Kentucky Women: Their Lives and Times

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SPEAKERS
Craig Buthod, Melissa A. McEuen, Question, Thomas H. Appleton Jr.

Craig Buthod 00:00
Good evening. My name is Craig Butoh and I'm the president and CEO of the Filson Historical Society. And thank you for coming out tonight. And thank you to Ox more for having us here tonight. Tonight we're talking about Kentucky women. A new book from University of Georgia press. There must be a story there. I'll get there as proud as can be to have that title, aren't they? They feel like they poached you. Melissa McEwen is a professor of history at Transylvania University. She's the author of the award winning seeing America women photographers between the wars and of making war making women femininity and duty and of the American Homefront. 1941 to 1945. Tom Appleton formerly served as editor in chief of publications for the Kentucky Historical Society since 2000. He's been a professor of history at Eastern Kentucky University, he has co edited five books, including negotiating boundaries of southern womanhood, dealing with the powers that be and searching for their places, women in the south, across across four centuries. Please join me in welcoming them. I don't know which of you goes first. But please step forward. Thank you.

Melissa A. McEuen 01:30
Thank you, Craig. And thank you all so much for coming out on a rainy night to hear about Kentucky women. I am in fact going to tell you why the University of Georgia press publish this book, Tom, and I've organized a tag team approach. Tonight I'll spend a few minutes discussing the origins of the volume and what we hoped to accomplish with it. Then I'll turn it over to Tom who will provide a bit of the backstory, how authors were selected and subjects and some of the challenges that we faced with the book. He'll then introduce a few of his favorite subjects favorite chapters, and then I'll get back up and introduce a few of my favorite chapters. I know that sounds like a long evening, but I promise we'll be out of here by 930. And we look forward to any questions that you've got for us after we make our presentation. Kentucky women is part of the University of Georgia press series Southern women their lives and times. There are a number of books in the series, you'll find a couple on Mississippi women, a couple of Georgia women, a couple on Tennessee women, South Carolina has three volumes. We can talk about that. Sorry, if I stole your thunder, Thunder there. There's a total of 15 books today in the series and more on the way in the works. Each volume in the series is an anthology of 15 to 20
original essays, new scholarship on various subjects. And the purpose of the series is to not only enrich women's history, but also to deepen and enrich southern history. The principal editor for the series who has since retired at the University of Georgia press said to me when we were talking about volume on Kentucky, that her principle rule was that each essay had to be a Life and Times story of a woman or one or two women, and it had to be compelling. That was what she wanted us to produce. So five years ago, I met her. I knew her already, but we met and she asked me if I would be interested in editing a volume on Kentucky women. And I said, you know, I'm a historian of women, but not of Kentucky. So I'm not sure you want me to do this. And she said, Well, you need to find the perfect co editor. And that's what I did in Tom Appleton, who is a Kentucky historian extraordinaire. So in 2011, Tom and I began brainstorming, contacting Fellow Scholars in southern history and women's history and Kentucky history to ask them whose story needs to be told or retold? Through the process. We work to build a table of contents that was balanced and truly representative. First of the great timespan that is Kentucky's past going way back into the late 18th century. Second, the vast geography of Kentucky, from the Appalachian Mountains in the east to the far western end of the state, and third of the myriad professions and interests and backgrounds of Kentucky women. And we also kept as our focus, again, what the principal editor had told us the stories have to be compelling. We ask what makes a Kentucky story? And is the woman who is under review now? Is she true Kentucky and is this Kentucky story, a Kentucky woman story? To what extent is the story of southern story because again, the series is Southern women, their lives and times. Tom will answer some of those questions for you. But before I hand it over to him, I want to say that I came away from the project, astounded by Kentucky's dynamic and diverse and progressive past made so in large part by its women. What I've developed over the last three and a half years is a clear understanding of how central women were and continue to be in the economic and political and cultural development of Kentucky and how widespread their influence was regionally, nationally and internationally. So I'll turn it over to Tom now.

