



WEST VIRGINIA  
DIVISION OF  
CULTURE & HISTORY

## From the Editor:

*We invite you to visit us in late June and July to view our newly refurbished Archives and History Library Reading Room and to tour the new West Virginia State Museum.* For return visitors to the Reading Room, we know the upcoming policy changes accompanying the installation of lockers for personal items, and the resulting prohibition on bringing certain materials into the Archives, will require adjustments on both your part and ours. Most institutions charged with the preservation and protection of our historical records and cultural heritage have similar policies. Your patience and your understanding are appreciated as we strive both to preserve the collections and to make them available for public use.

## Archives Library Reading Room Closing for Redecorating June 8-19

The Archives and History Library Reading Room is scheduled to close June 8 through June 19, 2009, for painting and for installation of new carpet and window blinds. A bank of lockers and a restroom for Library patron use will also be installed outside the Library entrance door. The Archives and History Library staff will be available for telephone and e-mail consultation during this time. Keep an eye on our Web site at <http://www.wvculture.org/history> and your local media for announcements. **Plans are subject to change. We urge you to call us at (304) 558-0230 before coming to ensure that the Library will be open to serve you, particularly if you are making a special trip or traveling a distance to visit us around these dates.**

The addition of the lockers will allow some changes in Reading Room usage policies for the greater security and preservation of West Virginia Archives and History Library collections. As in most

archival libraries, patrons will be required to leave personal items in lockers while researching in the Reading Room. Patrons will also be requested to wash their hands in the adjacent new restroom before

handling collections. Once the new policies have been finalized, they will be posted on our Web site, <http://www.wvculture.org/history>, and published in *Archives and History News*.

### RMPB Announces Grant Recipients

The Records Management and Preservation Board (RMPB) has awarded \$304,626 in grant funds to 28 West Virginia county commissions for county records management and preservation projects through its County Records Management and Preservation Grants program. The board reviewed submissions and made its recommendations in January for projects to improve management, storage conditions, access, and preservation of public records held in several county offices. Following official letters announcing the successful grants, RMPB staff began conducting courthouse site visits to provide technical assistance in setting up the

grant project, which officially begins with the new fiscal year July 1.

The RMPB, with its continuing interest in addressing records storage and management issues in the courthouses, announced three grant criteria in its invitation to applicants last September. The three criteria were: conduct a total records inventory and condition assessment, and develop a master records management plan for county records; remove non-records and accumulations of records having reached or exceeded required retention periods; and provide proper and improved storage of and access to permanent records or records with required

*Continued on the next page*

*Continued from page 1*

retention periods in excess of 25 years. The latter will include physical storage to provide proper shelving and/or archival records boxes (10"x12"x15"), and security/preservation microfilm, with a digital imaging combination for enhanced access.

Funding for the County Records Management and Preservation Program is from the filing fees collected by county clerks and deposited in the special Public Records and Preservation Revenue Account. The funds serve as an incentive to county officials to improve the management of their public records and conditions for their preservation. The RMPB was created by the West Virginia Legislature in 2000 to develop uniform county records management programs. Its primary focus is to establish guidelines and provide technical assistance to address the needs of the records of county governments through a uniform records management system, and to further encourage adoption of these goals through the county records grant program. In pursuit of these goals the RMPB authorized a statewide survey and

## Vital Registration Office Web Site Updated

The West Virginia Dept. of Health Vital Registration Office has redone its Web site and relocated to a new url: <http://www.wvdhhr.org/bph/hsc/vital/>. A Genealogy Information section, <http://www.wvdhhr.org/bph/hsc/vital/genealogy.asp>, has been added. The Genealogy information page includes a listing and explanation of records and indexes available through Vital Registration, a brief history of vital records in West Virginia, an explanation of who may obtain records, and a list of links relevant to West Virginia genealogical research. The introduction

report on the current state of county records, developed rules and a County Records Management Manual for county offices, and sponsored records management workshops for county officials and staffs. The next grant cycle and priorities will be announced September 1, for the fiscal year 2010-2011.

