



Kentucky

Spring 2019  
Kentucky Humanities

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**INSIDE:** 2018 Annual Report



# Improving Lives

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# Kentucky

Spring 2019

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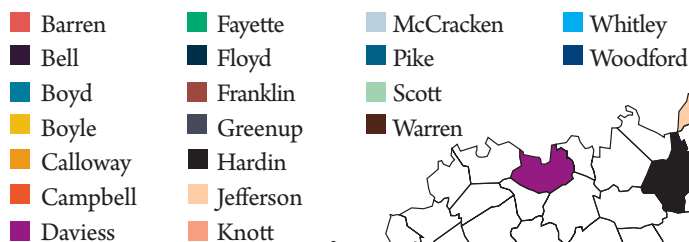
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By Georgia Green Stamper

### In this issue:



# Hidden Gems

When people, especially outsiders, try to define Kentucky, they seem to get hung up on three things — basketball, bourbon, and horse racing. While Kentuckians certainly embrace and excel in these three areas, there is so much more to our exquisite Commonwealth. In this issue of *Kentucky Humanities* we will bring you a few glimpses of what makes Kentucky special — our rich and unique history and culture; art inspired by our geography; creative thinking and innovations; larger-than-life personalities; and tremendous storytelling.

In 1997, state historian James C. Klotter and the late Lowell H. Harrison gave us *A New History of Kentucky*, which provided a comprehensive study of the Commonwealth. More than 20 years later, Klotter and Craig Thompson Friend have followed that with *A New History of Kentucky, second edition*, which includes significantly revised content with updated material on gender politics, African American history, and cultural history. Linda Elisabeth LaPinta shares an overview of the new volume on page 8.

There have been numerous studies to show the positive effects the arts and humanities can play in healing. Hospitals and healthcare facilities throughout the world are now giving patients access to art, nature, and music to assist in the healing process. Kentucky artist Guy Kemper recently completed a stunning work at the Norton Cancer Institute in Brownsboro. Titled, “The Falls of the Ohio,” the architectural art glass includes 13 glass panels that form a curved wall of the care center’s quiet room. Read about the Norton Cancer Institute’s approach to the role of art in healing, the works of art found at their Brownsboro location, and the artists participating in the collaboration on page 10.

Many of us can remember when University of Kentucky basketball legend Adolph Rupp died in December, 1977. At the time, James Duane Bolin was a senior at Belmont College (now University) and co-captain of the basketball team. In his new book, *Adolph Rupp and the Rise of Kentucky Basketball*, Bolin examines the life and famed career of the “Barron of the Bluegrass.” Published by the University Press of Kentucky, an excerpt appears on page 17.

Undoubtedly you have seen the certificates hanging in many offices throughout the Commonwealth and beyond, but the Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels is so much more than a piece of paper. Last year, the Kentucky Colonels distributed a record \$2 million in grants to community organizations throughout the state through their Good Works Program. Read more about the history of the Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels and the many ways they are enhancing the lives of Kentuckians on page 22.

When we think of dancing in Appalachia, clogging and square dancing quickly come to mind. But for some young girls in the region, the opportunity to take ballet lessons brought tremendous joy and fond memories. Edwina Pendarvis, Emeritus Professor of Education at Marshall University, was one of the young ladies to benefit from ballet lessons while growing up in eastern Kentucky. She shares her experiences and those of others beginning on page 27.

And lastly, Georgia Green Stamper shares a delightful tale of her quest to wow her book club with her culinary prowess. Her essay “Rhubarb” is on page 31.

I hope you enjoy this issue of *Kentucky Humanities* and the stories we’ll tell on the following pages. We want to hear your Kentucky stories as well. If you have a story to share, please contact our editor, Marianne Stoess, [Marianne.stoess@uky.edu](mailto:Marianne.stoess@uky.edu).



**Bill Goodman**

Executive Director  
Kentucky Humanities

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bill Goodman".

# SAVE THE DATE



## KENTUCKY BOOK FESTIVAL

### November 10-16

Kentucky Book Festival events will take place in Lexington throughout the week, anchored by the 38th annual Kentucky Book Fair on Saturday, November 16th at the Kentucky Horse Park's Alltech Arena.

*For more information about the Kentucky Book Festival and events taking place, visit [kyhumanities.org](http://kyhumanities.org).*



## Three new members elected to Kentucky Humanities Council Board

Mary Donna Broz, Dr. Lewatis D. McNeal, and Bobbie Ann Wrinkle were elected to the Kentucky Humanities board of directors at the November, 2018 Board Meeting. They will each serve a three-year term, with a second three-year term optional. As members of the 23-person volunteer board of directors, Broz, McNeal, and Wrinkle will help set council policies, award project grants to community organizations, and participate in fund-raising to help Kentucky Humanities meet the growing demand for its programs.



**Mary Donna Broz**

Since 2008, Mary Donna Broz has been the Executive Administrative Assistant to the President and CEO of Community Trust and Investment Company. Prior to her arrival in Lexington, Broz was the co-owner of a surfboard and tropical design company and the co-founder of the Bilibili clothing line in Long Beach, California. She also has experience as a primary educator and as an administrative assistant in community-based and academic health centers.

Broz earned a bachelor of arts degree in English from the University of Kentucky. A native of Danville, Kentucky, Broz has a long history as a community leader and volunteer in Lexington and Southern California with cultural and charitable organizations. She has served on community boards including Central Kentucky Youth Orchestra, the Lexington Singers, Baby Health Service, Inc., the Blue Grass Charity, Inc., and the Lexington Arts and Cultural Council (LexArts). Broz is past President and Chairman of the Board of the Junior League of Lexington and past Fundraiser Program Chairman for Children's Hospital of Los Angeles. She is an avid supporter of the arts in Lexington and performs with the Lexington Singers and previously with the Lexington Chamber Chorale, the University of Kentucky Opera Theatre's Grand Night for Singing and the San Fernando Valley Master Chorale.



**Dr. Lewatis D. McNeal**

Dr. Lewatis D. McNeal is the Assistant Dean of Administration, Inclusive Excellence and Special Projects/Clinical Associate Professor of Public Health at Northern Kentucky University. He joined the NKU faculty in 2017, after working for five years as the Associate Dean of Student Affairs at Owensboro Community and Technical College. McNeal also held positions at Western Kentucky University, the University of Kentucky/Trover Health System, and Mississippi State University.

Dr. McNeal earned a bachelor of science degree in nutrition/dietetics from the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff in 2002, a master of public health from Western Kentucky University in 2005, and a Ph.D. in public health sciences from the University of Louisville in 2016.

Active in his local and collegiate communities, McNeal has held leadership positions with the H.L. Neblett Community Center, the Daviess County Public Library, the Race, Community and Child Welfare Advisory Board, Daviess County Rotary, Kentucky Youth Advocates, Nursing Admissions Committee, the Campus Inclusion Team, and the Owensboro Area World Affairs Council, among many other organizations.



**Bobbie Ann Wrinkle**

Bobbie Ann Wrinkle is the Adult Services Librarian at the McCracken County Public Library, where she joined the staff in 1991. She initiated and directed the library's adult programs in 1994, creating the successful Evenings Upstairs series. Other programming that Wrinkle developed include the library's popular 101 series and Front & Center events. Wrinkle is a 24-year member of the American Library Association, working closely with the Public Program Division. She also serves as a resource for librarians throughout the Commonwealth and the nation who are launching adult programming at their library.

Wrinkle is a graduate of Murray State University, with bachelor of arts degrees in library science and English literature. She holds a professional certification from Kentucky Department of Libraries and Archives.

Wrinkle has served many organizations in the Paducah community, including the Market House Museum, the Downtown Kiwanis of Paducah, the Market House Theatre, and the Yeiser Art Center. She is a graduate of Leadership Paducah Class 9. In January, 2019, she was recognized with the one of Paducah's highest honors, the Duchess Award, for contribution to the community's well-being.



## 2018 Kentucky Book Festival

The Kentucky Book Fair experienced epic growth in 2018 with the expansion to a six-day celebration of author visits, book signings, and exciting literary events. Anchored by the Kentucky Book Fair on Saturday, November 17th at the Alltech Arena, the Kentucky Book Festival included activities Monday-Friday at various venues across Lexington.

Activities included: **New Kentucky Poetry & Prose**, where Robert Gipe, Jeremy Paden, Maureen Morehead, and Willie Davis read excerpts from their work. **Truth or Dare YA** highlighted regional authors of young adult fiction including Tracy Banghart, David Arnold, Gwenda Bond, Lauren Hudson, and Shawn Pryor. The **Literary Luncheon** featured Silas House discussing his newest novel *Southernmost*, along with musical guests Jason Howard and Tiffany Williams. On Wednesday, literary foodies gathered at Azur Restaurant and Patio for **Books, Bites & Bourbon** to sample drinks and recipes from Chef David Danielson and Tim Laird's newest cookbook, *The Bourbon Country Cookbook*. The fun continued as Beck Dorey-Stein, former White House stenographer for President Obama and author of *From the Corner of the Oval*, was in conversation with KET's Renee Shaw at **Cocktails & Conversation**; and more than 80 participants tried their literary knowledge at West Sixth Brewery for **Books & Brews Trivia**. Weekday events culminated on Friday, with the **Commerce Lexington Spotlight Breakfast**, where Cal Turner Jr., Dollar General CEO, spoke with Carla Blanton about his new book, *My Father's Business: The Small-Town Values that Built Dollar General into a Billion-Dollar Company*.

