

FONLS has requested \$391,372 Leverett CPA funds to stabilize the foundations and support structures of the historically important (Appendix 1) N. Leverett Sawmill. The mill was established in 1774 and is the only remaining member of 15 mills (Appendix 2) built in Leverett along the Sawmill River that has remained intact. Structural stabilization of the mill a required first step in its rehabilitation, which will subsequently be continued using a \$683,500 grant from the semiquincentennial fund of the National Park Service, and a recently awarded \$196,000 grant from the Mass Cultural Foundation Facilities Fund. Attendees at town and other meetings to discuss adaptive reuse of the building supported a multi-purpose event space that included museum, educational and other functions, while giving visitors the opportunity to stand in a building with 250 years of history. The Mill rehabilitation project is strongly endorsed by the Leverett Historical Commission (Appendix 3).

In reviewing FONLS application for CPA funds members of the CPC posed several questions to which the FONLS board of directors has responded below. As some of these questions required technical answers provided by our architect and lawyer we have asked these individuals to attend the Dec 3rd 2025 CPC meeting when the FONLS application and responses to CPC questions will be addressed, so that they can answer questions that fall within their areas of expertise.

Questions from CPC arising from FONLS Sawmill Structural Stabilization Proposal (10. 1. 2025) and Responses from FONLS BOD

1. What is the estimated cost for finishing the sawmill to an ‘open for business’ state?

We are approaching this project in four phases as outlined here:

I – Schematic design of mill, cost estimation, operational plan for sustainability (Sept 2023-Aug 2025): Completed.

IIA – Engineering review, building specifications, fund raising, final design, construction documents for receiving bids from contractors and permitting applied for as required (Sept 2025 – Aug 2026): In process

IIB – Construction bids executed for mill rehabilitation, construction undertaken and landscaping completed (Sept 2026 – Dec 2027): Planned

III – Dam repair - we are seeking funding for this (Timeline not planned at this time)

IV – Build out interior for museum and event functions, electronic equipment, seating inside and out – we are seeking funding for this currently

We will apply for a *certificate of occupancy* upon completion of phase IIB. Completion of this phase can be achieved using previously expended funds (private donations, bank donations and other grants) together with funds from (i) the National Park Service (\$683,500 awarded), (ii) Massachusetts Cultural Council Facilities Fund (MCFF) Capital Grant \$196,000 (notification of award attached as Appendix 4), along with, if funded, CPA 2025 (\$391,372). The cost for mill stabilization and rehabilitation up to completion of Phase IIB and including phases I and IIA was estimated by *AM Fogarty & Associates* as \$1.5 million which includes all engineering and architectural fees. Award of this proposal by CPC, together with the other awarded grants and funds expended will allow us to complete Phase IIB of the project.

Minutes from the Oct 2025 CPC meeting included these additional questions regarding building completion:

“What is the overall cost to bring the entire project to completion (in addition to the requested funding)”

As mentioned above we will complete Project Phases I, IIA and IIB by Dec 2027 using private donations, bank donations, 2023 CPA funding for design, a 2023 MCFF planning grant, a NPS Semi-Quincentennial Project Grant, and a MCFF Capital Grant in addition to the \$391,372 requested from CPC if awarded with those combined funds. Upon completion of Project Phase IIB:

- the mill foundations and floor framing will be structurally stable,
- power installed to both floors (underground access) and security lights installed,
- the envelope of the building repaired, and windows repaired or replaced with reproductions that match the originals,
- the original log entrances will be replaced with folding glass doors/windows,
- the upper mill chamber floor repaired and
- the upper chamber finished for 3 season use,
- ADA compliant composting toilets installed on 1st and 2nd floors,
- ADA compliant entrances/exits installed,
- the lower level (previous architect studio) floor repaired, and the studio room finished for 4 season use,
- well will be installed, drainage and septic system installed,
- parking and road access installed

At that time, we will apply for a certificate of occupancy, which when granted will allow public use of the building. Also as mentioned above, Project phases III and IV will remain to be completed, the former to rehabilitate the dam and the latter to build out the mill chamber interior for museum and event functions including electronic equipment, seating inside and out. We have not developed detailed plans for Phase IV as our efforts have been fully directed at work necessary to complete Phase IIB so that the building can be stabilized, sealed and opened to the public

“When would the work be complete?”

We anticipate that Phase IIB will be complete by December 2027. We cannot yet give a deadline for completing Phases III and IV.

“Page 3 of the application states (in bold) that the structural stability (for which the proposal seeks funding) will allow the initiation of non-structural repairs funded by NPS Semi-Quincentennial Program Grant. If CPA funding is not obtained, does that mean the non-structural repairs can’t be completed.”

CPA funding is necessary both for required structural work at the mill and as a match for a Mass Cultural Facility Fund grant that we have recently been awarded. If CPA funds are not forthcoming, either because the CPC does not allow the proposal to proceed to a town vote, or because the town does not favor the funding we would need to seek funds for the structural work and MCFF match elsewhere.

2. What plans do we have to obtain finance over and above what we have and those funds we are asking the CPC for?

We can go back to the State of Massachusetts (MCFF) for additional funds in 2 years according to their rules. We have a fund raising committee established which includes Dale Frank who has an insurance and investment firm, Will Melton who was a Development officer at multiple schools, universities, and on many non-profit boards, Stan Rosenberg who was a previous president of the Massachusetts Senate, Pat Fiero who served multiple terms in the State legislature, Susan Lynton who has raised private, non-profit, government and private sector funds, Samuel Black who has extensive experience in grant proposal writing for federal and foundation programs.

3. What happens if the funds are not available for completion of the septic?

We have been awarded a MCFF Capital Grant (\$196,000) for this work (Appendix 4). Thus, we have State and Federal funds to finish and landscape all systems through Phases IIB which will allow us to apply for an Order of Occupancy.

4. Is the work proposed required for full project development or would less work be required if we were to go for a more limited project/design?

The work proposed in this CPA project application aims to stabilize the foundations and other structural elements of the mill. This is required for any, and all, aspects of the mill rehabilitation project. It is a necessary first construction step in the phased project approach we have taken in mill rehabilitation.

5. What are the risks to the structural work if funded should the rest of the project be delayed because there are not enough funds to finish it?

The structural work needs to be done before any other work on the mill. With support from this CPA application, if funded, and NPS and MCFF Capital Grant funds awarded we will have enough funds to prepare the mill for occupancy. If we receive the CPA funding there is no reason to consider that funding is not available to complete the rehabilitation project considering the award of the NPS and MCFF grants.

6. The MCFF money is specified for septic and restrooms: what if that money doesn't come through? The septic and the restrooms are pending so if it doesn't come through to have the ADA compliance, how does that work?

The MCFF Capital Grant has been funded (Appendix 4), so the money has come through for the ADA compliant septic, restrooms and entrance to the mill.

7. Will the original saw and carriage be preserved in place in its entirety?

The saw and carriage will be preserved in their entirety as they currently exist. The track on which the log carriage moves will be preserved in its entirety, but not all in its present location. A photo-record will be preserved of the track, carriage and saw as they are currently. The log carriage track is assembled in sections and those that reside outside of the log carriage will be lifted and displayed elsewhere in the mill chamber, so that they can be reassembled into a full-length track in the future if that is desired. The original locations of the track will be marked on the floor with appropriately hued wood inlays. Moving of the track sections will allow ADA compliant entrance and exit from the main mill chamber. The Leverett Historical Commission has approved entrance/exit portals on the north face of the mill.

