



PARKER BEAM

For over a half-century, Parker Beam has been practicing his family's craft at Heaven Hill Distilleries of distilling, aging and selecting some of the world's most critically acclaimed American Whiskeys.

Nowadays, Parker is joined by his son Craig, who works alongside his father in much the same way as Parker did years before with his father, Earl, starting in 1960. Together, Parker and Craig are responsible for making sure that the Heaven Hill Bourbons and other American Whiskeys that are produced at the historic Bernheim Distillery possess the same high quality and consistent taste consumers have come to expect from such storied brands as Evan Williams, Elijah Craig, Larceny and Rittenhouse.

In addition to overseeing all aspects related to production, the two are also charged with safeguarding the world's second-largest supply of aging American Whiskey, an inventory of approximately one million barrels currently aging in Heaven Hill's 50+ open rick warehouses throughout Nelson and Jefferson counties.

Park Beam, Parker's grandfather and namesake, was the brother of James Beauregard Beam, better known as "Jim" Beam. It was Parker's father, Earl, who was the first to ply his trade at Heaven Hill. Earl, in turn, then turned the reins over to Parker in 1975. In doing so, Parker became the sixth-generation Beam to earn the title Master Distiller.

Craig, Parker's son, joined Heaven Hill in 1983, and with Craig firmly entrenched in the business as the seventh generation of Master Distillers, the family's continued legacy of Bourbon-making is assured.

Parker's legacy is further extended as a public advocate for Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS), or Lou Gehrig's disease. The Master Distiller was diagnosed with ALS four years ago and has worked closely with Heaven Hill to raise funds for Parker Beam's Promise of Hope Fund. The fund has raised over half a million dollars to support ALS research, care and awareness. The centerpiece of the fundraising effort includes the most recent editions of Parker's Heritage Collection, an upscale limited edition annual series. A percentage of profits from each bottle sold of the award-winning annual release is contributed to the fund.

"Both my wife, Linda, and myself have become very involved in the ALS Association and in raising awareness of the disease since I was diagnosed with it," noted Parker Beam. "We are pleased to be helping in any way we can and are most appreciative to Heaven Hill and the Shapira family for helping with such a generous financial contribution from the sale of the upcoming edition of Parker's Heritage Collection. We hope that others will become more aware of ALS and will find additional ways to help us in our fight."

To help support Parker and the ALS Association, please visit, www.alsa.org/ParkerBeamPromiseofHope.



OWSLEY BROWN II

During his tenure at Brown-Forman, Owsley Brown II helped carry a family legacy into its fourth generation, a tradition of business excellence that dates back to the company's founding in 1870. Beginning his career at Brown-Forman Corporation in 1968, he rose to become CEO in 1993 and added the title of chairman two years later. He retired from the CEO role in 2005, as chairman in 2007, and from the board of directors in 2008. While at the helm of Brown-Forman, he led efforts to dramatically expand its international presence and significantly modernize its marketing efforts. The strategy worked exceptionally well, as brands such as Jack Daniel's, Southern Comfort, and Finlandia became internationally recognized names, producing stellar financial returns.

"Owsley was a truly remarkable man with a brilliant mind. His combined analytical and creative talents enabled him to be both a visionary and a practical steward of the company's business," said Brown-Forman Chief Executive Officer Paul Varga. "He generously shared these unique gifts to build Brown-Forman into the global success it is today and to establish long-lasting friendships throughout our industry."

In addition to his service on Brown-Forman's board of directors, Brown also served on the board of directors of NACCO Industries, Inc. He served as both fund chairman and president of the Greater Louisville Fund for the Arts. He was a longtime board member of Actors Theatre of Louisville and has twice served as president during major fund drives. He also served on the boards of River Fields, Inc., the J.B. Speed Art Museum, the Kentucky Center, and The Partnership for Creative Economies. Beyond Louisville, Owsley was also on the International Council of Trustees for the World Conference of Religions for Peace.

Brown was a philanthropist and preservationist who, upon returning to Louisville in the late 1960s to work for Brown-Forman, subsequently led a group of investors who saved and rehabilitated a historic building at Sixth & Main streets, the first, but certainly not the last, time he helped preserve historic structures. In fact, Brown was a recipient of the J. Russell Groves Citizens Laureates Award, which honors individuals who have consistently encouraged the values of quality architecture in their community. The Actors Theatre building, Brown-Forman's property at 626 West Main, and the downtown Catholic Cathedral of the Assumption all stand as testaments to his ability to literally reinvent the Louisville cityscape, reinvigorating one of the country's most distinctive and livable cities.

