

# West Virginia Archives & History NEWS

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WEST VIRGINIA  
DIVISION OF  
CULTURE & HISTORY

## From the Editor:

*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

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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

scholarships offered. The AASLH annual conference includes governance of small and large organizations as a topic. For more information, visit <http://www.aaslh.org>.

West Virginia Archives and History may help your society in a number of ways. We maintain a mailing list of genealogical, historical and preservation societies in West Virginia. The list is posted on our Web site at <http://www.wvculture.org/history/histsocs.html> and published in *West Virginia History* journal. We also maintain a list of organizations and repositories by county, where more detailed information can be provided for each organization, including Web site links, collections, meeting locations, etc., at <http://www.wvculture.org/history/guide2.html>. Both of these tools channel the people most interested in your geographic area or subject directly toward your organization. Be sure to keep us up to date on your group’s address and other information, and please respond to the annual request from Mary Johnson, *West Virginia History* Assistant Editor, to confirm or correct your mailing address.

You can help both your society and the West Virginia Archives and History Library by donating copies of your organizations’ publications to the Library collection. Entry of your publication in the online Library Catalog makes the existence of the title known to anyone anywhere in the world who searches our catalog via the Internet. Library patrons 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

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## **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.

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donated materials on our shelves. All of this can lead to new members, research requests and increased publication sales for your society.

Last but not least, join the Mining Your History Foundation (MYHF), a "Friends of the Archives and History Library" group, whose Web site is <http://www.rootsweb.com/~myhf/>. In addition to their support for the State Archives, MYHF serves as a network among the genealogical/historical societies of the Mountain State. The more West Virginia societies that participate, the more effective this statewide organization will be.

## 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

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## New Titles

- Cemeteries of Roane County, West Virginia, Volumes 1-5:** Roane County Historical Society, 1999-2001.
- Days of Darkness: The Feuds of Eastern Kentucky:** John Ed Pearce, 1994.
- Mountain Boy: The Adventures of Orion Saddler:** Norman D. Mullins, 2004.
- Prickett's Fort: Based on a True Story:** Bill Hawkins, 2005.
- Coal in Appalachia: An Economic Analysis:** Curtis E. Harvey, 1986.
- North Carolina Taxpayers, 1701-1786:** Clarence E. Rathcliff, 1986.
- Kelly's Creek Chronicles, Kanawha County, West Virginia: The Illustrated Diary of James Alexander Jones:** William Roosevelt Hudnall, 2005.
- Abstracts of the Cumberland County Virginia, Court Order Books from June 1749 to May 1756:** Shela S. Fretwell, 1987.
- John and Amy Gatewood and Their Descendants, 1666-1986:** Carol J. Gothberg, 1987.
- Oak Hill Baptist Church, 1892-1992:** The Church, 1992.
- 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.
- Official Journal and Year Book of the West Virginia Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church:** 2005 issue, West Virginia Conference, 2005.
- Passenger and Immigration Lists Index, 2006 Supplement:** Gale Research Co., 2005.
- The Great Labor Uprising of 1877:** Philip S. Foner, 1977.
- The Fourteenth Pennsylvania Cavalry in the Civil War:** William Davis Slease, [1915], reprinted 1999.
- Handbook of the National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws:** 1995.
- Appalachian Bible College, 1950-2000:** Fern Hanlin Coberly, 2000.
- The Memorialists: An Antebellum History of Alleghany, Craig, and Monroe Counties of Western Virginia, 1812-60:** David Scott Turk, 1997.
- 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.
- My Woodrum-Kincaid Connection in Fayette County, West Virginia:** Linda A. Perdue, 2004.
- By the Banks of the Holly: Notes and Letters from the Desk of Bernard Mollohan:** Marie Mollohan, 2005.
- Ward W.Va. Annual Reunion, 2005:** Patsy Hudson Tucker, 2005.
- The Sumnerite 130th Anniversary Souvenir Calendar:** [1993].
- Productions Services Directory, 2005-2006:** West Virginia Film Office, 2005.
- Gilbert Presbyterian Church, Gilbert, West Virginia, 1897-1997:** Centennial Committee, 1997.
- Sorting Some of the Wrights of Southern Virginia, Part IV, Robert Wright, Sr. (Campbell County):** Robert N. Grant, 2005.
- Beauty Before Comfort, A Memoir:** Allison Glock, 2003.
- Steelworkers in America, the Nonunion Era:** David Brody, 1960.
- 1840 Census of Miller County, Missouri, with Annotations:** Robert L. McKinley, 1997.
- America: A Jake Grafton Novel:** Stephen Coonts, 2001.
- The Greatest Gamblers:** Ruth Sheldon Knowles, 1978.
- Ridgways in the U.S.A.:** Gertrude N. Brick and Thurman Ridgway, 1980.