In celebration of Kentucky native Robert Penn Warren's *All the King's Men*, Kentucky Humanities partnered with the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and Dr. Jonathan S. Cullick to present a **Master Class** for high school students. In addition to learning about persuasive language with Dr. Cullick, special guests Dr. Keen Babbage and University of Kentucky student Juwan Page guided students in preparing their college plans.

Our new **School Days** program sent seven children's and young adult authors across the state to visit students at 11 elementary and middle schools in rural communities. More than 1,940 books were given to Kentucky students, with more than 1,200 students receiving in-person visits. Plans are in the works for School Days to be expanded in 2019.

The culminating event was the 37th annual **Kentucky Book Fair**, where more than 175 authors, many from right here in Kentucky, had the opportunity to meet fans, participate in presentations, and sign books. Featured authors included Wendell Berry, Silas House, Sarah Smarsh, H.W. Brands, Artis Gilmore, Bobbie Ann Mason, Gwenda Bond, Crystal Wilkinson, and Robert Sabuda, along with many other talented writers from near and far.

We look forward to producing more exciting literary programs to share with you at the 2019 Kentucky Book Festival, kicking off on Sunday, November 10th, and ending with the **Kentucky Book Fair** on Saturday, November 16th, at the Kentucky Horse Park's Alltech Arena. See you there!

## Thanks to our Sponsors

Thank you to our sponsors and the many, many volunteers it takes to bring the Kentucky Book Festival to all Kentuckians!

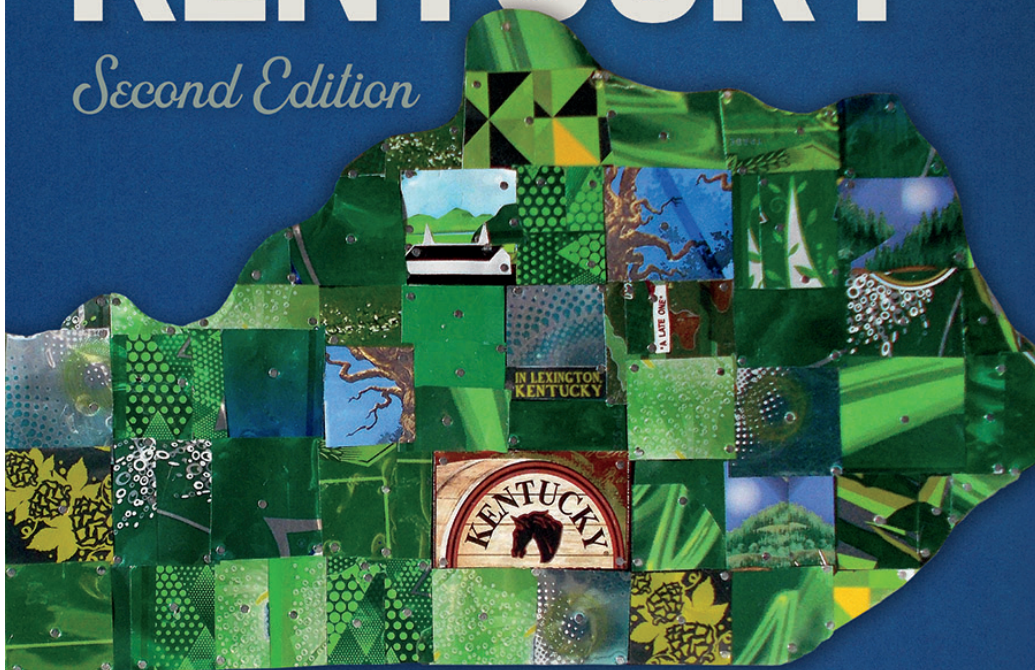


**Rory Harris**

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# A NEW HISTORY OF KENTUCKY

*Second Edition*



JAMES C. KLOTTER *and* CRAIG THOMPSON FRIEND

## Reviewed By Linda Elisabeth LaPinta

**A** *New History of Kentucky: Second Edition* by Kentucky State Historian and Georgetown College Professor Emeritus of History James C. Klotter and North Carolina State University Distinguished Graduate Professor of History and Director Emeritus of Public History Craig Thompson Friend casts a broader net than did the first edition of the book, which was co-authored by Klotter and the late

Lowell H. Harrison and, in 1997, also published by the University Press of Kentucky. In addition to discussing and analyzing 20 more years of the Commonwealth's commercial, military, and political history, this second edition chronicles a broader and deeper perspective of history itself by focusing more on the social, cultural, educational, environmental, racial, gendered, and intellectual aspects of the lives and times of traditionally



marginalized, as well as privileged, Kentuckians.

Although it is tempting to relegate a 443-page small-print text, exclusive of more than 100 additional pages of selected bibliography, notes and index, to a reference shelf, it is well worth a reader's time to treat *A New History of Kentucky* as an action-packed novel or even as a primer for Kentucky citizenship. For the heroic, harrowing, and riveting tales of the people and the topography that have shaped this border state serve as crucial, revelatory stories that remain critical to contextualizing contemporary issues.

Instead of first focusing on the long hunters, so named for their months-long hunting excursions into Kentucky from their homes in Virginia, North Carolina, and Pennsylvania, as being the territory's original settlers as they arrived in the 1760s through the Cumberland Gap, which is the point in time at which many historians have positioned the origin of the Commonwealth, Klotter and Friend cite the native communities that took route in the region between 7,000 and 1000 BCE as the people who settled the land long before infamous long hunter Daniel Boone and his fellow adventurers explored Kentucky territory. The authors also refute 19th-century historian Frederick Jackson Turner's view that whites were justified in taking Native American lands "as an act of civilization ordained by providential" — or manifest — destiny. "Native nations . . . drew boundaries between themselves and other native peoples to define their sovereignties in North America long before any Europeans did," they write, adding, "When white settlers began to crest the Appalachian Mountains, they were just the latest migratory group to enter Kentucky, following a pattern established centuries, even millennia, before. Their arrival merely complicated an already diverse and complicated region."

By 1790, after thousands of settlers from eastern states moved to Kentucky, which was then still part of Virginia, "39 percent of Kentucky's colonists were white women, another 17 percent were enslaved, and 24 percent were white males under 16 years of age," the authors write, noting that although "only 20 percent of the population were free white adult males, . . . they dominated as patriarchs over Kentucky's political and social structures."

Klotter and Friend's thorough discussion of the myriad contradictions concerning white Kentuckians' personal and political stances regarding slavery before, during, and after the Civil War serves as a metaphor for a state in which politicians' and voters' stances, and the state's location itself, have been and sometimes continue to be a betwixt-and-between borderline conundrum.

The late 18th century mostly agrarian, hardscrabble

existence that constituted the experience of most Kentuckians continued well into the mid-20th century. The grand homes, elegant shops, and distinguished institutions of higher education built first in the Bluegrass and later in Louisville and a few other urban centers as transportation modes shifted the wealth of the territory failed to proliferate throughout the state. As "late as 1910 four of five Kentucky families" still "lived in a rural setting," the authors comment, and to emphasize what rural meant they mention that just 30 years earlier, a writer described Elizabethtown as "a place where hogs roamed the streets, sleeping in the courthouse at night" and as a town in which "lack of streetlights meant that people had to carry lanterns if they moved about after dark."

By 2010, Kentucky, then "eighth most rural state in the nation" was still only 58 percent urban. Yet Klotter and Friend point to the state's 21st-century medical advances, to its musical and literary heritage, to its famous movie stars and its infamous politicians, as well as to its first-rate bourbon and basketball competitions as but a few of the factors that keep Kentucky competitive nationally.

But the authors also pose challenging questions about the Commonwealth's ultimate fate. Their thoughts can be summed up in one query. Going forward, they ask, "Will Kentucky stress unbridled individualism, or a spirit of caring for others and for community?" For "[t]hroughout the decades," they warn, "citizens of Kentucky . . . sometimes retreated into nostalgia. Kentuckians [have] to be careful to honor their past but not to be chained to history."

*A New History of Kentucky: Second Edition* offers readers a detailed map of the territory their ancestors explored as well as vivid descriptions of places and practices contemporary Kentuckians continue to navigate. The authors' scholarly assessment of the people who, in times past, both wrote and were erased from the historical record offers clues to current and future Kentuckians concerning how to reimagine familiar territory and approach new frontiers.

