

# 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.

## Spring 2016

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## THE WHALLEN BROTHERS: THE BUCKINGHAM BOSSES

BY GARY FALK

The Whallen Brothers: John Henry (on the right), the older brother, was visible, brash and outspoken. The younger, James (Patrick), possessed skills centered around making their various schemes become reality. You might say that their partnership was like a hand in a glove.



The two Whallen brothers ran the political machinery of the the city of Louisville for nearly forty years, following a bell shaped curve between the years 1876 until shortly after the death of older brother John in 1913. Many of the decisions previously relegated to city hall now came from the famous “green room” of the Buckingham theatre. The brothers made bold moves, taking chances that generally worked to their benefit. Most of their efforts centered around burlesque theatres and whiskey production, along with the attendant “by-products”. They spent much of their time trying to create an atmosphere for all of this to thrive, dealing with those one might consider “do-gooders”. In the process, they wrestled control over the dominant Democratic party for most of the years that they remained in business.



A 1916 Courier-Journal story about the Whallens points out the ambivalence of the locals toward the brothers. They were championed by many in labor, the disenfranchised and the poor for their support of causes in their behalf. The Catholic church benefited greatly from the two Irish brothers who were staunchly Roman Catholic.

John Whallen was born in May of 1850 in New Orleans from Irish immigrants Patrick and Bridget Whallen. Much of the carnival atmosphere in that city helped shape the pursuits of John Whallen throughout his life. Several years later the family moved upriver, settling in the town of Maysville, Kentucky where brother James was born in December of 1856 or 1857 (depending on which source you believe). Shortly after James' birth, the family came to Cincinnati where they would remain for several years. They made their home in northern Kentucky, either Newport or Covington.

In 1862, at the age of 11, John enlisted in the Southern army in the Fourth Kentucky Cavalry to become a "powder monkey" and scout, and later as a courier for General John Hunt Morgan. He was credited with saving the life of his commanding officer by holding off a band of marauders until help arrived. The Confederate Magazine of 1908 called him "the youngest veteran in the United States". He was mustered out at the ripe old age of 14. Years later he would become a "Kentucky Colonel". As one author remarked: "John's charm and charisma would be his lifetime hallmark."

In 1871 John came to Louisville, not yet 22 years old. He had little capital or training but he was able to open a saloon on Green Street (Liberty) between Fourth and Fifth streets, where the Paul Jones building (renamed Marion E. Taylor) stands today. In the late 1870s he helped manage a theatre, the Metropolitan. Meanwhile, James joined the Cincinnati police force where he suffered a near-fatal wound in the line of duty. Possibly as a result of that, in 1880, he joined his older brother in Louisville in the burlesque theatre business. This is when things really got rolling.

Before long, John had amassed sufficient funding to build his own theatre at 223 East Jefferson Street with 2000 seats and a vision to propel the popularity of burlesque beyond the East Coast. Whallen employed the skills of famed local architect D.X. Murphy to design the theatre, which was the first building in Louisville to be fully equipped with incandescent lighting. Murphy was a perfect fit; he was the son of Irish immigrants and a devout Roman Catholic. The theatre would have different names at different times, depending on the "legitimacy" that the Whallens assumed that was needed. Shortly after opening, they were closed by the local constabulary for presenting a production called *Female Bathers In The Sea*. Eventually they helped create an atmosphere for the burlesque business to thrive in the city. For a time, they named the theatre the Grand Opera House (1894) or the Jefferson for "family entertainment". From 1922 until its demise in 1989, the theatre was known as the Savoy.

It can safely be said that from the early 1880s until around 1920, the Whallen brothers played a part in virtually every Jefferson county election. They were directly involved in the election process of Paul Booker Reed in 1884. The 1905 election of Paul C. Barth as mayor, orchestrated by the Whallens is considered the most fraudulent in Louisville history. Barth was elected using ballot box tampering, corrupt election officers and policemen, strong-arm tactics, vote rigging and more. The result of the election was ultimately ruled invalid by the Kentucky Court of Appeals and Barth was removed from office after serving two years. This was unfortunate, at least in one sense – Barth was extremely popular. In his two years as mayor, he secured funding to extend the sewer system, create Shelby Park, establish Waverly Hills tuberculosis hospital and build an annex to city hall.

John Whallen died in 1913. His 56 acre country estate known as Spring Bank Park became Chicasaw Park. James died in 1930. His home at 4420 River Park Drive became the location of Flaget High School in 1947. Both are entombed in St. Louis Cemetery on Barret Avenue.

*There is much more to be said about the Whallen Brothers of Louisville that space will not allow. I have assembled a power-point presentation on the life and times of the Whallen brothers and the Buckingham Theatre, which offers greater detail on this fascinating era. – Gary Falk –*

Sources: *Louisville Courier-Journal*, *Louisville Times*, *Louisville Herald-Post*, *The New York Times*, (various articles from 1880-1940), *Fifty Years in Theatrical Management* by Michael Bennett Leavitt, website: *Findagrave.com*, *Wikipedia: John Henry Whallen*, *pre-prowhiskeymen.blogspot.com* by Jack Sullivan; *The Encyclopedia of Louisville* articles on John and James Whallen by Karen R. Gray and Sarah R. Yates "Boss John Whallen: *The Early Louisville Years 1876-1883* (1984) (reference); Flaget High School (Wikipedia)

# OHIO RIVER CANAL

BY CHUCK PARRISH, HISTORIAN (RET)

The completion of the “canalization” project on the Ohio River in 1929 called for a historic celebration. Consisting of 51 locks and dams the length of the 981 mile river, this notable engineering feat provided a sufficient depth for year-round dependable navigation, whereas previously travelling the river was seasonable and sporadic with unpredictable levels.

This massive project had begun in the 1880s with the first lock and dam built near Pittsburgh at Davis Island, and progressively moved downriver.

The Ohio Valley Improvement Association (OVIA) had lobbied for the system of locks and dams for years, even sponsoring the composition of a song, “We Dammed the River.”

