

the Archives

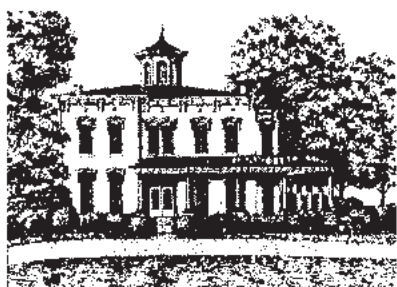


Louisville Historical League INC
founded 1972

Dedicated to promoting the appreciation and preservation of our cultural heritage and historic environment in the Louisville metropolitan area.

Summer 2014

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GERMANS IN LOUISVILLE

BY BOB ULLRICH

Since they first arrived in Louisville nearly two hundred years ago, Germans have shaped the history and influenced the culture of our city in ways unlike any other immigrant group. In the nineteenth century, Germans were involved in politics, business, manufacturing, engineering, and every facet of daily life in Louisville. Although German immigration declined in the twentieth century, almost one in three persons living in Jefferson County today claims German Heritage.

In celebration of the nearly two hundred years of the German history in Louisville, a book entitled "Germans in Louisville" is being planned. When published, it will be the first book about the history of Germans in our city since 1873. The book will be 50,000 words in length and contain about one hundred photos. Each of the twenty-five chapters will be written by a local expert on the chapter subject. The accompanying photo shows nineteen of the authors at a recent book meeting.

"Germans in Louisville" is being co-edited by Bob and Vicky Ullrich under the auspices of the Germanic Heritage Auxiliary of the German-American Club. The book will be published by History Press of Charleston, SC in July 2016. For more information, please contact the Ullrichs at 502-459-6820 or e-mail bobullrich47@gmail.com.



A LOUISVILLE MUSEUM

By GARY FALK

This photo shows the Louisville Historical Museum. It is one of four historic buildings dedicated to the preservation and archiving of Louisville history. The museum, started in 1986, is supported by some 650 dues paying members through a quarterly publication called the Louisville Historian. Museum Coordinator Bridget Bacon with the Department of Library and Museum Services for the city of Louisville tells me that the museum is currently open to the public fifteen hours a week. "What!?" you say. Well, it does exist . . . but in Louisville, COLORADO, population 20,000. Kudos to Louisville, Colorado.



Having a brick and mortar presence for Louisville, Kentucky history has long held a fascination for me. I'm not sure I'll ever live to see it. Sure, we have great museums - the Filson Historical Society (Ohio Valley History), the Portland Museum (Portland neighborhood), and the Carnegie Center for Art and History in New Albany, but *our* Louisville still lacks a museum such as the one shown above.

In Louisville, we are surrounded by communities that have a physical presence to establish their history. The Oldham County History Center (part of the Oldham County Historical Society) maintains the J.C. Barnett Library and Archives located on the block west of the Courthouse Square in LaGrange, Kentucky. It encompasses three buildings.

The Shelby County Historical Society maintains a welcome center at 627 Main Street in Shelbyville (40065) that has exhibits and historical artifacts concerning Shelby County history.

I recently visited the Market House Museum in Paducah, Kentucky. Founded forty-six years ago, this is a museum that could serve as a model for Louisville. Technically named the William Clark Market House Museum (yes - THAT William Clark, the founder of Paducah). Museum director Penny Baucum Fields gave my wife and I the full-blown tour of the four-thousand square foot facility. They have exhibits on two levels, including those dedicated to Paducah natives Alben Barkley, Boots Randolph and others. There are books on all facets of Paducah history.



The Market House Museum in Paducah contains artifacts and historical documents for the city.

It somehow seems incomprehensible that we do not have a viable physical location for Louisville, Kentucky history. We are at a point, unfortunately where many of the archival materials, artifacts and information about our city may be lost to the ages. But, I say . . . "never say never."

THE FOUR LOUISVILLES

By CHARLES W. ARRINGTON

With the Belle of Louisville celebrating its 100th birthday in October, have you ever wondered if there were other steamboats plying the rivers with the name "Louisville?" Actually, there have been. A quick search finds four and perhaps more looking at a time frame of about 200 years.

City of Louisville: This was a side-wheel packet boat with a wood hull and was built by the Howard Shipyard in Jeffersonville in 1894. It measured 301 feet x 42.7 feet x 7 feet. City of Louisville operated between Louisville and Cincinnati and was lost in the ice at Cincinnati during January 1918. This famous steamboat captured newspaper headlines with record runs between Louisville and Cincinnati both upriver and downriver.



Louisville: Louisville was a smaller paddlewheel boat that apparently operated on the Mississippi River. It served between the years 1864 and 1895. Little is known about this boat and it may not have been named for Louisville, Ky.

U.S.S. Louisville: U.S.S. Louisville was a 512 ton Cairo Class ironclad steam powered riverboat that was built in St. Louis and commissioned in January 1862. In early 1862, she served with the U.S. Army's Water Gunboat Flotilla in a successful campaign to secure the upper Mississippi River and its tributaries. In October 1862, U.S.S. Louisville was transferred to the U.S. Navy and participated in the Vicksburg Campaign. She remained active for the remainder of the Civil War on the Western Rivers and was decommissioned in July 1865. She was 175 feet x 51 feet x 6 feet with a stern paddlewheel and had a crew of 251.



C.S.S. Louisville: This steamboat Confederate Army in early 1863. was used as a cargo ship by the forces in Louisiana in July 1863. by the U.S. Navy and converted river gunboat and renamed U.S.S. July 1865 and sold becoming the destroyed by fire in 1869. More Louisville, Ky. during Confederate service, but she was originally built in New Albany, Indiana.



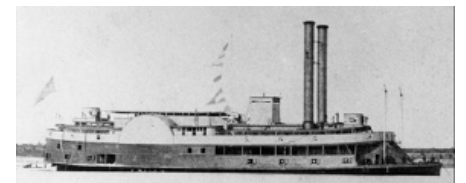
was built in 1861 and captured by the Given the new name "Louisville," she Confederates until captured by Union Following that, she was commissioned into a large, lightly armored "Tinclad" Ouachita. She was decommissioned in merchant steamer Vicksburg until being than likely this boat was not named for

Sources:

- (1) From Paddle Wheels to Propellers, by Charles Preston Fishbaugh, Indiana Historical Society, 1970.
- (2) Cincinnati Public Library website.
- (3) Naval Historical Center website, Washington, DC.

Photos:

- 001 City of Louisville at Madison, Indiana. University of Louisville Digital Collections.
- 002 Louisville at an unknown location or date. Cincinnati Public Library Digital Collection.
- 003 Artist view of ironclad U.S.S. Louisville during the Civil War. Naval Historical Center website.
- 004 Artist view of Confederate steamboat C.S.S. Louisville. Author's collection.
- 005 (alternate photo to 004) U.S.S. Ouachita, formerly C.S.S. Louisville. Naval Historical Center Website.



PLATO TERRACE, LOUISVILLE KENTUCKY

By JUDITH C. OWENS-LALUDE

I was born and grew up in Louisville, Kentucky. I moved away to continue my education; got married; and started a family. I never thought much about Samuel M. Plato, whose name was on the street sign in front of my childhood home or his contribution to the Louisville Community. After submitting recipes and pictures for the publication of *Recipes & Recollections* from the houses Samuel M. Plato built. by Leborah Goodwin and Jannene Winstead, I wanted to know more about the person who built my childhood home and who changed my street sign from Ford Place to Plato Terrace?