For more information about the Records Management and Preservation Board's annual grant program or the work of the RMPB, contact Joseph N. Geiger, Jr., director of the West Virginia State Archives for the West Virginia Division of Culture and History, by phone at (304) 558-0230, ext. 165, by e-mail at [joe.geiger@wvculture.org](mailto:joe.geiger@wvculture.org), or by mail at Records Management and Preservation Board, West Virginia Division of Culture and History, Building 9, 1900 Kanawha Boulevard, East, Charleston, WV 25305-0300. Information can be accessed electronically at [www.wvculture.org/history/rmpb/rmpb.html](http://www.wvculture.org/history/rmpb/rmpb.html). [Division of Culture and History press release. For list of recipients and a description of their

Archives and History News  
 is available on the  
 Archives and History Web site  
<http://www.wvculture.org/history/ahnews/ahnews.html>

states: "Although the records maintained by the Vital Registration Office are of genealogical importance, **the office is not the best source of genealogical data in West Virginia state government.** The best resource of genealogical information is the West Virginia Division of Culture and History's Archives and History Library..." [Emphasis theirs.] Links are provided to the West Virginia State Archives page and to Archives and History's Genealogy Corner page of

*Continued on the next page*

projects, go to <http://www.wvculture.org/history/rmpb/rmpbgrantsannouncement2009.html>]

## Correction

In the April 2009 issue, we incorrectly identified the donor of Upshur County books. The books were donated through the generosity of the **Upshur County Historical Society**. For more information about the Society and a complete list of publications available, visit <http://www.upshurcountyhistoricalsociety.com/> or write them at P.O. Box 2082, Buckhannon, WV 26201. Upshur County has not had a genealogical society for many years now, and that society's publications were absorbed by the Upshur County Historical Society. We apologize for the error.

## West Virginia Golden Horseshoe Reunion on June 19

All Knights and Ladies of the West Virginia Order of the Golden Horseshoe have been invited by Governor Joe Manchin III and First Lady Gayle Manchin to return to Charleston for a reunion on June 19, 2009. First awarded in 1931, over 15,000 West Virginia youngsters have earned the Golden Horseshoe Award by demonstrating their knowledge of West Virginia history through the Golden Horseshoe test administered annually to eighth grade students in West Virginia schools. To learn more about the Golden Horseshoe program and to access a searchable database of award recipients visit <http://www.wvculture.org/history/wvmemory/goldenhorseshoe.html>. If you are a Knight or a Lady and would like to attend the reunion, you must register by May 15. Online registration and printable registration forms are available at <http://www.wv.gov/ghreunion/Pages/default.aspx>.

Continued from the previous page links. Whether you are seeking certified copies of West Virginia state certificates, or researching your family history, this new Web site is easier to use and more informative than the previous one.

## Darby's Universal Gazetteer

*Editor's Note:* Okay, I can't deny it any longer—I am a nerdy historian and geeky librarian down to the bone. I am fascinated with *Darby's Universal Gazetteer*, 1827, which I have been perusing off and on for a month now, and from which I published a few entries in the April 2009 issue. My curiosity runs rampant, as many entries generate more historical and etymological areas to be explored! What made Sherrard's Store in Hampshire County important enough to be listed in a *universal* gazetteer, on the same page with Shepherd's Isles in the South Pacific and Sherborough, a fort in African Guinea? I love the language, describing White Sulphur Springs as a "watering place," and the pleasant countryside of Algiers as a place "thither the inhabitants resort in the hot seasons." Hmm, is this the origin of the word "resort" for a restorative vacation locale? I had to do some research to figure out that a "post village" is apparently a community along a "post road" (road over which mail is transported) that therefore receives some postal services, but does not have a true post office.

Bits of useful historical information are like buried treasure, such as the Harpers Ferry entry that states that the Armoury employs 260 men. Recent world events give new meaning to the following statement in the entry for Algiers: "Their chief subsistence is derived from their piracies, for they make prizes of all Christian ships that are not at peace

## New West Virginia State Museum Opening

The new West Virginia State Museum will open to the public on Sunday, June 21, 2009, and also will be open the following Monday, June 22, from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. After the initial opening days, the museum hours will be Sundays, noon to 5:00 p.m., and Tuesday through Saturday,

9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., closed Mondays. To view photographs of the work as it has progressed over the past months, visit <http://www.wvculture.org/museum/renovate.html>. For more information, call the Division of Culture and History, (304) 558-0220.

---

### Permission to reprint articles from *West Virginia Archives and History News* is granted, provided:

(1) The reprint is not used for commercial purposes, and (2) the following notice appears at the end of the reprinted material: Previously published in *West Virginia Archives and History News*, [Volume and issue numbers], [Month, Year], a publication of the West Virginia Division of Culture and History.

---

with them." I read entries of the political changes and economic status of various states in Europe, Asia and the Middle East and recognized that I was looking at the germination of future wars. Reading between the lines is as fascinating as the actual words. I hope you enjoy this ongoing look at our world as it was viewed over 180 years ago.

