

Historic District Signs Article:

The success of the Historic District Signs seen in place around Harrodsburg is ultimately due to a collaborative community effort. The James Harrod Trust, Harrodsburg Historical Society, and Harrodsburg First worked together to research and put in place Historic District sign markers denoting our Historic and Nationally Registered districts in the community. Thanks to the Harrodsburg/Mercer County Tourist Commission the signs were paid for and can be seen in twelve different locations in Harrodsburg.

Many surrounding communities such as Danville, Lexington, and Stanford have these types of signs to denote these types of districts. “These are an asset to the community because they mark our proud heritage not only for our residents but also for the visitors to Harrodsburg,” said Helen Dedman, Chairperson of the James Harrod Trust.

The Nationally Registered Districts in the community recognized with the new signs are College Street, Main Street, and Chiles Street. The Historic Districts are Beaumont Avenue and Lexington Street. Kentucky’s Oldest Street, Broadway in Harrodsburg, also has signs denoting its significance.

In examining the historic district signs in other communities, most had some type of decorative element like scrolls, logos or flourishes. Louisville uses the Fleur De Lyse, symbol of Louis XVI King of France for whom Louisville was named. Jerry Sampson, president of the Harrodsburg Historical Society, pointed out that Harrodsburg has a theme as well, although a bit simpler. Sampson, an amateur photographer, had often photographed the stylized honeysuckle symbol carvings on several Greek Revival houses in town. He and Anna Armstrong, a well known local photographer, agreed on the recurring theme and discovered that currently there are three notable houses with this similar carving. They are Clay Hill on Beaumont Avenue, Cardwellington on Broadway, and The Academy on Mooreland Avenue. Several other houses also have similar honeysuckle themes typically over doorway and window pediments. The design seen at the top of each historic district marker shows this often over looked detail. This tidbit of often over-looked architectural and artistic detail was used on the signs to compliment this great project.

Again, these signs would not have been possible without the gracious help of the Harrodsburg/Mercer County Tourist Commission.