

# DISCOVER

## Hawkins County



VOL. 4 — ISSUE 2 — FALL 2014 EDITION

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still runs through  
young co-star's dreams

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African-American contributions  
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... proud of his Hawkins County heritage

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... offers nature, education  
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A Civil War treasure trove located  
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Railroad made town crucial  
during Civil War



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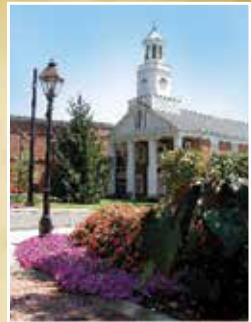
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# DISCOVER

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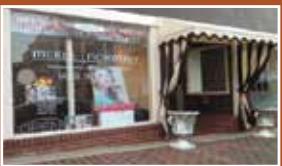
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# Welcome to Hawkins County!

The magazine you hold in your hands is a twice-a-year labor of love for the staff of our newspaper, *The Rogersville Review*.

In case you aren't familiar with Hawkins County, we are located just a stone's throw off I-81 between Bristol and Knoxville in beautiful northeastern Tennessee.

If history is your "thing", you'll find plenty of it hereabouts. The historic Courthouse in Rogersville (one of the oldest in the state, and which many first-time visitors mistakenly think is a church because of its bell steeple!), to the Rogers Cemetery where the founders of Rogersville (Joseph and Mary Amis Rogers), and the grandparents of Davy Crockett are buried, to the Archie Campbell Museum at Bulls Gap (containing many artifacts of the iconic landscape artist and Grand Ole Opry and Hee Haw star), to historic Laurel Run Park at Church Hill (where the 1984 movie "*The River*", starring Mel Gibson, Sissy Spacek and Hawkins County's own Shane Bailey was filmed), there's more than enough to fill up several days' worth of your time.

Throw in all of the county's Revolutionary War and Civil War landmarks, the Railroad Depot and Printing Museum (which houses exhibits on Tennessee's very first newspaper, published right here in Rogersville), and you could spend a week or more just focusing on the wealth of historic sites in our county.

Recreational opportunities abound, too, from hiking trails that wind along mountain streams and waterfalls in Laurel Run Park, to boating, fishing and other water-related activities on the Holston River and Cherokee Lake.

The natural beauty of Hawkins County shines brightly throughout all four seasons. Springtime flowers bring a constant burst of color around every corner, while the mild summers are a true blessing. Fall is an explosion of changing colors as oaks, hickories, maples, gums and other deciduous trees paint the mountainsides with a patchwork quilt of reds, oranges, yellows and purples. Winter brings snowfalls which turn the hills and valleys into quiet, peaceful worlds of white against the backdrop of fields, pastures, and century-old barns.

Hawkins County is home to many outstanding

artists, bluegrass musicians and craftsmen whose talents are known far outside the boundaries of northeastern Tennessee. Rogersville, for instance, is the home of country music personality Charlie Chase (of "Crook and Chase").

Walk Historic Rogersville's downtown streets and visit in the antique, art, and crafts shops where you will find everything from modern-day creations to 200-year old treasures.

Probably the most important attraction Hawkins County has to offer is its people. Folks hereabout truly care about each other, and welcome newcomers as friends and neighbors.

It is obviously outside the scope of this magazine to focus in one issue on every single attraction and event that our county has to offer, but we hope to have piqued your interest and shown you just a small sampling of what Hawkins County has to offer residents and visitors alike.

If you are travelling along one of our Interstates and pick up this guide, please accept this as our personal invitation to come and visit ... to "sit a spell" on our "front porches", walk our streets, shop with our local merchants, sample the fine local foods, and enjoy everything about Hawkins County, from Clinch Mountain on the west to Bulls Gap on the east, and from Allandale/Kingsport in the north to Mooresburg in the south.

We welcome you to our "home" and we truly hope that after one visit you will want to come back ... again and again.

Sincerely,

***Tommy Campbell***

**Publisher & Editor**  
***The Rogersville***  
***Review***



# DISCOVER

## Hawkins County

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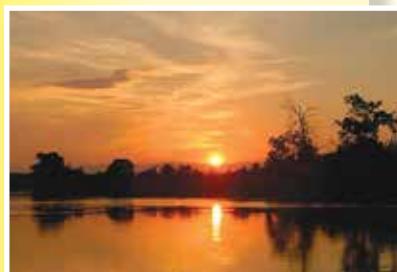
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**ON THE COVER:**  
The sun setting at  
Laurel Run Park  
in Church Hill,  
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# The Rogersville/Hawkins County Chamber of Commerce Membership Value

*A Chamber not only provides information and guidance to new businesses but can do the same for individuals. The Chamber is a wonderful resource for both new and existing citizens of Hawkins County.*

## These are just some of the tools found at your Chamber of Commerce:

- Demographic Information
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- Utilities Information
- Visitor Information Center
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- School Demographic Information
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- Business Networking Services
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**- Nancy Barker -**  
Executive Director

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## The Rogersville / Hawkins County Chamber of Commerce

# Committed to the growth of our community

The Rogersville/Hawkins County Chamber of Commerce is always working hard for its membership and our community.

Membership is a valuable and intelligent investment for your business, your organization or for yourself as an individual. While business recruitment can sometimes be a challenge in today's economy, the partnership between the Chamber and the Tennessee Small Business Development Center allows for many opportunities for local entrepreneurs.

Business counseling is made available by the Chamber through the TSBDC to not only new businesses, but also existing businesses that are looking for advice on any facet of their organization. Educational workshops are also offered on everything from budget and finance information to how to successfully market a small business.

The Chamber has also been expanding online resources by keeping an updated website full of valuable information. At [www.rogersvillechamber.us](http://www.rogersvillechamber.us) you can not only find Chamber information and a calendar of events, but a member listing, city and county links, and local event information as well.

A service recently added for its membership was the Chamber's addition of Constant Contact email communication. Through Constant Contact the Chamber can quickly and easily send reminders of meetings and educate its membership on Chamber, community and members' special events.

In addition to the benefit of online promotion, marketing and promotional opportunities are always available at Chamber events, giving your business publicity and exposure to potential consumers. Other targeted marketing and advertising opportunities can sometimes be gained at a discounted rate just by being a Chamber member.

There are also many networking opportunities at Chamber sponsored events, such as the monthly General Membership Breakfast where new business contacts can be easily made. These relationships allow Chamber members to help one another create a strong local economy by supporting each other and local business.

For several years, the Chamber has supported and encouraged a Shop Local campaign for Hawkins County by communicating the benefits to the community when residents

support local businesses.

The Chamber offers leadership development in the form of the Leadership Hawkins, a nine-month program that allows individuals to learn about Hawkins County, gain professional and personal development and help them become a part of an active, engaged and educated community and workforce.

The Chamber is also a proud sponsor of events that benefit our community such as the Heritage Days Children's Parade, Main Street's Trunk or Treat, Cruise-In on the Square, Rogersville In Bloom, and the Rogersville Christmas Parade. Being a member of the Chamber shows your customers and investors that you are committed to our community and want a successful future for Hawkins County, because the Chamber is committed to helping our citizens enjoy greater opportunities.

For visitors to our community, the Chamber offers brochures, maps, demographic information, visitor packets and relocation packets.

Join the Rogersville/Hawkins County Chamber of Commerce today and start benefiting from all the Chamber has to offer or stop by the Chamber office and let us make your visit a great experience.

**Nancy Barker**  
Director  
Rogersville/Hawkins County  
Chamber of Commerce

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## East Hawkins County, Tennessee

# Why would you live any place else?

Nestled at the base of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, East Hawkins County is located in Northeastern Tennessee. We experience the best of all seasons, warm, moist summers and crisp cool winters. We also enjoy extended periods of autumn weather with minimal precipitation, providing great fall days for a significant number of visitors who enjoy the vivid colors displayed by the large number of hardwood trees in the area forests. East Hawkins County is home to four cities, **Church Hill, Mount Carmel, Surgoinsville**, a portion of **Kingsport** and numerous communities surrounding these cities, such as Goshen Valley and Carters Valley.

East Hawkins County enjoys many things often taken for granted. There is a low crime rate, because the cities' well trained, professional Law Enforcement, and the protection Hawkins County Sheriff's Department provides for us. We can go to bed at night taking comfort knowing one of the cities' Fire Departments or local Volunteer Fire Departments will be there within minutes should we need them. There is the comfort of knowing if we ever need expedient and emergency medical treatment and transport; the local Church Hill EMS is there. It is nice to know the electricity supplying most homes and businesses is serviced and operated within our own county. There is comfort for the three cities citizens, knowing our utilities are operated inside our local city. When we are hungry, there are local diners minutes from our homes, and there are delicious home-cooked meals at local restaurants, owned by neighbors. We enjoy conversing at the local Barber or Beauty Shops, while getting a haircut. We can enjoy going for a walk at one of the eight public parks within the three cities, while our children enjoy playing on the playgrounds or having a family reunion at Laurel Run Park. At one of the three Public Libraries, there is always a good book waiting for us, or public computers available, so our children can complete a school project.

Knowing religion is still a large part of our lives and having many churches in East Hawkins County available for Sunday Services is wonderful. Being involved in most local events, or sponsoring an annual Community Celebration in Church Hill with free food, drinks and entertainment are just some of the things they do. All denominations are represented and respected among their peers.

The beginning of Kingsport's week long, fun-filled FunFest, starts with a Block Party in Mount Carmel, sponsored by local Merchants, with a beauty contest, car show, crafts, fun, food and music.

The Riverfront Festival in Surgoinsville, along the Holston River enjoys having a Block Party, Parade and festival with crafts, food, car and tractor show all fun with local townspeople and surrounding communities' neighbors.

These are just a few of the reasons why it is so great to live in East Hawkins County, not to mention the beauty that surrounds us, in the valleys, hills and mountains.

**This is why I live in East Hawkins County, this is why I will always live in East Hawkins County, and why the generations before and after me, have and will live in East Hawkins County.**

**Why would you live any place else?**

**Terry L. Morelock**

President

East Hawkins County Chamber of Commerce /  
Proud Citizen of East Hawkins County

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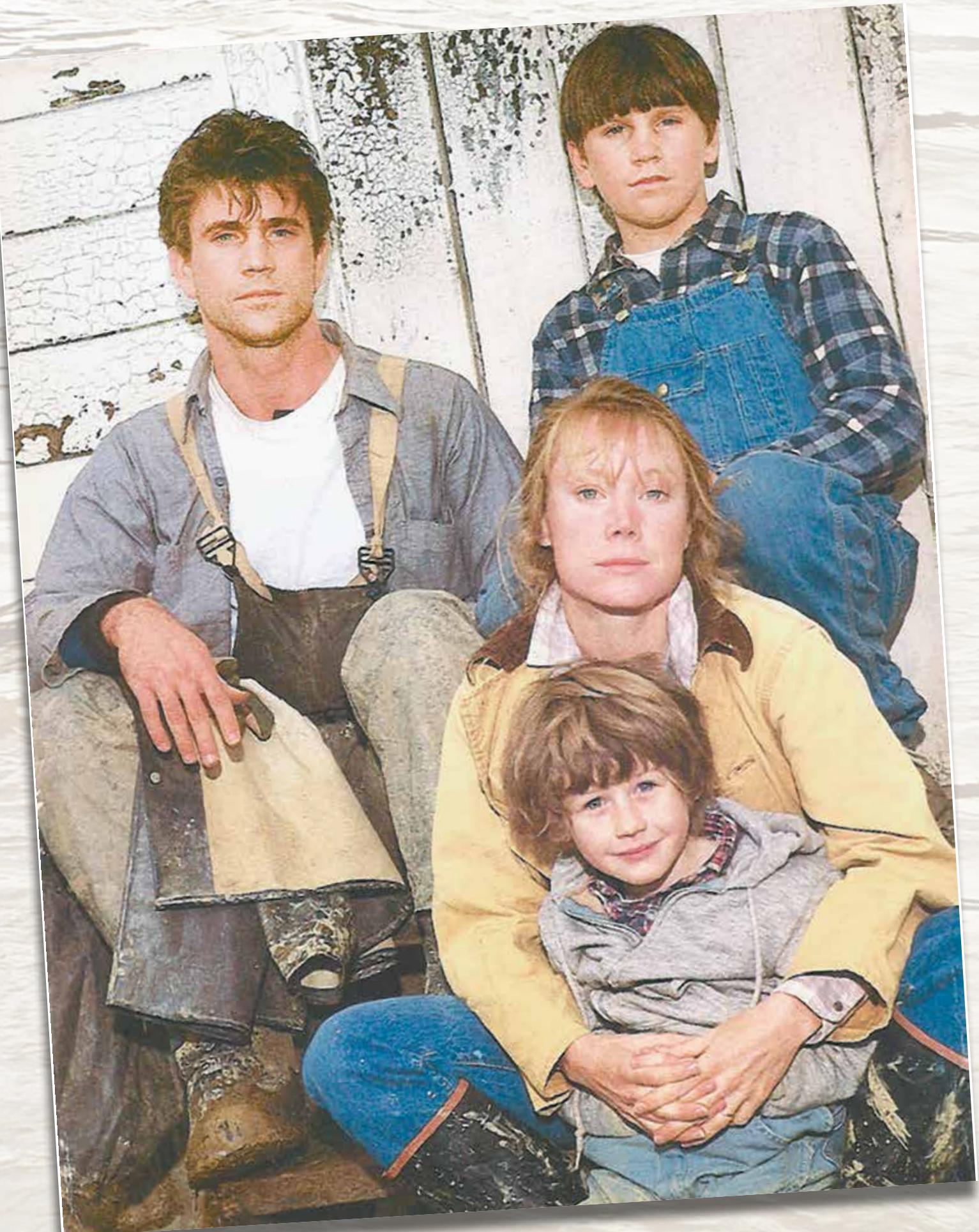


PHOTO COURTESY UNIVERSAL STUDIOS

A promotional photo of the "Garvey family" ... Mel Gibson, Shane Bailey, Sissy Spacek and Becky Jo Lynch.



PHOTO BY TOMMY CAMPBELL

Shane Bailey brought his "memory box" by the Rogersville Review office, where he shared albums filled with photos and clippings from the movie, along with the original script he used for his role as "Lewis Garvey".

# Thirty years later, *The River* still runs through young co-star's dreams

CHURCH HILL -- Looking back through the rear-view mirror of time, Shane Bailey realizes that for four months in 1983, he lived a 12-year old kid's dream.

"It still amazes me that I got the part," Bailey said of his role as Lewis Garvey in the Universal Studios film, *The River*. "Not many kids can say they lived and worked with two of the biggest stars of our time who were my 'mama and daddy' in the movie."

And who were his on-screen parents?

None other than Mel Gibson and Sissy Spacek.

Filming began Sept. 12, 1983 and wrapped up just before Christmas. *The River* was released the following Christmas with a Tennessee premiere

in Kingsport on Jan. 3, 1985.

More than \$7 million of the film's \$18 million budget was pumped into the economy of Hawkins and Sullivan counties, and Gate City, in nearby Scott Co., Virginia where the bank scene was filmed.

Bailey was a student at Surgoinsville Middle School who had recently moved back to Tennessee from Florida.

"If you had asked me at that time what I wanted to be when I grew up, it would have been a professional baseball player," Bailey said in an interview with *The Rogersville Review*.

When word got out that casting icon Lynn Stallmaster would hold  
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THE RIVER

1 EXT. MOUNTAIN "GROTTO" - DA

LEWIS GARVEY, a farm boy on fishing for trout in a mountain stream. A deer watches from the safety of a rock. The sound of thunder.

Lewis looks up.

A gentle rain begins to fall. The deer skitters away.

Lewis begins to reel in his line.

1-A WHAT HE SEES

The sky is darkening.

1-B BACK TO SCENE - LEWIS

Lewis quickly

2 EXT. MOUNTAIN

Lewis walks

Below, in a valley, a farm of some sort. A huge barn grows nearby.

ANGLE

Little rivulets of water are flowing into the stream as they rush down the mountain.

ANGLE

Lewis dashes to the farm as the rain arrives in force.

3

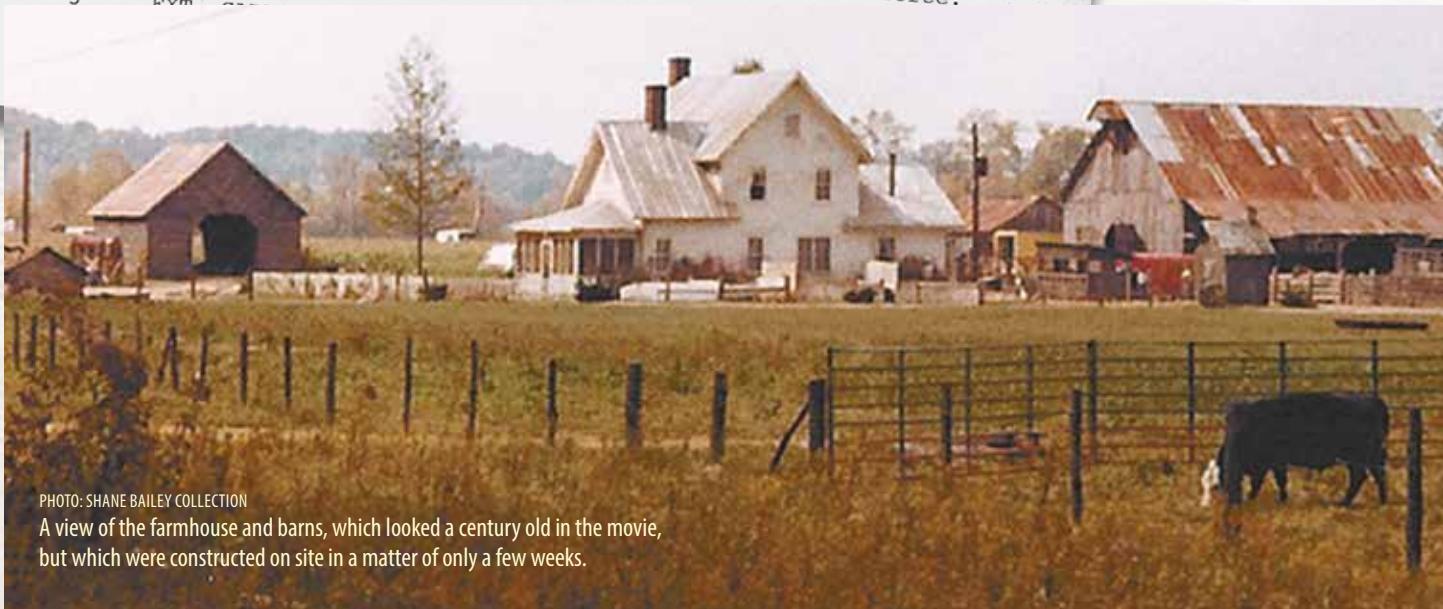
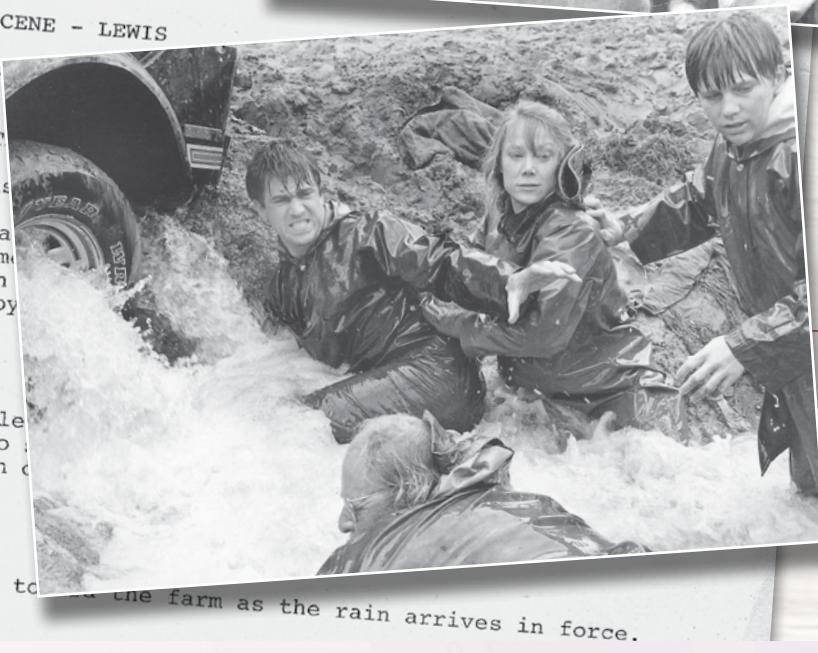


PHOTO: SHANE BAILEY COLLECTION

A view of the farmhouse and barns, which looked a century old in the movie, but which were constructed on site in a matter of only a few weeks.

