

**OUR CITIZENS ARE STARS!!!**



# **WELCOME TO FORT THOMAS**



**2010**



**Dear Newcomers, Residents, Visitors and Friends:**

**As your elected officials, we are pleased to be able to distribute this community information guide for the use not only of new residents, but for any of you who have lived here for many years. This guide provides you with information about the city's history, the services currently provided by our 90 city employees, and facts you may need to know about living here in one of Greater Cincinnati's most livable and finest communities.**

**We are proud to be your elected Mayor and Councilmembers. We recognize the immense debt owed to our many citizen appointees who volunteer on various Boards, Committees, and Commissions, as well as other volunteers. We salute them, as well as each of you who live, work and play here. Many of you are contributing time, efforts and money to the overall quality of life on a daily basis in a wide variety of ways. We hope that you will attend our Council meetings (1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday evenings at 7:00 P.M.) or feel free to stop by the City Building (office hours are 8:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M.) or call (859-441-1055) with any questions.**

**Sincerely,**

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Mary H. Brown".

**Mary H. Brown, Mayor  
City of Fort Thomas**

## **MAYOR AND COUNCILMEMBERS**

**Oaths of Office taken January 1, 2009**  
**Mayor - 4 year term, ends December 31, 2010**  
**Councilmember - 2 year term, ends December 31, 2010**  
**Next election: November 2010**

### **Mayor:**

<b>Mary H. Brown</b>	<b>140 Highland Ave.</b>	<b>441-2964</b>
----------------------	--------------------------	-----------------

### **Councilmembers:**

<b>Eric Haas</b>	<b>42 Stardust Lane</b>	<b>441-4227</b>
------------------	-------------------------	-----------------

<b>Jill Steller</b>	<b>165 Highview Dr.</b>	<b>781-5845</b>
---------------------	-------------------------	-----------------

<b>James Doepker</b>	<b>40 Carrington Point</b>	<b>781-2538</b>
----------------------	----------------------------	-----------------

<b>Tom Lampe</b>	<b>37 Covert Place</b>	<b>441-9955</b>
------------------	------------------------	-----------------

<b>Roger Peterman</b>	<b>129 Riverside Parkway</b>	<b>441-7012</b>
-----------------------	------------------------------	-----------------

<b>Lisa Kelly</b>	<b>118 Strathmore Avenue</b>	<b>240-6666</b>
-------------------	------------------------------	-----------------

## **CITY ADMINISTRATIVE EMPLOYEES**

**(Offices at 130 North Fort Thomas Avenue)**

**City Administrative Officer - Donald W. Martin**  
**City Clerk/Executive Secretary - Melissa K. Kelly**  
**Asst. to CAO/Economic Development Dir. - Jay Treft**  
**Main Street Manager (part-time) Debbie Buckley**  
**City Treasurer/Director of Finance - Fred W. Ewald**  
**Finance Officer/Purchasing Agent - Jennifer Machesney**  
**Finance Clerk - Lorraine Haverkamp**  
**Finance Clerk - Nancy Robisch**  
**Director of General Services - Ronald J. Dill**  
**Building Inspector/Zoning Administrator - Ralph Hopper**  
**General Services Secretary - Julie Rice**  
**City Mechanic - Harry Holtkamp Jr.**  
**Director of Property Management - Jeff Hartfiel**  
**Fire Chief - Mark K. Bailey**  
**Police Chief - Mike Daly**  
**Police Secretary - Debbie Shields**  
**Police Secretary (part-time) - Gracia Zink**

**(Offices off site)**

**Director of Recreation - David Buerger**  
**Recreation Assistant - Penny Kramer**

**City Attorney - Jann Seidenfaden**  
**City Engineer - Mark Brueggemann**



**We are proud to welcome you to the City of Fort Thomas! This community is an attractive and thriving residential municipality of approximately 16,800 residents located at the “top of Kentucky.” Built on a series of hilltop ridges overlooking the Ohio River, Fort Thomas is just south of downtown Cincinnati, Ohio, and is adjacent to five other municipalities—Newport, Dayton, Bellevue, Highland Heights, and Southgate. According to the Commonwealth of Kentucky's classification system, which is determined by a number of factors such as population and voting precinct representation, Fort Thomas is listed as a “Fourth Class Municipality,” but, we think our City is “First Class!”**

**Fort Thomas’ government is a Mayor-Council form of government, in that we have an elected Mayor for a four-year term, and six Councilmembers for two-year terms. Mayor Mary H. Brown served several terms as a Councilmember prior to her election as Mayor and is currently serving her fourth elected term. She also served as Mayor Pro Tem for several years while she was a Councilmember. The current Councilmembers are: Jill Steller, Eric Haas (Current Mayor Pro-Tem), Tom Lampe, Roger Peterman, Jim Doepker and Lisa Kelly.**

**Fort Thomas City Administration – The Mayor appoints a professional City Administrator (currently Donald W. Martin) who is hired to manage the City’s day-to-day operations. He provides assistance and support to the City's elected officials, Mayor Mary Brown and the six Councilmembers, as they solve problems, develop new legislation and set guidelines for the City's future. Mr. Martin previously served as City Administrator for the City of Bellevue for 10 years.**

**Jay Treft is the current Assistant to the City Administrative Officer and also Economic Development Director.**

**Other City Officers include the City Clerk, Melissa K. Kelly, who has been with the City since 2000, starting in the Finance Office for three years and then moving to the General Services Department for approximately 3 years. Melissa became City Clerk/Executive Secretary to the CAO, Mayor and Council in April of 2006. The City Clerk is the official Custodian of City Records, including minutes, correspondence, and official historic documents. She is the secretary to the Board of Ethics, Editor of the City’s quarterly newsletter, “From the Fountain,” and assists with special events within the City. She is also responsible for the written testing procedures for police and firefighter recruits.**

Recently, the City has started selling commemorative bricks to be installed in the walkway of the Mess Hall/Community Center in Tower Park. These bricks are \$40.00 each and an application can be obtained at the city building or on the website at [www.ftthomas.org](http://www.ftthomas.org).