Thomas H. Appleton Jr. 06:38

Thank you very much. Let me tell you that I am very familiar with the Filson. I first came to the Filson 43 years ago when I was newly arrived from Memphis where I grew up. And I was down on West Breckinridge working in that location. Or I met Jim Bentley, and he put me at a card table and turned me loose with some documents, the Mexican War. And I have enjoyed over the past decades coming to know Nelson Dawson, Mark Wetherington and others and I'm very pleased with the new headquarters that's under construction. I think it's great for the Filson I am as I said a native Tennessee and Melissa on the other hand is a seventh generation Kentucky and I take comfort though in the fact that although I'm not a native Kentucky and I remember what Irvin S Cobb once said he said that a Tennessee and is merely Kentucky and born away from home. And and that's I've truly found my home in Kentucky. I've made my career studying Kentucky history, which is what I teach it at ek you. I want to tell you a little bit about how we put this volume together. I would say this. When I was at the Kentucky Historical Society, we put up a highway marker. I think it's at the corner of fourth and walnut to the spot where Thomas Merton said he had an epiphany, religious experience. I think if in the future, someone decides to put up a highway marker in recognition of Melissa, that they should put that highway marker up at Panera is, because because she and I met there probably a score of times as we debated which women should be in this volume as we debated who would be the proper person to write the sketch and so forth. I want to say that the watchword for us was balance, we wanted this volume to be balanced in every way. In terms of chronological coverage, our volume has two essays that deal with the frontier period. That concluding essays come all the way up to Martha Lane Collins, Georgia Davis powers. So it truly spans from pre
statehood to modern times. We have geographical balance, so many people say that Kentucky history is focused on Louisville, Lexington, Northern Kentucky so we wanted to have the entire breadth geographically of Kentucky covered. We wanted occupational balance. Some of our women who are profiled were housewives, others were activists. Others were edge Educators. One was a best selling author. So there is occupational balance as well. And we wanted to have balance among our contributors. Some of our contributors are veteran scholars who have published many books. Others are mid career. Still others are younger historians just entering the profession. So we have that sort of mix as well. Now the question of who needs to be in this volume? Well, as you can see, you really can't have a volume on Kentucky women without Mary Todd Lincoln. She's a usual suspect, you can't have a volume without Martha Lane Collins, for example. Just as if you were writing on Kentucky man, you would have to have Daniel Boone, you'd have to have Muhammad Ali. But who else needs to be included? And we decided to have a mix of some familiar names, and some women whose stories were less familiar but needed to be told. For example, everyone has heard about caches, Marcellus Clay, and his exploits. But what about his wife, Mary Jane Warfield clay, whom he divorced after 45 years of marriage, and according to the laws of the day, she was left with nothing she inherited, she she got nothing in this divorce, that he was granted. So we have a wonderful essay on Mary Jane Warfield clay, where the contributor looked at what she wrote, in letters to her friends, to her relatives, and occasional diary entries that she would pin. Another consideration was, who would be available to write a sketch a number of people we considered were going to be on sabbatical, they would not be able to complete it by our deadline. Sometimes we just couldn't think of someone who was a logical person to prepare an entry. And I'll, I'm much less circumspect than Melissa. So I will tell you that sometimes we contracted with someone who then stiffed us. And I'm thinking of one person in particular, a New York Times best selling author, who agreed to write about another best selling Kentucky author. And after some months, she contacted us and said, I just don't think I'm going to be able to write this because I've decided I don't like her. I think Melissa took that better than I did. But you