

Volume 15, Number 4
Winter 2015

The Filson

A Publication of The Filson Historical Society, Kentucky's Oldest and Largest Independent Historical Society



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FROM THE PRESIDENT

As the new president of The Filson, I've now had a couple of months to settle in. In that time I've been able to meet a lot of members and observe how the institution works both internally and in the community. Of course, I have a lot more to learn but I have a few observations to share already.

Filson members are remarkably loyal to the institution and to history. That shows in the attendance at programs and events, in a strong membership renewal rate, and in the comments I hear at every turn. While our established membership is loyal, we need to reach more people in segments of the community where we have never succeeded in attracting a following.

The staff I met on arriving at The Filson is a highly qualified group of professionals who are committed to the mission and are eager to help the members, the public, and our partners. Their decades of experience in history, archives, and public programming keep us focused on what The Filson does best.

The Filson's collections are nothing short of amazing. I've worked in libraries and archives for forty years and I've never been surrounded by such rich and powerful material as I see at The Filson. We need to keep these collections growing.

We provide the community with a wide array of entertaining and educational programs that serve to remind us all of the importance of history in shaping decisions for tomorrow. We hope to extend more programming to schools and young people in the future.

While the Ferguson mansion on Third Street is beautiful, the Owsley Brown II History Center will be stunning when it opens. Our new building will change everything about how the public enjoys the Filson and how the Filson reaches the public. I can't wait.



Craig Buthod
President and CEO

FROM THE CHAIR

The Cornerstone Capital Campaign continues to make excellent progress as does the expansion and renovation of the Ferguson Mansion and the Carriage House. We are now projecting that the construction will be completed in late Spring/early Summer of 2016. Modest delays have been encountered which are not unusual given the scope and complexity of this endeavor. We remain confident that we are within our budget parameters. Our financial goals are getting closer to being realized, with more than \$11 million donated or pledged, and we have many exciting opportunities and prospects that we are still pursuing. We have begun planning what will become a "season" of grand opening events. We encourage our members, their families, and their friends to consider scheduling their special events such as weddings, wedding receptions, family reunions, and other occasions at what will certainly be a spectacular and versatile venue. We also hope to host many business conferences and meetings. Any questions in this regard should be referred to our Deputy Director, Judy Miller.

Craig Buthod, our new President/CEO, began on September 21, 2015. His experience and relationships in our community have already benefitted The Filson in many ways. If you haven't met Craig, I encourage you to do so.

We regret that the Gertrude Polk Brown lecture scheduled for December 3, 2015 had to be rescheduled. Given recent international events and the related news coverage demands, NPR felt that it was important for Steve Inskeep, host of *Morning Edition*, to be in Washington, D.C. We hope to re-schedule this event in the near future.

On behalf of the staff and board of The Filson, thank you for your friendship and support!



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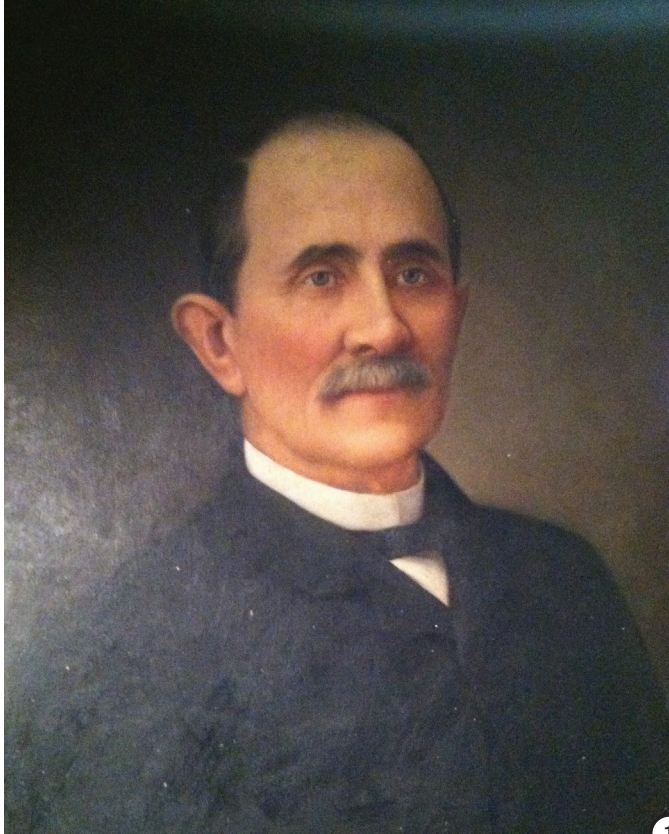
The Filson

is published quarterly by
The Filson Historical Society
1310 South Third Street
Louisville, KY 40208
We welcome your feedback
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OUR MISSION:

To collect, preserve, and
tell the significant stories
of Kentucky and Ohio
Valley history and culture.