Page #1 of Bailey's original script, dated August 31, 1983.

PHOTOS COURTESY UNIVERSAL STUDIOS  
(Pictured above) A still shot from a scene in the film which ended up on the editing room floor and was never seen by audiences. Gibson and Bailey are pictured during a deer hunt on nearby Clinch Mountain.

(Pictured at left) Gibson, Spacek and Bailey try to stop water from the flooding Holston River from overflowing a levee, sabotaged by a mob stirred up by the "villain" of the film, in the closing minutes of "The River". The man in the foreground was not identified.

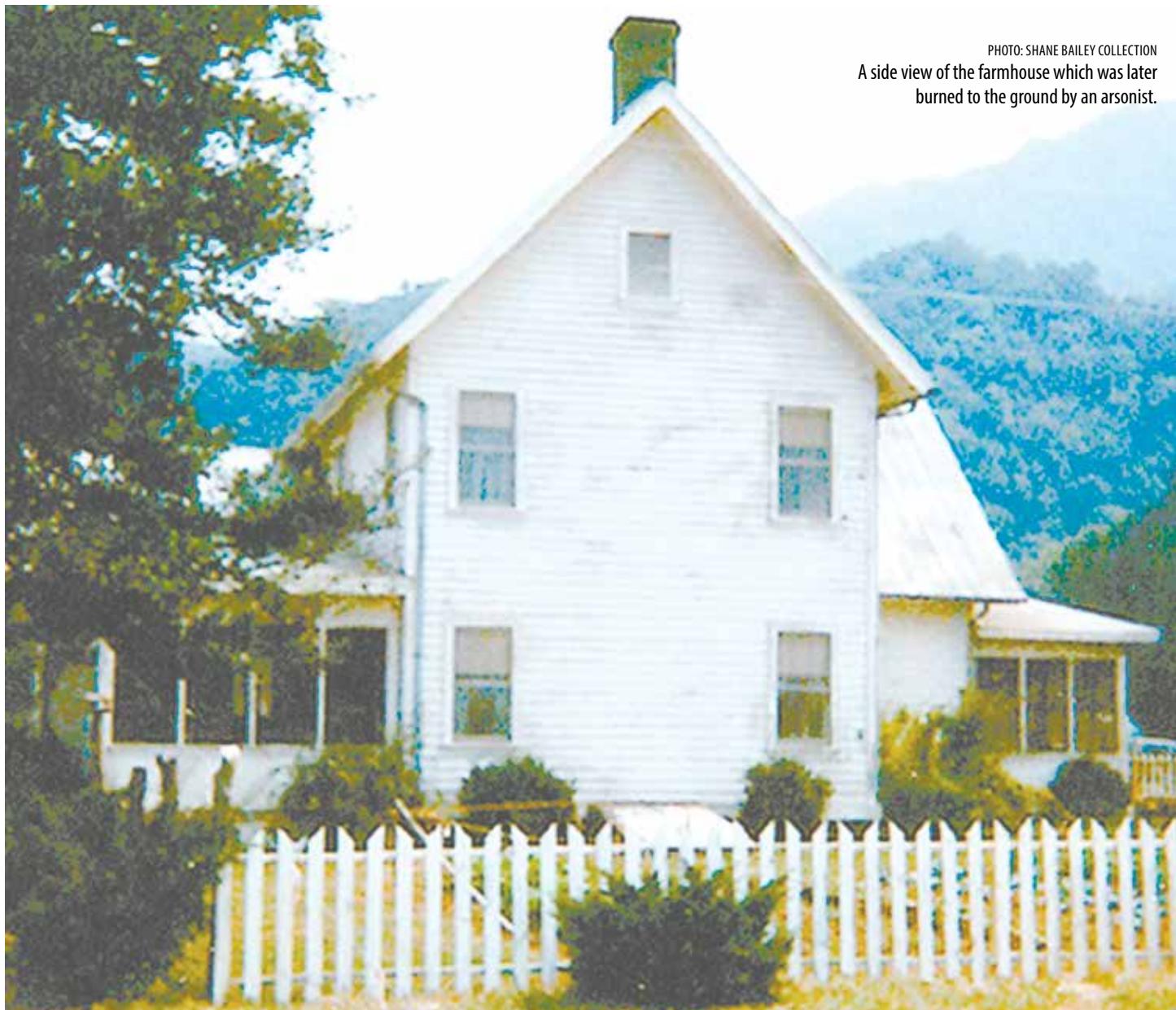


PHOTO: SHANE BAILEY COLLECTION

A side view of the farmhouse which was later burned to the ground by an arsonist.

*continued from page 11*

auditions in Kingsport for the film, Shane's father, Wayne — who had been in some dramas in his early years — encouraged him to try out.

"I didn't want to audition," he admitted. "I thought it was dumb because I didn't have any acting skills and I was afraid of what people would think of me. When you're 12, you don't want your friends to think that you think you're any better than they are. But he kept after me. I kept saying no. I finally agreed to audition if he agreed not to tell anyone!"

More than 1,000 people showed up for the auditions. Stallmaster brought in 10 boys at a time and sat them in a line of chairs.

"He looked us up and down and he stopped on me," he said. "It made me nervous and I asked him why he was staring at me. He laughed and said that I looked like the boy they were looking for."

Stallmaster took Bailey into another room and had him read a few lines on camera.

"They said I would know something in two weeks," he said.

On day 14, "the call" came.

"They said I was one of three finalists for the role of Lewis," he said. "We went back to Kingsport for another interview and that's when I met Mel and Sissy for the first time."

When they arrived, Bailey said he looked around for the other boys whom he thought were competing for the role.

"They said they would be there later," he said. "All I could think about was those boys and that I probably didn't stand a chance."

All day, photographers snapped pictures of Bailey with Gibson, Spacek, and Becky Jo Lynch, a seven-year old Jonesborough girl cast as Bailey's sister, Beth, and who also made her screen debut in the film.

"I finally couldn't stand it any longer and I asked director Mark Rydell where the other boys were," Bailey said. "He said there were no other boys, that I was their choice from the beginning."

Bailey has held onto his script and a large box of photos, clippings, autographs, and other memorabilia from the film which he still goes through from time to time.

"It's honestly hard to believe that it's been 30 years," he said, leafing through some of the scrapbooks and picture albums.

In the spring of 1983, after months of searching the Appalachians, Rydell — who also directed the Academy-Award winning *On Golden Pond* — settled on a 440-acre tract of land on the Holston River, at the foot of

*continued on page 15*



Boys will be boys! Twelve-year old Shane Bailey couldn't help but try out a seat and the viewfinder on one of the Panaflex cameras used in the filming of *The River*. (Pictured above.)

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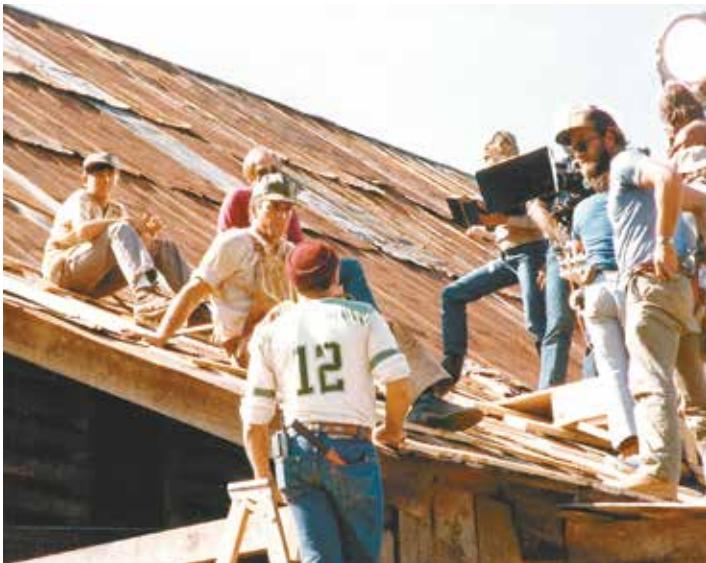
Photos from the  
Shane Bailey collection

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Water and mud were key elements of the film, and no more so than in this scene involving the family's truck, stuck in a massive mudhole adjacent to the levee along the Holston River, as movie lights blaze and cameras roll. (Pictured below.)



Gibson and Spacek (on tractor) get instructions from the director prior to a scene in the cornfield.



Shane Bailey and Mel Gibson (top left) on the roof of the barn prior to filming a scene.





PHOTOS FROM THE SHANE BAILEY COLLECTION

The "Garvey" family clowns around for the camera in the cornfield of their "farm" at what is today Laurel Run Park ... Mel Gibson, Sissy Spacek, Shane Bailey, and Becky Jo Lynch.

*continued from page 13*

Bays Mountain just east of Church Hill, as the location for *The River*.

The film documents the real-life struggles of a family in Tennessee who — in the face of dwindling crop prices, devastating floods, and of bankers unwilling to loan more money to farmers already drowning in debt — doggedly fight to keep farming and to hold on, at any cost, to their land, home and way of life.

In the storyline, money gets so tight that — to keep the bank from foreclosing — Garvey (Gibson) takes a job that turns out to be on a strike-breaking crew sent to work at a steel mill in Birmingham, Alabama.

In terms of sheer talent, from stars to production team members, Rydell assembled an all-star cast, including the assistant director of *Apocalypse Now*, the casting director of *Tootsie* and *Superman*, and the director of photography for *The Deer Hunter*.

Gibson had gained an international audience through the Australian-made *Mad Max*, but *The River* would become the first starring role in an American film for the then-28 year-old actor.

A native-born American from upstate New York, Gibson's parents moved to Australia when he was 11 years old, and it was his acquired "Aussie" accent that almost cost Gibson the role because Rydell was looking



*The River* debuted nationwide in 1984, with a Tennessee premiere in Kingsport in January of 1985. Bailey is shown here signing autographs at the Eastman Center event.

(Inset) Bailey's ticket to the Tennessee premiere of "The River".

for a leading male star with a true southern accent.

Before Gibson left for England to film *Mutiny on The Bounty*, he begged Rydell not to cast the part of Garvey until he had a chance to prove himself.

"He came back to my house in Los Angeles and started reading the script in this perfect Tennessee accent," Rydell said. "I was really impressed, even when he stood next to Sissy, who's like a tuning fork when it comes to accents, he had damn well done it!"

Spacek had endeared herself to audiences in her Oscar-winning role as country music legend Loretta Lynn in the film, *Coal Miner's Daughter*, and in the thriller, *Carrie*.

Scott Glenn, who played Spacek's high school sweetheart, Joe Wade — a ruthless land baron who was attempting to get their farm at any cost — appeared in *Urban Cowboy* and later portrayed astronaut Alan Shepard in *The Right Stuff*.

Even the musical score was by a soundtrack heavyweight -- John Williams (*Jaws, Star Wars*).

"I would go to school on days when they didn't have filming scheduled for scenes that I was in, and on those days, they had a tutor work with me three hours a day on the set," Bailey recalled.

*continued on page 17*

# Bulls Gap Tennessee



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- Bulls Gap Railroad Museum
- Volunteer Speedway

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Aldermen: Jimmy Sexton, Martha Snelson, Susan Williams**

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# It's Beautiful

**That's what people who live here, who pass through, or who end up making this their new home keep telling us about Rogersville.**

- Historical Landmarks
- Home of the Heritage Days
- Excellent Educational System
- Strong Industrial Community
- Diversified Downtown Business Community
- Senior Citizens Center
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continued from page 15

The production company would pick Bailey up every morning and take him to the nearby location.

"We would spend hours in makeup and wardrobe," he said. "And we ate good, too! They spared no expense in feeding the cast and crew."

Outfitters and costumers took Bailey to a shop in Kingsport where they bought him an assortment of boots, jeans, and shirts.

"They tied those boots by the laces to the bumper of the car and dragged them all the way back to Laurel Run just to scuff them up," he said.

Four months before the first scene was filmed, about 60 people began working on the property. Undergrowth was cleared and a corn field was planted.

The two-story farmhouse, and accompanying barns, which looked a century old in the movie, were actually built on-site in a matter of weeks.

The house was furnished with furniture and items from Haggle Shop Antiques, owned by Bob and Joyce Grills, which is still in business in Kingsport.

Livestock was brought in, earthen levees were built along the river to hold water back and to create the knee-deep mud that the family struggled with throughout the movie, as the stars and crew lived and worked alongside local residents to "fine tune" their accents and to gain a better knowledge of life in rural Appalachia.

Even though torrential rain was a key element throughout the movie, not one drop fell from the sky while filming was in progress, Bailey said.

"They pumped in water from the river and sprayed it out through pipes they installed around the property, Bailey remembered. "When you watch the movie, the rain and floods look so real."

With the cooperation of the Tennessee Valley Authority, water was released from an upstream dam about six hours before it was needed to raise the level of the river at the location.

During breaks in filming, Bailey said he came to know both of the main stars on a personal level.

"Mel and I talked about the *Mad Max* movies he made in Australia, and he would tell me step by step how they did the stunts," Bailey recalled. "Sissy was just as real and country and humble as they come."

Bailey's brother, Kenny, had a role in a scene at the levee toward the end of the film where a mob, spurred on by cash from Wade (Scott Glenn), tries to tear down the levee holding back the river.

Greg Bellamy, Bailey's first cousin, was his "double" in case of sickness.

After filming was completed, Universal Studios presented as a gift to the people of Hawkins County the 440-acre site that is today Laurel Run Park. The movie maker said that it wanted to show its appreciation for the warm reception that the cast and crew received from the people of northeastern Tennessee and southwestern Virginia.

Bailey today is an Assistant Principal at Rogersville City School, and a member of the Hawkins Co. Commission where he ironically serves as chairman of the Commission's Parks Committee which oversees Laurel Run Park.

(PUB. NOTE: See the accompanying article elsewhere in this issue for photos of the beautiful park.)

Some of the iconic landmarks from the film no longer exist, though. An arsonist later burned the house to the ground, but the waterfall, fed by a mountain stream in which Bailey is shown fly fishing in the opening scene of the film, is still a part of the landscape today, and one of the most popular destinations for visitors.

With filming done, Bailey returned to Surgeonsville Middle School where he met the girl who would one day become his wife.

"When I went back to school, somebody said that this girl Donna thought I was cute," he grinned. "I said, well, it's probably because of that movie, and she said, what movie? Man, that really brought me down to earth!"

Years later, they married and named their first son — now 15 — River. Their youngest son, Parker, is 10.

Later, he tried out for other films and high-tech movie icon Steven Spielberg (*E.T. --The Extraterrestrial*, *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*) personally called to invite Bailey to try out for a role in *The Explorers*.

"I tried out but I talked too country for them," he lamented. "Then I tried out for *Huckleberry Finn* and they said I didn't talk country enough!"

Bailey said he still appreciates the support of his parents, Wayne and Faye, and his siblings, Kenny and Pandora, and would love to see a reunion held locally of all of those who participated in any way in *The River*.

"I'm glad I did it and wouldn't take anything for the memories," he said.

He does get a little wistful, though, when he talks about what a different direction his life and career might have taken had movie-making proven to be his chosen profession.

"I'm perfectly happy with my life, my family and my work," he said. "But every once in a while I do look back and wonder ... what if?"

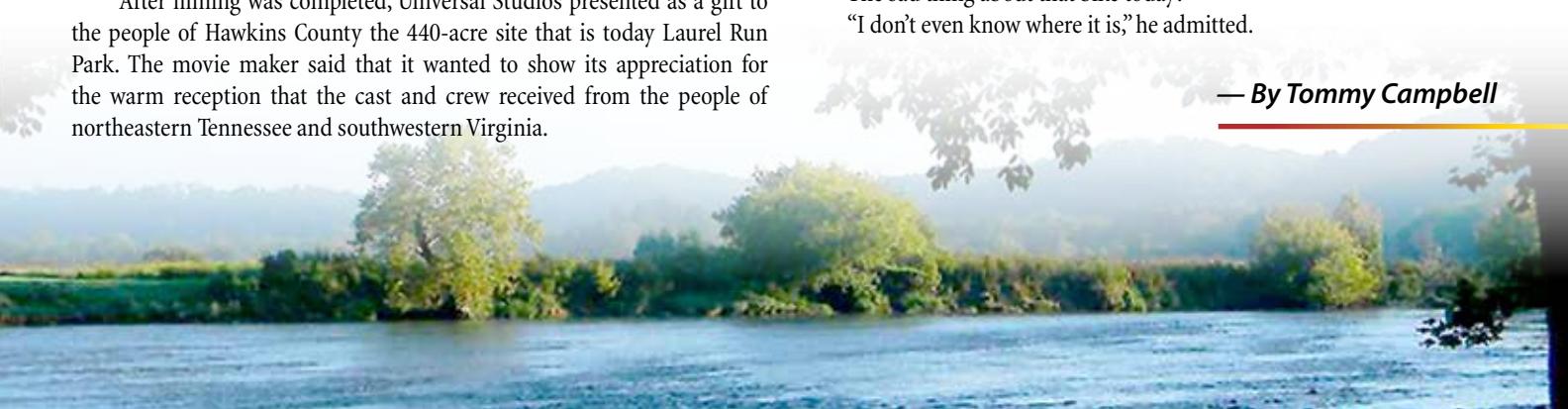
In retrospect, Bailey says he really didn't use his head when producers asked him at the end of filming what he wanted.

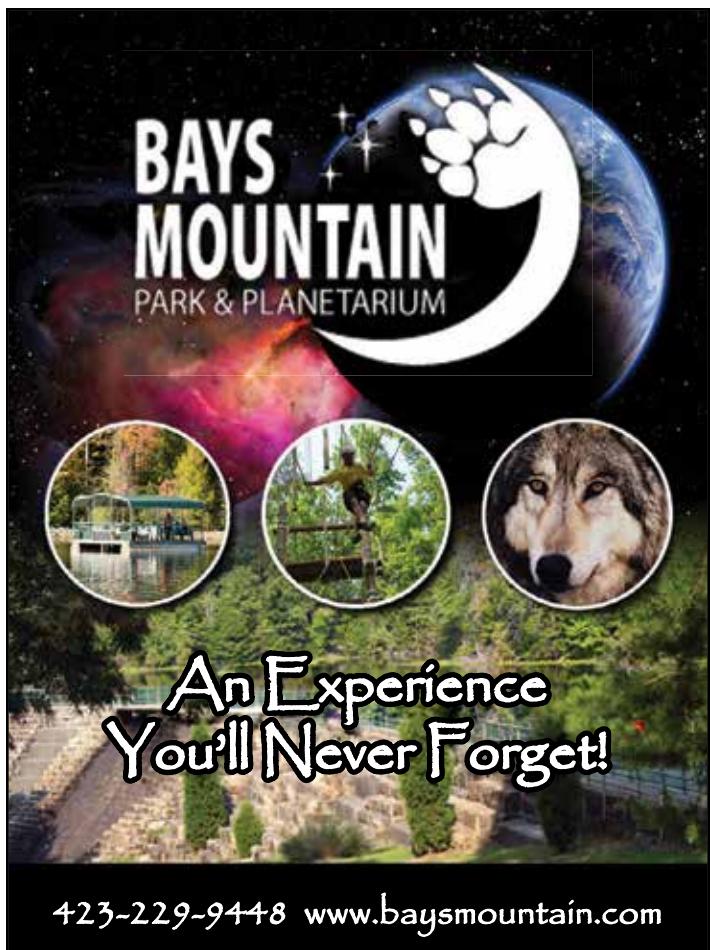
"They said, 'Shane, what do you want? Just name it and its yours.' I could have said anything! I could have said, I want this property where we filmed the movie, or lots of money. But I didn't. Somebody should have kicked me because I was 12 years old and I wanted what all 12-year old boys wanted then ... a 12-speed bicycle," he said.

The sad thing about that bike today?

"I don't even know where it is," he admitted.