Janice L. & Judith C. Owens with pet Mickey

Just before my mother died, she gave me a small cedar chest. I recently rummaged through it. A fold up deed in the chest confirmed that my house was purchased July 30, 1951, and recorded in Deed Book 2778, page 495, in the Office of the Clerk of the County Court of Jefferson County, Kentucky. It also disclosed Plat and Subdivision Book 9, page 50, Lot 67, was where my house was constructed on Ford Place – part of the Westover Park, section 2.

The familiar Ford Place marker that always let me know that I was at home was replaced with a Plato Terrace sign. Then, I didn't know why the change was made.

Today, I have an answer. All 36 families living on Ford Place signed a petition for renaming Ford Place. An Ordinance, number 182, series 1960, requested that Ford Place, between Virginia Avenue and Sunset Avenue of Louisville, Kentucky, be changed to Plato Terrace. Mr. E. E. Rice, Post Official signed the petition on September 9, 1960 and wrote an accompanying letter to Mayor Bruce Hoblitzell of Louisville stating that, "He (Samuel M. Plato) made a mark here in Louisville as the first contractor to work with the FHA building individual homes in the Westover Park Subdivision for Negroes . . ." On September 29, 1960 the ordinance was ordained by the Board of Aldermen of the city of Louisville and approved by Mayor Hoblitzell.

The name change expressed adulation for Samuel M. Plato (1882-1957) who was born in Waugh, Alabama. He was the son of former slaves James and Katie Hendrick Plato. There in, Waugh, at a young age, Plato took his father's \$500.00 horse wagon apart and used the wood to build a dog house for his dog which never slept in it. At seventeen, he secured a contract from Mr. Green, a white man in Waugh, to build his country store. In 1898, Plato came to Louisville, Kentucky to matriculate at the original Simmons College of Kentucky to study Law and Education. At the urging of the local representatives from the International Correspondence School of Scranton, Pennsylvania, Plato enrolled and studied Architecture during his summer break that year. According to President Dr. Rev. Kevin Cosby, of the resurgent Simmons College of Kentucky, "Plato graduated, with the class of 1902, from Simmons College of Kentucky as the first African-American Architect in the U.S. A."

After graduation, Plato moved to Marion, Indiana, where he lived for nineteen years until 1921 when he returned to Louisville. He became the first African-American to be awarded a contract to build U. S. Post Offices and built 39 of them including the one on Broadway at Seventh Street in Louisville. He was one of a few African-Americans to receive contracts to build federal government defense housing projects during World War II.

His first wife Nattie M. Lusby Plato died and was buried in Greenwood Cemetery, Louisville, KY [University of Kentucky Database]. He re-married to Elnora Davis Lucas, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. George Davis of Alexandria, Indiana. Elnora was a successful dressmaker who assumed administrative duties; became Plato's business manager; and traveled with him as a steadfast companion. She used her money to keep Plato's business going and avoided it from foreclosing.

Mr. Plato is special to me because he not only did he build my home and local post office, he also built, my church (St. Augustine), school (Virginia Avenue Elementary School), and many of my city's landmark buildings.

Special thanks to Kentucky State Representative Darryl Owens (D); Cynthia Johnson, Historic Preservation Specialist, Metro Louisville; David Morgan, Louisville Metro Archives; and The Filson Historical Society, Louisville.

THE LITTLE LOOMHOUSE CELEBRATES 75 YEARS IN THE LOUISVILLE COMMUNITY

BY STEFANIE BUZAN

The Little Loomhouse is devoted to the legacy of hand weaver Lou Tate Bousman, known professionally as Lou Tate. Located on a wooded hillside, the three, late 1800s, board and batten cabins, Esta, Wisteria and Tophouse, are connected by a walking path. They are designated Louisville Landmarks and are on the National Register of Historic Places.

In 1937, Lou Tate's mother purchased these three summer cottages to expand Tate's weaving business and house her personal archive of coverlets and drafts (coverlet patterns). Tate's interest began with the acquisition of five generations of drafts, the collection of weaver Nan Owen. Over time she expanded her collection of historic drafts and coverlets, became a Master Weaver, and trained and inspired other weavers. While she lived in Esta, she used Wisteria for storage and exhibition, and Tophouse as a studio. Over her lifetime, she rekindled interest in the folk tradition of hand weaving nationally, and in collaboration with Dr. Mather, created the Lou Tate Table Loom (known as the Little Loom). This loom has been in continuous use since the 1930's, and created cottage industries for rural students. She was commissioned by President Hoover to preserve the folk art of hand weaving during the Craftsman Movement and also worked with Eleanor Roosevelt as well as local and state dignitaries to expand weaving traditions. During her lifetime she inspired a generation of textile artists and created weaving techniques that are now part of the vernacular of today's weavers.

The Lou Tate Foundation, Inc. was created in 1980 after Tate died, by weavers who had spent time at the Little Loomhouse. This year the Little Loomhouse is celebrating its 75 year anniversary. The museum is open Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday and each third Saturday of the month, and by appointment. The current fifteen member volunteer working board oversees the active education programs, renovation of the cabins, organization and care of the collection. The 50,000 objects in the collection are referred to as the archive, which includes Tate archival materials, coverlet drafts, coverlets, furnishings and structures, and historic material related to the Kenwood Hill Neighborhood.



THE BREAKFAST WAS LOST— THE U.S. MILITARY RAILROAD IN FIRST STREET

BY ROBERT DAWSON

One hundred and fifty years ago, First Street in Louisville reverberated to the shriek of Locomotive whistles, the rattle of freight cars, and the yelling and sometimes cursing of train drivers and crews. For a period of little over a year in 1864-1865, this short railroad spur was a key component in General Sherman's plan to advance on Atlanta and drive a wedge through heart of the south.

Since the beginning of the Civil War in 1861, the Louisville & Nashville Railroad had been a vital supply line for the Union Armies in the Western Theatre. Men and material from the north and east arrived in Louisville by steamboat and by rail to Jeffersonville, Indiana. Freight on railcars at Jeffersonville had to be unloaded, hauled to the river, and then carried on ferries to Louisville. Once in Louisville, everything had to be loaded on wagons and taken to the Louisville & Nashville Railroad at 10th and Broadway.

As General Grant and his staff developed their plans to move south out of Nashville, the volume of supplies and ammunition required would require a substantial increase in railroad capability. Another problem, identified by James Guthrie, President of the L & N, was the shortage of railroad cars and locomotives to deliver what was needed.

So, in 1863 a plan was set in motion to bring supplies, cars, and locomotives from the Northern and Eastern states and deliver them into the South. The first order of business was to change the track gauge (the distance between the rails) of the railroad connecting Louisville with Lexington to match the L & N Track Gauge. The Louisville & Frankfort Railroad had originally been built to a gauge of 4ft. 8 ½ in.; most of the railroads north of the Ohio River were also built to this gauge. The Louisville & Nashville had been built to a gauge of 5 ft., the same as the connecting railroads south of Louisville. The gauge change was completed in October of 1863.

