



The Pine Creek Grist Mill, sometime during the late 1950s.

The granddaddy of mills

■ Research indicates that the Pine Creek Grist Mill might be the oldest operating grist mill west of the Mississippi still in its original location

Cynthia Beaudette
of the Muscatine Journal

MUSCATINE, Iowa – For the past 10 years, a group of dedicated area residents have brought the 158-year-old Pine Creek Grist Mill at Wild Cat Den State Park in Muscatine into regional focus.

Now, members of the Friends of the Pine Creek Grist Mill have learned the mill that has captured their imagination and inspired years of restorative efforts might also have a place in the national spotlight

Tom Hanifan, president of Friends of the Pine Creek Grist Mill, said after a representative from the Iowa State Historical Society suggested his group research the national significance of the mill,

he decided to take on the project.

“One of my obsessions has been to find out if there are any older operating grist mills between the Mississippi River and the Rockies (mountains),” said Hanifan, a retired librarian for Muscatine Community College. “Thanks to the Society for the Preservation of Old Mills, SPOOM, and the “millpictures.com” Web site, I have an answer.”

Hanifan said SPOOM is comprised of people who are fans of old mills and people who are involved in the restoration and interpretation of those mills.

“This organization is the premier source of information,” said Hanifan.

Hanifan, of Muscatine, found evidence indicating that Pine Creek, built in 1848 may well be the oldest known working grist mill between the Mississippi and the Rockies that is still on its original site.

David Metz, vice-president of the Pine Creek

More on Mill, page 2A



The Pine Creek Grist Mill, as it appears today.

BETH VAN ZANDT/MUSCATINE JOURNAL

