

History Gram  
The Newsletter of the  
Metropolitan Historical Commission



## **August 2015**

***In This Issue:  
Tough Summer at the MHC,  
Mayoral Candidates Answer Questions  
about Preservation in Nashville,  
National Register News,  
and more...***

### **Our Deepest Condolences**

The Summer of 2015 has been a sad one for our Historical Commission family. Commissioner Lula Brooks passed away on June 2, 2015. Mrs. Brooks had served the Historical Commission since August 2007 and was a devoted participant. If you missed it, please read her obituary [here](#). Later in the month, Mitchell Mielnik, the teenage son of staff member Dr. Tara Mitchell Mielnik, passed away on June 30, 2015. We know many of you saw our posts on Facebook about Mitchell, but if you missed his obituary, you may read it [here](#) – or even view a short [news story](#) about him. We were also saddened to learn about the loss of one of our former Commissioners. Mr. Francis Guess passed away on July 23, 2015. Mr. Guess served the Historical Commission from August 2006 to August 2010. A brief obituary is found [here](#), but Google will tell you much more about his extensive civic involvement.

Please continue to keep the family and friends of Mrs. Brooks, Mitchell, and Mr. Guess in your thoughts and prayers.

### **New! Historical Commission Update**

August brings quite a few changes to the Metropolitan Historical Commission. First, we bid farewell to Commissioner Holly Conner. Appointed to the Historical Commission in 2007, Holly chaired the Nominations committee and was one of our most active commissioners. Unfortunately, her recent term appointment ended—she will be greatly missed! Meanwhile, we congratulate Mark Rogers and Gerry Searcy on their reappointment to the Commission. Welcome back! Officers for the commission have changed as well. Jim Forkum is the new Chair of the Historical Commission and Dr. Clay Bailey is the new Vice-Chair. Many thanks to Dr. Bill McKee for his years of service as Commission Chair!

### **Meet Our New Commissioner**

On August 4th, the Metro Council will confirm Mayor Dean's recent appointment to the

Historical Commission, Mr. Patrick B. (Pat) Cummins. Pat will fill the vacancy left by the end of Commissioner Conner's term. A Cherokee descendent, Pat has been a resident of Nashville for 22 years. He holds a degree in Mortuary Science from Kansas City Kansas Community College where he graduated with honors in 1988. Pat served as President of the non-profit Alliance for Native American Indian Rights of Tennessee from 1998 to 2009, and as a member of the board of directors of the Tennessee Council for Professional Archaeology from 2004 to 2012.

A passion for archaeology and historical research led him to study Anthropology at Middle Tennessee State University, and he has worked as a professional archaeologist. Pat was appointed to the Tennessee Archaeological Advisory Council in 2004 as a Native American representative by former Governor Phillip Bredesen, and he continues to serve in that capacity today. In addition, he is co-founder and current President of the non-profit **Native History Association** (winner of the 2014 Commissioners' Award) where he donates his time as the organization's public spokesperson, conducting historical research, and developing educational programs.

Pat also serves on the board of directors of the Friends of Kellytown based in the City of Forest Hills. Mr. Cummins is also a state director for the Tennessee Chapter of the Trail of Tears Association and a Native American advisor to the Rutherford County Archaeological Society. Pat was a Men's Northern Traditional Powwow dancer and drummer for many years, and he remains actively involved with a number of regional Native American cultural events and other related pursuits.

Welcome, Pat! We're delighted to have you on the Historical Commission!

### **Election Day is August 6! Mayoral Candidates Talk Preservation in Nashville**

The field is set for the August 6th election. For a list of verified candidates for Mayor, Vice-Mayor, Council At Large, and Council District, visit the website of the [Davidson County Election Commission](#).

The election falls during a critical time for Metro. Wondering where the Mayoral candidates stand on Historic Preservation and Nashville's future? As part of Fort Negley's Memorial Day Observance on Saturday, May 23<sup>rd</sup>, the Historical Commission and the Friends of Fort Negley invited the seven mayoral candidates to share their positions on this very subject. Visit our [website](#) to read the answers!

Feel free to use these questions as a guide to learning more about where the candidates for *your* district stand on these important issues.

