Fall and winter bring several holidays that are most often shared with family and friends indoors, with lots of good food and conversation. This year try to record some of the family stories and memories of historical events your older relatives have to tell. Even if you use a tape recorder, take notes, in case the voices do not record well. Remind someone of a story that you know he or she loves to retell and use that to get started. Another effective method is to produce a basic family tree chart and request help in filling in the blanks. Ask everyone present where they were and what they were doing when a significant historical or family event occurred. We all regret lost opportunities to archive the anecdotes and tall tales that make our family histories more colorful and more likely to be passed on to future generations. Ask at least one question or save at least one story for posterity while you can.

Society Organization and Management

Organizing and managing a genealogical or historical society—and keeping it organized and running—is a daunting task. Recruiting new members, retaining membership, collecting dues and fundraising can reduce the energy and time of a society’s members to the point where the original purpose of the group is left behind. Add family history workshops, Web site creation and maintenance, newsletters and other publications to the mix, and the burden of leadership can be overwhelming. How many times have you seen a successful, active organization grind to a halt when the key person in the group becomes unavailable?

Several sources exist to aid societies in maintaining themselves as vital organizations and in achieving their goals. Genealogy magazines frequently feature articles and columns of advice for societies, as do a number of Web sites. The Genealogy Society Exchange is a Weblog designed to be “[a]n online forum where genealogical societies from all over the world can share ideas about promoting genealogical collections, service, tools, and awareness, and also share tips for fundraising and recruitment.” This blog is located at http://genexchange.blogspot.com. Anyone can read the posted comments, but must register (free) to post to the site.

The Federation of Genealogical Societies (FGS) was founded in 1976 with three major purposes: serving the needs of its member societies, providing products and services needed by member societies, and marshaling the resources of its member organizations. Membership fees are based on the size of the organization, starting at $35.00 for societies with one to fifty members. FGS sponsors a national conference annually which includes management workshops, genealogy lectures by nationally known speakers and regional experts, and exhibitors of genealogical materials and supplies. FGS has a Records Preservation and Access Committee in conjunction with the National Genealogical Society that addresses the issue of access to public records, legislation regarding public records, and records preservation policies and practices.

FGS provides extensive resources, ranging from A Guide for the Organization and Management of Genealogical Societies ($15.00 for members, $19.00 for non-members) to the Society Strategies Series Society Management Package ($54.00 for the set). The individual publications on many helpful topics included in the Strategy Series can be purchased separately, as well ($1.50 for members, $2.00 for non-members). Some sample titles are: The Society Newsletter; Creating Society Archives; Now That You Have Attracted Those Members, Keep Them!; Five Steps to Organizing a Society; Preparing a Budget; and Editing and Proofreading Society Publications. For further information, visit http://www.fgs.org.

While most of the materials offered through the Federation of Genealogical Societies should be equally helpful to historical societies, the American Association for State

Continued on the next page
and Local History (AASLH) provides assistance to organizations sharing its goal to “preserve and interpret state and local history to make the past more meaningful in American society.” Founded in 1904 as the Conference of State and Local Historical Societies under the American Historical Association, AASLH became an independent organization in 1940. Membership fees and benefits vary for both individuals and institutions based on size and level of participation, with a basic individual membership fee of $60.00 and a basic institutional fee of $100.00. Most memberships include subscriptions to the monthly newsletter, Dispatch, and the quarterly magazine, History News. The Association sponsors or supports regional and national workshops and seminars, with some support provided for travel to the Library in the State Capitol Complex in Charleston from all over the United States (and occasionally from foreign countries) to research their family history or academic topics, and are introduced to your society through your books, newsletters, magazines and other

WV Birth and Death Registration Problems in 1936

From time to time while searching old newspapers on microfilm (usually for obituaries in reply to research request letters), our staff finds newspaper articles of interest. We are always pleased to locate contemporary explanations or discussions of county and state records that verify our staff members’ educated guesses regarding missing or incorrect records. Such is the case with the following article from the Madison Recorder, August 14, 1936:

Check-Up on Births, Deaths Is Planned by Health Dept.: Field Agent Will be Visitor in This County Next Week

In an effort to check on failures to report births and deaths, the Division of Vital Statistics of the State Health Department has secured the services of two field agents, John C. Condry and L. A. Casto, one of whom will visit Boone county during the week of August 17th, announces the director of Vital Statistics, Dr. Franklin H. Reeder. Although complete registration of births and deaths has always been of great importance, says Dr. Reeder, even greater emphasis is placed on it with the enactment of the Social Security Act which requires applicants to have birth certificates before they are eligible for old age pensions.

