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The Blue Grass Trust for  
Historic Preservation

## Restoration of the Historic Dr. Thomas Hunt Morgan House In Progress

PRESERVATION

[www.bluegrasstrust.org](http://www.bluegrasstrust.org)

# Matters

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2020-2021

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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.

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# Message from our President

## Fall Greetings BGT Members, Friends, and Supporters

While much of the world's activities have changed, the BGT's work effort focusing on the mission of historic preservation has adapted and is active, productive, and rewarding. Of course, this would not be possible without the hard work and commitment provided by our energetic and creative staff members, Jackson Osborne, BGT Preservation Outreach Coordinator, and Brittany Sams, BGT Preservation Specialist. Also, instrumental in the progress is the BGT Executive Committee and Board and engaged committee members and volunteers. It is fun to see the new activities and accomplishments of this incredible "can do" team. I continue to be honored and energized to be a part of this organization.

Much has been accomplished since the previous *Preservation Matters* and some of the highlights are included in this edition; however, we encourage you to monitor, like, and engage with the frequent social media posts so that you miss nothing and help others become aware of the BGT's great work and education offerings. Many thanks to *Preservation Matters* Managing Editors, John and Carolyn Hackworth, and the authors who have prepared the content for this edition. Plans are already underway for the next edition. Additionally, Jackson and Brittany are constantly preparing social media posts to keep the face of the Trust interesting, educational, and focused on preservation.

Some of this edition's highlights and not-to-be-missed information include -  
Repair work is underway to bring the Dr. Thomas Hunt Morgan House back to its original beauty and ensure it will withstand the elements for decades to come. This gorgeous building is blossoming through construction oversight leadership provided by Joe Turley, AIA, and the input and work effort of the entire BGT Facilities Committee. Please watch social media for more information as we plan to offer an outdoor event to commemorate the work effort, provide information about the changes, and celebrate completed enhancements.

The deTours Committee has gone above and beyond to adapt to a virtual presentation and provide interesting, educational and lively content which can be seen on the BGT deTours Facebook post. You will be impressed by the quality and content.

One of the many activities facilitated by the Community Preservation and Education Committee (CPC) are the BGT Annual

*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.*

Awards nominations. Look for the article on this year's outstanding award winners.

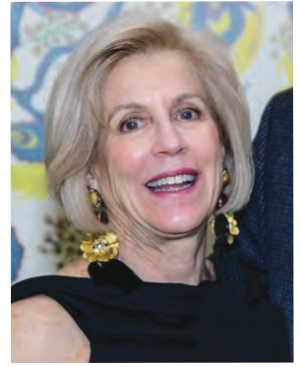
Please note the BGT Solidarity Statement. It is referenced and used as a guiding principle with committee plans and activities.

If you aren't currently active with the BGT, we would love to have you. Much of our work is done via Zoom, thus, by engaging, you will find a way to give back to the beautiful Central Kentucky Bluegrass Region, be in contact with others with similar interests and stay safe, as well. While we are accomplishing a lot, the more hands and minds involved, the more that can be realized. Please feel free to reach out to me, the staff or any board member and we can talk about how you would best like to be involved.

The Blue Grass Trust Annual Fund drive is underway. As you know, we are not able to host fund raising events so direct gifts are more critical this year than ever before. We work hard to reduce expenses, apply for grants and be as efficient as possible. All gifts will be used wisely and will ensure we are addressing the core mission: advocating for historic preservation. For those who have already given, thank you! For those who have not yet, please go to the middle of this *Preservation Matters* for easy instructions on how to donate.

Finally, thank you for all you do in the interest of historic preservation, making Central Kentucky the best it can be. This is a great time to appreciate and enjoy what we have right here in our own communities. Come, enjoy a picnic in the beautiful Hopemont gardens which are wonderfully maintained by the Town and Country Garden Club. The BGT has several interesting walking tours that can be enjoyed by the entire family including one especially important one coming out soon that showcases and educates about the East End of Lexington. Watch for it!


Sincerely,





## BGT SOLIDARITY STATEMENT


As a preservation-focused organization that seeks to protect the special historic places around us, the Blue Grass Trust for Historic Preservation acknowledges the pivotal role the Black community has played in the creation of our cherished buildings. Just as we seek to protect and support African-American history and spaces, the board and staff of the Blue Grass Trust stands with the Black community in the call for justice and racial equality.

Without action, talk is hollow. Here are specific ways we plan to move forward, honoring our mission to protect, revitalize, and promote the special historic places in our community, and to enhance the quality of life for ALL future generations:

 We commit to tell the stories of our historic structures with a wider lens and ensure the recorded history of our properties is not whitewashed.

 We will highlight with sensitivity the stories we tell and the viewpoints we use to include Black voices connected to historic properties. As we continue the restoration of Pope Villa, we pledge to research and include stories of the enslaved workers to both focus on their humanity and to celebrate their profound contribution.

 We will expand our efforts to protect properties, such as the Palmer Pharmacy, that are part of the built and cultural legacy of the Black community.

 We vow to listen to Black voices and be receptive to suggestions on how we can do and be better. We are stronger when we work together and consider viewpoints other than our own.

For those wishing to further contribute to preservation efforts and support African American heritage on a national level, we refer you to the National Trust for Historic Preservation's African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund.

Link: <https://savingplaces.org/african-american-cultural-heritage#.Xt0NTWhKhPY>

## 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 more. As the region's leading historic preservation organization, we work diligently to fulfill our mission of education, service and advocacy.

Stay in touch with the BGT in the following ways:

<https://www.bluegrasstrust.org>

<https://www.facebook.com/BlueGrassTrust/>

<https://twitter.com/BlueGrassTrust>

<https://www.instagram.com/bluegrasstrust/>

### 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.



# Shut Down and Scaffolding Up



*The Thomas Hunt Morgan House before restoration began*

of how genetic traits are passed on in fruit flies, demonstrating that genes are carried on chromosomes. His work and influence earned him the title of the “father of modern-day genetics.” It was within this home that the doctor spent his formative years, often spending most of his time on the third floor dissecting bird nests, insects, and small animals, using the house’s dry sink that remains today.

When the Trust acquired the house in 2014, it was painted a stark white with two large additions. In the 1960s, a conference room was built to connect the main house with the nearby extended chapel. Originally built in 1920 before being lengthened in the 50s, the chapel is now known as the H. Foster Pettit Auditorium. These added structures to the home increased the property’s total size to 10,000 square feet. That expanded space was a far cry from the cramped offices of “The Kitchen,” and it offered more opportunities for the Trust not only to earn more income for its mission through being a rental venue, but also to cast a wider net in terms of exposure by



*Restoration in progress*

In March of this year, COVID-19 became real to those of us in Kentucky. The virus that many of us were led to believe would be contained to the west coast and confined to our nation’s larger cities, before being eliminated as a threat, spread throughout the country. It would lead to a national shut down that, for the most part despite the lifting of some restrictions, a significant majority of us still feel we are experiencing. Weddings, funerals, and even divorces were all put on hold as we quarantined and kept our social distance. We watched Tiger King and learned how to make sourdough bread, but there is only so much we can do before realizing that our home is our castle and our castle needs a facelift! At least that was the case for us here at the Blue Grass Trust when we began our endeavor to renovate the exterior of our historic Dr. Thomas Hunt Morgan House at 210 North Broadway.

In 2014 the BGT was still stationed in the fabled kitchen building located within Gratz Park. Confined

in a building with electrical, sewage, and mold issues that was so small there was hardly enough room for a conference call, much less a 300+ person event, it worked well enough but was constraining to our potential and our staff. So when our good friends at the Woman’s Club of Central Kentucky offered to sell us the nearby Dr. Thomas Hunt Morgan House, adjacent to our Hopemont House Museum property, we jumped at the opportunity.

The home was built circa 1868-70 by famed Lexington architect and builder John McMurtry and would become the childhood home of Dr. Thomas Hunt Morgan, Kentucky’s first Nobel Prize winner. Morgan was noted for his groundbreaking research in genetics in which he conducted statistical studies



*Stages of window restoration*



being a place available to members of the community who might not otherwise be familiar with the BGT.

However, once the BGT moved into the Thomas Hunt Morgan House, it became apparent that for it to function as both an office and event space, it would be necessary to upgrade the interior with more



*Each window is removed, restored, and reinstalled*

modern amenities, replacing wallpaper, removing drapes, and adding additional exits. The result was a remarkable interior with a style that could easily accommodate a board meeting as well as cocktail party.