One day it was reported to the mayor that workmen were tearing up the pavement in First Street. Hurrying to the site he asked the foreman upon whose authority was he doing this. The man replied "By authority, sir, of Maj. General William Tecumseh Sherman". Thus began the construction of a track with passing sidings from the wharf at the foot of First Street to a connection with the L & N where CSX Railroad crosses Oak Street today. At the same time, the Frankfort railroad track was extended one block west from Brook to First to connect with the new line. The Frankfort and Louisville came down Jefferson Street from Baxter Avenue, with its depot at Brook Street. Several years later, after the Jefferson Street track was relocated to River Road, the depot grounds became the site of the old Haymarket.

It was agreed between Sherman and Guthrie that the resources of the L & N were being overly taxed, so the track was built and operated by the U. S. Military Railroad. Three engines were purchased from the L & N and put into operation.



Operations were simple. When northern cars arrived at the Jeffersonville Yard (Court Ave. and Wall Street today) they were taken to the river front on a temporary track in Wall Street. There they were winched down the bank onto barges that had been fitted with rails. The barges were towed by steamboats to the foot of First Street, unloaded, and assembled into short trains to be delivered to the L & N. The tracks in First Street had extra rails making them dual-gauged, so that cars from the north as well as those from Lexington could be accommodated. The little locomotives had to pull the cars up a steep grade from Water Street to Main Street. Another grade was encountered between Jefferson and Chestnut Street. This last was attacked by picking up speed at Jefferson. At Caldwell Street the tracks turned in a southwesterly direction to join with the L & N. There was a siding on this stretch so that trains could meet and pass by each other. Once on the L & N, the cars would be moved north to Kentucky Street where they were lifted by steam powered hoists so the trucks with northern gauge wheels could be exchanged for trucks and wheels of the "Southern" gauge. Locomotives were brought disassembled to the L & N Locomotive shop at 10th and Kentucky, reassembled, and sent on their way south.

In an article published in the Courier Journal in 1884, a witness to the road, known only as "Venerable Citizen" was asked if there any accidents on the line. "Yes accidents were quite frequent. I remember that one morning a locomotive ran off the track at Broadway, and ran into a kitchen just as the cook was taking up the breakfast. She got out of the way, but the breakfast was lost in the wreck."

Paying tribute to the L & N and its connections south in his memoirs, General Sherman wrote, "That single stem of railroad supplied an army of 100,000 men and 32,000 horses for the period of 196 days between May 1 and November 19, 1864." In another comment Sherman noted, "I was amused to see way down south in Georgia, cars marked for the Baltimore & Ohio, Pittsburg and Fort Wayne, Delaware & Lackawanna, and indeed with the name of almost every railroad north of the Ohio River. " These cars were delivered to him via the little railroad on First Street.



Traffic on the line began to diminish in the Spring of 1865, and finally stopped that summer. The locomotives were taken south, and soon the track was removed. The Annual Report of the City of Louisville for 1867 reported that the U.S. Government paid for the rebuilding of First Street from Fulton to Kentucky Street. The cost, \$12,500.

As First Street returned to normal, and residential areas extended south, the little railroad that accomplished so much was soon forgotten.

MERCY CLOCK

By GARY FALK

The impressive new clock that has been installed adjacent to the athletic fields behind Mercy Academy on Fegenbush Lane has quite a history behind it.

The clock was built by the Verdin Company in Cincinnati for the Cathedral of the Assumption in downtown Louisville in 1931. It remained in operation there until the church was renovated in 1999.

The clock was given to Ken and Tillie Machtolff, both League members, for giving a donation to the church. Restoring the clock became a real team effort. Ken, Steve Merker, Mike Jones (electrician) and Larry Young (machinist) rebuilt the mechanism. Once restored, it was incorporated into the new tower at Mercy. The 8 foot face and hands that are on the front and back of the tower were crafted with the help of the art department at the school.



THE POINT AND BEYOND

BY CHARLES W. ARRINGTON

Floods have long had a dominating place in Louisville's history highlighted by the massive one in 1937. But there were other Ohio River floods before and after 1937 with the 1945 flood ranking near the top. The recent discovery of a post-1945 flood publication directed to residents of the Point is worth taking a look at. This souvenir booklet with photos of the Point during the 1945 flood was distributed by Meyer's Pharmacy, 1335 Story Avenue, and ends by trying to be optimistic that the area will bounce back and life return to normal.

"Old Man River" (text portion of publication)

YES SIR, Old Man River is no respecter of persons or places! When winter snows melt and spring rains start coming down too hard and fast, that Ol' River starts rampagin' and it just seems like the Point is his favorite haunt when in this mean mood!

On Sunday, March 4, 1945, with the river just about hitting 38 feet on the upper gauge – it began to look like moving day for the rest of those brave persons who hadn't moved when the gauge registered 35 and 36 feet, which is the height when first alarm is felt. The government had four hundred German Prisoners of War fill and lay sand bags along the River Road, Fulton Street, and the Cut-Off to hold back the water and protect the Point. A crest of 40 feet was predicted for March 5th and the engineers thought the sand bags would hold back that much water. They were right. The sand bags did hold with the river standing almost stationary at 40 feet. The Pointers were elated over reports that the danger was about over. Then it happened – about 1:00 A.M. with the river at 40.2 feet March 6th, the rains came and what a deluge! It came down in torrents and by 3:30 A.M. the first break through occurred by the Big Four Bridge on the River Road. A half hour later, a break through occurred at Wayne and River Road and the Cut-Off. A number of Pointers were still in their homes when the river started coming over. Police cars with screaming sirens cruised about the Point arousing them and telling them to get out. Some few did not heed this warning and had to be rescued in boats hours later.

The heavy rains were not only local but throughout the upper Ohio River valley, and by 11:00 A.M. a prediction was made that we could expect 44 to 45 feet of water in the next twenty-four hours. We got it. The next day Wednesday, March 7th, the prediction was revised upward to 47 to 47.5 feet. Late Thursday night the river reached its crest – 47.1 feet, just ten feet below the 1937 Flood which registered 57.1 feet.

Well, spring cleaning is being done a little earlier this year. With mud four inches deep, the style of the day is a hose – scrub-brush and bucket, and plenty of strong arm motion. Just as soon as the water began to recede, leaving irreparable destruction sometimes, these hardy, unconquerable and undaunted Pointers marched back with hip-boots and sleeves rolled up to once again repair the damage Old Man River had dealt them. (end of text)

The Point dates back to when it was a peninsula like point of land between the Ohio River and the original course of Beargrass Creek which at that time emptied into the river between Third and Fourth Streets. In 1854, after Beargrass Creek was diverted upstream to its present location, the area kept the name "Point." Despite the optimism of the publication, after the 1945 flood the area was declared unsafe by the city and the community went into decline. Today the area is in a renaissance with Waterfront Park, the opening of the Big Four Bridge, and the new River Place condo and boat complex and maybe once again the "Point" name will become familiar in Louisville. One footnote: German Prisoners of War from World War II were known to be housed at the Army Ammunition Plant in Charlestown, Indiana and Fort Knox.

Sources:

- (1) Encyclopedia of Louisville, John Kleber, editor, 2001.
- (2) "Old Man River," Meyer's Pharmacy, 1945.



1855 Map of Louisville, J.H. Colton and Company. University of Louisville Digital Collection



The Point during the 1913 flood. Author's Collection

River Place Condo and Boat Complex, Frankfort Avenue and River Road 2014. Author's photo.



