



Guide to Historic Sites in Kentucky

By Molly Marcot



CIVIL WAR BATTLEFIELDS AND COAL

1. MIDDLE CREEK NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD

On this site in early 1862, volunteer Union soldiers led by future president Col. James Garfield forced Brig. Gen. Humphrey Marshall's 2,500 Confederates from the forks of Middle Creek and back to Virginia. The 450-acre park hosts battle reenactments during September. Two half-mile trail loops of the original armies' positions provide views of Kentucky valleys. (606) 886-1341 or www.middlecreek.org

2. KENTUCKY COAL MINING MUSEUM

This three-floor museum dedicated to the history of the early coal mining industry is located on a former coal miners' campsite in Benham. One mile east in Lynch is an exhibit space designed to resemble an underground coal mine with eight display areas featuring early 20th-century artifacts, including flame safety lamps. Thousands of artifacts include fossils, mining tools, machinery, and the personal belongings of county star Loretta Lynn, who hailed from Kentucky's coal country. (606) 848-1530 or kentucky.coal.museum

3. LEVI JACKSON WILDERNESS ROAD STATE PARK

This 892-acre park, crossed by 8.5 miles of walking paths, contains a memorial to the October 3, 1786, massacre of 24 west-going pioneers by Shawnee Indians.

Two historic trails, the Wilderness Road and Boone's Trace, began here and were traveled by more than 200,000 settlers between 1775 and 1818. In nearby London, the Mountain Life Museum features a recreated 19th-century village with seven buildings, such as the loom house and barn, which feature 18th-century pioneer tools, rifles, and farm equipment. McHargue's Mill, a half-mile south, first began operating in 1817. Visitors can watch cornmeal being ground and see more than 50 millstones. (606) 330-2130 or parks.ky.gov/findparks/recparks/lj

4. WILLIAM WHITLEY HOUSE STATE HISTORIC SITE

Pioneers William and Esther Whitley settled on this site in 1794 and built Kentucky's first brick home as a bulwark against Indian raids. Known as the "Guardian of Wilderness Road," the house hosted famous explorers Daniel Boone and George Rogers Clark. Twenty-five minute guided tours of the family home lead through the bedrooms, dining room, and the secret staircase that served as a hiding spot. Artifacts on display include William's long rifle and Esther's textiles. (606) 355-2881 or parks.ky.gov/findparks/histparks/ww

5. BATTLE OF RICHMOND VISITORS CENTER

In late August 1862, Confederates under Maj. Gen. E. Kirby Smith defeated a Union army commanded by Maj. Gen.

Bull Nelson on the site of this 62-acre park. The grounds contain the 1825 Pleasant View house, which became a Confederate hospital after the battle, slave quarters, and walking trails. One mile north is the visitors center in the 1811 Rogers House, with displays that include a laser-operated aerial map of the battle and a collection of 19th-century guns. (859) 624-0013 or visitorcenter.madisoncountky.us/index.php

LEXINGTON PLANTATIONS AND BLUEGRASS

6. MARY TODD LINCOLN HOUSE

This 1806 Georgian mansion, which belonged to Lexington businessman Robert Smith Todd, was the childhood home of Mary Todd, the future wife of Abraham Lincoln. Guided hour-long tours explore the home's 14 rooms. On display are Mary Todd Lincoln's Tiffany silver chocolate pot and Meissen and Old Paris china. (859) 233-9999 or www.mtlhouse.org

7. ASHLAND HENRY CLAY ESTATE

Sen. Henry Clay, known as "The Great Compromiser" for his negotiating skills, moved into this 18-room Federal-style mansion in 1804. Forty-five-minute guided tours lead through ornate rooms, which contain original furniture and Clay family artifacts, such as their china, law books, and racing purses. The 17-acre grounds feature English-style formal gardens and

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outbuildings, such as the dairy cellar and smokehouse. (859) 266-8581 or www.henryclay.org