— By Tommy Campbell





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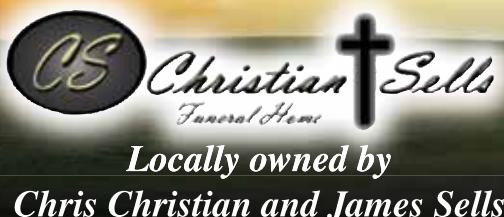


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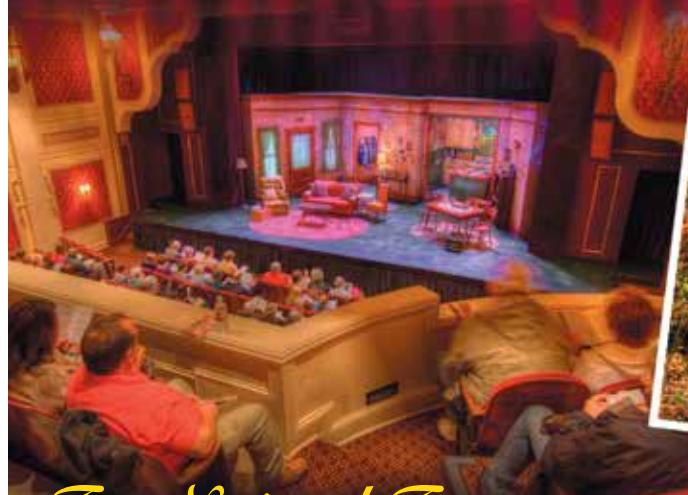
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PHOTO BY JOEL SPEARS

Stella Gudger (pictured) is executive director of the Swift Museum and has been an instrumental part of seeing the project through from the beginning.



A school desk inside the Swift Museum holds memorabilia collected from Swift College before its demise.

# African-American contributions honored at SWIFT MUSEUM

**T**hough its campus is long gone, the legacy of Rogersville's Swift Memorial College continues to rise like a phoenix, thanks to a devoted team of volunteers and donors. While the school's towering architecture no longer presides over downtown, the nearby Swift Museum honors its African-American school namesake.

Located inside Price Public Community Center, an renovated, segregation-era schoolhouse for Hawkins County's black children, the museum exhibits the only collection of Swift memorabilia that is open to the public.

"It's a museum for the 21st century," Executive Director Stella Gudger said. "We're all so proud of how it came together. It's amazing to see. Some people who saw it for the first time cried. I know how important the project was for me, but to see visitors get so emotional let's me know we've done a great thing here."

Swift Memorial College, founded in 1883, was named in honor of the late Rev. Elijah E. Swift, who was then-president of the Board of Missions for Freedmen of the Presbyterian Church.

Originally planned as a girls' seminary by the Presbyterians, the school gained notoriety in 1901 when White institutions were closed to Blacks. Then, Maryville College Board of Trustees near Knoxville gave Swift \$25,000 to begin educating Black college students, thus ringing in a new era in Rogersville and Swift's history.

In 1904, Swift became a four-year African-American college, with Dr. W.H. Franklin as president. Reports state that by 1909 Swift had approximately 200 students and 10 teachers. Many of the Southern states were represented, as well as Oklahoma.

The institution prospered until 1929 when changes in state and federal laws forced Swift to reorganize as a junior college. Swift Memorial Junior College continued to grow and included the president's home, St. Mark's Church, school administration facilities, boys' and girls' dormitories, and a large campus.

However, Swift's well-being declined in 1952 when the Presbyterian Board of Missions readmitted black students and ended financial support.

In 1955, Swift Memorial Junior College, as it was known by that time, was shut down and some of its buildings were converted by the Hawkins County Board of Education for the segregated Swift High School.

But when segregation ended in 1963, Swift's students integrated into local high schools and the college's signature building was demolished in 1964 to make room for the school board's central office and a refrigeration storage facility. Today, all that remains is the boy's dormitory and presidents home, along with the Rev. Franklin's final resting place on the property.

To honor Swift's memory, in 2003 the Swift Museum opened, but organizers immediately said they wanted to offer visitors more. Their dream became reality in 2009 thanks in part to a total of \$3,000 in grant funds from the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA).

Following an extensive renovation — thanks in part to Eastman, Humanities TN and USDA Rural Development — a new, interactive exhibit and layout were unveiled during an open house in March 2012.

The museum features a timeline of African-American history, along with the events that formed Swift's history. Also included are various artifacts donated by alumni; from books and lettermen jackets, to graduation

*continued on page 25*

PHOTOS BY JOEL SPEARS

A Tennessee State Historical Marker commemorates Price Public School, located at the corner of Hasson and Spring Streets in Rogersville. Price Public houses the Swift Museum and a meeting space available to the public.







PHOTOS BY JOEL SPEARS

A timeline features important events in African-American history, as well as the history of Swift College, alongside artifacts and memorabilia.



The Swift Singers. Left to right: Roberta Lee, Bivella Cox, Dorothy Sampson, Lillian Cox, Martha Cox and Doris Rock



continued from page 21

gowns and historic photographs.

In 2008, TVA provided Price Public with \$2,000 to organize an educational course of study at the Swift Museum that is being used to teach fifth graders in the region about the African-American history of Rogersville and Hawkins County. In 2009, TVA awarded an additional \$1,000 to help with the museum's reorganization as a 21st century facility and the creation of interactive exhibits.

To continue raising funds for the upkeep of the museum, as well as Price Public a commemorative brick sale is ongoing. Bricks may be personalized and engraved with up to three lines of text and will be displayed on a walk in front of the community center.

All proceeds from the sale benefit both the center and museum. For more information call (423) 921-3888.

The community center also hosts an annual Soul Food Dinner on the second weekend in October, during the town's Heritage Days celebration.

"We use our fundraisers in a variety of ways to promote the museum and to continue restoring Price Public," Gudger added. "We don't, as in year's past, have grant funding to rely on so we're also planning a membership drive. We've built a good relationship with the community through the years. We have various guest speakers, historians, authors, educators, musicians, and more, who come help us with the cause. We also do our best to give back to the community that has given to us by allowing nonprofits to use our facilities free of charge whenever possible."

Also, to continue growing notoriety for the museum in the East Tennessee community, Gudger said she is currently working with East TN Public Television at Knoxville to produce a 30-minute documentary about the former school.

"We hope to have it complete by the end of the year," she said. "Eastman provided us with \$5,000 for that project, which gives us a much broader spectrum that we can use to reach people."

Gudger said a five-minute version of the video is also being edited to use as an educational tool.

"Once we have the documentary complete, we want to use it in our educational tours," she said. "One of our visions is to also create a book of history and have it become part of a curriculum that will fit in with common core. This is something we'd love to see statewide, in addition to Rogersville and Hawkins County schools."

The Swift Museum is open Monday through Friday from 11:30 a.m.-3 p.m. and on Saturday from noon until 2 p.m.

The community center may also be reserved for special occasions, such as weddings, anniversaries and birthdays.

"When you think about it," Gudger noted, "had it not been for Swift College, a lot of local people wouldn't have had the opportunity to go to college and, economically, it was a plus for the entire community because there were students from all over the Northeast and Southeast who came here. Keeping those memories alive is ultimately what we're trying to accomplish."

— *By Joel Spears*

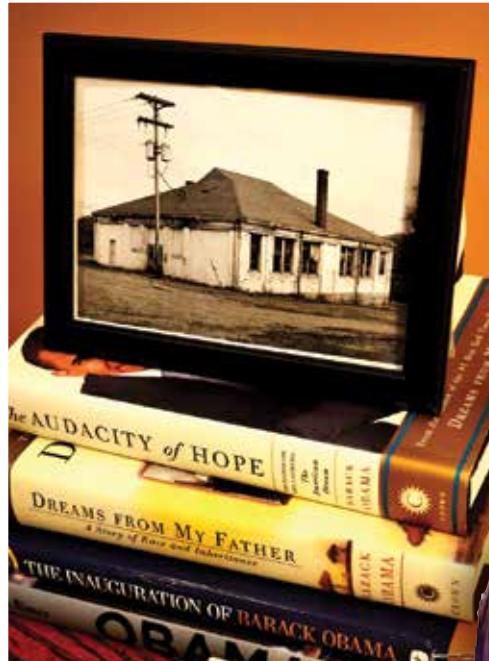
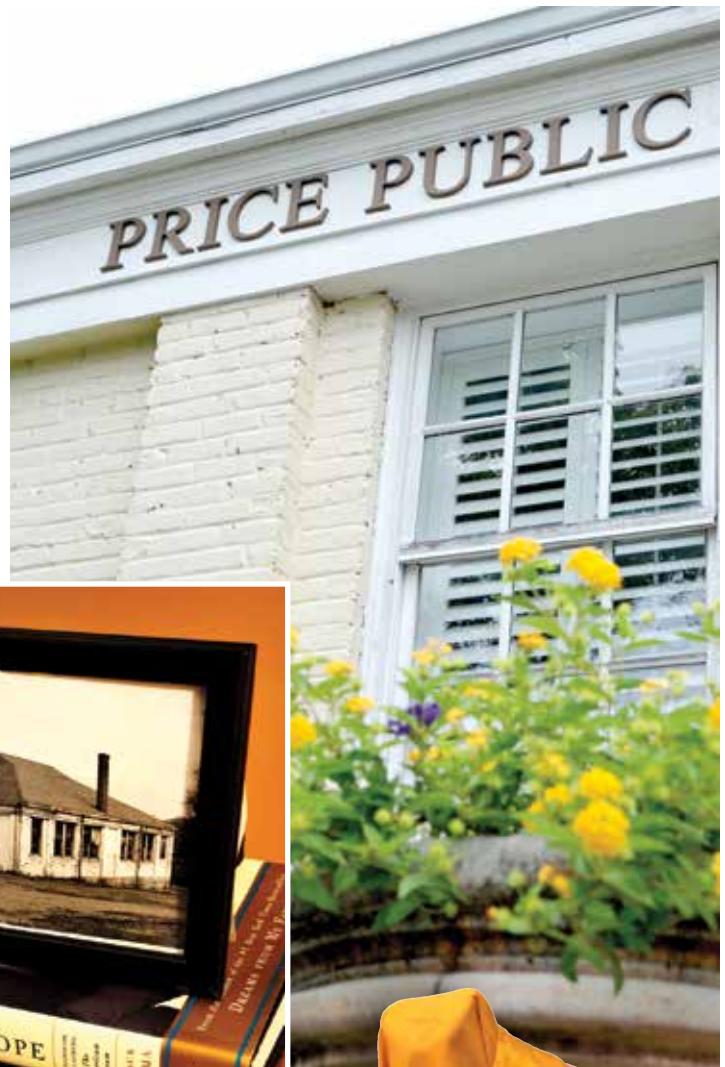


PHOTO BY JOEL SPEARS

Perched on a stack of books in the Swift Museum, a small photograph of Price Public School before its restoration greets visitors to show the amount of hard work and emphasis placed on restoration of the facility. Outside, the freshly-painted and restored exterior of the building shows the loving care taken to create a place that celebrates Rogersville's African-American community and the community at-large.



The logo for Auto-Brite Professional Detailers. The word "AUTO-BRITE" is in large, bold, orange letters with a white outline. Below it, "Professional Detailers" is written in a smaller, italicized, orange script font. To the right of the text is a graphic element consisting of several curved, swoosh-like lines in orange, white, and grey, set against a dark background.

The image features the large, bold, black 'BALDOR' logo with a registered trademark symbol at the top. Below it, the text 'A MEMBER OF THE ABB GROUP' is displayed in a red, sans-serif font. The background shows the exterior of a modern industrial building with a glass door and windows, and a sign that reads 'BALDOR' on a pole. In the foreground, there is a landscaped area with shrubs and a small tree. At the bottom, the text 'Discover Hawkins County' is written in a stylized, blue font, followed by the address '100 Baldor Drive • Rogersville, TN • 423-272-2686' in red.

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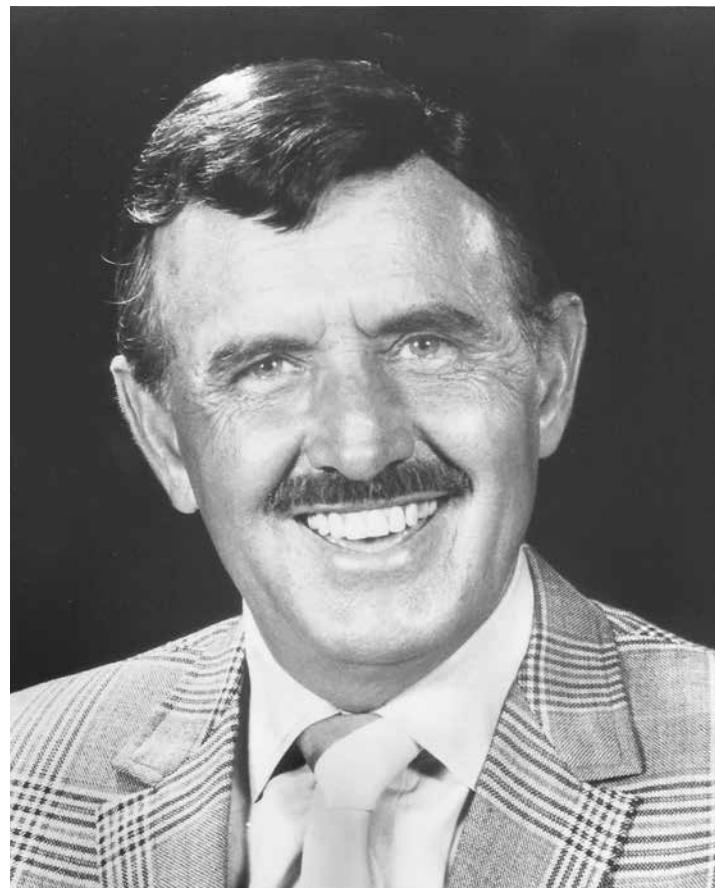
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PHOTO BY TOMMY CAMPBELL



Campbell in one of his most memorable Hee Haw "characters" .. Dr. Archie.



# Archie Campbell

## ... proud of his Hawkins County heritage

**BULLS GAP** -- Versatile, multitalented singer, songwriter, comedian, golfer, artist, TV and radio star Archie Campbell was proud of his Hawkins County hometown and never passed up an opportunity to talk about it, even though many mistakenly thought it was a made-up place, like Minnie Pearl's "hometown" of Grinder's Switch.

"He saluted Bulls Gap many times on the show," Mayor Mike Solomon said of the late Hee Haw star. "Some people thought he was putting us down, but Archie loved Bulls Gap. He was proud of his Hawkins County heritage. Bulls Gap is unique, and he helped make that uniqueness fun and entertaining."

Indeed, in 1976, Campbell recorded (with Junior Samples) a song and

### UNEXPECTED DISCOVERY (Pictured on page 32.)

Recently, Phil invited Tommy Campbell, publisher of the *Review* (no relation to Archie ... that we know of!), to visit with him at his late parents' home in Powell. While sorting through boxes of old photos, news clippings and other memorabilia of his father's amazing career, a discovery was made that brought tears to Phil's eyes: a yellowed Western Union telegram from World War II. Sent by Archie — who was on "shore leave" from the Navy in Miami — to Mary, back home in Tennessee, the "wired" message said simply that Archie was coming to get his bride-to-be. Phil said it was the first time he saw the message to the woman who would become his mother.

comedy album entitled "Bull Session at Bulls Gap".

"Archie came up in a different era," Solomon said. "Entertainment was how he fed his family, but performing and making people laugh was what he loved. It was in his heart and soul. Archie's brand of 'fun' was always good-natured and clean. He might 'pick on' Bulls Gap, but it was never mean-spirited or derogatory."

Born Nov. 7, 1914, Campbell grew up in the midst of the Great Depression.

He attended Mars Hill College as an art major, but during the Depression there wasn't much demand for artists, Archie's son, Phil, told the *Review*.

"But if you played an instrument, could sing, or be funny, that was a marketable commodity," he said. "It made people forget their troubles, and they desperately needed something to laugh about in those tough times."

After college, he found work at WNOX Radio, in Knoxville, where he worked with Grand Ole Opry legend Roy Acuff.

He joined the U.S. Navy in World War II, serving as a photographer's mate while stationed in Cuba.

"His job was to stand in the back of the ship and make pictures of practice shells that were fired at a target ship the main ship was pulling," Phil

*continued on page 31*

The Archie Campbell Museum is located in the rear of Bulls Gap Town Hall, next door to the restored "home place" where Archie lived as a child.





PHOTOS BY TOMMY CAMPBELL

Son Phil shows off his banjo playing skills in the living room of his late parents' home in Powell, Tenn., which they built following the success of *Hee Haw*.

*continued from page 29*

said. "It wasn't the safest job in the world, but it gave him a lot of experience with cameras!"

Later, he would put that experience to use photographing barns, houses and mountain landscapes which he turned into pieces of art.

"Dad was a talented painter," Phil recalled. "His paintings were just like he was: simple and honest. He had a kind of impressionistic style. There were never any telephone poles or power lines in his paintings. Most of his paintings were compositions of elements from several different scenes. It was what he imagined as perfection."

The mountains and farms of Appalachia served as inspiration for those paintings, many of which are on display at the Archie Campbell Museum, housed inside Bulls Gap Town Hall, just a stone's throw from his restored childhood Homeplace.

On shore leave from the Navy, Archie married Mary, the love of his life, and they had two sons, Steven and Phil.

After the war, Archie's radio career expanded to other area stations, including WROL, where in 1952 he helped launch "Country Playhouse" on that station's fledgling TV station.

"Dad had a lot of success in radio, but when TV came along, he was on the cutting edge," Phil said.

Campbell helped to create The Tennessee Barn Dance, which was instrumental in launching the careers of many country stars of the day. When the show ended in 1958, he moved to Nashville to become a member of WSM's Grand Ole Opry.

Soon after, RCA Victor signed Campbell to a recording contract, with one of his early singles — "Trouble in the Amen Corner" — reaching Billboard's Top 25 in 1960.

"That is still one of the most popular songs he ever did," Phil said.

Campbell recorded for a time with the Starday label, but in 1966 returned to RCA and enjoyed three hit "Top 40" singles — "The Men in My



Archie's son, Phil Campbell, has been a strong supporter of the annual Archie Campbell Days, held each Labor Day weekend in Bulls Gap.

"Little Girl's Life" (1966), "The Dark End of the Street" (1968), and "Tell It Like It Is" (1969).

In addition to his singing and writing abilities, Campbell was a natural "ham". One of his signature comedy routines was to tell stories in the "spoonerism" form, transposing the first letters of key words.

One of his most requested "mixed-up fairy tales" was "Rinderella", a takeoff on Cinderella.

"The storale of the mory is this," Campbell would say as he ended the story. "If you want to have a pransome hince lall in fuv with you and live heavily ever hafter, don't forget to slop your dripper!"

"The Pee Little Thrigs" and "Beeping Sleauty" were also oft-requested stories.

Even though none of his records ever made it to the #1 spot on the charts, they did in the hearts of his fans.

"The thing that I appreciate most about Dad, and what folks identified with, was that he genuinely loved people," Phil said. "He stayed until the last autograph was signed."

The serious side of Campbell came out in songs like "Fall Away", about a man who wakes up one morning, wonders where the years went, and suddenly realizes that it is his Golden Wedding anniversary.

In 1969, he was honored as Comedian of the Year by the Country Music Association.

But the event that sent Campbell's career into overdrive came in the summer of that year when he and Gordie Tapp were hired to star in and write comedy skits for CBS-TV's new show called "Hee Haw".

"Hee Haw was a very well-done show," Phil said. "The photography, lighting and sound was incredibly good. It was Nashville music performed by Nashville people. It was country and it was honest, and that's why it was so great."

He laughed as he recalled a skit involving the late Junior Samples.

"They actually had to teach Junior how to read, and they

*continued on page 32*



PHOTOS BY TOMMY CAMPBELL

The old wood-burning stove on which all of the Campbell family's meals were cooked graces the kitchen of the Homeplace.



The simple bedroom — complete with authentic furnishings — of the Archie Campbell Homeplace in Bulls Gap.



Bulls Gap Mayor Mike Solomon displays Archie's original Hee Haw "barber" and "doctor" shirts which hang on a section of the fence inside the Museum.

Pictured at right is one of the Hee Haw star's favorite parts of the TV set ... the fence.

*continued from page 31*

would put his lines up on cue cards," he said. "The skit went like, 'Did you hear about ol' Chet Atkins? They got him for bigotry.' Junior said, 'Bigotry?' and dad said, 'yep he had three wives!' Junior was supposed to say, 'that's not bigotry, that's trigonometry!' They had to run 'takes' on that one for weeks until Junior finally got that word right!"

Campbell created and was a cornerstone of the Barber Shop skits, usually with Roy Clark or Samples in the hot seat; as the cigar-puffing Dr. Archie, featuring Gunilla Hutton as "Nurse Goodbody"; and as the old country judge, Justus O'Peace.

