



THE COURIER

TENNESSEE HISTORICAL COMMISSION, NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

WINTER 2025



In This Issue: THC Announces Recipients of \$2 Million from New HPLAF Grant Fund and \$800,000 in Annual HPF Grants, Tobacco Wars in Tennessee, 1965 Voting Rights Act Anniversary

FROM THE DIRECTOR

2025 is off to a productive start! In this issue we highlight our new Historic Property/Land Acquisition Fund (HPLAF) competitive grant program, which is providing \$2 million, in funding to help restore and revitalize 23 projects across the state. Projects awarded this year range from restoration work at courthouses in Coffee, Gibson, Monroe, and Roane Counties to refurbishing the stained-glass windows at Temple Adas Israel in Brownsville, and helping repair the c. 1800 Rogers Tavern in Rogersville. The enabling legislation also allows the Commission to use the HPLAF (subject to board approval) to fund improvements to our own properties and has already made an impact at our sites. In Franklin, the groundbreaking for our \$6.5 million capital project of the Herbert Harper Visitor Center at Carter House State Historic Site will take place in a matter of weeks. The planned facility received a critical addition of \$2 million in funding last year from the Commission's board using HPLAF monies, which will allow a new facility to be constructed at our most visited state historic site. At Sparta Rock House State Historic Site in White County, where a generational \$620,000 restoration is currently underway, we are finalizing the acquisition of 20 acres of surrounding property using HPLAF monies. The surrounding property, which was imminently threatened by development that would have encroached almost to the front door of the site will now be used for interpretive purposes. Look for more information in an upcoming issue. And work is well underway at Rock Castle State Historic Site in Hendersonville on the new visitor center, where some \$4.1 million of HPLAF monies were added to the capital project's state funding to allow the improvements to be built. On the Federal side, we had another successful round of Historic Preservation Fund grants totaling \$800,000 (as outlined in this issue) and are looking forward to a full State Review Board agenda this month. I also recently signed the application to the National Park Service for what will hopefully be the 51st Certified Local Government enrolled in the program from Tennessee, so stay tuned.

As always, as the State Historic Preservation Office the Tennessee Historical Commission benefits from our dedicated and talented staff, who are always ready to assist. Please continue to reach out to us any time we may be of service, and thank you for your interest and work in protecting our state's heritage and irreplaceable historic places.

Sincerely,

Patrick



McIntyre with Steve Nelson of the Rogersville Heritage Association at the c. 1800 Rogers Tavern in Rogersville, December, 2024. The tavern is receiving a \$100,000 HPFLAF grant from the THC.

THC AWARDS FEDERAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION FUND (HPF) GRANTS

By Holly Barnett, Assistant Director for Federal Programs

This Fall the Tennessee Historical Commission awarded 21 matching grants totaling over \$800,000 from the Federal Historic Preservation Fund allocated to non-profits, municipalities, universities, and civic organizations across the state to support the preservation of historic and archaeological resources. This year's grant awards include a wide variety of historic and architectural projects, all listed below. Several projects this year continue previous projects such as the successful cemetery survey program in Nashville. Other grants will assist in funding preservation planners in seven of the state's development districts and other grants are for posters highlighting the state's archaeology and the restoration of historic buildings.

A complete list of grant recipients and/or National Register listed sites of the projects include:

Davidson County

Andrew Jackson Foundation
\$30,000 to restore the Alfred's Cabin at the Hermitage, a National Historic Landmark

Metropolitan Historical Commission
\$43,000 to fund forth phase of the countywide cemetery survey and preservation plan

Preserve Lindsley Avenue Now
\$60,000 to restore stained glass windows of the Lindsley Avenue Church of Christ

Fentress County

Sergeant Alvin C. York State Historic Park
\$6,000 to update the Honeymoon House

Hawkins County

City of Rogersville
\$70,000 to fund the restoration of exterior of the Powell Law Office

Henry County

City of Paris
\$25,000.00 to restore Paris Lee School Annex Windows

Knox County

Knoxville Botanical Garden and Arboretum
\$70,000 to restore windows and doors of the Joe Howell Home

Montgomery County

Clarksville Montgomery County Regional Planning Commission
\$30,000 to develop Downtown Urban Design Standards

Roan Mountain State Park
\$11,500 to fund Miller Farmstead Archaeology and Preservation Plan

Williamson County

Heritage Foundation of Williamson County
\$15,000 for County Survey (1st of multiyear countywide project with focus on African American history)

Multi-County Grants

Middle Tennessee State University, Department of Sociology and Anthropology
\$4,025 for posters for Tennessee Archaeology Week.

Middle Tennessee State University, Fullerton Laboratory for Spatial Technology
\$65,000.00 GIS services for historic/architectural survey

East Tennessee Development District

\$40,000 to fund a preservation specialist staff position for the East Tennessee Development District

First Tennessee Development District

\$39,000 to fund a preservation specialist staff position for the First Tennessee Development District

Northwest Tennessee Development District

\$38,500 to fund a preservation specialist staff position for the Northwest Tennessee Development District

Mid-South Development District

\$39,000 to fund a preservation consultant to prepare National Register of Historic Places nominations and address preservation needs

South Central Tennessee Development District

\$50,000 to fund a preservation specialist staff position for the South Central Tennessee Development District

Southeast Tennessee Development District

\$54,000 to fund a preservation specialist staff position for the Southeast Tennessee Development District

Southwest Tennessee Development District

\$44,000 to fund a preservation specialist staff position for the Southwest Tennessee Development District

