

## **Jefferson County Historic Landmarks Commission Receives a Grant from the West Virginia Humanities Council**

For immediate release – October 17, 2017

Contact: Martin Burke, Chair, Jefferson County Historic Landmarks Commission  
p: (304) 876-3883 / e: [HLInfo@jeffersoncountywv.org](mailto:HLInfo@jeffersoncountywv.org)

Charles Town, WV – The Jefferson County Historic Landmarks Commission (JCHLC) is a recipient of a minigrant from the West Virginia Humanities Council to produce and publish brochures for the Battle of Shepherdstown and the Shepherdstown Cement Mill. These brochures are part of a larger effort to increase awareness of this important historic site. The JCHLC has partnered with a number of local and national groups to conserve land on the battlefield: the Shepherdstown Battlefield Preservation Association, the Land Trust of the Eastern Panhandle, the Jefferson County Farmland Protection Board, the Civil War Trust, and the American Battlefield Protection Program. The National Park Service has determined that the core 510 acres of the Shepherdstown Battlefield could be added to Antietam National Battlefield due to their geographical and historical connection. This boundary adjustment requires congressional approval. If approved, the JCHLC will pass ownership of all battlefield property to the National Park Service.

The Shepherdstown Cement Mill, called Potomac Mills, was built in 1826 by George Reynolds and Henry Boteler as a grist mill. Construction on the C&O Canal began in 1828, and Boteler sent a letter to the president of the canal company describing the quality of Shepherdstown's cement. The mill became a major supplier of natural cement for the canal and later for building projects in D.C. The mill was burned by Union troops in August 1861. The Battle of Shepherdstown was fought at the site and surrounding farmland on September 19-20, 1864 in the aftermath of the Battle of Antietam. There were ten known cement mills built along the Potomac River to meet the canal's needs, and Shepherdstown's is the best-preserved. Potomac Mills was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2014. The JCHLC purchased the property in 2011.

The West Virginia Humanities Council is a state affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities. It was formed in 1974, and is the principal organization promoting the humanities in West Virginia through both grants and direct programming. The brochures produced from their grant have been distributed to visitor centers around the county, Antietam National Battlefield, and Harpers Ferry National Historic Park. They are available to download at the JCHLC's website: [www.JeffersonCountyHLC.org](http://www.JeffersonCountyHLC.org).