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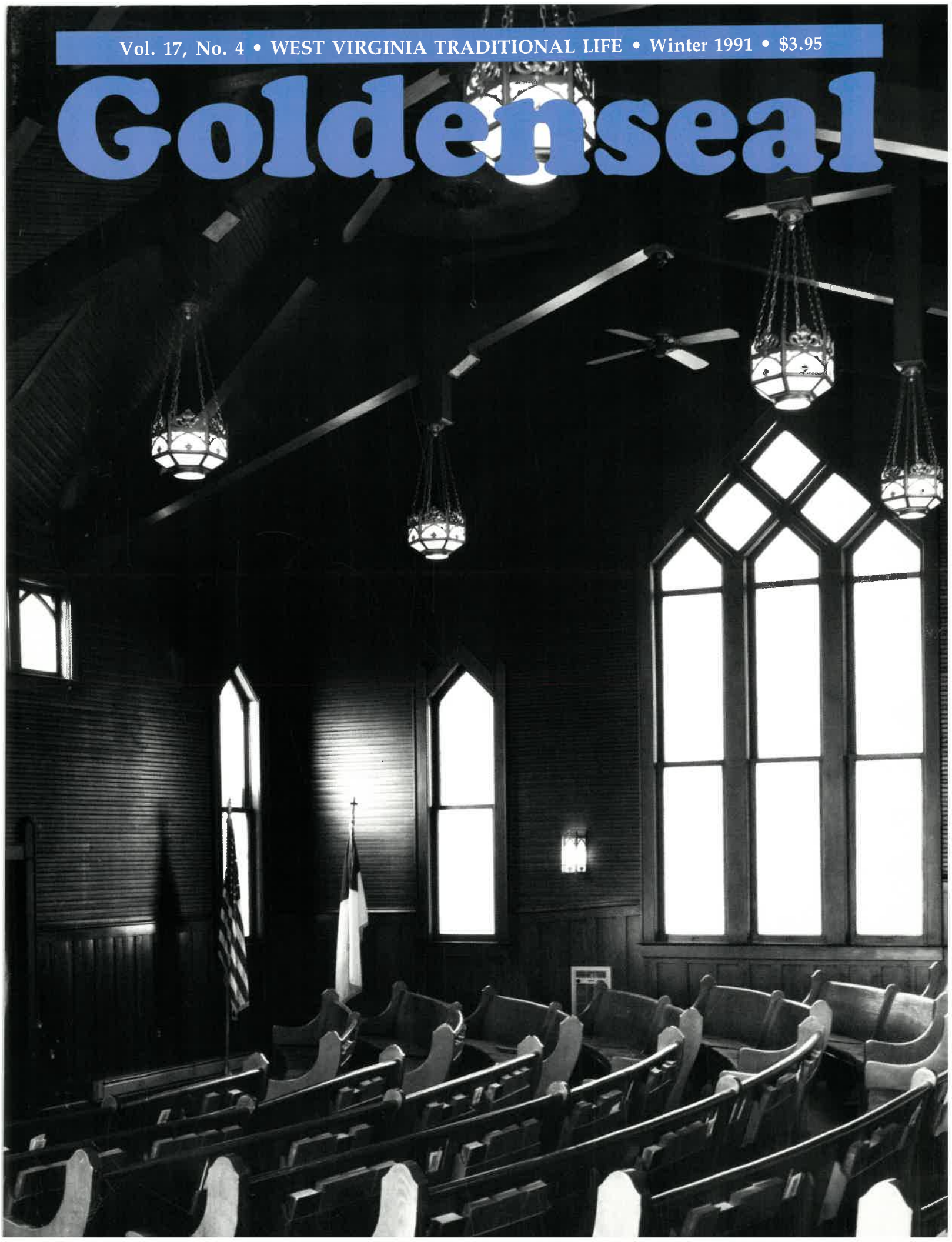
Goldenseal



From the Editor: Thank You

Okay—who's the wise guy who sent the tube of Ben Gay muscle rub after seeing my tractor-push photo in the last GOLDENSEAL? The "Extra Strength Formula," no less.

Actually, I know just who it was, but maybe I'd better leave him unnamed, along with all those who commented about the picture showing my "best side." It was all meant in good fun, I'm sure—and an awful lot of it was accompanied by checks and money orders. Fund-raising was the point of it all, and if the photograph helped I'm satisfied.

