



# THE COURIER

TENNESSEE HISTORICAL COMMISSION, NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

WINTER 2024



**In This Issue:** Travel with THC through Survey Work,

Origins of the State Historic Sites Program, Guide to the Historic Development Grant Program

# THE CONTINUOUS WORK OF HISTORIC PROPERTY SURVEY THROUGH THE EYES OF A NEWBIE

By Philip Staffelli-Suel, CLG Coordinator: West Tennessee



*Erin United Methodist Church Erin, TN*

Throughout the fall of 2023, THC Survey Coordinator, Peggy Nickell, and THC Technical Preservation Coordinator, Philip Staffelli-Suel traveled a 60-mile radius around Blue Oval City in Haywood County, Tennessee. While the city is striving to bring jobs to West Tennessee, the increase in development is beginning to threaten historic properties over 50 years old.

One mission of the Tennessee Historical Commission is to maintain and update an inventory of properties 50 years or older through survey. Many communities ranging in size from as large as Dyersburg to as small as Roellen were still in need of this. The historic property survey throughout the state is never-ending as properties age and get added every year. But how does one survey historic properties?

Before traveling with Nickell, Staffelli-Suel had minimal experience with survey work. Along the way, he learned a fair deal about the process, saw the beauty of West Tennessee, ate

some fantastic food, and became accustomed to sleeping in hotels. Survey work begins not in the field, but within the office. Before traveling, the first step is always to identify areas where the gaps in the historical record are by examining what has already been surveyed. Additionally, it is important to make note of areas where properties were not surveyed due to their age at the time. Through this, a list of the work ahead begins to form, communities are identified, and these historic properties are mapped out.

Once the THC team arrived in a city, they would scout the area for buildings within the commercial and downtown areas to be surveyed. From there, the team would duties for communities where the properties are more spread out, such as photographer and driver/photolog keeper. What is a photolog, you may ask? It is a document where you write down the photo number, property address, and any architectural details you can see. This log can also track information provided through conversations with property owners. These conversations are more frequent than





*Cotton's in Trenton, TN*

one would think because people are concerned when they see a stranger photographing their property. Many people thought the team was a developer or property tax assessors. However, after explanation, the team was able to facilitate conversation and the properties owners began sharing the history they knew about the building or community.

Upon return to the office, these photos are labeled, and properties are assigned a unique survey ID. This ID will forever be associated with this property. Once completed, the properties and their photos are input into the Survey123 application. Within this application, one inputs the address, date of survey/photos, and architectural details such as style or roof shape. This data is then quality-checked by Nickell, who has over two decades of experience in survey work. It is then transmitted to Dr. Zada Law at Middle Tennessee State University's Fullerton Geo-Spatial Lab. Dr. Law enters the information into a database and then prepares an update that for the Tennessee Historical Commission Viewer, a public platform to see properties surveyed throughout the state and listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The viewer is available on the THC website.

During this past year, the THC survey team has enjoyed catching a glimpse of what West Tennessee has to offer. From beautiful landscapes to unique cuisines, such as "redneck eggroll" and "chuckwagon". Through the team's efforts, several new communities were added to the Statewide Survey data, with many more to come.



*Post office in Dyersburg, TN*



*Trimble First Baptist Church in Trimble, TN*



# THE ORIGINS OF THE STATE HISTORIC MARKERS AND HISTORIC SITES PROGRAM

By: Bobby Cooley, State Historic Sites Program Coordinator

In 1919 the Tennessee General Assembly established the Tennessee Historical Commission, then called the Tennessee Historical Committee, with Senate Joint Resolution No. 53. The State Archivist and Historian, John Trotwood Moore, was appointed its chairman. Under its original legislative power, the Commission was to “collect, compile, index and arrange all data and information of every kind and character relating to the part that Tennessee has ever played, not only in the great world war which is now closed, but in all the wars in which citizens or soldiers of Tennessee were engaged, and also all data of every sort and kind which illustrates the life, history, development, resources progress, personalities, authors, orators, inventors, and statesmen of the state, and all such data information on these subjects shall be turned over to the state librarian for safe-keeping for the future history of the state.” In 1921, the General Assembly expanded the Commission’s role in preserving Tennessee history and added an amendment that gave the Commission permission to “properly mark and preserve battlefields, houses, and other places celebrated in the history of the state.” This amendment was the foundation for two of the Tennessee Historical Commission’s most successful and longest lasting programs, the State Historic Markers Program and State Historic Sites Program.

The initial collection of historic markers funded through the Tennessee Historical Commission were announced in July 1921. They included Bledsoe’s Fort, the Samuel Polk Home, Key Corner in Memphis, Blount’s Mansion, and the Crest of Breckenridge’s Charge. Based on a few surviving markers discovered stored in a West Tennessee barn, they were painted on wooden panels. The first generation of markers and their text is not recorded in the Commission’s current marker program, but many were rewritten and are represented on modern markers. These markers are significant because they indicate an earlier instance of the marker program that was previously forgotten after the Tennessee Historical Commission went dormant prior to reorganization in 1940. They also offer a glimpse into what people, places, and stories were important to Tennesseans before the Second World War. The process for erecting the original historic markers was also different. There were three sub-committees, one for each Grand Division of Tennessee, who recommended sites for historic markers. Interestingly, these original sub-committees were only entitled to erect three markers in each division. This contrasts significantly from today’s process, as any citizen can write an application for a historic marker to present to the Commission’s board for approval. Additionally, the Tennessee Historical Commission agreed to provided county markers for a brief time. Each county was



*Original THC Markers, c. 1921*

limited to 10 per year and the markers were made with a cheaper material.