Recent Acquisitions



1

The portraits and photographs shown here are part of a wonderful family collection recently donated by Frank P. Strickler III. Mr. Strickler's family has deep Kentucky roots extending back to pioneer days. The bulk of the gift was portraits of the Carter, Gheens, Moore, and Jones families and the photographs primarily of the Carter and Strickler families. They all are a most welcome addition to The Filson's collection.

1. Portrait of Charles W. Gheens (1837-1927) by Harvey Joiner, 1889. Gheens was a successful businessman, with interests from wholesale groceries to real estate. He was the father of C. Edwin Gheens who, with his wife Mary Jo, established the Gheens Foundation in 1957.



2a



2b

Recent Acquisitions (cont.)



3a



3b



4

2a. Photograph and portrait of Caswell Brown Carter (1858-1864). Cassie, as he was called, died at the tender age of six. This photo of the very solemn looking little boy was used as the model to paint a posthumous portrait by an unidentified artist.

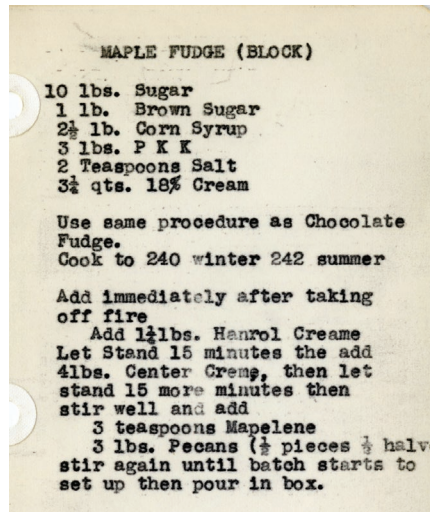
3a. Young Frank P. Strickler, Jr. (1892-1974) in anything but everyday wear, ca. 1897.

3b. From sporting the fashion of a young noble to a military air, Frank eventually opted for a career in medicine.

4. Portrait of Melvilla Carter Otter (1871-1936) by an unidentified artist, ca. 1886. She married John D. Otter in 1894. She was the sister of Caswell Carter and the mother of long time Louisville journalist Melville Otter Briney. Family tradition states that the portrait originally was full-length but was cut down to its present size years ago.

Food for Thought

BY JOHNA L. PICCO | ASSOCIATE CURATOR OF SPECIAL COLLECTIONS



In 2015, The Filson's blog (didn't know we had a blog? Check it out: filsonhistorical.org/filson-blog) ran a collection of ten posts focused on recipes from our archives and library. These posts can be found under the category "Recipes from the Archives" (filsonhistorical.org/category/recipes-from-the-archives/) and discuss a variety of topics—from maple fudge (20 lbs of it!) to mint juleps, etiquette, and even duck-squirrel-rabbit-and-pig soup.

The recipes vary in format; some are hand-written, like the cruller and gingerbread recipes from the Corliss-Respass Family Papers [Mss. A C799]. Other more modern, commercial recipe books were printed in full-color and served as a vehicle for advertisement, like the

1931 Kraft-Phenix Cheese Corporation booklet featuring various Velveeta recipes.

Of all the examples in our collections, my favorites are those that tell a story. This past year was the 141st Kentucky Derby and in keeping with the celebratory mood that surrounds this event I decided to make April's entry about Mint Juleps. In the 1934 pocket-sized publication titled *How to Make Old Kentucky Famed Drinks* (Brown Forman Distillery Co., 1934) that includes a recipe for the "Pendennis Club Mint Julep," and details "Martin's Own Recipe."

At first glance, I assumed that "Martin" was a fictional bartender, but further investigation proved me wrong. "Martin" is Martin P. Cuneo, a first generation Italian American, born in 1876. He began working at the Pendennis Club in 1913 and is typically associated with the Old-Fashioned, though it has been almost completely ruled out that he invented said drink.

What else do we know about Martin? Research reveals that he had five siblings: Virginia, John, Victoria, Julia, and Charles. His mother, Augustine, was a widower, though I am unsure what year Joseph, her husband and Martin's father, passed.

Martin married Rose (Groth) and they had twin sons, James M. and William P.; William died at just 8-months-old from what was in part due to the record-breaking heat of 1913. Several records also reveal a daughter, Dorothy, though her story is murky.

The 1940 census has Martin still working as a bartender, making about \$6/hour and working 54 hours per week. Four years later at the

Access all
of last year's
"Recipes from the
Archives" posts,
along with our
other blog entries:
filsonhistorical.org/filson-blog



age of sixty-eight Martin died of pancreatic cancer. Rose died the next year. Both he and Rose are buried in Cave Hill.

