

The

# Kentuckian



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## Greetings from the Governor General

Two years ago I stood before you and accepted the awesome role of Governor General of First Families of Kentucky. It has been a satisfying experience, and one for which I am profoundly grateful. Now, it is time for a valedictory.

Before anything else, I wish to thank my fellow officers, who have put in as much time and effort as I to make the past two years



successful ones. No one person can do everything in an organization such as ours, but that was never even thought of. I cannot single out one over another, as I have had a marvelous cast to support our

efforts. There will be many continuing in the new administration of Art Dietz, and so I feel confident that First Families of Kentucky will continue in good hands.

We have enjoyed a regular growth in membership. When I took office in June of 2015, the membership number of the last person admitted was #288. As of this writing, the last number assigned is #324, and others may be brought in before our annual meeting in June. There is no danger of us dying out. For this growth, I thank the members who

## First Families of Kentucky

Annual Banquet

Saturday the third of June  
Two thousand and seventeen

Pendennis Club  
218 West Muhammad Ali Boulevard  
Louisville, Kentucky

Social hour at Six o'clock  
Dinner at quarter past Seven

\$70.00 per person

White tie preferred  
Black tie acceptable

Speaker: Donna Jones  
"Boone Station, Daniel Boone  
and the Boone Families Fayette  
County, Kentucky Home"

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**firstfamiliesofkentucky.com**

**First Families of Kentucky  
Executive Board Slate for 2017-2019**

**Governor General** Arthur Dietz, Jr.

**Deputy Governor General** Stephen L. Collins

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**Registrar General** Sharon M. Withers

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**Corresponding Secretary General** Donna Hughes

**Historian General** Elizabeth Kuster

**Chancellor General** William Swinford

**Chaplain General** Jane K. Thomas

encourage their friends and relatives to consider joining. This is our primary source of new members.

We have also been fortunate in having informative and interesting speakers at our meetings. In October of 2015 our own Donna Hughes spoke on the "Duncan Tavern Historic Center" in Paris. Last May, Rev. Clyde Crews spoke on the topic "Wilderness Faith: Religion in Antebellum Kentucky." Then, this past October in Lexington Dr. Jon Coleman addressed us with "The Visit of the Marquis de Lafayette to Kentucky." I feel certain that when we hear Donna Jones speak on Daniel Boone in June, we will be equally delighted. In each case, we were made more aware of our Kentucky heritage, which is a major purpose of our society. We have also made donations to significant institutions representing our history and culture.

Sadly, the past two years have proven hard on the spouses of Honorary Governors General. On 25 January 2016, Ronald James Shea, husband of Honorary Governor General Lynn Shea, passed from this life. On 15 June 2016, Nancye Bruce Whaley Early, wife of Honorary Governor General Jack Early, went to meet her Maker. And on 1 August 2016 Bette Joan Cross Buckaway, wife of William Allen Buckaway, Jr., also departed this realm. We remember

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Lexington Country Club Luncheon



William C. Schrader, III



Speaker Dr. Jonathan Coleman



Memorial: Sharlene Cooper



Jean & Art Dietz



Dick & Nancy Lutz, Ann Franklin



William A. Buckaway, Jr. & Lynn Turner Shea



Bettie Tuttle, Frances Barr, Joan Mayer





Reed & Dorothy Butler, Marion & Lucy Jacobs



Marcia Lenz, Valerie & Banning Lary, Harold Cottrell



Carolyn & Gordon Krist



Alex Lesueur Sr., Alex Jr., & Joan



Ann Pennington, Jeanette Wortham



Harold & Jeanne Rarden





Sue & Mac McCracken, Kay & Ed Thomas



William Schrader, III, Jon Coleman



Anne Worthington, Charlotte Allison, Sonja Eads



Karen & Chuck Bragg



J. Murel & Frieda Wheatley



Carole Cornell, Linda Brock





Will Buckaway, William A. Buckaway, Jr.



Lexington Country Club October 15, 2016



Donna Hughes



Lynn T. Shea



Dena Green



Donna presents a donation to Eric Brooks representing Ashland, home of Henry Clay.



Kathy Hall, Margaret Shopshire, Rebecca Turner, Mary Dan Raider, Anissa Penn Davis

## Isaac Shelby

Isaac Shelby was my 4th great grandfather with whom I have great admiration. He was born near North Mountain, Washington County, Maryland on December 11, 1750. Shelby was the first and fifth Governor of the U.S. state of Kentucky and served in the state legislatures of Virginia and North Carolina. He was reared Presbyterian, worked on his father's plantation, occasionally surveyed land, and at the age of eighteen became a deputy sheriff. At age 23, he was a soldier in Lord Dunmore's War, in which Virginia frontiersmen defeated the Northwestern Indians. In 1775, Shelby went to Kentucky, where he surveyed lands for the Transylvania Company. He chased a buffalo which led him near a big salt lick, a spot of land he called "the most beautiful place I have ever seen." He pitched a tent that night and camped on the future site of his "Travelers Rest" home. In 1778, this 1400 acres was officially claimed by him by planting a crop of corn there.

