

# Friends of Spring Mill State Park Newsletter - Fall 2020



**View of the Mill in late October  
through the trees in the village.**

Spring Mill State Park is beautiful in the fall months. And also very busy! In spite of many traditional activities being cancelled due to the Coronavirus, the park still had many visitors throughout the fall months. From trail hiking to paddling on the lake to camping in the campground, many people were able to enjoy the beauty that is Spring Mill.

If you haven't had a chance to visit yet , there is still some color to see! Still time to sit by a campfire and roast marshmallows at your campsite, or take a hike around the lake!

Enjoy!

## **What have the Friends of Spring Mill been doing?**

Due to the coronavirus, many of the Friends activities have been cancelled. One of our main fundraiser, the concession stand near the village, was not opened this year to keep our members and the public safe since social distancing is not really possible when making sales!

But our members have been busy with other activities. Several of the members are talented grant writers. Our group has been the recipient of several grants to help enhance the park experience. Look through our newsletter to find out all the things we have been doing!

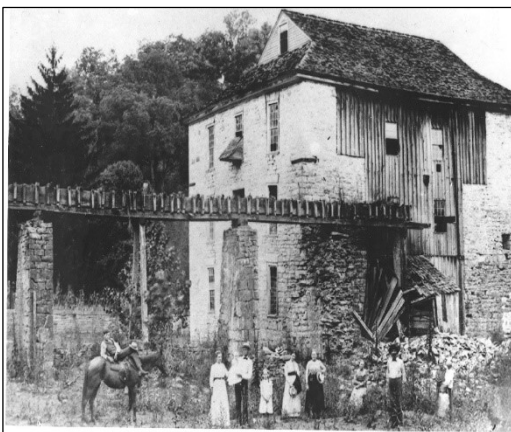
# HISTORY OF SPRING MILL PROJECT

The area of Spring Mill State Park has a rich history that dates back to the early 1800's. There are many historical documents and photographs, oral histories and movies that span this long period of time. In order to preserve some of these items, the Friends of Spring Mill President, Teena Ligman, wrote a grant to the Indiana Humanities Council. The grant was approved, and \$1773.97 was awarded to the Friends to help accomplish that preservation. Teena has begun work on this important task. Below are two examples of the many pictures she has scanned and documented.



Photograph of village from the north, looking south. Visible in the photo are the post office, apothecary, mill, and Lower Residence. Lower Residence has clapboard siding, two doors, and rail fence. Stagecoach road is rocky and has at least one ford. Wagon by mill.

Teena will be placing all these scanned photographs and documents on a website she has created. Oral histories and other media will also be included. The public will then have access to this rich history of the area.



Photograph of mill showing southeast side. Flume and windows pretty much still intact. Man reclining on horse (hat on knee), 11 other people in a line. Can faintly see "...mers, Aug. 17, 1901" written on front. Other copies of this photograph identify the people as Hamers.

## Pollinator Garden

As reported in our last newsletter, the Friends of Spring Mill received a grant through the Indiana Park Association to establish a pollinator garden near the nature center. Signs, like the butterfly weed picture on the right, will help to identify pollinator plants in the garden. The terracing of the area to create the garden is scheduled to begin. It is hoped the garden will be blooming next summer!



## Mission Statement of the Friends of Spring Mill

The mission statement for the Friends group was recently revised to better reflect the activities and projects of the group. The new mission statement is:

*The mission of the Friends of Spring Mill State Park is to support projects and events that help conserve, restore, and interpret the natural and cultural heritage of Spring Mill State Park as well as to enhance recreational and educational experiences for visitors in partnership with park staff.*

**Mark Your Calendars! Watch for more information!**

**Wonderland of Light – December 4, 5, 11 and 12**

**Volunteers needed**

**Spring Mill Campground**

## Turtle Talk

Nine years ago, in August, a small turtle, the size of a quarter, was brought to the Spring Mill Nature Center. It had been hit by a car and its shell was cracked. But the little creature was still alive. Coletta Prewitt administered some first aid, and didn't have much hope that the little creature would survive.

Happily, as you can see from the picture of Coletta by the current turtle tank, the Common Snapping Turtle survived and is thriving in his tank.

He is visitor friendly, and will swim along in the tank as you pass by, or poke his head

out of the water if you talk to him. This turtle has been raised in the nature center, and would not be able to survive in the wild.

