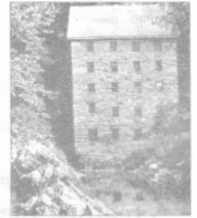


Beverley (Chapman's) Mill News



Volume 2, Issue 1

Thoroughfare Gap, Virginia

National Mill Day, September 13, 2001

Beverley Mill Stabilization Moving Forward

For over 250 years, the Beverley Mill has stood proudly along Broad Run. Thousands of motorists drive by the 6½-story stone structure every day as it rests in the heart of Thoroughfare Gap. It stands as a symbol of entrepreneurship and industry in early America, as well as the stalwart perseverance of those who kept the mill operating through countless obstacles until 1951. Though the mill suffered another setback after an arsonist's fire destroyed its interior in October of 1998,

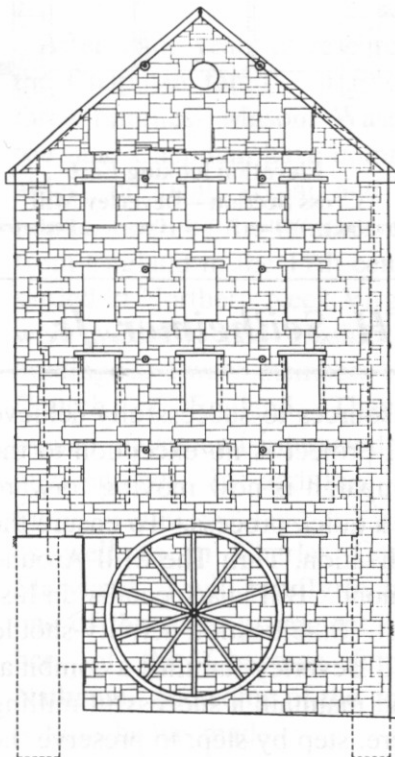
plans were made to stabilize the building, create interpretive pathways around the site, convert the stone mill store into an interpretive kiosk highlighting the history of the mill and Thoroughfare Gap, and open the site to the public for all to enjoy.

These plans are moving forward. The Turn The Mill Around Campaign received a \$300,000 Enhancement Grant in Virginia through the TEA-21 program (Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century), and has been working towards the stabilization of the building. The implementation of this grant requires much interaction with both the state and the local governments. Every step must be carefully reviewed, documented, and approved by these governing bodies. In February of 2001, the preliminary engineering contract was approved and awarded to William J. Davis, Consulting Engineers, of Richmond, Virginia. Mr. Davis brings a wealth of experience to this project as he has worked on many historic preservation projects throughout the Commonwealth. The decision to stabilize the stone structure will provide an opportunity for the public to enter the

building, view the beautiful stonework quarried from the side of the mountain right above the mill, and experience the immensity of the 6½-story structure.

The challenge of creating a structural framework that ties into the walls of the building has been met by Mr. Davis. In April of 2001, the final mounds of twisted metal debris were removed from the interior of the mill. This enabled Mr. Davis to view the cleared, mill interior and start developing the structural engineering plans. The basic design includes the use of tubular steel; lengths of steel, hollow inside, that has a rectangular shape to mimic the wooden beams that were used in the original structure. These beams will connect horizontally with steel rods that run through the stonewalls at existing structural points at each floor level of the building. Miraculously, all but one of these existing steel rods (pins) survived the fire. We hope to find it among the debris. The vertical tubular steel columns will intersect the horizontal ones at structural points

(Continued on page 2)



West Elevation of Beverley Mill

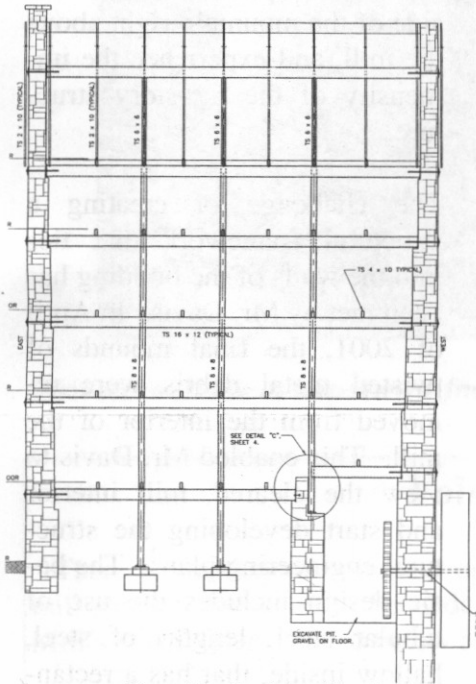
Drawing by William J. Davis, Consulting Engineers

