

Donation Of Town Square Bank Mound Unites Local Community

Various people played a role in the Conservancy's acquisition of a prehistoric mound.

This summer, Town Square Bank in Greenup County, Kentucky, generously donated a five-acre site containing a large Woodland-period mound to the Conservancy. The mound is located on one of the bank's foreclosed properties in Northern Kentucky, and when Town Square's board members were made aware of the mound's importance, they unanimously decided to gift the site, along with two adjacent parcels.

"The board thought it would be in the community's best interest to help protect and preserve a valuable piece of our area's history," says Bruce Van Horn, the bank's president. The mound was renamed Town Square Bank Mound in honor of the bank at a dedication ceremony that was attended by members of the state government as well as tribal leaders and many others who recognized the importance of preserving the mound.

Although the elliptical mound is quite large, standing 20-feet tall and stretching nearly 80-feet in length, it wasn't officially recorded as an archaeological site with the state's Historic Preservation Office until very recently. Stuart Nealis, a doctoral



(From left) Stuart Nealis, Dwight Cropper, and the Conservancy's Josh McConaughy are joined by Charlie Holbrook (fourth from right), Bruce VanHorn (third from right) and others in front of the mound.

student at the University of Kentucky, investigated the mound. His preliminary data shows the mound dates to the Fort Ancient or Woodland periods, roughly 500 to 2,500 years ago. Sediment analysis showed that the mound was constructed of materials from the surrounding hillsides, rather than from the floodplain upon which it stands.

Additional research is necessary to learn more about the mound. Many mounds were lost during the 18th and early 19th centuries due to development, looting, and excavations, so a mound of

this size is rare and very intriguing.

Two Conservancy members, Charlie Holbrook and Dwight Cropper, were extremely helpful during the donation process. Holbrook, a local attorney, facilitated the property transfer and donated his time and professional expertise. As a result, the Conservancy paid no closing costs. Cropper was also hugely helpful in organizing the dedication ceremony and cleaning up the mound site.

Thanks to the efforts of various individuals and organizations, this mound will forever remain a part of the landscape of Greenup County and be a reminder of the native people that once lived along the Ohio River and its tributaries. —*Josh McConaughy*