But that was six years ago, and now with COVID putting everything on pause, the Trust decided that the time had come for our beloved Dr. Thomas Hunt Morgan House to get by on more than just its personality and to highlight its beauty both inside and out. So the BGT Board of Directors shifted some significantly appreciated investment assets into exterior improvements on the house.

Though the Dr. Thomas Hunt Morgan House has never struggled to be the setting for a good-time fundraiser, a day-to-remember wedding, a loved one's life celebration, or host to countless community and educational events, it is safe to say that on the outside it was showing its age. The house, original colors still unknown, had been painted completely white, being out of character with when it was originally constructed in terms of style, but also time had taken its toll on the building's exterior. Shrubs had grown large around the house, covering up some but certainly not nearly enough, chipped

paint and waterlogged window sills. The decaying metal roof no doubt led many a passerby to suspect it might be right out of central casting for a haunted house (disclaimer: the house is not haunted). So, we certainly had our work cut out for us. But fortunately for the BGT, when it comes to this sort of thing, we do not have far to look, especially with members like Joe Turley, John Hackworth, Maureen Peters, Bill Johnston, Jackson Osborne, and Janie Fergus, who make up our Facilities Committee. Thanks to them, we were able to get the ball rolling for this tremendous endeavor, through thoughtful discussion of how to proceed with a clear vision of the renovated building, careful research, and of course, knowing who to call.



*Completed window restoration*

The most noticeable change to the Dr. Thomas Hunt Morgan House is that the white paint that covered the entirety of the home is long gone. A big "thank you" goes to facility committee members Joe Turley and Maureen Peters, who reached out to Jim and Martha Birchfield, owners of Elley Villa, also built by John McMurtry, and followed an A.J. Downing-inspired plan from his *The Architecture of Country Houses*. Downing advocated for earth tones in the landscape, rebelling

against the white paint. The mid-19th century taste master suggested straw or fawn with brown shutters. Much like the Dr. Thomas Hunt Morgan House, Elley Villa had been painted white, with green shutters, during the 1940s. So the Trust decided to follow the well-researched paint scheme of Elley Villa, conducted by the Birchfields who generously shared their specific paint colors with the BGT."

With the paint selected for the Dr. Thomas Hunt Morgan House and a well-put-together plan of targeted areas that needed to be addressed, we were ready to go. In June the Trust began the exterior renovation, with Jarboe Construction operating as the Trust's contractor for the site in cooperation with our subcontractors Phase IV of Lexington, Cutting Edge Construction Service from Shelbyville, and Contract Decorating of Lexington. The work includes a newly shingled roof on the original Dr. Thomas Hunt

Morgan House that now matches the attached Foster Pettit Auditorium; enclosed copper dormers; rebuilt box gutters with new copper lining; repaired and reworked windows; tuck-pointed masonry; and of course most noticeably of all the new earth tone paint colors.

To say we are happy with the results that have come forth from our renovation of The Dr. Thomas Hunt Morgan House would be an understatement. As



*Wooden base under an old box gutter*



*New copper box gutters*

stewards of such an important home to the history of our Commonwealth and watchdogs for historic preservation within the Bluegrass, we are overjoyed to be returning our headquarters back to a more accurate representation of its construction period and to be able to ensure that it will continue to stand for many years to come as home to much good work and many happy memories.

We hope you will celebrate with us soon. 

# Historic Preservation Awards, 2020

Historic preservation is thriving in the Bluegrass. Though we could not have our Annual Awards ceremony in person this year, the Community Preservation and Education Committee found numerous preservation successes throughout the inner Bluegrass to consider as 2020 Annual Award winners. Nominees were narrowed to thirteen final recipients for eleven award categories. Recipients were notified in July, and they each received a BGT plaque or bourbon barrel beaker. Our Annual Meeting Report contained descriptions of projects and photos, and both the *Frankfort State Journal* and the *Lexington Herald-Leader* published articles featuring award winners.

## Our 2020 Annual Award Winners:

**Preservation Craftsman Award:** Given to a building industry craftsman who has exhibited a strong commitment to quality craftsmanship for historic buildings.



Grant Logan Copper Steeple

**Grant Logan Copper,** for the restoration of the steeple of the 1st Presbyterian Church in Lexington: The historic church at 174 North Mill was built in 1872 by prominent local architect Cincinnatus Shryock and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Each piece of copper on the steeple had to be measured, shaped and cut by hand.

**Public Service to Preservation Award:** Given to a government agency or official for service to preservation movement or to a specific project.

**Purchase of Development Rights Program—LFUCG:** The Lexington Fayette Urban County Government's PDR Program's mission is to preserve central Kentucky's farmland by preventing future development from occurring on participating properties. In addition to protecting our natural resources, it also is a friend of historic preservation by encouraging owners to preserve and maintain historic aspects of their farmland,



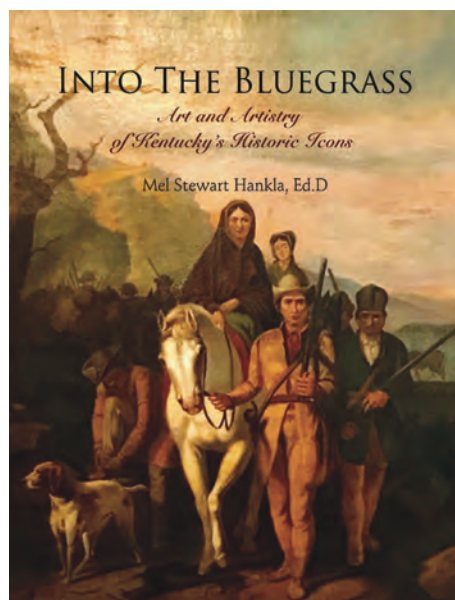
Screenshot from one of several screens of participants at the BGT virtual Annual Meeting in June

such as stone fences and outbuildings.

**Clay Lancaster Heritage Education Awards:** Given to an individual or group for service in researching and disseminating information about the Central Kentucky region.

**Mel Stewart Hankla, Ed.D.,** author of *Into the Bluegrass: Art and Artistry of Kentucky's Historic Icons*: Dr. Hankla's *Into the Bluegrass: Art and Artistry of Kentucky's Historic Icons* teaches us about the items that were not only necessary for survival of those early pioneers, but also embellished their lives with each artifact's distinct beauty. This important work elevates our understanding and appreciation of our material culture, while connecting the artifacts with the real history of those who cherished these treasures.

**Community Preservation Award:** Given to a non-governmental organization or individual for service to the preservation movement or to a specific project.



Book by Mel Hankla

**Kentucky Colonels:** The Blue Grass Trust is honoring the Kentucky Colonels for their Good Works Program Grants. The Kentucky Colonels have given numerous historic preservation grants in the central Kentucky area, sometimes multiple grants to the same organizations.

**Barbara Hulette Award:** For efforts in the preservation of Central Kentucky's history, heritage, built environment, landscape, archaeological resources, sense of community, or significant endeavors.

**The African American Heritage Trail—Together Lexington:** Located in downtown Lexington, the African American Heritage Trails was sponsored by Together Kentucky and researched and created by eighteen historians and community members.





*African American Heritage Trail sign*

The trail, a self-guided tour with a map of sign locations located at Courthouse Square, tells the African American story in Lexington's community and has been a source of education for residents and tourists since 2018.



*The Allen House*

**Community Ventures Corporation—Millersburg Allen House:** Community Ventures Corporation is being recognized for its efforts to preserve the former Millersburg Military Institute, and more specifically for the renovation of the main administration building known as Allen House. It is the centerpiece of the campus and an excellent representation of a Greek Revival dwelling. Community Ventures has transformed it into an event space for weddings, receptions, banquets and other special events.

**John Wesley Hunt Award:** Given to an individual for lifetime service to the preservation movement in Central Kentucky



*Lobby of the Kentucky Theater*

**Fred Mills:** Fred Mills was born in Lexington and grew up in the Historic Woodward Heights Neighborhood. He has played an important role in the revitalization and



*Fred Mills*

preservation of Woodward Heights since 1978. Most people know Fred through his lifelong career as the manager of the Kentucky Theatre. He first worked as an usher at the Kentucky in the early 1960s, and left for a period of time when he attended college to get a teaching degree, returning to manage full-time in the early 1970s. Fred was instrumental in getting the theatre repaired following the fire in a neighboring building in 1987. By April 1992, he completed the restoration and the Kentucky Theatre held a grand re-opening.

