

West Virginia Archives & History NEWS

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WEST VIRGINIA
DIVISION OF
CULTURE & HISTORY

From the Editor:

*You may have noticed that the February 2005 newsletter did not include a New Titles list. I did not catalog any additions to the Archives and History Library collection in January, largely because I spent much of my time attending and analyzing demonstrations of Integrated Library Systems (ILS) vendors as our representative on the West Virginia Library Commission committee currently searching for a new system for in-house administrative and record keeping chores as well as an up-to-date Online Public Access Computer (OPAC) library catalog interface. In a year's time, if all goes as planned, both visitors to the Archives and History Library and online users through our Web site will be enjoying a much improved library catalog with enhanced search features. On a different note, as we begin Volume 6 with this issue, we wish *West Virginia Archives and History News* "Happy 5th Birthday!"*

WV Archives and History Receives Yearbook Collection

The West Virginia Archives and History Library is proud to announce the addition of *The Woodrow Clay Hamilton, Jr. Collection of West Virginia High School and College Yearbooks* to our Special Collections. Mr. Hamilton, of Rockville, Maryland, has been actively collecting yearbooks of West Virginia schools for several years. He has graciously donated the results of his efforts to the Library, and has indicated he will continue to add to the collection. An alphabetical list of the schools with the dates of the yearbooks included can be accessed on our Web site at <http://www.wvculture.org/history/yearbooks.html>. The county in which the school is located is indicated, as well as the actual title of the yearbook. For example: East Bank H.S. (Kanawha Co., WV), "Kanawhan," 1940, 1948, 1964, 1965.

When visiting the Archives and History Library you may request copies of yearbooks from Closed

Stacks for use in the Reading Room. If you are unable to visit the Library and would like to request a search of yearbooks, please write a research letter to us providing the name of the person, the name of the school and the yearbook dates to be searched, enclosing a check or money order with the appropriate research fee (\$5.00 for a WV resident or \$15.00

for a non-WV resident). Please check the collection list online first to be sure the school and year you want are available.

In order to create a single comprehensive yearbook collection, we will be removing our cataloged yearbooks from the Library catalog and interfiling them with the

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High School and College Yearbooks: A Neglected Genealogical Resource

By Clay Hamilton

High school and college yearbooks are an available, often unique, but little used source for the genealogical researcher. Although genealogists often overlook this material as they immerse themselves in other records, yearbooks can speak to us in many ways. High school and college yearbooks contain one-of-a-kind, named pictures of our ancestors,

examples of their signatures, and evidence of the social and economic times in which they lived and matured.

These yearbooks, published widely throughout the United States and at American schools in many foreign countries, are available in academic and public libraries, local

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 historical society collections,¹ some private collections,² and, increasingly, in public markets. Most high schools, colleges, and universities have back issues of their yearbooks that researchers can use. And, for the most part, pictures of, and other information about, individual students contained in these yearbooks, especially those published before the mid 1950s, are unique—they are found nowhere else.

Most high schools in the United States began publishing yearbooks in the early decades of the 20th century.

West Virginia State Archives Joins National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom

The West Virginia State Archives has been accepted as a member facility of the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom program. The program was established by the National Park Service under the federal National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Act of 1998, and seeks to preserve Underground Railroad sites and to commemorate and to educate the public about this aspect of 19th-century American history.

The Underground Railroad was a secret network of people, places and routes used by enslaved blacks to escape bondage in the United States. Although western Virginia was not a major slave-holding area, in 1860 more than 18,000 enslaved blacks lived in the counties that would later become West Virginia. Located across the Ohio River from the state of Ohio, and bordering on Pennsylvania, both free states, western Virginia served as a passageway for blacks fleeing from bondage in other slave-holding areas.

