

Explore and Enjoy Our Heritage

AMERICA



RESERVE

A Preserve America Project



# A TOUR OF HISTORIC BOWLING GREEN ALONG THE GREENWAYS

This material is based upon work assisted by a grant from the Department of the Interior, National Park Service. Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of the Interior.



DISTRICT  
DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

DOZEN DISTINCTIVE DESTINATIONS 2006  
NATIONAL TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION



RESERVE AMERICA  
Explore and Enjoy Our Heritage

"A future with a past"



LANDMARK ASSOCIATION  
Bowling Green—Warren County

Bowling Green Area  
Convention & Visitors Bureau

This brochure represents the cumulative work of:



**MISSION STATEMENT**  
To develop a network of walking and biking pathways that bring the community and nature together.

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Greenways Commission

Historic Preservation Board

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# Louisville & Nashville Railroad Depot



Along the Greenways

# NEW HISTORIC BOWLING GREEN THROUGH TIME

This four features interpretive markers at twenty-three historic locations throughout the City of Bowling Green that are located along greenways or bicycle paths.

The L&N's Debut—1859

Traveling by train was exciting. Steam powered locomotives meant a new age for passengers and freight. After nine years of construction, the Louisville and Nashville Railroad made its first run through Bowling Green in 1859. It took only thirteen hours to travel by train from Louisville to Nashville. Cities and towns actively pursued rail companies to ensure that their town was located along the tracks.



Passengers wait beside a water tower in the station yard, ca. 1910.



On May 18, 1842, the town turned out to greet a new locomotive powered by twin 60 passenger coaches. An old steam powered locomotive sits on the right.

Courtesy of the University of Kentucky Passenger Station, Louisville Collection.

The New Depot

Over the years, Bowling Green's citizens pleaded with the L & N for a new station. One newspaper wrote, "Bowling Green wants a new depot, and the good Lord knows it's a modest request." The large, impressive depot built with local oolitic limestone opened in 1925; the architect employed classical details to illustrate the railroad's importance.



A late 1920s postcard of the new L&N Depot.



Late in the 1930s, three locomotives illustrate the golden age of steam powered travel. On the left is #7 the Atlantic Flyer, at center is #204, the Memphis Pull Man and on the right is #69, the Pull Man to New Orleans. Frank Williams wrote a song about #69 called Beauty of the Southland.



Posed in front of the roundhouse, the L&N employed both blacks and whites.

Hub to the World

As the largest employer in Bowling Green for the first half of the 1900s, the depot was a busy place and citizens came to watch the action. The L&N was the hub to the rest of the world; no one knew who would walk through the doors next, opera singer or circus performer. At its peak in the 1940s, over twenty-six passenger trains per day traveled through Bowling Green.



Advertising materials: Publicity photographs from the 1930s and a poster for the Pan American and Anzania. L&N Photo Collection.



The RailPark and Train Museum

In 1979, passenger service at the depot ended as automobiles became the primary mode of transportation. The community joined forces to restore the depot after it sat vacant and deteriorated. The Historic RailPark opened in 2002 and the Train Museum in 2007.



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### 1 WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY – SOUTH CAMPUS

2355 NASHVILLE ROAD

Western Kentucky University was home to several educational institutions before WKU and has multiple structures listed in the National Register of Historic Places. This sign provides a brief history of the development of higher education in Warren County.



### 2 CEDAR RIDGE NEIGHBORHOOD

CREASON STREET AT WKU SOCCER FIELD

This sign discusses the development of the Cedar Ridge Neighborhood from a farm to one of Bowling Green's earliest suburbs. Architect James Ingram designed many of the houses in this neighborhood.



### 3 WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY – MAIN CAMPUS

MAIN CAMPUS

Western Kentucky University was home to several educational institutions before WKU and has multiple structures listed in the National Register of Historic Places. This sign provides a brief history of the development of higher education in Warren County.



### 4 COLLEGE HILL HISTORIC DISTRICT

BETWEEN COLLEGE AND PARK STREET AND 11TH AND 14TH AVENUE

The College Hill Historic District contains an intact collection of houses representing popular architectural styles. It is listed as a National Register Historic District and as a Local Historic District.



### 5 FOUNTAIN SQUARE

DOWNTOWN BOWLING GREEN

Fountain Square is the historic heart of the city of Bowling Green. Fountain Square gives Bowling Green its special character and charm, attracting residents and visitors to its many shops and the shaded park.



### 6 RESERVOIR HILL PARK

LOCATED AT THE END OF MAIN AVENUE

This marker at Reservoir Hill, historically known as "College Hill" and sometimes referred to as "Hospital Hill" describes the history of the water works and the hospital.