The historic sites program did not materialize as quickly as the marker program. The first steps towards a historic sites program occurred in 1920, when Governor Albert H. Roberts sent Chairman Moore and State Geologist Wilbur A. Nelson to represent Tennessee at the first National Conference for Parks. The conference’s goal included developing ideas on how state lands could be preserved as parks, so it’s no coincidence that after Moore returned from the conference the amendment of 1921 mentioned above included preserving battlefields, houses, and other places. Moore’s first attempt towards preserving a state-owned historic site happened in 1923, when he urged the General Assembly to repair the Meriwether Lewis Monument, a state funded memorial constructed in 1848. It’s difficult to say this repair was the first example of Moore creating a state historic site, but it is the first documented example of the Tennessee Historical Commission preserving a state-owned memorial or monument. In 1925 Moore additionally requested that the state purchase 150 acres around the Meriwether Lewis Monument and the James K. Polk Home to establish them as state parks. This request coincided with a failed attempt by Nelson to establish a system of state parks in Tennessee. If their joint plan succeeded, those sites would have been the first state parks in Tennessee. For his part, Nelson was instrumental in the early state park movement alongside Moore, but Nelson favored natural and recreational areas given his role as State Geologist. Nelson’s dream of a system of state parks for Tennessee came true in 1937 and 16 parks were all built around natural, scenic, and recreational areas by 1940. Notably, no historic sites were included.

After Moore’s state park proposal failed in 1925, President Coolidge designated the Meriwether Lewis Monument a





Banquet at the Hotel Fort Des Moines, January 11, 1921  
Des Moines, Iowa

*First National Parks Conference*

National Monument in 1925. By 1928 it was designated a National Park under the authority of Shiloh National Military Park. Meanwhile, the State of Tennessee purchased the James K. Polk Home in 1928. In 1929 The Tennessee Historical Commission gained jurisdiction over the site, alongside the James K. Polk Ladies Association. This is the first example of a state historic site (as they are recognized in the modern era) and is still a part of the State Historic Sites Program today.

This also means that the State Historic Sites Program predates Tennessee State Parks by a decade and is one of the earliest examples of a state funded public lands project. Unfortunately for Moore, he did not see the program grow as he passed in May 1929. After his death

the Tennessee Historical Commission went dormant until Governor Prentice Cooper convened a meeting reinstating it on April 18, 1940. The revitalized Commission established Marble Springs State Historic Site and Sparta Rock House State Historic Site in 1941, creating the modern state historic sites program. The State Historic Markers Program—today consisting of some two thousand signs with its familiar Tri-Star logo—followed suit in 1948, re-establishing two of the most significant programs operating today.



*Governor Prentice Cooper Painting*

John Trotwood Moore’s role in the original incarnations of two of its most prominent programs of the Tennessee Historical Commission is admirable, but the historian is not without controversy. Moore filibustered Congress in opposition to the Dyer Anti-lynching Bill in 1922, and many of his writings are recognized today as ‘local color’, a literary style that encourages romanticism and the removal of race and class issues from the historical narrative. Recent decades have seen progress. In 1985 the state established the first State Historic Site exclusively dedicated to preserving Black History, the Alex Haley Boyhood

Home in Henning. Similarly, for years the State Historic Markers program concentrated on subjects typically associated with the contributions of those who were white, male, and affluent. Prior to the 1990s, the commission only approved and placed twelve historical markers related to the heritage of African Americans in Tennessee. Following an appropriation in the 1990s from the Tennessee General Assembly to fund markers highlighting Black History, by 1999 a sufficient number of signs were placed by the THC for it to publish a guidebook on African American markers titled *A Journey to Our Past: African American Markers in Tennessee*, edited by Mrs. Linda T. Wynn. The process continues today, as the Tennessee Historical Commission is dedicated to accurate interpretation on markers and at its state historic sites run by its non-profit partner organizations. Interpretations of underrepresented people and places highlighted through markers are on the rise, expanding the types of stories preserved within the historic marker program. Similarly, the State Historic Sites Program encourages accurate historical narratives at its sites and incorporates a comprehensive and truthful interpretation of the individuals and groups who lived, were enslaved, or in other ways affected by the places or people that the sites preserve. The Tennessee Historical Commission recognizes that there is much to accomplish and continues to work towards these objectives. Through recognizing our complicated and controversial past, we can create a better collective future for ourselves and for our communities.



*Meriwether Lewis Monument*





# STATE HISTORIC SITES SPOTLIGHT: ALEX HALEY HOUSE MUSEUM AND INTERPRETIVE CENTER STATE HISTORIC SITE

Welcome to the boyhood home of Pulitzer Prize winning author, Alex Haley! This 10-room Craftsman Bungalow was built in 1919 by Will E. Palmer, the maternal grandfather of Alex Haley. Before Haley's birth, and long before his fame, his grandfather was a significant local businessman within the town of Henning and managed the local lumber mill.

In 1920 Haley's mother and father, Bertha and Simon A. Haley, married at the nearby New Hope CME Church and had their reception inside the parlor of the recently constructed home. Nearly a year later, Alex Haley was born and from 1921 to 1929,

Haley lived here with his grandparents. As a young child, while sitting on the front porch of the home, Haley heard the stories of his family's history from his grandmother Cynthia. It was through these stories that Haley learned of Kunta Kinte, the inspiration of his 1976 Pulitzer Prize winning novel book, *Roots: The Saga of an American Family*.

This site has been owned by the State of Tennessee since 1985 and has been open to the public as a museum since 1986. Explore the Alex Haley House Museum and Interpretive Center State Historic Site through augmented reality here!



*Photograph courtesy of TN Photographic Services*



# CEMETERIES: LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION...

**By Graham Perry, Historic Cemetery Preservation Specialist**

The Tennessee Historic Cemetery Preservation Program continues to provide preservation assistance across the State. One successful site visit determined the boundary of a cemetery in Campbell County. Program Specialist, Graham Perry, was able to provide a resolution between a property owner and family member at the Boyd Cemetery after probing efforts to map out the cemetery.