know, my point is, I suppose we would not have any. If we use that as a criterion, we would not have any biographies of Osama bin Laden, or Adolf Hitler. Plus, I kind of liked the woman she was going to be writing about. I don't I don't understand that at all. Then another consideration was this Word documents available. Melissa and I really wanted to have someone from the field of music. We considered Loretta Lynn. And then we hit upon Rosemary Clooney. We really wanted that sketch of Rosemary Clooney. But this woman stiffed us on that, claiming that documents weren't available, which I don't think is fully true. I don't think she made a full effort at it. But I'll pick up a point that Melissa made from the get go, the University of Georgia said that Kentucky was going to be accorded one volume which I think is ridiculous. I don't know if it's because they don't appreciate what women have contributed in Kentucky history. I don't know if it's their feeling that Kentuckians won't buy books. I don't know what their rationale is. But three volumes for South Carolina. No. Two Volumes for Mississippi. You know after you get past Fannie Lou Hamer, Eudora Welty and moody who is there Mississippi, you know, and as far as my native, my native Tennessee is concerned, they get two volumes, you know, and I've read the first volume, because I reviewed it for a journal, I read it cover to cover, okay, I'll give them many pearl. And I'll give them Wilma Dykeman and Wilma Rudolph. But really two volumes for Tennessee and not an only one for us. But we think there's a possibility that Kentucky may be given a second volume. So tonight at the end, I hope if you have any suggestions of women that you think merit being in this volume, I hope you will pass them along to Melissa or me. So we can bear that in mind. Now one thing, one of the assets of our volume is this. We have scholars who are looking at documents with fresh eyes. You know, the story of Kentucky women is there. It's always been there, but sometimes it is hidden. You have to look for it, you have to ferret it out. Such as I mentioned a minute ago about Mary Jane Warfield clay the story was there but no one everyone had been so busy writing about caches, clays, dueling and that sort of thing that they
hadn't looked at what his wife had contributed. Some were pleased Melissa and I the book has been out six months. We're pleased with the early reviews. People have said it's pathbreaking. It's landmark. Someone told me last week, they said this is the last word on Kentucky women. And I didn't know I'm never going to turn down a compliment. But what this person meant to say was this is the latest word on Kentucky women. This is not the end of the story. This is we hope, just the continuation of the story. We hope that our book inspires additional scholarship and more serious work on Kentucky women. To date there is no single comprehensive monograph about Kentucky women. And that is a a a space that needs to be filled on the on the bookshelf. And our book, there are 23 Women profiled in 17 essays 17 original essays. And what I would like to do is just to tell you about a few of my favorites. And since Mrs. Lincoln is up here, I will begin with her. There is a wonderful essay discussing Mary Todd Lincoln and her half sister, Emily Todd Helm, and their relationship and also how those two women conducted themselves as widows. Everyone knows the story of Mary Todd Lincoln and the assassination of the President. I think my friend Katherine Clinton was here to speak about six weeks ago on Mary Todd Lincoln, less well known as the story of her half sister, Emily Todd Helm, whose husband was killed in 1863. He of course was a union, excuse me, a Confederate General. Emily became a widow at 26. She had three children under the age of six, and she would live another 66 years as a widow. She comported herself beautifully. She became an example of national reconciliation. As she grew older, she would go to reunions not only of Confederate units, but of union units as well. She became the beloved mother of the orphan brigade of her husband, you contrast that with the story of Mary Todd Lincoln, who had a very sad, final two decades. She was peripatetic, living in hotels, lived in France for a couple of years, suffering from depression and so forth. And the author of our piece, I think this is a perfect example of how you can