

KENTUCKY HERITAGE COUNCIL

NEWSLETTER



Hello and thank you to everyone who supports the protection and promotion of historic preservation in the Commonwealth of Kentucky. As we continue to recognize our collective history over the last 250 years, it is important to keep in mind that the historic places, sites and landscapes we cherish, some of which are highlighted in this newsletter, are still with us today because of sound preservation policy and the hard work of everyday Kentuckians over the course of generations.

2026 also marks the 60th anniversary of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) which was the first comprehensive effort to establish a national preservation policy. Section 1(6) of the Act states that, “the increased knowledge of our historic resources, the establishment of better means of identifying and administering them, and the encouragement of their preservation will improve the planning and execution of Federal and federally assisted projects and will assist economic growth and development.” This rings as true today as it did when it passed Congress in 1966. Kentucky would look much different without this seminal piece of federal legislation.

Recent efforts to rewrite the rules implementing Section 106 of the NHPA could significantly impact the ability of states, tribes, local governments and American citizens to remain a meaningful part of this “planning and execution” process. Continuing to interact with the federal government on undertakings that could negatively impact the Commonwealth’s historic resources is in question with this rulemaking. As we celebrate significant anniversaries and milestones, let’s not lose sight of the participation and sound planning that we have relied on under the NHPA to preserve our shared history and pass it along to future generations of

Kentuckians. We encourage you to visit the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's website (www.achp.gov) to learn more about their notice of proposed rulemaking.

Sincerely,

Craig Potts

Director, Kentucky Heritage Council/State Historic Preservation Office

2027 Historic Preservation Conference News



Our Partners:



The Kentucky Heritage Council is now accepting proposals for educational sessions and student poster sessions at the 2027 Kentucky Historic Preservation Conference, taking place May 12–14, 2027, in Frankfort, Kentucky.

Under the theme **Preserving Preservation: Leveraging Kentucky's Historic Assets**, the 2027 conference will explore how historic preservation can build vibrant communities while ensuring the long-term stewardship of the places and stories that shape them.

We invite proposals for engaging, relevant sessions that will appeal to a broad audience. We especially encourage proposals that highlight collaboration, innovation, community impact and practical application.

Sessions are 45 minutes in length. We welcome a variety of formats, including:

- Presentations
- Panel discussions

- Workshops or demonstrations
- Interactive sessions

[Learn More](#)

America250KY Grant Updates

The Kentucky Heritage Council's (KHC) America250KY 2025-26 grants support the physical preservation of historic properties in Kentucky that reflect on broad themes associated with America's 250-year history. This grant opportunity is being administered by the KHC on behalf of the Kentucky Historical Society (KHS) and the Kentucky Sestercentennial Commission.

As the United States celebrates the 250 years since the signing of the Declaration of Independence in 2026, the KHS, KHC and partners across the commonwealth are exploring the history of the state from the nation's founding to today.



L&N RAILROAD PASSENGER STATION
SCOTTSVILLE, KY

BEFORE



History of Transportation in Kentucky:

Allen County: The **Louisville & Nashville Railroad Passenger Station** in Scottsville, KY is an example of rural transportation that fostered faster importation & exportation of goods. The rail line created an avenue for opening new markets for

local businesses and making supplies more available. This project will be awarded \$9,370.00 to fund the exterior trim, signage, and accents, including the corbels.



History of Local Government and Civic Space in Kentucky:

Caldwell County: The **Caldwell County Courthouse** in western Kentucky is being awarded \$40,795 to mount and display the historic bell on the courthouse lawn at the center of town. This bell was displaced when the previous courthouse burned during the Civil War.



History of Architecture and Design in Kentucky:

Fayette County: **The Pope Villa** is noted for its unique design and its rarity. The villa was planned in 1810-1811 by Benjamin Henry Latrobe, who was America's first professional architect. This project is being awarded \$176,539.35 to remove the temporary steel structure and construct a new roof and associated structural elements that will help stabilize the house.



THE POPE VILLA
LEXINGTON, KY



INTERNATIONAL ORDER OF ODD FELLOWS
WASHINGTON LODGE #1513

BEFORE



History of Emancipation and Civil Rights in Kentucky:

Henry County: **The International Order of Odd Fellows, Washington Lodge #1513** was founded in 1872 by former enslaved persons; virtually all other fraternal organizations of the era were whites-only. The GUOOF provided vital support to its members and the local black community following the Civil War. Its work continues to the present. This lodge is the only active GUOOF lodge in Kentucky and is one of the oldest African American fraternal organizations in the state. Located in a small town in central Kentucky, this project is being awarded \$100,000 for restoring framing, plumbing and electrical work along with the addition of a bathroom. This will allow this building to be functional and generate income for the continued preservation of the building.



