



PRESERVATION

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Matters

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Spring/Summer 2022



HOPEMONT



201

N. M.S. 2

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For more information see article online
The Blue Grass Trust for Historic Preservation
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Hopemont,

Flagship of the BGT and Unique
Among Local Historic Homes



Message from our President

Spring 2022

Greetings Blue Grass Trust Friends,

Many great things have happened since our last *Preservation Matters* publication. First and foremost, I hope you have had the opportunity by now to meet Dr. Jonathan Coleman, BGT Executive Director. If not, you must. He brings great energy and focus to our common goal of historic preservation, and he makes it fun.

Also, I hope you had an opportunity to attend this year's Blue Grass Trust Antiques & Garden Show. It was a huge success with a full roster of curated exhibitors presenting beautiful displays of antiques, gardens, art, design, interesting speakers, and the largest number of sponsors and visitors ever. The show is always a perfect way to kick off the beautiful Kentucky spring. An enclosed article provides more details and fun pictures.

As my tenure as president of the Trust's board wraps up, I want to thank each of you for your gifts of time, resources, and advocacy you share with the Trust. BGT supporters are amazing and there are many active and dedicated volunteers for a broad range of activities. It is an enriching experience to work with you and to learn from you as we

move forward with initiatives supporting the Trust's mission. Some ways to be involved include the ten committees (the Trust's lifeblood, led by active chairs) who accomplish much because of very engaged members. The BGT docents are fantastic and if you haven't yet had a Hopemont tour, schedule one soon. Our financial donors are crucial and appreciated. Current board and past board members are important to the Trust's success as they provide numerous resources and great guidance. Finally, I must fully recognize and thank Jackson Osborne, Rebekah Kirkland, Haviland Argo, Ellie Cook, and Dr. Jon Coleman for their service to the Trust.

A special thank you goes out to John Hackworth and Megan Winfield who are completing terms on the Board of Directors. Both are longtime Trust supporters and give much, both visibly and behind the scenes. Their past and continuing service is greatly appreciated.

It has been an honor to serve as President, as well as a fun and gratifying experience. I am excited to be part of the Trust as it moves into the coming new year with renewed focus on the mission and values of helping Central Kentucky be the best it can be for generations to come. 🌱

Letter from our Executive Director

How quickly six months have passed since my tenure began at the Blue Grass Trust for Historic Preservation. Time does fly when you're having fun! The Trust community has extended the warmest welcome, and it has been a great privilege to meet so many Kentuckians dedicated to revitalizing, protecting, and promoting the special historic places of Central Kentucky.



Jonathan Coleman, Ph.D.
Executive Director
Photo by Brett Barnett

During these six months, I have embarked on a "listening and learning" tour, reaching out to a broad, diverse group of Trust leaders, supporters, and community stakeholders to better understand how the Trust operates and the needs the Trust can meet. After six months of listening and learning, what have I found?

- **Central Kentucky believes in preservation. And since 1955, the Trust has been pivotal in protecting Kentucky's historic structures, while striving to reflect the best preservation practices in the field.**
- **Central Kentucky needs a preservation advocate more than ever. Even in my short tenure, it has been made clear numerous times the Trust's mission is vital. From providing resources to home owners to encouraging our representatives to extend historic tax credits, the Trust helps make preservation accessible to all.**

As we celebrate Historic Preservation Month, I encourage you to explore this issue of *Preservation Matters* for the many exciting ways the Trust is making an impact on preservation in Kentucky. And more importantly, I invite you to join us in this good work. It's easy to help:

- **Support: Donate to the Trust.** Our dedicated teams of financial supporters ensure our mission endures.
- **Partner: Become a member.** Partner with our grassroots efforts to build a culture of preservation in Kentucky.
- **Advocate: We can't do this work alone.** Share the benefits of historic preservation with your neighbors, communities, and elected officials. If I haven't had a chance to meet you, let's correct that soon. I hope to see you at one of our upcoming preservation events, a deTour, or a tour at Hopemont. And please know my office is always open—my "listening and learning" tour is a permanent fixture!

Thank you for your support of preservation in Kentucky, and thank you for your support of the Blue Grass Trust.

Sincerely,
Jonathan Coleman, Ph.D.
Executive Director 🌱

The BGT in Brief

The Blue Grass Trust was founded in 1955 by a spirited group of Lexington citizens who were determined to save the John Wesley Hunt residence at 201 North Mill Street in Gratz Park from demolition. This group raised funds to purchase and restore the property, known as Hopemont, to its original 1814 appearance. In 1958, Gratz Park became Lexington's first local historic district. Today, Lexington has sixteen local historic districts, and Hopemont stands as a testament to the beginning of the BGT and the birth of the preservation movement in Central Kentucky.

Today, the Trust continues to provide valuable leadership, education and inspiration to the preservation movement in Lexington, Central Kentucky, and throughout the state through our advocacy, the BGT plaque program, BGT deTours, *Preservation Matters* magazine, seminars, walking tour brochures and apps, and more. As the region's leading historic preservation organization, we work diligently to fulfill our mission.

The Blue Grass Trust for Historic Preservation Mission Statement:

The Blue Grass Trust for Historic Preservation is a non-profit advocate for historic preservation that strives to protect, revitalize, and promote the special historic places in our community to enhance the quality of life for future generations. The Trust is guided by three tenets — education, service, and advocacy.

Read the BGT Statement on Solidarity at: <https://www.bluegrasstrust.org>

Stay in touch with the BGT in the following ways:

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Contributing to this edition of *Preservation Matters* are the following individuals. This publication would not happen if it were not for the efforts of these good people.

Jon Coleman, Diane Comer, Janie Fergus, Carolyn Hackworth, Wanda Jaquith, Bill Johnston, Rebekah Kirkland,

Hayden McNeil, Jackson Osborne, Judy Owens, Maureen Peters, Brenna Pye, Gay Reading, Julie Riesenweber, and

Richard Schein.
Editor: John Hackworth
Assistant Editors: Wanda Jaquith and Carolyn Hackworth

On the cover:

Hopemont, the historic museum house at 201 N. Mill St. Lexington, KY. Photo by Carolyn M. Hackworth

Hopemont

A Unique Lexington Experience

Pass through the doors of Hopemont and learn about life in early 19th century Lexington. Although known to many as the Hunt-Morgan House, the home built for John Wesley Hunt and his wife Catherine Grosch Hunt was given the name Hopemont when completed around 1814. Mr. Hunt, who came to Lexington from New Jersey, was a successful businessman in Lexington and played a significant role in the development of the city which grew from a frontier settlement to the city it has become. He made an impact through his involvement as a bank president, investor in the first Kentucky turnpike and the Lexington and Ohio Railroad, a trustee at Transylvania University, and a force behind the development of Eastern State Hospital, all in addition to maintaining a lucrative hemp business. Not only did John Wesley Hunt impact life in Lexington. His influence was felt throughout the region.



The front door of Hopemont, distinguished by its fanlight and pocket shutters, welcomed guests into this Federal home built in 1814.

Hopemont is situated on the corner of one of the first developed areas in Lexington, what today is called Gratz Park. This fortuitously preserved area was one of the first suburbs of Lexington and can be seen as a microcosm of Lexington's evolution. The life and work of the early families in the park reflect the industry, economic development, enslavement, arts, education, religion, and physical and social welfare of the growing city. Within blocks



Made in Baltimore, this Hunt family piano has an extra fourth pedal that reproduces the sound of a fife, banjo, or drum.

of Hopemont, hemp was manufactured; banks were founded; Transylvania University flourished; enslaved people were trafficked; horses were traded; newspapers were published; and civic institutions were established. The Hopemont tour puts names and sometimes faces to people who built and sustained these and other aspects of the community.

