



# KENTUCKY HUMANITIES

## Presentations about *Harmonizing Together*

### ***SPEAKERS BUREAU***



#### **Dr. Kathy Bullock**

Adjunct Professor, University of Kentucky

Berea, KY

Phone: (859) 979-1976

Email: [bullockka@gmail.com](mailto:bullockka@gmail.com)

#### **I Got A Right to the Tree of Life: Women's Suffrage and African American Women's Voices, presented by Dr. Kathy Bullock**

Through songs and stories this presentation will share the journey and the contributions of African American women in the struggle for the Right to Vote in the U.S. As part of the celebration of the centennial anniversary of the Woman's Suffrage Movement, this program will highlight stories and struggles of African American women leaders, from the late 1870s up to the Voting Rights Act in 1965 and beyond.

#### **Singing in the Spirit: The African American Sacred Music Tradition, presented by Dr. Kathy Bullock**

Spirituals and gospel music are much more than pleasing songs to listen to—they are powerful representations of the triumphant spirit and faith that have defined African-American music and people. Bullock takes the audience on a musical journey from West Africa, through the middle passage, to the North American shores where the African-American culture was forged. Through songs, stories, and performance, this participatory program lets the audience experience the beauty, joy, and power of this music and culture.

Equipment needs: Piano

Available as virtual programs: Yes





# KENTUCKY HUMANITIES



## **Jerry Deaton**

Kentucky Writer & Filmmaker

Frankfort, KY

Phone: (502) 229-1249

Email: [jdeaton@me.com](mailto:jdeaton@me.com)

### **Appalachian Culture, Yesterday and Today, presented by Jerry Deaton**

Deaton's program offering includes a humorous and heartfelt discussion of how a young man from Long's Creek in Breathitt County grew to become the lobbyist for all the cities in Kentucky and the Executive Director of a statewide trade association, as well as an author, filmmaker, playwright and world traveler. Deaton's stories relate back to his experiences growing up in eastern Kentucky in the '60s and '70s and explain how unlikely a candidate he was to achieve the things that he did. Deaton also reads stories from his ghost story book and memoir in a fashion that takes you back to a time and place that is indeed long ago and far away. This program can be tailored specifically to the telling and reading of his ghost stories, the Breathitt feud history, Mr. Harry Caudill, as well as Kentucky history and politics.

Available as virtual programs: Yes





# KENTUCKY HUMANITIES



## **Michael Johnathon**

Kentucky Writer & Musician

Lexington, KY

Phone: (859) 255-5700

Email: [michael@woodsongs.com](mailto:michael@woodsongs.com)

### **Kentucky and the Music of America's Front Porch, presented by Michael Johnathon**

In a time of great stress, economic and social concerns, even war, the comfort and imagery of America's Front Porch, the calming sense of family, neighbors and music is more important now than ever. To Michael Johnathon, Kentucky is the comfortable rocking chair on America's Front Porch. This is a performance and conversation about restoring that "front porch" feeling back into our hometowns.

Equipment needs: Suitable sound system, two mics (Sure 58 or equivalent) two mic stands

Available as virtual programs: Yes





# KENTUCKY HUMANITIES



## **Dr. Ron Pen**

Director Emeritus of the John Jacob Niles Center  
Lexington, KY

Phone: (859) 825-8780

Email: [ron.pen@uky.edu](mailto:ron.pen@uky.edu)

### **Echoes of the Hills: Kentucky's Traditional Music, presented by Dr. Ron Pen**

Kentucky has been justly celebrated for its contributions to country and bluegrass styles, but a diverse and vibrant range of earlier musical traditions made the hills and hollers echo with song and dance long before these popular styles came into being following World War II. Ron Pen will explore Kentucky's musical past through a talk illustrated by a PowerPoint presentation. A live musical performance of ballads, old time fiddle and banjo dance tunes, dulcimer songs, and shape note hymnody will animate the history and context.

### **Sweet Strains of the Dulcimer, presented by Dr. Ron Pen**

In 2001, the Kentucky Legislature recognized the Dulcimer as our Commonwealth's state instrument. The dulcimer's roots are firmly planted in the soil of east Kentucky with the earliest instruments crafted in 1838 by Ely Boggs and "Uncle" Ed Thomas in 1870. Dulcimers created by McKinley Craft, Will Singleton, and Jethro Amburgey spread throughout the country from Hindman. Performers including Jean Ritchie and John Jacob Niles popularized the instrument during the folk revival. This history will come alive through a talk illustrated by a PowerPoint presentation, enhanced with a live performance.

Equipment needs: Chair without arms, projector and speaker setup capable of PowerPoint projection with a laptop

Available as virtual programs: No





# KENTUCKY HUMANITIES



## **Nancy Richey**

Associate Professor & Reading Room  
Coordinator/Visual Resources Librarian  
Bowling Green, KY  
Phone: (270) 784-1443  
Email: [nancy.richey@wku.edu](mailto:nancy.richey@wku.edu)

### **Mose Rager: Kentucky's Shy Guitar Master, presented by Nancy Richey**

There are many country guitar legends—Chet Atkins, Merle Travis, and Eddie Pennington, to name a few—who trace the root of their music to Mose Rager. A Muhlenberg County, Kentucky native, he was known for developing a unique thumb-picking style. Mose worked as a barber and a coal miner when he wasn't playing gigs with Grandpa Jones, Curly Fox, and Texas Ruby. Although Mose died on May 14, 1986, his sound lives on when modern-day pickers try to play "That Muhlenberg Sound."

