

Two Historic Mill Sites Preserved on East Haddam Land Trust Properties

Remnants of two historic mill sites in East Haddam are located on East Haddam Land Trust properties. The Atlantic Mill located on the Moodus River is on land donated by Merle and Ron Bernstein. The Hammond Mill, on a preserve by the same name, is a gift of John and Barbara Kashanski.

Mills were most widely operated during the 1700's to mid-1800's. They were built of wood or stone along a river or large stream and were powered by water flow, often below a dam where water velocity was greatest. The mill was linked to the river by a channel called a raceway. The headrace delivered water from the river to the mill, either to the top of a huge waterwheel or to a turbine, which were then turned to produce power. The tailrace returned the water to the river.

The Atlantic Mill

Originally known as the Atlantic Duck Company ("duck" is a kind of heavy cotton fabric) the Atlantic Mill was first leased in 1852. Destroyed by fire in 1854, it was rebuilt and operational again in 1857. The stone 125' x 40' structure's maximum output was 250 horsepower. The mill was closed during the Civil War but again operated as a twine/textile mill from 1898 until it burned in 1939 from an electrical cord spark.

The Hammond Mill

Two mills originally operated on a site along the Eightmile River off of Dolbia Hill Road south of Devil's Hopyard State Park. The land on either side of the river was owned by Squire John Chapman. A hub of industry in the late 1700's and early 1800's, Chapman operated a grist mill, a sawmill, a fulling mill, a blacksmith shop, and a flaxseed oil press. Much of the stonework still exists from the old dam and mill site, as do the headrace and tailraces. The old mill house is now at the base of the dam in Moodus on the Johnsonville property.

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