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The Blue Grass Trust for  
Historic Preservation



# PRESERVATION

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Introducing the BGT  
Lexington East End Walking Tour

# Matters

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Spring/Summer 2021



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

Janie Fergus, Paul Evans Holbrook, Bill Johnston, Rebekah Kirkland, Hayden McNeil, Jackson Osborne, Maureen Peters, Kent Pleasants, Donna Price, Brittany Sams, and Dorothy Van Meter

Special thanks to guest writer Dr. Jonathan Coleman for his contribution to this edition.

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On the cover:  
**James "Jimmy" Winkfield (1882-1974) won over 2600 races in his lifetime. He began exercising horses at the age of seven and participated as a jockey in his first race at the age of 15 in Chicago. (Excerpted from the Lexington East End Walking Tour.)**

# Message from our President

## Greetings Blue Grass Trust Friends!



Janie Fergus, President of the  
BGT Board of Directors

With great pride and excitement, this edition of *Preservation Matters* introduces the digital East End Walking Tour for those who may not have seen the announcement on social media. This tour is made possible through the efforts of many including the very dedicated BGT Community Preservation and Education Committee, especially Thomas Tolliver; Brittany Sams, BGT Preservation Specialist, whose project leadership and hard work were instrumental; and the Keeneland Association, the Presenting Sponsor. Locals, as well as visitors, will find it tells the stories that make the East End of Lexington special and unique. Please read the enclosed article for more details on where to find and how to access this extremely well-done walking tour.

Volunteers, committee members, board members, professional staff, and numerous others have made this year one of great accomplishment for the Blue Grass Trust.

- The Dr. Thomas Hunt Morgan House has had an extensive and sorely needed exterior and interior renovation, helping make it the beautiful building it was originally. An important source of income for the Trust is rental of this facility. If you need or know someone who needs event space, please contact Jackson Osbourne, BGT Preservation Outreach Coordinator, so he can share the recent enhancements and how to use the space to best fit your event. He works hard to ensure planning is smooth and efficient. An Open House Tour of the THM House will be held as soon as it can be done safely. Of course, the tour will include the gardens and the grounds, lovingly maintained by the fabulous members of the Town and Country Garden Club. I encourage everyone to visit the grounds when they need to get out and enjoy the glorious Kentucky spring.

- Having Hopemont open again for regular hours, with an updated and enhanced guided tour, is another highlight of

the season. Even if you have toured in the past, we encourage you to come again. We are excited by the additions Brenna Pye helped incorporate into the tour to make for a more complete and historically accurate experience. Our dedicated and knowledgeable docents are ready to share these enhanced stories with you!

- The monthly virtual deTours continue to excite, entertain, and attract increasing social media viewership. An easy, free way to support the Trust is by subscribing to the "Blue Grass Trust – BGT" Youtube channel. Once subscribed, watch a few of the tours which will make you proud to be part of the Trust. The Woman's Club of Central Kentucky generously sponsors the deTours, thus supporting professional productions.

- The BGT Annual Fund drive is underway and wraps up at the end of June. It is our primary source of funding, and, with the pandemic, an even more critical revenue source. We would love for your name to be included in the next issue of *Preservation Matters* along with the other donors!

Other accomplishments this year are too numerous to mention here. I personally would love to tell you more and explore how you can best be further engaged with us addressing the mission of the Trust. We know we are helping make Central Kentucky desirable and beautiful for the generations who will follow us. I look forward to your call!

Most sincerely,

*Janie Fergus is a native Lexingtonian and longtime resident of Ashland Park. As the former president of the Ashland Park Neighborhood Association (APNA), she was very active in their efforts to obtain the H-1 Historic Overlay. She is recently retired after a 40-year career in healthcare information technology management, including being Chief Information Officer of the Saint Joseph Health System hospitals in central and eastern Kentucky. Janie enjoys tennis and yoga and with her husband, John Meyers, traveling, UK athletics, and friends. They have two dogs, Cricket and Beanie.*

# Have You Heard the Buzz?

## The BGT Could Be the Site of Lexington's Next Monument.

It's a bird; it's a plane; no...  
it's a *drosophila melanogaster*—you know,  
a fruit fly.



As you may recall from our last issue of *Preservation Matters*, the offices of the Blue Grass Trust are located within the Dr. Thomas Hunt Morgan House in Lexington, Kentucky, named for Kentucky's first Nobel Prize recipient. It is our goal to remember the doctor and his contribution to society by placing a large bronze statue of a fruit fly outside the BGT office at 210 N. Broadway. Doing so would be a tremendous opportunity to capture the curiosity of those passing by and to educate them on the history of who Dr. Morgan was and what his work has and continues to accomplish.

Kentucky, as a state, is well known for its pioneers from Boone to Lincoln, but surprisingly, as one of the most celebrated pioneers in his field, Dr. Thomas Hunt Morgan seems to have been forgotten by many within the Commonwealth. Born in Lexington and a graduate of the University of Kentucky, Dr. Morgan received the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine in 1933 for his discoveries clarifying the role the chromosome plays in hereditary traits. His work made a major contribution to the establishment of the field of genetics and would not have been possible without his experimental research with the fruit fly.

By observing fruit flies and their rapid rate of reproduction, Dr. Morgan was able to conduct genetic mapping. He did so by observing the passing of eye color from parents to their offspring, thus proving the physical existence of the gene. Photos taken during his research show him surrounded by glass fly-filled bottles, earning his laboratory the nickname of "The Fly Room". Here he would not only conduct his prize-winning studies but also help mold some of our nation's greatest minds, including two other future Nobel Prize recipients.

The placement of a fruit fly statue in front of the Dr. Thomas Hunt Morgan House would not just honor the legacy of Dr. Morgan as a great Kentuckian, but it would serve as well as a monument to our Commonwealth's contribution to science. Bringing the field of genetics into the mainstream benefited agriculture, medicine, and biotechnology tremendously. Continued advancements in these areas, as we are still gripped by this deadly pandemic, will lead us to a better tomorrow, and that is definitely worth remembering. 🧪

## 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 app, 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.

Stay in touch with the BGT in the following ways:

<https://www.bluegrasstrust.org>

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# Lexington's East End Walking Tour



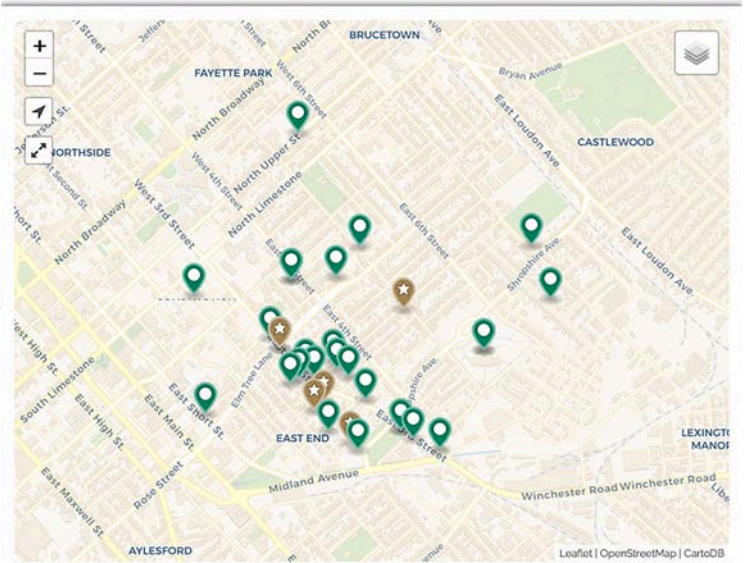
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## Ode to the East End

I see you, East End, with your historic homes and Dewese Street pride, strutting from Brucetown to Brick City from Gunntown to Goodloetown. Your stained-glass churches and neighborhood schools all jockeying for position with your mean streets reputation and your sometimes-racy past.

Kentucky Poet Laureate Frank X Walker voices the opening words of his poem "Ode to the East End" at the start of the Blue Grass Trust's new virtual tour, Lexington's East End Walking Tour. The tour begins at the MET (Midland & East Third), where Walker's poem is displayed as a mural on the side of the building. Walker recorded the tour with the Blue Grass Trust staff, one of many audiovisual immersive experiences for tourists and locals alike exploring the significant and essential history of Lexington's East End.



The Blue Grass Trust's Community Preservation and Education Committee, chaired by Wanda Jaquith and Maureen Peters, oversaw the research and collaborated for the committee's winter project, Lexington's East End Walking Tour. Preservation Specialist Brittany Sams and committee members Thomas Tolliver, Beverly Fortune, Paul Holbrook, Wanda Jaquith, and Jean Scott pulled materials from Keeneland Library, UK Special Collections, African Cemetery No. 2, the Notable Kentucky African Americans Database, *Smithsonian Magazine*, the National Register of Historic Places, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and research compiled by Yvonne Giles, as well as various other sources. Sams organized the research into 32 stops for the final tour.

The various stops cover both a wide range of locations in the East End neighborhood and a broad range of topics. Lexington's East End Walking Tour celebrates the neighborhood's roots in Kentucky's racing industry as well as its significant early contributions to the thoroughbred culture that so uniquely defines central Kentucky's landscape. The tour explores nationally celebrated musicians, significant architecture, community centers, the Kentucky Association Race Track, Black jockeys, Black trainers, Black breeders,



Lyric Theatre, photo provided by the Lyric Theatre website.

historic churches, schools, and the early 19th century communities that shaped the neighborhood into what we experience today. Collectively, the stops showcase historic photos,

**Keeneland sponsored the initial purchase of the Curatescape platform and an additional four years of maintenance fees.**

oral history collections, embedded links to documentaries, BGT deTours, audio files, magazine articles, and National Register forms.

After the research and audio-visual materials were completed and compiled, Keeneland sponsored the purchase of Curatescape. Curatescape is both a website and an app which provides tourists and locals a user-friendly, easily accessible, and aesthetically pleasing experience as they explore historic sites and collections. Keeneland sponsored the initial purchase of the Curatescape platform and an additional four years of maintenance fees.

**The platform resulted in the BGT's new app, Tour the Historic Bluegrass, and is available for both Android and iPhone. It also features its own website, [tourthehistoricbluegrass.com](http://tourthehistoricbluegrass.com).**

The Curatescape platform currently houses dozens of other historic sites throughout the nation. Specifically designed for easy access to historic materials and tours (both site-specific,

*continued page 6*



#### Kinkeadtown:

The first generation of Lexington's urban Black families lived in the residential spaces of Kinkeadtown. Jim Crow laws in the late 19th and early 20th centuries meant larger lots were divided into smaller lots with smaller homes predominately used as rental property, as increased segregation and racist housing laws meant more and more African Americans were seeking rental property in the city.