According to the Network to Freedom program's web page (<http://209.10.16.21/TEMPLATE/FrontEnd/index.cfm>): *The National Park Service is implementing a*

Many of these yearbooks, especially those published in schools located in larger towns and cities, came about as an outgrowth of publishing high school periodicals or newspapers. Yearbooks from urban high schools tend to be large, professionally done, and contain pictures and information about a wide range of school activities. High school yearbooks from rural and county district schools generally are more modest in size and scope. Rural high schools had fewer students, smaller budgets, and a smaller market for yearbook sales. However, they do not take a backseat

national Underground Railroad program to coordinate preservation and education efforts nationwide and integrate local historical places, museums, and interpretive programs associated with the Underground Railroad into a mosaic of community, regional, and national stories. . . . The Network will also serve to facilitate communication and networking between researchers and interested parties, and aid in the development of statewide organizations for preserving and researching Underground Railroad sites.

In becoming accepted as a member of the Network to Freedom program, the West Virginia State Archives joins Harpers Ferry National Historical Park as the only members in West Virginia. "We're pleased to be recognized as a facility on the Network to Freedom and look forward to serving as a connection with other network members in the region and to supporting the identification and recognition of other historic sites in West Virginia," said Fredrick H. Armstrong, Director of Archives and History, West Virginia Division of Culture and History. For additional information, contact Mr. Armstrong at (304) 558-0230.

to urban schools in their value as a genealogical resource. Both urban and rural high school yearbooks can be sought out at the high school, at local libraries and historical societies, and at some state archives. College and university yearbooks made their appearance much earlier. Some of the larger universities (i.e., Yale) began publishing yearbooks just after the Civil War. And, almost all of the colleges and universities were publishing yearbooks by the late 1800s. These books grew larger and more elaborate as student enrollments increased, so that by the 1960s, college and university yearbooks were almost all of oversized formats with thematic artistic designs. Almost all contain pictures not only of the seniors, but of all the undergraduate classes as well. College and university libraries hold these yearbooks.

Public markets offering high school and college yearbooks are growing. High school and college yearbooks were first collected by those seeking youthful pictures of persons who later became celebrities—movie stars and the like. But, interest in school yearbooks has increased markedly in recent years as non-celebrity editions came to be collected. Antique shops now feature these books and thrift shops and yard sales are other, often less expensive, sources for them. But the richest lode of yearbooks is found on Internet auctions. Of these auction sources, the most extensive and popular is eBay. At any given time, one can find 1200 to 1500 high school and college yearbooks up for bid, from all over the United States. Bidding on some books is brisk—especially if they contain an early picture of a movie star or if they are first editions from a well known university.

The pictures found in yearbooks are generally not available from any

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 other source. This is especially true for yearbooks published before the mid 1950s. (Everyone remembers taking home those hideous picture proofs for parents to select “the best.”) While this was true for you, it was not the case for your parents and grandparents. Such proofs were not done for them. The youthful picture of your parent or grandparent that appears in the yearbook is a unique likeness.

High school and college yearbooks have other features valuable to the genealogical researcher. Yearbooks are a rich source of signatures—especially maiden signatures. All of us conducting genealogical research have encountered the signature of father, grandfather and great-grandfather, usually on an official document of one sort or another. But how many times have we found the signature of a great grandmother before she was married? Not all yearbooks contain such rarities, but they remain the best source for such signatures.

Some collections, especially those containing large numbers of yearbooks from a variety of schools, can provide many fine examples of the publisher’s art. From Art Nouveau chromo-lithographs and interior design of the early 1900s, to

Historic Preservation Tax Incentive Workshop

Mannington Main Street and Mannington Historic Landmarks Commission are sponsoring a Tax Incentive Workshop on April 21, 2005, at the North Marion Senior Center located off Route 250 in Mannington. The workshop is open to anyone interested in learning more about the positive benefits of preservation. For more information or to register, e-mail Leisha Elliott at manmain@citynet.net.

Art Deco covers of the 1920s and 1930s, yearbooks show how significant decorative styles permeated popular culture throughout the United States.