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## About the Author

Linda Elisabeth LaPinta directs Spalding University's doctoral program in leadership. Under her maiden name, Beattie, she published three books related to Kentucky writers and a fourth book about intimate partner abuse. In addition, she has published numerous book reviews and magazine articles in local and national newspapers, magazines, and journals.

# Artful Healing



Photo by James Steinkamp

## By Menisa Marshall

When patients, families and visitors arrive at Norton Cancer Institute in Brownsboro, Kentucky, it is nearly impossible to miss the stunning architectural art glass that forms a curved wall along the new comprehensive care center's southeast corner. Titled *"Falls of the Ohio,"* this large-scale glass art piece is the work of acclaimed Kentucky-born artist Guy Kemper.

*"Falls of the Ohio"* dramatically defines the facility's first-floor meditation quiet room that looks out on a landscaped garden. It includes 13 panels that together measure about 7-feet tall and 23-feet wide.

According to Kemper, the design symbolizes the splashing of water and the interplay of light. It uses bold sprays of yellow to create a sense of power and strength. Multiple shades and hues of blue evoke soothing feelings of healing and hope.

Kemper's inspiration came directly from the Falls of the Ohio.

He calls this area an impressive, powerful place that gives you a sense of feeling small compared with something greater and mysteriously beautiful.

"Seeing the Falls of the Ohio gives me a sense of God's power and goodness," Kemper said. "I wanted to give those who visit and use this space that same feeling."

Kemper's projects often are inspired by nature. He sometimes collects ideas walking his 95-acre wooded farm in Versailles, Kentucky, where his home and studio are located. He once told a reporter the light coming through the trees reminds him of the mystical experience found in a cathedral.

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*A striking architectural art glass feature titled "Falls of the Ohio" anchors the outer wall of the center's quiet room. Kentucky artist Guy Kemper created this work to reflect the interplay of light and splashing water. A band of hand ground prisms casts a prism effect in the room and outer lobby area.*

More often, he takes inspiration from the natural landscape near a project's location. He is known for developing outstanding concepts that reflect detailed research and tie in with a project's locale and purpose.

Joseph M. Flynn, D.O., MPH, Chief Administrative Officer, Norton Medical Group, and Physician-in-Chief, Norton Cancer Institute, said Kemper's work reflects astute insight. It shows how art and medicine can marry well as part of a holistic approach to patient-centered care.

"Norton Cancer Institute focuses on caring for the body — and the person within," Dr. Flynn said. "This inspiring work of art anchors our new center as a place of hope, where expertise and compassionate care come together to meet each patient's individual needs."

### *A Unique Creative Process*

Kemper is a self-described architectural artist. His commissioned works grace dozens of public and private venues locally, regionally, and worldwide. They range in size and scope from the windows in Bellarmine University's Our Lady of the Woods Chapel to a massive 110-foot by 25-foot connector between arrival and departure terminals at the Baltimore/Washington Thurgood Marshall International Airport in Washington, D.C.

He crafts his award-winning creations using a unique process that merges fine art with architectural design and ornamentation. His innovative, multistep method differs greatly from painting on glass or creating blown or stained glass, yet draws on elements of all these art forms.

Like many of Kemper's works, "*Falls of the Ohio*" began as a concept painting. Yet he said this particular project was unlike any he previously had undertaken.

"This took me in a completely new direction as I looked at

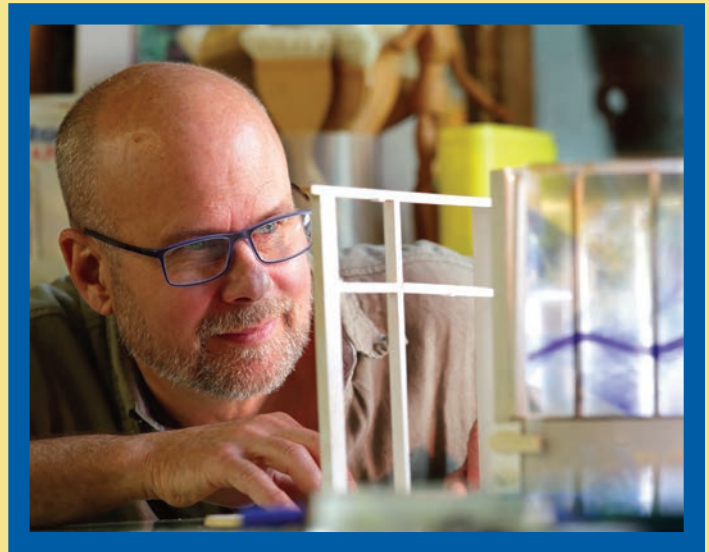


Photo by Nick Bonura

*Guy Kemper worked at his Versailles, Kentucky, studio on a 3D model of the art glass window. A sample panel helps show how his original painting will be translated to glass.*

how to capture the essence of splashes of water and the interplay of light," Kemper said. "I usually work in blown glass, but that technique was not the best way to translate this design." Instead he decided to paint vitreous enamels on clear glass.

Critical first steps involved assessing various architectural and environmental concerns. Kemper created a three-dimensional model to judge how the finished work would look and how it would interact with the site's space, lighting, and surroundings.

From there, he began collaborating with Rahmi Schulz, a skilled glass painter at Derix Glasstudios in Germany, who would capture the essence of his concept and hand paint it on the glass panels. It would be inaccurate to say Kemper's original painting was reproduced on glass. The steps involved can be described more accurately as a "process of translation."

He and Schulz worked closely to make sure the finished product captured the feel, look, and meaning of the original painting.

Creating the piece presented some daunting technical challenges. Each panel had to be hand painted in several steps, with

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*Progress on the project is seen as master glass painter Rahmi Schulz translated Kemper's painting onto glass.*



Photo by Guy Kemper



Photo by Jamie Rhodes

*Kemper and his son, Sam, worked together to install the glass panels for the finished project. One misstep can spell disaster and shattered panels, so this is a painstaking process.*

multiple firings in a kiln to permanently infuse the colors to the glass panels. The team at Derix Glasstudios achieved this effect through a level of skill and craftsmanship found nowhere else in the world.

It is a painstaking procedure. Areas are masked off before painting, then the vitreous enamel is airbrushed onto the glass surface. Each individual layer of color is added to the next, with firings in between. Sometimes the painter must mask off the previous existing layers and carefully trim around them by hand using a razor knife. Before each firing, the masking is removed. After the painting is completed, the piece is sandblasted.

“Sandblasting is risky,” Kemper said. “The fired enamel surface is extremely thin, so one misstep and all the paint and work already completed could go away.”

Though the glass panels measure just one-quarter of an inch thick, “they’re pretty tough,” according to Kemper. “They were tempered for strength.” Before being carefully crated to be shipped to Kentucky, the final step was to glue a band of hand-ground crystal prisms across the top of the panels.

Once the panels arrived in Louisville, a whole different set of challenges took center stage. Kemper and his son, Sam, often work together on installations. They spent two days unpacking and preparing the 13 panels to get them ready for placement.

Each panel weighs about 55 pounds. The entire artwork weighs in at more than 700 pounds.

According to Kemper, the most difficult part of installing the panels is preparing all the openings to accept the glass and making sure not to strike the edges.

“This was critical,” he said. “If you bump an edge, the entire panel could shatter.”

Once the first piece was in place, things moved faster.

“It was exciting on the third day to see it all come together,” Kemper said.

The final step was to add a band of hand-ground crystal prisms across the top of the assembled panels. As the sun moves slowly across the prisms, they vibrate with light and cast a vivid rainbow affect that changes course at different times of the day and as the seasons change.

“There’s something about a rainbow that’s reassuring. It’s hopeful,” Kemper said. “Through art, you’re given this assurance that there is always hope for another day.”

### *Nurturing Healing, Hope, and Art*

Art and healthcare go hand-in-hand. The first healers in almost every culture were shamans whose purpose was taking care of a person’s soul. They did this by using symbols, songs, costumes, and dance.

Today, a significant body of research supports the therapeutic value of art. Studies have shown that art in the healthcare environment can:

- Reduce stress and anxiety
- Affect patients’ perception of pain
- Distract from worry and negative emotions
- Reinforce the connection between physical and mental well-being

According to Joe Myers, Senior Interior Design Project Manager for Norton Healthcare, the organization has a rich history of supporting the use of art as an element of healing and hope.

“Numerous original works created by local and regional artists



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*Artist Claire Hirn works on her painting “We All Reflect.”*

using a variety of media can be found throughout our five hospitals and other facilities in the surrounding region,” Myers said. “Creating a positive environment and experience for patients and families is a key part of whole-person care at Norton Healthcare.”

As the largest cancer care program in the Louisville area, Norton Cancer Institute serves more than 4,000 newly diagnosed cancer patients each year. Art is an important component of the institute’s care model built on healing the body, mind, and spirit.

