

West Virginia Archives & History NEWS

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WEST VIRGINIA
DIVISION OF
CULTURE & HISTORY

From the Editor:

When you are making your travel plans to or through West Virginia for the holidays, don't forget to stop in at The Cultural Center for a little research in the Archives and History Library. We will do our best to help you make most efficient use of your time, however limited. You can help yourself—and us—by coming prepared with at least your basic research in a folder or notebook for reference while you work, and a list of specific questions you need answered and specific records you need to search. Talk to our staff about your research goals as soon as you come in so you will get pointed in the right direction from the start. Be realistic about the amount of searching you can accomplish in the time you have available, and concentrate on using the resources unique to our Library. If you don't get everything you need during your visit, write us a research letter for more assistance after you return home. Happy holidays and safe travels!

Ten More Counties to be Added to West Virginia Vital Research Records Online

The West Virginia Vital Research Records searchable database on the Archives and History Web site (http://www.wvculture.org/vrr/va_select.aspx) currently contains images of West Virginia Dept. of Health Vital Registration death certificates from 1917 through 1955, and of selected county birth, death and marriage registers. Six counties were entered in the initial launch of the project: Calhoun, Gilmer, Hardy, Harrison, Mineral and Pendleton. The next group of counties to be added sometime in 2007 are Braxton, Cabell, Grant, Greenbrier, Jefferson, Lewis, Logan, Marshall, Mingo and Wood. Because the data will be added in increments, all three categories of records of a single county may not be added at once, nor for example will all births for all ten counties be added at the same time. Keep checking the site to see what is new until you see a note posted stating that the loading of all records for these ten counties has been completed. Preparations are con-

tinuing for subsequent batches, until records for all 55 counties have been added to the database. Note that while records of the six counties currently online cover births from 1853 to 1930, subsequent county records will withhold births less than 100 years old (in

2007, only births through 1906 will appear, etc.). Hopefully each January one more year will be added automatically to the birth records of each county already on the database, as is done with the state death

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Time to Register and Plan for History Day 2007

Local groups with an interest in history or genealogy are invited to participate in the 11th West Virginia History Day on Thursday, Feb. 22, 2007, at the State Capitol Complex during the regular session of the West Virginia Legislature. Authorized by the legislature, West Virginia History Day commemorates local groups' efforts to preserve, protect and promote the study of the Mountain State's past. The West Virginia Division of Culture and History joins the Archives and History Commission, West Virginia Historical Society, West Virginia Historical Association, Preservation Alliance Inc., West Virginia Association of Museums and the Mining Your

History Foundation as organizers of this year's events. All West Virginia History Day events are free and open to the public.

In order to acquaint legislators and the public with their activities and services, local, regional and statewide historical organizations are expected to provide displays and re-enactments in the Rotunda of the State Capitol. 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 featuring historical documents, photographs, artifacts and publications. Other attractions will include

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Comparing Population Milestones

The U.S. Bureau of the Census has compiled an interesting press release comparing life and statistics in three time periods: 1915, when the U.S. population reached 100 million; 1967 when the U.S. population reached 200 million; and 2006, when the U.S. population reached 300 million. Here are a few of the interesting comparisons found on their Web site at http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/facts_for_features_special_editions/007276.html:

- World population in 1915 was 1.8 billion, in 1967 was 3.5 billion and in 2006 reached 6.5 billion.
- Number of foreign born people in America: in 1915 was 13.5 million, comprising 15% of the total population, with Germany as leading country of origin; in 1967 was 9.7 million, comprising 5% of the total population, with Italy as leading country of origin; and in 2006 is 34.3 million, comprising 12% of the total population, with Mexico as the leading country of origin.
- Life expectancy at birth was 54.5 years in 1915, 70.5 years in 1967 and 77.8 years in 2006.
- Percentage of the population with a high school diploma was 13.5% in 1915, 51.1% in 1967 and 85.2% in 2006.
- Average household size in 1915 was 4.5 people, in 1967 was 3.3 people and in 2006 is 2.6 people.
- The number of farms was 6.5 million in 1915, 3.2 million in 1967 and 2.1 million in 2006.

