Occoquan's era as an Industrial Center
The water power of the Occoquan Falls spurs the growth of Occoquan to include an iron furnace and forge, two major wheat mills, a cotton mill, sawmills and the supporting businesses for a bustling town.

July 1608
John Smith of Jamestown sails into the Occoquan River and is welcomed by the Doeg Indians at their settlement, Tauxenent.

1700
In his will, William Fitzhugh leaves his tan yards, one of the first industries at the falls of the Occoquan, to his heirs.

1736
Valentine Peyton establishes a tobacco warehouse on the south bank of the Occoquan River, near today's Occoquan Town Dock.

1755
John Ballendine purchases 20 acres of land and develops several commercial enterprises in Occoquan. His major industry is an iron furnace. George Washington ordered 3 tons of iron for Fort Loudon from the Ballendine furnace in 1758.

1757
John Ballendine hires William Buckland to design Rockledge Mansion.

1776
The Occoquan Baptist Church petitions the Virginia Convention for religious freedom.

1788
Light Horse Harry Lee purchases at auction the Occoquan mill property. Lee has the Oliver Evans style automated grist mill constructed on the mill site. This is the first automated grist mill in the United States.

1795
Merchant's Mill owner, Nathaniel Ellicott, petitions the Virginia Assembly to build a wooden bridge across the Occoquan.

October 1801
Nathaniel Ellicott hires John Davis as a tutor for his children. Davis describes the town in his book, *Travels of Four Years and a Half in the United States of America*, "On crossing a little bridge I came within view of the settlement, which is romantic beyond conception. A beautiful river rolls its stream along mountains that rise abruptly from its bank, while on the opposite rocky shore, which appears to have been enveloped in foam, and here and there a dwelling which has vast masses of stone for its foundation."

December 31, 1804
The trustees agree the Town of Occoquan is accurately laid out and the Plat is true and correct. It is filed on January 7, 1805 at the Prince William County Court.

August 1805
Ellicott opens his new road to Occoquan. The mail and stage will now travel from Alexandria through Occoquan. Alexander Gordon moves his Inn and stables from Woodbridge to Occoquan where the main traffic now crosses the river.

May 1808
The Occoquan wooden bridge reopens after suffering major damage during a storm in August, 1807.

March 24, 1811
After a visit to Occoquan, **Thomas Jefferson** writes mill owner Nathaniel Ellicott, asking for instructions on how to construct a plaster mill he observed in operation while in Occoquan. Ellicott and Jefferson continue correspondence relating to Occoquan.

1828
Samuel M. Janney builds a four story cotton mill in Occoquan that is operating with 1088 spindles.

Occoquan's Civil War Years
A foundation of Quaker mill owners gives the town a reputation as an abolitionist stronghold. Residents John Underwood and Samuel M. Janney are arrested for their antislavery views.

July 4, 1860
A group of Occoquan Republicans raise a Liberty Pole with Abraham Lincoln's campaign banner and the U.S. flag on the grounds in front of Rockledge Mansion.

July 27, 1860
At 3:30 p.m. the Prince William Militia ride into Occoquan from Brentsville, the county seat. The Liberty Pole is chopped down and the flags and pole pieces removed to Brentsville. These events are reported in the *New York Times*.

November 1860 Presidential Election
President Lincoln receives a total of only 55 votes from Prince William County. All the Lincoln votes were cast from the Occoquan District.

Fall 1861
CSA Colonel Wade Hampton's Legion and several Georgia units are encamped in the vicinity of the Town of Occoquan.

December 11, 1861
The U.S.S. Stepping Stones steams up the Occoquan and fires a warning shell over the town.

February 3, 1862
Confederate troops training near the Occoquan wharf trade fire across the river with the 3rd Michigan. Errant Union shots were fired into private homes. A snow storm blows in, obliterating the view for the troops on both sides, thus saving countless lives.

February 22, 1862
The U.S.S. Stepping Stones again travels up the Occoquan in search of Confederate troops. At least 40 shells fired from CSA guns plunge into the river near the ship. A launch sent out from the Stepping Stones mounted with a Howitzer returns fire.

March 8, 1862
The Confederate troops led by Wade Hampton withdraw from Occoquan.

May 10, 1862
The cotton mill owned by Francis Hanna and the home of Joseph Janney are destroyed in arson fires.

