Landmark Report (Vol. 17, no. 3)

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ANNUAL DINNER MEETING IS A SIZZLING EVENT!

Those attending Landmark's annual dinner meeting would have to agree that it was successfully executed, and no one would argue that it was not a sizzling event, literally. However, we shouldn't expect any different in the middle of June. The Association proffers its sincere appreciation to Alex Nottmeier and Jennifer Turner for allowing us to use their home-in-progress as the site for our meeting. The two, large, downstairs rooms of the Reardon-Natcher home (638 East Main Street) were beautifully decorated and the whole event was superbly coordinated by the members of our annual meeting committee: Dawn Slaughter, Jean Thomason, Georgeanna Hagerman, Susan McCue, Jonathan Jeffrey, Romanza Johnson, Ward Begley, and Matt Baker. We also appreciate Ray's Catering for their hard work. At the meeting, we welcomed new board members: John Perkins, Russell Morgan, and Jennifer Turner. The following officers were elected: President Ward Begley, Vice-president David Bryant, Secretary Dawn Slaughter, and Treasurer Jonathan Jeffrey. The new board begins work July 1. Most of the Landmark Award recipients are featured in the middle section of the newsletter; all annual meeting photographs are courtesy of Matt Baker.
Architectural Details

- Landmark has printed attractive notecards and postcards which feature an image of the downtown fountain framed by one of the lovely stone arches. Some members may recall this design was the logo for the state historic preservation conference held in Bowling Green in September. The cards will be sold in bundles of ten. Notecards sell for $4 and postcards $2.50. To get information about where these cards are sold contact the Landmark office at 782-0037.

- Congratulations to Landmark’s president-elect, David Bryant, and his architectural firm for winning the contract for the restoration of Bardstown’s Talbot Tavern, which experienced a devastating fire earlier this year. Many of you may remember that David was the chief architect for the re-building of Bowling Green’s oldest brick structure and popular eating establishment, Mary’s.

- New Landmark members, from February 6 to June 18, include: Agatha Layson Johnson, Elizabeth Layson Kirby, Richard & Gretchen Collins, Mrs. M.S. Wallace, Nellie Brown, Alex Nottemeer, Jennifer Turner, Stephen & Elizabeth Horn, Neal & Judy Turner, Fay Patton, Edith Lucas, and Michael Trappeo. Donors to the Irene Moss Sumpster Historic Preservation Endowment include: Hugh & Jean Thomason in memory of B.G. Davidson, Mary Alice Evans, Jonathan Jeffrey in memory of B.G. Davidson, Elinor Bennet Marble, Jim Owen, Mary Lou Parish, Janet Schwetzkopf, Sara & Jim Bennett, John Gilder, Arvin & Corrie Vos, M/G Mrs. Henry Love, Sam Push in, the Coca-Cola Bottling Works, Deemer Floral Company, the Eugene Gerard Company, and some ninety other individuals and firms, invested in preferred stock.

- At the annual meeting this year, the Landmark Association presented a $200 check to Cheryl Blaine of the Downtown Business Association to assist in the electrical updating of Fountain Square Park.

- On June 99th at Covington Woods Park, the Bowling Green Historic Preservation Board held a public meeting to discuss the proposed local historic district in the Nutwood, Magnolia and Covington Streets area. The Landmark Association provided refreshments at this meeting and also presented a plaque of appreciation to Jan Johnston for her work as preservation administrator for the board. The new administrator Paula Trafcon was welcomed, and she will become an ex-officio board member of Landmark.

KENTUCKY MAID
by Lynn Niedermeier

Through the autumn of 1931, motorists heading from Lost River Cave to the Russellville Pike over then- unpaved Dishman Mill Pike could watch the fruits of local initiative and cooperative enterprise rising over the treetops. The Bowling Green Refining Company had begun construction of the tanks, boilers, smokestacks and distillation equipment that for the next five years would produce the region’s own “Kentucky Maid” gasoline.

Oil producers and royalty owners in Warren, Simpson and Allen counties conceived the forty-acre refinery near Memphis Junction when national overproduction compelled them to create a market for their own product. The Illinois Pipeline Company, supplier to Standard Oil of Kentucky, had shut down receipts from the three counties in early March 1931. The previous December, the Indian Refining Company had refused further purchases from the area because the oil’s high sulphur content made it more costly to process. With a monthly capacity of some 35,000 barrels, the producers of the Bowling Green District had concluded that a new refinery was their “only salvation.” Many service station owners guaranteed support by promising to retail the products of any company purchasing local crude. On June 29, 1931, the Bowling Green Refining Company was incorporated to fill that role.

