



April 13: Gospel of St. John told by Robert Brock

Next up: April 27: Annual Plow Day and Spring Festival

Homeplace on Green River

Kentucky's Outdoor Classroom

March 2019

HP 2019 Season opens with two strong events

Homeplace is off to a strong start for 2019. The performances in the restored 1860s barn will begin **April 13 with Robert Brock telling the story of The Gospel of John.** An experienced actor, Brock presents the Book of John as it was delivered to the early Christians, most of whom could not read nor write.

On April 27, the horse and mule plow teams, antique tractors, artists and crafters, exhibitors and an assortment of family activities will be at Homeplace for the annual plow day/spring festival. There will be Kentucky arts and crafts, live music and a variety of food items. There will be a barrel train and hay maze for youngsters, hay rides for the whole family, colonial reenactors and opportunities to see how early farm families lived. The cost for the day is \$10 which includes all the activities except arts, crafts and food purchases.

The spring festival began in 2012 when Homeplace was invited to host the well-established tractor show first organized in 1997 by Adair Countian Lewis Garrison and held each year at Mr. Garrison's farm. However, an ever-increasing attendance required more space for people, parking and the tractors. The Homeplace Board enthusiastically welcomed the tractor show. In 2015 twelve horse and mule teams demonstrated their plowing skills while families enjoyed a variety of early Kentucky farm demonstrations and family activities., This year will be the 8th year for the spring festival and 5th year for the plow day spring festival.

Three years ago, the tractors came back to join the plow teams and other festival activities and last year there were more plow teams and more tractors than the year before. There was also a record attendance of about 2,500. This year even more exhibitors, vendors and demonstrators have registered to be at the festival.



THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

Homeplace on Green River

A Shakespeare in the Barn presentation

Adapted and presented by Robert Brock

Professor Brock came to Lindsey Wilson from the Kentucky Repertory Theater at Horse Cave. He began at the Repertory Theater in 1998 and was artistic director from 2002 until 2010. While at Kentucky Repertory Theater, Brock produced 86 plays. During his tenure the theater received many accolades, including selection as one of the top ten small regional theaters in the nation by USA To-day. While at Lindsey Wilson he has directed several outstanding productions including *A Christmas Carol*, *Oklahoma*, *The Sound of Music*, *Our Town* and *The Importance of Being Earnest*, using both students and local community actors. He also brought Shakespeare's *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* and *Smoke on the Mountain* to the Homeplace performance barn in 2018.

In the performance, Brock recreates the Gospel of John as a story teller, which is how early Christians were exposed to the work in an age where manuscripts were hand-written and most people could not read. Brock has told his story of The Book of John many times.



APRIL 13, 2019
7:00 P.M.E.S.T.

If you think of the Gospel, it's a story told by a story teller, and that's what I bring to life—the storyteller. There is so much drama in the Gospel, and so many interesting events.

Often when I do this performance people come to me afterwards and tell me it brought the scriptures to life in a way they did not know it could.

Robert Brock

There is no ticket charge to see and hear Robert Brock tell the story of The Book of John, but there will be an opportunity to donate to Homeplace.

Advanced reservations are suggested and can be made by calling or emailing Phil Hanna at (270) 384 2894 cphanna51@msn.com

Homeplace on Green River is located at 5807 New Columbia Road (KY Highway 55) about 12 miles north of Columbia and five miles south of Campbellsville in Taylor County.

If you have questions, messages can be left at (270) 789-0006 or you can view the Homeplace Web page at www.homeplacefarmky.org or the Facebook page at Homeplace on Green River Kentucky.

American Chestnut tree nursery set for Homeplace

Beginning this summer, Homeplace on Green River will establish a protected seedling nursery of the functionally extinct American Chestnut tree. Volunteers will monitor and care for the seedlings until they mature to where they can be disbursed. The project will be supervised by the Kentucky chapter of the American Chestnut Foundation.

Before the early 1900's, the American Chestnut was the queen of Kentucky's woodlands. It dominated America's eastern forests. Because it could grow rapidly and attain huge size, the tree was often the outstanding visual feature in both urban and rural landscapes. The wood was used wherever strength and rot-resistance were needed.

The 1800s log pen barn reconstructed at Homeplace is predominantly well preserved American Chestnut logs harvested in the early 1800s. In addition to the log barn, American Chestnut lumber was used in much of the original construction of the Homeplace bank barn built in the mid-1860s.

American Chestnut dominated eastern hardwood forests; an estimated three to four billion trees prospered across more than 300 million acres. Known as "redwoods of the east," chestnuts grew fast and big and lived long, many reaching more than 100 feet in height, with diameters exceeding 12 feet, and living up to three centuries.

The American Chestnut's edible nut was also a significant contributor to the rural economy. Hogs and cattle were often fattened for market or consumption by allowing them to forage in chestnut-dominated forests. There is no doubt the early domestic animals at Homeplace feasted on chestnuts. Chestnut ripening coincided with the Thanksgiving-Christmas holiday season. "Chestnuts roasting on an open fire" were common all winter long. Turn of the century newspaper articles showed railroad cars overflowing with chestnuts rolling into major cities to be sold fresh or roasted. The American Chestnut is truly a heritage tree.

All of this began to change about the turn of the nineteenth century with the introduction of chestnut blight. This disease reduced the American chestnut from its position as the dominant tree species in the eastern forest ecosystem to little more than an early-succession-stage shrub. There has been essentially no newly harvested chestnut lumber sold in the U.S for a century, and the bulk of the annual 20-million pound nut crop now comes from introduced chestnut species or imported nuts.