Hopemont is one of the rare places in Lexington where historic physical evidence of the life of enslaved people survives. Adjacent to the house is an urban slave quarters, home to the enslaved people whose labors and very existence made life at Hopemont possible. Visitors to the home may hear the story of the enslaved nursemaid Bouviette James, who tended to generations of children in the house. While this woman's name survives, many of the en-



The plaque on this rounded-top trunk reads "John Hunt, Kentucky". It is believed that Mr. Hunt brought the trunk with him when he traveled to Kentucky in 1795 from New Jersey.



facture of hemp and was a business leader in the city. His wife Maria Gratz made her mark as founder of the Lexington Orphan Asylum. Alexander Moore, whose home sat on Market St., ran a stationery store and sold the first school-books to the city of Lexington. At the north end of the park sat the original Transylvania University, an institution that helped establish the title "Athens of the West" for the emerging

at Hopemont, became Kentucky's first Nobel Laureate. Thomas Pindell, for whom the Bodley-Bullock House was built in 1814, went on to become mayor of Lexington in 1854. Dr. Robert Peter, who lived in the John Stark House, was a Union Surgeon at the hospital occupying Transylvania's Old Morrison during the Civil War.



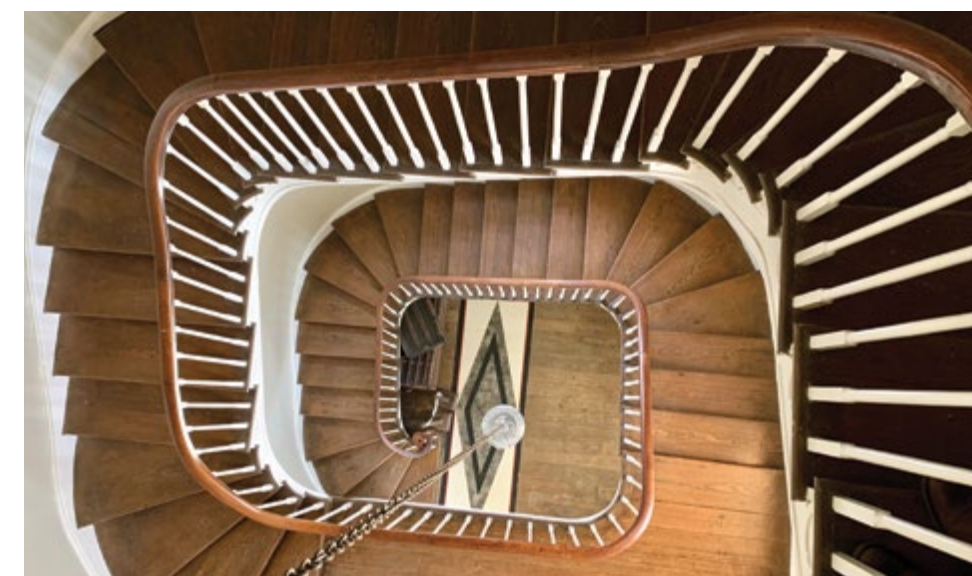
Portrait of John Wesley Hunt. John Wesley Hunt was born in Trenton, NJ in 1773. He moved to Lexington in 1795 and became such a successful businessman that he was known as the "First Millionaire West of the Alleghanies" having made his fortune primarily in the hemp industry.

The impact of the residents of Gratz Park, as well as the architectural influence of their homes, is evident not only in the city of Lexington, but also throughout the state. Hopemont remains an extraordinary example of that impact and offers a unique experience to visitors. The house is open for guided tours from late March through October. 📍

slaved people who were the backbone of life at Hopemont remain unnamed.

While tales of Confederate John Hunt Morgan, a grandson of the house, are a part of the history shared during a tour of the home, visitors will also learn about the differing sympathies among families surrounding the park. An exhibit highlights the sympathy of each home, demonstrating divided loyalties to either the Union or the Confederacy that existed not only in Gratz Park, but also in the city of Lexington, and throughout the state of Kentucky. Again, Gratz Park was a microcosm of the city.

In addition to the impact John Wesley Hunt had on Lexington, other Gratz Park residents were key players in the development of the city. Benjamin Gratz, whose home Mt. Hope was adjacent to Hopemont, also made his fortune in the manu-



This cantilevered stairwell is an excellent example of 19th century Kentucky craftsmanship. The treads are made of blue ash and the banister of cherry.

The Heartbeat of Hopemont

As an historic home in Gratz Park, Hopemont is a beautiful example of 19th century Federal-style architecture. The home's fine china and antique furniture are representative of the affluence of the Hunt and Morgan families, as well as the Gratz Park neighborhood in the 18th and 19th centuries. John Wesley Hunt, and other men of his status, helped develop Lexington from a frontier settlement into the "Athens of the West" through the building of businesses, through the establishment of Transylvania University, and through amassing personal wealth. Hunt's impact on Lexington, and the Bluegrass region, was significant, but it is important to remember the domestic, agricultural, and industrial labor behind his businesses, and the labor that increased his wealth, were performed by enslaved men, women, and children.

When we talk about Hopemont, Gratz Park, and the accomplishments of the early Lexington magnates, we must acknowledge their success as captains of industry and leaders in the local and national political sphere were inextricably linked to their roles as enslavers. Hunt and his contemporaries were able to focus their energies on shaping Lexington into a prosperous community because the drudgery of industry was carried



Constructed around 1830-40, the carriage house was built to house the family carriage and carriage horses. The building contains two carriage doors, one on Second Street and one on the back side of the carriage house. This allowed the carriage to pull forward into the house and out of the house without attempting to back up the horses. Note the second-floor door where hay, grain, and straw was unloaded into the loft.

out by those held in bondage. If Gratz Park can be seen as a "microcosm of Lexington's evolution," then Lexington's evolution was hastened by the labor of enslaved Black people.

A tour of Hopemont will help visitors contextualize the success of John Wesley Hunt and other Gratz Park denizens.

As an antebellum home in the Bluegrass, Hopemont is singular in that it retains remnants of its connection to urban domestic enslavement. Both the basement of the home and the carriage house remain as evidence of the labor of the individuals who were enslaved to serve the



The carriage house has two stalls, where the horses were kept while unhitched from the carriage. Each stall has a hay drop where hay was fed to the horses from the storage room above.



Stairs led from the first floor of the carriage house, where the horses and carriage were kept, to the second floor where bins were filled with grain for the horses and straw was stored for the stalls.



The front room of the kitchen, located in the basement of Hopemont, has one of two fireplaces in the three-room basement. The food for the family was prepared in the basement kitchen and carried upstairs into the warming kitchen.

Hunts, and later the Morgans. Although the objects exhibited in the basement are meant to evoke a slave dwelling, there is little evidence the space was used as anything more than a kitchen area for the home. Much of the interior of the carriage house, built around 1830, is preserved, save for the concrete floors, which hint at the space's later years as a car garage.

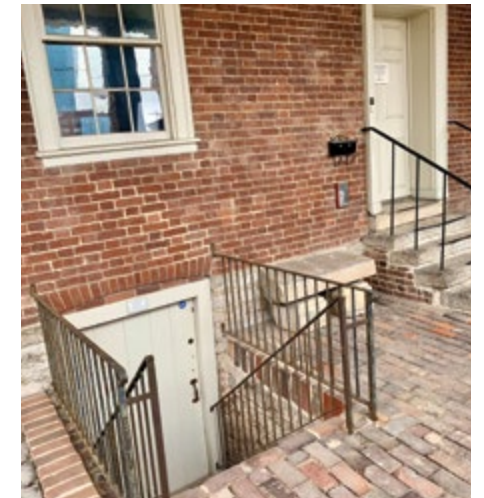
at Hopemont, it cannot tell us about those people's lives. One of the great tragedies of the institution of slavery is its erasure of people's personal stories. Through bills of sale, we know the names of over 50 young boys who labored in Hunt's ropewalk in downtown Lexington, but we will likely never know the personal stories of boys like Reuben, Harry, and Harvey. Another



Thought to have been built in the 1830s or 1840s, this two-story building housed those who were enslaved by the Hunt and Morgan families.

While the basement and the carriage house can provide a glimpse into the nature of the labor performed by the people enslaved

person's story we may never fully know is that of Bouviette James. Enslaved to perform childcare for the Morgan family, the



TOP: The furnishings in the second room of the basement kitchen suggest that laundry may have been done here, along with baths in the large tin bathtub. There may have also been enslaved persons who lived in this part of the house.

BOTTOM: From the courtyard, steps lead down into the basement kitchen. Food was prepared in the basement, then carried up the steps to the right, and into the warming kitchen.

glimpses we get of Bouviette the person are filtered through the paternalism of the Lost Cause movement, which portrayed her as a caricature and a stereotype.

