

greetings from

MILLWOOD, VA



Shiloh
Baptist Church



Village of Millwood, Virginia

Burwell-Morgan Mill, the village's namesake, operated for over 150 years in the Shenandoah Valley.

The village of Millwood, located in south-central Clarke County, grew up around the Burwell-Morgan Mill, one of the largest merchant mills in the Shenandoah Valley.

Completed in 1785, the mill was a joint venture between Col. Nathaniel Burwell and Gen. Daniel Morgan. Burwell was from the Tidewater region of Virginia, born and raised at Carter's Grove near Williamsburg. In 1771, he inherited nearly 5,500 acres in what was then Frederick County, Virginia.

Recognizing the power-generation potential of a fall in Spout Run, he convinced Gen. Daniel Morgan, the Revolutionary War hero of the Battle of Saratoga, to become his partner in establishing a mill and to oversee the mill's operations as Burwell still spent most of his time in the Tidewater area. The mill was a commercial success as soon as it opened. Shortly thereafter, Burwell built his plantation, Carter Hall, nearby and lived there until his death in 1814.

The Burwell-Morgan Mill operated for over 150 years, grinding corn, wheat and other grain into meal and flour for area farmers. Naturally, other commercial enterprises sprang up around the mill to take advantage of the traffic it generated.

By 1810, the village of Millwood had a tannery, a wagon maker, a boot-and-shoe maker, a tavern, a blacksmith, a tailor and a store, in addition to the mill.

After Clarke County was formed from Frederick County in 1836, Millwood continued to be a commercial center for the southern part of the county. Even after the mill closed in the early 1950s, the village included several stores, two gas stations, a hairdresser, a barbershop and other businesses.

Today, the mill is still the centerpiece of the village, but in an entirely different capacity. Now owned by the Clarke County Historical Association, the Burwell-Morgan Mill is a working mill museum, best known for its twice-yearly "Art at the Mill" art shows.

Art at the Mill began in 1990 with 14 artists and was held over a single weekend. The historical association's largest fundraiser, Art at the Mill is now held the first two weeks of May and the first two weeks of October. Each show features more than



1,000 pieces of artwork from over 200 artists. The show is highly

competitive, drawing artists from across the mid-Atlantic and beyond.

After the Spring Art at the Mill show closes in mid-May, the mill is open on weekends, with grinding demonstrations on Saturdays, through the end of November. The mill has





The Burwell-Morgan Mill, built in 1785, hosts "Art at the Mill" twice yearly.

an interior water wheel, an unusual design that allowed the mill to operate year-round in its heyday, and two grinding stones, one for corn and a heavier stone for wheat. In season, visitors can purchase organic flour and meal ground on site.

When the mill was donated to the historical association in 1964, the building was in rough shape. One wall collapsed in 1943, rendering the water wheel inoperable. The owner had continued limited mill operations for another eight or nine years, by cutting a new window into the lower level of the mill and running a belt drive off his tractor through the window.

The mill reopened as a working mill museum in 1971 after considerable restoration efforts by the historical association. Because it is a working mill, the building and its machinery require continual care and maintenance. A second major restoration was completed in 2001, but according to Nathan Stalvey, executive director of the historical association, a major support beam and a water spring were replaced last year.

"The art shows make these types of repairs possible, to keep the mill operating," Stalvey notes.

The core of the village, surrounding the mill, is remarkably intact. Across from the

mill, the Locke Store building has been continuously occupied by a store since it was constructed in 1836. Owner Juliet Mackay-Smith purchased the building in 2002 and has transformed it into the Locke Modern Country Store, specializing in prepared foods using locally sourced ingredients, a carefully curated selection of wines and other fine foodstuffs.

Mackay-Smith grew up in Pennsylvania, but came to Millwood during the summers when she was a child to stay with her grandparents who owned a Welsh pony farm. She remembers stopping at the Locke Store to get ice cream on hot summer days after swimming in the river. When she purchased the store, Mackay-Smith planned to focus on off-site catering and added a full kitchen to the building. However, she wasn't prepared for the scope of running a retail business and the catering side of the business has evolved into pick-up and on-site orders only.