"Dad said he had to do a barber shop scene because in small town America, that's where men went to interact," Phil said.

The barbershop often featured Campbell in the "that's good, that's bad segment" in which he would launch into a story that seemed to be headed in a positive direction. When his customer would say, "That's good," Campbell would counter with, "no, that's bad." After hearing a few embellishments, the customer would agree, "well, that's bad," drawing a reply from Campbell of, "no, that's good!"

As Dr. Archie, a patient would walk in with a complaint of, "Doc, it hurts when I do this," to which the cigar-puffing Campbell would slap them around with a rubber chicken and say, "then don't do that!"

Campbell, Tapp and a virtual 'who's who' of country music stars would pair up in the "PFFT! You Were Gone!" segment, an ongoing lament about



The quiet, subtle, snowy beauty of an old country barn is reflected in one of Archie's many paintings and sketches, including this signed limited edition print which is on display at the Archie Campbell Museum in Bulls Gap.

the trials and tribulations of married life, featuring the well-known chorus of, "Where oh where are you tonight ...", ending with the two singers facing each other for the last "raspberry"-producing line.

During the prosperous Hee Haw years, Campbell and his wife built a new home on a cul-de-sac in Powell, Tenn., just a stone's throw from I-75, where they lived until their deaths, Archie in 1987, and Mary in 2013.

When CBS cancelled Hee Haw, it was a huge mistake for the network, but probably one of the best moves for the stars.

"The outcry was unbelievable!" Phil said. "After they cancelled it, Hee Haw went into syndication, and they were in more markets than when they were on the network."

Country fans by the millions tuned in faithfully each week for heaping helpings of 'corny jokes' and good country music.

"Hee Haw is alive today in re-runs because it was and still is good entertainment," Phil said.

Golf was another love of Campbell's life.

"Dad was a heck of a golfer," Phil said. "He could have been a pro. He'd do a radio show that morning, play 36 holes of golf, and do another radio show that afternoon."

His favorite course was at Holston Hills, in Knoxville.

"He said that was the best course in the world, and he had played the best, Augusta, Inverness, all over," Phil recalled. "They've got a place at Holston Hills to this day that they call Archie's Bunker."

Campbell served one term on the School Board in Knoxville.

"That didn't work out very well," Phil laughed. "He was too honest to be in politics. Plus, he was a Republican when it wasn't cool to be a Republican!"

Campbell was also a dedicated family man.

"He loved to be at home," he said. "My mother was a great cook, and he was a great eater!"

In the 1970's, tourists could usually find Campbell -- when he was at home in Powell -- on a mower or working in his garden. He was always willing to stop and sign autographs.

"I will always be grateful that dad loved his family," Phil said. "His own father was an alcoholic, so dad didn't drink at all. We were well grounded in what really mattered. We had a normal home life to be surrounded by all of the 'show business' lifestyles we came in contact with."

Campbell's "star" set on Aug. 29, 1987, some 12 weeks after he suffered

a heart attack.

After his death, U.S. Hwy. 11-E through Bulls Gap was re-named "Archie Campbell Highway" in his memory.

Phil is, himself, a multi-talented country music entertainer in his own right, having performed with his father for more than 23 years in theaters in Pigeon Forge and Gatlinburg, in his on-the-road shows, at the Grand Ole Opry, and later, after Archie's death, as a solo artist.

"I sang my first song at the age of five at a school gym in Hazard, Kentucky," he said. "I was hooked!"

Phil later spent four years as a cast member on Hee Haw, and five years as the bartender and co-host of "Club Dance" on The Nashville Network.

He still performs shows, works with aspiring young entertainers, and runs a frame shop where he sells prints of his father's artwork.

Today, "Archie Campbell Day" is held on Labor Day weekend each September, and Phil always "comes home" to serve as Master of Ceremonies.

"The truth is, I just love to stand on the stage in front of people, just me and them," he said. "If I do my job right, they laugh, they forget their troubles for a while, and we all have a good time. "That's why I love what I do so much. That's what my dad loved and it's what I still love."

— By Tommy Campbell



PHOTO BY TOMMY CAMPBELL

The graves of Archie James Campbell (Nov. 7, 1914 - Aug. 29, 1987) and his wife, Mary Lee Campbell (May 19, 1919 - Dec. 27, 2013) are located in the cemetery of Glenwood Baptist Church in Powell, Tenn., near Knoxville.

# Bays Mountain Park

**offers nature, education  
above the cityscape**

Since 1971, Bays Mountain Park and Planetarium has provided Northeast Tennessee and Southwest Virginia with a respite from life's hustle and bustle.

Nestled atop part of the Bays Mountain formation and extending through Sullivan and Hawkins Counties, the park is a nature preserve owned and operated by the City of Kingsport, which also supplies a staff and facilities who are dedicated to environmental education.

One of those is Operations Coordinator Rob Cole, who said the mission of Bays Mountain's staff is "to instill attitudes of stewardship that will ensure future generations a healthy region and planet on which to live" — and on the park's little piece of the planet it does just that.

Not only does Bays Mountain provide a 3,550-acre outdoor classroom, but the area also includes a 44-acre lake, 40-mile trail system, and a nature center/museum. Visitors can also experience life under the stars in a state-of-the-art planetarium, or visit the Farmstead Museum, as well as a herpetarium.

Outdoor adventure also awaits the willing with a ropes course that includes a 300-ft zip line and, nearby, visitors can also find the park's animal habitat.

When it opened in 1987, Bays Mountain's Native Animal Habitat featured the park's still-popular river otter area. By 1990, a bobcat habitat was added. A third phase included an elevated walkway into a white-tail deer habitat and, in 1992, the grey wolf habitat was created and gained national attention by educating



PHOTOS COURTESY OF  
CITY OF KINGSPOINT, ROB COLE

visitors on the the grey wolf's endangered status. The most recent addition is Raptor Center, opened in 1999, which display a variety of native birds.

Following an unsuccessful attempt to acquire wolf pups for the Native Animal Habitat in 2013, Bays Mountain finally celebrated the arrival of four new month-old pups in Spring 2014.

Currently, the pups live in a small enclosure apart from the park's three adult wolves where they receive 24-7 care and attention from Rhonda Goins, one of the park's naturalists, and a team of specially trained naturalists and volunteers who feed, monitor, socialize, and even sleep with the pups.

"Socialization is key," Goins said, explaining a wolf's instinct to hide from humans. "We want school groups and college groups

to see them, understand their plight, and learn from them."

The pups' arrival represented the culmination of more than 18 months of fundraising, preparation, and collaboration among the Bays Mountain staff, naturalists, and its volunteers. Donations funded the entire program, from the cost of the pups to van rentals, food, vet bills, and supplies.

The pups came to Kingsport from Minnesota Wildlife Connection, a reserve and captive breeding facility where photographers and visitors schedule private viewings of whitetail deer, gray wolves, birds of prey, and other native species in their natural habitat.

Adorable pups aside, one of the parks newest ways to thrill

*continued on page 39*



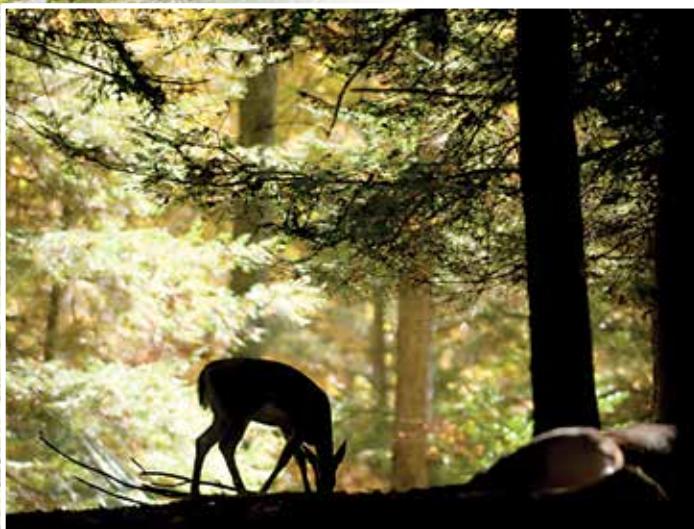


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PHOTOS COURTESY OF  
CITY OF KINGSPOINT, ROB COLE





continued from page 35

adventure seekers is the Adventure Ropes Course, completed in Winter 2011.

Designed to increase education and tourism efforts while providing park guests with new, outdoor recreation opportunities, the course was designed to be a catalyst for programming aimed at environmental awareness, fitness and recreation.

The key piece of the project is an elevated course, which provides the park with a new asset to target outdoor adventure seekers, while giving tourism officials a better, more competitive opportunity to recruit organizations and businesses that seek team building opportunities during retreats, conferences and conventions.

The course consists of two towers with a 300-ft zip line to exit and offers linear team events designed for four to eight participants to tackle together.

A second, low course consists of a series of logs and beams placed in varying designs at ground level, while also provides the capability of holding up to 72 participants at once.

Maintaining its educational outreach goal, Bays Mountain's many programs have become part of the local curriculum for area school children.

"Throughout the years, the park's regional importance in education has grown," Cole noted, "with students from up to 36 counties in the surrounding four states currently attending programs."

Students in Kingsport City, Sullivan County and Bristol, TN school system attend the programs at no charge. Students from surrounding counties pay a low, per student charge.

Public programs are also offered daily, year-round, with additional opportunities in summer.

During the 2013-2014 season, visitor attendance at Bays Mountain totalled more than 230,000, Cole noted. More than 35,000 of those were students who were directly involved in curriculum appropriate programs.

In addition to their educational mission, park personnel have also re-introduced five species of native animals beginning with white-tail deer in 1974. Soon the wild turkey followed, along with river otters, beavers, and ospreys. All five species are reproducing and present in the park or its outlying areas.

With such a broad reach, a central location is also key to the park's success. Situated only a few miles from downtown Kingsport, Bays Mountain is readily accessible via Interstates 26 and 81. Framed on all sides by mountain ridges, much of the park lies in a natural basin — a haven for wildlife.

Open all but four days a year, Bays Mountain Park allows visitors to take in a variety of activities for all seasons. Whether it's a springtime walk in the woods with more than 60 species of wildflowers, or a summertime barge ride around the park's lake on a 25 passenger pontoon barge, attending a planetarium show, visiting the wildlife habitats for a chance to hear the howl of a nearby wolf, accompanying one of the park's naturalists for a nature program, or taking a zip down the Adventure Ropes, there's something for everyone.

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— *By Joel Spears*



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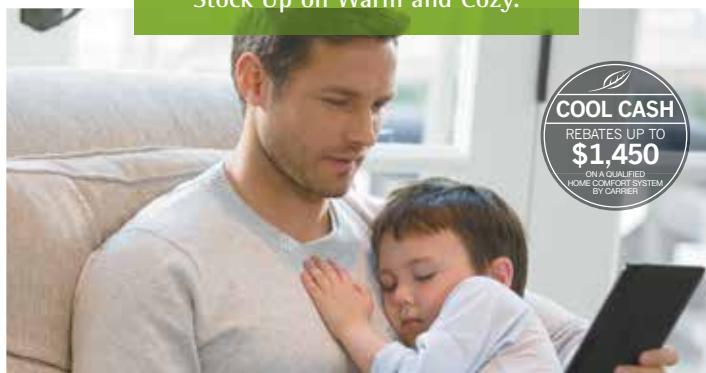
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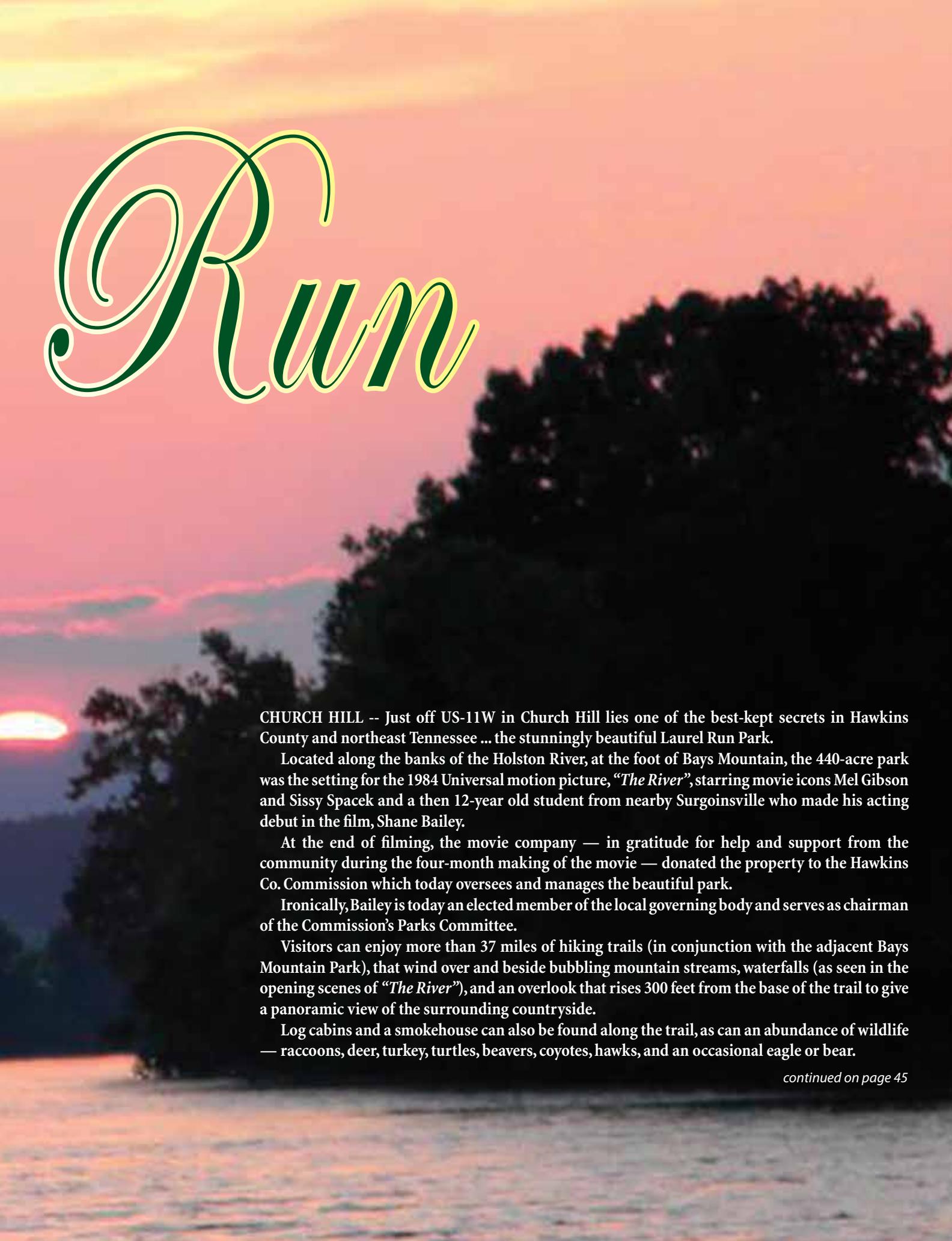
TN# 207


# Laurel



# Run

A scenic sunset over a body of water, with dark silhouettes of trees in the foreground and a colorful sky of orange, pink, and purple.

CHURCH HILL -- Just off US-11W in Church Hill lies one of the best-kept secrets in Hawkins County and northeast Tennessee ... the stunningly beautiful Laurel Run Park.

Located along the banks of the Holston River, at the foot of Bays Mountain, the 440-acre park was the setting for the 1984 Universal motion picture, "*The River*", starring movie icons Mel Gibson and Sissy Spacek and a then 12-year old student from nearby Surgoinsville who made his acting debut in the film, Shane Bailey.

At the end of filming, the movie company — in gratitude for help and support from the community during the four-month making of the movie — donated the property to the Hawkins Co. Commission which today oversees and manages the beautiful park.

Ironically, Bailey is today an elected member of the local governing body and serves as chairman of the Commission's Parks Committee.

Visitors can enjoy more than 37 miles of hiking trails (in conjunction with the adjacent Bays Mountain Park), that wind over and beside bubbling mountain streams, waterfalls (as seen in the opening scenes of "*The River*"), and an overlook that rises 300 feet from the base of the trail to give a panoramic view of the surrounding countryside.

Log cabins and a smokehouse can also be found along the trail, as can an abundance of wildlife — raccoons, deer, turkey, turtles, beavers, coyotes, hawks, and an occasional eagle or bear.

*continued on page 45*



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*continued from page 43*

With more than one-half mile of river frontage on the Holston, fishing for catfish, bass, and other species is a popular sport.

The park offers a one-mile long paved walking trail along the river for a spectacular year-round experience that varies with the changing seasons.

Needless to say, the park is home to an abundance of wildflowers, including mountain laurel, native azaleas, ferns, trilliums, wild phlox, and many more, and "flora" enthusiasts will find endless photo opportunities.

Laurel Run features a baseball/softball field, basketball court, tennis court, children's playground, an amphitheater for — where many concerts and weddings have been held — and an abundance of picnic tables and shelters scattered around the park.

The park also has a boat-launching ramp and is open all year, except Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day, with hours varying depending on the season.

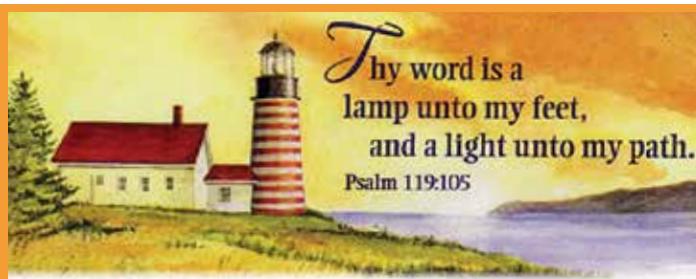
Admission to the park and use of most amenities is free of charge. Drinking fountains, restrooms are on-site, and shelter reservations are available for a fee. Groups are always welcome.

For more information, contact Caretakers Joe and Kristie Lindsey at 423-357-8110, or log on to the park's Facebook page.

