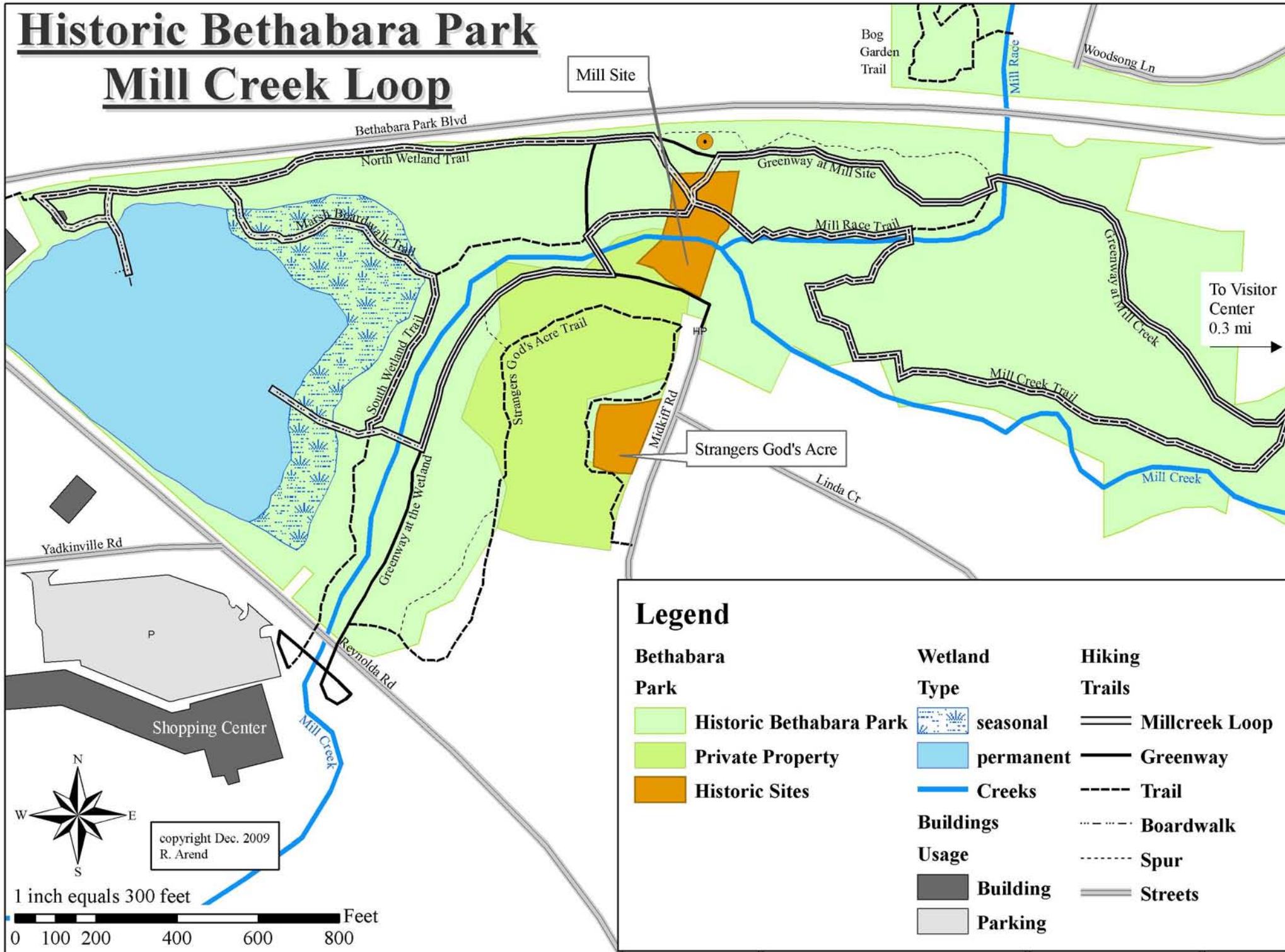


Historic Bethabara Park

Mill Creek Loop



Mill Creek Loop

Length: 3,8 km; 2,3 mi
 Overview: A Loop Trail that takes you to the Mill Site and then to the Wetland.

