



West Virginia Archives & History News



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WWI Draft Registration Cards

From the Editor: _____

The West Virginia Veterans Archives is an adjunct to the West Virginia Veterans Memorial, collecting information about those honored on the Memorial located on the grounds of the State Capitol in Charleston. If you have a family member whose death in a 20th century military action is listed on the Memorial, you may provide photographs, documents, letters, clippings and biographies for inclusion in the Veterans Memorial Archives. The information collected by the West Virginia Veterans Archives is accessible through the West Virginia Archives and History Library. To learn more about the Veterans Memorial and its Archives, visit <http://wvmemory.wvculture.org/wvvetmem.html> (includes a searchable database) and <http://www.wvculture.org/history/wvets.html> or contact Pat Pleska, (304) 558-0230, pat.pleska@wvculture.org.

WORLD WAR I DRAFT REGISTRATION CARDS AVAILABLE SOON

The West Virginia Veterans Archives has obtained the World War I Selective Service Draft Registration Cards for West Virginia on National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) microfilm. The 59 rolls of microfilm will be housed in the West Virginia Archives and History

Library and soon will be available to the public for searching and copying.*

The Selective Service Act was passed on May 18, 1917, creating a temporary draft for military service in World War I, and the Selective Service Administration to administer the draft. Under the office of the Provost Marshall General, the states and territories established local boards which were responsible for registering and classifying men, taking into consideration medical fitness and manpower needs in certain industries and agriculture, as well as special family situations of individual registrants. Local boards were established for each county (or similar subdivision) in each state, and for each 30,000 persons in each city or county with a population greater than 30,000. In West Virginia, only three cities were large enough to have separate boards from their counties: Charleston, Huntington and Wheeling (Wheeling is incorrectly listed as Wheeling *County*, not Wheeling City). The following West Virginia counties merited two boards each: Fayette, Harrison, Kanawha, McDowell, and Marion. There is no national or statewide index by surnames. The researcher must first determine the most likely geographic location in which a man would have registered, then check the alphabetical list by surname under the board for that area. If the man's residence at the time of the draft is not known, the researcher will have to search county by county, or in the cities as needed.

Three registrations were conducted for World War I, with the first on June 5, 1917, for all men between the ages of 21 and 31. A second registration was called on June 5, 1918, for all men who had reached the age of 21 after the first draft of June 5, 1917. A supplemental registration, included in the second registration, was held on August 24, 1918, for those who became 21 years old after June 5, 1918. The third and final registration was held on September 12, 1918, for men age 18 through 45.

The information requested differed slightly for each of the three registrations, but the personal information recorded for each includes full name, home address, date of birth, occupation, name and address of employer, race, citizenship, personal description and signature. The first registration also asked for exact place of birth, dependents, marital status, previous military service and grounds for exemption. The second registration asked for exact place of birth, nearest relative and address (but not relationship), and father's birthplace. The third registration asked for name and address of nearest relative, but without specifying relationship.

When searching these records, one must remember that the registrations are for the draft only. Any man who enlisted before being drafted, or who already was a career military man before the conflict began, will not be included. Also, since these are not military service records, the information about each man who actually served ends with his departure for army training. That said, your chances of finding someone are pretty good, given that 24 million men living in the United States registered for this draft, approximately 98% of men under the age of 46. In addition, *all* men had to register, U.S. citizens or not, making the cards a good source for locating immigrant information.

If you are unable to visit the Archives and History Library, the staff will accept research letter requests for searches and copies of the West Virginia cards under the terms outlined in the State

Archives section of our Web site under *Library Services and Fee Guidelines* at <http://www.wvculture.org/history/rr.html#serv> and in our brochure. *Inquiries must include the most likely county (or city) where the man would have registered for the draft.* (If you do not know for sure that the person in question was residing in West Virginia during 1917-18, or have no idea where the person lived within West Virginia in that time period, you will have to do the research on that question first.) Although the Archives and History Library can not loan its microfilm rolls, World War I draft registration rolls for the 48 U.S. states, the District of Columbia, and the territories of Hawaii, and Puerto Rico can be obtained through LDS Family History Centers or through the National Archives and Records Administration. For more information, visit the NARA Web site: http://www.archives.gov/research_room/genealogy/military/wwi_draft_registration_cards.html.

*A separate supplemental set of microfilm rolls includes Indians, prisoners, the insane, those in hospitals and late registrants. The West Virginia Veterans Archives is currently considering purchase of the supplemental roll that includes these registrations for West Virginia.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION GRANTS AVAILABLE

Applications are now being accepted for historic preservation development grants through the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) of the West Virginia Division of Culture and History. Approximately \$450,000 will be awarded, contingent upon appropriation of funds from the West Virginia Legislature or the United States Congress. Eligible projects include the restoration, rehabilitation or archaeological development of historic sites listed on the State or National Register of Historic Places. Properties owned by church organizations or used exclusively for religious or governmental purposes are not eligible for funding. Privately owned properties are

eligible only in instances where there is evidence of public support or public benefit. The deadline for applications is March 31, 2004. For more information, call Pamela Brooks, SHPO, at (304) 558-0240, Ext. 720, or visit the Website at <http://www.wvculture.org/shpo/presnews.html>.

