

Deep River Heritage Project Needs Help

RAMSEUR - A grassroots coalition is racing against time to save an important piece of our state's history along the Deep River. The Deep River Heritage Coalition is developing plans to create a heritage corridor along the Deep River that would interpret the rich human and natural history along the river from its source near the Piedmont Triad International Airport in Guilford County through Randolph, Moore, Chatham and Lee counties.

While the Deep River features many important natural heritage sites that include Native American and early European settlements, recent events have caused the Coalition to focus on the early textile industry that was developed by

the Quakers.

An important textile mill, the Columbia Mill in Ramseur, is being torn down for the salvage value of its materials.

"The Columbia is far more important than sum of its salvaged parts," says Franklinville Mayor Mac Whatley, the primary advocate for the heritage corridor. "The Columbia was the third or fourth oldest textile mill (c. 1848) still standing in the state and was largely untouched in that the mill had not been modernized over the years as so many other mills had been. That makes the preservation of the Franklinville Mill (c. 1838) all the more important."

According to Whatley, the Franklinville Mill is the second oldest textile mill in the state and is the oldest water-powered textile mill in the state.

"The mill was a social statement by the Quakers against the agrarian economy that was based on slave labor more than an effort at economic development," Whatley added.

An emergency effort is now under way to raise funds to secure as much of the salvaged materials as possible for use in the restoration of the Franklinville Mill, which would benefit from the more original materials that are being salvaged.

The Yadkin-Pee Dee Lakes Project, a regional sustainable development nonprofit that is working to create "North Carolina's Central Park™," is taking the lead in raising funds for this purpose. North Carolina Zoo Director David Jones serves as chairman of the Project and has been the guiding force in development of the "Central Park" concept.

Bill Medlin, Executive Director of the Yadkin-Pee Dee Lakes Project, says the Deep River Heritage Corridor is an important economic development strategy for the Piedmont region because of its capacity to produce significant well-paying jobs that cannot be exported because they are based on the history of a particular place and people.

"Imagine traveling from Greensboro via automobile on a scenic drive along the Deep River through small rural mill towns, each with their own character and story, stopping at a restaurant overlooking the river or staying at a Bed and Breakfast or Inn in one of the restored mills," suggests Medlin. "That is part of our vision for the Deep River Heritage Corridor."

Combine that with walking paths, a planned canoe and kayak blueway along the river and interpretation of its history, Medlin says, and one can ponder questions relative to the nation and society as a whole. "You begin to fathom the importance of this project and this resource," he said.

Medlin said the economic potential for the Central Park was confirmed by studies commissioned by his organization. These studies estimated the potential for the seven-county area to add 33,000 jobs and more than \$3 billion in annual revenue by the year 2025 if the Central Park Strategy is implemented.

Whatley encourages anyone interested in furthering this project to contact the Yadkin-Pee Dee Lakes Project at info@lakesproject.org or 704-422-3215. Whatley may be contacted directly at 336-824-2604 or 336-318-1484. Tax-deductible donations to the emergency salvage fund can be made in care of the Yadkin-Pee Dee Lakes Project, P.O. Box 338, Badin, North Carolina 28009.

Simon Participates in Symposium

Statesville attorney Pam Simon received notification recently of her 10th anniversary inclusion in *Best Lawyers in America*. The publication is based on an exhaustive peer-review survey in which 16,000 leading attorneys cast more than a half-million votes on the legal abilities of other lawyers in their specialties. Because lawyers are not required to pay a fee to be listed, inclusion is considered a singular honor.

Simon, a board-certified family-law specialist, has over the past decade increasingly devoted her career to Alternate Dispute Resolution (ADR) in lieu of courtroom battles. In the mid-90's she worked on the committee to formulate rules for Superior Court and Family Financial-Case mediation. In 1999, she was a co-drafter of the N.C. Family Law Arbitration Act, making North Carolina the first state in the country to adopt an arbitration act designed especially for family-law cases.

She is the lawyer primarily responsible for introducing North Carolina to the concept of "Collaborative Law," a procedure

in which the clients sign a contract at the outset agreeing to keep their case out of court, and negotiate as a team with their lawyers and other experts, identifying problems and fashioning solutions, attempting to maintain a cordial relationship with each other and to develop an excellent co-parenting relationship for their children.

She presented the first draft of a Collaborative Law statute to the legislature in early 2003, and the statute was adopted effective October 2003. North Carolina is only the second state in the Union to adopt a Collaborative Law statute. On Nov. 6, Simon will participate in a day-long symposium on Collaborative Law at the annual Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers' meeting in Chicago, Ill.

Simon received her J.D. with high honors in 1984 from the UNC-Chapel Hill School of Law, where she served on the Law Review and was tapped for the "Order of the Coif," the official law-student honor society. She is a member of Pope, McMillan, Kutteh, Simon & Privette, P.A., a Statesville firm.

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