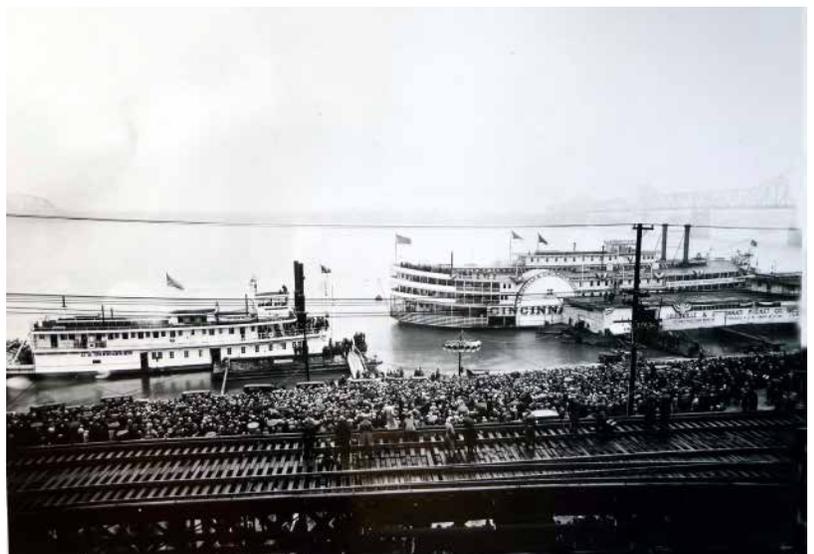
As the project neared completion, the Army Corps of Engineers, the construction agency for the undertaking, began planning a grand river troupe of steamboats and towboats. As the flotilla moved on toward the Mississippi River, stopping at numerous cities, the dedication hoopla noted that “the canalization of the Ohio River is the greatest achievement of its kind in the world.”

President Herbert Hoover joined the celebrants in Cincinnati, and when they reached Louisville at the Falls of the Ohio on October 23, a great crowd welcomed him and his party. In his riverside speech, the President called attention to the “United States Army Corps of Engineers who have served the Country as efficiently and as nobly in peaceful as in war-like pursuits.”

The President further remarked, “with each generation we will advance in our appreciation and use of the river.”

Little could anyone imagine nearly 90 years ago that today the Ohio River system, that is the “mainstem” of the river, along with its navigable tributaries, annually carries millions of tons of cargo, and that today’s river has been further transformed and modernized with 20 locks and dams. Each of these new “high-lift” structures replaced several of the old moveable wicket dams and small locks of the previous project. Locks and Dam #41, completed in the 1920s, has been replaced with the McAlpine Locks and Dam at the Falls.

These photos are from the Caufield and Shook Collection in the University of Louisville Photographic Archives.



President Herber Hoover at dedication of completion of Ohio River locks and dams, Louisville, Oct 1929

## MARKERS IN OUR MIDST

CONTRIBUTED BY WALTER HUTCHINS

There is history all around us. Here is an historical marker you may have missed.

Site: 4th & Main Streets; Northwest corner.

Title: KENTUCKY FUGITIVES to CANADA

Text: Thornton and Lucie (also called Ruthy) Blackburn wereslaves in Louisville, 1830-31. Thornton was hired out to Wurts and Reinhard's store at 4th and Main. When Lucie was sold to Virgil McKnight, the two escaped by steamboat. They were claimed two years later in Detroit by owners. The couple was rescued in "The Blackburn Riots of 1833," Detroit's first racial riot.

(Reverse) Lucie and Thornton escaped to Canada. Two attempts to extradite them were refused. They moved to Toronto and began the first taxi service in Upper Canada while continuing to assist other fugitive slaves. Thornton died in 1890 and Lucie in 1895. Designated "Persons of National Historic Significance" by the Canadian Government. Presented by African American Heritage Foundation and the Ky. African American Heritage Commission.

Comment: Attempts to escape from slavery were everyday occurrences. The success rate can only be guessed. Here is a July 1831 ad from the Louisville Public Advertiser.

### 25 DOLLARS REWARD

The subscribers will give for the apprehension and return of a colored man, named THORNTON, who absconded from our employ on the 3d or 4th of July, inst. Said Thornton is about 5 feet, 9 or 10 inches high; stout made, and of a yellow complexion; light eyes, and of good address; had on when he left, a blue cloth coat and pantaloons, boots, and a black hat. July 7 WURTS & REINHARD.

Reference: Karolyn Smardz, author, "There We Were in Darkness – Here We Are in Light. Kentucky Slaves and the Promised Land."



### The Peterson-Dumesnil House

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## CLEARING THE SLATE RE. THE LEVERING HOUSE

BY STEPHEN W. BROWN

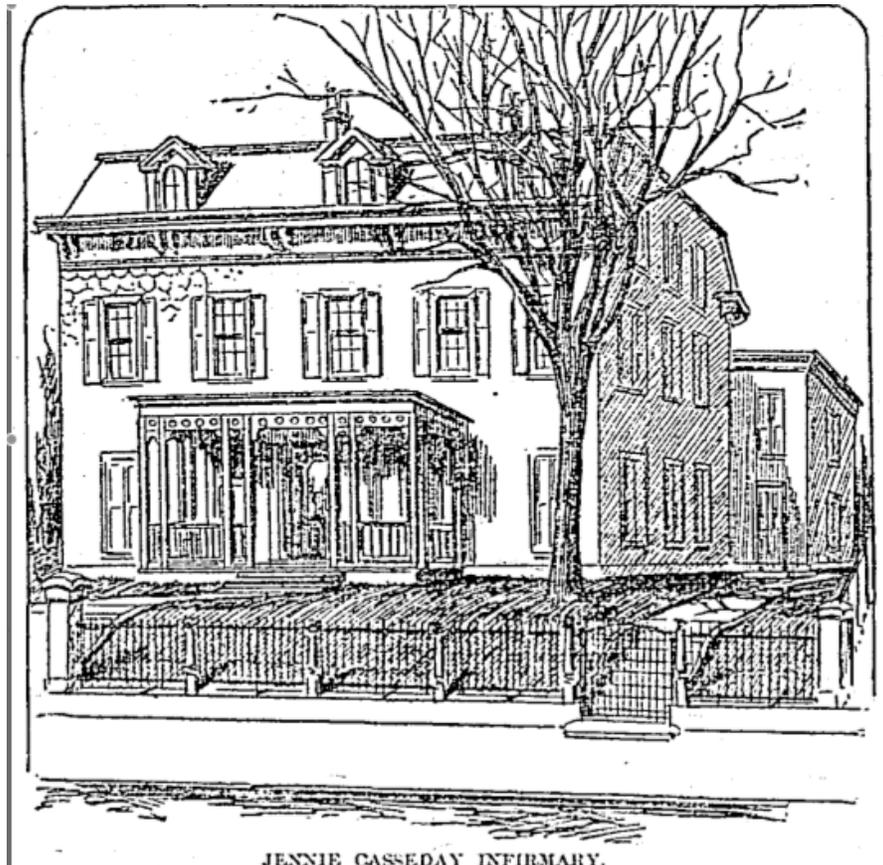
The Levering House at 1412 S. Sixth Street is better known as The Slate House. When talked or written about, it's almost universally stated that the slate tiles covering it came from the roof of the Southern Exposition building. Now I don't know that that's false. But I've never seen anyone cite evidence that it's true. It's rather like other lazily repeated "facts" regarding Old Louisville's history: the DuPonts allowed the Southern Exposition to use their land South of Magnolia Ave. as the site of the Exposition building – when the fact is they never owned or controlled that tract.; or that the St. James Court Fountain came from the J. L. Mott Co. in Brooklyn, NY -- when fifteen minutes on Google can assure us that Mott's Iron Works was never located in Brooklyn, but was at that time based in. . . surprise, surprise: the Mott Haven area of the Bronx (leaving open the question of how it's known that Mott made the fountain in the first place).

