THE SAM DAVIS HOME

The Sam Davis Home. 1999 Sam Davis Road, Smyrna, TN 37167 (615) 459-2341 or (888) 759-9524 • www.samdavishome.org

For hours of operation and rates of admission, please contact the museum or visit the Web site.

The best collection of log architecture in a historical setting is located at the Sam Davis Home in Smyrna. The main body of the two-story Davis house is constructed of red cedar logs covered with yellow poplar weatherboards. Just behind and to the left of the dwelling is the family’s log smokehouse. On the other side of the yard is the one-room overseer’s house, and beyond that lie the quarters where African Americans lived. At present, four small log buildings remain of the once numerous slave quarters of the plantation.

There are two other log structures on the property that have been moved from other sites in the county. One, the large dwelling in which Sam Davis was born, formerly stood off Almaville Road until it was relocated just behind the cemetery. The other small log building, now used for storage, is adjacent to the overseer’s house.

A Project of the Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area
Middle Tennessee State University

The Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area (TCWNHA) is a statewide program dedicated to the interpretation and preservation of Tennessee’s Civil War and Reconstruction legacies. Partially funded by the National Park Service, the TCWNHA is one of several programs administered by the Center for Historic Preservation at Middle Tennessee State University.

MTSU, a Tennessee Board of Regents university, is an equal opportunity, non-racially identifiable educational institution that does not discriminate against individuals with disabilities. AA/EOE
**HISTORIC LOG BUILDINGS**

The log buildings built by their forebears during the settlement period have fascinated Tennesseans for years. Constructed from native timber and stone, the log structures literally grew from the soil they stood on. These early dwellings consisted of two main types: the log cabin and the log house.

The log cabin, used by the people who first settled the backcountry, was usually a single, windowless room consisting of round, unpeeled logs joined at the corners with an easily formed saddle notch. Most cabins had puncheon floors and stick-and-dirt chimneys lined with clay and rock. Occasionally the hearth was located right on the dirt floor with only a smoke hole at the ridge. The log cabin's simplicity and iron-free construction fit perfectly in a heavily wooded rural environment.

The most common log house built in Rutherford County was the one-room type, usually 15 to 20 feet long, 14 to 18 feet wide and one story high. These buildings were the earliest permanent dwellings constructed by the farming families who migrated west. The houses were crowded, with plenty of children and often grandparents too, but they served their initial purposes of shelter and protection well.

Eventually, most frontier families outgrew their houses and longed for more space. Log buildings posed few obstacles to expansion because it was easy enough to construct another log room adjacent to the first. The single-room log house became the basic building block for further construction during the settlement years. The houses featured on this tour demonstrate several varieties that still remain scattered throughout the county.

The City of La Vergne acquired this hewn red cedar log house from a local family in order to provide residents with a visual reminder of their pioneer past as well as to preserve a rare surviving example of the early built environment of the area. The historic one-room dwelling, originally located off Stones River Road, had been obscured by several modern frame additions over the years and was not identified as a separate pioneer structure until after demolition had started on the larger house. Now standing in Bicentennial Park near a 19th-century graveyard, the log building is being carefully restored to serve as an educational experience for both members of the community and visitors alike.

**CANNONSBURGH VILLAGE**

Cannonsburgh Village, 312 South Front Street, Murfreesboro, TN 37130 (615) 900-0955 • www.rutherford-chamber.org

For hours and rates of admission, please contact the Visitors Center or visit the Web site.

Cannonsburgh, the original name of Murfreesboro, is a reconstructed village that began as a United States Bicentennial project. In order to showcase the heritage of the rural South, different types of historic folk buildings were purchased throughout the region and moved to the grounds. The structures are built from a variety of materials including log, frame, and brick. Illustrated above is a classic example of a log house with an open hall, commonly known as a dogtrot house. The log buildings at Cannonsburgh include a single-pen house, a two-story hall-and-parlor type house with a rear addition, a one-room schoolhouse, and several other examples of log architecture.

**AKIN LOG HOUSE**

Akin Log House, Bicentennial Park (La Vergne City Park) 5093 Murfreesboro Road (beside City Hall), La Vergne, TN 37080 (615) 793-3224 • www.lavergne.org

Hours: Daylight • Admission: Free