**Fort Thomas Finance Department** - Finance Director Fred Ewald manages the day-to-day operations in the Finance Department. The Finance Department is located in the central portion of the City Building and is responsible for the overall functioning of city government, the provision of services, collection and disbursement of taxes and other fees, and development and execution of a balanced budget for each fiscal year. Besides Mr. Ewald, the Finance Department includes the City's Purchasing Agent, Jennifer Machesney, Finance Clerk, Lorraine Haverkamp and Finance Clerk, Nancy Robisch. The Finance Department is your first point of contact when you call or visit the city building.

**Fort Thomas General Services Department** - Our Director of General Services is Ron Dill. In 2001, three (3) departments were combined and placed under the direction of Mr. Dill, who was formerly the Director of Building Services. That consolidation, combining the departments, gives him 15 full-time employees, along with several seasonal or part-time employees, including Foreman, Tim Mattingly, City Mechanic, Terry Plummer, Building Inspector, Ralph Hopper, and Secretary/Assistant, Julie Rice.

Employees of this Department provide snow and ice treatment/removal in the winter months and concrete curb/sidewalk work in the summer. They are an integral part of our continuing CBD Streetscape Project, as well as their assistance with street and sewer work, exterior and interior construction work of all types, landscaping and mowing work, tree planting, trimming and other assorted activities. They are skilled and experienced in all types of repairs to city streets, mud-jacking, crackfills and repairs to curbs and sidewalks.

The General Services Department issues building permits, conducts inspections for construction within the City and supports planning and zoning functions. This Department also follows up on zoning complaints and provides information about zoning regulations to builders, sub-contractors, and homeowners. They maintain plat records of property within the City and provide staff assistance to the citizen volunteer members of the Planning Commission, Board of Adjustment, Design Review Board, and the Tree Commission.

One important function of the General Services Department is to provide a complete, current Official Zoning Ordinance for the guidance of any development and for contractors within the City. A five-year update to the City's Comprehensive Plan is currently underway. Call this Department with any questions about fences, swimming pools, decks, proposed additions, and other zoning matters. Public

hearings are conducted as needed by the Planning Commission and Board of Adjustment for variances, development plans, signs, new garages and so on.

In addition, Property Maintenance Manager Jake Hartfiel is responsible for the numerous buildings and landscaping in the city as well as ice removal from the walkways. He also assists with work needed in the Recreation Department facilities.

**Fort Thomas Recreation Department** – Our Recreation Director, David Buerger was hired July, 2005. He has a full-time Recreation Assistant, Penny Kramer. The Office is located in the Armory Building in Tower Park. The hours of operation are 8:00 A.M.- 4:00 P.M. and phone number is **859-781-1700**. Check with the Recreation Dept. for information on parks, sports leagues, exercise programs, activities for adults, seniors, children; the Dog Park; use of rooms, buildings, or picnic shelters, bike trails; and upcoming events. Website: [www.ftthomas.org/recreation](http://www.ftthomas.org/recreation).

We are currently working on completely re-vamping Rossford Park. Once this project is complete, it will be a state of the art park with many amenities for our residents. To view the master plan go to our website at [www.ftthomas.org](http://www.ftthomas.org). The information is on the home page at the top. To obtain more space for soccer fields for play and practice, the City purchased a parcel of land on Route #8, adjacent to Pendery Park in Campbell County. The entire year is filled with sports leagues, classes, and recreation events of many types within the parks. Please call 859-781-1700 for a brochure or with specific questions.

The Recreation Department provides several very popular events for the community during the year, including: summer concerts at the Amphitheater, a Spring Egg Hunt, and a Jack-O-Lantern Walk. The City's largest annual event is the "4<sup>th</sup> at the Fort" with activities from early morning runs, food and booths in Tower Park and a big fireworks display at dusk to cap it off.

**Fort Thomas Renaissance** - The City's Renaissance Manager is Debbie Buckley. Utilizing the Main Street four-point approach, the Renaissance Board focuses on positively impacting the designated Renaissance district through economic and physical revitalization. All actions taken by the Board are done with a commitment to improve how we live, work and raise families within the city.

Each year Fort Thomas Renaissance develops goals dedicated to the development of a healthy business climate where our proud heritage helps us shape a promising future - enriching the quality of life in Fort Thomas.

During the late 1990's the city's elected body, staff and community volunteers engaged in a considerable effort to assess the city's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats as it planned for the new millennium and continued success for the community. This effort included a long-range strategic visioning

process, update of the city's official 20-year Comprehensive Plan, and consensus building from the elected body to establish priorities and areas of focus. These initiatives were completed with involvement and input from elected officials, city staff, volunteer committees, focus group meetings and professional consultants. One common theme that arose throughout this planning process was the need to reinvest in and revitalize the city's urban core, specifically its historic business districts which were beginning to show signs of economic and physical decline.

In 2000, the city formed a citizen volunteer committee named Fort Thomas Forward to lead the development of an urban design and streetscape master plan for the center of town. During this same period, the city received state designation as a silver-level Renaissance Kentucky/Main Street community for its CBD revitalization efforts and received \$95,000 in Direct Appropriation funds to underwrite some of the initial streetscape revitalization costs, specifically a CBD utility relocation project, market study, and new CBD streetscape design and engineering. Subsequently, a part-time manager position and Fort Thomas Renaissance Board were created pursuant to the requirements of the state Renaissance Kentucky/Main Street program.

The central part of our town has been renovated in the past few years providing for brick crosswalks and attractive landscaping, new street construction, lighting, benches and banners, which has brought a new cohesiveness to the area. There are several distinct business districts within the City, each with its own character, that provide different types of retail, professional office or service businesses. We are currently renovating the Midway District in the South end of town. Most of the city's homes are single-family homes, with a smaller percentage of multi-unit buildings, some apartment complexes and an increasing number of condominium developments.