However, he is growing rapidly and will soon outgrow his tank. The Friends group has partnered with the park to help raise funds to create a new turtle display. This will include a new home for this turtle. A donation box next to the tank, along with an explanation of the situation, has helped bring in the funds for this project. Anyone wishing to help this turtle get a new size-appropriate home at the nature center can either visit the nature center, or send a

donation to the Friends of Spring Mill State Park, attention Turtle Fund.



## ***Volunteers Needed***

Friends of Spring Mill adopted a two mile stretch of Highway 60 that borders the park. The Adopt a Highway program requires that trash be removed 4 times a year. If you are able to help with this project to keep our highway looking beautiful, contact Teena Ligman to be placed on the contact list. Her information is at the end of the newsletter.

## **Meetings**

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, the monthly meetings of the Friends have gone virtual. The Friends hope to go back to open meetings after the danger of the pandemic is over.

## **Campground News**

The Friends of Spring Mill Campground has merged with the Friends of Spring Mill State Park group. We will be including information about the campground in our newsletters.

Due to the Covid19 virus, many of the campground events were cancelled this year. However, the annual Christmas in July weekend, complete with Santa delivering presents to the children via jeep, was able to take place. Children were also able to get a picture with Santa.

It was reported that the vintage camper weekend went well. The open house was closed to the public due to the Covid19 restrictions. A sloppy Joe and Coney dog lunch was served cafeteria style to keep with Covid19 restrictions. Breakfast with the hosts was also served. The vintage camper rally takes about 8 months to plan and get ready, but well worth the effort when everyone gets together to celebrate.

The Haunted Campground was also different due to Covid19. Only the people camping and those staying at the Inn could Trick or Treat. There were very interesting decorations as well as some cute ghouls and goblins. The whole month of October was booked up with campers.

Next year, if there are no longer Covid19 restrictions, they plan to do these events and more:

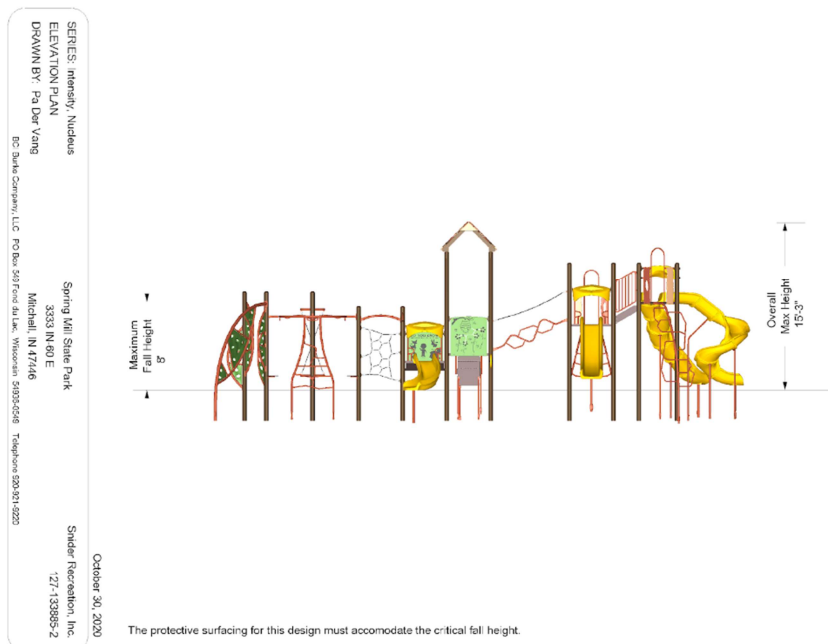
- Breakfast with Santa during Christmas in July
- Spring Open House and Campground Clean-up
- Scavenger Hunt in September
- Bicycle Parades for Holidays
- Bigfoot Weekend
- Chili Cook-Off and/or Smoke Off BBQ



# PLAYGROUND

Amber Hill, the secretary for the Friends of Spring Mill, submitted and received a grant from the Smithville Charitable Foundation to replace the old playground equipment at the Donaldson Picnic Area. The grant was for \$26,280. But the story doesn't end there. Amber was also able to multiply that grant! She was able to secure a 50% off price with Burke, the company that we are purchasing the playground equipment from, basically doubling our spending power! Thank you Amber for your hard work in getting this grant!

This is a diagram of the playground being considered.



**For more information about the Friends of Spring Mill, contact Teena Ligman, President**

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