

Proposal for a
Greene County
History and Culture Center

By

Blue Springs Historical Association, Inc.

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To: The Niswonger Foundation

Proposal for a Greene County Center for History and Culture

From: The Blue Springs Historic Association, Inc. along with other supportive citizens representing museums and sites

Purpose: To promote the historic and cultural assets of Greene County through a coordinated effort with schools, museums, historic sites and resources; and partnerships with local, regional, state and national organizations to enhance the education of students and adults through programming, exhibits, and events that result in increased visitation bringing additional income into our county.

Using the Niswonger Motto of Learn – Earn – Return

Learn

What can students and adults learn? “Telling Our Stories”
Greene County is rich in history and culture. Our stories need to be told on several different levels to meet the needs of different audiences. It is unusual for a small town/county to have both a National Park, “A Presidential Town” and a Tennessee State Park, honoring an international folk hero, David Crockett. Plus, Tusculum University has a nationally acclaimed Museum Studies Program and the Andrew Johnson Presidential Library.

Additionally, there are four viable museums and numerous historic sites, each with their own themes that are led by not-for-profit boards of directors with missions that promote historic and cultural education.

A goal is to coordinate our resources to help each site more fully develop and promote their educational programming. This will help the public have a greater appreciate and a stronger knowledge base of the museums and sites.

- Educational programming for students will be developed according to current curriculum standards.

Earn

How can this project financially benefit Greene County? This program would be developed on two levels.

- 1) School students would participate in activities developed for each site to enhance their knowledge and appreciation of the history and culture which

in turn will encourage them to invite other people to visit or locate in the area-retiring grandparents.

- 2) Public History - Opportunities for public history and culture events for all ages at the museums and sites are developed and promoted to bring our citizens and tourists to our city/county and thus increase revenue. Sharing the visitor's experiences about Greene County will encourage others to visit, stay in hotels to be able to visit multiple places, and eat in local restaurants.

Return

When people have a deep appreciation for their assets, it entices citizens to live in Greene County. Promotion of sites also entices adults to take advantage of the opportunities and for tourists to visit, stay here, be a part of the community, make contributions and give back to our county.

This program would also give students of the Tusculum Museum Studies Program an opportunity to have hands-on experiences and the graduates to find gainful employment in the history arena in our county.

How can this project be accomplished?

1. **Establish a Center for History and Culture**
2. **Establish a Board of Directors with representatives from the museums and sites**
3. **Employ a History and Culture Center Director/Educator**

The person in this position would work with the City Garage Car Museum, Dickson-Williams Mansion, Greeneville Greene County Museum, Blue Springs Historic Church and Cemetery, the Capitol of the State of Franklin through Greeneville Town Government and the Earnest Fort House. The director would lead development, planning, coordinating and promoting, through all media sources, educational and interpretive programs, events and activities at the sites. The time spent working with each site would be divided according to the level of visitation and activities of each museum or historic site. This director, the personnel at the sites and volunteers, through this work, would help increase visitation and revenue that would support the sites to fulfill their missions.

Alternate Plan – Establish Position in a School System

Milestone Events and Opportunities to Promote Greene County

- 2019 – President Andrew Johnson Returns to Greeneville**
- 2016-2021 – 200th Anniversary of the Dickson-Williams Mansion**
- 2020 – Direct Descendants and Kin of David Crockett – Family Reunion**
- 2020 – 225th Anniversary of Ebenezer Methodist Church**
 - Earnest Family Reunion and Genealogy Conference**
- 2020 - 240th Anniversary of the Battle of King’s Mountain – OVTA**
- 2021 – 225th Birthday of the State of Tennessee**
- 2023 – 160th Anniversary of the Battle of Blue Springs**
- 2023 – 240th Birthday of Greene County**
- 2024 – 240th Anniversary of the State of Franklin**
- 2024 – 160th Anniversary of the Death of General John Hunt Morgan**
- 2025 – 150th Anniversary of the Death of President Andrew Johnson**
- 2026 – 250th Birthday of the United States of America**
- 2026 - 150th Anniversary of American Calendar Company**
 - Crockett Days – Annual Event**
 - Baileyton Celebration – Annual Event**
 - Blue Springs Historical Association – Two Events Annually**