The full title of this reference book by William Darby is *Darby's Universal Gazetteer, or, A New Geographical Dictionary: containing a description of the empires, kingdoms, states, provinces, cities, towns, forts, seas, harbours, rivers, lakes, mountains, capes, &c. in the Known World; with the Government, Customs, and Manners, of the inhabitants; the extent, boundaries, and natural productions of each country; and the trade, manufactures, and curiosities of the cities and towns*. The West Virginia Archives' copy is "The second edition, with ample additions and improvements," published in Philadelphia by Bennett & Walton in 1827.

Last month we printed a few entries for features now in West Virginia, with spelling and punctuation unchanged. Here are some more: **Harper's Ferry**, pstv. [post village] Jefferson cty. Virg., on the right bank of Potomac river, at the mouth of

Shenandoah river, 65 ms. by land above Washington. The justly celebrated passage of the Potomac, through the Blue Ridge, is at this place. The U.S. has an armoury and manufactory of arms established here, in which about 260 men are annually employed.

**Shepherdstown**, pst. Jefferson cty. Virg., lying on the S. side of Potomac river, Opposite to Sharpesburg, 16 ms. NW. of Harper's ferry, and 34 NE. of Winchester. Pop. 1000.

**Sherrard's Store**, and pst. [post office] Hampshire cty. Virg. 98 ms. a little N. of W. from W. C.

**White Sulphur Springs**, and pst. watering place, Green-brier cty. Virg., 205 ms. W. from Richmond.

**Alleghany or Appalachian Mountains**, a long range of mountains in N. America, between the Atlantic, the Mississippi, and the lakes; extending nearly parallel with the sea coast; 900 ms. in length, and from 60 to 200 in breadth. The different ridges which compose this immense range have different names in the different states. Advancing from the Atlantic, the first ridge of Pennsylvania, Virginia, and N. Carolina, is the Blue Ridge, or S. Mountain, from 130 to 200 ms. from the sea, and about 1200 feet mean elevation from

*Continued on the next page*

its base. Between this and the N. Mountain, spreads a large fertile vale. Next lies the *Alleghany*, which is the principal ridge, and has been descriptively called the *back-bone* of the U.S. Beyond this is the long ridge called the Laurel Mountains. From these several ridges proceed innumerable nameless branches or spurs. The Kittatiny, or Blue Mountains, run through the northern parts of New Jersey and Pennsylvania. These mountains are not, in general, confusedly scattered and broken, rising here and there into high peaks overtopping each other, but stretch along in uniform ridges, scarcely 2 m. high. They spread as they proceed S. and some of them terminate in high perpendicular bluffs. Others gradually subside into a level country, giving rise to the rivers which run southerly into the gulf of Mexico. In the back parts of Pennsylvania, scarcely one acre in ten of this range is capable of culture; but this is not the case in all parts; for numerous tracts of fine arable and pasture land intervene between the ridges, having generally

a rich black soil. Indeed, some of the mountains will admit of cultivation almost to their tops.

## Vital Research Records Update

Barbour, Boone, Brooke, Doddridge, Hancock, Mercer and Tyler County births, deaths and marriages are now online in the West Virginia Vital Research Records database [<http://www.wvculture.org/vrr>]. Berkeley County births and deaths and Fayette County births and marriages are online also. We have not yet put up anything for Kanawha, Marion, Mason and Ohio counties. These may take more time because, for example, in Marion County death records, the left hand page has most of the information, but the righthand page has the date of death, and the pages were filmed as separate images, requiring extensive "cutting and splicing" to join the two parts of each record. Berkeley marriages will be up soon. Other counties that have slave records present problems

because the slaves were recorded without surnames. As a rule, the older and larger counties have both a greater number of records and a greater percentage of problems with the digitization and transcription of those records, and therefore will take awhile longer to appear online.

Since the last batch of county and state records were added to West Virginia Vital Research Records (VRR), the server for the database is running at near capacity during the busiest times of each day. At best, the system is sluggish, and at worst has timed out before producing results pages. Users have complained that images sometimes will not open, or that they can not move from one page of results to the next. Archives and History is aware of these problems, has addressed them by defining both the issues and a solution, and is awaiting a decision on a new server. In the meantime, users who encounter difficulties are asked to try again at a different time of day, particularly early morning, when fewer researchers are online.

## 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.

**"PUT YOUR FAMILY'S MEMORIES IN A SCRAPBOOK,"** May 12: A West Virginia Archives and History *Preserving Your Family History* workshop, presented by Lynn Barney, Archives and History Library, The Cultural Center, Charleston.

**"LINCOLN, WEST VIRGINIA HISTORY AND THE CIVIL WAR,"** May 14: WV Independence Hall, Wheeling. For more information, visit <http://www.wvculture.org/news.aspx?Agency=Museum&Id=1104>.

