

The State of State History in Tennessee in 2006

A Report by State Historian
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Tennessee State Library and Archives
Department of State
Nashville, Tennessee 37243

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The State of State History in Tennessee in 2006

Introduction

In 2004 I published the first report ever on *The State of State History in Tennessee* and now, two years later, I return to the subject. The purpose of the first report was “to determine where we are in preserving and delivering Tennessee history to the people of this state and to those beyond our borders.” Now it is my purpose to report on what has happened in the intervening period. Are we doing better today? What have we done in the last two years? What is happening now? What are the prospects for the future?

There is no question that increased public and private financial support since 2004 has contributed to improving the scope and the quality of delivering history in Tennessee. The ingenuity and perseverance of both volunteer and professional workers have leveraged additional funds into significantly enlarged projects. It is safe to say that in the future the preservation and sharing of Tennessee history will depend on a higher but realistic level of public and private funding. It will depend, also, on an increasingly high level of support from thousands of volunteers.

Since the earlier 2004 report we have seen public interest in the history of our state demonstrated time and again. Numerous new books, hundreds of published articles, and archaeological investigations are among the many things that have caught our attention.

We have visited reenactments, museums, museum houses, and other historic sites, some in our many municipal, state, and national parks. We mix trail drives and tours of the countryside with visits to libraries and archives with the result we are both instructed and entertained. During this period many of the agencies involved have expanded and/or improved the programs they offer and the insights they provide.

There are presently about 1,250 organizations, agencies, societies, and institutions that deal with Tennessee history. This total does not include the individual public and private schools K-12, individual chapters, posts, camps, etc., of patriotic and veterans' organizations, nor does it include local churches, synagogues, or other religious institutions, most of which preserve records of their history.

The large number of history-related organizations plus the hundreds—even thousands—not counted in the above total are spread across our state's 95 counties. Such a reach makes at least a part of the story of Tennessee available to almost everyone. Obviously some of the institutions and facilities congregate in the larger cities, but the locations of others, such as battlefields, archaeological sites, museum houses, etc., were determined by their own history.

Should we detect any shortfall in the number of historical sites or trails, the Civil War can furnish others from its numerous military campaigns that reached border to border, north and south, east and west. Tennessee is the only state in the Union that was designated in its entirety a Civil War National Heritage Area, although portions of many other states have been given that designation. The Heritage Area program was established by act of Congress in 1996.

In Tennessee and throughout the world, the electronic age is opening history to us in ways unimaginable a few decades ago. By the internet we are beginning to have access to the holdings of libraries and archives, photo and museum collections, data bases of all sorts, and, especially for Tennesseans, the online edition of *The Tennessee Encyclopedia of History & Culture*. In 2004 I published *A Directory of Tennessee Agencies Bringing State and Local History to the Public*. In lieu of reprinting, it is now maintained on the website of the Tennessee State Library and

Archives. The computer age has great potential for spreading the story of Tennessee and Tennesseans.

But of all that I have noted heretofore, the development that excites me most is the sense that Tennesseans are beginning to understand how important our state is to the history of the United States. Can you imagine the U.S.A. without the participation of Tennesseans in the Westward Movement, especially in settling and organizing the governments of the states of Texas and California, Arkansas and Missouri? Can you imagine American history without the roles of Andrew Jackson in the second war with England and in his two-term presidency? How would national history be seen without President James K. Polk's doubling the size of the country, without the remarkable foot soldier Alvin C. York in World War I or without the National Laboratory at Oak Ridge in World War II? Or what would our future be without the vast potential of the United Nations, whose "father" was Cordell Hull of Tennessee? The UN may be an organization with as many faults as it has members, but it nonetheless may yet be the last hope of humankind for peace between nations.



At the Oak Ridge National Laboratory site X-10, scientists built the world's first powerful nuclear reactor thus paving the way for the age of nuclear power. Courtesy Tennessee State Library and Archives.

Transportation Enhancement Grants, awarded by the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) from federal highway funds, have contributed significantly to historic preservation and interpretation efforts for the last several years. As the grants must be used to enhance the experience one has in dealing with transportation, both past and present, they have been awarded for the development of trails, transportation museums, historic sites located along highways and rivers, and other travel enhancement projects. Courthouse squares have been notable recipients of these funds as have highway welcome centers and trails ad infinitum. I have not identified the specific use of Enhancement Grants on the following pages except in special circumstances, essentially to remind us of their widespread application.

In this report I include a number of photographs to remind us that our history, while made by people, is anchored in places. Visiting those places enables us to enter other times and by visiting what we can see and touch and otherwise experience we can better understand the issues of those days and perhaps even those of our own.

By study, inquiry, interviews, phone calls, correspondence both conventional and electronic, and visiting people and places throughout much of the state, I have arrived at the evaluations offered here. By deliberately mixing agencies, organizations, and their various activities throughout the text, I have tried to show that historical interest in Tennessee is indeed widespread. The conclusions reached and recommendations offered are mine alone and I take full responsibility for them.

The office of State Historian is attached to the State Library and Archives, a division of the office of the Secretary of State. I could not have prepared this report without the encouragement of the Secretary of State Riley Darnell and the cooperation of Jeanne D. Sugg, State Librarian and Archivist. Publication of *The State of State History* in

Tennessee in 2006 was made possible by the office of the Secretary of State, for which I am deeply grateful.

Many others assisted me but special recognition must go to Glenda Brown Milliken, my capable and tireless co-worker; the recently retired Executive Director Herbert Harper and his staff at the Tennessee Historical Commission; the various state and private agencies that have contributed photographs; and Robert Greene and Melissa Fisher who know all one needs to know to produce an attractive printed product.

Walter T. Durham
State Historian
December 1, 2006

Walter T. Durham looked at local history through the eyes of Sumner Countians when in 1969 he wrote his first book, The Great Leap Westward, A History of Sumner County, Tennessee, from its Beginnings to 1805. In subsequent books he broadened his view to include the entire state as well as its predecessor government, the Territory of the United States South of the River Ohio. His works include three Civil War books; biographies of four prominent Tennesseans; a volume about Tennesseans and the California Gold Rush; and several other books to a total of eighteen.

The author served three years in World War II after which he earned the B.A. and M.A. degrees from Vanderbilt University. He was actively involved in the business world for several years before making Tennessee history his principal occupation.



The Pillars in Bolivar was built as a small Federal style house before 1828. In 1837 a subsequent owner enlarged and remodeled it in the Greek Revival style. Courtesy APTA.

The State of State History in Tennessee in 2006

Part I

Setting the Pace

Since publishing *The State of State History in Tennessee in 2004*, I am pleased to volunteer an update of the state of state history two years later. Although there have been no massive breakthroughs in bringing state history to the public, innovative ideas, increased funding, and the perseverance of professionals and volunteers alike have enabled progress to be recorded on many fronts.

Reports of new and/or enlarged activities in the field are widespread and numerous. The pace is fast. Here are several selected examples.

Long in preparation, the **monument** to Tennessee troops who fought at the battle of Shiloh in 1862 has been erected on that battlefield and presented to the National Park Service by the State of Tennessee. A compelling work of granite and bronze, it was dedicated in 2005. It merits a visit from all who have not seen it.

A bronze **statue** memorializing the Civil War services of United States Colored Troops (USCT) has been placed and dedicated in the Nashville National Veterans Cemetery. Representing a standing infantryman of the USCT, the statue is located at the site of 1,910 USCT burials and is believed to be the first monument raised to African-American troops of the Union Army. It stands prominently in the cemetery of more than 15,000 graves.

Since 2004 the East Tennessee History Center at Knoxville, with museum and library research facilities, has been completed and dedicated. The center is the result of the work of the leaders of the **East Tennessee Historical Society** (ETHS) with the cooperation of local, state, and

national government and the private sector. Completion of the center represents one of the most important recent developments in the state for collecting, preserving, researching, and presenting Tennessee history.

The preservation and renovation of the historic Governor's residence, **The Tennessee Residence**, in Nashville, begun in 2005, was over seventy percent complete by the end of 2006. Work is expected to be finished by July, 2007. During the autumn of 2006, The Tennessee Residence Foundation selected an architect to design the Conservatory Hall to be built on the Residence grounds. Thus far, more than \$7,000,000 has been contributed to the undertaking by the private sector.

After more than two years of intense restoration, the 1937 Davidson County Courthouse has been reopened in Nashville. It overlooks the new Public Square Park, a space now returned to public use.