ROMAN CATHOLIC HERITAGE CENTER ESTABLISHED

The Bishop Bernard W. Schmitt Catholic Heritage Center has been established by the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston (West Virginia) to serve as the centralized repository for the archives and artifacts of the diocese. The Center is located in Wheeling, with the official opening tentatively scheduled for December 2004. "A new feature for the Diocesan Archives will be allowing the public to access many of its historic and sacramental records for historical and genealogical research," according to the Center's brochure. Current Diocesan Archives services available include historical research for the public, parishes, diocesan offices and institutions; presentations on the Diocesan Archives and records access; and sacramental records (baptism, marriage, death) searches. All research requests must be submitted in writing. Contact information:

Tracey Rasmer, M.A.
Diocesan Archivist
Bishop Bernard W. Schmitt
Catholic Heritage Center
Suite 201
2000 Main Street
Wheeling, WV 26003
Phone: (304) 230-2079, or 233-0880, Ext. 235
Fax: (304) 233-0890

[Editor's note: Those seeking to trace Roman Catholic immigrant ancestors may find the resources of this Archives especially helpful. The Center has participated in "History Day" for several years. This year our staff had the opportunity to meet Ms. Rasmer and found her to be knowledgeable and delightfully enthusiastic. The Archives and History Library has a copy of *Faith in the Mountains: A History of the Diocese*

of Wheeling-Charleston, 1850-2000, written by Tricia T. Pyne, the previous Diocesan Archivist.]

"HOOT OWL" 2004

Dig out your sleeping bag and sharpen your pencils! Mining Your History Foundation's next annual all-nighter in the West Virginia Archives and History Library is scheduled for March 26-27, 2004. Registration is required and must be postmarked by March 17. Forms may be picked up in the Library or printed from the Website: <http://www.rootsweb.com/~myhf/hootowl.html>. If you have questions, contact Pat Pleska: (304) 558-0230, Ext. 116, pat.pleska@wvculture.org.

2004 HISTORY HEROES

Those West Virginians honored as "History Heroes" during History Day 2004 for their efforts to preserve and promote West Virginia history at the grassroots level are featured on the Archives and History Website, accessible through a link in the "What's New" section, or directly at <http://www.wvculture.org/history/hisher04.html>.

WEST VIRGINIA'S CEMETERIES 2004 SHPO CALENDAR

The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), West Virginia Division of Culture and History, produces an attractive calendar each year featuring a subject of historical preservation interest. The 2004 topic is cemeteries. In addition to striking photographs and informative text illustrating each month's calendar page, the following articles are included: "West Virginia's Cemeteries and the National Register of Historic Places," "A Labor of Love: Protection and Preservation of Historic Cemeteries," and "Tombstone Iconography." A list of references and resources offers guidance to those who would like to learn more about the history and preservation of cemeteries. Calendars are free while supplies last. To obtain a copy, contact Lora Lamarre, SHPO, at the Division of Culture and History address given below; call

(304) 558-0240, Ext. 711, or e-mail
lora.lamarre@wvculture.org.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

*PLEASE CHECK OUR WEB SITE
(<http://www.wvculture.org/history>) FOR
GENEALOGICAL and HISTORICAL SOCIETY
MEETING ANNOUNCEMENTS, AND FOR
MORE COMPLETE INFORMATION ON
ACTIVITIES LISTED BELOW.*

**WEST VIRGINIA STATE MUSEUM CLOSED
FOR RENOVATIONS:** Reopening date will be
announced at a later time. The Cultural Center,
Charleston.

**MUSEUM IN THE PARK REOPENS AFTER
CLOSURE FOR EXHIBIT INSTALLATION,
FEBRUARY 5:** Chief Logan State Park, Logan.

LINCOLN'S BIRTHDAY, FEBRUARY 12: The
Archives Library will be open.*

PRESIDENTS' DAY, FEBRUARY 16: The
Archives Library will be open.*

"HOOT OWL" NIGHT, MARCH 26-27:
Mining Your History Foundation, WV Archives
and History Library, The Cultural Center,
Charleston.

**WEST AUGUSTA GENEALOGY FAIR,
APRIL 24:** Parkersburg/Wood Co Public Library.
**Only the Archives Library will be staffed--all
other Archives offices will be closed.* The West
Virginia Library Commission Library in The
Cultural Center is closed weekends and all
holidays.

ARCHIVES AND HISTORY STAFF

Fredrick Armstrong: Director

Debra Basham: Archivist (photographs, special
collections)

Constance Baston: Researcher (Veterans
Memorial Archives)

Greg Carroll: Historian (Civil War, Native
American history)

Dick Fauss: Archivist (microfilm and moving
images collection)

Elaine Gates: Library Assistant (microfilming
and microfilm repairs)

Joe Geiger: Assistant Director (Historian, Web
page)

Ed Hicks: Photographer (archival photography,
darkroom)

Mary Johnson: Historian (*West Virginia History*)

Terry Lowry: Library Assistant (Civil War)

Cathy Miller: Library Assistant (WV State
documents, periodicals)

Sharon Newhouse: Secretary

Harold Newman: Library Assistant
(microfilming, Revolutionary War)

Pat Pleska: Manager of the Veterans Memorial
Archives

Susan Scouras: Librarian (cataloging, Kentucky,
library collection, newsletter editor)

Jaime Simmons: Library Assistant (records of the
1700's and early 1800's, Pennsylvania)

Bobby Taylor: Library Manager

Nancy Waggoner: Office Assistant

Working on special projects: **Allen Fowler.**

Volunteers: **Carolyn Conner, Bill Kelley, Angela
Tolbert, Bob and Lucile Foster, John McClure,
and Carol de la Riva.**

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Nancy P. Herholdt, Commissioner

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