**Lucy Shropshire Crump Volunteer Award:** Given to an individual or group that has provided exemplary service to the Blue Grass Trust throughout the year.

**Jerry Daniels:** A self-described "history geek" whose passion for history led Jerry and his wife, Hope, to create their own heritage tourism company—Stone Fences Tours. Recently he became a member of the deTours committee, and since coming on board has shared his resources with us to create

some of our most well attended and memorable deTours to date: the Bourbon Barons deTour of the Riply Mansion, Ballard House in Lawrenceburg, and Brutus Clay's home Lynwood Mansion in Richmond. Each had an attendance rate that exceeded 200.

**Lucy Graves Advocacy Award:** Given to an individual or group that has exhibited advocacy leadership in supporting the historic preservation movement in Central Kentucky.

**The Boyle Landmark Trust:** Over the past 50 years, the Landmark Trust has saved historic structures throughout Boyle County. The Trust has worked with individuals and other organizations including Centre College to prevent numerous buildings on Main Street from being razed, one reason for downtown Danville's currently intact streetscape.

**Clyde Reynolds Carpenter Adaptive Re-use Award:** Given to an individual or group for outstanding efforts towards the rehabilitation and adaptive re-use of a building or buildings within Central Kentucky.

**Sav's Grill:** When Mamadou Savane, "Sav", decided to relocate his West African restaurant in 2019, he had no idea of the history of the building he had chosen. Early in the process of revamping the place, he discovered the metal framework and more of a gas station behind the



*Sav's Grill*

drywall. The building was originally a Gulf service station, possibly in the 1930s, and there were plenty of remnants of the service station behind the drywall and brick. Sav says he is proud to host some of Lexington's history and to play a role in making new Lexington stories.



*Sig Lischer Brewery*

*Continued page 8*



Continued from page 7

**Sig Luscher Brewery:** Dating back to 1886, the oldest brewery in Kentucky, Sig Luscher, was located in downtown Frankfort where the Transportation Building now stands. The original brewery was demolished, so when the Sig Luscher family decided to re-open a taproom, they opened across from the brewery's original site at 221 Mero Street. The building was a pre-fab coffee shop located on US 27 South in Garrard County, and it had been moved to Frankfort and used as a BBQ stand. The Luschers kept the original structure and renovated it, going for an authentic 1886 brewery feel on the interior.



*Sig Luscher Brewery Taproom*

**Landscape Preservation Award:** Given to an individual or group for the preservation, design, stewardship, restoration, or enhancement of a historic cultural landscape in the Bluegrass.

**Lexington Cemetery:** This Lexington landmark—170 acres on the edge of downtown—was designated a garden cemetery at its inception in 1848. Also an arboretum, the cemetery boasts numerous old growth trees, many two and three hundred years old. The cemetery has three greenhouses, which host 25,000 annuals in the spring until they are ready for the various display beds. In the fall, 25,000 tulip and daffodil bulbs are planted. To maintain this beautiful, sprawling property, the cemetery has 15 fulltime employees and ten to twelve seasonal workers.

**Dot Crutcher Award:** Given at Annual Founders' Day Party to an exemplary member of the Blue Grass Trust.



**Gay Reading:** Gay's involvement with the Trust began when he was a Cub Scout and even influenced his educational study of architectural history. As a teen and young adult, Gay participated in the Trust's community activism and social

life. As a member of the Hunt-Morgan Committee, Gay not only served on the committee, but also became property manager and administrator of the Hunt-Morgan House until a manager and administrator was hired. Gay also serves on the Pope Villa Committee. While Co-chair of the Pope Villa Committee, he established the Pope Villa Advisory Board and has engaged in a great deal of hands-on work there. Gay has served more than once on the Blue Grass Trust Board of Directors. 



*Lexington Cemetery*



# Jerry Daniels, Co-Chair of BGT deTours and owner of Stone Fences Tours

A life-long love of history led Jerry Daniels and his wife, Hope, to create one of Kentucky's broadest and most in-depth historic tour companies, Stone Fences Tours. Stone Fences Tours has created over 30 historic tours that explore everything from high-density urban areas to small town downtowns and remote battlefields. Each tour, ranging from an hour to half a day, digs into Kentucky history, featuring not only the highlights Kentuckians are taught in grade school, but also the footnotes of more remote locations, lesser-known but still history-making Kentuckians, and the reasons why places of the past are the way we know them today. From the vices of locals in Versailles in "Woodford Unreserved", to expansive tours on pre-Civil War history and slavery in Lexington in "A Bluegrass Divided," Stone Fences Tours are an excellent opportunity to learn more about our state—our places—in a personal and entertaining environment.

Jerry's interest in history began in his childhood. Born in Eastern Kentucky in Salyersville in the midst of a large and close family, his curiosity about his ancestry, his love of Social Studies in elementary school, and his fascination with Civil War and Revolutionary War movies were the beginnings of the long road leading him to Stone Fences Tours.

"I remember playing cards with my great-granddad when I was six. He was born during the Reconstruction, in the 1870s. My mom was one of 16 kids and my dad was one of 9, so I had over 50 first cousins, and I spent a lot of time at my grandmother's. She had over 180 descendants when she passed away. I can't complain. I had a great childhood." Eventually Jerry traced his grandmother's side of the family all the way back to the early 1800s, and his grandfather's side of the family all the way back to the 1700s.

A natural inclination toward both history and math led Jerry to a degree in Political Science with minors in History and Math. The idea for Stone Fences Tours, however, did not evolve until later in his life after Jerry and his wife, an American history teacher, moved to Lexington for her new teaching position. At this point in their lives they were taking large, history-themed vacations every year. Each vacation included driving over 3,000 miles to various historic sites belonging in the realm of Jerry's and Hope's specific interests—battle sites and Civil War sights, over 100 total in three years. The majority

of these sites were not in Kentucky.

But one year, his daughter broke her leg and they decided to do an in-state vacation for ease of travel. Suddenly Jerry and Hope realized that Kentucky did not have a historic tourism industry like some of their other vacation locations—Savannah, Georgia for example. "That summer we did the whole Bourbon Trail and the Brewgrass Trail as well. We had a private tour of the Underground Railroad in Maysville. We checked out the historic homes here—we saw Hopemont and the Mary Todd Lincoln House."

Yet Jerry noticed that all of these tours centered around a few themes, leaving much unexplored territory. "In Kentucky, we have history and bourbon, history and horses, etc. But what about other kinds of history? Like the feuds of Eastern Kentucky? What kinds of programs do we have for those?"


That year Jerry and Hope began a three-year long journey researching Kentucky history to establish foundations for their own tour company, which would approach Kentucky history from a broader perspective. They used multiple sources, ranging from local newspapers to documents in the Library of Congress. Established for only a few years, Stone Fences Tours has already been featured in Kentucky Monthly, The Lane Report, the Lexington Business Journal, and WKYT, and is continually working on developing new tours for out-of-state tourists and locals alike.

Jerry joined the Blue Grass Trust through our popular and award-winning deTours program. "History geeks that we were, we saw a Facebook ad for deTours. We have been coming to them since we moved to Lexington.



*Jerry Daniels serving up history*

They are free! And I love getting to see the homes you wouldn't get to see otherwise." He is currently co-chair of the deTours committee and has been instrumental in securing locations for some of our most popular tours, each drawing crowds of around 200.

The Trust is most thankful for all of Jerry's efforts to promote our mission—a mission Jerry thinks is essential to his efforts with Stone Fences Tours. "Stone Fences Tours preserves history by talking about it. Historic homes and historic buildings are the same thing—they're history. They're history that is actually still here. The BGT is preserving these buildings so that we can take people to them and talk about them and say—this is where the history actually is. This is it. See it. Feel it. And you can't do that if all you have are parking lots." 

*Find more information about Jerry and Hope's tours at Stone Fences Tour's website. [www.stonefences tours.com](http://www.stonefences tours.com). Learn more about the BGT's deTour program on our website at <https://www.bluegrass trust.org/bgt-detours>.*



# Lights, Camera, deTour!

You might remember that in our last issue of *Preservation Matters* we alerted you that we would (for what we assumed would be a finite period of time) transition our deTours to a completely virtual format for you to enjoy from a safe distance. Well, that still has not changed in the months since our last issue came off the press. What has changed is where we have been and the amount we have learned in the process.



*Jerry Daniels and Hope Brown share some of the history of Gratz Park*

in time for National Historic Preservation Month—or, as some of you might call it, May. Manning an iPhone 6 and the loudest pair of wood heeled boots he could find, our Preservation Outreach Coordinator, Jackson Osborne, took us to the Kentucky

State Capitol for a deTour led by guide Russell Kennedy, whose informative and entertaining tour knocked it out of the park and even overshadowed the trailing clomp of following feet that echoed down the limestone walls throughout the video.



