

River Place on the Clinch

MARKET, CAFE, OUTFITTER, &
CABIN RENTALS

2788 HIGHWAY 70
KYLES FORD, TN 37765

(423) 733-4400

first issue!

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RIVER PLACE ON THE CLINCH

IS A PROJECT OF THE CLINCH-POWELL RC&D,
A 501(C)(3) NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION AND AN
EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PROVIDER AND EMPLOYER.
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MORE DETAILS ABOUT RIVER PLACE & THE
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Raise Your Mountain Dews High!

...And toast to the most
famous MOONSHINER
in East Tennessee History,
Mahala "Haley" Mullins.



MAHALA "HALEY" MULLINS

The tales were that she was a Melungeon who lived on the Tennessee-Virginia border and when the Tennessee officials came for her, she moved around to the Virginia side of the house and then when the Virginia officials came for her, she moved over to the Tennessee side of the house, always evading arrest.

Other tales say she couldn't leave the house to go with the police if she wanted to. One newspaper at the time reported her weighing 690 lbs. and claimed she told the officials flat out, "Why don't you do your duty? I've been selling moonshine right along. Goin' to do it ag'in too, soon's you uns gits out er sight. Why don't you take me: I'm all yourn--about 700 pounds of me. Take me along with you now."

Since she would not fit through the door, there she stayed until age seventy-five, selling moonshine all the while.

If you've never heard of Hancock's local folk hero, Haley Mullins before, you're probably asking yourself, is any of this true?

That's a good question. And that's just how it starts. There are many stories associated with the Melungeon community in Hancock County, Tennessee that draw people in and start 'em diggin' for the truth here at the Hancock County library and historical society, at the state archives, or online.

Haley Mullins lived all her life on Newman's Ridge near Vardy, Tennessee and her home has been lovingly restored by the Vardy Historical Society.

If you're one of the hundreds of thousands of descendants of East Tennessee pioneers who share a connection to this place somewhere down their family line, why not come visit Hancock County to get in touch with those Appalachian roots? Even if you're not a descendant or at least not a genealogy buff, what better way to explore the stories of the past than to come to the very place where they occurred? Can't promise you'll find moonshine in the hills but you'll definitely find a Mountain Dew at River Place on the Clinch Market in Kyles Ford. Plus cabins and just about anything else you might need for your stay. There's plenty to do in East Tennessee but Hancock County has something special you're just not going to find anywhere else.



NEWS & PRESS



ClinchRiverEcoTourism.com & RiverPlaceOnTheClinch.com

On December 27th, 2007, Clinch Powell RC&D hired Cedar Grove Design [www.cedargrovedesign.com] of Rutledge, TN to create a website for River Place on the Clinch and the Clinch River Conservation Center. The website contains a wealth of information about the area and will help visitors plan their trip to Kyles Ford.



The Ark: From Episode 1505

The very future of the Clinch River in northeast Tennessee is being threatened by several sources of pollution. Sediment runoff, illegal dumping, and coal deposits from mining operations in Virginia are endangering one of the most diverse aquatic habitats in the world. Among the river's residents are a variety of mussel species that are critical to the river's health. (CONTINUED ON PAGE 2)



Ford restoration: Development in Hancock County river community embraces past while also looking to future

By Morgan Simmons

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SECURE ONLINE SHOPPING & RESERVATIONS AT WWW.RIVERPLACEONTHECLINCH.COM

NEWSLETTER

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Movies, Internet, and Video Games Decreasing Participation in Outdoor Recreation

FEBRUARY 29 2008

A recent study conducted by the Virginia chapter of The Nature Conservancy indicates a dramatic overall decrease in people's participation in outdoor activities since first studied in 1990. Since then, the level has dropped an average of over one percent per year both in the U.S. and in other countries included in the study.



The study provided data on camping, backpacking, fishing, hiking, hunting, visits to national and state parks and forests.

In a recent press release, Stephanie Meeks, acting president and CEO of The Nature Conservancy, noted, "If we lose our connection to the natural world, we'll lose our appreciation for the food, water, and clean air it provides. And the next generation will feel little compulsion to protect it. We're facing the most serious environmental threats of our lifetime, particularly in light of the challenges posed by climate change. We need the next generation to both value the natural world in which we live and fight to protect it."

Other studies indicate that this decrease in outdoor activity corresponds to an increase in sedentary activities such as browsing the Internet, watching movies, and playing video games.

