

Wilkerson Mill

Wilkerson Mill is located about one mile upstream from the Owen Cochran Mill on Little Bear Creek. This mill is probably one hundred years old or older. Before it was called Wilkerson Mill, many people referred to this mill as Bearden's Mill. Mr. Bearden was one of the earliest owners of the mill. Mr. Bearden was a great uncle of Jack Thompson who owned and operated the mill for fifty years. Wilkerson Mill was owned and operated by the Thompson family and relatives for about 75 years. One outsider did own the mill during this time span. Mr. V. W. Denton owned the mill for 10 years. People were envious of Mr. Denton because he generated his own power from Little Bear Creek to electrify his home. Nobody else in the area had electricity.

The present water wheel on the mill was purchased by Jack Thompson in 1937. He saw an ad in the Market Bulletin for a steel water wheel located in Hartwell, Georgia. A mill in Hartwell was closing and had put the water wheel up for sale. Jack Thompson and his sons went and got the wheel and took it apart piece by piece. They numbered each part of the wheel so they would know where every piece when they put it back together. This is the second wheel and the first steel wheel the mill ever had. There was a wood wheel prior to the steel wheel.

The mill was used until the late 1960's. The mill has had two owners since the Thompson family owned it. The present owner is Gene Griffith who is restoring the mill with the help of some Amish families from Pennsylvania. Perhaps with the correct preservation, this mill will be around for future generations to enjoy.





Wilkerson Mill is the only standing mill left in south Fulton County.



Pictures of the mill taken from the dam.





Note the old belt hanging from the window. Someone has thrown it out.
This wide belt pulled the pulleys and gears to turn the grindstones.





Note the restoration in the back of the mill.







These are the original gears that went on the wood water wheel.



Pictured here is one of the large pulleys. A large belt pulled this wheel to help make the power to grind the corn.





This is possibly the remains of a wood dam.
Below is the present fieldstone dam.





The ladder in the above picture draws perspective in that it shows the immense size of the dam.

