

West Virginia Archives & History NEWS

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WEST VIRGINIA
DIVISION OF
CULTURE & HISTORY

From the Editor:

As we often do this time of year, we would like to remind you to take advantage of any visits with your family, old neighbors and friends during the winter holidays to collect and share family stories, local history tales, and such treasures as photographs, documents and keepsakes. If you attend any type of West Virginia reunion, whether for school, church, hometown, or family, please forward a copy of any program or memory book compiled for the occasion to the West Virginia Archives and History Library for posterity. We wish everyone happy holidays, safe travels and rewarding research finds.

Speakers Laud West Virginia State Archives During “A Celebration of Archives”

West Virginia Archives and History observed American Archives Month with “A Celebration of Archives: Your State Archives Working for You” in The Cultural Center on October 24, 2006. American Archives Month is a nationwide observance that seeks to reach out to the public and raise awareness of the role of archives in collecting, preserving, and making accessible irreplaceable records that document the past. The celebration of Archives Week was initiated more than a decade ago in New York and has expanded to include states across the country in activities that showcase the importance of archives. The Archives and History section of the Division of Culture and History chose to highlight several notable researchers from around West Virginia who have used the resources of the State Archives and the expertise of the Archives and History Library staff in very visible ways. Each was asked to make a few remarks about their archival experience. Presented in order of

their appearance that evening are our speakers, their backgrounds, and a few of their comments.

Kenneth R. Bailey, Ph.D., is retired dean of the College of Humanities, Business and Sciences at WVU-Institute of Technology. He is the author of several articles and books, including *Kanawha County Public Library: A History* (2004) and *Mountaineers are Free: The History of the West Virginia National Guard* (1978). Dr. Bailey is currently a volunteer for the West Virginia Veterans Memorial Archives and a

member of the West Virginia Archives and History Commission, plus Dr. and Mrs. Bailey have donated books and other materials to Archives and History over the years. For his most recent book, *Alleged Evil Genius: The Life and Times of Judge James H. Ferguson* (2006), Bailey used the Ferguson Collection (<http://www.wvculture.org/history/ms1.html#78-8>), consisting largely of Ferguson’s personal and business correspondence. Dr. Bailey first

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History Day at the Legislature to be Held February 22, 2007

Local groups with an interest in history or genealogy are invited to participate in the 11th annual History Day on Thursday, February 22, 2007, which will be held at the State Capitol Complex in Charleston during the regular session of the West Virginia Legislature. Authorized by the state legislature, West Virginia History Day commemorates local groups’

efforts to preserve, protect, and promote the study of the Mountain State’s past. Historians, genealogists, educators, preservationists, veterans, fraternal organizations, librarians, ethnic groups, and families with an interest in West Virginia’s history are invited to provide exhibits. Other attractions will include re-enactments of events in

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visited the State Archives when it was located in the east wing of the Capitol on the fourth floor, and commented "That is the place I first learned how fun it was to read other people's mail." He discussed the resources of the Archives and History Library, and thanked the staff by saying, "I greatly appreciate the work our Archives staff does in getting those materials to us."

Russ Barbour is a documentarian with West Virginia Public Broadcasting and an independent film maker. He has produced numerous documentary stories for television, many airing on the state's public broadcasting news magazine, *Outlook*, and frequently uses the state archives' extensive collection of archival news film and videotape, having first visited the Archives twenty years ago. He is currently working on a documentary about Ken Hechler. Barbour also has contributed to such print publications as *The West Virginia Encyclopedia* (2006). Barbour said that television allows all the various media to be brought together in a way that no other medium alone does, and "it communicates what I love most about the Archives work to people," and that the wonder of the Archives collection is that "it just lets you do so much storytelling." He also stated "There are stories I would never have known about, that I would never have pursued if it hadn't been for this collection."

