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SUBJECT: Nomination Narrative Summary for 45th Annual Preservation Award to Newlin Grist Mill for Restoration and Furnishing of 1739 Trimble Kitchen and Pantry

Ms. Barbara Marinelli, Chairperson
The Heritage Commission of Delaware County
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Electronically Submitted to
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Dear Ms. Marinelli and Heritage Commissioners:

It is my distinct privilege to nominate the 1704 Newlin Grist Mill's project to Restore and Furnish the 1739 Trimble House Pantry and Kitchen for the Delaware County Heritage Commission's 45th Annual Preservation Award for Restoration. Trimble House is a 1739 house located at 207 Cheyney Road, Glen Mills, PA in Concord Township, Delaware County, and is part of the Newlin Grist Mill.

Executive Summary: The Restoration and Furnishing of the 1739 Trimble House Kitchen and Pantry was a seven-year project to study, restore, and furnish these 18th Century rooms as an interpretive space for the exploration of the story of food in early America. This project has contributed to preservation through the documentation and restoration of an early 18th century food processing facility, restoration of the kitchen and pantry as a working demonstration space, and as a public education tool. The project included painstaking architectural analysis, archaeological investigation, historical research, experimental archaeology, careful restorations, and collaborations with tradespeople and artisans skilled in historic trades.

Historic Value of Trimble House: William Trimble built this house in 1739 overlooking both Nathaniel Newlin's 1704 Grist Mill and his own adjacent mill properties. Jonathan Woolman, the great Quaker abolitionist and activist, recorded staying with William Trimble in 1758 and holding a successful youth meeting in Trimble's home to convince local Friends (Quakers) of the evil of owning Negroes. Trimble family members later leased the Newlin Grist Mill from 1768 until buying the mill in 1817.

Removal of Accumulated Accretions: When NGM acquired Trimble House in 1998, the 1739 kitchen and pantry were hidden under three centuries of adaptation, modernization, and neglect. Of particular importance to discovering history, the rooms contained evidence of how early settlers in southeastern Pennsylvania adapted to and altered their environment. The Trimble house was constructed on the pinnacle of a hill and a ledge of bedrock stretched across the two rooms. In the kitchen, one peak had been lowered by using tools to pulverize the stone. Two other peaks showed signs of fire cracking techniques. In the pantry, masonry was used to adapt to the bedrock and incorporate it. Painstaking study and documentation of the 1739 kitchen and pantry uncovered elements of design and construction including the original hearth seat, smoke chamber and the configuration of the clay lined chimney. The project even uncovered fingerprints the original mason had left in the clay chimney plaster. Since the kitchen had been replaced by a later addition in the 1750s, and the walls covered with modern plaster, its early features and details were preserved including kitchen hardware, mounting blocks for furniture, and evidence of repairs. The layers of history in these spaces stretched from

pieces of soapstone used in a repair that contained antler toolmarks from pre-contact indigenous artisans to drains and hanging equipment from their early 20th century use as an abattoir.

Physical Restoration The physical restoration part of the project entailed removing modern plaster from all the walls, restoring the hearth and chimney, repointing the masonry, replacing window frames and doors, restoring the brick floor in the kitchen reconstructing the stone floor in the pantry and removing the intrusion of necessary 21st Century mechanical elements from the visitor experience. A modern I-beam in the pantry was replaced with a new oak beam hewn from a log in a public demonstration of period tools.

Furnishing: Staff worked with craftspeople and artisans from around the world to furnish the two rooms with usable items of cooperage, ceramics, basketry, pewter, tinware, cast iron, cutlery, and furniture. The project not only preserved an important example of early kitchen architecture but also contributed to the preservation of historic trades and skills. Newlin Grist Mill worked with these artisans to document the various processes.

Value this Project Adds to Interpretation of Delaware County History: The Kitchen and Pantry Project has made educational contributions during the restoration process and now continues contribute into the future. The restoration project was incorporated into public programing as part of the Newlin Grist Mill's Public Archaeology Project. Hewing the replacement beam and fabricating doors were demonstration activities in the Millwright Shop, an ongoing public program focused on promoting historic trades. Material Culture analysis of previously conducted probate analyses added depth to the project and gave real-world experience to Winterthur Summer Institute participants Since its completion, the Trimble Kitchen and Pantry are being used for demonstrations during school field trips, programs on hearth cooking and food preservation, and demonstrating historic brewing. The kitchen hosted programs by English food historian Marc Meltonville and African American culinary arts expert Jerome Bias.

Principal Project Participants: The core group for this project consisted of Newlin Grist Mill staff and volunteers who, in addition to coordination and oversight, conducted the architectural and archaeological analysis, conducted research of the documentary and physical evidence to ensure the projects accuracy, and completed elements of the restoration like hewing a replacement beam, building doors, and fabricating furnishings. The primary contractor on the project was mason Doug Groff of Victorian Heritage, Inc. Other contributors included Winterthur Summer Institute fellows who conducted material culture studies of the findings of previous probate analysis. (Full disclosure: I have been an active participant in the project and am a trustee of the foundation that owns and operates Newlin Grist Mill including the Trimble House site.)

Conclusion: The Trimble Kitchen and Pantry Restoration Project should be recognized for its contributions to our knowledge of early historic kitchens, documentation and authenticity, and public education of historic foodways, historic trades, and the restoration process itself. Thank you for the Commission's efforts to encourage and support the preservation of Delaware County's rich history and thank you for considering Newlin Grist Mill's project to Restore and Furnish Trimble House Kitchen and Pantry for a Preservation Award.

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Photographs in Support of Trimble Kitchen and Pantry Nomination



Fig 1. Original 1739 Trimble House w Kitchen Door



Fig 2. Unrestored Hearth and floor



Fig 3.Mason at work Inside Hearth (Shadow is from mantel behind him.)



Fig.4. Hearth and Kitchen Floor Restored

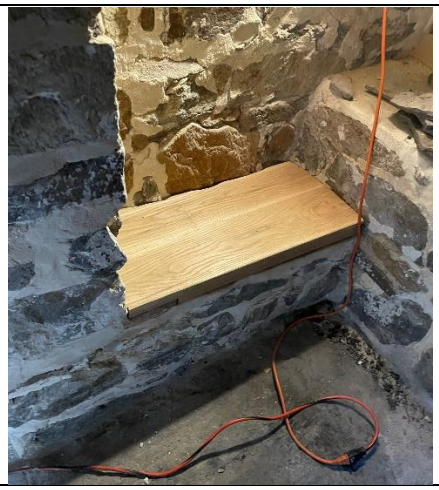


Fig. 5. Hearth Seat



Fig. 6 NGM Blacksmiths Forging Lug Pole



Fig 7. Mason Completing SE Corner of Pantry Floor



Fig 8. Show Three Steps To Hew a Beam



Fig 9. Hewing the Last Side



Fig 10. New Beam, Door Frame and Floor



Fig 11.Inside Faux Post to Conceal 21st C.Mechanicals



Fig 12. Installing Faux on Wall



Fig 13. Pantry Feet Scribed to Fit Bedrock Outcropping



Fig 14. Collected Cooperage



Fig 15. Collected Pewter



Fig 16.Pantry Cabinet In Use



Fig 17. Making Leaded Windows



Fig 18. Foodways Demonstration



Fig 19. The Restored and Equipped Trimble Kitchen Brings 21st Century Visitors Into An 18th Century Experience