

Grinding at Hagood Mill - A Family Affair

Hagood Mill's Reed Severance becomes one of only 16 certified millers in North America

Reed Severance, the miller at Pickens County's Hagood Mill Historic Site and Folklife Center, is a mechanical engineer who volunteers every Third Saturday at the 19th century corn mill, along with his 11-year old son Ethan, and fellow miller, Bob Martin. Grinding corn into meal, maintaining all the equipment, and answering visitors' questions are just some of the tasks involved each month. Every "Third Saturday at the Mill" Reed, his wife Sandy, daughter Leah, and Ethan dress in period clothing and all help in the milling process.



**Hagood Mill's volunteer miller,
Reed Severance with Leah and Ethan**

Reed began his milling experience almost 9 years ago when he and Sandy, along with their inquisitive 3-year old son, Ethan, first visited the site. Reed says that his engineering mind, the appeal of the old waterwheel, and Ethan's fascination with the entire process and his wanting to stay all day determined his decision: "I would be there!"

Alan Warner, the miller at that time, took Reed under his wing and taught him the milling process. When Mr. Warner left the mill for another venture, Reed took over the entire operation. He has been working the past few years to become a Certified Miller through the Society for the Preservation of Old Mills and in July he reached that goal, becoming one of only sixteen North American millers certified by SPOOM.

In addition to running the mill, Reed and his co-miller, Bob, are also collecting items that would have been used in 19th century corn mills, keeping a period journal of each milling process, making repairs using authentic tools when possible, and working on other demonstrations at the site. All of this work involves many more volunteer hours than that one day a month. In the future, this dedicated miller team would like to go organic using organic wheat and become Certified Organic.

According to Reed, "My love of milling is due to the fact that my son Ethan provided the road I'm traveling at Hagood Mill. Perhaps one day he will be the miller at Hagood Mill. To operate this historic mill will become a true folk art for him".

The Pickens County Cultural Commission congratulates Reed Severance for his outstanding accomplishment in attaining SPOOM certification, but more so appreciates his family's significant gifts of time and knowledge aimed at making the historic Hagood Mill a better place to visit, learn and enjoy. We invite one and all to visit the Hagood Mill during any one of their monthly Third Saturday events so that you can see Reed in action and let him know how much our community appreciates what he and his family are doing to make Pickens County a better place to live or visit.

The Hagood Mill operates, rain or shine, the third Saturday of every month and is located just 3 miles north of Pickens or 5 ½ miles south of Cherokee Foothills Scenic Hwy 11 off SC Hwy 178 at 138 Hagood Mill Road. Hagood Mill is open Wednesday through Saturday from 10:00 until 4:00, to tour the buildings and grounds and to visit the Mill Site Gift Shop.

For additional information please contact the Hagood Mill at (864) 898-2936 or the Pickens County Museum at (864) 898-5963.