During the Revolutionary War in 1780-1781, Shelby and his men contributed importantly to three American victories over British and Tory forces including Camden, Battle of Kings Mountain and Cowpens. He was considered one of the heroes of the Battle of Kings Mountain.

In 1782, Shelby moved into the territory of Kentucky. On April 19, 1783 he married at Boonesborough, Susannah Hart, the second daughter of Captain Nathaniel Hart, one of the earliest settlers of Kentucky. They settled in Lincoln County, near Knob Lick, and occupied the land previously awarded to Shelby where they would build Travelers Rest, his home-place for over fifty years. In later years he entertained neighbors and old friends, Indians, passing travelers and ragged war veterans, giving them the same hospitality he offered to the rich and famous who came to Travelers Rest for company or advice.

Isaac Shelby had eleven children by his wife,

Susannah Hart. Shelby's daughter, Sarah, married Ephraim McDowell, the surgeon who in Danville, Kentucky on Christmas Day 1809 performed the first successful ovariectomy. Shelby's son, Thomas Hart Shelby, was said to have been the first importer of thoroughbred livestock, including racehorses, into the state of Kentucky. His youngest daughter (my 3rd great grandmother), Letitia Shelby, married in 1816 Charles Stuart Todd (my 3rd great grandfather), the son of a United States Supreme Court Associate Justice. Earlier in March, 1815, Todd was made Aide-de-Camp to Kentucky Governor Isaac Shelby, with the rank of colonel, thus beginning the tradition of Honorable Kentucky Colonels carried on to this day and the philanthropic Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels established in 1932. Todd, Shelby's son-in-law, would later become Secretary of State of Kentucky in 1817 and United States Ambassador to Russia in the 1840's.

In April 1792, Shelby was a member of the convention which framed Kentucky's first constitution. In May 1792, he was elected the first governor of Kentucky, but was not reelected in 1796 because the state constitution barred anyone from serving consecutive terms as governor. In August 1812, Shelby was again elected governor by popular demand. He personally led the militia volunteers and fought at the Battle of the Thames on October 5, 1813. He was able to mobilize 3,000 Kentucky troops after Indiana Territory Governor William Henry Harrison requested 2,000 from him. In 1818, he was commissioned with General Andrew Jackson to negotiate an Indian treaty.

In 1820 at age 70, he suffered a paralytic stroke that deprived him of the use of his right arm and lamed him in his right leg. However, his mind remained clear until his death of apoplexy six and a half years later on July 18, 1826. He was buried on his estate, Traveler's Rest, in Lincoln County, Kentucky. The Commonwealth of Kentucky erected a monument over his grave in 1827. In 1952, one



hundred and twenty-six years after his death, Kentucky accepted the Shelby family cemetery at Traveler's Rest as a state shrine.

He has been called the "Father of Kentucky" with counties and towns in nine states named in his honor including nine counties, eleven cities and three military installations. To carry on family tradition, we named our daughter, Shelby Elizabeth Miller, and our home-place in North Carolina, Travelers Rest.

Horace William Miller, IV

## The Lincolns Visit Kentucky

Abraham Lincoln was elected as a Representative to the thirtieth United States Congress from the 7<sup>th</sup> District of Illinois. Preparing for the big move to the Capitol city of Washington D.C., Lincoln leased their home located on Eighth and Jackson Streets in Springfield, Illinois to a brick contractor, reserving the north upstairs room for storage.

On October 25, 1847 Congressman Abraham Lincoln, his wife, Mary, and their two children, Robert and Eddie, leave Springfield on their way to Washington D.C., with a planned stopover in Lexington, Kentucky to visit Mary's family. A stage is taken overland to Alton where the family boarded a packet steamboat to travel down the muddy Mississippi River where they spend the night in St. Louis, Missouri. A. Lincoln and family, along with his friend, Joshua F. Speed, are listed as guests at Scott's Hotel on Third and Market Streets. Boarding the steamboat again the family travels on to Cairo, the southern tip of Illinois, where the Lincolns transfer to a river steamer and start their journey up the Ohio River to Louisville, Kentucky. As the steamer slowly makes its way upstream the cool crisp air, the clear water, the blue sky overhead, and the autumn-

colored trees of the Indiana and Kentucky shoreline must have evoked memories of home for Mary. Some of the areas were even familiar to Lincoln as he recalled his young days traveling with his family. Arriving in the Louisville area the steamer passes through the 50-foot-wide Portland Canal. The family did not stop off in Louisville to visit Lincoln's good friends the Speeds but traveled on up the Ohio River to the Kentucky River and eventually disembarked in Leestown, below present-day Frankfort. They took a hackney cab to the top of the railroad incline and boarded the eastbound *Lexington & Ohio* train for Lexington. The train consisted of a small steam locomotive and a solitary coach for the 31-mile trip.