McCann (left) with the Les McCann Trio (Herbie Lewis & Ron Jefferson) 1962.



#### Les McCann:

Les McCann, one of Lexington's most recognized musicians, was born in 1935. He contributed greatly to the national jazz scene, perhaps most notably through the albums *Swiss Movement* and *The Shout*.

McCann is a self-taught musician, focusing on piano early in his career and then placing more emphasis on singing over time. He began his relationship with music at the Lyric Theater, where he worked and helped visiting artists move and carrying equipment. In an interview for the *Oxford American*, McCann said, "I just wanted to be there—the shows that came there! Oh, God, they were great. I saw more than half the people I [later] got to know in the business before I was in it—Louis Jordan, Louis Armstrong."



#### James "Jimmy" Winkfield:

Jimmy Winkfield (1882-1974) won over 2600 races in his lifetime. He was the youngest of seventeen children, born to George and Victoria Winkfield. He lived with his sisters on Warnock Street and drove coach-es. He began exercising horses at the age of seven and participated as a jockey in his first race at the age of 15 in Chicago, where he cut across four other riders, caused an accident, and was suspended.



#### Palmer Pharmacy: Dr. Zirl Palmer

Dr. Palmer's drugstore was the only Black-owned drugstore in town; as a franchise of Rexall, it was the company's first drugstore in the country to be owned by an African American.

continued from page 5

such as a museum, and larger areas, such as neighborhoods and cities), the platform is tailored into an individual app for each purchasing organization. Owners can add multiple tours and an unlimited number of sites over time.

While the Community Preservation and Education Committee began brainstorming new COVID-19 safe historic preservation projects in

the fall, the research process was completed in January, and the search for the appropriate platform took another month. The app was developed in March of 2021 with the Director of Keeneland Library Becky Ryder assisting with the final editing process. The Blue Grass Trust partnered with Keeneland for the tour's release in early April via press releases and social media advertising. Keeneland also included the tour in their Spring Meet Race Day Program. 🏇



### Sanford T Roach, Dunbar High School

Born in Frankfort, Kentucky, Sanford T. Roach was a noted educator and basketball coach. After graduating from college, Roach returned to his old high school, Danville Bate High School, to teach and coach basketball. Over three years, Roach's coaching record was 98-24 and in 1941 he gained notoriety for benching his five starting players the day of the district tournament for disobeying curfew. Roach's strict sense of discipline caught the attention of the principal of Lexington's Paul Laurence Dunbar High School where he was hired to teach and coach.



### The Charles Young Park and Community Center

Both the Charles Young Park and its community center were listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2016. In 1930 the city of Lexington purchased the lot that would become the second public park to honor African Americans. The park was named the Charles Young Park, after the third African American graduate of West Point. Born in 1864, Young died in 1922 during his detail in Nigeria. He was the highest-ranked African American to serve in the segregated United States Army.

Many thanks to the following for their contributions and feedback along the way!

Yvonne Giles  
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Paul Holbrook  
Wanda Jaquith  
Jean Scott  
Becky Ryder  
Rufus Friday  
Janie Fergus  
Dan Vivian  
Maureen Peters

Stories Featured  
Lexington's East End Walking Tour:  
Start Here (The MET)  
Murphy House Lot and  
Murphy Memorial Garden  
Kentucky Association Race Track  
Ansel Williamson  
Courtney Mathews  
African Cemetery No. 2  
Sanford T Roach, Dunbar High School  
Shiloh Baptist Church  
Palmer Pharmacy; Dr. Zirl Palmer  
Constitution School  
Kinkeadtown  
The Kinkead House  
Dudley Allen  
Old Episcopal Burying Grounds  
The Lyric Theatre  
Les McCann  
Gunntown  
Deweese Street  
Julia Perry  
Edward Dudley Brown  
The Wilgus House  
The Winn Gunn House,  
Smith and Smith Funeral Home  
Dr. Thomas Wendell House  
Greater Liberty Baptist Church  
The Ellen Davis House  
The McCracken Wilgus House  
Goodloetown: Goodloe Street  
Shotgun Houses  
503/505 East Third Street  
James "Jimmy" Winkfield  
The Charles Young Park and  
Community Center  
Book of Genesis, East End Chapter

The Blue Grass Trust for Historic Preservation is Proud to Present

# LEXINGTON'S EAST END WALKING TOUR

A Virtual Tour Experience Sponsored by Keeneland



DOWNLOAD THE TOUR THE HISTORIC BLUEGRASS APP ON YOUR IPHONE, GOOGLE PLAY OR ANDROID.

TourTheHistoricBlueGrass.com



# The Story Behind the Plaques



Executive Director Dick Decamp and home owner at 359 S. Mill Street, Mrs. Lavern Holt, admire the first BGT plaque in 1972. Courtesy of the Lexington Herald-Leader

In the early 1970s, when the Blue Grass Trust was still relatively young, Dick DeCamp, the first executive director of the Trust, and a host of involved members began brainstorming how to raise awareness of Lexington's beautiful historic properties. Mr. DeCamp recalled a historical marker project from his high school days in Hudson, Ohio and an idea was born. His committee of Henry Loomis, Betty Lee Mastin, Mrs. Robert Wooley, and Lofon Ingels was charged with creating a suitable plaque and identifying the structures in Lexington fitting their criteria. At that time, priority was given to 50 structures in Lexington predating the Civil War.

The logo was created by Ellsworth "Skip" Taylor, who at the time was employed by the University of Kentucky as a book designer. The Elizabeth, NJ transplant also designed the iconic Shakertown logo as well as the Lexington rainbow logo, started the graphic design program for the University of Kentucky, and was later the art director at KET. Once designed, the plaque was created at the foundry of the UK College of Engineering and was ready for distribution.

Initially, the plaques were to be in two parts – the well-known oval design we see today, plus a square marker below it listing the date the structure was built and the original owner. Ultimately, the second portion was scrapped because of the expense and research involved.

The 50 owners of the original designated buildings were asked to contribute \$25 for their plaques. The first plaque was installed on the house at 359 S. Mill St. This home was built in 1812 by William Poindexter, a local jeweler and watchmaker. A native of Virginia, Poindexter is believed to have been an apprentice of the renowned Asa Blanchard. With his sons William and Charles, he developed a flourishing silversmith business in Lexington and the region that continued until around 1880.

In 1972, the home was owned by Mrs. Lavern Holt. In addition to the plaque, she was successful in getting the home




A view of 359 South Mill Street today, still a beautiful home 50 years later

listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1973. DeCamp recalls the home as being well cared for, in sharp contrast to the general state of South Hill at the time. He

described the area as being mostly cheap rooming houses occupied by students and substance abuse victims. His hope, which has become a reality, was the plaques would raise awareness of the historic nature of the neighborhood and South Hill would ultimately be restored to its former glory.

In the past 50 years, the plaque program has flourished. The design remains unchanged and is easily visible to pedestrians and motorists traveling around Lexington and elsewhere in the Bluegrass. Over time, the criteria evolved, requiring

structures to be at least 50 years old and applicants attesting to the historical significance of the structure, with a record of the people who lived there. Over 1000 plaques have been issued. As DeCamp noted at its inception, the program was not designed to be regulatory, but he hoped it would raise awareness of the historic significance of these beautiful buildings. 

## Hey, What's the Big T Anyway?!

For many central Kentucky residents, and those outside the Bluegrass region as well, a BGT Plaque on one's property is easily recognized as a mark of distinction for a house or building. However, sometimes that is as far as a passersby's knowledge goes and has even led to one such gawker of a historic home to deliver the compliment "I like your big T," referring to the bronze plaque next to a recipient's front door. Now, what this individual thought the "BGT" represented we are unsure, perhaps homage to Mr. T, the film Dr. T & the Women, or just plain old admiration for the 20th letter of the alphabet. The possibilities are almost endless. However,



This is the original mold from which the BGT plaques were first cast.

dear reader, as you likely know, that is not the case. The BGT (which stands for Blue Grass Trust) Plaque is a visual symbol of civic pride meant to signify respect and appreciation for the historic value of the property and the heritage of the community. So, it's not a big T (though the T is rather large), but it is a big deal. 

# The BGT's Secret Garden

"A damp, drizzly November in my soul"- to quote Herman Melville best describes this winter, even for those of us accustomed to Kentucky's weather. It seemed like the cold and sleet would never end. For every season there is a time, however, and Spring has finally arrived with what seems a return to some normalcy from the ongoing pandemic. So as the hustle and bustle of life begins again, the Blue Grass Trust for Historic Preservation



surrounded by a bed of green velvet lamb's ear growing in the shade of a historic walnut tree, part of the property almost as long as Hopemont itself.

Reading this, you might think Hopemont Garden has been a well-kept secret for a reason, and that we are merely bragging, but, to the surprise of many, our garden grounds are regularly open to the public

would like to remind you to stop and smell the flowers and do so at Hopemont Garden. While most readers are aware of the BGT's flagship property, Hopemont, operated as a house museum since we took ownership in the 1950s, what you may not know is that tucked away, next to the home, just through the front gate, and to the right of Hopemont is a serene greenspace that secretly coexists with the home.

during the day, and we welcome you. So, the next time you need some fresh air and are looking for a relaxing space to read a book on a bench, picnic in the grass, practice the violin in a gazebo, or just break up the day with a stroll, please come. We only ask you allow others to enjoy it as well.

The Town and Garden Country Garden Club has maintained Hopemont Garden since 1970, and their care, dedication, and attention to detail clearly show as each year outshines the last. Thanks to their good work, the grounds



Of course, should you want Hopemont Garden for a private event with friends and family, that can be arranged as well. The Blue Grass Trust does permit garden rental for a fee of \$1,000 going toward the organization's mission to protect, revitalize, and promote the special historic places in our community that enhance the quality of life for future generations.



are a spectacular sight during the spring season. Currently, the brick pathways are lined by bright heart-leaf foamflowers, Lenten roses, and dark, mauve-colored coral bells. On the other side of the garden, white-headed daffodils and tulips, along with budding Salomon's seals reside next to a bed of purple larkspur surrounding the garden's sundial. Brightly colored geraniums overflow the limestone planters

Hopemont Garden is a special place, and it is the Trust's honor to share it with those who appreciate its beauty. So, whether you are interested in renting the space for a gorgeous outdoor celebration, or you are just looking for a place to sit and listen to the birds sing, we look forward to having you. 📍

## BGT Webinar Series

In celebration of Preservation Month, our Community Preservation and Education Committee hosted a webinar series, "Navigating Historic Home Rehabilitation." The series offered practical advice on five different topics and featured seven different speakers. It ran May 17-21, each session beginning at 4:00. The three participating craftspeople were each filmed exhibiting their work and specialty. The videos are accessible on our YouTube channel.



