

Nicholas Facts

The Mercury PLUS, a total market publication to all households and businesses in Nicholas County, has been available for over two years. Along with serving as an advertising medium, The Mercury PLUS contains news of general interest to residents of its coverage area.

Daily newspapers circulated in Nicholas County include The Mayesville Ledger Independent, The Louisville Courier-Journal and The Lexington Herald Leader.

Lexington, Kentucky television stations UHF channels 18, 27, 36, and 56 serve the commercial area.

Kentucky Educational television is also available through two channels.

Cable service for television is available in the City of Carlisle via Simmons Cable Service, with offices in Paris, Kentucky.

Public radio stations with signals available in Nicholas County, include stations from Morehead State University, University of Kentucky and Eastern Kentucky University.

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County driving

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a wagon and team down this road into Lexington was named Smith and that the road became known as "Smith's Wagon-road".

In 1817 the road was chartered as the Mayesville and Lexington Turnpike Road Company. Road improvements were begun with work being completed in 1835. The road was now complete from Mayesville to Lexington. It was a sixty-four mile turnpike with 13 tollhouses and 6 covered bridges. With the tollhouses and 6 covered bridges. With the hard surfaced road the stagecoach speeds were increased from three to four miles per hour to eight to ten miles per hour.

The pioneer cemetery contains over two hundred graves of early settlers in this area. The tombstones themselves bear excellent examples of the skills of the stone cutters.

2. Colonel Throckmorton's Inn
Traveling east for about one and a half miles, on the right side of the highway, is the red brick inn built in 1810 as a stage coach stop. Several famous guests are known to have stayed here. General Santa Anna, the General who defeated the Texans at the Alamo and who later became the President

Mexico, stayed here overnight on his way to Washington, D.C. Henry Clay was another overnight guest. The inn is presently a private dwelling.

3. Eaglestone Farm
On the left side of the highway, a 696 acre horse farm owned by Mr. and Mrs. William A. Marquard. The main house is visible from U.S. 68. It contains three wings.

Additional areas are the guest house, tennis courts, swimming pool, smoke house with Japanese sauna, a horse hospital, office building and maintenance barn. Eaglestone Farm is not open to the public.

4. Daniel Boone's Cabin Historical Marker
A short distance past the junction of U.S. 68 and S.R. 36 is the site of Boone's last home in Kentucky. An historical marker is on the right side of the road. The cabin is visible in a wooded hollow. The cabin is on the National Historic Register.

Two tenths of a mile past the marker is a driveway through which the cabin can be reached. The cabin will be open to the public on August 17, 18 from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. and

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County driving

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September 21 from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. or by appointment.

8. Old Post Barn at Forest Retreat
Continuing north for a short distance, on the left side of the highway is an early example (1820-1830) of Thomas Metcalfe's stone work. The barn was used to accommodate the animals of the guests at Forest Retreat Tavern. The barn continues to be in excellent repair.

6. Forest Retreat Tavern
Just past the stone barn, on the right side of the highway, halfway between Mayesville and Lexington, this building was used as a tavern and stage coach stop relay station from 1825-1850.

It was known to travelers for its lavish and traditional Kentucky hospitality. This building was also one of the principal post offices on the Zanesville-Florence national mail stage coach route through Lexington to Nashville, by way of Mayesville, Kentucky.

The tavern now houses the offices of Forest Retreat Farms. It was restored in the 1970's and is listed on the National Historic Register.

7. Forest Retreat Farm

Across the highway from the tavern is the home of Thomas Metcalfe (1786-1853) sixth Governor of Kentucky. Metcalfe was a stone mason and was nicknamed "Old Stone Hammer". He built his home here about 1814.

Metcalfe also served as a captain in the War of 1812, a Kentucky legislator 1812-1817 and was elected to Congress in 1818 and re-elected four times. Her grandfather was the tenth Governor of Kentucky from 1829-1833. In 1848 Metcalfe filled the unexpired United States Senate seat of John J. Crittenden.

