



Harrison Heritage News

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June 2016

Vol. 17 No. 6

Marilynn Thomas Bell Honored

by Donald L. Wagoner, President



(left) Ky. State Rep. Tom McKee presented Marilynn Bell with a House citation and Kentucky Colonel commission.

(right) Mayor James Smith read a proclamation that May 20, 2016, was "Marilynn Thomas Bell Day." Seated are Paula Smith, Don Wagoner, President of the Harrison County Historical Society, and Marilynn Bell.

Photos, Denny Lipscombe

Marilynn Thomas Bell was honored by the Harrison County Historical Society on May 20, at Biancke's Restaurant. President Donald L. Wagoner arranged the ceremonies to honor her seven years service as secretary and distinguished service as project manager compiling and subsequent marketing of the *Harrison County History and Families* book, which was a heroic effort that resulted in the book's success.

Cynthiana's first and only woman mayor, Honorable Virgie Wells, gave the invocation. Kentucky State Representative and historical society member Thomas M. McKee presented Ms. Bell with a Kentucky House of Representatives Citation for her service to the Historical Society. McKee praised her citizenship and also presented her with a Kentucky Colonel Commission, the highest honor for service to the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

Honorable James Smith, Mayor of Cynthiana, presented Ms. Bell with a proclamation declaring May 20, 2016, as "Marilynn Thomas Bell Day," citing her service to the Harrison County Historical Society and Harrison County, while highlighting her excellent citizenship. Harrison County Historical Society President Donald L. Wagoner then presented Ms. Bell with a plaque citing her seven years faithful service as secretary and her heroic effort, as project manager, who compiled the *Harrison County History and Families* book and directed the successful sales of the book. Also, the plaque stated that Ms. Bell was appointed the first Secretary Emeritus.

Ms. Bell was gracefully thankful for all the recognitions and commented that she enjoyed her work with the Harrison County Historical Society. She is an outstanding Harrison County citizen.

Harrison County Historical Society

Don Wagoner, President

Brian Harney, 1st Vice President - hchsky1@gmail.com
 Elizabeth Darnell, 2nd Vice President - btdarnell@gmail.com
 Marilyn Bell, Secretary
 Virgie Wells, Treasurer
 Denny Lipscombe - Historian - dennyL1986@yahoo.com
 Bill Penn, editor: pennwma@aol.com

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

William Northcutt, Anderson, IN

(Following are new Eastside Elementary School student members,
 all from Cynthiana, KY)

Jaden Miller, Walker Wilson, Addison Hoskins
 Caleb Collins, Bethany Franklin, Katherine Judy
 Hannah Judy, Meredith Judy



President's Corner - Don Wagoner

Thank you for allowing me to serve you as president for the past 30 months. We have contacted qualified persons to be the next president. All of them held offices in other organizations that took their time and declined to be our new president. I shall not abandon you and will be a candidate for president, under the condition that the search for a suitable replacement continue. When one accepts the job, I shall resign and a special election will be conducted to install the new president.

Historical Society Program: May 19, 2016

Program: Jeff Kinney's fifth grade class history students presented a program portraying historical figures. Each student gave a short introduction to their character. After the program, audience members visited with the students. Thanks to the students and Mr. Kinney for continuing to present these interesting programs and involving the students in the Historical Society. (See photos on pp. 4-5).

Business meeting: President Don Wagoner announced the upcoming recognition dinner for Marilynn Bell, for completing seven years as secretary. He discussed the Lair Vault problems and efforts to raise funds for repairs. The Historical Society has donated \$2,020 toward a fund.

The Vault Restoration Fund

is still open for donations. A bank account has been set up - jointly administered by BT Darnell, John Lair, Don Lee, and Billy Grayson - to pay for the present repairs as well as a maintenance fund for the future. If you would like to contribute, make a check to "The Ruddell Fort Vault Fund" send it to "Kentucky Bank" PO Box 280, Cynthiana, KY 41031.

