

OWEN COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Weddings create memories of a lifetime

The beautifully constructed display case stands in a place of honor in the Ladies Room at the Historical Society Museum. It was painstakingly hand-crafted by Dean Riddle, who



BONNIE STRASSELL

was an active board member of the Historical Society until he passed away several years ago.

Inside the case an intricately beaded wedding gown catches the eye and imagination of visitors. The dress, from the early 1900's, was worn by an unknown young woman from Owen County on her wedding day.

In the museum's parlor, a wedding exhibit gives visitors a glimpse into the past as it features wedding dresses, wedding pictures and accessories of Owen County brides and grooms.

One of the dresses is a lightweight, cotton Callaghan wedding dress, which is embellished with lavender sprigs and was worn by Louisa (Williams) Callaghan.

The Callaghan Family immigrated from Ireland in the late 1800's and settled on Severn. The dress was washed and pressed once a year by Maude Dunn Callaghan; and it was handed down through the Callaghan Family until several years ago it was donated to the Owen County Historical Society Museum.

Owen County weddings have always been joyous occasions which created family memories; and June has traditionally been a favorite month in which to exchange marriage vows.

The history of June weddings goes back to early Roman times when the ancients celebrated a festival on June 1st in honor of the Roman deity, Juno. She was worshipped as the goddess of marriage and childbirth.

In the 1500's June was the time when people came outdoors to take their yearly bath after a long winter. Perhaps it was logical to marry when one was clean. Then, too, flowers were abundant in June, and their aroma would mask any unpleasant body odors which might permeate the large crowds gathering for the celebration.

Though June seems to have been a popular time to marry, an article from the Covington Commonwealth newspaper, dated Oct. 28, 1875, received a report from Owenton that fall weddings seemed to be in vogue that year.

"Matrimony is the rage of our people at this time, there being as high as two weddings per day in this town and vicinity. Though there are several young men left yet, who look as though they would like to



Owen County Weddings is the new exhibit at the Historical Society Museum. Featured are wedding photos, wedding dresses and accessories from the past.

marry if anyone is interested."

According to a Kentucky Journal article, dated Feb. 3, 1872, the following story told of a well-planned elopement near Owenton: "On Friday last week, near Owenton, Thomas Heath, in company with nine other young men, went to within a short distance of the house of Miss Lena Ballard, whose father opposed her marriage with Heath.

"One of this party advanced and gave a concerted signal. The girl started, with the old gentleman in hot pursuit. The race was close and determined, but the girl got in ahead and was borne off on the horse behind Heath, amid the cheers of the party, whilst the disconsolate parent returned to console those of his household.

"The party hastened to the residence of a magistrate, where they were soon pronounced man and wife."

During the Great Depression families across the nation suffered greatly. Jobs were lost, people were going hungry; and for so many the future looked bleak. But the conditions in the country did not keep love from blossoming in many Owen County Communities.

In May of 1932, clutching a suitcase and waiting along the side of a darkened road, 15-year-old Lela Maude Karsner anxiously waited for the young man who was to become her husband for the next 66 years.

John William Hawkins attended school with Lela Maude and it wasn't long before love entered the schoolroom.

Eventually the two decided to elope to Jeffersonville, Indiana; and that decision led to a pre-dawn meeting of the love-smitten pair.

After tying the knot, the newlyweds returned home to Owen County, and after a tense few weeks, Lela Maude's father welcomed John William into the family where he won the hearts of everyone.

Not all love stories involve the very young. Mary Kenney Shipp was a favorite Owen County teacher. She was born in 1904 and after graduating from college, Mary Kenney

taught school and gave piano lessons.

After her parents died, Mary Kenney met a gentleman who rented a room in the same house where she resided. The elderly man, Edward Connely, was quite taken with Mary Kenney, and after several dates he asked her to marry him.

At first refusing his pleas, Mary Kenney finally relented and the two (ages 73 and 82) celebrated an elegant wedding in Owenton which was attended by family, friends and many former students.

Many countians married childhood sweethearts, and although it might not be unusual for siblings in one family to marry those in another family, what makes this Owen County love story a bit unique is the number of siblings involved.

Barbara, Wanda, and Mary Helen True married David, Danny, and Ronnie New, and with a play on words, one might say these love stories began when the Trues became the "News" of Owen County.

Though love stories have introduced a variety of characters in various settings, the common thread of love is timeless, transcends generations, and in many cases endures for a lifetime.

When one Kentuckian was asked how she and her husband had managed to stay together for sixty-five years, she replied, "We were born in a time that when something was broken, you didn't throw it away. You fixed it."

Mark your calendars for Saturday, June 14 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. when Mayberry Day comes to Owenton; and the Owen County Historical Society Museum transforms into the haunted Rimshaw Place.

