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401 Morgan Avenue, Harriman



Newsletter

June 2023

Custodians of the Past. Stewards for the Future

CHHCO IS OPEN TO ALL INDIVIDUALS INTERESTED IN PRESERVING AND PROTECTING HISTORIC HARRIMAN. MEMBERS NEED NOT BE A RESIDENT IN A HISTORIC DISTRICT TO BE ACTIVE.



**Living
in a
Historic
District
Means
Living
in a
Legacy**

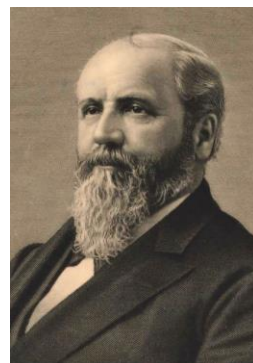
Harriman's Founding Fathers & Front Man Clinton Fisk



Figure 1 Front (L-R) William Silverwood, A. W. Wagnalls, General Clinton B. Fisk, A.A Hopkins, H. A. Buttrick; In Back P.S. Mason, Frederick Gates, Ferdinand Schumacher, Walter C. Harriman, W. H Russell, Dr I. K. Funk

Clinton Bowen Fisk (December 8, 1828 - July 9, 1890), 3rd from left in front of the above East Tennessee Land Company Board of Directors in

1890 and photo below, was not involved in Harriman's founding by accident. He was popular among Prohibitionists in the late 1880s, and in 1890, was the ideal candidate to head the East Tennessee Land Company and to take the public lead in the founding of the company's proposed City of Temperance – Harriman. As noted in Walter Pulliam's "Blue Book,"



HARRIMAN: The Town That Temperance Built, his name was "Magic" to the Prohibitionists of his day. In effect, he became the "front man" for the Land Company's town building enterprise while Gates became the "man behind the scenes."

Clinton Fisk was a populist of his day – not only by the prohibitionist, but also because of his passionate concern for the freed slaves of the War Between the States. Fisk was an abolitionist and served with distinction during the Civil War. He was appointed as a colonel of the 33rd Missouri Infantry in the Union Army in 1862 and rose to brigadier general two months later. He commanded forces in Missouri and Arkansas where his main duties were to oppose raids by the Confederate cavalry and guerrilla groups.

After the War, Fisk was appointed Assistant Commissioner of the Freedmen's Bureau for Kentucky and Tennessee, to provide practical aid to the 4 million newly freed African Americans nation-wide in their transition from slavery to freedom. He worked through the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen and Abandoned Lands and the American Missionary Association to establish the first free schools in the American South for both black and white children. He made the abandoned barracks in Nashville, Tennessee available to the American Missionary Association for the creation of the Fisk School, and endowed it with a total of \$30,000. That was the beginning of Fisk University.

He was also a zealous leader of the prohibition movement. The emphasis on alcoholic drink stemmed not so much from a moral opposition to liquor as from a pragmatic one. Alcohol abuse, said the Prohibitionists, led to chronic illness, job loss, spouse and child abuse, and impoverishment. The best way to reduce social ills, prohibitionists maintained, was to eliminate alcoholic consumption.

During the 1888 presidential elections Fisk served as the Prohibition Party's presidential nominee. Fisk did quite well in the general election where he received 249,506 popular votes and which placed him third behind Benjamin



Harrison and Grover Cleveland. Fisk therefore was accused of being a spoiler candidate that would allow Republican candidate Benjamin Harrison to defeat Democratic incumbent Grover Cleveland, by winning the electoral college 233-168 despite losing the popular vote.

Now, the Harriman Connection. Before 1890, what is now Cornstalk Heights (and much of Harriman) was part of a large farm owned by Robert K. Byrd. That year, the East Tennessee Land Company, formed by the northern Temperance activists led by Frederick Gates and General Clinton B. Fisk, purchased the land from Byrd's widow for \$26,000. The company hoped to establish a large industrial center that would attract businesses, while at the same time demonstrate the benefits of barring the sale or consumption of alcoholic beverages. Gates, a former Methodist Minister now entrepreneur, recognized it as "Temperance for Profit."

As President of East Tennessee Land Company, Clinton Fisk was most influential in obtaining the capital with which to purchase the extensive land holdings of that company and also the extensive land holdings of that company and also for the founding of the new Prohibition City of Harriman, which was his last venture. He and Mrs. Fisk came to the site of Harriman for the

Great Land Sale of February, 26, 1890. Both addressed the buyers of lots, wishing the new city well. **"We are going to build Harriman,"** Fisk himself assured the buyers. However, on July 9, 1890, only a little over four months after the Great Land Sale and the beginning of Harriman, Clinton Bowen Fisk died at his home at Seabright on the New Jersey coast.