Similarly, such collections can speak even to the nation’s economic health. Generally, yearbooks published in the late 1920s show the richness of design and quality of material reflective of good economic times. But beginning in 1931 or 1932, a dramatic reduction in size and quality becomes evident. In fact, some schools were forced to suspend production of their yearbooks altogether. Others limped through the Depression Era with paper covers and simple black and white formats.

Whatever the format, yearbooks provide details about individuals found nowhere else. Even if an individual’s picture or signature cannot be found,

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2005 West Virginia Legislation of Interest

Following are a few bills introduced in the First Regular Session of the 77th Legislature. HB indicates “House Bill” and SB indicates “Senate Bill.” The purpose of each bill is stated exactly as it appears in the text of the bill itself. You can read the full text of a bill and track its progress on the West Virginia Legislature Web site at <http://www.legis.state.wv.us/>.

- **HB 2005/SB 145:** Budget Bill [Editor’s note: This is a status quo budget.]
- **HB 2149:** The purpose of this bill is to require the accumulation of one and one-half years of instruction in the study of the Declaration of Independence and other founding American historical documents, including the Bill of Rights, before high school graduation. The bill also requires that students study the historical, political and social environments

the story of his/her life will be enhanced by the general information on the school environment. Locating a yearbook can be challenging, but the reward is great.

1. For example, in Virginia, the Bath County Historical Society holds about two dozen issues of its county high school yearbook. In the more populous Prince William County, the Ruth E. Lloyd Information Center at the Bull Run Regional Library, holds more than 250 yearbooks from its county high schools.

2. The writer maintains an archive of about 1,000 yearbooks from West Virginia high schools and colleges. [News Editor’s Note: Mr. Hamilton donated his collection, now 2,050 yearbooks, to the West Virginia Archives and History Library in January 2005.]

at the time these documents were generated and it prohibits study of social problems, economics, foreign affairs, the United Nations, world government, socialism or communism until basic courses in American state and local geography and history are completed.

- **HB 2154:** This bill adjusts allocation of funds from the Racetrack Video Lottery. [The West Virginia Veterans Memorial and the West Virginia Veterans Memorial Archive were funded through this part of the code.]
- **HB 2306:** The purpose of this bill is to require that the annual reports of state agencies be placed on CD-Rom for distribution. [Editor’s note: CD-Rom format *only* required.]

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- **HB 2622:** The purpose of this bill is to add the State Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinator as a member of the Capitol Building Commission. The bill prohibits any substantial physical changes to the buildings and grounds of the State Capitol without the approval of the Commission and compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. In addition, the Commission is given authority to hire employees, enter into contracts for studies and to levy fines for violations of the article.
- **HB 2867:** The purpose of this bill is to institute a “Celebrate Freedom Week” and require the instruction in the study of the Declaration of Independence and other founding American historical documents, including the Bill of Rights, during this week.
- **SB 167:** The purpose of this bill is to create a tax incentive for the creation, construction or enlargement of tourism attractions or amenities. The credit operates to allow the taxpayer to recover up to 25% (or, in the case of bed and breakfast facilities, 50%) of qualified investment in a tourism attraction or amenity by offsetting up to 80% of consumers sales and service tax collected by the taxpayer from customers over a period of either five or ten years at the election of the taxpayer. [Editor’s note: Historic preservation sites would qualify.]
- **SB 206:** Text of the bill: “No Revolutionary War, War of 1812, Civil War, Spanish-American War, World War I, World War II, Korean War, Vietnam War, Persian Gulf War, Native American, or African-American historical monuments or memorials erected on public property of the State may be renamed. No

street, bridge, structure, park, preserve, reserve or other public area of the State dedicated in memory of or named for any historic figure or historic event may be renamed or rededicated on behalf of a political officeholder until that officeholder has been deceased for a minimum of ten years. No person may prevent the public entity responsible for the monument or memorial from taking proper measures and exercising proper means for the protection, preservation and care of these monuments, memorials or nameplates.”