*Russell Kennedy was our guide for the first deTour during the pandemic*

When the pandemic first struck, it is safe to say that we, like the rest of the world, were caught off guard.

It was our first entirely virtual deTour and, for what we were working with, it was a considerable success. But we realized that we needed to do more to adapt to our new way of exploring Kentucky's historically significant places and soon upgraded our equipment and editing skills. We also began recruiting professionals who already had both. With the help of L. Grey Photography and Media Collaboratory, we have released our deTours at their regularly scheduled time each month. The only pause we took was during the month of June. At that time, we decided to postpone our deTour to maintain space for the important conversations about racial justice and equality that were taking place on social media following the tragic death of George Floyd.

When the pandemic first struck, it is safe to say that we, like the rest of the world, were caught off guard. Everything shut down right before our April deTour. Out of bewilderment, we suggested that you, the deTourist and now viewer, use our regularly scheduled time to revisit some of your favorite and/or missed deTour locations by accessing our Facebook page (and maybe even starting the AfterHour early--as if you wouldn't have anyway) while we regrouped and came up with a solution to our literal distant problem. We found the answer just



*Yvonne Giles provides insight into African American Cemetery No. 2*

In July, deTour co-chair Jerry Daniels and Hope Brown, his partner in both life and Stone Fences Tours, guided us through Civil War-era Gratz Park in a deTour based on the diary of Frances Dallam Peter. Hope and Jerry provid-

ed great insight into the history of the neighborhood's homes as well as the social and political climate of the time. In August, African Cemetery No. 2 advocates Yvonne Giles, Thomas Tolliver, Mark Coyne, and Allan Hetzel provided a fascinating tour of the earliest recorded cemetery in Lexington to be organized, owned, and managed by African Americans. African Cemetery No. 2 dates back to 1869 when it was purchased as a burial ground by The Colored Peoples Union Benevolent Society No. 2. Those resting within the grounds include notable leaders in civil rights, education, the horse industry, and our military. Finally, in September, deTour co-chair Lucy Jones and our newest deTour Committee member, Nathaniel E. Hocker, led a tour of mid-century roadside architecture and signage which made stops at Southland Bowling





*Thomas Tolliver leads part of the cemetery deTour*

Lanes, the Gardenside bus shelter, Indi's, Burger Shake, and the 1964 Judd & Sweet designed rest area on I-64. In this instance, the new video format provided an excellent opportunity to showcase some mid-century gems that, due to their finite capacity, would not be amenable to traditional deTours.

In addition to all the great places we have been since we began our virtual deTours, we have also gained a sponsor for our programming from our friends, the Woman's Club of Central Kentucky. An organization established in 1894 by a group of spirited reformers of the Progressive Era, the club continues to be dedicated to promoting charitable endeavors, educational and cultural improvements, civic pride, and unity among the women of Central Kentucky. We are proud to have them be a part of deTours and look forward to the work we will achieve together. And while we still cannot be together in person, we do hope you will join us each first Wednesday of the month as we continue to deTour virtually. 📺



*Lucy Jones explains local mid-century architecture and signage*

## Remembering Win Meeker

The Blue Grass Trust and the preservation community lost a great friend and advocate recently.

Win Meeker, who was the guardian of Fayette Park for over 50 years, died on July 8 at age 83. Her children, Bill, Dave, and Ann, organized a virtual memorial service on August 1. At that event, while one of her neighbors referred to her as the “Mayor of Fayette Park,” our real current mayor, Linda Gorton, said she and Win had been friends for over 22 years. As fellow registered nurses, they had an instant and continuing bond from the first time they met. Of the many neighborhood projects on which she and Win had worked, Mayor Gorton noted that Win valued the health and strength of neighborhoods because she knew that strong neighborhoods meant a strong city. The mayor went on to say that Win valued the preservation of the historic fabric of our community and understood the strength that it gave us. She noted that Win always worked for the greater good, and that is how she will remember her.

Service to our community was an imperative for Win. She served as Chair of the LFUCG Historic Preservation Commission for 12 years. For decades she championed Lexington's historic neighborhoods and all aspects of historic preservation in Lexington and Fayette County. She also served as president of the Fayette Park and Northside Neighborhood associations, and in these capacities she received multiple awards including the Service to Preservation Award from the Ida Lee Willis Memorial Foundation and the John Wesley Hunt Award from the BGT, among many others. She also worked to build the Lexington Ronald McDonald House, serving as the President of the Board of Directors and then being elected to the lifetime Board of Directors in 1991. Win was a leader in the fundraising efforts for such Lexington treasures as the McConnell Springs Education Center, the Kentucky Theater historic organ, and the historic Sculler's clock on Main Street.

During the memorial service, Bettie Kerr, Director of the LFUCG Historic Preservation Office, spoke



of her friendship with Win which spanned over 25 years. Bettie noted that Win did nothing by half measures. If she was involved in a project, she was involved with all aspects from the beginning to the end. Bettie noted that during Win's tenure as chair of the Historic Preservation Commission, there were at least seven historic districts formed in Lexington. This is an arduous job, and Win helped shepherd these important H-1s to a successful resolution. Win's work in the Northside included the formation of the Northside Improvements Corporation, which was an adjunct to the NNA. The Corporation was able to purchase property on Miller Street, preserving a home and planting the seeds of rejuvenation for the entire street. Bettie said she found a couple of quotes from Win in an old newspaper interview from the 1990s regarding a neighborhood project. Win told the reporter, “If you don't care who gets the credit, you can get a lot done.” Win would always want to give the lion's share of the credit to others. In a second quote, Win explained, “I have always been a volunteer. We're here for a short time, and we need to make a difference while we are here. It's a chance to leave something permanent.”

Lexington has been blessed to have had Win in the community for a “short time,” making so many lasting contributions while she was here. We at the Blue Grass Trust are so very grateful for all she did for all of us. Thanks to the “Mayor of Fayette Park.” 📺



# Henry Tandy

In our 2017 Issue of *Preservation Matters*, we celebrated the restoration of the old Fayette County Courthouse, now known as Courthouse Square. The grand Richardson Romanesque-style building adorned with Indiana limestone that operates as a focal point for downtown Lexington and now stands as a shining example of what can be made possible through historic preservation and adaptive re-use. But now this year we are celebrating the man who made it possible, Mr. Henry A. Tandy of Tandy & Byrd Masonry, who along with his business partner Albert Byrd, was responsible for the brickwork of this spectacular structure amongst many others that make up the city of Lexington and the surrounding Bluegrass Region.

Henry Tandy was born into slavery in 1854, within Estill County, Kentucky. In 1865 as the Civil War ended, he moved to Lexington, where he started work for local photographer John Mullen before finding his calling in the construction business working for the building and contracting firm of Garrett D. Wilgus. Working as a bricklayer amongst the other 200 plus men employed by Wilgus at the time, Tandy was able to differentiate himself from his co-workers as a skilled leader with a natural gift for the business. He was promoted to the role of foreman not long after being hired, and he continued to move in the upward trajectory of the company earning Wilgus's trust. Eventually, alongside his future business partner Albert Byrd, Tandy ran the company as their boss's health declined throughout the 1880s and early 90s before he would pass away on February 17, 1893.

Upon the death of Garrett Wilgus, the firm Tandy & Byrd was formed where Tandy was the business manager as well as the face of the business while Byrd focused his skill as a foreman. Because of the two men's work for Wilgus, the business started out already well established with many large projects. The 1894 First National Bank building; Lexington Dry Goods; The Merrick Lodge; the Natural Science Building at the State College now known as Miller Hall at The University of Kentucky; original structures at Eastern Kentucky University Roark Hall and Sullivan Hall; and of course the Fayette County Courthouse were some of their more notable projects.



*With his passing, Tandy not only left behind his buildings, many of which still stand today, but also a legacy larger than them all and deserving of mass recognition for his works and achievements.*

Tandy & Byrd would last successfully for 20 years, employing a staff of up to 50 brick workers. It would be during this time that Tandy would step to the forefront and become a well-known and established figure in many realms. He was known as a prominent businessman, a forward-thinking construction professional presenting papers and speaking nationally at the National Negro Business League on the subject contracting and building. He was also recognized as a fixture within Lexington's African American community, being involved with many African

American organizations such as the Kentucky chapter of Brethren of Friendship Lodge, which he also constructed, and was "the wealthiest colored fraternal organization in the country," with 10,000 members and helping construct smaller projects of residential developments that contributed to better housing within largely African American neighborhoods.