Upper Cumberland Development District

\$35,000 to fund a preservation specialist staff position for the Upper Cumberland Development District



Knoxville Botanical Garden and Arboretum

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES NEWS

By J. Ethan Holden, National Register Coordinator

Four Tennessee Properties Added to National Register of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places is the nation's official list of cultural resources worthy of preservation. It is part of a nationwide program that coordinates and supports efforts to identify, evaluate and protect historic resources. The State Historic Preservation Office administers the program in Tennessee. The state's new listings are:

West J. Crawford House

Listed November 4, 2024

(Memphis - Shelby County)

The West J. Crawford House was listed in the National Register on November 4, 2024, under Criterion C for its local architectural significance. The handsome Italianate residence was constructed in 1877 to serve as the home of West J. Crawford and Annie Louise Thompson. It was once part of the formerly listed Vance-Pontotoc Historic District, a neighborhood locally known as "Millionaire's Row." Wealthy Memphians like Crawford constructed lavish houses in the Italianate, Queen Anne, and other Victorian-era styles in the area. Now, the West J. Crawford is the only remaining Italianate House on Lauderdale Street, and one of the last three houses that comprised the original neighborhood. Important features of the Crawford House include its side-passage plan, brick construction, arched hooded windows, overhanging eaves, decorative brackets, and classically influenced porch.



Photograph Courtesy of Esosa Osayamen



Photograph Courtesy of Sara Anderson

Mossy Creek Presbyterian Church

Listed November 6, 2024

(Jefferson County)

Located in Jefferson City, the Mossy Creek Presbyterian Church was listed in the National Register on November 6, 2024, for local architectural significance under Criterion C as an excellent example of its style. The original portion of the church was constructed in 1871 and featured a two-story bell tower on the façade, imposing brick pilasters, decorative brick turrets, and tall-arched windows. An addition was constructed on the rear of the church in 1949 to accommodate the church's growing needs. The rear addition is characterized by its modest Colonial Revival influences. Nomination research concluded that Mossy Creek Presbyterian Church may be one of the earliest surviving examples of its style as it pertains to religious architecture in East Tennessee. The church currently houses the First Presbyterian Church of Jefferson County. The congregation continues to preserve the church building and serves the local community through various outreach programs.

Rosenwald Recreation and Community Center

Listed November 21, 2024

(Shelbyville - Bedford County)

The Rosenwald Recreation and Community Center in Shelbyville was listed in the National Register on November 21, 2024, under Criterion A for its local significance in the educational and social life of the surrounding African American community. In 1929, local African American citizens formed clubs to fundraise for the establishment of a larger school for their children. Known as the Rosenwald Clubs, the organizations met monthly with a Rosenwald Building Agent named Professor Robert E. Clay. The clubs raised approximately \$1700 and purchased two lots of land for a school. However, Shelbyville and Bedford County opened the Bedford County Training in School in 1939. In response, community members used the funds and land to build the Rosenwald Recreation and Community Building for the use and benefit of the local African American community. The building hosted vital community activities, including tutoring, art classes, and family festivals. Outdoors sports like baseball and basketball were held on the grounds, and the large backyard was used for band practice. The center continued to be an important asset into the 1980s and 1990s



Photograph Courtesy of Rebecca Schmitt

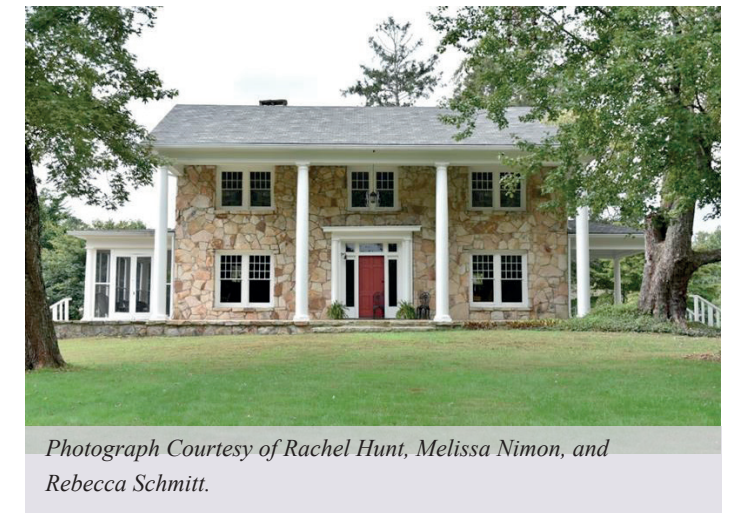
and served as the location for the South Central Human Resource Agency's Early HeadStart Program for twenty-years until 2020. The Rosenwald organization continues to maintain the building and serve the local community.

Bachman - McCoy Farm

Listed December 2, 2024

(Hamilton County)

Nestled along Anderson Pike near the historic W Road in the Town of Walden on Signal Mountain, the Bachman-McCoy farm was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on December 2, 2024, for its historical significance. Bachman family members played significant roles in local politics, social reform causes, and environmental preservation. In 1911 Nathan L. Bachman purchased the property as a summer home for his family. By 1918, the Bachmans had transformed the property into a full-time residence and gentleman's farm. With the farm as his home base, Nathan L. Bachman rose in Tennessee's political world, serving in the Tennessee Supreme Court and as an important southern Senator in the U.S. Congress during the first phase of the New Deal from 1933 to 1936. He played roles in the creation of the Tennessee Valley Authority and the passage of the Social Security Act. His wife, Pearl Duke Bachman, had significant involvement in the local Garden Club movement. She was an early advocate for land conservation and other social causes. Their daughter, Martha Bachman McCoy,



Photograph Courtesy of Rachel Hunt, Melissa Nimon, and Rebecca Schmitt.

became a powerful voice for highway beautification. Martha and her family became the farm's primary residents ca. 1940. Her will transferred the farm to the Town of Walden for use as a public park. The property's 38 acres are now open daily for outdoor recreation and events.

