

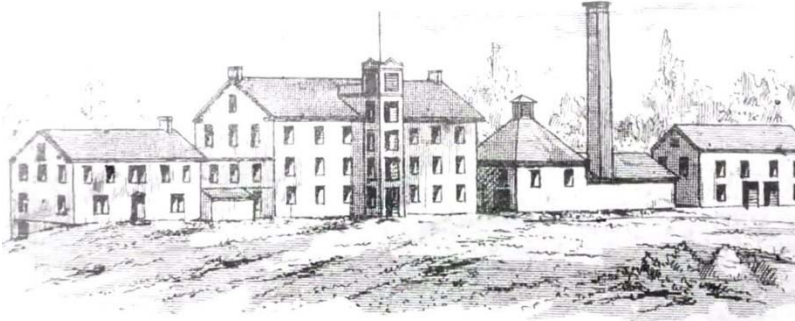
# Southern New England Chapter – Society for Industrial Archeology

Tour of

## Mill River Valley

Williamsburg & Leeds, Massachusetts

Saturday, September 26, 2015



Cost: Free. Tour is limited to 24 people.

Please contact Marc Belanger @ (508) 837-5669 or [mnbelanger@comcast.net](mailto:mnbelanger@comcast.net) to reserve your spot.

### **Schedule:**

10 A.M. - Meet at the Williamsburg Historical Society, 8 Main Street, Williamsburg. (See parking info below). The tour will begin a discussion on the industrial history of the Mill River Valley, including the catastrophic 1874 flood caused by a dam break in which 139 lives were lost. We will then walk a short distance to the circa 1881 Hiram Hill Grist Mill. This small water-powered mill was built to replace an earlier one that was destroyed in the 1874 flood. It operated as a grist mill until 1925. It is now home to the Historical Society's Farming Museum, and contains a wide array of antique farming machinery, vehicles and tools mostly from the local area.

After lunch (on your own), we will visit the site of the 1874 dam break. Please note that there is limited parking and NO public access to the dam site, so we will need to car pool. The afternoon will conclude with a tour of the villages of Skinnerville (totally wiped out by flood), Haydenville (brass works) and Leeds (walking tour, including the historic 1880 Hotel Bridge). The tour will finish around 4:30 PM.

### **Directions:**

#### **From I-91 (northbound):**

Take Exit 19. Continue STRAIGHT onto Damon Road. Cross under highway to Route 5. Continue STRAIGHT onto Bridge Road. Continue on Bridge Road for about 2 miles to rotary. Follow Route 9 westbound for about 5 miles to Williamsburg center. The Historical Society is on the left. Take LEFT onto Petticoat Hill Road (at Brewmasters Tavern). Park in rear lot next to school or along Main Street.

#### **From I-91 (southbound)**

Take Exit 21 onto Route 5 south. RIGHT onto Hatfield Street to end. RIGHT onto Bridge Road. Continue on Bridge Road for about 1.8 miles to rotary. (See directions above from Rotary to Williamsburg).

#### **From Pittsfield / Points West**

Take Route 9 East to Williamsburg. RIGHT onto Petticoat Hill Road (at Brewmasters Tavern). Park in rear lot next to school or along Main Street.

### **Recommended Reading:**

*In the Shadow of the Dam: The Aftermath of the Mill River Flood of 1874*; Elizabeth M. Sharpe  
*American Phoenix: The Remarkable Story of William Skinner*; Sarah S. Kilborne