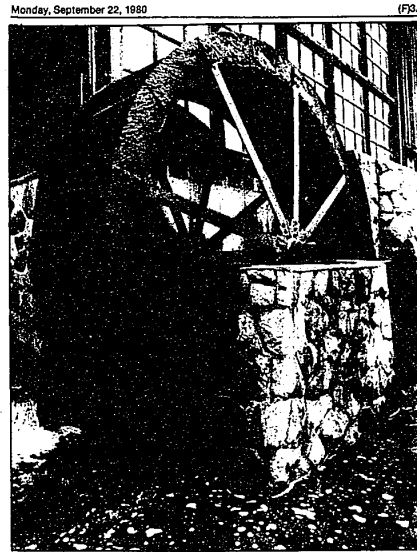


The bright red Yates Cider Mill, which sits on the bank of the Clinton River, is the only mill in the Rochester area that uses water power alone to manufacture its cider.



This water wheel, sold to the 17-year-old Paint Creek Cider Mill by Fitz Water Wheel Co. in Pennsylvania, graces the front of what will become a family restaurant.

Cider-sippin' season:

Mill proprietors take pains to help win over the consumer's tastebuds

Story: KAREN SUE HERMES

Photos: DAVID FRANK

Michigan, with its wealth of fast-moving streams and acres and acres of apple orchards, boasts approximately 70 cider mills.

The Rochester area has three—Yates, on Avon at Dequindre, Avon Township; Paint Creek, on Orion at Collins, Oakland Township; and Goodison, on Orion at Hilltop, Oakland Township.

Consequently, the cider business is very competitive, says Jerry Mancour, owner of the Paint Creek mill, and each year mill proprietors strive to make the best-tasting cider and doughnuts to attract a greater portion of customers to their locations.

"Best-tasting," of course, is in the tastebuds of the cider-sipper, so mill proprietors pride themselves on their cider's sweetness, or their cider's tartness, on whether their cider is filtered, or not filtered, depending on their own particular tastes.

The competition doesn't stop there, either. Mill proprietors strive to achieve the most-drawing atmosphere and most varied offerings.

To aid the certain-to-be-confused cider-seeker this autumn, the Rochester Eccentric offers the following comparison of the three Rochester-area mills:

PAINT CREEK uses locally grown apples to manufacture a tart cider that becomes sweeter as the apple season progresses in Michigan.

Its early cider is a blend of Williams Red and Pensions, its later cider being Jonathans and early McIntoshes.

Paint Creek, unlike Yates and Goodison, doesn't filter its cider, giving it a cloudy appearance.

Says proprietor Mancour, quoting one of his customers, "Cider isn't any good unless you can strain it through your teeth."

Paint Creek uses an apple-spice doughnut mix contrived by the Amendt Milling Co., Monroe, especially for the Oakland Township mill.

It is lighter than most doughnut mixes, resembling more of a cake mix.

The atmosphere of the Paint Creek mill is "excellent," according to Mancour.

It sits in the heart of Goodison, next to Paint Creek, on a site Mancour hopes someday will become an historic district.

THE SITE'S history dates back to 1835 when Needham Hemmingway constructed a mill on it to grind flour for early settlers. In 1840, Edward Demerrell added a saw mill to provide lumber for the area's houses and farm buildings.

In 1876, William Goodison, who named the Oakland Township settlement after himself, purchased the mill and made several improvements to it. The structure eventually was torn down.

The present building, though its design gives it the appearance of being 100 years old, was built just 23 years ago by Dale O. Miller, Sr., owner of Rochester Gear, Inc., Oakland Township. He intended it to be a restaurant, "but it never got off the ground," Mancour said. Five years later, the cider mill was added.

Mancour, who has owned the building and operated the mill for three years now, plans to carry out Miller's restaurant plans. He expects Paint Creek will be serving lunches by next September.

The whole concept of the Paint Creek mill is "family entertainment," Mancour says, and the restaurant will add to that concept.

Families will be able to come watch cider be made, have lunch, sit by Paint Creek and, possibly, hike along the old Detroit United Railway tracks.

THE MILL'S charm is enhanced by antiques displayed about. Included is a cement statue of Chief Pontiac, resurrected from a Royal Oak restaurant.

Paint Creek uses electrical power to run its cider presses. Water power helps generate much of its electricity.

Also on sale at the mill is cheese and sausage, gifts, popcorn, caramel apples and T-shirts.

The Goodison Cider Mill, the smallest of the three mills in size and production, manufactures the sweetest of the three ciders.

To make it sweet, owners Thomas and Ruth Barkham of Oakland Township blend early Michigan apples, which generally are tart, with late Michigan apples, generally sweet, that have been stored from last year.

Goodison, a completely electrical mill that was built about 25 years ago, filters its cider, giving it a see-through appearance and longer shelf life.

