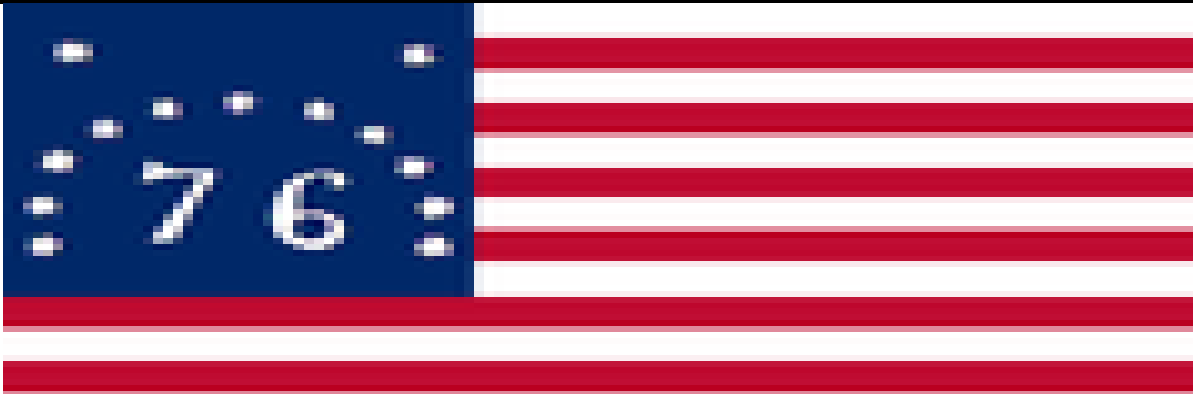


Quarterly Newsletter of the Woodford County Historical Society, Inc.

**Officers:**

President: Winfrey Adkins

Vice-president:

William Phelps

Treasurer: Alison Hume

Secretary: Shirley Rouse

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Martin Traugott

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Wayne Basconi

Gay Belcher

Linda Finnell

Harold Lee

Brady Miller

Amber Harvey

Judy Phillips

**Historical Society
Needs and Wishes:**

- Table Size Easels
- Single Pole Coat Rack
- 1958 & 1964 -*The Jacketeer*
- An Air Purifier
- Old photos of Woodford County Families - Please ID

A Letter from the President:**WCHS President's report for Newsletter June, 2024**

Hello again. We are very busy here at the Society working on a number of projects. First (and foremost) is the possible relocation of the J.J. Crittenden Cabin. As you may know, this structure was moved from it's original location on Methodist Home Property, to where it is today, on property owned by The Frontier Nursing College (former Methodist Home Property). After several meetings with interested parties, the Administration of The Nursing College, Experts in the field of Log Cabin Restoration, and Moving, and talks with public officials, we are making slow progress toward this goal. We will need a new location to place the Cabin, as well as a plan to move, restore, and maintain it when it is relocated. In addition we will need funds, in the form of grants, donations, or a foundation to take this treasure of local history into the future. I will keep you updated as we move ahead with this project.

Second, we are excited that the City of Versailles, Farmer's Market and Park renewal is on schedule and nearing completion. This will bring renewed focus to our Museum Facility, as we will be in a frequently visited area by many of our locals as well as out of town visitors. A new park access ramp and a theater stage will compliment the area improvements, near our facility.

Third, The General Lafayette Historical Marker should be arriving soon, and is set to be installed, with a ceremony, near our WCHS Museum building.

Fourth, The Museum staff, and Volunteers continue to do a great job in cataloging, inventorying, and storing donations and already acquired artifacts. Several Officers, Directors, Members, and Volunteers are working, on a daily basis, to keep our Museum open to the public, now four days a week. We can always use more volunteers to be able to open more days. Please email

or call the Historical Society if you are interested in volunteering leaving your name and contact information.

Fifth, I had the privilege to present the May WCHS program, at The Woodford County Library Community Room on Thursday night May 23. It was a rendition of a power-point presentation highlighting scenes from the 20th Century Fox movie, The Flim-Flam Man (1967) , which was filmed in Central Kentucky. This featured scenes as they appeared in the movie, and how they look in more recent times. Dennis Martin, co-author of this program flew in from Los Angeles to assist with this program.