What can be verified is that the Levering House had a slate-covered exterior from the get-go. The original roof was a "variegated slate of very handsome design" while the walls were shingled with "Georgia slate, of a soft, rich bluish tinge". Book publisher E. E. Levering, who had the house built in 1867 by E. B. St. John, hired John H. Schroeter to handle the (40 tons of) slate work. The Louisville Daily Courier, in a glowing "review", was already calling it The Slate House.

Newspaper advertisements for boarders at "The Slate House" targeted visitors to the Southern Exposition during the inaugural year of 1883. None of the 1888 articles detailing the sale of materials from the Exposition I've been able to find mention slate tiles. Of course, it is possible that some shingles from the roof of the Exposition Hall were rescued and used to refurbish The Slate House.

While it's not my purpose here to provide an overview of the Levering House's history, there is a connection to the Slaughter family I'd like to conclude with. In 1892, the Jennie Casseday Free Infirmary For Women purchased the property for \$9,500. King's Daughters recruited sponsors for each of the rooms. In commemoration of his recently deceased daughter Annie, William H. Slaughter fixed up "arguably the prettiest apartment in the house".

The primary sources I used are contemporary newspaper articles (from the Courier, the Journal, and the Courier-Journal). For the William H. Slaughter reference, please see my article below on Thomas Hynes Slaughter. The accompanying illustration is from the Feb 11, 1892 issue of the C-J.



JENNIE CASSEDAY INFIRMARY.

## SUSAN LOOK AVERY (1817-1915):

EDUCATED, HONEST AND DETERMINED TO CHANGE THE WORLD

BY TIA BROWN

“Who run’ the World?” Okay, maybe not the world. And while many girls may not have acquired the experience and wisdom necessary, apparently Louisville women have been at the helm of many of this nation’s political and social reform for centuries. Though largely unsung, their works have national and even international reach. One such woman, Susan Look Avery held many titles—Suffragist, Advisor, Educator, Nurse, Mother, Wife and most importantly Woman.



In an effort to generate support for the women’s right to vote, own property and have custody of their children, she founded the Women’s Club of Louisville in 1890. Susan was awakened to the cause when after her husband, Benjamin F. Avery died in 1885, she could not legally collect his estate. Instead, the fortune went to her sons. The Louisville Women’s Club then became one of the first of its kind in this area. A Los Angeles Herald article written about Susan Look Avery after her absence at the sixth biennial club meeting, stated that she “devoted much time and thought to questions of general importance, finance, profit-sharing, capital punishment, free trade, sociology and etc., etc.” For these causes she was not afraid to use her voice, speaking publicly and contributing to literary works advocating the rights of women. And according to local sources Mrs. Avery helped to fund Susan B. Anthony’s movement.

Described as earnest and gentle, never aggressive and fundamentally an optimist, these characteristics may have also described her style as a wife and mother. Susan devoted her time to her six children during their youth. As a dutiful wife, it is said that “during war times her deeds complimented her husband’s generosity; who converted the family plow factory into a hospital for Union soldiers. She is noted as having personally nursed to health wounded soldiers thought to have been on the brink of death.”

“Susan Look Avery graduated from Utica Female Seminary where she remained on as a teacher until 1844 when she met and married Benjamin F. Avery.” Benjamin, a successful inventor of the steel plow, moved his wife to Virginia then Louisville where the family business took off. In addition to the Women’s Club of Louisville, Mrs. Avery also founded the Susan Look Avery Club of Wyoming in New York. Susan Look Avery remained active in the clubs, as a suffragist and advocate of single tax until her death at age 97 on Feb. 2, 1915 in Wyoming, NY.

Though Mrs. Avery died before seeing the thirteenth amendment ratified in 1919, she realized much progress. In Kentucky, the Women’s Property Act passed in 1894. A women’s school suffragist act passed due largely to the organizational efforts of black women; a fact which once discovered caused the act to be rescinded. Still this marks a victory, as Mrs. Avery was a strong advocate for racial equality and sent a statement in her absence at the sixth biennial of the General Federation of Women’s clubs urging the admission of “colored” women’s clubs.

In conclusion, being born female came and still comes with its fair share of crosses to bare. However, the words of this wise woman, Susan Look Avery, hold true: “It is bad for the ignorant and vicious to do ill, but it is worse for the honest and educated to do nothing.” In baring her cross, she successfully matriculated from girl to woman and helped in the struggle to set the world back in proper order.

Sources: Obituaries. (1915, February 3). The New York Times., Susan Look Avery: One of the Club Women who Did Not Attend the Biennial. (1902, June 29). Los Angeles Herald., Falk, G. Susan Look Avery: Founder of the Louisville Women’s Club. The Anchor: Louisville Historical League, 2., Wisner, Steve. Personal interview.

*Mentioned in Old Louisville histories only in connection with an achievement of his big brother, by another name he led a life filled with the romance (and romances) of the big time stage:*

## **THE PSEUDONYMOUS LIFE OF THOMAS HYNES SLAUGHTER**

By Stephen W. Brown

Not a lot has been written about Tom Slaughter. It's said that his house was the first on St. James Court. The lot was supposedly a gift from his brother, William H. Slaughter, the Court's visionary developer. Marguerite Peters Gifford, who grew up in The Saint James (flats) a couple of doors up from Tom and Ada Slaughter and who as an adult lived in the Slaughter house, wrote that they were actors and often entertained theatrical folk there. And that's pretty much it.

Probably the reason not more has been found out about him is that Tom and Adalyn Slaughter performed under stage names. And (with one notable exception we'll speak of later) they were opera singers rather than dramatic actors.

Thomas Hynes Slaughter was born in August of 1848 to Daniel Strother Slaughter (1809-1863) and Ann Eliza "Annie" Hynes Slaughter (1815-1866) of Bardstown KY. Tom's grandfather, Judge James Slaughter, was a state legislator and presided over the Circuit Court in Nelson County. He was related to Governor Gabriel Slaughter and Col. George Slaughter (a founder of Louisville). Annie was one of the nineteen (plus two adopted) children of William Rose Hynes. William was the nephew, Executor, and business partner (in the Hynes Hotel/Talbott Inn at Bardstown) of Col. Andrew Hynes, who named Elizabethtown for his wife.