JOSIAH BAKER GATHRIGHT

By GARY FALK

Josiah Baker Gathright was born 1838. He became a soldier, merchant. In 1862 he graduated from University. He enlisted in the first lieutenant, 8th Kentucky command.

Gathright began in the leather following the war, in 1865 he es- for the manufacture of the cel- following year (1866) he formed a J. Harbison, a Civil War veteran gaged in manufacturing a general including horse collars, locating tel on Main Street. The company, sisted in Louisville to this day. At automotive parts distributor. The locations, mainly in the area of Seventh Street, between Main and Market and the north side of Main Street between Seventh and Eighth (1877). By 1935 they had become the largest manufacturer of saddles and harnesses in the south.

But Harbison and Gathright did so much more.

In 1896 they began manufacturing bicycle components. Gathright was an inventor of many products that were diverse in nature. He probably became best known for his invention of the typewriter tabulator in 1890 which allowed the carriage to move to set points to establish columns. This improvement was incorporated into Underwood and Remington typewriters.

Some of his other inventions included the following:

- 1873 - improvement in machine for making bridles
- 1874 - improvement in fire escapes
- 1879 - improvement in saddle trees
- 1879 - improvement in faucet design
- 1880 - mail bag improvement
- 1885 - automatic car brake
- 1908 - container for perforated music rolls
- 1910 - improvement in girthing means for riding saddles
- 1913 - design for a wrench
- 1914 - locks for straps for mail bags
- 1918 - boys runabout

Josiah Baker Gathright died in 1919 in Louisville and is buried in Cave Hill Cemetery.

Sources: Louisville Fifty Years Ago (Louisville Board of Trade 1923) p. 52-53, Made In Louisville, Gary Falk (Publishers Printing 2013) website: findagrave.com , website: google.com on patent issuance, website: patentfish.com, website: cavehillcemetery.com



in Oldham County, Kentucky in chant, manufacturer and inven- Indiana Asbury (now DePauw) Confederate army, becoming a Cavalry under John H. Morgan's

and saddle business in 1863. Fol- tablished a business in Louisville ebrated Morgan Saddle-Tree. The partnership with his cousin, John of the Federal Army. They en- line of saddlery and leather goods, next to the famous Louisville Ho- Harbison and Gathright has per- the present time (2014), they are an company had many downtown

locations, mainly in the area of Seventh Street, between Main and Market and the north side of Main Street between Seventh and Eighth (1877). By 1935 they had become the largest manufacturer of saddles and harnesses in the south.

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INCORPORATED.

ELLEN CHURCHILL SEMPLE

BY CYNTHIA COOKE

*Man has been
so noisy about
the way he
has conquered
Nature and
Nature has
been so silent
in her persis-
tent influence
over man that
the geographic
factor of the
equation of
human develop-
ment has been
overlooked.*



This was Ellen Semple's point of view molded for the world to see during her thirty years of teaching, lecturing, traveling, writing and researching. She based the interpretation of economic conditions upon an understanding of the natural factors of the environment. Semple went a step further than her predecessors in defining the influence of geographic conditions upon the development of society, illustrating her findings through colorful and articulate literature and lectures.

How did this environmental determinist begin her career of continuous effort? Born in January, 1863, just months before Morgan's Raid on Louisville, to an old and socially prominent Bluegrass family, Semple grew up and was educated in Louisville. The family lived on Fourth Street on the present site of present-day Spalding University. Public and private tutors prepared her for Vassar College, which she entered at age fifteen. She graduated in 1882, still the youngest in her class.

Ellen Semple came back to Louisville and taught at her sister's Semple Collegiate School. Then she returned to Vassar to work toward a Master's Degree in History, and it was during this time that she questioned how much geographic environment influenced human development. Not much worthy literature existed on the subject to quench her curiosity, but the name Fritz Ratzel of Germany was tied to what notable thoughts prevailed.

In the fall of 1891, she attended Ratzel's class, or rather a closet, for women were not allowed to matriculate at Leipzig University in Germany. She sat with the door ajar in a small room next to the lecture hall filled with five hundred men, Professor Ratzel and the information she came to hear.

Seminar classes were quite a different set of logistics. She actively participated, with the professor giving her "exceptional help and encouragement" in her pursuit of the most exhaustive study of its kind ever made.¹ With the knowledge she gained during the years in Leipzig, she began to travel and write, returning to Ratzel with the finished work in 1895.

¹ After she came back to teach in various American universities and colleges, she was elected president of the Association of American Geographers. Later she wrote her last book, *Geography of the Mediterranean Region*.

Her first published material appeared in the *Journal of School Geography* in 1897 entitled “The Influence of the Appalachian Barrier on Colonial History” Her first book, *American History and Its Geographic Conditions* (1903) was used as a geography text in several universities. But it was “The Anglo-Saxons of the Kentucky Mountains,” published by the American Geographical Society in 1910 which began the many debates and disagreements over cultural determinism. Many did not agree that the environment exhibited as much control over the people in Eastern Kentucky as her study found. But the work was in much demand as she presented facts agreeably, lending much color to the subject.

Her writing style was creative, almost entertaining, with a literary flavor lacking in most scientific literature. She had been developing it for fifteen years as she wrote this to her sister in 1911:

When I begin a book, I eliminate everything else - every activity. For example, I have already ordered my clothes for the two coming years and will only replace such things as can be obtained by telephone . . . I never read a newspaper in the morning having found it fatal to get interested in any line of thought opposed to the thought I am working with . . . I allow nothing to interrupt me . . . I have two hours of exercise every afternoon . . . follow it six days a week . . .²

Ratzel died in 1904, leaving Ellen Semple an unfinished manuscript on anthropogeography. This prompted her to begin the infamous “Influences of Geographical Environment,” an interpretation of his philosophy. She went to the Catskills in New York during the summer of 1911 and worked in an isolated tent “with only the denizens of the forest as company”³ The work is a monument to environmental determinist thought and it is a good rendition of Ratzel’s thoughts, but her own interjections may be confused with the ideals and principles of Ratzel and vice-versa.

She traveled 46,000 miles through Europe, Africa, and Asia, writing and photographing as she went. Her reputation for scholarship made her well received every place she went.

² Semple developed a serious heart ailment and thus, we see the end arriving for a dedicated geographer, devoted to the purpose of making clear to others a new geography concerned with the living organisms as affected by their environment.

³ Today, her philosophy is still pertinent, still applicable. She is buried in Cave Hill Cemetery in Louisville. Though perhaps she lies forgotten, she remains a dean of American geographers, author and educator with a style all her own.

Sources:

- (1) Bertha Trunnell: *Study of the Life of Ellen C. Semple*, 1942
- (2) Ellen Churchill Semple Papers, University of Kentucky Libraries, Special Collections
- (3) Trunnell, above
- (4) Millicent Todd Bingham: *Ellen Churchill Semple*, Vassar Quarterly, July, 1932

Ellen Churchill Semple lived 1863-1932. Semple Elementary School in Louisville is named for her. This article was first printed in *Kentucky Women*. Cynthia Cooke is a board member of the Louisville Historical League and the owner of Bashford Manor Bed and Breakfast in Louisville. Photo: University of Kentucky Library.