Upon Perry's visit, it was clear that a cemetery existed in the area, judging by a single obelisk which had toppled over. Knowing that often parties erroneously believe that the number of graves in a cemetery is equal to the number of markers, Perry probed the area, discovering a distinct line of at least seven unmarked graves. Further probing and manual dirt removal revealed several shaped stone markers with some graves and a likely perimeter was established. Both parties were very happy with the results, and they were able to easily determine the area that should be fenced to protect the cemetery from the landowner's cattle. Furthermore, the family member offered to upkeep the cemetery in exchange for the erection of the fence by the landowner.

TCA 46-8 obligates a landowner to "protect" any family cemeteries that are known to exist on his/her property. What "to protect" means is not specified in the law and is open to interpretation; however, it stands to reason that permitting cattle to roam freely through a family cemetery is highly likely to cause damage and could be prosecuted as desecration. In such a case, a family member has every right to challenge a landowner. The good news is that the landowner offered to fence the cemetery based on the newly determined boundary.

Truly this case shows that there is middle ground between landowners and family members that can be reached without conflict. In essence, that is a primary goal of the THC cemetery program: To help find reasonable and amicable solutions between affected parties. Doing so bodes well for the protection of Tennessee's cultural resources.



*One of the shaped stone markers discovered*



*Grave layout at the Boyd Cemetery as determined by probing.*

## **Cemeteries Recently Added to the Tennessee Historic Cemetery Register**

Since the release of the Statewide Cemetery Map and the Tennessee Historic Cemetery Register in April 2023, the Tennessee Historical Commission has listed sixteen cemeteries to the Register. Thanks to the efforts of the public, new information and cemeteries are added to the Cemetery Map and Database daily.

### **The new Tennessee Historic Cemetery Register listings are:**

- White Cemetery, Maury County. Listed on August 26, 2023
- John Butler Tipton Cemetery, Monroe County. Listed August 27, 2023
- Mt. Moriah Cemetery, Blount County. Listed August 27, 2023.
- Marsee-Grub Cemetery, Claiborne County. Listed August 27, 2023.
- Holly Springs-DeHart Cemetery, Monroe County. Listed October 24, 2023.
- Alexander Greer Cemetery, Bedford County. Listed October 24, 2023.
- Woods-Handly Cemetery, Franklin County. Listed December 6, 2023.



# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES NEWS

By J. Ethan Holden, National Register Coordinator

## Three Tennessee Properties Added to National Register of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places is the nation's official list of cultural resources worthy of preservation. It is part of a nationwide program that coordinates and supports efforts to identify, evaluate and protect historic resources. The State Historic Preservation Office administers the program in Tennessee. The state's new listings are:

### Central Gardens Historic District (Additional Documentation and Boundary Increase)

Listed November 17, 2023  
(Memphis, Shelby County)

The Central Gardens Historic District in Memphis was originally listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1982. Central Gardens was one of the most prestigious communities in Memphis during the early twentieth century, and many of the city's most prominent citizens called the neighborhood home. The earliest building in the neighborhood was constructed in 1852, though the most intensive development in the neighborhood occurred between 1905 and 1925. The updated nomination explores this evolution



Photograph Courtesy of Wesley Byram and Margot Payne.

and the impact that the neighborhood had on Memphis' broader community planning initiatives, in addition to reiterating the architectural significance of the district. Central Gardens was recognized as a Historic Conservation District by the

Memphis Landmarks Commission in 1993. This recognition and the efforts of the Central Gardens Association ensures the district continues to be preserved and protected.

### Omicron Sigma Chapter House of Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Incorporated

Listed December 4, 2023  
(Memphis, Shelby County)

Located in Memphis, Shelby County, the nominated property is locally significant for both its role as the headquarters of the Omicron Sigma Chapter of Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority and for its architecture. The house was originally constructed circa 1913 by John H. Fisher and is an important local example of the Folk Victorian style. Many of its original architectural characteristics remain, including its decorative brackets and elaborate porch. The Omicron Sigma Chapter acquired the house in August of 1957 from the Top Hat & Tails Club. Founded in May of 1937, the Omicron Sigma Chapter is part of Sigma Gamma



Photograph Courtesy of Rebecca Schmitt.





Rho, an international African American sorority dedicated to the advancement of their members' personal and professional lives and one of the "Divine Nine". The chapter hosted many of their most important community service events at the house, including the Teen-Town

program and "Rhomania". The Sorors of Omicron Sigma continue to maintain the property and serve the community through various programming, including Operation BigBookBag, Project Cradle Care, and RHOck the Vote!.



Photograph Courtesy of Rebecca Schmitt.

**Harlinsdale Farm (Boundary Increase)**  
Listed October 23, 2023  
(Franklin, Williamson County)

The Harlin House is located near the Harlinsdale Farm in Franklin, Williamson County and is locally significant for its history and architecture. The Harlin House was constructed circa 1860 and served as the residence for multiple owners in the area. In 1942, Alex F. Harlin and William Wirt Harlin bought the property when they expanded their horse farm. The house became the home of Wirt's

son and daughter-in-law, Bill Harlin and Barbara Ann Nunnaly. Bill played a major role in Harlinsdale Farm's operations and served as the President of the Tennessee Walking Horse Breeders' and Exhibitors' Association. The Harlin family lived in the house until 1974. Because the Harlin House was associated with the Harlinsdale Farm during the Harlin's tenure, the boundaries for the original Harlinsdale Farm nomination were expanded to include the Harlin House. The current owner continues to preserve and maintain stewardship of the house.

