

The Kenton County Historical Society



February 1992

Kenton County Historical Society

P.O. Box 641
Covington, Kentucky 41011

R E V I E W

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ANNOUNCEMENT: GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING AND PROGRAM
On Wednesday evening, February 12th, 7:00 PM, at the Kenton County Library, Covington, Leah Konicki (Preservation Specialist), and John Spence (Planner) will discuss the new COVINGTON WALKING TOUR BROCHURES and the new COVINGTON HISTORIC PLAQUE PROGRAM.

Previous neighborhood brochures have been printed and distributed. But in 1991 it was determined that new updated brochures for a larger number of neighborhoods should be made available for wider distribution. The new historic plaque program was developed based on examples from a number of cities including Lexington, Kentucky.

The Kentucky Bicentennial Celebration partially funded both the brochures and the plaque program and this Bicentennial matching grant is listed as one of several rewarded to Kenton County for the Bicentennial.

Ms. Konicki and Mr. Spence will also discuss the proposed new park at the Suspension bridge which will attempt to provide aesthetic and recreational complements to this improved entrance into Northern Kentucky. This program is free and the public is invited.

Wednesday evening

February 12

7:00 PM

Kenton County Public Library

Fifth and Scott streets, Covington

NORTHERN KENTUCKY SYMPHONY

On Sunday, February 23rd, at 6:30 PM the symphony will host A NIGHT IN OLD VIENNA at the Oldenberg complex. The scene will include 1800s ballroom, Viennese fare, Viennese style beer (brewed by Oldenberg), Strauss Waltzes, polkas, arias, surprises, for a complete evening. \$43.00 per person (\$10.00 tax deductible)--for dinner including wine & beer and for concert, etc. Tickets from Oldenberg complex (606-341-2804); ask for Beth or Peggy, 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM, Monday through Friday.

"THE LIBERTY BELL IS VIEWED BY THOUSANDS"
This Kentucky Post headline referred to an occasion on Monday, November 22, 1915, when children (and other citizens) lined the L and N railroad tracks in Covington to view the Liberty Bell on its return trip from San Francisco to Philadelphia. The train halted briefly at the crowded Latonia race track grandstand, then proceeded slowly north to the L and N Bridge. The deliberate movement gave opportunity for patriotic emotions (and flag waving). Renditions included "Star Spangled Banner," "My Country 'Tis of Thee," and "Columbia, the Gem of the Ocean." Boy Scouts "stood at salute." A man went through a skylight on Pike street. Henry Prater from Lee street, and Robert Zuborg of Twelfth and Russell streets also sustained slight injuries and were "attended" by Joe Michaels, pharmacist with Bart Stuntebeck, Pike and Russell. The train had "several Pullmans, and the Pennsylvania flat car with its precious cargo at the rear..."

The people observed the Liberty Bell from roof tops, porches, balconies, as well as on grade level at tracks and crossings. Coincidentally the paper reported on November 22nd that the Covington Industrial Club and the West End Welfare Association (of Covington) were advancing plans with "some financial arrangements" to have the L and N and the C and O railroads eliminate grade crossings, and even if necessary have the city sue the companies to enforce elimination of such rail-street intersections.

Twelve days earlier, the paper had carried Superintendent Homer Sluss' announcement of quite another plan regarding the Liberty Bell. Covington school children would be "released" from school, and given "free passage" to cross the Suspension bridge (then a toll bridge) to view the symbol

of freedom at the L and N warehouse in Cincinnati. The following persons would head the parade: Sluss; T. C. Tarver, Chas. Moore, Ben Griffith (Commercial Tribune), F. A. Crippen (Editor of the Ky Post) from the press; Fathers Carroll and Almann (from St. Mary's Cathdral and St. Aloysius parochial schools respectively); Clarence Roberts from the "Historical Club"; H. Cohen, Ben Eilermann, Louis Gershuny (prop. of a Cloak and Suit Co. at 626 Madison) from the merchants. These arrangements were outline by Covington Mayor Philips. On November 10th the paper reported that 10,000 Covington public and parochial children would participate, but the parade would have to coordinate with the planned descent of about 70,000 Cincinnati school children on the warehouse.

The Post reported on November 11th that Clifford Shinkle, President of the Bridge co., had arranged to pay the tolls himself for the 10,000 students as well as teachers. Final arrangements were still in process with planning centered at the Northern Kentucky Press Club on Madison Avenue.

However, on November 16th changes were announced and by November 18 plans were finally completed. Northern Kentucky children would view the Bell in Covington. 50 policemen under Lieutenant Dan Crout and 15 firemen under Fire Chief Teddy Griffith "will command the crowds." Commissioner Theo. Kluemper will arrange locations of rope barricades; 50 boy scouts under Col. Nelson Edwards will assist. Children will sing songs and wave flags. 20,000 cards bearing a picture and history of the bell as well as words to "America" will be distributed. Children will be assigned to these locations: The Latonia race track grandstand (Hubert Cohen in charge); Nineteenth street (W. C. Ryerson of the Commercial Tribune); Seventeenth street (Col. Edwards); Robbins

street (Sluss); Ninth street (Father Carroll); Pike street (Father Amann and Ben Eilerman); and Sixth street (Louis Gershuny in charge). The train will leave Latonia about 1:00 PM and arrive in Cincinnati about 1:45 PM. Covington merchants will then be closed. On November 19 Ben Eilerman, president of the Liberty Bell committee, reported that Newport had given up its previous plans and would parade its children across the Fourth street bridge to designated locations at the Covington tracks.

In 1915 on February 8th Covington was 100 years old. In November Kentucky elected its 38th Governor, A. O. Stanley over Edwin P. Morrow (later to be elected 40th Governor), in a "close" race. Morrow's campaign manager was a robust corporate lawyer from Covington, Maurice Galvin, who in his career represented the Latonia race track ownership and railroads (the C and O, etc.) including business with the city that saw the tracks later elevated on higher roadbeds including iron trussels above streets and sidewalks.

The Liberty Bell (weight 2080 lbs.; cast in London in 1753; rang for the Declaration of Independence in 1776, etc.) in 1915 was returning from the Panama-Pacific exposition in San Francisco (which also climaxed the opening of the Panama canal in August 1914).

Thus on November 23rd, 1915, the Post's report (including a photo of the scene near Pike and Russell streets) described the auspicious occasion, and (on the same page) that the election of the new Kentucky Governor had been "certified."
(John Boh, Kenton County Historical Society)

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