Historic and Cultural Assets in Greene County

Sites with paid staff:

- Andrew Johnson National Historic Site National Park – Educator
- David Crockett Birthplace State Park – Educator
- Greeneville Greene County Museum – Director but no Educator
- T. Elmer Cox Genealogy and History Library – Part-Time Staff
- Tusculum University – Museum Studies and History Department
Andrew Johnson Presidential Library, Doak House Museum,
Baseball Museum
- Walters State Community College – History Professors

Sites with no paid staff that sponsor events led by volunteers

- Blue Springs Historic Church and Cemetery
- Bridge Burners Park and Cemetery
- Capitol of the State of Franklin
- City Garage Car Museum
- Dickson-Williams Mansion
- Earnest Fort House
- Veterans Park

Tours

- “A Walk with the President” – Downtown Greeneville Tour
- Dickson-Williams Mansion – Historic Home Museum
- “America’s First Frontier” in Northeast Tennessee
- “The Civil War from Greeneville to Russellville”
- “Sunnyside Trail” – Tennessee Department of Tourism

Programming that currently exists

“Growing up in Greene” Greeneville Greene County Museum for third graders – used annually

Old Blue Springs Day and Decoration Day – Blue Springs Historical Assoc.
Voices from the Past or Whispers from the Graves

Programs developed but not currently in use

Battle of Blue Springs Curriculum
"Divided Family, Divided Country" – Dickson-Williams Mansion
Greeneville-Greene County Museum various programs
General Greene County curricula developed for different grades

Additional Organizations that support local history

Antique Automobile Clubs
Baileyton Historical Association
Blue Springs Historical Association, Inc. – Wilhelmina Williams
Capital Theater – Tracy Solomon
Center from Appalachian Studies and Services – ETSU
Daughters of the American Revolution – Carolyn Gregg
Descendants of Valley Forge – Tim Massey
Dickson-Williams Historical Association – Beverly Williams/Sarah Webster
George Clem Multicultural Association – Gene Maddox
Greene County Genealogical Society – Stevie Hughes
Greene County Government – Kevin Morrison, Mayor
Greene County Heritage Trust – John M. Jones, Jr.
Greeneville Greene County Partnership Tourism – Tammy Kinser
Main Street: Greeneville – Jann Mirkov
OVTA – Overmountain Victory Trail Association/Nolachuckey Settlement
Quilt Trail and Murals – Amy Saxonmeyer
Sons of the American Revolution – Tim Massey
Sons of Confederate Veterans – Todd Pierce
Sons of Union Veterans – R.J. Wilkerson
Town of Greeneville – W.T. Daniels, Mayor
TriCities Civil War Round Table – Wayne Strong

Organized Family Associations

Babb Family Association
Direct Descendants and Kin of David Crocket
Earnest Family Fort House, Inc.

Sevier Family Association

Other Resources

Greene County Historian – Tim Massey

Tennessee Historian – Dr. Carroll Van West

Tennessee Historical Commission – Patrick McIntyre

National Register of Historic Places Sites, Tennessee Century Farms,
Tennessee Historical Commission Highway Markers, National Civil War

Trails Signs, Greene County Heritage Trust Markers

Historic Churches and Historic Cemeteries

Regional/State/National Resources with Local Interest

American Association of Museums

Tennessee Association of Museums

Northeast Tennessee Museum Association

East Tennessee History Center Museum and Society

First Tennessee Development District-Historic Preservation

Humanities Tennessee

Jonesborough Heritage Alliance

McClung Library and Archives – Knox County

McClung Museum – University of Tennessee

Lakeway Historical Association/Hamblen County

Definition

The difference between history and culture can be summarized as follows:
History is about making of a country whereas **culture is about making of a person or an individual**. History is a chronological record of important events.