FONLS have arrived at the above decision regarding the log carriage track after long deliberation including consideration of possible solutions raised by Eva Gibavic in her role as a member of the Historical Commission and FONLS contact with the CPC. These are our reasons:

- i) the track prevents direct ADA compliant entry into the mill chamber from the outside access ramp and walkway.
- ii) it poses a tripping hazard that our architect has stated he is unlikely to sign off on (Appendix 5), and which would have substantial insurance liability. Notably, Jim Hawkins, building inspector, agrees with the architect (Appendix 6)
- iii) provision of a traversing ramp over the log carriage tracks that would be compliant with the ADA, and removal of the tripping hazard posed by the tracks by enclosing them in railings would obscure the tracks. The traversing ramps require a 5' square landing over the tracks by code and ramps of 1 horizontal foot for each 1" rise of the ramp on both sides of the tracks, i.e., 8' on each side of the tracks. Each track is a 6" high rail with 2" high wheels on which the log carriage runs. The ramps and landing would also need to be enclosed in rails for safety. This space filling structure would substantially limit how the mill chamber could be used as a museum and event space to gain revenue to cover costs of mill insurance and maintenance.
- iv) Raising the entire mill floor to sit flush with the level of the upper surface of the tracks and wheels and equipped with a transparent shield to enable both ADA compliant passage over the tracks and views of their outside and internal space would obscure parts of the saw, require raising the outside access platform to sit above the current entrance level, require a

new structural analysis, and strengthening of the beams supporting the current floor to support the overlay floor. All of this would require substantial new funding.

- v) Dropping the level of the tracks so that they sit below the current floor level and remain visible through a transparent shield inset into the floor would require cutting and replacing the current support beams for the mill floor, renewed structural analysis, and again substantial new funding. In addition, if the dropped tracks were to support the log carriage and retain its special relation with the saw, both the log carriage and saw would have to be dropped below current floor level.
- vi) Accessing of the upper mill chamber by ADA compliant elevator access would not be suitable as the main public access route for safe entry and exit from the building in case of fire or another hazard and would not diminish the tripping risk posed in the main mill chamber by the log carriage tracks.

8. Looking at examples of adaptive re-use, it seems that only the shell of the buildings is preserved.

This is true of most rehabilitation projects, which is a major category of historic preservation. However, historic features inside the rehabilitated building are often preserved. This is certainly our plan for the sawmill where we will retain the saw, log carriage and tracks on which the carriage rolls (with the caveat presented in question 7) as historic artifacts that are important in telling the story of the mill. Two pieces of original equipment - belt-driven rip saw and planer - will be displayed in the upper chamber on the side though not in their original position as it would inhibit flexible use of the space. The tool room will be preserved as well, as will the general architecture of the main mill chamber of which the utilitarian post and beam structure tracks the 250 years of the mill's history and gives an immediate sense of antiquity to visitors standing in the mill chamber.

9. Will there be charges for using the space?

In some instances, yes, so that we can build a sustainable model for running costs, maintenance and insurance. We envisage that 60% of running/maintenance/insurance costs will be obtained from grants and donations and 40% from admission charges for events and other uses.

10. What will the capacity be for the space – how many people in there at a time?

Jim Hawkins from the Franklin County regional inspection service informed us that the number of people allowed to occupy a building is determined by the architect and enforced by the fire department. This value has not yet been determined. There are several variables that are considered when determining the number of people allowed to occupy a building. Some of these variables are square footage, pathways, egress, seating arrangement plans, floor, load, capacities, etc. With respect to restroom use we will adhere to the capacity limit that is allowed under the regulations for the type of septic system we are developing (25 people). On occasions when a larger attendance is expected at an event, we will reserve use of the in-mill toilets for those who require ADA compliant access and use external porta potties for other users. It is our understanding that this will require a permit from the Leverett BOH.

11. FONLS has stated that the maintenance plan will be developed with Mass Cultural Facilities Fund, but it seems there is no plan for how maintenance will be done.

A multi-year maintenance plan will be developed using a MCFF Systems Replacement Plan Grant (\$8,000 which has been awarded) and a \$8,000 match from FONLS (which is in escrow) as follows:

Goals of the Systems Replacement Plan Grant – “The goal of the Systems Replacement Plan (SRP) Grant is to provide organizations that own facilities with a tool to prioritize their capital maintenance needs. The Systems Replacement Plan is a 20-year capital needs assessment conducted by a pre-selected contractor hired by the Cultural Facilities Fund to assess the facility's structure, mechanical, electrical, plumbing and life-safety systems. This tool will help managers and board members of cultural organizations get the objective information they need to address the

cycles of maintenance and replacement for their facility. Organizations must own the facility to be eligible. Grant amounts are determined on a case-by-case basis using the square footage of the facility (up to 50,000 square feet). The SRP Grant is a matching grant starting from \$8,000. All grants require a 1:1 cash match, which supports the total cost of the Plan & matching funds have been obtained/raised by FONLS and certified by the State. (Please note that SRP Grants cannot be matched with funds already spent on capital improvements or other planning exercises.) Grant recipients enter into a contract with a third-party contractor, pre-selected by the Cultural Facilities Fund to conduct the analysis and report and thus do not need to hire the contractor for this product. The contractor will survey the building envelope (roof, walls, and entry systems) and the mechanical systems (heating, cooling, ventilation, plumbing, and pool filtration). The survey will provide the estimated usable-life expectancy and the approximate replacement cost of your building systems. At the conclusion of the survey, organizations will receive a 20-year Systems Replacement Plan which forecasts the necessary replacement schedule of specific systems and equipment."

12. The FONLS BOD is skewed towards senior citizens. How will FONLS ensure that there will be a BOD that will carry on administering this building in 10-15 yrs, or even 5 yrs to carry on?

We are building a succession plan and recently have added two new board members, Linda and Robert Jablonski (Leverett), who are 12 to 20 years younger than the rest of the board. In addition, we are building an advisory group of younger Leverett residents, who will give advice as to programming needed, etc. and perhaps contribute to BOD succession over time.

13. The unique historic feature of this sawmill is its long log carriage/saw. There were only ever two mills with saws that long and this is the only one in existence still. Thus, it is critical to preserve that in its entirety, not to be truncated or diminished in any way. Essential that displays show the history of the building and interpretation. It's been a sawmill since 1700s so we hope there will be historic presentations and interpretation in that building.

Regarding preservation of the log carriage and its tracks in their current position see our answer to question 7.

We are intrigued by the statement that "the unique historic feature of this sawmill is its long log carriage/saw. There were only ever two mills with saws that long and this is the only one in existence still" We request verification of this statement. It is relevant, indeed important, to future presentations/displays on the mill. Our web research did not find suitable verification, but did yield the following, **cited verbatim from the web:**

1. "There is no specific, publicly available, aggregated count of how many sawmills in North America have or had the exact capacity to saw 42-foot logs. The number of sawmills varies significantly by year and location, and data is generally collected by overall capacity in board feet (BF) or cubic meters, not by the maximum log length they can handle.
2. Sawmills that can handle extremely long logs (often referred to as timber or specialty mills) are generally much less common than standard dimension or stud mills, which process shorter, more standard-sized logs. Historically, during the era of old-growth logging in the late 19th and early-to-mid 20th centuries, some mills in the Pacific Northwest, like the former Meadow River Lumber Company, were massive operations designed to handle very large, long logs. However, specific historical counts based purely on a 42-foot capacity are not readily available.
3. During World War II, a few specific sawmills supplied the large, high-quality timber needed for the keels and other structural components of U.S. Navy minesweepers.

The keels were typically made from solid or laminated **white oak**. One notable example is a large sawmill set up by **Outpost Nurseries** in Ridgefield, Connecticut, in 1942. This mill cut huge logs, some supplied from President Franklin Roosevelt's Hyde Park estate, for the construction of Navy patrol vessels, including minesweepers and PT boats, which required non-magnetic wooden structures. Other major sawmills and timber companies across the country contributed to the war effort by supplying vast amounts of lumber for various military needs. Specific details on every individual sawmill that was capable of producing the massive, specific dimensions required for minesweeper keels are limited in general records, but key regions and companies involved included:

- **Pacific Northwest:** Sawmills here, such as those that handled logs up to 40 feet in length, were a primary source of large-dimension timber, often Douglas fir, for military construction and some ship components.
- **New England:** The region's extensive forests, especially in Maine and New Hampshire, produced essential softwood lumber for crates and some construction, and specific local mills like the one in Ridgefield handled specialized naval contracts.
- **Southern U.S.:** Companies like the Hilton Dodge Lumber Company, once the third-largest lumber mill in the country, processed pine and cypress, which was likely used for general war efforts and possibly some naval applications.

