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The Landmark Association
& Meyer Mortgage
present a
Christmas Tour of Homes
Saturday, December 7, 2013 • 12:00 – 5:00 p.m. • $10 per person
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Jeff & Susan Stevens - 628 E. Main
Nick Rabold 942 - Parkway
Sky Ranch Professional Lofts - 314 E. Main
Armory Lofts - 537 E. 10th
Mike & Cheryl Holland, Owners - 1019 State
Landmark Store & Silent Auction at 314 E. Main
Rambling in Lexington
on October 8th.

Photos by Michael Trapasso

Camelot Visits Bowling Green, 1960

By Jonathan Jeffrey

viewed the Commonwealth's ten electoral votes as important. Kennedy, his running mate Lyndon Baines Johnson, and several of their family members canvassed the state frequently that fall. Kennedy, himself visited Louisville, Lexington, Bowling Green and Paducah in one two-week period; the last three cities he visited on Saturday, October 8th.

In late-summer 1960, Democratic Party leaders planned for JFK, accompanied by Mrs. Kennedy, to make a quick sojourn of visits in the Commonwealth during early-October. Although rumors flew around for several weeks in the late-summer about a potential visit to Bowling Green, townpeople, other than a few key Democratic operatives, didn't get the official word until the local paper announced it on September 13th. It had been nearly thirty years since President Franklin Delano Roosevelt had stopped at the city's L&N depot to give a stump speech for Senatorial candidate Alben Barkley and it had been a full forty years since Democrat James Cox had given a campaign oration in their fair city. Local Democrats felt that the city had long been overlooked in the campaigns of national candidates, and the paper noted that the "scheduling of Kennedy's speech…followed extensive negotiations." Part of the negotiations revolved around who would actually make the campaign visit, as a number of important Democrats felt that vice-presidential candidate Lyndon B. Johnson would have more affinity with local audiences however Kennedy supporters won the day.

The local paper announced October 6th as the visit's official date, which was changed when the presidential debate schedule was released. Because the second debate was planned for Friday, October 7th, planners rescheduled the Kentucky visit to Saturday, October 8th. Due to Mrs. Kennedy's pregnancy, she was unable to be a part of the
The day’s events survived and included every choreographed detail; it also included an alternate plan to hold the event in the Bowling Green High School gym in case of rain.

Finally, October 8th arrived, full of sunshine and promise. Kennedy, slightly late, was greeted at the Bowling Green airport by 300 well-wishers including Congressman William H. Natcher, who introduced him to a number of local dignitaries as well as Miss Kentucky Alice Chumley and B.C. Hayden, a 92-year-old, life-long Democrat, who the itinerary noted “will be in a wheel chair.” The candidate then entered the motorcade’s fifth vehicle, a red Oldsmobile convertible loaned by Bettersworth Motors and driven by City Treasurer William F. Scates. He was accompanied in the car by event chairman Morris Lowe and Police Sergeant Wayne Constant. The motorcade consisted of sixteen vehicles, including several buses for members of the press, with state police cruisers at the start and finish. At City Hall, the candidate disembarked, walked through the building, and ambled out the front door to the grandstand.

Surrounded by local and state politicians, the candidate faced one of the largest crowds ever assembled in Bowling Green for a political speech. Papers estimated the crowd at 5,000. Nine-year-old Lucinda Francis was awed by the cheering crowd and was surprised to look up and see grown men with their legs dangling from the trees in the courthouse lawn across the street. She also recalled how well the large speakers that were strategically located in trees and on trucks amplified the speech so that everyone could hear the candidate. Several crowd members remember the speech as rather typical campaign broilerplate, but they were surprised at the delivery. This was no Southerner speaking to them, and Lucinda Francis pondered if anyone could really understand what this handsome young man was saying in his distinct Boston accent, although she admitted that he spoke in a slow, deliberate cadence. Before JFK left the platform, Bowling Green mayor, Robert Graham, presented him with a large country ham, which displayed a fine patina of mold. Kennedy joyously accepted the token and noted that back in Massachusetts, “it took a brave man to eat the first oyster,” so “I’m going to take your word for this. If you say it’s good, I’ll eat it.” Before leaving that day, Kennedy slipped Graham his home address on a slip of paper and asked him to send Jackie directions on how to prepare the Kentucky delicacy.

