

The Bowling Green CIVIL WAR EXPERIENCE



Bowling Green, Kentucky
The Confederate Capitol of Kentucky
November 1861- February 1862

Featuring
“A Star in Each Flag: Conflict in Kentucky” Exhibit
“Lincoln and the Railroad” Exhibit
Civil War Discovery Trail Audio Tour
Lost River Cave & Valley Tour
Lost River Cave & Valley Civil War Days

BOWLING GREEN, KENTUCKY

Fact Sheet

Bowling Green is located on the Barren River in south central Kentucky. It is conveniently located 110 miles south of Louisville and only 60 miles north of Nashville, Tennessee.

Area code: 270

County: Warren

Population: County 104,023; City 54,244; Total 158,267

TRANSPORTATION

Interstate access: I-65

Parkways: William. H. Natcher, Louie B. Nunn

U.S. Highways: 31W, 68, 231

Kentucky Highways: 185, 80, 234, 1435

Airport: Bowling Green-Warren County Regional Airport. This airport has two paved runways that are lit for night-time flying.

TIME ZONE

Bowling Green is located in the Central Standard Time Zone. This can be confusing for some travelers because half of Kentucky is in the Eastern Standard Time Zone while the other half is in the Central Standard Time Zone. Bowling Green is within miles of the dividing line. Louisville, Lexington, and Frankfort are in the Eastern Standard Time while Nashville is Central. Please keep this in mind when traveling through airports and arriving at attractions and events.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Bowling Green has 31 hotels, including most major chains, and more than 2,500 rooms. It also has three bed and breakfasts and two campgrounds for your enjoyment.

VISITOR INFORMATION

The Bowling Green Area Convention & Visitors Bureau is here to serve you! You can locate us at 352 Three Springs Road; Bowling Green, KY; 42104. For more information, please contact us at (270) 782-0800 or (800) 326-7465, fax (270) 842-2104 or log on to www.visitbgky.com.



Media Contact: Marissa Butler
270-782-0800 or marissa@visitbgky.com

Bowling Green's 'Civil War Experience' Includes Opportunities to Learn and be Entertained

John Hunt Morgan's saddle, a Victorian photo studio, rare photos, historic train exhibits, and underground cave adventures combine to offer visitors a unique glance into Kentucky's Civil War history

Bowling Green, KY., – Most known for its fast cars (Bowling Green is home to the National Corvette Museum), roller coasters and college sports, Bowling Green, Kentucky also has many entertaining stories to tell that include some little-known facts about the Civil War. Local attractions have interpreted those facts in "Bowling Green's Civil War Experience," which includes opportunities to hop aboard a train, dress in period clothing, ride a boat through an underground cave, travel by car along the Civil War Discovery Trail and much more.

The South Central Kentucky city's convenient location (less than an hour from Nashville) and unique geography appeal to many travelers both presently and in the past. The Bowling Green area's productive farms and its ample quantities of fresh water promised plentiful supplies for an army during the Civil War. Access to the Louisville-Nashville Railroad, a system

-MORE-

-Civil War 1st add-

of roadways and the Barren River allowed for quick and efficient movement of men and supplies. Rolling hills and underground shelters offered effective opportunities to defend those transportation routes, making the area a strategic post that both camps wanted to control. Visitors today still recognize those valuable geographic traits, and now they can be entertained while they learn about how Kentucky played an important role in the war and why the Bowling Green area was viewed as such a strategic post.

Bowling Green's Civil War Experience includes:

"A Star in Each Flag: Conflict in Kentucky"

[The Kentucky Library & Museum](#) on Western Kentucky University's campus has introduced a new exhibit that encourages guests to walk through a simulated campsite, view a slave cabin, and step into a community post office. Examine period artifacts including John Hunt Morgan's saddle, an original copy of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* by Harriett Beecher Stowe, actual letters between Kentucky residents written during the war, various medical instruments, Civil War flags, weapons and more. "A Star in Each Flag: Conflict in Kentucky" also includes a children's activities center and a Victorian photo studio where visitors can dress in period clothing and have a picture taken. The exhibit is the first in the region to interpret South Central Kentucky's Civil War story, with emphasis on the divided loyalties of regional families and the lives of slaves in Kentucky.

"Lincoln and the Railroad"

[The Historic Railpark & Train Museum](#) will debut a "Lincoln and the Railroad" exhibit March 25, 2009 featuring rare Matthew Brady Civil War railroad photos from the National Archives and accompanying text from Smithsonian research assistant Peter Hansen. The exhibit will highlight Lincoln's little-known 20-year career as a railroad attorney in Illinois and the expansion of the railroad during his administration. Also of interest are permanent exhibits 'Segregation and the North American Railroad' and 'The Great Locomotive Chase,' displaying a Civil War Medal of Honor.

