Archives Photo Collection Database

From the Editor:

We are approaching Memorial Day in May, when families remember and honor their departed loved ones in many ways. If part of your tradition is to clean and decorate grave sites, refer to the September 2000 issue of Archives and History News, especially the article by Jeanne Robinson titled “What to Do and Not to Do When Working in a Cemetery.” Whether you are visiting a cemetery on private property, or you are the owner of the land in which a cemetery lies, remember that West Virginia law guarantees access to all cemeteries for the following purposes: visiting graves, maintaining a grave or a cemetery, burying a deceased person, or conducting genealogical research. This does not include the right to operate motor vehicles on private lands unless there is a road or adequate right-of-way that permits access, and the owner has given written permission to use that means of access. Be aware that all persons exercising this right of access are liable to the owner of the private land for any damage. If no inventory has been made of your family cemetery, please consider compiling a list of those buried there, along with whatever information is available from grave markers and cemetery records. Fill out a West Virginia Cemetery Survey Form from the State Historic Preservation Office, (304) 558-0240, and donate a copy for the Archives as well.

WEST VIRGINIA ARCHIVES PHOTOGRAPH COLLECTION DATABASE

Coal Life Collection Now Online

West Virginia Archives and History proudly introduces a new online searchable database of its photograph collection, accessible through our Web site at www.wvculture.org/history. In recognition of the role of the coal industry in the history of West Virginia, the Archives has chosen the Coal Life Collection as the initial online entry. The Coal Life Collection contains nearly 700 prints collected as part of the Coal Life Project, a combined effort between the Division of Culture and History, Huntington Museum of Art and Oglebay Mansion Museum. The Coal Life Project resulted in an exhibit that premiered in The Cultural Center in Charleston in 1981, later was displayed in other parts of the state, and was shown at the 1982 World’s Fair in Knoxville, TN.

Among the photographs acquired for the project and now housed in the Archives collection are views of several McDowell County coal towns, including Gary and Coalwood; Consolidation Coal/Fairmont and Department of Mines prints; and an assortment of photographs that document labor strife, mine disasters, and prominent individuals in the state’s coal history. Most of
these images are now available for viewing online. The photographs themselves may be viewed by appointment in the Archives and History Library.

In the coming months, other collections will be added to the database, which currently contains only a small fraction of the more than 100,000 images held in the State Archives. The photograph collection covers a variety of topics in West Virginia’s history, including the administrations of the state’s governors in the last fifty years. The Divisions of Natural Resources and Tourism are also well-represented in the Archives’ holdings. Already online as part of the John Brown Database are images included in the Boyd B. Stutler Collection relating to John Brown and the Civil War. Unfortunately, no comprehensive, image-by-image guide to the entire Archives Photograph Collection exists, a situation we hope to remedy over time with the online database.

The Archives began a concerted effort to copy photographs statewide in 1984. Working in collaboration with various organizations (such as many of the genealogical and historical societies that receive this newsletter), the project has taken Archives staff members to 33 counties and added thousands of images to the collection. Unaffiliated individuals have also donated photographs or allowed the Archives to copy their personal collections. This combined effort has yielded images relating to business and industry, education, politics, social and athletic events, historic homes and other structures, as well as many other activities around West Virginia at the state or local level.

For further information regarding the West Virginia Archives photocopying project, refer to the June 2001 issue of Archives and History News, accessible online through our Web site or in hard copy either in the Archives and History Library or in genealogical/historical society libraries and around the state. For further information regarding the Archives Photograph Collection, contact Debra Basham, Archivist. To arrange a photocopying session in your area, contact Fredrick H. Armstrong, Director of Archives and History.

(Compiled from Archives and History Photograph Collection Database Introduction and from a press release issued by Ginny Painter, West Virginia Division of Culture and History.)

JENKINS PLANTATION MUSEUM TO CLOSE FOR REPAIRS

West Virginia Division of Culture and History’s Jenkins Plantation Museum at Green Bottom will be closed April 6 through May 10 for minor repairs, including weatherproofing and work on the electrical wiring. The museum will reopen with regular operating hours (Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.) on May 11 in time for the annual Civil War Camp.

CIVIL WAR CAMP JENKINS PLANTATION MUSEUM

Jenkins Plantation Museum in Green Bottom will host its annual Civil War Camp on May 11 from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The living history program is free and open to the public. Spectators will get a glimpse of how soldiers lived and fought during the Civil War. Mock skirmishes and demonstrations will be held at the top of the hour from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Author Mike Weaver will give talks at 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. on Confederate General Albert Gallatin Jenkins’s raid on Mechanicsburg, PA, and will sign copies of his historical fiction book on the same subject. Additional attractions scheduled include a Civil War-era artifact display, special hands-on activities for children, and tours of the historic Jenkins House. A representative of Archives and History will be present from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00
p.m. with information on applying for unclaimed West Virginia Civil War medals.