Each year a Holiday Walk is held in the Central Business District and Midway District with the lighting of a Christmas tree, open houses at businesses and lots of prizes and fun.

**Fort Thomas Police Department** - Our Police Chief is Michael Daly who was promoted to the position in August of 2005. He has been a Fort Thomas Police Officer since 1994 and heads a department of 22 sworn police officers and two police clerks, Debbie Shields and Gracia Zink. Accredited by the Kentucky Association of Chiefs of Police (KACP), the 5<sup>th</sup> law enforcement agency in Kentucky to become accredited in 1994. Dispatch phone numbers: 911, or 859-292-3622; police business line: 859-441-6562.

Our Police Department provides police protection, patrol and response, bicycle patrol, crime prevention, educational programs and community training, driver's education programs, Operation ID and Neighborhood Watch programs, Bike Road-E-O, visits from McGruff the Crime Dog, and various other community

participation events. The Police Department recently began installing car seats for our residents.

**Fort Thomas Fire Department** – Our Fire Chief is Mark Bailey, who was formerly with the Greater Cincinnati Airport Fire Department. He has a department strength of 18 professional firefighters, most of whom are Kentucky Certified Paramedics. Our Department was one of the first in Northern Kentucky to provide their own Paramedic Unit, or Advanced Life Support Unit, for our citizens. A new life squad unit will be placed in service approximately in October of this year. The last squad, which will be sold was purchased in 1998; a new aerial ladder truck purchased in 2000.

Our Fire Department provides quick response to calls for fire or medical emergencies, and in addition, much time is spent on public education, fire prevention, code inspections and enforcement, and preparedness training. The Department implemented the Learn Not to Burn Program within the schools, have monthly First Aid/CPR Classes offered to the public, conduct an annual Smoke Detector Blitz, and visit schools with the Fire Safety House and Sparky the Fire Dog. They also issue burning permits (for brush) and provide assistance with child car safety seat installation. Dispatch phone number: 911, or 859-292-3622; Fire business line: 859-441-8393.

Our City Attorney is Jann Seidenfaden, of Bertelsman, Kaufmann, Seidenfaden & Kolentse. The City's Engineer is Mark Brueggemann, with CDS Associates, Inc.

The total number of City employees varies during the seasons, with full-time workers at 70-75.

There are approximately 7,300 residential “living units” with few developable building lots remaining. However, on the hillsides overlooking the Ohio River and the Licking Valley, there are multiple acres of woodlands, “green space,” and forests. Any future developments will necessarily need to deal with suitable methods of reusing existing lots or with the difficulties of building on the hillsides.

Fort Thomas is approximately 5.2 square miles in area, with homes tucked away in valleys and situated on hilltops, on flat-street subdivisions and on gently curving, tree-lined streets that total about 70 linear miles of streets. There is a wide range of housing stock within the City and assessed home values from \$80,000 to over \$2,000,000.

The economic base of the community is comprised mostly of professional offices and service-oriented businesses, with retail shops that provide the essentials for daily living such as convenient stores, banks, restaurants, drug stores, and beauty shops. There are no industrial areas or manufacturing zones within the City.

Some of our largest employers in the City are, St. Elizabeth Medical Center, the Fort Thomas Independent School system, and two nursing homes, the Highlands of Fort Thomas/Barrington Health Care Facilities and Carmel Manor. In addition, there are two federal facilities located within Fort Thomas both adjacent to Tower Park--the VA Hospital and a U.S. Army Reserve Engineering Complex. Contained within the boundaries of the City is a water pumping station and two water reservoirs for the Northern Ky. Water District, one on Military Parkway and another on Memorial Parkway.

Our population includes approximately 25% of property owners who are over the age of 65 and who receive Homestead Exemptions or Disability Exemptions on the total valuations of their property. This state-mandated exemption, deducted from both city and county taxes, requires that at least one property owner be 65 and complete the proper forms, presenting proof of age.

There is a high level of community involvement within Fort Thomas and the attractive, well-kept neighborhoods extend the feeling of small town living to the convenience of quick interstate access to Covington, Newport, Florence, and just minutes across the bridges, into downtown Cincinnati. There are three larger parks, Tower Park (south), Highland Hills Park (central), and Rossford Park (north). In addition, there are several smaller pocket parks, such as Memorial Park, Holly Park, Storrs Park and others.

Warm weather ushers in lots of activity in all the parks as well as walkers and joggers on the sidewalks throughout the city. Especially "on the Avenue" (North and South Fort Thomas Avenue), and on Highland Avenue, in the early evening hours families are out riding bicycles, pushing baby strollers, roller blading or scootering, or just chatting with friends. The City has recently completed a Dog Park within Highland Hills Park (at the end of Mayfield Avenue) where canine pets can run free and get exercise.

Fort Thomas consists of approximately 3,660 acres. Many of our residents leave and return daily to work either in Cincinnati or to the industrial or commercial areas of Northern Kentucky. There is an increasing number of small businesses and retail establishments within the community, and a sizeable number of in-home businesses all of which contribute to the local economy.

The Board of Education completed construction in 2001 of a new \$13.9 million Middle School facility located adjacent to Highlands High School on Memorial Parkway. A Committee has recently completed an evaluation showing a critical need for upgrades to the High School as well as elementary schools, with an estimated construction cost at \$27 million. The school is currently working on re-building Woodfill School. The school is estimated to be complete by Spring of 2012.

Two parochial schools, St. Thomas (central) and St. Catherine (north) are within the City, plus there are twelve (12) churches scattered in areas from North to South.

Basic to the historic spirit of the City is the military fort, for which Fort Thomas is named, constructed around the turn of the century between 1898 and 1901. Due to our high elevation, the site was chosen for building a U.S. Military Fort for the training of troops at a location that wouldn't be repeatedly flooded as it did in the "bottom" land at Newport Barracks. One of the City's most significant landmarks is a large 100 foot tall stone water tower, built to provide water for the hundreds of troops stationed here during the Spanish-American War. As was the custom of the time, the Fort was given the name of an outstanding and much-beloved Civil War General, George C. Thomas, who was a strong and courageous leader famous for his firm stand in battle, and known as the "Rock of Chicamauga."