And let me bring you up to date on that. The results are still coming in from the fall subscription drive as I write this in early November. That makes it a little early for predictions, as I've learned from long experience. The proverbial cash flow ebbs as well as flows, I've found out, and seems to vary with everything from the state of the economy to the position of the sun, moon and stars. At this point let's just say that we're running several thousand dollars ahead of last year and hoping to do still better.

So thank you. Thanks to the thousands of readers we've heard from already—and thanks also to the others I'm sure we'll hear from soon.

Believe me, we'd better. We had more than a few crisis meetings with top management here at the Division of Culture and History to get GOLDENSEAL through to the end of the 1990-91 fiscal year last June. We made it, just barely.

We can't count on that sort of bailout every year. We have brought GOLDENSEAL closer and closer to full self-sufficiency, but we're not there yet. With your support, we raised about 85% of our total budget last year. That's the best ever, and extraordinarily good for a government publication of any sort—but it's not good enough. The extra thousands we need are harder and harder to find from taxpayer funds. As the state scrimps to cover basic services you can bet that magazine publishing is way down the list. That means we must look after ourselves.

In other words, GOLDENSEAL readers must support GOLDENSEAL. I think that's a fair proposition, requiring those who benefit from the service to pay for it. That's the way it is with electrical service, cable TV and the morning paper. We must put the magazine on the same basis.

And this is the year to do it, to put GOLDENSEAL over the top, into the black—next year at the very latest. Otherwise we won't be here. It's as simple as that.

If my thank-you itself has turned into a fund-raising appeal, I'll apologize for that and promise to change my tune after the next paragraph or so. But do keep in mind that fund-raising is a year round proposition, and it does occupy our attention. I trust that those who have helped know of our gratitude, and figure that others need the reminder.

I remain optimistic. We've done better each year, as I say, and I expect that to continue. I welcome the challenge to put the magazine on its own feet. It's a reasonable demand, made on us by those in charge of doling out the limited number of tax dollars around these parts. But it is a difficult task, as anyone who has had anything to do with small magazines will readily agree. Success will require your full support.

With all that said, then, let me repeat my hearty "thank you" to those who contributed promptly. Mail came in by the boxful in late September and early October, a gratifying sight. Processing it efficiently and on a business-like basis was a challenge for a while there, but it was a good problem to have.

Volunteers Chuck and Esther Heitzman pitched in to help, as in past years. They came in daily for most of October, processing nearly a thousand pieces of mail some afternoons. Thanks to them, in particular.

The Heitzmans helped us to get the money in the bank, and we hired temporary help for a couple of days to help straighten out the paperwork. Cornelia Alexander tells me everything will be under control by the time this magazine goes out, all the coupons out of the way, names and addresses changed wherever necessary, and your payments duly credited.

By the way, some folks took the opportunity to remove their names from the GOLDENSEAL mailing list. We appreciate that as well. Do let us know if you no longer wish to receive the magazine. We won't be offended, and the money saved will contribute to balancing our budget.

Thanks also for the many non-monetary contributions which accompanied the checks and money orders. As always, we got story ideas, suggestions, some constructive criticism and lots of words of encouragement. All of it is appreciated.

And I did receive quite a lot of comments on the tractor-push photo from the last issue. Hey, I thought it was a great idea for a fund-raising pitch—sometimes you gotta back up and push, as we used to say down in the country. I was literally straining to put Melvin Wine's tractor over the hump, and figuratively that's about what we do every day here.

As for the Extra Strength Ben Gay, I'll take that in the spirit it was given, I suppose—and promise to use it the next time I have to push-start a tractor.

Thanks again—and best wishes for the holidays and new year.

— Ken Sullivan

Published for the
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Gaston Caperton
Governor

through the
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Goldenseal

Volume 17, Number 4 Winter 1991

COVER: Chestnut-paneled Rainelle United Methodist Church was a peaceful refuge from a booming mill town. Our story on Rainelle and the Meadow River Lumber Company begins on page 9. Photo by Michael Keller.

PHOTOS: Frank Altizer, Doug Chadwick, Greg Clark, Donato's Studio, Johnston and Johnston, Michael Keller, Susan Leffler, Tawney Studio, Jay Williams.

Letters from Readers

GOLDENSEAL welcomes letters of general interest from readers. Our address is Division of Culture and History, The Cultural Center, State Capitol, Charleston, WV 25305. Published letters may be edited for brevity or clarity.

