

OPINION

Heaven Is A Lot Like Kentucky

ANCIENT MYSTERIES AND THE BIRTHDAY PETROGLYPH

The Good Lord was willing and the weather was cooperating, I celebrated by climbing Campbell Mountain to once again visit the sacred stone kettles.

The well-traveled and scholarly video archeologist Lee Pennington and his associate Tom Dowler accompanied myself and good friend Tracy Hammonds up the steep hillside to the site.

The kettle site, located in central Fleming County on private property, is one of many ancient mystery sites I've been to in northeastern Kentucky.

I searched in vain over the past 35 years for the sacred Upper Licks Altar, written about by Lewis and Richard Collins in their monumental historical two-volume History of Kentucky.

Several of the stones had hieroglyphs etched upon them as recorded by Hunter's children, and I have a copy of the "ancient writ-



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ing that appeared on one of the stones, as copied by a local historian. Unfortunately, the stones, which were said to be haunted and thus called voodoo stones, were destroyed after resting in the family garage for over two decades.

Many bizarre artifacts and stones have been found along Slate Creek in Bath County and I continue to study these symbols and artifacts.

I've always been attracted to the ancient mysteries of northeastern Kentucky, and I was rewarded with a pretty special discovery of my own under extremely bizarre circumstances Sunday on my trip to see the Kettle site.

The four of us finally made our way up the steep hill without having any heart problems or knee sprains, and we made our way to the largest Kettle. Lee and Tom began

studying the stone bowl, or "Kettles" as scientists and local residents have called them, for the last 125 years, and I decided to do a bit of exploring west of the last known kettle.

I'd gone about 500 yards westward and was ready to return to the main site when a reflection happened to catch my eye up along the ridge.

The beauty of the woods on Campbell Mountain can scarcely be described, and I was momentarily offended at the thought of litter being located in such a beautiful place.

Strange as it may have been, there I stood in the middle of a vast forest on my birthday and found a birthday balloon.

The odds of that as astronomical and yet, it did indeed happen. And then I saw it. And I shall always refer to it as The Birthday Petroglyph.

All the while we simply could not comprehend the strange sequence of events surrounding the discovery, and I've been a lot of places and seen a lot of strange things but these kettles are the strangest things I've ever seen," Lee said and added that the circumstances of the finding of the petroglyph only added a unique twist to the bizarre, wonderful day.

As I sat amid the sacred kettles I had a good thought for my two former schoolmates and birthday buddies; Mark Inhamel and John R. Newman would have turned 45 with me on Sunday had they yet lived.

Both lost their lives in tragic separate accidents two decades ago. Losing them and other friends, family members and loved ones has been hard.

There are no guarantees in this good life, dear reader. No guarantees in this wonderful, yet mysterious life.

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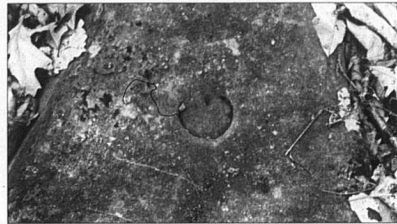


Photo by Charles Mattox

The semi-circular engraving was found near the Kettle site in central Fleming County. The site remains one of many Kentucky mysteries

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OBITUARIES

Paul Williamson Gentry 1954-2008

Paula Williamson Gentry, 53, died Monday, April 21, 2008, at her residence. Born in Georgetown, June 24, 1954, to Charles and Geraldine Sullivan Williamson, she was a craft maker.

In addition to her parents, she is survived by a son, Loyd Thomas Coy, Louisville and two brothers, Charles Nelson Williamson, Tallahoma, TN and Mark Allen Williamson, Louisville.

Visitation was Thursday April 24, 2008 at Ware Funeral Home.

Funeral services were conducted Friday April 25, 2008 at Ware Funeral Home by Rev. Dave Carper. Burial will be in Jacksonville Cemetery. Memorial contributions may be made to Hospice of the Jacksonville area. www.warefunerals.com

Charles T. Crawford 1920-2008

Charles T. Crawford, 87, passed away Sunday April 27, 2008 following a short illness. He was born in Car-

lisle November 28, 1920 to the late Eddie and Pearl Singer Crawford.

He was an Army Air Force Corporal, World War II veteran. He was a member of the Carlisle Planning and Zoning Committee and a retired carpenter. He was a member of the Carlisle United Methodist Church for 57 years.

He was preceded in death by three brothers, Roy, Elmer, and Raymond Crawford; Funeral services were held at 2 p.m. Wednesday, April 30, 2008 at the Carlisle United Methodist Church, with the Rev. Jim Doughton and Rev. Ernie Carmicle officiating with burial following in the Carlisle Cemetery.

Contributions to Memorial Funds at the Carlisle United Methodist Church, Chestnut Street, Carlisle, Ky. 40311. Visitation after 5 p.m. Tuesday at the Church. Clark Funeral Home in charge of arrangements.