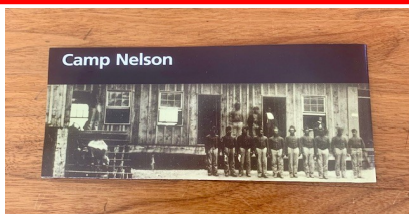
Sixth, As an FYI, the Kentucky Tourism Cabinet is preparing a State Wide “Railroad Related” Visitor Guide, geared toward tourists who seek out railroad-related attractions (like Bluegrass Railroad Museum, Nostalgia Station, Bluegrass Rail Explorers, Ricardo's Restaurant, and Downtown Midway (all in Woodford Co.) This guide will feature videos, as well as suggested itineraries for this untapped area of Kentucky Tourism. Our Historical Society Museum could benefit from a future influx of visitors as a result of this area of tourism.

Seventh (and last!) We are in need of members. If you know someone who is interested in our rich Woodford County History, please ask them to join the WCHS (membership levels are available elsewhere in this newsletter). We welcome new members, and this way we can keep our history alive,

General William Woodford

(A correction to the article in our last newsletter regarding General Woodford's birth place.)

Woodford County was named after General William Woodford, interestingly he never stepped foot in the county in Kentucky. The County was formed from a part of Fayette County Virginia in 1788. William Woodford, an American Revolutionary War General from Virginia, died while a prisoner of war in 1780. Woodford was born October 6, 1734, in Caroline County, Virginia, obviously no where near Versailles, Kentucky. Caroline County is in the eastern part of Virginia, northeast of Richmond. Richmond County Virginia also has a town/hamlet named after General Woodford.



160th Anniversary

Commemoration

July 12 - 14, 2024

Friday, July 12: History at Sunset ~ 7:00 p.m.-8:30 p.m.

Saturday, July 13: The American Awakening ~ 9:15 a.m.-9:30 p.m.

Sunday, July 14: Refugees and Realities: Graveyard No. 1 ~ 9:00a.m.-3:00p.m.

More Details: 160th Camp Nelson Anniversary Commemoration - Camp Nelson National Monument (U.S. National Park Service) (nps.gov)





Brick Sales 2024

The Woodford County Historical Society is accepting brick orders for our annual Commemorative Brick program around the flagpole at 121 Rose Hill. This year the dedication of the bricks, in honor or memory of those we care about, will be Thursday, September 26 at 6:00 p.m. The bricks are on sale through Thursday, August 1. Unlike other things, the cost for a brick has not changed! The dark red, standard size bricks, allow three lines of laser imprinted letters, all the same size, with twenty characters per line. Characters include spacing and any punctuation used at a cost of \$100.00 per brick. A separate order form must be enclosed for each brick ordered.

To purchase a brick, contact the Society by phone at 859-873-6786 or email at woodford-kyhs@gmail.com. The form for the bricks is also on our Website and on the next to last page of this newsletter. You may drop them off or mail them to us at Woodford County Historical Society, 121 Rose Hill Avenue, Versailles, KY 40383.

Versailles High School

1944

**40th Class Reunion
"Getting Old"**

Just a line to say I'm living
That I'm not among the dead
Tho' I'm getting more forgetful,
And more mixed up in the head.

For sometimes I can't remember
When I stand at the foot of the stairs,
If I must go up for something
Or I've just come down from there.

And before the fridge so often
My poor mind is filled with doubt
Have I just put food away, or
Have I come to take some out?

And there's times when it's dark outside
With my nightcap on my head
I don't know if I'm retiring, or
Just getting out of bed.

So if it's my turn to write to you
There's no need in getting sore
I may think that I have written
And don't want to be a bore.

So remember – I do love you
And wish that you were here
But now it's nearly mailtime
So I must say goodbye my dear.

There I stood beside the mailbox
With a face so very red
Instead of mailing you my letter
I had opened it instead!

Saturday, October 13, 1984
Woodford Hills Country Club

Caverns in Woodford County - Part II

On a certain cold day in the winter of 1965, on Montgomery Avenue, mom watched me pack a green ammo box with 35 mm canisters of carbide. She cautioned “Remember what happened to Floyd Collins”. I was headed underground to explore a cave located not far from Nonesuch, somewhat near Lock 6. Mom herself had told me the location. As a schoolgirl she had carried water from the spring at the mouth of that cave up the hill to Mt. Edwin school (see footnote). That schoolhouse was now (in 1965) the residence of Joe Weber.

