

From department stores to soda fountains: A glimpse into Owen's past

Today, walking the streets of Owenton creates a plethora of memories for many who have lived in town all their lives and recall days in the early 1900's when businesses lined the streets and families traveled from outlying communities to shop at the Blue Front Department Store or visit Gayle and Allen to view the latest in buggies, carriages, and road wagons.

Kemper, Ransdell and Company was the place to procure the latest in medicinal cures; and one might stop in to discover a sale at F & A Cox Company or the L.C. Littrell establishment.

Ed Dunavent owned a harness shop and Joseph Nisius displayed fine monuments which he carved and sold in his shop in the center of town.

Today, many of these pieces of beautiful craftsmanship are on display in the Owenton IOOF Cemetery.

The Seminary Street location of the McDonald & New Funeral Home was first operated by J.C. Hart-sough, original owner of the home that is currently the Owen County Historical Society Museum.

During the Civil War, J.C. joined the Confederate Army and went on to become one of Owenton's favorite businessmen.

According to a 1979 News-Herald article, Charles Marshall, representing the Ford Motor company, became Owenton's first automobile dealer in 1914; and in the same year the "Old Factory Lot" (which later was the location of the Marston subdivision) was the scene of many roadshow skating rinks, circuses and The

Buffalo Bill Cody Wild West Show. As early as 1915, Chautauqua was offering various shows during the warmer months in a huge tent set up on Roland Ave. Season tickets in 1916 were \$2.00 for adults, and performances included the Cecilian Choir, Swiss yodelers, and readings by William Jennings Bryan.

In the winter, lectures on literary, scientific and moral topics were offered at the high school. The Pastime and Dixie Theaters provided Owen County with the new popular silent movies, always accompanied by live music performed by local pianists.

Baseball was a sport enjoyed by many, and by the 1920's, Owen County produced many excellent teams.

At this time basketball was introduced into the schools, and continues to be a Kentucky favorite sport.

A new Looseleaf Tobacco Warehouse was opened in 1921 on the east side of Roland Avenue; and in 1936 Owenton acquired its first large industry, Kraft-Phenix Cheese Corp., which bought milk and cream from Owen County farmers.

In 1941-42 outdoor privies were barred by the City Council, and as the population of the town grew, local businesses prospered.

In the 1950's and '60's a strong personal allegiance to one of the two Owenton drug stores was evident; and each store offered something unique.

Though both Simpson & Kelly and Morgan & Thomas boasted soda fountains, the teen crowd seemed to favor Rexall's Simpson & Kelly for after-

noon hangouts. Teresa Perry worked at Simpson & Kelly and remembered the days when Carroll Hunt Bourne, owner and editor of the News-Herald, would come in for a chocolate malt.

"I hated the smell of the malt," Teresa admitted, "and yet it always seemed I was the one designated to make Carroll Bourne's chocolate malt."

While seated on stools at the counter or at one of the several small tables, customers would exchange news or review the school day as a continuous parade of malts, floats, sundaes or flavored cokes marched by.

Like many rural towns in Kentucky, the face of Owenton has changed through the decades. Many of the old folks have passed away; and though buildings fell into disrepair over the years and grand homes were demolished, a sense of nostalgia still lingers and clings to the fringes of our history.

Perhaps the decline of rural Kentucky towns was not so much a result of folks fleeing to the cities for work but was the result of a world that no longer held onto many of the traditional values of the discreet, tight-knit communities that for so many years were self-sufficient and self-sustaining.

Only time will tell if the people of Owen County, and those residing in many other small towns, can take advantage of modern technology without sacrificing their unique position in the world which provides them the opportunity to reveal the enduring Spirit of America that is entrenched in their character.

Mark your calendars for June 20, 10-2, when Owenton will be trans-

formed into the town of Mayberry.

Join in the festivities and don't forget to visit the Rimshaw House (aka the Historical Society Museum) where the Andy Griffith episode about this haunted hang-out will be

shown.

The Historical Society is also sponsoring Forget-Me-Not Dancers who will perform colonial dancing in front of the Courthouse at noon.

Recently several needed repairs on the museum

have put a strain on our finances. If anyone can help us with any donation, we would be sincerely grateful. Please send to: Owen County Historical Society, 206 N. Main St., Owenton, KY 40359.