Submitted by Gary Falk



1852 CHRONOLOGY OF PORTLAND

LOUISVILLE DAILY COURIER

SUBMITTED BY RICK BELL

1 January 1852

BOSTONA FOR NEW ORLEANS – The magnificent and unrivalled passenger packet *Bostona*, starts to New Orleans this evening at 4 o'clock, from Portland. For fare and accommodations, as well as speed and safety, she is unsurpassed by any boat afloat. Passengers going South will find it a real pleasure to travel on the swift and beautiful *Bostona*. Her commander, Capt. Bentley, is one of the most careful and experienced boatmen on the river.

2 Jan. 1852 – LDC

LAUNCH OF THE ECLIPSE – Early yesterday morning, the *Eclipse*, the greatest steamer ever built west of the Alleghenies, floated off the stocks at her dock below New Albany, and was free and afloat on the broad bosom of the Ohio without any damage or accident whatever. This boat is certainly the greatest achievement of the age, and will create a new era in steamboat navigation. Her main cabin forms an unbroken line three hundred feet in extent, and it will be the most beautiful and gorgeous ever dreamed of. – As she lay on the water yesterday, with her boilers and the greatest portion of her machinery on board, her draught of water was 4 feet 9 inches at stern, and 3 feet at the bow; as it is expected she will draw but 4 ½ feet water in running trim.

17 January 1852

LOUISVILLE AND PORTLAND CANAL – We find in one of the city papers yesterday the following bill for the purchase by the Government, of the stock in the Louisville and Portland Canal, as introduced into Congress by the representative from this district:

Mr. Marshall: of Kentucky, introduced the following bill – To authorize the immediate purchase of the outstanding stock in the Louisville and Portland Canal Company, and to provide for the enlargement of said Canal.

6 February 1852

During the past week an immense amount of produce, groceries, and provisions have been transported over the Portland Avenue, and along Main street. The line of drays was so thick as to continually jostle each other, and very frequently completely obstruct the road, rendering a passage almost impossible. Main street is much the worse for wear, and another week of heavy travel over it will nearly wear it out. The Portland end of the turnpike road is in an awful condition, and the draymen are compelled to "double team" to pull an ordinary load through it. The necessity of a plank road never was more severely felt.

7 February 1852

CEDAR GROVE ACADEMY, PORTLAND, Ky. – A session in this truly excellent school for young ladies, commenced Monday last, under very cheering prospects. Hitherto the institution has labored under very great disadvantages, from the want of suitable buildings, but in the course of the past year, a spacious and elegant school edifice has been erected, which will afford ample accommodations for a large number of pupils; and from the many advantages which this school now possesses, there can be no doubt that it will rapidly increase in numbers. In Cedar Grove Academy a young lady can receive a finished education, in the most extended signification of the term – the ornamental, as well as the useful, being embraced in it – and the pupils are under the constant supervision of the teachers. The grounds pertaining to the Academy are admirably adapted for the healthy exercise and recreation of the pupils. The teachers cannot be excelled in their several departments. A more delightful situation could not well be imagined, nor one wherein the pupil may hope to gather so many intellectual roses, and feel so few of the thorns.

1 March 1852

The *Telegraph No. 2* made the run from Tarascon's Mill, at the foot of the Falls, up to Fourth street, yesterday in eleven and a half minutes. This is ascending the Falls in a hurry and at the present stage of water, is quite a feat. It is the best time ever made.

LDC – 2 March 1852

THE ECLIPSE – The rush of visitors to this splendid steamer is so great, that Capt. Sturgeon is compelled to ask his friends to delay their visits until the painting and decoration of the cabin is completed, when he will gladly receive one and all his friends who desire to inspect his boat. It is hoped the public will appreciate the necessity which imposes this course on Capt. Sturgeon. As soon as the cabin work is finished, he hopes to be honored by numerous visits from the ladies of the city, who take a lively interest in the *Eclipse*, as in everything else in good taste, beautiful and complete.

13 March 1852

Iron Beds – We noticed a considerable shipment of iron bedsteads on the *Cornelia* yesterday, for the Hospital in Paducah. They were manufactured by *Snead & Co.*, of this city, who are filling orders from all sections of the West.

23 March 1852

Portland Avenue yesterday reminded us of Broadway, N. York, with its interminable line of omnibuses. All day long the road was crowded with carriages, omnibuses, drays and wagons, going and coming, as we had never seen before.

23 March 1852

The steamer Eclipse, laying at the Portland wharf, three miles below the city, was visited yesterday by thousands of ladies and gentlemen. Indeed, it seemed as if the whole town had turned out, for from early in the morning until night the road was crowded with carriages, buggies and hacks, conveying their roads to and from the vessel-palace. Of course everybody was delighted with the visit, and all expressed their wonder at the gorgeous elegance and richness of everything that surrounded them on this monster steamer.

LDC – 24 March 1852

The Portland Avenue is now in better order than we have ever known it to be for some time, notwithstanding the immense travel that daily takes place on the road. If the plank road was completed, it would double the facilities of our intercourse with Portland, and be of great benefit to our citizens generally.

30 March 1852

The new Marine Hospital, on the Plank road between the city and Portland, will be opened on the 1st of April.

Daily Democrat

Desperate Affair at Portland

A fight took place at Portland, on Friday night, between the crew of the steamer Southern Belle, on the one side, and the crew of the Georgetown and several citizens of Portland, on the other. At the first onset, the crew of the Southern Belle, were repulsed. They then went to the boat and armed themselves with knives, and whatever they could get hold of and returned and renewed the attack. After a fight of about five minutes they put their opponents to flight. In the affray the following persons were dangerously wounded: - Lesley Bigg, Preston Whittaker, Aaron Atkinson, Andy Wright and Edward Hubbard. The latter belonged to the Georgetown. Several others on both sides were severely injured. We learned last night that one of the Portlanders had died of his wounds. The cause of the difficulty we were unable to learn although we made diligent enquiry. The Southern Belle left for New Orleans soon after the fight. A large force of the Louisville police went down to Portland, but arrived too late to make any arrests.

12 June 1852

Daily Courier

The Portland Plank Road is progressing slowly at the Louisville end of the line. Mr. Graham, the contractor, is daily receiving supplies of lumber, by the railroad. The citizens of Portland are at work on their end of the road, which will soon be completed.

15 July 1852

Portland Plank Road

This structure is at last completed. It is 29 feet in width and is one of the strongest roads ever constructed.

19 July 1852 – Louisville Daily Journal

The Portland Plank Road – We hear serious complaints in reference to the Louisville portion of the Louisville and Portland plank road. The road has been put in use without throwing sand over it, and the planks being thus exposed to the weather, have become displaced. The road is now in a condition almost impassable to vehicles. The Portland portion is in fine order.

20 July 1852

Portland Plank Road

A considerable portion of the Louisville division of the Plank Road is already out of repair, or else it had never been properly constructed. In places the planks are loose, and in other places are off, and the travel on the road dangerous to horses.

4 September 1852

Both boards reported in favor of the annexation of Portland, and it will be a part of the 8th Ward of Louisville from Monday night. The council to appoint agents to collect wharfage and taxes; and the city to assume the debts of Portland, amounting to some \$30,000, which are to be paid time to time from the Sinking Fund. The city by this act receives real estate to the value of about \$40,500.

