

Preservation Matters

Central Kentucky's
Preservation Magazine

Inside this issue

Exploring Kentucky Historic Tax Credits



Making Preservation Possible

Also

**Supreme Court Decision
a Win for KY Preservation**

Frankie Vagnone Gives Hopemont Lecture

Blue Grass Trust Preservation Awards

Preservation Professionals Directory

.....And so much more

Contributors

This magazine takes a village to bring to you. The Assistant Editors, Wanda Jaquith and Carolyn Hackworth, who scrupulously dot the i's and cross the t's and make sure the photo captions are under the correct photos, along with the *Preservation Matters* writers and the BGT staff are involved in bringing this publication to the readers. Special thanks to Julie Riesenweber, Asst. Professor of Historic Preservation at UK, for her article on the Gray Design Building and to Craig Potts, Kentucky's SHPO, for providing an overview of historic tax credits in KY. Inveterate preservationist and BGT board member Janie-Rice Brother as well as veteran writer Amanda Corbin help round out our village of contributors. Thanks to all who worked on this issue.

John Hackworth, *Editor*

On the cover

Heartland, a beautifully renovated home and wedding venue in Woodford County (see pp. 24-25.)

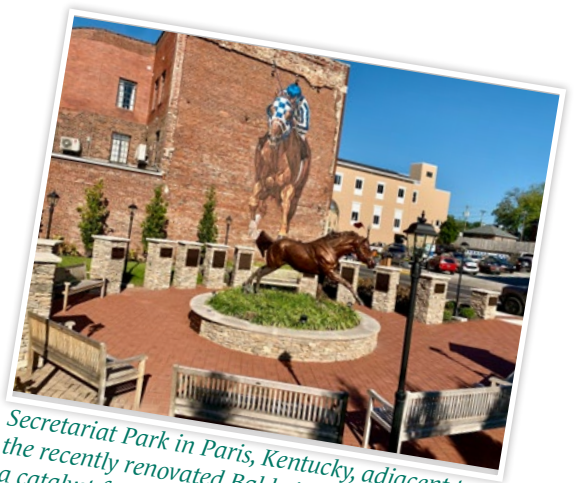


Preservation Matters

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Secretariat Park in Paris, Kentucky, adjacent to the recently renovated Baldwin Hotel, has been a catalyst for additional renovation of historic Main Street properties.

Blue Grass Trust in Brief

As the 14th oldest preservation nonprofit in the country, the Blue Grass Trust for Historic Preservation is Central Kentucky's resource and guide for historic preservation. The Blue Grass Trust was founded in 1955 by a spirited group of Lexington citizens determined to save Hopemont, an 1814 residence located in Gratz Park, from demolition. Over the years, our iconic symbol has become synonymous with the most celebrated historic places in the Bluegrass, and today we remain a pillar of advocacy, education, and service, ensuring historic preservation is accessible to everyone.

Our Mission

The Blue Grass Trust for Historic Preservation is Central Kentucky's resource for protecting, revitalizing, and promoting our historic places, enhancing the quality of life for all.

Our Values

Education: We will share the value of historic preservation with Central Kentucky.

Service: We will serve as a resource and guide to help Central Kentuckians in their historic preservation efforts.

Advocacy: We will lend our voice to historic preservation efforts in our Central Kentucky communities.

Our Vision

Our vision is to live in a community that honors its diverse cultural legacies through historic preservation.

Read the **Blue Grass Trust Solidarity Statement** at: bluegrasstrust.org/our-impact

STAY IN TOUCH WITH THE BLUE GRASS TRUST IN THE FOLLOWING WAYS:

bluegrasstrust.org



@bluegrasstrust

Greetings Blue Grass Trust Friends

Dear Friends,

It has been a busy summer at the BGT! The relocation of our administrative staff has been completed and they are now comfortably situated at Hopemont. The remainder of the space at the Thomas Hunt Morgan house has been added to a new lease with the Lexington History Museum. This has resulted in an increased income stream from the building and a commensurate reduction of expenses.

After receiving several expressions of interest, the working group and the Board have approved moving forward with negotiations with the Mitchell Parks Companies on its proposal for restoration and adaptive end use of Latrobe's Pope Villa.

We continued to see strength in our annual fund campaign this summer and hope you will continue



to support our principal source of funding as we move forward with this initiative.

Finally, I want to thank Jonathon and our talented staff for all their work this year and especially the renewed effort to stay engaged with our membership. Our reception for former board members in late June and the Members and Guest Reception in October at Hopemont were well attended, and we are looking forward to another successful year at the Blue Grass Trust.

Sincerely,
Mike Meuser
Board President

About this Issue

Kentucky Historic Tax Credits are a boon to historic preservation potential in the Commonwealth. This issue explores the availability of tax credits and provides examples of how they are being used. Most everyone enjoys taking advantage of a sale—getting something at a reduced price. The Kentucky Historic Tax Credits put the renovation of historic properties on sale at a reduced price! The articles in this issue illustrate the use of both commercial and residential tax credits available to the qualified applicant.

Following Kentucky's State Historic Preservation Officer Craig Potts' overview of Kentucky's historic tax credit program is an article describing the recent historic tax credit experience at the Blue Grass Trust's own Hopemont. Then, we explore how tax credits were utilized in four Central Kentucky counties—Bourbon, Clark, Fayette, and Woodford. Each of these stories follows a different path, and there is something to be learned from each. The BGT plaque house in this issue even has a historic tax credit story to tell.

Besides highlighting some of the Blue Grass Trust's advocacy, education, and outreach activities, you will learn of our new resource, the Preservation Professionals Directory. That article features one

of the craftsmen in the Directory. Also, the historic preservation department at the University of Kentucky has a new home, and Julie Riesenweber writes an article about the historic purpose-renovated new digs for the College of Design.

While the challenging work of the Blue Grass Trust sometimes ends in disappointment, there are moments of significant victory as well. For a case in point covering both ends of the spectrum, read the article starting on page 12. The Blue Grass Trust committed to challenging an unjust law, which took a circuitous route all the way to the Kentucky Supreme Court. The court's ruling profoundly and positively impacts homeowners' associations, non-profit organizations, as well as others across the Commonwealth.

Finally, Blue Grass Trust Board member Janie-Rice Brother, who authors the Gardens to Gables blog, maintains a Montgomery County farm, has a young family, and is a full-time professional preservationist, penned an article for this issue in her spare time. She explores how some of the historic lodgings in Kentucky towns evolved as modes of transportation changed. Her contributions are always fascinating.

I hope you enjoy this issue.
John Hackworth, Editor 🍷

Dear Friends of
Blue Grass Trust



Welcome to this edition of *Preservation Matters*. As always, we are excited to share how hands-on preservation efforts are making a difference in Central Kentucky and to highlight the Blue Grass Trust's role in safeguarding, promoting, and revitalizing our historic places.

In this issue, we delve into one of our most powerful tools for historic preservation: historic tax credits. Residential historic tax credits can help supercharge preservation efforts across the Commonwealth, but they are often underutilized. We hope the case studies featured in this edition of *Preservation Matters* will demonstrate just how significant and achievable using tax credits can be. If you are considering a preservation project that qualifies for historic tax credits, feel free to reach out to us. We would be happy to point you to some valuable resources.

We also have a lot of news to share, including a significant victory for preservation at the Kentucky Supreme Court. I'm glad to report, thanks to the efforts of the Blue Grass Trust and our partners, including the National Trust for Historic Preservation, we have made future preservation battles much fairer for neighborhood associations and preservation nonprofits like us. Additionally, be sure to catch up on our 2024 Preservation Award winners, the Hopemont Lecture, and the latest Heritage Society outing. This issue also provides a wonderful opportunity to extend our heartfelt gratitude. We are deeply honored by the growing number of donors who share our passion for historic preservation. For the second consecutive year, we have seen the highest number of donors in our history. Your support, alongside the increasing number of fellow advocates, underscores the value of our work and its impact on the community. We are immensely grateful for your vital partnership.

As you read through *Preservation Matters*, I hope you find inspiration in the mission-driven accomplishments of the Blue Grass Trust. Preservation is truly a collective effort, and your involvement is crucial. We invite you to continue supporting our important mission by considering a donation to the Blue Grass Trust.

We are deeply appreciative of your commitment to the Blue Grass Trust.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Coleman, Ph.D.
Executive Director



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Founders Day at Hopemont

Blue Grass Trust was honored to host the 2024 Founders' Day and Annual Membership Meeting July 11th, marking 69 years of making preservation possible in Central Kentucky. From record-breaking support to advocacy in every regional county, the Blue Grass Trust has much to celebrate thanks to the work of its many donors, members, volunteers, and staff.

Members enjoyed hors d'oeuvres and drinks in the newly renovated Hopemont and gardens, while mingling with other preservation enthusiasts. Board president, Mike Meuser, chaired a short membership meeting where the 2024-2025 officer slate was approved along with three new board members, Shea Brown, Jo Ellen Hayden, and Kent Pleasants. Executive Director, Jonathan Coleman, also gave a short year-in-review and unveiled the 2024 Annual Report. While always enjoying celebrating successes, the Blue Grass Trust is committed to achieving even more in the coming year.

In addition to celebrating the past year's achievements, two awards were presented to outstanding members of the Blue Grass Trust. The Dot Crutcher Award recipient, Kevin Lane Dearing, has been a longstanding and exemplary supporter of the Blue Grass Trust. Kevin grew up celebrating Bluegrass architecture by reading Bettye Lee Mastin and marching with Clay Lancaster. He supports the Blue Grass Trust as a member of the Heritage Society, has hosted one of the most successful deTours at his home in Hampton Court, and contributed to the Hopemont Lecture Series with



Dr. Jonathan Coleman presents the Dot Crutcher Award to Kevin Lane Dearing.

his charming and informative presentation, "The Best One Night Stand in America: The Rich Theatrical History of Lexington, Kentucky: 1808-1918." But Kevin's support of Kentucky's rich heritage extends well beyond his support of the Blue Grass Trust. Kevin is also an author whose publications include several Kentucky theatre histories and Kentucky-themed plays.

Perhaps most importantly, Kevin is a familiar and friendly face at Blue Grass Trust events and is always ready with a helping hand, kind word, or hysterical story, all offered at just the right time.

Lucy Jones, the Lucy Shropshire Crump Volunteer Award recipient, has been instrumental to the Blue Grass Trust. She has made significant contributions, particularly in advocating for the preservation of the Historic Palmer Pharmacy, a project that ignited her passion for preservation within the organization. Lucy has served on the Board since 2019 and the deTours committee, serving as both co-chair and a core volunteer, and hosting events in benefit of the Blue Grass Trust. Her vision for storytelling was crucial in saving the deTours during the pandemic, leading to the creation of the virtual deTours format still in use.