Lone Star Quilt on display at Blue Licks

Members of the Blue Licks State Resort Park staff are excited to be showcasing their new neighbor Garnetta Letcher.

Letcher's "Lone Star Quilt" will be on display at Blue Licks Battlefield State Resort Park during the month of May. Letcher and her Himalayan cat "Happy Pappy" are settling in within one mile of the park's entrance.

Her current project is a "Yes to Quilt" and is great anticipation to what to see it.

it "momma always told me that you could tell how pretty the stitching was by looking at the back" and no one was disappointed. This is one stunning quilt with impeccable detail no matter which side you are viewing.

Ma Letcher's interest in quilting began as a little girl when she would watch her grandmother, mother, and neighbors get together for a "quilting bee."

Soon she began quilting as well and anticipates she has been quilting since at least the 1930s.

Through the years she has hand stitched many quilts for friends and family, but she has taken on many other projects as well from embroidery to crochet to gardening.

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Dorothy Stoker Thacker 1927-2008

Dorothy Stoker Thacker, 81, Nicholasville, formerly of Robertson County, died Saturday, April 19, 2008, at St. Joseph Hospital in Lexington.

Born in Robertson County, February 3, 1927, to the late Russell and Edith Dotson Stoker, she was a homemaker. Besides her parents, she was preceded in death by a son, Phillip Stoker and a brother, Julian "Duggie" Stoker.

She is survived by her husband, Adrian Thacker, a brother, Bobby (Ann) Stoker, Mt. Olivet; a sister, Betty Farmer, Phoenix, Arizona; a granddaughter, Amber Stoker; three great grandchildren; two nephews Brian Stoker and Billy Stoker; two great nephews, Ryan Stoker and Brandon Stoker and two special friends and caretakers, Jennifer and Joan Lakes.

Funeral services were held Sunday, April 20, 2008 at the Robertson County Funeral Home by Rev. John Ray Dotson with visitation at noon. Burial was in Piquet Cemetery. www.robertsoncountytu-neralhome.net

Nicholas County Hospital Speciality Services PAMELA COMBS, M.D.-CARDIOLOGY Wednesday - 12:00 p.m. May 14th CALL 859-987-0302 FOR APPOINTMENT

GARY EARLE, M.D. CARDIOVASCULAR THORACIC SURGERY Tuesday - 12:30 p.m. May 13th CALL JMH.C, 859-289-7181 FOR APPOINTMENT

FRED LAUSE, M.D.-PODIATRY Wednesday - 1:00 p.m. May 14th CALL JMH.C, 859-289-7181 FOR APPOINTMENT

REGINA RAAB, M.D.-NEUROLOGY Friday - 8:30 a.m. May 2nd CALL 859-987-0302 FOR APPOINTMENT

JOHN TUTTLE, M.D.-UROLOGY Wednesday - 9:00 a.m. May 7th and May 21st CALL 1-800-433-0978 FOR APPOINTMENT

Nicholas County Hospital 2323 Conley Road, Carlisle 859-289-7181

Did You Know???

The results of the Nicholas County telephone tobacco survey are available! Approximately 400 Nicholas County residents responded to a recent telephone survey sponsored by the Nicholas County Agency for Substance Abuse Policy board and the Nicholas Countians for a Safe and Drug Free Community Champions group.

Overall, nonsmokers and women are more concerned than smokers and men about youth tobacco use respectively. Two thirds of the participants felt that residents are either very concerned or somewhat concerned about preventing minors from using cigarettes or smokeless tobacco.

When asked how youth under eighteen obtain tobacco, 53 percent of respondents thought that they received it from an adult willing to purchase, while 23 percent thought that parents bought for their children. However, 81 percent strongly agreed that it is wrong for an adult to purchase tobacco products for a minor.

The majority, 83 percent, feel that individuals put themselves at either a great or moderate risk of harm if they smoke one or more packs of cigarettes a day. The same percentage of respondents also felt that the following statement was either very accurate or somewhat accurate: "Exposure to secondhand smoke is associated with health problems in children."

The results show that most Nicholas Countians are concerned about youth tobacco use and feel that their community is concerned as well. They also feel that adults are the ones contributing to or allowing youth to use tobacco products. Furthermore, the majority of respondents agreed that smoking puts users at risk of harm and that secondhand smoke may lead to health problems in children.

If you are interested in working on reducing youth tobacco use in Nicholas County or would like more information about the results of this telephone survey, please contact Melissa Hill at 859-289-7126, Peggy Seithers at WEDCO Health Department 1-888-664-4242, or Liberty Ruhlley and Jessica Moore at 859-225-3296.

ONLY TWO MORE WEEKS UNTIL THE CAT'S OUT OF THE BAG! Watch for details! The Carlisle Mercury