A mapping team from UK joined me on this trip to Webber’s cave. We would publish our map in *The Kentucky Caver, Volume 1, Number 3, December 1965*. That same publication would include an article I wrote about an experimental 2000-hertz location device that allowed one of us (one who remained on the surface) to stake a benchmark directly above each subsurface survey station – useful if a recovery shaft had to be drilled, should we meet the fate of Floyd Collins. To clarify, Joe Weber and his brother Martin Weber (my great uncle) spelled their name with one ‘b’. Their brother John spelled it with two ‘b’s’. We named the cave after the wrong brother.

At the entrance to Webber’s cave, at one time, was a ‘perpetual motion’ water pump - best described as a mechanical heart the size of my fist. With a thump-thump heartbeat it had pumped water up the hill to a cistern, 30 to 60 squirts per minute, 24/7, no electricity or gasoline. Years later, Joe Weber’s son-in-law, Carl Patterson, would take that ‘heart’ - a hydraulic ram pump – to demonstrate at the annual tractor show in Nicholasville.

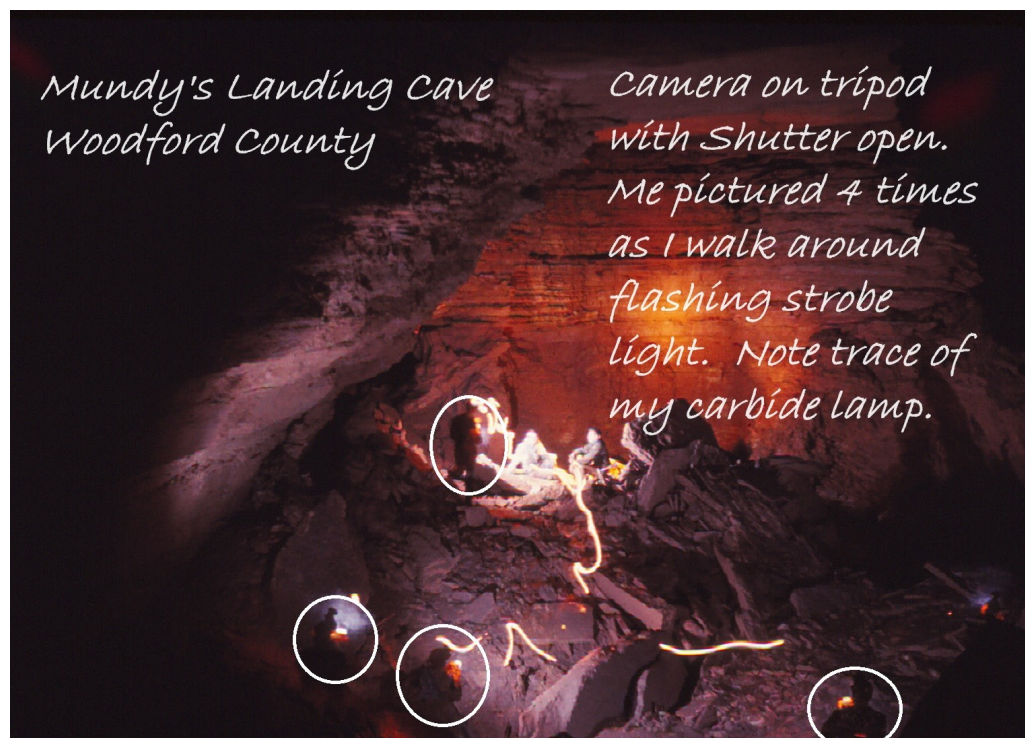
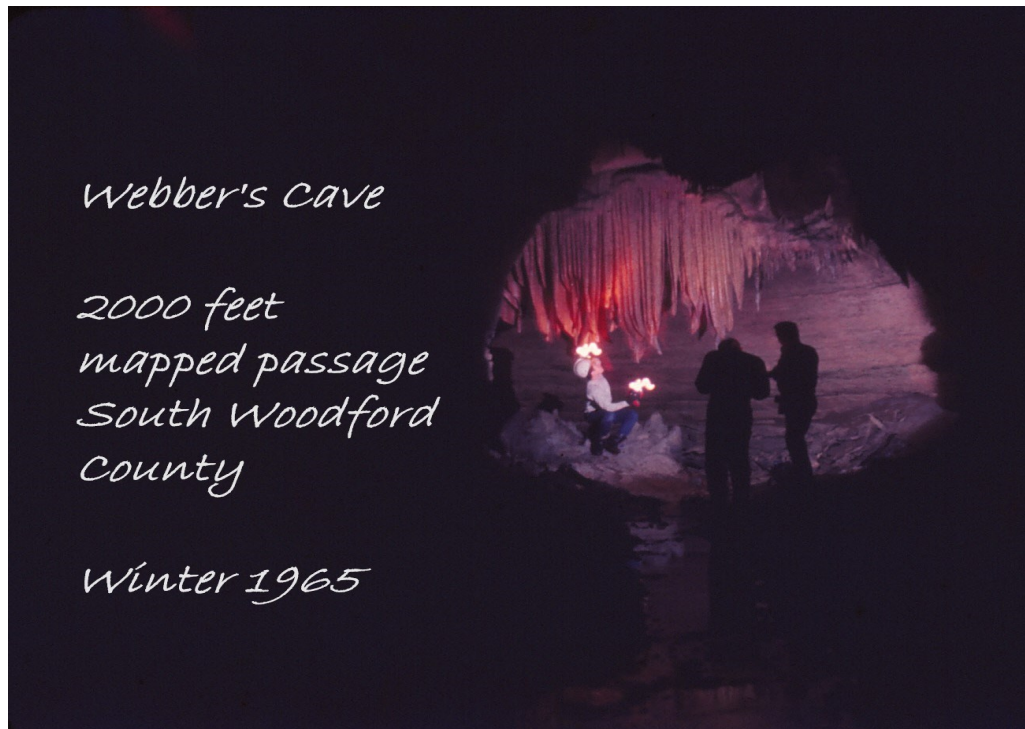
As a history note, in 1921 Charles Lindbergh explores a Kentucky cave with Homer Collins, a teenager his own age he meets in the Mammoth Cave area. Lindbergh writes that Homer pointed to an archway in the cave and asks, “Ya see that hole over there? Floyd – he’s my brother – he tried to reach the end o’ that; but he ran outa time an’ food”. “Time?” (Lindbergh adds.) “Who knows what time it is inside this planet shut off from sun and stars. Here time is meaningless. There’s no sign of earth’s rotation, no direction, twilight, dawn, or day” (from Charles Lindbergh, *The Spirit of St. Louis*, 1953, page 348). There are unverified (and likely untrue) reports that Lindbergh himself was one of the aviators who flew film negatives from Kentucky to the news agencies in Chicago during Floyd Collins entrapment in Sand Cave.