(Continued from page 1)

creating the look of the original floor levels as the eye travels upward six stories. This steel framework will be topped off by the addition of a roofline, supported by the re-creation of the gable ends and supporting several steel mem-

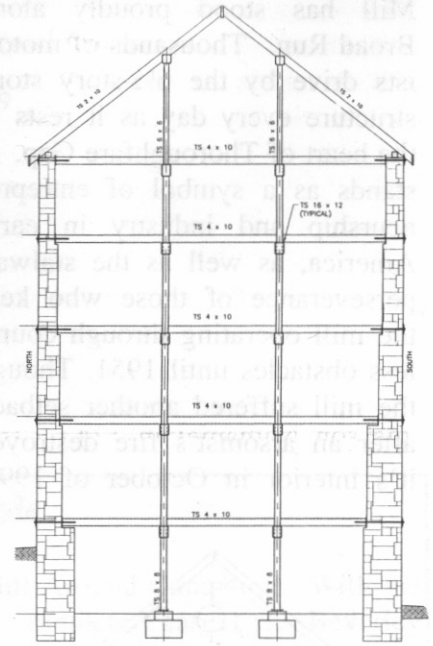
bers that will look like roof rafters, giving the impression of where the roof was located. Presently, the stone gable ends of the mill are not complete due to the destructive nature of the fire. The plan includes rebuilding the gable ends with stone still available from the local quarry. This will involve a close association between the steel erectors and the stone masons as they work together from the bottom up, stabilizing the walls and the window and door openings as they move upward. There are a total of 63 existing openings throughout the building.

hire well-qualified contractors, the next step in the TEA- 21 process. By late fall, Turn The Mill Around Campaign expects to be well on the way with the stabilization process, adding a new chapter to the rich history of Beverley Mill.



Elevation looking South
Cross Section—Beverley Mill

Drawing by William J. Davis, Consulting Engineers



Elevation looking East
Cross Section—Beverley Mill

Drawing by William J. Davis, Consulting Engineers

A Message From the President . . .

Charles H. Seilheimer, Jr.

Historic preservation involves a vast commitment of time, energy and resources to successfully achieve the goals of preservation, interpretation and education. The Beverley Mill project is no exception to the rule. After navigating the bureaucratic waters, Turn The Mill Around Campaign is now moving forward with plans for the stabilization and interpretation of the mill, but this is not a quick process. To ensure the best possible solutions for the design and implementation of the mill stabilization, Turn The Mill Around Campaign is working closely with our engineer, William J. Davis, of Richmond. Bill is a specialist in historic structures, as those who were active in the Aldie Mill project can attest. Stabilization activity should begin by late fall of this year. Let's remember that it took the Chapman and Beverley families a combination of over 200 years of hard work, planning and perseverance to build and maintain a successful milling business. As stewards of this important, historic site, we also must persevere, step by step, to preserve the Beverley Mill site for future generations.

Nathaniel Chapman

(1709 - 1760)

A Maryland and Virginia Gentleman

By Elmer S. Biles

High on the north wall of the Chapman/Beverley Mill is an inscribed stone tablet that gives the names of the Chapman family members from Jonathan, Nathaniel, Pearson, John, George to John who owned and/or operated the mill during the Chapman years. Each in their own way made a contribution to the legacy of this historic site. The original mill site was acquired by Jonathan Chapman in 1737 and a 757 acre nearby tract was purchased by his son Nathaniel in 1743. But, who were the Chapmans and where did they come from?

After some years of researching the Chapman family, I find the three families- Mason, Washington and Chapman have commonalties- political, social and economic. Each of the families came from England in the 17th century, settled in Northern Neck Virginia, were wealthy, had sizable land holdings and were members of the Church of England. They all owned slaves and interacted with one another. In addition, each family would own land in Virginia as well as in Charles County, Maryland. I will briefly focus on one of the more prominent members of the Chapman family-- Nathaniel, and some of the contributions he has made.

By the early 18th century there

was a growing demand in the colonies for iron products for plows and tools in the expanding tobacco industry and for household appliances. In 1724, Jonathan Chapman was working as a stone mason in the building of an iron furnace for the Principio Co. north of Baltimore. In 1729, Augustine Washington journeyed to England to negotiate with the owners of the Principio Co. for the operation of an iron furnace on his land on Accokeek Creek north of Fredericksburg, Virginia. By 1730 Nathaniel Chapman was listed as a supervisor at the Accokeek furnace. Chapman and Washington would be business associates in the iron business. The iron business is identified by many as the beginning of the American Industrial Revolution. For 25 years Nathaniel Chapman served as the general manager of one of the largest iron works in the colonies. It is the iron business that provides Augustine Washington with the income that would greatly influence the life of his son George.