October 6, 1991
Dunbar, West Virginia
Editor:
I've been buying my GOLDENSEAL for years at Trans Allegheny or Dalton's Bookstore in Charleston. You can give Jim Comstock and the *West Virginia Hillbilly* newspaper credit for persuading me to subscribe. I guess it hadn't come to my attention that you really do need and deserve a raise now, in order to keep this magazine coming.

I buy three extras usually to send to relatives and friends out of state. Ohio and Tennessee get copies, and the one in Tennessee is passed on to a neighbor in the apartment building. He is a professor there. He was astounded when he saw GOLDENSEAL, and said, "My Lord, I didn't know they had anything like this in West Virginia!"

So I always make sure my contact in Bristol, Tennessee, gets her magazine so she can pass it on to this professor. Good publicity for West Virginia, instead of the other kind.

Good luck with the membership drive.
Sincerely,
Amelia Palmer

Our thanks to Jim Comstock for enthusiastic words for GOLDENSEAL in the Hillbilly *last October. — ed.*

Some Help on the Hungarian

October 4, 1991
Slanesville, West Virginia
Editor:
Thank you for "The Zekanys of Logan County" in your fall 1991 issue.

Just for the fun of it, let me translate the 1909 postcard: "Written Logan, W. Va. Jan. 3, 1909, Sunday. My dear wife, I too have arrived from far away and now to you and to my parents and Laci and everyone I wish a Happy New Year and Epiphany and I remain your faithful husband. Sandor Zekany."

My other comment refers to the Hungarian folksong you mention, "Wooden fork, Wooden spoon, Wooden plate." The lively song continues (in free translation):

> Wooden fork, wooden spoon, wooden plate,/I am dying, I am dying for my love./If I enter the tavern, I'll be inside./If they throw me out, I'll be outside./Wooden fork, wooden spoon, wooden plate./I am dying, I am dying for my love.

This will be all for now, except to thank you for the good work you do with the GOLDENSEAL.
Sincerely yours,
Stephen Sziarto

Mountain Schooling

September 16, 1991
Clendenin, West Virginia
Editor:
The excellent stories on mountain schoolhouses in the fall 1991 issue of GOLDENSEAL brought back pleasant memories of my early years in small country schools. The one-room schools and the dedicated teachers who taught in them are fast disappearing, and I hope that more of these former teachers will write their remembrances for the rest of us to enjoy.

I started to school at Barren Creek Grade School near Clendenin in Kanawha County in 1932. The Barren Creek School had two rooms, but only one room was used for teaching at that time. The other room was empty and used as a playroom during inclement weather. My first grade teacher was Lillian Kennedy and my second and third grade teacher was Mosella Russe.

Following the third grade I was transferred to the Corton Grade School, about one mile away. Corton School had two rooms, both of which were used for teaching. My fourth grade teacher was Audry McCown and my fifth and sixth grade teacher was Gladys White. Barren Creek School was torn down years ago but Corton School still exists and has been used as a community church.

I can't praise my grade school teachers enough. They were dedicated, hardworking and highly respected by the entire community. They made certain that we students (called "scholars" by my mother and other older people at the time) learned reading, writing, arithmetic and other essential subjects. They treated all of us fairly and did not tolerate misbehavior. They encouraged us to excel and make something of our lives.

In my opinion we received as good as or better education than children do now, even though the teachers didn't have computers and all the other aids that one sees now. Most of us were poor farm children and had lots of chores to do besides studying. Thank goodness we didn't have television to distract us.
Sincerely,
Ottis L. Dilworth

Remembering the Smoke Pilot

September 23, 1991
Fairhope, Alabama
Editor:
I came to Charleston in May 1971 to help set up the National Weather Service state forecast office. For several years I traveled the state as air pollution and fire weather meteorologist. So "Weather Watchers" and "Smoke Pilot" both bring back good memories.

I first met Asher Kelly when he came into the weather office for a preflight weather briefing — dressed in

his flight coveralls with long white scarf and gloves. He looked great.

Later we flew several times to search out forest fires, and I enjoyed being with him.

The state received a surplus army aircraft that Asher Kelly and I used to fly to Lewes, Delaware, to attend a six-state fire weather conference. We landed after dark on a grass strip and had a bumpy ride over that. I was glad to be on the ground.