In 1870, Tom followed his brother William Henry Slaughter (1840-1910) to Louisville. William had established himself in the insurance business and was serving as the Secretary and Treasurer of the Louisville Bridge Company.

By the late 1870s, Tom had moved to San Francisco working as a teacher of music. He married a respected landscape and portrait painter. At her funeral, friends stated that Sarah was a descendant of Miles Standish, and as a girl befriended Longfellow and influenced his "The Courtship of Miles Standish".

Tom first appeared on a San Francisco stage at the Old Standard Theater in the chorus of a production of "H.M.S. Pin-afore". By the time he left the city he was playing Deadeye Dick and headlining with the San Francisco Quartet. And he went by the name Harry De Lorme.

In 1882, Harry moved on to feature roles in New York. Although he left Sarah A. Slaughter De Lorme (1845?-1909) behind, she would take both his family and stage names to her grave (a source of confusion to those who wrote about her later).

Meanwhile, Adalyn Branson Dunham (1856-1937) of Atlanta, Illinois was twice divorced. She left son Kenneth D. Williams (1876-1905) with her parents while she too pursued a career on the opera stage. Curiously, Adalyn was named not after her mother, but in honor of her father's first wife.

Perhaps Adalyn crossed paths with Harry De Lorme in a travelling Gilbert and Sullivan show. However they met, they were together in Liverpool in August of 1883 where they were married. Their daughter Gladys was born in London shortly thereafter. Gladys would, two years after the death of her father, leave a promising career at the Met to marry star baritone Taurino Parvis.

It's perhaps not out of place here to note that no one has ever offered any explanation for the "English" theme William H. Slaughter later adopted for his St. James Court development. Could that have come from brother Tom's London times?

The Slaughter/De Lormes left England for Australia in the mid 1880s. In adopting the stage name Adeline Hynes, Mrs. Slaughter was taking Tom's middle (and his mother's maiden) name. Together they appeared in light fare such as "Fun On The Bristol". Harry also tackled heavier roles including Don José in "Carmen". In addition to appearing in works like "Iolanthe", he'd played Manrico in "Il Trovatore" while in England, so this was not his first meaty role. Adeline generally played supporting roles and was described as "charming" and "a pleasing mezzo".

Tom had improved his voice by studying the Lamperti method with William Shakespeare (the well-regarded tenor, composer, and vocal instructor) in London. One reporter wrote: "Mr. Slaughter possesses a voice that is nothing short of phenomenal... his high C has a ringing tenor tone, clear as a bell, and of a force to make the rafters reverberate." Other reviewers raved about the clarity of his tone and the gusto with which he sang. His "fine physique", "appealing manner", and "exceptionally handsome" appearance also were commented on. Papers in California and Australia called him their favorite tenor.

In 1886, Harry hit the big time. Heinrich Conried cast him as Sandor Barinkay in Strauss's "The Gipsy Baron". Mr. De Lorme made his debut in the role on Oct 18th at the Grand Opera House. His performance would be remembered fondly by a New York Times critic over a decade and a half later when Harry was back on Broadway in a much different capacity.

After "The Gipsy Baron's" successful NYC and touring run (including well-received performances at Macauley's in Louisville), Harry and Adeline appeared together in various productions before moving to San Francisco.

Then in 1889, newspapers across the country carried an item announcing that Harry De Lorme was retiring from the stage, moving back to Louisville, and joining his brother in the insurance firm of Slaughter, Vance, and Irwin. The Slaughter family (which never seems to have included Kenneth Williams) moved into a home on Third Street near where the last remaining wing of the Southern Exposition building was razed and William H Slaughter was envisioning a stately subdivision.

For Harry and Adeline, this move didn't take. A year later they were back on the road. But when W. H. Slaughter's Victoria Land Company sold off lots for St. James Court, it was Adalyn's wealthy father (and not Tom's brother), William Shaw Dunham (1827-1905), who bought them the property near the fountain. Ada seems to have decided to concentrate on running the home and raising their daughter. She would continue to sing in local productions and at church and charity functions. Tom's career apparently declined by the end of the decade, and he announced that he would concentrate on vocal instruction.

Yet in a couple of years, Harry was again on the circuit, if not at the level he once was. His voice may have dropped a bit by then (in younger days his range was a half tone shy of three octaves, extending to the E flat above his bell-toned high C), as he more frequently sang baritone roles.

In June of 1898, during an extended run of "The Bohemian Girl" in the Twin Cities, Harry seriously injured his leg when a bridge on stage collapsed. He gutted out the show that night, but had to be carried back to his boarding house. It was feared he might have contracted blood poisoning as a result.

Upon recovery, he appeared in a production of "The Marquis of Rivoli" in the role of a vagabond alongside one Harry Standish. Around the same time he sang as Miles Standish in a Chicago production of "John and Priscilla", a romantic opera based on (of all things) "The Courtship of Miles Standish". It may have been while performing in Chicago in that capacity that Harry met the young wife of a frequently travelling businessman. But more of that later...

In 1903, Mr. De Lorme made a bold move into dramatic acting. He was cast as Judge Ignatz Niphoravitch in an Oscar Hammerstein production of Tolstoi's "Resurrection" at the Victoria on Broadway. During the run, he fell seriously ill. His wife and daughter arrived in time to say their goodbyes. Thomas Hynes Slaughter died of paralysis in a New York City hospital on April 14th and was buried in the Dunham family plot in Atlanta, Illinois.

Conried's "Gypsy Baron" Company.



HARRY DE LORME.

Five months later, Chicago papers ran the salacious story of the Ferguson divorce. Alexander M. Ferguson sued his wife Emma Louise on the grounds of desertion when she pled a form of temporary insanity. Mrs. Ferguson claimed to have had “a hypnotic spell” cast over her by the “matinee idol” Harry De Lorme. But now that he was dead “the fatal influence was broken”. Her tears and desperate desire to once again be a pure and worthy wife to Alexander moved him to the extent that he mitigated his suit from “statutory grounds” to desertion. While it’s not known what Adalyn Dunham Slaughter thought of all this, it is presumed that Tom’s bones were left to lie in the family plot.

