Landings' history tied to McKay family

By Lance Cowan Banner Correspondent

BRENTWOOD - More than 200 years have passed since John McKay and his family first saw the Jand that became Williamson County.

As rapid development changes the face of Williamson County, McKay's significance is being remembered by the builders of an apartment complex south of Brentwood city limits.

"I hope we've given the community a feeling that we're here to stay and that we respect their history," said Doug Marshall of The Grupe Company of California, developer of the new 724-unit apartment complex, The Landings. "I

know I do."
Marshall researched the history of the 205 acres that once belonged to the McKay family.

A captain in the French and Indian War, McKay — prounounced MACK-ey — had traveled to Ten-nessee from South Carolina with his Indian wife and three sons in 1735, Marshall explained.

John and two of his sons, Thornas and William, owned land in the Franklin area. The third son, Alexander, lived in Spring Hill.

Thomas owned a tavern, which was probably attached to his home, located on Bridge Street. His tavern was said to have been the site of the first organizational meeting to form Williamson Coun-

ty, in 1799. The McKays were instrumental in the founding of the county, Marshall said. The first court met in the house of Thomas McKay in 1800. He was listed as being a member of the first jury.

William's son, John Porter McKay, purchased the farm now occupied by The Landings.

But John Porter McKay was more than a farmer and participated in area business.

He was elected Justice of the Peace in the late 1830s and continued serving in that capacity until his death in 1873.

As justice of the peace, Marshall said, McKay had jurisdiction over the trial of small civil suits

and of criminal cases involving minor offenses.

He was the administrator of several wills, which gave him power of attorney to sell a tract of land for an owner, gave him temporary guardianship of a minor as well as the responsibility of per-

forming weddings.

After the Civil War, the number of McKay family members peaked in Williamson County. According to Marshall, an 1878 map of the Franklin-Brentwood area shows only seven McKay family

households.
"We've found out quite a bit,"
Marshall said. "It adds to your
property when you can tie it to your history. I think this was quite appropriate."



Cleburne's Brigade, a Civil War re-enactment group from Nashville, marches through the Landings, a new apartment complex in BrentBanner photo by Lance Cowa

wood. The just-opened Landings was built on land once owned by the McKay family, the first settlers in Williamson County.