**ORDER OF THE GOLDEN HORSESHOE REUNION RESERVATION DEADLINE,** May 15: Go to <http://www.wv.gov/ghreunion/Pages/default.aspx> to register online, or to print off a form to mail.

**FESTIVAL OF NATIONS CELEBRATING WEIRTON'S 100TH ANNIVERSARY,** May 16: Weirton Millsop Community Center, Weirton. Sponsored by the Weirton Area Museum and Cultural Center. For more information, call Pamela Makricosta, (304) 748-1549.

**VANDALIA GATHERING,** May 22-24: The Capitol Complex and the Cultural Center, Charleston.

**MEMORIAL DAY,** May 25: Archives Library will be *closed*.

## Calendar of Events

**WV ARCHIVES AND HISTORY COMMISSION MEETING, May 29:** Morgantown.

**ARCHIVES AND HISTORY LIBRARY REDECORATING, June 8-19:**

Archives Library will be *closed*.

**TRAIN DAYS CELEBRATION, June 18-19:** Museum in the Park, Logan State Park, Logan.

For more information, visit <http://www.wvculture.org/eventdetail.aspx?Id=864>.

**ORDER OF THE GOLDEN HORSESHOE REUNION, June 19:** The Cultural Center.

**“SEX IN THE CIVIL WAR,” June 19:** Dr. Thomas Lowry, lecturer, Beverly Heritage Center, Beverly.

**WEST VIRGINIA DAY HOLIDAY, June 19:** Archives Library will be *closed*.

**WEST VIRGINIA DAY, June 20:** Archives Library will be open\*.

**WEST VIRGINIA DAY AT INDEPENDENCE HALL, June 20:** Independence Hall Museum, Wheeling. Visit <http://www.wvculture.org/eventdetail.aspx?Id=838>.

**WEST VIRGINIA DAY AT MUSEUM IN THE PARK, June 20–21:** Museum in the Park, Logan State Park, Logan. Visit <http://www.wvculture.org/eventdetail.aspx?Id=863>.

**LEMUEL CHENOWETH WEEKEND, June 20–21:** Beverly.

For more information, visit <http://www.historicbeverly.org>.

**WEST VIRGINIA STATE MUSEUM PUBLIC OPENING, June 21:** The Cultural Center, Charleston. For more information, call (304) 558-0220.

**RACE AND ETHNICITY IN THE CIVIL WAR, CIVIL WAR SEMINAR, June 25–28:**

The George Tyler Moore Center for the Study of the Civil War, Shepherd University, Shepherdstown.

For more information, visit <http://www.shepherd.edu/gtmcweb/cwcenter.htm>.

**“LISTENING FOR A CHANGE: ORAL HISTORY AND APPALACHIAN HERITAGE,” June 28–July 3:** Folklife documentation course with Michael and Carrie Kline, instructors, Elkins. For more information, visit <http://www.folktalk.org/events.html> or call (304) 636-5444.

**INDEPENDENCE DAY HOLIDAY, July 3:** Archives Library will be open\*.

**INDEPENDENCE DAY, July 4:** Archives Library will be *closed*.

**NEW DEAL FESTIVAL, July 10–12:** Arthurdale Heritage, Inc., Arthurdale.

For more information, visit <http://www.arthurdaleheritage.org> or call (304) 864-3959.

**7TH WEST VIRGINIA CAVALRY DESCENDANTS REUNION, July 11:**

The Cultural Center, Charleston. For more information, contact [steve@wvcivilwar.com](mailto:steve@wvcivilwar.com).

**BATTLE OF RICH MOUNTAIN RE-ENACTMENT, July 11–12:**

For more information, visit <http://www.richmountain.org>.

*\*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.

West Virginia Division of Culture and History  
 The Cultural Center  
 1900 Kanawha Boulevard East  
 Charleston, WV 25305-0300

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](mailto:susan.scouras@wvculture.org).

## Archives and History Staff

Joe Geiger ..... Director  
 Bryan Ward ..... Assistant 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)  
 Denise Ferguson ..... County Records Archivist  
 Allen Fowler ..... Special projects  
 Elaine Gates ..... Library Assistant (microfilming and microfilm repairs)  
 Ed Hicks ..... Photo Archivist (archival photography, darkroom)  
 Mary Johnson ..... Historian  
 Terry Lowry ..... Historian (Veterans records)  
 Cathy Miller ..... Library Assistant (WV State documents)  
 Harold Newman ..... Library Assistant (microfilming, Revolutionary War)  
 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 ..... Secretary  
 Interns ..... Kyle Campbell, Brett Steele  
 Part time ..... Matt McGrew  
 Volunteers ..... Carolyn Conner, Bill Kelley, James Wilburn, Sue Shank, Charlotte Thurston, and Ken Bailey