

MILL MUSINGS

A Publication of the Museum of Power and Industry, Inc.

Volume XXVI Number 2 July 2022



UPDATE ON MILL ROOF REPLACEMENT

In the January newsletter we requested donations to help replace the mill roof. Since that time, we received \$16,545 toward the goal of approximately \$35,000 (based on a contractor's estimate) from among individual donors. We then received notice in June that we had been awarded an unsolicited \$20,000 grant from the John and Robyn Horn Foundation of Little Rock, Arkansas. Pat Forgy is the Executive Director of the foundation. This grant provided enough funds to cover the roof replacement.

John had been corresponding with John Horn regarding the restoration of our Washington printing press, since he has a large collection of vintage printing equipment. His wife Robyn is an artist and sculptor. John is also a longtime friend of Walter Clement, museum member and supporter for many years. The grant was made in honor of Walter.

Local contractor and museum member John Bush provided the estimate for the roof. Since then, material costs have risen, but we are still confident that museum funds can cover the work. The upper metal roof on the mill was replaced in the 1970's, and the lower two roofs are much older. Roofing nails have popped up, causing numerous drip leaks throughout the building. We have also had wind damage in the past, causing several panels to become bent near the edge of the roof. Our goal is to use stronger materials than those used on the current roof thereby increasing its life expectancy. Weather permitting, we will begin construction work in early December after the mill has closed for the season.



SANDERS FOUNDATION GRANT

We reported in the last newsletter that the local Sanders Foundation had awarded the museum a grant of \$4,000 to support guided tours for county school children. Although we have about 1,200 school children visit each year, very few have been from schools in our own county. We are using the grant funds to cover the admission of the local students. To date we have had 185 students from four different Franklin County schools visit the mill and museum. We anticipate several more during the fall school term. We hope this will encourage more area teachers to plan field trips to the mill.

WASHINGTON PRESS

The Washington printing press, donated to our museum by Bea Collins in 2002, has finally been restored. The press, which weighs close to a ton, is set up on the concrete floor near the old Chandler and Price press that we use to print our flour, meal, and grits bags. On Monday, June 20, Kyle Dugger came over from West Tennessee to help John prepare the Washington press. They were successful, and printed four copies of a poster commemorating the 150th anniversary of the opening of the mill. The wooden type for the poster was set by hand and with a few well placed shims under the letters, and a great deal of ink, they were able to produce a good impression.

The press is the subject of the Franklin County Historical Society's October meeting, where John will present a brief program on the historical newspapers in Franklin County, and then demonstrate the old press. It was in one of the Winchester newspaper offices in the late nineteenth century. When Bea's father, Harmon Alexander, bought the two Winchester papers (the *Truth* and the *Herald*) in 1913, he had the foresight to save the old press from the scrapyards, and it passed on to Bea after he died. By the time we received it, it was rusted and missing several parts, which we replaced. The restoration was fairly extensive, but it now works smoothly and is a beautiful example of nineteenth century technology.

NON-MONETARY DONATIONS

Regarding the Washington printing press, our friend Neil Tyson machined and donated 8 platen bearers for use with the press. These are rectangular blocks of cast iron machined to the height of metal printer's type (0.918 inch). One is placed at each of the four corners under the heavy impression platen, so that when it is lowered to make the printed impression, the bearers will keep the platen from cocking and thereby not only produce a sharper image, but also avoid damage to the wood type. These were critical to the successful operation of the old press.



Mickey Knowles, a friend from the Tennessee Valley Woodworkers Club, donated an antique retractable kerosene ceiling lamp, which we hope to install in the schoolhouse.

Nancy Bleil of Silver Spring, Maryland, donated an early cast iron coal shovel (circa 1926) and a fire poker that belonged to her family. We had been corresponding by email regarding our old wool carding machine.

Jimmy and Barbara Pate donated several items from their former print shop in Calhoun, Georgia. These included large size paper for the Washington press, wood furniture (spacers), slug cutters for metal spacers (used in setting type), composing sticks (for setting lines of type by hand), a pantograph router, books, and several other items for use with our presses.