Congratulations to Kevin and Lucy!

Blue Grass Trust is so grateful to have such a diverse and passionate group of donors, members, and volunteers alongside as it pursues its mission. Blue Grass Trust is especially eager to celebrate its 70th Founders' Day in 2025! 🎉



Board members Beverly Fortune and Brenna Pye chat with the two award winners, Lucy Jones and Kevin Dearing.

2024 Blue Grass Trust Preservation Awards

Blue Grass Trust celebrated the 2024 Preservation Awards recipients on May 19th at the Dr. Thomas Hunt Morgan House during the annual awards ceremony. 12 recipients were announced for 10 different awards. Awards are given for service in the field of preservation, innovative historical research, and saving Kentucky's diverse cultural heritage.

For over 30 years, Blue Grass Trust has used the Preservation Awards to shine a light on the positive, far-reaching impact preservation has in Central Kentucky. Preservation is a big mission, and the Preservation Award winners highlight the amazing individuals, groups, and organizations working to protect, promote, and revitalize historic places in Kentucky communities.

Blue Grass Trust is especially grateful to Central Bank for generously sponsoring the 2024 Preservation Awards. 🏦

Barbara Hulette Award: Given for efforts in the preservation of Central Kentucky's history, heritage, built environment, landscape, archaeological resources, sense of community, or significant endeavors
Midway Museum (Midway, KY)



Barbara Hulette with her namesake award recipient, David Hume representing the **Midway Museum**

Clay Lancaster Heritage Education Awards: *Footprint Traces of Black History in Richmond, KY* by **Sharyn Mitchell** (Richmond, KY) **Wesley Francis** (Lexington, KY)



Sharyn Mitchell accepting a **Clay Lancaster Heritage Education Award** for *Footprint Traces of Black History in Richmond, Kentucky*



Wesley Francis, one of the two recipients for the **Clay Lancaster Heritage Education Award**

Clyde Reynolds Carpenter Adaptive Re-Use Award: Given to an individual or group for outstanding efforts in the rehabilitation and adaptive re-use of a building or buildings within Central Kentucky
Two recipients: **Art Center of the Bluegrass** (Danville, KY); **Craig Rushing** (Lexington, KY)



Art Center of the Bluegrass President Brian Hutzley accepting one of the **Clyde Carpenter Adaptive Re-Use Awards**



Wanda Jaquith presenting one of the **Clyde Carpenter Adaptive Re-Use Awards** to **Craig Rushing**

Community Preservation Award: Given to a non-governmental organization or individual for service to the preservation movement or to a specific project:
Lewis and Lynne Wolfe (Georgetown, KY)



Wanda Jaquith with **Community Preservation Award** recipients **Lewis and Lynne Wolfe**

Landscape Preservation Award: Given to an individual or group for the preservation, design, stewardship, restoration, or enhancement of a historic cultural landscape in the Bluegrass: **Terry Thomas** (Georgetown, KY)



Maureen Peters presenting the **Landscape Preservation Award** to **Terry Thomas**

Lucy Graves Advocacy Award: Given to an individual or group that has exhibited advocacy leadership in supporting the historic preservation movement in Central Kentucky: **The James Harrod Trust** (Harrodsburg, KY)



Wanda Jaquith presenting **Jerry Sampson**, Chair of the James Harrod Trust, with the **Lucy Graves Advocacy Award**

Preservation Craftsman Award: Given to a building industry craftsman who has demonstrated a strong commitment to quality craftsmanship for historic buildings



Preservation Craftsman Award recipient **Josh Lowry** with **MasterCraft Woodworks, Inc.**

Public Service to Preservation Award: Given to a government agency or official for service to preservation movement or to a specific preservation project: **Kitty Dougoud, coordinator of the Kentucky Main Street Program** (Georgetown, KY)



Kitty Dougoud, recipient of the **Public Service to Preservation Award**

Yvonne Giles Award: Given to an individual, group, or project for contributing to research on African American or other culturally inclusive history, advocacy of the understanding of that history, and education of the community regarding African American or other culturally inclusive history in the Bluegrass



Thomas Tolliver, recipient of the **Yvonne Giles Award**

Lifetime Service to Preservation Award: Given to an individual for lifetime service to the preservation movement in Central Kentucky: **Maureen Peters** (Lexington, KY)



Jackson Osborne presenting the inaugural **Lifetime Service to Preservation Award** to longtime member and supporter **Maureen Peters**.

Running With Scissors: The 2024 Hopemont Lecture

The 2024 Hopemont Lecture, presented by the Blue Grass Trust for Historic Preservation, showcased one of the most exciting discussions in the field of preservation this year. The event welcomed Frankie Vagnone, Founder and President of Twisted Preservation and co-author of the groundbreaking *Anarchist's Guide to Historic House Museums*. Vagnone's presentation, titled "Running With Scissors," invited attendees to explore how preservationists and historic sites can drive innovative change, build community, and promote sustainability. Vagnone, recognized as a leading thought leader in historic preservation, challenged the audience to rethink traditional approaches and embrace new, dynamic ways of engaging with historic places.



Frankie Vagnone gave an animated and provocative talk for the rapt audience at the Hopemont Lecture at the Thomas Hunt Morgan House.

"We are honored to host Frankie, a national visionary and iconoclast at the forefront of historic preservation. Bringing this thought leader in historic preservation to Central Kentucky and encouraging innovative ideas and methods to circulate and germinate here, the Blue Grass Trust is excited to fulfill our mission as a resource for every Kentuckian wanting to preserve our historic places and stories," said Dr. Jonathan Coleman, Executive Director of the Blue Grass Trust. His remarks underscored the importance of bringing pioneering perspectives to the region and highlighted



A portion of the audience at the Hopemont Lecture

the Trust's ongoing commitment to preservation education and advocacy.

The lecture took place on Thursday, September 26th, at the historic Dr. Thomas Hunt Morgan House in Lexington, KY. As a free event open to the public, it attracted a diverse audience eager to engage with Vagnone's forward-thinking ideas. With limited seating, the event reached full capacity quickly, illustrating the community's strong interest in the evolving field of preservation.

Complementing the lecture, the Blue Grass Trust hosted its second Hopemont Lecture Preservation Workshop on Friday, September 27th. This half-day, interactive workshop catered to preservation professionals, public historians, students, and grassroots leaders. Participants engaged in hands-on activities and discussions, learning from both national and local experts who are at the forefront of implementing innovative changes at public history sites. The workshop provided a platform for collaboration and skill-building, empowering attendees to bring new approaches to their work in preserving historic sites.



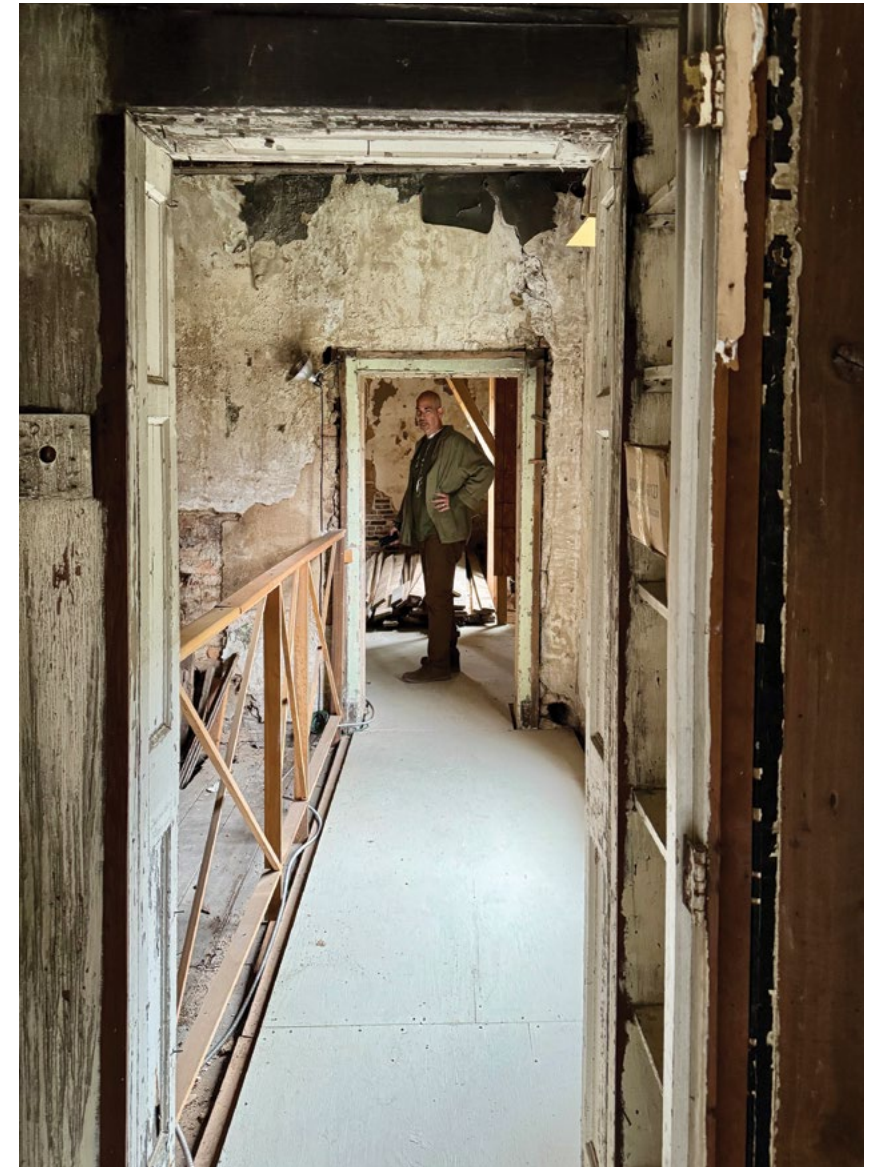
Some of the participants at the Preservation Workshop at Hopemont

Hurricane Helene postponed our Hopemont Day of Service at Huntertown, but Frankie and his partner Johnny turned the storm into an adventure. After their flight was canceled, they stayed at Latrobe's Pope Villa for their "One Night Stand" blog series, where they experienced the historic spaces overnight. Despite the storm's challenges, they enjoyed comparing the villa's raw, fire-damaged interior to Philip Johnson's pristine Glass House.



At first glance, this unlikely comparison seemed purely aesthetic. The austere geometry of Pope Villa's remaining spaces echoed the stark minimalism of Johnson's Glass House, creating an unexpected visual rhyme across centuries. But as I delved deeper, a more profound parallel emerged. Imagining life within Pope Villa's walls, I was struck by a realization: the experience must have mirrored that of dwelling in Johnson's transparent masterpiece. Both homes, despite their vastly different eras and styles, likely felt like living in a fishbowl of avant-garde experimentation.

