

## HISTORIC PRESERVATION

The Historic Preservation element discusses Boone County's historic, architectural, cultural, and archaeological resources as well as outlining ways to preserve them. Additionally, the element places these resources in their appropriate historic contexts in order to understand their true significance. Boone County's historic, cultural, architectural, and archaeological resources greatly enhance the quality of life for all county residents and give the county a sense of identity, making their preservation essential.

The preservation strategies developed for these resources are distinct from those for recreational and open space resources. Maintaining and developing recreational areas and open spaces is the responsibility of local governments, whereas historic preservation in Boone County is essentially a grass roots endeavor with direction or guidance supplied by the appropriate county agencies. For these reasons and those discussed in the preceding paragraph, a separate Historic Preservation Element was needed for the Boone County Comprehensive Plan.

### BOONE COUNTY HISTORY

The earliest occupants of Boone County, referred to as the Paleo-Indian culture, consisted of a highly mobile existence dependent upon the hunting of large game animals. Later people, referred to as Archaic peoples, developed a more diversified subsistence strategy based on choices from a variety of local options. A third time frame, the Woodland period (c. 1000 B.C. - A.D. 1000) contained the use of cultivated plants as the major subsistence strategy. A more sedentary lifestyle, and larger groups of people characterize this period. The Late Prehistoric Period (ca. A.D. 1000-1700) of the central Ohio Valley, known as Fort Ancient, reflects an elaboration of Late Woodland subsistence activities and social organization. Settlements were large villages located in valley bottoms. Some of the major sites located adjacent to or near the Ohio River were fortified; many had central plazas or courtyard areas. Smaller sites, possibly representing seasonal hunting camps, were located on tributary streams.

Perhaps the first European to visit Boone County was a Frenchman who sailed down the Ohio River in 1729. He highlighted primeval Boone County on his chart with an inscription in French that translates "where they found the bones of an elephant." Thus, Big Bone Lick became one of the wonders of the world.

That Frenchman was followed a decade later by Captain Charles de Longueil who was credited with the first investigation of that area. His account of the huge bones of dead mammals provided incentive for further exploration, and attracted the attention of the British and early American colonists. The salt deposits at Big Bone Lick had long been known to the American Indians and, in 1755, Mary Draper Ingles, the first recorded European woman to visit this region, escaped from her Shawnee captors while they were boiling water from the lick to make salt.

France claimed the Ohio Valley until the end of the French and Indian War, and a veteran of the war, Captain Thomas Bullitt, led surveyors to this territory in 1773 when it was a part of Fincastle County, Virginia. In 1789 over a decade after the first settlement in Central Kentucky, John Tanner, a Baptist preacher from North Carolina, established Tanner's Station where Petersburg is today. Tanner's Station was the first settlement in this region, and others rapidly moved in. The community's name was changed to Petersburg in 1814. These pioneers occupied tracts of land above and below Tanner's Station. Many came from central Kentucky, now Woodford and Scott counties, and in 1794, seven persons founded the Bullittsburg Baptist Church in the North Bend Bottoms above Tanner's Station. Other early settlers in the area were Captain Jacob Piatt and Captain John Brown, both of whom were from New Jersey and Revolutionary War veterans.

Many pioneers during this first period of settlement migrated from Virginia. A large portion of them were of German ancestry and came from the Germanna community in Madison County, Virginia. Eleven people from that place arrived in 1805 under the leadership of Ephraim Tanner. The following year, they organized the Hopeful Lutheran Church in the east-central part of the county. Other families came after them and settled in Florence and Hebron (named after Hebron, Virginia).

When Boone County was officially established in 1799 (having been created by the Kentucky Legislature in 1798), less than two hundred men owned all of the land and the population was 1,500. On June 17, 1799 the first county court decided to locate the county seat on a seventy-four acre site donated by Robert Johnson and John H. Craig. The town was originally called Craig's Camp which was changed to Wilmington and then renamed Burlington in 1816.

Boone County prospered because of the Ohio River which forms its northern and western boundaries. At one time there were six ferry crossings to the opposite shore, and as many shipping points with warehouses. There was a distillery at Petersburg, and another at Hamilton. Steamboats were built at Big Bone and Belleview, and steam packets offered service to the far reaches of the Ohio and Mississippi rivers.

Inland, blacksmith and wagon shops flourished at crossroads communities, and farmers cleared forests and cultivated grain in the rich soil. The waters of Gunpowder, Woolper and other creeks were harnessed by grist mills grinding the corn to meal and the wheat to flour. Most of the early farms had ready access to the Ohio River and its down river markets, and most appear to have thrived in the early years of the county's existence. The towns along the river, however, failed to develop as trade centers for the interior of the state. They, instead, became specialized centers for cross-river ferry traffic, post offices and general stores. The fertile floodplain along the Ohio River in Boone County seems to have attracted those settlers who were more interested in agriculture than in commerce, but there are probably other reasons, including geography and the nearby development of Cincinnati, for the lack of commercial growth in Boone County.

Despite Boone County's proximity to Cincinnati, its nineteenth century development was largely isolated from that of its large urban neighbor. Early in its history, Cincinnati became the chief urban focus for the central Ohio River Valley because of its reputation as a fortified settlement offering protection from Indian attacks, its role as a stopping point for westward bound settlers, and its large floodplain suitable for expansion. The population of Cincinnati in 1800 was 750, while that of Boone County was 1,534, but between 1800 and 1820 the population of Cincinnati took the lead.

The Kentucky cities along the Ohio River that were successful gateways to central Kentucky were either closer to the geographic center of the state, such as Maysville and Carrollton, or opposite the Ohio from Cincinnati, such as Newport and Covington. Even Boone County's potential advantage of having a major transportation corridor, the Dry Ridge Divide, pass through its border seems to have had a minimal effect on the county's economic growth until recent years. The crossroads town of Florence was established at the intersection of roads from Covington to Louisville and Lexington. Ten miles from Covington, it was thus the first stagecoach stop. However, in the late 1880's, the town of Erlanger was established across the county line from Florence. The railroad promoted the sale of land near its right-of-way, and Florence despaired. Its population fell off 24 percent at the turn of the century, and remained so until 1930. With the completion of the first railroad through the county, the town of Walton held great promise as the county's primary railroad town, but its growth dwindled even before the Great Depression. Young and old left farms for work in the city, and shopping "over the river" became the popular thing to do.

