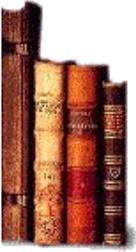


West Virginia Archives & History News



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PHOTOGRAPHS

From the Editor:

June is an appropriate time to discuss photography and preserving photographic images, since the activities of the summer months often bring special moments and significant events in our lives that we want to perpetuate with photographs. Graduations, family reunions, vacations, and backyard barbecues are all recorded for the next generation to enjoy. As we travel, we try to capture images of both natural and man-made wonders that impress us, in the process freezing pieces of today's world for future examination by curious historians and the nostalgic public alike. We hope the information and advice offered in this month's *Archives and History News* will help you save your old photographs and negatives, and make better choices regarding creation of new images to pass on to your descendants.

CREATING AND PRESERVING VISUAL IMAGERY WITH STILL PHOTOGRAPHY

Photographs have been created in several different formats over the years. Of the older methods, most of us are familiar with tintypes and daguerreotypes, but may not be aware of ambrotypes (has an overall amber color) or cyanotypes (looks like blueprint). Photographs were often printed on postcard backings or in

duplicate on stereoscope cards. Negatives were produced on glass plates coated with chemicals up until the 1920's, overlapping the development of lower cost and easier to use Kodak Brownie cameras and film in 1900. Professional photographers continued to use glass plates even after the amateur photographers had shifted to simpler, less expensive cameras using roll film. Although amateurs were making color slides in the 1940's, color print photography did not become commonplace for the general public until the 1950's.

All of these formats are represented in the West Virginia State Archives Photograph Collection. The collection has grown from less than 2,000 photographs in 1978 to over 80,000 images of all types in 2001. The Archives collects old negatives both on film and on glass, and creates new negatives by copying old photographs. Most photos are black and white, but a small portion of the collection is in color. The prints in the collection come in all shapes and sizes and in varying condition.

The purpose of the Archives Photograph Collection is to visually document West Virginia's past. The Archives collects and preserves visual documentation of the state's people, places, events, celebrations, work, recreation, education, social life, tragedies and military involvement. Images we seek to add to the collection include anything and everything having to do with West Virginia

and West Virginians past and present. We prefer identified images, or ones that tell some type of story, such as people working and playing; agricultural, construction or industrial processes; aftermath of disasters; and family portraits. We are especially on the lookout for images of women, African-Americans, and all ethnic groups. Documentation of a community or of modes of transportation is important to preserve. We seek photographic records of events ranging from baptisms, weddings and funerals, to parades, street scenes and hangings.

Who uses images from the Archives Collection? All types of public media, both print and electronic, employ photographs from our collection to illustrate their stories. State and local government officials often want copies of portraits or relevant scenes with which to decorate their offices or to honor previous office holders. Authors of biographies and autobiographies seek portraits, especially, but also look for scenes in which the subjects took part. Area corporations, particularly restaurants, purchase photos for decoration. Museums request photos for exhibits. Sometimes an individual will request scenes of a hometown or a relative's portrait that we happen to have. The Weather Channel, ESPN, BBC, Disney Channel, Public Television, documentary makers and film makers have all used images obtained from the West Virginia State Archives.

The Archives tries to collect images that can be used freely without restrictions. Researchers identifying images of interest to their work may order prints. (5" x 7" up to 16" x 20" prints can be made in the Archives darkroom. Larger prints can be arranged upon request.) Users are asked to credit the West Virginia State Archives (and in most cases, the original owner, also) as the source of the photographs. We also ask that the Archives be given a copy of the final product, whether in print or video, in which the image was used.

As an important part of the Archives Photograph Collection acquisitions effort, photo copying sessions are conducted around the state. When

invited by a community organization who then organizes and publicizes the session, representatives of the Archives will travel on a specified date to a designated site to examine photographs brought in by the public. Usually photo shoots are sponsored by historical or genealogical societies, churches, civic organizations or libraries.