BONNIE STRASSELL

LEGAL NOTICE

COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY
UNIFIED COURT OF JUSTICE
OWEN CIRCUIT COURT
CIVIL ACTION #26-CI-00213

KENTUCKY HOUSING CORPORATION
PLAINTIFF
VS.
KENNETH WHITE, ETAL.
DEFENDANTS

NOTICE OF SALE

By virtue of a Judgment and Order of Sale rendered in the Owen Circuit Court on the 5th day of May, 2026, I will sell at public auction to the highest and best bidder on the front steps of the Owen County Courthouse, 100 North Thomas Street, Owenton, Kentucky at the hour of 10:00, a.m. on Saturday, May 30, 2026, the following described property:

Lots 1584, 1585, 1586 and 1587 in Elk Lake Shores, Owen County, Kentucky, as shown on the plat of record in Plat Cabinet 1, Slice 76 in the Owen County Clerk's Office.

Being the same property conveyed to Kenneth White by deed dated October 20, 2023 and recorded in Deed Book 272, page 593 in the Owen County Clerk's Office.

Property address: 445 Elk Lake Resort Rd. 1584, Owenton, KY 40359
Parcel No.: 075-80-15-084.00

The amount of money to be raised and for which this sale is being made is the sum of \$105,349.40 adjudged due to plaintiff on its first lien on the property, together with interest thereon at the rate of 7.25% per annum, from June 1, 2025, until paid, plus court costs and attorney's fees of \$3,900.00.

The real estate shall be sold on the terms of 10% cash at the time of the sale, with the balance payable within 30 days, except that the deposit shall be waived if plaintiff is the successful bidder. Any purchaser, other than the plaintiff shall be required to execute bond, with surety thereon acceptable to the Master Commissioner, to secure the unpaid balance of the purchase price, and said bond shall bear interest at the rate of 7.25% per annum from the date of the sale until paid, and shall have the same force and effect as a judgment and shall remain and be a lien on the property until paid. The purchaser shall have the privilege of paying all or part of the balance of the purchase price prior to the 30 day period.

It is further provided that the property sold contains insurable improvements and the successful bidder at said sale shall, at bidder's expense, procure a policy of fire and extended insurance coverage on said improvements in the amount of the appraised value, or the unpaid balance of the purchase price, whichever is less, as a minimum, with a loss payable clause to the Commissioner of the Owen Circuit Court or the plaintiff herein. Failure of the purchaser to effect such insurance shall not affect the validity of the sale or the purchaser's liability thereunder, but shall entitle, but not require the plaintiff to effect said insurance and furnish the policy, or evidence thereof to the Commissioner if it so desires, and the premium thereon or a proper portion thereof shall be charged to the purchaser as purchaser's cost.

When the purchase price is paid in full, title will be conveyed to the purchaser by commissioner's deed.

The aforesaid real property shall be sold free and clear of any and all liens and claims except the following:

- a. All State and County real estate taxes payable on the property for 2026 and thereafter;
- b. Easements, restrictions and stipulations of record;
- c. Assessments for public improvements levied against the property;
- d. Any facts which an inspection and accurate survey of the property may disclose.

For further information, see the Judgment, Order and pleadings of record in the Office of the Circuit Clerk of Owen County.

/s/ Mark R. Cobb
MARK R. COBB
MASTER COMMISSIONER
OWEN CIRCUIT COURT

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BIDDING WILL START TO END FRIDAY MAY 29TH AT 2:00 PM EASTERN

Location: 2497 LaGrange Road, New Castle, KY 40050

Real Estate: Three-bedroom, two-bath trailer on 4 acres with nice tobacco barn offered at auction. Investor opportunity on 4.35 acres with dual road frontage! This property offers approx. 350 ft on LaGrange Rd and approx. 550 ft on Jackson Rd, creating potential for a one-time division. The 3-bedroom, 2-bath trailer is in need of renovation, with much of the home down to subfloor, gutted bathrooms, and no running water or functioning HVAC. A carport structure covers the home, and the property also features a spacious 45x52 barn as well as a creek running through the back of the property. With a mix of open space and room to expand, this property offers flexibility for a variety of uses. Ideal for investors, flippers, or buyers looking to build their dream home—restore for rental income or start fresh.

Terms: A 10% buyers premium will be added to the final bid price to determine the final sales price. The winning bidder shall put down 10% of the total sales price at signing of the sales contract with the remaining balance due on or before June 29th 2026. Sold as is.

Public Viewing: Sunday May 24th 12-2pm

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