

# GLEN JEAN SCHOOL

*Glen Jean, Fayette County*

The old Glen Jean School is the last remaining structure from the original development of Glen Jean by the McKell Family, who established the town as part of their mining operations in the region. The school ceased operations in 1997, and beginning in 1999, it served as the business offices and visitors center of the Thurmond, Glen Jean & Great New River Railroad. After the sale of the railroad in 2006, the building was closed and used for storage. It has been vacant for eight years. Since 2009, a group of private investors have owned the property and enclosed it. However, in the summer of 2013 it was heavily



vandalized, and it has been subject to damaging water infiltration. Currently, the group is mobilizing to take action by assessing the feasibility of a preservation re-use project for high-quality housing and hopes it will have a mixed use.

## ENDANGERED PROPERTIES OF WEST VIRGINIA

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2014

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## Endangered List 2014

### Glen Jean School

**Location:** Glen Jean, Fayette County

**Endangerment:** Deferred Maintenance, Vandalism

**Construction date:** c. 1925

**Background:** The current structure was built after the original school burned in 1924. The building was constructed in two phases, the current one-story building was built in 1925 and the two-story section was built a year later.

The school remained in operation until 1997. Beginning in 1999, it served as the business offices and visitors center of the Thurmond, Glen Jean & Great New River Railroad. After the sale of the railroad in 2006, the building was closed and used for storage. It has been vacant for eight years.

**Description:** The Glen Jean School sits adjacent to the Boy Scouts of America Bechtel Summit and the National Park Service Headquarters for the New River Gorge National River. It is comprised of two sections, one one-story and the other two-story. Both are of brick construction. It features a unique central tower that has Moorish influences.

**Significance:** The school is one of the only remaining historical buildings from the early New River Mining era that developed under the McKell Family. It was also a significant educational institution for over seventy years.

**Preservation steps:** Stabilization, assessment by structural engineers, and professional mothballing until a new use can be determined. Interior restoration would return the interior into a safe and usable area.

**Ultimate goal:** Long-term plans would be to restore the building for a possible residential and/or mixed-use space.

**Resources:** The current owners are willing to provide some financial resources while seeking additional funding moving forward. The owners are interested in exploring non-profit establishment to oversee the structure as the restoration evolves.

**Nominated by:** Scott Legg, Glen Jean Station



**PRESERVATION ALLIANCE of WEST VIRGINIA**

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*Preservation Alliance of West Virginia is the statewide grassroots organization devoted to preserving West Virginia's history and culture. In partnership with the National Trust for Historic Preservation, PAWV provides assistance to help save endangered sites. For more information on the 2011 Endangered List, or if you would like to suggest a site for next year, see: [www.pawv.org/endangernom.htm](http://www.pawv.org/endangernom.htm)*