Other early residents of Gratz Park, like Benjamin Gratz for whom the area is named, were just as influential and successful as John Wesley Hunt. Their success too must be examined with their status as enslavers in mind. These men achieved much in their lives and left an indelible mark on Lexington and the Bluegrass. Their success, however, came at the expense of the men, women, and children they held in bondage, and the economic institution of slavery they upheld. 🇺🇸

Newlyweds at Home in Gratz Park

Newlyweds Tom and Judy Grunwald began their married life in 1964 in a rented apartment in historic Gratz Park. Upon graduation from the University of Kentucky, Tom was hired as a history teacher and Judy as a secretary at Sayre School. Judy



Judy and Tom Grunwald, who were married in 1964, are seen here cutting their wedding cake.

says living in the historic neighborhood was ideal not only for their work at Sayre, but also for enjoying everything downtown Lexington had to offer. She described the ease of walking to the Lexington Public Library in the center of Gratz Park, frequenting downtown restaurants like Levas's and department stores such as Wolf Wiles, Meyers, Graves Cox, and Purcell's. In her words, downtown Lexington was a "bustling place."

The young Grunwalds moved into the John Morrison cabin at 318 W. Third St., built in 1787, and lived there from 1964 to 1966. The couple sublet the second floor while living on the first floor. Although they loved living in the cabin, Tom and Judy jumped at the chance to live in an apartment at Hopemont. The historic home offered a perfect setting for the new history teacher, and it certainly fit their budget. They rented the upstairs apartment for \$100 a month, including all utilities except for telephone. Judy recalled Tom bringing members of the Sayre football team to assist getting their refrigerator up the beautiful winding staircase

to the second floor. Despite their care, the boys still scraped along the wall, which Tom fortunately was able to repair with a paintbrush.

The apartment consisted of a dining area located on the second-floor landing at the front of the house, looking out the Palladian window. Two bathrooms, installed in the 1940s, were located on either side of that window. The Grunwalds' kitchen was in the room currently interpreted as the nursery. Their living room, with radiator heat, was in what is presently furnished as John Wesley and Catherine Hunt's bedroom, and the Grunwalds' bedroom was in what is now called the Victorian bedroom where Henrietta and Calvin Morgan slept.

Both the Grunwalds' living room and bedroom had fireplaces, probably not used in decades. As an outdoorsman, as well as a lover of history, Tom itched to build a fire in one of those fireplaces. Knowing it was probably not wise to do, he gave into that desire one weekend and built a fire in



The Grunwald's living room in their second-floor apartment at Hopemont is now interpreted as the bedroom of John Wesley and Catherine Hunt.

their bedroom fireplace. The fireplace had been refitted as a coal burning fireplace with a much smaller opening during the Victorian period. Realizing the depth of the fireplace was much less than a log-burning fireplace, Tom was careful to use small logs. Still, not long after lighting the fire, a brick fell from the chimney into



The Grunwalds lived in the John Morrison Cabin at 318 W. Third Street, built in 1787, from 1964 to 1966.

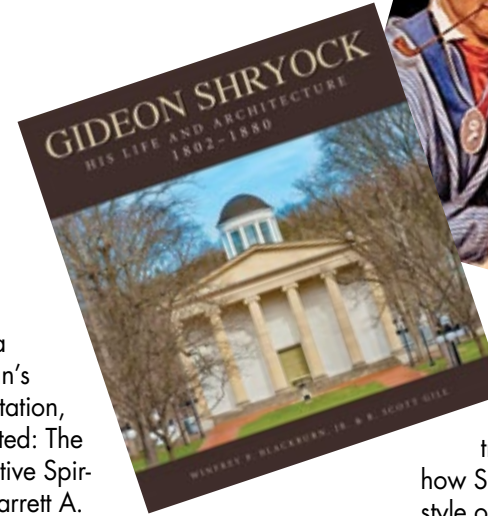
the fire, and Tom was quick to put it out. For the remainder of the weekend, Tom and Judy checked the fireplace to be sure they hadn't set the chimney on fire. "We could just imagine the headlines had we set this beautiful old historic home on fire. We certainly never did that again," Judy said when confessing this.

During the year the Grunwalds lived in Hopemont, the downstairs was frequently rented for weddings, meetings, and receptions. Although not a museum house at the time, some stories about the early residents of the house did persist. Tom and Judy had been warned the ghost of Mam' Bet, the enslaved nursemaid of the Morgan children, resided in the house. On several occasions, they lit a candle and waited for her appearance, but Aunt Betty never appeared.

Following their year at Hopemont, Tom and Judy moved across the park to the Noah McClelland House at 248 Market St., built in 1855. After a year in this third historic property, the young couple moved into a more modern home to await the arrival of their son Matthew. Those memories of Gratz Park most certainly made their mark, however, as the Grunwalds were eventually drawn back to downtown Lexington, owning a home in Bell Court for the past 49 years. 🏡

The BGT's Hopemont Lecture Series

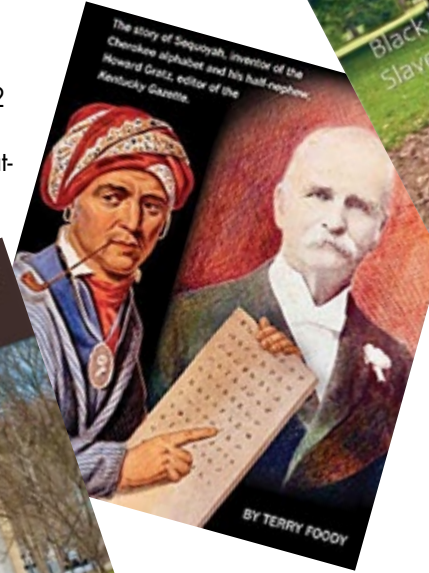
In the last issue of *Preservation Matters*, we announced the start of the 2021-2022 Hopemont Lecture series, featuring guest lecturers discussing historical material related to Kentucky. We kicked off the lecture series



with Sandra Morgan's presentation, "Patented: The Innovative Spirit of Garrett A. Morgan," about her grandfather, the inventor, activist, and entrepreneur Garrett Morgan. Ms. Morgan's lecture was quite an act to follow but set the perfect tone for subsequent presenters who did exceptional jobs, as you will read for yourself!

In November 2021, local author and friend of the Trust Terry Foody presented her lecture "Sequoyah and Gratz: Kinsmen in Words," based on her book, *Cherokee and the Newsman: Kinsmen in Words*. She discussed the connections between Sequoyah, inventor of the Cherokee alphabet, and his half-nephew, Howard Gratz, editor of the Kentucky Gazette and son of Benjamin Gratz for whom Gratz Park (where Hopemont is located) is named.

For December, BGT and the Warwick Foundation co-sponsored the presentation of co-authors Winfrey P. Blackburn, Jr. and Dr. Scott Gill for their new book *Gideon Shryock: His Life and Architecture 1802-1880*, the first and definitive book about



Shryock, Ky.'s first formally trained architect. They described how Shryock brought the international style of Greek Revival to Kentucky and the American West and, in the process, created a template of architectural and professional dignity for others to follow.

The 2022 portion of the Hopemont Lecture Series began with Reinette Jones and Kopana Terry from UK's Special Collections and their presentation of "If It's Not in The Newspapers, Don't Believe It." They shared how to use Kentucky newspapers as a major resource for historical research and genealogical work. They also explained how newspapers contain information not found in other



resources and how they can be used as an educational tool for all ages. They told how the Kentucky Digital Newspaper Program (KDNP) came to exist, who uses it, and why it is free to all who have internet service. Additionally, they overviewed why so much local African American history is found in newspapers and how newspapers have been a vital resource in develop-

ing the Notable Kentucky African Americans Database (NKAAD).

In February, BGT hosted a special Valentine's edition Hopemont Lecture with the help of Victorian Barman Brian Cushing and his presentation of "Mixology in the Victorian Period." The evening featured three different cocktails from the era (including bourbon, brandy, and



Victorian Cocktails presented by Brian Cushing

absinthe concoctions) guests were able to learn to craft themselves, while enjoying an historical beverage or two.