This holistic care model is reflected through the institute’s art and music therapy programs for adults and younger patients. It’s also seen in the many works of art that grace the institute’s downtown Louisville center, including a striking three-story, multicolored art glass window that serves as a well-recognized landmark.

*The center’s meditation garden provides patients, families, and visitors a space for reflection, renewal, and healing. Featured sculptures are Unity Circle by Wenqin Chen, and People Helping People by Aragon Dick Reed.*

It is not surprising, therefore, that art would be a key element in the new Brownsboro center designed to bring all of Norton Healthcare’s oncology services together for the first time under one roof. Soon after the system’s leadership announced in June 2017 it would invest \$38 million in Norton Cancer Institute – Brownsboro, a call for proposals went out to local and regional artists.

The aim was twofold. Commissioned art pieces and uplifting nature-themed photography would create and reflect an environment of warmth, compassion, healing, and hope. Works also would be grouped by floor to make it easier for patients and visitors to navigate the new center’s range of oncology services.

On the first floor, in addition to Kemper’s art glass window, the lobby boasts a large-scale painting by Claire Hirn. It is titled “We All Reflect” and uses transparent, opaque, and textured areas to create a sense of movement through a series of radiating circles.

Hirn’s inspiration was the rhythm of circles as they radiate with no stop or start. Like a circle, she said, “The cycle of life does not favor one particular arc over another.”

The second floor lobby features a grouping of four paintings by Debra Lott. Each of the 2-foot by 2-foot canvasses that make up “Peace and Serenity” displays hands from different perspectives and underscores the fact that cancer impacts all races, genders, and ages.

Lott said, “Hands can communicate much more than we realize — a touch, a clasp, a gesture — expressing more than the spoken word while bringing comfort.”

The second-floor lobby also has a special hanging and cabling display system that allows the center to host traveling or specialized art exhibits. This might be art and photos with a specific theme or even items created by patients and caregivers.

For the third floor, Tamara Scantland created a watercolor painting inspired by watching the sun rise over the Ohio River. Adams used layers of paint to form birds, flowers, colors, and light for the work she dubbed “Hope and Healing.”



As it happened, this message of hope connected on a personal level with one of the center's breast cancer patients. Cynthia "Cyndi" McHolland was delighted to see her own garden captured in the work of Adams, her long-time friend.

"It was a joyful surprise, and we can never have too much joy," McHolland said.

Beyond the new center's walls, the "artful healing" theme is echoed in its outdoor meditation garden. This tranquil space is open to anyone visiting any part of the Norton Brownsboro Hospital campus and can be accessed from the center's first floor, or from nearby sidewalks and pathways.

The garden features two metal sculptures, plus benches and areas for reflection. Another meaningful piece is a large concrete "N" with hand prints, initials, names, and messages. This distinctive work of community art was created during the center's announcement ceremony by survivors, caregivers, healthcare leaders, and others who were invited to take part in "building a foundation for comprehensive cancer care."

Special gifts made through the Norton Healthcare Foundation supported Kemper's project, plus the other artwork and meditation garden at Norton Cancer Institute – Brownsboro.



Photo by Dean Lavenson

*For her watercolor entitled "Hope and Healing" Tamara Scantland was inspired by the sun setting over a friend's garden near the Ohio River.*

"Thanks to our generous donors, we're grateful we can offer patients and their loved ones the proven benefits of whole-person care," said Lynn Meyer, Ed.D., R.N., CFRE, Senior Vice President and Chief Development Officer, Norton Healthcare. "Studies show time spent enjoying nature or art can help reduce anxiety and pain, lower blood pressure, and bring about feelings of relaxation. Those who come to us for lifesaving care deserve a full range of support that meets all their needs."

According to Dr. Flynn, hope is an essential thread that runs through Norton Cancer Institute's mission to cure cancer and eliminate suffering. Advanced technologies, innovative therapies, and top-level research are making great gains against cancer, he said, "yet we must never forget the power of hope, especially when it comes to eliminating suffering."

When Kemper was asked what he would like his work to mean to those who come to Norton Cancer Institute – Brownsboro, he echoed the importance of giving people a sense of peace, reassurance, serenity, and hope.

"Hope is the number one thing I am trying to convey here," he said. "Through art, through beauty, hopefully you're given reassurance that you and your journey matter."

### *About the Author*

Menisa Marshall is a public relations and communications specialist who lives in Louisville. She has focused on working in the nonprofit sector, and her work has earned six top Landmarks of Excellence awards presented annually by two key regional professional member organizations. She retired this spring from Norton Healthcare and looks forward to doing more freelance writing, working in her gardens, and enjoying time with family and friends.



Photo by Dean Lavenson

*Artist Debra Lott works on one canvas of her four-panel composition of hands entitled "Peace and Serenity."*

# Marrying Art and Architecture to Create Place

## By Guy Kemper, Artist

“Architectural art” is a marriage of two very different disciplines. Art is not a team player. It draws its power from within itself. But when art is cast in a new and worthy role as a key element of an environment, it is tasked with becoming sometimes a team player and sometimes a leader.

Typically, an artist might only consider the given dimensions and what he or she wants to do with them. The focus for what he or she will create often centers on whether the art will look good by itself, on paper, or in a gallery. As an architectural artist, I approach my work from two essential perspectives.

First, I must first think like an architect, not an artist. This demands a careful analysis of many critical questions, such as:

*What is the function of the building and the psychology that people will bring to it?*

The function of a space often determines the psychological “baggage” people bring to it. This, in tandem with the architectural dynamic, will profoundly affect their perception. An identical work of art will be perceived quite differently in an airport, a court of law, or a hospital. The psychology of the architecture must be considered to find the best art solution. For example, people generally do not go to a meditation room in a cancer center to celebrate something. So the art should be respectful of that.

*Who is the primary audience, and what emotion do we want them to feel?*

The purpose of architectural art is to provoke a desired emotional response in a particular environment. Whatever that specific aim may be — joy, calm, hope, excitement, etc. — creates a basic framework for what you ultimately will strive to achieve.

*How much light is available and how can it be used most effectively?*

Use of light and space is critical. You must study how people and light will move through a space and understand the way available light can be manipulated. It is crucial to ask:

- What options can be used to address bad light or bad view challenges?
- Does the art want to move in a certain direction, rhythm or composition?
- What direction does the light come from — north, south, east or west? This determines the quality of the light.
- How important are the exterior and nighttime views?

*Where is the location, and what scale of art and color palette does it require?*

It is difficult to create great architectural art without first considering the role it will play in its surroundings, and the proper scale the location and surroundings dictate. One must also have a clear understanding of any budgetary and engineering issues. There is no point designing something that is over the indicated budget or that will fall apart.

Once these questions are fully examined and answered, then I can start to think like an artist. I like to envision I’m carrying on a shamanic tradition of bridging the physical and “benevolent spirit” worlds, connecting to people’s souls to make them feel better. I approach this by quietly asking what the building wants. I strive to put myself in the frame of mind of the user, then design something that, if I were that user, I would love to see. Love is the ultimate healer.

In the end, I’m using a box of tools to inspire my vision and bring it to life. I’m creating something bigger and more complicated than an artwork. I’m helping to create a place.

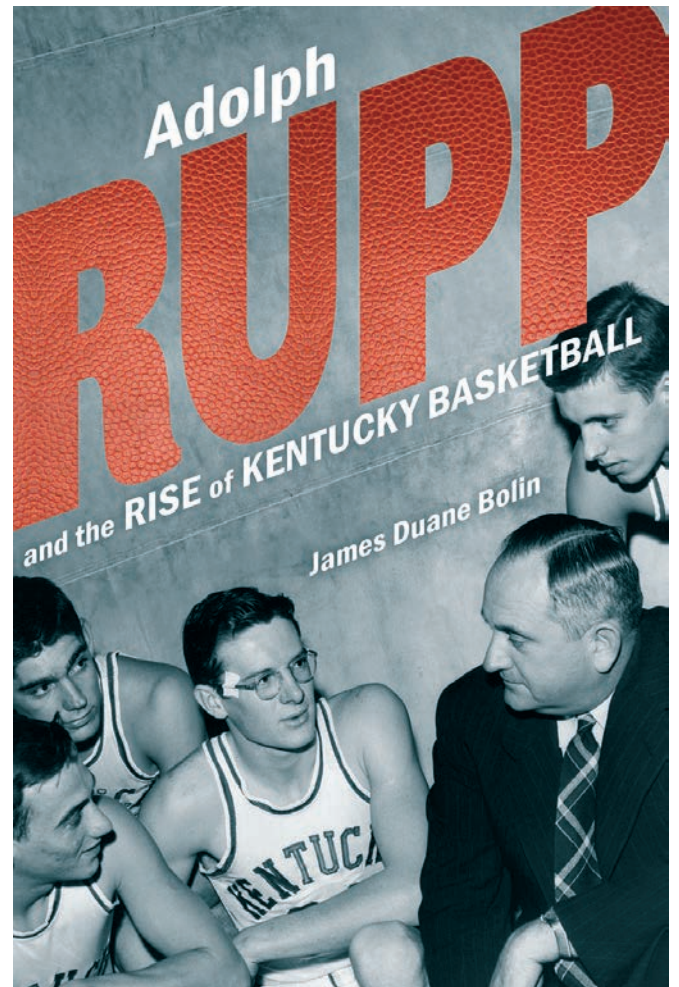


Photo by Nick Bonura



# ADOLPH RUPP

## and the Rise of Kentucky Basketball



*Reprinted with permission from the University Press of Kentucky*

## Epilogue

By James Duane Bolin

**I**n December 1977, my senior year in college I recorded in my diary, “Adolph Rupp — dead of cancer 3 days ago. He meant so much to so many people. At the South Carolina game [at Rupp Arena] his big seat was left empty.” In some ways, my feelings about Adolph Rupp have not changed since I wrote those words as a twenty-two-year-old history major, the co-captain of my Belmont College (now Belmont University) basketball team all those years ago.

