Cemetery cleanup season often begins around Easter and continues up to Memorial Day. For tips on cleaning and researching in cemeteries, check “cemeteries” in the subject index to past issues of the newsletter (http://www.wvculture.org/history/ahnews/ahnewssubjectindex.html). Anyone working in or visiting a cemetery is encouraged to fill out a Cemetery Survey form for the State Historic Preservation Office, and to share a copy with the Archives and History Library. Information about the program and copies of forms can be found at http://www.wvculture.org/shpo/cemetery.html. If you do not have the time to participate in the full survey but would like to provide information to the Archives, you can simply list the names of the persons buried there, including information on the gravemarkers and your own knowledge about them. Send that list to Susan Scouras, Archives and History Library, for inclusion in the West Virginia Cemeteries Collection. We include any West Virginia burial place, even a single unmarked grave on the family farm.

2011 West Virginia History Bowl Champion is Moorefield Middle School

The 2nd annual West Virginia History Bowl, sponsored by the West Virginia Division of Culture and History, took place on April 26, 2011, at the Culture Center in Charleston, West Virginia. The fledgling but successful History Bowl of 2010 was formalized and expanded for 2011 and subsequent years to include a regional competition in each of the eight Regional Service Education Agency (RESA) districts, with the winning and runner-up teams advancing to the state championship. The 2011 History Bowl state tournament champion is Moorefield Middle School, Hardy County, RESA 8. Sissonville Middle School, Kanawha County, RESA 3, was runner-up. For more information, including a video of the championship round, visit our Web site at http://www.wvculture.org/Historybowl/historybowl.html.

The History Bowl features questions about West Virginia history, culture, heritage, tourism and people pulled from a compilation of more than 1,600 prepared by the staff of the Archives and History section, with help from the West Virginia Division of Tourism. Students who use the Daily Trivia, Quick Quizzes and Golden Horseshoe Study Guide on the Archives and History Web site will be well prepared for competition. All public and private schools, as well as home school organizations, who assemble four-person teams of eighth grade students are welcome to participate.

Music and Film Programs to Feature Archives Staff

Upcoming Archives and History First Tuesday lectures feature the knowledge of archives staff on both entertaining and informative subjects. On May 3, Bobby Taylor, library manager, will present “West Virginia’s Heritage Music,” combining historical information with musical performance to demonstrate “old time” musical traditions. For more information visit our Web site at http://www.wvculture.org/history/workshops/taylor050311promo.html.

On June 7, Dick Fauss, moving images archivist, will conduct “Archives and History Movie Night: Footage from the Collection.” Audiences for previous Archives presentations and for annual History Day displays have always enjoyed Fauss’s selections from...
Continued from page 1

newsreel footage, documentaries, travel promotion pieces, etc., in the Archives’ collection.

Workshops are held from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. in the West Virginia Archives and History Library. The

Hall to Address May Genealogy Club

George A. Hall, a Civil War historian from Parkersburg, will present “The Civil War in West Virginia—The Moccasin Rangers from 1861 to 1863,” at the May 12, 2011, meeting of the Thursday Evening Genealogy Club in the West Virginia Archives and History Library. The lecture will focus on partisan warfare in central West Virginia and will include the legend of Nancy Hart. For more information, visit http://www.wvculture.org/history/workshops/genealogy051211promo.html.

Thursday Evening Genealogy Club meetings are held on the second Thursday of each month from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. in the West Virginia Archives and History Library, The Culture Center, Charleston, West Virginia. Registration for these free workshops is helpful but not required. To let us know you plan to attend, call us at (304) 558-0230, or e-mail bobby.l.taylor@wv.gov.

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New Titles


Family Circle of Richard T. Shackelford and Celia Hubbard and Related Lines: Loretta J. Wright, [no date].


U.S. Steel and Gary, West Virginia: Corporate Paternalism in Appalachia: Ronald Garay, 2011.

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Genealogy Club

Archives and History Library

Every Thursday Evening
6:00-7:00 p.m.

Once a month, on the second Thursday, there will be a special program with a speaker. 6:00-7:30 p.m.
Genealogy Club Learns about NewspaperARCHIVE

At the April meeting, the Genealogy Club was addressed by Susan Hayden, adult services consultant for the West Virginia Library Commission. Hayden explained how to access and use NewspaperARCHIVE database, as well as other newspaper resources available free to all state residents through the “Newspaper Archives” section of WVInfoDepot, http://www.wvculture.org/history/workshops/2011aprilgenclub.html. To learn more about WVInfoDepot, contact your local West Virginia public library, or contact Susan Hayden, Adult Services Consultant, West Virginia Library Commission, (304) 558-3978, susan.g.hayden@wv.gov. To view photos of the evening, visit http://www.wvculture.org/history/workshops/2011aprilgenclub.html.