In March, Dr. Andrew Patrick from Centre College joined us for his riveting presentation "Black Hands & Green Fibers: Slavery & Race in Kentucky's Hemp History," an in-depth overview of hemp's history in Kentucky from the Revolutionary era to modern-day with a particular emphasis on the underappreciated roles played by Black Kentuckians.

Ending the 2021-2022 Hopemont Lecture Series, we were pleased to be joined by historian and Bourbon County native Estill Curtis Pennington as April's speaker. For the past 40 years, he has actively studied painting in the South and recently completed his book *Matthew Harris Jouett (1788-1827): His Life and Works*. Pennington's lecture focused on Jouett's time with Gilbert Stuart in Boston, his achievement as a portraitist, and his modern legacy.

The Hopemont Lecture Series for 2021-2022 had quite a run, sharing important and diverse histories. The BGT looks forward to continuing to host these import-

A Short History of Historic Preservation in the United States

As a formally declared country, our history began relatively recently. Therefore, the concept of preserving any of our history is relatively new as well. Nonetheless, the never-ending tension between building the new versus preserving the old has been around since the country's beginning, and it does not appear to be going away – ever. Historic Preservation is about managing this tension, a topic of fevered discussion for 200 years.

Settlers to the Ohio region had at least some recognition of the importance of preserving the past. In the 1700s, as they began to drive out the indigenous residents, they did elect to preserve some of the indigenous architecture, in the form of mounds. Some of these mounds were for burials, but the purpose of others is unknown. A great example is the serpent mound located in Peeples, Ohio (an hour or so east of Cincinnati). It is a World Heritage site and is thought to be one or two thousand years old.

One of the first organizations to focus on United States history was – and still is – the Massachusetts Historical Society, in Boston. It started out in 1791 as a collection of papers, records, artifacts, family records, etc. It now has millions of documents, and hundreds of thousands of works of art, photographs, and other artifacts.

During the first half of the 19th century, aside from individual interest in preserving a random colonial structure, the nation was more focused on building than



The Great Serpent Mound, located in Adams County, OH, is a 1,348-foot-long, three-foot-high prehistoric effigy mound, the largest serpent effigy in the world.

preserving. But as the century progressed interest began to grow about what to preserve and when it should happen. One of the first successful preservation efforts was George Washington's headquarters in Newburgh, NY in 1850. It became the first publicly operated historic site in the United States.



Washington's Headquarters, located in Newburgh, NY, overlooking the Hudson River, was quarters for George Washington while he commanded the Continental Army during the final year of the American Revolution.

Organized historic preservation in the United States is considered to have begun in the late 1850s when the circa 1735 house of John Hancock (once known as the finest house in all of Massachusetts Bay) and George Washington's circa 1734 Mount Vernon were in danger of being demolished; both for real estate development. It caused great public con-

sternation. The Mount Vernon Ladies Association raised funds to purchase Mount Vernon; they maintain and operate it to this day. Hancock's house didn't fare as well. After several efforts to save it, it was sold and torn down in 1863. The furor over its demise for a residential development was the impetus for the beginning of the preservation movement in Boston that saved several old landmarks, including the Old South Meeting House. (Some things never really change. As mentioned above, historic preservation is knee-deep in the age-old conflict between keeping the old versus building the new. Interestingly, like Mount Vernon and Hancock's house, the demise of one and the potential loss of another famed historic building in Lexington triggered the start of the organized historic preservation effort in Central Kentucky, our Blue Grass Trust for Historic Preservation, in 1955.)

Interest in preserving our nation's heritage grew during the latter half of the 19th century. This eventually culminated in the federal Antiquities Act of 1906. This act established a process for identifying and designating archaeological and historic sites located on federal lands, and imposed fines and punishment for removing antiquities from federal lands without a proper permit.

Starting in the 1920s, the cultural landscape was dramatically altered by the rise of automobile travel. While the phenomenon created conditions that have resulted



Built in 1729, the Old South Meeting House, a Congregational church and gathering place for politics in Revolutionary Boston, is in downtown Boston.

in a threat to known landscapes and the demolition of many important buildings, the increased mobility vastly expanded tourism of historic landmarks. The 1926 \$100 million preservation and restoration

of Williamsburg, Va., by John D. Rockefeller, Jr., was part of that expanded interest. The federal government's passage of the Historic Sites Act in 1935 allowed for the purchase and administration of historic places by the National Park Service. The National Trust for Historic Preservation was created in 1949 to provide "leadership, education, and advocacy to save America's diverse historic places and revitalize our communities" according to its mission statement.

The 1964 destruction of New York's monumental Penn Station resulted in the 1965 creation of the New York Landmarks Preservation Commission, and most likely aided the passage of the very significant landmark National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. Among its important provisions, it reaffirmed the federal government's role in preserving our nation's historic sites, created the National Register of Historic Places (our nation's official list of historic properties), created the National Historic Landmarks Program, established a procedure for dealing with federally funded development

projects that adversely affect historic sites (the Section 106 process), and created the federal tax credit and the State Historic Preservation Offices. In 1996, the act was expanded to include Native American sacred sites. Over time, the register has been expanded to include whole neighborhoods over 50 years of age and that meet other criteria.

Preservationists were sometimes referred to as "sentimentalists" in the early 1950s. We have progressed from that patronizing reference to where preserving our built heritage is viewed as an

important economic asset even to many who might not be interested in preservation just for the sake of preservation. (The economic impact of tourism to Central Kentucky measures in the billions!) This is summarized by the thought, "People don't come to visit places to experience what they can get at home. They are interested in experiencing that which makes a locality unique and different from what they are used to." In Lexington Visitlex tells us horses, bourbon, and a preserved unique and varied history are the main drivers of tourist traffic. 🇺🇸



The Governor's Palace in Williamsburg, VA was the official residence of the governors of the colony of Virginia. Having burned in 1781, it was rebuilt in the 1930s and is part of Colonial Williamsburg.

Below you will find a listing of new memberships to the Trust spanning this past year from April 1, 2021 through March 31, 2022. New recipients of BGT plaques are listed for the same period. (Plaque recipients also receive a membership.) All the categories of donors to 2022 Antiques & Garden Show are listed as well as memorials, honorariums, and specifically designated gifts.

In the upcoming Fall/Winter issue of *Preservation Matters*, this year's ongoing Annual Fund donors will be listed in giving categories. The Annual Fund is singularly important in supporting the Trust's ongoing expenses. The Annual Fund closes on June 30. If you have not made your contribution, please do so by using the donor envelope enclosed in this magazine. Donations can also be made online at www.bluegrasstrust.org or by using the QR code to the right. *Thank you.*

New Members

Mr. Jim Albisetti
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Dr. Richard Schein

New Plaque Members

Recipients of BGT plaques also receive a BGT annual membership.

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Katharine and Forest
Erickson
Mr. Richard Ford and
Ms. Melissa Wilson
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Ms. Donna Grace
Mr. and Ms. Raymond Hill
Mr. Steve Kay and
Ms. Rona Roberts
Jim and Lisa Maffett
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Ms. Janice C. Mayes
Kathryn and
Ryan Montgomery
William Pope and
Jacqueline Tackett
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Mr. Shawn Sheehan
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Ms. Marcia A. Smith and
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Tom and
Kathy Stanwix-Hay
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Mr. Mark Thomas and
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Mr. Chesney Turner
James and Cynthia Ware
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Allison Westcote and
Ryan Caudill
Ms. Kay Anne Wilborn
Ms. Penny Wilcutt

Contribution to Honor

Dr. Jonathan Coleman
Ph.D.
by: Robert Magrish
Martin Ginocchio
by: Gretchen Brown
Jack Stevenson
by: Anonymous
Lucy Shropshire Crump
by: Kenney Roseberry

Gifts Given in Memory of

Patricia DeCamp
by: Betty Dabney Brown
by: Alex Campbell
by: Rodes and
Elizabeth Campbell
by: Robin Combs
by: James and
Donna Cornish
by: Ann Todd Dupree
by: The Grady Family
by: Bill and
Beverly Fortune
by: John and
Carolyn Hackworth
by: David Hafley
by: Oggie Beth Hilliard
by: W. Burroughs Holton
by: Barbara and
Libby Hulette
by: Steve Kay and
Rona Roberts
by: Zee Kurfees
by: Fern Letnes
by: Charles and
Gloria Martin
by: Dabney Parker
by: Maureen Peters and
Joe Turley
by: Ms. Jill Rose &
Mr. Austin Mehr
by: Allen and
Margie Schubert
by: John and Katie Stites

