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Landmark Report (Vol. 21, no. 4)

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The Landmark Association invites you to
The Annual Picnic
at The Ennis Farmstead, home of Drs. Jeff & Tammy Adams

956 Glen Lily Road (east of Veterans Memorial Blvd.)
Sunday, September 15th
4:00 House Tour • 5:00 Picnic • 6:00 Brief Remarks • $5.00 per person
POTLUCK, Landmark furnishes chicken, drinks, paper items, cutlery
We will include a silent auction of vintage items.
Underwriting provided by:

WYATT
WYATT, TARRANT & COMBS, LLP
& Jonathan Jeffrey
Growing Up On State Street

by Sara Tyler

Sara as a young child. Courtesy of Jean Thompson.

My parents acquired the one hundred foot lot across the street in 1914; one-half was sold to my aunt, Mrs. Birdie Reed Ellis, sister of my mother, and the two houses, designated as 1353 and 1349, were built. The architect for both was Creedmore Freeman; and many years later both were designated as historic structures for this reason. Incidentally, the original cottage on the lot was moved to College Street—just across the alley—and became 1340 College Street.

As I indicated, I lived at 1353 State for some fifty years, and after my parents’ death, I spent time with a realtor searching for a smaller house to move into. Suddenly, one day after returning home, I realized that I really did not want to leave State Street. The Thomasons were renting from me the house which had been Aunt Birdie Ellis’ house next door and since I thought that house would lend itself to being made into two apartments we agreed that they would buy my home at 1353 and I would move into 1349 State. We then exchanged houses. It was then I undertook the project to convert my aunt’s house into two apartments. I would live downstairs and rent the other unit. This arrangement served me well for thirty-odd years. However, the time came when I no longer wanted to cope with home maintenance or house guests. I awaited eagerly the construction of a retirement facility in Bowling Green by The Christian Church Homes of Kentucky; but, unfortunately, that facility and our house and back porch to serve both 1349 and 1353. My aunt, Mother’s sister, lived there having built her home at the same time. This was at a time still waiting for the Civil Rights movement!

The downstairs lavatory I had installed around 1959-1960 in the second pantry off the kitchen, as Daddy with progressive amyotrophic lateral sclerosis stepped difficult. In the beginning this pantry housed the refrigerator, for which the ice company (Topmillers for many years) delivered each day whatever quantity a household needed and designated on a card displayed somewhere visible out front on the porch. We children loved the ice trucks, hopping on the back step and gathering slivers chopped off the large blocks as the ice man used his pick to divide the blocks into smaller chunks. We enjoyed long talks for placing in the iceboxes in the kitchen. This was also an era for home milk delivery from a dairy, and groceries ordered by telephone early in the morning arrived in time for the cook to prepare for the noon meal.

Most property was fenced across the back yard, and I doubt Morgan & Belcher had any trouble there; these were picket, plank, or wire, usually whitewashed—annual spring event. Many lots had servants’ rooms at the rear, and I believe there is still one remaining at 1319 State. Some had a carriage house at the rear, or a small chicken house. The rented cottage at 1357 had its beginning as the latter.

We children loved to walk the fences from the top of the hill to the end of the block, and we never did think of the hill to the bottom in an exhilarating train accompanied by shrieks of glee. I never had a broken bone nor recall anyone else suffering one.

On summer nights we played hide-and-seek, or other games up and down the street and through the yards. As neighbors I recall as long-suffering: they never chided us for running out of bounds. Later when there were young children in the neighborhood, they and their dogs at home on our front porch where my parents, aunt and I sat on summer evenings until bedtime. From there were patios, outdoor grills, and private swimming pools at the rear of homes, frequently fenced for privacy. State Street had its resident bad boy for a few years. Some of his meanness was real, but much of his behavior was put on to appear to me as my aunt, Mother’s sister, lived there having built her home at the same time. This was at a time still waiting for the Civil Rights movement!