Want to see properties be considered for listing in the National Register of Historic Places in person? Our State Review Board meets every January, May, and September to consider nominations for listing in the National Register. Come see us in 2025 on the following dates at 2941 Lebanon Pike Nashville, TN 37214.

- **May 16, 2025 at 9:00 am CDT**
- **September 19, 2025 at 9:00 am CDT**

THC AWARDS \$2 MILLION IN NEW HISTORIC PRESERVATION GRANT PROGRAM

By Caty Dirksen, Outreach Coordinator

The Tennessee Historical Commission announces the awarding of 23 matching grants totaling \$2 million from the Historic Property/Land Acquisition Fund (HPLAF) program. These grants, which come from real estate transfer tax growth funds that have been allocated to the Commission will be used to fund historic restoration and rehabilitation projects for National Register-listed properties in Tennessee that have a public benefit.

“This new state grant program is an important component of our mission of revitalizing historic places across Tennessee,” said Patrick McIntyre, Tennessee State Historic Preservation Officer and Executive Director of the Tennessee Historical Commission,

A complete list of grant recipients include:

Carroll County

Webb Alumni Association Inc.
\$54,000 for the restoration of the Webb Public School

Carter County

City of Elizabethton
\$100,000 for window repair at the U.S. Post Office

Coffee County

Coffee County Historical Society
\$150,000 to restore the main entrance to the Coffee County Courthouse

Davidson County

Preserve Lindsley Ave Now (PLAN)
\$12,000 for the restoration of stained-glass windows at Lindsley Ave Church of Christ

Fentress County

Alvin C. York State Historic Park
\$100,000 to restore the Honeymoon House



Gibson County Courthouse in Trenton, recipient of a \$150,000 grant.

adding “from historic courthouses to museums, this program will help a variety of time-honored landmarks that make our communities unique.”

This year’s grant awards include a wide variety of historic and architectural projects, all listed below. The grant program requires a 10% match of project funds from the grantee and is for properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places that also have a strong public engagement component such as museums, courthouses, and libraries. These projects meet the goals and objectives of the Tennessee Historical Commission’s plan for historic preservation.

Gibson County

Gibson County
\$150,000 to restore the porch at the Gibson County Courthouse

Grainger County

Grainger County
\$100,000 to restore the Old Grainger County Jail

Greene County

Blue Springs Historical Association, Inc.
\$75,000 for the exterior restoration of the Blue Springs Lutheran Church

Grundy County

Savage Gulf State Park
\$45,000 for a trail improvement project

Hamilton County

National Park Partners
\$150,000 for the structural restoration of the Brown’s Ferry Tavern

Haywood County

Christ Church Brownsville
\$100,000 to restore the bell tower of the Zion Church, Christ Church Brownsville

Temple Adas Israel

\$100,000 to repair the stained-glass windows at Temple Adas Israel

Hawkins County

Rogersville Heritage Association
\$100,000 to restore the Rogers Tavern

Henry County

Paris Henry County Heritage Center
\$31,000 to replace the roof of Cavitt Place



Brown’s Ferry Tavern in Chattanooga, recipient of a \$150,000 grant.

Humphreys County

Johnsonville State Historic Area
\$65,000 to remove hazardous trees throughout the earthworks

Jefferson County

Bethel Presbyterian Church
\$50,000 to restore the Bethel Presbyterian Church

Lincoln County

Fayetteville-Lincoln County Museum
\$135,000 to replace the roof at the Lincoln County Museum, Borden Powdered Milk Plant

McMinn County

Beth Salem Cumberland Presbyterian Church
\$55,000 to restore windows at the Beth Salem Presbyterian Church

Monroe County

Monroe County
\$43,000 for an exterior restoration of the Monroe County Courthouse



Webb Public School in McKenzie, recipient of a \$54,000 grant.

Roane County

Roane County Heritage Commission
\$125,000 to restore the Roane County Courthouse

Shelby County

Junior League of Memphis
\$40,000 for the restoration of the Boyce-Gregg House

Sullivan County

Sullivan County
\$70,000 to replace the cedar shake roof on the Anderson Townhouse

Williamson County

The Heritage Foundation of Williamson County
\$150,000 for the restoration of the Winstead House