## HISTORICAL MARKERS

At its meeting on October 20, 2023, the Tennessee Historical Commission approved ten historical markers: **The Charles M. Hall School**, Blount County; **Capture of General Robert Vance**, Cocke County; **Robert J. Moody**, Dyer County; **Chickamauga Mound**, Hamilton County; **The O. H. Howard Rosenwald School and Community Center**, Hickman County; **The Nolan House**, Humphreys County; **Odem's Chapel**, Lawrence County; **Howard White "Smiley" Johnson**, Montgomery County; **Memphis Municipal Employees Federal Credit Union**, Shelby County; and **Wassom Farm**, Washington County. **Rugy**, Morgan County. Those interested in submitting proposed texts for markers should contact Linda T. Wynn at the Tennessee Historical Commission, 2941 Lebanon Pike, Nashville, Tennessee 37243-0442, or call (615) 770-1093.



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### Public Comment Solicited

As the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), the Tennessee Historical Commission is soliciting public comment and advice on its administration of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). Especially, we are seeking input on such matters as geographic areas or classes of properties which may be a priority for survey and/or registration efforts, criteria and priorities which should be established for Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) grants, and ways and means through which local efforts at preservation of historic properties can be most effectively assisted. The HPF is the federal fund appropriated under the authority of the NHPA to assist states in carrying out the purposes of the NHPA. Comments and advice on other areas and issues of a more general nature are also encouraged. Activities carried out by SHPO under the mandate of the NHPA include efforts to survey and inventory historic properties across the state and to nominate the most significant of them the National Register of Historic Places. Other activities involve programs to protect and preserve properties once they are identified by reviewing Federal projects to determine if they will adversely affect historic properties; administering the federal historic tax credit program; awarding and administering HPF grants; and providing technical assistance and advice to local governments which are attempting to establish local programs and ordinances to protect historic properties. The comments received will be used to structure the SHPO's annual application to the National Park Service for these funds. The public input and advice which we are soliciting now will help to set both general office objectives and to establish priorities and criteria for the review of grant applications. Comments are accepted throughout the year and should be addressed to Holly Barnett, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Tennessee Historical Commission, 2941 Lebanon Pike, Nashville, Tennessee 37214. This program receives Federal funds from the National Park Service. Regulations of the U.S. Department of the Interior strictly prohibit unlawful discrimination in departmental federally assisted programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, age or disability. Any person who believes he or she has been discriminated against in any program, activity or facility operated by a recipient of Federal assistance should write to: Director, Equal Opportunity Program, U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, D.C. 20013-7127 Tennessee Historical Commission, Authorization Number 327324, 4,845 copies promulgated at a cost of \$1.17 per copy, 2/2/24.



# HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT GRANT PROGRAM: SETTING UP A SUCCESSFUL REHABILITATION

By: Lane Tillner, CLG Coordinator: East Tennessee

Created in April 2021 by the Tennessee General Assembly, the Historic Development Grant Program (HDGP) is a state-funded grant program for the rehabilitation and reuse of National Register-listed, historic buildings across the state. Jointly administered by the Tennessee Historical Commission (THC) and the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development (ECD), this is a competitive, reimbursable program that requires eligible buildings be listed individually, or contributing to a listed district, on the National Register of Historic Places and meet at least one of four economic considerations. Other eligibility considerations include: all work rehabilitation work must meet the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation (the Standards) and the post-rehabilitation use must be income-producing in some manner.

## HOW DOES ONE APPLY FOR THE HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT GRANT PROGRAM?

The HDGP consists of three phases: a Letter of Intent (LOI) phase, an invitation-only Application phase, and a Closeout phase. The LOI phase is used to determine that the building is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and that it maintains its character and integrity. This phase is usually open for about six weeks, beginning in May. The Application phase is invitation-only for those buildings that were determined to meet the requirements during the LOI phase. This phase is used to evaluate the proposed rehabilitation work and determine if the project will cumulatively meet the Standards as proposed. The Closeout phase simply closes out the grant contract.

## WHAT IS REQUIRED OF EACH PHASE?

The HDGP is designed to mirror, and be stacked with, the Federal Historic Tax Credit (HTC) [a preservation partnership between the State Historic Preservation Offices, National Park Service, and IRS] in an effort to maximize the incentives available for the applicant. The grant program uses the same forms as the HTC to streamline the process. For the LOI phase, the applicant must submit the HPCA Part 1 – Evaluation of Significance Form along with photographs with descriptions, a photo key, and maps. If the project is seeking the Federal Historic Tax Credit alongside the grant, the Tennessee Historical Commission provides comment and transmits the form and related materials to the National Park Service for certification. If the project is seeking only the grant, the Part 1 Form, and all required documentation, remain at the Tennessee Historical Commission.

If invited to apply during the Application phase, the HPCA Part 2 – Description of Rehabilitation is required along with photographs with descriptions, a photo key, existing floorplans, proposed floorplans, and other documentation based on the scope of the proposed rehabilitation. The THC can assist an applicant in determining what documentation might be required. Similar to the LOI phase, if pursuing the tax credits and grant, the Tennessee Historical Commission will review the projects and provide comment, and the Part 2 Form, and all required materials, will be transferred to the National Park Service in order to determine if the proposed work will meet the Standards. If only pursuing the grant, the Tennessee Historical Commission will review the project and determine whether the proposed work will meet the Standards. If the proposed scope of work changes at all after the Part 2 Form has been approved by either the National Park Service or the Tennessee Historical Commission, please reach out to the THC as soon as possible for guidance to ensure the rehabilitation still meets the Standards.

The Closeout phase requires the submittal of the HPCA Part 3 – Request for Certification of Completed Work, photographs with descriptions, and a photo key. The Closeout phase follows the same process as above based on whether the applicant is pursuing the HTC and the HDGP or just the HDGP alone.

