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The Second Amendment

A WELL REGULATED MILITIA, BEING NECESSARY TO THE SECURITY OF A FREE STATE,
THE RIGHT OF THE PEOPLE TO KEEP AND BEAR ARMS, SHALL NOT BE INFRINGED.

1787

A man built a single room log house in west Kentucky and carved his sandstone fireplace lintel stone with meaningful designs; a bible, a song verse, stars, diamonds, and within a cartouche that might be mistaken for a coiled snake; the words; H W KEELING April 1787. The little log house withstood the ravages of time through the years but 256 years later, a tornado came near closing the chapter on the Keeling home place.



The carving of H W Keeling's name and date 1787 on the fireplace lintel stone.

THE AMERICAN MOUNTAIN MEN LAND IN WEST KENTUCKY. A STORY OF GENEROSITY, A REMARKABLE DISCOVERY, SWEAT EQUITY – AND A FUNDRAISER

It all began with one generous donation. And then another followed.

In 2008 AMM member David Menser donated 37 acres of undeveloped land near Dawson Springs in west Kentucky to the American Mountain Men. The landlocked property, nestled among beautiful rolling hills and covered with picturesque woods and small fields, is remotely situated with no intrusive distractions.

In 2013, AMM member Larry Mayes discovered a log house in Todd County that had been damaged by a tornado and was slated to be torn down by the owner. In fact, a bull dozer was sitting by the cabin when Larry contacted the owner and suggested, rather than destroy the cabin - to donate it to the American Mountain Men, which the owner did.

When the members dismantled the 18' x 18' hewed log structure to move it to their property, they made a remarkable discovery. The previously covered fireplace lintel stone was carved and dated. The 5' x 2' sandstone block was hand-carved with different folk art designs consisting of diamonds

and stars, a Holy Bible, a verse from a religious song, and the name *H W Keeling April 1787*! It is now considered an "AMM National Treasure" according to Larry Mayes. Since the cabin has always been in the Keeling family, it is presumed H W Keeling was the original owner.

The American Mountain Men, founded in 1968 with nearly 700 members internationally today, is a non-profit historical organization with its focus on the Western Fur Trade, circa 1800-1840. So, it was determined that the log structure would represent a trading post/store in Kentucky during the first quarter of the 1800s which fits within the time period of the AMM. Kentucky at that time was a crossroads for folks traveling to and from the Rocky Mountains and a trading post (or store) fit a natural use for the building.

One of the members pointed out "that Kentucky isn't located in the Rocky Mountains, and we can't move the Rockies here - but Kentucky was instrumental during the western fur trade. At least 31 men from Kentucky are identified as being involved in the western fur trade. During the peak years of the western fur trade, (1820-1840) men moved through here,

going to and coming from the Rocky Mountains. We can represent that right here.”

Members and friends took on the reconstruction of the cabin and came to the Kentucky Land as often as they could to work on the cabin.



Above: The original cabin as it looked after all the roof and siding was removed, ready to be moved to the AMM property. One pen, 18 feet square.

Below: The completed cabin, now as “The Keeling Trading Post” on the AMM Kentucky Land.

Top Inset: Installing pegs with the post and beam construction.

Bottom Inset: Installing the rived shakes on the roof.

A front, side porch and a back room were added, built by timber framing method. Mortise and tenons were used throughout the construction and beams and posts are held together with wood pegs.

The lumber for the construction was sawed with band saws which closely resembles sash-sawn lumber of the early 19th century. During the first quarter of the 19th century cut nails were in use so it was reasonable to use some nails throughout the construction.

For the roof, 24” rived wood shakes were purchased and installed. No one had any prior experience with installing wood shakes, so the job was accomplished with OJT - “On the Job” training.

The project is the result of thousands of hours of work, all by men and women volunteers - some who traveled as far away as Texas, Iowa, Oklahoma, Florida, New York, Indiana, northern Illinois and more.

There is not enough room to mention the names of all who have worked on the cabin project from the beginning but we can say that this distinctive accomplishment has been built by dedicated members of the AMM and friends.

Additionally, a blacksmith shop is under construction, and when completed, member blacksmiths can beat out iron and teach their skills to others.

Today the Keeling Trading Post stands as an example of self-determination by a dedicated group of history minded people to share the history of the Rocky Mountain fur trade – in Kentucky.



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“THE KEELING TRADING POST COMMEMORATIVE SET” OFFERED AS A SPECIAL FUNDRAISER

A special fundraising Give-Away has been undertaken and this handsome set is being offered to raise money to fund the AMM Kentucky Land. Tickets for The Keeling Trading Post Commemorative Set are being made available to the public and the drawing will take place on October 9, 2021.

THE SET

To offer a historically correct fur trade era set, four AMM members have offered their services to create these outstanding works of art – The Keeling Trading Post Commemorative Set – named in honor of H W Keeling and the recreated Keeling Trading Post on the AMM Kentucky Land. Chuck Edwards, Shawn Webster, Todd Daggett, and Brad Bailey have all contributed their talents to bring together one of the most appealing and outstanding sets to be offered as a fundraiser.

