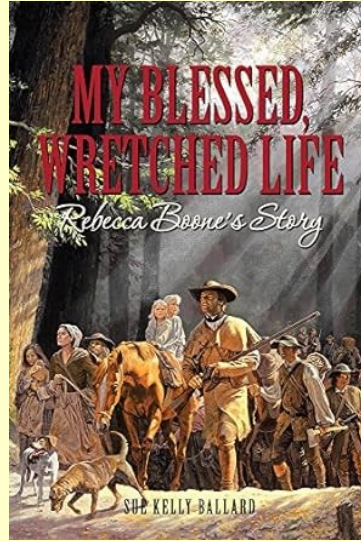


NEWS RELEASE
(March 2024)



Sue Kelly Ballard Kicks Off History Matters Speakers Series

SHELBY COUNTY, KY - Author Sue Kelly Ballard brought Rebecca Boone out of the shadow of her famous husband, Daniel Boone, with her historical novel, *My Blessed, Wretched Life, Rebecca Boone's Story*. Motivated by various reasons to capture Rebecca's life story in print, Ballard wanted to show, "Kentucky pioneer life through the eyes of a pioneer wife and mother and honor her contributions to the building of our nation."

In honor of **Women's History Month**, Ballard will present a program about *My Blessed, Wretched Life, Rebecca Boone's Story* on **Tuesday, March 19 at 6:30 pm** at the Carnegie Library Center, located at 731 College St. This program is free and open to the public, and presented in collaboration by the Shelby County Historical Society and the Shelby County Public Library.

Ballard had to dig deep in order to uncover information on Rebecca's life. While the exploits of men are well documented, the same cannot be said of women in the 18th century. Rebecca Ann Bryan was born on Jan. 9, 1739 in Virginia to Joseph and Hester Bryan. She moved to the backwoods of North Carolina at the age of ten with her Quaker grandparents. Best remembered as the wife of Daniel Boone, they married on Aug. 14, 1756 in North Carolina. Rebecca and Daniel had ten children, nine of which lived to adulthood. Without any formal education, Rebecca was reputed to be an experienced family doctor, leather tanner, sharpshooter, linen-maker, resourceful and independent. She was certainly every bit her husband's equal.

Ballard said she “spent two years doing research before I ever started writing. As was common in Rebecca’s time, there was very little written about the women. There were, however, volumes written about Daniel Boone. He was an incredible man smack in the middle of so many adventures.” Ballard studied countless books about Daniel, visited museums and historical sites associated with the Boones and early Kentucky settlers such as Cumberland Gap National Historical Park, Fort Boonesborough State Park, Martin’s Station at Wilderness Road State Park, retraced Boone’s Trace twice and attended re-enactments to form an accurate picture of Rebecca and the time period in which she lived.

Randell Jones, author of *In the Footsteps of Daniel Boone* and *Trailing Daniel Boone*, said of Ballard’s book, “Rebecca’s own story, as imagined creatively by Sue Kelly Ballard, is so captivating, so gut-wrenchingly realistic, so obviously genuine, we begin to acknowledge who really moved America westward: our pioneer mother ancestors.”

Other programs in the **History Matters Speakers Series** include: **April 23**, Paul Sims, retired US Secret Service agent who served under President Clinton; **May 7**, Squire Boone, presented by Mike Harrod; and **June 4**, Stuart Sanders, author of *Anatomy of a Duel*.

Ballard will have copies of her book for sale and to sign. For more information contact the Shelby County Historical Society at (502) 513-5555 or director@shelbykyhistory.org.