

## **Heartland Waterways Corridor Cultural Tourism**

The early settlers had few store-bought luxuries or even the places to buy them. Instead, they learned to create the things they needed to make a house a home, to carve communities out of the wilderness. Relying on time-tested skills, they made quilts, pottery, furniture, baskets, clothing, rugs and musical instruments. Today, Kentucky crafts are appreciated the world over for their heritage, originality and beauty. In the Heartland Waterways Corridor, the vast array of artists and their creations still carry on the cultural heritage passed down to them by their ancestors.

A creative form of human expression, arts and crafts can be found in every corridor community. An example of this is Another Era in Edmonton that carries musical instruments, harps, weavings, tartans and tapestries. In Campbellsville, Roger Blair, a famed Kentucky woodcarver has a studio and gallery. His exquisite carvings of native Kentucky birds, fish and other animals are sought after by collectors all over the nation. Directly above Sirius Coffee Café and Express Bar in downtown Columbia, Arnold's Upstairs is a small gallery offering a mix of regional Kentucky landscape paintings and contemporary art.

En route to Columbia, there are some interesting craft studios along US 61. About 8 miles south of Columbia, the Highland Raku Studio has an inspiring setting in which to work – surrounded by apple orchards and nice deep hollows. The gallery features Henrietta Scott's Raku pottery, along with work by other craftsmen on the Adair County Art Trail. One of those is glassblower John England at Outback Glass, whose marbles and paperweights have been sold by the Smithsonian at the Renwick since he won their "Best of Southeast" award. John and Jill England also make Christmas ornaments, some of which have hung on the Kentucky Christmas tree at the White House. At Heart's Image, ceramic sculptor David C. Waltz makes fantastic stoneware pottery in both utilitarian and sculptural forms. Check out his series of black blues musicians done in full round.

Campbellsville has lovely handmade cherry furniture. Four companies in town manufacture the furniture: Campbellsville Cherry Reproduction, Campbellsville Hand Made Furniture, Gary Humpress & Sons and McMahan's Furniture Company. All welcome visitors and have showrooms of beautiful beds, chests, tables and other pieces. Campbellsville Cherry graces houses all over the world. Located near Columbia, Pieceful Valley Quilt Camp in Dunnville is a retreat for quilters who would like to get away and concentrate. Adjacent to the R.E. Tarter Wildlife Management Area of Adair County, the Homestead dates back to the early 1800s and was at one time the Civil War site of Camp Billy Williams. Established by the Union Army to guard the Green River against enemy infiltration, the farm also grew food for the Union troops. Look for signs and quilts on the porch. There are lots of quilting classes.

The performing arts are not forgotten in the Heartland Waterways Corridor. The Barn Lot Theater, which began in 1980 in Edmonton as an outdoor theater, has grown to become the area's only year-round operating indoor theater. In addition to a season of plays including one annual dinner theater production, Barn Lot holds special events such as concerts by a variety of artists, art related classes, workshops on different aspects of theater, a continuing cycle of displays by local and regional artists, and children's theater. In addition, Barn Lot Theater is the Community Arts Center for Metcalfe County. As a bit of musical trivia, Metcalfe County is home to the musical group, The Kentucky Headhunters.

For the literary arts, the Heartland Waterways Corridor has some landmarks. In Columbia, the oldest building on the public square, built in 1812, is a hotel where Theodore O'Hara wrote "The Bivouac of the Dead" in 1847. A verse from it is inscribed at the entrances to the cemeteries in Frankfort and Arlington, Virginia. Also in Columbia, Mark Twain's parents, Jane Lampton and John Marshall Clemens, were married in 1823. Well-known author Janice Holt Giles and her husband Henry Giles settled in Knifley, Henry's home. There Janice wrote and Henry farmed. Her books, noted for action and imagery, include *The Enduring Hills* and *The Believers*. Eventually, Henry also began to write. The story of how they built their log house and the necessity of moving it after the Green River Dam was built is chronicled in two books by the couple, *A Little Better Than Plumb* and *Around Our House*. Their home is now open to the public.