look at familiar material through a different lens and sees something new and and different about the subject. I should have shown you that earlier. Another woman I'd like to mention is Elizabeth Lizzie Fouse, who was an African American woman living in Lexington. She was very well educated. In fact, she had been a schoolteacher until she married. And then according to Kentucky law had to give up the profession. Her husband was the superintendent of what were called the Lexington colored schools. Lizzie Faust was a member of more than 40 clubs in Lexington, a very active churchgoer and so forth. In the year 1925. She became outraged when a local woman, also African American who worked as a domestic was found unconscious and unresponsive on the streets of Lexington. The police assumed that Gertrude boulder was drunk and they took her they incarcerated her. She died that same night. She had a severe gastrointestinal illness. Lizzie Fouse mounted a petition drive that secured I believe about 1100 signatures requests requesting that the mayor of Lexington hold an inquiry an inquiry into this situation. He did. The two local newspapers supported this and Lizzie phalluses efforts resulted in changes in police procedures for people who were incarcerated and they were now required to seek a doctor to come and take care of anyone who was who was ill. Okay, loose the firm and on the left was a reformer in eastern Kentucky. But I would like to tell you a little bit about Linda Neville, the woman on the right. Sometimes my students will ask me if you could meet anyone who has gone before us if you could meet anyone and have a conversation with them. Who would it be? Wouldn’t it be Daniel Boone? Well, frankly, it would not be Daniel Boone. If I had talked to one of the boons there would be Rebecca, his wife, she has the story to tell. But frankly, if I could meet one deceased Kentucky and it would be Linda Neville, there on the right, I think she's one of the most admirable people I've ever encountered. Let me begin by asking how many of you have ever heard of Linda Neville? Think well, a specialist like Jeanne Potter, of course, would have heard of Lenten Neville. How many of you have heard of the odd disease? trachoma? Okay, about a half a dozen or so of you have? I'm glad frankly that most of you do not know anything about trachoma. But I wish you knew about Linda Neville. Linda Neville was born in the 1870s and Lexington her father was a professor of classical languages at what is today the University of Kentucky. Linda and her
sister were educated up at Bryn Mawr College in Pennsylvania. They came back they opened a school for the elite in Lexington. When she was in her mid 30s. Linda, bad chance heard about trachoma and how widespread it was in eastern Kentucky. And really she didn't believe the stories. So the next year which was 1908 she decided to find out for herself. So she and several others decided to go from Lexington to Handman Kentucky, which is a Knot County. That's a distance of about 130 miles. They started out on the train. When the when the tracks ran out, they transferred to an open buggy. It took her 52 hours to traverse those 130 miles. When she got to Heineman, she saw people walking on the streets who had red oozing sores around their eyes. Everywhere she looked there were these people. This was the eye disease known as trachoma. Now, people in that area frequently referred to it as sore as sore as while she was there, a young boy between eight and 10 came up to her and asked her if she would take him to the horse pedal. Because he wanted to have his eye cut out. He said it busted when I was a kid. She decided right then and there, she had her, her Thomas Merton epiphany that she was going to devote the rest of her life to helping people with trachoma. And the thing that really that she really couldn't get over was that trachoma is absolutely preventable. It's preventable. It's easily communicated. Most people would catch it, if they, if they didn't have indoor plumbing, they would have a common wash base, and then their house and someone would wash their face and then splash water, then that dirty water would go down into the base, and the next person would come and use it again. They would use towels, common towels, this is how it was spread land and Apple came back to Lexington and persuaded our doctors to go with her down to Eastern