8. BLUEGRASS HERITAGE MUSEUM

This three-floor museum in the 1894 Guerrant Clinic building focuses on the history of the Bluegrass region, so named after the blue-blossomed grass species that grows here in profusion. It features displays on the Eskippakithiki Indians, the founding of the Western frontier and Wilderness Road, the Civil War, and the tobacco industry. The Bell South Central gallery contains a 1910 "Bull's Eye" switchboard and phone booth, while the military gallery has World War II uniforms from the Army and Navy. (859) 745-1358 or www.bgheritage.com

9. FORT BOONESBOROUGH STATE PARK

In April 1775, Daniel Boone and fellow explorers crossed the Kentucky River and founded Fort Boonesborough on this site. The 153-acre park contains a reconstructed working fort with cabins and blockhouses. Costumed interpreters demonstrate 18th-century weaving, blacksmithing, and candle-making techniques. (859) 527-3131 or parks.ky.gov/findparks/recparks

10. WHITE HALL STATE HISTORIC SITE

This 1799 Italianate mansion south of the Kentucky River was home to Cassius Marcellus Clay, an abolitionist newspaper publisher, and his daughter, Laura Clay, a women's suffragist. Costumed interpreters lead 60-minute guided tours through the 44-room house, which contains Victorian-era furnishings and 12 bedrooms. (859) 623-9178 or parks.ky.gov/findparks/histparks/wh

11. AVIATION MUSEUM OF KENTUCKY

This 12,000-square-foot museum, located in a hangar on Lexington's Blue Grass Airport, has displays on six military and 14 civilian aircraft from every era of America's aviation history. Highlights include a Navy F-14 Tomcat, Marine Corps F-4 Phantom fighter, and an Air Force T-83 supersonic trainer. Visitors can also view the engine collection, which features a General Electric CF6 turbofan, and ride in an original Army helicopter flight simulator. (859) 231-1219 or www.aviationky.org

EARLY POLITICS AND THE BOURBON TRAIL

12. LIBERTY HALL HISTORIC SITE

This four-acre complex, situated on the banks of the Kentucky River in downtown Frankfort, contains two restored Federal-style political estates: the 1796 Liberty Hall, built by Sen. John Brown; and the 1835 Orlando Brown House, which belonged to his son. A 75-minute tour explores both homes, and showcases such artifacts as a 19th-century Stoddard piano. Visitors can learn about Margaret Wise Brown, Sen. Brown's great-great-granddaughter and a renowned author of children's fiction. Trails lead through the boxwood and perennial gardens to the riverfront. (502) 227-2560 or www.libertyhall.org

13. KENTUCKY HISTORICAL SOCIETY HISTORY CAMPUS

Located in downtown Frankfort, the campus includes the Kentucky Military Museum, housed within the 1850 Old State Arsenal, which contains artifacts from two centuries of war. Five blocks northwest lies the two-story Greek-Revival Old State Capitol building that features hour-long tours through the recreated 1850s House and Senate chambers and law library. Also on the campus is the 167,000-square-foot Thomas D. Clark Center for Kentucky History, which explores Kentucky's past from Paleolithic times to the present. (502) 564-1792 or history.ky.gov

14. WOODFORD RESERVE

Kentucky's oldest bourbon distillery has occupied this site since 1812. A two-hour guided historic tour begins in the visitors center and leads through the distillery and the 1890 limestone warehouse, where wooden casks of bourbon are aged. The docents reveal details about copper-pot distillation methods and the sour-mash fermentation process. (859) 879-1812 or www.woodfordreserve.com

15. CAMP NELSON CIVIL WAR HERITAGE PARK

From 1863 to 1866, this 525-acre site on the Kentucky River served as a 4,000-acre Union supply depot and parade ground where 10,000 former slaves trained to become soldiers. Visitors can take 30-minute guided tours of the restored 1855 Perry House. The 6,000-square-foot interpretive center, located at the entrance to

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4. Frankfort Tourist Commission: Visit Frankfort Kentucky! Experience the history and heritage of Kentucky's Capital City! www.visitfrankfort.com, (800) 960-7200.