The Pope Villa, with its radical departures from Federal-era norms, would have been as much a spectacle in its day as Johnson's modernist icon was in the mid-20th century. Its inhabitants, like those of the Glass House, would have been constantly aware

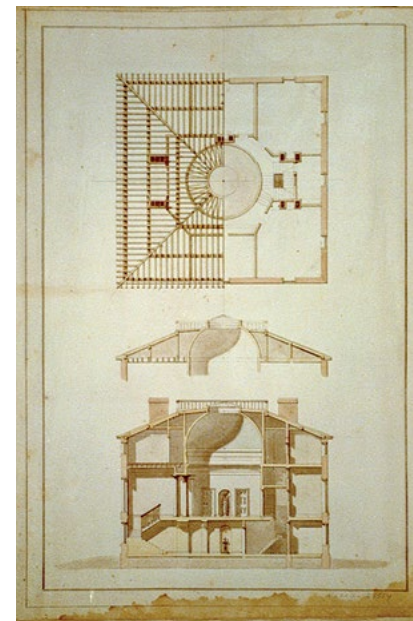


Frankie Vagnone exploring Latrobe's Pope Villa during his "One Night Stand"

of their role as custodians of a revolutionary architectural statement. This shared sense of being on display, of one's daily life intertwining with a bold artistic vision, formed an intriguing bridge between these two disparate structures.

You can read their full reflections on the unique contrasts between the two historic homes at <https://twistedpreservation.com/one-night-stand-series/>.

Through these events, the Blue Grass Trust for Historic Preservation continues to advance its mission of promoting innovative preservation practices. By connecting Central Kentuckians with leaders like Vagnone, the Trust is fostering a vibrant dialogue on the future of historic preservation, ensuring that the region's heritage is not only preserved but reimagined for generations to come. 🍷



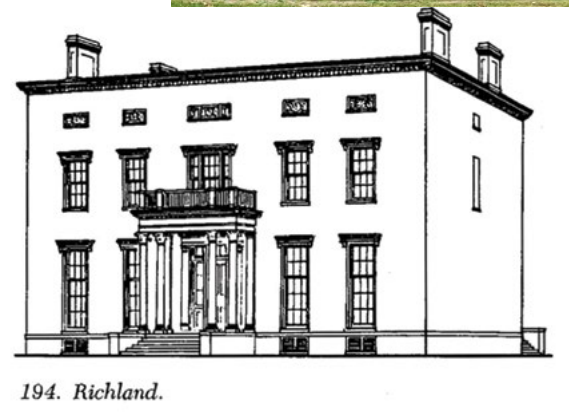
LEFT: Drawing of Latrobe's Pope Villa

RIGHT: Philip Johnson's Glass House



Heritage Society Visits Richland

Members of the Blue Grass Trust Heritage Society enjoyed a truly exclusive experience in late September when they visited Richland, the 1824 Shelby Family Residence currently being restored by the Francis Family. After a light reception on the sweeping east-side porch of the home, Wesley Francis, a sophomore at the University of Kentucky studying business and historic preservation, took guests through the house and gave a fascinating history on the occupants and their contributions to the Commonwealth. Wesley became so interested in learning more about the estate and the Shelby Family he published a book based on his findings, *A History of the Shelby Family of Fayette County, Kentucky and Their*



Houses. Wesley is the winner of the Blue Grass Trust 2024 Clay Lancaster Heritage Education Award for his study of the Shelby family and their residences.

Although initially constructed in the Greek Revival style in 1824 for General James Shelby, the son of Governor Isaac Shelby, Richland was remodeled by builder John McMurtry in the Italianate style in 1860. At that time, it was passed on to Elizabeth Fontaine Shelby Kinkead and her husband, Judge William Bury Kinkead. McMurtry enlarged it substantially, adding a garret level punctuated by ventilation grilles, along with a rear extension. During the Civil War, the house received its share of uninvited Confederate visitors. In 1874, Richland passed out of Shelby ownership and was eventually acquired by prominent

farmer William Land, who owned two nearby estates with Shelby connections.

Richland entered a new era in 1970, when Arthur Francis, Sr. and Hilary Boone jointly acquired 500 acres that included the property. When they divided this acreage in half, Francis reportedly won the Richland section in a coin toss. He then set about restoring the house. However, tragedy struck in 1982 when a massive fire engulfed the upper stories. Thankfully, Arthur's grandson, Wesley, has taken charge of the rehabilitation. Recently, he repaired the woodwork and repapered the soaring 16-foot walls in the banquet hall.

The invitation to tour Richland was extended as a token of appreciation to members of the

ABOVE: The front of Richland as it exists today minus its portico
LEFT: Richland, as drawn by Clay Lancaster, *Ante Bellum Houses of the Bluegrass*, p. 141
BELOW: The Land family at Richland, circa 1920s



Blue Grass Trust Heritage Society. Every year, the members of the Heritage Society gather for a special tour and update on the Blue Grass Trust. The Heritage Society consists of individuals who have informed the Blue Grass Trust of a planned estate gift, knowing their patronage enables BGT's continuation of its mission of education, service, and advocacy.



Members and guests enjoyed socializing before touring the house and grounds.

Have you ever considered becoming a member of the Heritage Society? Please consider including the Blue Grass Trust in your estate planning and join the growing number of those whose legacies will benefit the Blue Grass Trust. Membership is easy; simply notify a member of the Blue Grass Trust staff or Board of Directors either verbally or in writing that you have made a provision for the Blue Grass Trust in your will or estate plan. If you are interested in learning more about becoming a member of the Heritage Society, just reach out to our Executive Director, Jonathan Coleman.

Blue Grass Trust thanks the Francis family and the Heritage Society members for their generosity and support. 🙏



Heritage Society members heard about Richland's history and ongoing efforts to restore it.



Wesley Francis led a tour of Richland, sharing its rich history and the stories of the families who owned it. He personally did much of the restoration in this room.



Executive Director Jon Coleman presents a special book to Wesley Francis in appreciation for hosting the gathering.



The Francis family has made huge strides in restoring this wing of the house after a fire.

The Blue Grass Trust Goes to Court: Decisions Rendered in the Commonwealth Building and E. Maxwell Rezoning Cases



Commonwealth Building entry

The Blue Grass Trust is thrilled to share news of a significant legal victory that could reshape the landscape of preservation advocacy across Kentucky. For nearly six years, the Blue Grass Trust has been involved in litigation to save the formerly state-owned Commonwealth Building at 120 W. High, which Thomas Page Edwards (1914-1980) designed around 1956. A member of the Army Corps of Engineers, Lt. Edwards worked alongside renowned architect Nicholas Warfield Gratz after his discharge.

In fall 2018, the Planning Commission approved the demolition of the Commonwealth Building on the grounds it was a non-contributing element of the South Hill H-1 overlay district created in 1972. The case took many twists and turns as it made its way to the Kentucky Supreme Court. On the one hand, the Blue Grass Trust argued the Planning Commission ignored key expert testimony vouching for the significance of the building—including that of city staff. On the other hand, BGT questioned the constitutionality of KRS 100.3471, a law compelling appellants in land use cases to post enormous bonds (up to \$250,000) to secure an appeal of circuit court decisions. As this lawsuit proceeded, BGT was also forced to request an injunction, as the Board of Adjustment had improperly issued a demolition permit before the case was resolved.

Thankfully, the Supreme Court concurred in a 4-3 ruling that KRS

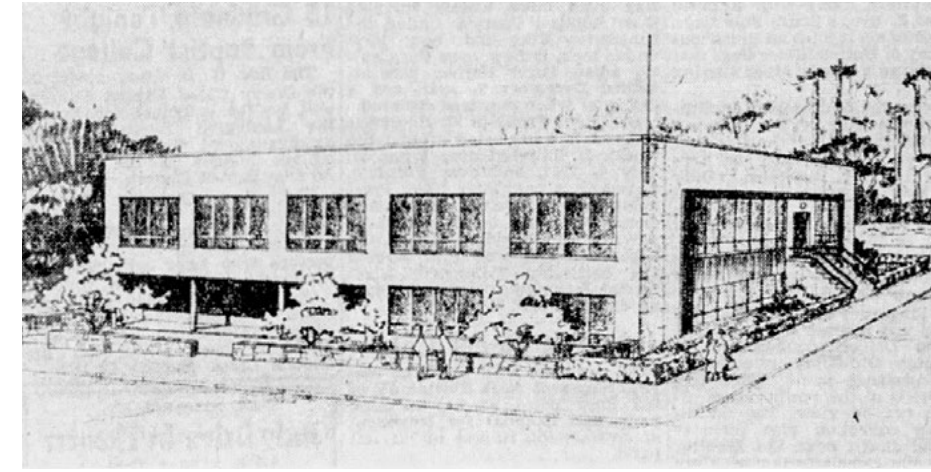
100.3471 undermined the government's separation of powers and was "manifestly unconstitutional" regardless of an appellant's assets. The Blue Grass Trust's arguments concerning this "question of law" were thus affirmed. However, the justices refrained from overturning the Planning Commission's decision, as that action had essentially answered a "question of fact" and met the basic requirement for evidentiary support. Central Dealers LLC, which owns the Commonwealth Building, has already applied for a new demolition permit. Though this historic resource will be lost, the abrogation of KRS 100.3471 is a major win for advocacy nonprofits throughout the state.

Since last October, Blue Grass Trust has also been campaigning to save 13 National Register-listed buildings on E. Maxwell Street and Stone Avenue from demolition. The Trust created an online petition that garnered nearly 3,000 signatures,



North and west elevations of the Commonwealth Building

thoroughly researched and publicized these properties on its social media accounts, testified before the Planning Commission, and wrote op-eds before pursuing a legal appeal. Threatened buildings include the 1885 Queen Anne cottage at 215 E Maxwell, the 1891 brick dwelling where tobacco researcher Benjamin F. Scherffius resided (227 E. Maxwell), the 1920 Prairie-style



Sketch of proposed Commonwealth Building, 1955



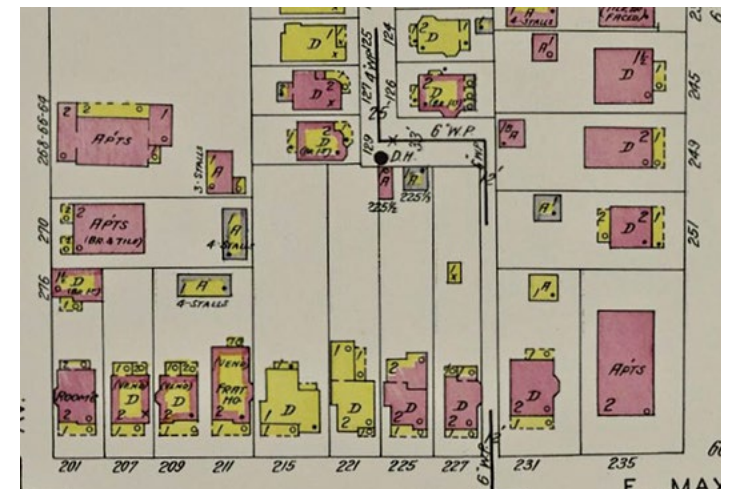
Photograph of E. Maxwell Street, facing west

home of mining instructor Thomas J. Barr (251 Stone Ave), and the striking Tudor-Revival bungalow at 245 Stone Avenue saloonkeeper John F. Nunan constructed for his retirement.