With the advent of the automobile, long, tiresome journeys to the city, over the river road through Constance or the Dixie Highway (new U.S. 25) through Florence, became short and enjoyable. It became possible to work in town and live in Boone County. It was the beginning of a new era.

The population of Boone County grew slowly between the Civil War and the 1890s and then declined slowly until the great population surge that began in the 1940s. Between 1920 and 1940, Boone County lost 21 percent of the number of its farms and 3 percent of the farmland acreage. The average farm size fluctuated little throughout the twentieth century: 93 acres in 1900 and 102 acres in 1969. Today, county acreage devoted to agriculture is steadily decreasing. In 1946 the airport for Cincinnati was dedicated in northeastern Boone County. The population of Boone County grew by twenty percent from 1940 to 1950. With the construction of Interstates 71 and 75 in the late 1950s, Boone County became one of the fastest growing counties in the nation. Based on 2000 census figures, Boone County is the fastest growing county in Kentucky.

## **HISTORICAL SETTING**

Located in the largest bend of the Ohio River a few miles downstream from Cincinnati, Boone County is the northernmost county in Kentucky. For forty-two miles the Ohio River bounds the county on the north and west. As in most sections of the outer Bluegrass region of Kentucky, the land in Boone County is gently rolling to steeply hilled. Historically Boone County's economy has been dominated by agriculture: corn, wheat and especially tobacco continue to be the principal cash crops. However, residential, commercial, and industrial growth are changing the once rural landscape of Boone County.

There are several significant natural and archaeological sites documented in the county. The natural sites are, for the most part, the result of the glacier's presence in the area. The archaeological sites represent the different periods of occupation by native aboriginal cultures. Boone County has a substantial number of log structures, and a wide variety of vernacular building types. It also has a significant group of houses near the river with links to Ohio River Valley Greek Revival architecture and several valuable variants of mid-19th century revival styles. Many of the historic

resources are farmsteads, but urban houses, commercial and industrial buildings, churches and schools are represented as well.

The land is drained by numerous small streams that flow westward into the Ohio River from headwaters along the Great Ridge, or Dry Ridge Divide. This major feature runs north-south just inside the eastern boundary of the county and has long served as a major transportation corridor connecting Cincinnati and Lexington. The completion of the Greater Cincinnati Airport in Boone County in 1946 and of I-75 in the 1950s has accelerated the suburban growth that began about 1950. This growth in population and the postwar rise of industry dominates the northeastern section of the county. Industrial growth is expanding in southern Boone County, especially around Walton, while the western portion remains relatively untouched by the more intrusive forms of 20th century culture. These rural sections have retained much of their 19th century character, marked by an almost total concentration on agricultural activities.

## **INVENTORY OF GEOLOGICAL, ARCHAEOLOGICAL, AND ARCHITECTURAL SITES**

### **Geological/Natural Sites**

The bedrock of Boone County is primarily limestone and shale. Along with the parent material, glacial deposits occur in the northwestern section of Boone County. It is this region that was covered by early glaciation but untouched by later glaciers. It is estimated that as much as one-fourth of Boone County is covered by glacial tills and associated alluvial deposits. The remnants of two terraces are visible along the Ohio River (Boone Cliffs & Split Rock). Ravine and valley deposits are comprised of glacial gravels, sand and silt, along with alluvial deposits (glacial deposits in Woolper & Gunpowder creeks). Boone County is noted for its numerous mineral springs, the most famous of which is Big Bone Lick. The saline water of the springs arises from the Saint Peter sandstone layers.

### **Archaeological Sites**

Over 440 archaeological sites have been identified in Boone County. Many of these sites have not been thoroughly surveyed and studied. Much more identification, research, and analysis remains to be done. Several Boone County archaeological sites have been placed on the National Register of Historic Places, including Big Bone Lick State Park (encompassing just over 500 acres), possibly one of the most significant Paleoindian sites in this part of the country. Also listed are Arrasmith and Cleek-McCabe, two Fort Ancient sites, Rogers, a Woodland mound and habitation complex, and Reeves Mound, from the Adena culture, (currently owned by the Archaeological Conservancy). Also potentially eligible but not listed yet are a multiple period Fort Ancient village site in Petersburg, and the ruins of a grist and saw mill on Gunpowder Creek.

Archaeological sites in Boone County are known to include (but are not limited to) cemeteries, the communities or camps of native American Indians, the remains of demolished or deteriorated buildings, former community sites (now obscured on the surface), former industrial sites such as grist mills, former commercial sites such as toll houses, sites of Civil War activity, and the yards of existing historic structures.

Boone County has been the focus of archaeological investigation by professionals and amateurs for many years. Identification of archaeological sites began early and focused on reporting the presence of cemeteries and earthworks. In Archaeological Survey of Kentucky, Funkhouser and Webb (1932) listed thirteen sites for Boone County. Eight mounds, one complex of two mounds, one mound and cemetery complex, one fort, one village, and one village and cemetery complex were listed.

During the Works Progress Administration (WPA) era (1938-1941), seven Adena mounds and a Fort Ancient mound and village site were excavated. In the 1950s the Northern Kentucky Archaeological Society, largely under the direction of Ellis Crawford, conducted investigations in Boone County, most notably at the Rogers mound and village.

