

Stephen Brown's January 2022 Newsletter

Hello:

I hope this finds you well.

Here is a brief excerpt from my article in the Greenbrier Historical Society Journal. This is the featured article, so I am thrilled with the honor. There is a lengthier excerpt on my [website](#):

“A newspaper advertisement in the December 5, 1874 issue of the Greenbrier Independent promises, ‘Fresh Oysters, either by the gallon, half gallon, quart, pint, or half pint, or by the plate.’ Nancy Letitia Perkins was my great, great, great grandmother and born into slavery on April 12, 1842 in Lewisburg when it was still part of Virginia. She learned to cook in the Mason Mathews household. It was illegal to teach an enslaved person to read or write, yet less than nine years after The Emancipation Proclamation was ratified, Nancy and her husband, James Callender, were business owners. Their restaurant building is now Edith's Health & Specialty Store at 1035 East Washington Street, Lewisburg, WV. There is a picture of what the building looked like when it was a restaurant on my website. There is also a picture of Nancy. There have been reports of Nancy's ghost wandering upstairs, but that's another story . . .”

[Click here to read more and see some of the old photos:](#)

**Here is an excerpt from my short story, Planned Development:**

“Buster Hodges ignored the mechanical voice of the GPS urging him to turn around. The roads didn't exist yet, but he recognized the stand of redbud trees. He had played here as a child every Sunday after church while his parents enjoyed their weekly picnic.

He followed two meandering ruts cut into the reddish-clay soil. Tall dropseed grass scraped against the bottom of his truck, and his approach flushed a covey of Northern Bobwhite quail who were feeding on the seeds. A red-tailed hawk soared into view, tracking their retreat through the tall stalks.

The truck tires kicked up pieces of gravel and sent them pinging against the fenders when he crossed the wash where blackberries grew so thick you could eat your fill and still carry home five-gallon buckets full for pies or cobbler.

A swarm of honey bees were working the clump of giant blue hyssop near the top of the rise. He rolled down his window, heard them buzzing around the lavender stalks as he drove past. Switch grass and fox sedge had reclaimed the ruts on the far side of the wash. The slender stalks were heavy with seed and swayed in the light breeze as the cool morning air sank deeper into the canyon. He had ridden his bicycle along every animal trail that meandered through this entire grassland. Little green plastic flags marking the golf course fluttered alongside the tall stems of the native grasses . . .”

I will be uploading the rest of this short story to my website next month. A novella will follow.

<https://singingrockpublishing.com/pages/recent-publications>

## Mark your calendars:

Thursday, March 31, 2022, 6-7 pm, I will be reading excerpts from “[Stealing Renoir](#),” and discussing the art and history that inspired the novel. This will have a World War II focus about the 650,000 to 1,000,000 pieces of art that the Nazi’s looted from Europe. Free! This will be at Daviess County Public Library, 2020 Frederica St., Owensboro, KY 42301, 270-6894-0211

Earth Day! Friday, April 22·11:00 – 11:30am, Anne and I will be at the Ridgway Memorial Library, 127 Walnut St, Shepherdsville, KY 40165 helping them celebrate Earth Day and presenting some of our Earth-centric experiences from “[Let The Earth Breathe: Gardening with Native Plants](#).”

Wednesday, April 27, 2022, 6-7 pm, Anne and I will be discussing “[Let The Earth Breathe: Gardening with Native Plants](#),” and sharing practical advice and some of the joy in our 12+ year project. Free! This will be at The Louisville Nature Center, 3745 Illinois Ave, Louisville, KY 40213. <http://lettheearthbreathe.org/>

The next night, Thursday, April 28<sup>th</sup>, 6 – 7pm, we will be at the Daviess County Public Library, 2020 Frederica St, Owensboro, KY 42301 so we can share more of our delightful journey in the creation of “[Let The Earth Breathe: Gardening with Native Plants](#).” A dollar from the sale of each book goes toward native plant restoration.

It will be a “hands-on” program for “[Let The Earth Breathe: Gardening with Native Plants](#),” at the Midway Branch of the Woodford County Library. The library has an outdoor reading garden and walking trails—perfect for native plants. Look for this special program in May. Details to follow in the next newsletter.

I’m on Chapter 13 of “Stealing Picasso.” No artist has had more paintings stolen than Picasso, so he is a good subject for a mystery novel featuring an art thief. On March 20, 1939, more than 5,000 paintings, drawings, and sculptures were destroyed in a bonfire in the Tuileries Garden in Paris. At least four paintings by Picasso perished in the fire. It might have been a good idea to pull them from the blaze, since “Woman seated next to a window (Marie-Thérèse),” painted by Picasso recently sold for 103 million dollars.

It would be a big help if you would leave a review for “[Stealing Renoir](#), [Mystery Island](#), and [Let The Earth Breathe](#)” on Amazon. (You will need to scroll down the page a little farther than you’d think.)

If you were unable to attend my recent presentation about Stealing Renoir, there is a short video at: [https://www.amazon.com/Stephen-Allten-Brown/e/B00UGN6DXE?ref =dbs\\_p\\_ebk\\_r00\\_abau\\_000000](https://www.amazon.com/Stephen-Allten-Brown/e/B00UGN6DXE?ref =dbs_p_ebk_r00_abau_000000)

That’s about all the news that fits. There’s more on my website: <https://singingrockpublishing.com/>

Thank you for your support.

Happy Reading!