Regrettably, the circuit court upheld the Planning Commission's rezoning that allows placement of a 7-story student housing tower on the site. This experience has been a frustrating—but enlightening—one revealing several questionable practices and policies at the governmental level. Dr. Zak Leonard's newest piece in the *Herald-Leader*, which is also posted on the BGT website blog, problematizes the city's willingness to depart from its own comprehensive plans and takes issue with the internal procedures that prohibit constituents from communicating with their councilmembers on zoning matters. This entrenched policy of evasion (not actually codified in law) should be disconcerting to any Lexington resident who values transparency and accountability. Despite this outcome, the Blue Grass Trust would like to thank supporters for their engagement and assistance in sustaining this crucial grassroots advocacy. Rest assured, the Trust will continue to campaign for sensible infill development that does not compromise Lexington's historic and unique urban fabric. 🌱



Photograph of E. Maxwell Street, facing north



1934 Sanborn fire insurance map showing project area

The Annual Fund drive is a critical way to do your part to ensure Blue Grass Trust continues its efforts to be the leading organization in Central Kentucky addressing historic preservation through advocacy, education, and service. The Fall/Winter 2024-25 issue of *Preservation Matters* lists the 2023-24 fiscal year’s donors (ending June 30, 2024) broken into giving categories. The Annual Fund is the lifeblood of the Blue Grass Trust since it receives no federal, state, or local funding.

This current Annual Fund drive, which began July 1, closes on June 30, 2025. Please make your contribution by using the donor envelope enclosed in this magazine; by going online at [www. bluegrasstrust.org](http://www.bluegrasstrust.org); or by scanning the QR codeto at the right. Thank you.

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\$5,000 or more

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Kentucky Historic Tax Credits May Work for You

It can be easy to overlook the profound impact Historic Preservation Tax Credits have had on communities large and small throughout the Commonwealth of Kentucky. Historic downtowns and neighborhoods currently benefit from increased levels of economic activity that can appear to be wholly organic and simply the result of current preferences. But the interest in older and historic properties designed in traditional development patterns is buoyed by many years of smart advocacy, revitalization strategies, regulations, policies, and incentive programs like the Historic Preservation Tax Credit that help level the playing field with new construction. Without the sustained work of preservation advocates for more than 50 years, and without the practical tools developed because of their efforts, many of the historic places we value as important, vital components of our communities would surely have been lost.

While the arguments to support investment in historic preservation are wide-ranging, it is often the math that determines which buildings get rehabilitated and when and where. That math can, by extension, also dictate which downtowns and which neighborhoods get the critical mass of investment they need to address overall revitalization needs. Repairing or adaptively reusing neglected and underutilized historic structures can be time-consuming and expensive and most investors cannot justify losing money, at least not over the long term. We can love and appreciate the cultural significance and architectural character of historic building stock, but at the end of the day, the math must work.

To help address this, the federal government created the Federal Historic Tax Incentives Program in 1976 to energize the historic rehabilitation sector and provide additional practical support to carry out the tenets of the National Historic Preservation Act adopted just ten years prior. Administered jointly by the National Park Service and State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPO's), income-producing properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places individually or within historic districts can qualify for up to 40% in tax credits on all qualified rehabilitation expenses (QRE's). Because the program focuses on rehabilitation versus restoration, QRE's include a wide range of expenditures beyond the repair of historic materials. Plumbing, electrical, HVAC and many other modern upgrades can qualify for the credit. This program really works, with more than \$131 billion in private investment incentivized to successfully rehabilitate more than 49,000 historic properties nationwide since 1976.

Recognizing a strong return on investment to local communities, many states enacted stand-alone historic tax credit programs in the ensuing years that couple with the federal program. Kentucky became one of those states by adopting the Kentucky Historic Preservation Tax Credit in 2005. Kentucky's incentive follows the same basic

rules as the federal incentive but provides a 20% tax credit (dollar for dollar) for commercial and non-income producing projects and a 30% tax credit (dollar for dollar) for homeowner projects. When combined with the federal incentive, commercial property owners can realize an overall tax credit of 40%.

While Kentucky's program started very small with an overall statewide cap of only \$3 million available per year, it has grown significantly through advocacy to \$100 million per year making it one of the strongest historic tax credit incentives in the country. In 2024 alone, Kentucky allocated more than \$94 million in state historic tax credits to commercial and non-income producing projects and more than \$4 million in state historic tax credits to homeowners. Combined, these state tax credits leveraged more than \$565 million in total reinvestment in 194 historic properties statewide. Not bad for one year.

If that's not enough, these projects support our tax base, provide space for new businesses and needed housing, spur job creation encouraging additional private investment in neighboring properties, and promote general community revitalization. These incentives are typically "paid back" through sales, income, and property tax revenue in four short years, and they cannot be moved out of state once the incentive has been earned. To quote one Kentucky Governor, this program is a "no brainer."

Do you own or plan to purchase a historic home that will require more than \$20,000.00 in repairs in a future 24-month period? If so, the 30% Kentucky Historic Preservation Tax Credit may apply. Are you affiliated with a non-profit or local government that plans to invest more than \$20,000.00 in a historic property in a future 24-month period for non-income producing purposes? If so, Kentucky Historic

Preservation Tax Credits in the amount of 20% can be earned and sold to a financial institution to help underwrite qualifying repairs. And finally, do you own or plan to invest in the substantial rehabilitation of a historic commercial property in a future 24-month period? The 20% Federal Historic Tax Incentive and the 20% Kentucky Historic Preservation Tax Credit together might support the financial viability of your project. Let us help you make the math work!

For more information about the program requirements please visit the Kentucky Heritage Council (SHPO) website at heritage.ky.gov.



Rehabilitating Hopemont:

Our State Historic Tax Credit Experience

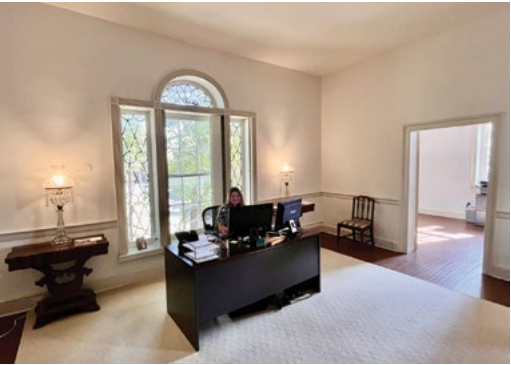
As part of the Hopemont Reimagined initiative, the Blue Grass Trust recently completed a thorough rehabilitation and modernization of its 1814 Hopemont property. The Blue Grass Trust administrative offices are now located on the second floor, while the primary space will contain a cutting-edge Preservation Resource Center consisting of exhibit and lecture areas, a reference library, and a modular conference/tutorial room. As the Blue Grass Trust intended from the outset to apply for state historic tax credits, it was essential alterations be performed in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. The state government allows nonprofits to claim up to 20% of qualified rehabilitation expenses as historic tax credits, which

these organizations can then syndicate (essentially, sell) to for-profit businesses with a tax burden.

Preparing the initial paperwork for the historic tax credit was straightforward. As a contributing resource in the National Register-listed Gratz Park Historic District, Hopemont was eligible to receive the credits; the Trust also supplied additional information on the significance and structural evolution of the building. Part 1 of the application called for extensive photographs of Hopemont's interior and exterior keyed to a site plan. In Part 2, the application required details of the modifications being made, including the systems upgrades and selection of finishes.



Hopemont's entry with its iconic fanlight doorway



Second-floor reception area



Historic preservation manager's office on the second floor



Hopemont first floor lecture space

Updating Hopemont's wiring necessitated some creative troubleshooting. Replacing the dated electrical receptacles along the baseboards was an easy fix, but the house lacked overhead fixtures in all but two rooms. Downstairs, electricians were able to tap into the existing dining room wiring to add four subtle track lights to illuminate the planned exhibits. To light the upstairs offices, wiring was fished down through the attic; the new ceiling fixtures are remote-controlled, or motion activated, as the tax credit reviewers discouraged the use of visible wiremold or conduit. Improving Hopemont's internet connectivity was more difficult still, as it was impossible to rely on Wi-Fi signals due to the solid-brick composition of the interior walls. The electricians therefore ran ethernet cables from the attic to the offices below and – rather ingeniously – to the A/V hub in the lecture space. They also went above and beyond in the first-floor conference room, fabricating hanging track lighting that accounts for ceiling joist deflection.

Aside from plaster repairs and repainting, the ash floors were also restored to their original luster by sanding them and applying a coat of amber-tinted polyurethane. During this work, it was discovered that a corner of the pine floor in the foyer was sagging. Cesar, the committed foreman, stabilized it by creating a metal support system that rests on the dirt-floor crawl space beneath. Other repairs included the installation of new piping wrapped in a heating coil to prevent ruptures during deep freezes under the second-floor bathroom.

Adhering to the rather exacting work plan necessitated near-constant communication with the contractors, as well as a thorough accounting of expenses for Part 3 of the application. But this oversight paid off, as the Blue Grass Trust was awarded \$72,706 in state historic tax credits that will be syndicated. BGT encourages residents of historic homes, owners of income-producing properties, and other nonprofits to take advantage of these generous incentives that, in many cases, can turn a preservation dream into a reality.

The Ryefield, An Uninhabited Family Farmhouse Comes to Life Using Historic Tax Credits



The Prewitt house in 2017 before the onset of rehabilitation work and the house as it looks today

The “Old Prewitt Place,” as folks in Clark County referred to it, off Basin Springs Road has been in the same family for generations. The land was originally titled to Patrick Henry as a military land grant, and there were several owners before the Prewitts. In recent decades with no family living on the farm, coupled with a 1970s fire, the original circa 1815 farmhouse, known as The Ryefield, had fallen into serious disrepair and decay.



Enter Anna-Coleman Prewitt Simon with her husband Dan Simon, who in 2017 decided to move back to Kentucky from their Alexandria, Virginia home of 12 years. The contrast could not have been more striking—from densely populated suburbia to residing on a 317-acre farm where the house is over half a mile off the road. Surveying the horizon in any direction from around the home, no other house is visible, nor is traffic audible. Standing on the front porch of The Ryefield, the vista is probably not too unlike what the first 19th century residents would have viewed and heard.

