Landmark Association Sponsors Historic Scavenger Hunt

The Landmark Association is sponsoring a scavenger hunt that will take individuals around the city's circumference as well as exploring many interesting facts about sites within the city proper. On April 1, the brochure "A Tour of Historic Bowling Green Along the Greenways" will be mailed to Landmark members and to other interested parties that answer advertisements and public service announcements. Accompanying the brochure will be a list of questions; one question for each of the new twenty-three interpretive markers found along the greenways system. The questions will not be difficult to answer but will require the entrant to carefully examine each marker. The answers will not be included in the brochure. Entrants will then mail the filled-out form back to the Association's office. Drawings for the four prizes will be held at Landmark's annual dinner meeting held on Thursday, May 19, and winners will be promptly notified. Only one entry per person, but if a family attempts the hunt together, each member can enter but each must fill out an individual form.

Get out there and enjoy some fresh air and Bowling Green's history!

Prizes
- $50 gift certificate to Barbara Stewart's Interiors
- $50 gift certificate to Mariah's Restaurant
- $50 gift certificate to Candle Makers on the Square
- $50 worth of Landmark merchandise including books, maps, note cards, etc.

Save the Dates:
- March 18
  Spring Ramble to Princeton
- May 19
  Annual Meeting
  Reception at 600 State Street
  Dinner at Mariah's
The Landmark Association of Bowling Green-Warren County
A non-profit organization established in 1976 as a community advocate for preservation, protection and maintenance of architectural, cultural and archeological resources in Bowling Green and Warren County.

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Landmark Report 2

March 2011

We hope many of you visited the pump house during Landmark's Christmas Tour of Homes. The restoration of the 1920s pump house is near completion. Work on the front gutter is still needed and planned landscaping will finish the project. As seen in this photo, the Association had an attractive owning installed over the door to prevent overflow from the gutter from doing damage to the door. Unfortunately the damaged gutter is still splashing water onto the door and wreaking havoc.

A landscape design has been drawn for the plot which will include low-maintenance plantings and a natural rock retaining wall near the front of the building. The Association and the Upper East Main Neighborhood Association received a SNAP (Select Neighborhood Action Program) grant to assist with the landscaping costs, however the grant funds alone will be inadequate to complete the project.

If you would like to make a donation toward this project, please send checks to Landmark at PO. Box 1812, Bowling Green, KY 42102-1812. Remember that donations to Landmark are tax deductible. Landmark’s work on the pump house was recognized in January 2011 by Operation PRIDE in their monthly Commercial Property Renovation awards.

Volunteers will be solicited soon to assist with the landscaping project. If you are interested in assisting with the landscaping, please call Jason Hildabrand (270) 791-5472 and let him know. The dates for the work are still to be announced. Also, contact Jason if you have native limestone rock that could be used in building the retaining wall.

Pump House Work Continues

March 2011

Landmark Report 3

The History of Her Heart
by Lynn Niedermeier

When Rosa Praig Dickerson died in 1902 at her home in the Plano community of Warren County, the Bowling Green Times-Journal eulogized her as a good Christian woman, a doctor’s wife, the mother of five daughters and, more uniquely, as a “writer of marked ability.” While the full record of Dickerson’s published work will never be known, at a minimum it comprised 29 poems and another 29 sketches and stories, including at least 8 in one of the most popular periodicals of the 19th century, Godey’s Lady’s Book and Magazine.

That Dickerson is unknown today is hardly surprising, for the literary endeavors of women whose bylines appeared in Victorian-era mass-market magazines have long brought condemnation, if not outright scorn.

Criticism of their work—which typically involved earnest musings on nature, mortality, beauty, love and loss—as unbearably sentimental and moralistic dates from their own time, when Nathaniel Hawthorne famously decried them as that “d—d mob of scribbling women” whose “trash” monopolized both the public’s attention and its purse. In 1930, magazine historian Franklin Luther Mott offered an example of the sentimentality that “infected” the pages of Godey’s Lady’s Book. He cited a story in its December 1868 issue by one Violette Woods called “The Frozen Heart,” in which the heroine, despite having her capacity for love extinguished by an untrue suitor, marries and bravely devotes herself to another man in the single year of life she has left. Although Mott made clear that he had selected this tale entirely at random, its roll of the dice was especially unlucky, for “Violette Woods” was, in fact, Rosa Praig Dickerson.

