

**Civil War Trust Park Day 2017 at Shepherdstown Battlefield was a Success**

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Charles Town, WV- Saturday April 1 was Park Day 2017 at Shepherdstown Battlefield. Park Day is an annual event sponsored by the Civil War Trust that is focused on the maintenance of Civil War battlefields and sites across the nation. This year, 139 sites participated in a wide array of volunteer-based, hands-on preservation projects.

In Shepherdstown, volunteers from the Shepherdstown Battlefield Preservation Association cleaned up trash along Trough and River Roads and the Potomac and clipped back invasive species in the area. Joseph Hoover donated the use of his chipper, so thanks to others who brought along their chainsaws, the group was able to break down some trees that have been felled at the site which were threatening the foundations of Boteler’s cement mill and kilns and blocking the view of the Potomac. These trees were used to mulch a path along the river.

Shepherdstown Battlefield was the site of a skirmish following the Battle of Antietam on September 19 and 20, 1862 - the bloodiest fought in what is now West Virginia. On September 19, a detachment of Major General Fitz John Porter’s V Corps pushed across the Potomac at Boteler’s Ford, attacked a Confederate rearguard commanded by Brig. Gen. William Pendleton, and captured four guns. Early on the 20th, Porter pushed elements of two divisions across the Potomac to establish a bridgehead. Maj. Gen. A.P. Hill’s division counterattacked while many of the Federals were crossing and nearly annihilated the 118th Pennsylvania (the “Corn Exchange” Regiment), inflicting 269 casualties. This rearguard action discouraged Federal pursuit. The battle marked the end of the Maryland Campaign, and President Lincoln, encouraged that the Confederates had been forced from Union soil, issued the Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation on September 22.

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The Jefferson County Historic Landmarks Commission (JCHLC) is a branch of the Jefferson County Government and operates under authority granted to landmarks commissions by the West Virginia Legislature. The Landmarks Commission focuses on heritage education and tourism, historic preservation, and historic resource development. JCHLC’s primary mission is to preserve historic sites, structures, and rural landscapes within the unincorporated areas of Jefferson County and to educate the public about the County’s heritage.