I became interested in Thomas Hynes Slaughter while researching his brother William Henry for a project in progress entitled: “A New Look at Old Louisville”. Aside from chasing Harry De Lorme in newspapers from Melbourne to Manhattan, I spent considerable time in the usual places: the Jefferson County deed room, Louisville Metro Archives, the Filson, UL Archives (which contains some account books for Slaughter Vance & Irwin including payments made to agent Tom Slaughter), the LFPL, and genealogical resources such as ancestry.com and the LDS. The friendly folks at the Logan County Illinois Museum were helpful regarding the Dunhams in the Atlanta Cemetery. John Frederick Dorman, by telephone and snail mail, generously shared information on the background of the Slaughter family (although his files contained no revelations regarding Thomas H. or William H. Slaughter). Librarians at the Berkeley CA public library and the Mechanics Institute in San Francisco forwarded information on the exhibition of a few paintings by Sarah A. Slaughter De Lorme and her bio entry in “Artists in California 1786-1940” by Edan Milton Hughes. Marguerite Gifford’s “St James Court in Retrospect”, while perhaps a necessary preliminary source, is unfortunately (because she’s been uncritically accepted) the root of a few misconceptions re. Old Louisville’s history.

## LOOKING BACK

BY GARY FALK

This recent photograph, taken at 914 Mason Avenue in Louisville was the home of Henry Pilcher and Sons, Pipe Organ manufacturers. Pilcher, or the House of Pilcher as it was referred to, operated in Louisville from 1871 (The year that the Chicago Fire sent them our way) until 1944. Pilcher built organs for around 2000 churches, auditoriums and other venues in the United States during their long career. One of the premier pipe organs in Louisville built by Pilcher is located in Memorial Auditorium.



# THE LITTLE LOOMHOUSE, BIRTHPLACE OF THE HAPPY BIRTHDAY SONG

BY STEFANIE BUZAN

Over the past couple of months, the news has been bustling with stories concerning the world's most famous song – Happy Birthday to You. The song was written by two sisters from Louisville, Mildred and Patty Hill. First there was the controversial copyright dilemma which resulted in the song being released into the public domain. Then, the University of Louisville's, James Procell's exciting discovery of the only known manuscript from which the Happy Birthday song was adapted – Good Morning to All. We learned that the manuscript found its way to the University via the estate of Hattie Bishop Speed.

Although there is a state issued, historic highway marker at the intersection of Kenwood Drive and Kenwood Hill Road as well as a city issued marker at 9th and Main telling the reader that local history recounts during a birthday party for Lisette Hast, in what is known today as the Esta Cabin of the Little Loomhouse complex on Kenwood Hill, Patty Hill suggested that the words of "Good Morning to All" be changed to Happy Birthday to You, in honor of Lisette's birthday, this important detail has been overlooked in all of the recent hoopla around the song.

It may seem random to suggest that the words to the world's most popular song were first sung at some obscure birthday party in a board and batten cabin on Kenwood Hill; however, if you take the time to understand what Louisville was going through during that period, and who was in attendance at the illusive party, it all begins to make sense. The following is a brief summation:

Louis Henry Hast, a distinguished nineteenth century musician who was born in Gochlingen, Bavaria made his way to Louisville in 1854. During the nineteenth century, Louisville enjoyed a rich musical culture, and Louis Henry Hast was the dominant figure. The last half of the nineteenth century found Louis to be the essential ruling spirit in the musical circles in Louisville. His home was the gathering place for the greatest singers and musicians. His musical library was probably the finest west of New York City. Hast was a teacher, organist, pianist and choir director. As a teacher, his most accomplished pupil was Hattie Bishop Speed. The Hills, the Hasts and the Speeds were friends and contemporaries.

Louis Hast and his wife had four children who they raised to appreciate and flourish in the enriched cultural atmosphere that they worked so hard to develop in Louisville. For the sake of this story I will focus on two of their daughters: Etta Hast a well-known artist and Lisette Hast a famous decorator. In the 1890's, Etta Hast had a summer residence on Kenwood Hill. During the summer months, Kenwood Hill was the playground for Louisville's elite to escape the heat of the city and retreat to the often elaborate cabins that dotted the wooded terrain of Kenwood Hill. The social columns of the local newspaper were teeming daily with news of the happenings on the Hill.

Etta hosted annual art festivals for local artists, writers, educators as well as others who had summer cabins in the area. Kindergarten teachers and composers, Mildred and Patty Hill had a summer log home on Possum Path just a short distance up Kenwood Hill and were regulars at these festivals along with Madison Cawein (poet), Young Allison (poet and editor) and Reuben Post Halleck (prominent educator).

Former summer home of Mildred and Patty Hill, which was located on Kenwood Hill (photo courtesy of the Tenny Family)



In 1902, Esta Cabin eventually became the residence of Mary Wulff, a writer and artist who continued using the cabins for the community. She had special Wednesday soirees to which she invited local poets, writers, etc. Particularly significant was her inclusion of gifted children such as Lou Tate Bousman at these gatherings. These soirees were Lou Tate's introduction to the dynamic residents and artists that gathered on Kenwood Hill and the cabins that would become her home for forty years, the Little Loomhouse. (House of Little Looms est. 1939)

In 1939, Lou Tate and her Mother purchased the three cabins at 328 Kenwood Hill Road from the estate of Mary Wulff. Lou Tate's love for history prompted her to team up with other historians in the area to chronicle the rich history of Kenwood Hill through a series of oral histories. By conducting oral histories, Lou Tate was able to chronicle the story of how the Happy Birthday to You song was introduced for the first time, in honor of Lisette Hast's birthday, in the Esta Cabin of what is today a part of the Little Loomhouse complex.

Lou Tate Bousman graduated from Berea College and then went on to receive a Master of Arts in History from the University of Michigan. Lou Tate Bousman worked with President Herbert Hoover's Administration during the Craftsman Movement to collect, research and document coverlets throughout Appalachia. Lou Tate also worked with the Roosevelt Administration to offer scholarships to young women in rural communities. With the support of Mrs. Hoover and Mrs. Roosevelt and development of the small loom, a vision became reality in the establishment of the Little Loomhouse. The Little Loomhouse was founded for the purpose of sharing the knowledge and history of hand weaving and textile arts.

Over the years, thanks to countless hours – largely by volunteers and with donations from generous patrons who have recognized the historical significance of this landmark, the Little Loomhouse has stayed true to its original purpose, teaching new generations about the history and artistry of weaving. Kenwood Hill's impressive legacy, the Little Loomhouse, continues as it started by encouraging participation in weaving classes, tours, a gift shop where hand woven treasures can be purchased, and involvement in local festivals. Each year the Little Loomhouse is visited by local residents, school and community groups, and tourists from all over Kentucky and around the world.

