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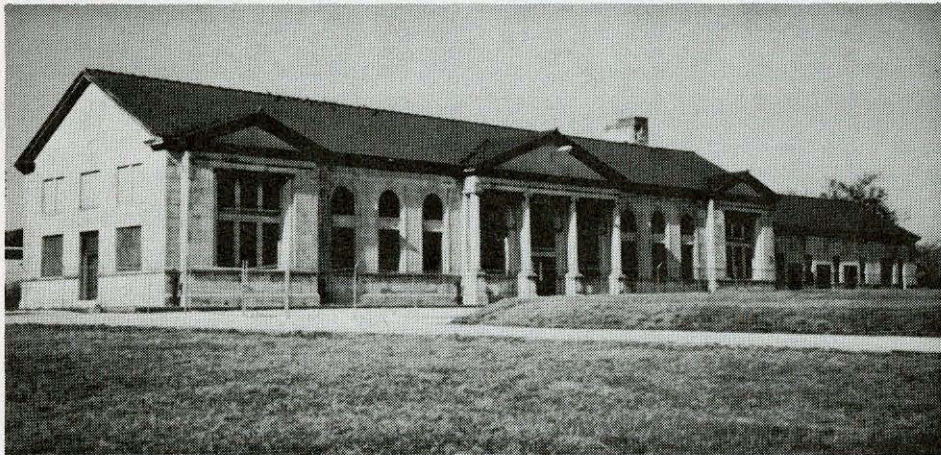
LANDMARK REPORT

OF BOWLING GREEN & WARREN COUNTY

VOL.14, NO.1

ANNUAL DINNER TO BE HELD AT BOWLING GREEN LANDMARK

Thursday, May 19 Revisit the L&N Train Depot



▶ **THE L&N DEPOT IS THE SITE OF LANDMARK'S 1994 ANNUAL DINNER, THURSDAY, MAY 19 AT 6:30 PM.**

DAVID MORGAN, KENTUCKY HERITAGE COUNCIL EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, WILL BE THE GUEST SPEAKER.

For 54 years the L & N Depot at Bowling Green, Kentucky served the people of Warren County and the surrounding region as a gateway to the world at large and as a homing beacon. Built in 1925, the facility aided in the sending and receiving of goods and commodities for the area. The Depot stood watch as service men and women left for duty in World War II, and when the war ended, the Depot welcomed them home. Over the years, college students and basketball teams coming and going from Western Kentucky University relied on the Depot. Also, it was where fun-filled excursions on exotically named trains began and ended.

By 1979 automobiles, trucks, and airplanes were the preferred means of transportation,

and the Depot permanently closed its doors. Since that time several attempts have been made to restore the Depot both physically and symbolically to its former glory. None of the projects were successful, and it appeared that the Depot was without hope of rehabilitation. However, in 1993 Operation PRIDE accepted the challenge to save the Depot by purchasing the property and met with resounding community support. The public recognized that the restored structure offered the city an opportunity to reuse an endangered historic landmark and to pursue additional economic development options for the area.

The L & N Railroad had a long association with Bowling Green and Warren County prior to building the depot on Kentucky Street. The line connecting Louisville and Nashville opened on August 10, 1859 just in time for the Civil War to put an end to the prosperity enjoyed by Bowling Green as a primary agricultural center. During the war both Confederate and Union forces occupied and pillaged the town and countryside, and as Confederate forces prepared to withdraw in February of 1862, they burned the railroad depot. Bowling Green's first train station was a brick structure built in 1860 and was located at the corner of Adams and Main Streets in the

ACTIVITIES & EVENTS:

L&N Depot Story Continued

heart of the business district. By 1863 the L & N had replaced the depot with a frame building at the same location. Rebuilding the post-war economy was difficult, but was made easier because of rail transportation. By the turn of the century the frame structure that served as the L & N depot suffered from overcrowding and had seriously deteriorated. Clearly the time had come for a new depot if Bowling Green was to continue as a thriving agricultural center for the shipment of agricultural products like tobacco, corn, and especially strawberries. During the 1920s, 30s, and 40s hundreds of railroad cars filled with strawberries left the L & N station at Bowling Green, and Warren County, Kentucky was known as the "Strawberry Capital of the World." In the first quarter of the 20th century dressmaking, logging and limestone quarrying were other very prosperous industries that reached far beyond the Warren County line.