The following year, I believe that aircraft crashed near Elkins and both state employees on board were killed.

Oh, yes—one other thing about the article "Smoke Pilot"—Asher and I both served in the *Army Air Force*, not the Air Corps. Asher entered the military on July 11, 1941, the Army Air Corps became the Army Air Force on June 20, 1941.

Best wishes to the
GOLDENSEAL staff,
Art Carlson, Jr.

Thanks for straightening us out. So many old fly guys have corrected us on air service nomenclature over the years that we finally called the Air Force itself for the official version. We understand that the Aeronautical Division of the Signal Corps was established in 1907, becoming the Aviation Section in 1914. Congress established the U.S. Army Air Corps in 1926, changed to the Army Air Forces (yes, the "s" is right) in 1941. The United States Air Force was born in 1947. — ed.

September 12, 1991
Sutton, West Virginia
Editor:

I loved the story on Asher Kelly by Bob Beanblossom. I wrote a lot about Asher for the newspaper, and once flew with him on a forest fire flight. We flew through smoke, hollows, and rough air, sometimes so low Asher would shout to a fire tower attendant on the ground.

I am prone to airsickness, and that produced a classic, textbook case.

Sincerely,
Skip Johnson

Richwood Families

October 18, 1991
Dunbar, West Virginia
Editor:

I was surprised to see the picture of the Green family in the Richwood article. Mrs. Green is my sister and still lives in Medina, New York, in a nursing home. Her daughter, Martha, still lives there too. Another sister of mine went to New York State at a later date and lived there until she passed away. Also a brother, Donald, moved there a few years later to find work. He worked at the Duffy Motts plant until he retired. I lived at Richwood until age eight. Those were hard times for everyone.

The Green family, photographed by John Collier. Courtesy Library of Congress.

The GOLDENSEAL is a great book on West Virginia people. We enjoy it very much.

Sincerely,
Inez Mitchell

September 15, 1991
Friendsville, Maryland
Editor:

Last year when you printed a smaller version of the photo of the Friend family at the Richwood railroad station, I clipped it, sent photocopies to a few people who are researching Friend families in West Virginia, having gone through our records here. No luck in identifying Bryant's line.

Now you've printed two bigger versions of John Collier's photos of the Friend family and I sit and look at them again and again. Even if these folks weren't named Friend I would be fascinated by that which John Collier captured in their faces, their postures, their place. It's innocence and goodness, isn't it?

This issue of GOLDENSEAL is a gold mine for me, with Bryant, Hazel and Ferrell Friend. Most West Virginia Friends are descended from Israel, who was a very interesting person —"ambassador to the tribes of the North," guide to the surveying party that set the Fairfax Stone, early iron worker or iron maker in or near Bakerton. His house there (built 1735-37) is being restored by a young couple.

Thanks for the great job you do—all of you.

Sincerely,
Ina Hicks, Librarian
The Friend Family Association
of America

Model T Memories

September 16, 1991
Sissonville, West Virginia
Editor:

I would like to point out a slight error in the article "Martinsburg Memories" by Paul Fansler. He said, "the gas tank was in the dashboard of the Model T and the fuel flowed by gravity."

It's correct it flowed by gravity, but the tank was under the front seat. Since the driver's seat was very high, most of the tank was still higher than the carburetor. The early T's had oil lamps, no battery, and no starter. When you cranked them you had to be careful not to be ran over or to receive a broken arm. I learned to drive on one of these.

It was the B and A Models that had the gas tank over the fire wall. You filled the tank by a cap in front of the windshield. I was the owner of A Models in '29,'30,'31. I think the B was a '28 model.

It's true that when the gas tank on a T model was low you might have to back up a hill. Also you could use a tire pump, placing the hose over the vent hole in the gas cap, putting pressure on the tank and forcing the gas out. This took two persons as the driver had to keep his feet on the controls to drive the car.

Harold Melton

October 10, 1991
Melbourne, Florida
Editor:

I enjoyed very much your "Martinsburg Memories" in your fall '91 issue. Your writer, Paul Fansler, impressed me as a man of quality, a gentleman and a scholar — and there are very few of us left, you know.

But his statement that the gas tank in a Model T Ford was above the dashboard is contrary to all my recollec-

tions. I cut my teeth driving Model T's and all that I ever drove had the gas tank under the front seat. The Model A had the tank above the dashboard and immediately in front of the windshield. There was a cutoff valve under the dashboard which made it convenient when you wanted to run out of gas.