Deborah J. Sonis works for the West Virginia Humanities Council, where she served as managing editor for *The West Virginia Encyclopedia*, (2006). She was assistant editor of the Division of Culture and History's *Goldenseal* magazine from 1988 to 1998 and previously worked in radio and advertising. In relating the importance of West Virginia

Archives and History collections and staff in the production of the *Encyclopedia*, Ms. Sonis said, "Much of our fact-checking and research for editorial sticking points was done here in the State Archives and most of the Archives staff wrote entries for the book." "The county histories section [of the Archives Library] was invaluable." "The online listing on the Archives and History Web site of county resources available in the Archives and History Library was very helpful." Ms. Sonis said that for such topics as a biography of entomologist William Henry Edwards (1822-1909), the information was not available anywhere but at the West Virginia State Archives. Work with the Archives was on-going, from the conception of the project in 1997 through the end of November 2005, when they finished up by working with the Archives staff to correct and refine the bibliography, an effort that took eight months. Well over 100 photographs from the Archives images collection appear in the *Encyclopedia*. She concluded by saying, "I really want to take this opportunity to say thank you to West Virginia Archives and History, the library search room [staff], for a wonderful facility. The collections are really something West Virginia can be proud of, and the people that work here and help the general public are great. So, thank you, State Archives, for all the help you provided to the *West Virginia Encyclopedia*."

Terry Lively is creative services manager for the West Virginia Department of Transportation (DOT) and produced a cable-access television series on transportation issues between 2001 and 2003. More recently, she produced the hour-long, state and regional award-winning documentary *CROSSINGS - Bridge Building in West Virginia*,

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In Memoriam

Joseph H. Ferrell

Joe Ferrell of St. Albans, WV, past treasurer of the Kanawha Valley Civil War Roundtable and longtime Civil War historian, passed away in September 2006. He generously left his collection of over 300 Civil War books, primarily biographies of Union and Confederate generals, to the West Virginia Archives and History Library. Mr. Ferrell's hobby was locating and photographing the grave sites of Civil War generals, and he donated his photograph collection to the West Virginia State Archives as well.

Lois Jean Thomas

Jean Thomas of Winfield, WV, longtime supporter of West Virginia Archives and History, passed away in October 2006. She was a regular patron of the Archives and History Library, and her name appeared frequently in our donation lists. Remembering the importance of preserving local history and genealogy to the last, she left her personal book collection and her genealogy research materials to the Archives and History Library. Mrs. Thomas was buried near the gravesite of her grandfather, Bill Blizzard, a prominent West Virginia labor leader (<http://www.wvculture.org/history/thisdayinhistory/0527.html>).

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which premiered at the Cultural Center in March 2006. Lively is also adjunct professor at West Virginia State University. In researching DOT resources for *CROSSINGS*, Ms. Lively discovered official photographs that had been taken of Highway Dept. projects over in the years, in all stages of planning and construction; however, the photographs were stored in very poor conditions. She is quite proud of accomplishing the preservation of these photographs by having them transferred to the State Archives. She also achieved another preservation coup in locating in Arkansas a film of the 1928 ribbon-cutting ceremony for the ill-fated Silver Bridge, and obtaining copies of the film for both the State Archives and the Pleasant River Museum. The raw footage and still photographs collected in the making of the documentary were also donated to the Archives. Ms. Lively made the following remarks regarding her experiences with the West Virginia State Archives: "As a writer and film maker I would like to say what a huge help the State Archives has been to me in this project because it was so much stronger because of the outstanding archival material provided by the . . . Archives division." "By archival materials I don't just mean the old photos, but a wealth of reference materials from newspaper clippings and more, particularly from previously unseen video clips. . ." "After having donated materials to and accessed materials from the Archives, I would like to vouch for what a wonderful resource we in West Virginia have in our State Archives. You are doing a great job at preserving our collective past, for not only historians but also present and future writers, researchers and film makers."