## Directions:

**From US-11W in Church Hill, take Goshen Valley Road a short distance to River Road, which intersects with Laurel Run Park Road. Take a left and the park is at the end of that road.**

— **By Tommy Campbell**



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## *Laurel Run Park ~ Church Hill, Tennessee*



*Photos by Kristie Lindsey and Tommy Campbell*

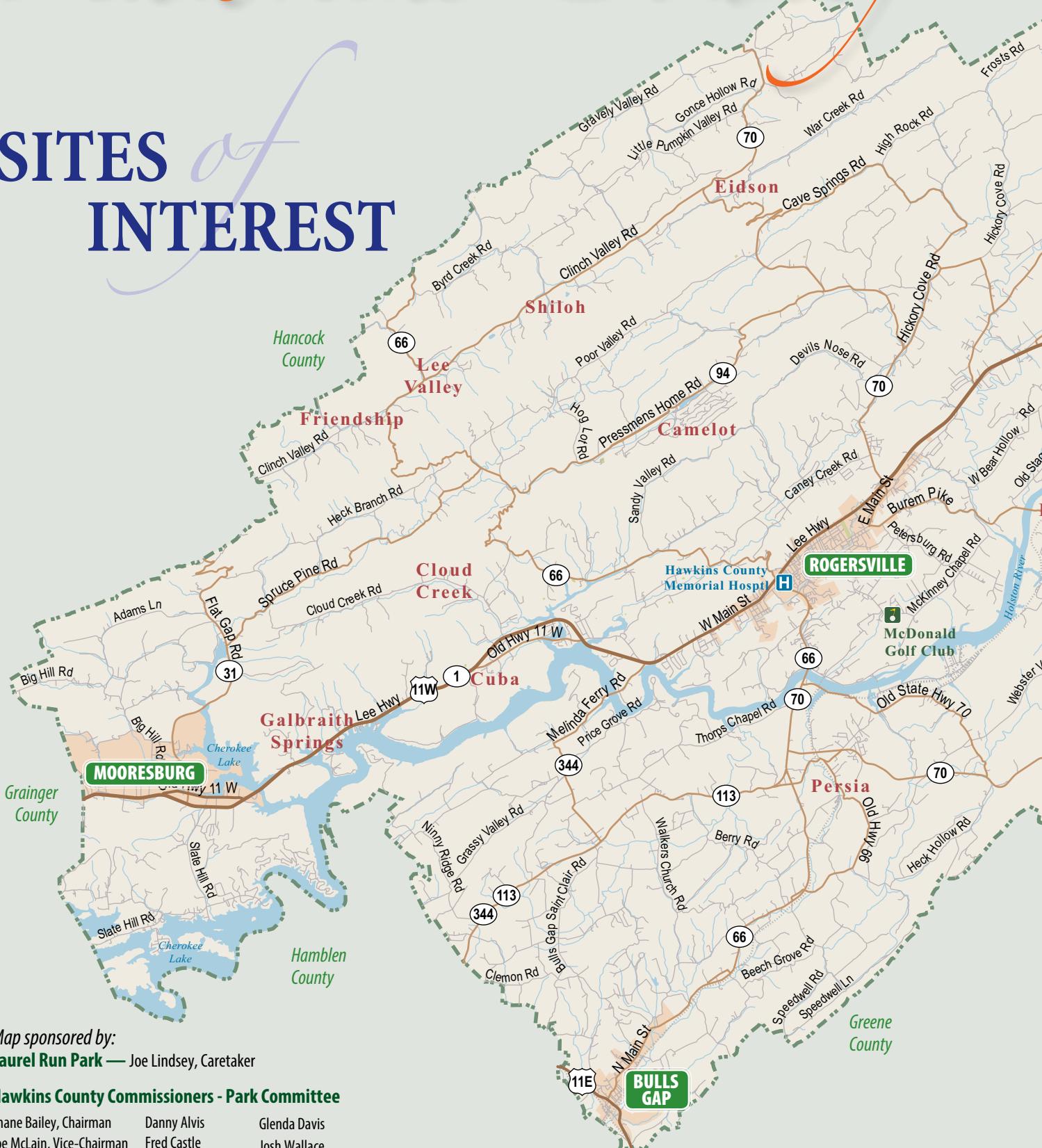


# Hawkins County

## TENNESSEE

### SITES of INTEREST





*Map sponsored by:*

## **Laurel Run Park** — Joe Lindsey, Caretaker

Hawkins County Commissioners - Park Committee

Shane Bailey, Chairman

Joe McLain, Vice-Chairman

Danny Alvis

Fred Castle

Glenda Davis

Glenda Davis  
Josh Wallace

# VIRGINIA



## Allandale (Kingsport):

- Rotherwood Mansion
- Allandale Mansion
- Bays Mt. Park & Planetarium

## Mount Carmel:

- Gov. McMinn's Home (historic marker)
- Liberty Hill Cemetery (historic site)
- Mount Carmel City Park & Veterans Memorial

## Church Hill

- Carter's Store historic marker
- Rice's Mill historic marker
- New Canton Plantation
- Church Hill Park & Veterans Memorial
- Laurel Run Park

## Surgoinsville

- New Providence Church & Cemetery (Oldest Presbyterian Church in TN)
- Phipps Bend Industrial District (nuclear reactor base)
- Long Meadow House, Carter's Valley (Oldest log home in TN)
- Fudge Farm (house, oldest log barn in TN)
- Riverfront & Creekside Parks
- Maxwell Academy
- Civil War sites (Battle of Big Creek)

## Bulls Gap

- Archie Campbell Homeplace / Museum
- Railroad Museum
- Bulls Gap Museum
- Long & Berry Cemetery
- Civil War sites (Battle of Bulls Gap)

## Rogersville

- Hawkins Co. Courthouse (1836)
- Veterans Memorial
- Clay-Kenner House
- Pettibone House
- Rogers Tavern
- Crockett Spring Arboretum
- Rogers Cemetery (containing graves of Joseph & Mary Amis Rogers and grandparents of Davy Crockett)
- Price Public Community Center & Swift Museum
- Kyle House
- Tennessee Newspaper & Printing Museum
- Site of Tennessee's first newspaper
- Hale Springs Inn (1824)
- Overton Lodge
- Amis Mill Homeplace, Eatery, Dam
- Ebbing and Flowing Springs & Methodist Church

## Mooresburg

- Campgrounds
- Hawkins County's marble mining industry landmarks

## Cherokee Lake / Holston River

- Fishing
- Boating
- Water-related activities, camping

## Boat Ramps

- Church Hill City Park
- Laurel Run Park
- Christian Bend
- Surgoinsville Bridge
- Beech Creek
- Beech Creek SW
- John Sevier Steam Plant
- Caney Creek
- Gilmore Dock
- Melinda Ferry
- Quarryville
- Church House Point
- County Line Road (Bean Station)

## In adjoining counties

- General Longstreet Museum, Russellville, Hamblen Co.
- Bridge Burners Monument, Midway, Greene Co.

(PUBLISHER'S NOTE: These landmarks are only a few of the many points of interest in Hawkins County and is not a comprehensive or all-inclusive list.)

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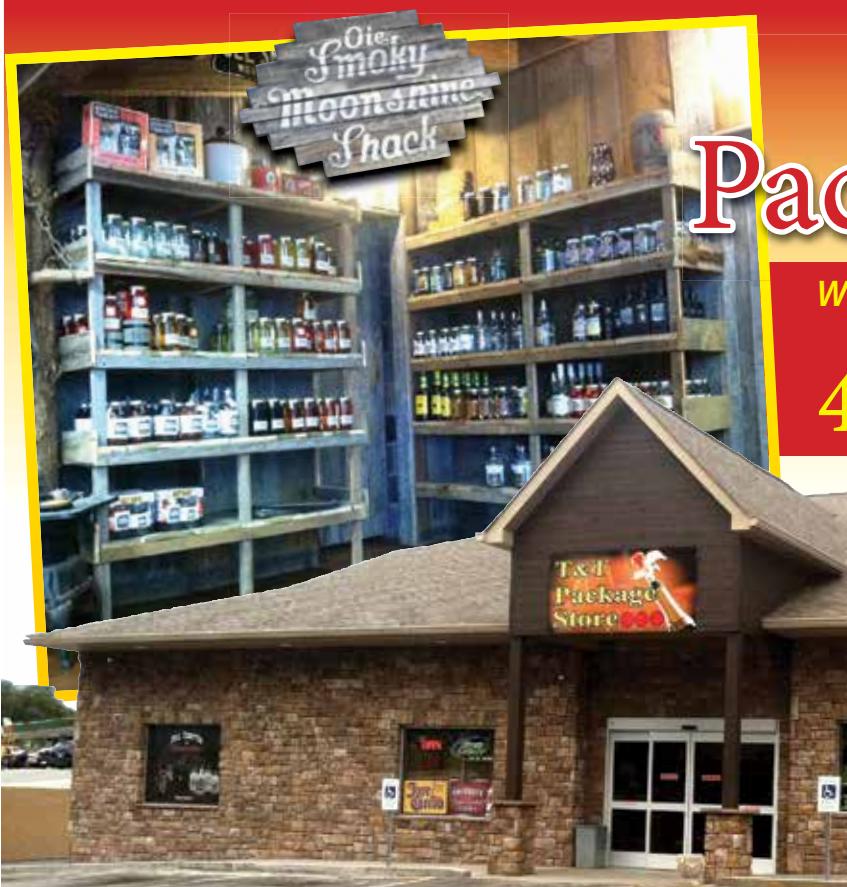
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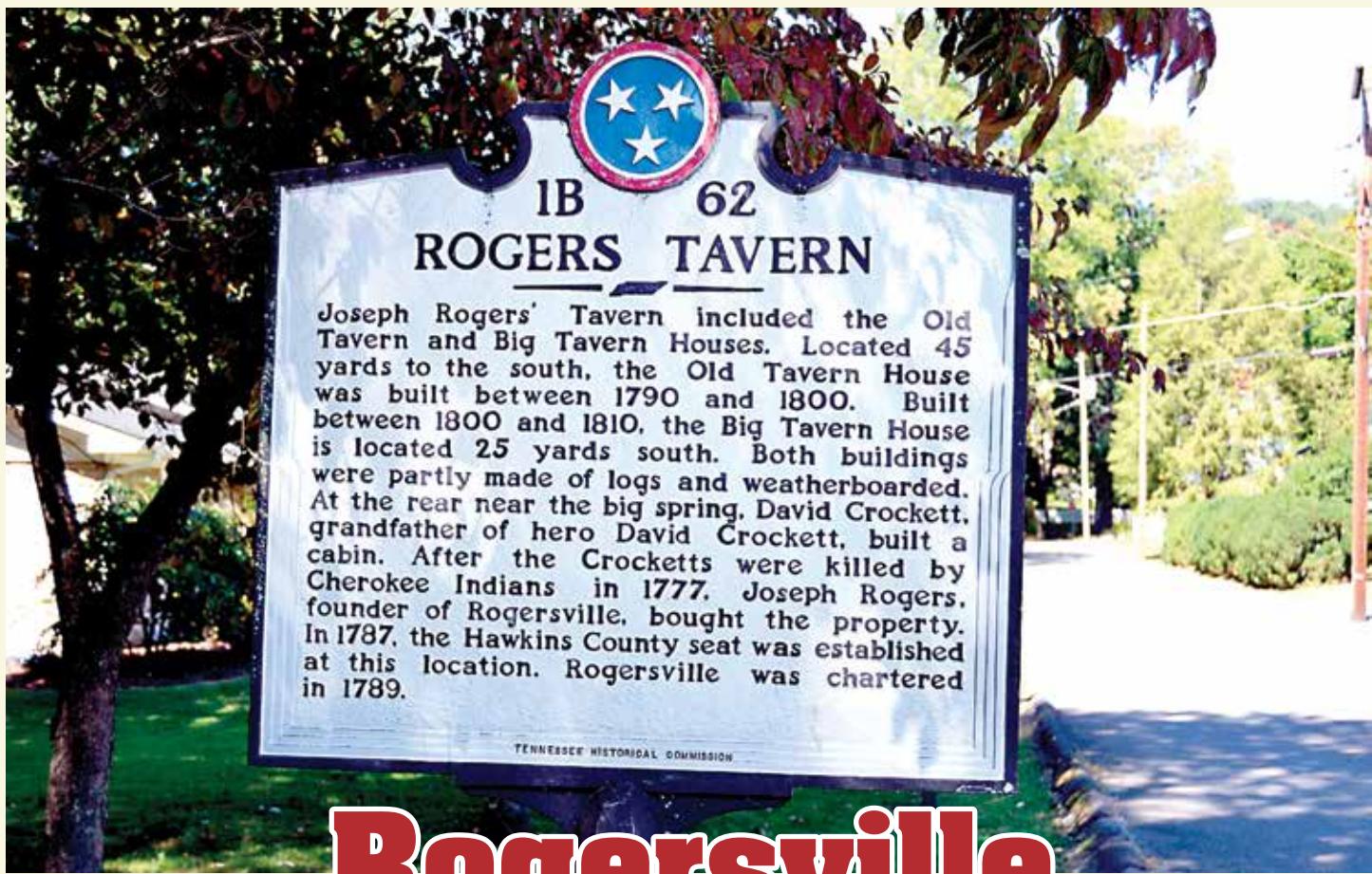
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PHOTOS BY TOMMY CAMPBELL

Tennessee Newspaper & Printing Museum and Depot



# Rogersville Heritage Association

## Historic Rogersville,

one of the state's oldest towns, was founded in 1775 by Joseph Rogers and settled by the grandparents of Davy Crockett.

Whether you are a history buff or just enjoy the scenery, you are sure to be charmed by the architecture and brick sidewalks, lined with period lighting in the downtown district, which is on the National Register of Historic places.

Once a part of the famous Wilderness Road, Main Street is home to Federal-style buildings surrounding the town square, which was given to the county by Joseph Rogers and has remained virtually intact since 1789.

The area that comprises Rogersville was home to the grandparents of Davy Crockett, who erected a cabin at Crockett Springs, in the center of the current downtown area. In 1777, Indians massacred Crockett and his wife. Their son, Robert (Davy's uncle), sold to Joseph Rogers the 281-acre tract that became Rogersville.

Rogers was an Irish immigrant who came to what was then North Carolina to work as a clerk on the Thomas Amis plantation on Big Creek, three miles outside of Rogersville. In 1786, while Amis was serving in the legislature, Rogers and Amis' daughter, Mary, eloped.

(PUB. NOTE: See the Spring 2014 issue of "Discover Hawkins County" magazine for more on the Amis Plantation.)

Rogersville flourished due to its location on an important stage road that connected Atlanta to Washington, DC, with routes to Kentucky and the Cumberland settlements by way of the Great Wilderness Trail through the Cumberland Gap. As a result, several inns and taverns were built here, including Rogers Tavern, at 205 South Rogers Street (1786). One guest who stayed at the tavern was future President Andrew Jackson. Joseph and Mary Rogers operated the tavern until they died from fever in 1833. A log-and-stone structure, the two-story building has since been covered with siding and is owned by the Rogersville Heritage Association.

Next door, the Pettibone Double House, or "Old Tavern House", was also erected by Rogers (c. 1786). The two-story log tavern (also now covered by siding) was connected by a covered walkway to Rogers Tavern.

Crockett Springs Park and Arboretum, located behind the two buildings, served as the centerpiece of early Rogersville, and includes Rogers Cemetery. Surrounded by a stone wall, the cemetery has 12 graves, two of which are unmarked. Joseph and Mary Rogers are buried there, along with David and Elizabeth Crockett.

The certified Tennessee Arboretum was dedicated in Sept., of 2013

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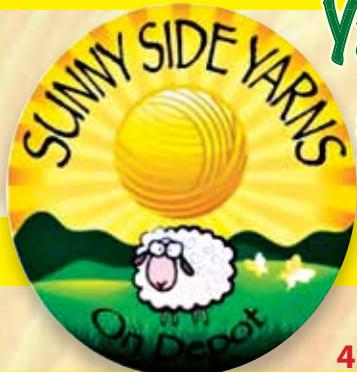


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Rogers Cemetery

PHOTOS BY TOMMY CAMPBELL

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and has 36 varieties of trees. The park is a perfect year-round setting for weddings, picnics or casual strolls and can — along with the gazebo — be rented for special occasions.

Housed in Rogersville Depot is the Tennessee Newspaper and Printing Museum, and a historical irony connects the two. It was in Rogersville on Nov. 5, 1791, that history was made, when *The Knoxville Gazette*, first newspaper in Tennessee, published its first issue.

Newly appointed territorial Gov. William Blount asked George Roulstone and Robert Ferguson to bring a printing press over the Allegheny Mountains. Rogersville and a then-nonexistent Knoxville were both in contention for the capital of the Territory South of the Ohio, which included all of Tennessee. The paper published on a weekly basis until around September 1792.

On June 11, 1792, Knoxville was established as the capitol of new territory, and that fall, Roulston hauled his press by wagon to the Holston River and floated it to Knoxville on a raft.

A newspaper, entitled, "The Railroad Advocate", published in Rogersville beginning July 4, 1831, was devoted to the promotion of railroads.

Local businessmen were excited about having a railroad. However, many citizens opposed the railroad because it took valuable land, would disturb Sunday worship, and would be dangerous to livestock and children. Another factor in their opposition was that the railroad, at the time, was being built by slave labor, and the people hereabouts were abolitionists.



Graves of David Crockett and wife in Rogers Cemetery

The railroad came to town in 1870 when a spur from Bulls Gap was built.. The Norfolk-Southern Railroad built the present Depot in 1890.

The Museum features numerous printing artifacts, including a lead casting machine, "pig" molds filled with lead, a marble topped "makeup" table, a Linotype machine used by the *Rogersville Review*, and a replica of the first issue of the state's first newspaper. The RHA's office is also located in the Depot.

Hale Springs Inn, at 110 West Main Street, has a strong presence today, but must have been truly striking by frontier standards. In 1806, lawyer John A McKinney (1781-1845) came to the area from Philadelphia to defend a client and stayed. He erected the present three-story brick building in 1824 that was known as McKinney Tavern.

The inn, which played host to three U.S. Presidents — Andrew Jackson, James K. Polk and Andrew Johnson — also contains original paintings by American artist Samuel Shaver, including a portrait of McKinney (c. 1842). The inn has had various owners and various names until finally in the early 20th century it became known as Hale Springs Inn.

In 1982, Capt. Carl Netherland-Brown purchased and renovated the inn, restoring the heartwood floors, opening fireplaces, and the large rooms that had been divided.

The inn — now owned by the RHA — was given a complete renovation in 2009 and is again the "crown jewel" of historic Rogersville. Overnight guests can experience a little piece of history without forgoing modern

*continued on page 57*

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PHOTOS BY TOMMY CAMPBELL

President Andrew Jackson suite at Hale Springs Inn

continued from page 55

conveniences in any of the nine rooms named after notable figures from Rogersville's heritage.

The inn features McKinney's Restaurant and Tavern, which serves outstanding contemporary Southern cuisine.

The Inn is also a popular location for weddings, reunions, parties and seminars.

"Christmas on the Square" is held the first Saturday in December, featuring a live nativity scene, strolling carolers, pictures with Santa, and a parade. The Inn at Christmas is a marvelous sight to behold as is all of downtown Rogersville. Wreaths, twinkling candles and Christmas trees welcome visitors and residents.

Rogersville has had an illustrious history, reflected both in brilliant statesmen and businessmen and in its many productive industries. Today, it reflects its gracious past in its homes and buildings and in the cordial manner of its citizens.

Anyone interested in experiencing the past and present of Rogersville is invited to visit our community from Oct. 10-12, 2014 for "Heritage Days", an event that Tennessee Magazine named the "Best Festival in East Tennessee".

This event showcases traditional music and dance, children's events, a craft show, art and photography show, classic cars and vintage farm equipment, and a juried craft fair. Visitors and residents enjoy fellowship, educational exhibits, and demonstrations of skills.

Everyone enjoys the food, such as caramel apples, kettle corn, funnel cakes, apple butter, and fried pies. There is a "soul food" dinner on Friday and traditional hot dogs, hamburgers, barbecue, and fries.

The RHA President's Chili Cook-off, on Friday, Oct. 10, at 3 p.m. at Hale Springs Inn Courtyard, is a crowd pleaser.

Rogersville's Heritage Days, a celebration of Fall and the rich heritage of the town, will this year celebrate its 35th anniversary. As the principal fund-raising event of the RHA, all profits are returned to the community in the form of various historic preservation projects — Rogers' Tavern, Pettibone House, Crockett Springs Park and Arboretum, the Depot's Newspaper and Printing Museum, and Hale Springs Inn / McKinney's Tavern.

We welcome one and all to join us in our celebration of a piece of Tennessee's gracious past and present!

— *By Gay Grabeel*

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For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God - not the result of works, so that no one may boast.

Ephesians 2:8-9

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PHOTO BY JIM BELLER

The current Lick Creek Bridge, a successor to the one burned in November 1861 by Union loyalists. Note the remnants of past bridge pilings still embedded in the creek bed.

**M**OHAWK — On Nov. 8, 1861, Thomas Harmon looked up and saw Daniel Smith riding his horse onto the family farm.

"I've come to see Jacob," Smith said.

"He ain't here," Jacob's son, Thomas, replied.

"Tell him that David Fry is going to be at my house this evening and wants Jacob to come and see him," Smith said.

When Jacob got home and received the message, he rode off towards Jonathan Morgan's house.

Jacob Harmon notified Morgan of the gathering and that a Union Colonel named Long would be present.

"I was very anxious to see a Federal soldier as I thought I would like to be one myself," Morgan recalled 36 years later.

Harmon and Morgan met up with John W. McDaniels and John Alexander Lowe, who were picking corn in a field in the Lick Creek bottoms.

Harmon dismounted and met the two men at the field's edge.

"I want you to come to my house tonight and bring your arms," he said.

"I have no arms," McDaniels said.

"Come anyhow," Harmon replied. "I've seen David Fry. The railroad bridge over Lick Creek is going to be burned tonight."

# The Lick Creek Bridge Burners

## One night's events had life-changing consequences

**Five months earlier to the day**, on a second vote, Tennesseans had voted 108,399 to 47,233 to secede from the Union.

As the ballot results became known, U.S. Vice President Andrew Johnson saw the writing on the wall and escaped Greeneville by buggy with J.P. Holtsinger, W.C. McClellan and James Carter and traveled through Cumberland Gap, eventually arriving in Washington D.C.

"For many years, the Confederate troops stationed in Greeneville because Vice President Andrew Johnson's home was in Greeneville," says present-day Bulls Gap Mayor and Civil War buff, Mike Solomon.

"They wanted to have a feather in their cap and say, 'Hey, you're a Union vice president, but we're living in your house.' Occupying Greeneville was a badge of honor for the Confederacy," Solomon said.

Despite that, East Tennessee was ripe with Union sympathizers, having voted two to one against secession, necessitating the second vote.