Although the company limited its common stockholders to producers and royalty owners willing to deliver crude to the refinery in payment for stock issued, other community members rallied to participate in the venture. Realizing its economic value to the region, many of Bowling Green’s well-known names, including B.J. Borromeo, O.D. Porter, Marshall Love, Sam Pushin, the Coca-Cola Bottling Works, Deemer Floral Company, the Eugene Gerard Company, and some ninety other individuals and firms, invested in preferred stock.

Construction of the refinery began in mid-August 1931 on a parcel of land between Russellville Pike and the L&N Railroad. When operations commenced on November 17, however, the company was still without a brand name for its gasoline. After the name “Cardinal” encountered trademark problems, the refinery staged a contest and awarded a Bowling Green woman twenty-five dollars for suggesting “Kentucky Maid.” The company added its own slogan, “Smiles At Miles.”

Drilling for oil in the 1920s could be dangerous. This photograph was taken near the Kelly oil field in the Rockfield area. Courtesy of the Kentucky Library, WKU.
the previous decades—by early 1933, oil prices had slid to sixty cents a barrel from an already-low eighty-five cents in 1931—but existing investments secured some protection. Company president Worth Dafoe reported that eighteen months after opening, the refinery was accepting crude from 2,700 wells in all three counties and generating royalty checks for more than 300 farmers. The "ripple effect" of the company's activities—railroad freight fees, tax payments, and employment in ancillary businesses—returned an estimated $350,000 to the economy in 1933 and $600,000 in 1934, rivaling tobacco as the region's chief cash-producing commodity.

The refinery's owners nevertheless knew from experience that success could be short-lived, for their always-unstable business was becoming increasingly competitive. Despite the Depression, the great enthusiasm Americans maintained for their cars prompted improvements in automotive technology that required higher-octane gasoline and correspondingly more sophisticated production techniques. The refinery's relatively small capacity, its research and development costs, and its acknowledged dependence on "public sentiment and direct interest" in the face of competitors' national marketing strategies hampered efforts to expand its base of distribution.

Ultimately, supply determined the company's fortunes. Producers began to bypass the refinery when pipeline companies paid better prices. For several months in late 1933, as much as one-third of the necessary crude had to be brought in from Owensboro fields. Finally, in February 1936, stockholders met at the Helm Hotel and voted to liquidate the Bowling Green Refining Company when it was no longer able to obtain enough local oil to operate at a profit.

The refinery completed its outstanding contracts, then shut down on April 96, 1936. Thirty men lost their jobs, but few today would mourn the attendant loss of the company's fifteen-year pipeline lease to discharge its "refuse and waste" into "Buzzard's Cave" north of Dishman Lane. If Warren County was no longer an attractive site for gasoline production, it remained one for consumption. The Ohio Oil Company would use the refinery site for over a decade as a distribution center for its own brand of "Linco" gasoline and motor oil, later selling the refining equipment to a county man who contemplated moving it to—of all places—Texas.

One January day in 1917, Shaker trustees Joseph Allen, Benjamin Youngs, and John Rankin traveled sixteen miles from South Union, Kentucky, to nearby Warren County to examine a mill seat on Drakes Creek. The meandering waterway, fertile bottomland, and abundant timber there promised a prosperous new enterprise. Seventeen days later they bought the site and 300 surrounding acres.

The trustees continued to buy land along Drakes Creek and by 1931 they owned 1,274 acres in Warren County costing $8750. They christened their new out-farm Mill Point. The property, located on both sides of Drakes Creek, ran from the now-closed Middle Bridge Road to its intersection with Hunts Lane and stretched almost to Cemetery Road.

The Drakes Creek purchase initiated more than a decade of Shaker residency in Warren County. Exclaiming "Ho! for Drakes Creek" a number of Shakers moved to the farm in 1818. Leaders planned to open a gristmill and sawmill at the site where a number of the main community's members would live and work. The mills, whose products were so essential to daily life, benefited both the society and the surrounding community.

