

# KENTON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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## KCHS MEETING

**DATE** Tuesday November 14

**PLACE** Trinity Church  
16 East 4th Street  
Covington

**PROGRAM** Land Speculation of  
Simon Kenton and  
Daniel Boone

**SPEAKER** Dr. Joe Gastright

Old deeds found in the Campbell County Courthouse in Alexandria shed new light on early land speculation by the famous pioneers.

## Bulletin

## November 2000

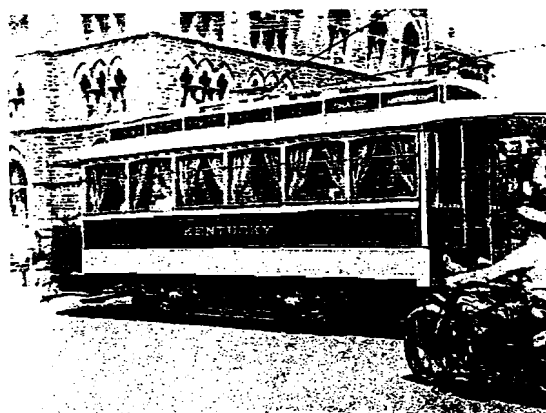
### From the President.....

A KCHS Board meeting was held Monday, October 23. There is \$3,300 in the treasury at this time. Some of our members' subscriptions ran out in July under the old schedule, but expiration letters have not been sent out yet. If your subscription to membership and the magazine expired in July, please send in your membership fee for six months. All subscriptions will then be due in January 2001.

Look for news regarding a cooperative effort by the Kenton County Historical Society and Cincinnati Historical Society to print old pre-Civil War maps of the City of Cincinnati and the City of Covington from 1851-1840. There is also a plat from 1815 of the property of Richard and Robert Gano. This is where the Carneal House sits now. These maps will be suitable for framing. We will inform you of the selling price hopefully by the next issue. It would be a great Christmas gift.

The following piece about the old Green Line is by an anonymous author. Some of the pictures are from the collection on Earl Clark. You will find a lot more detail and some more interesting facts in Clark's article contained in the 1996 issue of Northern Kentucky Heritage Magazine, Volume III, #2. You may order the magazine for \$6 plus postage of \$1.13 or a copy of the article for \$2.

The Fall issue of the magazine is a little late in its printing, but it will be mailed to you next week.



*The well-appointed Kentucky street car has been restored by TANK and will return to the Behringer-Crawford Museum when museum expansion is completed*

WEB SITE <http://www.kenton.lib.ky.us/~histsoc/>

## The History of the Green Line

Thousands of Northern Kentuckians will remember the Green Line, a transportation system which dates back to 1865, when the original transportation company, then known as The Covington Street Railway Co., was incorporated and was granted a franchise by the city. Operations began in 1867 with horse cars and was referred to as the "White Line." In the ensuing years, other horse car companies started, including The South Covington and Cincinnati Street Railway in 1876. In order to distinguish the various lines the cars were painted different colors and were called the "Blue Line," the "Yellow Line," and so on. The South Covington and Cincinnati Street Railway Company adopted green as its official color; hence the "Green Line."

In 1892 control of these various small companies was purchased by an Ohio Corporation, The Cincinnati, Newport and Cincinnati Street Railway Company. Although owned by the same corporation, operations in Kentucky were conducted under the old name of South Covington and Cincinnati Street Railway Company.

In June of 1922, the Ohio company was dissolved and all its rights and franchises were acquired by the Kentucky corporation. At this time the name was changed to The Cincinnati, Newport and Covington Street Railway Company.

The company inaugurated an electrical modernization program and set out to lengthen its lines, install new routes, lay tracks and string trolley wires. This began in 1893 when the Dayton and Bellevue line was constructed and the Fort Thomas and Rosedale lines were added.

The next few years saw rapid transit development throughout Northern Kentucky. In 1894, the Ludlow and Evergreen (Southeast) lines were installed. In 1896, the Holman line in Covington was laid and the Ludlow

tracks extended to the Lagoon.

In 1890, the Holman line was extended and three years later the Fort Mitchell line was constructed. In 1904, the South Bellevue line was added and now except for a few added lines in Covington and the lines that used existing track (Cross-town and Newport Covington) the system was complete.

Starting about 1905, the small four-wheel cars were replaced with larger four-wheel cars of the 100 and 300 series built by the Cincinnati Car Company and the St. Louis Car Company. These cars, seating 32 passengers and equipped with electric heaters and hand brakes, were operated until 1946 at which time buses came onto the scene and replaced the electric cars.

In 1917, the 25 "500" series double-truck cars were delivered by the Cincinnati Car Company. With air brakes and coke heating stoves, they were the last word in public transportation at the time. After the disastrous Ohio River flood of 1937, these big cars were converted to one-man operation and served faithfully until their retirement in favor of buses in 1950,

Although considered a small company, the Green Line was not without interest. All of its lines were double tracked, three of which ran over private right-of-way, winding through tree-lined hills in one of the most beautiful parts of Northern Kentucky.

After October 23, 1921, all lines terminated in the enclosed Dixie Terminal Building at Fourth and Walnut Streets in the lower downtown area of Cincinnati. The Covington cars entered the upper level ramps directly from the Suspension Bridge. The Newport cars used the lower level, entering from Third Street and crossing the river on the Central Bridge.

