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THE BEACON OF THE STONE INDUSTRY

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A COMMUNITY BUILT OF CRAB ORCHARD STONE



THE DARK DAYS OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION, THE U.S. GOVERNMENT LAID THE FOUNDATION FOR A NEW COMMUNITY IN CUMBERLAND COUNTY, TENNESSEE. THAT COMMUNITY WAS BUILT ON A FOUNDATION OF CRAB

ORCHARD STONE.

Located south of Crossville, the 10,000-acre Cumberland Homesteads Historic Site celebrates the legacy of the Subsistence Homestead Program, which was created through the National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA) of 1933.

The program literally built a working community of 250 homes from nothing, according to Vicki Vaden, a third generation homesteader who has been involved in promoting and preserving the history of the community.

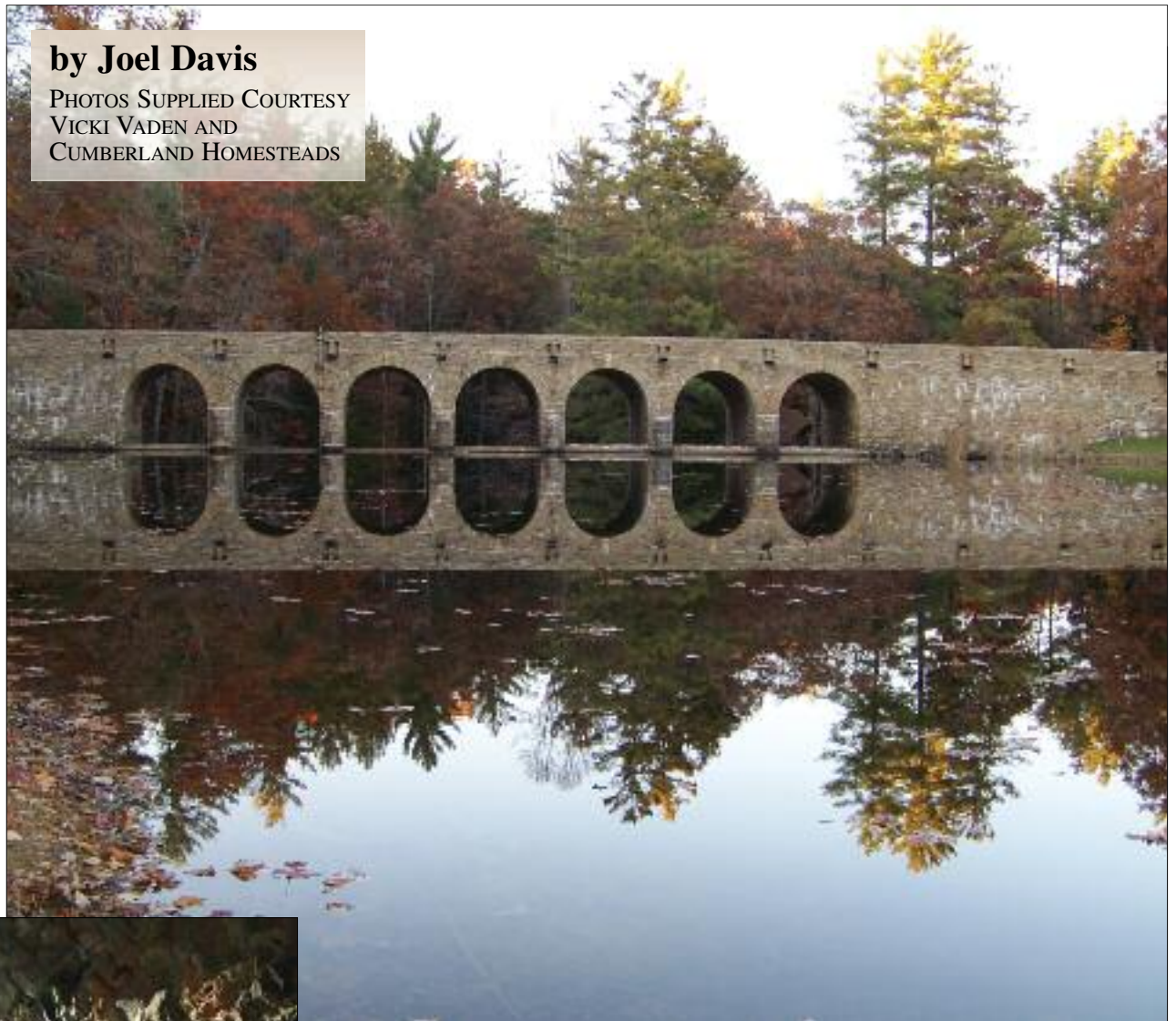
“We wouldn’t have a community without it,” she said. “It was literally a community-building project. This was one of 100 similar projects that were built across the nation. We were one of the first and one of the largest. The government did a lot of experimental things here and evaluated them as they went along. Things they learned here, they were able to use in the other New Deal communities across the nation.”

The historic homes are now privately owned, but the non-profit Cumberland Homesteads Tower Association preserves the history of the area by operating the Homesteads Tower Museum and the Homesteads House Museum.

Preserving the history of the Cumberland Homesteads has a very personal meaning for Vaden, whose mother still lives in a Homestead house.

by Joel Davis

PHOTOS SUPPLIED COURTESY
VICKI VADEN AND
CUMBERLAND HOMESTEADS



The Cumberland Mountain State Park Bridge, built by the Civilian Conservation Corps between 1935 and 1940, is faced with Crab Orchard Stone, a durable sandstone used in structures throughout Cumberland County. It serves both as a dam for Byrd’s Lake and as a bridge for traffic moving through the park.

“My grandparents on both sides of the family were original homesteaders,” she said. “I’m a third generation. My mom and dad got the museum going.”