Tom Francis, window restorationist and webinar participant

- Yolanda Demaree, Paint Specialist, Contract Decorating: Historic paints and painting historic surfaces
- Bettie Kerr, Historic Preservation Officer, LFUCG: Design guidelines for homes in H-1 overlays and determining which projects necessitate going through the Board of Architectural Review
- Tom Francis, contractor and restorationist, Cutting Edge Construction: DIY and restoring historic windows
- Erick Rawlings, Staff Architect, Kentucky Heritage Council: Applying for preservation and rehabilitation tax credits
- Joe Turley and Jackson Osborne, The Blue Grass Trust for Historic Preservation: Rehab tax credits case study, the Thomas Hunt Morgan House
- Adam Carmona, Masonry Specialist, United Contracting: Trouble shooting historic masonry issues and tuck-pointing historic brick 📍



# Trends and Changes in Historic Preservation

Historic preservation is not as static as its “historic” name might suggest. Global changes are forcing preservationists to make significant adjustments. Just as the world is dealing with (or not!) a host of new issues, historic preservation is

historic pictures of the site being viewed. In some cases, a site can be toured without the tourist even being physically present – like real estate sales tours. BGT’s deTours are presented on social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc.)

Once deTours can return to in-person on-site visits, they will be once again live-streamed. The same social media platforms are used to communicate regularly with interested viewers. The Trust’s

transform traditional ways of thinking about preservation. From the beginning of the country’s preservation effort, it was all about preserving structures such as Mount Vernon or Thomas Jefferson’s Monticello. Then it expanded to include neighborhoods and districts, but almost always the buildings and neighborhoods belonging to white people, ignoring the forced, but skilled, contributions of the initially enslaved – and later just subjugated – African American population. They provided much of the labor and skills that built a great portion of these structures and neighborhoods. Work has begun to address this oversight. On a national level, even prior to the 2020 cultural awakening, the National Trust for Historic Preservation established an African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund to help support preservation activities representing African American heritage. They also issued a statement entitled, “Our Commitment to Inclusion and Diversity”.



Two Lexington homes reflecting the tastes of different eras – an 1891 Victorian home and a 1976 example of mid-century modern architecture



being affected by many of the same issues. For historic preservation these include new history, changes in technology, climate change, and finally the need for equity and diversity.

New history refers to buildings aging into the 50-years of age category, making them potentially eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places. It requires flexibility to appreciate the historic significance of properties and neighborhoods created recently enough that one personally saw their creation. The most current example is the post-World War II architecture now referred to as mid-century, international style, and mid-century modern. While many are unable to comprehend how anyone would ever think saving those stark looking (to some, at least) buildings is worthwhile, others remember how many mid-20th century residents thought the same about the Victorian architecture of the previous century.

Changes in technology affect many historic preservation areas. In addition to vast advances in communications via texting, emails, etc. affecting us all (for better or worse), tools have been developed to help examine historic artifacts - sometimes without actually touching them. These tools also affect more familiar activities such as historic tours. For decades, visitors to historic areas could obtain brochures to walk around with when viewing historic sites. Now, digital tools allow smartphones to detect one’s location, and present text, sound, supplementary information, and

newly released Lexington East End tour is accessible via smartphone.

Climate change is partly about getting across the concept that the “greenest building is an existing building”, and how keeping and restoring existing buildings and adaptive reuses save energy and thus help the climate. Energy is expended when a building is constructed. Removing that building requires energy to demolish it, and energy to transport the materials to the landfill (using up another valuable resource). This energy is wasted. Plus there is an expenditure of new energy to construct the building’s replacement. Also, climate change is affecting historic properties themselves. Rising seawater threatens coastal buildings and cities. Weather extremes generate fires that burn large areas containing historic structures and create hurricanes and tornadoes which can eliminate history in an instant. Floods from now regular 100-year rains do damage as well.

Historic preservation has long ignored equity and diversity, but that is changing. The need for equity and diversity has required - and will continue to require a lot of effort to

Similarly, the BGT has begun a concerted effort to become more inclusive. In the summer of 2020, the BGT drafted a Statement of Solidarity (referenced on page 3 in this issue). The Trust has committed to a more complete telling of the history of its holdings and the area it serves. A detailed walking tour of Lexington’s East End, appropriate diversity updates to the Hopemont Museum docent guide, and continuing efforts to preserve the Palmer Pharmacy (home to the first African American Rexall druggist in the country) represent recent and ongoing efforts in the areas of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Lastly, BGT’s leadership is becoming better educated about the complex issues of preservation and gentrification. While much remains to be done, the preservation movement is committed to creating positive change. 🌱

# Hopemont Re-Opens with a Revised Tour

Before Hopemont's March re-opening, Hopemont docents and committee members met with Jacob Glover, Ph.D., Director of Public Programs and Education for Shaker Village of Pleasant Hill. Glover kicked off the tour season with an in-depth training session on the history and fundamentals of interpretation methods adopted by the National Parks System. Glover, docents, and committee members discussed experiences and stories geared toward visitor engagement as well as the universal themes in Hopemont's history connecting its present to its past.

In addition to discussing new and future interpretation methods, the committee reviewed two exciting additions to the tour.

The first addition was written by Brenna Pye, Manager of Education at Ashland, the Henry Clay Estate. This addition explores the institution of slavery as it functioned in Lexington and within the household and industries of the Hunt family. While it is by no means the final attempt to explore the individuals enslaved in Hopemont's domestic setting, it does provide essential context for tourists to understand how their surroundings were shaped by the presence of the enslaved. Some of Hopemont's story is yet to be discovered, but Brenna Pye's addition is the beginning.

The second addition is the portrait of Garrett Morgan, courtesy of the Western Reserve Historical Society in Cleveland, Ohio. Mr. Morgan, one of the country's greatest inventors and innovators, is best known for creating the stoplight and a prototype of the modern-day gas mask. Additionally, he was dedicated to advancing the cause of racial equality. His portrait has been added to the Hopemont collection because he is a descendant of the Hunt-Morgan family, the grandson of General John Hunt Morgan.



*Garrett Morgan Portrait*



BGT staff and Executive Committee member John Hackworth had the honor of meeting Garrett Morgan's granddaughter, Sandra Morgan, and she shared her perspective on Morgan's life and accomplishments. She preferred to describe her grandfather as an "entrepreneur" rather than an "inventor" due to his inventions being outcomes of problem-solving and trouble-shooting—products designed to alleviate a need rather than create one.


Born in 1877, Garrett Morgan was the seventh son of Sydney Morgan and Elizabeth Reed, both of whom had been enslaved. He grew up in Bourbon County where he worked in the fields until age 14. Seeking better opportunities, he headed north to Ohio, finally settling in Cleveland. There, he swept the floor at a clothing factory until he worked his way up to expert sewing machine repairman. Perfecting a longer-lasting and more effective sewing machine belt, he eventually opened his own repair shop. By happenstance, he created his first big invention, a hair straightening product. To keep

wool from burning and scorching as it passed under the fast-moving needle of the sewing machine, he concocted a liquid solution. Morgan noticed the fibers of the wool, after being exposed to the solution, lay straight. He patented the product in 1910 and started the G.A. Morgan Hair Refining Company.

Successful, Morgan was able to focus more of his time on his passion, creating solutions to preventable problems. Morgan created his "safety hood" and patented it in 1914. The hood offered its wearers protection from smoke and gases, and was marketed to firefighters. Because of racism, however, Morgan had to hire a white actor to promote his products while he posed as the actor's assistant, Chief Mason, from Canada. His breathing device was a precursor of the gas mask used in World War I.

Morgan was the first Black man in Cleveland to own a car. After witnessing a horrific carriage accident, he decided something needed to be done. He invented the traffic light in 1923 and acquired a patent for the three-way traffic signal in the United States, Britain, and Canada. He eventually sold the patent to General Electric for \$40,000 (slightly over \$600,000 in today's dollars).

In addition to his reputation as an inventor, Morgan was greatly involved in launching a newspaper, *The Cleveland Call*, dedicated to the Black community. Morgan, too, was a member of the newly formed NAACP, was active in the Cleveland Association of Colored Men, donated to Black colleges, and opened an all-Black country club.

After a life well-lived, Morgan passed away in 1963. Since his death, multiple schools and other institutions bear Morgan's name, including Garrett Morgan Elementary School in Lexington. Now his portrait is rightfully displayed at Hopemont, where visitors can learn more about his amazing life and societal contributions. 

# Mildred Hart Dunning, *Benefactress of the Blue Grass Trust*

Evaluating the viability of an organization over time, one anticipates peaks and valleys, even more so if the organization operates as a non-profit led by an ever-changing volunteer board of directors. Although the mission may remain the same, both internal and external factors periodically impact the robustness and efficacy of an organization. Some organizations, however, have the good fortune to possess a financial stabilizer to help bridge and buttress the inevitable ups and downs. The Mildred Hart Dunning Trust has provided such financial stability to the Blue Grass Trust for over 25 years. The Trust owes much to this modest lady who continues to be the BGT's most significant benefactor. But who was this unassuming unknown donor?



Mildred Hart Dunning



Mildred's husband, Ellis Dunning

other. Ellis died in 1972. In 1983, after over 100 years of Mildred's family living at the West Third Street residence, she moved to her newly renovated home at 319 Queensway Dr. where she lived until her death in 1994.

Besides the Blue Grass Trust, Mildred's largesse also extended to Ashland the Henry Clay Estate and to Cardinal Hill Rehabilitation Hospital, each receiving an equal share of her estate. The Blue Grass Trust is continuously grateful for Mildred Hart Dunning's transformative gift that keeps providing stability to the organization as the Trust continues to pursue its mission in central Kentucky.

Mildred Anderson Hart was born in Lexington on December 27, 1912. One newspaper described the newborn as "the richest little girl in Central Kentucky." Her mother, Minnie Anderson Hart, had recently inherited (together with Minnie's brother) two large fortunes from her father John E. Anderson and his only brother, Richard T. Anderson, a bachelor. The newspaper went on to state, "It is highly probable that the whole estate will eventually belong to this little girl, as Mrs. Hart's brother, though some years married, has no children, and, marrying late in life, it is not expected that a large progeny will bless the union of Mr. and Mrs. Hart."