"History Day" continued from page 1
reenactments of events in the state's history, music, storytelling, and a ceremony honoring citizens from across the state who have made contributions to the history of West Virginia. At an awards ceremony in the State Theater of the Cultural Center, "History Hero" awards will be presented to people who have made significant grass-roots contributions to the preservation of local or regional history. Local historical, genealogical, preservation, museum, patriotic and other similar groups are encouraged to provide nominations for the awards.

Information and forms for History Day 2007 and History Hero nominations have been mailed to all historical, genealogical and preservation societies on the History Day mailing list. Applications from groups interested in setting up displays on

history-related projects are due by Jan. 15, 2007. History Hero nominations must be postmarked by Dec. 31. Nominations also may be hand-delivered to the Archives and History Library at the Cultural Center in the State Capitol Complex by the deadline. If your organization has not received a packet, call (304) 558-0230 to determine if you are on the mailing list and if so, to verify your mailing address. The History Hero nomination form is also available on our Web site at <http://www.wvculture.org/history/historyday/historyhero07.pdf>. Whether as exhibitor or visitor, we hope to see you in Charleston on February 22 for a very enjoyable and informative day, and we encourage you to include a visit to the West Virginia Archives and History Library as part of your trip.

Coal Camp Message Board and Mailing List Now on RootsWeb

As most of you will know, RootsWeb.com is the home of many message boards and mailing lists for surnames, geographic areas, ethnic groups and other subjects of interest to genealogists and historians, allowing researchers to post questions and share information. One of their newest topics is coal camps in the United States, under the heading of US-COALMINING-CAMPS-L. You will find it in the USA section under Miscellaneous, or go to <http://lists.rootsweb.com/index/usa/misc/misc.html>. Last time I checked, Coalmining Camps was at the end of the miscellaneous list, which also

includes other subject lists of interest to West Virginians, such as Native Americans, snake handlers of West Virginia and Kentucky, mound builders, and migration within the United States.

FYI, the Dondrill (sic) book mentioned in the introduction to U.S. Coalmining Camps is *20,000 Coal Company Stores in the United States, Mexico and Canada*, by Gordon Dodrill (1971), a listing of company stores with scrip and tokens issued for spending in those stores. The West Virginia Archives and History Library has this book, as well as other books for coal and lumber company scrip and explosives tokens. Although published by and for scrip collectors, the lists are useful for identifying company towns and which company operated which town.

For questions about the list,

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 certificates.

We strongly suggest you read the article linked from the Vital Research Records page to learn about the contents of the database and guidelines for searching. While based on articles appearing in the August and November issues of *Archives and History News*, the information will be updated as we discover new search techniques or problems, or as the contents of the database change. The Vital Research Records database has been one of the most well-received projects we have undertaken, and is probably the most used portion of our Web site. Please continue to send us your comments, suggestions and corrections for the database to our special e-mail address for the site, wvrr@wvculture.org. If you do not have access to e-mail, call Debra Basham, (304) 558-0230.

**Archives and History News
 is available on the
 Archives and History Web site
[http://www.wvculture.org/history/
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 with the single word *subscribe* in the
 message subject line and body. The
 list is new, so there will not be much
 in its archives yet, but you can search
 or browse the archives from a link on
 the site. Many of you will have much
 to contribute to this site, will enjoy
 sharing reminiscences, and may be
 able to connect with former residents
 of the same coal camp communities
 where you grew up or now live.

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.

“COVERED BRIDGES: SPANNING THE AMERICAN LANDSCAPE,” November 4, 2006–January 7, 2007: Smithsonian Institution Exhibit, Museum in the Park, Logan State Park, Logan.

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

MUSEUM IN THE PARK, LOGAN STATE PARK, HOLIDAY HOURS, November 25–December 30: 5 to 9 p.m. Monday and Tuesday, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Saturday, and 1 to 9 p.m. Sunday.

JENKINS PLANTATION MUSEUM HOLIDAY CELEBRATION, December 2: Lesage.

CHRISTMAS EVE, December 24:
All Culture and History facilities will be closed.

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

HISTORY HERO NOMINATIONS DUE, December 31:
 Archives and History, The Cultural Center.

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

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

HISTORY DAY REGISTRATIONS DUE, January 15:
 Archives and History, The Cultural Center.

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

LINCOLN’S BIRTHDAY, February 12: No longer a West Virginia state holiday. All government offices will be open.

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

HISTORY DAY, February, 22: 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.

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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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 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