**Question 1 - Balancing Preservation with Growth and Development:** The preservation of Nashville's historic buildings and sites gives our city its unique character and "sense of place" and is an important planning tool in building economic, environmental, social and cultural sustainability. In the last year, the city's rapid growth and development pressures have caused one preservation organization to list the entire city as "endangered." *Given our current growth, how important do you consider preservation as a goal for the next administration? How would you suggest we protect those historic resources?*

**Question 2 – Preservation of Metro-owned Historic Sites:** Many of our city-owned historic resources have been in a state of deterioration due to lack of funds allocated for their maintenance. Examples include Fort Negley, Fort Nashborough, the Nashville City

Cemetery, Shelby Park's Naval Reserve Center, Sunnyside and its outbuildings in Sevier Park, Lock 2 Park, and several Metro Schools, among others. *Do you think it is important to demonstrate leadership in preservation through funding annual maintenance of Metro-owned historic sites, and if so, what plan would you put in place to accomplish this?*

**Question 3 – Preservation of Music Row:** Nashville's Music Row is internationally known for its history in the creation of music that is heard around the world and has given us the monikers of "Music City," and "Songwriting Capital of the World." Since the 1950s, this area has nurtured an environment where all disciplines of the music industry (song writing, publishing, recording, record labels, entertainment attorneys, artist managers, and etc.) are gathered and have flourished. The importance of this area of Nashville has led to its having been identified as a "National Treasure" by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. *Currently, sites that formerly were home to music industry businesses are being demolished to make way for new housing developments, threatening the area and its synergy as a place to create music. What is your stance on this issue, and what type of plan would you put in place if you hope to change the current course?*

**Question 4 – Preservation Incentives:** Many states and cities in the U.S. offer economic incentives to owners of historic properties when they make appropriate repairs and renovations to historic buildings. These incentives include property tax abatements, grants, and fee waivers, to name a few. *If elected, how would you create similar incentives for owners of historic properties, both residential and commercial, in Davidson County?*

**Question 5 – Heritage Tourism:** In addition to its appeal as "Music City," some of our city's best but least utilized assets for tourism are the stories and sites that tell our history—from geologic formations and natural history, Native American sites, and early white settlements, to plantations and slavery in Civil War era Nashville, and the Civil Rights movement—just to name a few. *How can we raise the profile of our past and the historic sites that dot our landscape to enhance our attractiveness as a tourism and convention destination?*

Still curious? Visit [Historic Nashville, Inc.](http://HistoricNashville.com) for additional questions and answers from the mayoral candidates.

### **New! National Register News**

The RCA Victor Studios Building (aka Studio A), located at 30 Music Square West, was officially listed in the National Register of Historic Places on July 21, 2015.

From the nomination: "The RCA Victor Studios Building, at 30 Music Square West, Nashville, Davidson County, Tennessee, is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its exceptional significance in the city's history of recorded music, music industry administration and popular culture. Built 1964-1965 by the W.B. Cambron firm in Nashville with studio engineering by Alan Stevens and John E. Volkmann of RCA Victor, New York City, it was the first 'Music Row' building constructed to be both a major international recording studio and to provide office for a major corporation and associated businesses and organizations for the Nashville music industry. As such, it was the first recording company landmark on Music Row, soon to be followed by many other key studio buildings such as those for Columbia and Monument records built immediately afterward. Since its opening in 1965, it has since hosted music recording sessions as well as served as offices for recording artists, music publishing firms, and record companies in Nashville. Its planning, construction and first three decades of recording and music industry administration coincided with and helped to shape three

significant eras in the country music history. First is the flowering of the 'Nashville Sound' from 1965 to 1970. The second is the 'Outlaw' movement, including the release of the influential album *Wanted! The Outlaws* (1976) and the rise of the independent producers from 1972 to 1977. Third is the studio's association with the emergence of the modern Nashville country music industry, marked by the 'neo-traditional' movement with George Strait's recordings in 1981-1982 to the recording of the landmark country-pop album, *The Woman in Me* by Shania Twain in 1995. Its period of significance begins with its opening in 1965 and extends to 1995, a time when Music Row developed as the center of the Nashville music industry and when it took on the general form and look of today."

Many thanks to Dr. Carroll Van West for working so hard and so quickly to complete this nomination to the National Register.

Wow—what a difference a year makes! Back in September 2014, Historic Nashville included Studio A on its Nashville Nine endangered sites list, and the fight to save Studio A quickly turned into the fight to save Music Row. Today, the Music Row neighborhood is considered a National Treasure by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and we'll soon have a completed survey and contextual document to support additional nominations of Music Industry-related sites to the National Register of Historic Places.

