Forest Inn Retreat opens for business & pleasure

Donna & Mike Burkart love people and history; open Forest Retreat Inn

By Leigh Stone
Managing Editor

Bringing history back to life is a project of love for Mike and Donna Burkart.

The Covington couple recently acquired Forest Retreat Farm on U. S. 68 in Nicholas County and opened an inn and dining facility July 24.

The inn is famous, as the 1814 home was once the home of Thomas Metcalfe, Kentucky's 10th governor.

"We want to be a part of this community. The people have been so wonderful and accepting," commented Dona Burkart between telephone calls for lunch reservations at the grand home Monday morning.

Mike and Donna already restored the small business district of Mays Lick and happened upon Forest Retreat during a Sudnay drive several years ago. It was a project they kept in mind.

According to an article in The LexingtonHerald Leader by Dick Burdette published July 9, Authur Asbury of Philadelphia sold the property to the Burkarts in May for $370,000.

"It was time and the price was right," Donna said before gesturing to the lovely 1930s wallpaper in the dining room. A yellow paper found in a bedroom closet, there was just enough to do the room. Folks readily praise the renovation.

"I haven't been there yet, but I'm going there this weekend."
Dick Letton

"My son dined at Forest Retreat last weekend. I haven't been there yet, but I'm going there this weekend," said Dick Letton of Carlisle.

The Burkarts and two children, Allison, and Josef, both Nicholas County Elementay students, live in a house nearby on the property. While the children are at aschool, the couple manage a staff, including Linda Perkins,, a leather expert from Rhode Island, and Chef Kevin Shoe. From Nicholas County, employees are Kasi Tubbe, Gayla Scott, and Diane Ritchie.

"We try to do everything we can locally and that included hiring local people. We're real pleased," Donna mentioned.

Guests are Forest Retreat are, indeed, treated.Think candlelight and four course meals served when time goes backward into history.

People have been supportive. Tempa Endicott and her husband had a Forest Retreat bed for years they bought at an auction. Recently, Endicott and her son, Malcomb, donated the bed back to Forest Retreat.

"It will always be here as long as we have anything to do with it," assured Donna gratefully.

Forest Retreat had its first guest July 12. It's already hosted its first wedding reception and the first wedding will be Sunday.

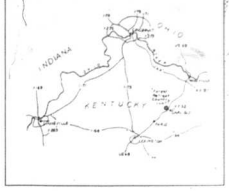
Those wishing a room are treated to a sumptous breakfast. The inn is famous for belgium waffles, hazelnut coffee and regular coffee, and a French roll with an overstuffed filling that Donna particularly likes.

There are three bedrooms from which to choose.

When not in one's room, Mike suggests guests take a walk around to see the 200 varieties of trees native to the' area located on the property.

The Burkarts sincerely invite the public to Sundy brunch and dinners and lunches served Thursday through Saturday. Please call ahead for reservations at 606-289-4444.

Directions: Forest Retreat Country Inn fronts historic National Highway U.S. 68 midpoint between Lexington and Maysville near Carlisle, Kentucky where routes 32 and 1244 join U.S. 68.



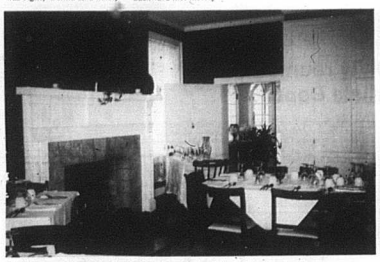
Forest Retreat holds special meaning for Carlisle couple

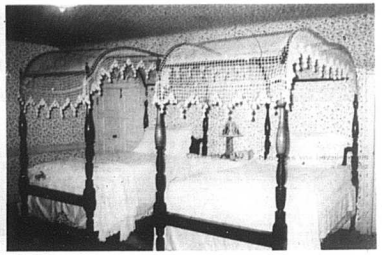
"Forest Retreat has special meaning for John and I were married the 21st day of December 1969," recalled Emily Wolfe of Carlisle.