December 18, 1862
CSA Gen. Wade Hampton raids Occoquan and **arrests local resident John Underwood for treason**. 20 Union supply wagons are captured as they are attempting to ferry across the river.

December 27, 1862
CSA General Wade Hampton leads 870 men and one section of artillery into Occoquan as part of the raid led by CSA Major General J.E.B. Stuart. Hampton rousts the 2nd Pennsylvania Cavalry from the streets of Occoquan.

June 15, 1863
A 300' pontoon bridge is laid across the Occoquan to cross Union supply wagons and wheeled artillery on their way to Gettysburg. It took 3 days for the crossing. The 13th Vermont assists slaves crossing the pontoon bridge heading north to freedom.

September 23, 1863
Abraham Lincoln writes a personal note to the Secretary of War asking him to find a position for John Underwood who was recently released in a prisoner trade.

Occoquan Evolves from an Industrial Center to a Tourist Destination
Shipyards, lumber from the surrounding forests, hotels for fishermen and tourists, these become the new industries in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. A bridge to bring cyclists and autos, marinas, boat tours and buses, all open the doors to Occoquan.

1874   The Town of Occoquan is Incorporated.
The steamer *Mary Washington* is built in Occoquan. She was one of several ships that would bring day-trippers from Washington D.C. and Alexandria to Occoquan to walk along the beautiful mill race and dine at the Alton or Hammill Hotels.

June 13, 1878
The iron truss bridge crossing the Occoquan River is completed.

1883
The Ebenezer Baptist Church is dedicated. Reverend Bailey, a former slave, founded the congregation.

1884
The Methodist Church at 305 Commerce Street is dedicated. This structure was destroyed in the 1916 fire.

1889
The Old School Baptist Church led by Rev. William M Smoot is formed. Smoot publishes a widely distributed religious tract, the *Sectarian*. The Church congregation disbands on the death of Rev. Smoot in 1939.

1889
Captain William Giles of Occoquan offers excursions on the Occoquan and Potomac Rivers from the Occoquan docks on his steamer the *Bartholdi*.

1890's
Cyclists clubs from D.C. and Alexandria find Occoquan a unique destination for a weekend ride.

1894
A telephone line is erected between Occoquan and Woodbridge.

June 1910
The Buick Motor Co. sponsors a road trip to Occoquan for a day of fishing. If the fish don't bite a fine chicken dinner can be found at the Alton Hotel.

1910-1915
The Washington Post sponsors many auto road trips from their offices located in Washington D.C. through northern Virginia. Occoquan is 25.5 miles from the newspaper building.

January 28, 1914
A bunker is constructed to store carbide for the Town of Occoquan street lights.

August 25, 1916
A massive fire in Occoquan causes $50,000 in damages and destroys many homes and businesses.

March 3, 1921
Stock for the Occoquan Electric Light & Power Co. Inc. is issued.

October 1924
The Merchant's Mill is destroyed when a fire erupts from the electric company's generator.

September 1938
The OWL Fire Department is incorporated. Fred Lynn is the first Fire Chief of the volunteer department.

1950
Work on the Occoquan High Dam is complete. Five water basins constructed above the Occoquan footbridge on the south side of the river process up to 40 million gallons of water daily from 1965-2009.

1950
The Prince William Marina opened in Occoquan. In 1998 the expanded facility moved to the outskirts of Occoquan.

June 20, 1969
The Occoquan Historical Society is incorporated as Historic Occoquan Inc. June Randolph is elected as the first President.

June 13, 1970
Dedicated volunteers open the Mill House Museum! The historical society sponsors an Antique sale that day which eventually evolves into the biannual Town of Occoquan Arts and Craft Show. (September 1971 is the first merchant sponsored show and June 1981 is the first town sponsored show.)

June 22, 1972
Hurricane Agnes destroys the 1878 iron truss bridge across the river at Occoquan and floods the town causing major destruction.