Another example complete with back story comes from the November post that featured several Thanksgiving recipes. Cissy Gregg, the author of those recipes, was a long-time *Courier-Journal* columnist whose recipes appeared daily in a column titled “Cissy Gregg’s Cookbook and Guide to Gracious Living.”

Cissy was the wife of Louisville architect Edd R. Gregg; the couple met while studying at the University of Kentucky. Edd, who served as the “guinea pig” for his wife’s culinary endeavors, wrote his own *Courier-Journal* op-ed titled “I’m Fed Up!” in which he reflected on his wife’s “successes”:

I weighed 145 pounds when I came out of the service. Now I weigh about 132 pounds. It isn’t that we don’t have any food at our house—our grocery bills belie that,—it’s the experimental cooking that I have to eat (and much of it that doesn’t get in the paper) that is getting me down.

Weight loss or not, Edd was an accomplished architect, working first under E.T. Hutchings and later for himself. Edd also served a term as President of the Central Kentucky Chapter of the AIA. As for Cissy, her column and recipe books were no passing fad. “Cissy Gregg’s Cookbook and Guide to Gracious Living” ran from 1942–1963 and was the first *Courier-Journal* magazine section to utilize color. In 1996 Cissy was added to the Kentucky Commission of Women’s “Kentucky Women Remembered” award and exhibit. Today her recipes still appear within the newspaper—both in print and online. The Filson has a small collection of Edd’s architectural

work [Mss./AR/G819] as well as a handful of special edition *Courier-Journal* magazines featuring Cissy’s recipes [uncatalogued].

These are only a sampling of the recipes available within The Filson’s collections. Those not featured in the blog range in theme from an 1870 recipe book of Henrietta (Etta) Wilson Pope Jacob [Mss. BH J15] that includes food-related verses and medicinal recipes to household cleaning recipes—including one for carpet cleaning—found within the Garthright genealogical papers [Mss. A G261 9]. And the recipes themselves are just the beginning. As my blog posts reveal, the topic lends itself to the study of all things food, including: diet, menu, advertisement, etiquette, quality—the list could go on. Whether your research needs are academic or light-hearted, we can help.

And don’t forget: you can access all of last year’s “Recipes from the Archives” posts, along with other blog entries, on our blog: filsonhistorical.org/filson-blog.

PENDENNIS CLUB MINT JULEP

"Martin"—Head Bartender,
Louisville's Pendennis Club

MARTIN'S OWN RECIPE:

A MINT julep should be served in a 16-ounce silver cup. Dissolve teaspoonful of granulated sugar in spring water — using just enough to dissolve thoroughly. Add two or three tender sprigs of mint — not bruised. Fill cup with cracked ice — not shaved. Add two jiggers of B-F Kentucky Whisky and stir gently. Refill with cracked ice and let stand a few minutes to allow frosting. Place large bunch of mint — with ends cut to bleed slightly — on top of ice and force down firmly. Mint should be about five inches long. If straws are used, cut them off so that the ends protrude just above lip of cup. The nostrils of the drinker should be practically buried in the mint leaves during the act of drinking.

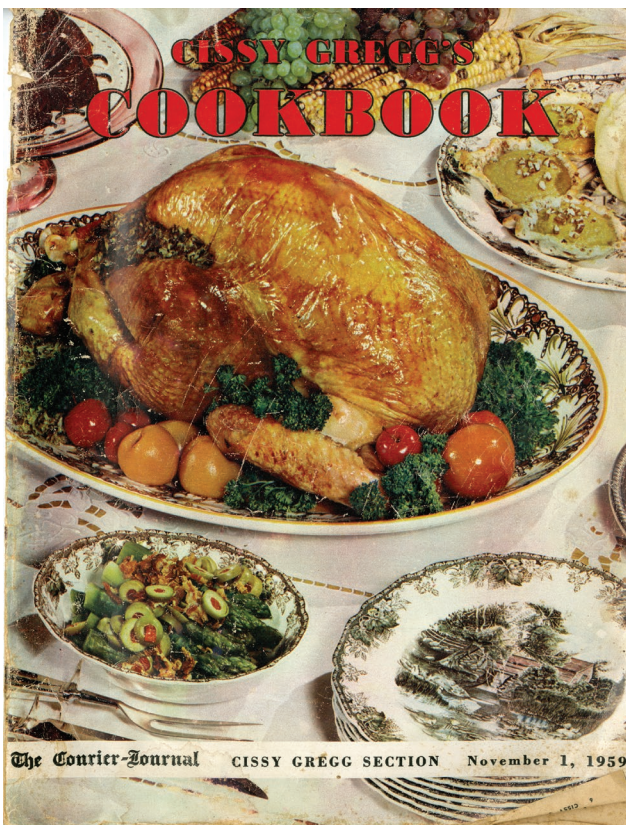


in the Kraft-Phenix line

suited for families with children. Pimento Velveeta and Kay for spreads and appetizers. Kraft American, Pimento, Brick, Swiss, Grated, Old English—each individual in flavor and texture.