One newspaper described the newborn as "the richest little girl in Central Kentucky."

Mildred grew up in the house her great uncle Richard T. Anderson built at 431 West Third Street. This imposing home is as handsome today as it was when built in 1880. When he died in 1911, the local newspaper stated, "Mr. Anderson lived in this city all of his long life, leading a quiet, unostentatious life of great service to his fellow townsmen but not seeking for any role that would bring him prominently into the public eye." Mildred seems to have inherited this trait of humility and modesty from her great uncle as reflected in the quiet and unpretentious manner in which she lived her entire life.

An example of her unpretentious manner was explained to Mildred's cousin, Holly Gathright, immediately after Mildred's funeral. Mrs. Gathright had organized a luncheon for Mildred's closest friends – many of whom had been her friends since childhood. As the lunch progressed, the ladies went around the table sharing their most vivid memories of Mildred. Several recalled how each morning as Mildred arrived at school, she would slink down in the back seat of her chauffeured car so as not to let the classmates see her in this conspicuous conveyance!

Mildred married Ellis G. Dunning, a UK graduate, at the home on West Third Street on Tuesday, May 20, 1941. By August, Ellis was commissioned a First Lieutenant in the United States Army and saw service in France. He retired as a Major and returned home to Lexington becoming a sales representative for Hurst Printing Company. He and Mildred lived quiet low-key lives, cheering for the Wildcats, enjoying travel, friends and each

*The BGT is grateful for the research assistance for this article provided by Jim and Martha Birchfield and to Mildred's niece, Holly Gathright, who shared invaluable insights.*



431 West 3rd Street, Mildred Hart Dunning's home for most of her life

# Out of the Closet, Into the Streets: Lexington's LGBTQ Places

Jonathan Coleman, Ph.D

For marginalized communities, recognizing their history in the physical landscape can be particularly difficult. This is especially true for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and queer Kentuckians, whose history is often hard to recover and is still easily lost to prejudice and apathy. Despite these challenges, Lexington is replete with sites essential to and long honored by its LGBTQ community.

The most recognized of these spaces is 224 East Main Street, Kentucky's oldest continuous gathering place for the LGBTQ community. Perhaps as early as 1939, LGBTQ Kentuckians could gather here in a series of bars that had a reputation for tol-



In 2018, two historic markers to honor Lexington's LGBTQ history were dedicated.

Some of these women helped form the Gay Liberation Front at the University of Kentucky. In November 1971, the group applied for formal recognition as a student organization, but their application was denied. Led by Peter Taylor, the group's president and a sophomore from Whitley County, the Gay Liberation Front sued for recognition. The students lost their case, being described by Kentucky's Attorney General as "a lawful group sprinkled with unlawful activity." The Gay Liberation Front, however, did successfully organize one of the first openly LGBTQ events in Kentucky, The Gay Rights Cha-Cha, held in the Student Center Ballroom.



The Bar at 244 E. Main St.

erance, so long as queer patrons behaved with discretion. In 1963 John Hill and Estill Wilson, a gay couple from Chicago, opened the Gilded Cage, hosting drag shows and allowing same-sex couples to dance. A police officer encountered two men dancing at the Gilded Cage and asked them, "Who is the man and who is the woman?" One of the men daringly replied, "This week, I'm the woman." Police frequently raided 224 East Main Street. On April 8th, 1970, police stormed the bar, now renamed The Living Room, and arrested four drag queens for "wearing disguises." One of the four, Leigh Angélique, lost her job with the city after her name appeared in a newspaper article about the raid.

Not all LGBTQ sites are public spaces like 224 East Main



Home of Sweet Evening Breeze at 186 Prall St.

Street. Private homes played a pivotal role as places of refuge, celebration, and community. Located in Pralltown, one of Lexington's historic Black neighborhoods, 186 Prall Street was the home of Sweet Evening Breeze. Sweet Evening Breeze was a well-known member of Lexington's LGBTQ community, and she lived in the modest-sized house for over 60 years. In 1955, Sweet Evening Breeze housed the young, queer, artist Henry Faulkner when he first moved to Lexington. Her home was also a meeting place for the four drag queens arrested at the Living Room in 1970. In the backyard of 186 Prall Street, Sweet Evening Breeze hosted mock weddings where she played the bride, and, in one account, routinely married the quarterback of the University of Kentucky football team.

472 West Second Street was also built as a private home, but, by the early 1970s, it became the Lexington Women's Collective, a communal-living group of feminist women, most of whom were lesbian-identified. Although informal in its structure, the collective was effective, disseminating feminist and lesbian literature while participating in social justice activism and lesbian-feminist community building. Many of its organizers were connected to the University of Kentucky, but the group drew women from across the state to their consciousness-raising groups and women-centered events, and, sometimes, to live with them at 472 West Second Street.

While these places still stand, their significance to LGBTQ history has, up until now, mostly lived in memory. But that is slowly changing. In June 2018, the Commonwealth of Kentucky dedicated two historic markers in honor of Lexington's LGBTQ history—the first such markers in Kentucky. A third was added in 2019. Last year, with funding from VisitLex, Faulkner Morgan Archive released Pride of Place: Lexington's LGBTQ History, a self-guided walking tour of LGBTQ places. Thousands of copies, in both English and Spanish, have been given away.



472 W. Second St. -  
The Lexington Women's Collective in the 1970s

We celebrate these achievements, but there is more work to do. Kentucky has yet to nominate any sites to the National Register of Historic Places primarily for their contributions to LGBTQ history.

The tendency of LGBTQ sites to be located within downtown urban cores makes them especially vulnerable to gentrification and redevelopment. Historic preservation is a powerful tool in saving and sharing our collective past, and with it an important Kentucky story of courage, freedom, and the unending American endeavor for greater equality. 🏳️‍🌈

Jonathan Coleman, a historian, is the Executive Director of Faulkner Morgan Archive, Inc., a nonprofit dedicated to saving and sharing Kentucky's LGBTQ history. A proud BGT member, Coleman served on the BGT de Tour committee for several years.



## The BGT Blog: Posted but Not Forgotten



In a world of Tweets, Zooms, and other nouns that could also be onomatopoeic, it is easy for anything put on the internet to be swallowed by an ocean of other clickable links. This, of course, is truer now as all of us have spent more time than we would probably like to admit in front of our computer screens this past year. With so much information constantly being thrown into the digital void, it is hard for something not to seem fleeting, even if it is something the Blue Grass Trust for Historic Preservation has posted! Have no fear because we have a solution.

The Blue Grass Trust takes pride in what it shares, either through the email subscriber list or on social media, and, like you, do not want it overshadowed by a video of a parrot performing a Hamilton song on Instagram. So, to ensure our shared information is available to those interested in revisiting links to our DIY Preservation, Rehabilitation Opportunities List for 2020, or learning more about significant Kentuckians (such as Garrett Morgan, Henry Tandy, and Dr. Zirl Palmer) you can. By visiting the BGT Blog located on the Blue Grass Trust webpage, or by searching <https://www.bluegrasstrust.org/bgtblog> you can find everything the Trust has shared within the last year and until now. We continue to update the blog with anything the BGT shares so you can always access the helpful information you may have come across scrolling through your newsfeed. 

Below you will find a listing of new or, in some cases, lapsed and renewed memberships to the Trust spanning this past year. Memorials, honorariums, and specifically designated gifts are also listed. The lists cover the period from April 1, 2020 through March 31, 2021.

In the upcoming Fall/Winter issue of Preservation Matters, this year's ongoing Annual Fund donors will be listed in giving categories. With the absence of the BGT's major fundraising event this year, the Antiques and Garden Show, the Annual Fund is all that more 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](http://www.bluegrasstrust.org) or by using the QR code to the right. *Thank you.*



### *Gifts Given In Memory Of: Win Meeker*

- by: Richard and Debbie Comley
- by: John and Carolyn Hackworth
- by: Northside Neighborhood Association
- by: John and Diane Irvin
- by: QSDD
- by: Pamela Stilz
- by: Wayne and Margerite Waddell
- by: Eugenia Whayne
- by: Elizabeth Lewis

### **James Wesley Bryant**

- by: John and Katie Sites

### **Isaac C Van Meter IV**

- by: Van Meter / Barnhart Family Fund

### **Elizabeth M. Wagner**

- by: Evelyn Kemper

### *Contribution to Honor:*

#### **Donna Price**

- by: Jean Dorton

#### **Dr. Elvis and Geneva Donaldson**

- by: Dr. Marta S. Hayne

#### **John and Carolyn Hackworth**

- by: Will and Stephanie Sturgill

#### **Janie Fergus**

- by: Bruce Holle

#### **John Dowling Stewart, M.D.**

- by: Milly Ann Stewart

#### **Dean Hammond**

- by: Charlotte Lakers

#### **Myles Cochran Davis**

- by: Molly Davis

### **AGS 2020-2021**

- by: Mr. James and Mary Oppel
- by: Ms. Jill McCarty
- by: Douglas and Kathryn Hendrickson

### **Hopemont**

- by: Ms. Mary Hammond
- by: Dr. and Mrs. Shailendra Chopra
- by: Ms. Jan Swauger
- by: John and Carolyn Hackworth
- by: Ms. Janette Heitz
- by: Ms. Janie Fergus
- by: Ms. Lucy Jones
- by: Kroger Community Rewards
- by: Network for Good

### **Thomas Hunt Morgan**

- by: Dr. Elvis and Ms. Geneva Donaldson
- by: Mr. and Mrs. William Johnston
- by: Josephine Ardery Foundation
- by: Woman's Club of Central Kentucky
- by: Network for Good

### **Palmer Pharmacy Donation**

- by: Rick and Kathy Brown

### **Pope Villa**

- by: Ms. Nancy Perry
- by: Amazon Smiles

### **New and Renewing Members**

#### **4-1-2020 thru 3-31-2021**

- AubrieAna Chenault-Brand
- Mackenzie Kirker-Head
- Ms. Charlotte O'Connell
- Ms. Susan Clary
- Ms. Morgan Middleton
- Craig and Anella Wetter
- Mr. and Ms. Chris and Teri Kelly
- Mr. and Ms. Billy Ray and Dorothy Paxton
- Mr. William Carey
- Ms. Helen H. Evans
- Ms. Rebekah Kirkland
- Mr. David Jones and
- Ms. Kathy Simon