In 1732 Nathaniel Chapman married Constantia Pearson, daughter of a wealthy and influential merchant in northern Virginia. In 1747 Nathaniel was one of the founders and the first treasurer of the Ohio Company of

Virginia. The Ohio Company included 25 of the wealthiest and most prominent men of colonial Maryland and Virginia. Included in the membership were both Lawrence and Augustine Washington, Thomas Cresap, William and George Fairfax and Thomas Lee. In 1749, at the urging of Nathaniel Chapman, the company accepted into membership George Mason IV who succeeded Nathaniel as Treasurer of the company--a position Mason would hold until his death in 1792. The main purpose of the company was to seek major land grants from the Crown for lands west of the Alleghenies into the Ohio valley. The French and Indian War in 1754 and legal disputes over title to the land doomed the Ohio Company to economic failure. The Company was successful, however, in preventing the French from colonizing the west.

In 1750 Nathaniel Chapman purchased a 580 acre tract of land in Charles County, Maryland on the Potomac known as Grimes Ditch. The same year his friend, George Mason, married Ann Eilbeck of Charles County and began building his home across the Potomac from Grimes

(Continued on page 4)

Nathaniel Chapman (1709 - 1760)

(Continued from page 3)

Ditch, which he called Gunston Hall. During this same period a few miles up river George, the eldest son of Augustine Washington by his second marriage, was rebuilding Mt. Vernon. Nathaniel built a two story house on the river at Grimes

Ditch for himself, his wife and their six children. This would evolve into a working plantation with more than 30 slaves, the raising of sheep and hogs and the growing of wheat and Indian corn. An inventory taken of his Charles County plantation following his death revealed he lived a rather comfortable lifestyle. In addition to his being general manager for the Principio Iron Works in both Virginia and Maryland he managed the mill property at Thoroughfare Gap and numerous other properties in Virginia. In addition he owned residential property and a tobacco warehouse in Fredericksburg and was a partner in a gristmill operation in King George County. The Chapman dynasty would hold forth on the Grimes Ditch plantation site for the next 165 years. The Chapman as well as the Mason and Washington families would maintain successful shad and herring fisheries on the Potomac. These fisheries would be the one of their main sources of income. The Chapmans also operated a ferry between their plantation and Hallowing Point on Mason's Neck. During this period

the Potomac continued to be the center of commerce and transportation for the early settlers.

In March 1760 there is an interesting entry in George Washington's diary. He notes that he and John Carlisle were considering setting up an iron works near Harper's Ferry. Nathaniel Chapman was proposed as a partner and would be asked to go there to assess the potential for such a venture. This partnership would not materialize because later that year tragedy was to strike when Chapman died suddenly near the Principio works in Baltimore. Although his life was cut short at the age of only 51 Nathaniel Chapman had touched the lives of many, had contributed much to the development of our culture and had laid a solid foundation as a legacy for his children.

As we look at the Chapman Plantation site today we can still see the boundary ditches including survey markers dating back prior to 1750 that were there during Nathaniel's residency. The cemetery and other remains of 18th century activities are also still in evidence.

Some other interesting facts about Nathaniel Chapman: He was the executor of both Augustine and Lawrence Washington's estates. His wife's mother was the half sister of Mary Ball Washington--Augustine Washing-

ton's second wife. His daughter Lucy, married Samuel Washington the brother of George Washington. The will of his wife Constantia, included a diamond encased mourning ring for her close friend Ann Eilbeck Mason. Nathaniel had many prominent descendants including a grandson, Nathaniel, who became a distinguished Philadelphia surgeon, co-founder and first president of the American Medical Association.

A new Chapman house was built by Pearson Chapman, grandson of Nathaniel Chapman, on the Charles County property in 1840 on a high bluff overlooking the Potomac. This is the house we know today as Mount Aventine. The Chapman plantation in Charles County has been known through the years as Pomonkey, Chapmans Landing and Chapman's Fishing Shore in addition to Grimes Ditch and Mt. Aventine.

(Author's Note: In October 1998 the State of Maryland purchased a 2,250 acre tract in Charles County, called Chapman Forest which includes most of the original Chapman plantation. The author is a board member of the "Friends of Mount Aventine" and is currently serving on a history/cultural work group appointed by the State of Maryland to recommend potential uses and type of management for this historic and environmental treasure. More information on the Chapman property in Charles County and related issues is available at the website, www.chapmanforest.org--Elmer S. Biles)