One of those sympathizers was Carter's brother, the Rev. William Blount Carter, 41, a Presbyterian minister in Carter County who hatched a bridge-



PHOTO COURTESY OF HARPER'S WEEKLY

"A Thrilling Scene in East Tennessee – Colonel Fry and the Union Men Swearing by the Flag," from Harper's Weekly, March 29, 1862, illustrated the bridge-burning plot.

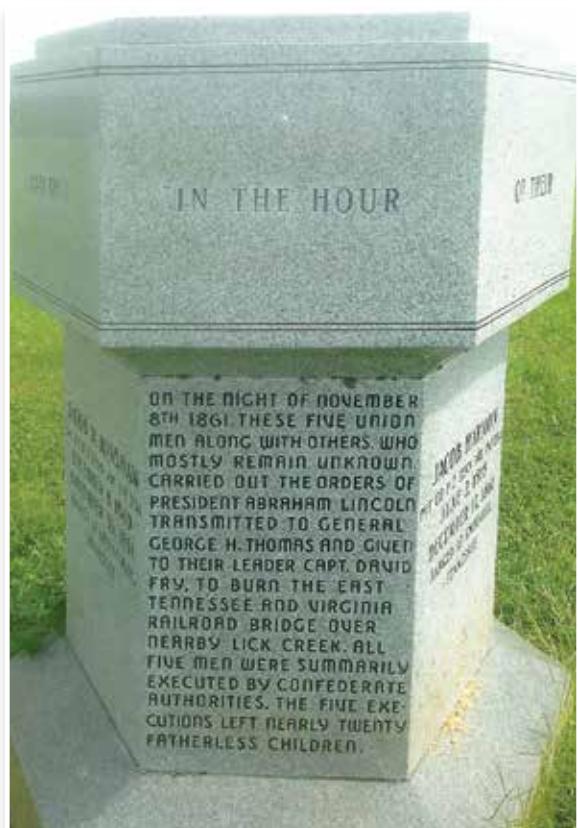
burning scheme and traveled to Camp Dick Robinson, Ky., to tell Union Brigadier Generals George Thomas and William T. Sherman about it.

Although Sherman needed convincing, Thomas liked the plan and on Sept. 30, 1861, dispatched the following message to Union Maj. Gen. George B. McClellan:

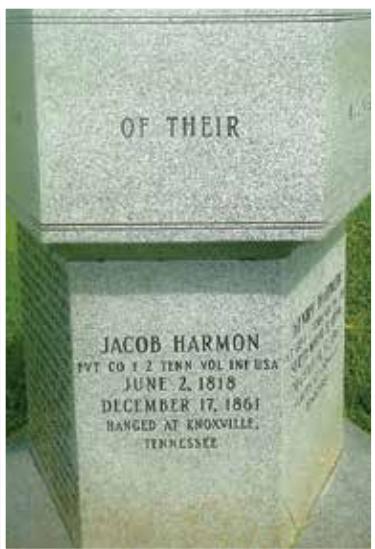
"I have just had a conversation with Mr. W.B. Carter of Tennessee on the subject of the destruction of the grand trunk railroad through that state. He assures me that he can have it done if the Government will entrust him with a small sum of money to give confidence to the people to be employed to do it. It would be one of the most important services that could be done for the country and I most earnestly hope you will use your influence with the authorities in furtherance of his plans which he will submit to you together with the reasons for doing the work."

The goal was to prevent the Confederate Army from using the railroad to move men and supplies, the most efficient method of the time. Lincoln

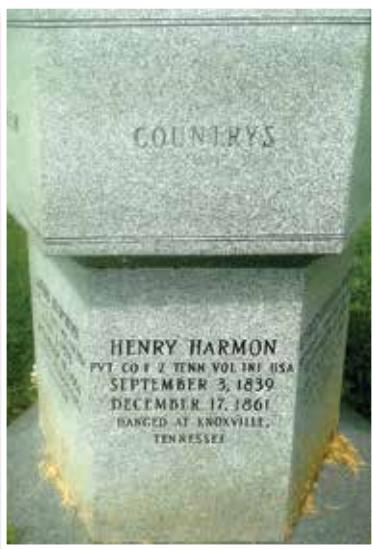
*continued on page 62*



The “Bridge Burners” monument located at Harmon Cemetery Historical Park off Pottertown Road in Midway, Tenn., briefly describes the events of Nov. 8, 1861.



Remembering Jacob Harmon



Remembering Henry Harmon

# IN THE HOUR OF THEIR COUNTRY'S PERIL, THEY WERE LOYAL AND TRUE

*continued from page 61*

agreed and issued the modest sum of \$2,500 to fund the bridge burning.

Carter stationed himself near Kingston where he recruited others. Union Captains William Cross and David Fry, a Tennessean who had fled to Kentucky to join the Union, were assigned to help carry out the plan.

Nine targets included a bridge over the Watauga River in Carter County; one across the Holston near what's now Bluff City; the Strawberry Plains bridge; a 900-foot Loudon Bridge across the Tennessee River; a covered bridge across the Hiwassee between Calhoun and Charleston; two bridges across Chickamauga Creek near Chattanooga; one at Bridgeport, Ala.; and the Lick Creek Bridge at Mohawk.

**On the night Lick Creek Bridge was to be torched,** John Alexander Lowe, a Confederate supporter, had finished picking corn and was riding home to his wife, Margaret Jane Lemons Lowe. He stopped at Harrison Self's hog pen to ask Self if he was going to that night's meeting.

Self wasn't sure. “I fear it is a bad thing,” he said. Lowe didn't think it would amount to anything and stayed home that night.

Harrison Self went to the meeting anyway, as did Christopher Alexander (C.A.) Haun, later considered one of southern Appalachia's most significant antebellum potters in the Pottertown community near Mohawk. Approximately 40 men gathered at Jacob Harmon Jr.'s house around 9 p.m. that night, reportedly including Jacob, Thomas and Henry Harmon; C.A., Cannon, Jacob and Arthur Haun; Harrison, Andrew and Hugh Self; John, James and Harrison McDaniels; William, Elijah, and Granville Willoughby; Henderson and John Lady; Lazarus Rednour and another Rednour; Matt

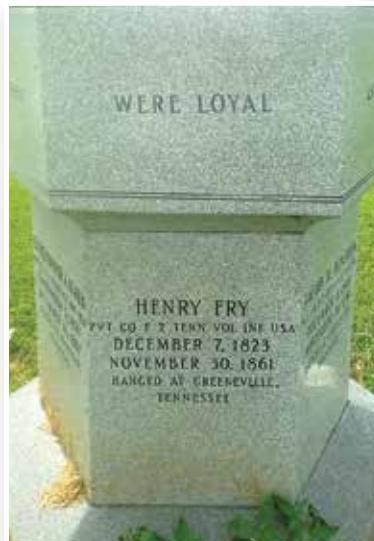


PHOTOS BY JIM BELLER

The grave of Bridge Burner Jacob Hinshaw is located in Long & Berry Cemetery off Highway 66 outside Bulls Gap.



Remembering Christopher A. Haun



Remembering Henry Fry



Remembering Jacob M. Hinshaw

Hincher, Jacob Myers, James Guthrie, Henry Wampler, Daniel Smith, James Tuthrie, William Housewright, Jonathan Morgan, Jacob Hinshaw, Col. Long, and David, William and Henry Fry.

“Col. Long informed me that the military authority of the U.S. Army had sent him and General Carter to make arrangements with Union men to burn all the bridges from Chattanooga to Bristol on the 8th of November at night 1861,” Morgan recalled 36 years later at age 70, on April 1, 1897.

“He said also that the army was on the way then to Tennessee and that a part of the army would come into Jim Town that night and as soon as the bridges burned, they would rush right in and take possession of the road and fortify and hold East Tennessee,” Morgan said.

“He also said that the Federal authorities would protect us in it and that we would be recompensed for it. I then asked him if we would not have to scout ‘til the army reached here,” Morgan said.

The colonel replied, “No, just go burn the bridge and go home and never let on like you know anything about it.”

Morgan didn’t like the idea of burning a bridge on spec in what amounted to enemy territory with only the promise of backup.

“I told them that we would all be arrested before the next night,” Morgan said. “The Rebel soldiers was then camped in one-half mile of us.”

But the Union plan was set.

With their left hands raised and their right hands placed on the Union’s Stars & Stripes flag spread out on the table, the men were sworn into the Union Army’s Company F, 2nd Tennessee Voluntary Infantry Regiment by Capt. David Fry.

The men collected their guns, mounted up and headed toward Lick Creek Bridge around midnight.

“My plan was to go and burn the bridge and then travel by daylight towards Kentucky,” Morgan said.

**Corporal Isaac N. Hacker of Captain M. Lives’ Company, Confederate Army**, was assigned to guard the bridge with five or six other Confederate soldiers, including those named Azer Miller, Barding, Trexell and Pugh.

Shivering inside a tent around 1 a.m., they did not hear the sound of the approaching horse hooves on the bottom land until it was too late – not that they could have fought off 50 men anyway.

Fry announced they were all prisoners of war. “You men have a choice to make. You can die here and now or you can take an oath of loyalty to the

*continued on page 64*



Thanks to the efforts of Greene County Historian Donahue Bible, a large, hexagonal monument of polished gray granite honoring the “Bridge Burners” is located at Harmon Cemetery Historical Park off Pottertown Road in Midway, Tenn., next to Scepter Inc. and near the Walmart Distribution Center.



PHOTOS BY JIM BELLER

The graves of Bridge Burners Henry and Jacob Harmon are located at Harmon Family Cemetery off Pottertown Road in Midway, Tenn., next to Scepter Inc. and near the Walmart Distribution Center.

*continued from page 63*

United States of America," he said.

Not much a choice, so they lifted their hands, took the oath and swore not to reveal any of the bridge burners' identities.

"We're taking these rail lines. Tell Jeff Davis and South Carolina has had them long enough," Fry said, leaving one man to guard Hacker's tent while the rest went to watch the wooden bridge burn, which it did in an hour, timbers and embers crashing into the creek.

"Someone of the crowd said the damned wire was done telling on them now," Hacker said. "A telegraph wire runs along the line of the East Tennessee and Virginia Railroad."

Telegraph word travels even faster than the trains on the adjacent tracks.

Another voice in the crowd announced the line had been cut.

"It won't tell on us now," Fry said, although one of his cohorts inadvertently would. Hacker overheard one of the bridge burners ask another, "Who has Henry Harmon's gun?" and informed investigators. "Someone else of the party replied, 'I've got it,'" Hacker later testified.

"The bridge was burned after midnight about one or two o'clock," said Morgan, who had been skeptical of the plan. "Time proved in less than 24 hours that I was right and they was wrong. Before daylight the Rebels captured Capt. Harmon and his two sons and sent them to the Knoxville jail."



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE GREENEVILLE SUN

A monument located near the intersection of Tusculum Blvd. and Snapps Ferry Rd in Greeneville, Tenn., remembers Captain David Fry, who's credited with arranging the burning of Lick Creek railroad bridge.

Along with Capt. Jacob Harmon Jr., 43, his sons Thomas and Henry, C.A. Haun, 40, was also arrested and sent to Knoxville.

Five of the nine bridges were destroyed: the Hiwassee Bridge; two bridges across the Chickamauga Creek; the bridge near today's Bluff City and the bridge at Lick Creek.

The Bridge Burners awaited a liberating army that never came. Sherman, who would later gain infamy for burning Atlanta in his "scorched Earth" policy, had been suffering a nervous breakdown in Kentucky and doubting success, had changed his mind about moving into Tennessee. So the bridge burners had no backup.

**On Sunday, Nov. 10, 1861, Morgan was arrested.** "They drove me out of my house with their guns and bayonets, swearing they would shoot me if I did not move right out," Morgan said. "It frightened my wife nearly to death. I left her with a little child."

"They drove in to Midway. One of the soldiers, a neighbor of mine, stopped us as we passed his house and got a plow line and would have hung me on the way had it not been for one of the officers and a few friends present," Morgan said.

"When we got to Midway, they tied my hands and feet together and sent me to Knoxville. I would like to tell right here what I suffered there, but I have not the tongue, neither power of language to express it," said Morgan. "So I will say it was the meanest — a perfect Hell on earth that I ever saw

continued from page 64

before or since."

On Nov. 30, 1861, Confederate Col. Danville Leadbetter posted a proclamation:

"All men taken in arms against the Government will be transported to the military prison at Tuscaloosa, and be confined there during the War. Bridge burners and destroyers of Rail Road track are excepted from among those pardonable. They will be tried and hanged on the spot."

That day Leadbetter reported the capture of Henry Fry, Jacob Hinshaw and 16-year-old Hugh Self. Fry and Hinshaw were hanged from "a huge oak tree near the Greene County railroad depot," according to multiple accounts. The bodies were then left hanging for 26 hours to make a statement to any other would-be Union sympathizers. The 16-year-old Self was spared.

On Dec. 11, C.A. Haun, 40, was found guilty in Knoxville where he was hanged on gallows north of the railroad tracks. Jacob Harmon Jr. had to watch his 22-year-old son, Henry Harmon, hang before suffering the same fate.

On Dec. 13, two days after the hanging of the man who had tried to recruit him from his cornfield to burn a bridge, John Alexander Lowe traveled to Morristown and joined the 29th Regiment of the Confederate States of America.

"Ever since Fremont's proclamation, I have been a Southern man so now I'll fight for the South," Lowe told his wife. But the first thing he did was to fight for a man being tried by the South.

**On Dec. 20, 1861, Lowe went to testify on behalf of Harrison Self,** who was 50 years old with grown children and grandchildren at the time of his court-martial.

Despite Lowe's testimony, Self was found guilty on all charges on Dec. 21, 1861, and sentenced to hang the following day at 4 p.m.

But the eight members of the court, including Judge-advocate T.J. Campbell, appealed to W.H. Carroll, Brigadier-General to spare Self.

"The court is unanimous, however, in the behalf — from the testimony in the case, from the character of the prisoner, from what the members of the court know of his previous life and conduct, from his known kindness of heart and his standing in the community as a good citizen, and from many other circumstances occurring in the trial which cannot be transferred to paper — that this is a proper case for commutation of punishment."

In addition, Self's daughter, Elizabeth Self, appealed by telegraph to C.S.A. President Jefferson Davis: "My father, Harrison Self, is sentenced to be hung this evening at 4 o'clock on a charge of bridge-burning. As he is my only earthly stay, I beg you to pardon him."

"There was no answer until it like to have been too late," said Morgan, who was in the same Knoxville jail as Self at the time, expecting to be hung as well. "They had started men to the jail to bring Mr. Self out to hang him when the dispatch came."

"They started a runner after them and stopped them before they got to the jail. The report said Davis and his Secretary of War disagreed over the

matter, Davis being in favor of stopping the hanging," Morgan said. "Anyway, this stopped the trying and hanging of Bridge Burners."

Morgan was released in mid-January, 1862.

"I came home and found my wife in a bad condition, her mind wrecked. I worried with her 24 years and she never was the same woman in mind any more," Morgan said. "I am a potter by trade and might have been well-situated today had it not been for the loss of my wife's mind."

Twelve years after her death, his decision to join the Bridge Burners 36 years earlier haunted him, as well.

"I have not been able to support myself the last four years. The loss of my wife's mind cut off every avenue to prosperity and happiness," Morgan said.

"But instead of being well situated, me and my children is in the jaws of poverty, suffering financially from the effects of that night's work the 8th of November 1861."

Capt. David Fry eluded capture until March 22, 1862, when he was shot in Lee County, Va. trying to escape to Kentucky and taken to a Confederate

prison in Atlanta. He was sentenced to death but escaped with other captured Union soldiers on Oct. 14, the eve of his execution.

He made it back to his unit near Nashville the following February and was subsequently promoted to lieutenant colonel of scouts. While steering East Tennessee men who wanted to join the Union to Kentucky, he was shot and captured again, taken to Abingdon, Va., where he was held in chains for nine months and shot a third time trying to escape.

Paroled by the Confederates on March 12, 1865, and subsequently honorably discharged from the Union Army, Fry spent the next seven years petitioning the U.S. government for pensions for the widows and orphaned children of the five men hung for burning Lick Creek Bridge.

The man known for organizing the plot to cripple Confederate rail lines died in 1872 at age 46, ironically after being hit by a train near the Greeneville Depot.

(Sources: *Lick Creek Bridge documents, Archie Campbell Museum, Bulls Gap, TN; Greene County historian Donahue Bible; "The Bridge Burners: A True Adventure of East Tennessee's Underground Civil War," By Cameron Judd; "Unionists tried to burn bridges, take Tennessee in 1861," a knoxnews.com article by Amy McRary; tnvacation.com; The Civil War Papers of George B. McClellan: Selected Correspondence, 1861-1865; War of the Rebellion, Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, Trial of Harrison Self for Bridge Burning, "Grave Marking for Capt. David Fry...," May 12, 2006 Greeneville Sun article, Jonathan Morgan statement, Mohawk, Greene County, Tenn., April 1, 1897)*



COURTESY OF BIGBLACKCREEKHISTORICAL.COM

An abandoned bridge over Big Black Creek located outside of Denmark, Tenn., illustrates early railroad bridge construction. The original pilings made from trees are still visible under the abandoned bridge.

— By Jim Beller



## ROGERSVILLE – In Fall of 1863

Union Maj. Gen. Ambrose Burnside launched a campaign to gain control of East Tennessee.

On the morning of Oct. 10, a Union Force led by Gen. Samuel P. Carter encountered Confederate cavalry commanded by Gen. John S. Williams encamped around Blue Springs, in the area now mostly known as Mosheim.

The Battle of Blue Springs, considered the last major battle in Upper East Tennessee, commenced as artillery blasted all day long, killing and wounding 66 Rebel soldiers.

By 5 p.m., Confederate lines were stretched to two miles and broken by Union Gen. Edward Ferrero's infantry, and 150 were taken prisoner. Ultimately, Confederate forces retreated all the way back to Abingdon, Va.

Just shy of one month later, the Rebs got some payback after learning of Kentucky and Ohio regiments commanded by Col. Israel Garrard encamped near Big Creek, about four miles east of Rogersville.

On Nov. 3, Confederate Maj. Gen. Robert Ransom ordered Brig. Gen. "Grumble" Jones to attack from Kingsport before rains made the Holston River impassable.

"It looks as though it would rain, and we may be prevented from making the movement," Ransom instructed Jones. "After starting directly for Rogersville, rapidity will be required both in the execution of your march and attack, and in your return to your present position."

Jones drove straight at Garrard on Big Creek, surrounding the Yanks and stampeding the Seventh Ohio Cavalry. Caught between Col. Henry Giltner's Second Cavalry Brigade and the Second East Tennessee, the Union rear guard of mounted infantry surrendered.

Jones elected to stay put in Rogersville rather than return to Kingsport to avoid any chance of entrapment on the railroad between Rogersville and Bull's Gap.

What Grumble and other Rebels didn't know was two Union soldiers, while retreating from the skirmish, buried a cache of silver coins under the roots of a tree on Big Creek, fearing losing it to the Confederates.

One of the soldiers later died in battle and the other, a New Yorker, was unfamiliar with the area, and gave up hope of ever finding the loot.

Thirty-five years later, long after the war, Rogersville's Bob Venable and two buddies were hunting rabbits in the woods near the Powell Fain Farm in the Big Creek area when the boys came upon a large, fallen tree.

Young Bob reached into a hole caused by the uprooted tree in an attempt to grab a rabbit.

"Instead of feeling warm rabbit fur, however, his fingers touched cold, hard coins," Bob Bradley wrote in an article in the June/July, 1971 issue of "Treasure" magazine.

"The three boys began digging industriously and eventually pulled out a pot of silver coins," the article continued.

"Since they could not carry the heavy kettle of silver, they filled their pockets and hats, then tied their trousers legs at the ankles and poured in the remaining coins."

The boys had found \$1,512 – a tidy sum. It was also nearly as dangerous to transport in 1898 as it had been in 1863.

In a 1951 Knoxville Journal article, Vic Weals wrote: "They headed back to town through the woods, afraid to go by the main road with all that money on hand. One of the boys looked up at Bob and said, 'I always heard that when folks got rich they got the big head. But I ain't got it.'"

After some discussion, the boys decided to turn the money over to authorities, who tried to find the rightful owner.

A New Yorker eventually read about the treasure discovery and wrote a letter stating that he helped another Union soldier bury the silver coins

*Rabbit-hunting Tennessee  
boys find lost Yankee treasure*

# Battle of Big Creek

under the roots during the Big Creek skirmish.

"The letter, addressed to one of the boys whose name was Bob Venable, stated that the writer held no claim on the money," Bradley's article states. "And since the man who had buried it was dead, this left the cache of \$1,512 to be divided between young Venable and the other two boys, John and Taylor, whose last names are unknown."