However, much planning and careful preparation went into this move to the country. While staying with Anna-Coleman’s parents on their Woodford County

farm, in August of 2017, the Simons opened the house and had structural engineer Jordan Yeiser carefully check the structural integrity of the house. Many of the floor joists as well as the flooring on the first floor had to be replaced, but the house had good bones. The Simons began working with general contractor Coppinger and Associates who reframed the roofing trusses and put a new metal standing seam roof on the original house. In the spring of 2018, Carter and Witt began major tuck-pointing and chimney rebuilding to complete sealing the exterior envelope of the home.



The entrance hallway after the initial restoration work and trash removal had begun and the same view after renovation. Anna-Coleman scraped and sanded the ash stair steps, which are original.

The 1970s fire had been in a wooden addition added at an earlier period and was not repairable. Tate, Hill, and Jacobs Architects designed a rear addition, which provided bathrooms, closets, and a modern kitchen among other accommodations for the Simon’s growing family. Daniel King and other skilled workmen from Coppinger were on hand to execute the plans and add knowledgeable assistance to the renovation of the original house.

Meanwhile, a lot of the unskilled work was being done by Dan and Anna-Cole-

man such as removing unrepairable plaster, paint-scraping, sanding and refinishing windows, doors, and other parts of the interior. Dan was able to accomplish some of the less demanding carpentry.

An essential part of providing feasibility to this major rehabilitation was and is utilizing Kentucky Historic Tax Credits. In the 1970s, The Ryefield had been placed on the National Register of Historic Places, which is a pre-requisite for applying for the tax credits. The first application completed by the Simons included insect treatments, floor replacement, plaster work, painting, electrical work, and other elements essential to preserving the historic home. They are now working on completing a second application for historic tax credits, as they continue the restoration.

Anna-Coleman found the application for tax credits manageable, but very specific expectations must be met. She praised the assistance provided by



Here Anna-Coleman is standing in the basement below the master bedroom-to-be. The flooring as well as the floor joists were so damaged they had to be removed. The master bedroom today has walnut flooring which was installed throughout the first floor. The wood came from Anna-Coleman’s parents’ farm in Woodford County.



The oldest structure was the original kitchen building in the rear of the main house. This view shows the brick kitchen and the addition designed by Tate, Hill, and Jacobs Architects. The original kitchen was gutted by the 1970s fire and today is transformed into the Simon’s living room. The exposed beams are original.

Mike Radeke, the Restoration Project Manager at the Kentucky Heritage Council with whom she met in person several times as well as communicated by phone and email. “He was extremely helpful and could not have been more generous with his time.” Anna-Coleman stressed that “before” and “after” photographs are extremely important, and the photos must include every angle of any given room. Such details are important, but the payoff is significant and can go a very long way in making such rehabilitation work financially feasible.



The Simon family on their front porch

One of Anna-Coleman’s major pieces of advice to the prospective historic tax credits applicant is to take lots of “before” pictures BEFORE beginning work. Failing to do so can greatly complicate if not nullify application success. The Simon family finally moved into their new old home just after Thanksgiving of 2019, and while there are projects remaining and plans yet to execute, this once decayed, abandoned, and nearly lost house is once again a vibrant family home. 🍂



The dining room, which is the first bay on the left after entering the house, had a hole in the corner which was a result of the 1970s fire. The corner cupboard is currently located in that corner.

Home in Historic Northside Neighborhood Enjoys Tax Credit Benefits X 3



456 North Limestone Street in Lexington

Nathan Rouse and his wife-to-be, Julie Burke, purchased the house at 456 North Limestone Street in Lexington in August 2015. With somewhat unconventional careers, he a consulting engineer for drilling and blasting and she a jockey, they found the challenges of updating the house for it to become the home they wanted no great obstacle. The kitchen was bare bones with a refrigerator, microwave, and a stainless tub sink. There were no cabinets or any other appliances. The two bedrooms upstairs had no air conditioning, so they opted for the small bedroom downstairs. In their mid-twenties, the couple was not discouraged by the spartan conditions and the initial adjustments they had to make in their new home.



Replacing the roof and repairing the box gutters were priorities for Nathan Rouse's first round of Kentucky Historic Tax Credits.

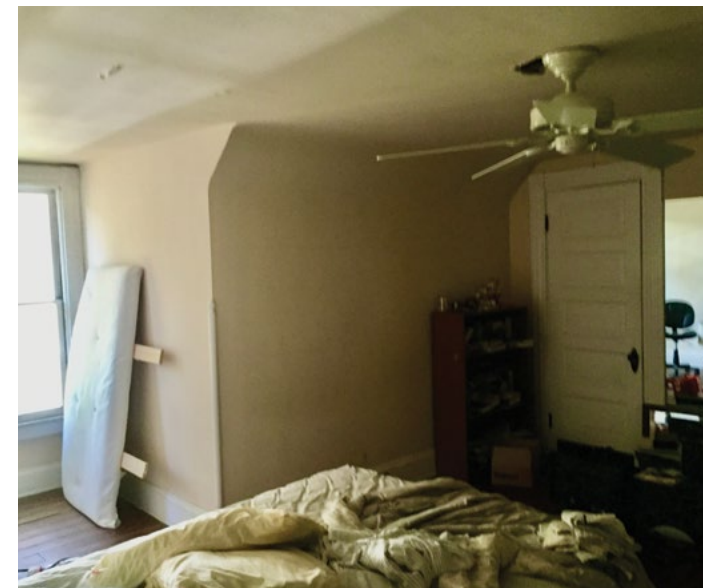
As with many buildings that have been neglected somewhat, the first priority had to be a new roof. As an early 20th century home when box gutters were in vogue, 456 Limestone needed these replaced as well. Before Nathan began making improvements, he received timely advice from Linda Carroll and John Morgan, who were his employers at the time and preservationists with vast experience renovating downtown Lexington properties. Since this section of North Limestone is in the Mulberry Hill Historic District and was already on the National Register of Historic Places, they advised Nathan to take advantage of Kentucky Historic Tax Credit financial assistance. So, Nathan's first tax credit application was for his new roof and box gutters. That work was completed in 2016.



Phase two renovations included a total remodel of the very sparsely equipped kitchen.



This angle of the renovated kitchen shows the chimney with the circular stained glass featuring the Irish knot.



A portion of one of the upstairs bedrooms prior to renovations

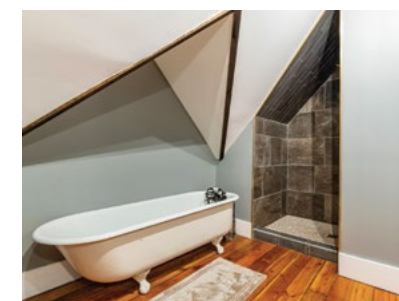


Architect Darren Taylor's design captured more upstairs livable space.

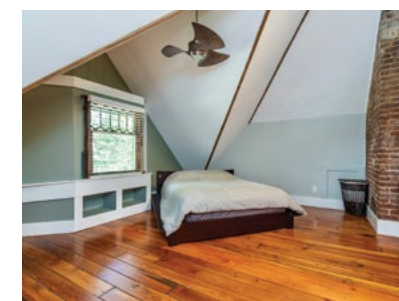
After the roof and gutter replacement, in 2018 the couple turned next to the downstairs kitchen and bathroom renovation. They had to move the refrigerator and microwave to the dining room, and for a period of about a month and a half they had no bathroom. Fortunately, both were able to take showers at work! While most of the kitchen redesign focused on upgrades, efficiency, and more space, a cast iron inlet pipe coming out of the chimney in the kitchen gave Nathan and Julie an opportunity for creative expression. Rather than cover up the hole in the chimney, they had a custom-designed stained-glass light made to fit the hole featuring an Irish knot, a nod to the original Irish owner as well as to Julie's home country. The successful completion of the second tax credit application was for the kitchen and bathroom improvements, making the financial impact of these rather costly upgrades much more manageable.



Another glimpse of one of the pre-renovation upstairs bedrooms



The original claw-foot bathtub was moved to the second floor from the downstairs bathroom.



With Darren Taylor's second-floor design, Nathan and Julie were able to expand the master bedroom to where they could use the front dormer window, which was previously in the attic

For the third tax credit application, Nathan and Julie tackled the upstairs bedrooms in 2019. They did most of the upstairs demolition themselves but hired out the rest of the tasks, including a new HVAC system for that floor. Nathan recalls the demolition experience as nothing less than "awful" with the accumulation of "over 100 years of dust and grime." The attic floors were black from all the dust and soot. Hoping to creatively maximize the limited space, they realized this was the most ambitious project of the three. To help them determine the best use of space, they hired Darren Taylor, currently of Gibson Taylor Thompson Architecture and Design, to reconfigure this part of the house.

The second floor was basically just two bedrooms, with a door leading to each. Darren was able to

expand the space dramatically to provide a bedroom with ensuite bathroom, another bedroom, another bathroom, a living room area, and a laundry room. He accomplished this by capturing much of the unfinished sections of the attic. While Darren Taylor created the plan, Mike Egan did all the finish carpentry and David Eden did all the painting and shower tiling. Nathan recalls both doing excellent work along with Scott Clapham and his crew at SEC Flooring who refinished all the floors.

Nathan did not find the Kentucky tax credit documents as complicated or challenging as have some others. He attributed this to his background in engineering as well as his familiarity with government forms and requirements. Several times during the course of completing his three tax credit applications, Nathan needed to contact the Kentucky Heritage Council. He found the personnel knowledgeable and helpful, but he completed the documents without any professional assistance.

Once the second-floor work was completed and Nathan and Julie had made improvements throughout the house and property, they were married in their "new" home in 2020. Then in late 2021, they sold the property and emigrated to Ireland, Julie's home. This is where they currently reside along with their 8-month-old baby boy.

Nathan recalls the improvements made to their home were well worth the effort and the inconvenience. They were able to price their home competitively due to the updates and renovations they had completed. The financial assistance of the Kentucky Historic Tax Credit program made the resulting sale even more gratifying. 🍀

Main Street Paris Investment with Tax Credits Is Transformative



The Robneel Building and the Hopewell Bake Exchange as they are today with apartments on the upper floors.



The Baldwin Hotel before renovation alongside Varden's after a previous first floor renovation by Philip and Trudy Tibbs



The Baldwin Hotel and Varden's, after both properties were completely renovated by the Poynter family

A trip to downtown Paris in Bourbon County is always a pleasant experience. Along Main Street, historic building facades remain mostly intact, and you will likely see a lot of activity as locals and visitors frequent the shops and businesses, while others visit the new Secretariat Park. This is not just an accident of the town's proximity to Lexington or simply good luck. Chris Poynter attributes much of Paris's downtown vibrancy to forethought given and actions taken 35 years ago. In 1989, Kentucky's SHPO (State Historic Preservation Officer) David Morgan got together with some forward-thinking people in the community to place all of downtown Paris on the National Register of Historic Places. Because of that action, all the buildings on Main Street in Paris are historic tax-credit-eligible. "That vision of 35 years ago has had a direct correlation to the revitalization that is taking place today," Chris explained.