Ms. Marcia A. Smith and
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Mr. Mark Thomas and
Erin Chandler
James and Cynthia Ware

Martha Foster
by: Nat Sandler

Edward E. Gage
by: Dortha Caras
by: Lucy and
Roger Dalton
by: John and
Carolyn Hackworth
by: Mary Ann Hatton
by: Jennifer and
Robert Murray
by: Maureen Peters and
Joe Turley
by: Nancy Thoma

Ann Garden
by: Anonymous
by: Cary and
Nancy Blaydes
by: James and Elise Boyd
by: Katherine Brewer
by: Darrell and
Lendy Brown
by: Elizabeth Buckley
by: Lee Carroll
by: Martha Cassidy
by: Lucy and
Roger Dalton
by: Sarah Davis
by: Elvis and
Geneva Donaldson
by: William and
Judy Gayle
by: Edie and Bush Gess
by: John and
Carolyn Hackworth
by: James (Ben) and
Mary Haggin
by: Nina Hahn
by: John and Donna Hall
by: Hugh and
Marij Hines
by: Jim and Pat Host
by: Lindsey and
Alice Ingram
by: Evelyn Kemper
by: Zee Kurfees
by: James and
Carolyn Kurz

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by: Betty Anita Webb
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by: Charles and
Diane Lovell
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by: Betty Jo Palmer
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Jane Pancake
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Joseph C. Graves Jr.
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A Woman Saves Her Family's "Spirits" on the Racetrack



Renowned beauty and "Kentucky's Queen of the Turf" Ella Offutt Pepper

A distinguished bourbon drinker will "nose" whiskey before tasting it, which helps detect aromas hidden deep in the flavor profile. And when visiting a bourbon distillery, the unmistakable smell of yeast, wood, and copper denote America's national spirit. With such an olfactory concentration surrounding bourbon, it is surprising the James E. Pepper Distillery sat abandoned for decades under the collective nose of bourbon enthusiasts in Lexington. It wasn't until 2008 Amir Peay and other savvy visionaries began resurrecting the distillery which sits just 1.2 miles away from the University of Kentucky's famous Rupp Arena.

This recent recovery story, however, is one of several in the Pepper brand's history. While the intricate bourbon distillation process refines grains and water into sweet and soothing corn whiskey, every bottle of bourbon created by Pepper seems to simultaneously steel the

company's resolve to thrive in the face of adversity. Founded in 1780, Pepper bourbon has endured wars, recessions, and political upheavals that severely threatened its existence or made it temporarily inoperative; yet it prevailed.

One particular comeback story has captured the attention of the public for over a century – a woman's trailblazing endeavor to save the distillery from financial ruin by adopting thoroughbred horse racing during the highs and lows of the Industrial Revolution. This story involves a beloved socialite equipped with perspicacious wit.

Born in Shelbyville in 1856, Ella Offutt married James E. Pepper in 1890. Together, they moved into an elegant Greek Revival home standing on the 223-acre Meadowthorpe Farm in Lexington. Professionally prosperous, the couple enjoyed an elite status as they traversed the country in a private rail car and consociated with business moguls such as Rockefeller, Vanderbilt, Pillsbury, and Steinway.

A national economic crisis, however,

reared its head in the 1890s and the Pepper family was unable to repay bank loans. Faced with losing their distillery, their creditors forced an auction of the thoroughbred horses at Meadowthorpe. It was at this pivotal point Ella took charge of all equine operations. Once she arrived at the auction slated to doom her family, all parties present agreed not to bid against her and she successfully bought back her thoroughbreds "for a song." During the next few years, she succeeded in the horse racing industry beyond anyone's wildest dreams. Racing under the shorthand name of "E.O. Pepper" to conceal her womanhood in the male-dominated profession, she acquired the means to pay off the family's indebtedness and a substantial penalty fee issued by The Jockey Club meant to cripple the Pepper's future in the industry.

It was known James was extremely fond of his prized horses and was interested in thoroughbred racing purely for sport, not gambling. And while Ella was equally attached to their stable of chestnuts and bays, she was astute in her dealings and won over \$950,000 during her career. Her accomplishments even took her to England where her horse, Kings Courier, won the coveted Doncaster Cup by edging out the monarchy's own steed.

This is where Ella's story typically ends. It is well-known she was outstanding on race day, but what was her secret? How did "The Turf Queen" come to direct "the most successful racing stable ever campaigned on



Advertisement in the Dec. 1897 Brooklyn Life magazine



ABOVE & BELOW:

Located in the thriving Distillery District on Manchester Street in Lexington, the James E. Pepper Distillery moved here from Woodford County in 1936. In 1962 it went out of business and has only recently been resurrected at the very same location by Amir Peay, who has revived Pepper bourbon.

the American turf by a woman" as a 1901 article by the *Philadelphia Inquirer* stated? The answer can be found in the words of the woman herself.

She disclosed to a reporter of the *Portsmouth Herald* in 1899, "I naturally regarded the purity of water as vital consequence." Hence, she drilled a 200-foot artesian well at Meadowthorpe so her horses could have sanitary water. Understanding her horses drank approximately eight gallons of water a day, she ensured they were consuming natural water imbued with lime, magnesium, and iron instead of the surface water polluted with organic matter. Once her stable was equipped with stronger bones and tissues due to their hydration source, she made serious changes in the horses' handling and training. She was firm that "we do not do any forcing" and allowed her horses to "romp around in the blue grass" naturally. Lastly, Ella was adamant about spending time with each horse she owned and naming them "suitable to their breeding." With her mindful

care, Ella's success likely initiated many modern practices still exhibited in the horse industry.

Ella's bold resolve seems to have inspired her family members to achieve great feats, including her niece Florence Offutt Stout who once lived with Ella at Meadowthorpe. After becoming an acclaimed gymnast, Florence was hired at the University of Kentucky and eventually became the first woman to become a full professor at the school and the first Dean of Women in 1909. In a progressive notion, she recommended ending the rule that boys and girls could not walk together on campus.

Without Ella's intrepid efforts and keen insight at the turn of the 20th century, it is hard to determine what fate the

Pepper brand may have met. The next time you choose to enjoy a glass of this steadfast whiskey, raise a glass to Ella Offutt Pepper and her enterprising leadership. 🍷



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2022 BGT Antiques & Garden Show



Honorary Chairs Brent Bruner and Matt Carter with Sarah and Ben Carter at the Gala on Thursday evening (Photo by Daniel Roberts)

Renowned for southern charm and quality dealers, the Blue Grass Trust for Historic Preservation's 36th Antiques & Garden Show, presented by Christopher Michael



Alice Mayer, Jennifer Mayer, and Martie Mayer of Lilies at Nursery Place (Photo by Daniel Roberts)

Interiors and Central Bank March 4-6, 2022 in Lexington, was a fun and successful event in every way! The event started with the Gala Preview Cocktail Party sponsored by Syers Browning and Dr. and Mrs. Elvis Donaldson, Jr. on Thursday evening, March 3rd, featuring a signature cocktail by Maker's Mark and a delectable array of gourmet food by DaRae Catering. A fundraiser for the BGT's preservation work in Central Kentucky, this three-day show has become a regional draw. We welcomed thousands of guests to the 2022 show at the Kentucky Horse Park's Alltech Arena, which featured 80+ quality exhibitors from around the country. We were

serve again as the 2022 AGS Committee co-chairs. They did an outstanding job.

The high note of the 2022 show was our stellar keynote speaker – Christopher Spitzmiller speaking about his new book, *A Year at the Clove Brook Farm – Gardening, Tending Flocks, Keeping Bees, Collecting Antiques, and Entertaining Friends*. The Keynote Presentation sponsored by Benjamin Deaton Interior Design was sold out for the first time.

