

Brittany Gibson

Samuel May House

The Samuel May House is the oldest brick home in the Big Sandy Valley, located in Prestonsburg, KY. The house was built by Samuel May in 1817 and the restoration process began in August of 1996. The house was used as a recruiting station during the American Civil War by the Confederate forces and was a residential home until 1981. The house was donated to the city of Prestonsburg in 1992 and in 1995 the city was granted \$400,000 by the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet for the restoration of the house. The home was completely restored in 1997. The reformation of this home also included a parking lot, landscaping, and the construction of a gift shop, and many other things that was needed for the living history museum.

The purpose of restoring the Samuel May House was to preserve the first brick home in the Big Sandy Valley. Many citizens in Eastern Kentucky were inspired to restore this home, and a college class at Prestonsburg Community College, now known as Big Sandy Community and Technical College, helped promote this in many ways. This 1992 class became so interested they formed a group called "The Friends of the Samuel May House." The group raised \$3,000 from the Kentucky Heritage Council for studying the house and two years later helped Floyd County receive the grant from the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet to initiate the restoration process.

With the help from "The Friends of the Samuel May House" and Floyd County, the Samuel May House was restored and is now a living history museum in Prestonsburg, KY. Inside the Samuel May House, there is a gift shop and people can take a tour of the museum, which housed antique items from the 1830s or items native to that time period, including items from the May family home. The restoration of the Samuel May House has provided jobs in Eastern Kentucky and employees numerous people in both the museum and the gift shop.

Preservation is not very common in today's society because many citizens and the government wish to tear down old buildings and replace them with new ones daily. For example, in nearby Pikeville, KY, the Pinson Motel and Weddington Theatre was recently torn down. Instead of preserving the old building and keeping the history in their town, they are getting ready to build a new Hall of Justice, it seems as though not many people in Kentucky take pride in our history. Therefore citizens need to make an effort to save our historic buildings before most of them are torn down, and we have no buildings of history preserved for the future.

http://mayhouse.org/friends_inc/restore.htm (History of the Restoration Effort)

<http://mayhouse.org/perry/index.html> (The Samuel May House Archives)

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prestonsburg,_Kentucky