The restoration preserved the external appearance of the building and was totally respectful of its history and to the integrity of the structure itself. It is a good example of preserving a notable building for important use now and in the future. The courthouse has served the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County since the city and county merged in 1962.

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One of the strongest statements about public interest in Tennessee history was made by the City of Franklin when it purchased 110 acres of a local golf and country club for \$5,000,000. The entire site is core battlefield. **Franklin Charge**, a coalition of battlefield preservation groups, Civil War historians, the people of Franklin, and local, state, and national governments, led the successful effort. The new owners will restore the land to the condition that existed at the time of the battle of Franklin in 1864. The restoration will be at once battleground and green space.

Though at a measured pace, plans are going forward for the construction of a new **State Library and Archives** (TSLA) building and a new home for the **State Museum** (TSM). Both structures are due to be located north of the Capitol on the Bicentennial Mall. The state has selected design architects for the library and has chosen a planning agent for the museum. Both of these institutions are among the finest of their kind in the country.

Governor Phil Bredesen and the Tennessee Building Commission have approved a location for the **Museum of African American Music, Art, and Culture** at Jefferson Street and Eighth Avenue North in Nashville. An initiative of the African American History Foundation of Nashville, Inc., the museum will celebrate the contributions of African Americans on local, regional, national, and international levels. Detailed plans and other construction details are under development at this time.

At Andrew Jackson's **Hermitage**, contractors completed restoration of the two log buildings that constituted the first Hermitage. They installed interpretive panel exhibits with each and set up wayside signage. During the past eighteen months, they have completed the longer term mansion restoration.

The Hermitage has become a certified site on the National Park Service's Trail of Tears National Historic Trail. This recognition gives impetus to the Hermitage's efforts to confront Indian removal issues and deal with them in the context of the times.

There have been important additions to the Hermitage manuscript collection. They include a letter from a Bostonian describing a meeting with Jackson in 1824, photographs of Hanna and Aaron Jackson, and a collection of maps, prints, and newspapers related to the general.

During the summer of 2006, California filmmakers taped scenes at the Hermitage for *Andrew Jackson: And*

the Shaping of American History, a documentary that will be shown nationally on PBS in 2007. The film examines the life and times of Jackson. Recognizing that it advances the study, teaching, and understanding of American history and culture, the National Endowment for the Humanities has partially funded the project. Community Television of Southern California (KCET-TV) in Los Angeles is in charge of production.

The Hermitage has begun assessing its extraordinary collection of archaeological artifacts assembled over the past 26 years. The undertaking will include analyzing, processing, and cataloging and is expected to be completed in two years. The goal is to make this information more easily available for educational and research purposes.



The Andrew Johnson Homestead is part of the Andrew Johnson National Historic Site at Greeneville. The Site preserves another of his homes, his tailor shop, and his gravesite. Courtesy National Park Service.

The **James K. Polk Memorial Association** of Columbia, TN has purchased an 1870s church building that adjoins the gardens of the ancestral home of the president. Plans are to develop it as an exhibit hall and educational facility. Working with William R. Polk, the Association has reprinted *The Diary of James K. Polk During his Presidency, 1845-1849*, in four volumes handsomely encased. A commemoration of the 200th anniversary of James K. Polk's move to Tennessee was held during the autumn of 2006.

Caretaker and interpreter of the **Andrew Johnson National Historic Site** at Greeneville, TN, the National Park Service reopened the Johnson Homestead to tours in August 2005 after an eleven-month closure to rehabilitate the structure. The undertaking provided for the installation of new electrical and mechanical systems and fire alarm and fire suppression systems. Extensive repairs to the building were made including new porch flooring, roof repairs, and wallpaper.

There is widespread expectation that the Andrew Johnson site and the four national parks located on Civil War battlefields in Tennessee will be presenting new programs and displays for the Civil War Sesquicentennial less than five years away. As of December 1, 2006, no directives for any such activities have come down from Washington. To make plans and implement them through Federal channels is a slow process. And it suggests that for the national parks to have appropriate roles in the 150-year celebration, the administration should take any action it contemplates without further delay.

Additional funding for the **Tennessee Historical Commission** (THC) was included in Governor Phil Bredesen's budget for 2006-2007 and passed by the General Assembly. Funds for erecting, maintaining, and replacing damaged or missing highway historical markers was increased from \$10,000 to \$45,100, and the budget for

physical maintenance of the approximately one hundred buildings on 16 state-owned historic sites was increased from \$100,000 to \$200,000. The appropriation for grants to local historical organizations partially to reimburse them for site operating expenses was doubled to \$233,300. Even with that increase, the local groups will still be funding about sixty percent of operating costs for state-owned properties.

After an appropriation in 2005 for a new visitor and interpretive center at the Alex Haley home in Henning, TN, Governor Bredesen recommended and the General Assembly provided a capital outlay of \$1,250,000 in 2006 for a similar facility at the Carter House on the site of the Battle of Franklin. Such facilities are extremely important to assure a meaningful experience for the many who will visit the sites.

The state has just completed repairs, painting, and decorating for the Cloverbottom Mansion of the 1860s that houses the offices of the Historical Commission. It is located at 2941 Lebanon Road, Nashville, 37214.

In cooperation with the city of Dickson, the Clement Foundation, and the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT), the State Historical Commission has initiated the development of the **Frank G. Clement Birthplace and Railroad Museum** at Dickson. Located in the old Halbrog Hotel on the railroad, the facility is a state-owned historic site. A ground breaking ceremony was held June 2, 2006.

When completed, the museum and site will have interpretive exhibits, artifacts, and various elements of the railroad culture that shaped life in the region. It will also include materials and exhibits that recall the public career of Frank G. Clement, especially his ten years as governor, and the long history of the Clement family in Tennessee public service.

Under the provisions of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the Historical Commission has approved applications for Federal tax credits that resulted in \$89,024,818 spent in renovating and restoring National Register properties for current use since January 1, 2005. During the same period and under Section 106 of the same act, THC reviewed for compliance 4,100 construction and other projects using Federal funds to determine the impact of each on the cultural resources of the state.

The Commission successfully entered 50 listings on the National Register of Historic Places that included 1,418 properties. There are now 1,958 entries in the National Register for Tennessee, including 261 districts for a total of 40,200 structures and sites now listed. Allocations from the Commission's Federal budget enabled both the Southwest Tennessee Development District and the Greater Nashville Regional Council to add a preservation planner to each staff.



A crowd surrounds the Tennessee Monument at its dedication in Shiloh National Military Park in 2005.

The **Wars Commission**, a part of the Historical Commission, has been instrumental in winning grants and appropriations for the acquisition of historic battlefield sites. During the last year, 21 acres of the Davis Bridge Battlefield site, 30 miles southwest of Shiloh, were acquired, boosting the total holdings there to 225 acres. From its own modest grant funds, the Wars Commission participated in funding the USCT monument and awarded a matching grant to the Franklin and Williamson County Heritage Foundation for the publication of 150,000 tour brochures for the Battle of Franklin.

The **Department of Tourist Development**, the Historical Commission, and representatives of other state agencies have begun informal consultations for the Civil War Sesquicentennial in 2015. The observance is expected to examine the effects of the war on all of the people of the state and its institutions irrespective of creed, gender, or race.

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With three new curators added to its staff, the **Tennessee State Museum** has recovered previously budget-eliminated positions. One of the three, the curator of history and extension services, will focus primarily on extending services to local museums throughout the state. Services will include advice and assistance, managing and monitoring loans of artifacts to them, and organizing traveling exhibits from the collections of the state museum. This is a timely development as local museums are rapidly increasing in number throughout the state. Several counties have a museum in each of its major towns; Robertson County has five such combinations.

Staging attractive exhibits at its downtown Nashville location, TSM has displayed "Old Glory," a precious but delicate American icon on loan from the National Museum of American History at the Smithsonian. It was shown with associated artifacts and graphic images on a



The statue memorializing the service of United States Colored Troops (USCT) in the Civil War was erected in the Nashville National Veterans Cemetery in 2005.

specialty designed rack until November 26, 2006. The flag was the property of Capt. William Driver of Massachusetts who flew it over his seafaring vessel before retiring to Nashville. When the first contingent of Union soldiers marched off their troop ships into town, he, as a Unionist, permitted it to be flown briefly over the State Capitol after the Confederate flag was lowered. The term “Old Glory” is

attributed to Driver, an exclamation he made when he first raised the flag over his ship. The exhibit was called "Old Glory: An American Treasure Comes Home."