Chris, a current Louisville resident, grew up in Paris where his parents, Debbie and Darrell, still reside. After college Chris worked as a reporter for the *Courier Journal* where,

among other things, he covered stories about historic preservation. Those assignments helped him realize the possibilities for Paris. With a love for his boyhood town, along with his parents' appreciation for historic preservation, Chris realized the potential—both aesthetically and financially—of becoming involved with historic preservation in Bourbon County and that tax credits made it significantly more feasible.

Chris, along with his parents, have now completed five renovation projects in Paris. In 2016 the first was the former Odd Fellows Lodge known as the Robneel Building at 800 Main Street. Built in 1908, the Robneel was the beginning of what has proven to be a successful formula—residential spaces on the upper floors and businesses on the ground floor. The Robneel has eight apartments and two commercial spaces at street level. That project was followed by the old Paris train station, which is now Trackside Restaurant and Bourbon Bar. At 134 East Tenth Street, this Blue Grass Trust award-winning restoration is the only project so far not on Main Street. The third

project was the Hopewell Bake Exchange at 719 Main Street. Above the bakery are two apartments.

The fourth project was the Baldwin Hotel, which had been mostly vacant for nearly 30 years and had been threatened by demolition. Purchased in 2021, this was one of the most challenging projects taken on by Chris and his parents. The previous owner had knocked down walls, making the renovation all the more challenging. Fortunately, the windows were original and could be restored. The Baldwin Hotel now has six apartments—four are long-term rentals and two are mid-term rentals. (The Poynters have no short-term rentals.) There are two retail spaces at street level.

The impact of the Baldwin project was even greater than Chris had imagined. The preservation of that building and the adjacent vacant lot changed the story of economic development for the entire block. That block had been mostly void of commercial activity and now is full. As Chris reflected on the Baldwin Hotel renovation, he proudly pointed out, "It shows the impact that even just renovating one building can have on a community." Chris lobbied to place a Secretariat



Walls removed during renovation of an apartment of the Baldwin Hotel, shown on the left, resulted in a spacious kitchen/living area shown on the right



The first floor of the Varden building is now occupied by "All About Kentucky." The mahogany cabinets and stained glass remain as they always have been. The unique interior contains many one-of-a-kind items.

project, the financial benefit can make a huge difference in a project's feasibility and economic outcomes.

Chris Poynter is a man on a mission in downtown Paris, Kentucky. After completing five renovation projects, he is planning for the next one. All of these have utilized Kentucky commercial historic tax credits. When asked about the occupancy rate of the rental



Chris Poynter in Secretariat Park with the mural of Secretariat on the wall of the Baldwin Hotel. All the stone in the park is from remnants of old stone walls from the Witt family farm in Bourbon County. Master stone mason and Irishman Charles Dewar and his crew did the stonework for the park.

properties, Chris said it is 100%! Obviously, Paris has become a growing attraction for visitors to Kentucky, and much of the credit goes to the Poynter family and other investors, with their vision for saving and restoring the town's historic buildings. 🇺🇸

mural on the side of the Baldwin. Then The Poynters purchased the vacant lot next to the Baldwin simply to have control of what would happen to it. Eventually, they Poynters transferred ownership of the lot to a non-profit foundation, and with tremendous community support, the vacant lot has been transformed into Secretariat Park, which instantly became a major attraction.

The fifth renovation project enlisted additional Bourbon County preservationists, along with the Poynters. Varden's Pharmacy building at 509 Main Street, had previously had a major ground floor Blue Grass Trust award-winning facelift by Philip and Trudy Tibbs over a decade ago. Chris had worked in the pharmacy while in high school and had wanted to purchase the Varden building for years. The property now has four newly renovated apartments above the striking street-level retail space.

Chris has been involved in acquiring Kentucky Historic Tax Credits for all five of these projects. He recalls the Kentucky Heritage Council was very helpful as he worked through the application process. He thinks many do not consider using this financial assistance because the application seems too daunting. But he says that is really not the case. It is quite manageable as long as you follow the directions and take it a step at a time. And whether it is a residential or a commercial

Home + Wedding Venue = *Heartland*

In 2017, Laura and James Stouffer, who already had a history of restoring old homes, knew they wanted to find a larger place with more acreage for their family. After much searching, they found Heartland, a home owned by the Prichard family of Woodford County. While having some trepidation about making such a challenging commitment, they were convinced this place would more than fulfill their expectations. They realized, too, their dream could only happen if they were able to create a business using the property to help finance the restoration, along with historic tax credits. As Laura explained, “We had to have a business to be able to raise our family here. They go hand in hand.”

In the previous three articles, tax credits played an essential part in making renovation expenses financially feasible. At Heartland, the necessity of using the Kentucky tax credits was even more compelling, and in this case, both residential and commercial tax credits were applied. Heartland is the 1886 Dr. McLeod House, owned by the Elliott family since the early 1900s, and then the Prichard home (by marriage) that sat on 500 acres. While the Stouffers had some experience with home renovation in Lexington, the renovation of Heartland far surpassed anything they had taken on previously.

The Stouffers crunched the numbers and Heartland, along with the 30-acre parcel of Woodford farmland they purchased with it, did not seem financially feasible. Using bold and creative thinking and fastidious calculations and methodical preparation, James and Laura came up with a plan to use the potentially scenic grounds and spacious first floor of their home as an event space to generate income while employing both commercial and residential tax credits to supplement the very hefty price tag that came with this adventure – an adventure which included their two- and four-year-old children.



The ruins of the carriage house overgrown after years of neglect

Their first step involved applying for the property to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Realizing the time and research required to accomplish that, they sought professional assistance. While that was happening, the Stouffers had time to assess all the work needed to make their new home attractive for weddings. They made the prudent decision to have Jen Williamson, a Frankfort architect with vast tax-credit experience, assist with the tax credits.

Jen guided them as how to proceed in order not to make missteps which could ultimately cause them to be ineligible to receive the much-needed credits. With this guidance from two professionals, the property was placed on the NRHP, and the tax credits followed.

James, as an engineer at Toyota, and Laura, with a background in marketing, were perfectly suited to take on the monumental task of renovating the home and grounds of Heartland, preparing it to become a beautiful events attraction. James was able to do much of the electrical work along with most of the interior paint removal, sanding, and refinishing of the slate mantels. Laura’s keen aesthetic was focused on planning the event spaces both inside and out. A small side porch was extended outward and converted into a spacious sunroom. Old bathrooms were refitted, and a new washroom was added to accommodate potential clients. Much of Laura’s time was devoted to managing the restoration project, including contractor communication, as well as sourcing renovation materials and purchasing furnishings to be added to the pieces left by the Prichard family. Also, some local planning and zoning approvals were needed, which meant the Stouffers had to make presentations to the local board on several occasions.

Behind the house, where the wedding vows were to be exchanged, was a jungle of honeysuckle, small trees, vines, and tall grass. James and Laura attacked this with the same determination that was to see their entire plan become a



Laura was inspired by the carriage house arch and envisioned it being the perfect setting for marriage ceremonies. After massive clean-up, stabilization, and landscaping efforts, the arch stands ready for the next wedding.

reality. They both invested an incredible amount of sweat equity into realizing their goal. An essential part of Laura’s vision was to incorporate the arch of the largely destroyed carriage house into the backdrop for weddings. The ruins of the carriage house structure had to be stabilized while huge amounts of decayed and destroyed portions of the structure had to be removed. The jungle was trans-



The spacious parlor at Heartland before and after renovation

formed into a beautifully manicured lawn, which provides seating for up to 200 wedding guests to witness vows being exchanged with the carriage house arch in the background.

Not only did Jen Williamson provide guidance for the tax credits, she also made a critical personnel recommendation, which James and Laura consider an essential factor in their success. At Jen’s suggestion, the Stouffers employed Anthony



The east-facing side of Heartland at the beginning of roof repair. The small, enclosed porch would be expanded during a later phase of renovation.

“Tony” Vince, a “seasoned, historic restoration conservator.... He was integral to the restoration projects from the plaster repair, masonry (stone, brick and patio pavers), floor re-finishing, walnut trim refinishing, etc. We relied heavily on his expertise for the journey.”

The spacious grounds have a park-like feel. Beautifully manicured grass spaces are flanked by wide walkways with steel edging. After consulting with landscape designer Jon Carloftis, the Stouffers designated a large flat space for tents, often an essential part of large wedding events. This tent space, along with the walkways, is covered with Brassfield, a fine crushed beige gravel from Indiana. Beside the area for tents is a woodland savanna, which provides shade and sylvan vistas with of another line of trees as well as the wooden fences of the adjacent horse farm.

Laura and James have even used a portion of the basement to create a grooms-men’s quarters, which is accessible from the backyard. Everything a groom and his grooms-men may need is available in this mancave.

The Stouffers have plenty of projects still to accomplish as they continue to make improvements to their home and the event space. They intend to apply again for Kentucky tax credits and view those tax credits as essential to bringing their dreams to fruition. 🍷



During renovation, the enclosed porch was expanded to make a much more multi-functional room for guests.

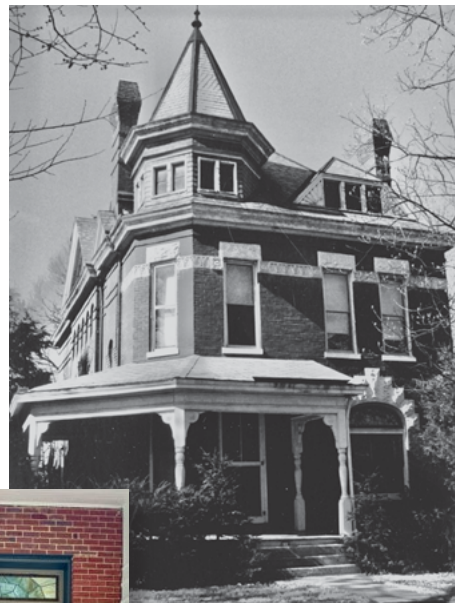


At the rear of the house behind the covered bar area is an entrance to the Grooms-men’s Room – a “man-cave.”

416 Fayette Park: A BGT Plaque House with a Tax Credit Story



416 Fayette Park Ave, east and north elevations, with inset of the front door. Stained glass is a characteristic of Fayette Park houses.