Mom had listened each day to the national news coverage. Floyd Collins was trapped about 10 am January 30, 1925. By February 13th, the Kentucky National guard had pretty much given up hope. Floyd’s body was eventually recovered, placed in a glass casket in Crystal Cave, stolen, returned with a missing leg, finally buried for the last time in 1989 at the Mammoth Cave Baptist Church. For references, google ‘Kentucky Cave Wars’.

I used a carbide head lamp in my exploration of caves in Woodford County. A 35 mm film canister would hold one load of carbide. A surplus ammo box would hold lots of canisters. When I repelled into a deep crevasse in Mundy’s Landing Cave, I did it in total black darkness because the acetylene flame of a carbide lamp would torch nylon climbing rope. Spelunking in Woodford County is dangerous. The two-foot-wide crevasse - sixty feet deep, straight down - in Mundy’s Landing Cave in the floor of a passageway would be death for a distracted explorer.

Martin Traugott

Footnote: There were 42 schools in Woodford County when my mom was a student (1906 to 1912). Pictures of those schools—that we now have on display—were part of an exhibition at the 1893 Worlds Fair in Chicago. Mt. Edwin was mis-identified as Mt. Edmund in the exhibit.



**The Residence at 131
Montgomery Avenue
On 1877 Map of
Woodford County**

Presented by Dan Crabtree
Article by Judy Phillips



The WCHS presented a program at 6:30 p.m., Thursday, April 25, 2024, at this facility, 121 Rose Hill Avenue. Our speaker was Dan Crabtree, former Lexington resident. Dan presented his research on his current residence at 131 Montgomery Avenue in Versailles.