The proliferation of Internet websites is one of the most notable changes in historical communication in recent times. Easy to access, the contents of websites extend from a basic statement of the mission of a given organization to a veritable encyclopedia of information.

The State Museum is undertaking a project to use its collections as the basis for a website to explore Tennessee history from prehistoric Native American civilization to the beginning of the twenty-first century. The website development has been undertaken since the museum identified a need shared by both teachers and students for readily available materials on Tennessee history. Much of the material will be expressly designed to meet the needs of middle school and elementary students. In addition to using its own holdings, the museum will provide links to the online resources of the Tennessee Historical Society and will draw on such other sources as may be needed.

Recognizing what he saw as our inadequate effort to make Tennessee history resources available to public schoolteachers, Nashville author and historian Bill Carey is on line at <http://www.tnhistoryforkids.org>. The website puts photographs and information about Tennessee history at the fingertips of anyone who can use a personal computer. He has recently added some "virtual tours" and a Tennessee history text written for eighth graders.

A Tennessee Historical Commission staff member has compiled "The Tennessee Documentary Sourcebook" and has it on its own website up and running. The project has created a new "one-of-a-kind" publication, in CD-Rom format, word searchable, and based on extensive research by the author. A grant from the Wars Commission will help duplicate and deliver the "sourcebook" to more than 1,000 Tennessee school libraries.

Another state museum in Nashville is the **Oscar L. Farris Tennessee Agricultural Museum** located on the grounds of the Ellington Agricultural Center. The museum collection is housed in a renovated plantation barn. Operated by the Tennessee Department of Agriculture, the museum features educational programs and hands-on activities for students along with displays of home and farm artifacts for the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Also, on site are log cabins, an early twentieth century farmhouse, a wooded trail, and seasonal gardens and heirloom plants.

In its mission the museum has partnered with Nashville Public Television, MTSU educational television, and the Nashville Public Educational Foundation. The museum houses the Tennessee Agricultural Hall of Fame and enjoys the support of a nonprofit museum association of 118 members.

The museum maintains a regular schedule of public events. In addition, special events such as the 25th Annual Historic Rural Life Festival which will be held May 1-4, 2007, attract popular support. Two hundred volunteers helped produce and stage the Music and Molasses Festival on October 21-22, 2006.

The **Tennessee State Library and Archives** has established the Tennessee Virtual Archive, a program to digitize photographs and historical documents both to preserve them and to facilitate sharing, ultimately by the Internet. The Tennessee Virtual Archive will be the Web-based portal to digitized versions of TSLA's rich and varied holdings, searchable and linked to online finding aids. Although the primary goal of this project is to provide enhanced access for the citizens of Tennessee to TSLA collections, an important part of the activity stems from the library's aim to give teachers and students better tools for using primary sources. Educational outreach and providing

enhanced resources for K-12 users are receiving increased attention at TSLA.

Another program, Volunteer Voices, seeks to open up access to information held in Tennessee's cultural heritage institutions. The statewide goal is "to create a digital library using documents, photographs, and other materials in Tennessee libraries, museums, and archives for use in the K-12 classroom."

The first phase of activities will focus on the development and implementation of a portal to provide coordinated, centralized access to contextual information and existing electronic resources on Tennessee history and culture. The second phase will focus on efforts to expand the electronic content of the portal through the creation of new digital resources.



Near Nashville, Clover Bottom was first built in 1852 in the Greek Revival style, but fire gutted it in 1859. Rebuilt soon after in the Italianate style, it currently houses the offices of the Tennessee Historical Commission.

The website, <http://www.volunteervoices.org/collections/>, provides a glimpse of digitization activities currently underway in Tennessee. It is the goal of Volunteer Voices to bring this content together in a way that opens up new teaching and learning opportunities for the residents of Tennessee. As the host institution for the Middle Tennessee portion of the project, TSLA began digitization work in early April, 2006. One of the goals of the project is to cooperate with as many smaller repositories as possible to make their collections more visible. By such collaboration local archives and repositories are enabled to play increasingly important roles in the preservation and dissemination of Tennessee history.

Beyond its own holdings, the State Library has reached out to smaller repositories through its Archives Development Program. During the last two years, that program has assisted the organization of eight new local archives. Assistance and professional advice from TSLA is of great value to them. The successful operations of local archives are of immeasurable value to all who care about Tennessee history.

Extensive research by library staff produced an impressive exhibit entitled "This Honorable Body: African American Legislators in the 19th Century Tennessee." It was presented to the General Assembly in 2006 and can be seen on the TSLA website.

TSLA is working with institutions of higher learning to acquaint them with the remarkably rich historical resources available in the library's collections. The word is going out anew that it is a resource center for scholars, historians, academic institutions, the media, genealogists, and for the public at large.

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The MTSU **Center for Historic Preservation** has made effective use of partners, both public and private,

to expand its programs in rural preservation. The Center publishes the *Tennessee Century Farms Newsletter* and a how-to document, *Holding On to the Homestead*. Within the last 18 months it has prepared 15 nominations for the National Register of Historic Places, developed a heritage development plan for the City of Pulaski, and laid out an Iron Furnace Trail for West and Middle Tennessee counties. The Center has been prominently involved in editorial and publishing such as the online edition of *The Tennessee Encyclopedia of History & Culture* for which the governor proposed an appropriation of \$50,000 to update and maintain. It furnished the editor and other support for the path-breaking book, *A History of Tennessee Art: Creating Traditions, Expanding Horizons*.

Administering the **Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area**, the center has partnered in projects with the Mississippi River Natural and Recreational Corridor, the Scenic Highway 321 Corridor in East Tennessee, and Franklin's Charge battlefield initiative in Williamson County. The Heritage Area staff and the Center for Historic Preservation have collaborated to conduct a historic structure report for the African American Cultural Museum in Lebanon. As the National Heritage Area includes the entire state, the center is examining heritage issues in both urban and rural areas. Its mandate is to focus attention not only on our heritage from the war years, but on the early Reconstruction period as well.

A relatively new Civil War memorial group is the **Tennessee Civil War Preservation Association (TCWPA)** "dedicated to saving Tennessee's Civil War battlefields." Its primary aim is to rally broad regional and national support for battlefield preservation, especially in Tennessee. It is headquartered in Nashville.

A non-government entity, the TCWPA made preservation grants to three battlefields as follows: The Franklin battlefield, \$10,000; the Davis Bridge battlefield,

\$2,000; and the Battle of Nashville Preservation Society for Shy's Hill, \$5,000.

TCWPA has launched a program called "Two Flags over Tennessee." During the next two years, battle preservationists will join local citizens in a ceremony raising a Union and a Confederate flag over the respective positions of the opposing armies on all of the state's most significant Civil War battlefields.

Started February 6, 2006, at Fort Henry on the Cumberland River, the program uses Civil War era flags: the "stars and stripes" version of 1861 featuring 34 states and the eleven-star Confederate "First National" flag known as the stars and bars. The purpose of "Two Flags over Tennessee" is to call attention to the importance of preserving key battlefield sites in Tennessee before real estate development further overtakes them.



Cragfont near Castalian Springs was the home of the family of James and Susan Black Winchester. The Georgian house was constructed during the four years 1798 - 1802. Walter T. Durham Collection.

On June 22 state officials joined local citizens and out-of-state guests for the formal dedication of the **Parker's Crossroads Battlefield**, the site of the Civil War battle of the same name. Battle reenactors participated with eight full-scale artillery pieces of the type used in the fighting on December 31, 1862.

Parker's Crossroads contains over 346 acres of preserved national battlefield property, acquired over the last six years. Preservation of the area was made possible through the cooperation of the Tennessee Wars Commission, the Civil War Preservation Trust, Federal Highway Enhancement funding, the Tennessee Lands Acquisition Committee, several history-minded Tennessee legislators, and local municipal officials.

A pedestrian trail 4,500 feet long from the Red River bridge to the **Fort Defiance** property, a scenic overview, secondary routes throughout the fortress area, and an interpretation center of the fort are under construction by the City of Clarksville, assisted by TDOT enhancement grants. Fort Defiance was a Civil War fortification erected by the Confederates, but captured early in 1862 and afterward used by Union forces.

Part II

In Places Large and Small

During the past 18 months, the merger of the **Shelby County Archives** with the County **Register's Office** is a most significant development for the history researcher in Tennessee. After the merger the Register's Office/Archives purchased a computer and scanning equipment including a 480 image per minute production scanner and a digital planetary scanner. The production scanner allows rapid digitization of the less fragile, more modern records. The planetary scanner, currently the only one in the state, allows scanning of the largest and most fragile records without damaging them.