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## **AROUND TOWN**

### **It's that time of year again!!**

*Amqui Station Farmers Market*

*Historic Amqui Station- Madison, TN*

*Sundays 12pm-3pm, May-August*

The Historic Amqui Station Museum will be open free of charge during market hours. Visit [www.AmquiStation.com](http://www.AmquiStation.com) for more information.

*12South Farmers Market*

*Sevier Park- 3000 Granny White Pike Nashville*

*Tuesdays 3:30pm-6:30pm, May-October*

Visit [www.12southfarmersmarket.com](http://www.12southfarmersmarket.com) for more information.

### **New! Exciting Developments at Metro Archives**

To say that the Metro Nashville Archives Facebook page is a huge hit is quite the understatement. If you don't already follow the Archives on Facebook, you really should! Check the (almost) daily postings of photographs and clippings from the department's collection to help the Archives team identify various historic houses and streetscapes, test your memory of historic Nashville, or just indulge in a little nostalgia for our city's beloved landmarks—some lost, some saved.

This spring and summer, the Archives has debuted three new tools available to further educate and entertain its guests and virtual visitors. For those visiting the Archives location within the Nashville Public Library, the brand new "History Wall" features two, 42-inch, interactive touch-screen monitors that each display images and documents from the Archives' collection. Meanwhile, the new Archives blog highlights some of the department's finds to tell the stories behind the objects, photographs, and documents housed in the Archives' collection. Bookmark the blog today! <https://nashvillearchives.wordpress.com/>

Back in July, the Archives' sleek new website also went LIVE:

<http://www.nashvillearchives.org/> Check back frequently to keep up with all of the exciting

events taking place at the Archives, including exhibits and First Tuesday programs. Nicely done!

**New! Throwback Thursday at the Metro Archives**

*Thursday, August 13—1 to 2:00 p.m.*

*Nashville Public Library*

*615 Church Street*

*Commons Room, Third Floor*

Throwback Thursday at the Metro Nashville Archives presents, "Women and the Civil War: Homefront and Battlefield," a program by Stephanie Grace Whitson, author of *Daughter of the Regiment*. The event is free and open to the public.

**New! Salt and the Sulphur Dell Dig**

*Saturday, August 15—2:00 p.m.*

*Tennessee State Museum*

*505 Deaderick Street*

An exhibition showcasing archaeological discoveries found prior to the construction of the First Tennessee Park will open at the Tennessee State Museum on August 15. These findings, dating to about 800 years ago, center around Nashville's first industry—salt.

A leading authority on saltworks in antiquity, Dr. Ian W. Brown, will give a free public lecture on the exhibit's opening day, Saturday, August 15, at 2:00 p.m. Dr. Brown is the Professor and Chair, Department of Anthropology at the University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa. His keynote lecture, *Salt in Prehistory and History*, will address the role of salt and salt production in world history and prehistoric times.

The exhibition will feature objects found by archeologists during the excavation of the land where the new First Tennessee Park, home of the Nashville Sounds minor league baseball team, now stands. Museum curator Dr. Rex Weeks has organized the exhibit, which interprets the history of the Sulphur Dell site. Some of the artifacts include pottery and tools.

Dr. Brown became interested in this subject in the late 1970s while working on Avery Island in Louisiana. His experience there culminated with his writing of a monograph on salt production and use among the Indians of eastern North America. This is also the subject of a major volume authored by Brown, which was recently released by the Louisiana Archaeological Society as a Special Publication, *The Petite Anse Project: Archaeological Investigations along the West-Central Coast of Louisiana 1978-1979*.

It is important to note that salt is more than just a condiment, according to Dr. Brown. Although it figures prominently in foodways throughout the world, its production and use extends far beyond the realm of cuisine. Salt is arguably one of the most significant mineral resources with regard to human societies. Ancient salines, where brine bubbles forth from the ground, were highly valued by peoples of the past and, as such, were often closely guarded.

Kings and chieftains were known to have fought for control of salt sites, because in many societies salt served as a form of currency. The mineral was also important in the economy of Bronze and Iron Age cultures throughout Europe. Some of the earliest cities were established as centers for the salt trade, and many of the earliest roads were made for the transportation of this valuable commodity.

Salt has had many other usages beyond diet. It has often performed a social function, as in Medieval Europe where salt was a symbol of fraternity. In other regions of the world, salt has been employed in the cleaning, bleaching, and dyeing of fabrics, in the leather industry, in the working of precious metals, in the conservation of oils, in mummification, and even in cheese-making. One of its prime functions has been to preserve meat and fish. If the old adage is true that an army "moves on its belly," then it was salt that preserved the food to fill the belly. Drawing from experience in the U.S., England, Germany and China, Dr. Brown's talk will offer a glimpse as to why salt is integral to our understanding of the past.