Kentucky. And they would set up free clinics. They would perform operations for free. She went door to door in some cases cabin to cabin telling people about trachoma, how it could be prevented, and as difficult as it may be for us to believe she ran into some opposition, because people said it's God's will. There's nothing we can do about this. She even had the Elenin railroad. And I know you hear a lot of bad things about the Elenin railroad at this time period. She got the Elenin railroad to provide free passes or at least discounted fares to bring the afflicted from Eastern Kentucky to Lexington where they could be treated. It's thanks to her untold 1000s of people had their eyesight. She lived until the year 1961. If you're familiar with Lexington, you may you I know you know where Rupp Arena is. Right close buys the Mary Todd Lincoln house. And then right down the street is the Salvation Army. Miss Neville lived right where the Salvation Army now stands, which after she died in 1962. They raised her home. They built the Salvation Army building. And I just think that there must be hallowed ground there. Just think in 1952, the state of Kentucky declared trachoma eradicated. So she saw the culmination of her life's work. I might add, she was one of the founders of the Kentucky Federation for the prevention of blindness. She persuaded the legislature I believe it was 1914 to pass a law saying that a doctor must examine the eyes of a newborn and, and put drops in if necessary to prevent diseases and so forth. At the University of Kentucky library, all of Lenda Nevels papers are available to be researched. And I've been through many of these. And one time I found a letter there and it was written. You wouldn't believe English, you wouldn't believe the grammar. It looks like some of my students had written that. And this one person said to miss Neville, me and my friend Lou Liu, me and my friend Lou. Want to go to the school s k u l to the school for blind children in Lexington. I don't know what compelled me but the envelope was attached. And I looked at that envelope. And on the envelope it was addressed to the woman in Lexington, Kentucky who looks after blind children and somehow it made its way to her and one wonders if the post office today would be very efficient. I suspect not. But she is known in Kentucky history as the angel of the blonde I would also like to say another word about Martha Lane Collins, the author of our piece on Martha Lane Collins makes the excellent point that Martha Lane's background as a Baptist really served the state well, because when she was trying to lured Toyota to come to Kentucky, and they were 20 Other states trying to land Toyota, Martha Lane called upon her knowledge that she had learned from hearing missionaries talk. The missionaries would tell her about Japanese culture, about the culture of
Asia. So when she went about the task of courting Toyota, she knew how to do it. For example, she knew that the Japanese love fireworks. So one night she had a dinner at the governor's mansion in Frankfurt. And after dinner, they went out to the front porch, and they had a fireworks display. Now, unfortunately, they had not told the neighbors about this, and so that caused a little bit of havoc in South Frankfort. She also knew that for whatever reason, the Japanese love Stephen Collins Foster and his music. So she had the costume dancers from Bardstown come to the governor's mansion for that dinner. It was brilliant the way she courted Toyota and landed that facility. I was working in Frankfort at that time at the Kentucky Historical Society and I had the occasion to see Governor Collins often. And because of her, I changed my view on whether a governor should be able to succeed himself or herself. Because as she entered her third and fourth year, she really hit her stride. And she was great, especially in the area of economic development. And our author talks about this and everything that she accomplished in her governorship. I know that Melissa is going to tell you about some of her favorite personalities in this book. But I'll just end this by saying that I am so grateful for the opportunity to have spent four years or so working on this project to become so familiar with 23 extraordinary ladies who appeared in this book. And also I will say that none is more extraordinary than Melissa. And it's been a privilege to work.