The Archives staff chooses the images to be reproduced, trying to select the ones in better condition and the ones that tell the stories the best. Current policy is to copy only photos that are identified, unless there is something unique about the images themselves, such as distinctive clothing, unusual activities, etc. Photographs cut out of newspapers can not be copied. Photos are not copied unless the individual agrees and signs a consent form giving the Archives permission to use the image. (The Archives always provides the name of the holder of the original photo to anyone who obtains a copy, with a request that the person or organization be mentioned in the credit line.) Using a laptop computer, a staff member records all available information about each photo. The Archives photographer employs a special copy stand to make a black and white negative of the image. The image is then immediately returned to the owner.

If only negatives are available without corresponding prints, the owner can choose to have prints made at his or her own expense, and bring those prints to the photo session, or can opt to allow the Archives staff to bring the negatives back to Charleston to copy. Many times individuals donate the negatives to the Archives in exchange for a set of prints. Archives Photographer Ed Hicks uses filters and other equipment to produce an improved visual image, particularly from faded or yellowed photos.

West Virginia State Archives staff members are available to speak or to advise organizations on the preservation and collection of photographs, either in conjunction with photo shoots or for a separate meeting. In the meantime, if you have technical

questions about photographs, call Ed Hicks, Archives Photographer. Direct questions concerning the contents of the Archives Photograph Collection to Ed Hicks, or to Debra Basham, Archivist. To set up a photo session or to arrange for a speaker, call Fredrick H. Armstrong, Director of Archives and History. We may be reached at (304) 558-0230, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

TIPS FROM THE ARCHIVES STAFF FOR PRESERVING AND STORING YOUR FAMILY PHOTOS

- **Black and white photography is the preferred medium for preservation.** Color photos and negatives are not as stable and will deteriorate at a faster rate than black and white. If you want to truly archive family portraits and candid shots of important events, or record the location and appearance of your home, for example, you should make some black and white photos in addition to the color photos you normally take. It is difficult to find a source to develop and print black and white film properly, using the correct chemicals and paper intended for black and white developing and prints only, but it is worth the effort for your most precious images.
- **Color photography has improved over the years, but is still not as stable chemically as black and white.** Certain techniques are not very stable at all. **If you have not made copies of your old Polaroid photos, do it quickly.** *They are fading away as you read this.*
- If you have the **original color negatives** for your photos, put them in archival containers and place them in a refrigerator (not the freezer).
- **Older black and white negatives from approximately 1920-1950 are starting to deteriorate now.** The emulsion which holds the image is breaking loose from the binder that holds it to the acetate film. If this is happening to your negatives, cracks will be visible. Have prints made as quickly as possible for preservation. Saving the negatives is possible by archival methods of direct negative transfer, but the process is expensive and is not widely available. The West Virginia State Archives can not provide this service; however, the Archives can make the best photograph possible of a print, then make new negatives from the print copy.
- **Don't try to separate negatives that are stuck together.** Find a professional photographer who is willing to make an attempt to get them loose.
- **If you try to work with your own negatives and photos, err on the side of caution, working very carefully.** If ever in doubt, find a professional.
- **Keep photographs in a dry, relatively cool area.** Storage in damp basements or hot/cold attics can damage photographs badly and irretrievably over time. Store photos unframed because photos in frames may become stuck to the glass over time. Store away from possible sources of water damage due to roof leaks, burst pipes, etc.
- **If possible, remove any photos you have stored in "magnetic" photo pages.** The adhesive and the plastic overlay eventually will cause discoloration and deterioration of the photos.
- **Acid-free archival materials are widely available now.** Store photographs in acid-free cardboard boxes. Both regular cardboard and plastic boxes can hasten deterioration. Use acid-free albums to display photos. Use pencil or acid-free ink to write on album pages or labels.
- **Pencil is still preferable to any ink, but if ink is your choice, many acid-free inks are now available.** Write around the rear outer edges of the print, not across the back of

the image. For a group photo or other shot requiring extensive labeling, make a photocopy of the image, write the identification on the photocopy, then store it away from the photo. Don't write anything on the print.