Documentation	Letter of Intent—Part 1	Application—Part 2	Closeout—Part 3
HPCA Form	■	■	■
Photo Key	■	■	■
Photo Sheets	■	■	■
Map(s)	■	■	■
Existing Plans (all floors, elevations, site plan, reflecting ceiling plan, HVAC, finishes schedule)	■	■	■
Proposed Plans (all floors, elevations, site plan, reflecting ceiling plan, HVAC, finishes schedule)	■	■	■
Other (existing and proposed window drawings, test patches, results, and samples) Reach out to <a href="mailto:THC.Rehab@tn.gov">THC.Rehab@tn.gov</a> for documentation guidance	■	■	■

■ Required      ■ May Be Required, Based on the Project Scope      ■ Not Required



## WHAT ARE THE KEYS TO SUCCESSFUL PREPARATION AND APPLICATION?

- Early communication with the Tennessee Historical Commission is vital.
  - Verify the National Register status of the selected building using the Tennessee Historical Commission Viewer
    - Review the National Register Nomination and use as reference when completing the Part 1 Form
  - Submit an Information Packet to receive a Determination of Eligibility
  - Discuss proposed treatments, plans, and scope of work with Technical Preservation staff
    - A site visit might be scheduled based on staff schedule availability
- Take comprehensive photographs of the exterior and interior of the building prior to any rehabilitation work and key an existing floorplan of the building
- Review rehabilitation guidance materials prepared by the Tennessee Historical Commission and the National Park Service
  - Reach out to the Technical Preservation staff at

the Tennessee Historical Commission anytime you have questions

- Begin early coordination with the Technical Preservation Staff at the THC and your project architects/contractors/engineers
  - The turnaround time between the LOI and Application phases provides a small window in which to prepare the required materials such as floorplans

## WHAT DOCUMENTATION MATERIALS ARE REQUIRED?

Entering its fourth year, the Historic Development Grant Program has been a powerful preservation tool throughout the state and has created opportunities for the rehabilitation of schools, theatres, banks, office buildings, mills, and many other building types. Combining the grant program with the Federal Historic Tax Credit creates ever greater incentives that benefit the applicant, the local community, and the State.

If you have any questions about the Historic Development Grant Program or the Federal Historic Tax Credit, please reach out to [THC.Rehab@tn.gov](mailto:THC.Rehab@tn.gov).



*Sanda Hosiery Mills in Cleveland, Fiscal Year 2022 Historic Development Grant Program recipient, completed a successful rehabilitation project in 2023.*

# TENNESSEE HISTORICAL COMMISSION CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## WINTER 2024

Spring into the new year with our State Historic Sites, check out their events on our website's calendar!

- **State of Franklin Battle at Tipton-Haynes State Historic Site**  
February 24, 2024 from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm CST
- **Almira's Book Club at Cragfont State Historic Site**  
February 29, 2024 at 5:30 pm CST
- **Living History Day at Sam Houston Schoolhouse State Historic Site**  
March 23 and 24, 2024 from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm EST

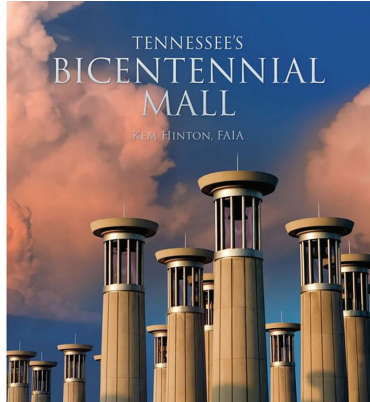


# PUBLICATIONS TO NOTE

By Linda T. Wynn, Assistant Director for State Programs & Publications Editor

Kem Hinton's *Tennessee's Bicentennial Mall* was published by Grandin Hood Publishers, 1101 W Main St, Franklin, TN 37064. In this comprehensive book, lead designer Kem Hinton, Fellow of the American Institute of Architects (FAIA) enlightens the reader

with the story of the State Capitol, which was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1970 and designated a National Historic Landmark a year later. Designed in 1845 by architect William Strickland, Tennessee's State Capitol building is regarded as the most important single building in the state. Built in part by enslaved labor, all men loaned to the state government by A. G. Payne, a Nashville stone mason. Based on an ad in the *Republican Banner* on April 23, 1847, Strickland called for "twelve stout, able-bodied Negroes are required, for quarrying and hoisting stone for building. . . Apply at the office of the Architect on the hill. W. Strickland." The author shares the story of the Capitol, regarded as "the most important building in Tennessee, and next moves to the efforts to establish a new park.



Hinton explains the early efforts to establish a new public park in North Nashville, in proximity to the Farmer's Market, that would provide a clear view of Tennessee's historic statehouse. Lastly, the author provides the reader with a description of the design process to create within this exterior public space an edifying open-air museum about the Volunteer State. The western outer path is the *Pathway of History* that chronicles major events in the state's history with short inscriptions. The pathway is divided into two main sections: a shorter section that provides a brief overview of the state's prehistory and precolonial history, beginning one billion years ago, and a shorter one that provides a more detailed history of the state from 1766 to 1996. Dedicated on Statehood Day, June 1, 1996, over the last twenty-seven years, the Tennessee Bicentennial Capitol Mall has hosted numerous celebrations, concerts, and educational events.

Located north of the state's capitol, the nineteen-acre urban setting is part of Tennessee's state park system. The recipient of national and international recognition, the Bicentennial Capitol Mall is one of the capital city's most visited public spaces. In 2018 and 2021, the Tennessee State Museum and the Tennessee State Library and Archives were located in proximity to the Tennessee Bicentennial Capitol Mall. This book is a must have that captures how the Bicentennial Mall went from the drawing table to an outdoor landmark mall that captures Tennessee's storied past. **Hardback, \$50.00.**