Perhaps, through Dickerson’s own story, we can see Violette Woods in a kinder light.

Rosa Belle Praig was born in Louisville on July 17, 1843, the second of five children of John G. and Elsa Dickerson. Rosa’s father appears to have died in her youth, because by 1859 he had married another woman and had a child, Arthur. Rosa reappears, now converted by the memory of her pious but, alas, mortally ill. When he dies and leaves his fortune to her daughter, Alice seriously resumes her exemplary life without regret that she once sacrificed love at the altar of morality.

Continued on page 4

From “A Winter’s Night” by Rosa B. Dickerson (Bowling Green Gazette, Feb. 13, 1884)

The wind has folded down its restless wings, And sleeps, exhausted, in its long retreat; Unconscious that its wild, fierce wanderings With sorrow and with tears have been replete. And yet, within our closely-sheltered room, How warm and roseate the night appears! And fire and lamp obliterate the gloom And bliss contentment leaves no cause for tears!
The Cardinal Motel: A Piece of Roadside Kitsch

By Samantha Pillar

In 2004, during a meeting of the Orphan Brigade Kinfolk Reunion held at the Kentucky Library & Museum, a visiting couple announced that they were staying at the Cardinal Motel on the By-Pass. An almost collective gasp went up from the listeners, who recognized the Cardinal as an aging way station not so different in its creature comforts. The couple explained that they had married in 1954 in Louisville and were motoring down the 31-W By-Pass anticipating a Florida honeymoon. Tired from the day’s activities, they decided to stop in Bowling Green and continue their journey the next day. They stopped at a brand new motel called the Cardinal Motel only to find that this was the first night that the motel was open for business. Thus their reason for staying at the Cardinal; the couple and the hotel were celebrating their fiftieth anniversaries. The Cardinal Motel, 1310 31-W By-Pass, is one of the few motels left in Bowling Green proper and is certainly unique in that until recently it was still individually owned and not a franchise-operation. The Cardinal opened in 1954 & met the needs of a traveling public on a heavily traveled route between Louisville and Nashville. During the 1940s Highway 31-W was the major thoroughfare in Bowling Green. Following Chestnut Street through town 31-W was always congested. One gets a sense of the immense convenience this caused city dwellers when one hears a long-time resident of Bowling Green report that there was an accident in town every night.

In 1947, with the rumor that a superhighway connecting Canada to the Gulf of Mexico might be built on 31-W, many property owners petitioned the State Highway Department to construct a route around Bowling Green on Laurel Avenue. Citing the dangerous conditions in the city the petitioners asked that “this route be relieved of some of the heavy traffic.” The owners in town wanted to get this new road designated as an “alternate” in hopes of keeping the tourist traffic coming through town, but to no avail. Its 1949 construction almost immediately gained 31-W By-Pass the majority of the business activity in Bowling Green. Besides catering to passing tourists, businesses looking for ample parking space also built on the By-Pass. By 1951 new construction included two tourists courts, a drive-in theater, many saloons, betting parlors, restrooms, an auto parts store, a miniature golf course, two whiskey stores, two fruit markets and a monument businesses. By 1956 these numbers jumped to fifteen gasoline stations, five tourist courts, liquor stores, ice cream parlor and an assortment of florists, jewelers, and clothiers. As stated in an October 1951 news article: “It is only necessary for a person to drive along the smooth, easy-to-read roads to get an impression of economic ventures to see that here on the Bowling Green By-Pass is big business.”

The builders of the Cardinal received their building permit in July of 1953. They estimated that the new twenty-room motel would cost $20,000 to build. The Cardinal is U-shaped, punctuated on the ends of the courtyard “arms” by the red roof of the registration office and the white wall outlining the pool. My interpretation of this is that the color marks the beginning and end of the motel, where one gets a room and what one does while staying in his enclosed complex. Good design was of primary importance to roadside architecture, because the exterior was what caught the motorist’s eye. The old cabin motel of the previous twenty years was replaced by integrated or massed units in the 1940s. Because these units were under one roof instead of individual units, they were cheaper to construct.