The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, and the Procedures of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation require that impact assessments must be conducted for construction involving Federal licensing or funding. In compliance with these acts, archaeological surveys have been performed in Boone County since 1968. In conjunction with these requirements, projects involving road construction, airport expansion, power plant development, sewer lines, and U.S. Army Corp of Engineers permits have required archaeological survey and, at times, extensive testing. Survey and testing of archaeological sites has continued in the 1990's, reflecting the rapid commercial growth and increase in population which have occurred in the Cincinnati metropolitan area.

Since the 1730s, Big Bone Lick has been noted as a place where bones of extinct megafauna could be found. At the salt springs of Big Bone, the remains of many animals have been found where they were entrapped in the mire. Sloths, horses, tapirs, deer, elk, moose, reindeer, caribou, musk ox, bison, peccary, mastodon, mammoth, and bear

have been identified. Preliminary paleontological research, completed at Big Bone in the 1960s, by the University of Nebraska has never been properly reported, and the artifacts recovered remain in Nebraska. Very little archaeological research has been completed at Big Bone Lick. In the summer of 1993, local archaeologists from 3D Environmental Services noticed an important archaeological feature, on the steep bank of Big Bone Creek, in danger of being destroyed by erosion. They obtained emergency permits from the State Office of Archaeology, and the Department of State Parks, and through a combined volunteer and pro-bono effort, the site was excavated and analyzed.

Properly interpreted, Big Bone Lick State Park has the potential for becoming a unique education site, as well as a National Historic Landmark. A National Natural Landmark nomination is under preparation at this time. The first phase of a new museum at Big Bone Lick was dedicated in November, 2004. Subsequent phases of construction depend on funding through the State Department of Parks. Ongoing archaeological and paleontological research remains the core of the facility's interpretive mission. It has been estimated that the development of this site as an archaeological "theme" state park would triple tourist visitation, and provide non-invasive economic development for western Boone County.

In 1990-92, extensive archaeological research took place at Petersburg. Previously identified sites, 15BE6, 15BE6A, and 15BE6B, were studied in detail during this three year project. The project was funded by a Certified Local Government grant from the Kentucky Heritage Council, and matched by funding from the Boone County Fiscal Court. The project had a dual goal of completing scientific and historical research, while providing public education about Boone County's heritage as well as archaeological methods. Over 1,200 school children and adults benefitted from on-site visits, workshops, and classroom presentations.

In 2004, archaeologists from the Kentucky Heritage Council, Kentucky Archaeological Survey and University of Kentucky returned to the Petersburg Site, following the accidental discovery of human remains during construction of a house foundation. These organizations were assisted by the volunteer efforts of nearly 20 trained archaeologists. Over a period of 10 days, 35 prehistoric burials representing 38 individuals were excavated from the area impacted by the house foundation. While analysis of the remains and associated artifacts will take time, it is clear that their recovery will redefine archaeologists' understanding of the Fort Ancient occupation in the Ohio Valley. The location of a significant prehistoric burial ground in Petersburg has now been confirmed, although the extent of the cemetery remains unknown. This has planning implications for future sub-surface excavation throughout Petersburg, including installation of water lines, construction of basements and similar projects.

Also, in 1992, archaeological survey was completed in a variety of areas throughout the county. This research focused on previously identified but not documented sites reported by county residents, and amateur archaeologists. Approximately 25 previously unrecorded sites were documented during this project. A Certified Local Government project completed in 1996 identified and documented Indian burial mounds throughout the county. The accurate mapping of these sites will ensure their protection from development under Boone County's Cemetery Preservation Plan.

As part of an ongoing comprehensive architectural survey the Crisler-Gulley Grist and Saw Mill site on Gunpowder Creek was identified in 1993. Through a Kentucky Department of Local Government Community Rivers and Streams Grant, the site was nominated to the National Register, and a traveling exhibit and student handbook about the mill site were prepared.

Boone County has numerous small family cemeteries. An inventory of known cemeteries is maintained by the Boone County Historic Preservation Review Board. All known cemetery locations are also mapped in the Boone County GIS. Cemetery location and burial information is shared with the Boone County Public Library, which is the community's most accessible genealogical resource. The Historic Preservation Review Board should be notified and involved in any matter affecting the preservation of a family cemetery. The Boone County Cemetery Preservation Plan, approved in 1990 and now a part of the Boone County Zoning and Subdivision Regulations, offers recommendations to preserve these cemeteries and to limit the development surrounding them. This plan was one of the first of its kind in the country, and has been widely copied throughout the nation.

Cemetery preservation remains important in Boone County. In 2002, a thesis prepared by a graduate student in community planning studied the issue, comparing cemetery preservation strategies and results in Boone County with those of Cobb County, Georgia. The thesis compiled information about Boone County cemeteries that have been relocated and/or preserved in place as a result of the cemetery regulations adopted in 1990. The thesis made a number of recommendations, including the formation of an organization dedicated to cemetery preservation, with authority to review site plans and zone change applications. Among other recommendations, the thesis suggested that all cemetery relocations be managed by a licensed archaeologist and that Boone County develop an Adopt-a-Cemetery Program. In 2003, a cemetery advocacy group (Johnson-Wilson Cemetery Stewards Association) formed

in Boone County. To date, the Historic Preservation Review Board has partnered with the non-profit private organization on several projects, including a cemetery restoration grant project.

Paleo-Indian artifacts are found in private collections and have been informally reported from the Rogers site, and others throughout the county. Paleo-Indian tools have also been recovered from several sites west of Big Bone Lick. By the middle of the Archaic Period, the environment in Boone County was much as it is today. There is abundant evidence of an Archaic presence in Boone County, however, there is still much still not known about specific patterns of Archaic adaptation to the local environment. The presence of a Woodland population is indicated by the numerous mounds, many of which are associated with the Adena tradition, such as the National Register listed Reeves Mound in the northern part of the county. Small to large villages, and hunting camps are the site types defined for Fort Ancient.

Currently, Boone County's archaeological sites, particularly the Indian mounds are threatened by pot hunters. These people indiscriminately dig up mounds and other sites to find artifacts which they then sell or keep for themselves. Such amateurish invasion of these sites destroys valuable scientific evidence. Consequently, any information the sites may have yielded on Boone County's history is lost forever.