There is no admission charge for the exhibition or the lecture. For more information, visit [tnmuseum.org](http://tnmuseum.org).

Please note: I-40 may be closed on the downtown loop on August 15 due to bridge construction. Because TDOT does not make closure decisions until closer to the date, the museum is still uncertain as to whether or not the I-40 Charlotte Avenue exit will be open on that date. Check the museum's website for the most current information: [www.tnmuseum.org/Visitors](http://www.tnmuseum.org/Visitors)

About the Tennessee State Museum:

In 1937, the Tennessee General Assembly created a state museum to care for World War I artifacts and other collections from the state and other groups. The museum was located in the lower level of the War Memorial Building until it was moved into the new James K. Polk Cultural Center in 1981. The Tennessee State Museum currently occupies three floors, covering approximately 120,000 square feet with more than 60,000 square feet devoted to exhibits. The museum's Civil War holdings of uniforms, battle flags, and weapons are among the finest in the nation. For more information, please visit: [www.tnmuseum.org](http://www.tnmuseum.org).

### **Ongoing! Summer Events at Two Rivers Mansion**

*Two Rivers Mansion*

*3130 McGavock Pike*

The Friends of Two Rivers Mansion continues the summer music series, Music at the Mansion, this month. On August 22 the ever popular Nashville Blues Society, featuring the Eight O' Five Jive and Markey Blue, will take the stage. Closing the season is newcomer to the Two Rivers stage, the Tennessee Mafia Jug Band, on Friday, September 18.

Rose Mary Lane's Catering will be on site so guests can purchase summertime refreshments. Music starts at 7 p.m. but the grounds are open at 6 p.m. so plan to arrive early to get a good spot.

Admission for each music event is \$5 per person or \$20 per family or carload. Admission for the Historical Tours is \$5 per adult, and \$2 for children. Members who present their current membership card will be admitted FREE to all events.

Since its inception, the Friends wanted to host regular tours of the home. This summer, Historical Tours of Two Rivers Mansion will be held four days a week. Visitors will learn about the rich history of this antebellum home and the McGavock family who resided there. Tour dates will begin June 8th and continue through the end of August. Generally, the group will open the Mansion for tours on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday afternoons for tours beginning on the hour at noon, 1 pm, 2 pm, 3 pm and 4 pm. Cost is \$10 per person and free to Friends members who show their membership card. Look for a complete listing of tour dates and times on the group's [website](#).

Proceeds raised will fund the restoration of the mansion. Friends of Two Rivers Mansion is a 501(c) (3) tax-exempt organization therefore all membership fees are tax deductible. For more information for upcoming events and membership visit the website at [www.friendsoftworiversmansion.org](http://www.friendsoftworiversmansion.org) or contact Events Manager Laura Carrillo at 615-862-8431 ext. 233. All events are supported by Metro Parks & Recreation.

**New! Learning the Legal Avenues in Genealogy**

Saturday, August 29 – 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

FiftyForward Knowles, Patricia Hart Building

174 Rains Avenue (across from the State Fairgrounds).

This Middle TN Genealogical Society workshop will cover items such as Wills, Deeds, Court Records, Tax Records, Guardianship Records, and other Legal documents that will assist those working on Genealogy. Paul R. White, Nashville attorney and member of Middle TN Genealogical Society, will lead the workshop. He is an avid researcher in genealogy and historic topics. Mr. White has authored two family histories and won the MTGS Writer's Award for best article in the MTGS Quarterly Journals for 2012/2013. Registration information will be appearing soon on [www.mtgs.org](http://www.mtgs.org) website. There is a charge for this meeting.

**Save the Date! Volunteer at Fort Negley**

Our friends at Fort Negley could use your help on **Saturday, September 5th** with clearing invasive plants and weeds at Fort Negley. Invasives choke out the beneficial native grasses that promote erosion control. Follow [this link](#) to learn more and to sign up!

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The Metropolitan Historical Commission publishes this monthly newsletter to keep you informed on events and happenings at the MHC. If you have questions, comments, or news to pass along, please email [scarlett.miles@nashville.gov](mailto:scarlett.miles@nashville.gov) with E-NEWS in the subject line.

Metropolitan Historical Commission

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Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County • Karl F. Dean, Mayor