Nathan Stalvey, executive director of the historical association.

On a typical weekend, it's not unusual to see locals coming to collect their dinners standing in line, with out-of-town visitors buying lunch to eat at one of the picnic tables on the front porch. Mackay-Smith offers wine tastings every weekend, drawing a very loyal clientele from far and wide.

"The building has kind of a life of its own," Mackay-Smith says of the store. Her restoration of the store and the adjacent building, known as The Buttery, continues a family legacy. Mackay-Smith's grandfather was instrumental in the restoration of the Burwell-Morgan Mill in the late 1960s.

Following the Civil War, Millwood was a predominantly African-American community. Today, the village remains tight knit, with many families going back generations. Denise Jackson's family has lived in Millwood since before the houses had running water. She remembers stories from her mother of having to draw water from the village pump next to Shiloh Baptist Church. The pump is still there, although its handle is missing.

Shiloh Baptist Church was built in 1892 by a white Baptist congregation, but after they built a new church two miles away in Boyce in 1923, the African-American Baptist congregation in Millwood purchased the building. Jackson was the last member of the



Scenes from around the Locke Modern Country Store, the core of the village of Millwood.



Above (from left to right) Ashley Gannon, Locke Store owner Juliet Mackay-Smith and Savannah Voelkel.



congregation to be baptized in Spout Run.

After she graduated from high school, Jackson went to Washington, D.C., to find work. She returned to Millwood in 1979 when Project HOPE opened the Carter Hall Conference Center at Nathaniel Burwell's former plantation. Jackson worked at Project HOPE for 22 years as a cook and housekeeper.



Denise Jackson, long-time resident of Millwood.

When she was growing up, the center of village life in Millwood was the Millwood Community Center. The center was built in 1910 as a school for African-American children, replacing an older Reconstruction-era building. In 1952, the African-American schools in Clarke County were consolidated at the Johnson Williams School in Berryville, the county seat, and the Millwood school was closed. Later that year, a group of village ladies formed the Millwood Good Will Association and purchased the building from the county for

use as a recreation center.

Jackson has fond memories of watching boys play basketball on the court behind the center and of the youth dances that were held at the center nearly every Friday and Saturday night.

"So many kids lived in Millwood back then. Saturdays were 'Oldies but Goodies' nights and that floor would jump," Jackson recalls. "I was too young to stay until the dances were over, though." The dances ended in the 1970s. Today, the community center hosts an annual fall homecoming weekend and is available for rental.

Millwood is an unincorporated community, so there is no municipal government. Instead, the Millwood Community Association, a non-profit organization, tries to fill that gap. According to Candy Means, who moved to Millwood in 2005 with her husband Howard, the association has been successful in limiting truck traffic through the village and in enforcing the county noise ordinance.

However, the association focuses most of its efforts on projects that help Millwood residents. Several years ago, the association converted the vacant lot next to the village post office into a community garden.

"There is a perennial garden in front and a vegetable garden, with a deer fence around it, behind that. One week each month, the produce from the garden goes to the food

pantry run by the Episcopal Church," Means explains. "The weeks when the food pantry is closed, we deliver produce to pantry clients in the village."

The Millwood Community Association also hosts a Christmas bazaar, with the proceeds going to the Good Will Association, and a summer picnic for the entire village on the mill grounds.

After moving to Millwood from Bethesda, Maryland, the Meanses quickly became involved in village affairs. "People were just so welcoming," Means says. "When we retired, we knew we wanted to live someplace where we could be part of the community. We certainly found that here in Millwood. It is a very special place." ■

Visiting Millwood

- **Burwell-Morgan Mill:** Open weekends from mid-May through the end of October. Grinding on Saturdays, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Upcoming events include Colonial Kids Day on July 15, the Fall Art at the Mill show (Sept. 30 to Oct. 15, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily) and Heritage Day on Nov. 4. www.clarkehistory.org/events.
- **Locke Store:** Open Tuesday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. www.lockestore.com. ■