My siblings and I were going through some of our family pictures the other day and found a painting of the old Buckner Feed Mill. The painting was by Mrs. Helen Brown and was very detailed. When I saw it I told my brother and sisters that I would like to have it. The picture brought back so many memories of my childhood. I have placed the picture on a shelf in my home office. When I look at it I get a very peaceful feeling. Today as I thought about it I remembered the hard work of mixing and sacking feed. Most of the sacks that we filled were either fifty or one hundred pound sacks. We loaded the feed in trucks and went to the various pastures where calves and heifers were located to put out the feed for them. I recall going to the train depot in Oneonta to get a box car load of citrus pulp and cotton seed meal. When we finally got the car unloaded I was near exhaustion. The tired feeling was a good feeling. The rest was good. There was a certain refreshment about the cool evening breeze that came through our windows (although I remember sometimes it wasn’t so cool, yet not knowing the coolness of an air conditioner, it was okay). All of our equipment for planting, plowing, and harvesting was kept at the mill. So our maintenance on all the equipment was done there also. It was our home base for the farm. That picture represents the hardest, continual, physical labor of my life. So why do I get such a peaceful feeling? Why would I like to go back and just walk through the old place one more time? Why do I long for the sounds and smells of the old feed mill? During this time I met the Lord as my Savior. This was a time when my mother and dad were young and healthy. As kids we roamed the woods and our community without worry or fear. Our friends’ parents were like our parents. We worked hard during the week and went to church on Sunday. The front porch of our home was a pleasant place. It was a common thing to go by a house and see people sitting on their front porch. The old feed mill represents my memories of childhood and youth. When I look at it, I’m reminded of my friends, family, church, community and school. Really and truly I do not want to go back to those days, but I want those types of values instilled in my children and their children. Yes, when I see the old feed mill I see a life-long blessing given to me by my Lord.

Yours in Christ,

Brother Randy Burtram