



Dedication Ceremony for the
Listing of the Fraterville Miners' Circle
on the
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

11:00 AM until Noon
Thursday, May 19, 2005

The 103rd anniversary of the Fraterville Mine Disaster





Dedication Ceremony for the
Listing of the Fraterville Miners' Circle
on the
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

11:00 AM until Noon
Thursday, May 19, 2005

The 103rd anniversary of the Fraterville Mine Disaster

PROGRAM AGENDA

1. Opening remarks and prayer
2. 2005 Coal Creek Eisteddfod Literary Competition Awards Ceremony
3. Reading of farewell messages and names of Fraterville miners while National Register marker is mounted
4. Performance of songs about the miners by Tony Thomas and the Mystery Mountain Boys, and Jeff Barbra & Sarah Pirkle
5. Closing remarks by descendants of the Fraterville miners

LIST OF DECEASED FROM 1902 MEMORIAL PROGRAM – Does not include itinerant miners

<u>Names of Deceased</u>	<u>Burial Place</u>						
		54 Richard Green	Longfield	108 Roy Riggs	Longfield	162 John Webber	Leach
1 Geo. W. Adkins	Longfield	55 W. B. Goodman	Leach	109 Porter Roberson	Longfield	163 Rufus Webber	Leach
2 Conda Adkins	Longfield	56 Wm. F. Gross	Indian Creek	110 Walter Roberts	Leach	164 Chas. A. Wallace	Leach
3 Paul A. Adkins (F)	Leach	57 F. Oscar Goans	Leach	111 Wm. H. Roberts	Leach	165 John C. Wallace	Leach
4 Chas. Adkins (S)	Leach	58 Wm. R. Goans	Leach	112 Edgar Sorrells	Pleasant Hill	166 W. Earnest Wallace	Concord
5 Robert H. Allen	Leach	59 Bart D. Hightower	Starr	113 David H. Stansberry	Longfield	167 W. G. Wallace	Concord
6 A. Hamilton Alred	Leach	60 James P. Hightower	Leach	114 Lewis Stansberry	Longfield	168 Wm. E. Wallace	Leach
7 Wm. A. Alred	Leach	61 Powell Harmon	Longfield	115 "Red" John Smith (F)	Leach	169 Wm. Henry Wallace	Leach
8 Enoch H. Alred	Leach	62 John Hendren	Pleasant Hill	116 Forrest Smith (S)	Leach	170 James H. Wallace	Leach
9 Wm. B. Angel	Knoxville	63 Thos. W. Henaren	Clinton	117 Robert Smith (Mst'n)	Briceville	171 William Witt	Leach
10 Henry C. Brooks	Leach	64 W. Scott Hutson	Leach	118 R. H. Smith	Leach	172 Marvin J. Witt	Leach
11 Jas. A. Brooks	Leach	65 George S. Hutson	Indian Creek	119 Edward Smiddy	Longfield	173 James R. Wallace	Leach
12 R. S. W. Brooks (F)	Leach	66 Charles Hutson	Indian Creek	120 Joseph Smiddy	Longfield	COLORED MEN	
13 Charley Brooks (S)	Leach	67 Levi Hatmaker	Longfield	121 Andrew Stooksberry	Longfield	174 James Davidson	Welsh
14 James F. Bennett	Longfield	68 Wm. O. Hatmaker	Leach	122 Charles R. Seivers	Leach	175 Frank Gibbs	Welsh
15 Conda Bennett	Wilson	69 George Hill	Leach	123 Alex B. Scott	Wiley	176 Preston Griffiths	Knoxville
16 Charles Bennett	Wilson	70 Alphonso Hensley	Leach	124 Jacob Sharp (F)	Macedonia	177 James Kindman	Welsh
17 Wm. Brymer	Leach	71 W. W. Hays	Clinton	125 Roscoe Sharp (S)	Macedonia	178 Thomas Mack	Welsh
18 John Bullock, Jr	Murrayville	72 James M. Leach	Leach	126 Benjamin Sharp (S)	Macedonia	179 Sampson McClain	Welsh
19 Henry C. Beach	Longfield	73 James E. Leinart	Leach	127 Alex Sharp	Leach	180 Jas. P. Massengill	Knoxville
20 Roscoe Brantly	Leach	74 Charles A. Leinart	Leach	128 Frank Sharp	Wilson	181 Robert M. Rhea	Welsh
21 John C. Chapman	-----	75 Wm. Leach	Leach	129 James D. Strickland	Leach	182 John Redick	Clinton
22 Chas J. Chapman	Leach	76 Luke Leach	Leach	130 Wm. H. Slover (F)	Leach	183 Wm. Spears	Welsh
