

COMMUNITY

Museum Musings

By Brenda Plummer

This Wednesday, July 15th will be the last day to enter our photo contest. We have had some beautiful photographs brought in. They really do show our theme: “A Fleming County State of Mind.”

Our special display on Patriotic Items has begun to take shape. I’m afraid I have been occupied with some other things and have been slow to get it into place. However, if you have items, pictures, etc. that are related to the flag, Uncle Sam, the presidents, national monuments, etc. that you are willing to loan, please bring them in and we’ll add them to our display. Remember the Fleming County Covered Bridge Museum is open on

Wednesdays from 10-4 and on Saturdays from 12-4. We are happy to arrange other days and times for groups. You may call the Chamber at 845-1223 or me at 849-2957 for further information.

Explore Fleming County’s book on Historic Fleming County Churches is available at the museum. Compiled to honor America’s 250, the soft bound book has 204 pages with full colored pictures, the majority of which were taken by Lowell Tackett. The book contains information on county churches which are 100 years old or older. Information was gathered from files, newspaper articles, church histories, as well as some deeds. Unfortunately,

there are a few churches which the committee (Ginny Reeves, Stephanie Dailey and myself) was unable to find much about. The book will be of interest to not only those who want to know about the churches, but also those interested in county history and families which were involved in starting the various churches, attending, and/or serving the churches in various capacities or perhaps preaching in some of the churches. The books may be purchased here at the museum or at Pickett Fence. The cost is \$35.

Explore Fleming County is also hosting “Supper on the Bridge” on Saturday, August 15th beginning at 6:00 at the Grange City Covered Bridge. V&V Catering is providing the meal: parmesan chicken, mashed potatoes, green beans, pasta salad, with homemade strawberry cake for dessert. David Austin Tackett and Brady Vice will provide the entertainment and I am hoping some of our guests will share stories dealing with the bridge as well. Tickets are \$40 and you can get them here at the museum, you can call me to reserve tickets (849-2957) or you can e-mail Melanie Jones at flemingsburgtourism@gmail.com or explorefcky41041@gmail.com. We are only selling fifty tickets, so you don’t want to wait till the last minute.

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I started a few weeks ago sharing the names of some of our early Fleming County settlers who were also Revolutionary War veterans. The William Dudley Chapter of NSDAR has a list of their patriots at the library. However, that list is not a complete list of those settling in Fleming County. I’ve been searching on line for names and information. So, I thought I would share some things that I found.

One of the more recognized names in Fleming County is John Finley (some spell it Findley). John was born July 7, 1748 in Pennsylvania. His father is listed as John O’Neill Finley and his mother was Martha Berkeley Finley. His grandparents came from Ireland to this country. According to the Find a Grave entry, “John was a pioneer and surveyor who came to Kentucky in 1773. He discovered the Upper Blue Licks, surveyed land to the Kentucky River near present day Frankfort. John was commissioned a major in 1783 for service in the Revolutionary War. He was the Judge Advocate of the Northwest Territory in 1792 and then he and his family came back to Kentucky in 1796. He farmed a 1000 acre land grant and was a member of the Kentucky House of Representatives from 1800-1804.” There is some debate—whether

this John Finley or another man named John Finley, was the man who persuaded Daniel Boone to come to Kentucky. Finley had a ferry which he used to cross the Licking River (close to present day Battle Run). He built a fine house of bricks (an article states that those bricks were eventually used to build a more modern house located near the river). There were also some land disputes with others concerning the parcels of land which he claimed. John married Hannah Duncan and they had several children (I’m sure there are several in Fleming County who can trace their families back to him). John Finley died on April 10, 1837 and he was buried near his home in what is now known as the Finley or Battle Run Cemetery. A historic marker can be found near the cemetery. For many, many years the cemetery, like many family cemeteries, found on local farms, was overgrown. The property changed hands and the new owner cleaned the cemetery and uncovered several tombstones which had been covered over with dirt through the years, due to the river flooding, etc. A few years ago, the Sons of the American Revolution and our local DAR chapter held a ceremony at his gravesite. Robert Cotterill in his manuscript, “Fleming County,

The First One Hundred Years 1780-1880” gives much more information about Finley and his family.

While I was looking through various genealogy sites the other day, I ran across one which was listed as “1799 Will of Thomas Mills—Fleming County”. The site has a photographed copy of his will as well as a typed version (as you know some of the early wills are hard to read). An introduction to the will states: “Thomas Mills was the son of Jacob Mills and Ann Davis Mills. He married Martha Phillips about 1769 in Virginia. He served during the Revolutionary War while living in Monogalia County, Virginia (now West Virginia). He bought land in Fleming County in 1792 (at the time we were part of Mason County) and moved here in 1793. Thomas and Martha had 13 children—all of whom are listed in his will . . .”

Military Service websites, I’m sure would give us more detailed information on when and where Finley and Mills served and who their commanding officers were. For now, we can remember these early Fleming County settlers for their service during our War for Independence.

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