Harper Horizon, an imprint of Harper Collins Focus LLC, 501 Nelson Place, Nashville, Tennessee 37214, published *Night Train to Nashville: The Greatest Untold Story of Music City* by Paula Blackman. In this work Blackman chronicles the history of WLAC, the radio station remembered for its R & B (Rhythm & Blues) broadcasts from the 1950s through the 1970s. The author's grandfather, Edward "Gab" Blackman, an executive at WLAC decided during this era of racial separation to play music by African American artists and to advertise to an African American audience on the radio. In spite of the opposition to R & B, the musical genera appealed to both African Americans and the mainstream population nationwide. Blackman, the daughter of Edward and Anne Duff Blackman, attended a professional screenwriting school where *Night Train to Nashville* began as a class project. After completing the course of study, she continued to research the story for years, eventually turning it into a creative non-fiction book. Blackman includes the perspectives and experiences of Nashville's African Americans by highlighting businessman William "Sou" Bridgeforth, a well-known individual within the community. As the owner of The New Era, a North Nashville nightclub, Bridgeforth gave musicians and entertainers like Etta James, Jimi Hendrix, and Little Richard among others, a Nashville stage upon which to perform. Etta James' 1963 live album, *Etta James Rocks the House*, immortalized The New Era, once located on Charlotte Avenue. She was one of numerous African American celebrities who performed in the city's well-known R & B clubs, making the city a top destination on the "Chitlin Circuit" in the 1940s, 50s, and 60s. Many of these clubs lined Jefferson Street, then Nashville's prime thoroughfare for African American culture and commerce. Notwithstanding, one cannot forget about the Bijou Theater on Fourth Avenue North, in the city's African American business district, which first began hosting African American performers in the 1920s, just blocks away from the Grand Ole Opry. An important collaborator in writing the book was Harriett Bridgeforth Jordan, the daughter of Sou Bridgeforth. Most discerningly, Blackman's book portrays how WLAC and Nashville's R&B scene brought the African American musical expression to the forefront of pop culture in the segregated South. Taking place during one of the most turbulent periods in America's history, *Night Train to Nashville* explores how "Music City," a municipality divided into two completely different and unequal communities, demonstrated how the power of music transformed the world. **Hardcover, \$29.99.**



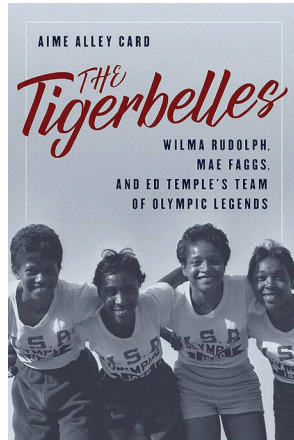
Most discerningly, Blackman's book portrays how WLAC and Nashville's R&B scene brought the African American musical expression to the forefront of pop culture in the segregated South. Taking place during one of the most turbulent periods in America's history, *Night Train to Nashville* explores how "Music City," a municipality divided into two completely different and unequal communities, demonstrated how the power of music transformed the world. **Hardcover, \$29.99.**



**Lyons Press, an imprint of Globe Pequot a division of Roman & Littlefield Publishing Group Inc. Essex, Connecticut**, has published *The Tigerbelles: Olympic Legends from Tennessee State* by Aime Alley Card. *The Tigerbelles* is one of several books narrating the compelling accounts of Tennessee A & I University, known in 1970 as Tennessee State University's (TSU) Tigerbelles. Among those include *Tigerbelle: The Wyomia Tyus Story* by Wyomia Tyus (2018) and *Temple's Tigerbelles: An Illustrated History Of The Women Who Outran the World* by Dwight Lewis (2019). Card, a nonfiction editor for Pangyrus literary magazine and a board member of the Women's National Book Association, Boston Chapter, conducted and reviewed hundreds of hours of interviews and read numerous books and articles on the Tigerbelles. Her work reveals the story TSU's all-African American women's 1960 track team that found Olympic fame in Rome. Many are familiar with Clarksville native Wilma Rudolph (1940-1994), who while still a student at Burt High School and the youngest member of the Tigerbelles, competed on the collegiate level in 1956 and won a bronze medal in 4x100 relay at the Summer Olympics in Melbourne, Australia. Four years later, at the 1960 Summer Olympics in Rome, Italy, Rudolph competed in three events: the 100 and 200-meter sprints, as well as the 4 X 100-meter relay. Rudolph, who won a gold medal in each of these events, became the first American woman to win three gold medals in a single Olympiad. Other members of the 1960 TSU Tigerbelles included Barbara Jones, Lucinda Williams, Martha Hudson, Willye B. White, and Shirley Crowder. After the Tigerbelles success at the 1960 Olympics, *The New York Times* referred to them as "the cathedral of women's track in this country." Prior to the 1960 medal-winning Olympic Tigerbelles, Tennessee State produced others winners like, Audrey Patterson, who in 1948 won a bronze medal in the 200-meter race and Emma Reed White represented the United States in the London Olympics. Three years later, Jean Patton Latimore won the 100 meters in the Pan American games.

In 1950, when Ed Temple took the position of coach, although not his idea, Tennessee State's women's track team became known as the "Tigerbelles." The name came from Earl Clanton, III, the institution's sports information director. The women's track team moniker combines the appellations of the college's mascot and the nomenclature "southern belles," hence Tigerbelles.

*The Tigerbelles* narrates the story of "desire, success, and failure—of beating the odds— against the backdrop of a changing America." Temple pressed each Tigerbelle beyond the limit and saw the potential in them that they did not see in themselves. One of the coach's and Tigerbelles objectives was to change America's perception of what a group of young



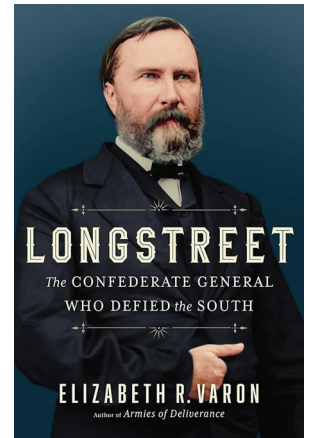
African American women could accomplish despite of the social restrictions that nation assigned to them. Card introduces the reader to the individual Tigerbelles struggle and triumphs and how their dreams emerged and solidified as the United States was grappling with a way to legally renounce the era of racial segregation. She conducted and reviewed hundreds of interviews and read numerous tomes and articles written about the Tigerbelles and Coach Temple.