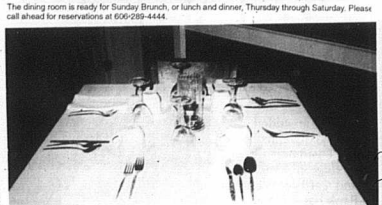
The hill at the inn was difficult to get up and the preacher was about 20 minutes late, but it still turned out to be a beautiful wedding.

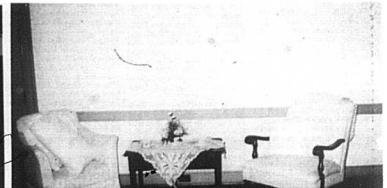
Wolfe said the Burkart's are the reason. "They're a nice couple. They're a credit to the community. It's good for Nicholas County that they're here."

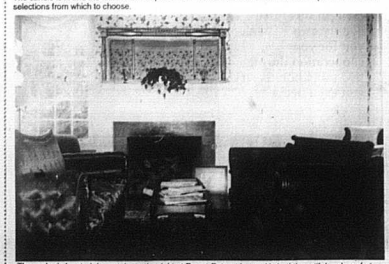
The Wolfes and two other couples had a "big party" at Forest Retreat last Saturday night. There were about 70 people. It was very nice. We dined on the patio with lit torches. It rained a little bit in the chips and popcorn, but nobody minded. The main course was chicken kabobs with fresh veggies, some very nice rice. It was really good. Chef Kevin Shoe made homemade rolls that were excellent. The dessert was to die for - he made about 12 cheesecakes with raspberry and caramel. It was very delicious."

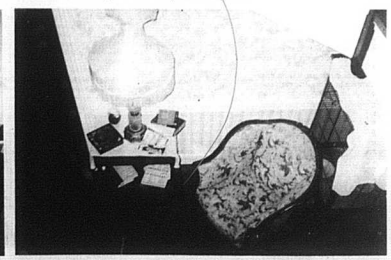

The dining room is ready for Sunday Brunch, or lunch and dinner, Thursday through Saturday. Please call ahead for reservations at 606-289-4444.


The bedroom with two matching canopys provides beauty and comfort for guests


The candle is lit and the table is set. Expect a four-course meal at dinner. The menu provides several selections from which to choose.


These comfortbale looking chairs await the guest who stays in one Forest Retreat's bedrooms.


The parlor is located downstairs to the right at Forest Retreat Inn and is both beautiful and comfortable with plenty of light streaming through the windows for reading.


This view is at the landing of the staircase with its lovely cherry bannister.

Forest Retreat is open! Located in Nicholas County off U. S. 68 near Old Paris Pike, call for a room or get dining reservations at 606-289-4444.

Former owner recalls early days

The following information is taken from The Most Famous Buffalo Trace', Forest Retreat Tavern, on U. S. 68 in Nicholas County. The booklet was presented at the Cincinnati 'terary Club on Feb. 2, 2976 by Dr. Taylor Asbury, president of Forest Retreat Farms, Inc. at that time. The booklet was published on the occasion of the dedication of the restored Forest Retreat Tavrn Oct. 3, 1976. The booklet was presented to co-owner Donna Burkart by Dr. Asbury of Cincinnati.

From Page 8-9:

Early one morning in 1933. I was roaming about in our Grandin Road residence when e I happened into the library and encountered a man that appeared to me to be about 100 years old. His kind smilse- and benevolent face immediately relieved any apprehension that an eight-year-old boy might of seeing an unexpected stranger in the house. I went over and boldly asked, Who are you?" and he replied, "I am your uncle Tom!" As it turned out, he really wasn't my uncle, but my father's uncle who had driven from Nicholas County earlier that morning somehow getting into the house without a key.

Thomas Asbury was a very prosperous tobacco farmer and warehouse owner inn Nicholas County during the first 30 years of this century. For some time he had recommended to my father that he buy land in Nicholas County, his birthplace. Now he knew that the Old Governor Metcalfe farm would soon be put up at auction to settle an estate, and he advised Dad to take advantage of what he knew would be a real bargain. Dad agreed and the farm was acquired soon thereafter sight unseen by the purchaser.