For more information, visit the Museum Web site at www.wvculture.org/sites/jenkins.html or contact Stan Bumgardner at (304) 558-0220, Ext. 121.

“HOOT OWL” NIGHT IN THE ARCHIVES AND HISTORY LIBRARY A GREAT SUCCESS!

Thank you to the Mining Your History Foundation for conducting their annual “Hoot Owl” program in the Archives and History Library last month. Thirty-five researchers enjoyed being “locked in” the Library for the night with several experts on hand for assistance with their genealogical research. The event raised $800.00 which will be used to purchase forty rolls of microfilmed West Virginia county birth, death and marriage records to replace worn-out, damaged and/or illegible copies in the Archives Library. In addition, the Library received approximately $250.00 in copy fees during the all-nighter.

Pat Pleska would love to hear from you if you have suggestions on specific rolls of microfilm in the Archives collection that need to be replaced. You may jot down the film information on sheets in the Library’s Microfilm Storage Room, call Pat at (304) 558-0230, Ext. 116, or e-mail her at pat.pleska@wvculture.org. Watch for the next “Hoot Owl” in Spring 2003!

1930 WEST VIRGINIA CENSUS NOW AVAILABLE IN THE ARCHIVES AND HISTORY LIBRARY

The long-awaited 1930 West Virginia Census is now available in the West Virginia Archives and History Library. Due to the anticipated heavy initial interest in these microfilmed records, security needs, and the lack of an index for 48 of the 55 counties, we have established the following guidelines for equitable use of the microfilm rolls:

- The Population rolls and Soundex rolls are kept at the Copy Desk (the desk nearest the Library entrance door) and must be requested from and returned to the Copy Desk staff.
- 60 minute time limit per Population roll.
- 30 minute time limit per Soundex roll.
- Only one roll of microfilm (either Population or Soundex, not both) per patron at a time.
- To request a roll of film, complete a green call slip for the specific roll and give the slip to the staff member on duty.
- If the roll you need is currently in use, sign the Waiting List. The staff will let you know the approximate time the roll will be available.
- Reels must be returned to the Copy Desk and checked in by the staff. Do not leave rolls unattended on the reader or the desk. If you have not finished searching the roll and no one else has signed the Waiting List for it, you may check out the roll again. Once you have turned in a roll, you may check out another one.

As soon as demand dies down and indexes are available to reduce actual searching time, the 1930 Census will be placed in the Microfilm Storage Room along with the other Census and Soundex rolls. Until that time, we appreciate your patience with our attempts to be sure everyone has a fair opportunity to use this new and valuable resource for West Virginia genealogy.

This newsletter is a publication of:

The Division of Culture and History Archives and History
The Cultural Center
1900 Kanawha Boulevard East
Charleston, WV 25305-0300
(304) 558-0230
Nancy P. Herholdt, Commissioner
NEW TITLES

The History of South Charleston: South Charleston History Book Publication Committee, 1995.
The 1900 US Census of Wayne County, West Virginia: Jo Ann Smith, [no date].
Ohio County (WV) Index, Volume 8: Card Index to All Ohio County Courts’ Case Files & Loose Papers, Part 1, 1776-1825: Kenneth Fischer Craft, Jr., 2001.

West Virginians Worth While in Cartoons: West Virginia Cartoon Association, [no date]. Request from staff.
Memories and Photos of Mullins, West Virginia: Volumes 3, 4, and 5: John W. “Jack” Feller, [various dates].
1998 Election Cycle Report: West Virginia People’s Election Reform Coalition, [no date].
2000 Election Cycle Report: West Virginia People’s Election Reform Coalition, [no date].

NOTE: If you can not find a book recently listed as a new acquisition on the New Title shelves, please ask the library staff to check the Bindery List for you. We are sending approximately sixty unbound/paperback titles for binding this month. We expect to have them back on the shelves the first week of June.

TAKE A WALK THROUGH HISTORY

West Virginia Historic Preservation Week
May 13-19, 2002

The following activities will be featured in a brochure to be issued by the State Historic Preservation Office the first of May. Archives and History News is giving you a jump on selecting which activity you will attend during Preservation Week, and in planning which of the on-going tours you will take this spring and summer. We at Archives and History commend the historical societies, preservation groups and civic organizations that have taken advantage of the grants and other assistance provided through SHPO to preserve and promote the historic assets of their communities. Don’t forget to send three copies of each of your brochures to the Archives and History Library for the collection!

EVENTS

• Belle Boyd Birthday Party, May 18, Belle Boyd House, Martinsburg.
• Morgan Cabin Spring Festival, May 19, Bunker Hill.
• Preservation Workshop, focusing on National Register of Historic Places and on historic rehabilitation tax credits, Friends of Sutton Historic District. Contact Angela Damastus, (304) 765-0146.