Information compiled by Stefanie Buzan from the following sources:

The Filson Club Quarterly re: Louis Henry Hast

The personal correspondence of Robert French, Louisville Academy of Music

The personal correspondence of Lou Tate

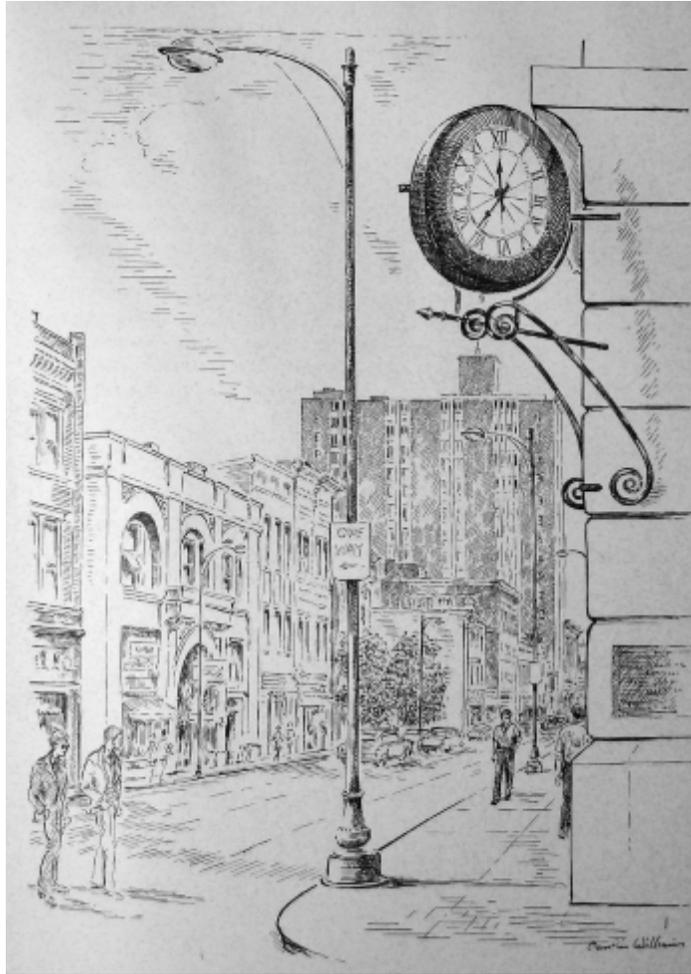
The Little Loomhouse, A Brief History by Alice S. Davidson



The Esta Cabin at the Little Loomhouse with Mary Wulff standing at right.

# THEN AND NOW

By GARY FALK



Illustrator and Author Caroline Williams published a sketchbook of Louisville scenery in 1970 entitled *Louisville Scenes*. This little known book (144 pages) has her drawings of famous Louisville landmarks with supportive text. One really caught my eye.

The scene on the left, entitled *Third Street From Liberty* shows the Morrisey Garage, Falls City Theatre Equipment Company, the 'area' where the Water Company is, and several other buildings approaching and opposite what was Walnut Street at the time (now Muhammad Ali Boulevard). What offers reference to the location in both the 1970 sketch (left) and the current (2016) photo (right) of course is the clock on the building (300 West) at Third and Liberty. The tall building in the background, Trinity Towers (at the time) adds additional perspective.

This "Then and Now" illustrates just how much downtown Louisville has changed. It is a sad testimony to how much we have lost.

## LOUISVILLE'S QUEST FOR A MUNICIPAL AIRPORT

BY CHARLES W. ARRINGTON

Louisville's quest for a municipal airport was a long drawn-out affair that lasted eight years. The quest essentially spanned from May 1920 when Bowman Field was founded to mid-1928 when the airport property was purchased by local government. In between included much drama that saw litigation in both federal and state courts with property owner, German national Waldemar von Zedtwitz in Europe and events in Louisville that led to voter approval of a bond issue in 1927, that allowed the purchase to go forth. After an earlier bond issue in 1924 failed, a maximum effort by Louisville leaders, business interest, and airport enthusiast, including airport founder Abram H. Bowman went forward. They rallied to support the land purchase through the 1927 bond issue. Abram Bowman himself worked long and hard to insure success by voicing concern that Louisville could not be successful without a municipal airport that would insure inclusion on the national air map which would bring air mail, airline passenger service, and progress.

Responding to this, Mr. Bowman's first partner in Bowman Field, Robert H. Gast wrote an article that appeared in the Courier-Journal on June 25, 1925 that spelled out the importance of Bowman Field to Louisville. The article follows in its entirety.

### VALUE OF BOWMAN FIELD TO LOUISVILLE IS CITED

SECRETARY-TREASURER OF AERO CLUB OF KENTUCKY POINTS TO DEVELOPMENTS OF FUTURE.

BY ROBERT H. GAST

Few people realize just what Bowman Field, Louisville's airport means to our city. It is one of the greatest assets of which we can boast. There is no other city in the country that has a flying field that compares with the Louisville port. Bowman Field in the short time it has been in existence has risen to be one of the most prominent airports in America. It is renowned for its hospitality. Nowhere in the air service can you mention Bowman Field, Louisville, Ky., but what you meet with instant approval and hearty endorsement.

The advantages of a city owning an airport such as this are many. Daily from many cities of our country ships fly in and discharge their cargoes and are off on their way. At present there are approximately fifteen ships a week through Louisville including the regular Army Air Service and commercial flyers.

Louisville within a short time will be placed on the air mail route. This plan meets with enthusiasm as the savings affected will be great. The discount on paper handled by banks will be enormous. Thousands of dollars daily will be saved by our banks in interest as the air mail will shrink the map several days.

Within a short time a mooring mast will be erected at Bowman Field. With this added facility it will be possible to have lighter than air craft stop at Louisville.



## NEW BOOK WILL SHOWCASE OVER 100 OF LOUISVILLE'S AFRICAN AMERICAN MUSICIANS AND ENTERTAINERS

Several individuals with historical ties to the music industry in Louisville have formed a committee to produce and publish a book that will celebrate the lives, talent, careers, and contributions of over 100 of the city's African American musicians and entertainers.

The idea for the book, yet to be titled, evolved from an extraordinary photo exhibit debuted at the Kentucky Center for African American Heritage during African American history month. The exhibit featured dozens of African American musicians and entertainers who were either born in Louisville or who have lived and performed in Louisville for a significant portion of their professional lives.

The book will salute those and many more African American performing artists who have made major contributions to Louisville's music scene over the past several decades. It will also highlight several Louisvillians whose talent and impact have earned national and international recognition. Music genres featured in the book will include jug band music, blues, rhythm and blues, jazz, classical/theatrical, gospel and more.