Upcoming Meetings and Events

Meeting time and place: *Hospice of the Blue Grass on Oddville Avenue, 1317 US HWY 62E. Meeting room is 1st floor rear entrance. Except March 19 Sat. 10 am Rohs Opera House.*

June 23 - officer elections during business meeting. Guest speakers will be former Cynthiana firemen telling about their efforts and the events that occurred while fighting the Monticello Mansion fire, July 8-9, 1985.

July 22 - Joint dinner for Museum and Historical Society - Bianckes, 5:30 pm. RSVP to HCHS, PO 411, Cynthiana, Ky. 31031, by July 12. See sign-up sheet on page 9.

Note from Family of Dorothy Slade

*Harrison Co. Historical Society,
 Thank you so much for
 remembering Momma with
 the beautiful basket of flowers.
 She enjoyed being a part of
 the Historical Society for many
 years.*

Kay & family

"Biography in a Nutshell"

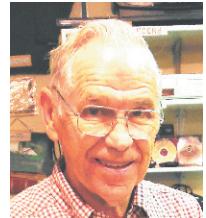
(Taken from the Cynthiana Democrat, June 1896,
 submitted by Donald L. Wagoner)

"Born, welcomed, caressed, cried, fed, grew, amused, reared, studied, examined, graduated, in love, loved, engaged, married, quarreled, reconciled, suffered, deserted, taken ill, died, mourned, buried, and forgotten."



More on Date of Steam Engine

(See "Pressure Dome and Lamp from an 1863 Cynthiana, Ky., Steam Fire Engine," *Harrison Heritage News*, May 2016) Additional information has been found on the fire engine. The minutes of the Cynthiana City Council and Mayor's Office for April 18, 1860, are as follows: "The Committee on Fire Department would recommend that the city purchase six hundred feet of hose and a hose waggon, and employ a competent person to take charge of the engine and hose and keep them in good repair." It is not clear when the fire engine and hose and wagon were actually purchased. 1864 minutes mentioned the city owned a steam engine. Apparently, from the date of the lamp, probably "1862", the steam engine was purchased about 1862-1863.



Kenny Simpson, Curator

Children's View on the Children's Room

Sally Kinney

This month's column features some favorite items in the Children's Room. Luckily, several children were in the Museum while I was planning what to write. Boys and girls, ages six to eleven, talked to me about some things they liked best in this room.

The following is a list of these **Favorite Things**:

- Space cadet and cowboy suits
- Lincoln logs
- Doll in the rocking chair and her table
- Birds on the mobile
- Roy Rogers guitar
- Dart game, which one boy pointed out was "dangerous, and had led to several injuries, and had been banned."
- Doll house and furniture made of paper
- Abacus ("an adding and subtracting machine" according to one boy)
- Raggedy Ann doll which several children knew was related to Cynthiana
- Phone booth made by Billy Fowler
- "Tiny things" in the "doll house" a "replica" (new word for all the children) of a local home crafted by Bruce Mitchell
- Canopy bed was "cool" as was the Cynthiana game, according to one 7 year old girl.

I really enjoyed showing children around the "Children's Room." They were also here to find the item in the treasure hunt as promoted in the Cynthiana Democrat. They enjoyed their day at the Museum! Many had been here several times; others were here for the first time; all assure me they plan to return.

Other guests (including a lady from Lexington who as a child had visited relatives here and a long-time Harrison County couple) were impressed with the many treasures displayed.

Next month, I plan to concentrate on the displays in the Front Room, also known as Room One there are many interesting items in the display cases and on the walls. I hope to "See you at the Museum."

ON DISPLAY AT THE MUSEUM

Ruth Smith's doll house, a replica of her childhood home, at 207 N. Walnut St. This house was sold to the Cynthiana Christian Church in 1961. The history of this house goes back to 1902. George M. Dickey, a police officer, built the house and lived there until 1918. Visit the Museum to see the rest of the information on this doll house.