After the speech Kennedy returned to the red Oldsmobile. As the car pulled away from the rear of City Hall, the Democratic candidate heard the plaintive cry of “Daddy Daddy.” A new father himself, JFK heard the shout and asked Police Sergeant Wayne Constant if this was his daughter, Constant assented and told the candidate that her name was Susie. At that, Kennedy turned to her, beamed one of his iconic smiles, and enthusiastically yelled: “Hi Susie!” Even 50 years later, Susie (Constant) Poschel recalls the moment lucidly and said that (continued on page 5)
Reflections of the Twentieth Century Club

by Jean E. Nehm

The daffodil is the Twentieth Century Club's official flower and can be found on many of their yearbooks, such as this one from the 1962.

The earliest minutes are dated May 3, 1909, but they offer no explanation for the choice of the club's name. The season must have inspired their choice of green and white for the club's colors as well as the daffodil for the club flower. The first officers were Corinne Barr, President; Mary Hughes, Vice President; Mary Agnes Willard, Second Vice President; Marian Hines, Treasurer; and Louise Matlock, Secretary.

If they could have imagined 50 years into the future, they would certainly have been amused to read an entry in the minutes book by a renowned member named Margie Helm (only fourteen years old when the club was organized) who wrote, "Bock on State Street again! No wonder we meet so often on State Street where there are six members who live within one block, and six members are nearly one third of the club."

On May 10, the members of this new club voted to study the World's Greatest Novelist, and a program committee was assigned to bring a list of the most famous novelists for the club to choose at their next meeting. The entry for May 17 items the chosen authors and works, adding that they would spend one afternoon studying the life and style of the author and another afternoon studying the novel itself. The meetings began in fall and included the following literary works:

- Les Misérables, by Victor Hugo
- Oliver Twist, by Charles Dickens
- The Three Musketeers, by Alexandre Dumas
- Waverly, by Sir Walter Scott
- The Last Days of Pompeii, by Edward Bulwer-Lytton
- Adam Bede, by George Eliot
- Captain Singleton, by Daniel Defoe
- Vanity Fair, by William Makepeace Thackeray
- The Scarlet Letter, by Nathaniel Hawthorne
- Elsie Venner, by Oliver Wendell Holmes
- The original constitution for the club specifies that "the Club shall meet at the residence of the members in alphabetical order." The twenty members gathered at the home of a hostess to hear a program presented by another member.

The idea for this club was suggested by Corinne Barr's home on State Street in order to form a new ladies club, for they did indeed found the Twentieth Century Club.

In 1910-1911, they changed from fiction to Nineteenth Century poetry, and members gave presentations on Longfellow, Whittier, Lowell, Wordsworth, Shelley, Burns, Keats, Robert Browning, and Tennyson. On the date for Byron, "each member answered the roll call with some quotation from the poet." Other program themes during the first years included Germany, Mythology and the Formation of Modern Beliefs, Kentucky, and Modern Drama. By the end of the 1915-1916 season, the precedent for hard work had already been established, and the club was proud of its identity. In June, Mrs. Margaret Wilson, the secretary, wrote, "The club adjourned, thus bringing to an end a club year of much profit and promise—profit in that the Club work has at all times been given most conscientious study, and we have strive always toward a duty well done—Promise in that the club is a stronger organization than a year ago and stronger today than ever in its history."

No wonder we meet so often on State Street where there are six members who live within one block, and six members are nearly one third of the club."