A baseball, knocked through a window, begins a journey into a ghostly tale. Join us and take a tour of the museum and perhaps meet a few ghosts on the way.

On Saturday, June 21, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., the Owen County Historical Society will present an outdoor Summer Concert at the Historical Society Museum Pavilion. The concert will showcase Owen County's own Kentucky Dulcimer Gatherin'.

KAYS BRANCH AND BEYOND

BY WANDA NEW

Welcome to June. Kids are happy school is out for the summer.

That means my brother Noel is on summer vacation from driving the bus.

I saw where Liam Ballinger was the first grade talent show winner, telling funny one liner jokes so I'm sure he was happy.

Chris and Joel DuFour's daughters celebrated their graduations on Saturday with a big party at Steve and Christine Wilson's home on Peaks Mill Road. Sophie graduated from Franklin County High and Natalie from Oberlin College in Ohio. Both had a big display of pictures and awards they had won, both are very talented girls. Both played volleyball in school so of course the younger generation that was at the party had an energetic game of volleyball with them. They also had a blow-up bouncy obstacle course set up.

The afternoon was beautiful and the tent and white tablecloths out in the yard made a pretty setting for the meal that was served in the kitchen of the beautiful home. Everyone enjoyed catching up with friends and talked the afternoon away. I got to see Susan and Raymond I hadn't seen in a while. Our Kays Branch party goers included Bridget and Ezra, Harrods, Kennedys and me. Joels family came from Indiana, his dad and brothers are all tall so we see where the girls get their height. It was a great party. Best wishes to all the graduates.

Hannah was missing from the party but she had a full day at other events. She enjoyed brunch at Liberty Hall where the speaker was Jessica Whitehead who has spent years writing a biography of Harlan Hubbard, Kentucky's Thoreau and friend of Wendell Berry.

He and his wife lived an interesting life on the banks of the Ohio without electricity or running water, growing and catching all their food. Patrick Kennedy is a fan of Hubbard and bought his book, "Driftwood," about their unique lifestyle.

Hannah went on to Danville to meet up with some of her long time Girl Scout camp counselor buddies at the Great American Brass Band Festival. There were friends from CA, N.C., MT Sterling, Richmond and Lexington. They enjoyed the music and visiting together.

On the way home through Gregory Woods she saw a doe with new twins along the road as they were not strong enough to jump the fence. She got out and took a picture, the fawns laid down and never moved a muscle, nature is amazing.

Hannah missed her April Holly Hill Inn dinner so she found a friend to take before May was gone. She got to speak to Ouita Michel, the owner, sitting on the front porch and tell her how much she appreciated the feast event last week. Among the choices on the menu was soft shell crab with avocado, bourbon fried duck breast, sweet breads (organ meats) served with foraged greens, rabbit, and scallops. The asparagus soup was to die for, she said. To top it off chocolate cake with pistachio layer. The meal did not disappoint. No fast food here.

John Harrod was being interviewed at his home last week by two guys from Appalshop in Whitesburg a program about a fiddler John has recorded in the past. Also, Nora Brown, banjo player doing an internship with Appalshop and Phoebe Wagner were at their house Saturday afternoon before the graduation party where John and Tona played some music.

They went to the graduation party for the musical Webb twins on Tuesday night in Frankfort. Grandkids Evan and Maddie came from Lexington, too. They've been friends for years with the Webbs. I saw them play at the Harrods when they were about 7 years old, I think.

On Friday morning they went to

Bardstown for Kitty's promotion from fifth grade to middle school. The grand-kids are growing up too fast.

They were surprised one morning when son Clay drove up from Louisville with son Ben and the 2-year-old Isaac before they had even had their morning coffee. He was driving to try to get the baby to go to sleep and ended up for a visit to Kays Branch.

Last weekend Fay and Jennifer went to Fay's growing up area, Minors Branch Road, for people born or raised around there for a reunion and meal at Minorsville Church on 227. She said there was about 28 people there and she really enjoyed seeing and talking to people she had not seen in a long time.

Afterward they went to a fish fry in the area on Cedar Road of some other family members, so they had a full day.

Ray and I went to Frankfort Friday evening for the first concert of summer at the Old Capital but the threat of rain had cancelled it earlier in the day, but the evening was beautiful after all. We ate our pizza and I had Hoggy's coconut almond chocolate chip ice cream cone, delicious as we took a walk down St Clair St. where many were enjoying eating outside and visiting with friends.

Ray had gotten almost 3 inches of rain so that changed their plans for cutting hay. Now to wait and see what the rain predictions are for this week. It's always a gamble.