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Public Comment Solicited
As the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), the Tennessee Historical Commission is soliciting public comment and advice on its administration of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). Especially, we are seeking input on such matters as geographic areas or classes of properties which may be a priority for survey and/or registration efforts, criteria and priorities which should be established for Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) grants, and ways and means through which local efforts at preservation of historic properties can be most effectively assisted. The HPF is the federal fund appropriated under the authority of the NHPA to assist states in carrying out the purposes of the NHPA. Comments and advice on other areas and issues of a more general nature are also encouraged. Activities carried out by SHPO under the mandate of the NHPA include efforts to survey and inventory historic properties across the state and to nominate the most significant of them the National Register of Historic Places. Other activities involve programs to protect and preserve properties once they are identified by reviewing Federal projects to determine if they will adversely affect historic properties; administering the federal historic tax credit program; awarding and administering HPF grants; and providing technical assistance and advice to local governments which are attempting to establish local programs and ordinances to protect historic properties. The comments received will be used to structure the SHPO’s annual application to the National Park Service for these funds. The public input and advice which we are soliciting now will help to set both general office objectives and to establish priorities and criteria for the review of grant applications. Comments are accepted throughout the year and should be addressed to Holly Barnett, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Tennessee Historical Commission, 2941 Lebanon Pike, Nashville, Tennessee 37214. This program receives Federal funds from the National Park Service. Regulations of the U.S. Department of the Interior strictly prohibit unlawful discrimination in departmental federally assisted programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, age or disability. Any person who believes he or she has been discriminated against in any program, activity or facility operated by a recipient of Federal assistance should write to: Director, Equal Opportunity Program, U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, D.C. 20013-7127 Tennessee Historical Commission, Authorization Number 331973, 4,906 copies promulgated at a cost of \$1.06 per copy, 1/15/25.

60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE VOTING RIGHTS ACT OF 1965

By Linda T. Wynn, Assistant Director for State Programs

The Voting Rights Act of 1965 had a long circuitous passage before the United States Congress passed and President Lyndon Johnson signed it into law. Voting rights, expressly enfranchisement and disenfranchisement of diverse groups, have been a moral as well as a disputative political challenge throughout United States history. Because of their status in a white male dominated society, the right of the franchise was elusive for both African Americans and women. America began its democratic experiment in the late 1700s when its governmental leaders granted the right to vote to a limited subset of society — white male landowners. Until the ratification of the United State Constitution, the young nation was governed under the Articles of Confederation that made the newly formed nation of states act more like independent sovereign countries. It promptly became apparent to some of the young nation's leaders that future stability required a stronger, more centralized government. The drafting of the Constitution of the United States began on May 25, 1787, when the Constitutional Convention met for the first time with a quorum at the Pennsylvania State House (now Independence Hall) in Philadelphia, to revise the Articles of Confederation. It ended on September 17, 1787, when the Frame of Government drafted by the convention's delegates to replace the Articles was adopted and signed. The ratification process for the Constitution began that day, and ended when the final state, Rhode Island, ratified it on May 29, 1790. A year before the ratification of the U. S. Constitution in September 1789, the First U. S. Congress proposed to state legislatures twelve amendments to the Constitution. Articles 3 through 12, ratified December 15, 1791, by three-fourths of the state legislatures and constitutes the first ten amendments of the Constitution, known as the Bill of Rights. Article 2 concerning "varying the compensation for the services of the Senators and Representatives" was ratified in May 1992 as the 27th Amendment. The first amendment that concerned the number of constituents for each Representative was never ratified. African Americans and women were not allowed to participate in the governance of what became the United States of America.

The issue of Women's Rights emerged during the American Revolution, when Abigail Adams warned her husband, John Adams (2nd U.S. president and founding father), not to adopt the repressive code of common law, or the ladies were "bound to foment a rebellion." In some colonies women voted, but all women lost the right to vote with each state constitution drafted between 1777 and 1807. Like women, African American men were generally denied the right of the ballot. The denial of the

franchise to African Americans and women was also evident in Tennessee's Constitution.

In 1796, Tennessee's constitution granted the franchise to all free men who met property and residency requirements, as well as the right to and bear arms. Although this provision applied to a small number of free men of African descent, the state's 1835 Constitution no longer used the ownership of property as a requirement for white voters. In its place a poll tax was instituted that voters paid for and provided a source of revenue for the state. From the state's African American perspective, one of the most devastating aspects of the state's 1835 Constitution was its left enslavement as a part of its body politic and overturned their right to bear arms and stripped away their right of the franchise. It took 35 years before African American men regained their right to vote.

After the Civil War ended in 1865 and the war-torn country entered the Reconstruction era, it took five years before the passage and ratification of an amendment to the U. S. Constitution granting African American male the right to vote. Tennessee, however, preceded the newly reunited nation in granting African American male the right of the franchise. The first state to return to the Union, in May 1866 the Tennessee General Assembly passed legislation giving African Americans the right to make contracts, to inherit property, to sue, and to hold equal benefits and protections under the laws. Yet, the right to vote remained elusive. However, two unrelated events aligned and instigated critical transformations.

Sampson Keeble, the Rev. Nelson G. Merry, Samuel and Peter Lowery, among others, organized the second State Colored Men's Convention, which met in Nashville in August 1866. They held daily marching protests at the Capitol in their quest to gain passage of a voting rights law aimed at giving African American men the right to vote. Governor William G. Brownlow took office in 1865. Brownlow understood that he could only maintain political power if he held Confederate sympathizers at bay and that enfranchised African Americans could increase his voter base. Consequently, he pressed the legislative branch to introduce and pass a bill granting African American men the right to vote. In March 1867, the state's legislative branch passed a bill giving African American men the right to vote and to hold political office. Tennessee's law granting African American men the right to vote, preceded the passage of the 15th Amendment to the United States Constitution that granted African American men the right to vote nationally by three years. By the time the 15th Amendment arrived in the state for ratification, legislators

were in the process of trying to negate the new voting law giving African American men the vote. Consequently, they refused to ratify the 15th Amendment. After 127 years, on April 2, 1997, Tennessee finally ratified the 15th Amendment, the last of the original thirty-seven states in the Union that had not committed an act of support.