Chief Scientist for The Nature Conservancy, Peter Kareiva, included an essay with the research findings cautioning that in his experience, most adult conservationists developed a connection with nature in their youth and added, "This alienation from nature is a growing — and troubling — trend worldwide. Today, the majority of humans live in cities, and urbanization is accelerating so rapidly that by 2050 only a small portion of the human population will live outside urban areas. This disconnect could have severe consequences for all of us."

The consequences are not solely limited to environmental concerns. Already, two out of three Americans are overweight and half that number are clinically obese. The current percentage of obesity has doubled since 1980. Not surprisingly, the instance of type 2 Diabetes has risen to epidemic proportions and alarmingly, among children. The solution? Eat less and enjoy the outdoors more (...at Kyles Ford!)

Community Heroes Create Conservation Easements

MARCH 06 2008

Preparing your taxes? Now is a great time to read up and talk to your lawyer, accountant, or tax-preparer about the tax benefits of selling or donating land to the Clinch-Powell RC&D or setting it up with a conservation easement to determine its future usage.

As urban sprawl consumes more and more of our Tennessee family farms and idyllic landscapes, turning them into shopping strips and suburbs, if we don't protect the land now, would we even recognize it if we could travel to the future and walk its acres? Who knows, someday our rolling grassy hills may be razed flat to make way for a shopping strip. A gentle spring once visited by all manner of wildlife may be buried by asphalt. Our mountainsides may be stripped and pillaged. And our once-clean river where we fished since we were a kids, like generations before, may have become a lifeless, undrinkable, sewage drain.

Want to make sure the family farm stays a farm and doesn't end up being a landfill EVER? The language of a conservation easement can leave that open to interpretation or may create a lock-solid legal mandate that can't be negotiated by future developers, newcomers to the area, or government bureaucrats. With thoughtful, careful preparation, a conservation easement for your natural landscape is a legacy of healthy land that you leave not only for your children but also for your community. It's lit-

Volunteers and Community

The success of RC&D programs and projects depends on the help of volunteers and the community. Volunteers assist with most of our activities and provide vital links to partner organizations and community groups. They are also a continual source of new ideas, energy and fresh perspectives. We rely on our communities for the direction of our projects. We are always listening, and with our communities's input and participation we are able to focus on the concerns and problems that are important to them. In FY 2000, 493 volunteers spent thousands of hours conducting a wide array of programs and activities.

Support the Clinch-Powell RC&D - Some of our most successful programs, such as Conservation Camp, are currently being funded through the RC&D's general operating funds. We need help from caring community residents like yourself to be able to continue these programs



The RC&D accepts monetary donations from individuals and businesses. Clinch-Powell RC&D is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, and all donations are tax deductible. You can make a donation to the RC&D by check or money order. **Please mail your contribution to:**

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____

I am interested in volunteering my time to help the RC&D.

I would like to make a donation of \$ _____ to Clinch-Powell RC&D.

Clinch-Powell RC&D
 P.O. Box 496
 Rutledge, TN 37861

Please choose all the following that apply:

Program Area: If you would like, you may indicate a specific program to donate to.

- I do not wish to donate to a specific program (Most helpful!)
- First Wheels
- Conservation Camp/ Envirothon
- Clinch-Powell Community Fund
- Clinch River Watershed Alliance
- Clinch-Powell Home Team
- Appalachia CARES
- Appalachian Quilt Trail
- Clinch-Powell Regional Network
- Other



TENNESSEE WILD SIDE PRESS...

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

The Ark: From Episode 1505

continuously filter the damaging pollutants, creating cleaner water. But every day more and more mussels are dying. That's why the TWRA has begun a multi-year effort to move some of them from the Clinch to a cleaner river.

Wild Side Guide Alan Griggs tells more in video located at the tennessee wild side website:
[HTTP://WWW.TNWILDSIDE.ORG/STORIES.ASP?STORY=775](http://www.tnwildside.org/stories.asp?story=775)

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EARTH DAY April 22, 2008

Clinch River Conservation Center & Retreat Opening & Earth Day Event

You are invited to a Gathering on the Clinch at Clinch River Conservation Center & Retreat Celebrate Earth Day at one of the Last Great Places on Earth!

The Clinch River is the most ecologically rich river in the nation with 48 imperiled and vulnerable fish and mussel species, including 21 that are federally listed as endangered or threatened. In Hancock County alone the river boasts a collection of freshwater mussel species unmatched anywhere in the world.

