

GREATER JEFFERSONTOWN
HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

February 2018

Vol. 16 Number 1

February Meeting -- Meeting Time Change. New Time -- 12:30 P.M., Monday, February 5, 2018.

Several members have requested that we meet during the day, so for the meetings in February and April we will meet at **12:30 P.M.** in the Jeffersontown Library, 10635 Watterson Trail.

February Program

“The Hannibal of the West: George Rogers Clark and the Revolutionary War in the West” presented by Jim Holmberg, Archives Curator for the Filson Historical Society

In Memorium

Tyler Taylor, a GJHS member, passed away Saturday, December 30, 2017 at her home at 85 years of age after an illness. She was born in Jeffersontown, KY to Walter Frank Diemer and Mary Tyler Blankenbaker Diemer on August 17, 1932.

She graduated with a Bachelors and Masters degree from Western Kentucky University where she was also homecoming queen. She taught at Greathouse and Kennedy Elementary Schools, started her own business in Jeffersontown, The Yarn Shop, located in the historic Blankenbaker House on Watterson Trail and retired as a Librarian from the Louisville Free Public Library system.

Tyler had many passions including tap dancing with The Rockerettes, sharing her love for knitting with the Grateful Threads, volunteering at Blackacre Nature Preserve, and participating in the Jeffersontown Current Events Club. She was a gifted gardener, knitter, seamstress, worked crossword puzzles in ink, and was one of a long line of Tylers who were the early settlers of the Jeffersontown area.

She was preceded in death by her parents and daughter, Natalie Bright Taylor. Survivors include her husband of 64 years Hal, sister Margo Thompson, daughter Kit Taylor Tolbert (Todd), son Harold Aubrey Taylor (Sandra), and 6 grandchildren Aubrey Livingston (Josh), Tyler Forrester (Nathan), Scott Banks (Amanda), Wesley Taylor, Tolbert and Cody Taylor (Hannah) and 2 great grandchildren Elizabeth Forrester and Skyler Taylor.

Her visitation was held at her Church, Jeffersontown Christian Church, where she was elected the first woman to serve as Elder.

October 2017 Program

Historic Properties Along the Proposed Taylorsville Road Bike Path From Veterans Park to the Parklands.

Anne Bader’s company, Corn Island Archeology, has been retained to search out the historic properties along the proposed bike path following Taylorsville Road. The bike path will hook up with the 100-mile Louisville Loop that goes around Louisville. The Jeffersontown section will be one of several bike paths Metro government wants to connect to the Louisville Loop to create a city of parks connection. It is planned to start at Veterans Park and end at the Floyd’s Park section of the Parklands.

There are four possible routes proposed. Two follow Taylorsville Road, one on each side, one to the north would go along Rehl Road to Pope Lick and end at Floyd’s Fork Park, and one to the south would

follow along Old Heady Road and connect south of Floyd's Fork Park. One thing they all had in common was how and where they would cross the Gene Snyder Freeway.

Corn Island is tasked to determine the historical significance of anything along the paths, so sign posts could point out their importance and a guide map could be published that path users could have. And what Anne wanted to do at this presentation was to cover the many properties on or near to the proposed path and pick our brains for the history and information they don't have now.

They started out with the 1858 map of the area to see what was there and using old property maps through the years they found what is there now. They created lists of remaining properties along each corridor and checked the National Register of Historic Places for known information on properties on their lists. The Tyler Rural Settlement District comprises much of the area and encompasses such properties as the Moses-Presley-Tyler farm and house, now Blackacre Nature Preserve.

Several of the properties surveyed are in danger of being torn down or being replaced from neglect. One of these is the old Robert Tyler Place/Old Wilderness Fort (ca.1790), next to the Tyler Center on Taylorsville Road close to the Gene Snyder Freeway

Corn Island considered not only places that are still here, but places that once were standing that could be an archeological information source. One of these is an old farm property between Rehl and Taylorsville Roads that passed through the Hoke and Hummel families (old J'Town names), and became Landherr Estates. Another was Rockdale, the Joseph Sweeney place, and another place just out Taylorsville Road a bit, both built in the early 1900s and torn down in 1979, now condos and apartments at Sweeney Lane and Taylorsville Road.