The merger also enabled the Archives to begin placing indexes and records on the Register's office website. As a result, an impressive portion of the Archives holdings are now accessible through the website.

Arguably the most important collection of twentieth-century Tennessee manuscripts and documents to be made available to the public recently are the E. H. Crump Papers held by the **Memphis Public Library**. Crump has been widely regarded as having been one of the three most important urban political bosses in American history.

Historic preservationists in Memphis are celebrating the preservation and adaptive re-use planned for the building that housed the U.S. Customs House, Courthouse, and Post Office on Front Street. A \$42 million restoration will result in its becoming the new **University of Memphis Law School**. The University had previously acquired the property from the federal government.

Publishing interest has been high in Memphis. *Memphis Then and Now* and *Shelby County* have been published, and a local press is reprinting the *Goodspeed Histories of Tennessee Counties*. The West Tennessee Historical Society has purchased for resale 400 sets of the late Paul R. Coppock's books on Memphis and Mid-South history. Upcoming publishing events in Memphis are a biography of Boss E. H. Crump and a second book of genealogical sketches by the Descendants of Early Settlers of Shelby County, both expected to be out this year. The third book, a coffee table history of Shelby County is expected to be off the press next year. Another manuscript dealing with north-eastern Shelby County and southeastern Tipton County is in preparation.



Beale Street in Memphis was an important venue for the development of blues and other river music during the nineteenth century. The street's W. C. Handy became known as "the father of the blues." Courtesy Tennessee State Library and Archives.

Other activities in the bluff city include the opening of the **National Civil Rights Museum “Rooming House”** expansion and the new **Memphis Cotton Museum** located in the Cotton Exchange Building. On the other hand, the Memphis Museums System has closed its two museum houses on Adams Avenue in the Victorian Village.

The Memphis District of the **Army Corps of Engineers** has concluded a comprehensive survey of cultural resources in and along the Mississippi River. The **Tennessee Parks and Greenways Foundation** has begun promoting a parkway route from the Kentucky border to the Mississippi line through the Tennessee counties that border on the Mississippi River. It will be known as the Mississippi River Natural and Recreational Corridor with full recognition of historical sites along the way.

Assisted by an enhancement grant of \$648,816 from the Tennessee Department of Transportation to the city of Jackson, the **Historic Casey Jones Home and Railroad Museum** there is launching a major expansion that will include a largely expanded transportation-themed museum. Its focus will be on turn-of-the-century (1900) railroading. The museum will feature architectural design elements that will create an authentic train station of the period including beaded wood ceiling, waiting room benches, and a telegrapher’s window. Present exhibits will be enlarged and will include artifacts from the life and legend of Casey Jones, his fireman Sim Webb, and the lives of other Tennessee railroaders of the period. The project is expected to be completed in 2007.

Successor to the Tennessee Heritage Alliance, the **Tennessee Preservation Trust (TPT)** has been gaining support statewide. One of its most impressive acts to date is the publication *Banking on Tennessee’s History: The Economic Value of Historic Preservation to the People of Tennessee*. The trust annually publishes a list of the most endangered historic properties in the state. TPT will stage a

statewide preservation conference in Franklin and Williamson County March 29-31, 2007. In 2006, **Knox Heritage** hosted the Tennessee Preservation Trust Statewide Preservation Conference and it was, as predicted, the “largest single event of the year for Tennessee’s preservation community.”

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Important progress in preserving and interpreting history is occurring throughout the state. A working group is compiling an inventory of historic sites and structures in Greene County as a part of the county’s new strategic plan. The **Nathanael Greene Museum** presented an educational program for third graders, “Growing up in Greene.” Another program for schoolchildren, “Divided Family—Divided Country” was designed to help them understand the period of the 1860s. It was presented by the Dickson-Williams Mansion organization. While conducting ongoing restoration of the Old College and the Doak House, **Tusculum College** hosted over 12,000 schoolchildren in its **Andrew Johnson Museum** and the **Doak House Museum**.

Partnering with the Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area, the **Battle of Blue Springs** reenactment enjoyed another successful run in 2005. This time the sponsors distributed teachers’ guides for the Civil War event. Greene County is working with the Heritage Area to develop a Civil War Driving Tour publication and to make plans for the Bicentennial Celebration of Andrew Johnson’s birthday in 2008.

The site of the Confederate States **Camp Trousdale** in northern Sumner County near the Kentucky state line is receiving the attention of the **Highland Rim Historical Society** and the **Cumberland Valley Civil War Heritage Association**. They are looking at possible preservation of the campsite and plan to develop a history and interpretation of it. Many of the Confederate troops from Middle Tennessee trained there in the fall of 1861 until

Union forces moved on Fort Henry and Fort Donelson early in 1862. The concerns of the Society and the Heritage Association have been shared with the Tennessee Wars Commission, the Land Trust for Tennessee, the City of Portland, and the property owners.

New historical museums are appearing. Displaying military artifacts from the Civil War to Vietnam, the **Crossville Military Museum** is now open. The **Overton County Legacy Museum** and the **Smith County Heritage Museum** are now in operation. Recently refurbished, the new **Cookeville History Museum** reopened during the summer of 2006.

The establishment of railroad and/or transportation museums continues to be popular undertakings even as railroad construction was endemic in the nineteenth century. The restoration of the old **Smyrna Railroad Depot** is underway for use as a welcome center and railroad museum. Rehabilitation of the old **Roane County Courthouse** will provide a welcome center on the first floor and a transportation museum on the second and third floors. The **Cookeville Railroad Museum** has recently acquired a 1913 Baldwin 4-6-0 steam locomotive and tender. They are being refurbished with an enhancement grant to the city of Cookeville from the Tennessee Department of Transportation.

A **civil rights museum** was scheduled to open in Clinton, Tennessee, by the end of 2006. The museum will tell the story of the twelve students from Green McA-doo School, then an all black institution, who enrolled in the previously all white Clinton High School in the fall of 1965. "These Clinton students were the first African Americans to enroll in a white public school in the Southeast in the 20th century," according to the Center for Historic Preservation at MTSU.

Partnering with the **Green McAdoo Cultural Organization** and the **City of Clinton**, the Center has assisted in developing initiatives such as a first public interview with the original twelve students, a new historical account of the events of the civil rights crisis 1956-1958, and an oral history of the experiences of the twelve. The undertaking is underwritten by a federal grant.

A number of other historical activities for the Cumberland Plateau are in the planning stages. Using an enhancement grant from TDOT, the city of Woodbury and Cannon County are ready to restore the **Woodbury Courthouse** square. Cumberland County is planning an Interstate 40 welcome center at Crossville to provide socio-historical interpretation for the Big South Fork area. In the works is development of an interpretive kiosk for the World War II prisoners of war camp near Crossville. A feasibility study is weighing the possibility of restoring the camp infirmary as a P.O.W. museum.

The Cherokee removal of 1838 is receiving attention along the route of the **Trail of Tears**. In White and Van Buren Counties, efforts are underway to establish a Trail of Tears Park to interpret Native American Indian history including the removal experience. In Meigs County a new visitors and interpretive center marks the location of the place where 9,000 Cherokee and 500 Creek camped during the period of the forced removal. It is located on the banks of the Tennessee River at Blythe Ferry Road. Another welcome and interpretive center for the Trail of Tears has been authorized for Pulaski.

The **Heritage Development Initiative** in Fentress County has prompted a movement to restore the old York Institute building there. In Jackson County the **Granville Museum** observed its annual Heritage Day festival in 2006 by holding a grand opening of a new display, *At the Crossroads: The Civil War in Granville*.

Other projects underway include the **Amonette-Borderlands**, a Pickett County site of ten acres ultimately to be the location of a replica of a Victorian village. Work has been completed on the McMinnville downtown revitalization project which highlights and protects downtown architectural resources. A **Rails-Trails** project between Cookeville and Monterey features an eighteen-mile walking trail alongside the newly refurbished Nashville and Eastern Railroad track. The trail will include portions of the old Walton Road.

Near Fort Donelson National Park, the **Town of Dover Historical Walkway**, Phase I, will soon be a reality. Part trail and part sidewalk, the project includes construction of a boat dock at Dover landing, a pedestrian bridge, and sidewalks.