Eastside Elementary fifth graders presented the Historical Society program at the May 19 meeting. Nine students brought historical figures to life through our mini wax museum.

The students in the group photograph are (from L to R):

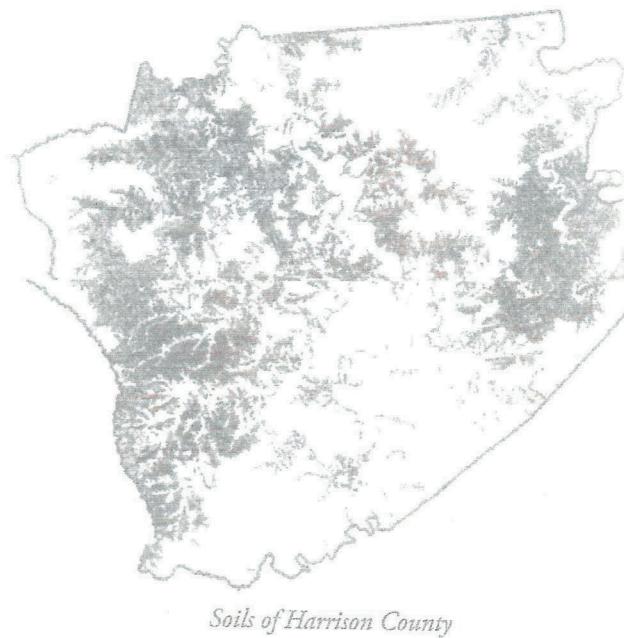
Frazier Dailey as Henry Clay; Meredith Judy as Georgia O'Keefe; Conner Harney as Vincent Van Gogh; Grace Wilson as Anne Frank; Hannah Judy as Audrey Hepburn; Addie Hoskins as Joan of Arc; Walker Wilson as George Washington; Katherine Judy as Annie Oakley; Brooke Kinney as Ruby Bridges

Below are scenes from the presentation by the fifth grade class of Jeff Kinney, Eastside Elementary School, Cynthiana, Ky.



Did You Know....

By President, Donald L. Wagoner



The following was provided by the Harrison County Extension Office. The map of Cynthiana shows the soils of the Cynthiana series. These soils make up about 35% of the soils of Harrison County. They are formed from the limestone and shale layers that make up the Cynthiana Formation of bedrock. Most of these soils are in Western Harrison County in broad areas, and are also located along the Licking River and Beaver Creek. They appear on steeper slopes and hillsides. These soils have a brown or yellowish-brown color, with a silty clay loam to clay surface layer. The Cynthiana series of soils are well drained and somewhat excessively drained. The depth of bedrock in the Cynthiana series is generally less than 20 inches deep, with slabs of limestone common throughout the series. Rainfall runoff on these soils is very fast. Most of the acreage of Cynthiana soils in Harrison County is used for pasture and hay land, and some are in second growth hardwood and cedars. The Cynthiana series got its name during the 1965 soil survey of Harrison County. Cynthiana soils are located in Kentucky, Tennessee and possibly Indiana; the total extent of these soils is large.

Historic Lair Vault Repaired

Elizabeth Darnell, 2nd vice-president

As owners of the property on Old Lair Road where the Lair Vault is situated, people frequently call and ask my husband Dunny and me to show them vault. We have owned the property for a little over eight years now. We began to notice in the last two years that there was some deterioration in the column holding up the large slab over the walkway where the gate was situated. This past spring it worsened and I asked Billy Grayson from Battle Grove Cemetery to take a look. He declared that it was almost to the point where he felt it would be dangerous for people to pass under it, as it might collapse at any moment.

With his help we were lucky enough to get Cecil Aguilari, an excellent dry stone mason living in Harrison County. He assessed the situation, agreed with Grayson and gave us an estimate of \$4,600 to shore up the wall beneath the column and to “fix” the column to prevent the slab above it from falling. He and a helper have completed the work more than satisfactorily and now I feel that this will stand for over 100 more years, barring some unforeseen catastrophe.