During the years when the Army Post was activated (until approximately 1948), there was a bustle of activity as troops from Ohio, Indiana, and all sections of Kentucky came in by train through Newport and Cincinnati. Enlistees were brought directly to Fort Thomas by bus or trolley, lived in the barracks buildings, dined in the (still-existing) Mess Hall, and marched daily on the drill fields (now converted to ball fields). The Fort was deactivated by the U.S. government in the early 1970s, and then purchased by the City with the express purpose of making it a recreation area. Today Tower Park is our largest, most active park, containing an Armory Building, picnic shelters, tennis courts, basketball and volleyball courts, hiking trails, and a full track/soccer field complex. In addition, the Mess Hall or Community Center has been renovated and is currently in use for wedding receptions, meetings and parties almost every weekend. You can call (859) 781-1700 to book this and other meeting rooms available at Tower Park.

The lovely turn-of-the century homes overlooking the Ohio River at the extreme eastern side of the Park were military-assigned quarters for the Generals, other officers and non-commissioned officers assigned to Fort Thomas. They have remained the property of the Federal Government and were assigned for use by civilian employees assigned to the Veterans Hospital facility. The VA recently declared the property "excess" and the City hopes to obtain title to these homes and then resell them to individual owners as condominiums, similar to those homes transferred and now known as "Military Commons." Adjacent to the Park property is Carmel Manor Nursing Home, and the Headquarters of the U.S. Army Reserve 478<sup>th</sup> Engineering Battalion, which was deployed to Iraq in 2003 and again in 2007.

About a dozen of the surviving military buildings, those closest to the Stone Water Tower within park property, were formerly owned by the City as part of Tower Park. The Fort Thomas Heritage League worked for many years to get the Military Fort property designated as an official "Historic District." They worked hard to raise money for the restoration of the Mess Hall and it is now an attractive

Community Center. It was used in June, 1998, for the Centennial Celebration of the Spanish-American War, and during this event, a small military museum contained within the building was dedicated. Many of the original military buildings have been torn down, including the soldiers' barracks, riding stable, chapel, and auxiliary kitchen.

The City recently completed two "gateway parks" located at Highland Avenue and Grand Avenue, and the intersection of Memorial Parkway and N. Fort Thomas Avenue. Highland Hills Park is used by softball and baseball teams, as well as for track team practice and has been upgraded with fencing, lights, dugouts, and/or bleachers. Other improvements have been made at Rossford Park.

Whether you are a "true newcomer," having just moved into the City, or have lived here for all of your life, information is available to you in this booklet, in our quarterly newsletter From the Fountain, or on the internet at [www.ftthomas.org](http://www.ftthomas.org). Information is updated frequently, with a calendar of events, minutes of Council meetings, ordinances and resolutions, and information about the activities of the Administration, General Services, Police, Fire, and Recreation Departments.

**Other services:** Fort Thomas residents have bus service available to them from the Transit Authority of Northern Kentucky (TANK), as well as mini-buses from SouthBank. Scheduled routes for TANK connect with downtown Cincinnati, south to Northern Kentucky University, cross-county between Alexandria's Village Green and Florence Mall and interconnections between the various cities in Campbell, Kenton, and Boone Counties. The SouthBank mini-bus has a circuitous route between Newport, Covington and several points in downtown Cincinnati.

The Campbell County Public Library System, which recently celebrated 100 years of library service in the County, has a branch in the city. An attractive new building at 1000 Highland Avenue provides books, periodicals, CDs, and videos. There is a special section for children, as well as several meeting rooms and offices in the building. The library staff sponsors summer reading programs, story times, special events related to books and literature, and various discussion groups. Their phone number is: (859) 572-5033.

As City employees, we are here to help you. We try to make a good impression on everyone we meet—emphasizing our spirit, our willingness to work hard and our constant attempts to conserve, recycle and save money wherever we can for our City's benefit. Whether you own a home, condominium or business, rent an apartment, or stop here only long enough to visit with friends, you are welcome. We hope you come here deliberately to patronize one of our fine businesses or to enjoy our fine parks. This booklet is dedicated to the citizens whether you are one day old or 100 years old. Fort Thomas is a great place to live!

## **CITY GOVERNMENT**

Fort Thomas is classified by the Commonwealth of Kentucky as a Fourth Class City. We have an elected Mayor, who serves a 4-year term and 6 elected Council members, who serve 2-year terms. Elections are held in November and officials take the Oath of Office on January 1<sup>st</sup> of the following year.

Council meetings are held on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday evenings of each month at 7:00 P.M. in the City Building, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Council Chambers. A regular time is set for any necessary Committee meetings at 6:15 P.M. just prior to Council meetings. The address of the City Building is, 130 North Fort Thomas Avenue, Fort Thomas, Kentucky 41075. If the Monday of Council/Committee meetings fall on a Federal or State holiday, the meeting is delayed to Tuesday night at the same time and place. Citizens are invited to attend these meetings and participate in their local government. During the course of a year, there are Public Hearings scheduled for various purposes, including the Fiscal Year budgets, applications for Alcohol Beverage Control licenses, community development and variances. These are advertised, by law, in the local newspaper of record, the Fort Thomas Recorder.

Our City's original by-laws from 1867 designate that we have a Mayor-Council form of government. All Ordinances, Resolutions, Municipal Orders, and Executive Orders carry the Mayor's signature, after presentation and approval by Council at a regular meeting. As laws are formulated and put into document form, they are presented at a Council meeting, are reviewed and studied by Councilmembers and the City staff during the next 2-week period, and then presented for a Second Reading and a Roll Call vote at the next regular Council meeting. At each meeting, there is opportunity provided for citizen input.