Fred Barkey, Ph.D., is professor emeritus at Marshall

University Graduate College and chairman of the board of the Coal Heritage Trail Authority. A historian and author on labor and immigrant history, his work appeared in *West Virginia History* and other publications. Dr. Barkey also first visited the State Archives in its fourth floor of the Capitol location, and remarked that in the beginning, "I think the Archives for me was a means to an end—the resources are tremendous—but the more I used it and the more I became familiar with the people and everything in the Archives, it just seemed to me that it is a continuing adventure as much as it is a means to an end." Although he has used archival resources frequently for academic projects and writing, he discussed using the Archives' newspaper microfilm collection in particular to enrich family history as well. Dr. Barkey further remarked: "There is stuff here that nobody knows about. I'll stumble upon it sometimes and be absolutely shocked. What is this doing here and why didn't I know about it? But I think that is the key to what little success that I have had in that I have done the right thing in the sense that I have spent a lot of time here. Now I haven't spent as much time here lately, and you know what? I haven't done much. I think the two go together, and I've got to get back into that habit that I used to have of coming up here, whether they want me to or not, come up here and just walk around and look at stuff and if something strikes my fancy, to pick it up, read it and go through it, and I swear I could be a very happy man."

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

"Being in the Archives—it may sound silly to the man on the street there—but it is for me part of life's great adventure."

Woodrow Clay Hamilton, Jr., a trained historian and retired employee of the CIA, has been researching family history for thirty years and published his first volume on the Hamilton family in 1999. He donated a large collection of West Virginia high school and college yearbooks to Archives and History in 2004 and continues to add to this important collection. He related that his first trip to the West Virginia State Archives was nearly thirty years ago, and said, "My experience here has been a good one." More of his remarks: "I came up here with a slip of paper, and on it was written the names of great-grandparents and a county in Virginia. And from that scrap of paper I was able to use the resources here and meticulously and over many, many years build a family history." Like Barkey, Mr. Hamilton is also an avid user of the microfilmed newspapers. "Now, every family historian is eager to get the marriage, birth and death dates of their ancestors, and you should do that, but there is a lot more, and this building has a lot more. The newspaper collection Fred [Armstrong] mentioned, I have used—I have worn the microfilm out—I have probably run that machine back there—my favorite one—more times than I care to relate. But the intricacies of the newspaper collection really can build a fascinating story about a particular individual." "The collection of newspapers, which I have frequently checked and still do, forms a tremendous base for the construction, the building, the revelation in family history research." "The staff of this Archives has let me to many, many discoveries. . . the staff advises and I discover, and they are wonderful."

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"Fellow researchers also can give you many wonderful tips." He told how Dr. Bailey noticed something Mr. Hamilton was researching in the Archives and History Library, and gave him the name of another researcher for that family, allowing Mr. Hamilton to make a connection for sharing research and problem-solving that he probably would not have made otherwise. "The staff, the fellow researchers, the whole package makes the West Virginia Archives a true triple A, blue ribbon gem for the state."

Immediately following, Division of Culture and History Commissioner **Randall Reid-Smith** presented **Woodrow Clay Hamilton, Jr.**, with the West Virginia Division of Culture and History Order of the Arts and Historical Letters, a newly created division award given "in recognition of outstanding service in the performing or fine arts, which exemplifies the spirit of the people of the great state of West Virginia."

Donations

Roscoe Keeney of Charleston, WV, continues to donate books from his personal collection to the West Virginia Archives and History Library. Recently Mr. Keeney has begun cleaning out his family history files, and has donated several notebooks of material to the Manuscript Collection and Special Collections. **St. Albans Historical Society**, St. Albans, WV, very kindly provided the Library with a list of their currently available publications to check against Library holdings, then promptly provided copies of any items not found in the collection. We are grateful to those of you who think of us and of your fellow researchers and preservationists by donating books and other materials to the West Virginia Archives and History Library.

Fredrick H. Armstrong, director of Archives and History, in his closing remarks for the evening said, "But I will say I can not be blessed with a better staff, of a team that is totally supportive, that our mission here is to serve the people to the best of our abilities with what they need to make their connections to their history or their historical tie, and to collect and preserve all the materials that make that possible. That is truly our mission here, and this staff truly believes in that mission and tries to deliver on that mission every single day."

The speakers and audience were treated to a reception in the Great Hall with both sweet and savory treats prepared by Archives and History staff (and a spouse or two), served with coffee, soft drinks and punch amidst fall decorations.

Editor's note: *Portions of the information in this article were provided by Mary Johnson.*

Library of Congress Testing Expanded Search Capability

The Library of Congress is testing a new federated search that allows the user to simultaneously search any combination of the Library of Congress catalog, the Prints and Photographs catalog, the Library of Congress Web site and American Memory (United States cultural and historical collections). The beta site address is <http://www.loc.gov/search/new/>. FAQ's and Search Help are provided. Opinions of users are requested and may be sent directly through the site.