Photograph of 416 Fayette Park, 1976 (University of Kentucky Special Collections: Northside Neighborhood Association Records)



Welcome to Fayette Park, one of Lexington's toniest pocket neighborhoods and the location of our featured plaque property. The stunning Romanesque house at 416 Fayette Park has been lovingly rehabilitated by its current owners, who received state historic tax credits for that project.

In 1889, Stephen A. Charles purchased land from the Fayette Park Company and constructed this impressive home as his own residence. As was typical for Romanesque architecture in Central Kentucky, the building also features elaborate woodwork characteristic of Eastlake design. As the superintendent of the Lexington Hydraulic and Manufacturing Company, which supplied the city's water, Charles was a prominent citizen and civic improver. For instance, he vocally advocated for brick roads, which wore better than limestone blocks when fired at a high temperature. Meanwhile, his wife, Sophia, was an avid philanthropist and president of the Humane Society who occasionally took in malnourished horses. Their family's presence in Fayette Park surely helped establish it as "the most desirable place in the city."

By 1902, Charles had completed another stately dwelling for his family at 439 Fayette Park (also a plaque property) and sold 416 to grocer and amateur photographer J. Howard Curry. In 1905, it was acquired by the young doctor Warren B. Davis, who lived there with his widowed mother. Eventually, the house passed to Warren's sister, Mayme Wharton, and her husband, Joseph. Their children, Lucille and Mary, continued to reside there after Mayme's death in 1962.

The name Mary Wharton should be familiar to local plant lovers. Appointed to the Department of Biology at Georgetown College in 1947, she rose to the position of chair before retiring in 1974. During this time, Mary authored notable guidebooks such as *Wildflowers and Ferns of Kentucky* and *Trees and Shrubs of Kentucky*. Between 1958 and 1989, she amassed 287 acres of land along the Kentucky River for conservation; in 1987, the Floraciff nonprofit was established to manage

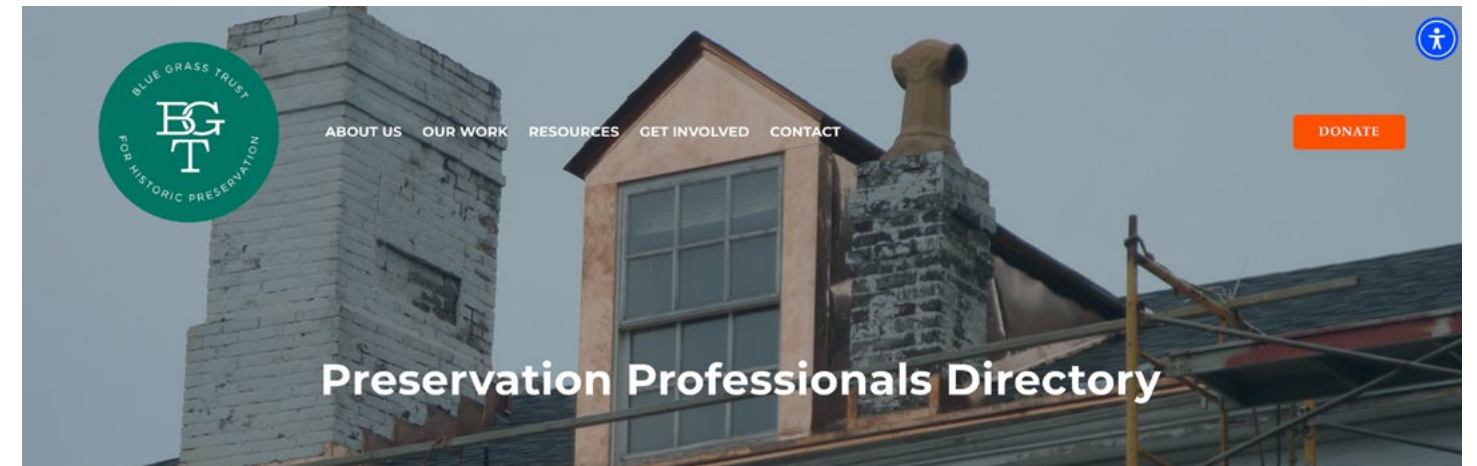
this acreage. Wharton was also responsible for imposing a scenic easement on part of this tract, the first of its kind in Kentucky.

When architect Susan Hill and her husband, Ray, purchased 416 Fayette Park in 1992, it required significant heating, electrical, and plumbing upgrades. In 2021, the Hills received state historic tax credits following a massive repointing of the house's brick walls, foundation, and five chimneys. Although the application for these credits did take some time to complete, the Hills "are grateful that this program exists and that Kentucky has increased the funding for a wide range of historic properties." Indeed, Susan and Ray are intending to apply for additional tax credits to help finance a new phase of this on-going rehabilitation that will include reroofing, repainting, and porch repairs.

This magnificent Romanesque home in Fayette Park remains a tribute to late 19th century architecture in Central Kentucky. The Hills' dedication to its maintenance and improvement ensures it will continue to be a part of what makes this "tony pocket neighborhood" so special, and they have demonstrated Kentucky Tax Credits can play a significant part in the process. 🌿



West elevation with an inset of one of the house's several chimneys, all of which have intricate brickwork, another characteristic of these homes



Preservation Professionals Directory: Highlighting Josh Lowry

In a new initiative, the Blue Grass Trust is pleased to provide property owners with a free listing of craftspeople, contractors, and professional service providers who focus on historic preservation and traditional construction methods related to the maintenance, restoration, and rehabilitation of historic structures. The list went "live" on the BGT website in October and will be expanded on a continuing basis. To view the listing, go to bluegrasstrust.org/directory.

One of the preservation professionals listed in the directory is BGT Preservation Craftsman Award recipient Josh Lowry who is a finish carpenter and cabinet maker specializing in custom cabinetry, built-ins, and millwork that strike a balance between modernizing the property and maintaining the integrity of a historic home.

He does new construction as well but said, "It's not as rewarding... I'd much rather work on something historic and bring life back to it."

Josh is dedicated to preservation and said, "Sometimes just doing part of a project on an old remodel is disheartening because the people who came before you may not have had the same integrity towards preservation and respecting the people that did the work before them."

He started woodworking when he was 14, saying, "That's all I've ever wanted to do."

After more than 20 years working on historic homes, he has built a consid-



A small sample of Josh Lowry's work on historic homes in Central Kentucky

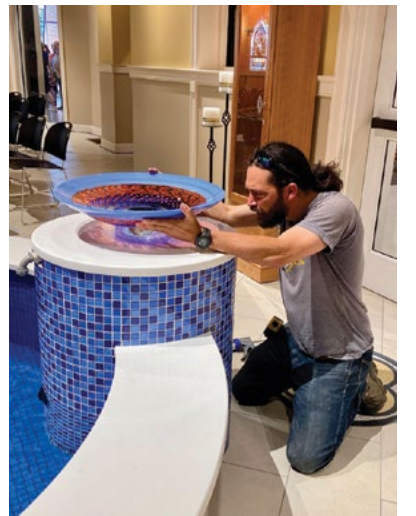
erable knowledge base, but talk to him for a few minutes and you will see one of the things that sets him apart is his passion for the craft.

"I prefer to work on the things that excite me," he said. "I would rather drive 100 miles to work on something I enjoy than to drive five miles down the road doing some apartment building or something."

But he knows every historic project has unexpected challenges, and he's willing to meet them all to get the job done. "Never do you walk into a historic remodel and have anything just cut and dry," he said. "But nothing beats a good project, like a whole house that was done right and everything comes together." He cited the Saint Peter Claver Church on Fourth Street as an example of a project coming together in ways both beautiful and artistic.

For Josh, preservation is about respecting the beauty and artistry of historic buildings as well as the craftsmen who did the work. "When you walk in these old houses and you see the things that these craftsmen have done before me—they had to do all that by hand—and I look at the effort they put forth, and the talent they had to have, and the last thing I want to do is come in and ruin that or disrespect that," he said. "I feel that's something you have to live up to."

Preservation professionals interested in being included in the directory should contact Community Outreach Manager Jackson Osborne at josborne@bluegrasstrust.org or 859-253-0362. 🌿



While doing the finish carpentry at the St. Peter Claver Catholic Church addition in Lexington, Josh Lowry was asked to help install the Stephen Powell baptismal bowl.

A Place to Rest Your Head



The original St. Asaph Hotel in Stanford, KY

Lodging and travel are natural companions. While taverns and inns were built along fledgling transportation networks, as transportation improved and towns expanded, hotels became an important part of the local economy and community. Hotels were an outgrowth of the American desire to shape the landscape with a focus on commercial development and growth.

Our county seat towns (and smaller communities, as well) retain many examples of former hostelrys, some adaptively reused, others still serving as hotels, and some just...languishing.

By necessity of space, this is a brief and not at all academic overview, touching on various types of historic lodging options common in Kentucky: late 19th century buildings in commercial blocks on Main Street; railroad hotels; purpose-built hotels in the early 20th century; and historic homes transformed into motor courts.

One of the oldest buildings on Main Street in Stanford, Kentucky was also one of its oldest hostelrys. The two-story brick building at the corner of Main and Mill opened in



The 1930 addition to the St. Asaph Hotel, now the Stanford Inn at Wilderness Road



The New Sherwood Hotel in New Haven, KY

1878 as the St. Asaph Hotel, although an inn or tavern is purported to have been located on the site since 1820. The 1886 Sanborn Fire Insurance map shows the building, then known as the Portman Hotel, hosted several uses, in addition to hotel rooms: a grocery, a dry goods and notions store, and a dwelling. The hotel continued well into the 20th century, expanding in 1918 with a small barbershop addition on the east elevation.

In 1930, the St. Asaph Development Corporation announced a new addition: the Hargan Motor Company, "Kentucky's most modern garage." This two-story addition to the St. Asaph Hotel housed the garage on the first floor, and rooms leased to the St. Asaph Hotel on the second story.

In 1955, the hotel known as the "Stanford Hotel" was sold at auction. The building then housed the Gaines Furniture Company for many years. The 1930 addition to the St. Asaph Hotel is now a boutique hotel with eight rooms known as the Stanford Inn at Wilderness Road.

The expansion of the railroad across Kentucky after the Civil War ushered in a new



The Lawrenceburg Hotel in Lawrenceburg, KY



The Harrison Hotel in Cynthiana, KY



Undated historic postcard showing the Montgomery Hotel



The Baldwin Hotel in Paris, KY (See also pp. 22-23)



Motor court in Lebanon, KY

type of hotel: the railroad hotel. The 1914 New Sherwood Hotel, in New Haven, Kentucky, replaced a late 19th century hotel destroyed by fire. After the hotel was closed, the ground floor businesses, restaurants, and bars, and the hotel rooms on the second floor were converted into apartments.