-MORE-

-Civil War 2nd add-

Civil War Discovery Trail

By car, visitors can listen to the newly developed audio tour accompanying the [Civil War Discovery Trail](#). Bowling Green was the Capitol of the Confederate State of Kentucky for approximately four months in 1861-62. Noted on the tour is the private residence that served as the capitol building. Historical markers interpret interesting facts throughout the city and Riverview at Hobson Grove Historic House & Museum offers a wonderful stopping place to learn more about how the house was used as a fort and an ammunition depot during the war. A free download of the interpretive audio is available online at www.visitbgky.com, or a CD version is available for purchase at the Bowling Green Area Convention & Visitors Bureau located on Three Springs Road, just off Scottsville Rd. from exit number 22 of I-65.

Lost River Cave & Valley

Explore more Civil War secrets underground at another stop on the Discovery Trail, the [Lost River Cave & Valley](#), and hear stories about both camps hiding out and the mysterious deaths of soldiers there. Lost River offered a natural water supply and the beauty of the cave provided a diversion from the ugliness of war. It is believed that on one of his "lightning raids" into Kentucky, John Hunt Morgan hid in the cave when escaping from pursuing troops. Visitors can learn more by taking a boat ride through the cave. Lost River's annual Civil War Days, taking place October 16-18, 2009, recreates history and includes period re-enactors, demonstrations and interactive exhibits and activities.

President Abraham Lincoln emphasized the value of Kentucky's strategic importance in an 1861 letter, "I think to lose Kentucky is nearly the same as to lose the whole game." Through "Bowling Green's Civil War Experience," visitors can step back in time and learn more about the legacy of a war that bitterly divided our nation, our state and our families. Area hotels and one-of-a-kind dining establishments, in addition to creative shopping venues and attractions, contribute to Bowling Green's unique charm. To learn more about Bowling Green's Civil War Experience and area tourism destinations, visit www.visitbgky.com or contact the Bowling Green Area Convention & Visitors Bureau at (800) 326-7465.

###

Notes to Media:

Photos are available at <http://picasaweb.google.com/VisitBGKY>. In addition, experts can be contacted to answer questions specific to each attraction. Please contact Marissa Butler at marissa@visitbgky.com or 270-782-0800 to arrange for an interview or for more information.

All of the above-mentioned attractions are linked to www.visitbgky.com.

America commemorates the **150th Anniversary of the Civil War** beginning in 2011.

Other regional sites of interest include the Shaker Museum at South Union, Fort Williams in Glasgow, and Octagon Hall & KY Confederate Studies Archive in Franklin, KY. The Shaker Museum hosts a **Civil War Camp Out June 26-27, 2009** for children up to 14 years old and their guardians. Activities include drills, scavenger hunt of the grounds with living historians, and cooking demonstrations.

American Drummer Boy, an independent film shot in the Bowling Green area and based on true accounts of two young Kentucky boys might make for an interesting sidebar or mention for your readers. A **public screening of the film will take place April 16, 2009** at the Kentucky Library & Museum in Bowling Green. For more information about the movie, visit <http://www.americandrummerboy.com>.



Contact Information:
Jennifer Wilson, 270.745.6977

Unique Civil War Exhibit to Open at Kentucky Library & Museum

The Kentucky Library & Museum announces the grand opening of a new Civil War exhibit entitled “A Star in Each Flag: Conflict in Kentucky.” A Bowling Green Area Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting is scheduled to kick off the opening weekend Friday, October 24 at 9:00 am at The Kentucky Library & Museum on Western Kentucky University’s campus.

At the exhibit, visitors will see the strong conflict and opposing views regarding slavery between friends, neighbors and community members in the state of Kentucky. In addition, guests can walk through a simulated campsite, view a slave cabin, step into a community post office, examine period artifacts including John Hunt Morgan’s saddle, various medical instruments, Civil War flags, weapons and more. Families will enjoy visiting the Victorian photo studio where they can dress in period clothing and have a picture taken.

“This new ongoing exhibit will illustrate how deeply divided Kentuckians were during the challenging years of 1861-1865.” said Timothy Mullin, Head of Special Collections for University Libraries, “We hope to see students and families from every school in the region walk through our doors. There is something for all ages to enjoy and learn.”

There will be a special “Bourbon & Belles” reception Friday evening for Friends of the WKU Libraries & Museum and other interested patrons. For ticket information, contact Jennifer Wilson at 745-6977. All community members are invited to visit the exhibit on Saturday, October 25 free of charge. For fee information on other days, see www.wku.edu/Library and click on “Kentucky Library & Museum Online.” Museum hours are Monday through Saturday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Sunday, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

###

A Star in Each Flag: Conflict in Kentucky

A new exhibit at the Kentucky Library & Museum

Exhibit Description

The Civil War is a perennially popular topic, and until now, there has been no exhibit in the region to tell South Central Kentucky's story. Looking at the major issues of the war, each section of this exhibit narrows the focus down to what was going on here.

To begin, this was the only period in American history when there were two presidents, and both were from Kentucky; even one of the First Ladies was from our state. The exhibit begins with this interesting bit of trivia.

Next, we look at the causes of the war, and how Kentuckians had their effect. Henry Clay worked out two compromises to maintain the delicate balance of slave and free states. Formerly enslaved Kentuckian, Joshua Henderson, likely served as a role model for Uncle Tom's Cabin; an original copy of which is on exhibit.