### **Architecture**

The initial survey of Boone County was conducted in 1976-1977 by the Kentucky Heritage Council (or KHC, then known as the Kentucky Heritage Commission). The survey documented 353 resources and was comprehensive in that every passable road was traveled. Twentieth century resources, barns and outbuildings, and simple vernacular structures were largely neglected. In 1979, the KHC published the results of that survey in Survey of Historic Sites in Kentucky: Boone County. In 1988, all of the original 353 resources surveyed were re-examined, and 60 principal structures, along with related contributing buildings, were listed on the National Register of Historic Places through a multiple resource area nomination. In 2000, 14 individual Boone County properties were listed in the National Register of Historic Places as an addendum to the 1988 Multiple Resource Listing. A new Multiple Properties Documentation Form entitled Historic and Architectural Resources of the County of Boone, Kentucky, 1789-1950 was also developed. In 2004 - 2005, National Register nominations for 10 to 15 additional Boone County historic properties will be prepared. Criteria for inclusion in the National Register are based upon local historical and architectural significance as defined in the National Register Standards and Guidelines within the contexts defined by the 2001 Multiple Properties Documentation Form.

In 1992, a new comprehensive architectural survey, funded by a county matched Certified Local Government grant, began in Boone County. Completed in 1996, this survey created an inventory of all Boone County buildings and structures, fifty years old or older, with historic and/or architectural significance, primarily in a local context. The inventory final report, titled Comprehensive Architectural Survey of Boone County, Kentucky, also made recommendations for potentially eligible National Register Historic Districts, especially in Petersburg, Belleview, Rabbit Hash, Verona and Walton. This inventory includes agricultural buildings, ruins, and bridges, as well as houses, businesses, and public buildings. Since 1996, the inventory has been continually updated, primarily as a result of publicly funded development projects, including road construction, airport expansion and cellular tower installation. The Boone County inventory now includes over 1,500 historic resources. The inventory provides a foundation for the county-wide Preservation Plan, which was adopted in 1999, and gives the Historic Preservation Review Board documented evidence of the wealth of historic resources found throughout the county. This information is used in the review of plans for development, by citizens completing historic or genealogical research, and as a guideline for future historic preservation projects and initiatives in Boone County.

In 2002, the Boone County Historic Preservation Review Board published Historic Structures of Boone County, Kentucky. The book is a followup to the KHC's 1979 Survey of Historic Sites in Kentucky: Boone County. Based on information recorded during the mid-1990s survey, Historic Structures showcases 192 of Boone County's historic properties. The book is a glossy paper bound volume with black and white photographs. It is available for sale to the general public through the Boone County Planning Commission.

Kentucky Historic Resources inventory forms, as well as the final report are public information and copies can be obtained from the Boone County Historic Preservation Office, or the Kentucky Heritage Council in Frankfort. The location and basic information about each inventory site is maintained in the Boone County GIS. Some of that information, including site location, is readily available to the public through the online Boone County GIS Interactive Mapping Services. Copies of inventory forms may be obtained through the Kentucky Heritage Council or Boone County Preservation Office.

Just as Boone County's major transportation corridors did not guarantee commercial growth, so the Ohio River and the Dry Ridge Divide did not ensure a substantial body of high style architecture for Boone County. Despite its location

on main routes of architectural communication, Boone County was minimally affected by changes in stylistic tastes and by the flow of builders, artisans and architects into the Ohio River Valley and the Bluegrass region of Kentucky. With rare exceptions, the builders and architects are unknown. Most of the structures with stylistic pretensions are found along Highway 42 (Old Louisville Road), in the Burlington county seat, and along the Ohio River.

### **Burlington National Register Historic District**

Listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1979, the Burlington National Register District is a grid rectangle of 74 acres comprising the original town in its entirety. It is bounded on the north by Temperate Street, on the east by Orient Street, on the south by Torrid Street, and on the west by Ohio Street (now Water Street). The western most street and the western end of Torrid Street were never completed, but the remainder of the streets exist essentially as planned. Burlington is situated on a low hill that falls away on all sides. The town was laid out orthogonally, with main streets running north-south and east-west. Recent subdivision development in central Boone County is evident upon entering Burlington from the east, Burlington Pike, and south, East Bend Road. These subdivisions ignore the street grid of the original town plan. One northern approach, Idlewild Road, is still basically agricultural and recreational in character. The Boone County Fairgrounds, and land owned by the Airport, soon to be used for recreational purposes, dominate this entrance to the county seat. The social and visual center of Burlington is the intersection of the two main streets, Washington and Jefferson, and includes the principal commercial, retail and governmental structures.

In 2004, the Burlington National Register district was revised and the boundary redrawn to reflect current National Register criteria. The 1979 nomination had become dated since the district was created in 1979 and questions had been raised about the relevance of the district boundaries and the period of significance. More importantly, the number and location of contributing historic properties discussed in the original nomination was unclear. The revised Burlington Historic District consists of a mixed-use concentration of 33 acres containing a total of 71 resources, 63 of which were previously listed in the National Register. Of the buildings in the district, 38 are residential, 8 are commercial, 3 are religious, 1 is a former school, 17 are residential dependencies, and 2 are public institutional buildings (the Old Courthouse and the Old Clerk's Building). The Burlington Historic District is locally significant under National Register Criterion A for its reflection of patterns of politics/government in Boone County and under Criterion C for architecture, which includes fine examples of Greek Revival, Federal and Bungalow styles. The period of significance extends from c. 1790 to c. 1950. The revised Burlington National Register nomination is currently under review by the National Park Service.