I still believe he meant so much to so many people and that he continues to do so. And I still believe that his chair on the sidelines of the home court of the University of Kentucky has been difficult to fill. It has, after all, taken four head coaches — Joe B. Hall (1978), Rick Pitino (1996), Tubby Smith (1998) and John Calipari (2012) — to equal the four NCAA championships that Rupp won alone.

So, who was the real Adolph Rupp, the coach and the man? What is his legacy? What should it have been? How much was he a product of his times? How much did he do? How much more could he have done? How much did he leave undone? Like so much surrounding the Baron of the Bluegrass, the reality often lies obscured beneath many layers of legend. Certainly, Rupp's attitudes and actions — or inactions — on the issue of race are significant, if we are to understand the role that sports played in America in the twentieth century. Race is not the issue that defines Rupp's role, however. This complex man contributed significantly in the pretelevision years — perhaps more than anyone else — to the rise of college sports as a big business in the twentieth century.

While he did not invent the fast break, he perfected its use during and after the World War II years. Despite that, when compared to the sky hooks of UCLA's Lew Alcindor, or the fall-away corner jumpers of Purdue's Rick "the Rocket" Mount, or the sparkling behind-the-back and through-the-legs maneuvers of LSU's Pistol Pete Maravich his last teams seemed almost plodding on my small, living room television screen. The game had passed him by. Rupp also missed out

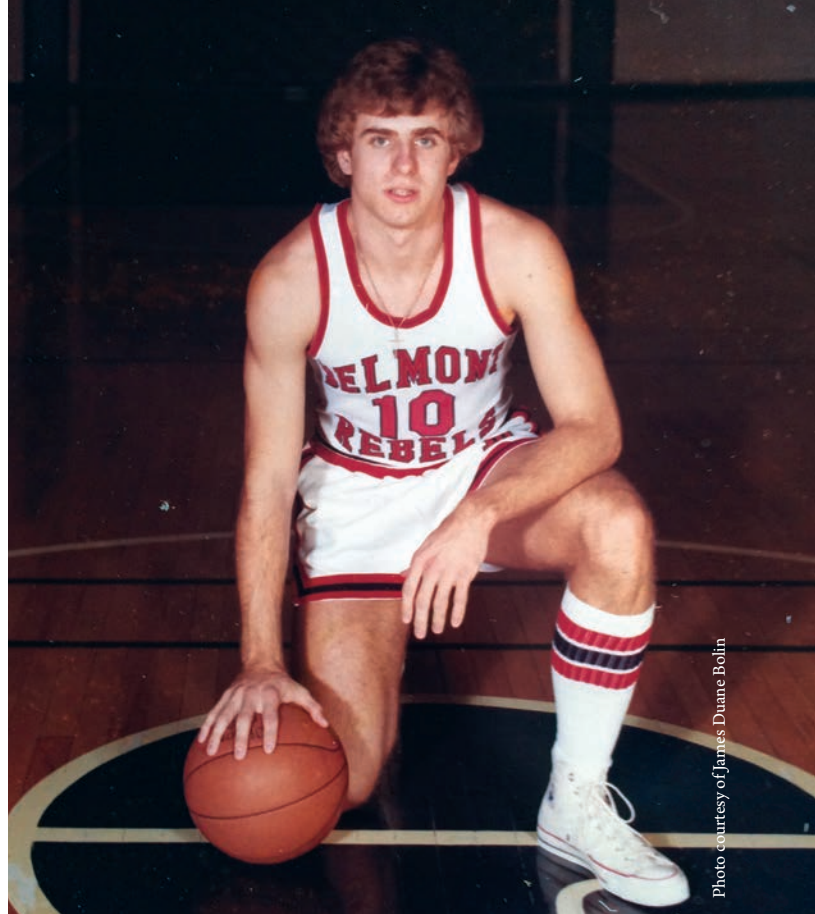


Photo courtesy of James Duane Bolin

*Author James Duane Bolin was a senior at Belmont College in December 1977, when Adolph Rupp died of cancer.*

on the magnificent play for his own teams of Alcindor, Sidney Wicks, Austin Carr, Westley Unseld, Butch Beard, and other African American athletes because of his lackluster recruiting efforts. After the 1970–1971 season, when Tom Payne, Rupp's lone African American recruit, played very well on a 16–9 team, Rupp's very last team, in 1971–1972, was again lily white. Clearly, the game passed him by.

One of the reasons it has taken this book so long to be written is that a new Rupp story came to light so often, sometimes on a weekly basis. Rupp stories seemingly never end. Jim Host, the creator of Host Communications and a student radio broadcaster in the late 1950s and early 1960s, literally has a host of Rupp stories to tell — all delightful.

There was the 1959 trip to California, for example, when Kentucky beat a good UCLA team, 68–66, starring Walt Hazzard and coached by a young Johnny Wooden. After the game in Los Angeles, the team loaded onto the bus, with Coach Rupp characteristically taking the seat directly behind the bus driver. Twenty-one-year-old Host took the seat opposite Rupp behind the barrier by the door. According to Host, when Rupp took his seat, he never looked back to see if everyone was in place — that was expected — he just said to the driver, "Kick her, Doc," and off they went.<sup>1</sup>

*Two of the most successful collegiate basketball coaches in history, UK's Adolph Rupp and UCLA's John Wooden.*



Photo courtesy of UK Libraries & Archives

They were to play the University of Southern California (USC) the next night, so they headed for the hotel for a late meal, but a car ran through an intersection and the bus broadsided the vehicle. The collision threw Host over the barrier and into the well by the door. Bleeding profusely, Host had suffered a head wound and concussion, but he remembered Rupp jumping down into the well and shouting, "My gawd, is he dead?"<sup>2</sup>

Host did not die, although four car passengers perished in the crash. Rupp followed the young student to the hospital, where he was bandaged up well enough to call the next evening's USC game for the radio, a game UK lost 87-73.

After games, Rupp held court in his hotel room wearing red silk pajamas. According to Host, he always had student managers provide sacks of White Castle hamburgers and bottles of Lowenbrau beer. For the Baron, only bourbon whiskey would do. Members of the press would all sit on the floor and Rupp would sit in a big chair. "My gawd, help yourselves. There's beer and there's White Castles."<sup>3</sup>

Rupp himself would fill his glass with bourbon, "exactly half full," and go into the bathroom to the sink and "whisk," just a spritz of water in the glass. He would come back in and take a big swallow and you could see the tears come into his eyes, and he was ready to begin the post-game "press conference."<sup>4</sup>

And with Rupp there were always stories to tell, usually about how brilliant the opposing coach's defensive strategies had been,



*Tom Payne (center) was the lone African American player recruited by Adolph Rupp to play at the University of Kentucky.*

strategies that Rupp had just dominated by 20 or 30 points. Rupp wanted to be sure that an inferior coach would be around next year to beat again.

No doubt about it. Adolph Rupp made the most of his opportunities to change college basketball in America. Even though his predecessor John Mauer largely had put the fast-break system into place, Rupp perfected it and showcased it to the nation by taking his teams to play to Chicago and New York and to the Sugar Bowl in New Orleans. Although Rupp refused to recruit African American athletes until he was forced to do so by an adamant University of Kentucky administration late in his career, unlike

*In 1976, Rupp Arena was opened in downtown Lexington. With more than 23,000 seats, Rupp Arena has been the home of the Kentucky Wildcats for 43 years.*



other schools in the Southeastern Conference he never refused to play schools with African American players. Rupp played all comers anywhere, including Memorial Coliseum in Lexington.

For Kentucky, Rupp and the success of the Kentucky Wildcats united the commonwealth. The cliché became true: Kentuckians from Pikeville to Paducah rooted for the Wildcats victory after victory, championship after championship. High school coaches attended Rupp's clinics and tried to emulate Rupp's success. Negatively, basketball success superseded academic success in the commonwealth both in higher education and on the secondary level. A winning basketball team held so much more importance than high test scores or winning debate or speech teams.