SIDE DOOR OF MILL

The frame (or buck plates) for the side door of the mill had deteriorated to the point where the door was sagging making it very difficult to close. The bottom few inches on each side plate had completely rotted away over the years, causing the whole frame to drop down. John had to jack the door and frame back up to the lintel, then saw off the rotted portions. Next he inserted new wood under the plates and secured the entire framework so it could not shift side to side. After caulking and filling in gaps in the damaged brick and plaster behind the frame, painting began. The repair work allowed the door to function properly once again. The door looks so good that now we will need to paint the window trim along the north side of the building!

LOSS OF TWO FRIENDS AND LONGTIME MUSEUM SUPPORTERS

Our good friend and longtime museum member Mary Jo Fogle of Huntsville, Alabama, passed away May 30 at the age of 87. John had known the Fogles since the days he taught at the University of Alabama in Huntsville. Mary Jo's late husband Valmore (Val) Fogle had helped with several museum projects and also assisted in wiring our log house on the mill property. Their son Frank also helped John move the huge yarn spinning mule from Kentucky to the third floor of the mill, and also helped with construction of the log house. Their youngest son Andy gave a moving eulogy at Mary Jo's service. She will be greatly missed by her family and many friends.

Another friend and museum supporter, Myra Johnson of Winchester, died June 14. John had known Myra's husband Dr. Gerald Johnson and her son Kurt from their attendance at the Sons of Belvidere (SOB's) dinner gatherings for many years. Kurt has also been a longtime supporter of our museum. Myra lived a long and productive life and died at the age of 92.

WORK AROUND THE SCHOOLHOUSE

The outhouse building is in place behind the log schoolhouse. We are in the process of installing the plumbing fixtures. Stonehenge Dark Druid Yew shrubs have been planted in front of the porch of the schoolhouse. Once these have matured they will mask the plumbing for the chain water pump that is on the front porch. A large number of visitors and groups have toured the schoolhouse. A short program was presented by "schoolmarms" Christy Anderson and Sunday Perkins, who were wearing dress appropriate to the 1890's.. John has put together a nineteenth century schoolmaster's outfit for use in the fall and winter programs. Most of the clothes were tailored and made by Beth Webb of the Well Stitched Studio in Bishopville, South Carolina.



THE KEROSENE REFRIGERATOR

We reported in the last newsletters that Mary Howe had donated several interesting items from her late husband Norman Howe's collection. The last remaining item was a 500-pound Servel Electrolux kerosene refrigerator in the basement of her house. The new owner of the house was able to move the refrigerator from the basement to the garage and place it on a pallet. On June 28, John and Paul Holloway traveled to Brownsboro, Alabama, and picked up the old refrigerator. Along with the donation came several vintage operating manuals, some period recipe books, and two hand fans promoting the Servel brand. Norman also had a miniature coin bank replica of the refrigerator.

After some research and connecting with other antique appliance collectors, we have more information on the refrigerator. It is a circa 1935 Model F-73 called by the manufacturer the "Queen Kero." The refrigerator is almost complete, only missing one shelf and a few minor cosmetic parts. It has a small freezer compartment for ice trays only, although one could be removed if the kids wanted to place a popsicle inside. The unit has a 5-gallon kerosene tank providing the heat source for the ammonia and methyl chloride gasses that generated the cooling. It would run about a week to 10 days on a tank. It works much like an RV refrigerator, with no moving parts and completely silent. Our next step is to remove the burner unit and inspect for repairs. We are already in touch with a wick supplier and possibly a restorer who can recharge the unit if necessary. We have no clue at this point if it can be restored to operate again. We have only located a couple of these nationwide, neither of which is workable. The units that ran on natural or LP gas from this era seem a bit more common.

Check the fallsmill.com website for details on the Membership Picnic happening this fall!

Check your museum membership card, and if it is time to renew, please join us at the Museum of Power and Industry, Inc., at Falls Mill for another year! Thank you for your contribution.

Check the contact/calendar page of the website fallsmill.com for special events.

INDIVIDUAL/FAMILY MEMBERSHIP \$25.00 per year _____

TAX DEDUCTIBLE MUSEUM DONATION \$ _____



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