### 7 MODERN AUTOMOTIVE DISTRICT (CIRCUS SQUARE PARK)

CORNER OF STATE STREET AND 6TH AVENUE

This sign discusses the impact of the automobile on the landscape of Bowling Green. Information about the three buildings in the National Register listed Modern Auto District is provided as well as information about the Dixie Highway.



### 8 LOWER COLLEGE STREET (HERITAGE TRAIL)

700 BLOCK OF COLLEGE STREET

The Cecilia Memorial Presbyterian Church was constructed in the late 1840s. Read this sign to learn about the history of the church and Ora Francis Porter, one of the first registered nurses in Kentucky, who lived on Lower College Street.



### 9 LOUISVILLE AND NASHVILLE RAILROAD DEPOT

401 KENTUCKY STREET

The historic L&N Depot opened in 1925. Read this marker to learn about the history of the railroad in Bowling Green. Today the site is the home of the Historic Railpark and Train Museum.



### 10 CIVIL WAR RIFLE TRENCH (ROLAND BLAND PARK)

400 CENTER STREET

This sign discusses the Civil War Rifle Trench that extended from the L & N railroad tracks to the middle of the Roland Bland Park in downtown Bowling Green.



### 11 DEFENDING THE L & N RAILROAD

L & N RAILROAD BRIDGE

This marker explains the significance of the defensive stockade built by the Union Army for the L & N Trestle on the Big Barren River.



### 12 FORT BAKER - RIVERFRONT (WELDON PEETE PARK)

OLD LOUISVILLE ROAD

Fort Baker is a stop on the Civil War Discovery Trail and can be seen from the junction of these two parks. This marker explains the role of the fort and its strategic placement.



### 13 NATCHER FOOTBRIDGE

BEHIND KROGERS AT 350 W. 31 W BYPASS

This Natcher Footbridge honors William Huston Natcher, who served as U.S. Congressman for Kentucky's second district for 41 years. Read this marker to learn more about Congressman Natcher.



### 14 THREE CEMETERIES

1209 FAIRVIEW AVENUE

This portion of the Greenway passes between the junctions of three historic cemeteries – Mt. Moriah, Fairview and St. Joseph Cemeteries. Read this marker to understand the history and significance of each.



### 15 MT. AYR AND FORT UNDERWOOD (KEREIKAKES PARK)

1220 FAIRVIEW AVENUE

This sign discusses the Civil War history of Fort Underwood and Mt. Ayr located near Kereikakes Park.



### 16 LOVERS LANE (LOVERS LANE SOCCER PARK)

385 LOVERS LANE

Lovers Lane not too long ago really was a place for courting couples to escape L to – a rural dirt road lined by trees and farms. This marker talks about the history and development of this area.



### 17 LOST RIVER CAVE AND VALLEY

2818 NASHVILLE ROAD

This marker discusses the role that Lost River Cave played during the Civil War.



### 18 JENNINGS CREEK (PRESTON MILLER PARK)

2303 TOMBLINSON WAY

Jennings Creek was an important settlement area for Warren County. This marker talks about the families who settled here and the importance of the county's waterways in shaping the development of the region.



### 19 THE HOBSON FAMILY

RIVERVIEW AT HOBSON GROVE 1100 W. MAIN AVENUE

Riverview at Hobson Grove is a historic house museum listed in the National Register of Historic Places. This sign talks about the interesting and athletic Hobson Family who started building this house before the Civil War and lived in it for many years.



### 20 BOWLING GREEN WHARF AND BOATLANDING

BOATLANDING ROAD

Before the advent of the railroad and modern highways, this location was the main transportation hub in Bowling Green. For many years, boats of many types arrived here at the boatlanding with goods, services and passengers. A portage railroad delivered freight from this site to downtown.



### 21 DELAFIELD'S LITTLE ROCK CHURCH AND THE DELAFIELD COMMUNITY

1005 BOATLANDING ROAD

This treasure of a church, Delafield's Little Rock Church, was constructed in the 1890s as a mission church by the Presbyterian congregation. This sign talks about the history of the church and the Delafield community.



### 22 CIVIL WAR HOSPITAL CENTER (HINES PARK)

HINES BOATLANDING, BOATLANDING ROAD

The Boatlanding is a stop on the Civil War Discovery Trail. The interpretive marker here talks about a Civil War Hospital that was located nearby. This small park beside the river offers opportunities for fishing, boating and picnics.



### 23 ST. JOSEPH'S HISTORIC DISTRICT

416 CHURCH STREET AND SURROUNDING STREETS

The St. Joseph's Historic District was one of the early industrial working class neighborhoods settled by mostly Irish immigrants who were employed by the L & N Railroad. The architectural centerpiece of the district is the St. Joseph's Church. This marker provides a history of the district and the church.