In 1925 the L & N built a new depot in Bowling Green and at the dedication on October 1 it was greeted by an enthusiastic crowd of 5,000 citizens who were not deterred by a continuous downpour throughout the day. Classical Revival in style, the imposing structure was located at 401 Kentucky Street in the center of Bowling Green's business and commercial district and was larger and grander than other depots found in cities of comparable size. The new depot was faced with Warren County limestone which was widely recognized for its fine qualities and over time would bleach to a glowing white patina. The design of the Depot, as well as employ-

ment with the L & N, reflected race relations of the day with "separate but equal" accommodations for black and white patrons and employees. However, separate was never equal and that was reflected as well. The "Negro Waiting Room" was much smaller and considerably more modest than the ornate main lobby that was finished with hand laid tiles.

The decades between 1920 and 1950 saw considerable growth for the railroad in Bowling Green. The L & N provided the residents of Warren County with employment, commercial markets, mail service, and opportunities to see other parts of the southeastern United States. The decline of rail shipment and travel can be matched to the development of the interstate highway system and the preference for truck and automobile transportation over train. During the 1950 and 1960s fewer and fewer trains passed through the Bowling Green Depot.

By the 1970s L & N was faced with increasing financial difficulties, problems caused by increased transportation of hazardous materials, and inadequate safety standards. The 1970s also brought the end of passenger rail service to Bowling Green. On October 7, 1979 the last passenger train passed through town and the Depot closed after fifty four years of service.

For the last fifteen years the Depot has been idle and vacant, and despite various unsuccessful restoration attempts, little has been done to maintain the structure. However, considering the long years of neglect, the building is structurally sound and in fairly good condition. With the commitment of Operation PRIDE to begin restoration as soon as possible and renewed interest in the grand old building, hopefully very soon the Depot can once again be a productive citizen on the Bowling Green landscape.

MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS FOR ANNUAL DINNER TODAY !

David Morgan, Executive Director of the Kentucky Heritage Council, will be the guest speaker at the annual dinner to be held at the L & N Depot on Thursday, May 19. A reception begins at 6:30 and dinner follows. Cost for the dinner is \$17.00 per person. To make reservations, complete the form below and return by May 10 to:
Landmark Association, P. O. Box 1812, Bowling Green, Kentucky, 42102.

Name: _____

Address _____

Number of Reservations at \$17.00 each: _____

ACTIVITIES & EVENTS:



PRESS ON

On March 22, fourteen Landmark volunteers assisted in pressing James Maurice Ingram's architectural renderings of Bowling Green and Warren county buildings. They had the pleasure of opening packages which had been stored for nearly fifty years. As each drawing flattened, we gazed at a piece of Bowling Green's architectural heritage. Ingram designed many homes, businesses and schools in this area. The processing was a dirty job, but a pleasurable one.

The volunteers completed over 250 sets of drawings which composed about two-thirds of the Bowling Green/Warren County renderings. A great deal of work remains, as the Bowling Green drawings make up only 1/3 of the entire collection. Ingram, who began practicing here in 1928, left Bowling Green in the 1940s to open an office in Louisville, where he executed some of his finest work. Although he left Bowling Green, he maintained an office here until 1960.

The volunteers were quite photogenic as irons swayed in rhythmic cadence. WBKO and Fox featured them on their newscasts and the Daily News featured a photograph of the busy group. We appreciate the attention paid to these deserving volunteers and to an outstanding architectural drawing collection. With much work left to complete the project, another ironing day will be scheduled in late May.