Other places are the Goose place on Rehl Road, built 1879 and still standing, the V. Lachleiter house according to the 1858 map still standing at the corner of Chenoweth Run and Taylorsville Roads. Anne observed this house has an old foundation and chimney. If you go by 12209 on Rehl Road the house is 1920s, but the 1907 map notes a house, maybe the one that occupied the concrete pad next to the present house. Also in this block of Rehl Road is what is believed to be the old Tucker Station Schoolhouse. According to an article in a 1965 *Jeffersonian* newspaper, W. B. Fairfax and Joe T. Wheeler were the two teachers in 1925. A 1947 *Courier-Journal* article indicated the school operated from 1876 to 1946 and the building was auctioned in 1947. Past inquiries about the house were asked of Beth Wilder and she believes it is still occupied.

On the western end of the Tyler Settlement District is the 1920-1930s Eisenbach farmstead now in sad shape. The Eisenbachs are an old St. Edward Church family. In the 14000 block of Rehl Road is the Bradbury house that was listed in the 1879 atlas. It was believed to have been a tollhouse. GJHS member, Bill Brinley's third great grandmother was married to Bradbury.

There is a house built between 1875 and 1900 with outbuildings at 3200 Old Harrods Trace that is empty and about which little is known. The Towerview Farm built in 1921 on Taylorsville Road, is still in operation and has been documented inside and out, and nominated to be placed on the National Register.

Jacob Hummel is listed on the 1840 census. Parts of his house and farm buildings are still standing at the very end of Sweeney Lane and everything has been documented photographically by Corn Island Archeology. The property appears on every map back to 1858 Bergmann. Hummel married Catherine Risinger, another old Jeffersontown name, in 1833 in Kentucky. They are buried in the Jeffersontown Cemetery.

The E. S. Sweeny/W. Gray farm at 4309 Old Heady Road is now the home of Bluegrass Landscaping. The large estate house with antebellum elements is still standing.

The area that is going to be the most affected by the bike path construction is the Hopewell Community and when they searched for information on why it was settled there and when the community started, there was little information to be found and difficult to uncover. Anne said they looked everywhere. There is information on Hopewells in almost every county in Kentucky, but not much in Jefferson County. Beth Wilder suggested some might be found in old issues of the *Jeffersonian* newspaper. There was some information on a few of the frame houses along Hopewell Road, but only a few had even been surveyed. Hopewell was cut by the Snyder Expressway construction, making the southern section essentially a cul-de-sac. One house was registered and known to have been built between 1875 -1899. On the northern section are a possible school that is on the 1913 map and the Hopewell Presbyterian Church and cemetery that are on the 1858 map, but they don't think the building there now is the original church.

At the northern end of Hopewell is the T. Bridwell house built in the mid-1800s and surveyed in 1977. It is so close to the expressway that you can see and feel the cars going past. Anne believes that if a pedestrian bridge is built over the Snyder, it will be in view of this house. H. J. Moody owned the house in 1879 and the Moody family cemetery is on the other side of the Snyder.

The Judge Hancock/Bridwell house on Old Taylorsville Road behind the Hatmaker gas station had belonged to J. Pound and is in the 1879 Beers and Lanagan Atlas and is on the Historic Register. It sets back from the road, but is in the area of where the path will probably be.

Anne commented that it is hard to comprehend but according to most laws/guidelines any structure over 50 years old is considered eligible for the Historic Register and we need to think in terms of saving archeological evidence.

There are numerous structures along Taylorsville Road that are more than fifty years old that will cause problems for the planners. Not only will the fate of old buildings cause problems, but the little roads, old bridge abutments and deep contours will have to be dealt with.

Many family cemeteries, such as the Blackburn Cemetery, will not be in the path of the trail. The same goes for the Edward Tyler family cemetery out by the Tyler Center and the William "Walking Billy" Tyler family cemetery, the remains of which are located on Silver Ridge Lane in the area where the Silver Springs Swimming Pool was along Taylorsville Road.

Edward Tyler and his wife, Ann "Nancy" Langley were the great-great-great grandparents of President Harry S. Truman and, a tree from Truman's property was planted in the Tyler cemetery.

The head stones from the "Walking Billy" cemetery were piled up when the cemetery was destroyed in the 1930s during construction of the swimming pool. The actual location of the cemetery is unknown. The Tyler log cabin was used into the 1940s as the changing area and shower house. The story goes that the swimming pool owners didn't want people to know they were walking around a cemetery, so they took the piled headstones and just threw them around the property. After the pool closed and the property sold the new owners collected them and placed them in one area by the lake. Reliable sources believe the cemetery was in front of the present houses.

There is another very small (12 stones) family cemetery, maybe the Rouff family around old Rouff Road close to the Old Heady Intersection.