Crabtree graduated from the University of Kentucky in 1972 with double majors in history and political science and a secondary teaching certificate. He first was a “home missionary,” serving as a teacher, coach and church youth worker at Red Bird Mission in Bell County. Later he served as the girls’ basketball coach at Red Bird High School while being a junior high teacher in a four room Leslie County school. He also served a brief string as a Michigan youth pastor to start his career. For 21years, Crabtree worked in the field of college admissions, then switched to the secondary side of college admissions as a counselor at Wheaton Academy near Chicago. He retired from that field after 16 years and moved to Versailles, Kentucky.

A copy of Deed Book 5, page 190 had been left on the mantle from a sale dated in October 1892 between two females who had owned the property. Later on Crabtree discovered their original three –room home on the 1877 map of the town. Crabtree’s extensive research related to this property sows that many surprises may surface in diligent research of history from more than 150 years ago.

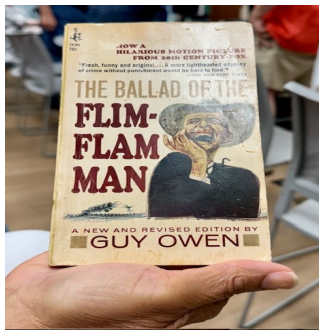
Research further led him to discover that in 1853 Peter Yager and his wife had owned this property. Poring over an 1853 local newspaper, he learned that Yager had been murdered that year, a tragic crime committed by three of his own enslaved men at a now long abandoned city dump, then on Macey Avenue. The newspaper gave many details of this bizarre event from this court case with the eventual execution by hanging of the three men for their actions.

Crabtree’s extensive research related to this property shows that many surprises may surface in diligent research of history from more than 150 years ago.

Our program was well attended with lively discussion following. A thoughtful guest provided refreshment.



Winfrey Adkins



This pocket book of *The Ballad of the Flim-Flam Man* was published in 1967.



Dennis Martin

The Woodford County Historical Society hosted its May program on May 3 at 6:30 p.m. at the Woodford County Library. The guest speaker was Los Angeles resident Dennis Martin who first met current Society President Winfrey Adkins when both were at the county's Bluegrass Railroad Museum about ten years ago. Aided by Adkins, Martin presented a Power Point program on various sites for the '66 filming of the 20th Century Fox's film, "*The Flim-Flam Man*", done in five central Kentucky counties (Anderson, Clark, Fayette, Franklin and Woodford) and Estill County at the edge of eastern Kentucky, which premiered in Louisville on May 5, 1967 - Derby Day. This program had previously been presented in Anderson County three times.

Martin had visited the sites in these six counties where the '66 production was done innumerable times over the years since '66, 50+ years later. Among the luminaries in this film were George C. Scott as Morcedia Jones,, Sue Lyon as Bonnie Lee, Harry Morgan as Sheriff Slade, slim Pickens as Jarvis and others.

The opening scene was at the railroad crossing on Payne's Mill Road in adjacent Scott County, near the Woodford County line. Later a chase scene occurred on Main Street in Lawrenceburg in front of the Anderson County Courthouse. Martin and Adkins revisited some of the original sites while Martin was in Versailles on this visit in 2024.

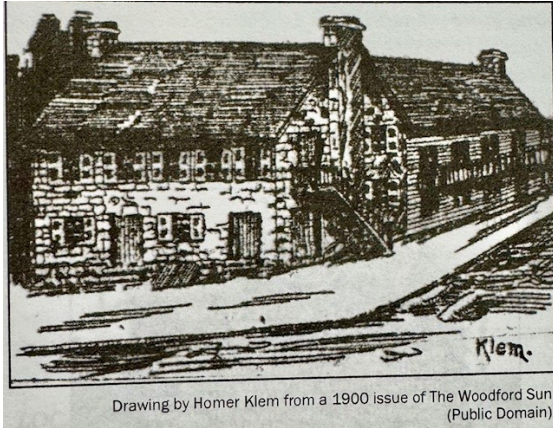
Martin brought many black and white photos and scenes in and around Lawrenceburg and Versailles to complement this Power Point presentation with captions. The late Woodford County native Jim Curtis, a local historian and photographer extraordinaire took many of the Woodford County images. The two presenters, Martin and Adkins, fielded many questions to conclude this program. Having traveled almost two thirds across the country for this even, Martin was pleased with the number of attendees present for this most unusual program and closing reception.