The next most important aspect of the era’s motel construction was the aesthetic treatment. Five general aesthetic themes emerged from the 1920s to the 1950s: rustic, southwest, western, modern, and bungalow. The idea was to present to the public something exotic like the adobe look or something traditional like colonial revival. By the 1950s the bungalow and modern style were the most popular because they were the most familiar. The characteristics of The International Style greatly appealed to motorists. Honesty, economy, clean lines, functionality and the reduction of elements to fit basic human needs fit into the whole concept of the motel. If one compares a stereotypical advertisement illustration of a motor hotel from 1962 to a photo of the Cardinal, one sees similarities in the
The Severance Club's Evolving Identity

By Jean E. Nehm

On a Tuesday evening in February of 1935, several women gathered at the Seventeenth Street home of Mrs. W. Ross McGhee. These Bowling Green ladies were taking the tentative steps in forming a club, and their first concern was what to name it. Their first general meeting, dated February 21, 1935, reports without explanation "that it was thought wise to not use the word 'literary' in the name." Initial suggestions for the club's name included The Eight O'clock Club, The Tuesday Evening Club, The Kan Club (Scottish for "to know"), and the Re-in-kan Club (the word formed by the last letters in the last names of the charter members: Miss Hammer, Mrs. McGhee, Mrs. Momkin, Mrs. Rosebrook, Mrs. Connette, and Mrs. Patterson). A decision was postponed until the next meeting, and after a discussion of period furniture and refreshments of spiced tea, pear and cheese salad, and wafers, they adjourned.

Suggested names offered at the next meeting again indicate some uncertainty about the purpose of the club: The Tri-Arts Club (Home Arts, Fine Arts, and Social Arts), The Philomath (love of learning), Inter Nos (among ourselves), The Quest Club, The Coatskin Club, The Arts and Crafts Club, and The Studio Club. After a discussion, the women decided to name their new organization The Severance Club. This name is "in honor of Madame Caroline Severance, 'Mother of Clubs' and founder and president of the first women's club in America: The New England Woman's Club of Boston." This quotation has been written in every yearbook of programs from 1935 until the present.

Having decided on a name, the women commenced writing a constitution. Article I recorded the official name as The Severance Club, and Article II stated that the "object of the club is to broaden and widen the cultural and practical interests of the various members of the club." Membership was limited to twelve members, a good number, they thought, to ensure an interesting organization and to enjoy a close and friendly relationship with each other. The women wanted refreshments at each meeting but declared in the constitution that these must be "limited to two foods and these must be very simple." Officers (chairman, vice-chairman, and secretary-treasurer) were to be chosen by secret ballot, and meetings were to be held on the fourth Tuesday of every month with optional social meetings held as desired. Mrs. McGhee invited the group to her home for the first social meeting, with the ladies encouraged to bring along their sewing.

The topic of the first year was period furniture. The women wanted refreshments for serving a tea, a buffet supper, a reception, and a buffet buffet supper, a reception, and a card party as well as rules for serving family meals - with or without a maid.

During the first few years, several literary topics were suggested as possible programs for the following year, but it was not until 1939 that the club decided to spend the year studying contemporary American writers. Selected authors included Pearl Buck and Robert Frost. The following year's theme was Literary Places. And so these women left behind the domestic topics and pursued more intellectual topics. Even if the topics were not explicitly about books or authors, the women began choosing topics that required significant research. One example of a challenging theme was "Music: The Universal Language" chosen in 1946. Specific programs were given on Stephen Foster, Jean Sibelius, opera, the history of church music, the origin of musical instruments, and American folk music.