Tandy would pass away on February 13, 1918, just days before the anniversary of his former boss Wilgus's death. With his passing, Tandy not only left behind his buildings, many of which still stand today, but also a legacy larger than them all and deserving of mass recognition for his works and achievements.

Henry Tandy was a man born into an America where he was to be enslaved from birth until the age of 15, before being freed to the Jim Crow South where he struck out on his own and navigated a world of powerful racism and Confederate sympathy, and he still had the ability to rise from the ranks of a bricklayer to being a partner of one of the state's most prominent masonry firms. While we may know his

history now, we may never know all the hardships he endured having to reach such success. Henry Tandy's story is one of grit, determination, and charity. Yet for most of the 21st Century, it has been left in obscurity. As we continue to progress through our study of history, we hope that his story and the many others like his will become better known and appreciated. 🕊️





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# Community Preservation During Worldwide Upheaval



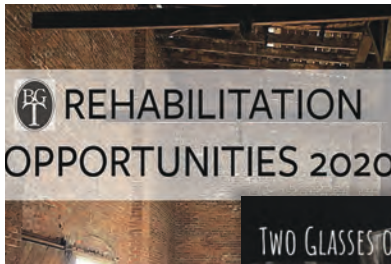
One has to acknowledge that we are living in a most unusual time: runaway wildfires in the West, increased hurricanes in the Atlantic, protests and riots all over, a worldwide pandemic affecting millions, a struggling economy, rising sea-levels, extreme weather episodes, global warming, melting ice-caps, chronic opioid addictions, and Black Lives Matter, and on and on.

Amidst all of this excitement, how is the Blue Grass Trust's Community Preservation and Education Committee (CPC) doing? Quite well, thank-you!

CPC focuses on one of the major reasons that the Blue Grass Trust exists: advocating for historic preservation in the Bluegrass. That includes educational programs and lectures, appearing before various governmental panels, commissions, and boards - to present the preservation side of whatever issue is being discussed; and rallying the troops when needed to show community support for some preservation issue. While its purpose may seem minor in comparison to the world's upheavals, its work is important to Central Kentucky. It must go on – and it is.

In the past, we have done our work in person. With social distancing, masks, canceled meetings, restrictions on large indoor gatherings, and even concerns regarding small indoor gatherings, we along with others have changed how we work. CPC still meets twice a month - now via Zoom – for an hour or more to discuss whatever topics of interest are in process, their status, any action required on our part, and who is to participate in the agreed upon action. While a lot is to be gained from in-person interaction, there are other ways – thanks to current technologies – to address CPC's objectives. Think email, social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, websites, and more), and Zoom (one of the heaviest used of the available remote meeting tools). We are using them all.

One of the positives from the current environment is that it has pushed us to use the above tools more aggressively and more creatively. Our objective with the use of social media is to keep the BGT out in front of our supporters (current and potential), to inform supporters of topics of interest, and provide education regarding our history – particularly our built history.



One project that worked really well was the "Rehabilitation Opportunities 2020". CPC members scanned the real estate listings in the counties surrounding Fayette to find houses for sale that needed significant rehab work and that were on the National Register of Historic places (thus qualifying them to use the historic tax credits to help with rehab costs). We came up with 11 that we posted on social media. It was so positively received that several other preservation organizations reposted it, and our Preservation Specialist, Brittany Sams, was interviewed by the



"Two Glasses of Bourbon" social media site. Since we have not done an "11 Endangered Properties in their 11th Hour" for several years, we decided this would be a great and more positive way to accomplish a similar result. The BGT received a lot of great social media attention as a result of this innovative project.

In another project, CPC requested members to submit their favorite historic buildings in the central Kentucky area along with some information about the building and their relationship to it. These were posted weekly on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram during Preservation Month this past May. We are currently beginning work on a history-tour of Lexington's East End which will build on the existing and interesting walking tour found on the Lexington Public Library's website.



*Madeline McDowell Breckinridge played a major role in women's suffrage*

In addition to the above social media posts created as part of the CPC effort, our BGT staff has also posted the monthly deTour tours, information about the Palmer Pharmacy Building at the corner of 5th and Chestnut, a feature on three turn-of-the-century women who played a major role in women's suffrage,



retweeting various items of timely historic interest such as one about baseball's Negro League's Lexington Hustlers, and other history related items. A recent posting covered the renaming of

Cheapside Park to The Henry A. Tandy Centennial Park in honor of Henry Tandy, a former slave who became a leading masonry contractor. His work included the 1899 former Fayette County Courthouse, which is located in the renamed park.

One should anticipate that even when the world returns to its "new normal", our increased focus on social media will continue. 📱



# Why Live In An H-1 Neighborhood???

Visitors to Lexington generally marvel at the stately beauty of the older neighborhoods that abound in the downtown area. The H-1 designation was created in the 1950's to preserve these neighborhoods. Structures within these districts cannot be altered or demolished without the approval of the LFUCG's Office of Historic Preservation. In the ensuing 60 or so years, 17 areas have applied for and achieved this distinction, sometimes rather easily and sometimes with considerable controversy. What would it be like to live in one of these communities—would you like it, hate it, find the rules too restrictive???

After reaching out to several of these H-1 communities, the answer seems clear. All the people contacted find their districts to be special and are glad for the designation.

The granddaddy of the H-1 is Gratz Park. Lovely and varied homes, many of them over 200 years old, line a stately and peaceful park that is anchored by the Carnegie Center for Literacy and Learning, and includes Hopemont, the John Wesley Hunt estate. After it achieved H-1 designation in 1958, it went further and was added to the National Register of Historic Places. Gratz Park residents, over the last 20 years, raised funds for park landscaping and other improvements. This was largely achieved by applying for grants and hosting fundraisers. Neighborhood president John Hackworth says that the designation has brought the residents closer together and they all know one another well. After a recent purchase, the new homeowner stated to his surprise, "I didn't just buy a house, I bought a neighborhood." Residents also enjoy the easy

access to downtown with cultural, dining, and professional opportunities.

past, but had declined to pursue it. After the development plan was presented, two motivated citizens, Jesse Voight and Candace Wallace, began canvassing the neighborhood and holding meetings. Two streets were added during the process. With the help of the late councilman Jake Gibbs, their goal was eventually achieved. The process was long and arduous, but eventually over 72% of the neighbors voiced their support for the H-1 overlay. The Pensacola Park area was primarily concerned about increasing development along the clogged Nicholasville Road corridor, and residents were anxious to preserve the character of their neighborhood. Some of the former factions from the application process remain, but by and large the community has become closer with a monthly newsletter and improvements in landscaping on some of the streets.

Mark Streeby, president of the Ashland Park H-1, is passionate about the process and historic preservation in general. This community achieved the designation in 2013. Not to be confused with Ashland Avenue or the Henry Clay estate, this area includes Hanover and Desha Roads, extending from Fontaine to Richmond Road. The precipitating event that mobilized residents was the demolition of a house in the district. Streeby states that studies show home values increase 10 percent as a result of the H-1 restrictions. He was quick to praise the BOAR review process as fair and reasonable. He himself went through the process twice, and he appreciated how this body pressed to uphold historic standards.

The common thread among these vastly diverse sections of Lexington is that the residents love their neighborhoods and would not want to live anywhere else. 🏡



*Some of the variety of architectural styles in the Pensacola Park H-1 neighborhood*

On the opposite end of the spectrum is Pensacola Park, which achieved the H-1 status in 2019. The residents were mobilized after a planned dense multifamily housing development was proposed along Nicholasville Road. The area had considered the designation several times in the



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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).



## The Perfect Plaque Application...

Okay, so there is no such thing as the perfect plaque application, and there probably shouldn't be as we all see things differently in the grand scope of it all, but there are some application forms that we receive that come pretty darn close—in our (professional) opinion. Now, this doesn't mean that to be a BGT plaque house you need to know the entire reference section of the Library of Congress or give us the history of your property dating back to Pangaea. We do not want you to stress about that, and anyway, if Lincoln slept in your house or Elvis took a bath there, we would likely already know. That being said, we would like to take the time in this

article to recognize good behavior and highlight a well-researched and thoroughly put together plaque application that scored high marks all the way around, and was a Christmas gift none the less (hint-hint for that special someone), so for our 1820 home in Georgetown, we say "Bravo!" accented with a chef's kiss.