Difficulties with the project began to arise. In January 1818, Shaker Samuel G. Whyte, armed with a petition of 1,200 signatures, traveled to Frankfort to remove an injunction placed on building the waterworks. On January 28, Kentucky's General Assembly repealed any acts which declared Drakes Creek navigable, clearing the way for the Shakers to build their dam. Area residents, particularly those owning land and property upstream, petitioned the legislature to reopen the stream, but to no avail. Concerned about getting goods to market, they argued that Drakes Creek had been navigated for nine years from mills 10 miles upstream and that 25 boats had been built and safely descended. In their petition they concluded: "to be deprived of the use of a navigable stream is forbidding us the use of the air we breath[e]."

With the way now cleared, brethren began to lay stone for the dam in August when the creek was at its lowest level. Elder Benjamin explained the latest catastrophe.

This detail from the 1818 Luke Munsell "Map of the State of Kentucky" indicates the location of the Shaker mill (see center box). Notice Shaker Town located to the southwest of the Mill Point farm.

Reprinted by permission
“HO! FOR DRAKES CREEK”: WARREN COUNTY’S SHAKERS
(Continued from page 5)

before the Dam was finished, the fresh[et] took many of the great stones one after another out of
their beds... they threw them into the gulf it had made... tore away part of the Island facing the Dam &
threw up the gravel nearly all round in the form of a Bason(sic).

After this incident, the Shakers built an overflow to relieve the pressure.

The men "raised" the mill house in June of 1819. Twenty-three days after completing the dam, South Union's
journalist recorded the "Drakes Creek Mills-A failure!" Brethren had discovered sinks approximately 200 yards in
length which, in dry weather took precious water into the ground and under the mills. The presence of these sinks
made the mills a seasonal operation. The leadership was in a quandary, having invested too much capital in the
enterprise to abandon the project. Members tried to stop the diversion of water by throwing brush and dirt into
their beds... & threw them into the gulf it had made... tore away part of the
holes. Elder Benjamin reported. "It so far swallows all that is done... a more solid material, or else nothing will
finally be effected... & the results of our worst fears be realized."

On October 30, 1819, the sawmill began operation. The Shakers, apart from regular business, supplied materials
for South Union's building projects. In 1825, two Brethren "went to Mill Point to cut and sew timber & procure
lumber for a House for Genny Neely" who was allowed to live alone because "she was nervously disposed - &
then was annoying... her affections being entirely out of her control."

Though we know nothing about the Shakers' dwellings and outbuildings at Mill Point, we do know that on the
farm they raised cattle, sheep, and hogs and grew timothy, flax and hemp. They cut timber, gathered tan bark and
had a sugar camp and a peach orchard there as well.

On May 11, 1824 and 1828 flatboats were built at the mill.

"All that is done... a more solid material, or else nothing will
finally be effected... & the results of our worst fears be realized."

Preservation Pearls
by Rick Voakes

Natural wood floors are a valued feature of antique homes. Many older homes have tongue-and-groove
wooden plank flooring of hardwoods such as oak or maple, and softwoods such as poplar or pine. Each of these
woods has its own charm and appeal. In Kentucky, many homes boast of sub-flooring (even in kitchens) made of
these materials, that can be finished by sanding and varnishing, with outstanding results.

Many home-owners are reluctant to do this, because there are imperfections in the floor, such as patched areas,
or round holes where pipes have been placed. Planks can be replaced if you have access to antique woods that match. Pipe holes are fairly easy to repair with a wooden cork-shaped plug. First file out the hole so
that the upper part flares out slightly. Then carefully measure it or trace it if it is not perfectly round. Cut out
the shape using a similar wood, being careful to make sure the grain is running in the same direction. As you cut out
the shape with a coping saw, bevel the angle of the cut, so that the result is a cork shape to fit the hole.

File down your "cork" until it almost fits (but is still a little too large). Then apply wood glue to the cork and
to the hole, line up the grain in the right direction, and pound it in with a hammer. After dry, sand it smooth, and
fill any gaps with wood filler.

A maple stain on poplar will bring back the antique patina and rich dark color to your sanded floor. Then
finish with a hard polyurethane varnish. Even with the hardest varnish, high-heel shoes will punch holes in
poplar floors, so restrict traffic in those rooms.

Natural wood floors look great in kitchens, but use extra care if you have softwood like pine or poplar.
Area carpets will catch some of the traffic wear, and put thick felt pads under table and chair legs. Slice a piece
of plywood or sheet metal under the fridge to prevent the constant flow of warm air from drying and shrinking the
wooden planks of your kitchen floor.