We salute our volunteers: Dr. Carson, Dorothy Dotson, Jennifer Chiles, Betty Lyne, Vernon White, Pat Reid, Cheryl Mendenhall, Jean Thomason, Barbara Stoube, Mary Lou Parrish, Bill and Francis Holt, Jennifer Mills and Pat Hodges.

The Book Corner

The following books are available from the Landmark Association:

A Stroll Around Fountain Square
(\$3.75 plus mailing and handling charge of \$1.65)

Architecture of Warren County, Kentucky, 1790-1940
(\$6.00 plus mailing and handling charge of \$2.50)

An Album of Early Warren County Landmarks
(\$15.00 plus mailing and handling charge of \$3.65)

Mailing and handling charge for two or more books: \$3.75

Contact Cooper Smith at 781-1320 for information about ordering.

ACTIVITIES & EVENTS:

Save Outdoor Sculpture! Survey

On March 4, 1994, a Save Outdoor Sculpture! (SOS!) volunteer training session was held at the Kentucky Library, led by Lori Meadows, Kentucky Arts Council SOS! Coordinator. Mrs. Meadows explained state and national SOS! goals, critical issues in the area of public art, definition of outdoor sculpture and the role of the volunteer in documenting our outdoor sculpture. Thomas Podnar, sculpture conservator with McKay Lodge Fine Arts Conservation Lab in Oberlin, Ohio, gave instruction to staff members of the Kentucky Library and volunteers in identifying sculpture materials, condition problems and some possible solutions. The training session focused on Bowling Green outdoor sculptures.

Kentucky Save Outdoor Sculpture! is part of a national campaign to locate and inventory publicly accessible outdoor sculpture and to increase public awareness of the value of outdoor sculpture and the need for responsible long-range plans to care for these works. The project includes works ranging from contemporary sculpture to historic statues, folk art and liturgical statues. Information gathered by Kentucky SOS! will be forwarded to the National Museum of American Art for addition to their Inventory of American Sculpture, which is accessible to scholars, conservators, and others interested in sculpture.

The Kentucky Arts Council, in collaboration with the University of Kentucky Art Museum, is the sponsoring organization in the Commonwealth. More volunteers are still needed to complete the work in Warren and surrounding counties. For more information

on volunteering for this project, or to report a sculpture, please contact: Lori Meadows, Kentucky SOS!, Kentucky Arts Council, 31 Fountain Place, Frankfort, KY 40601 (606-846-5076) or Jonathon Jeffrey, WKU Kentucky Library or Lynn David (606-763-6394).

OPERATION PRIDE HAS STEPPED FORWARD AND ACCEPTED THE CHALLENGE TO SAVE THE L&N TRAIN DEPOT. THESE "BEFORE" PHOTOS PROVIDED BY DAVID NOYES OF D.F. NOYES STUDIOS SHOWS SOME OF THE ARCHITECTURAL CHARM AND ELEGANCE THE STRUCTURE POSSESS.



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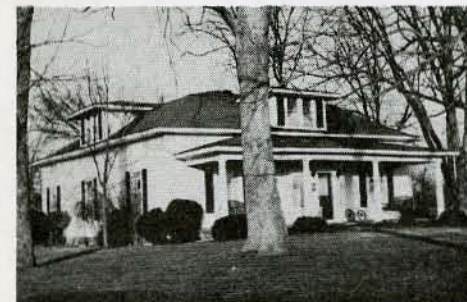
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P.O. BOX 1812
BOWLING GREEN, KY 42102-1812

COMING EVENTS

NATIONAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION WEEK MAY 9-15

LANDMARK ANNUAL DINNER MAY 19

L&N DEPOT, KENTUCKY STREET. 6:30 RECEPTION, DINNER FOLLOWS

TICKETS: \$17.00 MAKE RESERVATIONS BY MAY 10

LANDMARK REPORT

Is a publication of the Landmark Association of Bowling Green and Warren County, Inc., a nonprofit corporation organized to promote historic preservation/ economic development. Landmark is supported by the membership of concerned citizens.

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