Join the Clinch-Powell Resource Conservation & Development Council for a special Earth Day event as we dedicate the Clinch River Conservation Center & Retreat in Kyles Ford, Tennessee with an important gathering concerning the Clinch. We are bringing biologists, citizens, funders, and regulators together for a conversation about the national treasure that is the Clinch River.

River Place on the Clinch Development Recap

MARCH 20 2008

- RIVER PLACE MARKET OPENED SEPTEMBER 1, 2007 with a ribbon cutting ceremony, music, and free hot dogs. The Hancock County Chamber and Partners sponsored the event.
- A couple of weeks beforehand, River Place Market had a private pre-opening event with Congressman David Davis and all the local officials and volunteers and workers who had worked on the River Place Market/Café building's restoration.
- ON OCT 6, 2007 River Place on the Clinch and Clinch-Powell RC&D co-sponsored the Harley Davidson Run for the Hills Ride (Poker ride) in conjunction with the Hancock Fall Festival. Colboch Harley Davidson was also a sponsor.

WHAT IS A POKER RIDE? A "POKER RIDE" OR "POKER RUN" AS IT IS OFTEN CALLED IS A MARKED OR PREDETERMINED ROUTE WHERE RIDERS PICK UP POKER PLAYING CARDS AT DESIGNATED STOPS TO ACCUMULATE A "POKER HAND." THE PARTICIPANTS DRAW THEIR CARDS FROM DECKS AT VARIOUS STOPS ALONG THE ROUTE AND THE SCORES ARE THEN CALCULATED AT THE END OF THE RIDE/EVENT. THE HIGHEST SCORES WIN.

- RIVER PLACE CABINS OPENED NOV 1, 2007
- RIVER PLACE CAFÉ OPENED DEC 1, 2007

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CABIN & COTTAGE RENTALS

You'll find everything you need for a weekend getaway, a day out with the family or a reunion with friends at River Place on the Clinch! We have four new and fully furnished cabins and a restored cottage for rent, located on the beautiful Clinch River in the Historic Kyles Ford Community. Enjoy a hunting trip, or just relax with the view from the balcony as you look over the river.

Rental Rates

Sunday through Wednesday- \$80/night
 Friday and Saturday- \$95/night
 Full Weekly rate- \$575
 10% Discount for Seniors 65 & up, Government rates honored.



CAFE & MARKET

Residing in the location of the old Willis family store, the River Place Market is open and serving everything from River Place Market Interiorgroceries to gossip.

Remembering the old days of the general mercantile store, we provide the Kyle's Ford Community with basic grocery needs, small hardware, and plenty of friendliness and fellowship. If your cupboards are full and nothing needs to be repaired around the farm, then come on in for a spirited game of checkers or some lively conversation.



OTHER RENTALS

Campsite, canoe, Raft, & bike rentals...coming soon.

Events are regularly scheduled at the Conservation Center. Check our website Event Calendar to see what's coming up. Review our online Lodging Calendar of Availability to reserve a cabin or the Conservation Center for your vacation, research trip, or event.



River Place on the Clinch is featured on
AQT™ The Appalachian Quilt Trail™

CONSERVATION CENTER & RETREAT

The Clinch River Conservation Center and Retreat in Kyles Ford, Tennessee is located within a spacious house that was once the Testerman family home. It has been beautifully and painstakingly restored to the original style and cultural nuance native to the Clinch Mountain Appalachian Community.

The Retreat is the gem of TWRA's 850-acre Wildlife Management Area. The facility has the capacity to provide comfortable lodging for large groups or a few smaller groups. This is a perfect place for environmental retreats, conferences, educational field trips, school groups, and many more activities related to the Clinch River .

The facility is located at 3225 Highway 70, Kyles Ford, TN 37731. The phone number there is 423-733-9341. The retreat facility contains 9 private bathrooms, 7 of which, have showers. There are 5 bedrooms upstairs with enough beds to accommodate 24 people upstairs and an overflow downstairs of 4 people for a total of 28. The extra room downstairs (the overflow room) can be used as a handicapped accessible bedroom and has an attached handicapped accessible bathroom. The conference aspect of the facility has a catering kitchen available and a central meeting room that will accommodate approximately 48 people in a classroom style seating with tables. Other conference amenities will include LCD projection and screen, flip charts and overhead projector. The building has a large outdoor dining deck and front porch overlooking the river, complete with rocking chairs.



Rental Rates The rate per room is \$50/night for single occupancy, \$60/night for double occupancy, \$300/night for the group rate, which includes access to kitchen and meeting rooms.