Page Five



The Courier-Journal Cissy Gregg Section November 1, 1959

Page 3

Typed recipe for Maple Fudge taken from the Reed Candy Store recipe book.
[Mss. BB R323]

Page 3

Gingerbread recipe from the Corlis-Respass Family Papers.
[Mss.A C799]

Page 4

Forty-six classic drink recipes published by Brown-Forman Distillery Co., 1934.
[Filson Library Collection]

Page 4

Long-time Pendennis Club bartender Martin Cuneo's famous Mint Julep cocktail recipe.
[Filson Library Collection]

Page 4

Too much cheese? No such thing. This 1931 booklet features Kraft cheese recipes on detachable cards. [Filson Library Collection]

Page 5

Cissy Gregg's *Courier-Journal* by-line photo, ca. 1950. [Filson Library Collection]

Page 5 - bottom

Courier-Journal's November 1959 edition of "Cissy Gregg's Cookbook." [Filson Library Collection]



THE HENRY D. ORMSBY III SEMINAR SERIES

THE LOST CAUSE: CONFLICT, CULTURE, AND CONFEDERATE MEMORY IN KENTUCKY

.....

The 8th Annual Henry D. Ormsby III Seminar Series honors and recognizes Henry's devotion and distinguished contributions to The Filson Historical Society. The series affirms Henry's personal involvement and commitment to life-long learning, scholarship and education.



ABOUT OUR SPEAKER

Brad Asher is an independent scholar and historian. He is author of three books, including *Cecelia and Fanny: The Remarkable Friendship Between an Escaped Slave and her Former Mistress* (University Press of Kentucky, 2011) and *On-The-Road Histories: Kentucky* (Interlink Books, 2006). He is currently working on a biography of Union general and commander of Kentucky Stephen Burbridge. He holds a PhD in U.S. history from the University of Chicago.

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JANUARY 27

WINE, 5:45 P.M. LECTURE, 6:00 P.M.

OXMOOR FARM, 720 OXMOOR AVENUE, LOUISVILLE

WHOSE CAUSE? WHOSE LOSS?

Shortly after the guns fell silent, the battle over the proper way to tell the story of the Civil War began. Waged through memorial observances, monuments, memoirs, and children's literature, this battle resulted in an apparent southern victory by the early decades of the 20th century, as the narrative of the "Lost Cause" dominated its cultural rivals. In this session, we will discuss the meaning of the Lost Cause and look at the competing alternative narratives. We will take a quick tour of the burgeoning historical literature on Civil War memory and show the ways in which race and gender shaped the competing stories and influenced the outcome. The goal is to come to an understanding of how and why a southern-tinged understanding of the war and its consequences came to be the foundation of sectional reconciliation.

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FEBRUARY 11

WINE, 5:45 P.M. LECTURE, 6:00 P.M.

OXMOOR FARM, 720 OXMOOR AVENUE, LOUISVILLE

KENTUCKY'S CAUSE?

Divided in their loyalties during the war, white Kentuckians firmly embraced the Lost Cause after the conflict. Politically, socially, and culturally, former Confederates ruled in the Bluegrass state. Dismayed at the emancipationist policies of the Lincoln Administration after 1863, an increasing number of Kentucky's conservative Unionists found solace in a narrative that stressed the honor and valor among the white soldiers on both sides and that de-emphasized the constitutional revolution that followed the years after 1865. In this session, we will discuss the work of several younger scholars who have turned their attention to the ways in which a "Confederate Kentucky" was created.

Page 6

Colored Postcard, Confederate Monument, Louisville, Ky.
From The Filson Historical Society's Collection. [MNU-218]

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FEBRUARY 17

WINE, 5:45 P.M. LECTURE, 6:00 P.M.

OXMOOR FARM, 720 OXMOOR AVENUE, LOUISVILLE

GOD'S CAUSE?

Many of Kentucky's Protestants shared a common way of reading and understanding the Bible before the Civil War that was widespread among American evangelical Christians. This shared approach was based on "common sense" understandings of the literal text of Scripture. Under the strains of war and emancipation, however, this common religious culture began to fray, and Kentucky's religious leaders differed violently over the meaning of the conflict. After the war, southern divines reasserted their old understandings of the Bible and God's will and over the next few decades Kentucky's dissenters came back to the fold. This theological reconciliation both facilitated and was facilitated by Kentucky's pro-southern political and cultural reconciliation. In this session, we will talk about recent scholarship on Kentucky's religious history.