The final text of all Ordinances is published in the Fort Thomas Recorder. Copies of any Ordinance, as well as other City documents as defined under the Open Records laws, may be obtained in the office of the City Clerk with a small fee for copying any document over 5 pages. Upon request, they can also be mailed or faxed.

Each Council member is Chairman of one of the six standing committees and serves on two others. These Committees are, Finance, Public Safety, Public Works, Law-Labor-License, Public Utilities & Buildings, and Recreation. In addition, there are other citizen boards and commissions appointed by the Mayor to advise on matters of Planning and Zoning, Police and Fire testing, Tree Planting and Preservation, Ethics issues, and on the Board of Adjustment.



### **IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS**

**Please dial area code first – 859 – if you are calling or faxing from outside the area.**

**City Building/Finance Office/Administration 441-1055**

**Fire Department/Police Department/Life Squad 911  
(Dispatch Center took over all calls 2 years ago)**

**Business Office Number for Police Administration 441-6562**

**Business Office Number for Fire Administration 441-8393**

**Recreation Department/Armory/Director 781-1700**

**City Attorney 441-2700**

**City Engineer(CDS Associates) 525-0544**

## **INFORMATION FOR NEWCOMERS**

**Within 15 days after moving into Kentucky:**

**Register your car/truck/motorcycle/motor home/boat/van -**

**Bring title, most current registration, proof of any previously paid sales taxes, and current proof of insurance card to the Campbell County Clerk's Office, 1098 Monmouth Street, Newport, KY 41071 PH. 292-3850**

**To obtain a Kentucky drivers' license-**

**Bring current license, if any, and Social Security card to the Campbell County Circuit Court Clerk's Office, 1098 Monmouth Street, Newport, KY 41071 PH 292-6311**

**Bring proof of any name/address change to same office. Written and eye tests may be required.**

**Within 30 days after moving into Campbell County, and/or into a new voting precinct:**

**Register to vote; make application at least 30 days prior to an election to the Campbell County Clerk, 1098 Monmouth Street, Newport, KY 41071 PH 292-3885  
Absentee ballots may be filed, however the time prior to election is longer, call to find the exact information on the specific election.**

**To register your child/children for schools in Fort Thomas or for information on what school your child should attend, please contact the Fort Thomas Board of Education/Fort Thomas Independent Schools, 28 N. Fort Thomas Avenue, 781-3333, for requirements and instructions on registration.**

**Our current waste collection and recycling contractor is Rumpke of Kentucky. Waste/Recycling collection days in Fort Thomas are Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday. Please call the Finance Department at 441-1055 for your collection day. Recycling bins are available at the City Building at a nominal cost of \$6.00 each.**

## **LIST OF UTILITIES**

<b>Gas/Electric – Duke Electric Company</b>	<b>513-421-9500</b>
<b>Water – Northern Ky. Water Service District</b>	<b>859-578-9898</b>
<b>Sanitation – Sanitation District No. 1</b>	<b>859-578-7450</b>
<b>Telephone – Cincinnati Bell Telephone Co.</b>	<b>513-565-6090</b>
<b>Cable Television – Insight Communications</b>	<b>859-431-0300</b>
<b>Waste Collection &amp; Recycling – Rumpke of N. Ky.</b>	<b>513-741-5255</b>
<b>Animal Control – call your Police Department for dispatch (859-292-3622) of our Animal Control Officer. The salary and expenses are shared by five (5) cities.</b>	

### **Utilities:**

**There is a 3% utility tax placed on bills of the citizens of Fort Thomas by the School Board in order to provide money for the operation of the school district, effective April, 1998. This is on all of the following, gas and electric, water, sanitation, telephone, and cable T.V.**

**Auto Licenses - Campbell County Court House, 1098 Monmouth Street, Newport, Kentucky**

**Voter Registration - Campbell County Court House, 1098 Monmouth Street, Newport, Kentucky**

**To visit your City or County Library branch:**

**The Carrico Branch in Fort Thomas, under the Campbell County Public Library System, is in Fort Thomas at 1000 Highland Avenue, Fort Thomas, KY 41075**

**Call (859) 572-5033 to get hours. Just announced: opening on Sunday afternoons.**

**To locate your closest U.S. Post Office:**

**The Fort Thomas Branch is at 24 South Fort Thomas Avenue, Fort Thomas, KY 41075 Phone 441-1938 Constructed in 1941; see interesting mural on wall.**

**The nearest Hospital:**

**St. Elizabeth Medical Center East, 85 North Grand Avenue, Fort Thomas, KY 41075 Phone 572-3100**

**For patient information, you may call 572-3232. Visiting hours for patients are generally 1-8 P.M. daily.**

## CHURCHES

### Baptist

First Baptist Church - 600 N. Fort Thomas Ave. 441-8884

Highland Baptist Tabernacle - 1080 Highland Ave. 781-4510

Highland Hills Baptist Church - 638 Highland Ave. 441-0442

### Christian - Disciples of Christ

First Christian Church - 1031 Alexandria Pike 441-8658

### Episcopal

St. Andrews Episcopal Church - 3 Chalfonte Place 441-1092

### Jehovah's Witnesses

Kingdom Hall - 1960 Memorial Parkway 441-5773

### Presbyterian

First Presbyterian Church - 220 S. Fort Thomas Ave. 441-8939

### Roman Catholic

St. Catherine of Siena Church - 1803 N. Fort Thomas Ave. 441-1352

St. Thomas Church - 26 E. Villa Place 441-1282

### United Church of Christ

Christ Church - 15 S. Fort Thomas Ave. 441-2565

St. Paul United Church of Christ - 1 Churchill Dr. 781-4628

### United Methodist

Highland United Methodist Church - 314 N. Fort Thomas Ave. 441-0587

## SCHOOLS

### **Public Schools - Elementary Schools**

<b>Johnson School - 1180 N. Fort Thomas Ave.</b>	<b>441-2444</b>
<b>Moyer School - 219 Highland Ave.</b>	<b>441-1180</b>
<b>Woodfill School - 1025 Alexandria Pike</b>	<b>441-0506</b>
<b>Highlands Middle School – 2400 Memorial Pkwy.</b>	<b>441-5222</b>
<b>Highlands High School – 2400 Memorial Pkwy.</b>	<b>781-5900</b>
<b>Board of Education Office – 28 N. Fort Thomas Ave.</b>	<b>781-3333</b>