- If you have photos, particularly group shots, without identification, try passing a photocopy of the image around to people who may be able to put names to faces, or to identify locations and dates.
- See *The Care of Black and White Photographs* in this issue for additional information.
- **Scanning is a great way to share photos with friends and family, but scanning is not an acceptable means of preservation.** You still need to take steps to protect the original negatives and prints, including making fresh photographic copies.

MAY NEW TITLES

The Rupicola: Spencer High School: Spencer High Senior Class yearbook, 1925, 1926.

Oh-Kan: Point Pleasant High School: yearbook, 1927, 1928, 1929.

The Mountain State: An Introduction to West Virginia: Otis K. Rice and Stephen W. Brown, 1997. [Juvenile textbook.]

The True Story of Our National Calamity of Flood, Fire and Tornado: 1913.

7 Decades: An Autobiography of a Kind: Jim F. Comstock, 1982.

The West Virginia Centennial Book of One Hundred Songs, 1863-1963: West Virginia Centennial Committee on Folklore, 1963.

Currier Family Records of U.S.A. and Canada: Philip Joseph Currier, 1984.

Allegheny Oil: The Historic Petroleum Industry of the Allegheny National Forest: Michael W. Caplinger, 1996.

Unite—The Most Remote Quarters: An Archaeological and Historical Survey of the

Staunton-Parkersburg Turnpike: John T. Hriblan, 1996.

The Chesapeake & Ohio Canal Lock-houses & Lock-keepers: Thomas F. Hahn, 1996.

Alumni Record: West Virginia University: Waitman Barbe, editor, 1903. *NOTE: This is a little gem containing information probably not found anywhere else. If you are looking for information about anyone who graduated from WVU prior to 1903, check to see if he (I didn't come across any women) is included in the biographical sketches. Some contain valuable genealogical and historical information.*

Mormon Pioneers of Harrison County (Now West) Virginia in the 1830's: Diane Hill Zimmerman, 1997.

God Speaks to Women Today: Eugenia Price, 1969.

Makin' Hole, Pumpin' Oil": an oral history of a West Virginia oil field: Philip W. Ross, 1993.

History of Greenville Community, Monroe County, West Virginia: George W. Vawter, 1928.

Upshur County, WV Marriages, 1924-1932: Wes Cochran, 2000.

Water Quality in the Kanawha-New River Basin, West Virginia, Virginia, and North Carolina, 1996-98: Katherine S. Paybins, et al, 2000.

Moore-Pugh Genealogy, 1263-1974: Junius Teetzel Moore, 1975.

Put It in Writing: Guide for Populore Narratives: Melinda J. St. Louis, 1996. [Guide for recording oral history.]

Whitman Family Genealogy: (Floyd Butcher Whitman and Regina Maria Conley): Pioneers of Logan County, West Virginia: Anna Ruth Perry, 2000.

African-American Life in Preston County: Nancy Jane Copney, 1999.

The Dead, the Missing and the Captured: 19th Infantry Regiment: "Korea War" 1950-1953: Joe Sweeney, 1998.

Adam Livingston, the Wizard Cup, the Voice: An Historical Account: A. L. Marshall, 1978.

Wills of Rappahannock County, Virginia 1656-1692: William Montgomery Sweeney, 1998. [Originally published in 1947.]

Marriages and Deaths: [information gathered from *The Owl*, a Romney, WV, newspaper], [1924]. *This is not truly a new title, but is a book returned anonymously to the Archives and History Library after being missing for 16 years! Thank you, whoever you are!*

MEET OUR STAFF

ED HICKS

Ed Hicks, Archives Photographer, has been on the Archives and History staff for two and one-half years. Ed specializes in copy photography, using professional tools and techniques to photographically preserve older photographs, maps, documents and other flat objects, as opposed to three-dimensional objects such as buildings, artifacts and people. He records images both in the Archives facilities and at on-site photo shoots to add to the Archives collection. Ed develops this film and makes prints from these new copy negatives, as well as old negatives in the Archives Collection, all in the Archives Photo Lab in the Cultural Center. He also uses his expertise to enhance copies of damaged or faded photographs. Ed is called upon by other photographers for technical advice in archival photography because working in two dimensions and in black and white photography is becoming a dying art.