By checking the records of infant deaths at the State Health Department and by other means, certain births have been found reported only on death certificates, no birth certificate having been filed with the director of Vital Statistics. The law regarding birth registration requires that all births, regardless of whether the baby is still-born or not, shall be registered with the Division of Vital Statistics. The field agents will begin their work by endeavoring to obtain these omitted birth certificates as well as to find out who was responsible for the failure to register them at the proper time. Negligence in reporting deaths promptly will also be investigated by the agents.

The law provides a penalty for any physician, midwife or other person attending a birth refusing or neglecting to file a complete birth certificate within ten days, and for any undertaker, or person acting as such, for conducting a funeral without filing a death certificate and securing a burial permit before burial is made. The moral obligation of physicians and undertakers is not discharged until proper registration of births attended and burials conducted is made.

Continued on the next page
**New Titles**

- Wilson Families in Cumberland County, Virginia and Woodford County, Kentucky with Correspondence and Other Papers: Patti Sue McCrary, 2005.
- Ritchie County Fair: [Reprint of 1938 fair program], Ritchie County Historical Society, 2005.
- Divided Loyalties, the Border States of the Upper South; Delaware-Maryland-West Virginia, Kentucky and Missouri: Their Cultural Heritage and Divided Civil War Loyalties: Jack T. Hutchinson, 2005.
- The Sumnerite 130th Anniversary Souvenir Calendar: [1993].
- Sorting Some of the Wrights of Southern Virginia, Part IV, Robert Wright, Sr. (Campbell County): Robert N. Grant, 2005.
- Steelworkers in America, the Nonunion Era: David Brody, 1960.
- 1840 Census of Miller County, Missouri, with Annotations: Robert L. McKinley, 1997.

**Archives and History Library Bindery Order**

The Archives and History Library has shipped 60 titles to Heckman Bindery. If you can not locate a book in the Reading Room, particularly if it is a relatively new acquisition, check with a staff member to see if the book has gone to the bindery and is temporarily unavailable.

**Ulster Historical Foundation Seminar**

Dr. Brian Trainor and Fintan Mullan, of the ever popular Ulster Historical Foundation of Belfast, Ireland, will present a seminar, *Researching Your Scots-Irish Ancestors*, as the workshop portion of the annual meeting and workshop of the Mining Your History Foundation (MYHF) on November 5, 2005. Co-sponsored by the West Virginia State Archives, all activities will take place in The Cultural Center in Charleston, in the Great Hall and the Norman L. Fagan West Virginia State Theater, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. As well, the West Virginia Archives and History Library will be open regular Saturday hours, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., for...
West Virginia Memory Project

The West Virginia Division of Culture and History, Archives and History Web site hosts the West Virginia Memory Project, a collection of searchable databases, at http://www.wvculture.org/history/wvmemory/index.html. The project’s main page is also accessible through a link from the Archives and History home page. The Memory Project originated with two databases begun in 1998. That year, Archives and History entered into an agreement with the West Virginia History Film Project to create an electronic finding aid to the films West Virginia: A Film History and The West Virginians. Archives and History also received a National Leadership Grant through the Institute of Museum and Library Services, a federal program, to place on line portions of the Boyd B. Stutler Collection of John Brown materials. The West Virginia Memory Project made its on line premiere of the John Brown and West Virginia History Film Project databases in December 1999.

The Memory Project consists of both databases relating to Archives and History collections and those that compile information on specific topics. The following databases are currently searchable through the West Virginia Memory Project:

- John Brown/Boyd B. Stutler*
- History Timeline
- Highway Markers
- Collections* [currently includes materials from two manuscript collections: Civilian Conservation Corps and “Jost Hite of the Shenandoah Valley and Descendants” by Laidley.]
- Golden Horseshoe
- Veterans Memorial*
- Periodicals
- State Documents
- West Virginia History Film Project*
- West Virginia Union Militia*
- Photos* [currently includes photos from eight collections]
- Pierpont-Samuels Papers Collections indicated with an asterisk include selected digital images. The John Brown database also includes full-text transcriptions for a portion of the text documents presented.