## 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

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## Donations of Mining Your History Foundation

**Genealogical Abstracts of Revolutionary War Pension Files:** In four volumes, Virgil D. White, 1990-1992.

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

**Index to US Military Pension Applications of Remarried Widows for Service Between 1818 and 1911:** Virgil D. White, 1999. Note: Contains mostly applications from widows of Civil War soldiers.

## 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

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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.

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## Carpet Installation Reminder

The carpeting in The Cultural Center is being replaced now through January 2006. We anticipate closing the Archives and History Library sometime in January for an undetermined number of days. Most staff who must vacate their offices will be elsewhere in the building during the installation but will be available by telephone and e-mail. Please check our Web site at <http://www.wvculture.org/history> or call (304) 558-0230 before visiting to verify which facilities and offices will be open on a given date.

"Ulster" continued from page 3  
 researchers.

Registration is required, with a pre-registration fee of \$15.00, with an option of \$7.00 for lunch, due by October 25, 2005. Registration at the door will be \$25.00, with no option to order lunch. For additional information about the seminar or MYHF, contact Wes Cochran at wescochran@juno.com or Kellis Gillespie at Kellisgill@aol.com, or write: Mining Your History Foundation, P.O. Box 6923, Charleston, WV 25362-0923. Visit <http://www.rootsweb.com/~myhf/> for more details and a registration form.

**Don't Forget History Day,  
 February 16, 2006**

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documents portion while the second, which is below the first, is for the photographs portion. This database also has an option at the bottom of the record page to view the full record, which contains additional fields of information. Database errors may be reported to Mary Johnson at mary.johnson@wvculture.org or Joe Geiger at joe.geiger@wvculture.org.

If you find items in Archives and History collections through the databases, or elsewhere on the Archives Web site, that you would like to see during a visit to the Archives and History Library in The Cultural Center in Charleston, please print off or copy the complete entry, including library call numbers, if any. This will facilitate the Library staff in locating the exact item you need. If you plan to use the Manuscript, Archives or Special Collections during your visit, please make an appointment in advance with Debra Basham, archivist, so that the items you want may be pulled. Ms. Basham may be reached at (304) 558-0230, Ext. 702, or at [debra.basham@wvculture.org](mailto:debra.basham@wvculture.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.

### **MINING YOUR HISTORY FOUNDATION ANNUAL MEETING AND WORKSHOP (ULSTER HISTORICAL SOCIETY SEMINAR), November 5:**

The Cultural Center, Charleston.

**VETERANS DAY, November 11:** Archives Library will be open.\*

### **CIVIL WAR LECTURE "THE CIVIL WAR IN GREENBRIER COUNTY, WEST VIRGINIA,"**

**November 15:** Tim McKinney, speaker, sponsored by the Kanawha Valley Civil War Roundtable, South Charleston Public Library, South Charleston.

### **THANKSGIVING DAY, November 24:**

Archives Library will be closed.

### **FRIDAY AFTER THANKSGIVING DAY, November 25:**

Archives Library will be open.\*

### **SATURDAY AFTER THANKSGIVING DAY, November 26:**

Archives Library will be open.\*

### **CIVIL WAR LECTURE "THE ATLANTIC SLAVE TRADE," December 20:**

Monty McIntyre, speaker, sponsored by the Kanawha Valley Civil War Roundtable, South Charleston Public Library, South Charleston.

### **CHRISTMAS EVE, SATURDAY, December 24:**

Archives Library will be closed.

### **CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY, MONDAY, December 26:**

Archives Library will be closed.

### **NEW YEAR'S EVE, SATURDAY, December 31:**

Archives Library will be closed.

### **NEW YEAR'S HOLIDAY, MONDAY, January 2, 2006:**

Archives Library will be closed.

### **HISTORY DAY, February 16, 2006:**

The Capitol Complex, Charleston.

\*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  
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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  
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## Archives and History Staff

**Fredrick Armstrong** ..... 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)  
**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)  
**Sharon Newhouse** ..... Secretary  
**Harold Newman** ..... Library Assistant (microfilming, Revolutionary War)  
**Pat Pleska** ..... Manager of the Veterans Memorial Archives  
**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  
**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  
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