The US Navy found that the strength, lightweight, and non-magnetic properties of the wood-hulled vessels were crucial for effective minesweeping operations. The specific requirements for minesweeper keels demanded that participating sawmills could handle exceptionally large logs and produce specific, high-grade lumber, generally Grade A white oak”.

We are requesting the Leverett CPC to provide to FONLS all information you have on sawmills that supported this war effort, particularly information including orders and invoices. While FONLS have a communication indicating that the Leverett mill was involved in this process we do not have specific order information or information on sawing of long white oak, or other relevant logs for keels of minesweepers or other naval or military uses.

14. The flow chart was confusing to some and CPC asked FONLS if the NPS is funding the engineering assessment.

As you can see from the attached contracts with the engineering firms and with the architect, each phase and work items require engineering, design, and bidding documents. The costs are borne by the individual funders for the items for which they are awarding the money. In this proposal, each engineering firm and architect is getting paid to deliver everything needed to have completed structural work which includes design, documentation, and specifications for construction execution for the lower level structural and architectural supervision and execution. Cynthia Baldwin who developed the flow chart will be happy to explain its content further as needed.

15. Since this is an adaptive reuse and the dam will not be used to power anything. Will the dam be removed noting it has not been used in a long time for power, and many studies show removal of dams is beneficial. Is there a plan to take out the dam to allow for the return of the ecology to pre-mill status.

Our goal is to preserve the dam for the following reasons. The fire department considers the mill pond a valuable secondary source of water for controlling fire events in N. Leverett as it has a dry pipe hydrant. We have a letter from the last Fire Chief and acting Fire Chief stating this (Appendix 7A and B). In addition, many neighbors of the mill and residents of Leverett consider the pond with the water falling over the dam to be a highly desirable aesthetic feature of Leverett, and the pond has daily visits from local and visiting fisher-folk who value its recreational use. FONLS and many others consider the mill pond the very heart of N. Leverett and want to retain this resource. Indeed, it

is possible that success in preserving the dam would lead us to reconsider its uses as an energy resource for the mill.

16. FONLS do not yet have septic system permits approved. What is the contingency plan if septic cannot be added?

Just to be clear, FONLS does have a conditional permit approved by the BOH, but its final approval is contingent on additional test pits being dug and found acceptable. These will be done in the next few weeks now that the required archeological tests have been completed on the site without finding significant artifacts. If the results of the tests are not satisfactory we will reconsider our septic plans. We have the option of using porta potties for events.

17. Concern was expressed about potential PFAS contamination of the well. What are our plans for remediation and how will we pay for it?

The well water is only for the restrooms and hand washing. We have budgeted for the same kind of remediation plan that other houses in Leverett have used if their wells are contaminated. Drinking water for functions will be purchased and guaranteed free of PFAS.

18. New FEMA flood plain maps of Leverett are coming out. Have FONLS started to look at them and how will it affect the project? It was noted that they are not fully approved but will be in the next few months and that they are different from the 1988 maps.

We have not seen these maps and would appreciate information on how we can access them. When they become available Foresight Engineering, with whom we have a contract, will advise on what the new flood plain map might mean for us. They have expertise in this area.

19. Assuming this is approved do we think we will need more funds from CPC in the future?

It is too early to answer that question.

20. CPC QUESTIONS FROM NOVEMBER CPC MEETING AND CONVEYED BY EVA GIBAVIC:

1) The sawmill is not zoned for commercial. Apparently, it would need to be for you all to rent it out for work classes/workshops, events, etc. There is concern that this might not be possible. And maybe (although I may have this wrong) if it was able to be rezoned, rezoning might impact what is needed relative to the septic.

2) The new FEMA maps and therefore wetlands provisions (which could be adopted by the planning board in 2026 or 2027) might impact what can be done that close to the river.

RESPONSES TO THE QUESTIONS:

The Sawmill is located in the Residential Village zoning district. Re-use of the sawmill for community space, art shows, classes, museum, artisan workshops, and the like is proposed. The lot, the parking, and the structure are lawfully pre-existing nonconforming due to size and location. The lot lines are not being changed. For the changes to the structure and parking a Special Permit from the ZBA is needed for alteration of pre-existing nonconformity. The “non-commercial community service uses,” “educational” uses, and the “conversion of non-residential historic structures (100 years or older) to [...] artisan studios and/or Sawmill” are all allowed by Special Permit from the ZBA as follows below from the Leverett zoning bylaws.

(i) Alteration of a pre-existing nonconformity (building and parking) under section 2250 (Non-conforming Uses):
“Other pre-existing nonconforming structures [other than dwellings] or uses may be extended, altered, or changed in use on special permit from the Board of Appeals, in accordance with Section 5300 herein, upon a finding by the Board that such alteration, extension, or change will not be substantially more detrimental to the neighborhood than the existing nonconforming use.”

Section 2254: “Premises may be changed from one category of nonconforming use to another only on special permit from the Board of Appeals. Such special permit shall be granted only for uses no more damaging or inharmonious with the environs than the use being replaced.”

Section 5300: "...will not have an adverse effect on the town or neighborhood, in view of the particular characteristics of the site, and of the proposal in relation to that site. The determination shall include consideration of each of the following:

5331 - Social, economic, or community needs which are served by the proposal;

5332 - Traffic flow and safety;

5333 - Adequacy of utilities and other public services;

5334 - Neighborhood character and social structures;

5335 - Impacts on the natural environment;

5336 - Potential fiscal impact.

(ii) Uses as identified under Section 2233 "Other non-commercial community service use" requires a SP; use as a conservation area, public park is allowed without an SP which could apply to the area surrounding the mill.

This lot is also in the (i) Aquifer Protection, (ii) Flood Hazard, and (iii) Streams and Lakes overlay districts. In response to those the following applies:

- The Aquifer District prohibits commercial structures on a lot with less than 120,000 sq ft or less than 300 feet of frontage.

The sawmill is lawfully pre-existing, nonconforming and thus may continue without more.

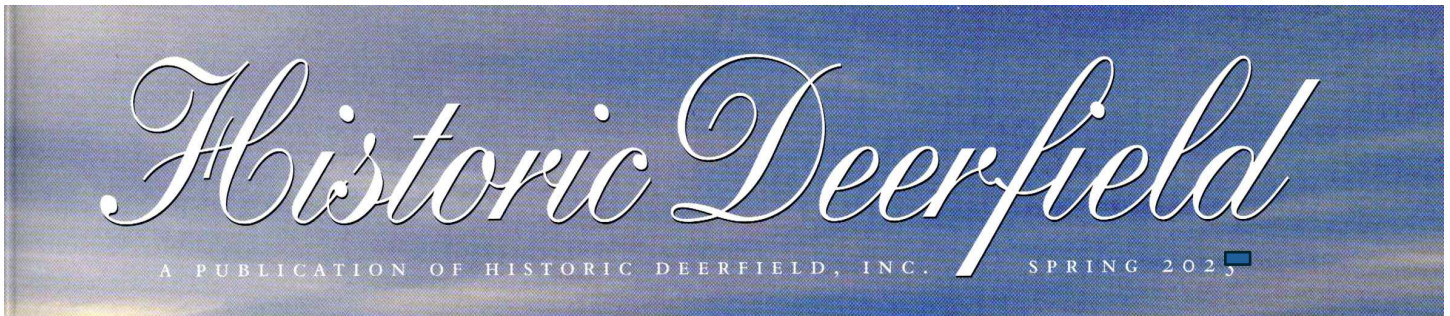
- For the Flood Hazard if we are considered to be altering the natural topography of the land by putting in the parking spots and septic, then a Special Permit (SP) from the ZBA is needed. These changes that will be near the road would not increase flood levels. Even if they did then this would apply:

Section 4400: ".... the special permit granting authority will give consideration to the simplicity, reliability, and feasibility of the control measures proposed and the degree to which allowance of the use would increase flood levels during the occurrence of the 100 year flood."