Henry Clay was a frequent guest to Metcalfe's home and gave to the home the name "Forest Retreat". Other notable Americans to visit here include Andrew Jackson on his way to his inauguration in 1829, General Henry Harrison in 1840 while campaigning for President and John J. Crittenden, General Santa Anna was also a guest here during the Civil War a camp for Federal Soldiers was established here in 1861.

The home has eighteen inch thick brick walls, ash floors and cherry banister on the main stairway. It is listed on the National Historic Register. Thomas Metcalfe and his

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County driving

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Boone and twenty six other settlers were captured by the Shawnee Indians and taken into Ohio.

Boone was adopted by Chief Blackfish. After being held four months Boone was able to escape. He traveled to Booneborough to warn the settlers of a planned attack. By 1820 the manufacture of salt was abandoned and the spring became celebrated as a summer resort for recreation and health.

The springs attracted many people including wealthy planners as far south as New Orleans. They came up the river to Mayesville and then by stage coach to Blue Lick.

In 1845 a hotel was erected. During the season it accommodated from 400-600 guests. The hotel was destroyed by fire in 1862. Other hotels were built here. One of these resorts hotels boasted a 100 foot long dining room, 192 beds, promenade porch, bowling alley, billiard room and luxurious rooms.

The hotels had bands for entertainment and thousands came on Sundays with hundreds during the week for vacation and to partake of the medicinal waters. A livery stable provided horses and carriages for hire. Boats were also available for cruises on the Licking River. One of the boat excursions was a trip to Boone's Cave, the place where Boone took his son Israel's body after he was killed at the Battle of Blue Licks.

A bathing house was built nearby. It bottled the famous Blue Lick water and shipped it to many states and even overseas. Two cooper shops were kept busy making staves and assembling kegs and barrels to ship the water in bulk. By 1866 the waters of the spring began to fail. With the loss of its main attraction the resort began to decline.

11. Blue Lick State Park
On the left side of the highway lies the state park which encompasses the site of the Revolutionary War. Col. Daniel Boone and two of his sons plus one son-in-law and eighty two men suffered heavy casualties including the death of Boone's son Israel. Sixty men were killed, seven captured and many wounded.

The state park facilities include a museum, gift shop, picnic tables, miniature golf, swimming pool, camping, shelters and a conference center. A 30 room lodge is in the

planning stages for the park. Cottages, canoes and pontoon boats are also planned.

12. 1800's School House

As you leave Blue Lick State Park head north on U.S. 68. Turn east at the first road past the park, Abners Mill Road. Three miles from this intersection will be the next historic site.

Turning east on Abners Mill Road allows a scenic view of the surrounding valleys. Follow the road to the right as you proceed through a junction. After traveling about 3 miles the school house can be reached by a gravel path to the left. It is situated at the top of a hill. This one room school house was used from the 1880's until 1914.

It has also served as a place for religious services. The Public Broadcasting Service used this school in the filming of the movie "Huckleberry Finn". The school house will be open by appointment only.

13. 1700's School House and adjacent log home

At the foot of the hill on Abners Mill Road look to the right and at the end of a driveway sits a one room school house which served the children of this area during the pioneer days. The adjacent log separated by a covered passageway called a dog trot. The school house and log home are owned by Mr. Hildreth who lives on the adjoining farm.

14. Lake Carnico

Returns to U.S. 68 by retracing your route on Abners Mill Road. It is best to return to U.S. 68 as Abners Mill road becomes quite narrow in spots. At the junction of Abners Mill Road with U.S. 68 turn left and proceed for about seven miles to the junction of U.S. 68 with S.R. 1455, a short distance to the east, lies a 400 acre lake spans 150 acres and has a public beach with swimming. A restaurant, the 19th Hole, and golf course are open to the public.

Adjacent to Lake Carnico on the Lake Road is a 250 acre 4-H Camp operated by the University of Kentucky. The Camp has cabins, a kitchen, dining, shelter, shower houses, a craft house, pool, boating area, and superintendent's home. The camp serves a 27 county area.

Remain on the Lake Road until it intersects with S.R. 22 then turn right. You are now approaching the city of Carlisle, county seat of Nicholas County since 1818. As you

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