- Mr. William B. Scott
- Ms. Donna Grace
- Ms. Jeanie Dorton
- Jim and Lisa Maffett
- Mr. Tom Ripy
- Dr. and Mrs. Phillip Tibbs
- Kopana Terry
- Ms. Kaylan Turner
- Mr. Dylan Curry
- Rev. Karen Hartsfield and
- Dr. James Hartsfield
- Mr. Kevin Dearing
- Mr. Ashley H. Kirk
- Mr. Richard Ford and
- Ms. Melissa Wilson
- Mr. Stephen Thoman
- Mr. and Mrs. Charles Hoffman
- Mr. Jacob Pankey
- George and Sarah Williams
- Mr. and Ms. Stephen Gray
- Josephine Ardery Foundation
- Mr. Wayne G. Yates
- Mr. Jeffrey England
- Ms. Bambi Blanton
- Ms. Jesse Voigt
- Merle & Emily Clark
- Mr. Foster Shroud
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- Carl and Rebekah Combs
- Madalyn Baker and Ryan Wiard
- Hayden McNeil
- Karine and Matthew Maynard
- Jane Dreidame & Tom Ralston
- Megan Sexton
- Mr. and Mrs. Jeffrey T. Pearson
- Ms. Laura Freeman and
- Mr. William Kingsbury
- David and PK Elpern
- Mr. Nelson Fields
- Ms. DaKeisha Jett
- Wolfe & Wolfe Partnership
- Mr. Brian Wolfe





Heritage  
Society  
Members

have made special provisions in their will, a life insurance policy, real estate, or some other financial conveyance to include the BGT in their estate planning. If you would like more information, contact the BGT at (859) 253-0362 or [info@bluegrasstrust.org](mailto:info@bluegrasstrust.org).

- Clyde Carpenter
- Ms. Linda Carroll
- Dr. David B. Dearing and Darrell S. Ung
- Mr. Kevin Lane Dearing
- Mr. and Mrs. Richard DeCamp
- Dr. and Mrs. Elvis Donaldson
- Janie Fergus and John Meyers
- Mr. and Mrs. Joseph C. Floyd
- Mr. and Mrs. John Hackworth
- Ms. Liz Harper
- Mrs. Gail H. Hart
- Mrs. Barbara Hulette
- Mr. and Mrs. David Jaquith
- Mr. and Mrs. William Johnston
- Mrs. Zee Faulkner Kurfees
- Mr. and Mrs. Robert E. Milward
- Mr. Jim McKeighen
- Mr. Tom Moore
- Dr. and Mrs. William N. Offutt
- Mr. N. Gregory Pettit
- Mr. Gay Reading
- Mrs. Sharon Reed
- Dr. and Mrs. Daniel Rowland
- Mr. David Stuart
- Prof. and Mrs. John R. Thelin
- Ms. Joyce Vanlandingham
- Mr. and Mrs. William T. Young

The Trust sadly notes the untimely passing of David Jaquith. A true friend of the Trust, David leaves behind his wife Wanda, whom we cherish.

## Charitable Gift Annuities, *An Alternative Estate Planning Strategy*



*Newly framed portraits of the Blue Grass Trust's three major benefactors have been added to the north parlor of the Dr. Thomas Hunt Morgan House. The BGT honors these three individuals who appreciated the good work of the Trust and made major contributions to further its work for future generations.*

*Left to right: Jane Hamilton Blachly, Miriam Bostrom Stambaugh, and Mildred Anderson Hart Dunning (see page 11 for an article about Mrs. Dunning)*

Over the course of the pandemic, many people have paused to review their estate and income tax plans considering those nonprofit organizations which are dear to their hearts. A charitable gift annuity can be an excellent tool for charitable giving because it combines the benefit of an immediate income tax deduction and a lifetime income stream. Furthermore, your future taxable estate will be reduced for the remainder value of the property transferred to the charity.

A charitable gift annuity is an arrangement in which you make a gift of cash or other property to a charity in exchange for a guaranteed income annuity for life. This is


similar to buying an annuity in the commercial marketplace, except you can claim an immediate charitable deduction for the excess of the value of the property over the value of the annuity, based on Internal Revenue Service (IRS) tables. The annuity may be payable to you over your life, or over the joint lives of you and someone you have designated. A portion of each annuity payment is tax-free because you are entitled to recover your original investment over your life expectancy. When you buy the annuity, you can claim a charitable deduction for a portion of the purchase price, determined from an IRS table based on your age.

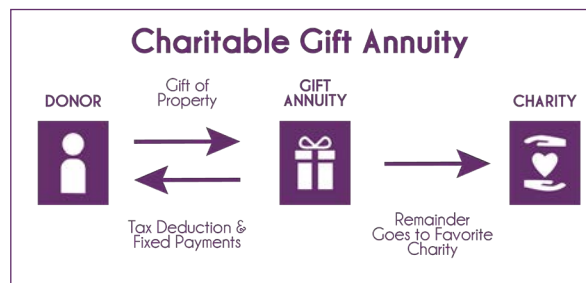
When you buy the charitable gift annuity, you will be entitled to an immediate income tax deduction for that

year, subject to an adjusted gross income limitation, even if the annuity payments are postponed until some future date. This makes it possible for you to claim the charitable deduction when you are in a higher income tax bracket and then receive the income from the annuity when you are in a lower tax bracket. The amount of your charitable deduction depends on a combination of your age and an IRS-prescribed rate of interest at the time of purchase. Of course,

your charitable deduction will be less than the total value of your annuity purchase price because your deduction can only be claimed for the present value of the property that the charity will keep

after your death, based on your life expectancy at the time of purchasing the annuity. Income from a charitable gift annuity is an obligation of the charity, not dependent upon investment results. In other words, the rate of return on a gift annuity is not variable. Instead, it is likely to come from a table based on your age at the time of the gift.

The BGT provides opportunities for Charitable Gift Annuities starting at \$25,000. If you would like more information about the BGT's charitable gift annuity program, please contact the office at 859-253-0362. The BGT staff will assist in setting up any proposed contribution in coordination with your estate attorney, tax accountant, and investment advisor before execution. 



# Getting to Take a Closer Look

As limits on gatherings have continued throughout the pandemic, so have our deTours. While we look forward to, hopefully soon, being able to gather again to explore central Kentucky's many significant sites, we value the opportunity a virtual format for deTour has offered. In the past, deTour locations (as spectacular as they are) were often constrained by parking, travel time, and the most dangerous task of "cat herding." For a deTour to be successful—as we have hiked through creeks in Wilmore, had to watch where we stepped in Athens, and even caused a traffic jam in the metropolis of Midway—we realize we've been able to make deTours not only about a place and its history, but also about its story. With a great deal of gratitude to the Woman's Club of Central Kentucky for their sponsorship and the impeccable filming and editing skills of Robert Tipton of Media Collaboratory in Lexington, BGT deTours has been able to explore significant places within the bluegrass region and really dig into why these places matter.

In October, we deToured the Headley-Whitney Museum



*L to R: The Headley Whitney Museum (Mr. & Mrs. Cornelius Vanderbilt Whitney Gallery); Joel Pett in front of his smoke house; Camp Nelson (Rev. Robert P Gates outside of the Fee Memorial Chapel)*

of Art. Driving out Old Frankfort Pike for a one-of-a-kind curator's tour, we learned about the museum's history from Hollywood to the rolling hills of the Bluegrass, explored its grounds (including the iconic shell grotto and pet cemetery), and got a look at its fabulous and unique items, including the current exhibit, *Indelible*, featuring the photography of James Archambeault, John Stephen Hockensmith, Linda Bruckheimer, and Deirdre Lyons. In November, a month we needed a laugh with some perspective, we did a celebrity deTour of American Pulitzer Prize-winning Lexington Herald-Leader editorial cartoonist Joel Pett's historic 18th century Mill House located along the Jessamine Creek in Wilmore, Kentucky. We learned about the home, the history of the mill within the community, and where Joel will be when the world ends.



*Boot Hill Farm (filming Ron Pen)*

In December, we continued the tradition of deTouring a place of worship and explored the Unitarian Universalist Church of Lexington designed in 1965 by renowned architect Herb Greene. Known for his organic modernist approach, he achieved international stardom when Julius Schulman photographed his 1961 *Prairie House* for *Life* magazine.

As January finally brought us out of 2020, we decided to celebrate by revisiting the Palmer Pharmacy, a place



supply depot and hospital during the Civil War and became a key emancipation site and a refugee camp for African American soldiers and their families.

In March, under a few inches of snow and ice, we deToured Midway's Historic Main Street. Checking in with Mayor Grayson Vandegrift to hear about the rich past of Midway's current City Hall, visiting with Midway Museum's Bill and Leslie Penn for some local history, spending some time with Milan Bush and learning about the important work she is doing with Honoring Black Stories in Midway, we then got a glimpse into Midway's future with Ness Alamdari and his renovation of the 1898 Odd Fellows Lodge.

As spring finally snuck into the Bluegrass, we were fortunate enough to explore John Jacob Niles's Boot Hill Farm in Clark County for our April deTour. Referred to as "a switched-on character, almost like a sorcerer," by Bob Dylan, Niles is considered one of the most prominent traditional American music collectors and performers of his time. Upon returning to Kentucky in the late 30s, Niles, his wife Rena, and their two sons made their home along Boone Creek on the Fayette and Clark County border, originally in a World War II-era



near and dear to the Trust, a relic of mid-century modern architecture, but most importantly, a civil rights landmark within Lexington's historic East End Neighborhood. Owned and operated by Dr. Zirl Palmer, its future is yet to be determined. For this deTour, we collaborated with the Louie B. Nunn Center for Oral History. Using audio from his 1978 interview for the Urban League's Oral Black History Project, Dr. Palmer, himself, guided us through the building.