The purchasing... was a magnificent blunder. It has cost immense treasure, to build it up... the water
escaping under the Bluff for 1/4 mile should have deterred further prosecution of the Work - In loss
of soul, by sickness & estrangement & loss on Money all together is not easily computed.

What looked to be a promising venture for South Union in 1819, actually cost the Shakers a vast amount of
time and money, and a loss of members. By 1850, the western Kentucky group had largely disposed of the Mill
Point property. With an "Adieu to Drakes Creek" they sold the last 300 acre tract in 1863, ending the Warren
County chapter in the South Union Shakers' history.

June 1998
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Annual Meeting Scrapbook

George Morris accepts the treasured Lamp lighter Award from Jonathan Jeffrey. This award is given by the presi
dent. It honors a board member who has given outstand ing service to the organization in the past year.

Dawn Slaughter and Jonathan Jeffrey congratulate John Perkins for a new
endowment established in his name which will assist the Association
with operation expenses. The fund will be called the John C. Perkins
Operations Endowment.

June 1998
Landmark Report 7
Vinyl and Aluminum Siding?

Vinyl siding damage caused by the April 16 hailstorm in one of Bowling Green’s neighborhoods. Photo courtesy of Linda Todd

Historic preservation professionals often speak out against the use of vinyl or aluminum siding materials on historic buildings. This objection is much more than a “knee-jerk” reaction against products which are not historic building materials. In reality, use of these siding materials can have serious harmful consequences beyond simple aesthetic issues. Often owners of historic houses see use of these materials as a solution to maintenance problems and are unaware of the serious problems such installations can cause.

1) Vinyl siding can disguise unchecked deterioration leading to major structural problems. In many cases, building owners opt to install artificial siding materials when buildings are in a deteriorated condition. Peeling paint, stains, and rotted wood siding and trim are situations that might lead an owner to choose aluminum or vinyl siding. If the material is installed on top of deteriorated material, even on minor problem areas, further deterioration can occur and will go unchecked as it cannot be seen. This deterioration can lead to major structural problems which can be quite costly to correct.

2) Application of vinyl or aluminum siding can lead to moisture problems for older buildings. Moisture created in the interior of a frame building from cooking, cleaning, bathing, etc., passes through a frame wall to the outside. The new artificial siding material does not allow this passage to happen and the moisture becomes trapped causing damage to occur. Preventative measures such as the addition of an interior vapor barrier or other ventilation devices are necessary to avoid this problem. These measures can be expensive and are not typically standard work items for the artificial siding contractor.

3) Vinyl siding is not maintenance free. Vinyl and aluminum siding materials are often touted as maintenance free. Aluminum siding is subject to indentation from scratches and dents as it is a relatively thin material. Some painted aluminum sidings are subject to chalking and fading and may need to be repainted. If this occurs, the siding will then have to be painted with the same frequency as wood. Vinyl siding can become brittle when cold which can lead to cracks and shattering which must then be repaired.

These physical problems, when coupled with aesthetic concerns, should lead to the conclusion that vinyl and aluminum siding products are not appropriate treatments for historic buildings. Visually, “wood-grained” vinyl siding does not resemble true wood. Also, during siding installation decorative architectural features are often covered or removed to provide the necessary flat surface to receive the new material. These changes in many cases equals the loss of the appealing historic character of the building. In summary, a property owner should carefully review all of these ramifications when considering using artificial siding on historic buildings. For more information, see Preservation Brief #8, published by the Department of the Interior, Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service, Washington, D.C. 20043.

Reprinted from History-Gram
First Baptist Church, Richpond by Loma Thigpen

Reverend Alex Williams organized the First Baptist Church of Richpond in 1870. The church structure was built sometime afterward. Older parishioners state that the original church was located in Richpond about a block southeast of Highway 311W. It featured weatherboard siding and stone piers and was the community's first African-American Baptist church. A few years later, an individual donated about three acres of land to the church on Highway 949 (Richpond Road), 2.8 miles southeast of Richpond. In 1884, the church's second building was erected on the newly-acquired rural property. A schoolhouse and Masonic Lodge were also built on the property. In later years the old school was torn down and the lodge went out of existence.