Returning in 2022 and a big draw were two Cocktails & Quickfire Seminars, hosted by Janice Carter Levitch, Publisher of *Voice Louisville*; Alex Narramore, *The Mischief Maker*; and Jackson Osborne of the BGT. We hosted a different lineup each day, of several ten-minute talks from trusted experts on exciting subjects, Design Eye, Plant/Floral, Entertaining, and Bar Times and Practical Home Ideas. Friday's fabulous lineup featured Alex Narramore, *The Mischief Maker*; Albert Lukonga, *Albert Couture*; Richard Weber, *Springhouse Gardens*; and Renee Brewer, *Wine + Market*. Saturday's spectacular array of experts featured Lauren Spencer, *Brownings Flower Truck*; Mea Adams, *the Apiary*; and Mitchell Christian, *Syers Browning and Henry Bradley from Castle & Key Distillery*. A specialty cocktail was provided each day by Bulliet Bourbon and Castle & Key Distilleries.

Adding to the beauty of the show were designer vignettes by Isabel Ladd Interiors, *Thoroughbred Antique Gallery Design*, *Norwalk Furniture & Design* by K&T Interiors, *Syers Browning*, *Isabella Yunker Designs*, *K. Chamblin Design* and Sarah

Marks Interiors. Bringing that touch of "spring is in the air" were garden exhibitors Pemberton's Greenhouse and Blooms. Thanks in large measure to AGS committee member Faith Harders, we had a great



BGT Intern Ellie Cooke, BGT Executive Director Jonathan Coleman, and Board member Kathy Chopra (Photo by Daniel Roberts)

lineup of complimentary daily lecturers sponsored by Blue & Co. including Sarah Marks: Sarah Marks Interiors, Kevin Nance: Garden Photos & Haiku, Bill Meng: Everything Tastes Better on



Jackson Osborne, BGT's "Go-To" man at the Antiques & Garden Show, with Jason Molvene of Blue Ocean Traders

Silver! and Ann Evans: *A Peek at the Art of Entertaining with Confidence*.

Another highlight of the Show was the revamped BGT Bazaar featuring vendors of stunning stalls including Ben Deaton Home, CC Pearl, Designer Baskets by Derek, Double Barrell Bourbon Honey, Henry Dry Goods, KY Paper On Stone, and Lexington Silver. ↑



TOP TO BOTTOM: LEFT: Keynote speaker Christopher Spitzmiller at his sold-out presentation

RIGHT: Sarah Marks Interiors Vignette

LEFT: Display for Rawlings Antiques of Bowling Green, KY

RIGHT: Kim Ellington of Booming Valley Flower Farm with Ashley Pemberton Herndon of Pemberton's Greenhouses welcoming guests to their booths at the Gala (Photo by Daniel Roberts)

LEFT: Sandra Morgan, recent lecturer in the Hopemont Lecture Series, and her husband Joe Harbert, visiting the show from Cleveland, with BGT staff and volunteers

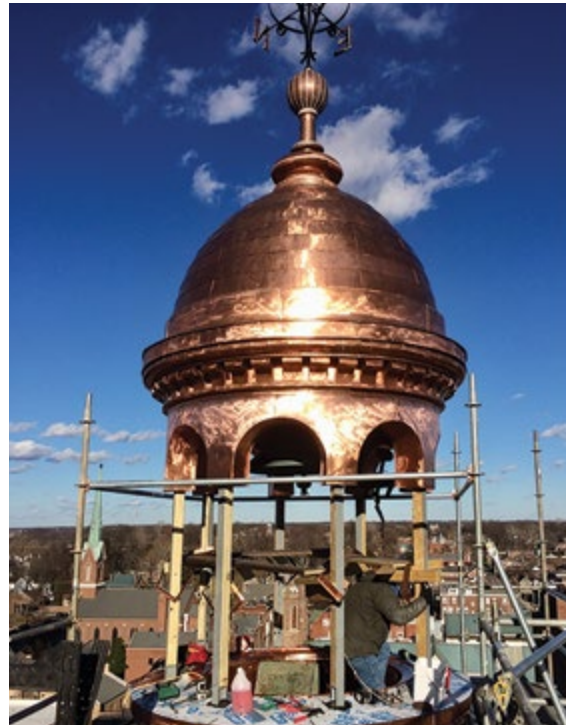
RIGHT: Liberty Hill Posters for Sale

LEFT: Board member Steve Gardner and his wife Karen Wilson share information about the Blue Grass Trust with visitors to the show

RIGHT: Maureen Peters, Co-Chair of the Antiques & Garden Show, and BGT Executive Director Jonathon Coleman, both looking away, as the \$1000 raffle ticket is drawn



Enhanced Kentucky *Historic Tax Credits* Provide Greater Incentives for Rehabilitation



State and federal historic rehabilitation tax credits were used in the restoration of the c1898 Fayette County Courthouse, a \$32 million commercial project, including repairs to the copper-sheathed cupola.

income-producing properties. Both programs are administered by the Kentucky Heritage Council/State Historic Preservation Office (KHC).

Like the federal, the state program offers up to a 20% credit for commercial and income-producing properties but additionally offers up to 20% for "other" projects undertaken by nonprofits, churches, local government, and non-tax entities that can sell the credit once earned. Most important for homeowners, the state credit also offers up to a 30% credit for owner-occupied residential structures.



State tax credits of \$15,000 for exterior repairs to this c1889 home in Lexington's Fayette Park included masonry and limestone foundation repointing and repair and rebuilding of two chimneys.

plumbing upgrades, and other adaptations enabling a building to function fully for modern uses.

Even with the previous caps, investment use and return from the state program have been impactful. Since implementation in 2005, through December 2021, 325 projects throughout the 6th Congressional District have generated \$92 million of investments in building rehabilitation. Statewide, the program has resulted in 1,116 buildings rehabilitated and \$709 million of private funds invested in preservation, leveraged through \$51 million in credits.

For more information, visit KHC's website at www.heritage.ky.gov.



Shaker Village of Pleasant Hill is a National Historic Landmark whose annual nonprofit budget depends on the significant return on investment that comes from submitting state tax credit applications each year for various projects. Recent work has included a new roof and other repairs to the 1817 East Family Dwelling. (photo courtesy Shaker Village of Pleasant Hill blog)

The Kentucky Historic Preservation Tax Credit has proven a successful incentive for the rehabilitation and preservation of historic homes and buildings in Central Kentucky and the rest of the state. This incentive, however, is about to become much more appealing.

A bill to increase per-project tax credit caps was passed in the 2022 General Assembly, enhancing legislation passed last year that raises the annual program cap to \$100 million, up from \$5 million, likely ensuring that project totals will not exceed the cap and result in an apportioned credit for applicants.

Tax credits are available for contributing properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places individually or within a district. The state credit is often used in tandem with the longstanding Federal Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit (HTC), a powerhouse 20% credit for commercial and

Both federal and state programs require a minimum investment of \$20,000 over 24 months (federal projects must exceed an adjusted basis). Currently, the state credit is capped at \$60,000, the maximum return for residential projects, with commercial/other properties capped at \$400,000. This is where the new legislation offers even a bigger carrot: program caps increase to \$120,000 for residential and \$10 million for commercial/other.

Tax deductions reduce the amount of taxable income, while historic rehab tax credits offer a dollar-for-dollar reduction in taxes for investment in projects certified to meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. These require a building's historic character to be retained and preserved, including distinctive features and finishes, and for historic elements to be repaired rather than replaced. The program does allow for kitchen and bath updates, HVAC and

Featured *BGT Plaque Application*

Jackie Tackett and Bill Pope lived on Valley Road for years and were happy in the house where they raised their family. Still, Jackie was intrigued by the slightly-out-of-place rental house around the corner she passed on her neighborhood walks. She thought maybe she could use the house at 236 Tahoma Rd. to entice a reticent Bill to downsize without leaving the neighborhood. The problem was the owner lived in Alaska and the house was not for sale – at first.



BGT Plaque Applicant at 236 Tahoma Road

But Jackie persevered (she won't say how!) and they moved in.