*The Tigerbelles* is not only about a group young women athletes at Tennessee State, it is also apart of Tennessee's sport history and its impact not only on America but indeed, the world. As Laura Munson of the *New York Times*, said, "*The Tigerbelles* is not only for sports lovers, but for anyone who values triumph over adversity, untold historical stories, women supporting women, and the collective power of team breaking the mold..." **Hardback, \$28.95.**

Elizabeth R. Varon's *Longstreet: The Confederate General Who Defied the South* published by **Simon and Schuster, 100 Front Street, Riverside, New Jersey, 08075**, is an engrossing

chronicle and reevaluation of the Confederate General turned Republican political figure and businessperson. When considering the prominent personalities of the Confederacy, three individuals stand out in America's Civil War. Individuals, such as Jefferson Davis, President of the Confederate States of America; Robert Edward Lee, a commander of the Confederate States Army; and Longstreet, one of the foremost Confederate generals come to mind. Longstreet served under Lee as a corps commander for most of the battles fought by the Army of Northern Virginia in the Eastern Theater, and briefly with Braxton Bragg in the Army of Tennessee in the Western Theater, where his troops launched a fierce offensive on the Union lines at Chickamauga that carried the day. Between September 18 through September 20, 1863, the Confederates broke through the Union lines and forced the Federals into a siege at Chattanooga. Notwithstanding, two years later on April 9, 1865, General Robert E. Lee surrendered the last major Confederate Army to General Ulysses S. Grant at the Appomattox Court House. Almost a year later on April 2, 1866, President Andrew Johnson signed a proclamation declaring that "the insurrection which heretofore existed in the States of Georgia, South Carolina, Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee, Alabama, Louisiana, Arkansas, Mississippi, and Florida is at an end and is henceforth to be so regarded." It has long been established that the South lost the Civil War but won the battle over historical memory. Almost from the moment of surrender, the tenet of the "Lost Cause" shaped both popular and scholarly understanding of the War between the States.

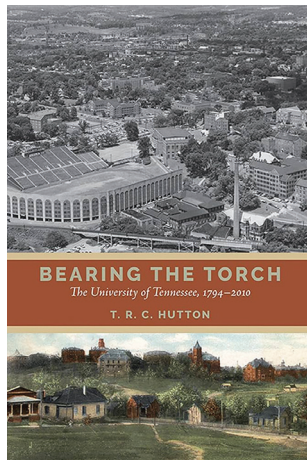
Dr. Elizabeth R. Varon earned the Ph.D. from Yale



University and is the Langbourne M. Williams professor of American history at the University of Virginia and a member of the executive council of the University of Virginia's John L. Nau III, Center for the Civil War History. The author of several books, her *Armies of Deliverance: A New History of the Civil War*, won the 2020 Gilder Lehrman Lincoln Prize and was named one of *The Wall Street Journal's* best books of the year. In her latest tome, Varon has written a compelling narrative that causes today's reader to see Longstreet through a different lens by focusing on his postwar years. While best known as a very capable Confederate military general and a "Lost Cause" outsider, he became a postwar Republican, diplomat, and a supporter of African Americans gaining the right of the franchise. "To me, the surrender of my sword was my reconstruction. I look upon the 'Lost Cause' as a cause totally, irrevocably lost" (p.363). According to the author, Longstreet's "embrace of Republicanism and Reconstruction rendered him unfit as a symbol of the Lost Cause. *Longstreet: The Confederate General Who Defied the South* should be of interest to those who want to comprehend this Confederate general who loss his standing in the South's Civil War history. **Hardback, \$35.00.**

**The University of Tennessee Press** published T.R.C. Hutton's *Bearing the Torch: The University of Tennessee, 1794–2010*.

Hutton's book is an across-the-board narrative of the University of Tennessee, complete with anecdotes and vignettes of interest to those captivated with UT, from the administrators and chancellors to students and alums, and even those whose awareness of the academy emanates primarily from the sports page. At the same time, *Bearing the Torch* is an account of an educational institution whose history reflects that of Tennessee and the United States. Founded in

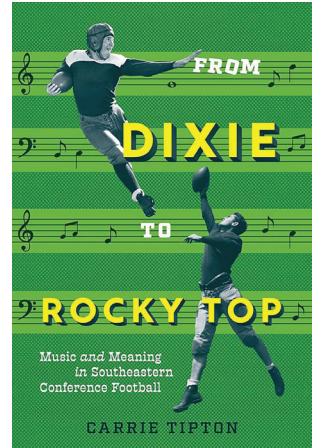


1794 as Blount College (named for Territorial Governor William Blount) in Knoxville in a building provided by James White, the town's founder, illustrates the connection between education and American history. The East Tennessee school was also known as East Tennessee College (1807), East Tennessee University (1840), and finally as the University of Tennessee (1879). Hutton, an associate professor of history and Appalachian studies at West Virginia's Glenville College. Prior to joining Glenville College's faculty, he taught history and American studies at the University of Tennessee for twelve years after earning his doctorate degree from Vanderbilt University. Ten years prior to the publication of *Bearing the Torch*, his *Bloody Breathitt: Politics and Violence in the Appalachian South* was published by the University of Kentucky Press. Hutton's latest tome is the first scholarly history of UT since James Riley Montgomery's *To Foster Knowledge: History University Of Tennessee 1794-1970* published in 1984. Hutton not only provides an updated

history of the university, he also presents a social history of the university and effectively incorporates historical context, exemplifying how the book's central "character"—the university— shows historical themes and concerns. **Hardback, \$24.95.**

**Vanderbilt University Press, 2301 Vanderbilt Place, Nashville, Tennessee 37240-1813.** Carrie Tipton's *From Dixie to Rocky Top: Music and Meaning in Southeastern Conference Football* is the first work to delve