21'st Century
Occoquan boasts several artist co-ops, boutique shops, popular eateries and purveyors of fine spirits.
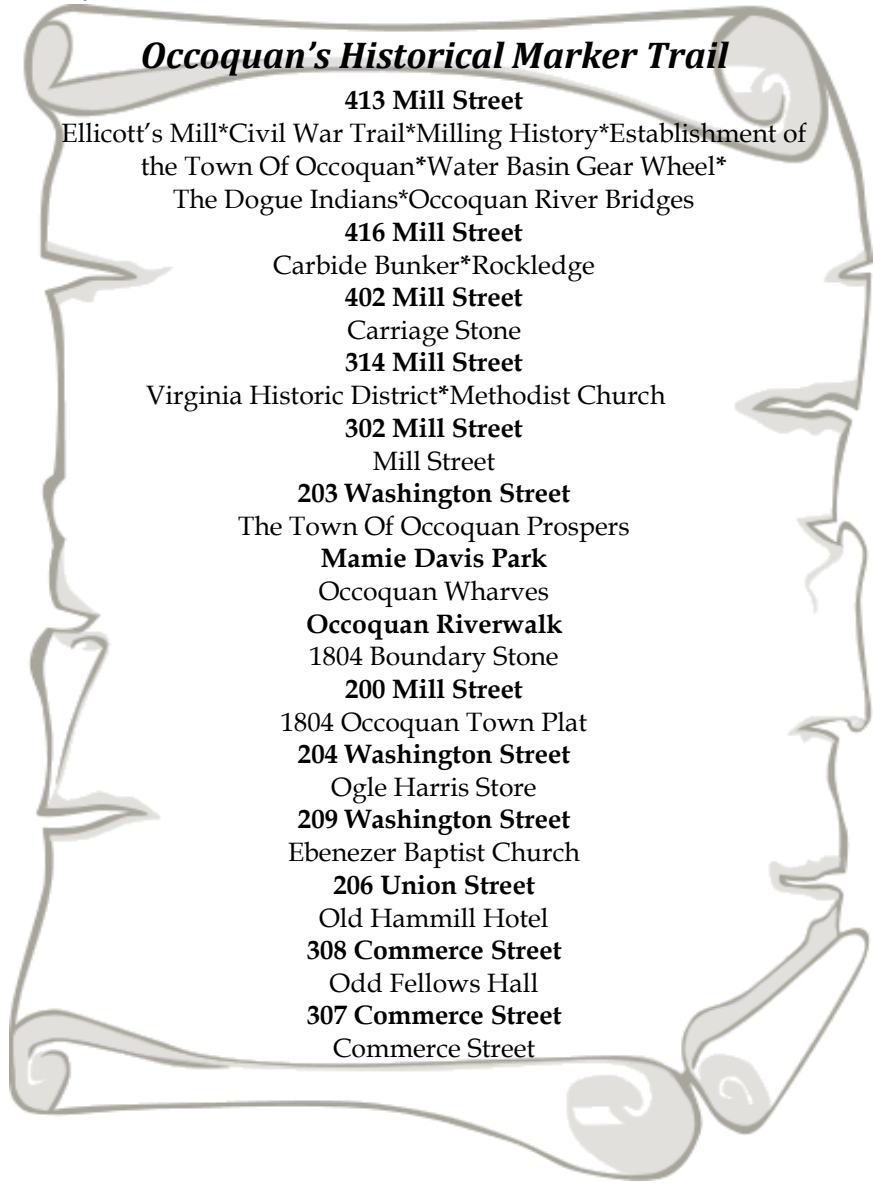
June 2004
Miss Rivershore Charters offers hourly weekend and chartered tours from the Occoquan dock.

October 2013
Occoquan Transportation Company offers rides from the Lorton Amtrak Auto Train to Occoquan.

September 2014
Removal of the old water basins, pumping station and pipe bridge began to make way for *River Mill Park,* which opened on July 30, 2016.

Occoquan's Historical Marker Trail

413 Mill Street
Ellicott's Mill*Civil War Trail*Milling History*Establishment of the Town Of Occoquan*Water Basin Gear Wheel*
The Dogue Indians*Occoquan River Bridges

416 Mill Street
Carbide Bunker*Rockledge

402 Mill Street
Carriage Stone

314 Mill Street
Virginia Historic District*Methodist Church

302 Mill Street
Mill Street

203 Washington Street
The Town Of Occoquan Prospers

Mamie Davis Park
Occoquan Wharves

Occoquan Riverwalk
1804 Boundary Stone

200 Mill Street
1804 Occoquan Town Plat

204 Washington Street
Ogle Harris Store

209 Washington Street
Ebenezer Baptist Church

206 Union Street
Old Hammill Hotel

308 Commerce Street
Odd Fellows Hall

307 Commerce Street
Commerce Street