REHEARSING SCENE. . . . The director of the "Flim Flam Man," left, shows actor George C. Scott what movements to make and which stones to pick up in the segment of the movie shot here Monday. Stuart Brown, manager of Range Jewelers, waits on a customer in the background. (Photo by Jim Curtis.)

This local scene did not appear in the movie.

Article by Judy Phillips



Drawing by Homer Klem from a 1900 issue of *The Woodford Sun*
(Public Domain)

The Watkins Tavern and It's Distinguished Visitor

The year was 1825 when the distinguished Frenchman, General LaFayette, toured the American States to pay his respects for the last time in person to his old friends and comrades of the Revolutionary War.

To understand the General's interest in Woodford, one has only to read in W.E. Railey's *History of Woodford County* the list of citizens who drew pensions for service rendered in the Revolution; or recall that General Woodford, for whom Woodford County was named, was also a gallant

officer of the same war; and that his childhood friend, a founder of Versailles and Revolutionary War soldier lived in the county.

After arriving in New Orleans on April 10, 1825, his itinerary through Kentucky read thusly: "arrived in Louisville May 11, departed 13 for Shelbyville, arrived in Frankfort 14, Lexington 15 - 18, then to Georgetown and Cincinnati on the 19."

"Kentucky Reporter", January 17, 1830 gave an extract from *LaFayette in American States*, by Levasseur (LaFayette's In American States, by Levasseur (LaFayette's private secretary) which gives the following account: "after leaving Frankfort on Saturday 14 May, on the way we visited the pretty little town of Versailles, where we remained some hours to attend a public dinner given by the citizens of the town and surrounding country, and we slept about three miles from Lexington."

J. Winston Coleman, Jr., in *Stage Coach Days in the Bluegrass*, writes of the Watkins Tavern in Versailles where General LaFayette was entertained.

The Watkins Tavern on lot number 1 on Main Street of Versailles was built of stone under the supervision of Thomas Metcalfe, a Virginian who came to Kentucky and became Governor of the State 1828-1832. This tavern was run from 1792-1826 by Henry Watkins and his wife, Elizabeth (Hudson) Clay Watkins, the widow of the Reverend John Clay and mother of Henry Clay.

On the second floor balcony of the tavern General LaFayette stood and gave his speech to the people of Versailles.

W. E. Railey sent the following account to the "Register of the Kentucky State Historical Society," Volume 19, 1921:

"The old stone tavern sketched in the January (1921) number of the Register, was one of the noted hostelrys the first quarter of the 19th century, as was the old Mansion House at Frankfort. Many distinguished men were on its register, and many notable events took place within its walls. It was the scene of the grand ball given in 1825 in honor of the distinguished Frenchman, Lafayette, when he was touring the state to pay his respects for the last time in person to his old friends and comrades of the Revolution.

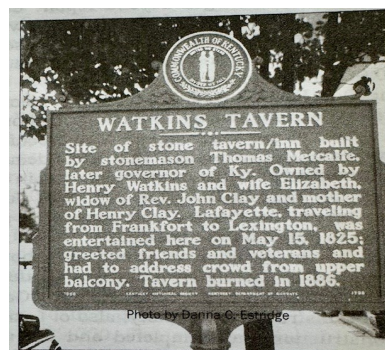
The ball was given by the citizens of the county and each person vied with the other to make the occasion such a success that it would not be forgotten by any one of that generation, and certainly was not forgotten at the time of the Civil War, being discussed around the fireside frequently at that time. As a boy, more than fifty years ago, I recall the vivid descriptions of that brilliant event by the elderly citizens, descriptions of the grand pageantry headed by Colonel John Steele, the grandfather of our venerable Captain John Andrew Steele, of Midway.