The Birthplace of Country Music Alliance has unveiled conceptual plans for the new **Birthplace of Country Music Cultural Heritage Center** in downtown Bristol. The new facility will include temporary and permanent exhibits that trace the history, cultural influences, and development of country music through a sequence of audio visual experiences which will allow visitors the opportunity to listen to the melodies and encounter the rich musical tradition firsthand.

The **Jonesborough/Washington County History Museum**, funded by a **Museums for America** grant from the Institute for Museum and Library Services is taking its museum to the streets. More specifically, the museum is adding signage to Jonesborough's downtown historic district, creating interactive exhibits within the museum related to the district, and telling local stories in a family friendly "front porch" environment. By these devices the museum is accessible anytime and it is adding context to the preservation work that has occurred throughout the years in the downtown area.

The month of February, the time appointed to observe **black history** in America, is increasingly busy with multiple local events and attentive media coverage. Examples are the annual day-long Conference on African-American Culture and History in Nashville and numerous museum displays in schools, libraries, and other public buildings. An outstanding display, “**Stony Road: Desegregating America’s Schools,**” portrayed issues at the national and the local level in East Tennessee. It highlights the city of Clinton having the first school in the South to desegregate and follows the later experiences of integration in the Knoxville City Schools, Maryville College, and the University of Tennessee. Sponsored by the Beck Cultural Exchange Center, the Knox County Public Library, and the government of Knox County, the exhibit was displayed in the **Beck House**.



Located on the campus of Fisk University in Nashville, Jubilee Hall celebrates the Fisk Jubilee Singers' successful international fund-raising tour in 1874. Walter T. Durham Collection.

An intriguing source of the history of post Civil War Tennessee private education for African Americans is the **Fisk University Archives** in Nashville. Often qualifying for grants from public and private sources, Fisk has recently received such assistance for processing several of its largest collections.

During the past twenty-four months, the University has been processing four collections that deal with the early history of the school, established in 1866. They include the papers of Rufus A. Taylor, a published historian at Fisk; the papers of Ambrose Caliver, the first black dean at Fisk and an advocate of vocational education; the Spence Family papers, including the works of Professor Adam K. Spence of Fisk and an important family history; and the papers of Thomas Elsa Jones, the last white president of the university.

The Fisk Archives is in the process of digitizing data about the **Rosenwald Negro Rural Schools Photography Collection**. Included in their mission is digitization of at least 6,000 photographs made at the schools located in sixteen southern states. Julius Rosenwald, an American philanthropist, promoted the construction of schools for black Americans by using a formula that required the “Negro” community to contribute one-third of the cost and the local government to contribute one-third to match the one-third he gave.

Attracting attention in the mid state is an important online document, the *Nashville Historical Newsletter* published by Mike Slate. The provocative presentation, usually an essay, raises questions and shares information about events in Nashville history. Kathy Lauder is editor. Selecting from its articles, the *Newsletter* has published two volumes in an open-ended series.

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The Historical Commission of Metropolitan Nashville and Davidson County is working with its parks system on plans for the further development of the newly-opened **Fort Negley Park**. An historical interpretation and visitors center is of top priority. A long-range plan for the development of an additional 20-acre site is under study. In another aspect of preservation work, the Commission and the Metro Council are developing a plan to assure that demolition permits have been reviewed for their impact on historic preservation before being issued. The 2006 loss to demolition of an important 1794 dwelling prompted the effort.

While not rewriting its history, **Chattanooga** has demonstrated that it can recognize errors of the past and, when indicated, seek reconciliation between those involved. A Chattanooga member of the Tennessee Historical Commission reported:

On March 19, 2006, a commemoration and peace walk was held marking the 100th anniversary of the lynching of Ed Johnson on Chattanooga's Walnut Street Bridge. Mr. Johnson, an African American, was convicted in an unfair trial of raping a young white woman, and his case was appealed all the way to the United States Supreme Court, which issued an order staying his execution. With the connivance of local law enforcement officers, a mob broke into the jail and lynched Mr. Johnson, which resulted in the only trial for contempt of the United States Supreme Court. The sheriff of Hamilton County and five other defendants were found guilty of contempt. In 2000, Mr. Johnson's conviction was over turned, and the story was the subject of a book published in 1999, *Contempt of Court*.

During 2005, **Billy Goat Hill**, an important point in the 1863 Battle of Chattanooga, was preserved as an historic site through the cooperation of the Trust for Public Land, the State of Tennessee, and the City of Chattanooga. A year later, the trust acquired a 47-acre tract near South Chickamauga Creek with two Civil War era bridges. This area has been incorporated into the South Chickamauga Greenway which maintains signage pointing to significant sites along its route.

In May of the same year, the **National Park Service** erected signs marking the addition of the Moccasin Bend National Archaeological District to the Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park, and marking it as a site along the Trail of Tears. With an enhancement grant from TDOT, Chattanooga has built the Wetlands Pedestrian Path which connects the existing facilities in Coolidge Park to the east, Manufacturers Road to the north, and to the Trail of Tears path of Moccasin Bend National Archaeological Site to the west. The Park Service has conducted public forums in 2005 and 2006 seeking comment on the future management of Moccasin Bend.

Chattanooga is also undertaking a pilot project to assess the possibility of adapting SmartPhone and PDA-based interactive features to historical signage. Four to six accessible downtown sites will be used for the testing. Layers of context and interactive features are under development. The results of the trials are expected to influence the design of the complete project which may have 60 to 80 sites. In its entirety it will involve thematic pedestrian “circuits” featuring the Civil War, architecture, business and industry, people, faith, culture, sports, and transportation.

This summer **Historic Rugby** opened a new visitors center and theater. Rugby has sold to the State of Tennessee 325 acres of woodland adjoining the historic district, part of a property it had acquired in an emergency purchase to protect the village. It will be known as the **Rugby State**

Natural Area. Another 150 acres of Rugby's purchase remains; it may ultimately be added to the Natural Area.

The **Mountain Goat Trail Alliance** has been organized to raise matching funds for a TDOT enhancement grant that will enable extension of a paved pedestrian and biking trail along the original Mountain Goat Rail Line between Monteagle and Tracy City. Earlier the trail had been built from Cowan to Monteagle. Future extensions are expected to bring it to natural and recreation areas and additional historic sites. The railway itself is an historic site having been built in 1853 as a rail spur for the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad. The Goat transported coal from the mines near Tracy City down to Cowan. It ceased operations after World War II and the rails and crossties were removed in 1985.



The Polk family home at Columbia was built in 1816 for President James K. Polk's parents. He lived there with them from 1818 to 1824.

The restoration of historic structures is an ongoing phenomenon. **Hale Springs** at Rogersville has been rehabilitated for use as a bed and breakfast, and the **Nance House** in Rutledge is undergoing extensive repairs for use as a trailhead for a historical walking tour of the town. Conversion of the old **Carnegie Library** in Harriman for use as a visitors center and construction of more than one mile of Cornstalk Heights Historic Trail will enable easy access to the city's historic areas.

Work has begun to restore the carriage house at **Netherland Inn** in Kingsport. Future plans call for construction of a wharf on the Holston River, a flatboat, and a river warehouse of the inn period.

A major restoration of the exterior of Belmont University's historic **Belmont Mansion** in Nashville began early this year. The facelift is expected to cost \$1.58 million. Further, the university plans to raise funds for an endowment to maintain the historic structure. It was built in 1853 and enlarged and remodeled in 1859.

Nashville's old East High, now East Literature Magnet School, was host last year to First Lady Laura Bush when she introduced the President's **Preserve America initiative**. Annual Presidential Awards will recognize outstanding preservation efforts by government entities, businesses, organizations, and individuals. Awards will be made through a competitive process administered by the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and the Secretary of the Interior. Nashville was chosen for the announcement because of its nationally known commitment to neighborhood preservation.

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Increased collaboration between historical groups has occurred statewide during the last two years. Publisher of the *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, the **Tennessee Historical Society** partnered with the Tennessee Arts

Commission, the University of Tennessee Press, and the Center for Historic Preservation at MTSU, to publish *A History of the Tennessee Arts: Creating Traditions, Expanding Horizons*.

The Society collaborated with the **Battle of Nashville Preservation Society**, the Metro Historical Commission, and the Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area to produce and stage a day-long event, “The Battle of Nashville, December 1864: 140th Anniversary Symposium.” Another collaborative effort was as coordinator for the eleven upper Cumberland counties federal training program for teachers “Teaching American History.” Partners with the project were Volunteer State Community College, Tennessee State University, and Wilson County Schools.