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Let's Read and Discuss

Reading and discussing good books brings a community together. The Landmark Association, the Kentucky Humanities Council, and the Kentucky Library & Museum invite you to participate in the following book discussions:

Monday, Sept. 16: Joe Survant’s Anne and Alpheus, 1842-1882 (a narrative poem about the hardships of a pioneer farmstead, told from male and female perspectives). Discussion will be led by Survant in the Falls Log House near the Kentucky Building at 6:00 p.m. No air conditioning, but plenty of shade, dress accordingly.

Wednesday, Sept. 25: Janice Holt Giles’ Hannah Fowler (The story of pioneering in eighteenth century Kentucky from a woman’s perspective). The Landmark Association, the Kentucky Museum education curator, Kentuckiana, will lead the discussion at 7:00 p.m. at the Kentucky Library & Museum, Co-sponsored with the XX Literary Club.

Monday, Sept. 30: Silas House’s Clay’s Quilt (A tale of an orphan’s life set in the hills of Kentucky, filled with strong family values and haunting flashbacks). Jonathan Jeffrey, Special Collections Librarian, will facilitate this discussion at 7:00 p.m. at the Kentucky Library & Museum.

All books are available at the Bowling Green Public Library & WKU Helm Library. All books are also available in paperback at Barnes & Noble.

“...and what you find is life.”

David McCullough

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events. This was an era of the Chautauqua Circuit as well—these often being held in tents. And oh, yes, the Warren County Fair—horse shows and carnival; and let’s not forget the circuses that came to town—to Hobson Grove Park—but with a morning parade around Fountain Square, the music of the calliope drawing us with its lilting music.

The observance of Halloween was far different from the trick or treat style of today. Pranks were the order of the night; porch furniture—in fact, any movable object—was moved into the house or it might be found on top of a kindling or chicken house. We dressed in costume, went to town, and paraded around the square to see and be seen. Masks were permitted with old and young enjoying the fun-filled evening.

In my growing-up days we attended Mrs. Washer’s classes to learn to dance. Located on Tenth Street between Kentucky and Adams Streets, it was operated by Mrs. Washer, the teacher, assisted in other ways by her husband who was a midget. Year-end programs were presented, sometimes at the Opera House mentioned earlier. So we received instruction in both ballroom and Interpretative dancing.

Postcard Book Proceeds to Benefit Landmark

The Landmark Association will be the beneficiary of sales from a new book entitled Bowling Green in Vintage Postcards. Arcadia Publishing of Charleston, South Carolina, is producing the book with an expected delivery date in early November. The book will feature 240 historic postcards from Bowling Green, including multiple views of local favorites such as Fountain Square Park, Reservoir Hill, Beech Bend, and Lost River Cave. A whole chapter is devoted to vintage postcards of Western Kentucky University. The postcards used in the book came from the collections of Laura & Ray Buckberry and the Kentucky Library & Museum.

Landmark treasurer, Jonathan Jeffery, wrote the captions for the postcards. He admits: “Sometimes it’s easier to write a two-page article than it is to write a 60-word caption. When it’s that short, it’s almost like writing poetry.” The author has asked that royalties from the book be donated to Landmark’s Irene Moss Sumpter Historic Preservation Endowment. “The Association has used this endowment to print maps, books, cards, and other publications related to our cultural heritage,” Jeffery said. “I think it is important to try to create sustainable income for projects such as this.”

The book will include twenty-four real photo postcards (such as the ones of the snow scenes featured on this page). These cards were photos taken by individuals and then printed with a postcard format on the back. Photography studios offered this service to customers. Cards such as this were not produced in mass quantities and represent some of the rarest cards in the book.

Winter Wonderland: These real photo postcards were taken on one of the coldest days in Bowling Green history, February 2, 1951. The newspaper reported that a record low had been recorded the night before of 20 degrees below zero which “eclipsed by three degrees the previous record minimum set on February 3, 1899.” Cold temperature perpetuated the nine inches of sleet and snow for several weeks. Repair crews for local utilities and communication companies were kept busy working on downed and snapped power lines. The paper also noted that the trees in Fountain Square Park “sparkled in a nightmare kind of brilliance.”