It turns out the house has an unusual pedigree and has been considered odd since it was built. Bettye Lee Mastin wrote in a 1953 newspaper article the modern design raised concerns from the "Tahoma Road Building Committee" who objected to the main entrance on the side and the clerestory windows, and worried too much money was being spent on such a small house. The house size was partly an illusion. The architect sited the house to take advantage of a sloping, south facing lot and placed the two-story living room with a shed roof in the back of the house and the bedrooms on the front, which mandated a side entrance. The slope also allowed for a light-filled basement under the living room. The connecting stairwell in the center of the house is highlighted by a glass and metal



balustrade, one of Jackie's favorite original elements.

The house appears even more of an historical anomaly in Lexington as it was designed by N. Warfield Gratz, better known for his traditional houses and additions built in the first half of the 20th century. Jackie and Bill inherited the original plans, drawn in 1951, a year before Richard Isehour moved to Lexington and sold us on modern houses. Tackett and Pope have not changed much in the house. It had been slightly modified in 1967, by "bumping" the east side out a few feet and turning the garage into a third bedroom. But the house's original appeal was maintained, and all Jackie and Bill really had to do to "make it theirs" was "patch 'n' paint" and add a screened-in porch on top of the house's original concrete back terrace. 236 Tahoma Rd. is our featured plaque house for a combination of reasons. It

marks an American architectural transition from traditional to modern, especially for the growing middle class in the American suburb. It does so through the personal design transformation of a well-known Lexington architect. It captures the social pressures of stereotypical, conformist suburban life in the actions of the Tahoma Road Building Committee. It reminds us



Glass and Metal Balustrade in house center

what is deemed "historic" by National Register criteria is a moving target. And it opens the possibility for the next generation of preservationists

to cast a wider net across the American landscape and our preservation efforts. Go to <https://www.bluegrasstrust.org/plaques> to download your plaque application.

UK Faculty and Students Develop Walking Tour for Winchester Historic District

photographs by Kopona Terry



Students at Judge James Benton House, ca. 1890, South Maple Street.



Bungalow at the intersection of South Main Street and French Avenue.

Over the past year and a half, students enrolled in American architectural history and historic places documentation classes at the University of Kentucky have researched, analyzed, and written about the buildings and cultural landscape of the Thomson Neighborhood Historic District of Winchester, Clark County, Ky. The ultimate goal of this effort has been developing a walking tour similar to that created in the collaboration with the Blue Grass Trust for its tour, "Adaptive Reuse in Lexington's Urban Core."



View looking northward along alley CS-1215 from Buckwalter House outbuilding.

The Thomson Neighborhood Historic District, located immediately south of Winchester's commercial core, was listed in the National Register in 1992 for its significance in the community's planning and development between 1888 to 1940. The district encompasses parts of six late 19th and early 20th century subdivisions, which were platted between 1871 and 1906 in response to Winchester's dramatic population growth after the town became the crossroads for two major railroads and the terminus for a regional railroad. Its name derives from Harrison P. Thomson, a prosperous Clark County farmer who was

responsible for the development of a large portion of the neighborhood.

Covering about 85 acres, the Thomson Neighborhood Historic District contains almost 200 contributing dwellings dating predominantly to the late 19th and early 20th centuries, as well as about 80 contributing secondary buildings, such as small barns, sheds, and garages constructed during the period of significance.

"What is exceptional about the Thomson neighborhood," said Professor Julie Riesenweber, who led the initiative, "is its integrity at both building and landscape scales. Not only is there an outstanding assortment of Victorian and early 20th century architecture, but the district retains the street patterns and lot divisions from the late 19th century. A surviving network of alleys gives glimpses of structures that

supported the domestic life of Winchester's well-to-do residents during the 1888 to 1940 period, and features such as stone retaining walls and double-track drives also survive. Accordingly, this walking tour not only highlights the district's architecture, but also presents these important cultural landscape features."

Professor Travis Rose, whose students contributed to the Blue Grass Trust's adaptive reuse tour, assigned students in another of his classes to analyze buildings in the Thomson neighborhood. "Contributing to the development of such walking tours is an ideal learning exercise for students of architectural history and preservation, as it requires them to apply the knowledge gained in the classroom and gives them experience working with actual preservation initiatives. Both students and faculty enjoy creating something of benefit to local communities."



Foursquare type house with Craftsman details and porte cochere, ca. 1915, South Maple Street. Note surviving double-track drive.

Winchester already has a downtown walking tour, which can be followed from either a brochure or app. The Thomson neighborhood tour will be offered via an app and will go live in May of 2022. 📱

WCCK Spotlights Innovative Nonprofits in Historic Buildings



The Well, located at 110 East Third Street, was originally developed by lawyer and politician General Leslie Combs.

One of the wonderful traditions of Woman's Club is the Spotlight Speaker grant program. The Philanthropy Committee chooses eight worthy nonprofit organizations to receive a \$400 mini-grant and join us for a club luncheon to discuss their work.

Many of these innovative nonprofits have offices and workspaces in historic buildings that have been adapted for new purposes. Not knowing much about these properties, I turned to Bettie Kerr, long time Director of Historic Preservation for the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government.

Bettie provided a fascinating sketch of Lexington downtown buildings, made new by three of this year's Spotlight Speakers.

The Well of Lexington, 110 East Third Street, supports victims of human trafficking.

The south side of East Third St. was developed by General Leslie Combs, a lawyer and politician. Born in Clark County in 1793, General Combs was a distinguished veteran of the War of 1812. He moved to Lexington in 1818 where he became a prominent Lexington citizen. He was a trustee of Transylvania, member of the legislature, railroad pioneer, and state auditor. The portion of East Third St. developed by General Combs was known as Combs Square and initially was occupied by merchants, blacksmiths, bankers, and builders.

The house located at 110 East Third St. was built circa 1860. Jacob White, a boot and shoe maker was one of the house's first residents. The house features the Italianate style. It is in the Constitution Historic District, both a National Register and local historic district.

Arbor Youth Services, 536 West Third Street, operates a ten-bed emergency shelter for youth ages birth to 17.

Circa 1890, trolley lines were introduced in Lexington, making outlying areas more accessible. Trolley lines along Broadway encouraged residential development. Thus the Northside neighborhood was opened to speculative real estate ventures. This allowed for specialized housing, at a variety



Woman's club members drop off donations to Arbor Youth Services at 536 West Third Street. The development of this property was the result of increased mobility in the city due to trolley lines. Pictured are, from left, Andrew Shadye, development director at Arbor Youth Services, Amelia Wisner, Judy Owens, Sharon Withers, Linda House, and Pace Cooke Emmons, all in leadership positions at the Woman's Club.

of socioeconomic levels, built in a mix of eclectic late Victorian architectural styles. Houses were constructed by lumber companies, combined builder-contractors and suppliers, who employed in-house architects. Families who first lived in the houses located along West Third St. may have worked at one of the industrial facilities (seed and grain companies, elevators and mills, tobacco warehouses, stock yards, and fertilizer factory) historically located



Woman's Club members touring FoodChain's aquaponics farm.

along the railroad adjacent to Newtown Pike. The house at 536 West Third St. was constructed between 1900 and 1907 and features Richardsonian Romanesque elements with some Colonial Revival details. It is in the Northside Historic Residential District, a National Register historic district.

FoodChain, 501-503 West Sixth Street, is a local nonprofit forging links among the community, fresh food, and sustainable agriculture. Its facility includes an aquaponic farm, processing kitchen, and teaching space.

During the latter part of the 19th century, the western portion of the Northside neighborhood experienced intensive development, the majority of which was residential. Additional construction within the neighborhood included commercial buildings such as grocery stores, restaurants, and saloons. Also, industrial buildings were built in and adjacent to the neighborhood. The building now commonly known as The Bread Box, at 501-503 West Sixth St., is part of the Northside neighborhood. It was constructed circa 1910, later expanded, and served as one of Lexington's major wholesale baking facilities. Former manufacturers once located in the building include Lexington Wholesale Bakery Company, Holsum Bread, Honey-Krust Bakery, and Rainbo Bread Factory.

Wow, Bettie! Thank you so much for sharing the history of Lexington, as told through these great old structures, continuing to help others today. 🙏

The Blue Grass Trust laments the passing of two friends who have been involved with the Trust for many years.