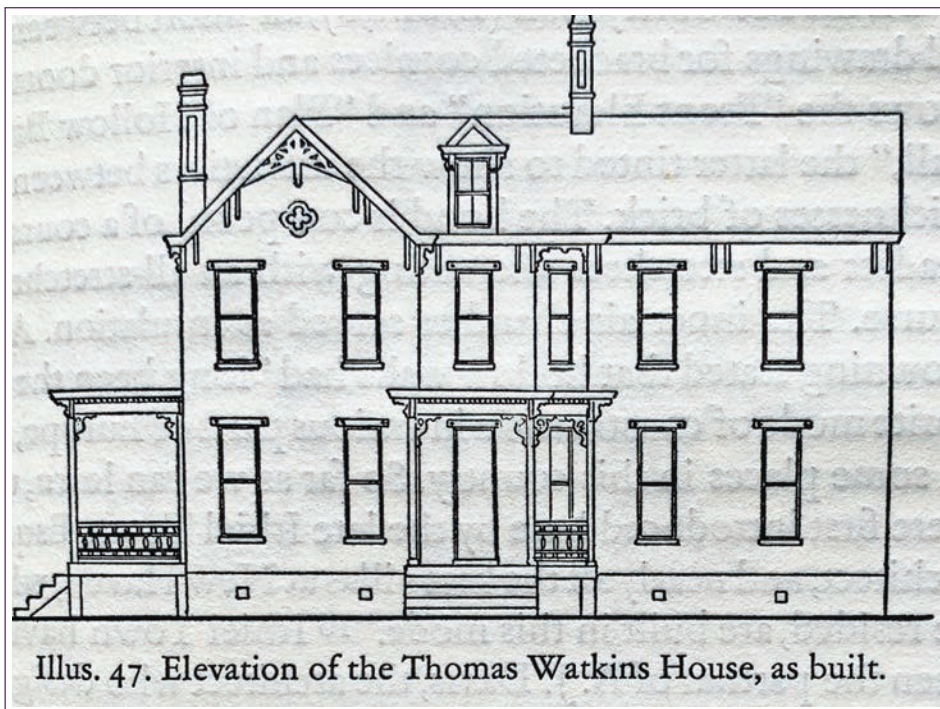
In honor of Black History Month, deTours visited Camp Nelson in Jessamine County, recently designated a National Monument by the Department of the Interior for its historical significance. Known to many for its National Cemetery, Camp Nelson was initially established as a Union Army

pre-fab Gunnison home placed on a flat piece of land previously developed for a home blown away by a twister. Over time, additions were made to the homestead, including a kitchen/dining area designed by local architect Ernst Johnson and a performance space ornamented in Nile's unique style, including hand-carved doors done by him thereby creating a home as unique as the ballads he performed.

While not being able to host deTours the way we used to has certainly had its setbacks, it has been the BGT's honor to continue to go to places we might not usually have access to and share the stories they hold. We look forward to continuing with deTours, whatever format, and hope to see you soon. 🙏

# The Thomas B. Watkins House *by John McMurtry*

The Community Preservation & Education Committee's (CPC) efforts are at the heart of the BGT's purpose: to increase advocacy for and awareness of preservation. CPC was created to bring together the historic downtown neighborhoods and create an ongoing dialogue about the preservation of the historic fabric of the vestiges of our venerable city. CPC is always on the lookout for properties endangered by neglect of new construction. It is the survival of historic properties, unprotected by historic zoning, for which we are most fearful. A case in point is the Thomas B. and Anne Watkins House at the southwest corner of Virginia Avenue and South Broadway.



Illus. 47. Elevation of the Thomas Watkins House, as built.

This house is an important example of the work of architect John McMurtry, the most prolific architect and builder of Lexington in the 19th century. Originally built on 40 acres, with dependencies, it sat on the outskirts of town. It is a late and mature example of McMurtry's style. He designed it for his daughter and her husband. As Clay Lancaster describes it carefully in *Back Streets and Pine Trees* printed by Carolyn Reading Hammer's Bur Press in 1956:

"The one working plan drawn by John McMurtry that has been preserved is that for the Thomas B. Watkins house. To Mrs. Watkins, the architect's daughter, we are indebted for the preservation of this one sheet. To the left, the ground floor plan of the house is on a blue-green field, the walls being light red, and the porches, staircase, presses and tub in yellow ochre. The architect's signature is below the right-hand corner of the plan. Diagrams of the second story and roof are to the right of the main plan, each scaled eight feet to the inch; and above them are the details for the "Best doors & casing," elevation and a plan for brickwork, and a cornice with brackets, on a one-inch to a one-foot scale. The size of the sheet is about twenty-two by twenty-six inches.

The house is composed of a two-story principal mass and a low wing attached to the rear. The entrance porch was made

The CPC is concerned about this fine example of McMurtry's later work. We can only lament that the current owners have applied for a demolition permit in order to destroy yet another remaining important aspect of our historic fabric.

smaller than indicated on the plan, because Mrs. Watkins did not want the window to the family room shaded. The Watkins House, built in 1887, and other McMurtry buildings of this period, stand in direct contrast to the architect's ante-bellum work: formal symmetry having given way to intimacy — yet without remarkable reduction in the overall size — and "correct" or archaeological motifs having been replaced by freely designed details executed simply in wood. A hall of modest width between the principal rooms functions as a reception center, and the staircase is in an extension that leads to the side verandah. The formal parlor is smaller than the family room, indicating the change in the way of life that came about as a result of the Civil War. With the demise of slavery, a greater emphasis was placed on the family unit due to the increased interdependence of its members. Still hanging [ca. 1938] over the marbled and stenciled iron mantel in the parlor is a beautiful portrait of Elizabeth Clark McMurtry. A narrow corridor separates the dining room and nursery, and connects with the service hall and kitchen. A bathroom with watercloset adjoins the nursery. Three bedrooms, a hall and a storage attic are on the second floor. The attic contained valuable McMurtry mementoes packed in an old carpetbag, that recent investigations on the part of the architect's grandchildren have failed to rediscover [in 1948]. Located about forty feet behind the residence, a small building housed

water closets on the near side and cowstalls on the other."

Several years ago the Watkins House was restored and was used for offices for quite a while. Only recently has it become vacant, and its porches boarded up to prevent ingress and egress. Grogan's Healthcare Supply business lies on an L-shaped lot surrounding the Watkins House and is for sale. The property adjacent, toward S. Limestone, is vacant and apparently slated for development as townhouses or apartments. The CPC is concerned about this fine example of McMurtry's later work. Should the current owner sell the property, it likely would not survive the development of the larger corner, unless it was somehow incorporated into the design of the future development,

perhaps as an office/clubhouse combination. That would be the best-case scenario. Meanwhile, we are making inquiries, hoping that it survives, even without local historic protection.

[Since this article was written to explain the overall historical importance of the Watkins House, both architecturally — in the apex of the career of John McMurtry — and as an important facet of the built environment of Lexington thereafter, we can only lament that the current owners have applied for a demolition permit in order to destroy yet another remaining important aspect of our historic fabric.]

*Back Streets and Pine Trees* is the University of Kentucky master's thesis by Clay Lancaster, first published 65 years ago, in 1956, by Bur Press. It is the fascinating history of John McMurtry's career as an architect and builder in Central Kentucky from 1830-1880. The text is richly illustrated by Lancaster, and images complement the text with floor plans and elevations accurately illustrating its buildings, including Loudoun House, Ingleside, Botherum, Lyndhurst, and Elley Villa. This new edition of *Back Streets* is updated with handmade hardback covers lined with French, Italian, and Indian marbled papers. Bound in the tradition of Japanese bookbinding, each edition of this second run of 100 is uniquely bound and lined with care. This second edition sells for \$60, and proceeds above publication expenses will be donated to Clay Lancaster's The Warwick Foundation, Inc. For more information contact Jennie K. Leavell at 415 East High Street, Lexington, KY 40507 or at Jennie's email (jkl@qx.net).



# Looking Back... *History of the Antiques & Garden Show*

The Blue Grass Trust's annual Antiques & Garden Show has been an iconic fundraiser for the BGT since the first show was held at the Civic Center in 1983, and its absence during this pandemic year was felt in Lexington and beyond. Since its early days in the Civic Center, the show has drawn increased crowds, developed into an event showcasing both antiques and gardens, and has produced significant income for the Trust each year. The venue has grown and changed from its early days in downtown Lexington, moving to The Keene Barn at Keeneland, then eventually to its present location in Alltech Arena at the Kentucky Horse Park.

Although we think of the Antiques & Garden Show as an annual event sponsored by the Trust for the past 35 years, the origin of the show goes back much further. Prior to the BGT's Antiques & Garden Show, the Fayette County Medical Auxiliary hosted an antique show for many years that raised money for nursing scholarships.

"The Fayette County Medical Auxiliary had done the show for years," said Gloria Martin, "and the members did EVERYTHING... no show manager, all the food for the preview party and all special meals and breakfast for the dealers." As attendance grew, the Round Barn became too crowded, and with large numbers of people on the second floor, safety became an issue. In response, the Auxiliary moved the show to Parker Place, where it was held until it eventually ended up at the Civic Center. "Once the membership realized the expense of putting on the show with the limited number of members was too much, they voted to end the show."

According to Barbara Hulette, who chaired the BGT show in 1987 and 1988, it was Dot Crutcher who was the central figure encouraging the Blue Grass Trust to approach the Medical Auxiliary about taking over the show. Dot was



an active volunteer in both organizations and realized the potential for the antique show to become a lucrative fundraiser for the Trust. "It was totally handed over to the Trust with everything (ideas, dealers, notebooks, etc.) the Auxiliary had accumulated over the years,"

Gloria

for the first BGT Antique Show. Judy Sebastian Miller was chosen to chair the first show in 1983, undertaking the daunting task of overseeing a show that hosted dealers from across the country and provided lectures, as well as a trolley tour of Gratz Park.

Nancy Iliff was in a position of watching the evolution of the show through the early years. With her background in American antiques, she was able to bring some top-notch dealers to the early shows. Over time, however, some of the high-end dealers found the clientele at the show did not make it profitable for them to return. Eventually it evolved into a show better fitting the tastes of a broader audience, providing a mix of high-end and more affordable items.

After years of featuring only antiques, Nancy and some friends attended Nashville's first Antiques and Garden show and returned with the idea of adding garden items to the show to appeal to a larger crowd. The next year's show featured displays by local garden and landscaping companies at the show's entrance.

During the early years, when Judy Sebastian Miller chaired the show, Jenny Dulworth Albert, former BGT Board and Finance Committee member, oversaw the sale of raffle tickets for a new Jaguar, donated by Doug & Taft McKinstry Rood. 500 tickets at \$100 apiece were sold, which covered the cost of the car and allowed the Trust to make \$20,000. This amount, in addition to the

total proceeds of the show, helped meet the year's budget for the Trust's operating costs. Jenny says of Judy, "What a beautiful and capable woman. Everyone loves her... to this day." And what a tribute to the woman who was willing to undertake the birth of the BGT's Antiques & Garden Show!