5. Harrodsburg, KY: Shaker Village of Pleasant Hill, a national historic landmark depicting America's best-known Utopian religious group; Old Fort Harrod State Park. www.harrodsburgky.com, (800) 355-9192.

6. Kentucky Department of Travel: Experience our unbridled spirit! Ride on over to Kentucky where a variety of unique and affordable family fun awaits you. www.kentuckytourism.com

7. Lexington's Bluegrass Region: Bluegrass history is more exciting than fiction! History remains alive in our restored and rebuilt forts, re-enacted battles, preserved churches and historic homes. bluegrasskentucky.com, (800) 225-8747 (ask for extension BG5).

8. Lexington Convention & Visitors Bureau: Visit Lexington today and discover the rich tradition of horses, history, and bourbon while enjoying the unexpected surprises of the Bluegrass. www.visitlex.com, (800) 845-3959.

9. Winchester, KY: Fort Boonesboro; Civil War and Daniel Boone sites; The Bluegrass Museum; historic homes and downtown on the National Register of Historic Places. www.tourwinchester.com, (800) 298-9105

U.S. Travel and Tourism

10. Gettysburg, PA: Relive the history; experience the passion of Civil War history on the battlefield and in the historic town of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. (800) 337-5015, www.Gettysburg.travel

11. Hilton Head Island: Explore Hilton Head Island's West African cultural roots through Sea Island Gullah culture. Order your free Gullah Heritage Guide. www.hiltonheadisland.org

12. Independence, MO Tourism Department: 20 attractions including the Harry S. Truman Library & Home, Victorian mansions, and the National Frontier Trails Museum. Great shopping, restaurants and lodging; minutes from Kansas City. (800) 810-4700, www.VisitIndependence.com/AH

13. Convention & Visitors Bureau of Marion County, West Virginia: A century's worth of historical adventure. Contact us for a FREE Visitors Guide. www.officialtravelfairmont.info

14. Miners & Millionaires (Mercer County, West Virginia): Discover America's Coal Story! Dig into the history of coal in the millionaire's town of Bramwell, WV. Join us today! (800) 221-3206, www.visitmercercounty.com

15. Pocahontas County CVB and Greenbrier County CVB, West Virginia: Discover the battles of Lewisburg and Droop Mountain—two engagements that influenced Virginia/West Virginia history. (800) 336-7009, www.naturesmountainplayground.com

16. Tennessee Tourism: To discover more about Tennessee and to order your FREE official Tennessee Vacation Guide, visit tnvaction.com or call 800-GO2-TENN.

17. WV Eastern Gateway (Jefferson County, West Virginia): George Washington family, Lewis & Clark, John Brown and the Civil War; discover them all in Jefferson County, West Virginia's Eastern Gateway. (866) HELLO-WV, www.WVeasterngateway.com

18. West Virginia State Parks: West Virginia's state parks and forests offer a variety of attractions, accommodations, facilities, history and events. (800) CALL-WVA, www.wvstateparks.com

19. West Virginia Tourism: Getaway to West Virginia and experience rich history and heritage along with breathtaking scenery. www.wvtourism.com

Education & Media

20. Constituting America: Our mission is to educate America's youth about the importance of the U.S. Constitution and the freedoms and rights it sets forth. ConstitutingAmerica.org

21. Rosetta Stone: Rosetta Stone® is available in over 30 languages and will have you speaking during the first lesson! Learning a language is fast, easy and effective with Rosetta Stone®. (877) 394-5947

22. White House Historical Association: Provides funding for the preservation of the public rooms of the White House, and furthers the association educational goals. (800) 555-2451, www.WhiteHouseHistory.org

Publications

23. Impressed! Historical novel explores the causes of the War of 1812 through the story of a Boston couple. 1812impressed.com

24. National Geographic: Publishers of American and world history books, available wherever books are sold or visit shopng.com/books

25. War on the Run: Visit www.waronthrun.com or select this number for more information about War on the Run, The Epic Story of Robert Rogers and the Conquest of America's First Frontier by John F. Ross.