In consideration of Burlington's small size (approximate pop. 350), architectural styles span a rather wide range. Several early vernacular 19th century houses remain, although artificial siding and layers of alterations conceal much of the original fabric. One log building (5878 N. Jefferson c.1860), and one brick building (5825 N. Jefferson, National Register, c.1830) have recently been restored to their original appearances. North of the courthouse are three sizable Federal style residences, with later Greek Revival influences, that date from 1820-35 and share certain similarities. The Greek Revival is well represented in public buildings by the former county clerk's office and in residential architecture by a small house on North Jefferson Street. Late nineteenth century architectural influences can be seen in residential and commercial structures throughout the Historic District.

The 1889 Boone County Courthouse is the third courthouse, the original a log structure, to occupy the same site and is attributed to the McDonald Brothers of Louisville. This architectural firm was responsible for numerous such structures in the southeastern United States. However, the Renaissance-inspired Burlington building is somewhat unique among most late 19th century courthouses, especially those of McDonald Brothers, which were typically Romanesque or eclectic in design. The building's original belltower was faulty either in design or construction and was replaced in 1898 with the present cupola, which was designed by the renowned Cincinnati architectural firm Samuel Hannaford and Sons.

The Burlington Historic District presents a crucial preservation challenge. Efforts must be made to insure that a mixture of governmental, commercial, and residential activity continues to function in Burlington. Burlington has the rare opportunity to capitalize on its unique architectural landscape, small town charm and rural atmosphere. Poorly designed new construction, already apparent in several Burlington locations, will destroy this valuable character. The town's historic buildings should be rehabilitated and adaptively reused to meet the realities of a rapidly changing county, and the challenges of the 21st century. A positive step in this direction was the development in 2002 - 2003 of the Burlington Town Strategic Plan. The plan's mission statement is "to energize the central town of Burlington into a healthy business and residential center of Boone County by using the public services, special events activity, and historical character of the town as a foundation." The plan includes recommendations designed to enhance the infrastructure, streetscape, architectural design, marketing and tourism potential of Burlington. Several recommendations, including the above mentioned update of the National Register District nomination have already been implemented.

The landscapes of Boone County are made up of a wide variety of natural and historic resources. Efforts must be made to integrate these resources with current development patterns, not as stagnant entities but as productive and contributing county assets. Development in Boone County appears poised to continue at a rapid rate into the future. The county has reached a point where historic preservation should receive more attention than in the past. It is essential that growth management strategies include the preservation and conservation of natural and historic sites. These strategies may not only involve the preservation of historic buildings, but instead focus on the retention of cultural landscapes and characteristics.

In Burlington, Union, and throughout the county, it is imperative that more of a balance between old and new be encouraged and supported. Boone County deserves to retain its own unique identity as it continues to grow and prosper.

#### **Rabbit Hash National Register Historic District**

The Rabbit Hash National Register was listed in December, 2003. The nomination was funded through a partnership between the Boone County Planning Commission and Rabbit Hash Historical Society. The Rabbit Hash National Register District is anchored by the Rabbit Hash General Store, a widely recognized community landmark which has been in continuous operation since c. 1831. The district encompasses approximately 33 acres, including the General Store and 11 other primary structures. The district extends from Parks Branch just north of the General Store south across Little Ranty Creek to 10410 Lower River Road - the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century Thomas Marshall House. The General Store and the late nineteenth century Italianate B.C. Calvert House were listed individually in the National Register in 1989.

Rather than focus on architectural significance, the Rabbit Hash nomination asserts that “the Rabbit Hash Historic District is significant in the area of community development in the context of ‘Boone County River Towns, c. 1814-1945.’ Rabbit Hash is important because of its continuous use as a commerce, transportation and communications center for the surrounding rural population. The relative isolation of Rabbit Hash, in relation to other primary towns of Boone County, and its close connection to Rising Sun, Indiana, allowed it to resist change and to retain its significance as a river town and a community gathering place. Its modest and unassuming character, organic form and vernacular buildings are typical of small river communities in Boone County. Its buildings are well-preserved and few modern intrusions mar the landscape.”

The creation of the Rabbit Hash National Register District is one of many preservation initiatives in that community in recent years. The most important of these was probably the \$250,000 bequest of a long-time resident to the Rabbit Hash Historical Society, which created a substantial endowment for the organization. The group has been able to put the interest toward significant preservation projects, including acquisition of 3.5 acres of Rabbit Hash (including the General Store and 7 other buildings), erection of signage and a historic marker in town, and rehabilitation and maintenance of historic buildings. Rabbit Hash remains one of Boone County’s most well known tourist destinations and was the subject of a full-length documentary film entitled “Rabbit Hash: Center of the Universe.” In 2004, Rabbit Hash joined Boone County on the list of 50 Kentucky communities recognized by the Federal government as Preserve America Communities. The popularity of Rabbit Hash as a unique tourist destination has resulted in some noise and traffic impacts which the Rabbit Hash Historical Society is attempting to address. The future success of the society’s efforts could serve as an example for other historic places in Boone County should they experience heavy visitation in the future.

#### **Walton South Main Street National Register Historic District**

Walton was founded in the mid-1790s and prospered in part due to its association with Abner Gaines, who built a striking Federal style brick residence (Gaines Tavern; National Register 1980) at the north end of town c. 1814. In 1818, Gaines founded the first stagecoach line carrying mail and passengers between Cincinnati and Lexington on the Lexington Pike. In the 1920s this route was rebuilt as the Dixie Highway and designated US 25. Main Street in Walton now follows US 25. In the late 1860s and mid-1870s, two railroads were built through Walton. The town grew rapidly and became the railroad center for Boone County. Walton developed as a classic linear railroad town, bounded by rail lines to east and west of Main Street. A business district flourished along Main Street, with residential neighborhoods to the north and south. A small industrial and warehouse district grew up beside the L&N tracks, and worker housing was built near the Southern Railroad depot.