The circa 1908 Lawrenceburg Hotel, located right by the Cincinnati Southern tracks, also replaced an earlier building lost to fire. In 1909, the hotel, which has a handsome, stone-accented brick facade, boasted— in addition to its guest rooms—a restaurant, bar, the hotel proper, a grocery, and a theater. The Lawrenceburg Theater, twice listed on the BGT's Eleven Endangered List (2003 and 2009), is in desperate need of a rebirth.

In the first half of the 20th century, many purpose-built hotels were constructed in Kentucky's downtowns. Two examples, both built between 1922 and 1923, can be found in Cynthiana and Mt. Sterling. The three-story brick Harrison Hotel made ample use of popular Revival style themes in its design, with stone quoins and arched windows enlivening the facade. The Harrison Hotel was remodeled into apartments in the early 1980s.

The four-story brick Montgomery Hotel in Mt. Sterling, Kentucky featured similar stylistic inspiration and a large ballroom on the first floor above the ground level storefront. It was later remodeled in the early 1960s and became a bank, boasting the first drive-through bank branch in town.

In 1933, the Hotel Baldwin, built on the site of the burned Fordham Hotel, opened on Main Street in Paris, Kentucky. The three story, brick, Art Moderne building was described as "modern in every respect" and "quite an addition to Main Street." Known as the Baldwin Hotel today, the building was renovated in 2022 and features six furnished apartment suites for "leisure and business travelers."

Improved roads and proliferation of automobiles brought about another change in overnight accommodations after World War II. Downtown hotels and "free range camping" (stopping the car and camping in an "attractive spot along the roadside at day's end")—couldn't deal with the deluge of travelers. Motor courts began to sprout across the country, and Kentucky was no exception. One of the most interesting phenomenon, in my opinion, is the practice of building a motor court around an existing 19th century dwelling.

In 1949, a historic 19th century brick side-passage house in Lebanon, Kentucky, was transformed into a motor court, with the historic house preserved and serving as office and home to the motel proprietors. The stone veneer motel rooms, arranged on either side of the historic house, with 14 rooms on one side, and 10 on the other, formed the Hollyhill Inn. It appears to still be functioning as a hotel.

There are two historic houses with motor courts in Mt. Sterling, Kentucky. One is the former Hall's Motel, later known as Little's Motel, built in 1949 around a circa 1860 Greek Revival/Italianate dwelling on Main Street in Mt. Sterling, Kentucky. The U-shaped, brick veneer motor court had 26 rooms. The historic hotels around Kentucky offer tremendous adaptive reuse potential – and when these buildings remain in service, they enhance the quality of life for each community. 🇺🇸



The former Hall/Little Motel, built around a circa 1860 house, Mt. Sterling, KY

The University of Kentucky's College of Design and Historic Preservation Department Move to the Gray Design Building



Gray Design Building (Reynolds Building) before rehabilitation



Gray Design Building after rehabilitation

In March 2024, the UK College of Design realized its long-held dream of uniting all its programs under one roof with a move to the Gray Design Building. The Department of Landscape Architecture, a unit of the Martin-Gatton College of Agriculture, Food, and Environment, joined the Department of Historic Preservation, the School of Architecture, the School of Interiors, and the Department of Product Design in their new home to increase opportunities for collaboration across design disciplines and to allow the various programs to grow, diversify, and cross-pollinate.

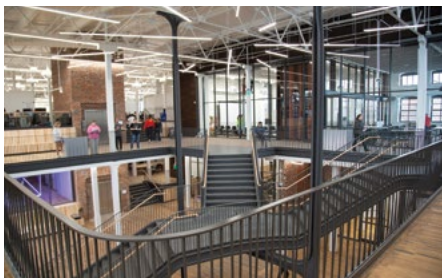
The Gray Design Building is the rehabilitated version of the R. J. Reynold Company Building, constructed in 1917 as a tobacco warehouse and redrying plant. Built of brick masonry with heavy timber framing, it is one of only a few structures surviving to represent Lexington's history as a center of tobacco sales and processing in the early twentieth century.

UK acquired the Scott Street warehouse, which overlooks South Broadway Street, in 1962. It housed the Department of Art for many years but was empty in 2015 when Mitzi Vernon first arrived in Lexington to serve as Dean of the College of Design. She quickly realized the simple structure could not only transform her college but also further several of UK's facilities master planning goals and determined to convince university administration to renovate the building for the College of Design. UK's Board of Trustees approved the plan in 2019, and the internationally recognized architecture practice Studio Gang was chosen as design lead for the project and K. Norman Berry Associates as the architect of record.

In addition to its ability to fuse historic preservation with innovative, contemporary design, Studio Gang recognized the inherently sustainable character of the proposed project. Jeanne Gang, FAIA, the firm's founding partner, remarked: "At a time when it is essential to conserve resources and decarbonize, the work of reinventing existing buildings to serve new purposes has never been more critical. The Reyn-

olds project demonstrates this idea and takes it beyond environmental necessity, showing how re-use can also be a satisfying, creative act of design and making."

A gift of over \$5.25 million from Gray, Inc. in 2022 enabled the realization of this vision. Widely recognized as an industry leader in design-build, part of Gray, Inc.'s gift includes funds dedicated to creating a design-build program within the School of Architecture.



"The Clearing" is a two-level, central space at the heart of the building that serves both circulation and gathering.



Design students working in the former warehouse storage space on the 2nd level

The Gray Design Building was carefully planned to preserve its historical essence while transforming Reynolds into a cutting-edge educational facility. Key elements of the original structure, such as the exposed brick walls, wooden beams, and large window openings have been retained, while other existing features, including open floorplates and a repetitive structural grid were reimaged to maximize interaction among people and disciplines. At the same time, modern enhancements like energy-efficient systems and state-of-the-art audiovisual equipment were designed to meet contemporary academic needs while maintaining the building's historical integrity.

Although many within the preservation community regard UK as a poor steward of its historic buildings, the institution has preserved several of its landmarks, such as a portion of the old Student Center, Patterson Hall, Cooper House, and Memorial Coliseum. The university is currently renovating or planning to rehabilitate

many historic central campus's buildings, including those vacated by the College of Design. As UK's most significant example of combining preservation and sustainability techniques to re-purpose an older, historic facility, the Gray Design Building is more than simply a rehabilitation project—it's a re-envisioning of how a historic building can be adapted to modern needs while preserving its historic architectural character. Gray bridges Reynolds' industrial past and its future as an innovative hub for design education. **The Gray Design Building will be the focus of the Blue Grass Trust's November 2024 deTour event.** 🍷



Preservation Matters: Catch Up on the Latest deTours!

Hello, preservation enthusiasts! Since the last issue of *Preservation Matters*, the deTours stalwarts have been busy exploring some of Central Kentucky's most fascinating historic spots. From a bourbon-industry farm to an iconic civil rights site, deTours has been diving deep into the past, connecting with our community, and of course, having a blast along the way.

The deTour summer series kicked off at Bluegrass Distillers at Elkwood Farm in Midway, Kentucky where bourbon and history meet. Originally built in the mid-1830s, this historic farm has found new life as a bustling distillery and visitors' center. Attendees enjoyed a behind-the-scenes look at the grain-to-glass process



May deTour at Leeds Theater in Winchester, KY with Bo List as the guide



June deTour of Bloomfield, KY included the Pink Garden House.



July deTour of Elkwood Farm in Midway, KY began on the porch of the historic home



September deTour of Hanover Tower in Lexington included a rooftop vista.

that makes Bluegrass Distillers so unique to the Bourbon Trail—and yes, a bourbon tasting was involved! Wandering through the beautifully preserved grounds, the history of the farm came alive, making it a perfect start of our season of exploration.

The Historic Palmer Pharmacy in Lexington's East End—a site with deep roots in the civil rights movement—was the next deTour. Built in 1961 by Dr. Zirl Palmer, it was the first Black-owned Rexall franchise in the country and a vital community hub. deTours participants were inspired by the story of Dr. Palmer's resilience, especially after learning about the challenges he faced, including the racially motivated bombing that forced the closure of his second pharmacy. Thanks to the efforts of the Blue Grass Trust and our partners, the original Palmer Pharmacy still stands, now serving as a WayPoint for the United Way, carrying on Dr. Palmer's legacy of community service.



October detour of Richard Taylor's Home along Elkhorn Creek in Franklin County, KY

The September deTour explored Hanover Towers, a mid-century structure in Lexington's Ashland Park neighborhood. Built in 1964, this 9-story gem celebrated its 60th anniversary this year. The large gathering of "deTourists" was provided the opportunity to see the various condominium

layouts, savor refreshments, and take in the stunning views from the rooftop. Hanover Towers has housed some notable residents over the years and continues to be a standout in Lexington's architectural landscape. The charm and stories of this place were the perfect backdrop for a delightful evening!

The fall deTours schedule wrapped up with a visit to the Giltner-Holt House in Franklin County, the historic home of former Kentucky Poet Laureate Richard Taylor. Purchased in 1975 and affectionately nicknamed "Taylor's Folly," this 1859 home was a true labor of love for Taylor, who transformed it from fixer-upper to literary haven. Nestled along the scenic Elkhorn Creek, the house not only stands as a testament to Taylor's dedication but also serves as a source of inspiration for his work. Exploring this historic gem with Taylor's stories echoing in the background was a highlight many will not soon forget.

Blue Grass Trust invites you to join future deTours on the first Wednesday of the month to continue to uncover the hidden gems and untold stories of Kentucky's rich heritage. Visit bluegrasstrust.org, Facebook, Instagram, or the YouTube channel to learn more and stay updated on upcoming adventures. 🍷

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Blue Grass Trust Wins Prestigious 2024 Thomas D. Clark Award of Excellence



Kentucky Historical Society Executive Director Scott Alvey (left) and President of the Kentucky Historical Society Governing Board Cynthia Torp (right) present the 2024 Thomas D. Clark Award of Excellence to members of the Blue Grass Trust Staff.

The Blue Grass Trust has been named the recipient of the 2024 Thomas D. Clark Award of Excellence by the Kentucky Historical Society. This esteemed award is presented annually to a Kentucky history organization that has made significant contributions to preserving and promoting our commonwealth's rich heritage.

The award was presented to Blue Grass Trust leadership and staff at the 2024 Kentucky History Awards ceremony on June 1 in Frankfort. Kentucky Historical Society Executive Director Scott Alvey and President of the Kentucky Historical Society Governing

Board Cynthia Torp were on hand to present the accolade. A video highlighting the Blue Grass Trust's work was also showcased and is available for viewing on the Kentucky Historical Society YouTube Channel.

"Being awarded the Thomas D. Clark Award is a testament to the hard work and dedication of our entire team and supporters," said Executive Director Jonathan Coleman. "We are immensely proud of this recognition and especially the mission-driven efforts this recognition represents." 🇺🇸