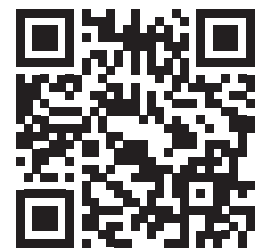
into the history of college fight songs as a culturally significant phenomenon. This tome focuses on the country's southern region, where the collegiate sport of football fashioned a forceful, quasi-religious perspective of importance and distinctiveness throughout the South. Musicologist Tipton, a musicologist and lecturer on US vernacular music, uses primary and archival



sources from the Southeastern Conferences (SEC) universities and integrates literature from sports history, Southern and American history, as well as Southern and American studies, and musicology. The author situates the broadly-accepted repertoire within the wide-ranging profitmaking music enterprise and uses fight songs that allow the fans to collectively cheer for their team. She explores themes of authorship and copyright; the commodification of school spirit; and the construction of race, gender, and identity in Southern football culture. Tipton's book should appeal to those interested in the SEC and how music intersects and became an integral part of post-secondary sport's culture. **Paper, \$28.51.**

## CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT NEWSLETTER

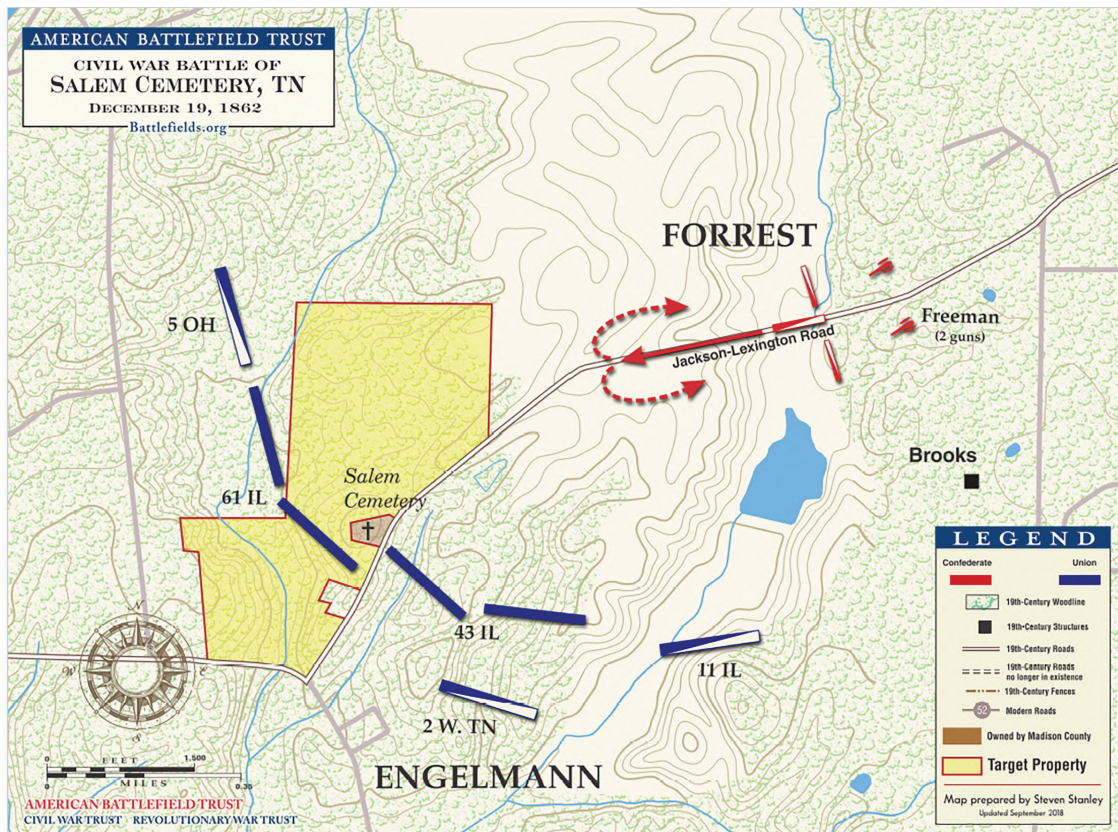
The Tennessee Historical Commission has 50 Certified Local Governments across the state. Keep up to date with our CLG program by subscribing to our monthly newsletter! Each month, learn about a featured CLG, preservation tips, news, and training opportunities. Sign up here:



# PRESERVATION ANNOUNCEMENT: YARBRO FARMS TRACT AT THE JACKSON SALEM CEMETERY NOW UNDER STATE OWNERSHIP

By: Nina Scall, TWC Program Director

During the 2018-2019 Civil War Sites Preservation Fund (CWSPF) grant cycle, the 120-acre Yarbro Farms Tract was acquired for \$690,673.90 by the American Battlefield Trust with funding from the CWSPF and the American Battlefield Protection Program's Battlefield Land Acquisition Grant (BLAG). The Tennessee Historical Commission served as the easement holder. Post-acquisition, the Friends of Salem Cemetery, the local preservation-minded 501(c)(3), approached the Tennessee Wars Commission requesting preservation advocacy and technical support. The goal was to establish a battlefield park similar to the very popular Parkers Crossroads Battlefield in Henderson County or the developing Camp Blount Historic Site in Lincoln County. With this request, the Wars Commission approached the American Battlefield Trust (ABT) who graciously offered to transfer ownership of the parcel to the State of Tennessee to help facilitate the creation of this amenity. After a lengthy bureaucratic process, the state is proud to announce that as of the close of 2023, we are the owners of this parcel. The Wars Commission is looking forward to continued consultation with the Friends of Salem Cemetery and Madison County Parks and Recreation as development of the project begins.





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 Sr. Hist. Preservation Attorney

ON THE COVER: the Gibson County Courthouse located in Trenton, TN. Photograph by Philip Staffelli-Suel, THC Technical Preservation Coordinator, October 24, 2023.