Rupp retired as the winningest basketball coach in the history of the college game, with a record of 876–190. His wins total has been bested again and again, and the issue of race increasingly has defined Rupp's legacy in the twenty-first century, indicating the lingering importance of the racial divide in the postmodern world.

Rupp's journey took him and the game of basketball a long, long way. The story of a successful basketball coach at first glance seems simple. What can be more straightforward than the rise of the son of immigrant parents from humble, rural roots in the plains of Kansas to the pinnacle of his chosen profession? But, then comes a central question: How did a boy reared in the small German farming community of Halstead, Kansas, within the confines of the pacifist precepts of the strict Mennonite sect of his parents and neighbors, become the colorful, cursing Baron of the Bluegrass? From Halstead, Rupp's journey took him to Lawrence and Burr Oak, Kansas, to Marshalltown, Iowa, where he served as a high school wrestling coach, to Freeport, Illinois, to Lexington, Kentucky, to London, England, and other cities in Europe and Asia and the Middle East, to hamlets in the rolling hills of western Kentucky and the mountain hollows of eastern Kentucky, to college towns around the Deep South, to the Sugar Bowl in New Orleans and to Madison Square Garden in the Big Apple, and eventually to the National Basketball Hall of Fame in Springfield, Massachusetts, where basketball began in 1891, invented by James A. Naismith, one of Rupp's professors at the University of Kansas.

## About the Author

James Duane Bolin is Professor Emeritus of History at Murray State University. He is the author of *Home and Away: A Professor's Journal*; *Bossism and Reform in a Southern City: Lexington, Kentucky, 1880–1940*; and *Kentucky Baptists, 1925–2000: A Story of Cooperation*.

<sup>1</sup> James Duane Bolin interview with Jim Host, Lexington, KY, July 23, 2015.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

# RUPP

## by the numbers

# 876

During his tenure at the University of Kentucky, Rupp amassed 876 wins — a record that stood for 25 years.

While at Kentucky, Rupp led his squads to a 57-6 record in the Southeastern Conference Tournament, including 13 tournament championships.

# 13

4 Rupp won four NCAA championships as the head coach of the University of Kentucky — 1948, 1949, 1951, and 1958.

In 41 seasons at UK, Rupp coached 32 all-Americans who were selected a total of 50 times.

# 32

# 82.2

Rupp finished his Kentucky career with an 876-190 record, giving him a win percentage of 82.2%.

Rupp was honored as the National Coach of the Year five times.

# 5

# 1976

Rupp Arena, a venue serving as a tribute to Rupp's outstanding coaching accomplishments, was dedicated in 1976.



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# Kentucky Colonels Exercise Honor in a Meaningful Way

By Sherry Crose

**A**voiding politics and staying dedicated to helping those in need throughout the Commonwealth is why the Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels (HOKC) is known as a long-standing philanthropic organization that improves the lives of Kentuckians.

The Kentucky Colonel commission is the highest honor bestowed to a citizen by Kentucky's Governor. It recognizes noteworthy accomplishments and outstanding service to the community, state, and nation. Many, however, even some appointed Colonels, mistake the title as a political gesture. Historically, there has been some truth to this, but by activating membership in HOKC, a Colonel becomes part of an historic organization that supports charities and organizations aiding many Kentuckians toward a boundless future.



Photo courtesy of the HOKC

*By activating membership in the Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels, a Kentucky Colonel becomes part of an historic organization, supporting charities throughout the Commonwealth. In 2018, the Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels awarded grants totaling \$2 million to Kentucky organizations.*

In 2018, through its Good Works Program, HOKC granted a record \$2 million to worthy causes touching more than 50 percent of Kentucky's population — often in areas overlooked by other charitable organizations. HOKC is a 501(c)(3) non-partisan organization receiving no funds from state government. All grants are generated from donations by active Kentucky Colonels. The 2018 grants encompassed 233 non-profit charities that serve more than 3 million people across the Commonwealth. Thirty-two percent of these organizations are run by a staff of five or fewer full-time employees.

"HOKC makes being a Kentucky Colonel more than just hanging a certificate on your wall," said Commanding General Lynn Ashton. "We are an active group of compassionate people who care about Kentuckians.

"What's most inspiring are the many donations from Colonels that range from \$1 to major gifts," Ashton added.

"Historically, donations come from both Colonels who reside in Kentucky and often from Colonels not living here — they all have one common bond and that is philanthropy and service," Ashton said.

Ashton also notes that HOKC delivers 85 cents of every donated dollar to charity.

"Our board of trustees takes a shirtsleeves approach in running the organization and are personally involved in vetting all grants," she said. "We cast a very wide net both geographically across the Commonwealth and across the scope of those in need. All grants

are specific to tangible items needed to serve the individual."

Grant requests cover an extensive range of needs — from a special needs wheelchair, to replacement phone systems for a shelter for abused woman or children, to a new stove for a boys' foster home in a rural Appalachian community, to the Kentucky Association for Academic Competition's 6th Grade Academic Showcase, or a new stage curtain for a small arts theater, to a fan for an animal shelter, to artifact restoration at a museum in Kentucky.

"We are a certified training facility in Louisville providing support and services to disabled adults so they can be more self-sufficient," said Harbor House CEO Maria Smith. "For more than 20 years the Colonels have helped us empower approximately 1,000 participants to remain employed and who provide services to many local businesses. They assisted us with the purchase of handicapped accessible vans allowing our participants to enjoy daily life experiences out in the community."

Located in Knott County, the Hindman Settlement School recently honored HOKC's long-term commitment with the opening and dedication of the Kentucky Colonels Cannery, where area residents learn how to preserve fresh and healthy farm-produced food.

"This creates an opportunity for them to also bring some of it to market for income," said Hindman Settlement School Executive Director Brent Hutchinson.

Hall of Fame jockey Pat Day believes that many deeds of the



Photos courtesy of the HOKC

*Sunrise Services, a boys' foster home in rural Appalachia, was awarded money for a new stove from the Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels.*

*The Hindman Settlement School recently honored the Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels' long-term commitment with the opening and dedication of the Kentucky Colonels Cannery.*

Kentucky Colonels go unnoticed.

“When I first became a Colonel, honestly, I blew it off thinking it was just a good-old-boys club,” said Day. “Then my wife Sheila, who was involved with Mom’s Closet Resource Center, applied for a grant. We both now realize this organization is seriously dedicated to serving the neediest.”

“The Colonels assisted Mom’s Closet so we could continue helping women who really need the support,” added Sheila Day.

“When you add up the outcomes of the Good Works Program over the years, HOKC qualifies as an independent charitable group with one of the richest histories of service and charitable support to Kentuckians,” said Maker’s Mark Chairman Emeritus and former HOKC Trustee Bill Samuels, Jr.

## From Militia to Philanthropy

The first Kentucky Colonels were presented the honorary title by Governor Isaac Shelby after a militia, predominantly made up of Kentuckians, had a successful campaign in the War of 1812. Afterward, the appointment took on a mostly ceremonial function until 1931, when Governor Flem Sampson blessed the idea of forming a “non-political brotherhood” dedicated to the advancement of Kentucky and Kentuckians.

The Colonels took Sampson’s direction further in 1932, when Governor Ruby Laffoon, who initially shunned the Colonels, asked his friend Anna Bell Ward Olson to help create a new organization called The Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels.

Olson owned several movie theaters across Kentucky and Laffoon had a deep sense of public relations and an affinity for Hollywood stars. Combined with Olson’s connections to the film industry, this coalition led to appointing personalities such as Mae West, Bing Crosby, Fred Astaire, Joe E. Brown, and W.C.



Photo courtesy of the Kentucky Historical Society

*At the request of Governor Ruby Laffoon, Anna Bell Ward Olson created The Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels, appointing celebrities including Joe E. Brown (center) as Kentucky Colonels.*



Photo courtesy of the Kentucky Historical Society

*In the early 1940s, Colonel Anna Friedman oversaw the raising of funds for courtesy recreation rooms for soldiers at Fort Knox.*

Fields as Kentucky Colonels, prompting a caravan of stars to be hosted while attending the Kentucky Derby and the many associated social events.

Then a natural event of epic proportion changed the course of the Colonels forever. The Great Flood of 1937 brought devastation to the Commonwealth, and Olson ignited action by the many Colonels in New York and California, who each donated \$5 to the relief effort. And in Hollywood, silver-screen star Colonels such as Bing Crosby and Fred Astaire, who also had an affinity for Kentucky’s fast thoroughbreds, held benefits for disaster relief. The drive and purpose of the Colonels shifted from social gathering to a philanthropic commitment.

