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## Westport cabin lovingly rebuilt

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The old, tiny cabin in Westport could hardly accommodate one person, with just 320 square feet on its main floor.

And it's not clear exactly who's lived there over the years, though some say one resident may have murdered a man there.



Wilbur Crick, left, and Dave Nachman work on a door frame of an old cabin being restored in Westport. By Michael Clevenger, The Courier-Journal

But the cabin, set off Ky. 524 not far from the Ohio River, is slowly but surely looking more as it did in the 1800s when it was first built. Nana Lampton is making sure of that.

"I thought as a favor to the ancestors it would be the right thing to do," said Lampton, the chairwoman and chief executive of Hardscuffle and American Life and Accident Insurance Co. of Kentucky.

Since July, a crew has been rebuilding the cabin to mimic its original look, and Lampton is overseeing the work. American Life and Accident Insurance Co. of Kentucky has owned the 700-acre property that is home to the cabin since the 1970s, Lampton said.

She said her father, Dinwiddie Lampton Jr., "believed in preserving land and keeping it whole and not just randomly developed."



As far as anyone can tell, Commodore Richard Taylor moved to the property in the 1790s after being wounded in the Revolutionary War. He brought his family, 100 slaves and his livestock and built a two-story log home he called Woodlawn.

The property also was home to a massive house, though now only the foundation remains.

"The house ended up being the most exceptional house on the river," Nana Lampton said, painting images of a hand-carved bathtub, handmade bricks and a 60-foot back porch where raucous parties with barge masters were held.



The house had a series of owners over the years, including one who was killed during his stay. Rumor has it a slave stole a ham from the man's house and later killed the man when he tried to get it back.

In the 1950s, the owner "tore down the whole house brick by brick and sold everything," Lampton said. "It's gone; there's no light fixture, there's no door."

Part of the foundation of the home now serves as a step up to the cabin. The cabin is probably one of several that were on the property, Lampton said.

In the last few years, the cabin looked as if it was close to collapsing, Lampton said.

"I thought I had better save it before it becomes dust and mud," she said.

A team including Westport resident and cabin builder Bill Pace has been working on the cabin for months, using wood from the original cabin and some found on the site.

The stone fireplace is in its original condition, and above it are some charred areas that show that the cabin may have suffered a fire at one point. The roof has been built using metal and conventional framing, and Pace said workers may install the original rafters.

Lampton said the company plans to maintain the property in its natural state. Much of the land is used for hay for cows on other company farms, she said.

The goal is simple, she said. It's "to restore the only historical place that's left" on the land.

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**COVER PHOTO:** Wilbur Crick, left, and Dave Nachman work on a door frame.

more photos

## Additional Facts

An online gallery is at [courier-journal.com/oldham](http://courier-journal.com/oldham)

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