Equipment needs: Projector for PowerPoint, microphone

Available as virtual program: Yes





# KENTUCKY HUMANITIES

## **KENTUCKY CHAUTAUQUA®**



**Aunt Molly Jackson**  
*Pistol Packin' Woman*  
1880-1960

Portrayed by:  
**Anne Shelby**  
Oneida, KY  
Phone: (606) 847-4792  
Email: [annegshelby@gmail.com](mailto:annegshelby@gmail.com)

Feisty, funny, and completely fearless, Aunt Molly Jackson lived for nearly 50 years in the coal camps of Southeastern Kentucky, where her father, brothers, husband, and sons were miners. In the camps, Aunt Molly delivered babies, nursed the sick, and wrote and sang songs about the miners' lives. Her "Hungry Ragged Blues," for example, tells of miners during the Depression who regularly risked their lives underground, but did not earn enough to feed and clothe their children. Aunt Molly's songs, her eloquence, and her intimate knowledge of life in the camps impressed Theodore Dreiser and his committee of writers when they visited Kentucky in 1931. Dreiser encouraged Aunt Molly to move to New York City, where her heartfelt songs and lively stories made her a popular and well-known spokesperson for Kentucky miners. Today, Aunt Molly's songs and stories take us back to the Eastern and Western Kentucky coalfields of the early 20th century.





# KENTUCKY HUMANITIES



**Loretta Lynn**

*Mem'ries of a Coal  
Miner's Daughter*  
1932-2022

Portrayed by:

**Lisa Woods**

Lexington, KY

Phone: (859) 361-3038

Email: [woods.lisam@gmail.com](mailto:woods.lisam@gmail.com)

Before she was crowned the “Queen of Country Music,” Loretta Lynn blazed a difficult trail through poverty, heartbreak, and resilience. Born in Butcher Holler, Kentucky, she was the daughter of a coal miner—a humble beginning that shaped the soul of her music. At just 15, she married Oliver “Doolittle” Lynn and moved across the country to Washington, where her journey as a singer began in modest venues with a borrowed guitar and bold determination. Her first hit, “I’m a Honky Tonk Girl”, marked the beginning of a career defined by fearless storytelling. After relocating to Nashville, she joined the Grand Ole Opry and signed with Decca Records, becoming a household name. Loretta’s deeply personal songs gave voice to working-class women and their everyday struggles—with themes that tackled marriage, motherhood, ambition, and heartache with unapologetic candor.

Throughout her life, Loretta never lost touch with her Appalachian roots, often returning to the tiny cabin of her youth. Her groundbreaking hit “Coal Miner’s Daughter” remains a defining anthem—not just of her life story, but of country music’s capacity to tell real stories that matter.





# KENTUCKY HUMANITIES



**Jean Ritchie**  
*Damsel with a  
Dulcimer*  
1922-2015

Portrayed by:  
**Rachel Lee Rogers**  
Versailles, KY  
Phone: (859) 338-4323  
Email: [jeanritchieactor@gmail.com](mailto:jeanritchieactor@gmail.com)

Traditional musician, songwriter, poet, commercial performer, recording artist, author and composer Jean Ritchie, born in Viper, Perry County, Kentucky, in 1922, was the youngest of Balis and Abigail Ritchie's 14 children. She began her recording career in 1952, signing with Elektra Records. Throughout her career she recorded more than 35 albums, which strongly reflected her Kentucky heritage and featured her playing the mountain dulcimer. Known as the "Mother of Folk," Ritchie was a major contributor to the national revival of folk music across American during the mid to second half of the 20th century. Artists including Johnny Cash, Emmylou Harris, Linda Ronstadt, and Dolly Parton have covered her songs. Jean Ritchie was also an outspoken environmental activist. Her song, "Black Waters" is a well known protest song that Ritchie wrote about strip mining in Kentucky.





# KENTUCKY HUMANITIES



**Mary Settles**

*The Last Shaker at  
Pleasant Hill  
1836-1923*

Portrayed by:

**Janet Scott**

Lexington, KY

Phone: (859) 825-8946

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When the first Shakers arrived in Kentucky, they built their village at Pleasant Hill on the western frontier, where they lived a privileged, communal life as educated artisans with their "hands to work and hearts to God." The Shakers empowered women, freed enslaved people and served as an army of peacemakers during the Civil War.

Within months of her arrival at Pleasant Hill, Mary Settles worked together with her Shaker sisters and brothers to provide the "simple gifts" of food and medical care to the armies of both the North and South. The last Shaker to live at Pleasant Hill, Mary Settles served as an eldress, deaconess, and teacher of women, maintaining the highest educational standards for the public school at Pleasant Hill. The story of these revolutionary Kentuckians is affirming of our nation's courageous history of passive resistance in the fight for civil rights and offers a vision of social justice for our future.