The NIRA included \$25 million in funding for the Subsistence Homestead Communities Program. The vision of the program was to create new, self-sustaining communities for people left unemployed by the Great Depression.

The centerpiece of the community is the eight-story Homesteads Tower, which was constructed with ubiquitous Crab Orchard Stone. It was built in 1937 to house the government administrative offices of the Cumberland

Homesteads.

“The tower is a unique structure,” Vaden said. “It was designed by the architect who designed the whole community. It was the crown jewel, the centerpiece of the community. The government offices were located at the base of the structure in four wings. The tower itself hid a 50,000 gallon water tank.”

The tower is a work of beauty and craftsmanship. “The interior stonework you see as you go up the spiral staircase is just as beautiful as the exterior. Incredible, the skill the masons put into it.”

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The Stone Detective concludes one of his biggest mysteries to date

Anne, Carmen, Ida Mae and Rufus tell it like it is, or should be

ANOTHER BUNNY WITH A PURPOSE

CHAMPIS THE BUNNY DOESN'T ONLY HOP — HE ALSO KNOWS HOW TO HERD HIS MASTERS' FLOCK OF SHEEP, POSSIBLY HAVING PICKED UP THE SKILL AFTER WATCHING TRAINED DOGS DO THE JOB.



Rufus Leakin
Guru of Folklore

to escaping through the gate he sometimes stops them," he said. "I mean I work with sheepdogs and know how hard this is. There are very few dogs that could do what this rabbit does."

The 5-year old pet rabbit from the small village of Kal in northern Sweden shot to online fame last week, garnering more than 700,000 YouTube hits, after a clip of his sheepherding skills surfaced on a blog.

The June video shows a persistent Champis running back and forth on the farm, trying to keep Nils-Erik and Greta Vigren's sheep together.

Greta Vigren said she first noted his talent last spring when they let out the sheep to graze for the first time after the long Swedish winter.

"He just started to behave like a sheepdog," she recalled, adding that while he likes to round up the sheep, he is consistent about leaving the farm's hens alone, treating them more gently.

"He's like a king for the whole group. He thinks he rules over both the sheep and the hens. He has a very big ego."

Dan Westman, a sheepdog breeder who shot and posted the video of his friends' remarkable bunny, said he was in awe when he first witnessed the phenomenon, noting Champis does the job even better than most dogs would.

"It's really incredible, it's a herding rabbit," he said. "He rounds them up, and if they get close

Westman, who's known both Champis and its owners for years, said the beige little mix-breed bunny had never been trained for the job but seemed to have learned the ropes all on his own.

"He's probably picked some of it up from watching the dogs," he said.

Despite his tiny size, Westman said the sheep seem to pay their minder a world of respect, letting him herd them around when he feels they need some moving.

What a befitting name for such an industrious rabbit! His heroic "feet" could almost put Peter Cottontail to shame. This reminds me of the movie "Babe," about a piglet who took on the role of herding sheep and came to be valued as more than just a hearty meal. Sounds like Champis may be on to something!

If you would like to see this "sheep bunny" in action, log on to YouTube at <http://bit.ly/Aixo8I> and marvel at his discipline and devotion. My mouth is still open.

INTERNATIONAL STONEWORKS CELEBRATES 30 YEARS IN BUSINESS

*International Stoneworks, Inc. Marks Its
30th Anniversary with a Big Bash*



Owners Rawi and Jacqueline Tabbah (center) stand with other International Stoneworks employees during their 30th year anniversary celebration bash held March 2, 2012.

INTERNATIONAL STONEWORKS, HOUSTON'S PREMIER NATURAL STONE RESTORATION AND MAINTENANCE BUSINESS, OPENED ITS DOORS IN 1982, AND AFTER 30 YEARS IN BUSINESS, PRESIDENT RAWI TABBAB WANTS TO THANK HIS DEDICATED EMPLOYEES AND CLIENTELE.



International Stoneworks organized an anniversary party at The Tasting Room at Uptown Park in March. It was an occasion to celebrate the company and its loyal commercial and residential customers.

Tabbah began his business by introducing one product to maintain natural stone without wax (the prevalent technique at the time). After he was given the opportunity to restore one marble bathroom floor with this new technique in a major Houston hotel, Tabbah expanded his business by performing stone restoration, maintenance work and selling various stone care products. International Stoneworks has grown over the years into a family-run business that has developed various non-wax restoration systems for both natural stone and tile, including a unique high speed grinding system.

International Stoneworks now sells its products nationally and internationally and while typically it performs stone and tile restoration in residences and major buildings in Texas, it has traveled as far as California, Florida and New Jersey.

"It is quite an accomplishment for any company to successfully stay in business for 30 years and I am very proud of International Stoneworks and its employees. I am always looking for ways for our business to improve

and grow and I enjoy teaching my daughter, who joined us in 2009, about the services provided by our company. I look forward to celebrating another 30 years!" said Tabbah.

About International Stoneworks, Inc.

International Stoneworks, established in 1982 by Rawi Tabbah, is Houston's premier natural stone restoration and maintenance business. Many prominent Texas buildings and homes have used International Stoneworks to clean, restore, protect, and maintain natural stones such as marble, travertine, granite (polished or flamed), slate, limestone (honed or polished), onyx, flagstone, terrazzo and other natural stones.

International Stoneworks has been an active member of the Marble Institute of America (MIA) since 1986 and has done work for commercial and residential customers in Houston and its surrounding cities, Dallas-Fort Worth, San Antonio and Austin for 30 years. Not only does it perform stone restoration services, it also sells safe and efficient products in order for clients to maintain their stone investments.

For more information on International Stoneworks, please visit <http://www.intl-stoneworks.com> or call 713-956-8291.

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