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KNOX NEWS SENTINEL PRESS...
(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)



-PHOTO BY MICHAEL PATRICK

Sunday, March 16, 2008

Hancock County 4-H volunteers Alyssa Maloney, left, and her cousin Brooke Maloney clean windows Monday at a seven-bedroom Kyles Ford, Tenn., farmhouse that has been restored and is scheduled to open on Earth Day, April 22, as the Clinch River



-PHOTO BY MICHAEL PATRICK

Conservation Center and Retreat.

Nakisha Johnson, left, and her mother, manager Kim Belcher, work the counter Monday at the River Place general store in Kyles Ford, Tenn. The store, closed for 24 years, reopened last summer as part of a rural development project overseen by the Clinch River RC&D.

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865-342-6321.

[HTTP://WWW.KNOXNEWS.COM/NEWS/2008/MAR/16/FORD-RESTORATION/](http://www.knoxnews.com/news/2008/mar/16/ford-restoration/)

Ford restoration

Development in Hancock County river community embraces past while also looking to future

By Morgan Simmons SUNDAY, MARCH 16, 2008

KYLES FORD, Tenn. - This is East Tennessee's ridge-and-valley region, where the rivers flow down from neighboring southwest Virginia and the mountains are long and low.

At the junction of State Highways 33 and 70, between Clinch Mountain and Newman Ridge, is the community of Kyles Ford. Cross the steel bridge over the Clinch River and you come to River Place, a renovated general store and a cafe that are part of a rural development project centered on the beauty and isolation of Hancock County.

On a hillside behind the store are four brand-new cabins overlooking a bend in the Clinch River. The cabins are for rent, as is a nearby farm cottage built in the late 1800s.

Across the Clinch River is an 850-acre tract purchased recently by the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency from The Nature Conservancy. The property features a seven-bedroom farmhouse that has been carefully restored and is scheduled to open on Earth Day, April 22, as the Clinch River Conservation Center and Retreat.

Tying all of this together is the Clinch River.

The shoals at Kyles Ford contain at least 35 species of freshwater mussels, perhaps more than any other site on earth. According to The Nature Conservancy, 29 of the mussel species are rare and imperiled.

The health of the Kyles Ford mussel shoal, and the Clinch River in general, is threatened by a variety of pollution sources that include riverbank erosion, bacterial input from cows wading in the river, and coal mining activity from upstream in Virginia.

The environmental conference center will include a museum in the farmhouse's living room. There also are plans for a canoe livery on the upper Clinch River, which is free-flowing until it reaches the backwaters of Norris Lake near the Hancock-Claiborne county line.

Overseeing River Place on the Clinch and the conference center project is the Clinch River RC&D, a rural development organization serving Claiborne, Grainger, Hancock, Hawkins and Union counties.

For Kim Belcher, manager of the River Place general store, the project is deeply personal. Her parents ran the store from 1964 to 1983, and her bedroom was on the second floor, overlooking Highway 70.

"When the wind would blow, I could hear the metal store sign rubbing outside my window," Belcher said. "The sound of that would put me to sleep. That, and the river. You could always hear the river."

The store was closed for 24 years before it reopened last summer after a yearlong restoration project. The shelves are stocked with canned goods, milk and bread, as well as jams and jellies made by local residents. The store uses brown paper bags instead of plastic, and of course, Moon Pies are available.

A side room where feed and 25-pound bags of flour were once sold has been converted into a country cafe. On a recent visit, the luncheon special was Parmesan chicken, with baked potato, green beans and banana pudding.

Belcher said that before interstates were built, Highway 70 drew a colorful array of travelers past the storefront, everybody from coal miners and farmers to Gypsies traveling in caravans. Right down the road were a garage and post office, and the second floor of the general store housed a beauty parlor and doctor's office.

"Everything you needed, you could find right here," Belcher said. "It was the perfect place to grow up. We had it all."

The mountains of Hancock County create physical barriers to industries that might otherwise move in and take advantage of the work force, Belcher said.

"Jobs are scarce," she said. "A lot of people drive at least two hours a day over Clinch Mountain just to get to work and back."

The environmental conference center is expected to provide lodging for school groups, environmental conferences and the teams of biologists who study mussels on the Clinch River.

The four rental cabins and cottage are expected to attract everyone from hunters to Appalachian crafts enthusiasts, Belcher said.

"Out here, we don't have access to cell phones or the Internet," Belcher said. "But we do have the river and a quiet, serene atmosphere. Our cafe tables are antiques, and the store is stocked with things you'd find 40 or 50 years