With the onset of World War II in the early 1940s, the Colonels’ dedication to service continued by serving the growing population of soldiers at Fort Knox. Colonel Anna Friedman of Anchorage, Kentucky, who took over for Olson, met the challenge by raising funds to establish courtesy recreation rooms for soldiers and organized Colonels to staff the Women’s Army Corps (WAC) recruiting office in Louisville. Her leadership solidified an enduring tradition of public service by the Colonels, and in 1951, it became official by attaining the 501(c)(3) non-profit status.

Friedman, a Louisville socialite and philanthropist, continued Olson’s tradition by producing a flow of celebrities who supported the charitable efforts of the Colonels and visited Kentucky for the Colonels’ Derby Eve Dinner and annual barbecue at “The Forest” in Anchorage. Among those she hosted were Peter Graves, Edie Adams, Lucille Ball, Alan Hale, Danny Thomas, and Bob Hope. Hope performed at the annual banquet for several years.

Throughout the years, the list of Kentucky Colonels grew. It





*Anna Friedman continued Anna Bell Ward Olson's tradition by getting celebrities to support the HOKC's charitable efforts and visiting the Commonwealth for the Derby Eve Dinner. Danny Thomas (center) was among the celebrities Friedman hosted.*

includes United States Presidents Lyndon B. Johnson, Ronald Reagan, George H.W. Bush, Bill Clinton, and Barack Obama. Celebrities, past and present include the Beatles, Jeff Foxworthy, Whoopi Goldberg, Elvis Presley, Reba McIntire, Tiger Woods and Raphael Saadiq. As well as Kentuckians Muhammad Ali, Rosemary and Nick Clooney, Johnny Depp, Josh Hutcherson, Ashley Judd, Jennifer Lawrence, Sturgill Simpson, Hunter S. Thompson, Lily Tomlin, and Dwight Yoakim, to name a few.

### The Colonels Today

The HOKC has gone away from the days of hosting stars and celebrities. As a philanthropic organization, the Honorable Order developed key areas of focus: community support by helping organizations provide social services to those most in need; funding community enhancement through organizations that provide culturally enriching services; assistance for health and rehabilitation and life skills; assisting the homeless, low income people, and those in crisis; aiding those most in need due to man-made or natural disasters, as well as emergency needs of charities; education and youth services; and historic preservation by supporting the safeguarding of items or landmarks of historical significance to Kentucky.

Since 1951, through donations from Kentucky Colonels,



*General Kevin Doyle presented Domuniquie Thomas from Prevent Child Abuse Kentucky with a grant at the 2018 Lexington Grant Celebration Party.*

HOKC granted approximately \$50 million to non-profit organizations throughout the Commonwealth, as well as providing disaster relief funds for events that adversely changed lives inside and outside Kentucky.

Today, Colonels gather in Louisville for a fall weekend of events encouraging camaraderie with a reception dinner-dance and racing at Churchill Downs.

Starting in 2017, Colonels created The Day of Service. On the first Saturday in October Colonels from across the state join together and volunteer at one of the many non-profit organizations that are supported by the Good Works Program.

### Annual \$5 Million Goal

HOKC’s goal is to annually grant \$5 million to Kentucky causes by the mid 2020s. “With this goal in mind, the charities that HOKC’s philanthropy helps will touch everyone in the Commonwealth,” Ashton said. “We have a board of trustees willing to do the hard work to get there. What we need is for all Kentucky Colonels to stand up, be active, and become a part of this magnanimous cause.”

Many Kentuckians honor the tradition of being a Colonel from generation to generation. HOKC receives calls of people in their family who are Colonels from generation to generation. If you are an appointed Kentucky Colonel and want to continue it as a family tradition to recognize a young family member for acts of good citizenship, nominate them.

“The Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels helps me distinguish between the Governor’s appointment and exercising the honor in a meaningful way,” said Bill Samuels, Jr.



Photo courtesy of the HOKC

*General Kevin Doyle presented Tracey Wright and Wesley Scott from the Life Adventure Center a grant at last year's Grant Celebration Party. In 2018, HOKC awarded \$2 million in grants.*

### About the Author

Sherry Crose is the Executive Director of the Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels. With her team, and the HOKC Board of Trustees, they serve as curators of the rich Kentucky Colonels history. Also, through the efforts of thousands of Kentucky Colonels worldwide, they help positively impact 3.8 million Kentucky citizens. Sherry has 30 years of experience in the nonprofit industry.



Photo courtesy of the HOKC

*Each year, Kentucky Colonels from across the state gather for a fall weekend of events including an afternoon of racing at Louisville's Churchill Downs.*



# Ballet Lessons from Eastern Kentucky

By Edwina Pendarvis

*T*he Appalachian experience is neither homogenous nor uniform. For example, if you asked people what kind of dancing they think of as Appalachian, they might say clogging or square dancing. Some might mention Cherokee tribal dances. A lot of people might just shrug. But for some of us, including my younger sister, Annette, and me, ballet is the kind of dancing we associate with the mountains of eastern Kentucky. The ballet classes we took as children when we lived in Pikeville meant so much to us then and even more to us now. Recently I started to wonder what studying ballet meant to other women of our generation.

To try to answer that question, I interviewed Annette and 14 women who are about our age. The youngest woman I interviewed was born in 1951 and the oldest in 1931. Eight of the women were born in Kentucky, four were from West Virginia, and two from southern Ohio. I'm still studying transcripts of what the women said, but I've already learned something about what ballet meant to these ex-ballet students. Part of what I learned from the interviews is summed up by a famous ballerina I didn't interview — Wendy Whelan, one of the greatest ballerinas this country ever produced. The Louisville native was recently named Associate Artistic Director of the New York City Ballet. Whelan said in a 2010 interview that in classical ballets, such as those by George Balanchine, the ballerina is “crystalline, a fantasy . . . perfume.”

That was certainly true of the ballets we knew about as children; in ballets like “Sleeping Beauty,” “Swan Lake,” and “The Nutcracker,” women were princesses, sugar plum fairies, swans, and snowflakes. They weren't wives and mothers who carried buckets of coal in from the coal bin, washed and ironed, swept and mopped, cooked meals, and often held down a paying job. All of the Kentucky women I interviewed took lessons because of their mothers' encouragement and sacrifices. Part of why their mothers wanted them to have ballet lessons was to give them a better life. Yvonne DeKay Sinnott, born in Flatwoods, Kentucky, told me that her mother took a job as a waitress just so three-year-old Yvonne, who loved to dance around the house, could take ballet lessons. Lynn Cohen, from Ashland, told me that what ballet classes added to her life was “probably not the classes themselves, but that my mother loved me enough to pay for classes for me to attend and to give me the opportunity to do something that other children might not be able to do.” According to Lynn, what matters to her is “not whether I became a dancer or not, it was just the fact that my mom was sweet enough to do that.” Annette and I still treasure pictures of us posing on tiptoe in crepe-paper tutus on a coal-camp sidewalk. Our mother had sewed the costumes for us so we could play ballerina when we lived in the small Floyd County town of Wheelwright.

In 1952, when our family moved from Wheelwright to Pikeville, Annette was six years old, and I was eight. Pikeville had a dancing school because of Mary Elizabeth Vernon, the mother of three sisters I interviewed. Mary Elizabeth didn't take a job to pay for her daughter's ballet lessons. She got a dancing school started! Elizabeth, the oldest of the three sisters, says that her mother, Mary Elizabeth Vernon nee Vorhauer, born in Augusta, Georgia, married Frank Atherton Vernon, a medical student from Tifton, Georgia. Frank Vernon did his residency in Glasgow, Kentucky; practiced surgery in Martin for a few years, and then accepted a position as a surgeon in Pikeville, where the family lived for many years.

Mrs. Vernon had taken dancing lesson when she was young, and she wanted her daughters and other children in Pikeville to have that opportunity. She called around until she located June Conn, a well-respected ballet teacher who lived in Ashland, Kentucky. Mrs. Vernon convinced June to come to Pikeville to give lessons on Saturdays. For years after that, June traveled U.S. 23 from Boyd County to Pike County almost every weekend.

Mrs. Vernon's daughters, Annette and I, and many other women, along with a smaller number of men, have “Ma” Vernon to thank for getting to take classes from June. Martha Vernon Spindler, the middle sister, remembers June Conn well. She said, “When June first came, she stayed at Rosalie Venters' house and then she stayed in a hotel on the weekends. . . . I don't know how Mother got in touch with June or knew about her,” but according to Martha's sister, Elizabeth, studying ballet in Pikeville was “a pure delight.”

Photo courtesy of Edwina Pendarvis



**Mary Elizabeth Vernon (“Ma” Vernon) as a child, circa 1918, in dance costume.**



**Elizabeth Vernon as “queen of the circus” in dance recital at the Oliver Memorial Gymnasium at Pikeville High School, 1954.**

Anne Vernon, the youngest sister, didn't like ballet much, though she liked to hear her mother play the bongos for the dancers in the jazz class. She also said that if she had a daughter, she would want her to take ballet lessons. Anne said that June Conn's dance classes were “at the high school, which was at the bottom of High Street hill. I felt safe and secure there. . . . being at the school, going downstairs, the tall mirrors. I think the studio used to be in the basketball players' locker room.” Anne is right. On most Saturdays in the 1950s and 1960s, the Pikeville Panthers' basement locker room was filled with music and dancers, rather than with basketball players changing clothes before or after a game.

