



An unidentified boy can be seen climbing on one of the poles used to stabilize the rotating platform of the railroad turntable.

## End of the line



Green County Public Library Genealogy  
Laura Johnson

For over 75 years, the railroad turntable in Greensburg was both a vital piece of infrastructure and an occasional source of trouble.

Since 1879, Greensburg was the terminus of the Cumberland & Ohio Railroad line stemming from Lebanon in Marion County. Every engine that arrived had to be rotated for the trip back to Lebanon. The turntable, a large circular pit with a bridge-like platform across it, was used by workers to turn locomotives around.

The first surviving newspaper reference to the Greensburg turntable appeared in November 1895. When the Wednesday night train arrived, cars had been switched too close to the turntable, leaving no room for another train to pass. The resulting collision produced a crash "heard all over town."

The C&O installed a new iron turntable in May 1899.

When the C&O sold its southern line to the Louisville & Nashville Railroad Company in 1903, L&N took over the nearly 31 miles of track and facilities between Lebanon and Greensburg.

The turntable became disabled for several days in October 1904, forcing locomotives to back up all the way to Lebanon. It was a necessary but dangerous process with little to no visibility for the engineer.

The following year brought another incident. In October 1905, a near comic sequence of failures: first a broken axle nearly derailed

the main locomotive; then the rescue engine sent to assist ran off the track at the turntable; finally, a third engine arrived around 9:15 p.m. to straighten out the mess.

By 1913, the L&N recognized the need for major improvements. In March, the railroad company began excavating for a new turntable near the J. H. Woodward residence on North Depot Street, extending the culvert near the old site, and preparing to fill in the depression where the original turntable sat. Plans also called for replacing the aging depot.

The transformation was swift. By July 1913, the relocated turntable was in use, and the old one had been lifted from its pit for shipment. That same summer, construction began on a new depot, built on the exact site of the old structure.

This marked the high point of Greensburg's railroad modernization: a new turntable, a new depot, and a reconfigured yard designed to meet the demands of the early 20th century.

By 1934, passenger business for the railroad had slowed down considerably. The daily train service between Louisville and Greensburg was discontinued.

As operations declined and the turntable saw less use, it took on an unintended role: a dangerous playground for local children.

In March 1935, while playing with friends, young Edwin Dulworth suffered a severe injury when his foot became caught in the moving turntable. The mechanism crushed his foot and nearly severed it before the table could be stopped.

Five years later, in February 1940, Jeff Henry Vaughn, son of Elizabeth Vaughn,

fell under the moving mechanism while playing with other boys one afternoon. He suffered a broken leg and lacerations and spent weeks in the hospital at Campbellsville. Due to his injury not healing properly, he required a bone grafting operation in Louisville that November.

The incident led to a significant lawsuit in Green County history. Attorneys T. P. and C. H. Noggle filed a \$15,255 suit against the L&N on Vaughn's behalf. A jury awarded him \$5,500 in July 1941 and in November 1942 the Kentucky Court of Appeals upheld the decision. It was the largest damage judgment ever granted in the county up to that point.

Passenger service to and from Greensburg stopped altogether on October 16, 1952, shifting the railroad's focus solely to moving freight.

When coal burning steam engines were replaced with diesel engines, there was no longer a need to turn around for the return trip northward. Instead, the engine and cars were uncoupled on the south side of the depot, the cars were moved to an adjoining track, and the engine got pulled back up the main track and recoupled onto the opposite end of the cars.

No longer in use, the railroad turntable was dismantled and the pit filled in by the mid-1950s.

Freight service would continue in Greensburg until July 16, 1980.

Though the turntable is long gone and only traces of the railroad remain, their existence helped to shape the community we live in now and reminds us of when Greensburg quite literally stood at the end of the line.

# Way Back When

By CAROL DIAL  
SPECIAL TO THE R-H

**Jan. 18, 2006**  
**Fire at storage facility** - A commercial storage facility on Ewing-Hicks Road, that was owned by Russell Jones, Horse Cave, caught on fire. Firemen were able to extinguish the blaze and save the structure.