- For the Streams and Lakes overlay the Conservation Commission is being provided with a Notice of Intent for their approval for all alternations:

Section 4330 Use Regulations: None of those indicated uses indicated in the Leverett ZBA bylaws (pg 38-39 under 'Schedule') apply to Sawmill site unless it is 3(c) "removal of more than 10 yards of earth, loan, sand or gravel not incidental to construction of a building" for the parking, roads and septic. If so, then we need a SP but it should be noted that the surfaces proposed will not be impervious to water and drainage is part of the design by the professionals according to the DEP regulations.

Appendix 1 – Historical significance of the N. Leverett Sawmill



Captain Slarrow's 1774 Sawmill: The Last Survivor

by Will Melton

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Slarrow's Sawmill, North Leverett, Mass.

Modern entrepreneurs understand that technological innovation is a team sport. So it was in early America. When mechanical talent and fresh ideas combined with a dependable source of power--usually along a descending waterway--settlers on the American frontier could prosper.

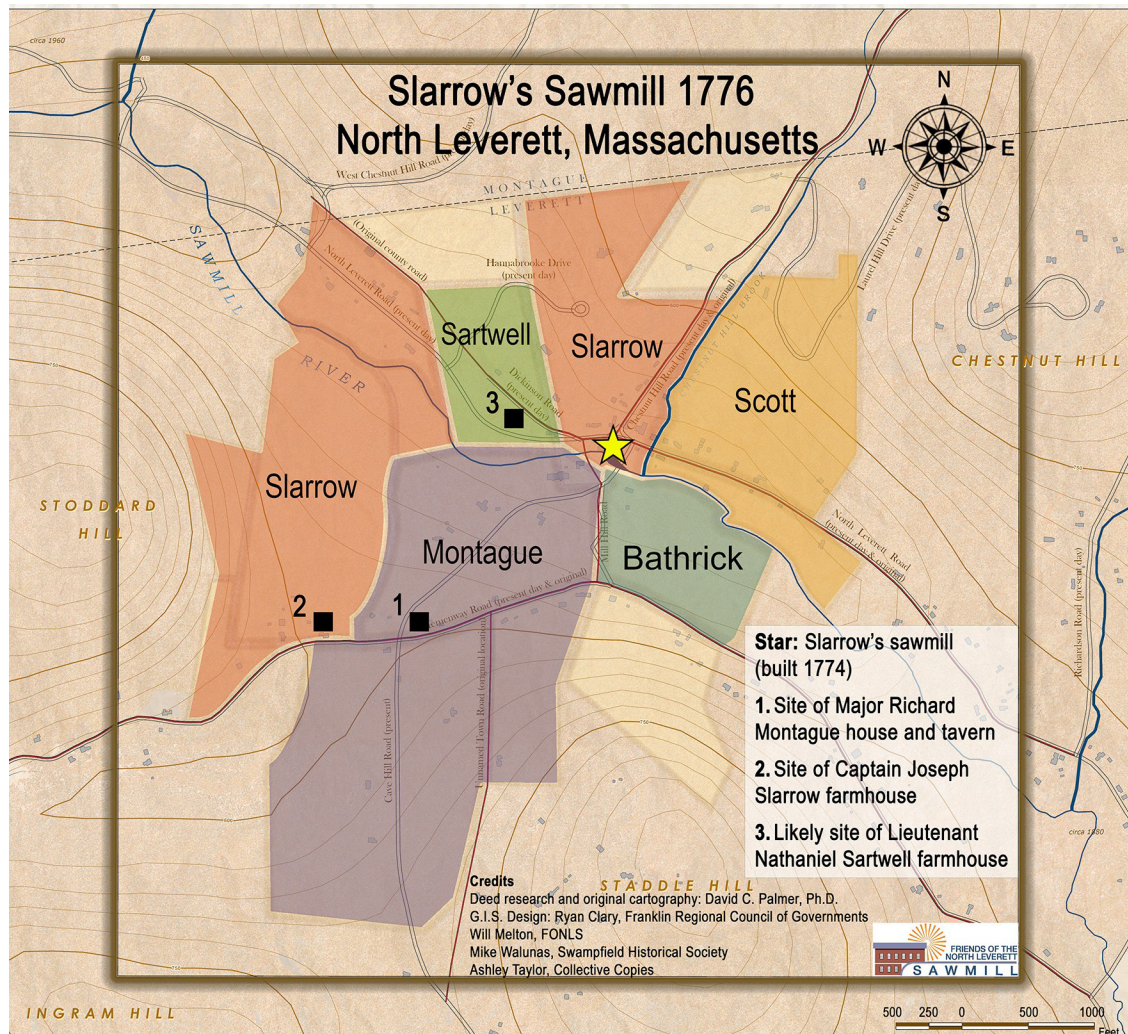
In the small western Massachusetts town of Leverett an industrial corridor formed along the seven-mile-long Sawmill River

in the years following the American Revolution. At its core was a sawmill venture formed by two men, military and religious leaders of the town. The river they harnessed flows from its source at Lake Wyola and empties into the Connecticut River.

The sawmill's construction in 1774 coincided with Leverett's breakaway from its mother town when landowners in the eastern half of Sunderland successfully petitioned the General Court of the Massachusetts Bay Colony to form a new town to be named for John Leverett (1616-1679), an early governor. It was a tumultuous time as the colony began a nearly decade-long struggle for independence from Great Britain.

Built by Joseph Slarrow (1731-1784), the mill is the only recognizable survivor from what became Leverett's 19th-century cluster of mills and workshops along the river. The old mill has long carried his name, even though he owned it for just five eventful years. At first, Slarrow bought land for a farm and dwelling in North Leverett from Richard Montague (1729-1794). Then, probably with Montague's help, he secured a grant of four acres from the town for a mill yard. In the years leading up to the Revolution, towns offered tax exemptions, land, and other incentives to attract sawyers and millers. Montague probably assisted Slarrow in negotiating a

town grant of four acres adjacent to the land he bought from Richard. A careful tracking of the deeds to the sawmill and its yard shows that ownership was structured in eight shares with Slarrow owning five while the rest were held by other partners including Richard Montague.



All lots radiating from Slarrow's mill (marked by a star) were owned by families contributing sons to the Continental cause. Credits: Ryan Clary (GIS specialist, Franklin Regional Council of Governments), author Will Melton, and deed researcher Dave Palmer, secretary of Leverett Historical Society.

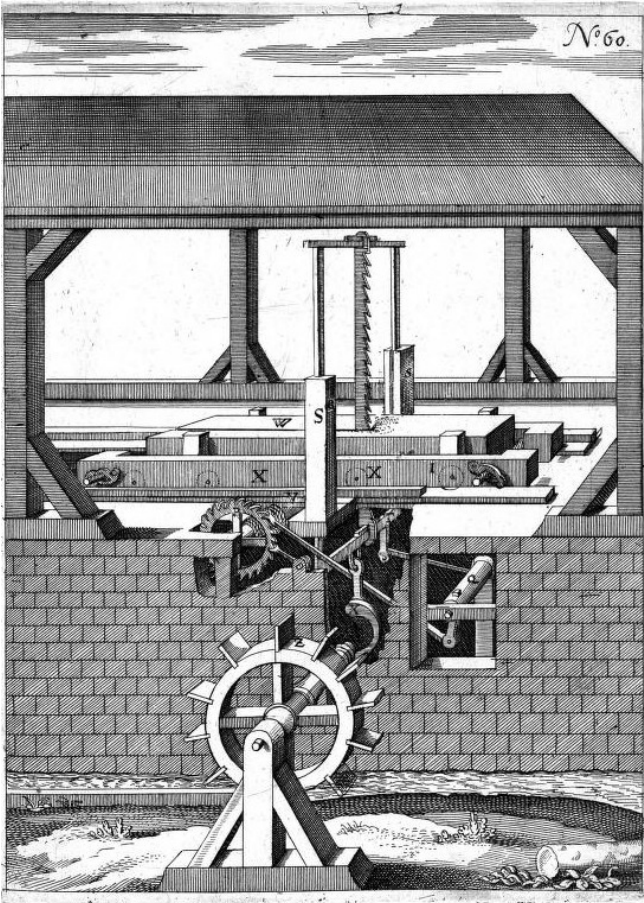
In addition to owning farms adjacent to the sawmill, Slarrow and Montague had other shared interests including religion. Each was a dissenter, skeptical of the Congregational (Puritan) church that dominated the Massachusetts Bay Colony¹