Melissa A. McEuen  33:10

Thanks. It's always hard to follow Tom Appleton because he's a great storyteller. I'm going to do what I can as I was thinking about my segue from his discussion of Mark Lane Collins to the subject that I want to discuss first Madeline McDowell Breckenridge, I thought about Governor Collins' son Steve, who I was in college with at Georgetown many years ago. He's been very busy this summer. Getting responses from people who would like to take a statue of Jefferson Davis out of the new state capitol rotunda. He's the chair of Kentucky's historic properties Advisory Commission. And Jeanne Potter knows about that. We've talked a lot about it. I wrote to Steve in his capacity as chair and as a former classmate and said, I'm not going to argue about whether Jefferson Davis needs to be up or down. But I think a woman a statue of a woman needs to be in Frankfort in the state capitol. And I'll go ahead and make an argument for match Breckenridge. And so I made an argument for Maj. Breckenridge. We have an essay by Dr. Lindsay appel, professor emeritus at Georgetown College on maj Breckinridge and I just want to read to you briefly from his essay, because I couldn't possibly kind of distill everything that maj Breckinridge did but this is part of his opening. Madeline Breckinridge revolutionized education, limited child labor and helped create a juvenile justice system lobbying for better health care particularly in the treatment of tuberculosis. A disease that had reached epidemic proportions in the Commonwealth brought her national recognition through all these reforming efforts she demanded more responsible and responsive government and revealed an eye for detail that few male politicians had shown best known for her role in formulating a plan to convert Kentuckians to the cause of women's suffrage and for serving as an officer and tireless spokesperson of the National American Woman Suffrage Association. Breckinridge merited a lion's share of the credit when Kentucky ratified the 19th amendment. Of course, we're looking to the 100th year anniversary of the ratification of the 19th Amendment in 2020. And I hope by then, that Kentucky will have put a statue of maj Breckinridge somewhere in the Capitol. I could go on about maj Breckinridge but I will leave you to Dr. Lindsay apples story, which is an amazing one. She was a very driven reformer. She knew the history of her family. She knew that the clays died early, and that she would have to work as quickly as possible. She too contracted tuberculosis of the bone and had to have part of a leg amputated when she was 24 years old. So most of the work she did in all of those many causes I've just listed she did with a prosthetic limb. Now you may recognize the name Enid
yandell. I don't know if you can see Enid yandell. At the very bottom of this photograph, we were fortunate to have art historian Julie Decker write a profile of Louisville’s own Enid yandell, the renowned sculptor who was the first woman inducted into the National sculpture society in 1899. Here’s yandell with her monumental Pallas Athena cast in her Paris studio in 1896. Those of you who were at the Filson in 2012, may have met Julie Decker because she did a great deal of her research in the handle family papers and the Enid yandell photographs and in the Reuben direct papers as well. Julie Decker was a fellow at the Filson Historical Society that summer. In her essay on Enid yandell. Decker demonstrates how yandell used her creative designs and sculptures of the Kentucky pioneer Daniel Boone to help cast herself as a woman pioneer in a world of sculpture as a woman in a male artists milieu that have large scale statuary. Just as Daniel Boone broke new ground and forge new paths, so did you handle and quite by design, Decker argues it's also how a Kentucky woman who left the state early early in her career, maintained and perhaps strengthened her ties to Kentucky through her artistic choices and decisions. yandell created and exhibited large scale statues in an age marked by America’s pride in its achievements. And so many of these were erected at worlds fairs. One of the things that Julie Decker talks about and uses her expertise as an art historian. Beautifully, I think to discuss some of this work is she she talks about yandell route. I don't want to get too far into this, but yandell choosing these venues, world’s fairs like Chicago in 1893, Buffalo 1901, St. Louis and 1904, to bring her talent in line with the United States rise kind of as an imperial nation showing off its technological prowess and Decker focuses a lot on Chicago where he ended yandell made her name early on, because there was a there was an emphasis there in Chicago in 1893, on the accomplishments of women in all fields, literary arts and visual arts and journalism, and photography, and many, many different fields. And that's one of the things that Decker points out that women were kind of on the rise professionally in the 1890s and Amy Jandal certainly was writing that way. She also ended yandell also made her name as a writer early on, and one of the things that Julie Decker talks about is at jandals book three girls in a flat, which was published while she was in Chicago, while she and her fellow artists fame male artists were living there and working for the Columbian Exposition Yandel and her friends were in their 20s when they were doing that, and as Decker argues and I'm gonna quote here from Julie Decker’s essay about your sandals book, three girls in a flat. It's a primer on the active