Individuals who provided photos and materials for the exhibit include Mickey Carroll, Keith Clements, Ken Clay, Gary Falk, Michael L. Jones, Ron Lewis, Winston "Church" Landrum, Allen Martin, Marjorie Marshall, Barrington "Boogie" Morton, Ray Johnson, Gwendolyn Murphy and Kibira Yakina.

Committee members working on the book, which will be published by Butler Books, include Ken Clay, Keith Clements, Gary Falk, Ron Lewis, and Michael L. Jones.

Anyone with photos, bios, articles, or other materials about any of Louisville's African American musicians and entertainers is encouraged to contact the book committee's chairman, Ken Clay, at [legaciesunlimite@bellsouth.net](mailto:legaciesunlimite@bellsouth.net) or 502-468-6005.

Carol Butler

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# KENTUCKY IN THE EARLY 1900s: A POSTCARD TRIBUTE

By CARL HOWELL

Hardcover, with full-color dustjacket

9 X 11

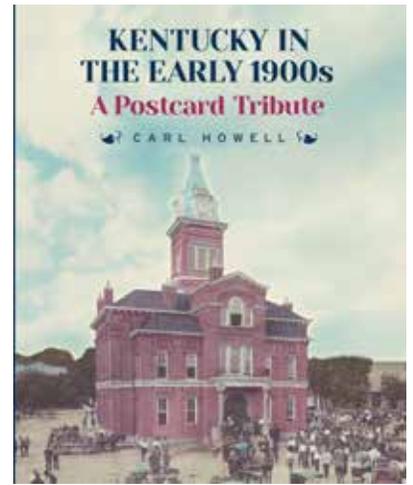
200 full-color pages

ISBN: 978-1-941953-15-0

\$39.95

Carton Quantity: 13

Published by and available through Butler Books - [www.butlerbooks.com](http://www.butlerbooks.com) – 502-897-9393



Kentucky in the Early 1900s: A Postcard Tribute provides a unique and intriguing glimpse into the history of the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

The images included in this book have been selected from an extensive collection of vintage postcards assembled over the last 35 years by Carl Howell, of Hodgenville, Kentucky. They provide rare insight into the lives of ordinary Kentuckians in the early 20th century. Viewed in their entirety, they reveal a panorama of subjects that shows who we were, what we valued, and what we accomplished.

During the Golden Age of Postcards, photographers took pictures of cars and trolleys, mines, courthouses, firefighters, county fairs, trains and depots, sports teams, businesses, special events and everyday lives. People regularly bought and mailed postcards, often with handwritten notes about the places and events depicted on the cards.

Howell, a renowned and respected postcard authority, has written detailed narratives about all of the images he has included.

This well-researched book makes a unique and lasting contribution to literature about Kentucky's history and people, and will appeal to history buffs, photographers, and anyone interested in the Commonwealth of Kentucky and its heritage.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Carl Howell is known statewide as Kentucky's premier vintage postcard collector. He has co-authored three Kentucky county history books which are illustrated by his extensive postcard collection and, in 2003, he authored a volume entitled, *Lincoln's Kentucky Years*.

Mr. Howell graduated from LaRue County High School in 1959. He majored in English and received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Georgetown College in 1963, and a Doctor of Jurisprudence degree from the University of Kentucky College of Law in 1966.

In December 1966, after receiving training in Quantico, Virginia, and Washington, DC, he received his appointment as a special agent in the Federal Bureau of Investigation. He served in this capacity in Buffalo, New York, and New York City from 1966 to 1969.

In his early professional legal career, he served as Hodgenville City Judge and Hodgenville City Attorney, prior to implementation of the statewide district court system. He was appointed Master Commissioner of LaRue Circuit Court in 1992 and served in that capacity for over 20 years. He retired from the practice of law in 2014 after 45 years of service.

Mr. Howell is a Lincoln historian and archivist and is a frequent speaker at historical events and area club meetings. He is a member of the Kentucky Historical Society and the Sherwood Historical Society. He established the first Lincoln Days Art Contest in Hodgenville in 1973, which has been a staple at every Lincoln Days Celebration thereafter. He served on the advisory board of the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission. He is president of Preservation of Lincoln's Kentucky Heritage, Inc., a non-profit corporation which was instrumental in purchasing the Abraham Lincoln Boyhood Home at Knob Creek Farm, and he gave the keynote address at the deed transfer ceremony on February 12, 2002. As president, he also served in the selection of the sculpture group responsible for creating The Boy Lincoln, a bronze statue which was unveiled on the square in Hodgenville on May 31, 2008.

In 2008, he received an award for his contribution to LaRue County High School athletics in baseball (1955-1959); and in 2011, he received the LaRue County Board of Education Distinguished Alumni Award in recognition of outstanding achievement since graduation from LCHS.

Mr. Howell has five daughters and is married to Sharon Howell. Together they share eleven grandchildren. He and Sharon reside in Hodgenville, Kentucky, and are active members of LaRue Baptist Church.

## **MY BLESSED WRETCHED LIFE: REBECCA BOONE'S STORY**

BY SUE KELLY BALLARD

PAPERBACK

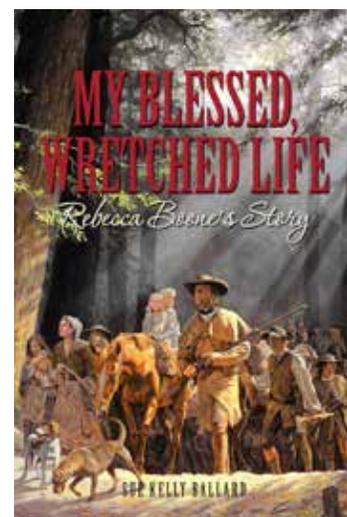
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CARTON QUANTITY: 20

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“Imagine living in the wilds of western Virginia during the early settlement of what would become Kentucky. Despite the solitary stillness of the early morning, this could be one’s last day alive. Was that the sound of a bird or an Indian signal to attack? White settlers, hunters, Revolutionary War soldiers, and entrepreneurs were streaming into the sacred hunting grounds of the Native Americans who soon found their very existence threatened. Rebecca Bryan Boone and her household had to constantly be at the ready for Indian attacks — a grim reality in the new frontier. Sue Ballard’s fresh approach to the wife of the famous frontiersman, Daniel Boone, offers an insightful view of the hopes, hardships, happiness, and horrors that most American pioneer women confronted. Rebecca narrates her story in dialect commensurate with the period. Ballard’s skillful presentation engages the reader and vividly brings to life the everyday experiences of her subject.”