The Society has been engaged in fundraising for the maintenance and enhancement of the free website of *The Tennessee Encyclopedia of History & Culture*. In this they partnered with MTSU’s Center for Historic Preservation and the University of Tennessee Press.

Partnering with East Tennessee State University and Johnson City Schools, the **Heritage Alliance of Northeast Tennessee and Southwest Virginia** is directing **Tennessee’s First Frontier Teaching American History Program**. Teachers from several communities will meet at ETSU for instruction in teaching American history. Part of their training will be visits to regional historic sites. The Heritage Alliance is headquartered in Jonesborough and the teaching program is federally funded.

At the **East Tennessee History Center**, plans for the new signature museum exhibit *Voices of the Land: The People of East Tennessee* are moving forward, accelerated by a grant of \$2,500,000 recommended by the Governor and approved by the General Assembly in 2006. The exhibit will take visitors from the earliest settlement period through the Civil War era and into the late twentieth

century. Simultaneously, the voices of East Tennesseans describing their “unique relationship to the land” will be heard. A **We the People** grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities in 2005 set plans in motion for *Voices of the Land*.

While this exhibit is being designed and constructed, the museum presented an exhibit from the Smithsonian Institution “July, 1942: United We Stand” in 2005 and a locally produced “James Agee’s Knoxville” in 2006. Additional temporary exhibits will be shown during 2007.

ETHS hosted the sixteenth biennial Ulster American Heritage Symposium. Panelists from Ireland and the United States addressed topics related to the theme, “Three Centuries of Ulster American History, Tradition and Shared Experience.” The State Historian addressed a plenary session on the subject, “The Ulster Immigrants and the Early Settlement of Tennessee.”

ETHS sponsored the seventh annual teacher’s institute: “From Tennessee to the White House.” It focused on the experiences of the three Tennessee presidents—Jackson, Polk, and Johnson. The Society is also cooperating in the new TSLA Volunteer Voices Digital Library project.

The 600 members of **Knox Heritage, Inc.**, are leading historic preservation efforts in the Knoxville area. Last year they created the J. Allen Smith Endangered Properties Fund, redesigned the role of preservationists in downtown development with the theater project in the 500 block of Gay Street, began an autumn tradition with the Old House Fair, and restored two houses in old north Knoxville. A Restore America grant from HGTV and the National Trust for Historic Preservation was vital to restoring the two residences.

An example of adaptive use and preservation of an old building can be seen in Cleveland, Tennessee. A local investor has purchased the old **Cleveland Woolen Mills** and converted it into retail shops and loft apartments. A historic building was preserved and a financially sound investment was made.



The Frank G. Clement Birthplace and Railroad Museum is housed in the Hotel Holbrook in Dickson.

Part III

Digging: In the Earth and Elsewhere

The **Coal Creek Watershed Foundation, Inc.**, is far along with plans to erect a monument on the hillside above the old Convict Mine of the Knoxville Iron and Coal Company to recognize the lives of 131 convict miners buried there. Within the past year, the foundation has identified the names of the miners from state prison records. Their labor had been leased by the state to the mining company. Many died from mine accidents and work-related illnesses. Some of them died in the Coal Creek War fought by free miners against them and the state militia in 1891-92. The militia prevailed, but the conflict brought public attention to conditions in the mines and an end to the convict leasing system in Tennessee.

In the spring of 2006, a geographer from MTSU and an associate professor of history from Tennessee Technological University took their search for Tennessee history to a World War I battlefield in France. Tom Nolan and Michael Birdwell are “80 percent” certain they have found the exact location where **Sergeant Alvin York**, acting alone, captured 132 German infantrymen.

Using a global positioning system device, French and German trench maps, other official documents, and York’s journal, the scholars uncovered casings they believe came from the sergeant’s rifle. They found the objects six to eight inches below the surface of the battlefield in a forest protected for centuries in peacetime as a natural preserve.

Nolan and Birdwell report receiving excellent cooperation from the French government. Subject to a final evaluation of their findings, the French are interested

in raising a joint Franco-American monument at the site. Nolan and Birdwell will issue a final report after analyzing the results of a second exploration of the battleground made late in 2006.

Local societies as well as state and national institutions have recently been looking anew at the “**Underground Railroad**,” the short term used to describe a considerable network of venues and people who assisted fugitive slaves escape northward to free states. Most of the activity centered in East Tennessee where abolitionist interest was strongest. *The Lamp Lighter*, newsletter of the **Greene County Heritage Trust**, reported this year that a significant number of Greene Countians seem to have been involved in helping the fugitives escape slavery. It was suggested that the faculty and students of Washington College were “conductors” on the railroad.

The **Quaker** settlement at Friendsville was active in assisting free blacks and escaped slaves make their way into the North. The Quakers also provided cover and travel aid for young men trying to escape the Confederate military draft. Opposed to slavery because of their religious beliefs, the Quakers earlier had promoted manumission and a return to Africa for those manumitted. Equally opposed to war on religious grounds, they were especially attentive to young men who conscientiously opposed military service.

The National Park Service and the Tennessee Historical Commission are also seeking information about the “railroad” wherever it operated in Tennessee. It is a challenge to researchers due to the clandestine nature of the operation.

The 54 state parks, operated by the **State Parks Division** of TDEC, are open again. Included among them are ten archaeological sites managed in cooperation with the Division of Archaeology. No new parks have been opened since January 2005. Previously a satellite of Mont-

gomery Bell State Park, Harpeth River State Park achieved independent operating status during the latter part of 2004.

The **Division of Archaeology** of the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation continues to monitor and coordinate all archaeological investigations within the state. The Division participated in three major archaeological developments of the past two years. Perhaps the most immediately significant was the agreement reached between the departments of Agriculture and Environment and Conservation on the future management of the **Pinson Mounds** area.

The agreement addressed the issue of overlapping responsibilities that arose after Agriculture's **Division of Forestry** purchased 310 acres in Madison County for a tree seedling nursery in 1947 and found it to contain numerous prehistoric Indian mounds. Forestry protected the mounds, but in the course of time, the division erected certain visually intrusive structures near several burial mounds. In the 1960s the State Parks Division of TDEC acquired the Pinson Mounds archaeological site of 880 acres, a tract that surrounded Forestry's land. The different missions of Forestry and Archaeology led to management conflicts that have now been resolved. Parks will have all of the significant archaeological features under its jurisdiction and Forestry will continue its long-term genetic tree studies.

A world-class archaeological site, Pinson Mounds is a National Historic Landmark that can now be fully protected and interpreted by the Parks Division. TDEC has recently purchased a large archaeological site known as the **Johnson site** in Madison County. It dates from about A.D. 400 and is related to the Pinson Mound complex which is nearby.

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TDEC recently acquired 133 acres at Castalian Springs, the site of a **Woodland period American Indian**

village surrounded by hills that contain a large number of stone box graves. The original earthen walls and many small mounds within the village as described by investigators during the early nineteenth century, have succumbed to erosion by wind, weather, and agricultural cultivation. The large ceremonial mound still stands, although diminished in height by perhaps 25 percent. Previous excavations produced many artifacts of museum quality.

The site is directly across State Highway 25 from Wynnewood, a state-owned historic property of 56 acres and the present location of the large log house built in 1828 as a stagecoach inn. Immediately west and across Rock Springs Road from the Woodland period village is Bledsoe's Fort park, 88 acres that include the location of Isaac Bledsoe's fort built in 1783. Although the fort no longer stands, archaeologists from MTSU have located its outer walls and the foundations and chimneys of its principal log cabins. Owned by the County of Sumner, the park is one of the many municipally-owned historic sites in the state.

Within two to five miles of this adjoining cluster of properties are several historic locations. Cragfont, built 1798-1802 by General James Winchester, and the Bledsoe Creek Park for camping are both state-owned. Privately-owned historic buildings include Governor William B. Bate's birthplace and, separately, the house he occupied while governor and U.S. Senator; the Francis Weathered house; and three Federal-style houses erected in the 1840s by the builder John Fonville. Two large Union Army encampments from the Civil War were located immediately south and southwest of Wynnewood. The area was also the scene of training maneuvers conducted by units of the Second Army of the United States in preparation for the invasion of Europe in World War II.

The **Bledsoe's Lick Historical Association, Inc.**, caretaker and interpreter of Wynnewood and Bledsoe's Fort Park, is consulting with state and local officials about

developing an interpretation plan for the entire area and methods to make it an attractive stop for heritage tourists.

The developments at Pinson Mounds and the Indian village at Castalian Springs are examples of how discovery is still at work in Tennessee history. The multiple sites in both areas provide insights into different periods and, in some cases, connections between them.



