

Weather

Clear and cold tonight, lows in the mid and upper 30s. Sunny Sunday, highs near 70.

Covington



Virginian

Gleanings

You can say one thing for our young people. They are not afraid of debt.

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TEN CENTS

Warm Springs Square Developed By Native

WARM SPRINGS — Some call it a miniature Williamsburg, others term it an adventure into the past, but its developers, Mr. and Mrs. Phillip R. Hirsh, hope their gristmill Square complex will be the genesis of the regeneration of the community of Warm Springs to what it once was a century ago.

In bemoaning the lack of growth in Warm Springs, native son, Philip Hirsh likes to quote from a book written by Allan W. Eckert in 1771 which described the then Warm Springs as, "by no means a large town comprised of a half dozen dusty streets bisected by one another and at least two bridges which crossed the stream."

But while Warm Springs might have been a sleeping beauty Monday through Friday, on Saturday, according to author Eckert, things changed.

"On Saturdays Warm Springs was a bustle of activity with people from a widely surrounding area walking the streets, chatting by store fronts, and converging on the town's four pubs," he relates.

The focal point of Gristmill Square as conceived by the Hirshes is the Warm Springs

Mill which is now the Waterwheel Restaurant and Eckert recalled it in his book as being owned by a man named Jacob Butler.

The present mill building is at least the third structure to occupy the mill site being acquired then by a man named Miller and having the lofty assessed valuation of \$503. When acquisition was made by Miller, the property was known as the "Tilt Hammer Chopping Mill."

It is not known whether Miller constructed an entirely new mill building or simple improved on salvageable parts of the old "Tilt Hammer Mill." But the Hirshes are proud that their Warm Springs Mill is as it was 70 years ago.

In their brochure, the Hirshes note: "As the water gently spins the mill wheel, the hungry visitor leisurely enjoys the superb cuisine in the main dining room or on the outside deck by the stream. For parties there is the private Trophy Room, as well as the charming tavern."

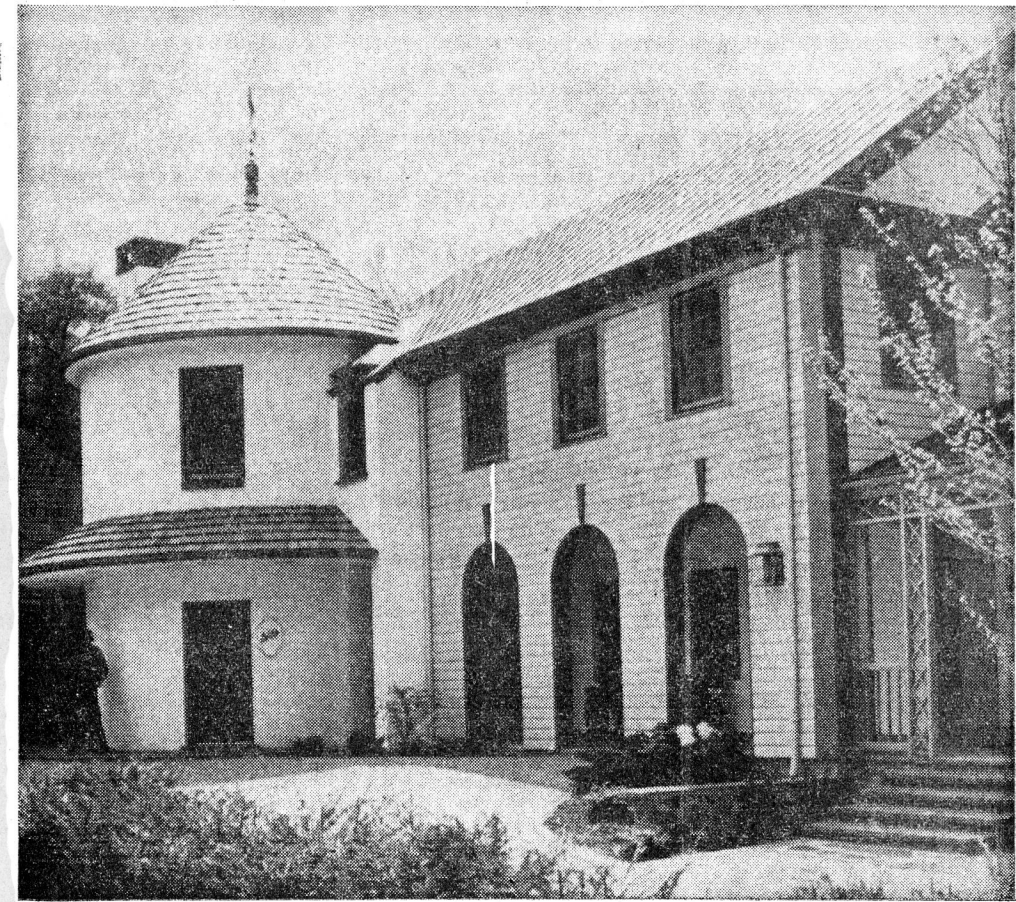
The shopping arcade includes brightly conceived establishments done in a colonial decor which dispense gifts, a country store concept which is heavy on

the old cheese, an art gallery, and ladies boutique which is called "Lib's Dress Shop." Also included is a pottery shop, operated by an English couple, Pauline and Tony Bristow, who among other accomplishments made pots which were presented to Queen Elizabeth I of Great Britain.

The "Wattle and Daub" art gallery which occupies an old barn, is Mrs. Hirsh's pet project. Mrs. Hirsh plans, in addition to painting displays of contemporary artists, to show art in many forms and artists from Virginia and West Virginia will be encouraged to exhibit in the gallery and at a later outdoor show in Gristmill Square hopefully some time this summer.

Though the original mill building and other structures were Victorian in design it was decided to do the square in a which its architect, Thommode which its architect, Thomas Craven of Charlottesville, laughingly refers to as "Steamboat Gothic."

"Steamboat Gothic" or whatever, Gristmill Square is living proof that sometimes progress can be made by sneaking into the past.



A Bit Of The Past

Gristmill Square in Warm Springs is a look into the past with its similarity to Colonial Williamsburg and is called "The Town Square of Yesteryear" by the developers. Bat's County native Phillip R. Hirsh and his wife developed the quaint attraction and their establishment, the Waterwheel Restaurant, is located in the former Warm Springs Mill. (Staff Photo)