Leverett's Forest Economy

Sunderland was an agricultural economy thanks to the fertile Connecticut River flood plain along the town's western edge with ferry crossings linking the town to Deerfield. In contrast, Leverett's uplands featured thick forests covering the rocky slopes of Mount Toby, still some of the wildest land in Massachusetts along the Connecticut. The cleared fields available for Leverett farmers were often a thin layer of topsoil dotted with deposits of glacial outwash.

Whereas much of Sunderland could be ditched and drained to yield rich bottomland, Leverett would never become an exporter of grain and produce. Leverett's abundant forests instead made

the new town ripe for small mills and workshops that tapped its wood resources. This would continue to be the primary economic driver for Leverett well into the 20th century.² Slarrow's mill employed the most advanced sawmill technology of the time, a water-driven wheel to power a reciprocal (up-and-down) saw. Such saws automated the manual pit system of a man at either end of a long saw, one in a ditch below the other on grade above. Working a pitsaw by hand could produce barely 100 board feet per day. When sufficient water force could be tapped, a sawyer could mount up to three blades on a single reciprocal saw frame and saw multiple boards from a log in one pass. Wooden-gearred wheels both powered the blade and advanced the log toward the cut.



At the time Slarrow was building the North Leverett mill, technology for water-driven reciprocating sawmills like this example evolved little until gang saws with multiple blades and geared log-advance systems were devised in the eighteenth century. Plate No. 60, Theatrum Machinarum Novum, Georg Andreas Böckler (1662))

The Saw and the Sword

The military collaboration of Slarrow and Montague began soon after the 1775 alarms of Lexington and Concord. Montague recruited a company of soldiers, which he led to join General George Washington in the 11-month-long siege of British-occupied Boston. During this time, he was appointed a major and adjutant on the general's staff. Having earlier served with British colonial troops in the French and Indian Wars, he had to explain to his wife Lucy his change of loyalties: "If the Lord will forgive me for fighting seven years for the King, I will fight against him the rest of my life."³

Slarrow organized Leverett's only militia company and was appointed its captain. His double role as sawyer (lumber miller) and militia commander was unusual, for millers were exempt from military service.⁴ Montague and Slarrow must have been inspiring men, for they led the January 1777 town meeting that "voted unanimously to risque our lives & fortunes in defence of our rights & liberties wherewith God & nature hath made us free." Through the campaigns of 1777-1778, Slarrow's men responded to alarms in New York at Fort Ticonderoga, Saratoga, and White Plains, and at Warwick, Rhode Island.⁵



1880s photo taken from the site of Richard Montague's North Leverett wartime home (and tavern?). The sawmill's level bottomland was an ideal site for drill, firearms training, and bivouac. Leverett Historical Commission photograph

It seems likely that Slarrow's men trained on the mill yard. As level bottomland (always the first ground to be cleared for planting) it made an ideal setting for drilling and camping in the hilly countryside. On behalf of his sawmill, Captain Slarrow must have welcomed the help of strong young men for stacking lumber and other sawmill chores in exchange for wages or meals during the regular

musters. A decade earlier, Montague had established a tavern on property nearby. During its operation recruits could gather there to smoke their pipes, sample the major's "strong spirits" and boast of their exploits, as soldiers have always done.⁶

At a critical juncture of the war in 1779, Captain Slarrow gave up his five-eighths share in the mill, his militia command, and the rest of his real estate in Leverett. The land he had bought from Richard Montague for £240 in 1772, and developed into a farm and sawmill business, was sold back to Richard for £2,500, an unprecedented profit for the times. Montague kept Slarrow's farmhouse and cropland while selling the sawmill operation to a wealthy young neighbor.⁷

What triggered Slarrow's change of heart and his abrupt departure? Was it the price offered by Montague, poor health caused by months of military campaigning, or simply the call of his own Presbyterian faith? Did the partners have a falling out or find their Christian beliefs at odds with one another? In early America, the smallest of religious disputes could lead to bitterness and anger. After the sawmill's sale, Captain Slarrow moved to Salem, NY, to join family members and fellow Presbyterians in establishing a religious community near the Vermont border. He died there five years later at the age of 54.⁸

New Generations of Lumbermen

The return of peace and the challenge of building a new nation called for more technicians--carpenters and masons, but also loggers, sawyers, millwrights, and blacksmiths to open the more than 15 mills and workshops along the Sawmill River in North Leverett. Just 50 yards downriver from the sawmill arose an iron foundry with a trip-hammer for stamping scythe blades and other farm implements. Next door to the foundry was a shop for turning lumber into snaths, the shafts and curved handles for manual tools. Other shops made wooden shingles, clapboards, boxes, tubs, sash and blinds, rakes, pails, furniture, and sap buckets. One account claims that an armory and gunpowder production operated farther up along one of the Sawmill

River's feeder streams. Perhaps a dozen gristmills also dotted the industrial district, some of them powered by crude flutter wheels operating along low-flow streams.

Advanced technology upgrades were introduced to Slarrow's sawmill during a surge of innovation following the Civil War. By extending the sawmill 15 feet downriver, owner Gilman Watson installed a very long log bed, capable of sawing timber beams measuring up to 20 inches thick and 30 to 46 feet long for large barns and commercial buildings in the area. Visual evidence shows that the dam was raised to boost the fall needed for driving the turbine which replaced the original external water wheel. These improvements increased both the sawmill's power and the number of months it could operate each year in drier weather that limited the river's flow.⁹

By 1870, Watson could report a 15-horsepower mill with four saws which cut 100,000 board feet each of chestnut and pine, and 40,000 feet of oak that year. The mill's capital value was then \$2,500. It is likely the mill shed was also extended upriver, to shelter the turbine-driven shafts and belts rotating the new-style circular blades. The turbine is said to have been recycled from a paper mill in Holyoke, Massachusetts. Perhaps more than any other factor, these improved technologies insured that the sawmill operated well into the 20th century.¹⁰

The Sawmill Joins the Navy

The long log carriage, rare in western New England, led to a historic contract during World War II when the Glazier family of Leverett attracted the interest of the U.S. Navy. In a letter written some years later, Arnold Glazier, grandson of the sawmill's wartime owner wrote, "We sawed logs 45' long to make keels for mine sweepers during World War II. This was the only mill in the area with a carriage long enough to do this." The Navy's Yard-class Minesweeper (YMS) prototype was launched in 1942. Ultimately nearly 450 of them were commissioned, the single largest class of ships built by the Navy during the war.¹¹



YMS 445 (1945) The last Yard-class Minesweeper launched during World War II. National Museum of the U.S. Navy.

