



BCPL Story Center finds a home at Grayson's Tavern

DANVILLE, Ky, July 18, 2024 – The Boyle County Public Library (BCPL) is a vibrant hub of information and activity for the Danville-Boyle County community. Earlier this year, BCPL announced that it had received a \$1 million grant from the Mellon Foundation for the creation of a Story Center, a five-year project to collaborate with all citizens and local history organizations in the county to collect, preserve and share stories of local life. "The Story Center was created on a foundation of community partnerships. We plan to collect and make accessible the stories of Boyle County history that have already been made known and to search out stories yet to be told. One of my particular areas of interest is the history of agriculture and documenting the industry that helped to build the county," said Colleen Hall, Library Director.

The Story Center is part of BCPL and supports the library's mission by inspiring our local community to engage with the history of Danville-Boyle County through individual and community-led collecting and preservation efforts. The Story Center's objective is to partner, collect, digitize, and make the county's history accessible through exhibitions, programming, and digital initiatives.

A major step in launching the Story Center was finding a home where the resources can be accessed. "As we began our search for a site to house the Story Center, it became clear that having the support of a partner organization would allow us to accelerate the progress of this new initiative," said Jason Cooper, Assistant Director of Library Operations. In early July, BCPL entered into a partnership with Boyle County Fiscal Court to temporarily house the Story Center at historic Grayson's Tavern on Constitution Square in Danville.

"The partnership of the Fiscal Court is so important for us at this early stage of the program," said Cooper. "The agreement that we have with the Court to locate temporarily at Grayson's Tavern will allow us better access to the public as we expand the reach of the Story Center to all corners of the county. We are thankful to the Court for the opportunity to begin our work in a place that is so significant to the history of Kentucky and Boyle County."

"We are excited and grateful for the opportunity to bring Grayson's Tavern to life through the Story Center," said Maggie McAdams, Story Center Manager. "The Story Center exists to preserve and share stories about Boyle County's past, and I cannot think of a better place to launch this initiative. Grayson's Tavern has a long history in Boyle County and will prove invaluable in helping us connect the past to the present."

The Story Center at Grayson's Tavern will provide patrons with the education and tools to preserve their own records. It will house a Memory Lab for digitizing historical records, an Oral History Studio for recording community stories and personal histories, programming space, and exhibition space. Currently the Memory Lab is located at the library, but beginning this fall, a second Lab will be available for use at the Story Center.

In addition, the Story Center will offer programming on local history, digitization, and best practices in collections care and preservation. "We welcome any and all feedback about our use of the structure, and hope that the Story Center's new location on Constitution Square will allow more community members to participate in our services," said McAdams.

For those interested in volunteering, there are many ways to get involved with the Story Center. Volunteers can help conduct research, scan and digitize historical records, and coordinate programs and events. Visit the Volunteer page on the library's website for more information, and note your interest in working with the Story Center.

You can also get involved with two new community projects: Community Curators and Community Collections initiatives. Both projects will offer ways to volunteer and collaborate with the library. For more information or to get involved, visit BoylePubLib.org/StoryCenter or email storycenter@boylepublib.org

The Story Center at Grayson's Tavern will open in fall of 2024, however the Center will not be limited to the Danville location. "Our plans to extend the presence of the Story Center will be visible fairly quickly," said Cooper. In 2025, BCPL

will establish a permanent scanning station at the Forkland Community Center to assist volunteers in working with the valuable documents they house there. Shortly thereafter, a mobile digitization van will allow BCPL to bring the Story Center directly to the people. "The idea of providing mobile services is not new to public libraries," said Cooper. "It's all about reducing barriers to access, no matter where people live."

The Boyle County Public Library serves the city of Danville and the surrounding communities, and is actively committed to enriching the lives of its patrons. The library is located at 307 West Broadway in Danville, KY.