- **SB 285:** The purpose of this bill is to continue the Division of Culture and History until July 1, 2007, pursuant to the West Virginia Sunset Law. This bill is recommended by the Joint Committee on Government Operations.
- **SB 348/HB 2779:** The purpose of this bill is to clarify when audits are required of state funds or grants.
- **SB 431:** The purpose of this bill is to place the West Virginia Cultural Center under the authority and control of the General Services Division of the Department of Administration.

New Titles

- An Index to Deaths, Marriages, and Some Miscellany in the Martinsburg Statesman, Statesman-Democrat, and Valley Star 1870–1913, (of Martinsburg, West Virginia):** Virginia E. Magruder, 2004.
Moundsville: Robert W. Schramm, 2004.
They Walked the Streets of Fame: The Parkersburg Jacksons: Linda Brake Meyers, 2004.
Documented History of Martinsburg and Berkeley County: Don C. Wood, 2004.
Hedgesville, North Mountain and Back Creek Bridge During the Civil War, 1861–1865: James R. Droegemeyer, 1997.
The Thomas Family of St. Albans, West Virginia: 2nd edition, Bob Thomas, 2004.
Plum Blossoms: Edgar E. Noel, 1968.
A History of West Virginia: Anna Egan Smucker, 2003.
No Star Nights: Anna Egan Smucker, 1989.
Smoot Family Reunion, 1974: The Reunion, 1974.
Smoot Family Reunion, 1989: The Reunion, 1989.
The Status of Women in West Virginia: Politics, Economics, Health, Rights, Demographics: Amy B. Caiazza, editor, 2002.
Today’s Furnace Blacks: Isaac Drogin, [United Carbon Company], 1948.
Annual Report: United Carbon Company, 1927.
Annual Report: United Carbon Company, 1952.
Harpole Cousins: The Harpole-Harpold-Harpool Families in America: 1986 Update: B. C. and Agnes S. Harpole, [1986?].
Collections Management Handbook: The West Virginia State Museum, Charleston, West Virginia: Paula J. Martinac, Janice B. Luth and Charles W. Morris III, 2003.
Fannin of Wayne County, West Virginia: Ralph Hall Sayre, 2004.
The Core and Foundation of Wayne County (West) Virginia: Ralph Hall Sayre, 2004.
Princeton Times Pictorial History: Princeton, West Virginia, Circa 1850–1991: Princeton Times, 1991.
Hero of the Rhine: The Karl Timmermann Story: Ken Hechler, 2004.
Washed Away: The Flood of July 2001: Devastation in Pictures: Bill Archer, [2001?].

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Civil War in the New River Valley, 1861–1865: 3 One-Day Driving Tours: David Bard, 2004.

The Career of Roy Bird Cook (1886–1961): Gerald W. Nottingham, 1984.

Donations

New Kentucky Titles donated by Mining Your History Foundation

Rowan County Kentucky: A Pictorial History: Rowan County Historical Society, 2001.

Marriage Bonds of Pike County, Kentucky, 1822–1865: Clyde Runyon, 1984.

Minutes of the Pond Creek Regular Baptist Church: A Digest: [Pike County, KY], Clyde Runyon, 1985.

Carter County History, 1838–1976: Carter County Bicentennial Committee, 1976.

The History of Elliott County, Kentucky: Elliott County History Book Committee, 1985.

Martin County, Kentucky, Marriages, 1860–1900: Oscar T. Atkins, 1993.

Martin County, Kentucky Families in 1880: Oscar T. Atkins, 1993.

Pike County, Kentucky Marriages 1866 to 1900: Oscar T. Atkins, 1993.

Obituaries of the New Salem Association of Old Regular Baptist Church, 1895–1950: Joe R. Skeens, [no date].

Memories From the Past: Rowan County Cemeteries: Six volumes, Rowan County Historical Society, Dewie E. Black, editor, 2002.