• Preservation Week 2002: Fayette County Historic Landmarks, May 17. Television program on WWRN and WMTV, 10:00 a.m.
• Preservation Awards Ceremony and Guest Lecture, May 18, Shepherdstown. Dick Brown will speak about a recent preservation project to preserve the old vault in the Elmwood Cemetery. Contact Cindi Cook, (304) 876-0910.
• Hike to Historic Henry Clay Iron Furnace, May 18, Coopers Rock State Forest. Part of “Celebration of the Outdoors” activities. Registration required. Contact Adam Polinski, (304) 296-0533, or visit www.coopersrock.org.

WALKING/DRIVING TOURS

• Self-guided Walking/Driving Tour of Historic Martinsburg and Berkeley County. Brochures at Belle Boyd House, or call Don Wood, (304) 267-4713.
• Guided Walking Tour of Sutton Downtown Historic District, May 18. Contact Angela Damastus, (304) 765-0146.
• Guided Walking Tour of Fayetteville Historic District, May 17. Contact Howard Edwards, (304) 574-1500.
• Self-guided Historic Walking Tour of Lewisburg Historic District. Contact 1-800-833-2068.
• Self-guided Historic Walking Tour of Shepherdstown Historic District. Brochures at the Shepherdstown Visitor’s Center and in Historic Shepherdstown Museum, or contact Cindi Cook, (304) 876-0910.
• Guided Walking Tour of the St. Albans Historic District, May 18. Contact Neil Richardson, (304) 727-5972.
• Self-guided Historic Walking Tour of Downtown Morgantown Historic District. Brochures at the office of Main Street Morgantown. E-mail mainst@westco.net or visit www.downtownmorgantown.com.
• Self-guided Historic Walking Tour of Lockwood Historic District, Summersville. Brochures at the Summersville Chamber of Commerce office, or contact Wilma Richardson, (304) 872-5726.
• Guided Walking Tour of Downtown Richwood Historic District. Contact Wilma Richardson, (304) 872-5726.
• Guided Tour of Summersville Historic Landmarks. Contact Wilma Richardson, (304) 872-5726.
• Walking Tour of Arthurdale Historic District. Visit www.arthurdaleheritage.org or contact Jennifer Bonnette, (304) 864-3959.
• Self-guided Historic Walking Tour of Courthouse Square Historic District in Historic Beckley. Contact Beckley Main Street, (304) 256-1776.
• Self-guided Historic Walking Tour of Beverly Historic District. Brochures available at the Visitors Center in the Bushrod Crawford Building, the Randolph Historical Society Museum, or call Historic Beverly Preservation, (304) 637-7424.
• Self-guided Historic Walking Tour of Julia Ann Square--Parkersburg Historic District. Call B. W. Luford, (304) 422-4535, or e-mail brucel@citynet.net.

OTHER PROJECTS

• Greenbrier County Visitor’s Guide. Guides available at the Greenbrier Convention and Visitor’s Bureau, or call 1-800-833-2068.
• Barn Preservation in Jefferson County. Jefferson County Historic Landmarks Commission is accepting volunteers to assist in an ongoing survey of historic barns. Leave a message for Bill Theriault, (304) 876-3321.

For more information about West Virginia Preservation Week or for copies of the new brochure, contact Lora Lamarre, (304) 558-0240, e-mail lora.lamarre@wvculture.org, or write to:

West Virginia State Historic Preservation Office
The Cultural Center
1900 Kanawha Blvd. East
Charleston, WV 25305-0300.

DONATIONS

As usual, almost all of the titles in this month’s New Title List were donated by the authors or the organizations which published the works. We especially thank Hackers Creek Pioneer Descendants and Kenneth Fischer Craft, Jr. for continuing to donate copies of all of their publications to the Archives and History Library. Wes Cochran donates copies of all of his work and the funds required to have the titles bound.

ARCHIVES AND HISTORY NEWS
EDITOR LOOKING FOR TOPICS FOR FUTURE NEWSLETTERS

Do you have unanswered questions concerning West Virginia history resources, genealogy research, or the Archives and History Library? Is there a portion of the Web site that you don’t understand? Do you have corrections and additions to the “Missing WV County Records” article in the February 2001 newsletter (with followup in the August 2001 issue)? Please send any suggestions for future newsletter articles to susan.scouras@wvculture.org (no research requests, please) or call Susan Scouras, (304) 558-0230, Ext. 742.

DON’T THROW IT AWAY!!
Spring cleaning season is upon us, so yard sales can’t be far behind. If you are cleaning out pamphlets, books, old West Virginia newspapers and magazines, city directories and telephone books, photographs, postcards, letters, etc., please check with Archives and History staff before disposing of such ephemera. (Did you know that “ephemera” is actually the name of the genus for mayflies, a short-lived insect, but in library terms refers to items of only short-term or limited interest? For historians and genealogists, nothing is truly ephemeral!) You may have items we can add to the Archives Collection. Items do not have to be very old to be of interest to us. We always want to hear about your finds; however, please do not send items to us without checking with us by mail or phone.