### **Parochial Schools - Elementary Schools**

<b>St. Catherine of Siena School - 1803 N. Fort Thomas Ave.</b>	<b>441-9856</b>
<b>St. Thomas School – 26 E. Villa Pl.</b>	<b>572-4641</b>

### **Day Care Facilities**

<b>Abby's Child Enrichment Center - 29 Churchill Dr.</b>	<b>781-3442</b>
<b>Child Development Play Care Center - 23 E. Villa Pl.</b>	<b>781-5498</b>
<b>Children's Garden – 960 Highland Ave.</b>	<b>781-8011</b>
<b>Kids &amp; Cribs Daycare – 1205 Alexandria Pike</b>	<b>441-5888</b>

### **Nursery Schools**

<b>Rainbow Nursery School – 638 Highland Ave.</b>	<b>441-9181</b>
<b>Wise Owl Nursery School – 600 N. Fort Thomas Ave.</b>	<b>441-5086</b>
<b>BlueBird Early Learning Center - 406 N. Fort Thomas Ave.</b>	<b>441-0587</b>

## **COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS**

**Northern Ky. Chamber of Commerce – 300 Buttermilk Pike, Suite 330, Ft. Mitchell, KY 41017 PH 578-8800**

**Northern Ky. Visitors Bureau - Covington (located in Main Strauss area)**

**Northern Ky. Convention Center - opened November, 1998, Covington Landing**

**Campbell County Historical Society – located at Alexandria Court House**

**Fort Thomas Heritage League - preservation of the history of Fort Thomas and specifically accomplished the renovation of the Mess Hall in Tower Park into a Community Center. Opened a small museum in June, 1998. Main function at this time is to take orders and place memorial bricks in the walkway in front of the Mess Hall. There are brick order forms at the City Building. The original group has disbanded/joined in with the Campbell County Group.**

**Campbell County Senior Citizens**

**Fort Thomas Optimist Club**

**Fort Thomas Lions Club**

**Fort Thomas Woman's Club**

**Village Players - Local theater group**

**Fort Thomas Masonic Lodge #808**

**M.O.P.S. (Mothers of Pre-schoolers) - based at Highland Hills Baptist Church & Presbyterian Church**

**Jaycees of Campbell County**

**Fort Thomas Garden Club – sets out annuals each year through the center of town in the median strips to beautify community, conducts contests for beautiful gardens.**

**Green Team – local organization that raises money for city beautification projects**

**Fort Thomas Swim Club - end of James Ave. adjacent to Highland Hills Park**

**Campbell County Branch Y.M.C.A.**

**Fort Thomas Jr. Baseball League**

**Fort Thomas Jr. Football League**

**Northern Kentucky Soccer League**

**Mountain Bike Club – rides at Tower Park**

**Highland Country Club - 18 hole golf course**

**Retired Men's Club**

**Fort Thomas Seniors – meetings held at Community Center monthly**

**There are numerous organizations connected with local schools and churches, and also many sports-related groups. For information on these, rely on direct communications from those sources, or watch for information in the following media sources: City newsletter From the Fountain published quarterly; weekly newspaper Fort Thomas Recorder; monthly news magazine Fort Thomas Living; plus local newspapers Cincinnati Enquirer/Kentucky Enquirer (publishes daily) and The Kentucky Post/Cincinnati Post (six days).**

## **SHORT HISTORY OF FORT THOMAS**

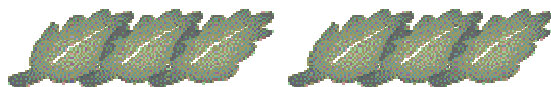
**(FORMERLY DISTRICT OF THE HIGHLANDS)**

Compiled by Dottie Ivie, former City Clerk, from various books, reports, and research papers of local historians and students. Some information obtained from the Official Minutes of Meetings of the Board of Council. Additional research was completed during the City's Spanish-American Centennial Celebration for Official Dedication of the Military Museum at the Community Center in Tower Park, June 27-28, 1998.

### **GENERAL GEORGE H. THOMAS**

The City of Fort Thomas was named in honor of Civil War General George Henry Thomas, who ranks among the top Union Generals of the War, along with Grant, Sherman, and Sheridan. Whereas these three men were true Northerners and, in fact, were born within approximately 50 miles of each other, George Thomas was a Southerner. He was born of Welsh/English and French parents in Virginia on July 31, 1816. He was educated at Southampton Academy, studying law and working as a law deputy for his uncle, James Rochelle, the Clerk of the County Court, and he received an appointment to West Point in 1836. He graduated 12<sup>th</sup> in his class of 42 in 1840 and William T. Sherman was a classmate.

After receiving his commission as 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Artillery Unit, he served the Army well for the next 30 years. He was made 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant for his gallantry in action against the Indians in Florida. In the Mexican War, he served under Braxton Bragg in the Artillery and was twice cited for gallantry—once at Monterey and the other at Buena Vista. After the war, he was again sent to Florida to fight the Indians and was wounded in the face by an arrow. From 1851-1854, he was an instructor of artillery and cavalry at West Point, where he became a permanent Captain. Following his service at Ft. Yuma in the West, he became a Major and joined the 4<sup>th</sup> Cavalry at Jefferson Barracks. The Colonel there was Robert Sidney Johnston, and Robert E. Lee was the Lt. Colonel. Other officers in this regiment who went on to become famous as Generals were George Stoneman, for the Union, and for the CSA, John B. Hood, Kirby Smith, and Fitzhugh Lee.