Two Downtown Revitalization Institute Training Sessions Remain

As previously featured in the August 2004 issue of *West Virginia Archives and History News*, the Downtown Revitalization Institute, a partnership effort of Main Street West Virginia and Coalfield Community Development, is offering training opportunities for economic development of downtown communities in West Virginia. The two-day sessions are intended to assist economic development organizations; state, county and city government officials; chambers of commerce; nonprofit boards and directors, and all citizens interested in revitalizing the downtown districts of their communities. If you or your organization is deeply involved in preserving and promoting a single site, explore the possible benefits of linking your efforts with the greater community to everyone's mutual benefit. Two sessions remain: Lewisburg on April 5–6, and

Wheeling on June 1–2, 2005. Registration for each two-day session is \$70.00. For further information, contact Marsha Geyer, Main Street West Virginia, (800) 982-3386, or mgeyer@wvdo.org.

[The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) is offering scholarships of up to \$100 to individuals to attend the workshop in Lewisburg. Eligible applicants must be members of a historic landmarks commission designated as a Certified Local Government (CLG) or elected officials or staff members of a city or county with a historic landmarks commission designated as a CLG. Applications must be postmarked no later than March 21, 2005. For information, visit the SHPO web site at <http://www.wvculture.org/shpo> or contact Chris Knorr, SHPO assistant director, at (304) 558-0240, ext. 156.]

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Hamilton Collection. Yearbooks of state institutions currently housed in the State Documents Collection will also be interfiled with the Hamilton Collection in the near future. If you have yearbooks you would like to donate, please contact Debra Basham, Archivist, (304) 558-0230, Ext. 702, debra.basham@wvculture.org.

Web Sites of Interest

Civilian Federal Employee Records

Civilian federal employee records dating primarily from 1900 to the present are retained by the National Personnel Records Center when the employee leaves federal service, and are available to family members after the employee has passed away. Visit the Center's Web site at http://www.archives.gov/facilities/mo/st_louis.html, or you may send a request for an employee's record, enclosing a copy of the death certificate, to:

NARA, National Personnel Records Center

Civilian Personnel Records
 111 Winnebago Street
 St. Louis, MO 63118-4199

Quaker Meeting Index

Tom Hill, author of *Monthly Meetings in North America: A Quaker Index*, has placed the database behind the 1998 Revised Fourth Edition of his work online at www.quakermeetings.com. Searchable by meeting name, county, state or province, or general word

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Mark Your Calendars!

Terry Lowry,
Civil War author and historian,
and Archives staff member, to speak
March 16, at 7 p.m.,
at The Cultural Center.

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search, the database includes basic historical information about every official North American group of the Religious Society of Friends that Mr. Hill has been able to locate. Both past and extant meetings are included. Although no individuals are listed, Mr. Hill provides the source of records for each entry. If a researcher locates a meeting in an area where a known Quaker lived, that researcher can contact the source in hopes of finding additional information. Mr. Hill also accepts submissions of new information for the database.

African American Ancestry Web sites

- NARA's (National Archives and Records Administration) Genealogy Pages: African American Research http://www.archives.gov/research_room/genealogy/research_topics/african_american_research.html
- Freedmen's Bureau Online: <http://www.freedmensbureau.com/>
- Africa WorldGenWeb Page: <http://www.worldgenweb.org/africa.html>
- African-Native American History and Genealogy Home Page: <http://www.african-nativeamerican.com/>
- Afrigeneas: <http://www.afrigeneas.com/>
- Civil War Soldiers and Sailors System: U.S. Colored Troops: <http://www.itd.nps.gov/cwss/>

Jenkins Plantation Museum to Host Cultural Heritage Program on "The Slaves of Green Bottom"

The Jenkins Plantation Museum, located in the Green Bottom Wildlife Management Area of Cabell County, will host a cultural heritage program on the history of slavery on the Jenkins Plantation on Saturday, March 12, at 1:00 p.m. The event is free and open to the public. Stan Bumgardner, Acting Director of Museums for the West Virginia Division of Culture and History, will talk about why so little is known about the slaves who lived at Green Bottom and what became of them after the Civil War. The museum itself is the former home of Confederate Brigadier General Albert Gallatin Jenkins. The house, noteworthy for its architecture, was built in the tradition of Tidewater,

E-Podunk: The Power of Place is a new database featuring place names throughout the United States. The site is searchable in several different ways, and offers a variety of information types and resources. The site also includes color images of many vintage post cards featuring towns, buildings, institutions and scenes all over the country. One could spend quite a bit of time wandering through this site at <http://www.epodunk.com>.