Blount Mansion was built in Knoxville in 1792 by Territorial Governor William Blount. In addition to being his home and office, it was the seat of government for the territory until 1796. Collection of Walter T. Durham.

Hinting at underwater explorations yet to come, the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation has announced plans to build a 5,000 sq. ft. visitors center at **Johnsonville State Historic Park**. The park is on the east bank of the Tennessee River near the underwater wreckage of a number of Union Navy riverboats that were sunk in a raid by Confederate cavalry during the Civil War. It is anticipated that underwater archaeological investigations will be undertaken to determine the possibilities of removing artifacts from the wreckage. Approval by the United States Navy is a prerequisite for exploration.

Anticipated interpretation of the Johnsonville site would include the U.S. and C.S. naval action on Tennessee waterways, the Civil War military railroads system in Tennessee, and the role of Tennessee United States Colored troops in building the railroad from Nashville to Johnsonville and manning guard posts along it. Johnsonville was a critically important port of transfer for waterborne troops and supplies that, periodically, could not reach Nashville by the Cumberland River because of low water at the shoals of the Harpeth River.

Approaching Tennessee history from a different perspective, the **Land Trust for Tennessee** exists to protect the land and the natural and historic views and vistas that go with it. The Trust holds in trust conservation easements by which land owners can protect their land from development or other uses that they may regard as destructive to the landscapes conveyed. The Land Trust now has more than 11,000 acres in its protection. One of its most recent easements protects the Thomas Hardy Perkins farm and house called Meeting of the Waters, at the confluence of the Harpeth and West Harpeth Rivers in Williamson County.

The several local chapters of the **Association for the Preservation of Tennessee Antiquities**, the oldest Tennessee-based preservation organization, have continued their usual educational programs and a variety of community activities. The Glenmore Chapter in Jefferson County has led efforts not yet successful to save "Five Chimneys," the home of Samuel Isaac Newman, founder of Carson-Newman College. Built about 1835, the house is located on Mossy Creek near Jefferson City. The significant costs of restoring it in place or moving it and the owner's interest in using the property for other purposes combine to make preservation prospects dim. The Fayette County Chapter is moving forward with the restoration of the Hannum-Rhea House in Sommerville. The Hawkins County Chapter made a financial contribution to the preservation

of the 1890s building that once housed the New Providence Presbyterian Church. Members of the chapter met with the Maxwell Academy Historical Association to discuss ideas about properly preserving and using the schoolhouse built in 1852 by the New Providence Presbyterian Church. The newsletter, *APTA News*, publishes a calendar listing chapter events for upcoming months, a schedule that testifies to the liveliness of their local activities.

The **Portrait Documentation Project for Middle Tennessee**, initiated by the Nashville Town Committee of the **National Society of the Colonial Dames of America in Tennessee**, has resulted in a data base and website for the portraits at the Tennessee State Museum. The website displays the paintings and the data base offers information about subject and artist.

Trained volunteers have photographed the originals with digital cameras and collected pertinent data from the owners. Most of the portraits are owned by individuals, often family members of the subject, but many are owned by museums.



As a child, Alex Haley, internationally known author of *Roots*, moved with his parents from Ithaca, New York, to his mother's hometown of Henning. He grew up in this house.

The number of portraits documented is reported to have exceeded one thousand. Similar projects may be undertaken in other areas of the state.

Several history conferences both national and international in scope have been held in Tennessee since June 1, 2005. Two of the most recent are the 40th Annual Military History Conference at Chattanooga and the Sixteenth Biennial Ulster American Heritage Symposium held at the East Tennessee History Center. A number of Tennessee conservation and historic preservation groups joined to host the National Land Trust conference in Nashville in October 2006. Advocates for land trusts and preservation gathered for the conference from all across the United States.

The history community took note of two other conferences of statewide interest. The Tennessee Conference of Historians held its annual meeting in Nashville, hosted by Tennessee State University on September 29-30, 2006. The annual Tennessee Arts Commission's Cultural Crossroads Conference, focusing on "Heritage Tourism and the Arts," attracted numerous local historians to its meeting at Jonesborough on October 19-20, 2006.

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The **Department of Tourist Development** is creating plans for a Tennessee **Civil War Trail** project with signage to mark trails statewide along interstate, state, and county highways. Comparable undertakings have been successful in Virginia and North Carolina. Signs would be supplemented by campaign trail brochures produced with the assistance of the Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area.

The **Lakeway Civil War Preservation Association** of Morristown recently purchased a house in Hamblen County used as a headquarters by Confederate General James Longstreet during the winter of 1863-1864. In cooperation with the Tennessee Wars Commission, the Center

for Historic Preservation at MTSU, TVA, and TDOT's TEA-21 Enhancement Office, Lakeway is working toward restoring the house and constructing a welcome/interpretive East Tennessee Civil War Visitor Center at the Longstreet headquarters site.

Humanities Tennessee is pushing development of its Tennessee Community History Program. It includes the Museum on Main Street project, the Community History Development Fund, the Scholarship Program for the Tennessee Association of Museums Conference, the Program Bureau Video Library, and networking opportunities.

Another project, Digital Humanities Tennessee, is a system that provides technological support for all the programs of Humanities Tennessee. Currently, it comprises two components: the Humanities website, which provides information and humanities content relevant to all of the programs, and the Tennessee Digital Atlas, a developing database of cultural and historical stories and objects from across Tennessee. Its contents are linked to appropriate points on a map of the state.

Including a goodly representation of recent regional and American history scholarship, the Southern Festival of Books is being held in Memphis and Nashville on alternate years. Swapping the annual event between the two largest cities in the state is a new strategy that promises positive results. It was held in Memphis in 2006.

Humanities Tennessee is continuing its 2004 oral history program "We the People of Tennessee—Stories of Land and Places" with "explicit attempts at building community . . . by understandings of who we, the people, have been and are in a particular place." The plan "is to discover and tell the stories of individuals, families, churches, organizations, businesses, communities, and the state as a whole" and by so doing "recover a sense of community in our state as a whole" and in local areas.

Although there has been progress made by many institutions that bring Tennessee history to the public, little change has occurred in **our public schools K-12**. Just as two years ago, public school social studies curricula do not provide separate courses in Tennessee history. The subject matter is embedded in American history offerings in grades 4, 5, 8 and high school. Recognizing the need for teachers to have access to additional Tennessee history materials, the state department is working with Bill Carey's <http://www.tnhistoryforkids.org>. Teachers can request information and brochures at Carey's e-mail address historybill@usa.com. No changes in the curricula are expected in the near future.

Many elementary and high school students participate in **National History Day**, competing at district, state, and national levels. Prescribed themes are usually broad enough to permit entries on state and local subjects which in turn offer opportunities to focus on some aspect of Tennessee history. The theme for 2007 is "Triumph and Tragedy."



A nineteenth century stagecoach stop, the Chester Inn is the centerpiece of historic Jonesborough. It provides offices for the International Story Telling Center.

Part IV

Conclusion and Recommendations

Cooperation and collaboration should be the bywords for all who bring state history to the people of Tennessee. Activities at many levels—community, city, county, state, and national—require us to be careful that our enthusiasm does not lead to overlapping confusion.

Fortunately, professionals in the field are setting good examples by cooperating, collaborating, and networking. It is for the rest of us to follow their lead.

The current broad scope presentations of Tennessee history could not have been accomplished without the many thousands of volunteers who sweep floors, raise funds, conduct tours, research history, and maintain properties. The Volunteer state tradition is with us yet!

Although Governor Bredesen and the legislature have increased capital funding for historical needs and have selectively added funds for the state's history related agencies, there are still needs to be met. Adequate funding for operations at the present level would have a minimum, almost negligible, effect on the state budget.

From time to time, someone asks if a consolidation of history related agencies might lead to a more efficient administration of history programs. Should such a question ever receive serious attention, the answer should be developed from the ground up to be sure the vital volunteers continue their support and continue to learn about our history by working on it at the grass roots level. Consolidation should not be imposed from the top. After all, the reason for state government to be in the business of history is to educate. And Tennessee history education is ongoing even

though, at certain times and places, it may not be conducted efficiently.

Recommendations

The Elementary and Secondary Schools

Blended in with already restricted courses in American history, Tennessee history receives little attention in regular course work. The introduction of state history to their students depends on the ingenuity and innovative skills of the teachers. What can teachers do?