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the park, contains a recreated refugee shanty, hospital ward, and quartermaster depot. The park is crisscrossed by six miles of interpretive trails. (859) 881-5716 or www.campnelson.org

16. SHAKER VILLAGE OF PLEASANT HILL

This 3,000-acre park contains 34 original buildings from the Shaker village founded here in 1805. Visitors can tour a typical family home, farmhouse, craft shop, and meetinghouse. Costumed interpreters play period musical instruments and demonstrate 19th-century weaving and wood-working techniques. (800) 734-5611 or www.shakervillageky.org

17. OLD FORT HARROD STATE PARK

Frontiersman James Harrod founded Kentucky's first permanent settlement in 1774 on this site. Visitors to this 15-acre park can tour 15 reconstructed fort buildings, including cabins, schoolhouse, and militia blockhouse. The onsite Mansion Museum contains Civil War guns and artifacts of the Adena people, who lived here in 200 B.C. The Lincoln Marriage Temple, houses the log cabin where Lincoln's parents were married in 1806. Costumed interpreters demonstrate blacksmithing, woodworking, and weaving techniques inside the palisaded fort. (859) 734-3314 or parks.ky.gov/findparks/recparks/fh

18. PERRYVILLE BATTLEFIELD STATE HISTORIC SITE

On October 2, 1862, Union Maj. Gen. Don Carlos Buell's 16,000 men defeated Confederate Gen. Braxton Bragg's 22,000-man force at the battle of Perryville on this site. Today visitors can take a seven-mile, self-guided walking tour of the battlefield and see the Crawford House, which served as Bragg's headquarters and now houses a museum containing Confederate uniforms, firearms, and cavalry artifacts. (859) 332-8631 or www.perryvillebattlefield.org

HORSE RACING, LINCOLN, AND BASEBALL

19. KENTUCKY DERBY MUSEUM

This two-floor, 56,000-square-foot museum celebrates the 135-year history of the Kentucky Derby, the thoroughbred horse race that occurs every May. Twelve exhibits explore horse breeding, racing, and Derby fashion. Interactive exhibits include a racetrack caller booth and a

dresser room where visitors can don 21st-century jockey silks. A 30-minute guided tour of the Churchill Downs racetrack begins in the museum lobby. (502) 637-7097 or www.derbymuseum.org

20. MUHAMMAD ALI CENTER

This 96,000-square-foot museum and learning facility contains artifacts such as the boxer's Rolls Royce, a robe given to him by Elvis Presley, and the torch he carried in the 1996 Atlanta Olympics. Visitors can participate in an interactive boxing arena, view a 13-minute film on Ali's career, which is shown in a theater shaped like a boxing ring, and learn about his impact on the civil rights movement. (502) 584-9254 or www.alicenter.org

21. LOUISVILLE SLUGGER MUSEUM AND FACTORY

The Hillerich and Bradsby Company has manufactured the famous "Louisville Slugger" bats since 1884. Forty-minute guided tours lead through the main factory, as docents explain how billets of wood from

Pennsylvania forests are sorted, bats are shaped and stained. Visitors can try out replica bats used by the Yankees' Mickey Mantle and other legendary players. An adjoining 15,000-square-foot museum includes an exhibit on the Negro League and contains the gloves of Satchel Paige of the Cleveland Indians and Willie Mays of the San Francisco Giants. (877) 775-8443 or www.sluggermuseum.org