social, professional, independent woman in the 1890s yandell, as you may know, was also a philanthropist. She was an art educator. She started her own art school and she continues to inspire women artists today. You may be aware of the Women Artists Collective that's based here in Louisville. It's about anyone know about the Women Artists Collective in Louisville. That goes by the name Enid. No. Okay. Sometimes they call themselves the nuts. But they they mounted the show at Transylvania about 18 months ago, solely based on the work of the women in that collective and again, it's based here in in Louisville. Now, I’d like to end with the last essay in the book. Another artist of sorts is Nancy Newsome Mahaffey. She considers herself an artist. I wrote an essay about Nancy for a number of reasons. I’ll just tell you a couple of them. When we were starting this book, I was reading the New York Times food section one Wednesday, there’s a big front page story by Sam Sifton, the food editor on Southern cooking and southern food. And he made a passing reference to nuisance a passing reference. And I thought I knew what nuisance was because I grew up in the town where Nancy Newsome Mahaffey grew up, which is Princeton in the far western end of the state. And I thought Sam Sifton expects the New York Times audience to know that reference that passing reference to nuisance I’ve got to look more into this. Well, Nancy Newsome Mahaffey of Princeton is an internationally recognized expert on the production of dry cured ham, or as we call it in the American South country ham. I like hearing that ah. In producing her award winning hams Mahaffey follows a recipe that the Newsome family brought with him to Kentucky in the early 1800s. That she continues to cure porque, as many rural southerners did for generations, speaks to my Hafeez appreciation for tradition, and a preservation process that
has nearly disappeared in the South. She could generate more profit if she abandoned the time consuming all natural curing operation, a decision that most US ham producers made decades ago. But she's committed to helping contemporary southerners and others understand and appreciate what their ancestors knew and ate. known today as heritage foods. She has won many prizes and awards nationally and internationally. And she has shared the stage and tables with such locavore chefs as Alice Waters. And here in Louisville, Edward Lee, larger Rowley and Kathy Carey, and I thought I would read to you something that Kathy Kerry said about Nancy Kerry and I'm reading from my essay Kerry, a longtime leader in the states farm to table initiatives praises Mahaffey for carrying out her work in the old Slow Food way, the way it should be done. Carrie has served Newsome Sam's and her award winning restaurant lilies since 1994. With a focus on the role of place and tradition in foodways, Mahaffey has spoken at events throughout the US about supporting and eating locally produced heritage foods and explaining their appeal and 2010. And this is Nancy talking. She said, I think one reason more and more people are liking the kinds of food that take a long time to produce the Slow Food kind of food is that the world is moving 90 miles an hour. All across America, there's a growing feeling that it's good to be able to know where your food came from, and know the person who made it. I conducted over the course of 15 months several interviews with Nancy Newsome Mahaffey, and I learned a great deal about a woman in a man's world here's another one. A woman who started 30 years ago in a business that was largely a business run by men, that is the ham carrying business. But she also was in the grocery business. She began, by, in some ways, taking over a business that her father had owned, he had a heart condition, she was afraid he would have a heart attack, and she would be left with the family business, which had been in the same place since 1917. So she sells hams out of her grocery or general store as it is now on Main Street in Princeton. And she also has with that downtown Main Street store fought against the Walmart effect in that small town. Walmart, the first the Walmart, the first one, I guess, was built in Princeton and early Walmart in the late 1970s. And very soon in Princeton, the businesses on Main Street closed their doors, appliance stores, clothing stores, shoe stores, because of the competition from Walmart. And Nancy was determined as a local entrepreneur and someone who believed in the power of small towns and Main Street to help revive Main Street so she has spent most of her adult life not just current curing hams, which is a very intensive work, by the way, but also trying to revitalize downtown Princeton and bring it back to life and fight the Walmart effect. Sorry, if I'm sending sounding too anti corporate there, but she really has has worked to do that and to try to attract tourists to to small town America. She believes in tourism as a way to revive small towns. So I'll I'll just end by concluding about Nancy Mahaffey that she's preserving, sharing and celebrating rural Kentucky foodways. That's her contribution to Southern culture and to American culture. While other women profiled in our book undertook settlement, suffrage, literacy, or curing chronic disease. Mahaffey promotes the role of Kentucky's culinary heritage to celebrate the past and keep tradition alive. Thank you. And we'll be glad to entertain questions if we have time. Yeah. Hey, we finished before 930. Any questions or comments? Or suggestions? Or suggestions? Yes? No, they're nice