For the firearm, the famed “Mountain Man’s choice – the Hawken Rifle” was selected. Noted Missouri gun maker and engraver, Chuck Edwards built the rifle – and extensively engraved it.

Says Steve Rose, “We call it a “Super Hawken” because Chuck built it and fully engraved it like the high-end Hawken rifles made by Jake and Sam Hawken in St Louis. Quite a few of these rifles are still in existence in collections today. General William Ashley made the statement in the 1820’s or 30’s that he carried a super Hawken.”

Greg Roberts, owner of The Hawken Shop generously donated a half stock Rocky Mountain Hawken rifle kit, with premium wood, and a 34-inch .54 caliber tapered barrel. To make the rifle as historically correct as he possibly could, Chuck consulted with Hawken experts Art Ressel and Jerry Gnemi who furnished him with photos of original Hawken rifles with traditional engraving on the guns. Chuck followed the style of engraving furnished by these examples and profusely engraved every part of the iron furniture on the rifle. For an extra bit of class, Chuck inlaid a gold band at the breech, and the barrel muzzle is neatly engraved with 8 “stars”. The result is undoubtedly a Super Hawken.



The Hawken tang and lock plate shows Chuck’s masterful engraving.



Close up of the engraved cap box, showing the running buffalo copied from an original rifle.



The offside of the Hawken butt stock shows the silver oval plate where the Giveaway winner can have his or her name engraved.



The St. Louis Powder Horn and Beaded Strap by Todd Daggett and Brad Bailey.



The black and white paneled butt plug is included on all St. Louis powder horns.



Todd Daggett's St. Louis Horn



The Super Hawken Rifle built by Chuck Edwards.

Accompanying the Hawken Rifle is a St. Louis Powder Horn with a beaded strap, and a Quilled Hunting Pouch. The handsome horn and strap is made by Todd Daggett and Brad Bailey. A beautiful Metis styled pouch is skillfully quilled by master quill worker, Shawn Webster.

In St. Louis about the time the Hawken brothers were turning out their celebrated rifles, a particular style of powder horn emerged, different than any other on the market. Always made of black buffalo horn and inlaid with black and white dots, diamonds, and panels, these unique powder horns created a special look. The makers of these horns are unknown today, but there is nearly a dozen still in existence, giving a good representation of what we refer to as "The St. Louis Horn". Illinois maker Todd Daggett utilized the natural materials of black and white horn to make up his creation, which always features the notable black and white paneled butt plug which shows up on all St. Louis horns. William Clark owned one of these powder horns, which is now held in the collec-

tion of the Missouri Historical Society.

Colorado resident Brad Bailey made the accompanying strap for the powder horn. Brad crafted his Metis-style two-piece strap with tabs inspired by two original straps on St. Louis horns, one in the National Museum of American Indian and another painted by Rufus Grider in 1890. Brad utilized traditional applique beadwork using linen thread with antique and reproduction pony beads on red stroud wool, backed with brintan buckskin and bound with indigo dyed cotton material. A chokecherry stick reinforcement in the ends keeps the strap flat and prevents distortion which shows up on the originals. The horn and strap make a handsome addition to the Hawken rifle.

Rounding out the set, well-known quill working artist Shawn Webster (Utah) has created a striking Metis style hunting pouch, based on one shown in a painting done in 1837 by artist Alfred Jacob Miller, the only artist to go west and attend a fur trade rendezvous – hired by Sir William Drummond Stewart. Shawn's 8" x 11" pouch is quilled on lightly smoked brintan buckskin as were the originals, and profusely covered with floral quillwork. The strap is edged with green dyed linen material and is backed with a printed calico patterned cotton cloth. The inside of the pouch is faced with the same material. Shawn's quillwork even as beautifully done as it is, it is also useable.

WIN THIS SET WITH A SPECIAL FUNDRAISING GIVE-AWAY OFFERING.

A Fundraising Giveaway has been developed and this handsome set is being offered to raise money to fund the AMM Kentucky Land. The Keeling Trading Post Commemorative Set is being offered to the public and the drawing will take place on October 9, 2021.

If you would like to donate to help us improve and maintain this wonderful piece of land, and have a chance to win this incredible set of contemporary historical art, based on original artifacts, you can either mail a check to: AMM KY Land Fund, P. O. Box 20, Fairview, KY 42221, or you may make your donations through PayPal at kylandfund@att.net. For a donation of \$10 you will have one ticket entered for the drawing. For a donation of \$50, you will have 6 tickets entered, and for a donation of \$100, you will have 12 tickets entered. Don't miss this opportunity to take home a wonderful set of art that you can both display - and use. Someone will win – it could be you.

Many thanks for your support. MB



Shawn Webster's meticulous example of a Metis styled quilled pouch.



Closeup of Shawn's masterful quillwork.