The transfer of a successful fundraiser from the Fayette County Medical Auxiliary to the BGT played a significant role in creating what has become the Trust's largest annual fundraiser and is obviously a credit to the many volunteers along the way who made it happen. We will all look forward to its return in 2022 🍀.

recalls. Barbara, who through her years of involvement with the Trust has become a BGT icon herself, credits the Medical Auxiliary Antique Show as the impetus for her introduction to the Trust. Barbara attended the Medical Auxiliary show each year and knew many of the women who ran it. Through her association with the organizers, many of whom became involved in the newly formed BGT show, Barbara became involved in the Trust's core mission of historic preservation.

Nancy Iliff was on the BGT board when Dot Crutcher recommended the Trust approach the Medical Auxiliary about taking over operation of the antique show. In Nancy's words, "Dot Crutcher was going to save that show, come hell or high water!" Once the board approved the motion, Dot approached Nancy and asked her to oversee the show, and in turn, Nancy approached Zee Faulkner, a long-time friend and respected antiques dealer, for assistance in developing the show. Thus were the seeds sown

"Dot Crutcher was going to save that show, come hell or high water!"

# Thomas Hunt Morgan House Renovation, *Part II*

In the Fall/Winter 2020-21 issue of *Preservation Matters*, the BGT was excited to provide a look at the extensive renovation of the exterior of the Trust headquarters and event space at the historic Dr. Thomas Hunt Morgan House. That article featured the well-researched and applied paint scheme used to make the home appear historically accurate for its time, the shingled roof in progress, the addition of copper downspouts, and the restoration of windows allowing them to easily open and shut.

Once this work had been completed, we had the gall to believe that we were finished and that the renovation would finally match the interior of the home in style and functionality.

In fact, this author was gullible enough to write that it would “highlight its [the Dr. Thomas Hunt Morgan House] beauty inside and out”. But no, just like anyone who has ever gotten a surprisingly good haircut knows, once you figure out what looks good, you have to make everything else look good.



*The Dr. Thomas Hunt Morgan House renovations 98% complete*

Maureen Peters, and Bill Johnston followed committee chair Joe Turley through the home for what we mistakenly may have assumed to be our final walk-through of a mammoth project. Smiling faces and the illusion of unlimited possibility for how the home would be used as a venue gradually dissipated to strained looks of concern

and perhaps feelings of being overwhelmed as Joe Turley, with his eagle eye for detail, made the case that while we had come far, we still had not come far enough for the venue to be what it could be. And he was right.

Even after everything we had done to the Dr. Thomas Hunt Morgan House, if we were going to do it right, we needed to do it right now.

While our public spaces, such as the parlor area, conference room, and Foster Pettit Auditorium were in good shape, their complimenting spaces required some work. The kitchen, to put it frankly, was a disaster; the downstairs auditorium restroom needed to be updated; and the upstairs green room area for guest

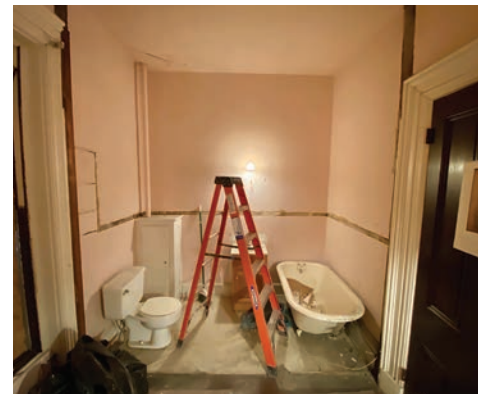
lecturers, performers, and of course, wedding parties was not up to snuff. Our Preservation Specialist Brittany Sams was working out of what essentially was a storage closet, even after being with us for over a year!

So, we dug in our heels and told our friends at Jarboe Construction we needed them to stick around a little bit longer and get to work. Now, after several additional months of labor, as the expression in baseball goes, “It’s all over but the crying,” but they were tears of joy since the results are spectacular. The remodeled kitchen is now a sleek and clean space, with state-of-the-art cooking appliances, a new floor and cabinets, and an in-



*The bridal room and retreat for lecturers and other guests*

While the interior of the Dr. Thomas Hunt Morgan House was mostly where it needed to be in terms of style and function, it, as a whole, was not compatible with the improvements made on the exterior. This became all too obvious as the BGT’s Facilities Committee members, John Hackworth, Carol Martin, Janie Fergus, Jackson Osborne,



*Brittany’s office space included a tiny walled off bathroom/storage room*



*Brittany’s office space after removal of the bath fixtures and wall*



*The masked John Carloftis with crew, including Thomas McKinley and the lovely Lily and Gertrude, generously gifting two Longshadow planter troughs*



*The kitchen during the total remodel*



*Newly remodeled state-of-the-art kitchen*



*Wedding arrangement adhering to COVID restrictions*



*One of many possible table configurations in the auditorium*

dustrial dishwasher, all making it a perfect space for a caterer to prepare the perfect meal for an event.

Upstairs, the green room has been completely renovated from what once could have doubled as a cleaned-up dorm room at UK's Haggin Hall with pushed-together couches, low lighting, and even a steel credenza. Now the space has been updated to an inviting open room with an ample amount of natural and artificial light from restored windows and interior lighting. Also, in the upstairs of the house, a similar upgrade has been performed on the former office/storage unit that is now 100% functional office space.

Downstairs, we have replaced stained carpet tiles, painted over scuffed wall marks, and made the addition of an accessible restroom with a diaper changing station, adjacent to the Foster Pettit Auditorium, providing a more inclusive environment for the property.

With these upgrades made to the Dr. Thomas Hunt Morgan House, which was accomplished through what every preservationist knows to be a labor of love, it is now safe to say the home has met its true potential. Thanks to the diligence of the BGT's Facilities Committee, who ensured the work was completed accurately, the Dr. Thomas Hunt Morgan House now has its beauty highlighted inside and out... and this time I mean what I wrote. 🙏

# Back from the Brink, *A Remarkable Restoration*



*445 West Second after renovations were completed  
(Courtesy of GLINT Studios)*



*Two views of the circular staircase before renovations began. Notice the hole in the floor where the wood had rotted through.*

For years, many of us can remember walking or driving past the beautiful turreted 1890ish Richardsonian Romanesque residence, left vacant and deteriorating, at 445 West Second Street. During that time, the Blue Grass Trust communicated numerous times with the LFUCG Code Enforcement office to force the owner to make necessary repairs. Often fines for previous infractions would be

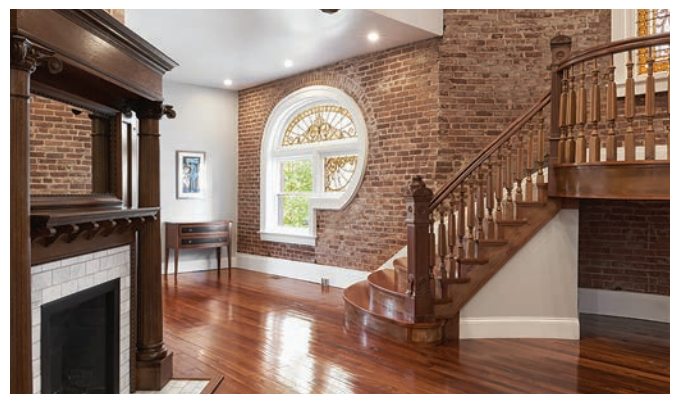
paid by the legal representatives of the owner, but the repairs never occurred. The house appeared on the precipice of total ruin.

Then, in November 2015, Brooks and Holly Scudder were able to purchase and rescue the house. They did so only after serious consultation with architect and friend Darren Taylor. In making the decision to buy and renovate, this threesome appears to have fallen somewhere along the continuum from likely crazy to truly courageous. After Darren had given his professional assessment, it was Holly who pushed forward telling Brooks, "We can do this." So, they got started.



*View of the rebuilt stairs and the refinished heart pine floors*

*Some of the floor boards came from heart pine on the third floor. The original stain glass window in the stairwell was beyond repair, and a new one had to be custom-made. (Courtesy of GLINT Studios)*



Both Holly and Brooks give Darren full credit for masterminding the renovation process, which took a year and a half to complete. Water had extensively damaged parts of the house after so many years of neglect. In some of the rooms, on all three levels, the floor joists had completely rotted out of the brick wall pockets holding them in place. This caused floors to move and sway. In other places on all three floors, moisture and black mold had caused the floors to simply rot away, leaving large holes. The turret was falling apart because the structural wood at its base had rotted away. The roof had leaked for years, and part of it was covered with a blue tarp, the make-shift roofing for much of that period of neglect. The two-story porch on the back of the house had completely disintegrated and fallen off, so there were backdoors that opened to nowhere. Yes — somewhere between crazy and courageous!

Clearly, the first item to tackle was the leaky roof and the gutter repair which was a part of that process. The house has 241 linear feet of box gutters. The metal in the box gutters had largely disintegrated and was falling off the house. Darren was able to have the exact profile of the box gutters replicated by Isaacs Roofing, which was essential to maintaining the building's architectural



*Molded and rotten wood had to be removed before renovations could begin. The entire project extended for over 16 months.*



*The back porch had fallen off the house leaving a second floor door going to nowhere.*

hallway, living room, and dining room. While Darren added bathrooms and made other modernizing modifications, the basic floorplan was changed very little. Holly and Brooks agreed one advantage of taking on a house in such disrepair was they were able to completely modernize with all new everything — wiring, plumbing, heating, insulation, etc.

integrity. Approximately 25% of the Scudder's total expenditures went to roof and gutter repairs. And then there was the turret. It was literally falling apart, and "popping bricks out from the inside like Tic Tacs!" according to Darren. The pack of eight 30 foot long 2 by 12s spanning the entire front of the house had rotted from the inside out, leaving the turret structurally in peril. In order to properly repair the base of the turret, it was necessary to strap the upper portion to the house so the base could be removed and repaired.

The house has a rather straightforward floorplan with a large entrance hallway leading to the circular stairway. A central chimney provides for three fireplaces in the

Probably the greatest challenge (among many) inside the house was the circular, cantilevered, "wedding" staircase, which was unstable and unsafe. It is a focal point of the home and had to be restored to its original beauty. The stairs were completely disassembled and reconstructed by master carpenter Danny O'Brien. The stained-glass window in the stairwell had to be removed and completely refurbished. And then there was the heart pine flooring, which was present throughout the house. Unfortunately, there were places where the floors had completely rotted through. Many floorboards had to be replaced, which would have been expensive, due to its rarity, except the attic had the same heart pine floor, although unfinished. Scott Clapham of SEC Flooring was able to use these attic floorboards to fill in the rotten places on the first and second floors. Along with all the flooring, the fireplace mantles were numbered, dismantled, stripped, dipped, sanded and re-stained to what the new owners think was the original patina.