With the gift of a bicycle, which I received at age twelve, my horizons were greatly extended. A new friend Gertrude Raymond (her family had moved to Bowling Green when her father, a contractor, was awarded the contract to build Pushin’s Department Store, corner of Main and College) and I explored Bowling Green, often engaging in hazardous endeavors, such as hanging on to small trucks to save ourselves pedaling. On occasion, concerned friends reported us to our parents.

Childhood was passing and growing up on State Street was becoming a memory.

Landmark Association
Annual Baking Scrapbook

Susie Likes accepted a Landmark Home Award for Greg Willis and Steve Scott for the work they did in restoring the Old Methodist Manse at 1403 State Street.

Dr. Jim Skaggs received a Landmark Home Award for the work done on the M.O. Morgan house at 1405 State Street, now State Street.

Jody Kary proudly displays her Landmark Home Award which was given for careful preservation of her residence at 1032 Magnolia in the Bungalow District.

Gary West and Deborah Fisher received a Landmark Home Award for their work on the Browder Home at 727 E. 11th Street.

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Covella Biggers accepted the Jane Morningstar Award of Merit for the continued restoration and maintenance of the Eloise B. Houchens Center for Women at 1115 Adams Street.

Joyce Rasdall, a former Landmark Board member, accepted a Landmark Building Award for the recent interior and exterior work done at Smiths Grove Baptist Church. Tom and Judy Cook, who were not able to attend the meeting, were also given a Building Award for the extensive work done at the Rockfield School.

Kelly and Elizabeth Woodrum received the Jean Thomason Historic Home Award for their restoration of the Kister House at 418 State Street.

President Matt Baker presented the Lamplighter Award to Eileen Starr for her outstanding service on the Landmark Board.

Heritage Award

The 2002 Landmark Association Heritage Award went to Dorion and Elaine Walker, a couple who has lived in Bowling Green for less than a decade, but they have already made an indelible stamp on our city’s historic preservation efforts. They moved here with their film and television production company in 1994 from Los Angeles. Although their productions are often seen on national television, we know them best for their local efforts to preserve our heritage through film, including a documentary entitled “Beauty of the Southland” related to the history of the railroad here, and “Spirit of Flight” which records the history of local aviators. Landmark members will remember them best for the film that their company produced in cooperation with Landmark, “200: A Historic Documentary.”

Besides their preservation of history through film, this couple has invested heavily in the historic preservation efforts in our community, including serving on the Friends of Riverview Board, the Hobson House Commission, the Depot Development Authority, the Bowling Green Historic Preservation Board, the Downtown Redevelopment Authority, and the Landmark Association Board. They have purchased four historic homes on State Street, one is restored and one is in the restoration process. The Walkers join a prestigious list of preservationists who have received the Heritage Award since 1980.
Architectural Details

- A generous Landmark member has issued a challenge grant to the Association in the amount of $2,000 for the Irene Mass Sumpter Historic Preservation Endowment. The Association must match the donation dollar for dollar by December 31, 2002 to receive the funds. The silent auction items at the picnic will be our initial effort at raising this match. Let our generosity match that of our magnanimous friend.

- Jane Morris is looking for a copy of Architectural Report of Warren County, Kentucky, 1790-1940, published by the Landmark Association in 1984. If you have a copy you want to give away or sell, please contact Jane at 782-7724.

- Notice on the front cover that Landmark’s website address is now www.blglandmark.com. Mike Wilson graciously serves as our webmaster. He has updated the rural church database with captions. This area will continue to be added to until we have photos and brief histories of all the rural (outside the city limits of Bowling Green) churches in the county. He has also added photos of our 2001-2002 award winners. We will continue to add previous year winners.

- If any of you attended the Loli-Glynn Beauty College here in Bowling Green, I would like to talk with you about a story I’m working on. Call Jonathan Jeffrey at 745-5083 (O) or 781-2873 (H).