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MARCH 9

WINE, 5:45 P.M. LECTURE, 6:00 P.M.

OXMOOR FARM, 720 OXMOOR AVENUE, LOUISVILLE

KENTUCKY'S CONFEDERATE HERITAGE AND CURRENT-DAY CONTROVERSIES

There are 61 Civil War monuments in Kentucky listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Of that group, seven memorialize the Union, showing the impact that the Lost Cause had on Civil War memory in the state. In the last few decades, however, some of the more prominent Confederate-themed monuments have drawn protests for various reasons. Most recently, these have included the bust of Jefferson Davis displayed in the Rotunda of the Capitol building and the Confederate monument on Third Street at the University of Louisville. When does a monument need to be moved or a flag taken down? In this session, we will discuss these questions as we explore how cultural power and memory continue to intersect.

Black History Month

Sunday, February 21 – 4:00 p.m.

Yearlings Club

4309 W Broadway, Louisville

Free

Preserving History, Culture and Arts: A Reflection of the Louisville Downtown Civil Rights Trail

Join The Filson Historical Society as we partner with the University of Louisville/Yearlings Club to host a discussion on the efforts to preserve the civil rights history and sites. The confirmed speakers for this event are:

- **Raoul Cunningham**
President, Louisville Chapter, NAACP
President, Kentucky State Conference
- **Kirk Bright**
Student Activist
- **Connie Cosby**
- **Moderator: Dr. Shirletta Kinchen**
Assistant Professor of Pan-African Studies,
University of Louisville

This event is free and open to the public.
Light refreshments will be served.

*The University of Louisville/Yearlings Club Forum
Series is sponsored by the College of Arts and Sciences,
Office of the Dean, Office for International, Diversity and
Engagement Programs, and The Yearlings Club, Inc.*

Monday, March 7 – 10:30 a.m.

Louisville Free Public Library

Western – 604 S Tenth Street, Louisville

Free

Oral Histories of Louisville's African American Communities Carridder Jones

Louisville, like many cities in the South, was home to many African American neighborhoods and hamlets where residents moved there because of their shared experiences and family ties. Join The Filson Historical Society and the Louisville Free Public Library for a morning of oral history as historian Carridder Jones shares stories of these neighborhoods found in her book *Voices: From Historical African American Communities near Louisville, Kentucky*, which will be available for sale after the lecture.

Carridder Jones is a historian and playwright. Ms. Jones is the author of *Voices: From Historical African American Communities near Louisville, Kentucky*. She is the founder of Women Who Write, a non-profit organization for women writers in the Louisville area.

Join The Filson Historical Society for an evening of blues hits from the 1950s and 60s. Blues is a key part of Louisville's history, with its roots dating back to the early 20th century. Several legendary blues artists called the River City home, including Sylvester Weaver, who recorded the first blues guitar record in 1923. Other local blues legends include Bill Gaither, Sarah Martin, Helen Humes and Edmonia Henderson.

BLUES NIGHT

WITH SPECIAL GUEST

10TH STREET BLUES BAND

PLAYING LIVE AT

OXMOOR FARM

720 OXMOOR AVENUE

**FRIDAY
FEB. 19**

**7:00
P.M.**

\$20 FILSON MEMBERS **\$25** NON-MEMBERS

The 10th Street Blues Band has been featured at The Kentucky Folk Life Festival in Frankfort and in blues clubs and festivals statewide. Sonny Sitgraves (drums), Matt Swenson (bass), Billy Bird (vocals and harmonica) and Pen Bogert (guitar) have been playing together for many years. Bogert, a former Filson staff member, will provide an overview of the history of blues, in addition to the evening's music. Materials relating to blues history will also be on display. Wine, beer, and light refreshments will be served.

THE FILSON
HISTORICAL SOCIETY
CORNERSTONE
CAMPAIGN

CAMPUS EXPANSION PROJECT UPDATE

The New Filson continues to take shape on our Old Louisville Campus. The Project's second story pedways, bridging our courtyard and historic alleyway, and connecting all of our buildings, are the most recent, visible, "new" additions, as the photos opposite show. A new elevator shaft, now in place between the Carriage House and the Ferguson Mansion, will house the elevator providing access to the pedways on the second floor of the Carriage House. The pedways will integrate our three main structures – the Ferguson Mansion, the Carriage House, and the new Owsley Brown II History Center – creating, in essence, a single building allowing our guests to visit and use all our facilities without having to brave the elements.