**GCMS royalty** - Martha Susan Pettit was chosen Homecoming Queen of the Green County Middle School.

**Jobless rate fell** - The unemployment rate for Green County fell to 5.5 percent for November from 5.6 percent in October.

**Candidates for election** - There were 56 people who filed as candidates for the primary election in May.

**Jan. 17, 1996**  
**Academic team wins** - The GCHS Academic Team won the State All "A" Classic competition.

**Mell Ridge, Ruth Dowell** - The snow storm over the weekend left enough snow for the neighborhood children to build snowmen.

**Anniversaries** - Rev. and Mrs. Ancil Durrett, Arley and Evelyn Wilson and Owen and Lorene Judd celebrated Golden Wedding Anniversaries.

**Altman to retire** - State Representative Ray Altman announced that he will not seek re-election.

**Jan. 16, 1986**  
**Bridge removed** - The Sardin Ford Bridge over Green River is being removed. The one-lane bridge was replaced by a two-lane concrete structure last year.

**Four injured** - Phillip C. Wyatt, Andrea Stevens, Marla Judd and Wayne M. Stinson were injured in a two-vehicle collision on Long Meadow Drive.

**Dobson receives award** - Rotarian Jessie Dobson received the "Good Joe" Award from the Greensburg Rotary Club.

**Jan. 22, 1976**  
**Icy roads cause wrecks** - Several people have been injured and vehicles damaged due to icy road conditions in the area.

**Local fair receives award** - The Green County Fair and Horse Show was named as the first runner-up in state competition for best county fair.

**Wind destroys home** - Strong winds blew a mobile home from its foundation and into trees thirty yards away. Dorothy Pierce, occupant of the home, is being treated at JTCH for injuries.

**New 4-H agent** - David Bodle is the new Green County Extension Agent for 4-H. Bodle replaces Mike Radford who resigned.

**Jan. 21, 1966**  
**Man escapes burning house** - German Simpson was able to crawl outside and escape the fire that destroyed his home on Buckner Hill.

**First snow of winter** - Roads were icy and slick Tuesday as the first snow of the winter hit the county.

**Featured at the Franklin** - Elvis Presley stars in "Roustabout". Vincent Price is featured in "Dr. Goldfoot and the Bikini Machine".

**Gupton heads merchants** - Garnett Gupton, manager of Houchens Market, was elected president of the Greensburg Retail Merchants Association.

## Benefit is January 24 for Rev. Trajan Smith

There will be a meal and gospel singing fundraiser benefitting Rev. Trajan Smith on Saturday, Jan. 24 at 4 p.m. CT at Greensburg Church of the Nazarene.

There will be singing, a meal, and an auction. Additionally, Rev. Trajan will give his testimony.

Featured performers will be Brook Marchal, Ann-Michael Tucker, Benson and Leah Sexton, Adam Cain and friends, Molly and Clara Myes.

A meal will consist of pulled pork sandwiches, baked potatoes, baked beans, cowboy beans, slaw, macaroni and cheese, and des-

serts. A silent auction will be held and bidding will take place throughout the benefit and winners will be announced at the end.

Winners must be present to win. The benefit will be donations only. All proceeds will go toward the medical expenses of Rev. Trajan.



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## Green County History Museum

Second floor of Longhunters Coffee & Tea - Greensburg Square

Hours: 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. - Fridays and Saturdays

Admission: \$3



"The museum is a 501(c)3 educationally chartered history museum and all donations are tax deductible!"

### DID YOU KNOW?

Almost 9 out of 10 newspaper readers vote in local elections.

	Ky adults	Newspaper readers	Non-newspaper readers
Vote in state/national elections	69%	71%	60%
Vote in local/school board/city elections	84%	86%	72%

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Source: The Kentucky State Study 2023: Conducted by Coda Ventures, Base: Total adults