The minutes state, "The club was particularly interested in this book on account of the light it throws on the present world crisis. Miss Reed Potter presented The First Hundred Thousand, a 1915 bestseller by Ian Hay Beith, which helped members feel "much better acquainted with the men and conditions at the front." During those years, members voted to go to the local Red Cross Society headquarters to sew garments and work on surgical supplies. They also voted to support a war orphan. Writing about a program on Florence Nightingale, a secretary wrote, "In these days of Red Cross activity, everyone is interested in nurses and especially in the Mother of all the Angels of Mercy. Mrs. Drake told of this splendid woman in a most interesting way." At the close of the war, program topics shifted to contemporary issues such as the League of Nations, the 1920 presidential candidates, Einstein's theories, and the production of moving pictures.

The Club meeting at the home of Nonne Smith in January 1924.

It is interesting to note how often the work of the club, in both their literary study and their community work, reflected the march of time and major events in our country and city. During World War I, for example, Mrs. S. H. Garvin gave a program on H. G. Wells' Mr. Britling Sees It Through. The minutes state, "The club was particularly interested in this book on account of the light it throws on the present world crisis. Miss Reed Potter presented The First Hundred Thousand, a 1915 bestseller by Ian Hay Beith, which helped members feel "much better acquainted with the men and conditions at the front." During those years, members voted to go to the local Red Cross Society headquarters to sew garments and work on surgical supplies. They also voted to support a war orphan. Writing about a program on Florence Nightingale, a secretary wrote, "In these days of Red Cross activity, everyone is interested in nurses and especially in the Mother of all the Angels of Mercy. Mrs. Drake told of this splendid woman in a most interesting way." At the close of the war, program topics shifted to contemporary issues such as the League of Nations, the 1920 presidential candidates, Einstein's theories, and the production of moving pictures.

Solidly, with the passage of time the first petal fell from the beloved club daffodil—the death of charter member Helen Galloway Drake in February, 1924. The club responded by writing formal resolutions: "Resolutions on the death of Helen Galloway Drake. We, the members of the Twentieth Century Club, adopt the following resolutions regarding the death of our beloved member, Helen Galloway Drake on February 25, 1924—Resolved: That death has taken from our midst one whose bright and happy presence will be greatly missed—That we deeply mourn the loss of our dear friend, and cherish with loving thoughts the memory of her loyalty, cordiality, and enthusiasm. That all who knew her have sustained a great loss and ours is a particularly keen one because of her long association with us as a charter member of the club. That we extend to her sorrowing family our heartfelt sympathy in their bereavement. That a copy of these resolutions be spread on our minute book and that copies be sent to her family." For many years, formal resolutions were written for passing members. Today, honoring members continues, for the club has an "In Memoriam" page in every yearbook, listing all the members who have passed away since Mrs. Drake.

Later in 1924, members gave programs on the latest Pulitzer Prize winners: Robert Frost's New Hampshire: A Poem With Notes and Grace Notes; Hatcher Hughes' drama Hell-Bent 'Fer Heaven'; and Margaret Wilson's novel The Able McLoughlins. In 1934, they began their own circulating book club. Librarians in the club, Miss Margie Helm and Miss Elizabeth Coombs, graciously drew up a list of recommended books. Each member purchased a book, and the books were passed around. "Those unable to finish their books at the (continued on page 8)"
expansion of two weeks may keep them, but must forfeit numbers of past glory. . . . Mrs. Roy Claypool, wearing a Merry Widow model of black trimmed with willow plumes took the prize.

An invitation to a 1927 Twentieth Century Club program featuring a Chinese love song, dance, and drama.

anniversary. The guest speaker was Jonathan Jeffrey, “always a very special guest,” who spoke of the history of the club and all the records archived in Western Kentucky University’s Special Collections Library.