- Wabuk Development purchased the old 12th Street Church of Christ property for senior housing. Site preparation and initial construction of 32 residential units has already begun in the church’s former parking lot. Plans for the large parking lot are still uncertain at this time.

- Ironwood Development, the same group that has an option on the old Junior High School, and FielderGroup Architects have purchased the vacant lot at College Street and Park Row. Plans include the construction of a mixed-use building that will include 4,000 square feet of ground floor retail space and 40 units of one-bedroom affordable senior apartments. The development will include covered and enclosed parking for 22. Although initial reaction to the proposed plans were less than receptive, the architects have listened to the concerns of area merchants and the Historic Preservation Board.

- The Downtown Redevelopment Authority now has a website. Check it out at www.downtownbg.org.

- Riverview will host a Civil War re-enactment on Saturday, September 28. For further information contact Riverview at 843-5565.

- A tour of Fairview Cemetery will be hosted by the Association on Sunday, October 26th at 9:30 a.m. The tour will cost $5. Anyone joining the Association that day can take the tour for free.

- The Southern Kentucky Genealogical Society and the Kentucky Library will host a genealogy workshop on October 5th at Downing University Center. The program features certified genealogists Pamela Boley Porter, Gail Jackson Miller, and Mark Lowe. For more information contact the society at 615-384-8178 or skygen2002@kytnresearch.com.

- The Association will sponsor a reception for our members and the members of Preservation Kentucky on November 8th. You will receive an invitation in the mail.

- The Landmark Christmas tour has been set for Saturday, December 7th.

- During Kentucky State Archives Week, the Kentucky Library & Museum will sponsor two lunchtime learning sessions. The first entitled “Treasure in Our Archives” will be conducted on October 7th by Sue Lynn Stone, University Archivist for WKU. On October 10 Nancy Baird, Kentucky History Specialist, will present “Photo Treasures in the Kentucky Library.” Both session will be held at 11:30 a.m. in the Kentucky Building’s Orientation Room.

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Bowling Green High School Saved!

Ironwood Development, based in Roswell, Georgia, has entered into a contract with the Bowling Green Board of Education to purchase the old Bowling Green High School for $800,000. The contract is contingent on Ironwood being approved for tax credits and other financing, as well as appropriate zoning changes. This project relieves the minds of many local preservationists who feared the building might be razed. A good portion of the building is currently being utilized as offices for WKU sports, which are awaiting the renovation of Diddle Arena.

Ironwood plans to spend approximately $9 million to create 110 one- and two-bedroom units that will range in size from 650 to 1100 square feet. Seventy-five percent of the apartments will be subsidized, and the rest will be rented at local market rates.

Ironwood was attracted to Bowling Green, because of the tax credits available for rehabilitation of historic structures through the Renaisances Kentucky program. Tax credits are an important economic development tool for Renaissance cities. The Renaissance program in Bowling Green is administered by the Downtown Redevelopment Authority. The effort to locate a purchaser for the high school building was spearheaded by Landmark members, including Mayor Sandy Jones, DRA administrator Cheryl Blaine, and local realtor Al Nottmeier. Also involved was 1st District Magistrate Terri Stahl.

Ironwood has an impressive list of properties in several states, chiefly Arizona, Georgia, and Texas. It is working on other projects in Kentucky at Hopkinsville, Princeton, and Nicholasville. Most of the company’s properties are senior and “affordable housing complexes.” To this point Ironwood has not worked with rehabilitating historic structures; it has been involved in new construction only. Of the company’s principals, Robert McMaster, was involved in the rehab of a historic hotel for housing in

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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.

Name ____________________________________________________________

Mailing Address __________________________________________________

City ___________________________ State ____________ Zip ____________

Telephone ___________________________ E-mail ______________________

Levels of Membership _____________________________________________

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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

LANDMARK ASSOCIATION

P.O. BOX 1812

BOWLING GREEN, KY 42102-1812

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