Corn Island Archeology is finishing the survey work and will compile a report.

Jeffersontown Arts Program

Family Performing Arts Night will be Friday, February 16, 7:00 – 8:00 P.M. at the Jeffersonian (Jeffersontown Community Center) at 10617 Taylorsville Road.

Wheeler Elementary School and the Louisville Leopard Percussionists will pay a tribute to Black Heritage. The event is free.

Jeffersontown Historical Museum Exhibit

The photographic exhibit, featuring older photographic equipment, at the Jeffersontown Historical Museum continues to June, 2018. It is part of the Louisville Photo Biennial 2017, Louisville's premier photographic festival that was celebrated at over fifty locations in the region

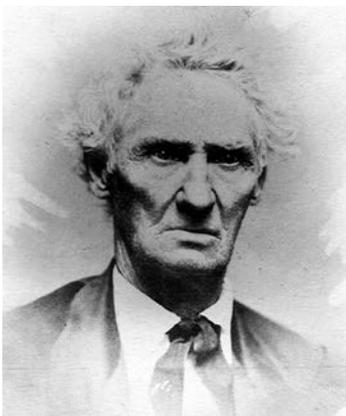
Jeffersontown Magazine

The city has contracted with the Towne Post Network to produce a new *Jeffersontown Magazine*, a monthly publication featuring people, places, businesses, happenings, and history of Jeffersontown. Beth Wilder is providing one or two great articles on Jeffersontown history each month. The free magazine is sent to J'Town residents and can be found at many businesses around town and at the library.

I will include as many of the articles as I can in the newsletter for our non-resident members. The following piece is what Beth submitted for the August 2017 issue.

Ahead of His Time: Famous Jeffersontown Doctor Pioneered Practical Medicine and Surgeries

William Bryan (1791-1871) was born in Halifax County, Virginia, and moved with his family to Bloomfield, Kentucky, when he was about five years old. William studied medicine while he was in Bloomfield, and he eventually married a young lady there named Margaret Duncan. The couple moved to Jeffersontown in 1819, and Dr. Bryan set up their home and his medical practice in a two-story log cabin to the right of John Leatherman's blacksmith shop (the two-story log cabin at 10531 Watterson Trail) on the town square.



Unfortunately, there was a cholera epidemic in 1834, and Margaret passed away, along with their young son, Willian Henry. Actually, two sons may have been lost – family history notes one son for certain, but there were rumors that a baby also died; indeed, in the German Reformed Presbyterian Cemetery to the left of Thoroughbred Hall on Watterson Trail, there are three stone boxes – one is definitely Margaret's resting place; the ones on either side of hers are likely both her children.

Doctors would not learn until the late 1800s that cholera was caused by bacteria carried in water, although Dr. Bryan suspected that tainted water could have been the cause of the outbreak, so he determined to move to a place where the water would be cleaner and safer. In 1832, he had purchased 324 acres in the Six Mile Lane area from pioneer John L. Hite. Between 1847 and 1849, he built a house there he named "Beechland," and he moved in with his second wife, Ann Eliza Hikes, and their children. The property

would be acquired and dubbed “Spring Lake Farm” over 125 years later by Jack Durrett, who was responsible for constructing the J-town Shopping Center and accompanying subdivision behind it in the 1960s.



Aside from working in the medical profession, Dr. Bryan was also active in civic affairs. He served as chairman of the town trustees in 1822, trustee of the Jeffersontown School in 1831 (he was among those who purchased land for the first public school in Jeffersontown), and trustee of Jefferson College in 1860.

Dr. Bryan was quite ahead of his time as far as medicine was concerned. Almost 100 years before penicillin was invented, he used wheat mold to cure people in the same way.

One of his patients had fallen off a wagon and suffered a severe head injury. Dr. Bryan surgically fixed the hole in the man’s head by inserting a silver plate. Dr. Bryan never received the \$25 fee he asked for the procedure, as the man stated that was “just too much money.”

That did not stop Dr. Bryan, however. He continued to practice medicine, making his rounds on horseback until his death in 1871. A pair of his reading glasses and their case is on exhibit at the Jeffersontown Historical Museum, along with many artifacts from his descendants, as well as other pioneer families in Jeffersontown. The Museum is located in the back of the Jeffersontown Branch Library at 10635 Watterson Trail. Museum hours are Monday – Friday, 10:00 am-5:00 pm – we would love to see you there!



Contact Us

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