The Cornerstone Campaign for the Campus Expansion Project continues to make great progress. Over 350 generous donors – businesses, foundations and individuals – have pledged over \$11 million to support the Expansion. You can help them bring the New Filson to life by making a pledge or by adding to a pledge already made. You can do so on The Filson's website or by calling the Development Department at 502-635-5083. Work on the Project will be completed and opening ceremonies held in 2016. We hope you will join us for the celebrations.

The Filson is open while this transformation takes place. We invite you to stop by and see the progress, and get a glimpse of the future, for yourself. If the winter weather keeps you at home, you can stay up-to-date on our progress by viewing our photos and videos on our website, filsonhistorical.org, or by following us on Facebook.



VIEW OF PEDWAY FROM FERGUSON MANSION THIRD FLOOR



VIEW OF PEDWAY FROM THE NORTH



VIEW OF PEDWAY FROM THE SOUTH

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 Jacqueline and Theodore S. Rosky
 Robert Rowan
 Thomas J. Sabetta, Ph.D.
 Mary S. Sachs
 Jeff and Rene Savarise
 Betty H. Schwartzel
 Second Street Neighborhood Association
 Lewis P. Seiler, Jr.
 Louise B. Seiler
 Vicki Shain-Eckley
 Alfred R. Shands
 Sarah and Robert Shaw
 Darrell and Nancy Shelton
 Robert Slaton
 Don Smith
 Diane and Walter Snowa
 The Snowy Owl Foundation
 The South Fourth Street Association
 John S. Speed
 George E. Stablein
 Pamela Steffen
 The Steinbock Family
 Sharon and John Stern
 The James W. Stites Jr. Family
 J. Walker Stites III
 Stock Yards Bank & Trust Company
 Elizabeth S. Stokes
 Richard and Mary Ellen Stottmann
 Bill and Lindy Street
 Frank Strickler
 Dace and King Stubbs, Marshall and
 Heather Farrer, Dace Maki

Clay W. Stuckey, D.D.S.
 David Stuedle
 Patrick Sumner
 Robert and Susan Schenkel
 Avanel Sutherland
 Mr. and Mrs. R. E. Sutherland
 Lisa Tabler
 Kate and Harry Talamini
 Peter and Margaret Tanguay
 Amy and Lawrence Tannheimer
 John and Sally Taylor
 The 1300 Association
 The Third Street Neighborhood Association
 B. Preston and Margaret C. Thomas
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 Nancy H. Thomas
 Tom and Sarah Thornton
 Ellen Miller Timmons
 Rose Mary Rummel Toebe
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 Martha S. Trotter
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*Gifts Received as of
 December 31, 2015*

BOURBON EVENTS



TUESDAY, JANUARY 26 - 6:00 p.m.

The Library at Oxmoor Farm
720 Oxmoor Avenue, Louisville
\$50

Bourbon Salon at Oxmoor Farm

KEEPING THE TRADITION ALIVE

Generations of distillers have contributed to the heritage and time-honored tradition of making bourbon, using the same methods that their ancestors used in years past to create America's native spirit. However, three families who owned or ran distilleries in the 20th century are now making whiskey in a new way. Join The Filson Historical Society for "Keeping the Tradition Alive," a panel discussion with Steve Beam of Limestone Branch Distillery, Peter Pogue from The Old Pogue Distillery, and Corky Taylor from Kentucky Peerless Distilling Company. All three come from distilling families but are revamping the way we experience bourbon whiskey. Michael R. Veach will moderate this discussion on how they incorporate their personal family traditions while creating bourbon in the 21st century.



TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 23 - 6:00 P.M.

The Library at Oxmoor Farm
720 Oxmoor Avenue, Louisville
\$50

Bourbon Salon at Oxmoor Farm

BOURBON'S OLDER SOPHISTICATED SISTER

Kentucky has a rich tradition of distilling brandy from fruit. One of the world's oldest distilled spirits, brandy was considered an essential part of daily life throughout the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries, and it survived Prohibition only because it was marketed as a medicinal prescription or an ingredient for baking. Join The Filson for "Brandy: Bourbon's Older, Sophisticated Sister," a panel discussion with Brandy Historian Renae Price and representatives from Copper & Kings and Huber's Brandy Distilleries. We will examine the connection between brandy and bourbon in the past and discuss how these two fine distilled spirits are becoming entwined in the 21st century.



SATURDAY, MARCH 5 - 9:00 A.M.-5:00 P.M.