An explanation of “How to Use the Databases,” which includes navigation rules and tips for searching, is provided. Search terms vary according to the database selected. Some databases have introductory text, while others that are more self-explanatory, such as Periodicals, have a search box only. The introductory pages for the Collections and John Brown databases include a link to a topic list that is specific to the particular database. This information is also available in drop-down lists on the search page.

There are two additional tips for using the John Brown database. The results page presents two lists: the first is for results in the text or Continued on the next page

Donations of Mining Your History Foundation

Index to War of 1812 Pension Files: In two volumes, Virgil D. White, 1992.

West Virginia and Regional History Collection Now Open Tuesday Evenings

The West Virginia and Regional History Collection of the West Virginia University Libraries, located in the Downtown Library Complex of WVU’s Downtown Campus in Morgantown, has expanded its Monday through Saturday 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. hours to include Tuesday evenings until 9:00 p.m. The Collection is closed Sundays, and on holidays and Saturdays only the Collection’s main reading room books and microfilm are available. For more information, visit http://www.libraries.wvu.edu/wvcollection/history/, or use the Featured Links from the Archives and History Web site.
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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>November 5:</td>
<td>MINING YOUR HISTORY FOUNDATION ANNUAL MEETING AND WORKSHOP (ULSTER HISTORICAL SOCIETY SEMINAR)</td>
<td>The Cultural Center, Charleston.</td>
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<td>November 11:</td>
<td>VETERANS DAY</td>
<td>Archives Library will be open.*</td>
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<td>November 15:</td>
<td>CIVIL WAR LECTURE “THE CIVIL WAR IN GREENBRIER COUNTY, WEST VIRGINIA,”</td>
<td>Tim McKinney, speaker, sponsored by the Kanawha Valley Civil War Roundtable, South Charleston Public Library, South Charleston.</td>
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<td>November 24:</td>
<td>THANKSGIVING DAY</td>
<td>Archives Library will be closed.</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 25:</td>
<td>FRIDAY AFTER THANKSGIVING DAY</td>
<td>Archives Library will be open.*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 26:</td>
<td>SATURDAY AFTER THANKSGIVING DAY</td>
<td>Archives Library will be open.*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 20:</td>
<td>CIVIL WAR LECTURE “THE ATLANTIC SLAVE TRADE,”</td>
<td>Monty McIntyre, speaker, sponsored by the Kanawha Valley Civil War Roundtable, South Charleston Public Library, South Charleston.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 24:</td>
<td>CHRISTMAS EVE, SATURDAY</td>
<td>Archives Library will be closed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 26:</td>
<td>CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY, MONDAY</td>
<td>Archives Library will be closed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 31:</td>
<td>NEW YEAR’S EVE, SATURDAY</td>
<td>Archives Library will be closed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 2, 2006:</td>
<td>NEW YEAR’S HOLIDAY, MONDAY</td>
<td>Archives Library will be closed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 16, 2006:</td>
<td>HISTORY DAY</td>
<td>The Capitol Complex, Charleston.</td>
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*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.
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
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Greg Carroll ..................................................................................................................... Historian (Civil War, Native American history)
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Denise Ferguson ............................................................................................................. County Records Archivist
Allen Fowler .................................................................................................................... Special projects
Elaine Gates .................................................................................................................... Library Assistant (microfilming and microfilm repairs)
Joe Geiger ....................................................................................................................... Assistant Director (Historian, Web page)
Ed Hicks .......................................................................................................................... Photographer (archival photography, darkroom)
Mary Johnson .................................................................................................................. Historian (West Virginia History)
Terry Lowry .................................................................................................................... Library Assistant (Civil War)
Cathy Miller .................................................................................................................... Library Assistant (WV State documents, periodicals)
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Bobby Taylor ................................................................................................................... Library Manager
Nancy Waggoner ............................................................................................................. Secretary
Volunteers ....................................................................................................................... Carolyn Conner, Bill Kelley, Shari Haywood, Angela Tolbert, Bob and Lucile Foster,
John McClure, Carol de la Riva, Lorene Mullins, and Kellis and Virginia Gillespie

This newsletter is a publication of: The West Virginia Division of Culture and History
Troy O. Body, Commissioner