By 1952, the Severance Club seems to have settled into its identity as a literary club. In fact, the secretary said as much in an entry about some new business in their March meeting. The members had been discussing whether to contribute to a community organization. They declined, writing that they were "in full accord and sympathy" with civic projects and that individual members contributed when they could. Concerning the Severance Club itself, the secretary added, when "our by-laws were written, it was with this idea in mind that we were purely a literary club, collecting no dues and assuming no outside obligations." The members' friendly for reading was again highlighted in the December 1955 minutes when the secretary wrote, "Miss Hammer turned in her usual fine performance with a paper on McGuire and His Readers. She had collected the readings to show which all of us back to another day when Reading was a lesson instead of a delightful pastime."

Looking back on historical topics ("Kentucky in Retrospect" and "As It Used to Be") was popular, but so too was a forward-looking look at the Russians launched Sputnik. Entitled "Destination Outer Space," Mrs. Patterson's program "held us spellbound with this timely subject and interesting subject matter. She stated that the future safety of our nation will depend on interplanetary travel and knowledge of outer space."

Over the years, broad program themes reflect the women's wide interests and allowed them to research a specific topic. Examples include Famous Families, Rivers of the World, Biographies, World Religions, National Parks, Women of Courage and Vision, Poets and Poetry, Kentucky Authors, and Western Kentucky University's Centennial.

Occasionally, members invite a guest speaker to present a program. For example, dressed in period clothing, Carol Crowe-Carraco, history professor at WKU, presented a program on the life of Kentucky Mary Breckinridge (1891-1965). Joe Survant, a professor of English and a Kentucky Poet Laureate, visited the club and read from his book Anne and Alpheus 1842-1882. Another example is Jonathan Jeffery's program given at the club in 2001. As Manuscripts/Folklore Coordinator at the Kentucky Library and Museum, he shared interesting insights on the shocking consequences of Victorian woman riding bicycles. According to the minutes, the women "forgot their ankles, rode with men, and even wore pants. There was a revolution of social customs; churches suffered, reading was prevented. Bikes popularized short skirts and bloomers and eradicated corsets."

December meetings of the Severance Club became an opportunity for members to change the traditional meeting format to allow each member to share a special Christmas reading or story. Included in the historical record are these examples:

- Jean Simpson read Kentucky writer Elizabeth Maddox Roberts' "Christmas Morning."
- Carol Adams read a poem "The Friendly Beasts."
- Gertrude Boile and Edith Curry enjoy a Severance Club moment in May 1932.
- Mary Campbel read a legend of the candy cane and gave every member a sample.
- Dorothy Dodson read a precious letter to Santa she herself had written as a child.

(continued on page 8)
The Morehead House

By Margie Helm

[Editor’s note: The following article on one of Bowling Green’s first hotels was written by Margie Helm in 1959. Her father, T.O. Helm, purchased the Morehead in 1915, he had the building razed in 1923 and the new Helm Hotel erected.]

The Morehead House was established in 1847. According to Warren County Deed Book 15, the first owners of the lot where the Morehead House was built and where the Helm Hotel was later built, were Elizabeth and Samuel Moore. In 1817, the Moores sold the lot to Samuel Work, who sold it to Charles Weller in 1833.

In 1836 Charles Weller and wife conveyed the lot to James K. McGoodwin, formerly of Russellville. McGoodwin’s son, Ike, became a well-known citizen and grocer of Bowling Green. Mr. James K. McGoodwin operated a general store in Bowling Green under the firm name of McGoodwin, Baker, and Hodge. In 1847 Mr. McGoodwin built a tavern similar in architecture to the Younglove Drug Store which was directly across the street. The tavern however was only a hotel. The old Morehead Hotel, the Drug Store with the owner’s apartment above was three stories. Mr. McGoodwin leased his tavern to Charles D. Morehead and his wife, Mr. Morehead had also come to Bowling Green from Russellville. The tavern was given the name of the Morehead House.