When Dad was able to inspect the property, he must have had some misgivings especially concerning the status of the Governor's former residence. The Governor had died in 1855 and the property changed hands at least once until acquired by an old bachelor named Wiggins shortly after the turn of the century. His tenants had occupied the main house for several decades without providing significant maintenance. The most recent family had 10 or 12 children under the age of 18 and only the front parlor was waterproof.

On rainy days the entire family huddled in this room no more than 18 feet square. The first floor otherwise consisted of a dining room and two bedrooms, one being used to smoke and hang hams, and the other serving as a hog pen. Upstairs were two bedrooms used by the family while the kitchen was detached room back of the house, a type of construction frequently used by the early settlers. Large fireplaces were present in all first floor rooms and were vital in the days before central heating.

I am sure it would have been much easier and cheaper to raze the delapidated house and build something modern, but my parents decided on authentic restoration plus central heating and plumbing. While much rebuilding was necessary, the woodwork was remarkable well preserved. The 18-inch thck brick walls were mostly intact and remarkably the ash floors merely needed to be sanded down to attain a beautiful finish. Almost incredibly, the cherry bannister accompanying the main stairway up to the second floor had been spared significant damage and remains today as one of the most decorative parts of the house.

When you visit: Room and dining info

From the brochure:

Forest Retreat room rate: $75 includes full colonial breakfast and afternoon tea). Bridal suite: $125.

Afternoon tea: 1:30 to 4 p.m. by reservation on Monday through Friday. Enjoy a sampler of homemade desserts, tea sandwiches, and coffee or tea. $8.95.

Lunch: Thursday, Friday, a:d Saturday, seating between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. lunch includes an appetizer, salad, entree, dessert, and beverage. $10.95.

Dinner: Thursday, Friday, Saturday, seating from 5 until 8:30 p.m Beautiful linens, dinner by candlelight, and lovely music complete your dinner which includes an appetizer, salad, entree, dessert and coffee or tea. $21.95.

Sunday Brunch: Seating from 11 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. Belgium waffles and omelets are a few of the many features. Enjoy a carriage ride from our 1810 stone barn to the beautiful front door of Forest Retreat. $13.95.

Bed donated back to Forest Retreat

Tempa Gaunce Endicott wrote the following about the bed donated to Forest Retreat:

The bed was bought by Dr. W. H. Martin who practised medicine in Nicholas County for more than 60 years from Thomas Metcalfe's heirs at an auction.

Following his death in 1939, his wife, Lizann Gaunce Martin, came to live with her niece in Midway and this bed was moved with her.

"My husband, Hubbard Endicott, deceased, and I have enjoyed using the bed and are attached to it. But my son, Malcolm and I feel it's time for the bed to go back home. After reading the article "Renovation lets couple mix business, pleasure, "in *The Lexington Herald Leader* July 9, I called Malcolm and had him read it and then told him about the bed. He feels as I do that the bed belongs in Nicholas County."

Renew your subscription

History shows whippings associated with local toll gate road

The following information is published courtesy of author Bonnie Lou Saunders and researcher Charles Gates, a Carlisle resident interested in local, Nicholas County history.

The Federal Government and Kentucky State Government developed a plan for a Toll Road from Zanesville, Ohio, to Alabama, which could cross Kentucky from North to the South.

The Road for Kentucky began at Maysville to Lexington and at first was being done in section with the first section from Maysville to Washington.

The first survey was completed in August of 1827.

The State Assembly passed an Act to complete the section form Maysville to Lexington. This Act was in the year 1827 and the survey was executed by James Darnaby and William Ellis. A copy is located at the University of Kentucky Library Archives under the Title May 307, dated 1827.

The Maysville and Lexington Toll Pike Road which crosised Nicholas County from Maysville to Lexington was 14 miles and 55 rods in length with Toll Gates House every five miles except an additional Toll Gate House that was located at and between Rankin's House and Blake Rag at Ellisville.

The Toll Road construction was started in Nicholas County in the year 1835 and was completed by 1840. This 1827 Survey marked the houses along the Old Buffalo Trail and the proposed new Toll Road and that portion of this survey shows General Thomas Metcalfe's House as being near Mud Lick (Jesse Enslows) which is not the location of the Forest Retreat Mansion of today. This survey indicates that General Metcalfe's Forest Retreat Mansion must have been built sometime after the year of 1827.