Thanks to the details included in the application by owner Kitty Dougoud, we know that the James-Edison House is in the Federal style with 1930's additions added by Warren Gratz. In addition to filling out every section of the application, the owner included interesting and macabre anecdotes, such as an owner drinking lye and being carried out the window instead of the front door so as not to alarm the neighbors, as well as mentions that it once belonged to the founder of Bacon College, which later merged with Transylvania University, and later served as a Presbyterian Female Institute. We love details about local history! The applicant attached photos




from each exterior angle of the house: front, sides, back, etc. Our CPC-Ed committee, which reviews applications every two weeks, enjoys looking at photos of each beautiful historic property that comes our way, and they play a major role in helping us determine whether or not a plaque is awarded.

Just as this home is not on the National Register, it's good to remind those interested in showcasing their historic home that properties don't have to be on the Register or even in a local historic district to qualify for a BGT plaque. They have to be older than 50 years old and the original historic

façade needs to remain largely unaltered. It certainly helps if they have any significant local or national history, so include it if you can. We also try to remind plaque owners or those interested that BGT plaques do not place any limitations on changes that

you can make to the interior or exterior of your house—we let your local city government create design standards and play the bad guy! (Although we must admit, we agree that H-1 districts are just about the best thing since sliced bread and support them in their endeavors.)

Already have a BGT plaque on your front door? Buy another! They make great Christmas gifts. If you have a neighbor, friend, or family member with a historic home and are coming up blank for holiday gift ideas, send us photos of the house and fill out the plaque application as best you can. We are always willing to help complete applications! 





# Eugenics and Dr. Thomas Hunt Morgan

In the late 19th century a social movement founded by Britain's Francis Galton emerged in the Western World. Called Eugenics, the movement promoted a "purification" of mankind, arguing that by breeding superior humans to one another, undesirable physical and mental traits could be gradually eliminated. By the dawn of the 20th century, this had progressed to the point that involuntary sterilization of "undesirables" would be one of the tools to achieve this purification. This movement had many devotees including Alexander Graham Bell, Winston Churchill, Woodrow Wilson, John Maynard Keynes, and eventually Adolf Hitler.

The theory was taught in schools and preached from pulpits. The movement was further advanced by the Carnegie Foundation, which awarded monetary grants to various scientists in the United States to study and implement their theories. It is

estimated that about 60,000 Americans and over 350,000 Germans underwent forced sterilization. The practice was supported in a 1927 Supreme Court decision in *Buck v. Bell*, which set a legal precedent that states may sterilize inmates of public institutions. The court argued that imbecility, epilepsy, and feeble-mindedness are hereditary, and that inmates should be prevented from passing these defects to the next generation. The procedure was continued in some forms until the 1970s. The Carnegie Foundation withdrew their financial support from the eugenics movement in 1939.

Thomas Hunt Morgan, great-grandson of John Wesley Hunt who built Hopemont, was born in that house in 1866. The son of Lexington's first mayor

Charlton Morgan, Thomas grew up in a house on the Hopemont property that today is called the Dr. Thomas Hunt Morgan House in his honor. Dr. Morgan even as a child was fascinated by natural history and eventually received a PhD from Johns Hopkins University. He taught at Bryn Mawr College and Columbia University. At Columbia, the Department of Experimental Zoology was created in recognition of his work and his famous Fly Room. In 1927, after 25 years at Columbia, Dr. Morgan was chosen to head the Division of Biology at the California Institute of Technology. It was during this time that he received the Nobel Prize in 1933 for his work in genetics.

By 1915, Dr. Morgan was actively and vocally discouraging other geneticists from supporting eugenics.

In the early 20th century, Dr. Morgan became a member of the Eugenics Records Office, but quickly became disillusioned with their premises. He then became an open critic of the movement, arguing that the traits that the Eugenicians

were trying to manipulate, such as insanity and feeble-mindedness, could not be clearly defined and as such, the genetic basis for these traits could not be determined. He believed they could be the result of mutations and environmental factors. He also argued that they could be partially altered by culture and social conditions. By 1915, Dr. Morgan was actively and vocally discouraging other geneticists from supporting eugenics.

It is timely and gratifying that, more than 100 years ago, Thomas Hunt Morgan suggested that social reforms would be a much more effective way to alter behavior and intelligence. 🇺🇸

## Pope Villa Workday



*Latrobe's Pope Villa co-chair Mike Meuser instructs UK preservation students*

Students and professors from the University of Kentucky's Master of Historic Preservation program and the College of Design's undergraduate programs in Architecture and Interior Design gathered at Pope Villa on Friday, October 9, to clean and complete light maintenance work. Chair of the Department of Historic Preservation and BGT Board member Dr. Daniel Vivian and Historic Preservation professor Travis Rose organized the efforts of seven students. Latrobe's Pope Villa committee co-chair Mike Meuser and committee member Tom Moore brought work materials and provided instructions to students. By the end of the beautiful autumn morning, the villa received new landscaping and a deep clean that allowed the temporary flooring to be freshly painted. We are honored at the opportunity to share the history and architectural significance of this nationally important structure with future professionals in relevant fields. A huge thank you to all who were involved!





# Town and Country Garden Club



Garden Club of Lexington became the guardians of the Hopemont garden as their sole project. Now 50 years later, dedicated members of the club remain the caretakers and innovators of the garden that so beautifully complements the Hopemont property. Not only is the garden a beautiful and peaceful destination in itself, but throughout each year it is the site of numerous events, including weddings, wedding receptions, and other private events. Without the diligence of the garden club members, such events simply would not be possible.

Through the years, the garden guardians have not only lovingly maintained the plantings, they have donated items that still stand among the plants today, including the cast iron bench in the gazebo, a pair of mounted urns on cast iron posts, the old millstone

Following the purchase of Hopemont in 1955 by the Foundation for Preservation of Historic Lexington and Fayette County (later to become the Blue Grass Trust for Historic Preservation), a small committee undertook re-creation of the 19th century garden adjacent to the house. That small group cared for the garden until 1970 when the Town & Country

located in the raised bed between the house and Second Street, the antique sundial, the wrought iron bench in the garden, and the iron bird feeding station on a large poplar in the garden. The octagon-shaped gazebo, originally a privy located on the Thomas Hunt Morgan property, was moved to the Hopemont garden.



*BGT Board member and Garden chair  
Kathy Chopra with Doris Shepherd*

Over time, the gravel walks have been replaced with brick walks.

For many years, the garden club has hosted fundraising events to provide funds for maintaining the garden. In the early years, they sold their own handwork at a Christmas Bazaar each year. Occasionally the members have hosted a garden party to benefit the garden, and they are fortunate to often



*September wedding in the Hopemont Garden*



*(L to R) Club president Jan Swauger,  
Sue Scheff, and Charlotte Lakers*

be the recipients of generous donations as well as grants. They held their first fundraising tea in the fall of 2019. In the summer and fall of 1987, a grant from the Lexington Council of Federated Garden Clubs was used to repair most of the original brick walks, and



brick window wells replaced the former ones. In 1991, the garden club installed a permanent soaker system in all the flower beds.



*A socially distanced garden club meeting*


In 2000, with the advent of a new century, the club created a Long-Range Planning Committee to evaluate and update the garden, always considering the history of the house and garden. While remaining true to the original plan for the garden, the garden club members are constantly reviewing and making changes that enhance the beauty of the existing garden. That year a new automatically timed watering system was installed and an herb garden representing historic herbs appropriate to the Hopemont period was planted.

In 2015, the small overgrown garden space located in the Hopemont courtyard was developed into a beautiful boxwood garden, with a millstone fountain and teak bench from which to enjoy that tranquil space. In 2016-17, the large beds were completely renovated and part of the boxwood hedge was removed to connect the two garden areas with a brick walk, creating a more useable space. A teak wraparound bench was installed around a holly tree, providing additional seating in the garden. In 2019, hornbeam trees were donated to create a backdrop at the northern border of the garden

This summer of 2020 has proven to be a challenge, with the limitations of the Covid-19 Pandemic, but the members have continued to see that the garden is not neglected. The limited number of rentals of the garden this season actually provided a welcome opportunity to rejuvenate the lawn with a lawn treatment service. It was also an opportune time to repair

and powder coat the wrought iron bench. So despite the challenging times, the garden still benefits from the loving care of the garden club members.