23 Scott Chapman	Island Ford	77 Thos. Luttrell	Leach	131 John B. Slover (S)	Leach	184 Joseph Yett	Welsh
24 William Curnutt	Leach	78 Houston C. Miller	Longfield	132 Samuel H. Slover(S)	Leach		
25 P. C. Childress (F)	Heiskell	79 Leon C. Miller	Jacksboro	133 James R. Slover	Leach		
26 Wm. C. Childress(S)	Leach	80 John C. McKamy	Wilson	134 Samuel Logan Slover	Leach		
27 John Childress (S)	Heiskell	81 Andrew McCamy	Wilson	135 Milburn Turner	Wilson		
28 James Childress (S)	Heiskell	82 William McCamy	Wilson	136 Jacob L. Vowell (F)	Longfield		
29 Richard N. Cox	Peably	83 James McKamy	Wilson	137 Elbert Vowell (S)	Longfield		
30 John L. Cooper	Indian Creek	84 J. Clay McKlin	Leach	138 Bannister Vowell (F)	Leach		
31 James F. Cooper	Indian Creek	85 Levi McKlin	Leach	139 George Vowell (S)	Knoxville		
32 Thomas Cooper	Indian Creek	86 Thomas Melford	Longfield	140 Wm. H. Vowell (S)	Leach		
33 Charles Carden	Disney	87 James W. Martin	Leach	141 Levi Vowell (S)	Leach		
34 John D'Zern	Leach	88 Dan Martin	Leach	142 Charles Vallalay	Leach		
35 David D'Zern	Leach	89 Thorton McGhee	Leach	143 Chesley V. Vandergriff	Leach		
36 Samuel D'Zern	Leach	90 B. M. McGhee	Leach	144 James Vandergriff	Longfield		
37 Car D'Zern	Leach	91 Wm. Murray	Leach	145 Andrew Woods (F)	Longfield		
38 George D'Zern	Leach	92 Oscar Murray	Leach	146 Charles H. Woods (S)	Longfield		
39 Noah Daugherty	Leach	93 Nicholas Massengill	Leach	147 Joel Woods (F)	Longfield		
40 Thomas Davis	Leach	94 James E. McDonald	Beech Grove	148 John Woods (S)	Longfield		
41 A. T. Dabney	Longfield	95 William Morgan	Beech Grove	149 John M. White	Leach		
42 Samuel M. Disney	Leach	96 David P. O'Dell	Leach	150 Elijah M. Weaver	Knoxville		
43 William Evans	Island Ford	97 Charles R. Orben. Jr	Leach	151 Sam Weaver	Pleasant Hill		
44 Edward Evans	Disney	98 Hillery C. Pitman	Leach	152 Marion Wilson	Indian Creek		
45 Charley Evans	Island Ford	99 W. Frank Pitman	Leach	153 R. C. Wilson	Wilson		
46 Wm. John Evans	Leach	100 J. Taylor Pratt	Big Valley	154 Ernest Wilson	Leach		
47 S. T. Eckardt	Leach	101 Thomas Prince	Longfield	155 Huston M. Webb (F)	Longfield		
48 John Elliot	Beech Grove	102 Robert Price	Beech Grove	156 Eli Webb (S)	Longfield		
49 James Elliot	Leach	103 Oscar Reynolds	Longfield	157 W. K. Webb	Longfield		
50 Wm. Fielden	Wilson	104 Wm. Reynolds	Longfield	158 Conda Webb	Longfield		
51 Mack C. Foust	Leach	105 J. Franklin Reynolds	Longfield	159 Wm. J. Webb	Longfield		
52 P. C. Green	Leach	106 Andrew J. Reynolds	Longfield	160 James R. Whitton (F)	Leach		
53 James S. Green	Longfield	107 Levi Riggs	Longfield	161 Henry Whitton (S)	Leach		

Letters Written in Fraterville Mine

From Jacob L. Vowell (Longfield)

We are shut up in the head of the entry with of little air and the bad air is closing in on us fast and it is now about 12 o'clock. Dear Ellen, I have to leave you in bad condition. But dear wife, set your trust in the Lord to help you raise my little children. Ellen take care of my little darling Lily. Ellen, little Elbert said he had trusted in the Lord. Chas. Wood said he was safe if he never lives to see the outside again, he would meet his mother in heaven. If we never live to get out we are not hurt but only perished for air. There is but a few of us here and I don't know where the other men is. Elbert said for you all to meet him in heaven, All the children meet with us both.