We have accepted in the past from yard sale scavengers, flea market fanatics or family members cleaning out estates include community festival programs, scrapbooks, high school yearbooks, church histories and directories, business ledgers, glass catalogs, and tourism brochures. We have also picked up copies of several volumes of Comstock’s West Virginia Heritage Encyclopedia, as well as West Virginia-related biographies, histories and maps, from book sales of area libraries and charitable organizations. We are interested in duplicate copies of some items and in each edition of a title for the collection, so often we are grateful to acquire additional copies of things already in the library.

RESEARCH REQUESTS TO WEST VIRGINIA ARCHIVES AND HISTORY

We always have a backlog of research request letters to be answered by our staff. If you write to us, please be as specific as possible in making your request and provide as much background information as you can. Allow a minimum of four weeks for a reply. The staff works on letters as they have time in addition to their other duties. Staffers who specialize in certain areas have even greater backlogs, such as Jaime Lynch for 18th century genealogy, and Greg Carroll for Civil War records and medal applications. In-state requests need not enclose payment (except with medal applications), and will be billed for a minimum of $2.50 for copies and postage. Out-of-state requests must include a $10.00 research fee per two specific requests, and will be billed for additional copying costs if necessary. If you are having problems formulating your request, or are not receiving satisfactory replies to your research letters, whether through Archives and History or any other resource, refer to Archives and History News, December 2000 issue, “Asking the Right Question.” You can read the text of the newsletter on our Web site, or in the libraries of many of the historical/genealogical societies across the state. If you do not have personal access to the Internet, visit your local public library.

PLANNING TO VISIT THE ARCHIVES AND HISTORY LIBRARY?

If you are planning a trip to the Archives Library, particularly if you are traveling some distance, be sure to check our Web site or to call us at (304) 558-0230 to be sure we are open. We are open most, but not all, holidays. Directions and parking information are also on the Web site.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS
“WE HOPE TO SEE YOU SOON”: A Collection of West Virginia War Letters. Exhibit in the Archives and History Library, The Cultural Center, Charleston.

JENKINS PLANTATION MUSEUM CLOSED FOR REPAIRS, APRIL 6-MAY 10.

6TH ANNUAL MID-OHIO GENEALOGY FAIR, APRIL 20. Parkersburg.


“LAND RECORDS,” APRIL 20. Program presented by KVGS, Marmet.


PRESERVATION WORKSHOP WITH ARCHIVES AND HISTORY STAFF, MAY 11. Parkersburg Public Library. Sponsored by Wood County Historical and Preservation Society.


GENEALOGICAL FAIR, MAY 11. West Virginia Genealogical Society, Elkview.

PRESERVATION WEEK, MAY 13-19. “Taking a Walk Through History.” Events throughout the state. (See article in this issue.)

PRIMARY ELECTION DAY, MAY 14. Archives Library will be open.*


MEMORIAL DAY, MAY 27. Archives Library will be closed.

WEST VIRGINIA DAY, JUNE 20. Archives Library will be open.*

INDEPENDENCE HALL’S WEST VIRGINIA DAY CELEBRATION, JUNE 20. Wheeling.

KENTUCKY RESEARCH WORKSHOP, JUNE 29: Eastern Kentucky Genealogy Society, Ashland.

*Only the Archives Library will be staffed--all other Archives offices will be closed. The State Museum will be open any time the Archives Library is open. 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 Archive)
Greg Carroll: Historian (Civil War, Native American history)
Dick Fauss: Archivist (microfilm and moving images)
Elaine Gates: Library Assistant (microfilming and microfilm repairs)
Joe Geiger: Historian (Web page)
Ed Hicks: Photographer (archival photography, darkroom)
Mary Johnson: Historian (West Virginia History)
Terry Lowry: Library Assistant (Civil War)
Jaime Lynch: Library Assistant (records of the 1700’s and early 1800’s, Pennsylvania)
Cathy Miller: Library Assistant (WV State documents, periodicals)
Sharon Newhouse: Secretary
Harold Newman: Library Assistant (microfilming, Revolutionary War)
Pat Pleska: Manager (Veterans Memorial Archive)
Susan Scouras: Librarian (cataloging, Kentucky, library collection, newsletter editor)
Bobby Taylor: Library Manager
Nancy Waggoner: Office Assistant
Working on special projects: Allen Fowler.
Volunteers: Caroline Connor, Bill Kelley, Dale Newhouse, Angela Tolbert, Bob and Lucile Foster, and Barry Williams.