An environment of a slave cabin presents narratives on the interior of how the enslaved peoples of Kentucky created their own underground social network, while outside, the lives of enslaved people are defined by the various ways in which they were put to work in the Commonwealth.

"The Philistines are Upon Us" looks at the divided loyalties of regional families. Set in the post office, where the community came face-to-face, images and paintings illustrate several family divisions.

What Civil War exhibition would be complete without a display of guns, edged weapons, uniforms and a few cannonballs? John Hunt Morgan, the hero or terrorist depending on your point of view, is represented by the saddle he used on his raids throughout Kentucky. Maps show the major battles that took place in Kentucky, and the horrors of field medicine and prisons are brought to life with graphic images.

A full tent is set-up for the public to browse and examine is the section on the life of soldiers. Images of soldiers, and quotes from their letters give visitors a glimpse into life in the field. Soldiers also carried images of their loved ones into war as the camera was developed to provide handsome small carte-de-visite images that fit into a pocket.

A photo studio typical of the time is set-up with period costume pieces to try on and capture your own memories of the exhibit.

In the end, the exhibit focuses on the legacy of this war that bitterly divided our nation, our state, and our families.



TO: All Media
DATE: March 9, 2009
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Marissa Butler
Public Relations Director
270.782.0800

New Audio Tour Shares Personal Civil War Accounts *Part of Bowling Green's 'Civil War Experience'*

BOWLING GREEN, Ky.--"The Gibraltar of the West" and "The City of Fortifications;" both of these were used to describe Bowling Green during the Civil War. A new audio tour that accompanies the Civil War Discovery Trail driving tour through Warren County explains why. In conjunction with two new museum exhibits and special events, the tour is part of Bowling Green's 'Civil War Experience.'

The audio tour was developed by the Convention and Visitors Bureau to offer a more entertaining glimpse at how the Civil War affected the men, women and children of South Central Kentucky. Written by Western Kentucky University Geography and Geology professor Dr. Michael Trapasso, also a Civil War enthusiast, and produced by Creative Digital in Atlanta, the audio tour includes eleven tracks.

The first track offers background on Kentucky's position during the Civil War, pointing out the strategic location of Bowling Green with access to railroads, roadways and the Barren River. Track 2 delves into the use of Lost River Cave & Valley by both Confederate and Union troops while tracks 3-6 take the listener to WKU's significant sites of Jonesville, The Kentucky Library and Museum, and Fort Lytle.

The Grider House, once the Capital Building for the Confederate State of Kentucky, is featured on track 7 and Forts C.F. Smith, Baker Hill, and Webb are the subjects of tracks 8-10. Riverview at Hobson Grove, once used as an ammunitions bunker for Union soldiers, is the subject of the final track.

Heard throughout the audio tour are personal diary entries from local residents Joanna Underwood and Mary E. Van Meter and excerpts from soldier's private letters describing their stay in Bowling Green. Trapasso has been studying the Civil War in Bowling Green for over 25 years and has gathered letters through the years, but collections at the Kentucky Library and National Archives also contributed to the tour's text.

"We wanted to create a tour that was not just about strategies, battles, and the cold, hard facts about the War," CVB Marketing Director Katie Frassinelli said. "Using different voices, sound effects and period music enables the listener to go back in time and feel what it was like while learning."

The Civil War Discovery Trail Audio Tour is available on CD at the Convention and Visitors Bureau or as a free download on the website at www.visitbgky.com.

BOWLING GREEN'S 'CIVIL WAR EXPERIENCE'

EXPERTS

Civil War Discovery Trail

Dr. Michael Trapasso, Western Kentucky University
Geography and Geology Department
270-745-2407
michael.trapasso@wku.edu
www.visitbgky.com/civilwardiscoverytrail.html

American Drummer Boy

Dorian Walker, Director
Peridot Pictures
270-792-6948
dorianwalker@bellsouth.net
www.americandrummerboy.com

Historic Railpark and Train Museum

Sharon Tabor, Executive Director
270-745-7317
stabor@historicroailpark.com
www.historicroailpark.com

Kentucky Library & Museum, Western Kentucky University

Jennifer Wilson, Marketing Coordinator
270-745-6977
jennifer.wilson1@wku.edu
www.wku.edu/library/kylm
**Extensive Online Civil War Collection and Photos available at:
www.wku.edu/library/kylm/collections/online/civilwar/index.html

Lost River Cave and Valley

Becky Madison, Civil War Days Coordinator
270-393-0077
beckyb@lostrivercave.com
www.lostrivercave.com

Riverview at Hobson Grove

Laura Southard, Interim Executive Director
Tour and general House questions
270-843-5565/ lauransouthard@hotmail.com
www.bgky.org/riverview
Jonathan Jeffrey, Western Kentucky University
Library Special Collections Professor/ Local Historian
270-745-5265
jonathan.jeffrey@wku.edu

Center for the Study of the Civil War in the West

Western Kentucky University, Department of History
Dr. Glen LaFantasie
270-745-4950
glenn.lafantasie@wku.edu
www.wku.edu/civilwarcenter/index.html