



The Delta Millers' Newsletter

The Gist of the Grist

Fall/Winter 2017

The Geography of the Old Stone Mill

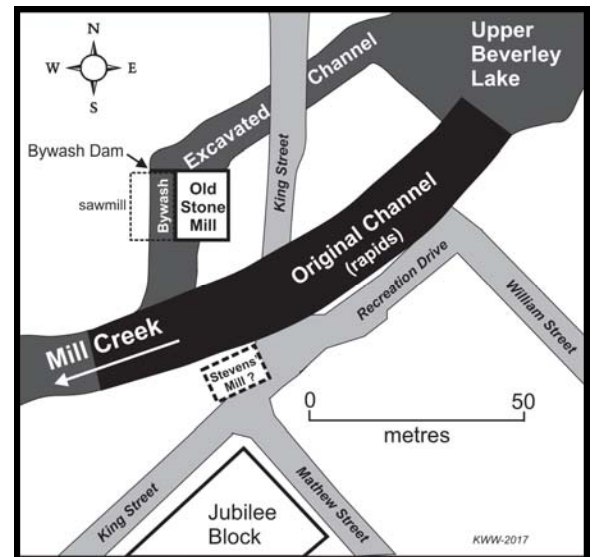
The history of the Old Stone Mill was misinterpreted for many years due to the erroneous assumption that it had been built in the same location as Abel Stevens' original wooden mills. It wasn't until the mid-1990s, when archaeologists and conservationists started investigating the mill, that a more accurate view of the mill's history was revealed.

In June 1808, William Jones purchased the property and mill(s) from Abel Stevens. In 1809, records show the former Stevens' gristmill with Ira Schofield as the miller (either under lease or as a partner with William Jones). In 1810, neither Jones or Schofield operated a mill but they were recorded as partners in operating a merchant shop and storehouse in Delta. The old Stevens mill may have burned down in late 1809 (anecdotal history has this mill burning down twice), perhaps "sparking" the construction of the Old Stone Mill. Or they may have planned a new mill all along. Construction started in the spring of 1810 and the mill is shown as being in operation by March of 1812 with Ira Schofield as the miller.

The mill is located on an artificial channel, not on the original stream course. The channel leading up to the mill, and the raceway (water channel) through the mill, were blasted out of solid bedrock using black powder. During archaeology in 1999, the bottoms of drill holes were discovered in the channel bed leading up to the mill. In fact you can still see a rock from the original waterwheel raceway with a drill hole in it. Why go to all this effort? Why this location?

The scale of the Old Stone Mill and its location on the landscape speaks to the incredible engineering design of the Old Stone Mill as an Oliver Evans' automatic mill. Up to this point, most mills of this design were made of wood. Jones and Schofield both came from well to do families, they had a large amount of capital funding available to them. They clearly decided to go first class with a large, 50' x 35,' 3-1/2 storey tall, stone building. Such a heavy stone building needed a solid foundation, it needed to be placed on bedrock.

The construction of a building meant to have water flowing through it is most easily done "in the dry." The designers of the mill chose an area of bedrock outcropping to the north of the original stream channel to build the mill. This allowed them to do all the foundation work without the problems brought on by water. A new excavated channel brought the water to the mill after the lower



Geographic Location of the Mills

We don't know the exact location of the old Stevens' mill(s). Lewis Grant's 1796 survey map shows it on the south side of the original stream channel. It would have been located near the base of the rapids in the stream between Upper and Lower Beverley lakes. The Old Stone Mill was built on a bedrock outcrop to the north of the stream and a new water channel was excavated. The original stream channel was filled in.



Delta Harvest Festival September 30

Lots of fun for the whole family: vendors, demonstrations, music, food, bread contest, car show and much more. See the enclosed program guide for full details and our website www.deltamill.org for the latest information.

portion was completed.

We don't presently know who designed the Old Stone Mill. While we credit William Jones and Ira Schofield, both men with some experience with mills, it is most likely that they hired a millwright familiar with the Oliver Evans' design (1795) for an automatic mill. That millwright, in consultation with Jones and Schofield, would have done the complete design of the mill. Expert masons and carpenters would have been hired to execute the design. It is clear today that the mill was purpose built from the ground up as an automatic mill. An interesting side note is that the mill is oriented exactly north-south, the entrance door faces due east. That very specific orientation is unlikely a coincidence, it perhaps has its origins in freemasonry beliefs.