Walton lost its pre-eminent position among Boone County cities in the 1950s, as the post-World War II suburban boom took hold. A tornado swept through the town in 1956, and a 1971 fire damaged parts of the business district. Walton met these challenges by joining the Kentucky Main Street program, which has brought new life to the town along with a deeper recognition of its distinctive heritage. In 1999 the city received a Preservation Award from the Boone County Historic Preservation Review Board. Continuation of the mixed-use development that characterizes Walton Main Street is enabled by a special Walton Downtown District in the Boone County Zoning Regulations. While design

guidelines exist for Florence Main Street, the Walton Downtown District focuses on encouraging a mix of land uses rather than on regulating aesthetics.

In 1996, the Comprehensive Architectural Survey of Boone County noted that the residential district on South Main Street in Walton had good National Register District potential. In 2004, a National Register Historic District nomination was prepared for the residential portion of South Main Street in Walton: the nomination is currently under review by the National Park Service. The nomination was funded by a Federal Survey and Planning Grant administered by the Kentucky Heritage Council with local matching funds from the City of Walton and Boone County Fiscal Court. In 2004 - 2005, the Boone County Historic Preservation Review Board will use that Federal grant program to fund development of National Register nominations for several residences on North Main Street in Walton.

The Walton South Main Street Historic District is a linear district straddling Walton's primary thoroughfare - US 25. The 31-acre district includes 47 primary buildings, mostly residences built between c. 1900 and 1925. Colonial Revival, Tudor Revival, Craftsman/Bungalow and American Foursquare are the most common architectural styles/types in the district. Churches located within the district include the 1949 Walton Christian Church and 1922 Walton Methodist Church, which blends Tudor Revival and Craftsman elements. Also included are three houses previously listed in the National Register: the Bruce Wallace House, the Edwards House and the Chandler House. The district is bounded by Depot Street on the north and the Norfolk Southern overpass on the south. The nomination asserts that the Walton South Main Street district is significant under National Register Criterion A in the area of Community Development between 1868 to 1950.

Main Street in Walton is the most intact and functional historic downtown in Boone County. Like Burlington, new development along Walton's Main Street should be carefully reviewed to encourage development that is compatible with the mixed-use character of this historic downtown. Rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of historic structures should be strongly encouraged.

## **PRESERVATION STRATEGIES FOR BOONE COUNTY**

Historic Preservation efforts in Boone County should focus on creating a balance between new development and preserving the history and character of Boone County. This could include strategies such as adapting a historic building for a modern commercial or retail use, including an existing building, usually a single family residence, in plans for a new subdivision, or a creative building design that blends with the existing landscape. Much of the success of such an effort depends on educating the public, including elected and appointed county officials, and residential and commercial developers, about the benefits of historic preservation. Increased awareness of the work of the Historic Preservation Review Board is an important part of the educational process.

The Historic Preservation Review Board has coordinated a comprehensive survey of all buildings or structures fifty years old or older in the county. This information includes the development of historic contexts or themes for historic and related resources. These contexts place buildings in their proper historic or architectural perspective, and help in evaluating their significance. The survey results have been used as the basis for a Boone County Preservation Plan, completed in 1999. The Plan provides specific guidelines and recommendations as well as pertinent background information for implementing a successful preservation program in Boone County.

The 2000 Boone County Comprehensive Plan recognized heritage tourism as a significant means of promoting historic preservation in Boone County, and recommended that the county's Historic Preservation Review Board work with the public and the Planning Commission to complete a Tourism Plan to guide development of the tourism industry in Boone County. Historic properties in the county such as Burlington's National Register Historic District, the Dinsmore Homestead, Big Bone Lick State Park, and the town of Rabbit Hash are currently popular tourist destinations. Route 8, from the historic Anderson Ferry west, is a popular bike and pleasure drive route with scenic views, and picturesque local farms. The Ohio River corridor, from Petersburg to Big Bone Lick, includes a wide diversity of significant natural and historic sites that should be protected from insensitive development. Properly handled, this corridor, including the Big Bone Lick-Middle Creek Scenic Byway, a designated Kentucky Scenic Highway, can provide the resources for a substantial tourism industry in Boone County.

In 2002, the Boone County, Kentucky, Heritage Tourism Plan was developed and adopted by the Historic Preservation Review Board. The plan was written by Review Board and Planning Commission staff with assistance from a professional consultant and guided by an Advisory Group of residents, business owners, representatives of key agencies, and other interested parties. The Vision Statement of the Plan is to "enhance the economic climate in Boone County while preserving the quality of life, protecting scenic, historic, cultural, archaeological, and recreational resources, and emphasizing tourism promotion and collaboration."

The Heritage Tourism Plan recognized that heritage-oriented businesses and organizations have operated for some time in Boone County, although there had never been a strongly coordinated effort to market and conserve Boone County heritage or utilize potential heritage tourism markets. Potential markets identified in the plan include the Cincinnati, Dayton, and Columbus, Ohio, metropolitan areas, southeast Indiana, central Kentucky, and the rapidly growing population of Boone County. The plan argues that the economic benefits of heritage tourism can be realized if an area's heritage is conserved and shared with visitors from these (and other) market areas.

The Heritage Tourism Plan catalogued Boone County's numerous heritage resources into seven categories: historic, cultural, natural, recreational, scenic, archaeological, and agricultural. These resources are "considered representative, unique, irreplaceable, or distinctly characteristic of" Boone County, Kentucky.

The plan proposed Conservation and Preservation goals, Economic Development Goals, and Specific Marketing Objectives, as well as a prioritized list of recommendations. Many of the recommendations in the plan have been implemented, including development of the Boone County Heritage Tourism Council, creation of a heritage tourism website ([www.boonecountyheritage.org](http://www.boonecountyheritage.org)), and printing of over 42,000 copies of the Boone County Heritage Tourism Map. The Heritage Tourism Council meets on a regular basis to coordinate heritage tourism marketing efforts in Boone County and to implement recommendations from the Heritage Tourism Plan.