Battle of Blair Mountain Site Public Meeting

The West Virginia State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) will host a public meeting to discuss the proposed Battle of Blair Mountain Site nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. The meeting will be held at 7 p.m., March 18, at the Museum in the Park, Chief Logan State Park. SHPO staff members will be present to answer questions about the nomination process and property owner's issues. The meeting is free and open to the public.

The Friends of the Mountains and interested local citizens prepared the nomination and submitted it to the West Virginia SHPO. SHPO is reviewing it and is planning to take the nomination before the State Archives and History Commission, the state review board for the National Register program, in May. If the commission endorses the nomination, it then will be forwarded to the National Park Service in Washington, D.C. for final review and approval.

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plantation house and enjoy light refreshments.

For more information call Matt Boggess, Site Manager of the facility, at (304) 762-1059, or Stan Bumgardner at (304) 558-0220. You may also visit the Web site at <http://www.wvculture.org/sites/jenkins.html>.

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.

“SNAPSHOTS IN TIME,” March: “A Photographic History of West Virginia,” an exhibit
of photographs from the State Archives, Museum in the Park, Chief Logan State Park, Logan.

“SLAVES OF GREEN BOTTOM,” March 12:
Stanley Bumgardner, Jenkins Plantation Museum, Lesage.

“WEST VIRGINIA ADJUTANT GENERAL PAPERS, 1861–1865,”
March 16: Terry Lowry, State Theater, The Cultural Center, Charleston.

HISTORY DAY, March 17: The Capitol and The Cultural Center, Charleston.

BATTLE OF BLAIR MOUNTAIN SITE PUBLIC MEETING, March 18:
National Register of Historic Places nomination discussion led by West Virginia State Historic
Preservation Office, Museum in the Park, Chief Logan State Park, Logan.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION DEVELOPMENT GRANTS APPLICATION DEADLINE,
March 31: West Virginia State Historic Preservation Office, The Cultural Center, Charleston.

“HOOT OWL” RESEARCH NIGHT, April 1–2: Mining Your History Foundation,
West Virginia Archives and History Library, The Cultural Center, Charleston.

DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION INSTITUTE TRAINING, April 5 and 6: Lewisburg.

**PETROLEUM HISTORY INSTITUTE 2005 INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM,
ON THE HISTORY OF THE OIL INDUSTRY,” April 6–9:** Morgantown.
(For more information visit http://karl.nrcce.wvu.edu/calendar/PHI_05_info.pdf
or contact Larry Woodfork at woodfork@earthlink.net.)

AN EVENING WITH JULIAN BOND: CIVIL RIGHTS NOW AND THEN,
April 13: Charleston Civic Center Little Theater, Charleston.

TAX INCENTIVE WORKSHOP, April 21: Mannington Main Street
and Mannington Historic Landmarks Commission, Mannington.

WV GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY GENEALOGY FAIR, May 21: Blue Creek.

VANDALIA GATHERING, May 27–29: The Cultural Center and the Capitol Complex, Charleston.

MEMORIAL DAY, May 30: Archives Library will be *closed*.

DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION INSTITUTE TRAINING, June 1 and 2: Wheeling

**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.

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West Virginia
Archives & History
NEWS



We would love to hear from you.

Let us know what you find helpful in the newsletter, and what new topics you would like covered.

Contact *West Virginia Archives and History News* Editor Susan Scouras, (304) 558-0230, Ext. 742, or by e-mail: susan.scouras@wvculture.org.

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