Barns are a distinctive feature of the Kentucky landscape and eastern Kentucky has some of the best examples of this folk architecture. As late as 1970 blueprint architects designed only 5 percent of world architecture. Most buildings were built by "folk builders" who obtained their patterns from their peers or ancestors. The stretch of KY 163 between Edmonton and Tompkinsville still preserves some good examples of older barns. A hip-style feeder barn in Metcalfe County is one of the few to be seen in the state. The area's farming influence also can be seen in the magnificent John B. Begley Chapel, located on the Lindsey Wilson College. Designed by world-renowned architect, E. Fay Jones, the chapel is reminiscent of a silo with the use of skylights to bring in the sky and heavens. The chapel is one of the most outstanding pieces of modern architecture in Kentucky.

Cooking is an art in the Heartland Waterways Region. Most communities have their favorite eateries, some of which have become legendary. Stop by A. Ennis Lunch in downtown Greensburg, home of the famed "slawburger." A slawburger, fries and bottle of Ski was made famous by the Kentucky Headhunters, a local music group in their song "Dumas Walker." In Tompkinsville, the rage is barbecue with an amazing 10 barbecue restaurants serving up their version of the popular meat. Operated in the same family since 1965, Paul and Nora's Barbecue is now serving the grandchildren of its original patrons. At R&S Barbecue, owner Anita Hamilton burns chunks and slabs of hickory wood in an open furnace out back. Every 15 minutes or so, Hamilton shovels the white hot coals into a bucket and carries them in the kitchen back door to feed the fire. Frances Barbecue is a favorite of country and western star John Anderson and even carries bottles of his tasty barbecue sauce.

Then there's Rolley Hole Marbles. At the Marble Club Super Dome (about the size of a large chicken house, built from leftover lumber) in Tompkinsville, the action is intense. Full-grown men kneel in the dirt, spending hours taking aim at their targets. Almost every evening after supper is done, a group of regulars show up to compete at the game they have been playing since youngsters. The natural colored marbles are handmade from flint found in the Cumberland River and rounded by hand or with a grinder. Recognized as the "Marble Capital of the Commonwealth," Monroe County is proud to continue its traditional marble games – and to welcome visitors to sit and watch one of the cultural gems of the Heartland Waterways Corridor.

## **DESTINATIONS:**

- \* Roger Blair, Campbellsville: 270/465-7641.
- \* Highland Raku Studio, Columbia: 270/378-6341.
- \* Heart's Image, Columbia: 270/378-5536.
- \* Pieceful Valley Quilt Camp, Dunnville: 270/384-6721.
- \* Janice Holt Giles House, Knifley: 270/384-5906.
- \* A. Ennis Lunch, Greensburg: 270/932-5972.
- \* John B. Begley Chapel, Columbia: 502/384-8400.
- \* Paul & Nora's Barbecue, Tompkinsville: 270/487-9271.
- \* R&S Barbecue, Tompkinsville: 270/487-1008.
- \* Frances Barbecue, Tompkinsville: 270/487-8550.
- \* Marble Club Super Dome, Tompkinsville: 270/487-1314.
- \* Campbellsville Cherry Reproductions, Campbellsville: 270/465-6003.
- \* Campbellsville Handmade Furniture, Campbellsville: 270/789-1741.
- \* Gary Humpress & Sons, Campbellsville: 270/465-2786.
- \* McMahan's Furniture, Campbellsville: 270/465-4831.

## **FESTIVALS AND EVENTS:**

- \* Celebration of the Arts, Columbia, September: Demonstrations, story telling, theater, musical performances and more. 270/384-6020.
- \* Monroe County Watermelon Festival, Tompkinsville, September: Contests related to watermelons, live entertainment, parade, races, marble tournament. 270/487-5504.
- \* Janice Holt Giles and Henry Giles Arts and Crafts Day, Knife, October: Fair features arts and crafts, gospel and bluegrass music and demonstrations. 270/384-5906.
- \* Cumberland River Bluegrass Festival, Burkesville, September: Enjoy the sights and sounds of bluegrass competitions, crafts and food. 270/864-2515.
- \* Sportsmans Swap Meet, Burkesville, first week in October: Swap, sell or buy outdoor equipment, featuring antique lures. Ask guides for tying tricks and swap stories about the one that got away. 270/433-5133.
- \* Cow Days, Greensburg, September: Two festival of arts and crafts, music, farm competitions such as hay bale toss. 270/932-5808.
- \* Sulphur Well Homeday Day, Sulphur Well, August: Country music and gospel, car show, lots of arts and crafts and food. 270/565-1621.
- \* Pumpkin Festival, Edmonton, October: Festival features plenty of crafts, food, gospel singing and pumpkins. 270/432-3561.