Ed says he has been primarily involved in technical photography, having created high precision photographic documents for ten years. He taught himself photography while in junior high, and immediately put his skills to work as photographer for school functions and yearbook staffs all the way through high school. Ed studied architecture at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, and photography at the Rhode Island School of Design under the renowned photographer Harry Callahan.

Rest assured that any photograph you bring to the Archives or to an Archives photo session will be in good hands and will be returned to you safe and sound. We know you will be delighted with the results of any print Ed Hicks makes for you.

DONATIONS

The West Virginia Archives greatly appreciates the donation of books by **John Gygax** of Belle, WV, from his personal collection, and by **Hulett C. Smith** of Beckley, WV, from the collection of his father, **Joe Smith**. The **Marion County Historical Society** sent us two dozen Fairmont city directories, half of which were new to the collection and therefore very important additions, while the other half gave us second copies of certain years for backup. **Jackolin Shiels** of South Charleston, WV, brought us 14 yearbooks from West Virginia high schools and colleges in the 1920's and 1930's. **Jean Thomas** of Winfield, WV, continues to bring in the treasures she finds, both large and small.

ARCHIVES AND HISTORY EXPANDED LIBRARY HOURS EFFECTIVE JULY 2001

Beginning Monday, July 2, the Archives and History Library will be open as follows:

Monday-Thursday	9:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m.
Friday-Saturday	9:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.
Sunday	Closed.

The extended hours are for the Archives and History Library only, including the Microfilm Room and Closed Stacks. Copy Services and the Microfilm Room will close one-half hour before the Library closes. Appointments for Special Collections or with Archives staff will be available during regular weekday office hours of 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

**Brooke County
Genealogical Society**

The Brooke County Genealogical Society has announced that they have a new Web site address:
<http://www.brookecountywvgenealogy.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 DAY, JUNE 20. *Archives Library will be open.

3RD ANNUAL STONEWALL JACKSON CIVIL WAR SEMINAR, JUNE 30. Pricketts Fort State Park.

ARCHIVES AND HISTORY LIBRARY NEW HOURS IN EFFECT, JULY 2.

INDEPENDENCE DAY, JULY 4. Archives Library will be closed.

PRESERVING CULTURES, AUGUST 8. Fredrick Armstrong will discuss the State Archives collection. Charleston Library.

LABOR DAY, SEPTEMBER 3. Archives Library will be closed.

**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.*

FOR THE MONTH OF JUNE, ARCHIVES LIBRARY HOURS ARE 9:00 A.M. TO 5:00 P.M. MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY, AND 1:00 P.M. TO 5:00 P.M. ON SATURDAYS. HOLIDAY HOURS VARY--PLEASE CALL IN ADVANCE.

ARCHIVES AND HISTORY STAFF

Fredrick Armstrong: Director

Debra Basham: Archivist (photographs, special collections)

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

Dick Fauss: Archivist (microfilm and moving images)

Elaine Gates: Part-time Library Assistant (microfilming and microfilm repairs)

Joe Geiger: Historian (Web page)

Ed Hicks: Photographer (archival photography, darkroom)

Mary Johnson: Historian (*West Virginia History*)

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: Part-time Library Assistant (Clipping File, Veterans Files)

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

Bobby Taylor: Library Manager

Nancy Waggoner: Office Assistant

Employees on special projects: **Constance Baston, Allen Fowler, and Leah Stover.**

Summer interns: **Ethan Byler, Adam Casto and Roger Christianson.**

We need volunteers to assist with several different projects in the Archives and History Library. High school and college students seeking public service hours are welcome. Please call for further information

This newsletter is a publication of :
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