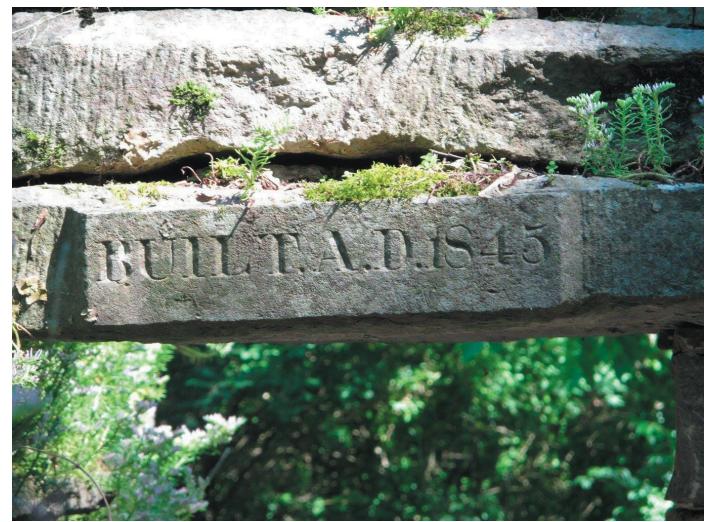
We were fortunate to have organizations such as Ruddle’s and Martin’s Stations Historical Association (RAMSHA) and the Harrison County Historical Society contributed the bulk of the restoration funds, but we have also had smaller organizations and individuals who gave money because they want to see the vault preserved for future generations.

In the publicity concerning the restoration we have discovered/uncovered additional funds. Several projects can be undertaken: returning the slab in the vault back to its original position on the back wall. It lists the members of the Lair family who are buried there. We would like to gravel the floor so that people can actually walk inside, and clean the tomb in the center of the vault so that it is legible once again. I think Charles Lair would be proud/pleased with our attempts to preserve a part of history.

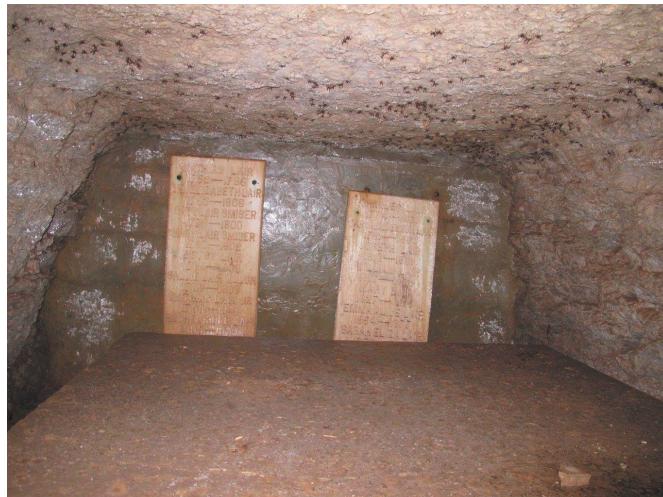


Monument marking the site of Ruddell's Station, or Fort, which was on the field in the background. This side of the marker faces the river and is located near the Lair Vault. Photos, Denny Lipscombe, 2016.

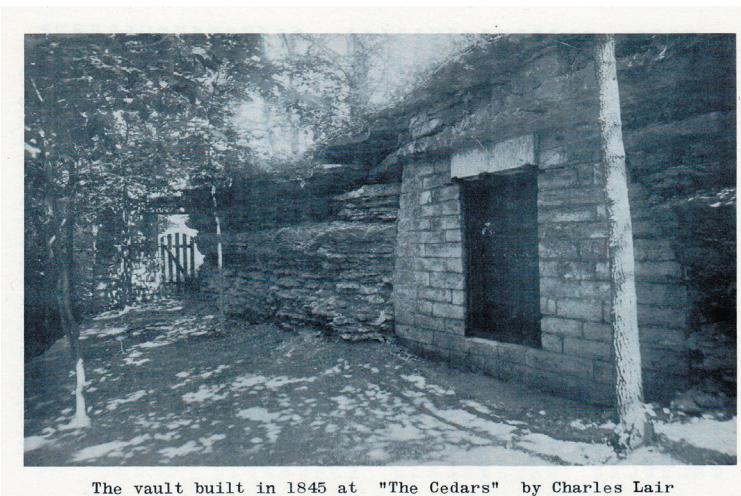
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A narrow path on a cliff above the South Fork Licking River leads to the Lair vault, “Built A. D. 1845.”