The East Tennessee Land Company's souvenir booklet, "One Year of Harriman, published in 1891, recalled that General Fisk, during the Great Land Sale, promised to build Harriman. The only other specific pledge he made to the land buyers was to build an iron furnace in the city. The booklet says he pledged his personal word for its erection, and that he was planning for it when he died. He gave his best vision and effort to this new City of Harriman, but didn't live to see it.

Harriman Hall Progress



Yes, there is progress on Harriman Hall, but it's not always visible – or at least, noticeable.

This month's focus has been securing a major opening in the foundation at the back of the structure, removing false ceiling joists & drywall in the foyer, and even installing a downspout on the scupper at the porch roof structure. They are small steps, but they are nevertheless progress.

Larger steps are not far behind, as now the focus turns to making the interior meeting rooms and restrooms



functional. Bruce *Completed Foundation Closure at rear of structure*

Knobloch, Chairman of the Renovation Committee, presented to the CHHCO Board the vision to finish the 2 front rooms into a meeting room and caterer's kitchen. Restrooms will be in the rear office space (rear corner of Cumberland Ave), and the lower level on Morgan Avenue are to be finished

as storage of supplies and costuming. Distinctive feature to also be included is a chandelier-type light to hang in the windows of the tower (above the vestibule), and illuminated as a reflection of the light CHHCO is providing to the community. It may be hard to visualize in the below photo, however use your “mind’s eye” to look up to a chandelier hanging above this opening in the vestibule (below),



which will be visible through the tower windows facing Morgan Ave and Cumberland St (above).

Tradesmen are now being contacted for the floor repairs and wall framing, plumbing, electrical and HVAC. Bruce will also be meeting with Roane County Building Codes Office soon to discuss the plans and assure the work will comply with codes and occupancy inspections. The focus remains to have these complete (with the exception of the basement level) by the Christmas Tour of Homes in December.

4th Saturday of the month Work Days will continue through the Summer, and Senior Moments will occur by those capable of additional services. However, we are now transitioning into requiring trades to lead our CHHCO volunteers with greater progress to meet our 2023 goals.

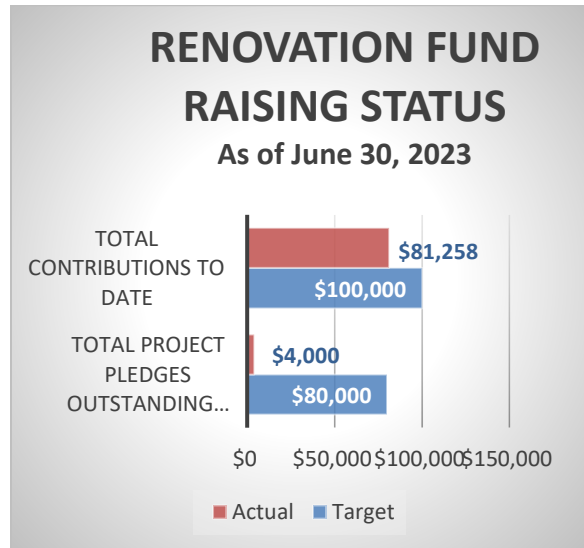
Historic Harriman Hall Fundraising

All donations go directly to the renovation of Harriman Hall, and are not used for any of the organization’s operating expenses.

Cornstalk Heights Historical Community Organization is a 501(c)(3) organization, and donations are therefore eligible as a tax-deductible charitable contribution to the full extent of the law.

Donations can be sent to:

CHHCO
401 Morgan Ave
Harriman, TN 37748



Abandoned Christian Church, August 2019

Lest we forget where we've been

And how far we've come

THANK YOU !!!



Harriman Hall Renovations, June 2023

CHHCO Community Calendar

July 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
2	3	4 Happy Independence Day!  5 pm Concert & Fireworks Smokin' the Water, Kingston Riverfront	5 11-2 Food Truck next to City Offices (Walden Ave)	6	7 6-10(pm) JEEPIN AT RIVERFRONT	1 8
9	10	11	12 11-2 Food Truck next to City Offices (Walden Ave)	13	14 5-8 FRIDAY NIGHTS ON ROANE	15
16	17	18	19 11-2 Food Truck next to City Offices (Walden Ave)	20 7:00 CHHCO Board Meeting 408 Roane, Visitors Welcome	21	22 7:00 Wild Blue Yonder Princess Theatre
23	24	25	26 11-2 Food Truck next to City Offices (Walden Ave)	27	28	29 9-noon Harriman Hall Workday
30	31					