22. HISTORIC LOCUST GROVE

Presidents James Monroe, Andrew Jackson, and Zachary Taylor visited this 1790 Georgian estate, home to explorer William Clark's sister Lucy Croghan. Sixty-minute guided tours lead through the home's period-furnished rooms, which contain Clark family portraits, furniture, and silver tea service, as well as outbuildings that include the kitchen, smokehouse, springhouse, and barn. The 55-acre grounds feature an 18th-century, Federal-style

garden and visitors center with an exhibit on Clark's military career and a recreated surveyor's office. (502) 897-9845 or www.locustgrove.org

23. MY OLD KENTUCKY HOME STATE PARK

Pennsylvanian songwriter Stephen Foster wrote his 1852 ballad, "My Old Kentucky Home," while visiting this 1818 Georgian mansion, which was named Federal Hill and was the home of his cousin Sen. John Rowan. Costumed interpreters lead 30-minute guided tours through six rooms, including the

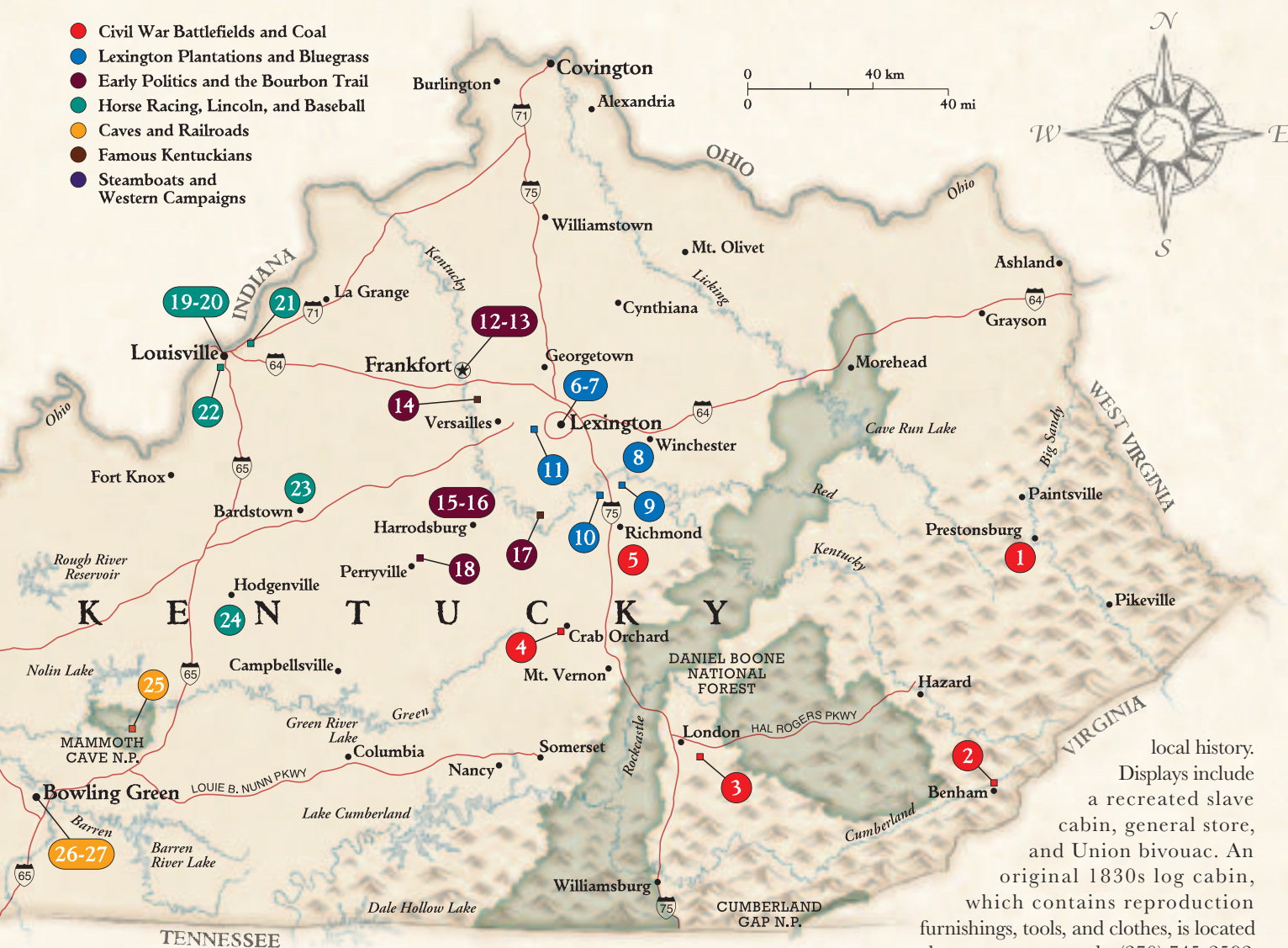


parlor and library. Visitors can take self-guided tours of the 295-acre grounds, which contain the family cemetery, smokehouse, kitchen, carriage house, and gardens. (502) 348-3502 or parks.ky.gov/findparks/recparks/mo

24. ABRAHAM LINCOLN BIRTHPLACE NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

America's 16th president was born in a log cabin in 1809 on this site, then called Sinking Spring farm, and now a 345-acre park. A full-scale replica of the cabin stands inside the Memorial Building at the entrance of the park. The visitors center displays exhibits on pioneer life and Lincoln family artifacts, such as their bible. Located nine miles northeast in Athertonville is the 228-acre Knob Creek Lincoln family farm, which includes the 1800 Gollaher Cabin, the residence of Lincoln's friend Austin Gollaher, and a tavern from the early 20th century. (270) 358-3137 or www.nps.gov/abli

