



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**LIBRARY & LOCAL HISTORY MUSEUM COMMEMORATE
THE SHEPHERDSVILLE TRAIN WRECK OF 1917**

SHEPHERDSVILLE, KY - On December 20, 1917, what has been remembered as possibly the worst train wreck in L&N Railroad history took place in Shepherdsville only yards from the lot where Ridgway Memorial Library would be built many years later.

On that cold winter evening a century ago, the No. 41 train carried approximately one hundred passengers as it pulled into the station in Shepherdsville. No. 41's travelers were likely coming from a day of Christmas shopping, visiting friends and family, or running errands in the city, when the No. 7 Express train collided with them at twenty-five miles an hour. In a matter of moments, the No. 41 was demolished.

By the wee hours of the next morning, forty-nine people—ages ranging from sixty-nine to as young as eight months—were confirmed dead. The tale of the 1917 train wreck is a sad and unfortunate series of events.

Said local historian David Strange, "In one stunning moment of Christmastime tragedy, families and communities from Shepherdsville to Bardstown to Springfield were dramatically affected. In some cases, entire family lines were ended on that dark, snowy evening in which normally unimportant choices often made the difference between life and death."

The Bullitt County Public Library and Bullitt County History Museum will mark the 100th anniversary of this notable event on Wednesday, December 20th at Ridgway Memorial Library. The Centennial Commemoration will begin at 6:00 PM with introductory remarks, followed by a presentation by local historian and author Charles Hartley. Mr. Hartley will share the full tale of the tragedy, from the events leading up to the collision to the outpouring of compassion and

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Ridgway Memorial Library ▪ 127 N. Walnut Street ▪ P.O. Box 99 ▪ Shepherdsville, KY 40165

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charity demonstrated in the aftermath. Most of all, the event will honor the victims of this terrible tragedy.

At 7:00 PM, following the presentation and a question and answer period, the community is invited to a reception, where they can enjoy light refreshments and explore the wreck further through photos and video. Mr. Hartley's book, *Train Wreck: The Story of the Shepherdsville Train Wreck on December 20, 1917*, will also be available for purchase and signing, and additional local history information will be available from the Bullitt County History Museum and the Bullitt County Public Library system.

Ridgway Memorial Library is located at 127 N. Walnut Street in Shepherdsville, KY. For more information or to register for Centennial Commemoration, please visit www.bcplib.org/event/centennial or contact BCPL Reference Services at 543-7675 ext. 4.

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