It uses four different doughnut mixes—plain, blueberry glaze, cherry and cinnamon-sugar—purchased from Barrett's Hot 'N One in Burton.

What the Goodison mill lacks in atmosphere, it makes up in goods. The Barkhams and Tom's parents, Robert and Doris Barkham of Oakland Township, sell fresh produce at the mill that they have grown in their own gardens.

"ONE LADY drives 22 miles to buy

our sweet corn," said Doris Barkham. They also sell green peppers, tomatoes, cucumbers and squash.

In addition, they sell handmade wooden accessories, fashioned by Tom's uncle, Ed Stoner of Oakland Township, and dried flower arrangements put together by Doris Barkham.

The arrangements include decorative weeds found in Oakland Township—teasel, yarrow, bitter sweet and Timothy.

Other offerings include honey and maple syrup from nearby farms.

Yates Cider Mill, the only one of the three that makes its cider strictly with

water power, makes an "in-between" filtered cider that tastes both tart and sweet.

Owner-manager Les Posey of Avon Township said each batch is carefully blended to assure that taste. In early fall, he combines Michigan's tart apples with sweet Red Delicious apples trucked from Georgia.

Yates uses a plain vanilla doughnut mix, also specially prepared by Amendt. "You can eat a lot more of these" than spice-mixed doughnuts, Posey says.

Like Paint Creek, Yates is rich in history and atmosphere. It lies beside

the Clinton River, next to the Rochester Utica Recreation Area where hikers can walk the abandoned Penn Central Rail Road tracks.

"EVEN THOUGH suburbia has moved all around us, because of the park, we still have the country atmosphere," Posey says.

The mill uses the same press it did nearly 100 years ago when it first started making cider.

Free tours may be arranged at Yates for groups of more than 20 persons. The tour begins with a professionally produced seven minute film, which

shows underwater operations of the mill.

Also available at Yates is freshly made fudge—that portion of the business is subleased, Posey explained—post cards of red wooden mill, jams and jellies, candy, popcorn and bubble-gum.

The Paint Creek mill is open 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily through early December; the Goodison mill from 1-6 p.m. weekdays and 9 a.m. to dusk Saturday and Sunday; and the Yates mill 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily in September, 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. daily in October and 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily in November.

Vet benefits expanded

Due to a recent Federal Court ruling expanding residency eligibility for the Michigan Vietnam-era bonus, an undetermined number of veterans may now qualify if they meet all three of the following conditions:

- Entered military service as a resident of a state other than Michigan.

- While in the service, became a resident of Michigan for at least six months after Jan. 1, 1961.

- While a resident of Michigan, completed 190 days of honorable service between Jan. 1, 1961 and Sept. 1, 1973.

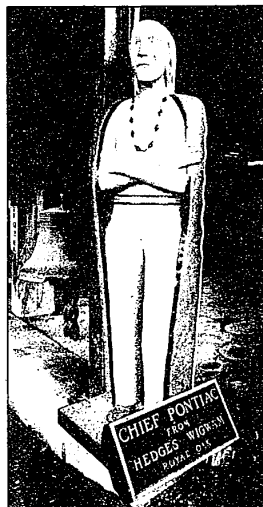
The statute governing the bonus originally required Michigan residency prior to enlistment. However, the ruling by U.S. District Judge Noel P. Fox opens the bonus program to veterans who enlisted from other states but while in the service came to Michigan, established residency (for a minimum of six months) and then met the other service requirements—a minimum 190 days of honorable service between Jan. 1, 1961 and Sept. 1, 1973.

In accordance with the order of the United States District Court, the deadline to apply for benefits is Sept. 30, 1980 for only those veterans who meet the new eligibility conditions and who have never applied previously for the Michigan Vietnam-era bonus. Beneficiaries may apply on behalf of a deceased veteran.

This court ruling does not extend the original June 30, 1980 statutory deadline for those veterans who were eligible under the original bonus program.

The Vietnam Bonus Section will also review all previous claims disallowed on residency grounds in order to determine if the former applicants would now be eligible. Those persons suspected as being eligible to receive the bonus will be notified in writing by letter to the claimant's last-known address.

Inquiries and requests for application should be directed to the Vietnam Bonus Section, Department of Military Affairs, 2500 South Washington, Lansing, 48913. The telephone number is (517) 373-7320.



This cement statue of Chief Pontiac greets visitors to Paint Creek Cider Mill. The statue once stood at the entrance to Hedge's Wigwam, a Pleasant Ridge restaurant that closed in the late 1960s.



Fresh farm produce, grown by owner Thomas Barkham's family, is available daily at Goodison Cider Mill.

Saks Fifth Avenue

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Act II—"Chapter Two," a unique comedy show written by Neil Simon.

Tickets are 12.95 each, and may be purchased at SFA in the Second Floor Boutique. For prepaid reservations, call 643-9000, ext. 274.

Somerset Mall, Big Beaver at Coolidge, Troy