This was Mary Todd Lincoln's first visit home since her marriage in 1842. She was often heard to remark that she was homesick for "the sweet old garden". The couple arrived at the Todd home on West Main Street in Lexington on a cold, windy, November day. Lincoln, tall and slim, alighted from the barouche with a heavy cap, ear muffs and a black cloak over his shoulders, to meet Mary's stepmother, Elizabeth Humphreys-Todd, and younger family members for the first time. Mary's father, Robert Todd, had visited the young couple in 1843.

During the visit in Lexington Mary was to introduce her husband to a great many of her family and friends. Mary had become very close to her grandmother Parker after the death of her mother in the summer of 1825 when Mary was only six years of age. Although Mary grew up a privileged child she did not enjoy a happy home life. Mary was very proud to introduce her young family to her beloved grandmother who lived on Short Street. Lincoln was content to spend many hours browsing in the vast Todd library and going to visit the cotton mills in Sandersville, on the Georgetown Pike, with his brother-in-law Levi Todd. One day Lincoln was privileged to attend a political meeting with his father-in-law, Robert Todd, where Henry Clay



delivered a fiery speech in opposition to the War with Mexico. As Lincoln traveled around the quaint slave-holding old town he was impressed with the many elegant mansions sitting on the large estates. He also spent time around the Lexington Courthouse where he swapped stories with the judges and lawyers and visited the public square on Cheapside, where everything from the weather, crops, horses, and politics was discussed. But perhaps his most memorable visit was when Mary took him to the 600 acre Federal-style country home, *Ashland*, to meet Henry Clay, a long-time idol of Abraham Lincoln.

On Thanksgiving Day the Lincoln family attended services in the new sanctuary of the Second Presbyterian Church in Lexington where they heard the guest preacher Robert J. Breckinridge. (Breckinridge, noted for his hostility to slavery was a supporter of the gradual emancipation of slaves.) In the afternoon the family bid good-bye to Mary's family and boarded a stage for Maysville, Kentucky, a distance of approximately 64 miles. Fortunately, stagecoach travel had become more pleasure than peril by this time. In Maysville the Lincolns boarded a steamboat going up the Ohio River to continue their journey to Washington, D.C. They arrived in Washington, the 13<sup>th</sup> largest city in the nation, on December 2, 1847. The Lincolns moved into a boarding house near the unfinished Capitol building.

Mary and the children returned to Kentucky in the early spring of 1848, leaving Lincoln in Washington D.C. She and her children went with the Todd family to the two-story frame summer home called *Buena Vista*, located on a knoll with a magnificent view. Lilacs and honeysuckle permeated the spring air and there the children could play under the large locust trees and in the small brook which meandered from the stone springhouse. Mary had spent many childhood days here as the family left the large populated town of Lexington, in summer, to escape the heat and the threat of cholera. *Buena Vista* set a short distance from the

Leestown Pike and could be reached by rail from the Ducker station in Franklin County, Kentucky. (The house was razed in 1947. Picture courtesy of Capital City Museum, Frankfort, Kentucky)



When Mary left Kentucky, Lincoln had already left Washington D.C. on a campaign tour of New England. They met in late July and visited Niagara Falls before Lincoln booked passage on the steamer, *Globe* leaving Buffalo, New York for Chicago, a 1,047-mile trip. The Honorable Abraham Lincoln and family arrived home in Springfield, Illinois in October of 1848. Lincoln was not nominated for a second term in Congress.

In 1850 Lincoln returned to the Frankfort and Lexington area to settle the estate of his father-in-law, Robert S. Todd, who died July 16, 1849, and was buried in Boswell's Woods, now Lexington Cemetery.

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Frieda Curtis-Wheatley

Please share your ancestor's Kentucky history by sending his/her story to *The Kentuckian*. Stories should be approximately 600 words or less. All stories will be edited for clarity and length. Copyright material must be accompanied by a signed release from publisher and author. Mail to the Editor at 600 Hatherleigh Lane, Louisville, KY, 40222.

them, as we know that they contributed greatly to the successes of their spouses, and not only in their capacity as Governors General.

In closing, I can say that First Families of Kentucky is healthy and active, and I predict that we will continue to grow, to learn more about our Kentucky heritage, and to enjoy meeting each other. I thank you all for the privilege of serving you as Governor General during the 2015-17 period.

William C. Schrader, III  
Governor General

## Congratulations

Congratulations to former Governor General Jack Jones Early as he was honored in Frankfort, February 21, 2017 for having served in the Kentucky Legislature 65 years ago. Introduced by Speaker of the House Jeff Hoover, Mr. Early received a standing ovation.