The Historic Preservation Review Board should study and design a Local Landmarks Program to recognize significant historic buildings throughout the County. Design review guidelines, administered by the Review Board, should be established for these properties. Design review guidelines help to preserve the historical integrity and strengthen the aesthetic value of a building or site. The Review Board has established design review guidelines in conjunction with a zoning district for Florence's Main Street. Although this area is not a traditional historic district, the guidelines are intended to preserve the existing historic character of Main Street, and strengthen its viability as a pedestrian corridor. Further study and extensive community education needs to be undertaken to determine exactly what areas in Boone County would benefit most from design review guidelines. In 2004, the Review Board began discussing the possibility of establishing a local landmark district in Burlington.

The preservation of significant archaeological sites also contributes to the quality of life in Boone County. However, the issues involved in preserving these sites differ from those for historic buildings and structures. The locations of archaeological sites should not be made public. Such sites, once their locations are generally known, could be desecrated by pot hunters and then any information they may have yielded is lost forever. Kentucky law prohibits the desecration of burial sites and cemeteries but enforcement of these statutes is difficult. Action on the local level is essential to the preservation of Boone County's archaeological sites. The Boone County Planning Commission and the Boone County Historic Preservation Review Board have developed the Boone County Cemetery Preservation Plan (which includes Indian burial sites) in response to this need. Its ongoing implementation represents a significant step forward in the county's preservation efforts. Community educational efforts, beginning with our schoolchildren, should focus on the importance of archaeological sites, and responsible action related to their preservation. The Historic Preservation Review Board must remain proactive in identifying and documenting significant archaeological sites in Boone County.

Boone County should also encourage groups such as the Archaeological Conservancy, Kentucky Heritage Council, Boone Conservancy and Hillside Trust to acquire easements on lands with significant sites. The Historic Preservation Review Board should work with private property owners and the Kentucky Heritage Council toward the donation of preservation easements for important archaeological sites. To document otherwise unobtainable historical information, the Boone County Planning Commission should encourage developers to conduct expedient archaeological surveys of their development sites with the goal of determining the significance of the site without delaying construction.

Because of Boone County's Certified Local Government (CLG) status, the Boone County Fiscal Court has received \$164,840 in grants from the Kentucky Heritage Council between 1986-2004 for historic preservation activities. Some of the projects include: a comprehensive architectural survey of Boone County and subsequent publication of Historic Structures of Boone County, Kentucky, the National Register nomination for Big Bone Lick State Park, a GIS cemetery mapping project, an elementary level heritage education curriculum, a cemetery preservation workshop, and numerous individual and district nominations to the National Register of Historic Places.

## **FEDERAL INCENTIVES FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION**

### **Investment Tax Credits**

The Tax Reform Act of 1986 permits owners and some leaseholders to take a 20-percent income tax credit on the cost of certified substantial rehabilitation of certified historic structures for industrial, commercial, or rental residential

purposes. The law also permits a ten-percent credit for substantial rehabilitation of non-historic structures built prior to 1936 if the post-rehabilitation use is nonresidential. In neither case can the credit be included in the depreciable basis.

Generally, the work must be completed within two years, although it may be phased over a maximum five-year period, if the development plan is initially conceived and presented in that manner. The credit is taken when the project (or the phase) is completed and put to use. The rehabilitated property is depreciated using the straight-line method over 27.5 years for residential property and over 31.5 years for nonresidential property.

For buildings eligible for the 10-percent credit, there is a strictly applied requirement that specific percentages of external walls and internal structural framework be retained. Taxpayers who sell rehabilitated property within five years are subject to recapture of the tax credit at the rate of 20 percent for each year less than five. There is no recapture after five years.

### **Certified Historic Structure**

A Certified Historic Structure is an individually listed structure in the National Register of Historic Places, or a structure certified by the National Park Service (NPS) as contributing to a registered district.

A registered district is one listed in the National Register, or designated under a state or local statute that has been certified to contain criteria that will substantially achieve the purpose of preserving and rehabilitating buildings of significance to the district. In addition, the district must be certified as substantially meeting all the requirements for listing of districts in the National Register.

A certified rehabilitation is a rehabilitation certified by NPS as being consistent with the historic character of the property and, where applicable, the district in which it is located. NPS refers to the Secretary of the Interior's "Standards for Rehabilitation" in certifying rehabilitations.

To qualify as substantial, the cost of rehabilitation must equal or exceed the adjusted basis of the property or \$5,000, whichever is greater. To calculate the basis, the following equation is used: cost of property, plus capital improvements, less the value of the land, less depreciation. Investment Tax Credit projects should be encouraged in Boone County as a means of promoting historic preservation.

### **Federal Tax Deduction for Easement Donations**

Federal tax laws also offer property owners a federal tax deduction for easement donations. A donation must be made "in perpetuity" to a qualifying agency - usually a nonprofit organization or a government body. In an easement donation, the owner gives up certain potential development rights; thus, the receiving agency can place restrictions on future changes to the structure. In exchange, the owner can get a substantial tax deduction, based on the difference in the value of the property before and after the restrictions. Use of this incentive is highly technical requiring substantial knowledge of federal tax laws. Individuals interested in easements should consult their tax attorney or accountant.

However, the Boone County Historic Preservation Review Board and its staff should have a working knowledge of how easements benefit property owners. They should publicize and promote easement donations as one part of an overall preservation strategy for the county. For more detailed information on easements, see state incentives.

## **STATE INCENTIVES FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION**

### **Easements**

An easement is a legal document through which a property owner grants limited rights in his or her property to another. Easements for driveways and utilities have existed for some time. Conservation easements, under Kentucky law, can now be utilized to protect natural, scenic or open space areas and natural resources or to preserve historically and architecturally significant properties and archaeological sites. Such an easement limits the right of the owner to alter the historic or natural character of the property. Because the easement is given in perpetuity, it continues to protect the property even after ownership changes hands.

The restrictions included in an easement are up to the property owner and organization holding the easement. Generally, in the case of a historic building, the easement restricts changes to the facade and blocks demolition. Easements can also be used to protect significant interior spaces and prevent subdivision of the land upon which the building sits. The owner does not give up title to the land, nor the right to sell, lease or mortgage the property.