We boys with a cornfield education soon learned to drill a hole in the gas cap and insert an inner tube valve (they were metal in those days), move the seat to the side, and use our tire pump to pump the gasoline to the carburetor. Then we didn't have to back up hills.

A former associate of mine, Erskine L. Davis of Clay, was awarded a Bronze Star in World World Two for improvising after the fuel pump of his half-track was hit by enemy fire beyond the American lines. He simply removed the hose from the vacuum windshield wipers, put them in a jerry can which he placed higher than the carburetor, and thus made it back to a more friendly atmosphere. How many city boys would have thought of that?

When you crank-started your Model T on level ground, a scarce commodity in West Virginia, you had to be prepared to outrun it. It would go forward on its own and you had to jump on the running board, leap over where there was no front door on the driver's side and take charge.

To avoid tiring our legs by having to push down the clutch (that put us in low gear) on long mountains like East River and Allegheny Front, we cut a notch in each end of a board and placed it between the frame under the seat and the depressed clutch.

Photo by R. R. Keller, courtesy State Archives.

Young boys and girls, usually eight to 10 years old, would set up shop along mountain roads and sell water for cars at five cents per ten-quart pail. I could never understand until I went into business for myself why those little gamins never had change for a dime.

Radiator stop-leak could be ginger, oats, pulverized blackboard chalk, or raw eggs. Horse manure was possibly the most popular, as horses outnumbered cars in those days and road biscuits were not hard to come by.

To get through mud or snow we wove rope, overalls or anything available through the wooden spokes and around the rear tires. Fording streams (bridges were few and far between) we'd take off the fan belt, cover the radiator with a rug, cardboard or anything handy, then hit the stream as hard as prudence permitted. After fording, we'd ride our brakes for some distance for a wet brake was no brake at all.

Model T's were as individual as people. I'm happy to have been acquainted with some in a bygone era when people were kinder and gentler and automobiles were cantankerous.
Yours,
Sam Keenan

October 7, 1991
Billings, Montana
Editor:
One of your articles had a photo of an auto putting along a dirt road in Summers County. I think the unidentified driver was Rufus Garfield Williams, schoolteacher, sawmill owner, farmer, stock trader, and my grandfather. I have no proof except family talk about his having the first car in those parts — the Elk Knob, Judson area.
Sincerely,
James F. Williams

CORRECTION: The Summer GOLDENSEAL mistakenly identified the wounded man here as W.G. Baldwin. In fact, Flossie Mae Allen informs us that this man is her grandfather Floyd Allen, leader of the Allen faction in the 1912 courthouse shootout in Hillsville, Virginia. Private Detective Baldwin (at rear) and partner Thomas L. Felts (left foreground), proprietors of the Baldwin-Felts Detective Agency, are Allen's captors. Photographer unknown, courtesy Eastern Regional Coal Archives.

Films on West Virginia and Appalachia

Steve Fesenmaier, director of the State Library Commission's Film Services unit, recently provided GOLDENSEAL with the following list of current films and videos about West Virginia and the Appalachian region. Film Services has the largest collection of mountain movies and tapes anywhere in the country, which may be borrowed at public libraries throughout the state.

The Author - Mary Lee Settle
58 min. (VHS) 1991 WVLC
Author Mary Lee Settle is interviewed by Culture and History Commissioner William Drennen, Jr. Settle, who grew up in Charleston and now lives in Virginia, wrote the *Beulah Quintet*, historical fiction following the West Virginia story from early settlement to the recent past. Her non-regional work includes the 1978 National Book Award winner, *Blood Ties*.

Blaze
117 min. (VHS) 1989 Facets
Paul Newman interprets the final years of Louisiana Governor Earl Long and his scandalous relationship with stripper Blaze Starr. Starr, a West Virginian, is portrayed by Lolita Davidovich who brings a fair amount of sizzle to the screen. The movie was based on the book by Huey Perry of Huntington.

The very real Blaze Starr recently sent us this publicity photo.

The Butterfly
107 min. (VHS) 1981 Vestron
Based on the James M. Cain novel of the same name, this film deals with hard times and the breaking of taboos in the southern coalfields. Cain, famous for such novels as *The Postman Always Rings Twice* and *Double Indemnity*, reported from West Virginia during the Mine Wars.

