

McCoy Farm & Gardens NEWSLETTER

Main entrance: 1604 Taft Highway • Front gate: 1715 Anderson Pike • Mail: P.O. Box 443, Signal Mountain, TN 37377 • 423-598-1658 • www.mccoypwalden.org

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Emma Bell Miles Connection

An early resident of what is now the McCoy property was naturalist, writer, and artist, Emma Bell Miles. She was ten years old when the Bell family moved in 1890 from Kentucky to Walden's Ridge in Tennessee.

The family's first house on the Ridge was a frame Victorian structure whose footings remain today at the northwest corner of the McCoy property near the intersection of Anderson Pike and Taft Highway. Emma lived most of her years among the mountain people and roamed the woods, drawing, reading, writing, and studying nature.

In October 1901, shortly after her mother's death, Emma eloped with Frank Miles, a mountain native with whom she had fallen in love three years earlier. Less than a year later, her father B.F. Bell, turned them out of the frame house on Anderson Pike, which her mother had left Emma in a handwritten will.

Emma's husband was unable to support his wife and children, so Emma sustained her family through the sale of paintings, poems, and stories. In November 1905, James Pott & Company of New York published Emma's



*This photograph appears on the cover of *Once I Too Had Wings: The Journals of Emma Bell Miles, 1908-1918*, edited by Steven Cox and published by Ohio University Press in 2014. The photographer, date and location are unknown.*

The Spirit of the Mountains, a classic study of Southern Appalachia.

In 1917, suffering from tuberculosis, Miles entered Pine Breeze, the county tuberculosis sanitarium, where she began a series of bird paintings. She would remain there until her death in March 1919. Bedridden most of

the time, Miles completed *Our Southern Birds*, which was published just two weeks before she died at the age of thirty-nine.

Stay tuned for a significant announcement about the works of Emma Bell Miles and McCoy Farm & Gardens.

Student Interns for Summer

We are very grateful for the support of a local foundation in hiring five college interns to work on the property for six weeks this summer. The young people are Brooks Barber (UTK), Sophia Gibby (UVA), Vito Knoop (UAH), Ella Saunders (UTK), and Aidan Shakespeare (Sewanee).

They will be working on a variety of projects including invasives removal, GIS mapping of the property, propagation beds, a species inventory, an apple grafting workshop, and facilities upkeep. Watch this newsletter for pictures of their work later in the summer.

The Mission of McCoy Farm & Gardens is to restore, enhance and preserve the historic McCoy homeplace so that it may serve the community as an arboretum, natural area, and venue for public and private events.

Blacksmith Shop Wedding

"In times past, the blacksmith in small towns was often justice of the peace and married people as well," noted Andy Jones when he sent this photo of a bridal party at our blacksmith shop. In this case, pastor Caleb Pitkin of Signal Mountain Methodist Church performed the marriage ceremony. He is also a blacksmith. Best wishes to bride and groom.



Tina and Jeff Clawson were married by Caleb Pitkin with Abby, at left, and Lilly in attendance. Photo by Andy Jones.

Volunteer Orientation

In March, Annette and Fred Wildman and Marguerite Batkin were the first participants in a new initiative focusing on Volunteers. They attended an orientation program featuring a brief history of MFG, a description of various existing committees and ongoing projects, and procedures for suggesting new ideas and securing approvals.

Each of the three promptly chose an area of service that fit their talents. The group agreed

that the presentation was worthwhile and will be advantageous for other volunteers. Watch the newsletter for the next Orientation session, or contact Melissa Nimon 598-1658 to register. A Volunteer Appreciation Social is scheduled for 2-4 PM, Sunday, November 13.



Could someone have been exploring the Children's Sensory Garden very thoroughly by experiencing it barefooted?

Tennessee Conservationist Recognition

The May/June 2022 issue of *TN Conservationist Magazine* features the Arboretums at McCoy Farm & Gardens and UTC and recognizes important contributions of our own Linda Collins and Andy Jones. <https://tnstateparks.com/conservationist>

Hours, Access & Information

The 1.1 mile long walking and running trail is open during daylight hours, seven days per week. Access the trail by the 1604 Taft Highway entrance and park in the trail parking spaces or the gravel lot. Dog waste pickup bags are at the trailhead and by the Anderson entrance.

We encourage our MFG visitors to practice healthy COVID measures at all times.

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NEWSLETTER [Karen Stone](#)

Support McCoy Farm & Gardens

McCoy Farm & Gardens is a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation. All contributions are charitable and tax deductible to the maximum extent allowed by law.

The 38 acre parcel contains the Bachman-McCoy home, pavilion, carriage house, barn, blacksmith workshop, apple house, various other structures, and gardens. Volunteers are very important to MFG in all areas. Your donations are welcome and will be used to improve the structures and gardens.

Please send your check to:

McCoy Farm & Gardens
P.O. Box 443, Signal Mtn., TN 37377
423-598-1658

www.mccoywalden.org

Shop at smile.amazon.com/ch/81-0737667
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