When Holly and Brooks purchased the Second Street house, they put their old home on the market. It sold within the first month, leaving the couple and their son, Nate, to move into an apartment for nearly a year and a half. Brooks acknowledges that during the restoration process, "There were several times Darren talked me down from the ledge." Holly agreed, "We couldn't have done this without Darren. This was too big a project without having a trusted friend to guide us. Having someone to navigate all of that is the only reason we're in this house."

The Scudders have enjoyed the results of their vision and resolve for slightly over four years now. Brooks says he is not finished with all he wants to do, but they are very pleased with the results. To show our appreciation for their efforts, the Blue Grass Trust honored the Scudders with the 2016 Community Preservation Award at the BGT Annual Meeting. Brooks is quick to point out there are still a few other residences left along Second Street that need attention and are just waiting for someone to come along and take on the challenge. Don't hesitate to contact him if you think you can manage to exist somewhere along that continuum between "crazy to courageous".



*In order to rebuild the base of the turret, the upper portion had to be belted to the house.*



*The living room, with one of the three fireplaces feeding into the central chimney (Courtesy of GLINT Studios)*

# Cheers to our future!

What is a legacy? Growing up, when any of us children asked my dad what he wanted for a gift, he always said the same thing: "Just a few kind words." Glorious laughter followed. It was family banter, but my dad's simple phrase revealed a treasured revelation. Kind words are the best gift, and so often lead to kind deeds. Kind words and kind deeds sum up the heartbeat of The Woman's Club of Central Kentucky.

During 2020, I have been awestruck at the power of my father's clear, profound words. Kind words are powerful, and when attached to actions, become an unstoppable force. The unstoppable force of kindness is the real legacy of WCKK, which has remained true to its mission since 1894. The kindness we feel toward each other radiates into a renewed focus outside our group and pours into our community, where partnerships are invigorated and strengthened. Our ladies live to serve.

Our partnership with the Bluegrass Trust and deTours reminds us that we are caretakers of the history, the people, the property, and the stories behind these marvelous historic structures. In 2021 we are dramatically expanding this partnership. We have exciting things planned, one of which partners BGT, WCKK, and The Lexington Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution. Stay tuned! We want to focus on our duty to generations of Kentuckians.

Our partnership with William Wells Brown Elementary School has given our membership infinite joy. Everything from uniforms to much-needed items for in-class instruction helps the children bring out the best in each person who serves. We anticipate the next opportunity! Our incoming President, Kymberlei Locke, directed the winter clothing drive for these marvelous students; they hold a special place in her heart. The COVID mask program headed up by our own Judy Owens was magnificent. WCKK partnered with The Lexington Chapter of the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution on projects for William Wells Brown. Lexington Chapter Regent, Clara Wilson, is a lifetime member of WCKK and a leader in the DAR. DAR's mission of Historic Preservation and Education is an ideal union with WCKK.

Recently, past President Gayle Hutcherson spearheaded donations of Chrome Books for the students at the new Success Academy in Lexington, where she volunteers. The Success Academy provides a safety net and personalized alternative for teenagers who need a nontraditional, accelerated pathway to graduate and successfully transition to college or the workforce.



*Left: Yvonne D. Walters, Family Resource Center Director, The Promise Academy at William Wells Brown Elementary School.  
Right: Kymberlei Locke, Incoming President WCKK*

Our partnership with Sayre Christian Village is inspiring. We, as a club, have an opportunity to benefit from the wisdom of its residents. Past WCKK grant recipient Elise Hinchman is helping us make a difference for the residents at Sayre. Service with kind words and kind deeds.



*Left: Clara Wilson, Regent of the Lexington Chapter, NSDAR.  
Right: Donna Price, President WCKK*

In March, we were privileged to help our fellow citizens whose homes and lives have been devastated and overwhelmed by the spring floods of 2021. Our monthly Spotlight Grants and our yearly grant of \$4,000 keep us centered on serving our ever-expanding community of exceptional people.

The century-old membership roster of the Woman's Club of Central Kentucky bears the names of influential women who recognize public service's significance. I wish to thank one of these fine women, Nancy Demarcus, a lifetime member who sponsored my membership into WCKK. I will forever be grateful. In 2014, Nancy was one of the 56 people named as outstanding staff at the University of Kentucky. Nancy retired from the University of Kentucky as a Special Collections Accession and Acquisition Archivist and University Records Manager. She graciously maintains the archives for WCKK.

My and my husband's families settled in this area before Kentucky was a state. Our ancestors have benefited from the providence of WCKK's philanthropy to Central and Eastern Kentucky. It has been a sincere honor to serve as President, these past two years, of a group dedicated not only to our ancestors but also to future generations.

I am excited to see everything Kymberlei Locke and WCKK will accomplish over the next two years and beyond. We are Strong Kentucky Women serving with compassionate hearts and busy hands, all in pursuit of the simple, yet powerful, legacy of kindness.

Donna Price President 2019-2021 

# Veiled Volumes Found in Henry Latrobe's Pope Villa



*Above: The cache of books discovered in the wall at Latrobe's Pope Villa*

*Uncle Tom: "One of the earliest publications of Uncle Tom's Cabin by Harriet Beecher Stowe"*

Living in the same dormitory as the basketball team would be the ideal student housing experience for many University of Kentucky freshmen, especially if its players eventually win a coveted national championship. Sharing the same cutting-edge building as superstar athletes would certainly pale in comparison to an alternative for many undergraduates – rundown off-campus housing where cockroaches check-in more regularly than landlords. And while Roger Herdy unquestionably reflects fondly on his time living in Holmes Hall with the 1978 National Champions, it was indeed a disheveled, cheap housing unit that left an indelible mark upon his college days. Through Herdy's curious and careful efforts, preservationists and historians have uncovered critical information about Benjamin Henry Latrobe's "Pope Villa" in Lexington, Kentucky that had eluded them for decades.

Herdy knew there was something unique about the old building that had been haphazardly sliced into ten separate apartments. Boasting a circular foyer and federal style designs, the house where he was renting for \$75 a month in the 1970s was not a typical structure and did not resemble other dwellings on the street. This fact would make itself more known after a serendipitous discovery Herdy made while looking for extra space to put his schoolbooks.

Within his apartment was a door that opened to temporary paneling, used to separate him from the neighboring unit. As he describes it, this area was a "dead zone" and ideal for a much-needed bookshelf. Able to see an old plaster wall through the gaps in the paneling, he began dismantling the makeshift barrier and found a hollow space. Grabbing a flashlight, he noticed a stack of books tucked into a corner approximately twelve feet above the floor.

Intrigued by this collection of veiled volumes, he fastened a coat hanger to his broomstick and gently brought down the pile of books, which included an early version of Uncle Tom's Cabin and a publication about peace negotiations between the United States and Great Britain. Opening his new newfound treasures, likely the first time they had been cracked in over one hundred

years, revealed pages containing signatures and details about some of Kentucky's earliest families of European descent – the Lancasters, Russells, and Todds (i.e., Mary Todd Lincoln).

Filled with excitement, Herdy informed his landlord what he unearthed in the walls, but after learning it was not surreptitious money, she told him "Whatever it is, you can keep it." Although it would take years to realize, his breakthrough would be worth more than expected.

Herdy conducted casual research on the books, but he ultimately set them aside to focus on his mechanical engineering studies and new marriage. The books remained in this suspended state for decades while life took him elsewhere, even though he returned to Lexington intermittently to visit his old stomping grounds. In 2011 he drove by the house and noticed a Kentucky Historical Marker in the front lawn that revealed the significance of the building. Recognizing its indispensable importance to Kentucky and American history alike, he called the Blue Grass Trust about the extraordinary books he found as a student behind the paneling nearly forty years prior.

Soon after, Herdy officially gifted the books to the Blue Grass Trust in a formal ceremony. His diligence and awareness successfully ushered in a new era for Benjamin Henry Latrobe's early 19th century architectural triumph. If not for his deliberate safeguarding, these crucial books might have been destroyed in a 1987 fire that severely damaged the house. As evidenced, Herdy's story reminds us everyone's actions matter when it comes to preserving our nation's past. 📖

One of the earliest publications of Uncle Tom's Cabin by Harriet Beecher Stowe

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The Blue Grass Trust is proud of and impressed by its staff. They are talented, bright, interesting people; they complement – and compliment each other very well. In addition to Jackson Osborne, our Preservation Outreach Coordinator, and Brittany Sams, our Preservation Specialist, the Trust also has an Administrative Assistant, Rebekah Kirkland. She keeps track of the financial transactions not only for the BGT, but also for numerous other organizations and companies. Some groups may require only an hour or so a month of Rebekah's time; others (like the BGT) require up to 40 or more hours each month. Rebekah has had her own business since 2015 and began helping the Trust about

## Rebekah Kirkland

that time. Rebekah generates all financial reports, does the payroll, pays bills, and tracks deposits. She generates the periodic letters that go out to members, and members-to-be. She also maintains the membership databases and the inventory of the Hopemont Museum. The BGT uses nonprofit software for tracking membership, donations, and other administrative tasks, and Rebekah is the go-to person for maintaining and accessing these databases.

Rebekah grew up in Arjay, Ky., outside of Pineville in Bell County. She comes from a family of ministers, graduated from Bell County High in 1993, and attended UK before graduating from Sullivan University with a degree in Business Administration. She and her husband, Jeff, live in Bourbon County on an acre of land surrounded by farms. They have two daughters

– 16-year-old Kristin and 23-year-old Madison.

Before striking out on her own, Rebekah served for nearly 20 years as financial manager – later Chief Financial Officer – for one of Lexington's largest automotive service centers. She still counts that business as a client along

with the previous owner's other businesses. Rebekah does not lack personal initiative. She took it upon herself to study for and achieve a certification through the National Institute of Automotive Service Excellence (ASE). Her certification allowed her not only to better communicate with her fellow automotive service workers, but also to better represent the business to clients and customers.

Rebekah has always considered herself a tomboy and she may be right. She grew up playing basketball, hiking, and fishing with her parents and siblings, and helping her father and brother restore

old cars. She and her family enjoy being outdoors, target shooting, hunting, and archery. She loves to read and is accomplished in Cricut craftsmanship (see the example). Rebekah is a person of many skills, talents, and interests. These, combined with her always positive demeanor, make her a great asset to the BGT. 

