



# 120 EATS

A Quest to Taste Kentucky's Best

BY DANA McMAHAN

## Greenup County

Covered bridges were romantic long before the book and film *The Bridges of Madison County* came along. But at Bennett's Mill Bridge in north-central Greenup County, the nostalgia of covered bridges makes for a one-of-a-kind event every summer. Picture the sun setting over the festively lit bridge, flowers, music floating on the breeze over the creek, arts and crafts, wine tastings—and a dinner table set for several dozen on the bridge itself.

The historic bridge—built in the mid-19th century to provide access to the mill for settlers on the west side of Tygarts Creek—has been the site of the Dinner on the Bridge event for seven years, according to **Fran Roberts**, the woman “behind the scenes” at the annual event. The dinner raises money for both covered bridges in Greenup County.

Fran, who lives near the bridge, is a descendant of the Bennett brothers who built it. And though she takes rightful pride in the bridge, which is the longest single-span covered bridge in the world that is open to public traffic, “One thing I want everybody to know is that this bridge belongs to the whole community,” she says. “It doesn’t belong to a person or family or historical society; it belongs to the people.” However, she adds, “I live here, so it’s my job to make sure it’s beautiful.”

So what’s on the menu? “We do a wonderful smoked meat; we do ribs, brisket and pulled pork,” says Fran. “We do fresh vegetables for salads—I have a garden here, so we can do that. My friend [Kay Harrod]

is the chef and chief cook. She’s a local. She is our friend.” Word is you’ll find cobbler for dessert, too.

The bridge will hold only 125 people, so seating is limited. The next dinner is scheduled for June 21, 2014 at 6 p.m., so if you’d like to attend, it’s best to call Fran to



reserve your spot. She says you should just call her at home, (606) 932-3636. And be sure to find her once you’re at the dinner and ask her to tell you about the bridge. “There’s all kinds of stories,” she says. Dating back to the Civil War, “both sides let it sit—it was a mill, but it served the North and South ... it remained intact. There’s just so many stories about it.”

Note: While visiting the county, plan to stop by the Oldtown Covered Bridge, built in 1880 and now closed to traffic. Crossing the Little Sandy River in southern Greenup County, it’s located on County Road 705 about 200 yards off of Ky. Rt. 1.

**Bennett's Mill Bridge Dinner on the Bridge fundraiser held each June**  
Learn more about the bridges at [tourgrenupcounty.com/points-of-interest.html](http://tourgrenupcounty.com/points-of-interest.html)

Read more about Dana's travels on the 120 Eats blog at [kentuckymonthly.com](http://kentuckymonthly.com)

## Grayson County

You won't find a Facebook page for Farmer's Feed Mill Restaurant, or a website for that matter. But a quick Internet search turns up several reviews of the Leitchfield restaurant.

"This is a 'wow' if you don't get home-cooked food often," wrote one Clearwater, Fla., resident on [tripadvisor.com](http://tripadvisor.com). A fellow Kentuckian also gave the family-owned restaurant a rave review: "Can't recommend it enough if you want a good, old family meal."

That's exactly what owner **Winston Davis** likes to hear. While he was growing up, his family owned Farmer's Custom Processing, which provided meat on a large scale. By the time the plant was destroyed by a fire in 2000, Winston had recruited family members to help him operate a carryout food and meat market. And then, local residents said that wasn't enough.

"We have a lot of factories here, and we do a lot of carryout. The people in town were coming in and getting the food and said they really didn't like eating out of Styrofoam boxes," Winston says. "So I just added on a small dining area—about 90 seats. Soon, they started coming in and said that's not enough. So a couple of years ago, I added another dining area, and within another year put in 54 more seats."

Today, Farmer's Feed Mill can accommodate 185 people for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Business has been so brisk that Winston decided to close the retail meat division. However, he still cuts the meat for the restaurant and does the smoking and barbecuing.

In addition to hand-cut meat, the restaurant also offers meatloaf, catfish, fried chicken and a variety of sandwiches and burgers, not to mention the home-cooked veggies, handmade desserts and Winston's favorite: small-town atmosphere.

"We're in a small town—[it's] kind of like a small family," he says. "Everybody knows everybody, and if they don't know them, they want to."

## Green County

When **Col. Bill Landrum** retired from the U.S. Army two years ago, he had one final mission in mind: re-energize Greensburg's public square. Bill, who grew up on a Green County farm that has been in his family since the 1850s, wanted to return home to serve his community after serving his country for 30 years.

"I just want to leave Green County better than I found it," he says. "I want to bring activity to the square."

His first action was the purchase of a two-story historic building smack in the square—with the goal of opening a nonprofit history museum with a restaurant to complement it. Bill and his wife, **Justine**, opened Longhunters Coffee and Tea Company, which serves breakfast, lunch and dinner and boasts trained baristas.

"We wanted it locally owned, not franchised," he said. "We've had a lot of people who said they've had enough Mexican food and enough pizza and enough Chinese food. They were looking for a place where they can have a nice salad."

Patrons can get a brief history lesson from the menu, since each sandwich is named for a historical figure important to Green County. These include the "General Nathaniel Greene"—turkey breast, provolone and roasted red peppers on sun-dried tomato swirl bread dressed with herbed oil—and the "Colonel James Knox," a spicy concoction of salami, pepper jack cheese, pepper rings and mustard on ciabatta bread. But the favorite among diners, Bill says, is the Longhunters Hot Brown, composed of a turkey breast served on a corncake with the required Mornay sauce, tomato and bacon.

"The reason I did a corncake is that we thought that might have been done in the 1700s with the longhunters," he says.

Entertainment is a regular item on the Longhunters menu. A full stage hosts bands, play productions and tapings of *The Country Junction* television show. Customers can purchase a souvenir or two while at the establishment. The Kentucky Market House, also located in the historic building, is a Kentucky Crafted retailer, selling everything from soy candles to pottery to books.

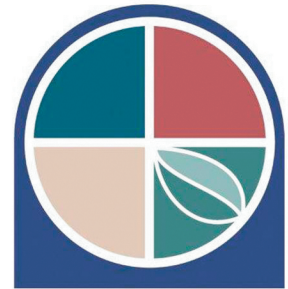
The Landrums currently are raising money via private donations to open the Green County History Museum. The museum can open once the elevator to the second-floor exhibit space is operational.

"We have the shaft, and when we get enough for the elevator we can open in 90 days [from that point]," Bill says. "There will be heritage items and artifacts across 11 different categories, from military to schools to cemeteries to agriculture to medicine to early lifestyles."

— JACKIE HOLLENKAMP BENTLEY



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