Weals had traveled to Rogersville in July, 1951 to research the story and write about the area. Weals was told by one of Venable's neighbors to look for the affable man on Main Street.

"D.H. Boyd was standing on the Courthouse Square," Weals wrote. "Would he know Uncle Bob if he saw him? Yes indeed he would. You just stand right here and you'll find Bob Venable a lot quicker than if you go looking for him," Boyd said.

"Sure enough, it was only a matter of seconds until Bob came trudging up the street with a big box on his shoulder." The box was addressed to Santa Claus, whom Venable was known for portraying throughout Hawkins County at Christmas time.

"Christine Price and Mary Lou Price were at Grant Trent's store at the far end of the valley," Weals wrote. "They recognized Uncle Bob. Mrs. Williams said her three-year-old boy, Virgil, still talks about sitting on his knee when he played Santa Claus at the Choptack School last Christmas."

And like presents under a Christmas tree, Bob never forgot about finding Union treasure under a tree on Big Creek.

(Sources: [tnvacation.com](http://tnvacation.com), *Knoxville Journal*, *Treasure Magazine*)

— **By Jim Beller**



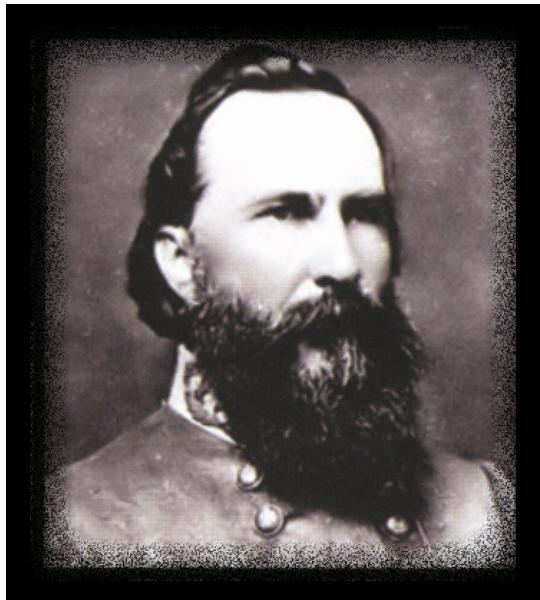
PHOTO COURTESY OF MARLENE HAGOOD JENNINGS

Bob Venable, who as a boy found Yankee treasure in Big Creek, demonstrates how to use a rotary telephone, the first one in Hawkins County, in 1942 at City Drug Store.



Many guns and armaments, as well as other Civil War memorabilia are on display at the General Longstreet Museum.





# General Longstreet Museum

## A CIVIL WAR TREASURE TROVE LOCATED RIGHT IN OUR BACKYARD

RUSSELLVILLE – Walking in the General Longstreet Museum, one gets a real sense of history.

“It smells like an old house,” says Linda Lammers, museum caretaker and tour guide. “I had a gentleman from Colorado who said, ‘Yep, it smells like an old house. It smells like chamber pots and cooking and people.’ We’ve tried to keep the integrity of the house. It’s not as pretty as anything in Rogersville or Greeneville, but that’s not the kind of a house it was. They were farmers, merchants and railroad people. They were upper blue collar.”

Located just across the Hawkins County line in Hamblen County at 5915 E. Andrew Johnson Hwy, Russellville, the General Longstreet Museum is drenched in history.

“These are the original floors. General James Longstreet walked on these very same floors. We also have something we’re very proud of, a one-of-a-

kind in the state of Tennessee: a telegraph,” Lammers says.

William Nenney’s family home served as Civil War General James Longstreet’s retreat during the winter of 1863-64 because of its proximity to the railroad station and telegraph lines.

“The railroad is two blocks away in 1860,” Lammers says. “They strung telegraph wire from the depot up here. This was his war room. This was the only communications room for the Civil War in the State of Tennessee,” she says. “He had communications. He could talk to President Jefferson Davis, General Lee or his other generals. All the men on his staff would meet with him in here and make plans.”

“I tell the kids in tour groups, ‘They didn’t have a smart phone, they

*continued on page 70*



The Nenney house at 5915 E. Andrew Johnson Highway had to be re-situated in a different position when the road was constructed.

*continued from page 69*

didn't have a laptop, they didn't have a telephone. That's as high tech as it got."

The Nenney home predated Longstreet's visit by three decades.

"This house was here in the 1830s," says Lammers. "And it was their home until the 1950s. They were quite the business people. It was a two-over-two – two rooms over two rooms. Then they built the addition to the house within the next decade."

The construction of U.S. Highway 11E in 1925 forced the owners to tear the house down or move it. So they detached it and reconfigured it on the site.

"This is technically the front door," Lammers says of the repositioning. "It faced the Russellville Pike that went into Rogersville. Another reason General Longstreet came here was Cain's Mill was just about a half mile away. It ran 24/7 grinding corn while his men were here."

An attempt in about 1989 to convert the building to a bed and breakfast failed and it was danger of being razed to accommodate a discount store.

"So they formed Lakeway Civil War Preservation Association then went down to the bank and got a note and bought it or it would have been torn down," she said.

History won, and the home was saved. The discount store, built down the road, recently closed.

It's not just the preservation of the building itself, but also the artifacts it holds which make it such a showcase of history.

"We have a relic room. It's always a work in progress," Lammers says. "We have relics that either were dug here or could have been dug here. We have the Bible from the Bethesda Church up the road, which was used as a hospital."

Dr. Carroll Van West, director of the Center for Historic Preservation at Middle Tennessee State University, who currently serves as Tennessee's State Historian, is the co-chair of the Tennessee Civil War Sesquicentennial Commission, and is director of the Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area.

"We're really proud of this," Lammers says. "Dr. Van West is really proud of this. He has been under this house, around this house, over this house, through this house and he loves this house."

"Middle Tennessee State University received grants and Dr. Van West gave us these informative wall panels. There were so many battles that so few people even know about. I'm from Michigan. I know more about the battles fought in this area than many of the locals. It's heritage as well as history," she says. "Tennessee is second to Virginia in battles fought because it had the bridges and the railroads."

According to the Oct. 25th Atlanta-Knoxville Register, Confederate

*continued on page 73*



Above: General Longstreet's office contains an authentic telegraph from the period.



Left: General Longstreet's bedroom has been carefully represented with era-specific items.

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continued from page 70

President Jefferson Davis felt East Tennessee vital to the Confederacy and would abandon Richmond if necessary in order to repossess East Tennessee.

In the Knoxville Campaign in November 1863, Longstreet challenged Union Maj. Gen. Ambrose Burnside for control of Knoxville, which both Abraham Lincoln and Jefferson Davis considered a major objective of the war.

Longstreet's attack in the Siege of Knoxville was delayed as he had to wait for reinforcements.

Meanwhile, the Union was closing in and on Nov. 25 at the Battle of Missionary Ridge, the Yanks had taken Chattanooga.

"The coming shock of contending armies on the soil of Tennessee will be decisive of the fate of the Confederation," the New York Times proclaimed.

Feeling the Yankees breathing down his neck, Longstreet attacked Fort Sanders on Nov. 29, but the result was disastrous. The Confederates sustained 813 casualties to the Union's 13. Longstreet abandoned the Siege of Knoxville on Dec. 4, 1863, and retreated northeast towards Rogersville.

According to [legends-of-america.com](http://legends-of-america.com), "Major General John G. Parke pursued the Rebels, but not too closely. Longstreet continued to Rutledge on Dec. 6 and Rogersville Dec. 9. Parke sent Brigadier General J.M. Shackelford on with about 4,000 cavalry and infantry to search for Longstreet. On Dec. 13 when Longstreet learned the Union cavalry had advanced beyond its infantry, he decided to go back and capture Bean's Station. Three Rebel columns and artillery approached Bean's Station to catch the Federals in a vice. By 2 a.m. Dec. 14, one column was skirmishing with Yankee pickets. The pickets held out as best they could and sent warning to Shackelford, who deployed his force for an assault.

"The battle continued throughout most of the day until southern reinforcements tipped the scales. By nightfall, the Federals were retreating through Bean's Gap and on to Blain's Cross Roads. Longstreet set out to attack the forces again the next morning, but as he approached them at Blain's Cross Roads, he found them well-entrenched. Longstreet withdrew and the Federals soon left the area.

"The Knoxville Campaign ended following the battle of Bean's Station. While the Rebels won ground, estimated casualties of this battle were 700 Union and 900 Confederate. Rebel success meant little to efforts except to prevent disaster."

Longstreet soon went into winter quarters at Russellville.

"When he got here, it was cold, the men were hungry, tired. They had no shoes. They could track them through the snow by the blood in the snow. It was a bad winter," Lammers says. "It was the coldest winter in history. It had gone down to 29 below zero at one time. His men and his staff were here. He had 20,000 men encamped around here."

"When they first got here, they ate a feast. They had ham and turkey, sweet potatoes, hominy, corn bread, moonshine. They ate very, very well. But after a while, the food depleted with the Confederates and the Federals wouldn't share, so it was whatever they could beg, borrow or steal. They lived for a long time on just biscuits and bacon," she says, adding that was the war's turning point.

"Lee, 'We've got to feed our people.' That's what he told Lincoln at the end of the war. He said, 'You didn't beat us. You starved us out.' They just didn't have anything left," Lammers says.

While it's the Longstreet Museum, the house retains the heritage of the Nenneys, as well. "It was as much the Nenney's home as it was General Longstreet's. He was only here for six weeks. They were here all their lives," Lammers says.

Nenney family items are on display at the museum in addition to Civil War artifacts.

"When the family found out, they asked if we would like to borrow some of the stuff that had been in the house through the years. We said of course," Lammers says.

General Longstreet Museum hosts school groups, tours and holds special events.

On the first Sunday in December from 2-6 p.m., the museum will host "Christmas with the General."

"We decorate the house and we have foods that they ate that Christmas Eve," Lammers says.

"When the kids come, when we do tours and at Christmas, we dress in period clothes. We decorate the mantles at Christmas. We have cedar, magnolia, bittersweet and holly and run it up the railing. It looks pretty good," she says.

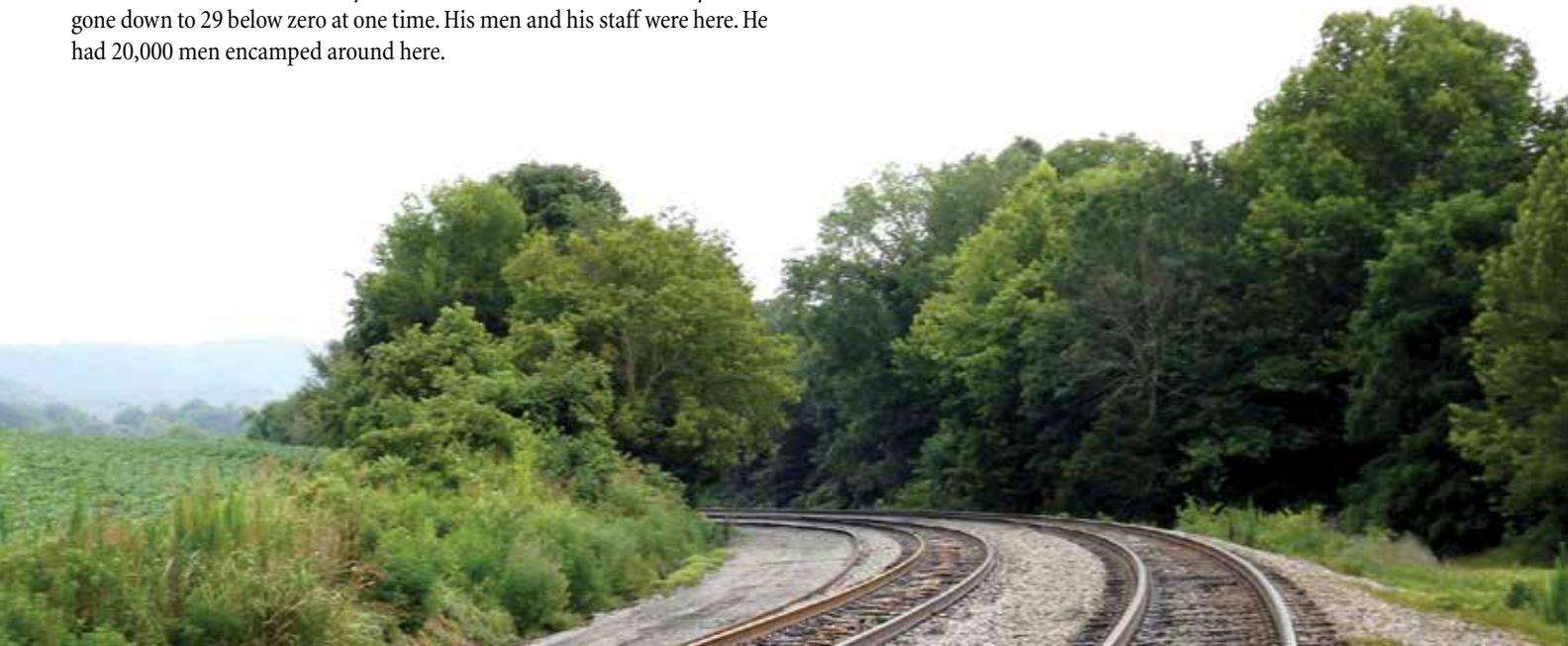
Lammers ends the tour with another interesting tidbit.

"Longstreet also had another man on his staff. Moxley Stahl was his attendant and took care of all his messages. He took care of him from the beginning until shortly after Longstreet was shot and wounded. He was off for quite a while. Moxley received a promotion and left," she says.

"But he had another man on his staff. His name was Peyton Manning and he was out of Louisiana."

(Sources: Linda Lammers, General Longstreet Museum, [legends-of-america.com](http://legends-of-america.com), [Atlanta-Knoxville Register.com](http://Atlanta-Knoxville Register.com), [New York Times](http://New York Times))

— By Jim Beller



# The Battles of Bull's Gap

## Railroad made town crucial during Civil War

**BULLS GAP** — While Nov. 11-13, 1864 is normally recognized as the dates of The Battle of Bull's Gap, the town's strategic location near the gap in Bay's Mountain made it a site of numerous skirmishes in a perpetual fight for railroad control.

"The East Tennessee & Virginia Railroad had been established in and built through Bull's Gap in about 1857," says present-day Bull's Gap Mayor Mike Solomon, a Civil War buff. "John Bull's blacksmith shop was located in the gap of Bays Mountain, so it got to be known as 'Bull's Gap.' That whole ridge goes to Kingsport.

"Primarily Bull's Gap, being in the natural gap in the mountains, was a natural defensive position. From my understanding, the Confederate troops were trying to protect the salt works up in Saltville, Va. That was their key. At that time, the salt works was a source of saltpeter for gunpowder manufacturing," he said.

"Being garrisoned in Greeneville, and having this natural gap down here and wanting to protect the salt works, it was a natural defensive site,"

Solomon said.

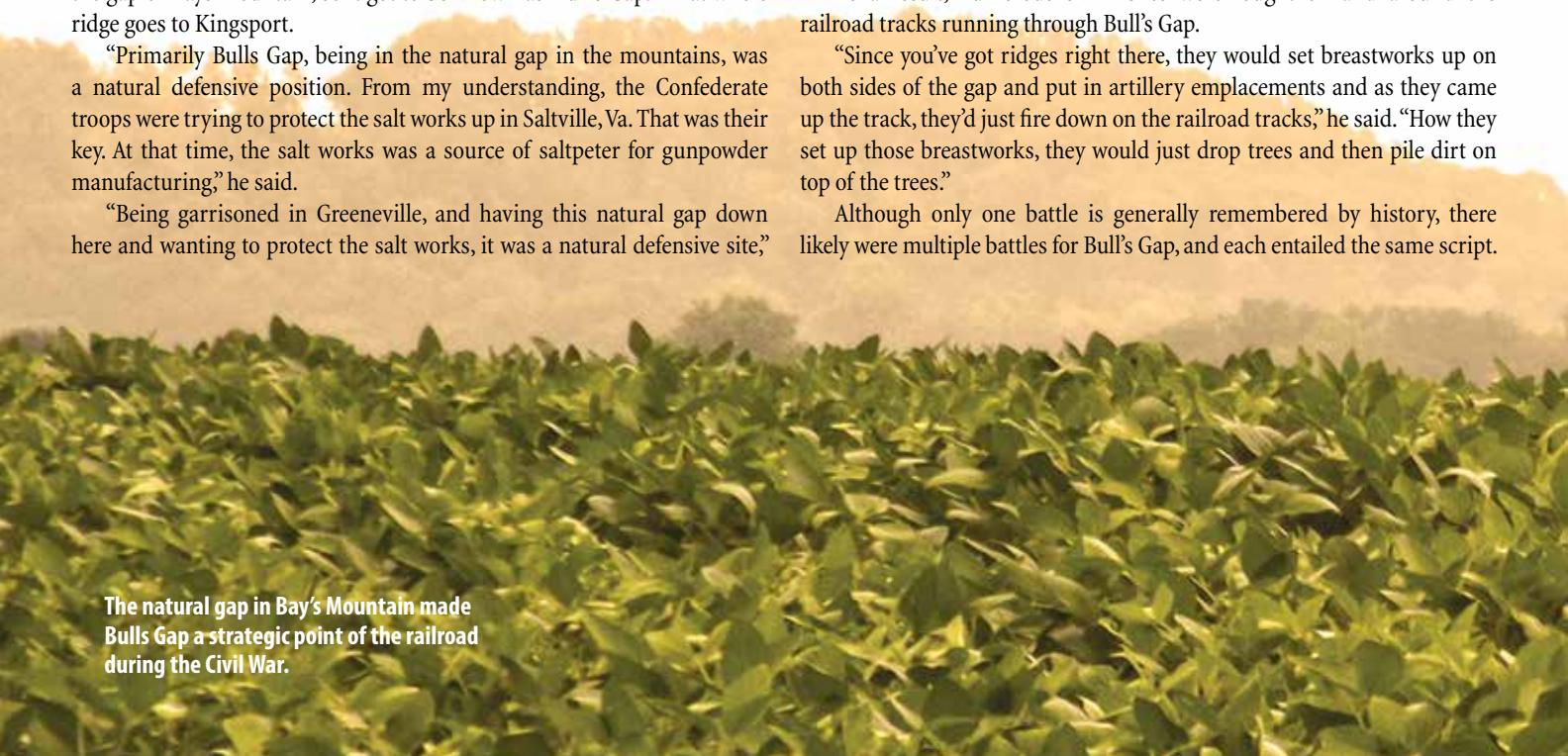
"The Union troops were garrisoned in Knoxville and down that way. At that time, it was mechanized infantry. They'd put the troops on the trains and shipped the troops where they needed to fight.

"Since this was a natural gap, the train tracks were here, the Union troops would load troops in Knoxville and run 'em this way. Of course, the Confederate forces would re-form here in the Gap," he said.

As a result, numerous skirmishes were fought on and around the railroad tracks running through Bull's Gap.

"Since you've got ridges right there, they would set breastworks up on both sides of the gap and put in artillery emplacements and as they came up the track, they'd just fire down on the railroad tracks," he said. "How they set up those breastworks, they would just drop trees and then pile dirt on top of the trees."

Although only one battle is generally remembered by history, there likely were multiple battles for Bull's Gap, and each entailed the same script.



The natural gap in Bay's Mountain made Bull's Gap a strategic point of the railroad during the Civil War.

"There were several battle grounds and battlefields in and around Bulls Gap. Coming into Bulls Gap from Morristown, there are several higher plots of ground that overlook the railroad. That's where the Union forces would put some of their mobilized forces. The key was the railroad tracks," Solomon said.

"There were probably three separate battles in Bulls Gap. Union forces would transport from Knoxville, get up this far and they'd be repelled here in Bulls Gap. They'd retreat back to Knoxville, but as they'd retreat, they'd tear up the railroad tracks so that the Southern forces couldn't use them to be on their heels," Solomon said.

And like the tracks themselves, that works both ways.

"The Confederate forces would build the tracks back, transport people down that way and they'd fight down that way to New Market or the river. Then they'd be repelled and they'd do the same thing: they'd tear the tracks back up to Bulls Gap," Solomon said. "The Union forces would gather together, build the tracks back and ship 'em back up this way."

A dispatch from Union Maj. Gen. J.M. Schofield to Brig. Gen. J.D. Cox on April 24, 1864, illustrates typical orders given to either side stationed around Bulls Gap, this one to Union troops.