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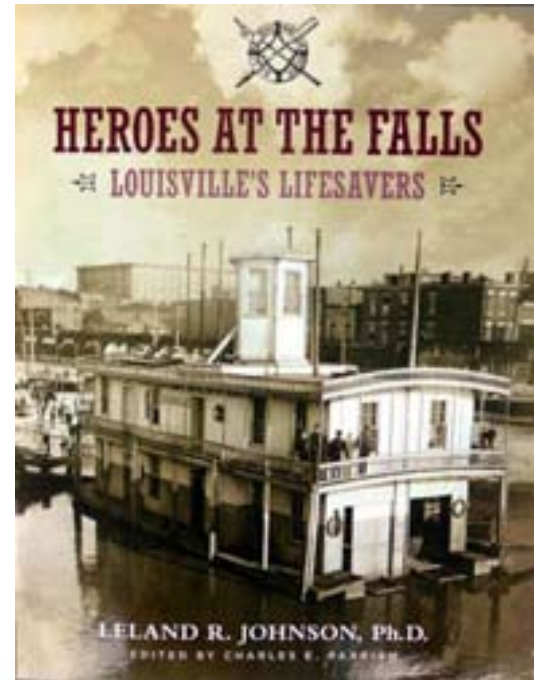
Heroes at the Falls: Louisville's Lifesavers

By Dr. Leland Johnson and Charles Parrish

Released in May with a program onboard the Belle of Louisville, this is the story of the daring exploits of men who rescued boats, passengers, and cargo which were challenged by the treacherous Falls of the Ohio at Louisville. Originally manned by three volunteer "river rats," following years of politicking, the US Congress authorized the establishment of a permanent station here in 1881, under management of the US Lifesaving Service. This became the only such Station on the inland waters of the United States, and served its purpose until 1915, when the Service was absorbed into the US Coast Guard, and which maintained it until 1972. This book, for the first time, documents the compelling story of the USLSS and its brave and selfless crews who served humanitarian missions at this dangerous location on the Ohio.

The Rivers Institute at Hanover College in Indiana sponsored this publication.

The book is available from Butler Books at P.O. Box 3711, Louisville, KY 40257, or at www.butlerbooks.com <<http://www.butlerbooks.com>> , price is \$20.



All Aboard! The Belle of Louisville

By Marie Bradby

Illustrated by Annette Cable

11.5 X 8 – horizontal format
32 full-color pages
Full-color softcover

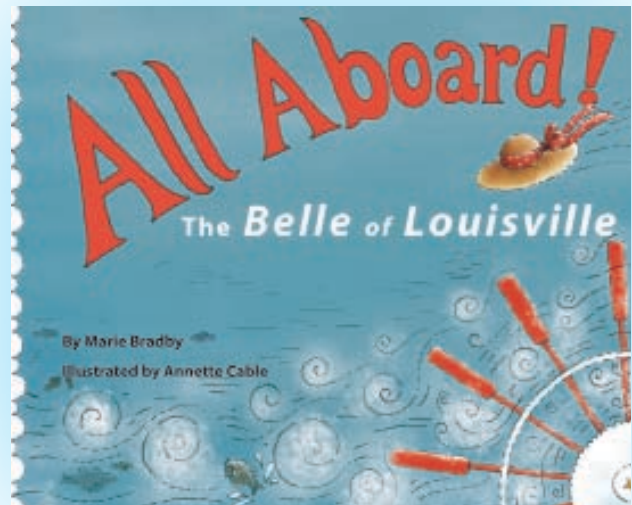
ISBN 978-1-935497-79-0
Retail price: \$14.95

In this book, passengers drop what they are doing and rush to board one of the oldest operating steamboats in the world.

Hurry! The captain and crew are busy getting the Belle's old engines going.

Steam PUFFS. Machines WHIRR. Gears CLICK. Here we go!

Come along for a lively ride on this boat that dates back to the industrial age—a time when steamboats were the rulers of transportation and the fastest roads were rivers.



BUTLER BOOK RELEASES

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Nosey's Wild Ride on the Belle of Louisville

By Martha Driscoll

Illustrations by Susan Andra Lion

11 X 8.5

32 pages

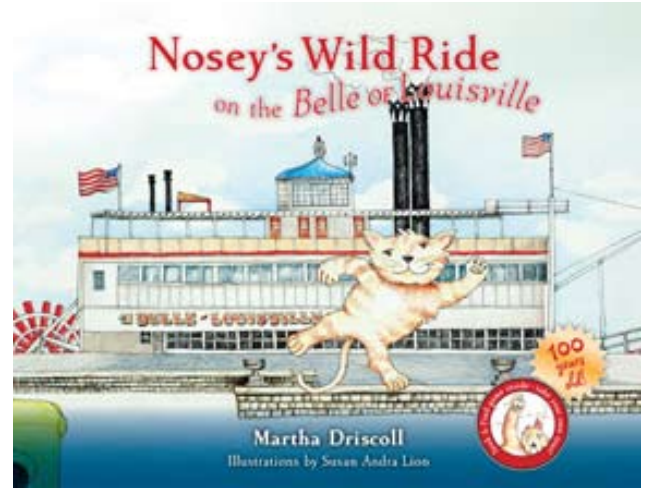
Full-color throughout

ISBN 978-1-935497-87-5

\$16.95

This is a story about a steamboat on the Ohio River, the Belle of Louisville. She is the only steamboat in the country built during the Great Steamboat Era (1820s to the 1920s) that is still cruising! A mischievous cat wanders on board the Belle and leads four children on a wild chase all over the boat. This rascal of a cat causes pandemonium wherever he goes. In turn, the children learn what makes a steamboat unique.

This book includes the whimsical ink and colored pencil drawings of award-winning artist, Sue Lion, and a Seek-&-Find activity for young readers. Both children and adults will enjoy this historically accurate and highly informative book about one very special steamboat – the Belle of Louisville.



POSTCARDS FROM DANIEL: 1755 – 1784

Daniel Boone Writes from the Kentucky Wilderness

By Betty Southard Stokes

Illustrations by Emry Quinn

9 X 6

80 pages

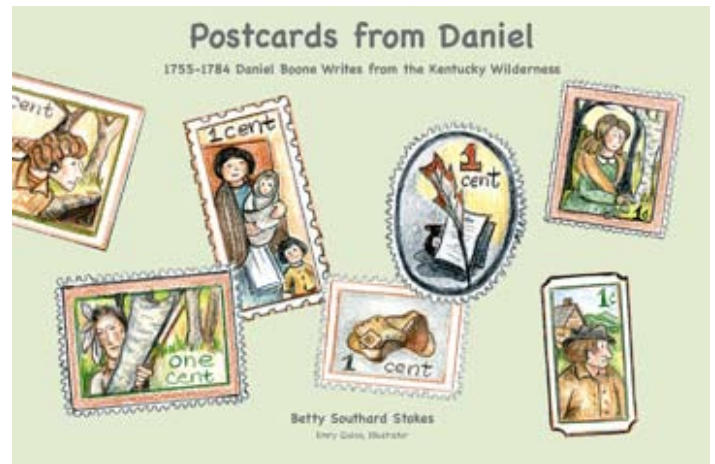
Wire-O binding

Full-color throughout

ISBN: 978-1-935497-89-9

\$19.95

These postcards from Daniel Boone, written from the Kentucky Wilderness, are just pretend. Postcards were not on the market during Daniel Boone's lifetime. They did not appear until 1851, after Daniel Boone had passed away. But despite the fact that this fun and educational book may not contain true artifacts, *POSTCARDS FROM DANIEL* provides an honest recollection of Boone's thoughts and discoveries as he explored the Kentucky wilderness from 1755–1784. This collection, which is the third in a series of historical postcard books created by award-winning Kentucky educator Betty Southard Stokes, is a perfect way to teach history to children in a fun, imaginative way.