Inside the vault. On the back wall are the Lair family iron caskets sealed in concrete, with footstones identifying the names and dates. In the foreground is the stone burial container of the people massacred at the fort.



The vault built in 1845 at "The Cedars" by Charles Lair

Photo of the exterior of the vault, from Lafferty,
Destruction of Ruddle's and Martin's Forts.

continued on next page

The Lair Vault, from Maude Ward Lafferty, *Destruction of Ruddle's and Martin's Forts* (Frankfort: Ky. Historical Society, 1957) pp. 35-36.

"Charles Lair blasted it out of the stone cliff along the Licking River and [in 1845] then called together all his relations to witness the removal of the ancestral Lairs from the family graveyard, which had been in the orchard, to his vault. Iron coffins were purchased in Philadelphia. As he opened each grave he moved the body from its crumbling casket into an iron one. Some of these were covered with black cloth, some with grey, and at least one with brown. They were placed in the vault together with the stone coffins in which the bones of the twenty persons massacred at Riddles Fort had been preserved."

"When the Lairs held their first reunion in 1910, they had the vault cleaned. To the amazement of those watching, the old iron lid over the face of Charles Lair was accidentally turned around its pivot, revealing the face of that remarkable man. He had on a ruffled shirt, a white stock and a voluminous, brown-

brocaded waistcoat. With oil from the lantern and a horse-shoe nail, the rust was rubbed away, and two more coffin lids were opened. One was that of Sallie Anderson Lair, his wife, whose lavender gown clung tightly to her emaciated form and the other, that of Charle's brother, William, who was killed at Harmar's defeat. [The Harmar Campaign was an attempt by the United States to subdue Native Americans in the Northwest Territory in the Autumn of 1790.] William was buried in black, accented in contrast by his ruffled shirt. Some of those who came to the reunion gazed reverently upon those ancestral faces, while others fled from the spot in terror. The bodies were all replaced in the vault and carefully set in concrete."

[Editor's note: Miss Cecil Chamberlin was thirteen in 1910 when she witnessed the removal of the iron coffins. She described to me how one girl with red hair retained the appearance as if she had just died.]



Coffins purchased in 1845 by Charles Lair for the vault at "The Cedars."

Photo, 1910, of metallic coffins removed from the Lair vault when it was cleaned. When the coffins were placed back in the vault , they were sealed with concrete. Photo from Lafferty, *Destruction of Ruddle's and Martin's Forts*.

Reservation for Annual Joint Dinner for Museum and Historical Society - Bianckes, July 22 - 5:30 pm.

RSVP to HCHS, PO 411, Cynthiana, Ky. 41031, by July 12.

Yes, I plan to attend:

Name _____

Phone No. _____

Number of guests attending with me _____

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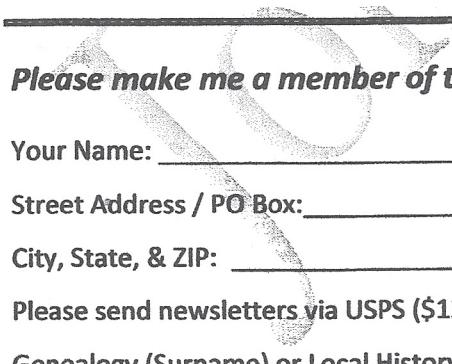
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