The Cass Scenic Railroad
30 min. (VHS) 1985 Pictorial Histories
A 30-minute journey on one of America's most scenic railroads — from the top of Bald Knob, West Virginia's second highest point, to the Greenbrier River. Historic photos from the 1900's and film footage of logging operations from the 1950's are included.

Chemical Valley
50 min. (VHS) 1991 Appalshop
Institute, West Virginia, has the only plant in the United States that manufactures MIC, a deadly gas that killed 3500 people in Bhopal, India, in 1984. This film follows events in the Kanawha Valley immediately following the disaster and over the next five years. Industry spokesmen, government regulators, plant managers, chemical workers, community activists, environmentalists, local residents and politicians speak out.

Civil War Weekend
60 min. (VHS) 1986 Pictorial Histories
In June of 1986 the Nicholas County battles of Keslers Cross Lanes and Carnifex Ferry were reenacted by men and women representing infantry, artillery and calvary from the armies of the North and South.

Coal Wars: The Battle in Rum Creek
29 min. (VHS) 1991 Kathleen Foster
This documentary looks at the role women played in the 1989-90 coal strike at Dehue, Logan County. The miners and their wives are embroiled in one of the most intense battles since the Mine Wars, and material from that era is included in the film.

The Deer Hunter
183 min. (VHS) 1978 Facets
This powerful drama, filmed partly in the Northern Panhandle, follows a group of friends from a Pennsylvania steel town through their Vietnam War experiences. There's fine work by Robert De Niro, Meryl Streep, and others.

Different Drummer Series
29 min. (VHS) 1989 and 1991 WNPB
Fourteen different documentaries on various West Virginia subjects, from "Appalachian Junkumentary" (a visit to six junkyards) to "Arthurdale" and Eleanor Roosevelt's time in West Virginia. Such colorful modern-day figures as Elmer Fike, former Nitro chemical plant owner; self-made millionaire and friend to the homeless, Frankie Veltri; artist "Sug" Davis; and former state treasurer A. James Manchin are among those featured.

Drawing the Line at Pittston
59 min. (VHS) 1989 Paper Tiger TV
A chronicle of the year-long miners' strike against the Pittston Coal Company in southwestern Virginia and southern West Virginia. Using interviews with striking miners and their families, members of the clergy, labor leaders, students, and others affected by the strike, this documentary illustrates a gradual political awakening.

Fat Monroe
14 min. (16 mm & VHS) 1990 Appalshop
Appalshop's first fiction, this film is based on a Gurney Norman short story with Ned Beatty in the title role. Fat is a gruff, unshaven mountain man with a gift of gab and a merciless sense of humor.

Interview with Lina Basquette
30 min. (VHS) 1991 WSWP TV
John Bauman of WSWP TV interviews Lina Basquette, a dance and film star from 1916 to 1943. Her autobiography, *Lina, De Mille's Godless Girl*, was published in 1990. Basquette now lives in Wheeling.

Journey Through a Depression
19 min. (VHS) 1990 Ruth Blackwell Rogers
Ruth Blackwell Rogers, one of the Mountain State's leading artists, takes the viewer through the different emotions experienced during a deep depression. The music, images, and narration reveal a profound understanding of this most common form of mental illness.

Julie: Old-time Tales of the Blue Ridge
11 min. (16 mm & VHS) 1991 Flower Films
Julie Jarrell Lyons was born in 1903 in the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina. In telling the stories of her life there — from memories of her midwife grandmother to her own proper courtship — Julie brings to life a world gone by. She sings ballads and plays harmonica to accompany her tales.

Ken Burns in West Virginia
58 min. (VHS) 1990 West Virginia Humanities Council
An introduction to one of America's leading documentary filmmakers, producer of the critically acclaimed PBS series, "The Civil War." Burns, who has family from West Virginia, is working in an advisory capacity with the West Virginia History Film Project.

Legacy of the Sixties
90 min. (VHS) 1991 WSWP TV
Following PBS's "Making Sense of the Sixties," WSWP did a three-part series exploring what happened in West Virginia in the sixties. Guests included librarian Yvonne Farley, editor Don Marsh, civil rights activist Donald Pitts, sociologist Sally Maggard, and others.