—Russell Hatter, City of Frankfort Historian, Capital City Museum, Frankfort, Kentucky

“Much has been written about the adventurous frontiersman Daniel Boone. Author Sue Ballard documents the life of Daniel’s wife, Rebecca Bryan Boone, a woman who deserves tribute for her role in carving new homes and new lives in the primitive and dangerous Kentucky wilderness. Ballard’s description of Rebecca’s day-to-day life is accurate in each detail, from raising their many children, farming, and kitchen work, to her hourly prayers and waiting in loneliness for the return of her trailblazing husband. Ballard’s narrative voice takes hold of the reader from the first pages and sweeps us back to relive those earliest days of Kentucky history. This evocative book inspires admiration for Rebecca as a fine representative of our revered pioneer women whose bravery and strength established the way for following generations.”

—Mary Popham, MFA, Spalding University,  
Author of works of fiction and nonfiction, poetry, essays, and book reviews

“Rebecca Boone’s story is a must-read for all who love early American and Kentucky history. My Blessed, Wretched Life is history, adventure, memoir, and love story. Its Kentucky pioneer characters become people we intimately understand with all their strengths, weaknesses, joys, fears, and sorrows. Rebecca married an extraordinary man, Daniel Boone. Equally she was an extraordinary woman. The author, Sue Ballard, has carefully researched the historical facts in order to build Rebecca’s world and use Rebecca’s voice to tell her astonishing story. This book is for those who have already studied this tumultuous era. It is also for those who come to our pioneer history for the first time. The reader will turn its pages eagerly, absorbed by a saga emerging from the past as imagined by a fresh new author and a master story teller.”

—Anne (Mrs. Harry M.) Caudill

Anne Caudill has narrated colorful, insightful stories from her married life with Harry, renowned author of *Night Comes to the Cumberland*s, to author Terry Cummins in *The Caudills of the Cumberland*s: Anne’s Stories of Life with Harry

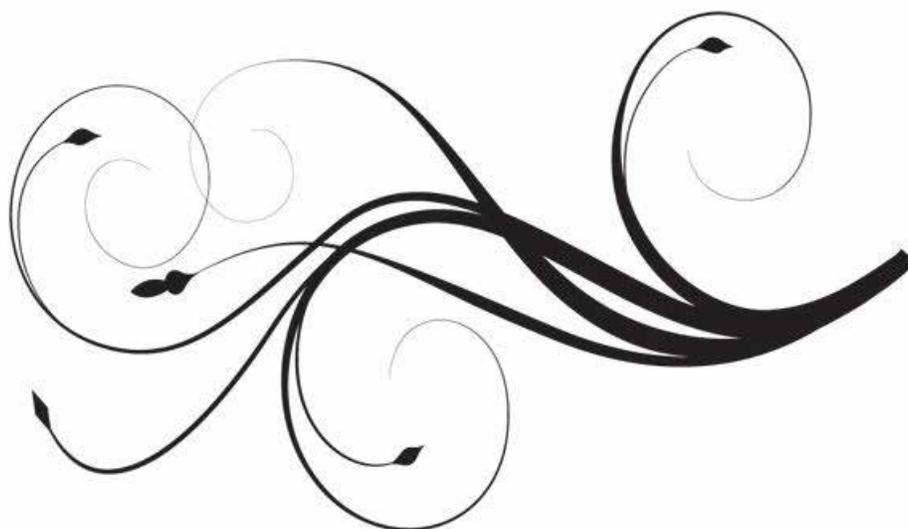
## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Kentucky-born author Sue Kelly Ballard became inspired to tell the amazing story of pioneer mother Rebecca Boone when she lost her own mother while still in graduate school. Ollie Lee Hays Kelly, a dedicated army wife, raised five children in several states and overseas under ever-changing circumstances. Thus Sue, the eldest, came to fully appreciate how vital a mother’s love and work is, not just to her own family, but to future generations.

According to family lore on her mother’s side, the Hayses are descended from Rebecca and her husband, Daniel Boone, through their daughter Susannah, who married William Hays in 1775. Both of Ballard’s parents descend from Revolutionary War veterans, and her husband’s forebears were among the early pioneer visitors to Boonesborough, Kentucky.

Ballard began her career in the corporate world in Kentucky, Arkansas, Colorado, and Indiana, and is now a professor of chemistry at Elizabethtown Community and Technical College, where she nurtures her creative side with a love of travel, history, literature, and writing.

She resides in Elizabethtown, Kentucky, with her husband, Jimmie, and two cats.



## RICK BELL HEADS WEST . . .

BY GARY FALK

We have just received word that longtime Louisville Historical League board member and historian Rick Bell and his wife Susie are leaving Louisville for Bluff, Utah in an area referred to as the Four Corners.

Rick was raised in the Portland neighborhood of Louisville and was well known for his many walking tours. He was the author of *The Great Flood of 1937*, an in-depth analysis of how the 1937 flood impacted the city of Louisville. Rick was also a leader in the restoration of the Marine Hospital in Portland and was most recently recognized as *Jake The Bartender* at the new Evan Williams Bourbon Experience. Rick will be sorely missed both by the LHL and the community at-large. His accomplishments are certainly worthy of a full-length article but for now all we can say is Rick, best wishes for your new endeavor in Utah!



## UPCOMING EVENTS

BY STEVE WISER

### **Sunday, May 22, 2pm:**

“Preserving Local Heritage” at the Samuel Plato Academy, 1701 W. Muhammad Ali Boulevard. This program will feature the ‘how to’ have a historic marker installed; place a property on National Register of Historic Places; and get a property designated a ‘local landmark’. If you are ever interested as to how places are deemed ‘historic’ then this is a great way to find out!

### **June 26**

Ice Cream Social: Location To Be Determined

### **August 21st**

History of Jewish Hospital; at Jewish Hospital at Brook and Muhammad Ali Boulevard

### **September 18**

Cemetery tour: Louisville Cemetery, on Poplar Level Road near Eastern Parkway

### **October 16**

Neighborhood walking tour: Schnitzelburg

### **November 20**

Fenwick Lecture Series: To be determined

### **December 4**

Holiday Party at the Peterson-Dumesnil House

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founded by Rev. Clyde Crews and Allan Steinberg

If you change your address or email address  
please notify the League so that you can continue to receive your notices!

Membership in the Louisville Historical League is \$15 for Seniors, \$20 Individual, and patrons \$40.

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[gfalk@aye.net](mailto:gfalk@aye.net)

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The Archives is the official publication of the Louisville Historical League. Questions or comments should be addressed to Gary Falk, [gfalk@aye.net](mailto:gfalk@aye.net) or (502) 962-1040.

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