Like the previous building, the front gabled church featured weatherboard siding and sat on stone piers. Each side boasted three equidistant windows. Some sources within the church state there were two doors for entry (a traditional church form), while others only remember one front door. Parishioner Sam Murrell recalled several things about the church from 1938, when he was seven years old: the church was lit with kerosene lamps and heated by a Warm Morning (brand name) stove; there was no carpet on the hardwood floors; Sunday School started about eleven, and Church, which was held every second Sunday, started about 12:30 p.m. and ended about 2:00 p.m.; ladies and gentlemen used separate privies; water was drawn from a well that existed before the church and before that water was drawn from a cistern.

Sometime around the early-1980s, a kitchen and a dining room were built onto the rear of the old church, and bathrooms were added to the front. Tragically, a fire destroyed the kitchen in 1993, and a second fire in 1994 destroyed the rest of the 110 year old building.

The front steps of the church were but a few feet from the road when the structure burned. The third church structure was built farther from the road and on the property's eastern most section. The front facade features a concrete basement is centered throughout the Warren County countryside. The front facade features a beautiful octagonal stained glass window. Centered above the double entry and below the roofline is another beautiful stained glass window in the shape of a large cross. The same cross design is centered below the roofline at the rear of the building.

The black-painted concrete basement is visible from the proper left and right sides. From the rear the basement appears to be the first floor of a two-story structure. A large well-kept cemetery is located on a downward slope, northwest of the church, and a wooded area surrounds the property on three sides.

A colorful mural decorates the church's fellowship hall. Photo courtesy of Loma Thigpen.

First Baptist Church, Richpond (Continued from page 5)

Men barbecued hogs on the grounds. Richpond Baptist Church not only volunteered their time but donated church pews and gave financial assistance. Bethel Baptist Church offered their podium and organ. The communities of Richpond, Rockfield, and Woodburn pitched in and worked hard to get the church completed quickly.

The brick façade characterizes a metal double-door entrance. Beyond the entrance, on either side, is a beautiful octagonal stained glass window. Centered above the double entry and below the roofline is another beautiful stained glass window in the shape of a large cross. The same cross design is centered below the roofline at the rear of the building.

The black-painted concrete basement is visible from the proper left and right sides. From the rear the basement appears to be the first floor of a two-story structure. A large well-kept cemetery is located on a downward slope, northwest of the church, and a wooded area surrounds the property on three sides.

Cover Stories

by Sandy Staebell

Imagine assembling over 66,000 pieces of fabric into a single quilt. To accomplish this, you cut ten different colors of cotton percale into pieces so small that the individual scraps measure no more than three-eighths of one inch once you sew them together. Oh, did I mention that you are a man, Bowling Green jewelry store engraver George Yarrell? This story behind the Spectrum Quilt is one of several fascinating tales told in the exhibit, "Cover Stories: Warren County Quilts and Quilters."

"Cover Stories", which runs until November 15, will feature more than 20 quilts from the Kentucky Museum collection. Other textiles with stories to tell include a pair of appliqué quilts made by Martha Woods Potter and her daughter Mildred Potter Lissauer. Upon seeing her mother's quilt, Carnation Basket, Lissauer reportedly responded, "I can do better than that!" Her result was the Godey Quilt, recently featured in American Quilt Collections: Antique Quilt Masterpieces.

Two quilts in the exhibit document Warren County's ties to the textile industry. Around the turn of the century, Mrs. J.T. Matlock made the first quilt, a Log Cabin (Multiple Barn Rising Variation). She used velvet remnants reportedly acquired from Mrs. A.H. Taylor's dressmaking business. Forty years later, Della White Henderson Kirby pieced a quilt from scraps saved by Union Underwear employees.

The exhibit also features a quilt made with fabric from Elizabeth Moore Dunn's trousseau, a quilt top that commemorates the War Between the States, and the Cathedral Windows pattern quilt that Mrs. Chester Young Duckett started at age 89. Three others, Tumbling Blocks (Cross Variation), Chester Dare and Tobacco Leaf have toured nationally.

A Kentucky Museum visitor examining one of the beautiful quilts at the opening of "Cover Stories: Warren County Quilts and Quilters" on June 7. Photo courtesy of Earlene Chest.
Perhaps you could pass this newsletter along to someone you think would be interested in supporting Landmark's efforts in historic preservation advocacy.

I (we) want to support the Historic Preservation efforts in Bowling Green and Warren County.

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I have enclosed $________ to support the Irene Moss Sumpter Preservation Endowment Fund.

Checks should be payable to: Landmark Association
P.O. Box 1812
Bowling Green, KY 42102-1812

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**LANDMARK ASSOCIATION**
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