One interesting deviation from the Evans' design was to have the mill act as its own dam, something Evans recommended against. This deviation is likely due to the geographic position of the mill and its north-south orientation. It meant the water had to turn 90 degrees to flow back into the original stream channel precluding the use of an upstream dam and flume (as would have been used for the Stevens' mills). There wasn't much choice for this, a waterwheel needs a free flow behind it with no backwash (no portion of a waterwheel can be underwater). To avoid problems with too much water in the mill, a bywash (bypass channel) was excavated just to the west of the mill, in the location now occupied by the turbine shed. A sawmill was located adjacent to or near the west wall of the mill (to access power from the waterwheel), perhaps spanning the bywash, similar to the later (Denaut era) sawmill.

- Ken W. Watson



If you look closely you'll see a semi-circular cut in the stone to the right of the scale card. This a portion of a hole made for black powder blasting using sledgehammers and a hand-held "jumper drill." The slightly irregular shape is due to the nature of the hand drill that was used. (photo by Ken Watson)

More history: we'll continue in the next newsletter, but history keepers can download our new *Tour Guide Manual and History of the Old Stone Mill* from the history page of our website: www.deltamill.org/history.html

President's Note

It is hard to believe that summer is almost over and the Old Stone Mill has closed for the season. We will be open for the Harvest Festival on Sept. 30 and the five Saturday evenings of Celebrating the Season starting on Nov. 18. We also open the mill by special appointment.

It has been a very busy summer with many visitors both locally and from all around the world. Thanks to the dedicated efforts of Anna Greenhorn, the many volunteers and our summer students we were able to stay open 7 days a week from Victoria Day weekend to Labour Day.

Thanks to our students who did an excellent job. We wish farewell to Matt Okum and Allisa Dullemond as they move on to further their careers. Thanks to Jared Hayes and Emily Gardiner who we hope will be able to return next summer. This year our summer staff shared some great ideas and we listened.

I want to give special thanks to the Delta Mill Society Board of Directors. You are a dedicated, professional group of people with a "passion for our heritage". The

only reason I was willing to take on the role of President was because I knew I could count on each and every one of you for your support. We are each a mixed group of talents and together we make a great team!

DMS Board of Directors 2017-2018

President - **Cathy Livingston**, Vice President - **Doug Bond**, Secretary - **Anna Greenhorn**, Treasurer - **Sharon Okum**, Property - **Moel Benoit & Art Cowan**, Communications and Webmaster - **Ken Watson**, Events - **Katherine Killins**, Collections - **Sally Wanless**, Health & Safety - **Ron Schleede**. This year we added 2 new co-ordinator positions: Volunteer Coordinator - **Ginny Okum** - email:- volunteer.deltamillsociety@gmail.com; Old Town Hall Coordinator - **Joanne van Dreumel** - email: - rentals.deltamillsociety@gmail.com.

Thanks to all our members and visitors for your support and your donations.

I also want to thank Dann Michols for his leadership for the past 7 years, helping us through the 200th Old Stone Mill NHS celebrations and then through times

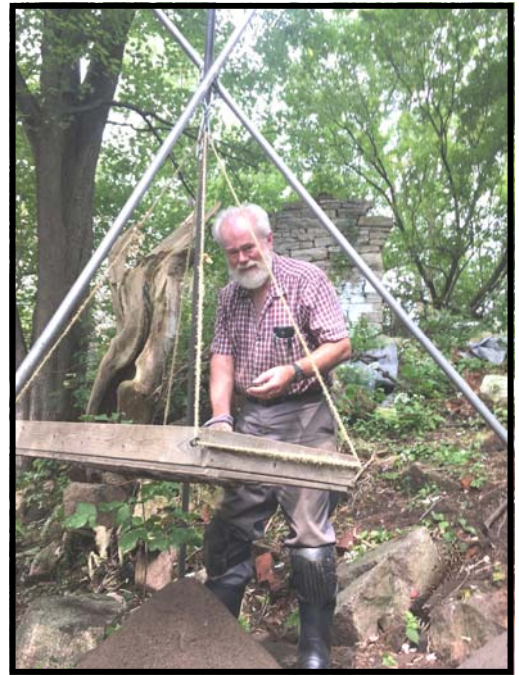
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Featured Member/Volunteer Q&A by Mariska Kriebel

Art Shaw

Art Shaw, who calls Red Horse Lake his home, is a very talented craftsman and specializes in woodworking. He is also one of the very committed volunteers to the Delta Mill Society, including serving as President of the society. He has put a lot of time, energy and expertise into the preservation of the historic Old Stone Mill. During the Old Stone Mill events you will find him as the senior Blacksmith in the Mill Drive Shed.

Art was born on the Gananoque River. This is where his parents opened the Shawmere cottages in 1938. This tourist resort is operated today by Art's brother. Art grew up building cottages and learning carpentry skills from his father. His love for history came naturally at a very early age. It came to the fore with Art's grade 8 teacher, Gerald Johnson, who made local history part of the curriculum at the school in Lyndhurst. One of the subjects was the Ironworks, which has been on Art's mind ever since. This is where he is today realizing his childhood plans and passion. Art took the initiative to raise funds and recruit volunteers to help with the archaeological dig at the Ironworks in Lyndhurst.