Today, more than 100 years after the blight forced it into near extinction; scientists are resurrecting the once-great tree. Homeplace has been selected as one of the places to advance the effort to bring this beautiful and useful tree back to Kentucky's forests. Only a few isolated trees are still standing in Kentucky. One is in Adair County; its location protected. It is designated a "mother tree" because it continues to produce highly blight-resistant viable seeds which are harvested and replanted in selected protected environments.

Despite its decimation as a lumber and nut crop species, the American Chestnut is technically not extinct. It is, however, considered functionally extinct by the U. S. Department of Agriculture because the blight does not kill the tree's root system. The American chestnut has survived by sending up stump and root sprouts that grow vigorously in the woodlands understory and inevitably succumb to the blight and die back to ground level.



Continued on next page

American Chestnuts

Many of these stump sprouts will be dug up across southcentral Kentucky and moved to the mother tree nursery at Homeplace where they will be nurtured through attacks from the blight. When they begin flowering, about five or six years after planting at Homeplace, the blooms will be bagged to prevent natural pollination. Pollen from blight-resistant chestnut trees will be used to pollinate our mother trees. This process will produce seeds which will be planted to produce seedlings. If all goes well, at least 50% of these first generation seedlings will be fully resistant to the blight and will produce trees that will be a significant step toward returning these queens of Kentucky's forests.

The information for this article was compiled for multiple sources including the American Chestnut Foundation. The photo of the towering American Chestnut tree is courtesy of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Lest we forget



Joseph S. Tate, Sr.



Joseph S. Tate Jr.



Fredrick Tate



Daniel Tate

Joseph S. Tate, a direct descendant of the first settlers at Homeplace, was a graduate of West Point Military Academy as were all three of his sons. Joseph, Jr. was a B-24 pilot in the 8th Army Air Force in WWII. He was shot down and lost over Germany in 1943. His brother, Fredrick Homer Sergeant Tate was also a WWII pilot. He was shot down and lost over France. The third son, Daniel Lisle Tate was still at West Point when the war ended. Because both Joseph, Jr. and Fredrick were hockey players at the academy, West Point named its new hockey arena Tate Arena in honor of the sacrifice of these two young army officers. These photos are prominently displayed at the Tate house at Homeplace.

Homeplace soil health cover crop underway



Homeplace neighbor Chris Sublett planted the spring cover crop on the experimental acreage at Homeplace the first of this month. The cover crop plays several roles in increasing soil health. The crop will be roller crimped to provide a mulch to conserve moisture, decrease the amount of chemical weed control needed and increase natural nutrients encouraging the growth of beneficial bacteria in the soil. Traditional plowing disturbs the natural bacteria in the soil and leaves the sprouting seed exposed to an often hostile environment. Next year there will be different cover crops used and evaluated.

Homer's short (but important) list

Homer is Homeplace's only volunteer under contract. We provide room and board and he provides commentary on important items for each Newsletter.

Please recycle: If it were not for recycling my parts would probably have gone to the dump and my wisdom gone forever.

The cost of **not** recycling is high. There is an "island" in the Pacific Ocean between San Francisco and Hawaii comprising plastic and other recyclables mixed with general trash. Known as The Great Pacific Garbage Patch, it measures about 1,000,000 square miles (more than three times the size of Texas). The trash island is the largest of eight such trash islands in the Pacific.

An estimated 100,000 marine animals die annually from plastic ingestion. When fish ingest the plastic, it enters our food chain. Just the thought of that makes me glad I don't eat fish—or anything else for that matter.



Help us keep the wheels turning at Homeplace: Please join Homeplace in preserving our rural heritage, providing wholesome family entertainment, instilling in our young students an understanding of the role agriculture plays in their lives and an appreciation for our farms, fields, woodlands and waterways. All are on full display at Homeplace on Green River. You can give either your time or money to support specific programs or improvements at Homeplace or to our general fund which pays the light bills, postage, building and equipment maintenance and other on-going month to month expenses.

If you wish to volunteer you can respond to this email or contact one of our board members listed on the Homeplace Web page, www.homeplacefarmky.org. If you would like to help with a monetary gift, you can also donate through the Homeplace Web page. Once you have opened the Web page, click on the "Donate" link and it will take you to PayPal. If you are a registered PayPal member, you can donate from your PayPal balance or with a credit card. If you are not a member you can donate with your credit card. In either case, please note "donation" and indicate if it's for a specific program in the "special instruction to the seller" section on the PayPal form. You can also give a check to any member of the HP Board.

New road to redirect traffic planned for Homeplace: The Homeplace Board is committed to ease congestion in the main activates area at the farm with construction of a new road. The new road will branch off from the entrance road and run behind the home and other buildings and join the present exit road past the red barn. Plans called for the graveled road to be finished prior to the April 27 plow day, but the unpredictable weather these past two months makes that unlikely. The road will be used only during times of heavy pedestrian traffic.

Homeplace festival attracts major rural news network: Rural Heritage Magazine will be filming the Plow Day/Spring Festival for airing on RFD TV later this year. RFD TV is a much-respected nationwide TV network that covers rural and agricultural activities. Come to the fest and be a part of the show.

"At Homeplace, we believe that an education is not complete until one has "hands-on" experience of the realities of rural culture, agriculture and the natural world."

Billy Joe Fudge