Notwithstanding, the need for an amendment granting African American men the right to vote was the infamous 1857 *Dred Scott v. Sandford* Supreme Court decision that upheld enslavement and their status as non-citizens. On March 6 of that year, Chief Justice Roger B. Taney rendered the Court's majority opinion that enslaved people were not American citizens and, consequently could not expect any protection from the federal government or the courts. The Court's opinion further stated that Congress had no authority to end enslavement from federal territory. The Reconstruction Amendments ended that status of African Americans. The 13th Amendment ended the institution of enslavement; the 14th Amendment made African Americans citizens overturning the Supreme Court's *Dred Scott* decision; and the 15th Amendment gave African American men the right of the franchise. It took another 50 years for women to gain the right to vote and Tennessee played the significant role in women gaining the right to vote.

As Reconstruction ended, the United States Supreme Court again used its long-reaching judicial arm to end the rights gained by African Americans, with its 1896 *Plessy v. Ferguson* decision. This decision issued on May 18, 1896, upheld state-imposed Jim Crow laws that became the legal basis for racial segregation in the United States for the next fifty years. For African Americans, this ruling impacted every aspect of their lives, including the right to vote.

From the Reconstruction era until the 20th century push for civil rights, Jim Crow laws such as literacy tests, poll taxes, state and local discriminatory practices, and other means of denying the right to vote to African American citizens, over time the federal role in elections increased through three U. S. Supreme Court cases until the Voting Rights Act of 1965. They included the 1876 case of *United States v. Reese*; the 1915 case of *Guinn v. United States*; and the 1944 case of *Smith v. Allwright*.

The *United States v. Reese*, the first voting rights case since the passage of the 15th Amendment, was when Kentucky election officials refused to allow William Garner, an African American, to cast his ballot. This action violated the 1870 Enforcement Act. The Supreme Court held that the relevant sections of the Enforcement Act were unconstitutional because the act was not sufficiently designed to enforce the 15th Amendment. The ruling in this case resulted in significant repercussions for voting rights. The ruling emboldened Southern states to enact discriminatory practices such as literacy test, poll taxes, grandfather clauses and other nefarious and reprehensible voting rules to circumvent African Americans from casting their ballots.

The *Guinn v. United States* case, decided in June 1915, held that Oklahoma's literacy test exempted individuals and their descendants who cast a ballot on January 1, 1866, prior to

the passage of the 15th Amendment. The first case in which the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) filed a brief, striking down the "grandfather clause" in Oklahoma's Voter Registration Act of 1910 because the clause discriminated against African Americans and, therefore, violated the 15th Amendment. The statute required voters to pass a reading test. However, the law exempted all those entitled to vote on January 1, 1866, just after the Civil War ended (and before the approval in 1870 of the 15th Amendment, which guaranteed voting rights for all male citizens, regardless of race, as well as their descendants. In 1866 those whose "grandfathers" voted; the law allowed their descendants to register to vote without passing a literacy test. In 1915 the U.S. government prosecuted the officials for criminal conspiracy to deny voting rights to Oklahoma's African American voting population. Justice Edward White struck down the grandfather clause, writing that the act "is based purely on a period before the enactment of the 15th Amendment and makes that period the controlling and dominant test of the right of suffrage." Founded on February 12, 1909, the Guinn case helped launch the NAACP into civil rights eminence. The Civil Rights organization fought two other voting rights cases. In 1927 the *Nixon v. Herndon* case struck down the Texas Democratic that prohibited African Americans from voting in the Texas Democratic Party primary and the 1932 *Nixon v. Condon* case that passed another variation to maintain the white primary system. Dr. Lawrence A. Nixon, an African American physician, brought both cases before the court with the assistance of the NAACP. The last case that focused on voting rights prior to the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 was the 1944 *Smith v. Allwright* case out of the state of Texas.

The Texas Democratic Party prohibited African Americans from voting in its primaries, and the state of Texas argued that this was allowable because the state was not acting. The Supreme Court contended that the party's white-only primaries violated the 14th and 15th Amendments. Litigated by Thurgood Marshall (future Supreme Court Justice), who argued that the Texas Democratic Primary permitted whites to structurally dominate the politics of the one-party South. The United States Supreme Court ruled in favor of the plaintiff. The *Smith v. Allwright* case overturned the Supreme Court's 1935 *Grovey v. Townsend* case that permitted white-only primaries on the basis that private, voluntary organizations ran the organizations. However, the nation's highest court held in *Smith* that Texas entrusted its authority to the state Democratic Party and consequently, the unconstitutional racial bias was, by extension, state action. The end to the white-only primary provided a building block for African American political power in the South. With the onset of the Modern Civil Rights Movement that began with the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court decision that desegregated public primary and secondary public schools, the efforts to desegregate American society across the nation, moved beyond litigation and the court system to direct action protest and the United States Congress.



Beginning in 1960 students conducted sit-ins across the South. The Student Movement across the South; the 1963 March on Washington; the assassination of President John F. Kennedy on November 22, 1963; and voting rights protests across the South led to the Voting Rights Act of 1965. One year prior to the passage of the 1965 Voting Rights Act, Congress on January 23, 1964, ratified the Constitution's 24th Amendment, which abolished and prohibited the federal and state governments from imposing poll taxes on voters during federal elections.

African Americans in the South faced tremendous obstacles to voting, including poll taxes, literacy tests, and other bureaucratic restrictions to deny them the right to vote. They also risked harassment, intimidation, economic reprisals, and physical violence when they tried to register or vote. As a result, African American voter registration was limited, along with political power.