In recognition of his philanthropy and preservation work, Brown received the Woodrow Wilson Award for Corporate Citizenship in June 2011. Brown and his wife, Christy, jointly received the Gold Cup Award for distinguished service to Louisville, presented in March 2011 by Greater Louisville, Inc., the local Chamber of Commerce.

"Owsley instilled a culture of enduring growth for which the board and Brown family are truly indebted. The continued strength of the company and its role as a responsible global citizen are the greatest testaments to his life's work," said Garvin Brown IV, chairman of Brown-Forman's board of directors.

Owsley Brown II was a graduate of Yale and obtained an MBA degree from Stanford University and then served as an intelligence officer in the U.S. Army at the Pentagon.

He is survived by his wife, Christy; three children, Owsley III (Victoire), Brooke Barzun (Matthew), and Augusta Holland (Gill); and nine grandchildren.



KATHLEEN DIBENEDETTO

Kathleen is a 24 year veteran of the original Jim Beam® Brands Co. She has committed much of her career to the development and advancement of the Bourbon whiskey category and was humbled when Rob Samuels, of Maker's Mark®, nominated her for the Bourbon Hall of Fame. Hired in November of 1991, Kathleen worked alongside Booker Noe on the launch of the Small Batch Bourbon Collection. Together with Booker Noe and his son Fred Noe, Kathleen was instrumental in the creation of Booker's, Knob Creek, Basil Hayden's and Baker's.

Kathleen began her career learning how to make Bourbon – this was demanded by Booker. His whiskies – the Small Batch Bourbon Collection – reflected pre-prohibition style Bourbon which could only be understood by actually experiencing the making of Bourbon from start to finish. Kathleen traveled to Kentucky and spent the time necessary working at both the Clermont and Boston (now Booker Noe) plants learning how to make good Bourbon whiskey.

Kathleen's entrepreneurial style challenged the accepted practices in marketing Bourbon, forging a new path by marketing the Small Batch Bourbons to the upscale consumer – focusing on education and inspiration which ultimately helped position the Small Batch Bourbon Collection as the driving force in the renaissance of Bourbon.

Most recently, Kathleen has focused on leading brand differentiation through education – helping those in the trade better understand the ever expanding spirits shelf. She achieved lasting impact through the creation of the award winning Virtual Spirit™ On-Line Education Platform reaching over 11,000 sales, distributors and bartenders across the U.S. and 45 countries.

Kathleen credits much of her professional development to the years she spent learning from Booker Noe and his son, Fred. With his father's gusto, Fred continues to drive, inspire and challenge her to preach the gospel of Bourbon wherever she goes. In the end, Bourbon brings a richness to life through history, stories, family, folklore and the people who make it. Kathleen is grateful to have had the opportunity to work alongside Bourbon Giants such as the Noe and Samuels families and is honored and privileged to be welcomed in to the Bourbon Hall of Fame family.



U.S. SEN. WENDELL FORD

The only Kentuckian to ever serve the Commonwealth as a State Senator, Lt. Governor, Governor, and U.S. Senator, Sen. Wendell H. Ford spent over a quarter of a century at the desk of Henry Clay, serving his public. Ford was first elected to office in 1965 to serve in the State Senate representing the Eighth District, which encompassed his native Daviess County.

In 1992, he made Kentucky history when he received the largest number of votes ever recorded by a candidate for elected office in the Commonwealth. As Ford rose through the ranks of government, on both state and federal levels, he always kept the interest of Kentucky first and foremost in his policy. One of Ford's most memorable quotes about his time in the Senate is "I wasn't interested in national issues, I was interested in Kentucky issues," which, of course, meant Bourbon.

Ford was a Kentucky Bourbon enthusiast. Friends recall a gathering in which Ford and his colleagues were sharing a bottle of some of the state's finest bourbon. When one member of the party went to close the bottle, Ford stopped him and said "when you're drinking something that good, you don't put the cap back on it," and thanks to the Senator's work, the industry has yet to do so.