## History - 2

As the Civil War broke out, he was on a 12 month leave of absence in the East. Although a Southerner by birth, Thomas chose to cast his lot with the Union. In a meteoric rise in rank, he was made a Lt. Colonel in April, 1861, full Colonel in May, 1861, and on August 17 of the same year, was appointed Brigadier General with the command of all volunteers assigned to Kentucky. On January 19, 1862, his troops won the first true victory for Kentucky at Spring Mill, defeating the Confederates under General Zollercoff, who was killed. His troops then joined Buell's forces and fought at Nashville and Pittsburgh Landing, where in April, 1862, he was made a Major General. His command was of all Volunteers and he commanded the right wing of Halleck's Army in the capture of Corinth. Again, he was reassigned to Buell's Army in Kentucky. Dissatisfaction of the higher-ups with Buell's retreat to Louisville caused them to order Thomas to take over Buell's command, but he declined due to his loyalty. He then served as Buell's second-in-command at the important Battle of Perryville.

Soon after this, General Rosencrans replaced Buell and General Thomas served under him with great respect and loyalty. On September 20, 1863, he showed his real battle genius and earned for himself the accolade for which he will forever be known. General Rosencrans, in an effort to cut off Bragg at Chickamauga, Tennessee, overextended his troops. General Thomas held the left or northern flank and Bragg, reinforced by Longstreet attacked the Union forces on the 19<sup>th</sup> of September, cutting the supply lines to Chattanooga. Neither side budged. On the 20<sup>th</sup>, Bragg, finding a hole in the Union lines on the right, poured through and swept the right center of the Union forces all the way to Chattanooga, but General Thomas—on the left—held firm. His lines were bent horseshoe-shaped but did not break. He held from noon until dark and then withdrew, bloodied but unbeaten. This action earned him the nickname or title of "The Rock of Chickamauga." In addition, he received the permanent rank of Brigadier General.

Two months later, he took command of the Army of the Cumberland with an attack on Lookout Mountain and Missionary Ridge. In May, 1864, Gen. Sherman began his march on Atlanta, and was joined by Gen. Thomas and his Army of the Cumberland. They pushed aside all opposition, beat Hood at Peachtree Creek, and received the surrender of Atlanta, being the first troops to enter the city. While Sherman continued his march through Georgia to the sea, Thomas was ordered to Nashville to organize an army to oppose Hood so he could not attack Sherman from the rear. He began to plan his strategy and get his new troops ready. It was his cavalry under General Wilson that prevented Hood from making a rear guard action or stand. The "Rock of Chickamauga" then became the "Hammer of Nashville." This was called by many the Union's victory of victories. It was the only major battle in the entire Civil War in which an army was destroyed. For his action, he was promoted to Major General with the gratitude of Congress.

## History - 3

After the War, General George H. Thomas served as commander of a number of military districts. By 1869, he had assumed command of the Military Division of the Pacific at San Francisco and he died on March 28, 1870, leaving his widow, Frances Kellog Thomas, but no children. George and Frances were married in November, 1852, while he was an instructor at West Point. He was buried at Troy, New York, the home of his wife. Thomas was a man of fine presence, 6 feet tall and weighing 200 pounds. He was studious in habits, deliberate but decided in action and fastidious to the point of exasperation. He was respected by his superiors and beloved by his subordinates. Another nickname he was given was "Pop Thomas."

### THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE FORT

When it was decided to relocate the Newport Barracks to the top of the hills overlooking the Ohio River to escape the relentless flooding of the "bottoms," General Sheridan chose the site that is now Fort Thomas. Standing atop a bluff, he selected 111 acres and declared that the "highlands" area looked like "the West Point of the West." As was the tradition at the time, forts were named to honor Civil War Generals and thus, Fort Thomas got its name from General George H. Thomas. To the best perusal of current records, General Thomas never lived nor was he stationed at Fort Thomas, but it is believed that he did visit the Newport Barracks and the area upon several occasions. It is a fortunate and notable heritage of Fort Thomas to be named for a well-respected man who placed honor and duty and country above all else.

During the Spanish-American War, Fort Thomas was busy as a mobilization point and as the war was ended, it was turned into a hospital where scored of veterans convalesced from jungle fevers and wounds. Prior to World War I, there was much talk that Fort Thomas might be converted to a storage depot or even abandoned, but the outbreak of hostilities with Germany reversed the situation quickly. The Fort became an important center of recruitment and induction for the entire war era. Temporary barracks were erected on every available spot. It was officially reactivated as an infantry post and in 1919 a fine new barracks was constructed that now serves as a key building in the Veterans Administration Rehabilitation and Nursing Home Complex.

In the early 1900s, mineral waters were discovered in the area, and there were entrepreneurs churning the area and constructing three large hotels to turn the area into a health resort, similar to French Lick, Indiana. The Altamont, the Avenel, and the Shelley Arms were hosts to numerous guests from Ohio and other points in the Midwest.

## History - 4

The 10<sup>th</sup> Infantry arrived in 1922 at Fort Thomas and remained until 1940. During these years, the fort was used for training and for administering several civilian projects inspired by the depression. Later, the post was again activated as an Army reception center and induction center until 1964. Army activities have extended over a period of 161 years.

### Notes from Centennial Book:

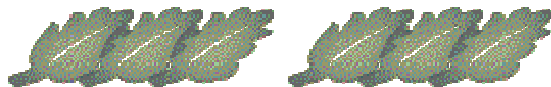
In 1970 the City of Fort Thomas purchased a portion of the government tract and the area was developed into park and recreation areas with many facilities for city residents. The first school in Fort Thomas was a log cabin near Holly Lane and North Fort Thomas Avenue, which was called Mt. Pleasant School. It was also used as a church building and was attended alternate Sundays by the Baptist and Methodist congregations. St. Thomas Catholic Church and School began in a house at the intersection of Grand Avenue and Tremont in 1902.