In 1964 numerous peaceful demonstrations organized by Civil Rights leaders and the malevolent violence that accosted them brought renewed attention to the obstruction of voting rights, especially in the South. Following the 1964 elections, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) urged the federal government to take action to protect the voting rights of racial minorities. The struggle to obtain voting rights was beset with violence and even death by those wanting to keep the vote from African Americans and maintain the racial status quo.

Their Alabama protests, especially in Selma, met the force of the police who sadistically fought African American voter registration efforts. SNCC's James Forman of SNCC said: "Our strategy, as usual, was to force the U.S. government to intervene in case there were arrests—and if they did not intervene, that inaction would once again prove the government was not on our side and thus intensify the development of a mass consciousness among blacks. Our slogan for this drive was 'One Man, One Vote'."

The murders of Mississippi voting-rights activists James Chaney, Andrew Goodman, and Michael Schwerner on June 21, 1964, by local members of the Klan and the attack by white state troopers on peaceful marchers in Selma, Alabama, gained national attention and persuaded President Johnson and Congress to initiate a meaningful and effective national voting rights legislation. The combination of public revulsion to the violence and Johnson's political skills, the long circuitous journey to African Americans gaining the right of the franchise ended when Congress passed the voting rights bill on August 5, 1965.

Since 2013, the Voting Rights Act came under assault when the U. S. Supreme Court made its ruling in the *Shelby County v. Holder*, which on June 25, 2013, the U.S. Supreme issued its devastating decision when it struck down the law's formula for determining which states and localities should be required to get federal approval for changes to voting policies to ensure that they were not racially discriminatory. Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act has also come under attack. In 2021 *Brnovich v. Democratic National Committee* made it more difficult to mount successful Section 2 challenges against discriminatory voting rules. However, in June 2023, the Supreme Court in a 5-4 opinion upheld the lower court's finding that Alabama illegally diluted the electoral power of African American voters and forcefully rejected the state's attempt to strike down or scale back the law. The Court decidedly reaffirmed the legal framework that has guided Section 2 cases for 40 years.

Amendments passed by Congress in the 19th and 20th centuries granted African American men, the right of the franchise through the 15th Amendment; in 1920 women gained the right to vote through the 19th Amendment; the 24th Amendment eliminated the poll tax in 1964; and in 1971, the 26th Amendment granted the right to vote to those 18 years of age.

A SUCCESSFUL OUTCOME AT THE MARCUS WINCHESTER CEMETERY IN MEMPHIS

by Graham Perry, Historic Cemetery Preservation Specialist

This past quarter, the Tennessee Historical Commission was able to aid ALSAC/St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in the discovery and relocation of a portion of the Marcus Winchester Cemetery in Memphis, located underneath a former city garage. St. Jude initially purchased the lot from Shelby County to expand visitor parking but was not informed at the time of its historical importance. Tennessee Historical Commission Cemetery Committee member, Jimmy Rout worked with THC staff to ensure that St. Jude was informed about this cemetery section, which likely contained the grave of Memphis's first Mayor, Marcus Winchester.

After bringing the issue to the Shelby County Land Use Board, St. Jude eagerly vowed to follow all state laws pertaining to the Family Burial Grounds Protection Act and hired an archeology company to watch as the surface layer of the ground in question was peeled away. Fairly quickly, human remains were discovered and a total of more than 40 graves were found. St. Jude is currently working closely with the Elmwood Cemetery to relocate the affected remains to an appropriate location on the historically significant cemetery's grounds. St. Jude should be applauded for taking the advice of the Tennessee Historical Commission and stands an example for other developments across the state.

Additionally, the Tennessee Historical Commission was pleased to host a cemetery preservation workshop this past November at the Willow Mount Cemetery in Shelbyville. Nationally recognized cemetery preservation icon, Jon Appell, demonstrated how to clean, level, and repair tombstones with hands-on participation from a large group of attendees. During this two-day cemetery preservation workshop, the group repaired 8 markers and cleaned more than 50 markers.

The Tennessee Historical Commissions Cemetery Committee is currently preparing for the upcoming recommendation report for the legislature, the due date of which is at the end of 2025. One issue that the committee would like to draw interest to includes providing detailed visitation rules, as many surrounding states have already addressed. Such rules would greatly help family members and landowners understand what is expected during cemetery visits. THC would like to thank the following committee members for their dedicated service: Jimmy Rout, Dr. Beverly Bond, Linda Moss Mines, Phil Hodge, Fletch Coke, and Loni Harris. The Tennessee Historical Commission would like to thank Nick Fielder, former State Archeologist, for his service on the Cemetery Committee since its inception. Mr. Fielder, who recently resigned, has been instrumental in helping the group familiarize itself with opportunities for improving Tennessee's current cemetery laws.

Cemeteries Recently added to the Historic Cemetery Register

Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Shelby County. *Listed October 10, 2024.*

Rosson Cemetery, Gibson County. *Listed November 4, 2024.*

Martin Family Cemetery, Weakley County. *Listed November 25, 2024.*

Beaverdam Ancient Cemetery, Benton County. *Listed December 2, 2024.*

Moore Chapel Cemetery, Benton County. *Listed January 2, 2025.*



Jonathan Appell demonstrates, proper cemetery preservation techniques at the Willow Mount Cemetery preservation workshop held in Shelbyville, November 2024.



Winchester Cemetery in Memphis.

TENNESSEE HISTORICAL COMMISSION CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Spring into the new year with our State Historic Sites, check out their events on our website's calendar!