With the acquisition of the Dr. Thomas Hunt Morgan House by the Trust, the garden club has gradually expanded their care to include the grounds around that building complex. The entire BGT campus now benefits from the guardianship of the Town and Country Garden Club. With their eyes to the continually changing grounds of both historic homes in years to come, members of the club welcome

new members who would join them in preserving and enhancing both properties. If you are interested, you can contact the Town and Country Garden Club by calling the Blue Grass Trust at 859-253-0362. 



## BGT Advisory Board

John Hackworth, Chair  
 Clyde Carpenter  
 Richard DeCamp  
 Ann Garden  
 Barbara Hulette  
 Nancy Iliff  
 Bill Johnston  
 Zee Faulkner Kurfees  
 Mike Meuser  
 Tom Moore  
 Maureen Peters  
 W. Gay Reading  
 Sharon Reed  
 Dan Rowland  
 Craig Potts, SHPO








Miriam Stambaugh and her husband Dr. James L. Stambaugh were pioneers in preservation as they lovingly restored two neglected historic Kentucky homes, beginning in the 1950s. Upon Mrs. Stambaugh's death in February of this year, the BGT learned that she had bequeathed \$224,000 to the Trust in recognition of her passion for preservation and her faith in the work of the BGT.

Dr. and Mrs. Stambaugh purchased Birch Nest, a combination of two homes, on Old Frankfort Pike in 1957. The original house, known as the Runyon Place, was built in 1860, then was later combined with a home that was moved from Bar Harbor, Maine, known as Birch Nest. The two became known as Birch Nest. The Stambaughs spent the next twenty years restoring the home. As industry began to develop along Old Frankfort Pike, the Stambaughs anticipated the encroachment of that growth and its eventual effect on their property. So in 1977 they sold Birch Nest. The house was eventually razed in 2011. (Go to [bluegrasstrust.org/resources](http://bluegrasstrust.org/resources) to see the January 2013 *Preservation Matters* article, pp. 12–14, "Tsunami Overtakes Birch Nest".)

The Stambaughs purchased another historic property, the Robert Steele House on Troy Road in Jessamine County, in 1985 and again restored that property, this time working with Richard Isenhour to create a home that would be livable while remaining true to its historic significance. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the Robert Steele House dates to pre-1800. Following Dr. Stambaugh's death, the Robert Steele House was sold.

In the words of her daughter, Kim Stambaugh Riggs, Mrs. Stambaugh "was personally invested in not only preserving the historic properties she lived in, but in demonstrating that these 'old houses' could continue to serve their original purpose as homes at a time when much of the historic landscape of Lexington and Fayette County was lost to development. Her gift to the Trust was given in support of its mission to not only protect and preserve historic properties, but to see them come to life in order that they may be enjoyed for generations to come."

The Trust is indeed honored to be remembered in such a significant manner by Miriam Stambaugh and will continue to promote its mission and work all that much harder to see that Mrs. Stambaugh's faith in the organization is well warranted. 

# CHARITABLE GIVING STRATEGIES

The tax reform bill that took effect in 2018 changed the giving landscape by increasing the standard deduction, making it less likely that individual taxpayers would itemize deductions. This created concern for many charities that believed there was a strong tie between donations and tax deductions. If taxpayers are not incentivized to give through tax deductions, would there be a sharp decline in donations?

In fact, tax strategies for charitable giving still exist, even for those who do not itemize.

Normally, taxpayers must itemize deductions (versus taking the standard deduction) to see a tax benefit

from their charitable contributions. Thanks to the CARES Act, taxpayers who do not itemize can see the benefit of their donations on their

tax returns. For 2020, an above-the-line deduction of up to \$300 per taxpayer is allowed for cash donations to public charities. There is bipartisan effort to increase the amount even further. This would clearly bring charitable giving tax incentives to all income levels, not just those who can afford to donate in excess of the new higher standard deduction.

Traditional charitable giving tax strategies still exist. Here are a few ways your charitable contributions to the BGT are still beneficial tax-wise.

## Donate Appreciated Investments.

Gifts of appreciated investments is beneficial for taxpayers because a current-year itemized deduction for the fair market value of the investment is allowed, and there is no tax liability for the increase in value from the original cost. Be sure to hold such property for at least one year before donating.

## Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD)

from an IRA. For individuals age 70 1/2 and over, an otherwise taxable distribution from an IRA can be paid directly to a charity. This is a


win-win for the donor and the qualified charity. Not only does the charitable organization get a donation, but the donor does not include this amount into income or pay tax on the distribution. So, while no charitable deduction will be taken for this amount, utilizing a QCD can lower one's tax bill by keeping adjusted gross income down.

Another bonus is a QCD can count towards the Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) from an IRA that individuals age 72 or over must satisfy annually. (The RMD is optional for 2020 under the CARES Act.) Individuals can arrange to

simply donate amounts they would otherwise be required to receive (and pay tax on) under the RMD rules. To take advantage of the QCD

rules, funds must come out of the IRA by December 31.

**Estate Planning.** There are many options for giving and thus impacting historic preservation for many years to come. Consider becoming a member of the BGT's Heritage Society by making a direct bequest in your will or designating the BGT as a beneficiary of your IRA or a life insurance policy. Charitable trusts and charitable gift annuities are also great tax planning tools. However, they can be more complex than the other strategies mentioned. Both of these strategies provide a charitable donation deduction for the donor, provide the donor an income stream from the donated assets, and help escape estate taxes.

Of course, you should always discuss any proposed contribution with your tax accountant and investment advisor before execution. Please contact the BGT office at 859-253-0362 if you need assistance facilitating your contribution to the BGT. 

Thanks to the CARES Act, taxpayers who do not itemize can see the benefit of their donations on their tax returns



# It's always about the story

Club life, what is it? I stand in awe of the contributions that The Woman's Club of Central Kentucky (WCCK) and The Blue Grass Trust for Historic Preservation (BGT) have made to Lexington. WCCK and BGT, each in our way and together, preserve communities that are the heartbeat of the Bluegrass. The activities of WCCK past and present are a narrative of the personalities and activities of our club members. "This is the kind of grassroots local history which gives meaningful perspectives on the past in rich personal terms and sets a sighting on the future," said Dr. Thomas D Clark, historian.

WCCK has made lasting contributions to Lexington since 1894. This year, we are going back to our original mission statement of "social, cultural, and educational advancement." Thank you, B.J. Cunningham, Gayle Hutcherson, Terrell Kowell, Janice Austin, and Dorothy Cassada, our recent presidents, and the membership for building on the distinguished tradition of service. The stories you have written for our community are the reason we exist today.

In 1896 WCCK recognized the urgent need for a free library in Lexington. Members Mary Dudley Short, Laura Clay, and others worked for this purpose. In 1902, Mary Dudley Short and Eva C. Stevenson were named to the Board of Trustees of the Carnegie Library by Mayor Henry T. Duncan. They, along with several other influential Lexingtonians, obtained \$60,000 from the Andrew Carnegie Foundation for a new library. The library opened in 1905. Today it is the Carnegie Center for Literacy and Learning.

In 1901 WCCK moved into Wickliffe House in Gratz Park, built in 1841, which still stands today. During the years at Wickliffe House, WCCK became highly involved with women's suffrage, school reform, and the original Chautauqua program in the Bluegrass. (The Kentucky Chautauqua brings to life the stories from our past.) It was our home until 1906.

Our members had a zeal for outreach; we still do today. In 1913, Katherine Pettit spoke to the club on "The Romance of the Southern Mountains." Thanks to the

efforts of Ms. Pettit, we have Hindman Settlement School and Pine Mountain School. Mary Gratz Morton initiated the Traveling Libraries, where ladies in Appalachian Kentucky rode horseback to bring books, newspapers, and periodicals. WCCK supported this project with books and money. I recommend reading *The Quare Women*, by Lucy Furman. This book is a fictional account of Katherine Pettit and May Stone, the "quare women" who arrived in the Appalachian Mountains to begin social settlement work. I also recommend reading *The Bookwoman of Troublesome Creek: A Novel*, by Kim Michele Richardson. This book highlights the horse Library Project through the WPA program during the 1930s.

WCCK has committed to long term partnerships with three fantastic institutions. They are The Bluegrass Trust for Historic Preservation, William Wells Brown Elementary School, and Sayre Christian Village. WCCK already partners with The Bluegrass Trust for Historic Preservation. Moving forward, it will be a more significant partnership. The BGT mission is the same as ours, helping to preserve the best of Lexington. We will be participating in service projects for Latrobe's Pope Villa. WCCK is also happy to sponsor the famous BGT deTours. They, like us, have made a lasting impact on the city of Lexington. Oh, the stories these buildings can tell.