For a distance of about one city block, both the Green Line and the Cincinnati Street Railway used the same track, but each maintained its own



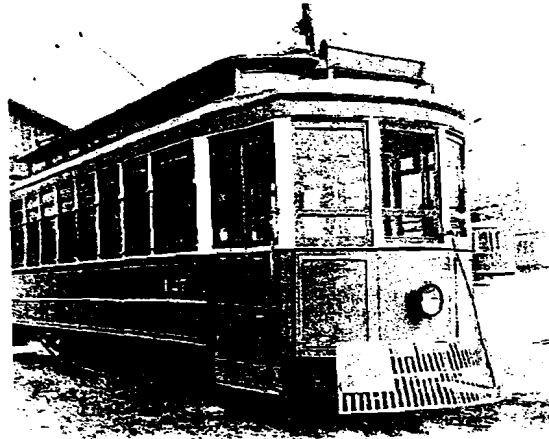
Saying Goodbye to the last Ft. Mitchell run



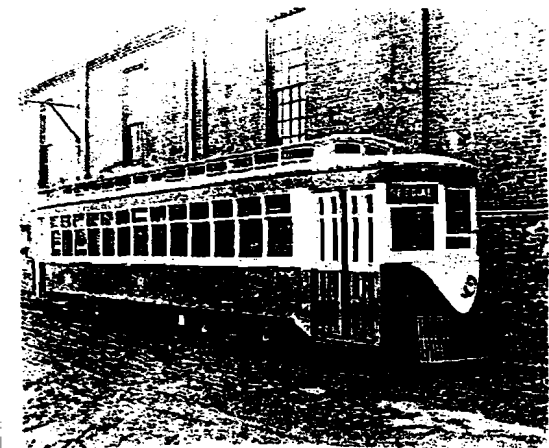
The tricky business of raising the second pole



*Motorman in small car*



*The last small car*



*The rebuilt #508 car after the 1937 flood*

overhead wire. This common trackage made it possible for the Kentucky company to have work done in the larger shops of the Cincinnati Company located in Winton Place on the northern fringe of Cincinnati. It was here that the "500" series cars were converted to one-man operation after the 1937 flood.

Because the Green Line entered Cincinnati, they were subject to the city ordinance that permitted only cars equipped with two trolley poles for operation on the double overhead wire system, the only city that ever required it. The cars used only a single wire in Kentucky and the change from one pole to two or two to one was made on the bridges over the Ohio River near the Kentucky side. The conductors prided themselves on their ability to raise and lower the pole without looking out the back window.

After the "500" series cars were converted to one-man operation the Green Line was granted permission to enter Cincinnati on one pole. However, their double overhead was maintained, even though not used, and remained up until the last car was vanquished in favor of buses after WWII. The Dayton line had been converted in 1940 and South Bellevue after the 1937 flood. Southgate got buses in 1935 when the railroad crossing on Alexandria Pike in Newport was replaced with an underpass. Leaving only the Ft. Thomas line in Campbell County to survive WWII. Ft. Mitchell line lasted until 1950.

With its bridges and trestles and picturesque stretches of private right of way, the Green Line was a colorful and recreational way to travel. It is of note that the CN & C operated in two states, ten cities, crossed two navigable rivers, the Ohio and Licking, and ran over four large bridges, one of which was owned by the company.

**At Behringer-Crawfor Museum  
Devou Park  
Covington, Kentucky**

**Holiday Toys and Trains  
Three exhibits in One  
Opens November 24**

**Model Trains**  
Dating 1930 to present  
Interactive for all ages

**Old Fashioned Parlor**  
Children of yesteryear played with these toys at Christmastime.

**First Ladies**  
An exhibition of antique china and bisque dolls clothed to represent and tell stories of the First Ladies of our nation. Also on exhibit, 3 dolls recently restored dating 1860-1900.

Show runs from November 24 to January 7. Hours: 10 AM - 5PM, Tuesday-Friday, Noon to 5 PM Saturday and Sunday.

If you like model trains and children's antique toys and dolls, don't miss this one.

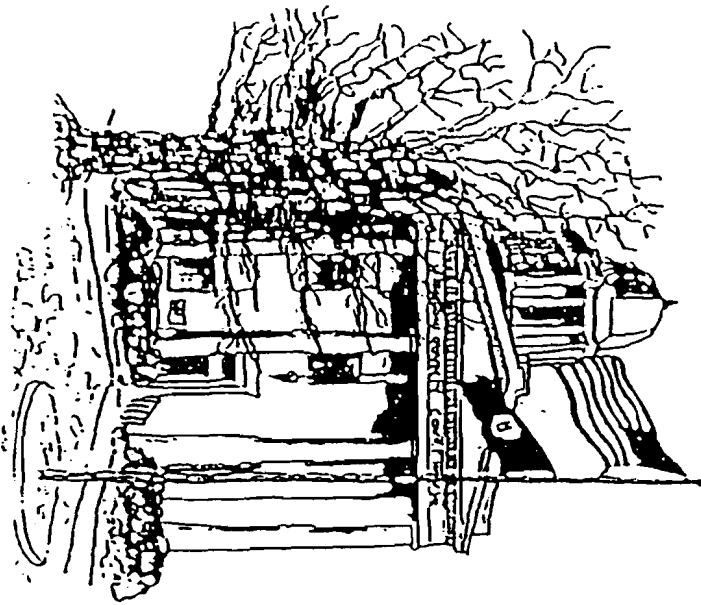
Kenton County Historical Society  
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Covington, Kentucky 41012

John Boh 12/1/00  
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# KENTON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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**INSIDE:**  
**The Green Line**

Dedicated to preserving our heritage as the "Gateway to the South"