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865-584-0344 • www.coalcreekaml.com

DEDICATION CEREMONY RECOGNIZING THE LISTING OF BRICEVILLE CHURCH AND CEMETERY ON THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

WHO: Volunteers interested in preserving Tennessee history

WHAT: Briceville Church, built in 1888 by Welsh coal miners, has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Furthermore, restoration work has been completed through grants from the Tennessee Historical Commission. As part of their Coal Creek Health Day activities, students from Briceville Elementary School will mount the National Register plaque and present results of their oral history research about the church and its cemetery.

WHEN: Friday, October 22, 2010, from 1:00 pm to 2:00 pm.

WHERE: Parking is available at Briceville Elementary School located on Highway 116 (i.e. Fraterville Miners' Memorial Highway), 4 miles southwest of Lake City exit 128 off I-75. The ceremony will be held across the street from the school at Briceville Church.

WHY: The church and its cemetery are testaments of the turbulent history of the Coal Creek Watershed. (www.coalcreekaml.com/Legacy.htm) From 1891 to 1892, miners fought the Tennessee Militia over the use of convict labor in area coal mines during the Coal Creek War. Nobody held guns to their heads forcing them to work in the mines. To the contrary, when the convict lease system threatened their way of life, Coal Creek miners went to war with the State of Tennessee. The church served as a temporary jail for miners captured by soldiers during the war. Also, 21 of the 300 miners killed in the May 19, 1902 Fraterville Mine explosion and the December 9, 1911 Cross Mountain Mine explosion are buried here.



Briceville Church built in 1888 by Welsh coal miners



Plaque recognizing the listing of Briceville Church and Cemetery on the National Register of Historic Places

Welsh miners from Coal Creek participated in Eisteddfod literary competitions held in Knoxville in 1890 and Chattanooga in 1891. In the tradition of the early Welsh miners, Briceville students are interviewing elders of the community about their memories of the church and cemetery and documenting this oral history in essays. Students are participating in an Eisteddfod literary competition, and winning essays will be read during the dedication ceremony.

For questions, please contact Carol Moore at (865) 584-0344 or clmoore@geoe.com.