Ellen, darling Good Bye for us both. Elbert said the lord had saved him. Do the best you can with the children. We are all praying for air to support us but it is getting so bad without any air. Horace, Elbert said for you to wear his shoes and clothing. It is now 1/2 past 1.

Powell Harmon's watch is now in Andy Woods hand. Ellen, I want you to live right and come to heaven. Raise the children the best you can. Oh! how I wish to be with you. Good Bye to all of you Good Bye. Bury me an Elbert in the same grave by little Eddy. Good Bye Ellen Good Bye Lily Good Bye Jimmie Good Bye Horace. We are together. Is 25 minutes after Two. There is a few of us are alive yet JAKE & ELBERT.

Oh God for one more breath. Ellen, remember me as long as you live. Good Bye Darling

From Harry Beach (Longfield)

Alice, do the best you can. I am going to rest. Good bye Alice.

From Scott Chapman (Island Ford)

I have found the Lord. Do change your way of living. God be with you. Good Bye

From James A. Brooks (Leach)

MY DEAR WIFE AND BABY: I want you to go back home and take the baby so good Bye. I am going to heaven. I want you to meet me there. JAS. A. BROOKS

From George Hutson (Indian Creek)

To Geo. Hutson's Wife--If you don't see me no more bury me in the clothing I have. I want you to meet me in Heaven. Good Bye. Do as you wish.

From R. Brooks (Leach)

DEAR WIFE AND FAMILY: Be good children. I am just about gone. All of you meet me in heaven. Good bye! Good Bye! R. BROOKS

From Frank Sharp (Wilson)

Dear Mabel, I am dying for air. I will soon be gone. Meet me in heaven. Help Jesus. Take care of the children and do the best you can. Meet me in heaven".

From John Hendren (Pleasant Hill)

DEAR DARLING MOTHER, BROTHERS, AND SISTER: I have gone to heaven. I want you all to meet me in heaven. Tell all your friends to meet me there and tell the Church I have gone to heaven. Oh dear friends, don't grieve over me for I am in sight of heaven. Oh dear stay at fathers or your fathers and pay all I owe if possible. Bury me at Pleasant Hill if it Suits you all. Bury me at black. This is about 1-1/2 o'clock. So good bye dear darling father, mother, Brother and friends. I have not suffered much yet, your boy, your brother JOHN HENDREN.

From Powell Harmon (Longfield)

DEAR WIFE AND CHILDREN: My time has come to die. I trust in Jesus. Teach the children to believe in Jesus. May God bless you all is my prayer. Bless Jesus it is now 10 minutes till 10 and we are all almost smothered. Don't know how long we will live but it is our time to go. I hope to meet you all in heaven. May God bless you all wife and children for Jesus sake good bye until we meet to part no more. POWELL HARMON. My Boys, Never work in the coal mines. Henry and Condly be good boys and stay with your mother and trust for Jesus sake.

From James Elliott (Leach)

"Well Mother, I am prepared to meet my God. I am prepared to meet you all in heaven. I have made a change my mother and sisters and brothers and my father. I have made an exchange. We are all alive at 12 o'clock. JAMES ELLIOTT."

FRATERVILLE MINERS' CIRCLE DEDICATION CEREMONY

Introduction

We meet here today to recognize the placement of Fraterville Miners' Circle on the National Register of Historic Places, our Nation's official list of cultural resources which define who we are as a people and a Nation.

When we've met in the past like this to honor the Fraterville miners, they've been sad affairs. Today, rather than honor their deaths, we're going to celebrate their lives.

Opening Prayer

Rev. Roy Daugherty will open the dedication with a prayer.