After the completion of the Maysville to Lexington Toll Road in 1840 many County Toll Roads were chartered and built by several different Co's over the next 50 years. There were so many Toll Roads in Nicholas County that no person could travel from any one place without paying a toll. This made many citizens very unhappy and out of this resentment came an organization called the Toll Gate Regulators which was to bring an end to the Toll Roads.

Starting in the 1870s many burnings of Toll Gates and whippings of those who collected the Tolls. The arson and whippings were not the limit of these Regulator's Laws, handed out at will. There were two killings of Nicholas County men.

John Dayton of Lower Blue Licks was chased down and killed by the Regulators under the pretense he mistreated his family.

The Robertson County Grand Jury, after hearing testimony of eight men, released them without indictment due to the fact that no one knew for sure if any of these men were there at the killing. This killing occurred in 1877 and Dayton was buried in the Standefird Grave Yard at the Lower Blue Licks.

The second killing occurred to the junction of Scrubgrass and Moorefield Roads.

Fourteen men were arrested for the murder of Noah Anderson and the cause was for the same reason as was Dayton's.

Anderson was killed in 1881 and buried in Carlisle Cemetery.

The Toll Road Regulators, were so out of hand that the General Assembly of Kentucky passed a law in 1896 session that the counties would begin buying up all private owned Toll Roads. Nicholas County bought its first Toll Road in 1897 which was the Lexington & Maysville Toll Road.

The price was $24,000 and consisted for 14 miles and 55 rods, two of the four Toll Gate Houses and the Suspension Bridge at the Lower Blue Licks.

The Toll Houses were Lower Blue Licks Toll House situated at the end of the Suspension Bridge and the Toll Gate House located at the Rankin's Farm and Shake Rag at Ellisville.

The Number 7 Toll Gate House was sold to the manager and president of the Maysville & Lexington Toll Road Company.

The Number 7 Toll Gate was located at the Forest Retreat Farm near Old Log Cabin which is said to have been Daniel Boone's.

The Toll Gate House Number 7 1/2 was situated at the Nicholas and Bourbon County line at the Millersburg to Johnson Toll Road entrance near old Grave Yard.

The only remaining Toll Gate House of the four on the Maysville & Lexington Toll Road is the Jimmy Hunt House which is located in Bourbon County. This Toll Gate 71/2 was moved into the boundary of Bourbon County by Jimmy Hunt and is no longer in Nicholas County.

Sources of Information: May 307 and Survey Deed Books 14, 16, 19.

The Maysville & Lexington Toll Pike Road 1827-1897

COUNTY OF NICHOLAS KENTUCKY
NOTICE OF ORDINANCE ADOPTION AND SUMMARY OF ORDINANCE

The Fiscal Court of Nicholas County, Kentucky (the "County") at a regular meeting on July 15, 1997 gave first reading to and on August 12, 1997 gave second reading to and adopted the following Ordinance entitled:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE FISCAL COURT OF NICHOLAS COUNTY, KENTUCKY, CONFIRMING AND APPROVING ACTIONS TAKEN OR TO BE TAKEN BY NICHOLAS COUNTY HOSPITAL CORPORATION (THE "CORPORATION"), AS THE AGENCY AND INSTRUMENTALITY OF THE COUNTY AND AS DIRECTED BY THE COUNTY JUDGE EXECUTIVE IN CONNECTION WITH FINANCING THE CONSTRUCTION OF IMPROVEMENTS TO JOHNSON MATHERS NURSING HOME (THE "PROJECT"); SPECIFICALLY AUTHORIZING AND APPROVING APPROXIMATELY $700,000 (WHICH AMOUNT MAY BE INCREASED OR DECREASED BY UP TO $70,000) MORTGAGE REVENUE BONDS OF THE CORPORATION WHICH WILL BE ISSUED BY SAID CORPORATION; AND APPROVING AND AMENDED AUTHORIZED AND ISSUED BY SAID CORPORATION; AND APPROVING AND AMENDED MORTGAGE SECURITY AGREEMENT AND INDENTURE OF TRUST AND AMENDED CONTRACT, LEASE AND OPTION IN CONNECTION WITH THE AUTHORIZED FINANCING.

