

# Landscapes

News from the Land Trust of the Eastern Panhandle Summer 2016

## THE CEMENT MILL

Ruins of Historic Site Tell a Story of Industry and War

Have you ever wondered about those brick structures along the Potomac on River Road east of Shepherdstown?

They are the remnants of a cement mill that played an important role in building the C&O Canal and was at the center of the 1862 Battle of Shepherdstown, when its kilns sheltered soldiers from artillery fire. The property is now owned by the Jefferson County Historic Landmarks Commission and preserved under a conservation easement held by the Land Trust of the Eastern Panhandle.

The Mill's beginnings date back to 1826, when a Shepherdstown physician, Henry Boteler, and a businessman, George Reynolds, partnered to build a water-powered grist mill on the Potomac River. By January 1828, Boteler realized that limestone on the property could be used to make hydraulic cement, the preferred mortar for masonry structures. Boteler and Reynolds built a small experimental kiln followed quickly by a larger kiln, to burn or "calcine" the stone. The mill then ground the calcined stone to cement to ship to construction sites.



*Administration Building for the Cement Mill.*

By late 1828, construction had begun on the C&O Canal on the Maryland side of the Potomac, which increased demand for cement produced at the Mill. Recognizing the need to increase production for the growing operation, Boteler and Reynolds then built a bank of six kilns in 1829 and 1830. Also in 1829, they built a dam of rubble and stone-filled wooden cribs across the Potomac, upstream from the mill, to create a pool for the mill-race to provide water power. The

dam can still be seen today when the Potomac's water level is low enough. The Mill became the sole property of George Reynolds after Henry sold his interests to his partner in 1835. Eleven years later, Alexander Boteler, Henry's son, purchased the Mill in full from Reynolds. By August 1861, Virginia's secession from the Union had drawn a line of division along the banks of the Potomac River. Alexander had been commissioned a colonel in the Confederate army

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*Bank of six kilns built in 1829 and 1830.*

and was also elected a representative to the Confederate legislature. Many believe that it was because of Boteler's position within the Confederate government and war effort, accompanied by impetus to destroy Confederate infrastructure that the Mill was burned in 1861. Later, in 1864, Boteler's home called "Fountain Rock"—on the site of what is now Morgan's Grove Park—was also burned by Union forces under General David Hunter.

Following the Battle of Antietam, fought September 17, 1862, General George McClellan ordered his forces to pursue the Confederate army across the Potomac into Virginia, now West Virginia. On September 19, advance units of Union General Fitz John Porter's Corps quickly overran Confederate pickets and artillery located around and above the Cement Mill site, capturing four Confederate cannon. The following morning, Confederate General A.P. Hill counterattacked with intense fighting culminating in a Federal withdrawal back across the river. A miscommunicated retreat order stranded the 118th Pennsylvania Infantry, known as the "Corn Exchange Regiment," on the heights above the Mill. Its members suffered heavy casualties as they made their way to safety under heavy fire, with the kilns and structure of the Mill providing cover for the shaken troops. The fighting that day would become known as the Battle of Shepherdstown, or Boteler's Mill. It was the final action of General Robert E. Lee's 1862 Maryland campaign and it was McClellan's failure to trap Lee that ultimately led to his replacement as General and Chief of the Union Army.

In 1867 a group of trustees rebuilt the mill. It continued to

grind calcined lime into cement until about 1901. In the century that followed, the site fell silent, resting quietly along the Potomac River as a reminder of a time come and gone. In 2011, the Mill site was preserved through a partnership with the Jefferson County Historic Landmarks Commission, Civil War Trust, Shepherdstown Battlefield Preservation Association and the Save Historic Antietam Foundation. Agreement by the Land Trust of the Eastern Panhandle to hold a conservation easement on the property released additional funds from the National Park Service's American Battlefield Protection Program. Four adjacent small parcels of land at the corner of Trough and River Roads have since been added, with the long term goal of donating the entire property to Antietam National Battlefield. The site can be viewed daily from dawn to dusk from River Road. ■