History Lesson about the Coal Creek Miners

- Some contemporary descriptions of the Coal Creek miners call them "poor, illiterate, mistreated, and abused". If they were so poor, how did they afford these elaborate headstones and how could many of them own their own homes and land as they did? If they were illiterate, how did they write all those farewell messages before suffocating after the mine disasters? If they were mistreated and abused, and if being a miner was such a terrible job, then why did they literally go to war to protect their jobs during the Coal Creek War?
- Dr. Eirug Davis, a Welsh Scholar at Harvard, has answers to some of those questions. Come to find out, two of the Coal Creek miners, Rees R. Thomas and his son David R. Thomas, donated a rare book collection to Harvard that Dr. Davies uses in his research about the Welsh in America. Dr. Davies has written a book about the early Welsh miners and is trying to involve the East Tennessee Historical Society in getting it published.
- The first miners who came to Coal Creek after the Civil War were Welsh immigrants. They came to America because the English never liked them. Their problems started in 1787 when the English needed a way to populate their new colony in Australia. Since they didn't like the Welsh, English "Bobbies" arrested and banished them to the prison colony of New South Wales, Australia, where Sidney is now located. Then it got worse in 1847 when British Parliament banned the use of the Welsh language. Since their Sunday Schools were practiced in Welsh, that impacted the way they worshipped. America needed experienced coal miners at that time, so they came here to live their lives on their own terms. Nobody held a gun to their heads, forcing them to work in the mines. To the contrary, when their jobs were threatened by the convict lease system, they literally went to war to protect their jobs and their way of life during the Coal Creek War.
- Since many of the Fraterville miners fought in the Coal Creek War, Briceville students this morning re-enacted the Battle of Tennessee Hollow that marked the start of the war. Thanks to the efforts of the miners, the convict lease system was abolished in Tennessee in 1896. Following Tennessee's lead, the rest of the South also eliminated the practice of convict labor that many considered worse than slavery. Why did it happen here? Maybe it was because the Welsh miners were well motivated. The practice of arresting primarily African-Americans for petty crimes to work in the coal mines as convicts was reminiscent of what the English had done to the Welsh and they wouldn't stand for it.

- Most of the Welsh immigrants who came to Coal Creek were well educated, only in the Welsh language, not English. The first thing they did here was to build schools so their children, and those of the other miners, could be educated in the English language. That's why so many of the Fraterville Miners had the ability to write farewell messages after being trapped underground.
- The Welsh miners, like those in Coal Creek, celebrated their heritage by holding annual Eisteddfod cultural festivals. At the ones in Knoxville in 1890 and Chattanooga in 1891, Welsh miners from Coal Creek joined miners from ten states to compete in literary and musical competitions. The judge at those festivals dressed up like a Welsh druid. After announcing the winners, he drew his sword, and asked, "Do you want peace or war in the land?" Not knowing if he was going to honor the winners or lop off their heads, participants yelled, "PEACE", to guide his decision. The judge then placed his sword at the winners' feet in tribute to them.
- On July 20, 1892, during the Coal Creek War, a truce was called with the Tennessee Militia so the miners and their families could hold the "Convicts Gone - Grand Picnic" to celebrate the first anniversary of the day the convicts were first released. A copy of the flyer from that event is included on the last page of this program. The miners built a stage for dancing using the lumber they removed when they tore down the convict stockade in Tennessee Hollow. They celebrated and had a grand old time with various types of competitions.

Eisteddfod Ceremony

In that tradition of competition, Briceville and Lake City Elementary School students this year competed in the 2005 Coal Creek Eisteddfod Literary Competition by writing essays and poems about the Coal Creek miners. We will begin the dedication ceremony by selecting winners of that competition from Briceville. Winners of the competition from Lake City will be selected tomorrow at 10:00 am at Lake City Elementary School for any who wish to attend. The award ceremony for both schools will be repeated on Saturday at 1:00 p.m. during the Coal Creek Miners' Festival.

The word "eistedd" in eisteddfod means "to sit". The tradition is for the winners to be seated in a ceremonial chair after they are announced. It's similar to the way the head of a company or committee is called the chairman. Also, in the tradition of the Welsh miners, they used fake names on their entries, so nobody knows the winners until they are announced.

Dedication of Miners' Circle on National Register

The miners of Fraterville were literate thanks to the schools built by the Welsh immigrants. Those letters were printed in newspapers around the world. From them, everybody in America knew the name of a coal miner. It raised public awareness about the dangers of early 20th century coal mining, starting us down the long road toward safer working conditions in the mines today. In 1902, 216 miners died in the Fraterville disaster alone. Last year, 28 coal miners died nationwide while producing the coal that provides over half of the electricity we use in this country.

While we mount the official National Register marker, descendents of the miners will read some of the farewell messages left by those miners and the names of the miners on the monument. We will be leaving off some of those names because we don't know them. Itinerant miners died

in the disaster without anyone knowing their names. They are buried by the abandoned railroad track in Fraterville.

Several of the early Welsh families who moved to this area after the Civil War were named "Thomas" and the Welsh were known for their rich singing voices. They say that the acorn doesn't fall far from the tree, so with that introduction Tony Thomas from Coal Creek and the Mystery Mountain Boys will follow the reading of the names with a song about those unknown miners. Jeff Barbra and Sarah Pirkle will then sing us a song from the play about the Fraterville miners, "Measured in Labor".