Starting at the Visitor Center proceed through the Palisade Fort to the Greenway. Turn right and follow this trail crossing Old Town Dr. and passing the power cut to the bridge. Turn left then right, following the Greenway to the Mill Site. Passing the mill stone stay on the Greenway for 250 feet, then go straight following the North Wetland T. to the picnic pavilion on the left. Take the Boardwalk to have a view of the Wetland. Return to the North Wetland T. and turn right onto the Marsh Boardwalk T. Reaching South Wetland T. turn right and go to the other Boardwalk on the right. Go back until you reach the Greenway at the Wetlands and turn left following it to the bridge. Cross the bridge and turn right onto Mill Race T. Take the little bridge on the left and follow Mill Creek T. until reaching the Greenway turning right. Go across Old Town Dr. and pass through the Palisade Fort back to the Visitor Center.

The Mill Stones

The construction of the grist mill within two years of the founding of the settlement indicates the high priority the Moravian pioneers placed on having their own milling operations.

A millstone is actually one of a pair of large circular stones stacked on top of each other.

*1755, June 26th.
Five brethren
with ten horses
went to bring in
the mill-stone
from Sweeten's
place.*

Grain is poured through a hole in the upper millstone and then ground between the two. The millstones never touch. The space between the stones regulate how fine the grain is ground.

When new, the runner stone, (the revolving one on the top), could be a foot thick, weighing more than a ton. The bed stone (the stationary one on the bottom) would be 15 inches thick. A mill stone from North Carolina granite could last anywhere from 20 to 25 years.

Bark Mill and Oil Mill

Mill stones were also used by rolling them edgeways to crush tree bark into a powder that was used to tan leather. They were also used to press flax seeds into Linseed oil, which was used as camp fuel, a wood preservative, and for medicine.

The Wetlands

Wetlands are natural areas that hold water all or part of the year. Because they have both land and aquatic characteristics, wetlands are some of the most diverse ecosystems on earth.

Depending on vegetation, soil type, water supply, and water chemistry found in and around them, wetlands are generally classified as marshes, swamps, peatland bogs or mangroves.

Wetland conditions favor a variety of plants, shrubs and trees and provide a critical habitat for a large number of mammals, reptiles, amphibians and insects. Many live in the wetlands for all or part of their life cycle. Wetlands harbor a third of the country's endangered or threatened species of plants and animals.

200 kinds of fish species require wetland habitats for spawning, feeding or protection from predators.

150 kinds of birds are attracted to wetlands for sources of food and sites for resting, nesting and feeding. They are the habitat for a third of the country's resident bird species.

Wetlands absorb and filter pollutants that could degrade lakes and streams and they provide flood control.

Wetlands provide many opportunities for recreational activities.



Historic Bethabara Park

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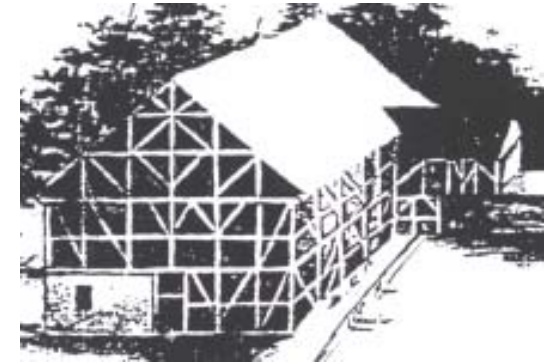
Walk Historic Bethabara Park Mill Creek Loop



Bethabara Mill runner stone.

Bethabara Grist Mill

Plans for the mechanical operation of the Bethabara grist mill have not been found. A description used to create the model found in the Bethabara Heritage Center is based on a single drawing made about 1756,



(possibly by Nicholas Garrison) as well as various diary entries, and the other construction work of Hans Christensen.

The building was thought to be a half-timbered construction, three stories high, with a one story wing off to one side. The material between the timbers was probably wattle and daub (sticks or wooden lathes daubed with clay, gravel and sand mixed with straw) rather than brick.

The mill structure was built across the creek, anchored off each bank, with the flood gates positioned underneath the mill at the foundation. The mill had a vertical, undershot water wheel with all of the workings for the grist mill operation, including the wheel, inside the structure to protect it from ice and freeze damage as well as to keep it from drying out on the outward side and getting water logged on the lower side when not in use.