In an early version of "stealth" military technology, the vessels' wooden hulls were less susceptible to the most dangerous mines with magnetic sensors that set off 6,000 pounds of TNT when metal ships passed nearby. Nazi Germany produced more than 200,000 of these mines. Minesweepers often dragged long cables with cutters to snag contact mines laid along shorelines. By breaking the anchor chains, the mines rose to the surface where gun crews could detonate them when they were far enough away

to destroy safely.¹²

Back to the Land

In 1972, the brothers Hugh and Lloyd Kirley gave Slarrow's sawmill a new lease on life by using it to revive long-forgotten building skills in post-and-beam construction. The brothers, trained as landscape architects, designed old-style heavy-frame structures assembled from timbers not seen in the market for decades. The logs for the frames could be sawn on the sawmill's long log carriage, utilizing the only commercial water-powered sawmill in Massachusetts. Despite its nostalgic charm, the technology had its limits. On a good day, the mill could produce 2,000 board feet of lumber compared with modern mills of the era that turned out 4,000 to 6,000 board feet day after day. Water flow remained a problem; diesel power was added to supplement the water-powered turbine. But the Kirleys' product was unique for the times: green wood--unplaned without trim or finish-- for big-timber construction of custom houses that remain appealing today.¹³

Disaster Strikes the North Leverett Sawmill



This circa 2005 photograph shows the extent of the sawmill's broken frame. The Kirley brothers and many others believed the building could not survive. Leverett Historical Commission photograph.

The mill's aging frame finally succumbed to New England's winter weather during an especially heavy snowfall in 2003. The snow load collapsed the roof and much of the mill's center section, probably the oldest part of the structure. Led by the Kirleys, volunteer members of the Leverett Historical Society raised funds and convinced town leaders to devote Community

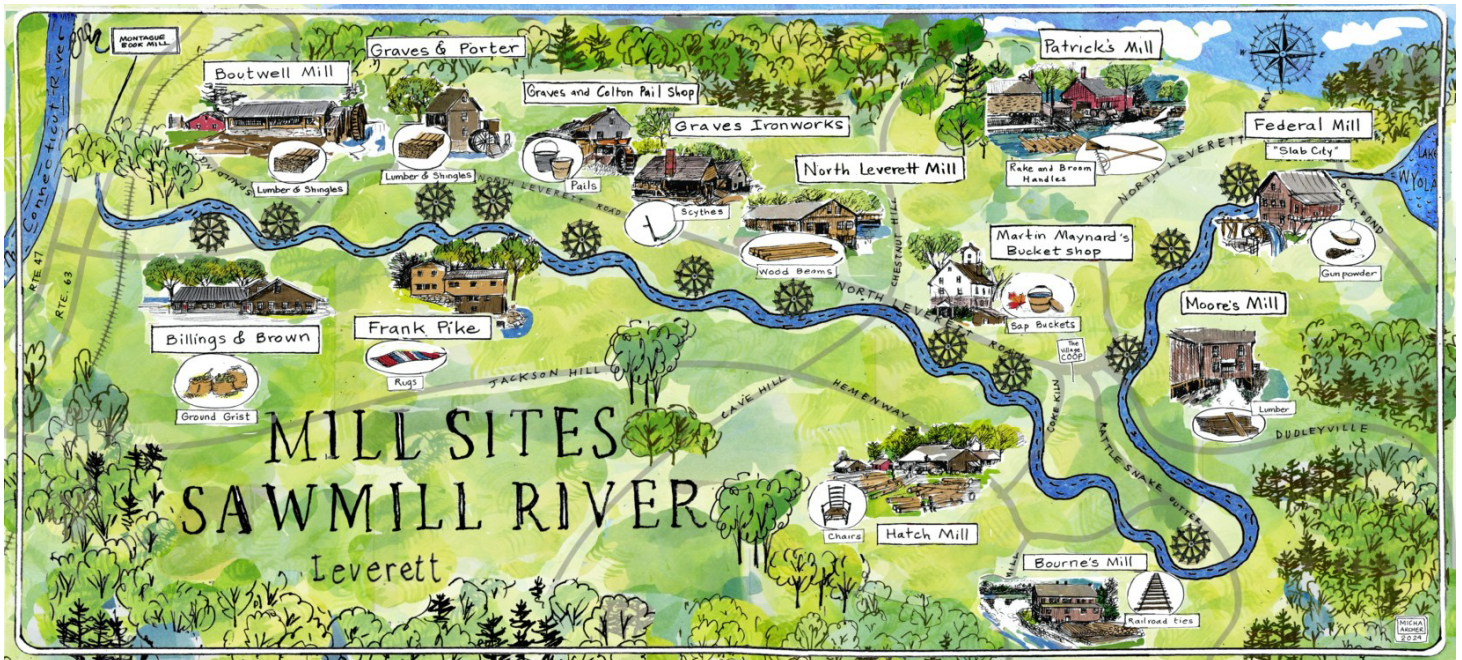
Preservation Act funds to rebuild the lost section.

In 2021, a nonprofit group formed to acquire Slarrow's mill and to find ways to save it as one of the oldest surviving sawmills in New England. Three years later the Friends of the North Leverett Sawmill (FONLS) were awarded a grant of \$683,500, one of only 19 National Park Service historic preservation awards in the country. The grant will make possible the preservation of the mill for another generation, with the building's interior serving as a seasonal event and historical museum facility.¹⁴

Decoding the Industrial Legacy of North Leverett's Sawmill District

Thanks to other grants from the Town of Leverett and Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and gifts from the Kirley family, a 3.1 acre industrial history park is open to visitors. It highlights what is known about the riverside workshops and mills that grew up around the sawmill during

the 19th century. Archaeological investigations planned for the site will uncover more stories about this local chapter in America's economic development. FONLS board members and Leverett historians plan to probe deeper into the site's industrial history using laser-based tools like LiDAR (light imaging and ranging) sensors and “total station” surveying tools to establish a 3-D base map for archaeological studies yet to come.



Slarrow's mill is titled "North Leverett Sawmill" on one of eight signs developed for the industrial park trail. By Michael Archer for Friends of the North Leverett Sawmill (FONLS).

For Leverett townsfolk and visitors, the mill, its pond, and historical trail will show the labors and inventions of generations past. Exhibits inside the old mill will bring to life its stories from long ago. Like Leverett, the ruins of hundreds of small-scale technology centers are scattered throughout virtually every town in New England, lying in wait for amateur archaeologists and public historians to uncover and celebrate. The story of the Sawmill River industrial corridor may encourage other rural manufacturing sites to reveal their own long-hidden histories.

Over the past 18 months, the story of Joseph Slarrow and his collaborations with Richard Montague in technology, town affairs, army life, and religious doctrine have become better understood than at any time over the past two centuries. It is tempting to think that more documentary clues can still be found. One century-old account mentions a wartime diary Montague kept that has long been missing. As America begins the celebration of 250 years of independence, new interest in the sawmill's role in the Revolution may turn up that diary and other revelations about its early owners.

ENDNOTES

1. Slarrow's parents were struggling Irish immigrants from Presbyterian Ulster. Before founding North Leverett's Baptist Church, Richard Montague was raised in the established church of Sunderland. His dissent arose when he refused to pay taxes for the salary of the town's Congregational minister. John Montague Smith, *History of Sunderland, Massachusetts* (Greenfield, MA, 1899), 454.