The Ambrose family had bought some hay equipment at Fay's auction so they had their first run at cutting, raking, baling and hauling in square bales for their horses last week. The weather wasn't as sunny as they hoped for when they cut it, but they got it baled. Hard work for sure.

Been there, done that growing up. Ray tilled our garden at mother's that Barbara has planted and we put mulch around the tomatoes. It looked so pretty after the rain the next day.

Ann said she planted a spider wort flower, as close to gardening as she gets. She does love her potted porch trees.

My strawberries have slowed down, probably about to end, after picking almost every day for two weeks. My asparagus has been producing since April 6.

Ray's 2002 Toyota pickup truck ball joint broke luckily not in traffic and not driving very fast with Ellis with him but it will now resort to being a farm truck only when it gets fixed, so he is looking for a good used four-wheel drive Toyota extended cab if anyone has one to sell.

Patrick and Dara has lunch one day at the new Ashbrook in Frankfort. Thursday was weekly lunch with Richard Taylor while Dara visited with friends and ate at Bucks in Louisville and did some shopping. Pat and Charlie won three games of pool each on Friday. Who will be the winner next time?

It was time for a haircut for Steve at the nursing home so when Ray and I were in town he cut his hair again. It always puts a smile on his face to see us stop by.

FEMA and other organizations were in Monterey last Thursday for a meeting with people affected by the recent flood. Sadly there are some still living in campers trying to make the best, day by day, until they can get back in their homes, so sad. I heard the Derringer house is being torn down, too many floods have been in there. Monterey will never be the same.

The Owen County High class of 2015 is having a reunion this Saturday, June 7 at West 6th Farm off Hwy 127 near Frankfort from 5-8 pm.

Downtown County Band will be playing from 6 to 9 p.m. There will be a food truck available. My niece Jessica Willhoite Depew and Neighbor Veronica Chisholm are trying to get this together. Pass the word.

No matter how you feel get up, dress up, show up and never give up.

Have a good week to start this new month.

WISDOM

FROM PAGE A3

As for 1 Peter 5:7, here's my mash-up, paraphrased version from several Bible translations and how it has also given me comfort through the years:

"Cast all of your cares, the whole, burdensome weight of them — all your anxieties and worries and concerns — and leave them with God, because

you can trust him with them, all of them, because he cares for you and about you. He has promised to give you his peace so you can sleep at night with confidence that you have a Father who loves you dearly."

May it give you comfort in the years to come.

Contact Nancy Kennedy at 352-564-2927 (leave a message) or email at nkennedy@chronicleonline.com.

DOG

FROM PAGE A3

every case, they relied entirely on the Lord.

What you should notice is that walking with the Lord doesn't always prevent us from facing difficult circumstances. If someone tries to tell you it does, point them back to the great heroes of the Bible, every one of whom faced trials and tribu-

lations. We all face difficulties at one time or another on this side of eternity, no matter our standing with the Lord.

The wonderful benefit of being Christian is that we have a mighty God to lean on in tough times, a God who is willing to surprise us with great victories in our lives.

I love the words of David, who faced unimaginable

troubles throughout his lifetime, yet declared: "The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower" (Psalm 18:2).

With that in mind, we'd be wise not to trust in our strength or intellect when the leopards of this world are stalking us. We'd be wise to fully trust in the Lord.

Reach Roger Alford at 502-514-6857 or rogeralford1@gmail.com.

LEGAL NOTICE

POSTED NO TRESPASSING ALL PROPERTY BELONGING TO BETTY & CHAD RICHARSON ON MANLEY LANE, SPARTA (OWENTON)

LEGAL NOTICE

ESTATE TO BE ADMINISTERED: Robert L. Rice  
ADMINISTRATOR: Cherry Kemper, 1065 Burkes Ln  
Owenton, KY 40359  
FINAL SETTLEMENT FILED: 5/28/2025  
10 DAY DEADLINE FOR EXCEPTIONS: 6/16/2025  
ATTORNEY: Kari F. Williams, 213 St Clair St.  
Suite 100 Frankfort, KY 40601

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PUBLIC NOTICE

Owen County, in conjunction with the Kentucky Association of Counties (KACo) will be accepting bids via a Reverse Online Auction on 6/16/2025 2:30 PM EDT, for the purchase of 400 Ton of 775 45 - Road Maintenance Salt (See Class 192 for Ice Removal Chemicals) for the Owen County local government. For bid participation, registration, and specifications, please contact Orbis Online at (502) 208-1007 ext. 701, or visit www.kacoauctions.com. You can also reach out to the Owen County local government agency at 502-484-3405 or at publicworks@owencountyky.us. The local government agency reserves the right to accept or reject any and all bids. Bids will only be accepted through participation in the reverse auction at orbisonline.com.