The Night Owls Hoot Again in the Archives

The Mining Your History Foundation and the West Virginia Archives and History Library co-sponsored the 12th annual “Hoot Owl Night” on April 1–2, 2011. Forty-five researchers, some from as far away as Michigan and Florida, worked in the Archives Library from 6:00 p.m. Friday through the night to 8:00 a.m. Saturday. Archives and History Director Joe Geiger conducted tours of the closed stack and processing areas that are not generally open to the public. Refreshments, a popular feature of the night, were enjoyed in the Archives Conference Room. The event is conducted as a fundraiser for the Archives and History Library. View more photos of the evening on our Web site at http://www.wvculture.org/history/workshops/2011hootowl.html.
Railroad Lecture
Well Attended

Large Collection of Civil War Books Received
The family of the late Echols A. Hansbarger, Jr., MD, of Charleston, West Virginia, has donated Dr. Hansbarger’s sizeable collection of books and other materials on Civil War subjects to the Archives and History Library. As these books are cataloged we will list them as “New Civil War Titles,” separately from our regular New Titles column. We thank the Hansbarger family for placing the books where they will be preserved and will be appreciated by other Civil War enthusiasts and historians.

New Civil War Titles
Charleston at War: The Photographic Record, 1860–1865: Jack Thomson, 2000. [Note: Charleston, South Carolina.]
The Last Shot: The Incredible Story of The CSS Shenandoah and the True Conclusion of the American Civil War: Lynn Schooler, 2005.
Waters of Discord: The Union Blockade of Texas During the Civil War: Rodman L. Underwood, 2003.

Virginia Legislative Petitions for West Virginia Counties
In conjunction with the Mining Your History Foundation, the West Virginia Archives and History Library has acquired Virginia Legislative Petitions on microfilm from the Library of Virginia for the counties which formed West Virginia, including the “parent” counties of Augusta, Giles, Montgomery and Tazewell. Beginning in 1774, Virginia citizens petitioned the legislature for private, public and political concerns that could not be addressed by or were not properly tended by local authorities. The petitioner did not have to be a voter—women, slaves and free blacks could not vote, but they could petition. Since few people could attend legislative sessions in Richmond and since transportation and communication were both slow and difficult, legislators made themselves available, usually at

Continued on the next page

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(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.

their county courthouses, to hear from constituents before proceeding to the General Assembly. People could present their concerns orally to individual

Petition research is not for the beginning family history researcher, but is an additional resource for the researcher who has looked at everything else available. Petitions are the only place divorce records will be found for this time period, since divorce was only obtainable then by petitioning the legislature. One may find a petition relevant to a specific family line, or may flesh out an understanding of an ancestor’s geographic area and of the practical and political circumstances of the time and place a family lived in. Former slaves or free blacks sought permission to remain in the commonwealth to stay near enslaved spouses and children (free blacks were only allowed to stay in Virginia for a limited amount of time). Searching the petitions effectively for genealogical information takes patience and a certain amount of foreknowledge of where people should be and what they may have been doing so that the researcher knows what to watch for when browsing through the petitions. All petitions from the county in which an ancestor lived are potential sources of information and should be browsed. For instance, a petition for a new road or road improvements may give reasons for the request, such as needing access to a mill and naming the mill’s owner. In addition to the information found in petitions, the records themselves are originals, not transcriptions; therefore, the signatures are those of the actual petitioners, not written by clerks.

Petition research has great potential for historians as well. Local historians may discover when and why a road was built or diverted, identify types of local businesses and names of owners, find names of professionals such as doctors and lawyers, explore disputes over county borders and naming of county seats, and much more. Even a petition for a change or waiver of a tax can provide a window into the circumstances that prompted the request.

A description of these records can be found in The Library of Virginia’s Legislative Petitions, Research Notes Number 18, posted at http://www.lva.lib.va.us/whatwehave/gov/rn18_legspet.htm. The West Virginia Archives and History Library has the most relevant of the additional sources mentioned in the Research Notes bibliography, including Popular Influence Upon Public Policy: Petitioning in Eighteenth-Century Virginia, by Raymond C. Bailey, and all five periodical articles cited. Three

Continued on the next page
Web sites with searchable databases for locating Virginia petitions are identified:

- [www.lva.virginia.gov/whatwehave/gov/petitions/](http://www.lva.virginia.gov/whatwehave/gov/petitions/): Calendar of Legislative Petitions submitted to the Virginia General Assembly from 1776-1865. Information includes the name of the petitioner and town/county; date presented and description of petition; and reel, box and folder numbers. Each petition has been assigned one or more topics that allow subject index searches.
- [http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/collections/petitions/](http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/collections/petitions/): In the Religion section of the Library of Congress’s American Memory Web pages, 423 early religious petitions to the Virginia General Assembly from 1774-1802 can be searched.
- [http://library.uncg.edu/slavery_petitions/](http://library.uncg.edu/slavery_petitions/): The University of North Carolina at Greensboro maintains a searchable database of petitions regarding slavery from Virginia and half a dozen other southern states. (Of course, the Archives Library will only have the petitions for Virginia.) Petitions are not indexed by the name of the petitioner, as a rule, but by the “nature of the petitions.” The names of individuals are sometimes listed in the “Description” section of the index entries, but not always. Researchers need to focus on the geographic area and time period, then look through petitions of that era to see if their people are mentioned.

Here are several samples of petitions:
- John Norris, Lewis County, 1824: surgeon in the 125th Regiment of Virginia Militia asks for an act allowing him pay for his services for the last five years.
- John Conrad Holstein, Preston County, 1831: asks for a divorce from his wife Wilhelmina.
- John Carter, Kanawha County, 1806: asks to receive a pension for his services against the Indians in 1792 under John Morris, Captain of the Militia of Kanawha County. Includes certificate.
- Sarah Cunningham, Harrison County, 1816: asks for a small pension for assisting in repelling Indians from the West Fork of the Monongalia River.
- Richard Pointer, Greenbrier County, 1819: former slave of Andrew Donnally asks for relief for him for his services against the Indians during the Revolutionary War in 1778.
- Citizens of Jackson County, 1841: ask for a free and sufficient system of public schools; a yearly and moderate appropriation for the Charleston and Parkersburg Turnpike Road and a branch to the Staunton Road; the abolition of prison for debt; etc.
- Citizens of Williamsport, Taylor County, 1845: ask for a change in the name of the town to Pruntytown.
- Martin Whitzel and others, Ohio County, 1803: Asks for some provision for the loss of their father and uncle who were killed by the Indians in defense of the frontier in 1786 and 1788.

### Archives and History News

Archives and History News is available on the Archives and History Web site [http://www.wvculture.org/history/ahnews/ahnews.html](http://www.wvculture.org/history/ahnews/ahnews.html)

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### Calendar of Events

Please check our web site [http://www.wvculture.org/history](http://www.wvculture.org/history) for genealogical and historical society meeting announcements, and for more complete information on activities listed below.

**INSPIRED: HISTORIC GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES ART EXHIBIT, through July 24:** The Culture Center, Charleston.

**“STORIES AND SONGS OF THE COAL FIELDS,” May 9:** Jim Costa, speaker, Erma Byrd Higher Education Center, Beckley. Presented by Concord University and Coal Heritage Highway Authority. For more information, call (304) 256-0270.

**“SECESSION FROM THE SECESSIONISTS: ANGRY WESTERN VIRGINIANS AND THE FATE OF VIRGINIA,” May 21:** William W. Freehling, speaker, West Virginia Independence Hall.

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.

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

ARCHIVES AND HISTORY COMMISSION MEETING, June 3: Charles Town.

“A SPECIES OF LEGAL FICTION: THE WHEELING CONVENTIONS OF 1861,”
June 4: David Javersak, speaker, West Virginia Independence Hall, Wheeling.

CIVIL WAR SYMPOSIUM, June 4-5: George Tyler Moore Center for the Study of the Civil War, Shepherdstown. For information, visit http://www.shepherd.edu/gtmcweb/seminars.html.

“FOR LIBERTY AND UNION: THE RESTORED GOVERNMENT OF VIRGINIA,”
June 18: Daylong program including re-enactors and special focus tours of the building, West Virginia Independence Hall, Wheeling.

RE-ENACTMENT OF GOVERNOR PIERPONT’S INAUGURAL ADDRESS,
June 19: Daylong program including re-enactors, special tours led by historic characters, period music, and reception, West Virginia Independence Hall, Wheeling.

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


WEST VIRGINIA DAY CELEBRATION, June 20: Daylong program including re-enactors, period music, and reception, West Virginia Independence Hall, Wheeling.

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


HACKERS CREEK PIONEER DESCENDENTS 30TH ANNIVERSARY ANNUAL GATHERING, August 11-14: Hackers Creek Library and John Sleeth Trading Post, Hackers Creek. Registration deadline August 1.


LABOR DAY, September 5: Archives Library will be closed.

*Only the Archives Library will be staffed—all other Archives offices will be closed.

The West Virginia Library Commission Library in the Culture Center is closed weekends and all holidays.
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.
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