- **State of Franklin Battle at Tipton-Haynes State Historic Site**
February 22, 2025 from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm EST
- **Nashville Opera Presents: When Marian Sang at the Clement Railroad Hotel Museum at Hotel Halbrook State Historic Site**
March 7, 2025 from 7:00 pm CST
- **Living History Day at Sam Houston Schoolhouse State Historic Site**
March 15-16, 2025 from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm EST

WINTER
2025

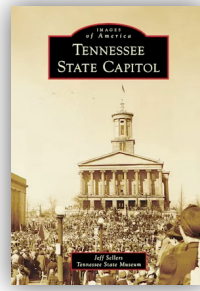


SCAN FOR MORE
EVENTS

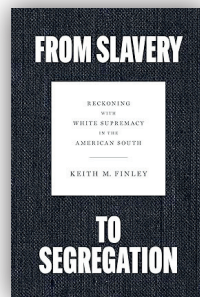
PUBLICATIONS TO NOTE

By Linda T. Wynn, Assistant Director for State Programs

Arcadia Publishing published Historian Jeff Sellers' *Tennessee State Capitol*. Sellers, the director of education and community engagement at the Tennessee State Museum assembled a collection of images from archives and private collections. Sellers reviews the construction design of the Tennessee State Capitol's noted architect William Strickland's fastidious Greek Revival design, one of the last great monuments to Greek Revival architecture in America, its "Civil War-era military occupation, the constant determination of preservation efforts, and the ever-changing neighborhood that surrounds the capitol." He also introduces the readers to the individuals who breathed life into what became known as "the people's house." Among those who helped the capitol become the "People's house" were fifteen enslaved men, loaned to the state government by A.G. Payne, a Nashville stone mason. For a year they carved out the Capitol's cellar, their skilled labor worth twice as much as the unskilled labor of free men, broke through tons of limestone rock and carting it away after digging. Convict labor also contributed to the construction of the state's Capitol building, which is one of the most historical and architectural buildings in the nation. Completed fourteen years later in 1859, the Tennessee State Capitol sits on what was originally known as Campbell's Hill named for its owner, Judge George Washington Campbell. Since the laying of the cornerstone, it has been known as Capitol Hill. Illustrated with numerous images that take the reader through the state's various historical stages, Sellers' *Tennessee State Capitol* is a must have tome for Tennesseans. **Paperback \$24.99.**

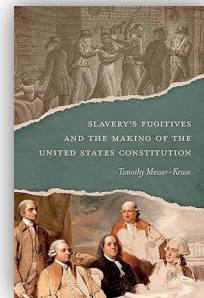


Louisiana State University Press published Keith M. Finley's *From Slavery to Segregation: Reckoning with White Supremacy in the American South*. This tome explores the strategic features of shaping southern politics during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as explicated in the region's justification of its racial structures that treated enslavement and racial apartheid as part of the same systems rather than as separate institutions rooted in different periods. While emphasizing the all-encompassing overview of the South's racial and political thinking, Finley, an associate professor of history and assistant director of the Center for Southeast Louisiana Studies at Southeastern Louisiana University, stresses the American struggle with racial injustice, while well-defined and executed in the South, plagued all of America. In this volume, the author reveals elements of continuity and change in the South's identity. The Old South and

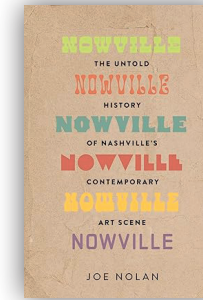


the New South shared a comparable constellation of philosophies that imparted arguments spreading their corresponding race-based social orders that took the form of a unity of perspicacity regarding race, a perception of being assailed by outsiders, and a "succession of appeals to the highest secular authority in the pantheon of regional and American beliefs—the Constitution." The author of *Delaying the Dream: Southern Senators and the Fight Against Civil Rights 1938-1965* illustrates how the twentieth century South narrative is linked to the nineteenth century. This work illustrates that "history, after all, is best understood as a continuum not a series of isolated events that fall neatly into a preordained timeframe." **Hardcover, \$45.00**

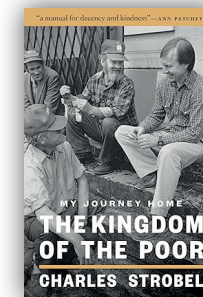
Louisiana State University Press also published *Slavery's Fugitives and the Making of the United States Constitution* by Timothy Messer-Kruse. In this tome the author extracts a long-hidden factor that led to the Constitutional Convention in 1787. Messer-Kruse argues that scholars have discounted Americans' desire to compel Britain to return fugitives from enslavement as a driving force behind the convention. Enslaved individuals, when offered freedom, joined forces with the British during the Revolutionary War. After the defeat of the British at the Battle of Yorktown, which ended on October 19, 1781, American diplomats demanded the return of the fugitive enslaved. The standoff over the those who escaped enslavement escalated following the Revolution as Britain failed to abandon the western forts it occupied and took steps to curtail American commerce. When the British refused, several states confiscated Loyalist estates and blocked payment of English creditors, hoping to apply pressure on the Crown to hand over those who escaped the institution of enslavement. The Treaty of Paris signed by U.S. and British Representatives on September 3, 1783, ended the War of the American Revolution. However, state laws conflicted with the 1783 treaty as it violated the Articles of Confederation—the first constitution of the American nation. However, Congress lacked an executive branch or a federal judiciary, consequently it had no way to compel states to comply. Messer-Kruse, a professor in the School of Cultural and Critical Studies at Bowling Green State University, contends that the issue prompted the founders to consider scraping the Articles of Confederation and drafting a superseding document that would dramatically increase federal authority—the Constitution that was ratified on June 21, 1788, when New Hampshire became the thirteenth state to approve the Constitution that became the official framework of the United States government. **Hardcover, \$45.00**