Advice for Small Genealogy Libraries

Historical and genealogical societies with their own library collections will find helpful advice posted at [http://genealogyeducation.wordpress.com/2006/09/22/mentoring-a-local-](http://genealogyeducation.wordpress.com/2006/09/22/mentoring-a-local-genealogy-society-librarian)

"History Day" continued from page 1 the state's history, music, and storytelling.

As part of the History Day celebration, History Hero awards will be presented to people who have made significant grassroots contributions to the preservation of local or regional history. Local historical, genealogical, preservation, museum, patriotic, and other similar groups are encouraged to nominate their most significant member for a History Hero Award. Criteria for this one-time recognition include dedicated supporting service for the nominating organization's programs, or a recent significant contribution to state and local history through research, interpretation, publication, or preservation.

Groups interested in setting up displays are invited to complete and submit the space reservation form, which is being mailed out in early November to dozens of organizations and which is also available upon request from Archives and History. Applications must be submitted no later than January 15, 2007. History Hero nominations must be post-marked or hand delivered to the Archives and History Library by December 31, 2006. Forms should be mailed to West Virginia Archives and History, The Cultural Center, 1900 Kanawha Blvd. East, Charleston, WV 25305-0300.

For more information about History Day, or to request forms to reserve exhibit space or to nominate a History Hero, call Archives and History at (304) 558-0230.

genealogy-society-librarian. Development of a mission statement, collection development policy and donation guidelines are the most important steps recommended.

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.

AUNT JENNIE WILSON EXHIBIT, September 2–November 5:

Museum in the Park, Logan State Park, Logan.

“THE OLD DOMINION: TWO STATES, ONE HERITAGE,”

November 3–4: Carnegie Hall, Lewisburg.

AMERICAN INDIAN LECTURE 2006: “THE GRAVE CREEK MOUND,”

November 4: Dr. Richard Allen, Grave Creek Mound Archaeology Complex, Moundsville.

“COVERED BRIDGES: SPANNING THE AMERICAN LANDSCAPE,”

November 4, 2006–January 7, 2007: Smithsonian Institution Exhibit,
Museum in the Park, Logan State Park, Logan.

FRONTIER DAYS, November 4–5: Museum in the Park, Logan State Park, Logan.

ELECTION DAY, November 7: Archives Library will be open.*

VETERANS DAY, November 10: Archives Library will be open.*

**“PRODUCE FOR VICTORY: POSTERS ON THE AMERICAN HOME FRONT,
1941–1945,”** November 10–December 31: Randolph County Community Arts Center, Elkins.

THANKSGIVING DAY, November 23: Archives Library will be *closed*.

THANKSGIVING FRIDAY, November 24: Archives Library will be open.*

THANKSGIVING SATURDAY, November 25: Archives Library will be open.*

CHRISTMAS EVE, December 24 (Sunday): All Culture and History facilities will be *closed*.

CHRISTMAS DAY, December 25: Archives Library will be *closed*.

NEW YEAR’S EVE, December 31 (Sunday): All Culture and History facilities will be *closed*.

NEW YEAR’S DAY, January 1, 2007: Archives Library will be *closed*.

MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY, January 15, 2007: Archives Library will be open.*

LINCOLN’S BIRTHDAY, February 12, 2007: No longer a state holiday.

All state government offices will be open.

PRESIDENTS DAY, February 19, 2007: Archives Library will be open.*

HISTORY DAY, February 22, 2007: 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
 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.

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
- Terry Lowry** Library Assistant (Veterans records)
- Cathy Miller** Library Assistant (WV State documents, periodicals)
- Sharon Newhouse** Secretary
- 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
- Volunteers** Carolyn Conner, Bill Kelley, Randy Marcum, Sue Shank, Ken Bailey, John McClure, Carol Vandevender, and Kellis and Virginia Gillespie

This newsletter is a publication of : The West Virginia Division of Culture and History
 Randall Reid-Smith, Commissioner