Col. Steele, with a company of mounted militia, met the distinguished visitor near Frankfort and escorted him to Versailles. When he reached the town he was driven to the home of the widow of George Taylor Cotton, Sr., nee Elizabeth O'Bannon, who was the daughter of Major John O'Bannon, one of the founders of Versailles. This home was on Elm Street. Here LaFayette was tendered a reception that deeply touched the old soldier. Instead of the widow of Cotton waiting on the porch, or

within the portals of the home in formal manner of the period to greet the veteran, she descended the steps and met him cordially with outstretched hands as he approached the house , after alighting from the carriage. I often heard that the scene was graphic. As this beautiful lady extended her hand the patriot grasped it with emotion, bended his body low and pressed his lips o it. Too bad that such a picture was not preserved on canvas.

LaFayette wept more than once in greeting his old comrades-in-arms, Calmes, Sublett, Dupuys, Trabues and others of French extract.”

The Tavern burned February 1886. At this writing August 23, 1985, the Woodford County Historical Society has recently submitted the name Watkins Tavern to have a historical highway marker placed on the corner of South Main and Court Street.



Framed oil painting of the Jesse Home, Henry H. Jesse, at 3065 Lexington Road, possibly painted by son William Jesse. Donated by grandson W. M. Bunker.

Sheet music *Pass Under the Rod*, 1862 by Hezekiah H. Culbertson of Versailles. An article on the formation of Civil War Kentucky regiments mentions him as Captain of the Woodford Blues, May 10, 1860. Donated by Dr. Terry A. Bryan.



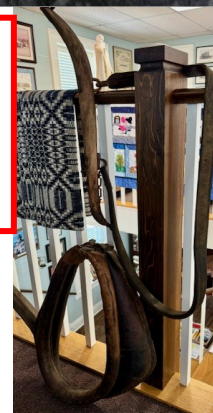
James R. Adams (1863-1937) sold vegetables from his farm in Woodford County from his mule-drawn wagon.



To the right is the mule harness and 2 hames with straps shown in the picture above. Donated by James Emery Poe.

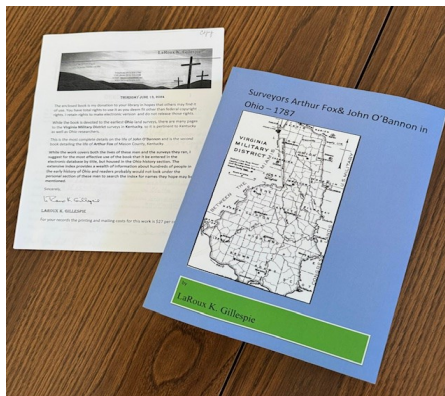


Margaret Hall Women's Hockey Stick belonging to Jean Duncan Hamilton Baker from approximately the early 1940's. Donated by Jeannette Sellers, her daughter.





Con't



The book *Surveyors Arthur Fox & John O'Bannon in Ohio—1787*. Donated by the author himself.

Donation of the Versailles Lion's Club memorabilia and cash donation. Chartered in 1957, sponsored by Fayette Lion's Club. Disbanded May 2024.





Big Spring Church, Versailles, Kentucky
1819

Woodford County Historical Society Engraved Brick Program Form

Yes! I want to leave my mark on Woodford County history! I am enclosing my donation of \$_____ (minimum donation \$100 for each brick). Please inscribe my brick as follows (please print legibly):

Each brick inscription may have up to three (3) lines of text with up to 20 characters per line. Spaces and punctuation count as characters.

Please make your check payable to the Woodford County Historical Society and mail with this completed form to 121 Rose Hill, Versailles, KY 40383. Alternatively, if you wish to use PayPal, our account name is woodfordkyhs@gmail.com. Please check here if using PayPal _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Daytime Telephone: _____

E-Mail: _____

Send the Certificate of Ownership to:

____ Same person as above

____ Someone else (please fill in information below)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

MEMBERSHIP FORM

____ Student (age 18 or under) \$5
____ Adult \$25 ____
____ Family \$40 ____
____ Friend \$65 ____
____ Supporter \$100 ____
____ Benefactor \$500 ____
____ A very generous donation of \$ ____

Please make checks payable to Woodford County Historical Society. Alternatively, you may pay using PayPal sending it to the email for the Historical Society printed below. We are a 501 (c) 3 non-profit, and your gift may be tax deductible. (Please consult your tax preparer for more information.) We thank you in advance for your kind gift. Please check here ____ if you are using PayPal.

____ New Membership ____ Renewal Membership

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Daytime Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Contact Info:

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