*(Article by Rob Aitcheson, Jefferson County Historic Landmarks Commission)*



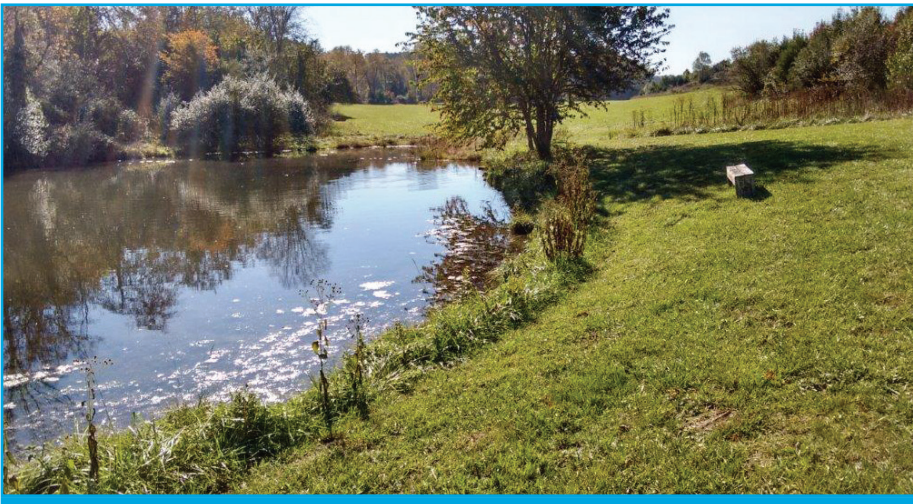
*Large kiln built in 1828 to burn or "calcine" the limestone.*



## BUILDING A LEGACY FOR THE FUTURE

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Since 1997 the Land Trust of the Eastern Panhandle has been building a legacy by preserving the scenic beauty, the historic character, and productive farmland of our area and by encouraging wise stewardship of our natural resources. Over 50 individuals and families are part of this legacy with us having placed conservation easements on their land ensuring in perpetuity that the landscape they value will remain. We can all be part of building this legacy not only through conservation easements on the land, but through a donation or gift as part of an estate plan. For example, the Federal income tax regulations allow deduction of the appreciated value of stocks donated to a 501(c)(3) charity, like the Land Trust, without the donor having to pay capital gains tax on the appreciation. The age required withdrawal of funds from an IRA, or 401k retirement account could also be directly donated without increasing the donor's income for the year. The Land Trust could be made the beneficiary of a life insurance policy that you no longer need or the beneficiary of accounts as part of a bequest. Two individuals have already joined in building the legacy, one with a donation of cash and one with a gift of stocks. We have created the Opportunity Fund to receive legacy contributions. If you are interested in learning more or in participating, please contact us. We want to join with you to share with future generations the landscape of the Eastern Panhandle that we all value. ■



*Peaceful landscape on the Moore Easement near Shepherdstown.*

## ENHANCED TAX BENEFITS NOW PERMANENT

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Thanks to intensive lobbying by the national association of Land Trusts, Congress in late 2015 made permanent the enhanced federal tax deduction for conservation easements.

Under the enhanced deduction, donors can deduct the easement value against 50 per cent of their income (100 per cent for farmers) with a carry-forward of any unused portion for up to 15 years. The congressional action assures landowners of easement tax benefits in a way that has been impossible in recent years, when Congress only extended the enhanced deduction at the last minute, one year at a time.

Martinsburg attorney David DeJarnett explained the enhanced deduction and other tax aspects of conservation easements, particularly as they related to estate planning, at the Martinsburg Library February 27 at a session sponsored by the three Eastern Panhandle County Farmland Protection Boards and the Land Trust of the Eastern Panhandle. His presentation is available at: <http://tinyurl.com/bowlesrice-estateplanning> and additional information on conservation easements can be found on the Land Trust website: [www.landtrustepwv.org](http://www.landtrustepwv.org). ■

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### YOUR PARTNER IN RURAL CONSERVATION

Our mission is to encourage people to preserve open space and rural landscapes in West Virginia's Eastern Panhandle. We use private, voluntary initiative and education to:

- Preserve the scenic beauty and historic character that have long made our region attractive to people;
- Promote a healthy, balanced local economy by preserving productive farmland and encouraging appropriate developments;
- Encourage wise stewardship of the regions natural resources.

We are a private, non-profit, tax-exempt charitable organization incorporated in West Virginia in 1995. Our board is composed of men and women from a variety of backgrounds from Morgan, Berkeley, and Jefferson counties.

We meet monthly at the Martinsburg law firm of Hammer, Ferretti & Schiavoni, and we thank them for opening their office to us.

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### Board Members

Terry Rieman Camilletti  
Sam Donley  
Barbara Humes  
Gavin Perry  
Grant Smith  
Bonnie Stubblefield  
Bob White

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### Land Trust of the Eastern Panhandle

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# Support Your Community Conservation Partner!

- ☐ I would like to **discuss** sharing my expertise with the Land Trust of the Eastern Panhandle.
- ☐ Please contact me to discuss **protecting** my land through a conservation easement.
- ☐ I would like to **support** the Land Trust with a tax deductible contribution:
  - ☐ \$500
  - ☐ \$100
  - ☐ \$75
  - ☐ \$50
  - ☐ Other \$
- ☐ Please contact me. I am interested in **volunteer** opportunities with the Land Trust.
- ☐ Please contact me to discuss Estate Planning Opportunities.

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY/STATE/ZIP

PHONE

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**Mail to:** Land Trust of the Eastern Panhandle • PO Box 2240, Martinsburg, WV 25402  
Visit our website for more information: [www.landtrustepwv.org](http://www.landtrustepwv.org)



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