During his tenure as US Senator, Ford was a relentless champion for America's Native Spirit. Ford authored countless letters to colleagues and government agencies advocating for the Bourbon industry. Serving as a liaison between the Bourbon industry and federal agencies, Ford led the charge against increased liquor taxes, and secured valuable regulatory exemptions. Intrusive government regulation threatened the sustainability of the industry and these exemptions continue to allow distilleries to invest in local operations and economic development today.

Over the years, Ford became known as a staunch supporter of the economic interests of Kentucky and as a national leader on energy, aviation, federal election reform, and other issues. Ford also served on the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources and was a ranking member of the Energy Research and Development subcommittee. He worked successfully to increase federal support for clean-coal technologies to strengthen the coal industry. Ford's accomplishments on behalf of Kentucky also include helping negotiate a buyout of tobacco surpluses and putting in place a mechanism to decrease imported tobacco.

For his commitment to community service Ford was named one of three Outstanding Young Men in Kentucky. He served as State president of the Kentucky Jaycees and later as national Jaycees president and international vice president. He received the highest service awards from both the March of Dimes and the Boy Scouts. He was honored by the U.S. National Guard Association, and received special commendations from the Veterans of Foreign Wars and the American Legion for his continuing service to veterans and their dependents.

Ford was born in Thurston, KY, on September 8, 1924. He graduated from Daviess County High School in Owensboro and later attended the University of Kentucky. He served in the U.S. Army in 1945–46 and in the Kentucky Army National Guard for 13 years. In retirement, Ford founded the Wendell H. Ford Government Education Center at the Owensboro Museum of Science and History where he taught middle and high school students about civics and public service. He died January 22, 2015.

He was married to the former Jean Neel of Owensboro, had two children, five grandchildren, and five great grandchildren.



DONNA NALLY

Donna Nally believes that Bourbon is the “American Spirit.” She has a strong passion for the Bourbon industry and loves telling people about Bourbon history in America, how Bourbon is made and how it affects the agriculture business. She had the great fortune of learning this from one of the best teachers in the Bourbon industry, Sam K. Cecil.

In 1978, Donna started work at Maker’s Mark Distillery as a part-time tour guide. In 1980, she became the Tour Director, and in 1990, she was promoted to Director of Tourism Public Relations. During her career, she joined many organizations both locally and across the state with the advantage of sharing Bourbon history with visitors from all over the United States. From 1980 - 2005, she served on various committees and councils promoting Bourbon and tourism: Kentucky Tourism Council, Marion County Chamber of Commerce, Lebanon/Marion County Tourist Commission, Nelson County Chamber of Commerce, Bardstown-Nelson County Convention and Visitors Bureau, Meeting Planners International, and the National Tourism Association.

In 1990, Donna worked with some of her Nelson County Tourism Associates in discussing the plans for a Bourbon festival. In September 1992, they were able to make it happen with the inception of The Kentucky Bourbon Festival. Their goal was to bring visitors into Bardstown and surrounding areas at a sleepy time of year. Since Bourbon was such a viable industry in Nelson County, it only made sense to explore and develop Bourbon history to share with the world. As one of the three original creators of the Kentucky Bourbon Festival, Donna continues with the Festival, volunteering, chairing and co-chairing many events for the last 23 years.

In 1998, while attending a conference with Doris Calhoun (Jim Beam) and Peggy Noe-Stevens (Woodford Reserve), the three discussed starting a “Kentucky Bourbon Trail.” Donna worked with Ed O’Daniel, former Kentucky Distillers’ Association President and Kentucky Bourbon Festival Hall of Fame Alumnus, on the first brochures. Her role was to contact all the distillers, gathering pertinent information to inform visitors about distillery details. Donna assisted in compiling the brochure and worked closely with O’Daniel in getting the Kentucky Bourbon Trail established.

Just two years after retiring from Maker’s Mark in May 2005, Donna moved to Wyoming with her husband, Steve, in 2007. Donna was hired by Wyoming Whiskey to implement public relations for tours, plan special events and tastings, and establish retail sales for a new gift shop. Once again, she was educating folks about the history of Bourbon in America and its new role in Wyoming.

Donna is quick to educate people on the responsibility and role of drinking Bourbon. You’ll often hear her say, “Responsible drinking protects yourself, others and the industry.”