Any property owner may grant a conservation easement to protect and preserve a historic building or land. Any governmental body empowered to hold an interest in real property or a non-profit organization involved in the preservation of natural and historic resources may accept such an easement. The benefits to the owner are that 1) the historic property is protected, 2) the owner receives a one-time tax deduction as a charitable contribution, 3) inheritance tax can be substantially reduced, and 4) his or her real estate taxes are decreased. The Kentucky Heritage Council will currently accept easements on National Register eligible property and already holds an easement on one property in Boone County. Other organizations holding conservation easements in Boone County include the Archaeological Conservancy, Hillside Trust and Boone Conservancy. The continued use of conservation easement programs should be encouraged for Boone County.

## **LOCAL INCENTIVES FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION**

### **Loan Program**

The following information from the National Trust for Historic Preservation describes how to develop a loan program and the positive impact it can have on historic preservation in a community.

"Establishing a loan program can encourage local banks to participate with preservation groups to finance the rehabilitation and reuse of privately-owned historic properties, provide below-market interest rates for historic preservation projects, attract other financial contributions and provide an ongoing source of local capital for historic preservation.

A revolving fund can be defined as a pool of capital created and reserved for a specific activity such as historic preservation, with the restriction that the monies are returned to the fund for similar real estate development activities. A revolving fund may be initiated with seed money from a variety of sources including grants from corporations, foundation, government agencies and individuals, and loans from banks and other lending institutions. Loan pools are established to accomplish similar goals, but the funds are disbursed once and repaid to the lender; they do not revolve back into the fund. Lenders, however, often are more willing to continue making loans for preservation purposes if their experience with the loan pool is positive.

In considering the establishment of a revolving loan fund or loan pool, an organization should assess and clearly define the need for the fund (identify the target population and area as well as existing financing resources, and determine why lending is not currently occurring), establish goals and objectives for it and identify potential funding sources. Once these items have been addressed and appropriate organizations and individuals have had an opportunity to comment, the management entity should be identified and the specific lending criteria, terms and conditions, loan disbursement process, marketing strategy and funding sources should be defined."

More research needs to be done to determine the feasibility of such a program for Boone County. It would require the cooperation of local banks and local government. Potentially, the Boone County Historic Preservation Review Board would review the proposed rehabilitation work. If the work is approved, then the loan application is submitted to the participating financial institution for its approval and disbursement of funds. This type of program could be part of a bank's Community Reinvestment responsibilities, and would encourage a greater balance between historic rehabilitation and new development in Boone County.

## **CONCLUSION**

The Boone County Historic Preservation Plan is designed to clarify the role of historic preservation efforts in Boone County, provide information, and suggest guidelines for recommendations of the Historic Preservation Review Board to the Boone County Planning Commission, the Boone County Fiscal Court and to the cities of Florence, Union and Walton concerning historic preservation issues.

Citizen education about the value of historic preservation in Boone County is an important key theme of the Preservation Plan, as reflected in the first Goal. This Goal provides mechanisms and strategies for improving the availability of information about historic resources in the county, as well as establishing objectives that focus on the importance of heritage education in local schools and throughout the community. Increased awareness of the economic, cultural and aesthetic benefits of historic preservation for Boone County will strengthen community participation and interest in preserving tangible reminders of their heritage.

Since Boone County Fiscal Court and the Cities of Florence, Union, and Walton have limited authority in Historic Preservation issues, the Preservation Plan does not propose specific regulatory measures for the protection and

preservation of historic resources. Rather, it provides guidelines which the Historic Preservation Review Board can use in making decisions and recommendations regarding potential impacts to historic resources. The Plan suggests further ways historic preservation can be a part of the planning process by continuing to partner with the Boone County Planning Commission. The Preservation Plan also outlines research questions that support specific Goals and Objectives. The Historic Preservation Review Board may consider these issues when planning future preservation projects, or looking for additional funding sources to support preservation endeavors throughout the county.

The goals of the *Boone County Preservation Plan* consist of the following:

- 1) Promote historic and prehistoric resources as a viable part of the county's lively past and vibrant future.
- 2) Identify historic and prehistoric resources as valuable assets to the county and to its citizens.
- 3) Protect historic and prehistoric resources from physical threats, which endanger their preservation.
- 4) Preserve historic and prehistoric resources through a variety of economic and other programs.

Recently, the preservation or occasional relocation of family cemeteries has become a recurring issue as developers attempt to maximize land usage in Boone County. Under certain circumstances, the preservation of such cemeteries is regulated by Boone County Zoning Regulations. However, there are two ways to legally move a cemetery under Kentucky law, neither of which is subject to local ordinance or zoning. Therefore, it is critical that the Historic Preservation Review Board, state offices, funeral directors, coroners, the Planning Commission and Boone County work closely with property owners to: 1) find viable alternatives to cemetery relocation or 2) ensure appropriate treatment of cemeteries (and any affected relatives) proposed for relocation).

The Historic Preservation Review Board must work toward achieving a greater public awareness of the benefits of historic preservation for Boone County, and the critical role it plays in the quality of life in this county. In fact, the Board has begun to consider the need for a brief, but detailed study to determine specific actions that can raise the overall awareness of preservation efforts. Historic preservation is not only over one hundred buildings listed on the National Register, it's not only thousands of annual visitors to the Dinsmore Homestead and Big Bone Lick State Park, or the celebration of Old Timers Day in Rabbit Hash; it's the preservation and protection of the very roots of Boone County's success. Through advocacy and coordination with numerous agencies and citizen groups, the importance of preservation efforts should be highlighted, not left as an afterthought. A high profile way of promoting historic resources is to create a public pathway system around a resource or connect the resource to other county features or population centers. Historic preservation goals must be integrated into planning, economic development, and governmental strategies in order for Boone County to continue that success in the 21st century.