Ann Garden, long-time resident of Gratz Park, has served the Trust in many capacities through the years, as a member of the board and on numerous committees. Most recently, Ann was a contributing member of the BGT Advisory Board. Her devotion to Gratz Park and the Blue Grass Trust will be greatly missed by everyone in the park and at the BGT.



Ed Gage, an accomplished interior decorator, had clients from New England to Florida. His involvement with the Antiques & Garden Show led him to become a valued board member from 2003 to 2009. Ed was full of surprises, including being a Harley Davidson owner. Always immaculately dressed, Ed appropriately wore a handsome set of leathers when he rode his Harley.



130 deTours and Counting...

The Blue Grass Trust for Historic Preservation held its first official deTour in 2011, not far from its headquarters in downtown Lexington at what was Table 310. Since then, the Trust has held 130 deTours. DeTours are always the first Wednesday of the month, rain or shine, except for holidays and the occasional pandemic which thwarted the April 2020 deTour. The pandemic, however, led BGT to work with Media Collaboratory to produce high-quality, short, documentary-style videos to continue bringing unique historic places to the public.

Despite the success of the deTour videos, we missed being together and exploring the spaces deTours offers in person. So, to paraphrase the late philosopher Yogi Berra, when we came to the fork in the road, we took it, and are now splitting deTours into two categories: video format for fall and winter and in-person for spring and summer. We are keeping the best of both worlds to highlight a wider variety of properties with more diverse stories to tell. With that being said, let's see where we have toured since the last issue of *Preservation Matters*.

In October 2021, BGT held its last in-person deTour, until this spring, at the Blue Grass Trust Campus and Bodley-Bullock House. For this very special deTour, we explored both the Dr. Thomas Hunt Morgan House and Hopemont

House Museum. The deTour began in the Foster Petit Auditorium of the Dr. Thomas Hunt Morgan House, which had recently undergone significant exterior renovations to reflect a more historically accurate version of the home. At Hopemont, guests were able to take a self-guided tour of the house museum which offers a tangible link to the past and through which visitors can learn about the highs and lows of Lexington's history. Afterward, we made our way across Gratz Park to the Bodley-Bullock House to view its extensive art collection, learn about the home's history, and take in its Federal, Greek Revival, and Victorian architecture and furnishings.

For the November deTour we took a closer look at Central Kentucky's Dry Laid Stone. The existence of dry-laid stone structures within the region is iconic, and we were fortunate enough to team with friends at the Dry Stone Conservancy, whose mission is to preserve historic dry stone structures and to revive and promote the ancient craft of dry-laid masonry.

In the month of December, BGT likes to feature an historically significant house



The Ruggles Sign Co. Truck

of worship for its deTour. This year we featured the historic Third Street Methodist Church, located in the heart of downtown Danville, Ky. The current church is located on the site of the original log church

TOP: An example of bending neon is demonstrated in this sign at Ruggles Sign Co.

built in 1791 which established the first Methodist Church congregation west of the Alleghany Mountains. Erected in 1891, the church is Romanesque in style and features a domed ceiling and many well-preserved stained-glass windows. We were fortunate to film the church after their annual Hanging of the Greens, thus



Chaquenta Neal, Executive Director of Food Chain, sharing their mission for our virtual March, deTour filmed by Robert Tipton of Media Collaboratory

making it the perfect spot to kick off the holiday season.

January 2022's deTour was of the Ruggles Sign Company. For over 75 years, this family-owned business has made impressive signs displayed worldwide, including some of the region's most iconic ones as featured in our 2020 deTour Mid-Century Roadside Gems. For this deTour, however, we explored how Ruggles uses state-of-the-art sign-making technology while honoring the past by offering classic sign painting and the



Outside of the Bread Box, where Food Chain, West Sixth Brewing, and Smithtown Seafood are located

art of neon bending to create eye-catching works.

For February 2022, the virtual deTour was of the Hunteartown Community Interpretive Park. Located in Woodford County, the park was once home to the thriving, close-knit African American Hunteartown community. Hunteartown was formed in August 1871, just six years after the Civil War, when formerly enslaved Woodford County United States Colored Troop veteran Jerry Gatewood purchased the first 5-acre tract of land in the would-be community. Because of continual flooding, the local government purchased the land and in 2003-2005 demolished existing structures and relocated the residents. Fortunately, former residents of Hunteartown and other dedicated community members joined together to keep the legacy of Hunteartown alive through the creation of the Hunteartown Community Interpretive Park.

In March 2022, BGT was fortunate to collaborate with its friends at Food Chain, West Sixth, and Smithtown for a deTour of The Bread Box in Lexington's west end, built circa 1890 and expanded several times over the years. It served as a major bread manufacturer for almost a century, starting with Holsum Bakery in the early 1900s and ending with the Rainbo Bread Factory in the 1990s. In August 2011, the Bread Box underwent adaptive reuse,

transforming from an empty building to a mixed-use property containing complementary businesses positively contributing to the community.

Lastly, for this deTour update, BGT visited the 1795 Cartmell House and 1890 Firebrook Mansion in April for the first in-person deTour of the season. The weather was less than cooperative, and at one point some of the organizers thought it



April deTour guests waiting their turn to explore the historic Cartmell House

might just be us for this deTour. But just like in the movies, our loyal deTourists did not disappoint and we had a wonderful crowd to explore the two early Kentucky homes located in southern Fayette County.

The Blue Grass Trust hopes you will join us for upcoming in-person deTours, which are free and open to the public the first Wednesday of each month. Also, if you know any special, unique places in the Central Kentucky region that would be fun to explore, please reach us at info@bluegrasstrust.org. We look forward to seeing you soon!

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Hopemont Docent Mim Wilson

Growing up on McDowell Road in the Ashland Park neighborhood in the 1930s, Mim Wilson says, was "perfect!" During those depression years, most neighbors had two children, mostly girls. Mim and her friends played in the neighborhood, often walking to Chevy Chase, where there was a pharmacy, a Piggly Wiggly, and a florist. Born "Miriam," the daughter of a tailor father who made suits for horse-men, bankers, and judges and a mother who was a milliner in a local department store, the strong-willed young Miriam chose to be known as "Mim." She attended Ashland Elementary School where, in third grade, she began her career as a violinist. She then attended Morton Junior High and graduated from Henry Clay Senior High.

At the University of Kentucky, where she played violin in the University Symphony, Mim followed her father's wishes to study bacteriology. It was in one of those classes she first saw Jim Wilson. After serving in WWII, Jim hitchhiked home to Kentucky in 1945 from a hospital in Jackson, Miss., straight to UK to pursue a degree in the sciences. With no men on campus during the war, Mim was one of 85 young women in a science class when young, hand-

some Jim Wilson entered the lecture hall. Jim had little interest in social life, attempting to make up for the four years he had lost. In the time Mim completed an undergraduate degree, Jim completed an undergraduate and a graduate degree. "He was on speed time," she said, "making up for lost time." Mim and Jim were married in 1950 when Mim completed a degree in business administration and Jim completed degrees in immunology.

Jim's career led him to Kansas City where he helped develop the polio vaccine and Mim played violin in the Kansas City Symphony, then onto jobs in New York and Connecticut. Along the way they had two children and in 1959 returned to Lexington when Jim was offered a position at UK researching equine viruses, where he developed a vaccine for equine flu. Mim pursued a degree in education and taught at Clays Mill for 25 years. After Jim's death and her retirement from teaching, Mim was eager to find a volunteer position. Once she discovered the opportunity to be a docent at Hopemont, she began a 13-year commitment in 2008 sharing her constantly growing knowledge about Lexington history, in general, and the Hunt and Morgan families, in particular. During her years of hosting visitors, she developed a special interest in the geneticist Thomas Hunt Morgan. When asked why she admired Thomas, her response was



*Carolyn Hackworth and Mim Wilson,
docent partners at Hopemont*

"I think he contributed more to humankind with his research than all the rest of the Hunts and Morgans combined!"

Recalling her time at Hopemont, Mim thinks of Hopemont as a "proud lady... majestic." "I just like to show her off in all her finery." Mim's docent partner Carolyn Hackworth defines those years hosting tours with Mim as "a partnership... filled with the pleasure of sharing the history of Hopemont with diverse audiences from across the country and around the world. We had so much fun and along the way developed a deep friendship." 🌿