



Newsletter 2025 4Q

50th Anniversary!

The Old Mill and T.R. Pugh Memorial Park will celebrate 50 years as a North Little Rock Park next May. The Old Mill was given to the City of North Little Rock by the former Justin Matthews Company on May 24, 1976. Justin Matthews was a visionary real-estate developer who conceived the idea of the Old Mill as part of a comprehensive system of recreational lakes and open spaces in the Lakewood area. Matthews had a tremendous impact on the shaping of the city's neighborhood character starting during the 1920s and 1930s with development of the Park Hill subdivision.

To honor the occasion, FOM will plan a celebration at the Old Mill next May. More details will be posted in the coming months, and we will be looking for volunteers to help with the planning and the event.

Tourist Information Signs at the Old Mill:



FOM, NLR Tourism, and NLR Parks & Recreation have replaced the paper brochures at the Old Mill with small signs with a QR code that can be scanned with a smartphone and allows access to the Old Mill webpage and all the information on the Old Mill. This allows visitors to explore the art of the Old Mill, its history, and other facts to enhance their visit. Look for the signs near each entrance, on the restroom building/deck, and at the amphitheater. A big shout-out to Patrick Isbell and Jeff Caplinger for making this happen.

Old Mill Tours:

Over the past year, FOM and Tourism have conducted more than a dozen guided tours of the Old Mill. These have been for out-of-state groups (such as Road Scholar and North American Travel Journalists Association) as well as in-state groups (such as Central Ark. Rose Society) and range from 5-6 persons to 30-35.

If you would like to help do guided tours, please contact Valerie Boyce at valerie.boyce61@gmail.com . We will provide training materials and do one-on-one training. As Tourism receives requests for tours, we work with volunteers to see who is available, and usually try to have at least two volunteers per tour. It's truly an honor to be able to show off the Old Mill and educate folks about its history.

NLR Tourism offers guided tours of the Old Mill for groups of 25 or more people who are lodging overnight in a North Little Rock hotel or RV park, and with advance tour reservations. These tours are conducted by trained volunteers from NLR Tourism and FOM. For smaller groups, FOM makes every effort to offer guided tours as guides are available. If you know of a group that would like a guided tour of the Old Mill, please contact NLR Tourism by calling 501-758-1424 or emailing info@northlittlerock.org .

Thank You!



the help of the Master Gardeners. And thank you to all the Master Gardeners who maintain the plants and beds around the park. MGs are continuing to plant dogwoods around the park to replace dead and

Thank you to NLR Parks for installing the Christmas wreaths on the fence of the Old Mill. Parks works year-round to maintain the grounds, including mulch application in the beds with



dying dogwoods (many are decades old and in decline) and add them in new areas. The dogwoods and azaleas make a particularly lovely display in the springtime.

Watercolor Artists:



A class of watercolor artists enjoyed the Old Mill scenery in October.



Donations to FOM:

Thank you to all who have donated to FOM. FOM hosted a tour in October for a small group of ladies from Hot Springs who surprised us with donations after the tour. We are glad the Old Mill inspires such joy and gratitude! FOM has installed a sign on the restroom building to acknowledge donors to FOM.

Would you (or someone you know) like to donate to FOM to assist in the upkeep of the Old Mill? Any amount is appreciated! Funds are used on an ongoing basis to purchase plants and gardening supplies to keep the landscaping at the Old Mill in top shape (with help from the Old Mill Master Gardeners and NLR Parks & Recreation); funds may also be used for special projects such as repairs, maintenance, new equipment, etc. as needs arise.

Tax-exempt donations can be made three ways:

- (1) by mailing a check (payable to Friends of the Old Mill) to Friends of the Old Mill, 506 Main Street, North Little Rock, AR 72114;

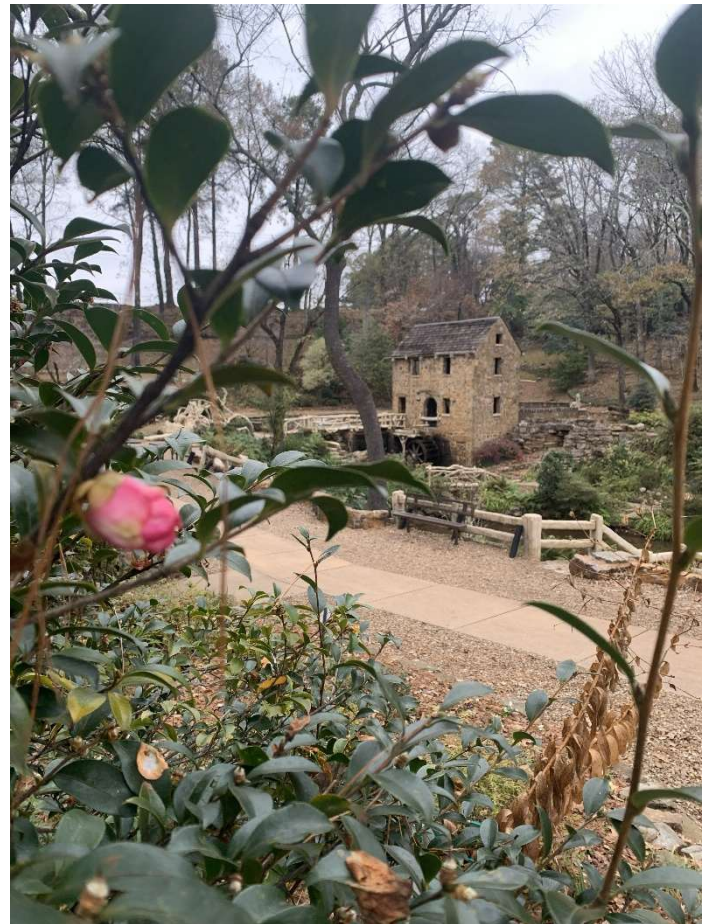
- (2) via PayPal (with a credit card) at the FOM website (<https://nlr.ar.gov/departments/parks-and-recreation/parks/old-mill/friends-of-the-old-mill/>); or
- (3) via PayPal (with a credit card) using the QR Code on the sign at the entry gate of the Old Mill.

Art of the Old Mill:

For information about the art of the Old Mill and some fun facts about the sculptures of Dionicio Rodriguez, please visit <https://nlr.ar.gov/departments/parks-and-recreation/parks/old-mill/the-art-of-the-old-mill/>.

Photographs from December 2025:

The Old Mill is lovely in any season, but in winter, the artwork of Señor Rodriguez shines through – along with some lingering fall color and a few fall/winter bloomers such as camellia sasanqua, camellia japonica, and pansies.





Your FOM Officers:

Valerie Boyce, President
Deeana Montgomery, Vice-President
Janet Beck, Secretary
Joe Detchemendy, Treasurer

Suggestions:

If you have any suggestions for how to make the Old Mill even better, please email Valerie Boyce at valerie.boyce61@gmail.com .

Save the Date:

The Old Mill will be 100 years old in 2033 – save the date: Saturday, **August 6, 2033**, for a centennial celebration. More information to come....