Elizabeth lives in Florida now and owns a ballet studio in Windermere. She loved studying ballet. “From the minute I first had class, I knew it was what I wanted to do. I wanted to be able to dance as well as June Conn did; she was an inspiration



**Caroline Wilson (left) and June Conn (right) in a Scottish tap divertissement at a recital in Ashland, 1946.**

to me. I felt like we had a gold mine in Pikeville. Robert Perry Call's wife played the piano for our classes. June's classes were every weekend except when there was snow on the mountains.”

Elizabeth went on to say “My mother loved to dance. She took classes back when “they used the ribbons and a lot of props when they danced. I still have a picture of her in my studio. I think she felt like she was dancing as long as we were dancing.” Dancing has been an important part of Elizabeth's life, and she feels a great debt to her mother: “Mom saw what each of us could do, and she helped lead us. She didn't push us; she helped guide us.”

With its arabesques, fantastic leaps, dizzying spins, and floating movements, ballet does seem magical and lends itself to the feeling of being in a kind of fairyland. Annette, who danced with the Lexington Ballet Company in the late 1970s, says that doing a grand jeté (a jump in which the dancer does a “split” in the air) feels like flying. Ballet dancers, as Annette says, “defy

gravity,” seeming to aspire to freedom and a beautiful world far away from the ordinary.

Caroline Wilson neé Coldiron, from Catlettsburg, may have felt a need for such freedom. Caroline’s family went through the devastating 1937 Ohio River flood. She was six years old in 1937 and remembers living in a freight car on a railroad side track in Russell for a while after the flood. Caroline says dancing gave her some of the happiest moments in her life. It also gave her a heightened sense of self-worth. She and June Conn were dance students together, and both went to New York in the summer of 1947 and again in 1948 to study at the School of American Ballet. Their ballet teacher in Ashland was Frances Nestor, who was Caroline’s cousin. Frances and Caroline’s mother, who worked at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, chipped in to help Caroline pay for the New York trips.

Wendy Whelan’s mother, who was a gym teacher and basketball coach, signed Wendy up for ballet lessons at the age of three so the toddler could put her excess energy to good use. In “Restless Creature,” a documentary about Whelan, Wendy says “Ballet is handed down from generation to generation.” She was talking about generations of dancers, but love of ballet also links mothers and daughters. And while Whelan made a career of the dance form, almost all of the women I talked to, whether

they became dancers or not, felt that ballet gave their life greater meaning. When I asked Caroline what ballet added to her life, tears came to her eyes, and she said that it opened up a new world to her, a world that most of her Catlettsburg contemporaries had no chance to see. Ballet not only links generations, it offers young dancers — girls and boys — a chance to perform difficult feats in pursuit of an almost magical beauty. For some of us, that chance is a treasured part of our childhood in eastern Kentucky and an important part of who we are today.

### *About the Author*

Edwina Pendarvis, Emeritus Professor of Education at Marshall University, earned her doctoral degree at the University of Kentucky. She worked for the Bureau of Education for Exceptional Children in Frankfort before teaching at Marshall. A nationally recognized authority on gifted and talented education, she has authored numerous books and articles on education. She has also published many poems and essays about Appalachian life and literature. Among her most recent publications are *Appalachian Murders and Mysteries*, co-edited with Dr. James Gifford and published by the Jesse Stuart Foundation, and *Out of Our Minds: Turning the Tide of Anti-Intellectualism in American Schools*, co-authored with Craig and Aimee Howley, and published by Prufrock Press.



**Caroline Wilson in a dance recital of Frances Nestor’s students, 1947.**



**Annette Burgess (author’s sister) and Dennis Anderson in June Conn’s version of “Cinderella,” 1955. Dennis was one of few boys bold enough to study ballet at a time when many boys considered ballet “sissy” despite its athleticism.**

Photos courtesy of Edwina Pendarvis

# Rhubarb

By Georgia Green Stamper

**M**y book club was planning to read Barbara Kingsolver's *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle* — the one about eating locally grown foods exclusively and only those in season. And so, the discussion leader turns to me, and says, "Georgia, could you make Kingsolver's 'Month of May' recipe for Rhubarb Crisp for our refreshments?"

I said yes, sure, no problem, I'd love to — even though I'd never touched a rhubarb before in my life, even though I'm mostly a counterfeit cook nowadays, scooting commercially prepared food into antique dishes and passing it off as homemade. In retrospect, I'm not sure what I was thinking, but I think I was thinking that whipping up a crisp from scratch might move me one degree closer to Barbara Kingsolver, who, like me, is a Kentucky-born writer, except her books make Oprah's Book Club and the short list for the Pulitzer Prize — and I can only wish.

So, I set out to find rhubarb in my asphalt city. It soon became apparent to me why I've been able to avoid rhubarb for six decades. This vegetable is in the Department of Agriculture's witness protection program. It's spotted from time to time, but it's near impossible to catch up with it.

My first calls went out to friends who are always going on about their non-pesticide gardens, and like Kingsolver, feed themselves from the land. Each in turn said that they couldn't "get rhubarb to grow!" Hmmm.

Next, I checked the Farmers Market, a traveling carnival of local food producers that encamps on city property here twice a week. Well, to be honest, I didn't check it on Thursday because it was raining cats and dogs and my desire to win a Pulitzer Prize will only push me so far. But it's open on Saturday, too, plenty enough time to pick up some rhubarb for Monday night's to-do, I reasoned.

But on Saturday, I learned it had been "a cold, late spring" in Kentucky. Thus, the Farmers Market didn't have any rhubarb.

My next stop was the Kroger supermarket closest to my home. I was concerned that this was cheating on Kingsolver's philosophy of buying locally grown foods in season. I suspect that the mega-grocer imports its produce from any old locale that has not had "a cold, late spring." But Kroger is headquartered in Cincinnati, just over the Ohio River from Kentucky, and I decided that gave it a hint of local aura.

"Nope," was the terse response when I inquired if they had any rhubarb.

Undaunted, I checked with another Kroger in a trendier neighborhood. They were friendlier, and told me they'd been ordering it every week for a month, but had yet to get any. They suggested I try yet another Kroger in an even trendier neighborhood, which I did.

"Had some. Sold it in an hour."

Now I was frantic. This was not going to edge me into conversation with the famous Barbara Kingsolver if she should ever drop in to visit her Old Kentucky Home.

I started phoning every food market in Lexington. Finally, I located two sources of rhubarb. One was an organic food boutique on the other side of the city. They refused to verify that their rhubarb had been grown locally, but did verify that it was \$3.99/lb. "because, you know, it's organic."

The second source — inexplicably — was a big box store a half-mile from my house. No one actually said their rhubarb had been imported from China, but no one said it hadn't been either. It was a \$1.99/lb. Draw your own conclusions.

I faced a moral dilemma: organic and "possibly local," versus cheaper and "possibly Chinese." In the end, my Scottish genes won out, and I rationalized that driving across town to buy organic would leave a larger carbon footprint than running up to the big box store nearby. I bought all Big Box had — twelve stalks — and wiped out half the rhubarb supply in Lexington.

In the end, my Rhubarb Crisp was not crisp. To be honest, it was downright soggy. So, I resorted to my old trick of using pretty dishes to distract guests from the food, and served up my un-crisp on Mother's delicate, dessert plates.

Along the way, I learned some interesting facts about rhubarb that may be a conversation opener should Barbara Kingsolver and I ever get a chance to chat. I wonder if she knows, for example, that dramatists as far back as Shakespeare have evoked "a menacing crowd sound" by asking several people to stand close together and repeat the word "rhubarb" over and over. (Personally, I'm thinking all those "menacing" crowds may be what scared rhubarb into hiding.) In time, the word rhubarb was co-opted to describe baseball fans who directed "a menacing crowd sound" at the umpire.

Finally, I learned that rhubarb is indigenous to Mongolia where it grew wild along the Rhubarb Road all the way to ancient Peking. That means that all the rhubarb that has ever been was originally exported from China!

I feel less guilty now about having bought my rhubarb at the big box.

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## About the Author

Georgia Green Stamper is a seventh-generation Kentuckian. A graduate of Transylvania University, Stamper is a former high school English and theater teacher and speech team coach. Her published works include *Butter in the Morning* and *You Can Go Anywhere*. She also writes a bi-weekly column, "Georgia: On My Mind," for *The Owenton News-Herald*. She has been a regular commentator for NPR member station WUKY affiliated with the University of Kentucky and a popular member of the Kentucky Humanities Speakers Bureau.



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