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local history. Displays include a recreated slave cabin, general store, and Union bivouac. An original 1830s log cabin, which contains reproduction furnishings, tools, and clothes, is located on the two-acre grounds. (270) 745-2592 or www.wku.edu/library/museum

CAVES AND RAILROADS

25. MAMMOTH CAVE NATIONAL PARK

In the late 18th century, white settlers discovered an abundance of saltpeter, an ingredient of gunpowder in this cave system, which is the most extensive series of natural passageways in the world. The cave became an important source of saltpeter during the War of 1812. Later it drew tourists and tuberculosis patients, the latter hoping for a cure in the cave's allegedly regenerative air. Two-hour historic cave tours travel 300 feet underground through the narrow passageway Fat Man's Misery, up Mammoth Dome, and across a bridge spanning the 105-foot-deep Bottomless Pit. The surrounding 52,800-acre park features scenic bluffs, springs, and historic attractions, such as the train engine No. 4 and its coach from the railroad during the late 1800s. (270) 758-2180 or www.nps.gov/mac

26. HISTORIC RAILPARK AND TRAIN MUSEUM

This three-acre Bowling Green depot, which was restored in 1925, served as a train station on the L&N rail line, which ran between Birmingham and Louisville from 1858 to 1979. The 4,000-square-foot exhibit space showcases L&N passenger, sleeper, and dining cars, as well as the city's first locomotive diesel engine. One display features a recreated segregated waiting room and interpretive panels that explore the role of minorities in North American railroad history. Visitors can see five restored railcars, including a post office car and caboose. (270) 745-7317 or www.historicrailpark.com

27. KENTUCKY MUSEUM

Located on the Western Kentucky University campus, this two-floor museum features exhibits on early Kentucky immigrants, the Shakers' influence on local culture, and the role of the Civil War in