2. A 1932 newspaper roundup of the area's sawmill activity claimed that "a certain territory some five miles square lying partly in Shutesbury, Wendell, Leverett and Montague, at one time claimed more sawmills than any other tract of like size in all New England." J.A. Taggart, "Saw Mills of Long Ago," *Gazette & Courier*, Greenfield, April 8, 1932.
 3. "The Montagues in America," address of Major Montague's great-grandson and namesake Rev. Richard Montague in *Meeting of the Montague Family at Hadley, Mass. August 2, 1882* (Boston, 1882).
 4. Little is known about Joseph Slarrow's military experience or his skills as a sawyer and builder, but his first occupation as a cordwainer (shoemaker) in the nearby town of New Salem shows that he was good with his hands. He also had leadership experience, elected in 1772 as a selectman in the Worcester County town of Hubbardston. Even though a newcomer, the town selected him constable and deer reeve (game warden), and he served as moderator for at least one town meeting. Town of Leverett Records, 1773;
 "Quakers, surgeons, ministers, Negroes, Indians, and Molatoes," were also exempt. *The Militia Act; together with the Rules and Regulations for the Militia* (Boston, 1777).
<https://play.google.com/books/reader?id=coQ2AQAAAMAJ&pg=GBS.PA18&hl=en> .
 5. "Town of Leverett Records," 1777; Declaration of war service of Caleb Hubbard, Slarrow militiaman and later Sunderland tavern landlord, Smith, *History of Sunderland*, 143-45.
 6. "...strong spirits..." Smith, *History of Sunderland*, 195. Three surviving payroll musters of Slarrow's company and town genealogies identify 31 men who served under Slarrow, a close-knit collection of fathers, sons, brothers, cousins, and neighbors.
 7. The original 1779 sawmill deed (Slarrow to Montague) is archived in Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association Library, Deerfield.
 8. Crisfield Johnson, *History of Washington County New York, Some of Its Prominent Men and Pioneers* (Philadelphia, 1878) Capt. Slarrow is buried in the Revolutionary Cemetery of Salem, NY.
 9. The Watson/Glazier family operated the sawmill for nearly a century. Pleun Bouricius, *Slarrow Mill Narrative Storyboard.pdf . A Sense of Where You Are: Slarrow/North Leverett Mill* virtual presentation October 22, 2012.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ovvElvecuwY>.
 10. Ibid.
 11. Arnold Glazier to John Foster, December 18, 2001. Leverett Historical Commission records.
- A nautical museum on City Island, New York, preserves the wartime story of the minesweepers. From City Island, yacht builder Henry B. Nevins (1878-1950) directed the construction of all YMS minesweepers at 12 yards on the East Coast, 19 on the West Coast, and 4 on the Great Lakes. <https://www.cityislandmuseum.org> .
12. "The Story of a WWII Wooden Minesweeper, USS YMS 339, and Her

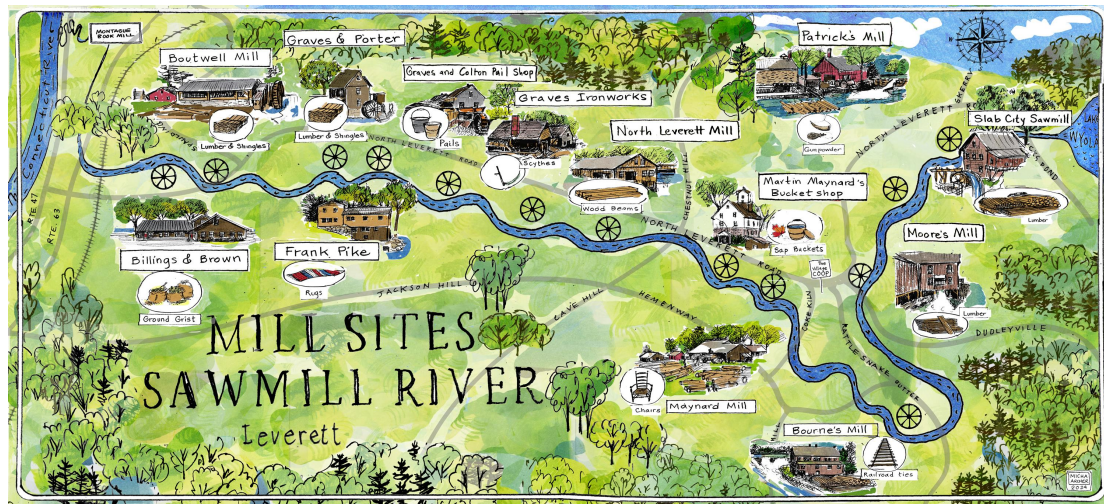
Skipper and Crew in the Pacific," 2009, Navy League of the United States, Connecticut Council. <https://www.navyleaguewestct.org/minesweeper.html>.

13. Unidentified clipping from Leverett Historical Commission files: pages 102-103 from article "Business #8" by Nancy Frazier and Pat Reilly (*Yankee Magazine* 1975?). Lance Kirley today operates the company founded by his late father Lloyd, in Florence, MA. In 2022, the Kirleys and a family trust donated the sawmill and 3.1 acres surrounding it to Friends of North Leverett Sawmill to establish the new industrial park and museum. <https://classiccolonialhomes.com>.

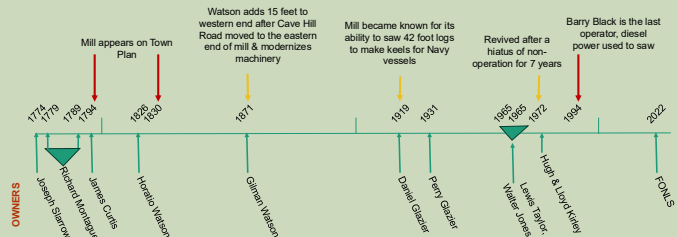
14. Scott Merzbach, "Historic Sawmill Secures Federal Grant" *Daily Hampshire Gazette*, Northampton, MA, September 2, 2024. <https://www.gazettenet.com/Nearly-700-000-grant-to-North-Leverett-Sawmill-from-National-Park-Service-56755061>

Appendix 2

Mills of the Sawmill River and Timeline of the N. Leverett Sawmill



Captain Joseph Slarrow, the North Leverett mill builder, came to Leverett in 1772. He sold the mill to Major Richard Montague in 1779. In 1777, the Town voted unanimously "to *risque our lives & fortunes in defence of our rights & liberties wherewith God & nature hath made us free.*" Slarrow agreed to lead the only militia company to be formed in the Town while Major Montague rode to Cambridge to join the staff of General George Washington.



This mill has been owned and improved upon by many Leverett families as outlined above. It was donated to the *Friends of the North Leverett Sawmill*, a non-profit public charity, by the Kirley family in 2022 to preserve it as a museum & event center.

Appendix 3. Letter from LHC

2



TOWN OF LEVERETT
Massachusetts 01054

LEVERETT HISTORICAL COMMISSION

October 2025

Dear Members of the Leverett Community Preservation Committee,

The Leverett Historical Commission writes in enthusiastic support of the application by the Friends of the North Leverett Sawmill (FONLS) for Community Preservation Act funding to support critical structural repairs to the historic North Leverett Sawmill.

MEMBERS

Carole DeSanti
Eva Gibavic
Susan Lynton
Susan Mareneck
Anne Schuyler
Ann Tweedy

Honorary Member

Edith Field

The North Leverett Sawmill is one of the town's most significant historic assets, representing an important part of our industrial and community heritage. Its preservation has been the focus of years of dedicated effort by the Friends of the North Leverett Sawmill and community volunteers. The site now serves not only as a preserved artifact of 18th-century mill architecture but is also, now, envisioned as an educational and cultural resource for residents and visitors.

The Leverett Historical Commission holds a Historic Preservation Restriction (HPR) on the property, the purpose of which is to ensure that the historic character, appearance, and integrity of the mill are protected. The current grant application aligns fully with those goals, addressing urgent structural needs that, if left unattended, could compromise the long-term stability of the building. The requested repairs are essential to the preservation of the historic structure, and supporting this grant will help ensure that the sawmill remains a vibrant and visible reminder of Leverett's rich history.

We strongly urge the Community Preservation Committee to recommend this proposal to Town Meeting.

Sincerely,
Leverett Historical Commission
Ann Tweedy
Anne Schuyler
Carole DeSanti
Eva Gibavic

c/o TOWN HALL - 9 MONTAGUE ROAD - LEVERETT, MASSACHUSETTS 01054

Appendix 4 – Notification of MCFF award

From: masscultural_noreply@smartsimple.com

Date: October 24, 2025 at 4:15:15 PM GMT+2

To: susanlynton@gmail.com

Subject: Cultural Facilities Fund Notification

October 24, 2025

Dear Susan Lynton,

The board of [MassDevelopment](#), the [Mass Cultural Council](#)'s partner in the administration of the [Massachusetts Cultural Facilities Fund](#) (CFF), has met to approve grant recommendations for the Fiscal Year 2026 Cultural Facilities Fund round.