From the Executive Director, Eileen E. Vroom

Archaeology at Beverley Mill

It's been the dream of many associated with Turn The Mill Around Campaign to pursue an archaeological dig at the Beverley Mill site. This July, that dream started to become a reality with the help of volunteer archaeologist, Mark Joyner, founder of the Association for the Study of Archaeological Properties. Mark has been involved in the field of archaeology for more than 30 years, working on digs at sites such as Manassas National Battlefield Park, Sully Plantation, and Buckland Mills Historic district, just to name a few. Ruins of the Chapman family home "Meadowland", the ice pit, ruins of the upper mill, and of course, the battlefield site of the Civil War Battle of Thoroughfare Gap are all within close proximity to the mill and are being considered as potential future archaeological sites. After many discussions



Volunteers Gary and Andrew Thompson screen for artifacts at Beverley Mill - Photo by Harry Leach

with Mark about the unlimited possibilities for archaeological research at the mill, we decided to start off small and utilize the existing resources available. The decision was made to screen (sift) the existing mounds of debris that have been removed from the mill interior.

Three large piles (mounds) of debris are located adjacent to the mill building. Knowing that they contained the 13 ft. of debris removed from the mill after the devastating fire of 1998, we went to work. A volunteer day was arranged at the end of July and the screening began. Each pile was marked with a numbered flag, and a screen was set up for each one. This helped establish the location of the screened artifacts so they could be

bagged and marked separately.

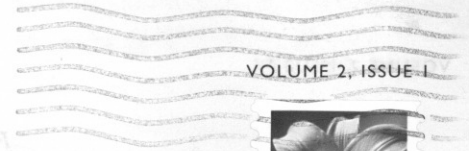
Within a four hour period, we found over 1,000 artifacts including hand-cast wrought iron square nails, fragments of hand made window glass, a large exterior iron door hinge, window latches, and even two different sizes of what appear to be stone cutting tools. These finds were tremendously encouraging and confirmed our original belief that the site contains a wealth of information and hidden treasure. After proper cleaning, numbering and labeling of the artifacts, a small display will be on exhibit at the mountain house, where the mill office is located.

Anyone interested in volunteering for upcoming archaeology days please call Eileen Vroom at (703) 753-3273.

Chapman and Beverley Information Wanted

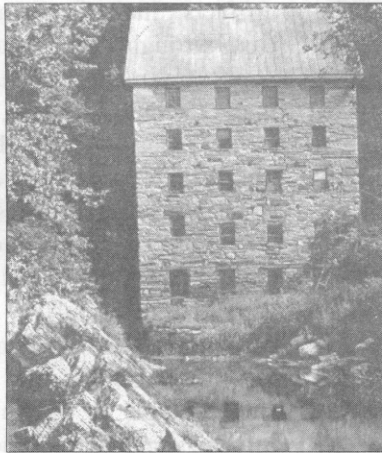
Turn The Mill Around Campaign is searching for any information available from our readers on the Chapman and Beverley families associated with the mill. Documents such as letters, diaries, invoices, bills of sale, for example, would help us greatly with the ongoing research of the mill's history and the families that made it all possible. We're also seeking the whereabouts of any paintings, portraits, drawings and/or photographs of the Chapman's and Beverley's for our archives. You never know what might be in those old boxes in the attic!

As always, Turn The Mill Around Campaign is interested in speaking to anyone who has had an association with the mill; from childhood memories to those who may have worked there until it's closing in 1951. Please contact Eileen Vroom, Executive Director, with any information you would like to share.



TURN THE MILL AROUND CAMPAIGN

Post Office Box 207
Broad Run, Virginia 20137
703-753-3273
email: mill@fmnbp.org



Don Wilson
Bull Run Regional Library
8051 Ashton Ave.
Manassas, Virginia 20109

Visit our web site at <http://www.fmnbp.org>

Volunteer Opportunities Available

There are variety of volunteer opportunities available with Turn The Mill Around Campaign. With the mill stabilization soon to be underway, there's a lot to be done to help complete Phase 1 of Beverley Mill's master plan. Listed below are a few of the volunteer opportunities available:

- Clear away overgrown vegetation from around the mill and the mill races
- Sort stone from the existing piles of debris that can be recycled
- Screen to find artifacts from the mounds of dirt removed from the mill interior
- Clean, number, bag and store artifacts for later reference
- Help conduct and document oral histories

Many Thanks to all our Volunteers!

Mill Bags For Sale

Original Beverley Mill cornmeal, flour and chicken mash bags (paper) are available for sale. A variety of sizes are still in stock. Prices range from \$8-\$14. (These are the real thing, removed from the mill when it closed.) Please call the mill office for more information (703) 753-3273.

Just A Reminder...

In its present condition, the Beverley Mill is a hazardous place. Turn The Mill Around Campaign and Prince William County seek your cooperation in staying off the property unless accompanied by a Turn The Mill Around Campaign staff member. This is for your protection as well as for the protection of this historic site. Thank you.