Click below to see all of the Kentucky Heritage Council's

America250KY Grant Recipients!

[More Projects!](#)



Kentucky African American Heritage Commission America250KY Grants

Bethlehem Baptist Church — \$5,000

Cemetery Restoration and Memorial Monument

This project will restore the historic cemetery grounds and install a memorial monument at the site where Bethlehem Baptist Church once stood in Daviess County. Established by formerly enslaved members of Green Brier Baptist Church following the Civil War and the passage of the 13th Amendment, Bethlehem Baptist Church served as a vital center of worship, fellowship and community organization for more than 135 years, until its structure collapsed in 2018.

The cemetery restoration and monument will create a permanent place of remembrance and reflection, preserving the legacy of generations who shaped African American life in the region and ensuring their stories are not erased from the historical record.

Camp Nelson Education and Preservation Foundation — \$5,000

Second annual Freedom Day Festival Research and Documentation

Funding supported research and documentation for the [2026 Freedom Day Festival](#), celebrating African American art, culture and the national significance of Camp Nelson and other United States Colored Troops (USCT) recruiting stations in Kentucky.

The festival featured African American writers, poets, painters, musicians and descendants of USCT soldiers and refugees. Grant funds helped to offset artist fees, honorariums and production costs, including stage and tent installation, amplifying

public engagement with stories of freedom and liberation.

James Harrod Trust Inc. — \$5,000

Forgotten Founders: The African American Community at Fort Harrod

This research initiative seeks to recover and preserve the identities of African Americans who lived in Harrodsburg in 1777, when approximately 20% of the settlement's 198 residents were African American.

Through contracted genealogical and historical research, the project will examine deeds, wills, tax records, manuscripts and other primary sources to reconstruct the lives of these overlooked individuals. Findings will be preserved at local research institutions and shared through public display materials, reframing Harrodsburg's early history to include those whose names and contributions have long remained absent from public memory.

Lexington History Museum — \$5,000

Documenting the Lives of 10 USCT Soldiers

In partnership with Dr. Amy Murrell Taylor of the University of Kentucky and Steve T. Phan of Camp Nelson National Monument, the Lexington History Museum will produce a panel exhibit tracing the lives of up to 10 Lexington-area men who enlisted in the United States Colored Troops at Camp Nelson in 1864 and 1865.

The exhibit will explore how military service shaped African American citizenship during and after the Civil War, examining both the advances and ongoing challenges to securing inalienable rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. KAAHC funds will support exhibit design, printing and display.



Kentucky Native American Heritage

Commission America250KY Grants

Living Archaeology Weekend - \$7500 | Whitley County

Support funding for bringing United Keetoowah Cherokee presenters from Oklahoma to Living Archaeology Weekend at Natural Bridge State Resort Park. This annual event will be held September 18-19, 2026, and more information can be found at livingarchaeologyweekend.org

Kentuckians for the Commonwealth - \$1500 | Corbin, KY

Support funding for Native American Heritage Weekend, held at Cumberland Falls State Resort Park in April of 2026.

Raven Run Nature Sanctuary - \$2500 | Fayette County

Support printing for signage for The Native American Story Walk that will function as programming around the Raven Run Nature Sanctuary ADA Discovery Trail as a part of the "Human History at Raven Run" exhibit.

Undermain Arts - \$7000 | Richmond, KY

Supporting the six-part Undermain/Eastern Standard series "The Art of the Originals: Native American Art in the 21st Century," which explores Native American tropes and stereotypes in musical theatre, from historical examples to more accurate and culturally sensitive present-day productions created by indigenous playwrights, directors, actors and others.

[Click to see the series](#)

Murray State University - \$1500 | Murray, KY

Faculty and students at Murray State University, Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences, in coordination with the Archaeological Conservancy and Kentucky Heritage Council, undertook the mapping of heavily damaged stone box graves and mounds at the Page Site in Logan County, Kentucky. Grant funds allocated will help defray the costs associated with updating the Conservancy's and KHC's map of these archaeological features for future stewardship and protection.



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