**Question** 48:04

to have you be willing to do a second volume if it becomes possible or we need that to someone else

**Thomas H. Appleton Jr.** 48:13
told me when we haven't talked about it, but I would certainly be willing to, if I could work with Melissa, I would be certainly happy to do that. Because there's so many people. Rosemary Clooney needs to be in there. Janice Holt Giles needs to be in there. Who else? Well. I'm going to say this bell breezing. You know the famous Madam from from Lexington, one of the most successful business women in Kentucky history. Who else? Pardon? Yes, yes. If there are enough records on on her that would be really good.

Mary Breckinridge is in there. She's in there.

Yeah, yes. She's on our list. Diane Sawyer

and in groups I mean, I'm interested in in essays that would have to do with groups of women working together. I'd love to see an essay on home demonstration agents who worked for you know USDA, for the state agriculture. What they did.

Again, Melissa is to con to say we had contracted with someone who stiffed us. We would have had that essay.

We would have had that essay there was a point where I asked Tom every time we were Panera Bread. Don't you want to write that essay? So and so's given up on it? Don't you want to write it and I'll have to admit we did. We did get an essay That was beyond the deadline that I spent three weeks in the summer completely rewriting. And thankfully, we just decided to cut it because there was a point at which I thought this isn't this is really not what I should be doing. I mean, I'm an editor, but I shouldn't be completely rewriting a very poor essay on a subject that we wanted, but it didn't happen. There have not been circumstances.

That's good. Yes, ma'am.

I'm just curious why the University of Georgia told you that Kentucky can only have one
volume. What was their rationale?

Melissa A. McEuen  50:36
I should know that. You know, I don't remember what she said to me about that. Except that she said, Well, Texas is just going to have one volume, and that's a much bigger state. So I do remember that now the Texas volume just came out, and it's huge. So there, there was this, this idea that some of the states that weren't part of the Deep South, right only merited one volume. So Texas gets one and, and Kentucky gets one, Virginia, it gets one. Yeah, right. Right. Again, I think it's an argument. I mean, if if many books sell, then I think we can make an argument to have a second volume. I haven't committed to it yet. Tom. Tom, is very interested in doing it. He he right now is teaching three sections of Kentucky women at Eastern Kentucky University. And I taught the course in the May term, the four week may term that we have at Transylvania this past May. And my students, one of the assignments I gave the students was to actually create research profiles of women who need to be included in the second volume. And I think Tom's doing the same. So we're going to have a big stack of paper that we can present to the University of Georgia press. Look at look at what these students these undergraduates have come up with. In their research. These women need to be profiled.

Thomas H. Appleton Jr.  52:13
I might say yes, I'm teaching ed students in the women's history, Kentucky women's history class, but half of them are men. And I don't think they're just sucking up to me. But a lot of them have said, you know, I really didn't want to take this class. But my advisor suggested that, but I'm really learning a lot that I had never knew about Kentucky women. And so that's very gratifying, very gratifying. Yes, sir.

Question  52:43
I would like to ask you, what made us choose to go in that direction of men, as historians, generally ignored women. So what is there in your background that changes?

Thomas H. Appleton Jr.  53:01
My doctoral dissertation was on prohibition, temperance and prohibition in Kentucky. And there I became very familiar with WC T u. And the women who promoted the cause of temperance in Kentucky and I was very impressed by their political skills in working with legislators in Frankfort and so forth. And that's how I got interested in it. And then, one of my best friends wrote the biography of Madeline McDowell Breckinridge. And she would be sitting at one microfilm reader, reading about Maj. I would be at my microfilm reader reading about prohibition, and then we would share stories and I just became fascinated by literally this untold story. And if you go back and look at the standard histories of Kentucky women just do not appear. They do not appear. Or Janey I know, you know, the story of Mrs. Merrill and her acts for one of the math students love this story about this woman on the frontier, who her cabin was under attack, her husband had been killed and native Indians started coming down the chimney. So she got pillows and threw feathers in the in the fireplace, the Indians fell down
at coughing and carrying on and she killed him with an axe. And, you know, we only know her as Mrs. Merrill. She doesn't even have a first name. That's so often the case and I just kind of like the adventure of this and filling in the story. Enough has been said about some of these people. Well, enough has been said about caches clay for example. Let's see what the other half has to say. That's a terrific Thank you. Thank you all. Thank you.