WCCK is helping with the educational advancement at William Wells Brown Elementary School. Through kindness and a generous heart, we will let each child and instructor know how important their

story is. WCCK donated the fabric (in the school colors) and elastic to make over 400 masks for the students and staff in partnership with the Lexington Chapter of NSDAR. Our own Clara Wilson is the Regent. Thank you to WCCK member, Judy Owens, for spearheading this project. We also contributed to supplying school uniforms for the students at WWB.



Left to right: Past President Gayle Hutcherson, Current President Donna Price, and Past President BJ Cunningham

WCCK has established long term a relationship with Sayre Christian Village. We are supplying materials for their Cooking Clubs that help with dexterity, cognitive issues, and social interactions. What a great idea to have these lovely people feeling productive and a part of service to others. We want to honor the stories of the residents at Sayre, and they are spectacular! I'm excited to see what the future holds for this partnership.

To quote Dr. Thomas D. Clark, "During the past century, Central Kentucky would not have progressed so successfully in many areas had it been denied the wisdom and energy of the Woman's Club." The same is true for the BGT. Both organizations are advocates for our communities.

In 1964 we moved into our current home, the Dr. Thomas Hunt Morgan house on South Broadway. It is the headquarters for BGT. The fruit of our two clubs' woven history is lovely, not only to our eyes but to our hearts. Why be a club if you can't make a difference?

Remember, it is all about the story. What is yours?

Donna Price, President 2019-2021. 📖

To quote Dr. Thomas D. Clark, "During the past century, Central Kentucky would not have progressed so successfully in many areas had it been denied the wisdom and energy of the Woman's Club."



# Rehabilitation Opportunities *Summer 2020*



In August our Community Preservation and Education Committee released its first Rehabilitation Opportunities list, featuring eleven properties within the inner Bluegrass. In the past, we released an “Endangered Eleven” list that focused on architecturally significant properties in danger of demolition by neglect. This year, we strove to take a more proactive approach and list historic properties that were available for preservation by purchase; all properties were currently for sale at the time of the list’s release. We also concentrated on structures that had historic significance or character-defining presence locally.



*The Bower House.*

These properties maintain original interior and exterior features but are in need of repair. “Repair” ranges from updating to adaptive reuse to full restoration. CPC-Ed included both residential and commercial properties, with locations varying from rural settings to the heart of Main Street, and most properties are listed individually on the National Register of Historic Places or are within a National Register district.

The list, formatted to read like a magazine, features photos and write ups of each of the

properties. They include history provided by National Register forms, historic newspaper articles, listing agents, and local historic societies. Information on the BGT Plaque Program completed the document.

Read the full list for more detailed information about each structure. For example, The Bower House, listed on the National Register for its architectural significance, is located in Parksville, Boyle County, and was originally built by a local undertaker. 799 E Jackson Street, in Georgetown, Kentucky, is an old tobacco warehouse located blocks away from both Georgetown College and the main downtown commercial districts, and is over 4,000 square feet ripe for adaptive reuse. It served its community as tobacco and seed storage for a (still) local family farm from the early 20th century until the late 1990s, and its exterior is covered with “ghost” Bull Durham signs. It does not take a great amount of imagination to imagine lofts or a local business operating from its convenient location. A church on Vimont Street in Millersburg, Bourbon County, has a fascinating history that includes both cultural elements of Millersburg’s history and French royalty! Not to mention its beautiful Gothic Revival architecture and stained glass windows.

A web-friendly version of the list is currently available on our social media pages and our website. It can be accessed at <https://www.bluegrasstrust.org/rehabilitation-opportunities-2020>.

After the project’s release, it was promoted by:

- Gardens and Gables
- The Kentucky Heritage Council
- The Kentucky Trust
- Kentucky Main Street
- Two Glasses of Bourbon, a podcast that focuses on Kentucky culture and history and educating younger generations. The podcast is available on Spotify and iTunes. 



*CME Church in Millersburg, Bourbon County. Go to the full Rehabilitation Opportunities list on our website to find out more about the unique history of the materials used to build this church.*





*Mirroring Victorians listed together in Cynthiana, Harrison County*



*Tobacco warehouse in Georgetown, Scott County. Blocks away from Georgetown College and the downtown commercial district. Great opportunity for adaptive reuse!*



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## Dick Decamp, *the First BGT Executive Director*

Most of us in Lexington and the Bluegrass region see the ubiquitous BGT plaques on residences all around the city, in our older suburbs, and in small towns and communities in Fayette County as well as surrounding counties. We know that those plaques come from the Blue Grass Trust and represent a home over 50 years old which is documented as being architecturally authentic and well maintained. The plaque program began in the early 1970s and was the brainchild of Dick Decamp, the Trust's first executive director. Dick, the consummate promoter, thought the plaques would raise awareness of not only the Trust, but also the nascent cause of historic preservation, which had been gaining credence since the passage of the National Preservation Act in 1966.

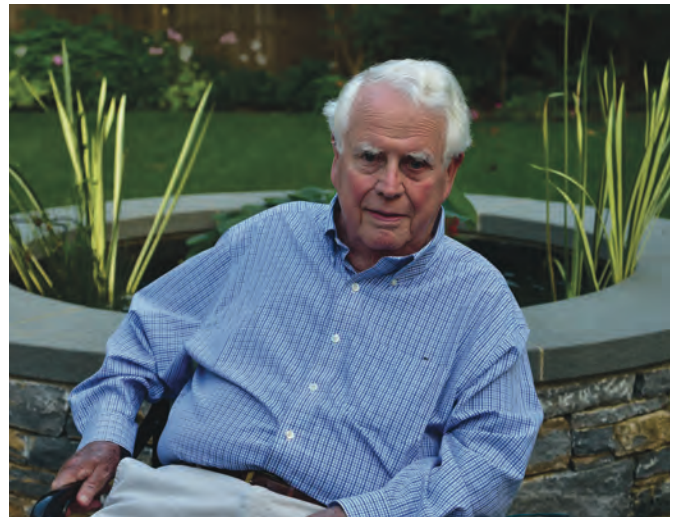
At 88, Dick recently reflected on those early years, "I never thought I would live long enough to see where we have come with the historic preservation movement in Lexington and the Bluegrass region." Dick lived in the Hopemont apartment in the mid-1960s, and he was already a member of the BGT board when they decided to hire an executive director. With his love of early Kentucky architecture, this Brown University grad with a major in the classics was a perfect fit for this new position.

When Dick became the first executive director of the Trust in 1969, the organization had no paid employees, and nearly all the attention of the dedicated volunteers was devoted to Hopemont. Of course, this is understandable since the BGT began with saving Hopemont, purchasing it in 1955. However, the concept of the preservation of groups of homes which were not owned by historical figures was just emerging. Dick played a critical role in moving the Trust beyond its Hope-

mont focus into the broader arena of historic preservation within the community at large.

Dick clearly had this broader view of preservation, and he began to share it with other Trust members and the community. His first task as E.D. was to get the organization organized! Files were sorted and order was established amongst the many volunteers who had various records of the organization. Then in the early 1970s when Foster Pettit was mayor, Dick convinced him that the city needed to recognize the bicentennial of the founding of Lexington in 1775. Mayor Pettit liked the idea and was prepared to form a Bicentennial Commission. Dick, however, was able to convince the mayor to name it the Lexington-Fayette County Historic Commission. By doing so, the commission could have a broader mission and live on after the 1995 bicentennial. At that time, Dick left the position of executive director of the BGT and became chair of the commission.

Although Dick left the leadership of the Trust, he didn't go far. He recalls today that the public-private relationship between the city and the Trust was most effective in moving the preservation baton forward. Dick was able to advocate for preservation in his official capacity within the city in ways that could not have been accomplished by the Trust. And the reverse was also true. So, a symbiotic relationship



was formed that served the cause of preservation very well. During Dick's tenure as chair of the commission, as urban renewal destroyed some of our most valued properties, there were six or seven historic districts formed, and the BGT played an essential part in that process. As an example of the importance of these early H-Is, Dick pointed to the South Hill area, which would have surely fallen prey to urban renewal if it hadn't become an historic district.

As a promoter of preservation, Dick was the perfect person to be the Trust's first executive director. He began the process that continues today of having the Trust look beyond what has been done in the past to grow the goals and the horizons of opportunities for the preservation efforts in Central Kentucky. And perhaps his greatest legacy is the BGT plaque, which can still be obtained through the application process on the Trust's website. 