

7. BANK BARN



PHOTO BY REHAN BASHIR

The bank barn, which is built into a hillside, housed sheep in the lower level. The upper level was used for storage of equipment and implements.

8. CORN CRIB

The corn crib was used to store dried corn through the winter. The open slits are spaced to allow air to circulate while protecting the corn from animals.

Main Barn

The Gudelsky Environmental Education Center sits on the footprint of what was originally the main barn. The lower level of the barn was used to stable the horses and cows. The upper level was used for hay storage. The roof of the barn collapsed during a snowstorm in 1942 and the barn was never rebuilt.

The Browns had draft horses which are bred for their strength to pull wagons, plows and carriages. Horses were used for transportation and power throughout most of this farm's history. The Brown's last horses were named Tom and George after two of the tenant farmers on the property.

The old foundation was used by the Conservancy as an outdoor classroom in the 1990's.

Farm Life

The Browns practiced a diversified style of farming. A farm family was self-sufficient, growing crops for their livestock and maintaining gardens and orchards which provided the vegetables, fruit and herbs needed by the family. As late as 1900 the average farm raised five crops.

Also important was the wood lot, an uncleared area of a variety of hardwood trees. Farm families needed wood for heating and cooking, lumber for buildings, furniture, fences and handles for tools.

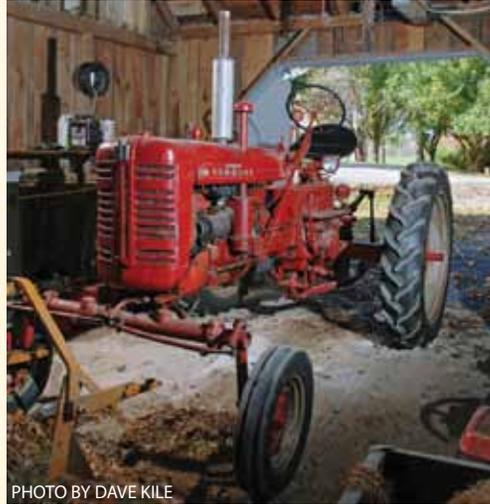


PHOTO BY DAVE KILE



Howard
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connecting people to nature

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The mission of the Howard County Conservancy is to educate children and adults about our natural world, preserve the land and its legacy for future generations and model responsible stewardship of our environment.

THE Farmstead Outbuildings



PHOTO BY JOHN MILLEKER

AT
Mt. Pleasant



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The Buildings of Mt. Pleasant

Welcome to the Howard County Conservancy, one of the best kept secrets in the area. Pictured on the front is the farmhouse seen on the hill that was the ancestral home of the Brown family. As you explore the property you will learn much about the family and their many contributions to agriculture and education and maintaining the rural flavor of this part of Howard County.

Early History

Ranger Thomas Brown was commissioned to survey the headwaters of the Patuxent River in 1692. He received this property as a land grant in 1703. It remained in the Brown family for eight generations. The farmhouse and its nine buildings comprise the most complete collection of historic farm buildings accessible to the public in Howard County.

Mt. Pleasant is a 20th century name for the farm, originally known as Ranter's Ridge. In a taped interview with Ruth Brown, the last resident of the property, she said: "This part was called Mt. Pleasant...because it was always cool and comfortable here. On the hottest day, we had delightful weather."

Farmhouse

Ranger Brown built a log cabin on a pleasant knoll overlooking two streams. Today there is a two story log cabin surrounded by the house. The front parlor was built in 1865, a west side addition in the 1930's and the kitchen in the 1950's. Today, the front of the house is used for offices and the rest of the house is occupied by the caretaker.

Outbuildings

In 1902 the barn, carriage house, granary and corn crib, built by Samuel Brown (1810-1880), were destroyed by a fire. Frank Brown (1854-1911) constructed the existing outbuildings. He used native stone for the foundations and painted the buildings the uniform gray color we use today.

1. CHICKEN COOPS

Two chicken coops are located at the left side and rear of the farmhouse. Ruth and Frances Brown raised guinea fowl, considered a delicacy, for food and gifts to give friends and neighbors for the holidays.

When you drove up to the house, the dog and the guinea fowl created a racket, acting as an alarm that announced your arrival. You couldn't get out of your car until one of the sisters said, "Hush now!"

2. SMOKEHOUSE

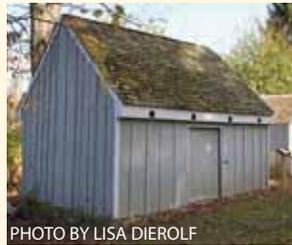


PHOTO BY LISA DIEROLF

Before refrigeration, families preserved meats by drying, salting and smoking. The preserving of meat on the farm would begin with packing it in coarse salt to draw out moisture.

The meat was then hung in the smokehouse, where a fire smoldered for two weeks. It would then age and be used throughout the year.

3. ICEHOUSE

Only the foundation stones remain of the icehouse. The East Branch stream was dammed to form a skating pond and also to harvest ice. Ice was important to prevent spoilage of food and at death to slow deterioration of the body.

4. CARRIAGE HOUSE



The carriage house held horse-drawn carriages, wagons and related tack. The cupola is ornamental but could have been used for ventilation.

5. BLACKSMITH SHOP



PHOTO BY DAVID HOBBY

The blacksmith shop has the only working forge in Howard County and is one of only three blacksmith shops still standing. Wooden blacksmith buildings are rare because they were often destroyed by fire. Every farm had a simple forge to make and repair tools, and a grinding wheel to keep tools sharp.

6. WAGON SHED



The wagon shed and corn crib combination was common in Howard County at the turn of the century. It was built using mortise and tenon construction.