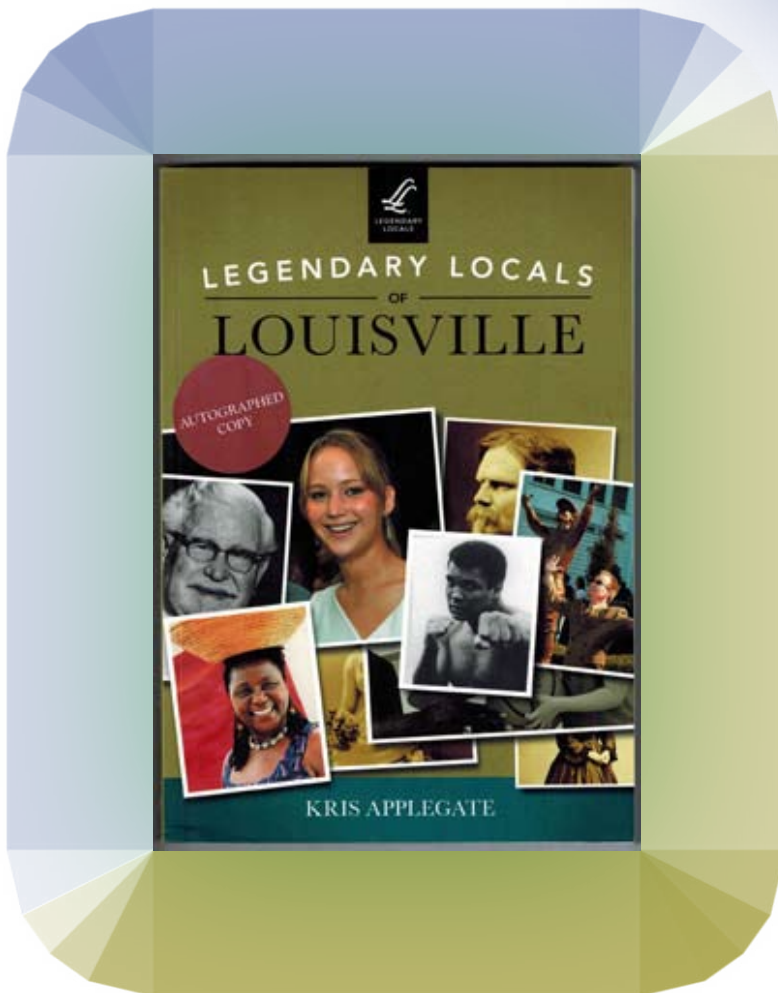
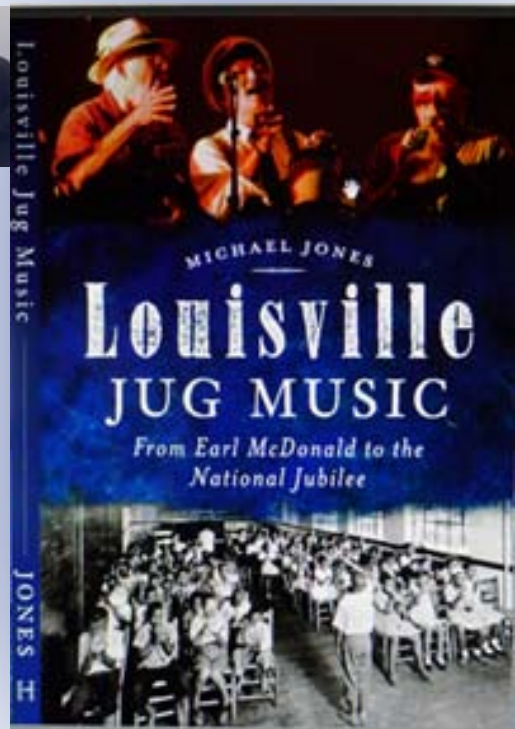
ADDITIONAL BOOK RELEASES

Louisville Jug Music

From Earl McDonald to the National Jubilee

By Michael L. Jones

Not since the book *The Jug Bands of Louisville* (Laurie Wright, Fred Cox, John Randolph, and John Harris) was issued in 1993 has there been an exhaustive study of Louisville Jug Band music. Slated for a September release by History Press (Charleston, SC), Louisville author Michael L. Jones has brought this subject to life with words and images. He reaches back to a unique time in American cities—especially *this* American city to explore this most important topic.



Author Kris Applegate recently held a book signing at Carmichael's Bookstore at 2720 Frankfort Avenue. Her new book *Legendary Locals of Louisville* is part of the *Legendary Locals* series from Arcadia Publishing. She has incorporated many photographs and descriptions of legendary figures from Louisville's beginning to today. A fascinating read.

Did you know?

- 1905 - the first public library in the nation for black citizens was established in Louisville.
- 1909 - Louisville was the site of the National Negro Business League (NNBL) convention. Booker T. Washington founded NNBL in 1903.
- 1914 - Louisville's black leaders organized a branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP).
- 1918 - NAACP effectively protests showing of *The Birth of a Nation*, which closed after two days. Producer and director of the controversial film was D. W. Griffith, a native of Oldham County.

Source: *Life Behind a Veil, Blacks in Louisville, Kentucky, 1865-1930*. George C. Wright. Louisiana State University Press. 1985.

George C. Wright, Ph.D., is a Lexington native and a graduate of the University of Kentucky, where he later taught. He is current president of Prairie View A&M University, a 130-year old HBCU in Texas.

The author reviews and documents the "polite racism" in Louisville between the Civil War and the Great Depression. Paternalism and strict segregation was enforced. Blacks established their own schools, banks, hospitals, churches and other institutions. Political and social efforts are also disclosed.

Review by Walter W. Hutchins

Did you know?

- The War on Drugs began at a time when illegal drug use was on the decline. A drug crisis suddenly appeared in the black community.
- One in three young African American men is under the control of the criminal justice system - in prison, in jail, on probation, or on parole.
- Today it is perfectly legal to discriminate against criminals in nearly all the ways it was once legal to discriminate against African Americans.
- In the 1950s, a massive grassroots movement began to challenge the racial caste system in the U.S.
- Today, because millions of Americans work directly in or in support of the huge "criminal justice industry," it is not likely to experience meaningful change.

Source: *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*. Michelle Alexander. The New Press. New York. 2010.

Michelle Alexander is an associate professor of law at Ohio State University, a civil rights advocate and a writer. Alexander is a graduate of Stanford Law School and Vanderbilt University.

In her book, Alexander argues that mass incarceration in America functions as a system of racial control in a similar way to how Jim Crow once operated. She analyzes some of the factors that contribute to the new and modified laws that reside in American society today.

Review by Walter W. Hutchins

Did you know?