Bourbon's Bistro
2255 Frankfort Ave., Louisville
\$100 for members
\$125 for non-members

IT'S ALL ABOUT THE BOURBON:

THE FILSON BOURBON ACADEMY

Come enhance your appreciation of bourbon and increase your knowledge of Kentucky whiskey products at The Filson Bourbon Academy. This educational seminar is supported by the Kentucky Distillers Association and the Louisville Convention and Visitors Bureau.

This eight-hour course will take place on Saturday, March 5 at Bourbon's Bistro. The class will be led by The Filson's bourbon historian, Michael R. Veach, a member of the Bourbon Hall of Fame and author of *Kentucky Bourbon Whiskey: An American Heritage*.

The Academy is limited to 30 students, with a cost of \$100 for Filson members and \$125 for non-members. This cost includes the day-long session and a box lunch.

To reserve your spot, please visit filsonhistorical.org/events or call The Filson at (502) 635-5083. Reservations should be made by March 1, 2016.



TUESDAY, MARCH 22 - 6:00 P.M.

The Library at Oxmoor Farm
720 Oxmoor Avenue, Louisville
\$50

Bourbon Salon at Oxmoor Farm

WOMEN DISTILLERS IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Prior to Prohibition, women were a part of the distilling tradition. The 21st century has seen a resurgence of women distilling bourbon, moving away from the stereotype that women who drink bourbon are threatening or dangerous. Join The Filson for "Women Distillers in the 21st Century," a panel discussion with Marianne Barnes, Master Distiller at the former Old Taylor Distillery, Pam Heilmann from Michter's, and Lisa Wicker from Starlight Distilleries at Huber's Orchard and Winery. These influential women in the distilling industry will discuss the products that their distilleries are producing under their guidance.

Inspiring Leadership and Philanthropy: The Legacy of Rogers Clark Ballard Thruston

Laura Kerr, Development Coordinator

Colonel Reuben T. Durrett and nine of his friends founded The Filson in 1884, to collect and preserve their region's history and make it accessible to the public. Over its more than 131 year history, The Filson became one of Louisville's cornerstone cultural institutions, and a nationally recognized historical society and center for lifelong learning. However, this illustrious history almost never happened.

In 1913, the future of The Filson was by no means a sure thing due to the passing of Col. Durrett, its driving force and founder. If a local mineralogical engineer with a love for history had not stepped in to take the helm, The Filson might not have lasted beyond its 30th birthday. That man was Rogers Clark Ballard Thruston. He served first as vice president of The Filson starting in 1913, and as president from 1923, until his death in 1946.

His vision, strong leadership, and generosity enabled The Filson to become what it is today: Kentucky's largest and oldest privately supported professional historical society, a renowned institution attracting both scholars and tourists from around the world.¹

In the Filson's early years, Col. Durrett's Louisville home was The Filson's home. Meetings were held in his library and The Filson's collections were stored alongside his own. In 1913, Col. Durrett, who had successfully led The Filson since its founding, passed away after a long, lingering illness. His library, including much of The Filson's collection housed with it, was sold to the University of Chicago. When Thruston learned that much of The Filson's collection had been removed to Illinois, he immediately began trying to save and preserve what was left. He rescued the remnants of the collection and housed it in his office in Louisville's Columbia Building. He realized, however, that using his personal office was only a temporary solution. For The Filson to survive, grow, and fulfill its mission, it needed a home of its own.²



In January of 1920, Thruston made a proposal to his fellow Filson officers. He promised that if The Filson would acquire its own permanent building with at least one fireproof room, he would donate his own collection, helping to replace the lost Durrett materials, and, moreover, would donate \$50,000 worth of income-producing corporate stock to establish an endowment. Upon becoming president three years later, Thruston personally led the effort to find The Filson's new home. That effort met with success in June 1929, when The Filson acquired and moved into its first building complete with a fireproof archive, at 118 West Breckinridge Street in Louisville. That same month, Thruston fulfilled his promise and established The Filson's endowment.³

Once the collections were safely housed in The Filson's own home, Thruston was able to focus on other important Filson operations. He actively worked to expand The Filson's resources, donating \$25,000 to start a collection acquisition fund and employing staff to manage the collection. He hired The Filson's first full-time staff member, his stenographer, Ludie J. Kinkead, as curator, and eventually added a full Filson team. The staff worked closely with him to increase, preserve, and organize The Filson's collections. He inspired and taught his team, and they admired and deeply appreciated him. When he passed away, many of them authored touching memorials to him in the April 1947 edition of *The Filson Club History Quarterly*.

Thruston Legacy Circle

The Filson owes much to R. C. Ballard Thruston. He was the dedicated, vigorous leader The Filson needed to survive after the death of Colonel Durrett. He contributed generously to The Filson during his lifetime and at his death in 1946 left The Filson a



bequest of \$125,000 — the first planned gift to The Filson — so that the society he loved could fulfill its mission of historical preservation and education for future generations. The Filson still benefits from the endowment he established and the example he set.