*Major- General. KNOXVILLE, TENN. April 24, 1864. Brigadier-General Cox, Bulls Gap: General Sherman directs me to destroy the railroad above Bulls Gap immediately and proceed to carry out his plans. Order General Manson to destroy at once all the bridges above Greeneville and break up and destroy the rails as far as possible, working back this way from the bridges. Let the cavalry push on and destroy the Watauga and Holston bridges, if possible. Commence yourself to-morrow to destroy the road from Lick Creek toward Greeneville. I will send up tools to-night. I have ordered General Hascalls brigade to Bulls Gap to support you. Let the work be pushed forward as rapidly as possible; time is important. J.M. SCHOFIELD, Major General.*

### Brig. Gen. J.D. Cox passes on the orders to Brig. Gen. M.D. Manson.

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**CORPS, Bulls Gap, Tenn., April 24, 1864.** Brig. Gen. M. D. MANSON Commanding Second Brigade, Greeneville: GENERAL: Since you left this morning I have received a dispatch from General Schofield, directing that after destroying the Watauga bridge the cavalry join you, destroying all others, and as much of the track as possible by bending the rails and burning the ties. From Jonesborough you may commence working this way, putting your men systematically at it, and doing the business thoroughly. I will myself begin at Lick Creek and work toward you. Communicate by sure messenger with Lieutenant-Colonel Trowbridge, and inform him that his instructions are modified as above.

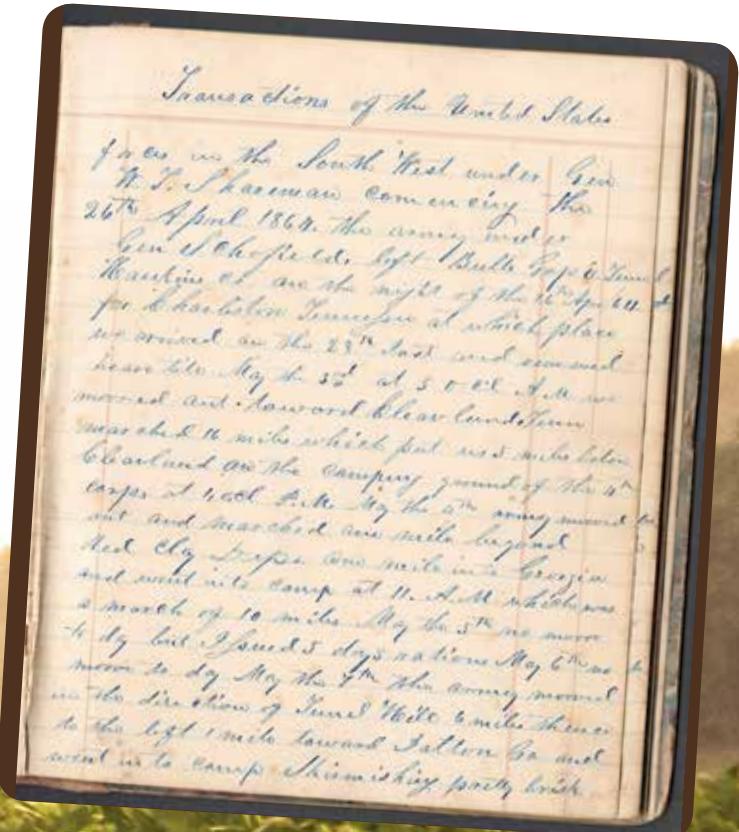
Time is important, and we will not delay to see what the enemy

*may do, but do the work ourselves. Let your officers and men use their ingenuity to discover rapid means of rendering the rails useless, as this is the most important thing. Leave no bridges, but if you have not time to destroy all the rails continuously it will be better to do it at intervals rather than all at one point. In this event begin at a bridge or trestle, and destroy this way as far as time will permit, and then pass to the next. Keep an accurate account of what is done, so that an exact report may be made. While this is going on let small parties watch your flanks so that you may not be surprised. The Tenth Michigan Cavalry will remain with you, but send back the Third Indiana, as soon as they report to you after destroying Watauga bridge. Order these last to report to me at First Brigade headquarters on the road.*

*Very respectfully, your obedient servant, J.D. COX,  
Brigadier- General, Commanding.*

A Union soldier from Cocke County, Tilghman Blazer, noted ensuing movements in a journal he kept, "Transactions of the United States forces in the South West under Gen W.T. Sherman commencing the 26th April 1864, the army under Gen. Schofield, left Bulls Gap E. Tenn Hawkins Co on the night of the 26th Apr/64 for Charleston Tennessee at which place we arrived on the 28th Inst and remained here till May the 3rd at 5 O cl A M we moved out toward Cleavland Tenn marched 16 miles which put us 5 miles below Cleavland on the camping ground of the 4th Corps at 1, ocl P.M."

*continued on page 77*



PHOTOS BY JIM BELLER

The journal of Union soldier Tilghman Blazer of Cocke County gives insight into the life of a Civil War infantryman.



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John Bull Family photo on display at the Bulls Gap Museum

*continued from page 75*

According to the Tennessee Civil War Preservation Association, the Battle of Bull's Gap in November 1864 was the last Confederate victory in the area:

"Built by Confederate forces as early as 1862, earthwork fortifications at the gap witnessed several battles between Federal and Confederate forces for control of the gap. By November 1864, with Union forces defending their position at Bulls Gap, Confederate Major General John C. Breckinridge led an attack on Brigadier General Alvan C. Gillem's Union forces. The initial confederate attack was repulsed; artillery fire ensued, and fighting continued for two days before the Union forces, short on ammunition and rations, withdrew from Bulls Gap. The Confederate victory was a Union setback in the Union's plans to rid East Tennessee of Confederate influence. U.S. General Ulysses S. Grant ordered Bulls Gap be occupied and fortified. By this time the Confederacy had begun to dissolve and Bulls Gap would see no fighting. Major General George Stoneman wrote from Knoxville on April 22, 1865, 'The most perfect quiet exists throughout East Tennessee.'"

"The tracks were taken out about two or three different times," Solomon said. "The last time the Union forces came in and built the tracks back. The last time the forces were in here, they felt like there were enough Southern sympathizers in the area, and didn't really come in with a force of arms."

They were hoping to pick up sympathizers to add to the army.

"A lot of that went on during the Civil War in areas that were not true Union or true Confederate. It worked on both sides. It was typical in lot of the border states. It was probably 60-40, depending on who was here at the time," Solomon said.

"Not that they were wishy-washy, there just weren't a lot of slaveholders around here and wasn't a really big issue. There wasn't a lot of flat ground to cultivate. A lot of the issue around here was just survival."

"It was kind of both sides. I've done a little research in my own family history and my fourth great-grandfather was an Ingles. He was from Greene County. He had died in a Union prisoner of war camp in Maryland. There's not a lot of information. His widow was awarded a veteran's pension. There's no record I've been able to locate on his service or his being in the prison camp," Solomon said.

"Since I haven't been able to find any official records, I've often wondered if some of it might have been he had friends probably mid-20s who said, 'Hey, why don't you go with us and let's go watch 'em fight.' And he wound up in the battle and got captured. 'Well, boy, you're from here, you must be one of them, so we're gonna take you prisoner.' A lot of that happened in communities like this. People would leave that morning and never show back up. Nobody ever knew what happened," Solomon said.

*continued on page 79*

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Many Programs Serving Hawkins County  
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### Emergency Food Assistance

Of One Accord Ministry is a home missions organization through which church volunteers can serve our community in programs like the Emergency Food Program

Families who find themselves without food can come to one of the two Hawkins County food pantry's or one in Sneedville for Emergency Assistance.

Food is distributed three days a week from 10am-1pm and in Rogersville also on Tues night from 6pm-8pm.

The ministry distributed 1,043,625 lbs food last year to 32,459 people. This translated to 50 tractor trailer loads of groceries

### Partnership Effort

The food program has become a total community project.

Special thanks goes to our Boy Scouts and the Postal Letter Carriers who divert food drives here and to Food City, Super-dollar, Food Lion, Save-A-Lot and Walmart grocery stores who donate locally.

Schools, clubs, and churches do special food drives throughout the year and a host of some 200 volunteers give of their time to interview and give out food boxes

Some youth groups love to do fundraisers that benefit the food program. By doing things like car washes or bake sales, money is raised that goes back into the food program. Every dollar goes directly towards food.

October is Hawkins County Hunger Month. Call to see how you can help

### Supporting the Shepherd's Center-supports the following programs

#### The Lunchbox

In a new innovative approach to feeding 350 kids daily in the summer, Of One Accord has



developed a Mobile Cafeteria to deliver meals to low income housing districts, mobile home

parks, the Boys and Girls Club and City Swimming pool for children. Volunteers are needed throughout the summer.

#### Neighborly Meals Program

Five meals each week are delivered to 45 Seniors in the Rogersville area. More volunteers are always needed to deliver meals. 10,270 meals were delivered in 2013.

#### Winter Coat Give-a-Way

Another valuable service to our community is giving away winter coats. The Shepherd's Center gives up to 2 coats per person per year to struggling families. The Lions and Leo Clubs partner with OOA to collect coats each year.

2,025 coats were given away in 2013 in Sneedville and Rogersville

#### Free Medical Clinic

There is a free medical clinic now operating in the Church Hill Shopping Center.



Several doctors and nurses are giving their time to make a dream come true for Hawkins County. 1,473 office visits

were recorded, 6,935 free prescriptions given, and 1,931 labs done.

The free clinic operates the 2nd, 3rd and 4th Tuesday of each month and Thursdays for diabetes screenings.

The Free Clinic focus' is to provide help to those without insurance and without jobs.

You can call ahead (256-2408) from 5-8 pm on clinic nights for more information.

More health care professionals are needed to expand hours and times the clinic is open.

#### Christmas for the Children

Another goal for Of One Accord is to help insure every child in our county gets Christmas



and every family has a good Christmas Dinner. Patsy Hurd, Director and a host of volunteers

work September through December to do four things:

1. Applications will be out by the latter part of September. All applicants have to be interviewed. Call 272-0772 for an appointment.

2. We works with every agency and church that already does a Christmas program to prevent duplication. If you do a program- please talk with Patsy to insure your names are not duplicated on several lists.

3. Businesses or churches are encouraged to take names, provide a party and purchase gifts for the children you take. Call for names at 272-0772.

4. Christmas for the Children provides for each remaining family and child.

984 children were screened last year and 1,567 families were provided holiday meals.

#### Help Sponsor Children

You can participate by helping us sponsor children at \$50 per child. Each child will receive clothes as well as a toy item.

You can help plan or provide a place for a party. Donations are taken to insure all children are provided for and each family will have a Christmas food basket to prepare a wonderful holiday meal

#### Market Place Needs You!

Of One Accord purchased the Market place building to rehab the back section to house mission teams. This will be where the old Gold Star Gym was located.

Of One Accord will have to raise the funds to build sleeping quarters, bathrooms with showers, and a dining room, do the electric, plumbing, and heating. Donations are being taken to help with this \$125,000 expense.



PHOTO BY ELLEN MYATT

Civil War re-enactors demonstrate equipment and methods at Fudge Farm, 2007.

*continued from page 77*

“A lot of the information is not there for Bulls Gap. Part of that is because at one time, Bulls Gap was called Rogersville Junction. There may be some documentation that talks about Rogersville may actually be Bulls Gap,” the mayor said.

“Fortunately for Bulls Gap, it was not so important that siege was laid to it where people had to live in sides of hills like in Vicksburg, or some of those places, where they starved the people out. People around here pretty much went on with there daily lives,” Solomon said, comparing life here 150 years ago as it currently exists elsewhere in the world.

“It’s kind of like the same thing that’s going on the Middle East right now. There are people fighting across the street but you’re trying to get on with your life the best you can. I think Bulls Gap was that way,” he said.

*(Sources: Bulls Gap Mayor Mike Solomon; “The War of the Rebellion: a compilation of the official records of the Union and Confederate armies,” United States War Dept., Cornell University Library, et al; “Tilghman Blazer Papers,” University of Tennessee Libraries, Special Collections; The Tennessee Civil War Preservation Association.)*

— **By Jim Beller**



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PHOTO BY TOMMY CAMPBELL

With the early morning summer sun at  
their backs, runners head down Main  
Street in Rogersville.



# It's not just about running the race. It's about sharing the passion.

ROGERSVILLE – What began as an effort to provide competitive events for runners in Hawkins County has bloomed into an ongoing series of award-winning local and regional events that have brought in competitors from 30 states and several foreign countries.

Rogersville attorney Mark Skelton and his family began Skelton Law Racing some 14 years ago as a way to promote their own love for the sport. But for them, the events are not just about promoting a running event. They are about providing opportunities to share their passion with their community and beyond.

“When we started the running events, there were no races whatsoever in Hawkins County, and there were no trail races in Northeast Tennessee,” said Skelton, a Surgoinsville native.

Together with his wife, Joanna, and adult children, Todd and Amy, Skelton plans and sponsors the Skelton Law Racing Series, which includes from 10 to 15 races each year, with race events planned in nearly every month of the year.

Launching the race events each year is the New Year’s Wake-Up 5K, followed by the Surgoinsville 10-Miler in February, the Amis Mill 10K in

March, the Laurel Run Ascent in April, the CASA 8K in May, The River Mile in June, three races in July – the Firecracker 4Miler, the Wolf Run, and the Phipps Bend 5K, and two in September, including the Bays Mountain Trail Race and the Phipps Bend River Run.

The events include 10 races that are part of the annual Skelton Law Racing Challenge, awarding runners who complete all 10 of the events during the year.

“We invite those completing the Challenge and any sponsors to a private twilight barge ride and dinner at Bays Mountain Park,” Skelton said.

To provide opportunities for runners to take part in longer distance events, the family promotes and sponsors four trail races – the Laurel Run Ascent, the Wolf Run, the Bays Mountain Trail Race, and the Phipps Bend River Run.

For the Skeltons, the promotion of the sport is a family affair.

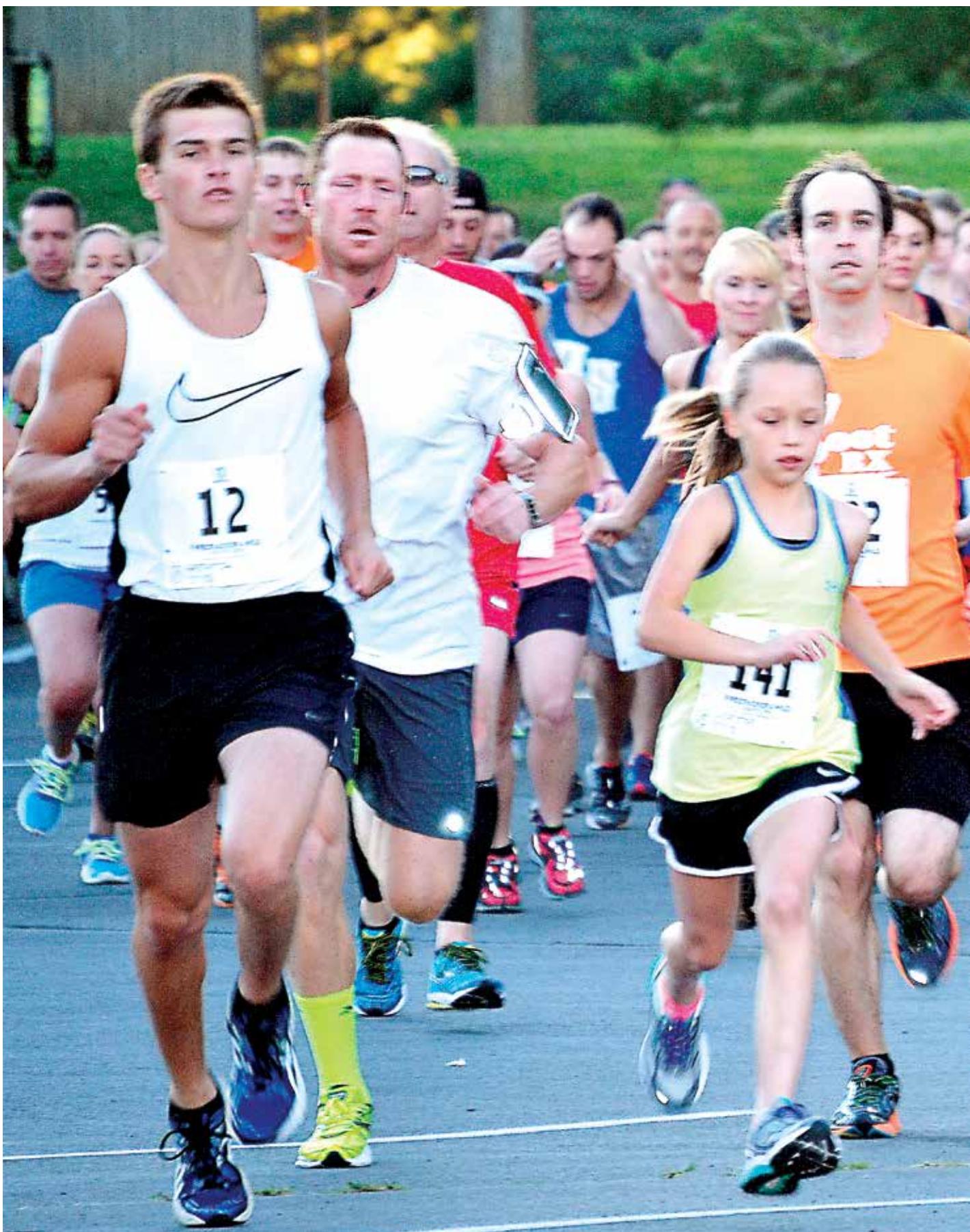
“Both my children enjoy running and helping with the races,” he says. “Other than having volunteers to help on race day, my wife, children, and I do all the pre-event work for the races.”

For the trail races, Skelton personally marks all junctions on the course and verifies that the trails are clear.

Always a proponent of physical fitness, Skelton grew up enjoying sports like canoeing, bicycling, and hiking. He became interested in competitive running when his son was in middle school. Todd’s interest in cross-country and track earned him trips to the state championships during all four of his high school years and spurred the interest in the sport among the rest of his family.

Skelton admits that the promotion and planning of the events takes much personal sacrifice of his own time, effort, and money, pulling him away from his law practice. But, he says, the effort is worth it in order to promote the sport, as well as the health and fitness opportunities that it provides.

*continued on page 87*





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PHOTOS BY TOMMY CAMPBELL

Racing series founder and director Mark Skelton gives directions to runners prior to the start of the event.



The slate of runners leaves the lineup area in City Park.

*continued from page 83*

Skelton said that his family tries to present premiere smaller events for runners and does not typically promote the mud/color/walking events that have become popular in some areas.

For those who run competitively or those who are just interested in meeting personal fitness and training goals, Skelton's races provide options for both shorter distances and longer events. The races are also opportunities for runners to join with others who are interested in the sport.

In addition to the races, the Skeltons host dinners and other events designed to reward runners for their efforts and to bring about a sense of community among those who are involved in the sport.

The Skeltons also incorporate community service into their race promotion, organizing local fundraising runs like the Save the Cinema 2-Miler held earlier this year.

"We try to have great race results, registration, well-marked courses, shirts, awards, and food," Skelton said.

For their efforts, Skelton Law Racing has won multiple awards for Race of the Year and Shirt of the Year as selected by members of the State of Franklin Trace Club, which serves East Tennessee, Southwest Virginia and

*continued on page 89*



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PHOTOS BY TOMMY CAMPBELL

Participants in the Firecracker 4-miler cross the finish line in Rogersville City Park after the July 5, 2014 event.

*continued from page 87*

Western North Carolina.

The Surgoinsville 10 Miler road race and the Firecracker 4 Miler road race were recently selected as 2014 RRCA Tennessee State Championships. All four trail races sponsored by Skelton Law Racing have been selected for the 2014 Trail Runner Trophy Series sponsored by Trail Runner Magazine.

This year, 12 races have marked the Skelton Law Racing schedule, with the races continuing to draw runners from their own Hawkins County area, as well as throughout the region and beyond.

Those interested in participating in the 2015 Skelton Law Racing Series can contact Skelton at 423.272.4812 or [markskelton@markskelton.com](mailto:markskelton@markskelton.com). Race applications are available at the Skelton law office in Rogersville or online at [www.RunTriCities.org](http://www.RunTriCities.org).



Volunteers hand out bottles of cold water to participants as they cross the finish line.

— **By Dee Ann Campbell**



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