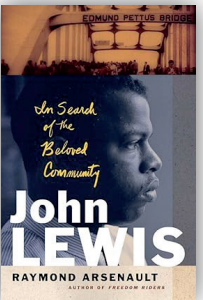
Vanderbilt University Press published *Nowville: The Untold History of Nashville's Contemporary Art Scene* by Joe Nolan. This title is an oral history of Nashville's art scene that began in the 1990s. Nolan pursues Nashville art punks, art monks, radical art students, and visionary pioneers to disclose what made their moments in Nashville special. He alerts the reader that Nashville's modern art legacy is rooted in three events in the city's Edgehill and North Nashville neighborhoods, in the first half of the twentieth century; Aaron Douglas's founding of the Art Department at Fisk University in the 1930s; William Edmondson becoming the first African American artist to mount a one-man exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art in 1937; and Georgia O'Keeffe's gifting the Stieglitz Collection to Fisk University in 1949. Nolan, an intermedia artist based in Nashville whose practice includes photography, multimedia paintings, public radio poetry broadcasts, and public projects, spoke with numerous individuals who created Nashville's contemporary art renaissance. Composed of thirteen chapters, *Nowville* provides the reader with the origin story of Nashville's surging contemporary art scene told by the ones who were there. It is not an account about commercial spaces or official institutions—this is the story of moldy warehouse studios and improvised galleries, happy-kegger after-parties and front lawn art sales, exhibitions in apartment living rooms and secret art displays hidden in plain sight. **Paperback, \$24.95**



Vanderbilt University Press additionally published *The Kingdom of the Poor: My Journey Home* by Charles Strobel. With the assistance of his niece, Katie Seigenthaler, his colleague, Amy Frogge, and edited by Ann Patchett, Charles Strobel sets about to explain why he was born. A native Nashvillian, Charles Frederick Strobel graduated from Father Ryan High School in 1961. After high school, Strobel studied for the priesthood. He attended St. Mary College in Lebanon, Kentucky, where he earned a bachelor's degree in philosophy. Furthering his education, he earned a master's degree in education from Xavier University in Cincinnati, Ohio, and a master's degree in theology from The Theological College of The Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. While in D. C., he became active in the Modern Civil Rights Movement. On January 31, 1970, Bishop Joseph Durick ordained Strobel into the priesthood at the Cathedral. Known for his generosity toward the city's less fortunate and unhoused, Strobel began the Room in the Inn, a program that provided shelter from the harsh cold nights. *The Kingdom of the Poor* reveals a people narrative and the occurrences that led Father Strobel to epitomize Matthew 22:39 "... Love your neighbor as yourself." **Hardcover, \$29.95**



Yale University Press published Raymond Arsenault's *John Lewis: In Search of the Beloved Community*. The John Hope Franklin Professor of Southern History emeritus at the University of South Florida, Dr. Arsenault is the author of several award-winning books including *Freedom Riders: 1961 and the Struggle for Racial Justice*; *The Sound of Freedom: Marian Anderson, the Lincoln Memorial, and the Concert That Awakened America*; and *Arthur Ashe: A Life*. His *John Lewis: In Search of the Beloved Community* is the first full-length biography of Georgia's late Congressman John Robert Lewis that describes his search for a more perfect union. This tome reveals Lewis's time as a planner and participant of protests that began in Nashville and continued throughout the South, his service in the United States House of Representatives from Georgia's 5th Congressional District from 1987 until his death in 2020, and his time as an American elder statesman. This work intersects with present day events and suggests the idea that history sets the context for the present or as William Shakespear noted in his play *The Tempest*, "what is past is prologue." Arsenault traces Lewis's upbringing in rural Alabama, his activism as a participant in the Nashville Sit-in Movement, Freedom Rider, and leader of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, his championing of voting rights and anti-poverty initiatives, and his decades of service as the "conscience of Congress." Lewis's activism led to repeated arrests and beatings, most notably when he suffered a skull fracture in Selma, Alabama, during the 1965 police attack later known as Bloody Sunday. He was instrumental in the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and in Congress he advocated for racial and economic justice, immigration reform, LGBTQ rights, and national health care. Lewis never wavered in this pursuit of the "beloved community," and though he is no longer among the living, in death his guidance prevails, motivating mobilization and resistance in the struggle for social justice. **Hardcover \$35.00**



HISTORICAL MARKERS

At its meeting on October 18, 2024, the Tennessee Historical Commission approved five historical markers: **Richard M. "Pek" Gunn 1904-1996**, Humphreys County; **West Gaines Colored School**, Lawrence County; **Christine Chatman**, Madison County; **Centenary United Methodist Church**, Shelby County; **First Settlers in Middle Tennessee**, Sumner County. Those interested in submitting proposed texts for markers should contact Linda T. Wynn at the Tennessee Historical Commission, 2941 Lebanon Pike, Nashville, Tennessee 37243-0442, or call (615) 770-1093.



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 TENNESSEE HISTORICAL COMMISSION
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ON THE COVER: Port Royal State Historic Park in Adams, TN. Photograph courtesy of Chad Burgess, Park Ranger, Tennessee State Parks, January 8, 2025.