Actually, a number of churches had their initial meetings in the old City Building, among them: Highland Methodist in 1830, St. Andrews Episcopal Church in 1905, Christ Church United in 1906, First Baptist in 1915, and First Presbyterian in 1830. In the north end of town, St. Catherine of Siena Catholic Church was founded in 1930.

A second school was built on Highland Avenue opposite Newman Avenue, and was known as Mount Vernon School. Union School was built shortly after on Alexandria Pike near St. Stephen's Cemetery. Highlands High School was constructed in time for the fall term of 1915 and the cornerstone record states: "Our graduates invariably stand high when entering universities or colleges. Our entire corps of teachers is a most excellent one." That year, there were 955 students and 15 teachers.

Today, Fort Thomas schools hold a high ranking with the State Department of Education. Teacher salaries are ranked at the top in Kentucky, and 80% or more of Highlands graduates go on to college. In May, 1978, the Fort Thomas school district was one of eleven in Kentucky to be designated Superior, and was the only Superior District awarded in Northern Kentucky.

--Excerpted from Fort Thomas...Its History...Its Heritage  
By Paul T. Knapp



## OUR EARLY HISTORY

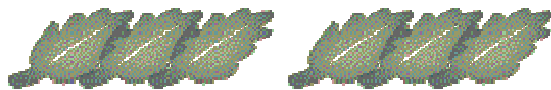
Located in the northeastern corner of Campbell County, Kentucky, Fort Thomas was once the site of a great Indian battle. Graves of 500 or 600 Indian warriors were discovered on a ridge near Highland and Newman Avenues. Archeologists indicate that around 1749 a roving Cherokee tribe fought and lost to the Shawnees and the Miamis in a fierce three-day battle. According to Indian legend, the Cherokee chief had betrayed a medicine man highly regarded by the other tribes. Over the years the once-plentiful relics and arrowheads have been thoroughly combed by field trips, school children, and construction in the area.

The same year, a group of prominent Virginians secured a land grant and sent surveyor Christopher Gist as scout to Kentucky. The state's first white woman, Mary Inglis, came to the area as a captive of the Shawnee Indians. She and a Dutch woman escaped from Big Bone Lick and were later rescued along the Ohio River banks. State Highway Route 8 was named for her in 1924.

During the Civil War, the city was on a key invasion route to Cincinnati and a part of the Cincinnati Defense Perimeter which stretched from Bromley and Fort Mitchell to Wilder and John's Hill. Remains of trenches are still visible on the south slopes of the Highland Country Club, the old Beverly Hills Club hillside and by the YMCA. Others can still be observed in Evergreen Cemetery where troops watched the southern Licking Valley. These were part of a 12-mile long perimeter of 25 installations built to defend the Greater Cincinnati area.

The key fortification in Campbell County was Fort Whittlesay almost directly across from the present tower at the entrance to Tower Park. Armed with nine cannons, it was actually two separate forts with a stockade to protect a passageway joining the exterior trenches. There were concealed trenches and a subterranean tunnel. This fort and others in the immediate area never had an opportunity to prove their worth, though there were many scares. One was when General Kirby Smith and 12,000 Confederates moved north; another was when General John Hunt Morgan threatened to raid Cincinnati. The only casualty recorded in Campbell County was a volunteer killed by a cannon misfire.

This year, Fort Thomas is 140 years old, founded in 1867. Originally called District of the Highlands, the name was changed officially, and by vote of its citizens, in 1914. Our first recorded Census (in 1871) showed a population of 617, the 2000 Census has shown that we've grown to nearly 17,000.



## **INTERESTING NOTES**

**In earlier times the central area of town was called Mt. Vernon and the north end of town was Mt. Pleasant. Highland Avenue used to have board sidewalks from Fort Thomas Avenue all the way down to Alexandria Pike.**

**There are many sites of interest in Fort Thomas, including: St. Stephen Cemetery in use since 1850. Samuel Woodfill School, named for a World War I hero. Robson Spring, and 1890 cement marker on the site of a mineral spring used when Fort Thomas was known as a health resort in the 1920's. Carmel Manor was built by Eli Kinney who was the first Treasurer of the District and is now used as a nursing home.**

**The Fort, itself which was used as a military post from the Spanish-American War until 1964. The Stone Tower, mentioned earlier, is made of Kentucky limestone and is a memorial to men who died in the war.**

**The Post Office has been here since 1941.**

**The Samuel Shaw House near Audubon was built in 1859.**

**Today there are over 150 homes that are 100 years old or more.**

**There was a toll-gate house at Highland and Grand Avenue, one of the most picturesque in the state, which was overshadowed by huge trees.**

**Skating in winter and fishing and swimming in summer were enjoyed in ponds at Klainecrest and Grand Avenues, and also one near Highland and Grand Avenues.**

**People from miles around went to the drill field at the Fort for regular Sunday afternoon concerts.**

**Highland Avenue was noted for its complete board sidewalks from Fort Thomas Avenue to Alexandria Pike.**

**Dr. Simon Kramer who lived in the only so-called castle on the rear of the Army reservation, and died only a year ago, was nationally famous for his experiments with serums conducted in his laboratory located there.**

**Robson's Spring on Alexandria Pike near the Covington reservoir used by many for drinking water in the flood of 1937, formerly was graced by a long watering trough for horses, and water was also sold to individuals.**

**The first tax rate was five cents per each \$100 valuation and the poll tax was \$1 per head. Our current tax rate for 2006 (city portion) was \$.314/\$100 valuation; there is no poll tax.**

---

## **Famous Murder Case**

Perhaps the most startling excitement and bizarre experience in the history of Fort Thomas occurred in January 1896, when in a field not far from the end of the car line was found the decapitated body of a woman. It startled and shocked the entire county, and now we know it as the famous Pearl Bryan murder case. The identity of the body as well as the murderers was discovered by Cal Crim, then a young man, and paved the way for his successful career. The head was never found and a year later two young dental students by the name of Walling and Jackson were hanged in the Newport Courthouse yard, although never confessing their guilt. This double hanging marked the last time that Campbell County meted out such capital punishment.

---