Night of the Hunter
2 hrs. (VHS) 1991 ABC TV
David Greene, best known for "Roots," made this new version of West Virginia author Davis Grubb's famous suspense novel. Richard Chamberlain stars as the diabolical preacher. The film was made in North Carolina, using the New River in place of the Ohio.

No Need to Repent
27 min. (16 mm)1989 Asymmetry Productions
Jan Griesinger, an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ and an active feminist, lives with other women at the Susan B. Anthony Memorial Unrest Home in rural Appalachia. Director Ann Alter, a leading feminist filmmaker, also worked on "Ten Miles to Fetch Water," about water problems in southern West Virginia.

Teenage Strangler
67 min. (VHS) 1964 Something Weird
Directed by Bill Posner and filmed on location in Huntington, this is a tale of murder and suspicion. Huntingtonian Clark Davis was the screenwriter and producer. "A mystery lipstick killer is strangling schoolgirls with stockings," says *Psychotronic Video* magazine.

Unbroken Tradition: Jerry Brown Pottery
28 min. (16 mm & VHS) 1989 Appalshop
A biography of potter Jerry Brown of Hamilton, Alabama — the ninth generation of Browns to sit behind a potter's wheel. The film follows Brown as he digs clay, prepares it for a wheel, and fires pots in his kiln. A portrait of a remarkable craftsman.

West Virginia Whitewater
60 min. (VHS) 1990 Camera One
Some of America's best river adventures can be found on the waters of West Virginia. This film includes the New River and Gauley.

Wrestling With God
72 min. (16 mm & VHS) 1990 Journey Films
Partly filmed on location in Bethany, this film tells the inspiring story of Alexander Campbell, the father of the Disciples of Christ. Campbell, also one of the early proponents of West Virginia statehood and founder of Bethany College, is arguably the most influential religious figure in our state's history.

Current Programs • Events • Publications

GOLDENSEAL announcements are published as a service, as space permits. They are not paid advertisements and items are screened according to the likely interests of our readers. We welcome events announcements and review copies of books and records, but cannot guarantee publication.

New River History

William Sanders of Princeton has written two new books on his southern West Virginia home country. Volumes 1 and 2 of *A New River Heritage* take a look at the colorful history of the New River-Bluestone area.

The New River Valley was a primary route of settlement of the southern counties, according to Sanders. His first volume deals with the west side of the river from Pearisburg to Pipestem. Volume 2, due out this month, is about Pipestem and the Bluestone benches of Flat Top Mountain. Sanders has practiced law in the area since 1948 and writes from his own experience and from a keen historical interest.

Sanders also authored *Lilly on the Bluestone*, an account of a community demolished in the 1940's to make way for Bluestone Lake. The Summers County village was never flooded, however, and Sanders has led several attempts to interpret the site for the public. He is also active in the Bluestone Highlands Association, a member of the New River Parkway Authority, and chairman of the Shawnee Parkway Association.

New River Heritage volumes sell for $35 each. The books are each approximately 350 pages long with photos and maps. Contact William Sanders, 320 Courthouse Road, Princeton, WV 24740; (304)425-8125.

Coalfields Love Story

Wyoming County author Lacy Dillon published his third book recently. *I'll Remember You in the Morning* is a love story set in a West Virginia mining town in the early 1900's. Young Mary Johnson, a newlywed who moves from the southern coalfields to a northern coal camp, is "the prettiest woman the coal town had ever possessed." Through her the reader learns about everyday life and the customs and traditions of a mining boomtown, along with the surprise twist that Mary's life takes.

Fiction represents a departure for Lacy Dillon, best known as the chief

Woody Simmons Turns 80

Champion fiddler Woody Simmons of Randolph County turned 80 on November 13. Simmons, a GOLDENSEAL cover subject in 1979, has long been revered as one of West Virginia's premier old-time fiddlers. Winner of the 1983 Vandalia Award and a Vandalia regular, as well as a participant at Augusta, the State Forest Festival and other music events, Simmons was honored with a birthday party at Davis and Elkins College.

Simmons released the album, "All Smiles Tonight," in 1979 on the Elderberry Records label. Copies are available from The Shop at the Cultural Center, Capitol Complex, Charleston, WV 25305 for $7.50, plus $3 shipping and handling. West Virginia residents must add 6% sales tax.