Final History Lesson about the Miners' Circle

Why were the miners buried here in a circle? Students from Briceville and Lake City schools found a clue from their sister schools in Carmarthenshire, Wales. Carmarthen is the ancestral home of Merlin from the King Arthur legend. We've deduced that maybe the layout of the Miners' Circle was modeled after the ancient druid stone circles in Wales.

When they were making arrangements to bury the Fraterville miners, they first planned to bury them all in the Miners' Circle. As the story goes, one widow didn't want her husband buried with the "colored miners" as they are called on the monument. This upset some widows because most thought they all should be buried together. They thought that since all the miners worked together as brothers in the mine, they should all be buried as brothers in the circle, similar to the way King Arthur arranged his knights around the round table as equals. After all, Fraterville means "village of brothers". As a result of the disagreement, some widows decided to have their husbands and sons buried elsewhere.

The African-American widows were at a loss as to what to do. The Welsh, who were tolerant of minorities due to the way they were mistreated in Great Britain, told them that they could bury their husbands in Welsh Cemetery in the Wye Community. That's why eight of the African-American miners who died in the disaster are buried in Welsh Cemetery. One is buried in Clinton and two are buried in Knoxville in Old Gray Cemetery where the owner of the mine, Major E. C. Camp is buried.

Closing Words

We will end our program here today by hearing from some of the descendents of the Fraterville miners.

For more information about the history of Coal Creek and efforts to preserve it, visit:

Coal Creek Watershed Foundation, Inc.
3502 Overlook Circle
Knoxville, Tennessee 37909
Phone: 865-584-0344
clmoore@geoe.com
www.coalcreekaml.com

CONVICTS GONE!

on the 20th Day of July, 1891,

AND ON

WED'Y. JULY 20th. 1892.

there will be a

Grand Picnic at Briceville, Tenn.,

near the mines of the Co-operative Mining Company. This picnic is to celebrate the day the Convicts and State Militia were driven out of Briceville.

Orators

The Addresses of Welcome will be delivered by EUGENE MERRILL, of Briceville, and W. C. WEBB, of Pittsburg, Ky., Also Mr. B. A. JENKINS will positively deliver an address to the crowd.

Amusements

There will be a Grand Ball given, and a platform will be erected 30x60 feet from the lumber remaining from the destroyed stockade.

FOOT RACE BY BOYS under 15 years old will be rewarded 1 pocket knife by J. F. Matthews and 1 scarf by W. B. Robbins.

SACK RACE, 100 yards, by men winner to receive a meerschaum pipe by L. N. Brown.

THREE LEGGED RACE, 100 yds., \$1.00 in cash by John Simpson.

WHEELBARROW RACE, blindfolded 20 yds., by ladies premium pair of Mitts by Mrs. C. Leinart.

THE YOUNG LADY who gathers 25 potatoes first will receive \$1.00 by Dr. C. L. Hill.

THE YOUNG LADY, who runs 25 yds., with an egg in a spoon will receive a handsome album by H. S. Pless also \$1.00 cash by Dr. Madison.

JUG BREAKING, by ladies blinded, premium 1 scarf by S. S. Burris.

TAILING THE MULE, by ladies, successful

lady \$1.00 by W. B. Underwood 50c. by Dr. P. Petree.

HAMMER THROWING, by men 1 box cigars by G. E. Irish.

RACES RUN by men, weighing 200 pounds or more 1 pocket knife by R. M. Chapman.

RACES BY LADIES weighing 200 pounds or more pair fine slippers by M. E. Bibes.

THE HANDSOMEST young lady over 15 yrs., 1 pair silk mitts by Robt. Hart.

THE YOUNG LADY repeating the largest number of words in five minutes, Silk Handkerchief by W. H. Branscom.

SHOOTING MATCH, 27 yds., off hand, and 40 yds., with a rest premium, \$2.50. Entrance fee 50 cents.

BASE BALL TEAMS have been invited and are expected.

Music will be Furnished for the Occasion by the Famous Rockwood String Band.

REFRESHMENTS of all kinds will be served by Local Assemblies Nos. 861 and 2957.

The Railroads will give Excursion Rates from Jellico, Harriman Junction and Clinton.

Committee of Arrangements:

C. M. WOODWARD, President.
SAMUEL TAYLOR, Secretary.