

ATTRACTION – TRAILS

TRAIL OF TEARS – THE BENGE ROUTE

Named for John Benge who led a detachment of approximately 1,100 Cherokee with 60 wagons and 600 horses on a route to Oklahoma by way of Tennessee near Dukedom, Tennessee through Hickman County, Kentucky and into Missouri and Arkansas. The group arrived in Columbus, Kentucky in mid-November 1838, and awaited transport across the Mississippi river by ferry to Belmont, Missouri.

The Cherokee spent several days camped around the ferry landing in the area of Columbus-Belmont State Park. The Benge Detachment is the only detachment out of the 13 that went overland that came through Hickman County, Kentucky. The Benge detachment was comprised of over 1,100 men, women, and children, with horses, buggies and wagons with supplies taking 10-days to cross the Mississippi River at Columbus “Iron Banks” by ferryboat.

For more information contact:

Kentucky TOTA Chapter
Alice Murphree
2380 Edwards Mill Rd
Hopkinsville KY 42240
Email: amurphree1139@bellsouth.net

Useful Links:

- Cherokee Nation - Trail of Tears - <https://www.cherokee.org/>
- History Channel - Trail of Tears - <https://www.history.com/topics/native-american-history/trail-of-tears>
- Kentucky's Trail of Tears - <https://www.nps.gov/trte/planyourvisit/kentucky.htm>
- National Trail of Tears Association - <https://www.nationaltota.com/>
- Wikipedia - Trail of Tears - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trail_of_Tears

KENTUCKY'S CIVIL WAR HERITAGE TRAIL

Columbus-Belmont State Park is part of the Kentucky Civil War Heritage Trails, a new state program to help visitors and residents understand how the conflict shaped the commonwealth as the nation observes the Civil War's 150th anniversary. The trails are not intended to be one continuous route, but instead to provide clusters of sites that can be visited conveniently in various regions. For more information about Columbus-Belmont State Park visit <https://parks.ky.gov/parks/recreationparks/columbus-belmont/>

Useful Links:

- Exploring the Civil War in Kentucky - https://www.kentuckytourism.com/custom404/?orig=/kentucky_civil_war/
- Kentucky Civil War Round Table - <https://kycivilwarroundtable.org/>
- Kentucky Historical Society - Civil War <https://history.ky.gov/?s=Civil+War>
- Kentucky in the American Civil War (Wikipedia) https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kentucky_in_the_American_Civil_War
- The Battle of Columbus-Belmont (Wikipedia) - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Belmont
- The Jackson Purchase During the Civil War - <http://jacksonpurchasehistory.org/jackson-purchase-during-the-civil-war/>

MISSISSIPPI RIVER TRAILS OF KENTUCKY

This trail is made up of a system of trails that provide more than 60 miles of riding adventure with some roads adjacent to wildlife management areas. Riverside trails accessing the environment created by the Mississippi River provides the best opportunity for wildlife viewing, birding, waterfowl, as well as deer and feral hogs.

Sometimes the trail is on roads and streets, atop a levee, and in other sections, the route is an off-road trail for bicyclers and walkers only. Somewhere along the Mississippi River, you can find a route to meet any purpose. The Trail system has been designated to generate tourism opportunities in four Kentucky counties bordering the Mississippi River.

KENTUCKY GREAT RIVER ROAD NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAY

From Hickman, Fulton County, Kentucky to Wickliffe, Ballard County— Old Man River, Father of Waters, “body of a nation,” Big Muddy: By any name, the mighty Mississippi River cuts a mythic figure across the American landscape. Read Mark Twain, listen to Showboat and dream of a trip down the Mississippi River or do what Huck Finn would have done if he’d had a driver’s license – travel alongside the Mississippi on the Great River Road, visiting shops, restaurants, and historical finds along the way.

The GRR changes direction often, crosses the river whenever it can, lingers in towns every other Interstate road has forgotten, and altogether offers a perfect analog to floating downstream. The GRR spares fleets of hurtling super-ton trucks and the Interstate parade of franchised familiarity, and rewards you with twice the local color, flavor, and wildlife (two- and four-legged) found along any alternate route. Lest these tangibles be taken too much for granted, every so often the GRR will skip over to a freeway for a stretch to help you sort your preferences. Savor, and enjoy.