28. ADSMORE HOUSE AND GARDENS

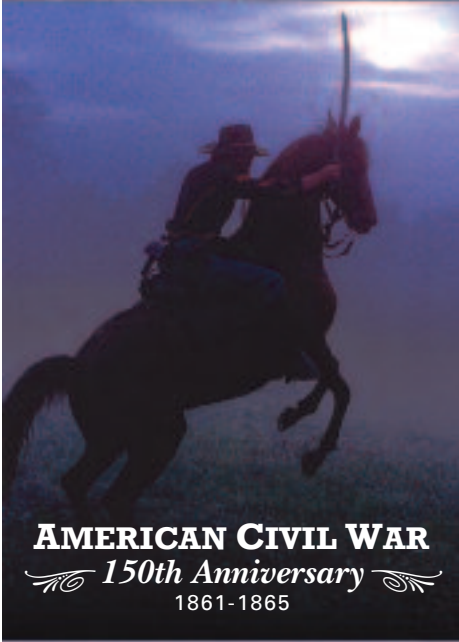
This 1854 colonial-Greek-Revival brick mansion and surrounding four-acre estate was owned by four generations of the Smith-Garrett family, who founded and ran the St. Louis-based International Shoe Company. Costumed interpreters lead visitors on 45-minute tours through nine rooms with original furnishings. Tours of the outbuildings, such as the 1844 Ratiff log gunsmith shop and the carriage house, are self-guided. (270) 365-3114 or www.adsmore.org

HOMES OF FAMOUS KENTUCKIANS

29. JOHN JAMES AUDUBON STATE PARK

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this 692-acre park features 6.5 miles of walking trails and a museum, which contains the largest collection of Audubon’s work in the world, including original watercolors, oils, and copper plate prints from his four-book Elephant folio, *The Birds of America*. (270) 826-2247 or parks.ky.gov/findparks/recparks/au

30. HISTORIC HENDERSON

With the help of explorer Daniel Boone, North Carolina judge Col. Richard Henderson and the Transylvania Company bought the land on this site from the Southern Cherokee tribe in 1797. The town that grew up here became prosperous from the tobacco industry. A self-guided tour leads through the 33-block historic district filled with restored 19th and early 20th-century buildings, that include the oldest public building in town, a library which features a 30-foot-tall rotunda ceiling decorated with classical murals and a restored stained glass skylight. Visitors can also see the 1904 Ohio Valley National Bank, site of the city’s first telephone company, as well as the Henderson County Courthouse, which houses the Heritage Museum of local history. (270) 826-3128 or www.hendersonky.org

31. FORDSVILLE L&N DEPOT COMMUNITY MUSEUM

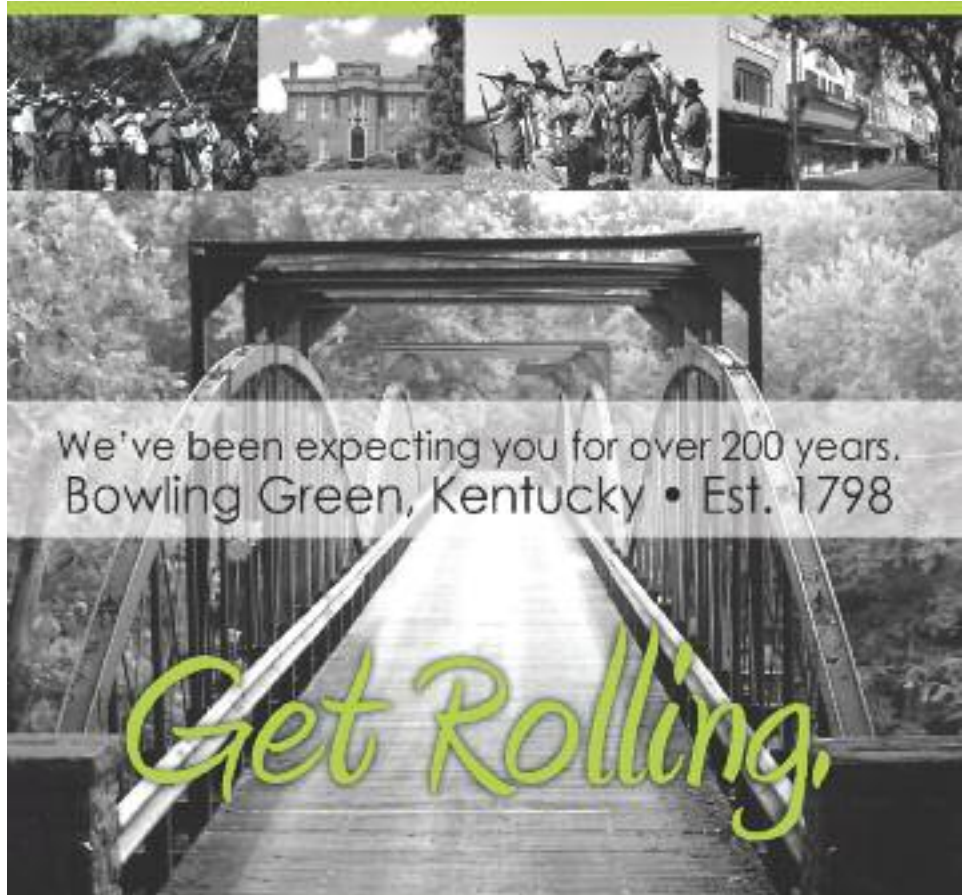
This restored 1916 train depot, which served the Louisville & Nashville and Illinois Central lines, contains a 2,200-square-foot museum of local history. Visitors can walk through a recreated early 20th-century loading dock, baggage room, station room, and waiting rooms. (270) 276-5400 or www.trainweb.org/fordsvilledepot