To honor Mr. Thruston, The Filson recently established the Thruston Legacy Circle. This honorary society will recognize those who, like him, have made a planned gift to The Filson. For more information about the Thruston Legacy Circle, including Circle member recognition, a list of Circle members, and information on how to join, please turn the page.

Thruston and Durrett would be proud of the progress The Filson has made in the century since since Col. Durrett's passing. Their vision for The Filson is still being realized. Our Campus Expansion Project, moving toward completion in 2016, is creating a New Filson with modern, expanded facilities, featuring far more than "one fireproof room." Thruston saw the need for The Filson to keep expanding even back in 1946. In his will he wrote, "We are now crowded and growing rapidly. We need more room, more staff, more income and endowment." This is as true today as it was 70 years ago, so The Filson continues to grow and expand in order to fulfill its mission for future generations.⁴

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Thruston took The Filson staff on outings to local places of interest. This picture shows the staff at the entrance to Mammoth Cave, KY. Thruston numbered The Filson staff in the photo as follows: (1) R. C. B. Thruston, (2) Katherine G. Healy, (3) Miss Ludie Kinkead, (4) Miss Margaret Schafer, (5) Mr. Otto A. Rothert, and (6) Miss Evelyn R. Dale.

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The Filson's 60th Anniversary in May, 1944. Seated, from left: Ludie Kinkead and Julia O'Fallon. Standing, from left: Evelyn Dale, R. C. Ballard Thruston, Otto A. Rothert, Margaret M. Bridwell.

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Rogers Clark Ballard Thruston in The Filson Library, June 1944.

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Filson Staff ready to leave for 3-day house party as Thruston's guests. Front, left to right: R. C. Ballard Thruston, Margaret Shafer, Otto Rothert. Back, left to right: Evelyn Dale, Katherine Healy, Ludie Kinkead. Sept. 9, 1932.

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The Filson's building at 118 W. Breckinridge Street

¹ Allen M. Reager, "An Inspiration," The Filson Club History Quarterly, (April, 1947): 137.

² Thomas D. Clark, "Rogers Clark Ballard Thruston, Engineer, Historian, and Benevolent Kentuckian" The Filson Club History Quarterly (October, 1984): 423-425.

³ R. C. Ballard Thruston, "The Will of R. C. Ballard Thruston," The Filson Club History Quarterly (April, 1947):157.

⁴ Thruston, "The Will of R. C. Ballard Thruston," 158.

Filsonian listing reflects membership renewals received through December 10.

The Filsonians

September - December 2015



The Thruston Legacy Circle is an honorary society established in 2015, to recognize those who have followed the example of R. C. Ballard Thruston by including The Filson in their estate plans. Since our founding in 1884, The Filson has been privately supported and planned giving is an ideal way to continue that tradition of private support.

If you have made a planned gift to The Filson and have not so advised us, we thank you and ask that you let us know so we can welcome you to the TLC. If you have not made a planned gift, but would like more information about doing so, please call our Development Department at 502.635.5083 or email Rick Anderson, Director of Development, at pra@filsonhistorical.org. We would be pleased to talk with you about planned giving.

TLC Members

*Dr. and Mrs. Harold W. Blevins
Emily Durrett and Leonard Gross
Michael N. Harreld
Robert Kulp
Dr. and Mrs. Alton E. Neurath
Mike and Mary Dale Reynolds
Mary S. Sachs
Bill and Lindy Street
Clay W. Stuckey
George R. Bailey and
Porter Watkins
Orme Wilson
Stephen R. Zollner*

CLARK Membership

(\$2,500 - \$4,999)

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Ms. Augusta Brown
Mr. and Mrs. R. Fairleigh Lussy
Vivian Ruth Sawyer and
Thomas T. Noland Jr.

SHELBY Membership

(\$1,000 - \$2,499)

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Dr. Laman Gray Jr.
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Ms. Nancy Lampton
Mr. H. Powell Starks
Brig. Gen. R. R. Van Stockum USMC Ret.
Mr. and Mrs. Orme Wilson

CLAY Membership

(\$500 - \$999)

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Mr. and Mrs. Mark B. Davis Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. C. James Hyslop
Mr. Alfred S. Joseph III
Col. and Mrs. Robert E. Spiller
Ms. Barbara Tafel

AUDUBON Membership

(\$250 - \$499)

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Dr. Michael Cunningham
Rev. John G. Eifler
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Ms. Betty Kilgore Gibbs
Ms. Paula Harshaw
Dr. Harlan L. Higgins and
Mr. Paul Lippert
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