The Southern Kentucky Argus of July 31 to August 31, 1847, carried the following advertisement:

"This new and extensive establishment, erected on the east corner of the public square (the corner lately occupied by Jos. K. McGoodwin, Esq.) is now open for the reception of travelers. For comfort and extent in its internal arrangement, it is unsurpassed by any other house South of Green River; having taken it for a term of years and fitted it up at a considerable expense, the proprietor intends to spare neither money nor exertions to render satisfaction in every department of his business. C.D. Morehead"

The Morehead family Bible records a tragic end to most of this Morehead family, Charles D. Morehead married Eliza Loving here in 1829. They had three children who survived infancy: Sarah, who married Joseph Younglove in 1847, and two younger children, Edwin and Emma. In August 1835, Mr. and Mrs. Morehead took a trip to New Orleans taking with them their son and daughter who were then about fourteen and eighteen. They were caught in a yellow fever epidemic and all four died within six days. The only child to survive was the oldest daughter who married Joseph Younglove, and had not gone on the trip.

One of the celebrities who visited the Morehead House was Jenny Lind. A letter dated April 7, 1857 and found in the D. Owen Helm papers, tells of the singer’s visit: "I rec’d your kind and welcome letter of the thirty first of March... I think as much of you as if you were my own sister. Jenny Lind stopped and took tea as she passed through our town. I got to see her as she passed from the stage to the town. I took her to be a very homely woman; she may sing well but she is not pretty. I am told that she did not get out of the stage at Franklin that was too bad she ought to have gotten out and let the natives have a peek at her..."

Ruth Hines Temple, whose family have been long-time residents of Bowling Green, recalls hearing her grandmother say that she saw Jenny Lind as she passed from the stage to the Morehead House. A boy who was in the crowd said he wished he could see the famous singer. Miss Lind is reported to have turned and smiled at the boy when she heard his remark.

In 1862, when the Confederate soldiers took over the Green River Tavern for a hospital, Mrs. John Hess, the owner, bought the Morehead House from Mr. James McGoodwin. Mrs. Hess died in 1876 and willed the hotel to her three daughters, Sarah Armitage, Carmilla Hardman, and Julie Dewey. The daughters had families of small children and evidently did not begin immediate operation of the hotel according to the following advertisement which appeared in the Bowling Green Democrat on March 4, 1876. They evidently leased the hotel to Mr. C. C. Kiger. The ad stated: "I desire to announce to the public that I have lately taken charge of the above House and shall endeavor to make it a neat and pleasant place of entertainment. The Morehead House is located on the public square and is... convenient to the business part of the city. The house contains excellent sample rooms for Drummers. Regular boarders are offered extra inducements and given the best accommodations..."

The hotel was operated from time to time by Shirley McFerran and Mrs. McFerran. In 1915 Dr. T. O. Helm bought the Morehead House from Mrs. Carl Hardman. The next year the name was changed to Morehead Hotel.

Dr. Helm, who had already sold his private hospital, St. Joseph, on Twelfth Street, gave up medical practice and became the active manager of the hotel. He was assisted by his youngest son, Harold, a student at Ogden College. The older sons, Bickey and Tom, were in service. In 1918, Dr. Helm was called to Ft. Benjamin for three months training in the medical corps.

The year 1919 brought not only the end of the war but also a remodeling of the hotel, plans were made to remodel it as quickly as possible. All rooms lacking running water and telephone connection were equipped with them. The parlor was made into a bedroom. Rooms were repapered. New furniture was bought for the lobby, desks, and chairs were added to the downstairs hall for a writing room.

When the boom had somewhat subsided in 1923, my father tried to organize a company to build a new hotel. He could find no one sufficiently interested, so he ventured into the enterprise alone. My brother, Tom, gave up the position he had taken in New Jersey after his graduation from Princeton and helped with the hotel.

The old Morehead Hotel had to turn down except for the Annex, and a new hotel, the Helm was erected, and finished in the summer of 1924.

Calendar of Events

March 18
Ramble to Princeton, Kentucky

April 19
Landmark grant applications due

April 29
Preservation Kentucky reception

L&N Depot

April 30
Landmark notifies grant awardees

May 4
Landmark awards applications due

May 12
Scavenger hunt forms due

May 19
Annual Meeting

September 11
Landmark Picnic

March 2011
Landmark Report 10

March 2011
Landmark Report 11
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 _____________

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Checks should be payable to: Landmark Association
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