1. Make use of websites such as those presently available, especially *The Tennessee Encyclopedia of History & Culture* and *Tennessee History for Kids*.

2. To complement the limited classroom instruction in Tennessee history, teachers should seek opportunities to take classes on field trips to nearby historic sites and/or museums. Students could use these visits to develop a sense of place and to learn about their town, county, and state.

3. History teachers should be required to demonstrate proficiency in teaching that subject.

4. The federally funded projects designed to teach teachers how to teach national and local history should be continued and expanded. Underwritten by Teaching American History Grants from the Federal Department of Education, these projects provide professional development opportunities to 4th, 5th, and 8th grade and high school teachers in areas of traditional American history themes with an emphasis on local historical resources.

5. Local history can be drawn upon for English compositions, photographic competition, examples of business and commercial operations, and numerous other matters of interest to students.

State Colleges and Universities

1. State institutions of higher education should, when appropriate, direct student research projects to include relevant Tennessee experience.

2. Colleges and universities should encourage and reward faculty teaching, research, and public service in the field of Tennessee history.

Tennessee Historical Commission

THC should take the lead to provide training of the volunteers who meet the public at state-owned museum houses and other historic sites. There is a widespread need to upgrade the quality of the interpretation and education we are now offering to visiting elementary and high school students and the general public. When possible, such training should be offered to nonprofit operators of Tennessee sites not owned by the state.

1. Conduct periodic managers and docents training for historical organizations that contract to operate historic state properties (sites).

2. Work with site operators to be sure operators at each site have good, current print materials such as brochures, pamphlets, and books that deal with the history of that site. Historical videos should be produced and shown.

3. Increase state funding to operating groups to a level at which state pays two-thirds of cost and operating group one-third. At present the state pays about two-fifths and the operating group pays three-fifths. An additional legislative appropriation of \$200,000 would enable a 50/50 split in operating costs.

4. Partnering with the University of Tennessee, the Center for Historic Preservation at MTSU, the State Museum, and the Tennessee State Library and Archives, THC should stage a biennial Tennessee History Summit.

5. THC should seek budget support to create a “history central” of two positions to keep an updated calendar of historical events statewide, to maintain a web site, and to publish an expanded version of *The Courier*, its newsletter. There is no central office or agency, public or private, for gathering, recording, and sharing information about activity in the field of Tennessee history. Similarly, there is no office, public or private, that has an overall view of what is going on in preserving and communicating our history. “History Central” could serve as an avenue for encouraging and assisting county historians to keep their local history before the public at every opportunity. “Central” could maintain an updated list of publicly owned (state, county, city) historic properties with a brief statement of their historic significance and current use. It would at all times monitor historical activity in the state.

6. THC should seek to bring the low salaries for their specialized positions more nearly in line with local market patterns.

7. THC should continue its recently adopted plan to seek out “missing” highway historical markers and repair and/or replace them.

Tennessee State Library and Archives

1. Planning for the new Library and Archives Building to be located on the Bicentennial Mall in Nashville should be moved ahead on schedule. Every effort must be made to assure both the care and accessibility of the collections. It must be remembered that the books, documents, letters, and other manuscripts in the library are vital to understanding the history of Tennessee, one of the most historically significant states in the nation.

2. Digitization of holdings must proceed without letup.

3. TSLA should further promote the use of its

remarkable holdings to scholars, journalists, and the public at large.

4. Creation of an online newsletter to alert users to the arrival of new materials and other services is recommended.

5. TSLA should continue to assist the creation of new local archives and monitor their progress.

6. TSLA should reinvigorate efforts to collect state publications born digital. By using the harvesting and indexing product, Archive-It, these documents can be collected, preserved, and be accessible for generations to come. This work is a collaborative effort with all state depository libraries across the state.

Tennessee State Museum

1. A new building and relocation of the State Museum is a welcome development. The state should provide the very best professional consultation and advice during the planning and design stages.

2. New design should include spaces to prepare, store, and ship exhibits that can be shared with other museums or other institutions that have the place and savvy to display them.

3. The collections budget, almost nonexistent at \$7,500.00 should be restored to at least \$125,000, the amount of the appropriation in 1978.

4. The state should stand at the ready to support this state history museum in its new facility. It is unquestionably one of the best such in the U.S.A.

5. Outreach to advise and otherwise aid local museums throughout the state should be further expanded.

6. Relationships of the various state-owned museums, museum houses, and visitor and interpretive centers

should be clarified. Essentially, the question is one of responsibility: who is keeping current inventories of artifacts, documents, etc., that are housed in these various locations?

Oscar L. Farris Tennessee Agricultural Museum

1. The hands-on experience of visitors to this museum and its calendar of programs and events throughout the year are educational advantages that should be maintained and expanded where possible.

State Parks

1. Mine the history lode for all its worth.

2. By signage, pamphlets, posters, and other available means acquaint visitors with events of Tennessee history that have transpired on the grounds of each park and the history of the park itself.

3. In park promotion, relate the natural beauty of a park's location in Tennessee with the state's history. In some instances the relationship could be a battlefield or an impounded lake. Most cases would need to include some geography and history of the development of logging, mining, iron making, cotton harvests, or vacation resorts in nearby areas.

Tourist Development

1. Tourist Development should increase the promotion of heritage tourism by targeting historical organizations throughout the U.S.A.

2. TD should encourage and assist development of heritage tours by commercial operators.

3. TD should encourage counties to publish maps showing the locations of historic places and events within their borders.

4. TD should collaborate with Economic and Community Development to promote heritage tourism as a major source of revenue for the state economy.

Economic and Community Development (ECD)

1. Economic and Community Development should collaborate with Tourist Development to promote heritage tourism as a major source of revenue for the state economy.

2. ECD should acquaint its staff with the history of economic development in Tennessee, especially with the various roles played by state government.

All State Agencies

1. Cooperation between all state agencies that bring Tennessee history to the public is vital to the mission. At least once each year, representatives from these agencies should be convened to share their concerns, to identify and eliminate duplication of effort, and to maximize collaboration in celebrating Tennessee history.

2. Share the common goal of a citizenry well informed about its history. Remember that the purpose is to educate; we plan better for the future if we understand how we arrived at where we are.

Recommendations

Other Agencies

Tennessee Civil War Heritage Area

1. Stand by your early resolution to investigate the Civil War and Reconstruction through the eyes of all sections and ethnic groups of Tennessee of the period.

2. Share your discovery that different views of the war existed throughout the state. No area of any appreciable size was totally committed to either the Confederacy or the Union. What did that mean?

Counties, Towns, and Cities

1. Municipalities that own no significant historic properties should look for, acquire, and maintain such places for the public benefit. One or two properties properly maintained and interpreted should be a minimum for any town, city, or county—with a population of more than 15,000. Even smaller municipalities should be alert to opportunities to preserve and develop historic sites.

Non Governmental Organizations (NGO)

1. Although the story of Tennessee is rife with adventure, deal with the history of this state with the importance and dignity that it deserves.

2. Be aware of the history of our state from settlement to the early 21st century.

3. Be inclusive by bringing the history of women and minorities as well as economic, political, social, and military history into the mix.

4. Recognize that history includes looking at humankind in its best and in its worst manifestations.

5. What does it mean? For example, try to discover the meaning of a war, a political event, Indian removal, the proliferation of churches, slavery and emancipation, or the Great Depression. Establishing meaning makes history and historic sites come alive.

6. Local NGOs should make their programs attractive and important enough to merit local financial support from both the public and private sectors.

7. Local NGOs should encourage children's interest in history by bringing them to visit historic sites and museum houses better to understand the place of children in history. Workshops and summer camps can be very attractive and a good learning experience for them.

8. Local NGOs should cooperate with tourism professionals to bring heritage tourism into their region.

9. All NGOs must plan and forever remember that their mission is primarily educational.

10. All NGOs should make serving in the field of Tennessee history a meaningful and satisfying experience for volunteers.

For All Tennesseans

It is timely that we should promote research and publishing in Tennessee history. Here are certain subject areas that, among many others, merit attention:

- | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Minority heritage | 9. Unionists during the Civil War |
| 2. Women's history | 10. National Period 1870-1917 |
| 3. Institutional history | 11. World War I |
| 4. Transportation history | 12. World War II |
| 5. Agricultural history | 13. Wars since World War II |
| 6. Manufacturing history | 14. Archaeological investigations |
| 7. Commerce in the state | 15. Public education |
| 8. The Westward Movement | 16. Family history |

And then?

We should insist that elected officials at all levels of government consult history when making public policy!

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