Conversations with current members reveal a beautiful melding of the present and the past. Peggy Pock, a member since 1967, reports a few changes in the format of club meetings. Now each member’s responsibilities alternate: she serves as a hostess one year and gives a program the following year. Refreshments are now served first, before the meeting. With enthusiasm, Peggy remembers Margie Helm. “Miss Margie! We all loved Miss Margie!” She also fondly recalls Sara Tyler and how everyone relied on her judgment whenever there was any question about the Constitution or By-Laws. Carole Hamed also has a special memory of Margie Helm. One year Ray Buckberry was Carole’s guest speaker, giving a program about Bowling Green historical postcards, with pictures projected on a screen. Margie Helm, by then an aging honorary member, was still able to contribute the exact dates for the scenes in the post cards. Having been a member for thirty-two years, Carole feels a deep bond with her literary club friends and still enjoys the opportunity to meet with such an interesting group of women. One of the newest members is Susan Dobson, whose first timely program on Saudi Arabia was presented from personal experience since she had lived there for eight years. She may be most famous, however, for her unique program on Brenda Lee, including her own rendition of a Brenda Lee song. Susan loves both the camaraderie of friends in the club and the lifelong learning.

Jean Thomson joined the Twentieth Century Club in 1961 and has now “graduated” to being an honorary member. She has a memory brimming with interesting details of the many past members who lived on State Street, including herself and her dear friend, Sara Tyler. She also notes that there have been a large number of mother-daughter-and sometimes granddaughter family connections within the club. If she needed a guest speaker, Jean had to look no further than her own family; her sons, daughters, and husband all gave programs. The Twentieth Century Club (continued on page 10)
Some of the oldest members of the Twentieth Century Club help observe the Club’s 60th anniversary at the home of Jean Thumason in April 1969. From L to R: Mrs. F.K. Greig, Mrs. Roy G. Cooksey, Mrs. Nelle Gooch Travelettad, Mrs. Clinton Rigbey and Miss Elizabeth Coombs.

has been such an important part of her life that, although she now lives in Nashville, Jean came up to Bowling Green to celebrate the club’s 100th anniversary. Jean Harris, this year’s club president and a resident of State Street, has been a member for almost thirty years. In addition to the learning, she has treasured the friendship of the older ladies, who have so much wisdom to share. She echoes the feelings of other members when she says how nice it is to have friends from other generations and how deeply proud she is to be a member of this special group.

The daffodil is a fitting symbol of the Twentieth Century Club. For more than a century, the club flower has appeared on yearbook covers, on the 80th anniversary ice cream cake, and on the centennial napkins. Reflecting on many years of this literary club, members may identify with William Wordsworth’s experience with daffodils. The great British poet was not only delighted to discover a “host of golden daffodils” but later found more joy in simply recalling the scene: “then my heart with pleasure fills, /And dances with the daffodils.” So, too, do members enjoy their current meetings and fellowship, while deriving untold pleasure recalling their special traditions and beloved members of the past, and looking forward to a promising future.

Works Cited

Tylor, Sara. (History). 1983. Twentieth Century Club, MSS 168, Box 7, Folder 2, Special Collections Library. Western Kentucky University.

History for Sale

This attractive notecard of the side yard gate of 610 East Main will be one of the many items available for purchase at the Landmark Christmas Tour of Homes. The Landmark Store will be located in the Sky Ranch Professional Lofts at 314 East Main. Notecards make great stocking stuffers for adults. We will also have our notecards featuring city hall, the L&N train depot, and the Warren County courthouse for sale as well as Christmas cards that showcase Fountain Square Park. In addition to notecards, we’ll have the popular Arcadia series books, our own books, Irene Sumpter’s Bowling Green book, maps, and sundry other items available.

Local architect Creedmore Fleenor designed the house at 610 East Main in the Arts & Crafts style for Carrie Burnam Taylor, a local modiste who made a substantial fortune in that business. When Moro & Blanche Sharpe purchased the house in the early-1930s, they had architect James Maurice Ingram make substantial interior changes as well design this attractive gate for their side yard. Ingram, a native of Paducah and a graduate of Notre Dame, began practicing architecture in Bowling Green in 1929. Favoring the Colonial Revival style, he designed hundreds of residences, schools, and commercial buildings in the city.
Perhaps you could pass this newsletter along to someone you think would be interested in supporting Landmark's efforts in historic preservation advocacy.

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