- 1775 - A black man and a black woman were members of one of the first groups that Daniel Boone led into Kentucky.
 - 1784 - In Kentucky's first history book, written by John Filson, black men appear in two different Indian raids.
 - 1807 - Kentucky Abolition Society organized.
 - 1822 - The society established in Shelbyville one of the first anti-slavery newspapers in the United States - *The Abolition Intelligencer and Missionary Magazine*.
 - 1867 - First convention of Negro Republican Party in Lexington.
- equality, to Dr. Whitney M. Young, Jr. because his life and deeds exemplify the brave and inspiring service of Kentucky's black citizens."

Review by Walter W. Hutchins

- 1904 - The Day Law outlawed integrated education in Kentucky.

- 1964 - The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. leads 10,000 marchers to Frankfort in support of a statewide public accommodations bill.

Source: *Kentucky's Black Heritage: The role of the*

Black people in the history of Kentucky from pioneer days to the present. By the Commonwealth of Kentucky, Kentucky Commission on Human Rights. 1971.

Staff writers - Mary S. Donovan and D. Patricia Wagner.

An outstanding reference source with drawings, illustrations and photographs, a rich bibliography, and a useful index.

"We dedicate this book, which tells the story of Kentucky's black people and their struggles for equality, to Dr. Whitney M. Young, Jr. because his life and deeds exemplify the brave and inspiring service of Kentucky's black citizens."

Review by Walter W. Hutchins

UPCOMING HISTORY & PRESERVATION EVENTS:

A free summer series of Waterfront Heritage Walks will be offered again this year because of a sponsorship by the Evan Williams Bourbon Experience. The 1.5-mile tours will be offered the first weekend of each month through September, according to a news release. Saturday tours will take place on the Big Four Bridge, beginning at 10 a.m. at the top of the ranch to the bridge. Sunday tours will explore Waterfront Park and will begin at 5:30 p.m. at the Belle of Louisville's landing at the Fourth Street wharf. The walks will be led by Rick Bell, a local historian. The Evan Williams Bourbon Experience is an attraction on West Main Street in downtown Louisville that features an artisanal distillery, tastings and tours. The \$9.5 million project is owned by Heaven Hill Distilleries Inc.

Cave Hill Cemetery will be holding several history-oriented tours:

- A. Twilight Tram Tours: Saturday August 9th and Sept. 6th, 6:30 to 8:30 pm, cost \$35
- B. Historical walking tour: Sunday September 14th and October 11th, 1 to 2:30 pm, cost \$15
- C. Art & Artist Tour, Sunday, October 5th, 1 – 3 pm, \$15 person
- D. Civil War walking tour with Bryan Bush: Saturday October 11th 9 to 11 am; \$15

For more info, click on www.CaveHillCemetery.com then click on the 'TOUR' menu link

SATURDAY, AUGUST 16, 2014: 10:00 am to 2 pm; "A Day on the Ohio": LECTURE AT SAR LIBRARY (809 W. MAIN STREET) "JOHN FITCH AND THE INVENTION OF THE STEAMBOAT" BY KADIE ENGSTROM OF THE BELLE OF LOUISVILLE. PRESENTATION WILL INCLUDE CONNECTIONS TO THE INVENTION OF THE STEAMBOAT IN 1787, THE STEAMBOAT ERA, AND THE BELLE OF LOUISVILLE, WITH AN EMPHASIS ON THE IMPACT OF THE STEAMBOAT ON AMERICAN HISTORY. FOLLOWED BY LUNCH RIVER CRUISE ON THE BELLE OF LOUISVILLE STEAMBOAT BOARDS AT 11:30 A.M., CRUISES FROM 12:00-2:00 P.M. COST: \$35, INCLUDES LECTURE, CRUISE AND BUFFET LUNCH (NON-REFUNDABLE) SPACE IS LIMITED. MUST SUBMIT PAYMENT AND RESERVE YOUR SPOT BY AUGUST 5, 2014. TO RSVP, PLEASE CONTACT RAE ANN SAUER AT 502-588-6130 OR RSAUER@SAR.ORG

"Legends of Louisville" by Steve Wisner, Tuesday, August 19th, 2:30 pm, at the St. Matthews Library.

Friday, August 22nd, 7 pm: Rascal's of Ragtime band (featuring LHL's Gary Falk on saxophone) will be playing at Warder Park in Jeffersonville (Spring & Court Streets). FREE but bring a lawn chair. All LHL members are encouraged to attend this wonder evening of lively music.

LHL Monthly Meeting: "Historic Theaters of Louisville" by Steve Wisner and Ken Dennis, Sunday August 24th, 2 pm, Memorial Auditorium, Fourth and Kentucky Streets.

Friday, September 19th, 3 pm, at Louisville Cemetery (Poplar Level Road at Eastern Parkway): Headstone marker dedication for noted 1920s era Blues singer Sara Martin

LHL Monthly Meeting, Sunday, 2 pm, September 21st: walking tour of Eastern Cemetery. Park at the Breckinridge Franklin JCPS School at 1357 Payne Street; then enter via the rear entrance off Payne Street.

EVENTS CONT:

Historic Houses of Southwest Jefferson County, October 12th, Sunday, 2 pm, Riverside – Farnsley – Moremen House, by Steve Wiser

The Bray Place/Scoggan-Jones Horse Farm Historic Highway Marker, October 12, 2014@2:00pm
The Bashford Manor B&B, 2227 Bashford Manor Lane

MusicVille, a music history of Louisville music by Gary Falk, Tuesday, October 14th, 6:30 pm, at the St. Matthews Library.

Belle of Louisville 100th Birthday Celebration, October 14th thru 19th, 2014: Celebrate America's rich Southern heritage with a cruise on the mighty Ohio River during Louisville's Centennial Festival of Riverboats. Nine historic riverboats will provide the backdrop as Louisville plays host to a six-day festival of food, bourbon, music and art at the internationally-acclaimed Waterfront Park. Enjoy live music, sample the finest spirits in the world and experience history, first-hand, as we celebrate The Belle's Big Birthday Bash and enjoy all that life on the river has to offer. For more info and to purchase tickets: <http://festivalofriverboats.com>.

"The Past, Present, and Future of Cave Hill Cemetery: Louisville's Landmark"- Thursday, October 16, 2014 at 2:30 p.m. Louisville Free Public Library- Crescent Hill Branch- 2762 Frankfort Avenue. FREE lecture.

Haunted Houses of Louisville, Sunday evening, 6 pm, October 19th, Peterson Dumesnil House, by Steve Wiser

Haunted Houses of Louisville, Saturday, 2 pm, November 1st, Culbertson Mansion in New Albany, by Steve Wiser

Historic Houses of Frankfort Avenue, Sunday, 2 pm, November 9th, Peterson Dumesnil House by Steve Wiser



The National Theatre was located on the SW corner of Fifth and Walnut (Muhammad Ali Blvd.) Streets. Built in 1913 with quite some fanfare, it was to house both live theatre and Vaudeville. It was beset with labor problems and conflicts with one of the leading Vaudeville circuits of the day. James Graham Brown purchased it in 1952 and had it demolished to build a "parking garage" to serve his Kentucky Hotel across the street. The garage was never built and the surface parking lot remains after sixty-two years.

The National was known for its fine acoustics. Photo: Caufield and Shook, U of L Photoarchives.

Louisville Historical League—Since 1972

founded by Rev. Clyde Crews and Allan Steinberg

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Comments and suggestions related to this publication:

gfalk@aye.net

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Design/Layout: Therese Davis

Print version of this newsletter available upon request.