32. BILL MONROE HOME PLACE

Bluegrass artist Bill Monroe, whose hits include “Kentucky Waltz” and “Scotland,” grew up in this 1917 wooden frame home on the 930-acre Jerusalem Ridge homestead farm. Visitors can take a 30-minute guided tour of the living room, kitchen, and three bedrooms, which include original furniture, family photographs, and Monroe’s personal possessions, such as his cowboy boots. The five-acre grounds contain a smokehouse and well. (270) 274-9181



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STEAMBOATS AND WESTERN CAMPAIGNS

33. RIVER DISCOVERY CENTER

This former 1843 bank houses a 10,000-square-foot museum devoted to the history of the steamboat industry on the Ohio and Tennessee rivers. The museum features 14 exhibits with interactive displays, including a pilothouse simulator with a wheel and model of a dredge used to open up sections of the river to steamboat travel. (270) 575-9958 or www.riverdiscoverycenter.org

34. WILLIAM CLARK MARKET HOUSE MUSEUM

The Dubois-Robertson drugstore opened at this site in 1876. The current building, which dates from 1905, houses a 4,800-square-foot museum of Paducah history, which is named for town-founder and Louisiana Purchase explorer William Clark. Exhibits include the 1877 List drugstore with original gingerbread woodwork, a 1913 motorized LaFrance fire truck, a life-size wooden statue of Sen. Henry Clay, 19th-century city maps, and Clark family artifacts, such as an Old Paris porcelain vase, which was a wedding present from

the Marquis de Lafayette. (270) 443-7759 or www.markethousemuseum.com

35. COLUMBUS-BELMONT STATE PARK

In late 1861 and early 1862, 15,000 Confederate troops at Fort DeRussy under Gen. Gideon J. Pillow endured a four-month siege by a Union force commanded by Brig. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant before surrendering. On this 156-acre site an 1850s wooden farmhouse contains a museum with battle artifacts. Outside the house stands a six-ton anchor that the Confederates used to secure a mile-long, ship-fouling great chain across the Mississippi. (270) 677-2327 or parks.ky.gov/findparks/recparks/cb

36. WICKLIFFE MOUNDS STATE HISTORIC SITE

This 26-acre site contains one rounded and two platform-shaped mounds left by the Mississippian peoples who built a civilization in the central southeast part of Kentucky between 1100 and 1350 C.E. An onsite museum explores Mississippian culture through exhibits on burial practices and architectural techniques and displays of artifacts including stone tools, pottery, and shell implements. (270) 335-3681 or parks.ky.gov/findparks/histparks/wm

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Riverside House, Buffalo Trace Distillery, Frankfort, Ky.

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