Art sifting for artefacts at the Lyndhurst Ironworks archaeological dig.

When and how did you become interested and involved with The Delta Mill Society?

It evolved out of the fight to preserve the old stone single lane bridge in Lyndhurst. In 1984 it was decided that the Lyndhurst bridge should be demolished. I was one of the ring leaders of local opposition to this idea. I was interviewed on CBC, and wrote some letters to the editor in Brockville and Kingston papers, including one that was quoted in Glenn Lockwood's book. In the end the bridge was saved. After all this publicity Paul Fritz asked me to consider joining the Delta Mill Society. I became part of the group of volunteers to help with the preservation of the Old Stone Mill. I familiarized myself how the Old Stone Mill worked and learned a huge amount in practice and by studying the available books.

What do you find most rewarding of being a volunteer?

The big victories, saving the bridge in Lyndhurst, restoring the Old Stone Mill and currently getting the archeology of the Lyndhurst Ironworks underway. It takes years of work and dedication with like-minded people. It is not only the reward that keeps me going, my conscience would bother me if I didn't take a role in saving the achievements of our predecessors. There is wisdom in them that future generations should have the benefit of.

Why do you think it is important to preserve The Old Stone Mill?

There is so much about the Old Stone Mill that we just cannot allow to fade away in time. The structure itself and the way it used the natural resources. As well as the craftsmanship that went into the framework. Particularly the roof structure is fabulous. Also the original husk of which we only have the timbers left (which are currently stored in the drive shed). It is amazing when you think that everything then was made by hand and they had few materials at their disposal. I think they make us look like wimps nowadays.

Besides the Old Stone Mill do you have any other favorite museums?

My favorites are; the Museum of History in Ottawa, the Royal BC Museum in Victoria, the Museum of Anthropology in Vancouver and the Glenbow Museum in Calgary.

Thank you Art!

President's Note Continued ...

when we had to make some drastic changes to the way we managed our operations, which in the end has helped us to learn and grow. This fall we will be reviewing the strategic plan that Dann initiated in 2015 as we move 'onwards and upwards', to quote Anna.

This fall and over the winter we will be preparing for yet another busy season in 2018. If you are interested in helping us please email the addresses given, call 613-928-2584 or email me at cathy.livingston@sympatico.ca.

OLD TOWN HALL

We continue to improve the Old Town Hall for use as a rental property in support of our heritage work with the Old Stone Mill NHS. A portion of an audio-visual grant given to the Township of Rideau Lakes allowed us to purchase a projector, screen, microphones and a sound system earlier this summer to facilitate event hosting.

We also have plans to create a bright, cheerful meeting space for smaller groups (up to 12) in the Old Town Hall. We're calling it "The Delta Room" and will offer it to community groups for a small fee. It is the middle room between the office and kitchen area. It now features a new floor and will be painted, decorated, and draperies sewn. A whiteboard and furniture are available. Washrooms and kitchen facilities are conveniently nearby.

You can rent this room or the hall itself by contacting us at rentals.deltamillsociety@gmail.com.



New Millstone Stand

Student Eric Beedham stands beside the robust millstone stand that he built at Algonquin College. We are presently working on an Old Stone Mill NHS sign to be affixed at the top of the stand.

DELTA HARVEST FESTIVAL

PLEASE GIVE US YOUR

**PRESERVES * PRODUCE * BAKING *
JELLIES* PICKLES * RELISHES**

We're looking for donations from our members of any type of preserves, baking, produce, etc. These are for our **Friends of the Mill** table where they will be sold as a fundraiser for the mill.



Please contact Katherine Killins:

katherinekillins@gmail.com, 613-924-7142

FALL/WINTER EVENTS



September 30—Delta Harvest Festival

October 28—Spirits of the Mill
December 2—Kids Gingerbread Craft Fair

Nov. 18, 25, Dec. 2, 9, 16—
Celebrating the Season

For full information on these events see the Events page on our website www.deltamill.org or email us at info@deltamill.org.

"A tour for all ages!"

TripAdvisor Review—August 2017 by dphoto5

Saw a sign for the Old Stone Mill & decided to check it out. Wow! This was one of the most informative & intriguing tours we have been on in a long time. The Mill itself is beautiful.

The guides are very knowledgeable & passionate about the history of this Mill (Anna was our guide through the mill). They make you want to hear more. We didn't have children with us. However, if we did, I know the guides would have had them just as excited to hear more.

There isn't a fee to tour. However, they do accept donations which I hope everyone who tours is generous enough to donate. I would hate if they ever had to close such a beautiful place. I hope to come back again!