The ordinance authorizes the Countyx participation with the Nicholas County Hospital Corporation (the "Corporation") in planning, development, construction, and operation of health care and nursing home facilities and in that connection the Fiscal Court desires that the Corporation act on its behalf in connection with the acquisition and construction of facilities to provide approximately fifty-five (55) additional beds and related improvements to the Johnson Mathers Nursing Home (the "Project"). The Corporation has been formed as a nonstock, nonprofit corporation pursuant to the provisions of KRS Chapter 273 and KRS 58.180 to act on behalf of the County in financing health care facilities.

Under the financing plan, the Corporation, as an agency and instrumentality of the County, as to issue $700,000 of its Mortgage Revenue Bonds, (the "Bonds") the proceeds of which are to be applied to the expenses incident to acquisition and construction of additions and improvements to the Project and the expenses incident to the authorization and sale of the Bonds. The Ordinance approves the conveyance of the site of the Project from the County to the Corporation and the execution by the County as Lessee of a Contract, Lease and Option (the "Lease") with the Corporation, as Lessor whereunder the Project is to be leased by the Corporation to the County, on a year to year basis at rentals sufficient to pay and retire the Bonds as the same become due and provide for the operation, maintenance and insurance of the Project, Under the Lease, the County is granted the option to renew the Lease each year until the final retirement of the Bonds.

The Corporation currently plans to issue the Series 1997 Bonds on a second lien basis inferior to the Nicholas County Hospital Corporation First Mortgage Revenue Bonds, Series of 1994, dated January 1, 1992 ("Series 1994 Bonds"); provided, however, the Corporation reserves the right to issue the Series 1997 Bonds on a parity basis with the Series 1994 Bonds in the event the Corporation obtains the consent of 100% of the principal amount of the Registered Owners of the Series 1994 Bonds, pursuant to Section 8 of the original Mortgage. Security Agreement and indenture of Trust, dated as of January 1, 1994, (the "1994 Indenture"). The rentals due the Corporation from the County under the Lease have been pledged and assigned to the trustee bank as additional security for the Bonds.

Under the Lease and the Indenture of the County has assigned all of its obligations with regard to the Project to Johnson Mathers Health Care Inc., a non profit and charitable corporation which operates Nicholas County Hospital and Johnson Mathers Nursing Home (the "Operating Company"). By enlisting the Project to the Operating Company under the Lease all of the County's obligations for rental paymants have been assumed by the Operating Company which will operate, manage, insure, and maintain the Project for the entire life of the Bond issue with all payments in connection with said operation to be made by the Operating Company from revenues derived from the operation of the Project. It is not now anticipated that any funds of the County will be expended in connection with the operation of the Project or the retirement of the Bonds.

The Bonds will mature in varying principal amounts in each of the years 1998 through 2014 and are scheduled to be sold by the Corporation at a publicly advertised competitive sale.

The County's participation in financing the Project is subject to the approval of the State Legal Debt Officer.

A copy of the full text of the Ordinance as well as proceedings of the Corporation in Connection with the financing are available for inspection in the office of the Nicholas County Court Clerk, Courthouse Carlisle, Kentucky.

The foregoing Summary was prepared by Henry M. Reed III, Bond Counsel, Louisville, Kentucky.

COUNTY OF NICHOLAS, KENTUCKY
By s/ Douglas Fryman
Nicholas County Clerk

FREE THINGS TO SEND FOR

(NAPS)—A new system can help a fire fighter navigate his way through a burning structure. For more information, call 1-800-932-9899. Or, write to Flexlite, Inc., 102 Fernwood Ave., Edison, NJ 08837.

For a free one-month trial of Internet browsers, call 1-800-FREE-MSN.

For a *Terrific Pacific* cook booklet, write to Andersons wines of Australia, 50 Garden Court, Suite 220, Monterey, CA 93940.

For a free educational kit for men, "Bone Wise" Strong Bones For Life," write the NOF at PO Box 96016, Dept. MQ, Washington, DC 20077.

For information on graduated licensing for teenage drivers, write to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Driver Register and Traffic Records Division, Room 6124, 400 7th Street, S.W., Washington D.C. 20590.