We are pleased to inform you that Friends of North Leverett Sawmill, Inc's application (FY26-CF-CAP-107345) for a Capital Grant has been approved for a grant in the amount of \$196,000. We are delighted to support this project.

Please note that funding of all grants awarded from the Cultural Facilities Fund is contingent upon the Commonwealth making the required capital funds available to MassDevelopment. Additionally, there is a two year wait period before Capital grantees will be eligible to apply for another Cultural Facilities Fund grant.

You will receive additional information regarding the steps for entering into the grant contract from MassDevelopment in the coming weeks.

As the CFF is financed with public funds through the Governor's annual Capital Spending Plan, we ask that you please advocate for continued funding by demonstrating your appreciation and the importance of ongoing capital investments into our state's creative economy.

X:

Thanks @MassGovernor for supporting the #CulturalFacilities Fund!
Your capital investment makes our state stronger. @masscultural
@massdev #PowerOfCulture #mapoli

Facebook:

Thanks so much @MAGovernor for supporting the #CulturalFacilities Fund! Your ongoing capital investment makes our state stronger.
#PowerOfCulture

<http://bit.ly/CulturalFacilities>

(To tag the Governor, type @ and then "MAGovernor." Select her name from the list that appears making sure that it's her "**Public Figure**" account.)

Instagram (post and story):

Caption: Thanks @MassGovernor for supporting the #CulturalFacilities Fund and @masscultural! Your capital investment makes our state stronger.

#PowerOfCulture

Image: Facilities image, audience at facilities, team photo, etc.

Congratulations on your successful application and thank you for your invaluable contribution to the cultural life and economic vitality of our state. We look forward to working with you as your project proceeds. Additionally, Mass Cultural Council is hosting several [regional grant celebrations](#) this fall and next spring, and we hope you will join us to celebrate this award!

Michael J. Bobbitt

Executive Director

Mass Cultural Council

Appendix 5 – Architects Letter regarding log carriage tracks



309 MAIN STREET, GREAT BARRINGTON, MA, 01230, +1 413 528 5180
28 WEST 27TH STREET, #703, NEW YORK, NY, 10001, +1 212 219 9909
INFO@CLARKANDGREEN.COM | WWW.CLARKANDGREEN.COM



November 21, 2025

MEMORANDUM

To: Friends of North Leverett Sawmill (FONLS)
Regarding: Retention of Saw Carriage Rails in Renovated Public Space

I write to express concern over the idea of retaining the full length of the existing saw carriage rails as part of the adaptive reuse of the sawmill.

Our design proposes to remove them except for some short lengths near the saw machinery itself, and to infill the removal with strips of flush but contrasting wood flooring to mark where the rails used to run. This is a practice that has been used in the past and is considered acceptable by historic bodies that have recognized certain realities involving safety and practicality.

The proposed design was carefully thought through, since we are committed to preserving as much of the spirit, character and charm of the historic facility as practicable, without exposing the public to undue hazards. We don't undertake the removal as a convenience, or simply to make the space more usable, which it would. Rather, it is our recognition that it poses a serious tripping hazard in the middle of the open floor, regardless of whether an accessibility ramp system is built to reach the other side of the floor.

The issuance of an architecture or engineering license by the state is undertaken primarily as a matter of public safety. As a licensed design professional with a legal and ethical duty to protect the public from building hazards, I am reluctant to take responsibility or seal drawings for a design which would pose an obvious tripping hazard in an open floor which is potentially to be used by the public in a wide variety of ways. I suspect that the liability could be great both for the party certifying the design with a seal, and the project owner. It is also likely to have a negative effect on the building's liability insurance costs, for obvious reasons.

For the sake of public safety, I strongly urge everyone to support removing a portion of the rails, resulting in a safer and more usable facility, especially since I am reluctant to approve keeping them in place.

Steve McAlister, AIA
Senior Architect

Appendix 6 – email from Jim Hawkins

Appendix 6 – email from Jim Hawkins

From: Jim Hawkins <jhawkins@frcog.org>
Sent: Monday, November 24, 2025 7:46 AM
To: Thomas R. Reidy <TReidy@baconwilson.com>
Subject: Re: North Leverett Sawmill

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe

Tom I would have to agree with your architect

Sent from my iPhone

On Nov 21, 2025, at 1:44 PM, Thomas R. Reidy <TReidy@baconwilson.com> wrote:

Hi, Jim –

Just following up here. Happy to discuss.

Thanks,

Tom

Thomas R. Reidy, Esq.

Shareholder
Phone 413.256.6701

Bacon Wilson, P.C.

From: Thomas R. Reidy
Sent: Friday, November 14, 2025 3:41 PM
To: Jim Hawkins <jhawkins@frcog.org>
Subject: North Leverett Sawmill

Dear Jim – In Leverett, the Friends of North Leverett Sawmill are seeking Community Preservation Act funds. The Community Preservation Committee have asked a question about retention in place of the original saw and carriage. Our architect does not believe that occupancy of the first floor would be allowed (ie, open to the public) with the tracks in place because of accessibility, walking and working paths, and fire escape routes. I am just writing to ask you to confirm this. The sawmill folks have designed the access points as a result of Historical Commission comment, and there are grant-funds tied to this sites sustainable use (not as a sawmill). I have attached photos of the rails. I'd like to be able to say to the CPC that utilization of the first floor could not happen because of the location of the rails. I can get you a floor plan for the proposed use if that would be helpful.

~~Thanks Tom~~ **Thomas R. Reidy, Esq.**
Shareholder

Appendix 7A Letter from the Assistant Fire Chief

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LEVERETT FIRE DEPARTMENT

95 Montague Road
Leverett, MA 01054
Phone: (413) 548-9225

Amy Rice - Deputy Chief/Acting Fire Chief

To: Whom It May Concern

From: Amy Rice

Date: 10/27/25

Re: Support for the North Leverett Sawmill Dam

I have reviewed the attached letter that former Chief Cook wrote in support of the plans by the Friends of the North Leverett Sawmill to leave the dam in place during restoration of the mill. I am writing to express my support for that decision. The Fire Department's position on keeping the dam in place to allow for a water resource at that location has not changed. In fact, the need to preserve natural water supply resources is more important now, given the recent significant drought conditions that have been affecting most of Massachusetts.

Sincerely,

Amy Rice

Appendix 7B. Letter from the previous Fire Chief

2



LEVERETT FIRE DEPARTMENT

95 Montague Road
Leverett, MA 01054
Phone: (413) 548-9225

Brian J. Cook - Fire Chief

To: Whom It May Concern
From: Chief Cook
Date: 7/5/2023

Re: Support for the North Leverett Sawmill Dam

I am writing this statement to express my support for the utilization of the North Leverett Sawmill dam as a backup water supply for the Leverett Fire Department during firefighting operations. As Fire Chief, I understand the critical role that having multiple water sources plays in ensuring the safety, stability, and effectiveness of our fire department to protect the life and property of our Leverett residents.

One of the most crucial resources needed during firefighting operations is a reliable water supply. Adequate water availability is essential to extinguishing fires swiftly and preventing their spread. While water on fire engines and tankers along with cistern water supplies generally serve as the primary water sources for firefighting operations in Leverett, they may sometimes prove insufficient.

This is where backup and redundant water sources, such as water at the North Leverett Sawmill dam, become invaluable. Alternative water supplies act as a lifeline for fire departments, enabling them to maintain a continuous flow of water even when primary sources are compromised or depleted. Having redundancy in water sources can significantly enhance the operational capabilities of our fire department and enhance their ability to save lives and protect property during emergencies.

The North Leverett Sawmill dam possesses several characteristics that make it an ideal choice for a backup water supply. Its proximity to the residences on the north side of Leverett allows for quick access, minimizing response times during critical situations. Moreover, the dam's ample water storage when at full capacity provides a large reserve that can support extended firefighting operations if needed.

By utilizing the North Leverett Sawmill dam as a backup water supply, we are ensuring that our local fire department has an additional resource available to tackle emergencies effectively.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Cook