Woody Simmons relaxes at the Vandalia Gathering a few years ago. Photo by Michael Keller.

chronicler of West Virginia's mine disasters. His 1976 book, *They Died in the Darkness*, covered the Mountain State's worst mine disasters from the early decades of the 20th century. In 1985 Dillon published *They Died for King Coal*, documenting lesser mine tragedies. The two books have become standard references.

All of the books may be purchased in West Virginia bookstores or directly from the author. *I'll Remember You in the Morning*, a 167-page hardbound, sells for $12.95. *They Died in the Darkness* costs $14.95 and *They Died for King Coal* is $12.95. Shipping is $1.50 per book and West Virginia residents must add 6% sales tax.

Mining History

Southern West Virginia is coal country, the site of countless mining operations in the late 1800's and throughout this century. Industry retiree Charles Smith recalls much of it firsthand and has an avid interest in the rest, particularly for the New River area. Drawing from his experiences and from research into company records, he recently wrote *Fire Creek: A New River Gorge Mining Community.*

Smith was the last superintendent at the Fire Creek mine, with his father in the same position for many years before him. He worked with George Bragg, a member of the Fayette County Landmark Commission and himself a coal miner, to bring the new book into print.

When the Fire Creek Coal & Coke Company was sold in 1945, Smith himself disposed of many of the company's papers. He says he has regretted it ever since, and in recent years he has worked to piece the Fire Creek story back together.

The 72-page large format paperbound book includes drawings and historic photographs, samples of correspondence, anecdotes and a glossary of early mining terms. *Fire Creek: A New River Gorge Mining Community* sells for $10, plus $2 postage and handling, from Gem Publications, P.O. Box 29, Glen Jean, WV 25846.

Tour West Virginia

Mary Rodd Furbee of Morgantown is the author of *The Complete Guide to West Virginia Inns*. The pocket-sized paperback lists 85 overnight establishments in the Mountain State — West Virginia's bed and breakfasts, country inns, wilderness lodges, and historic hotels. There's also information on regional festivals, historic sites, white watering, restaurants and state parks. Detailed descriptions, maps and drawings are included.

Furbee works as writer and editor at the West Virginia University Bureau of Business Research. Her work has been published by the Gannett News Service, *Charleston Gazette, Pittsburgh Press* and other publications. Furbee says she undertook the book project because national and regional guidebooks often feature only a handful of West Virginia inns or none at all. She says her book "aims to spread the word about West Virginia's unique lodging places. From simple riverfront cottages and stone manor houses to rustic wilderness lodges and grand hotels."

Copies of *The Complete Guide to West Virginia Inns* may be found in regional gift shops and bookstores, or ordered from South Wind Publishing, P. O. Box 901, Morgantown, WV 26507; (304) 291-1748. The cost is $6.95 plus $1.50 shipping. Discounts are available for orders of 2 or more books.

Dedicated to Old-Time Music

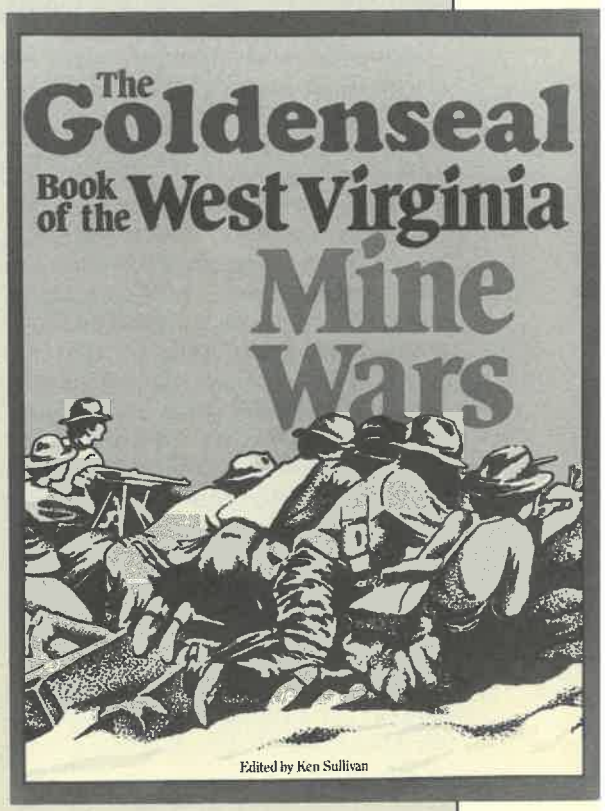
The Old-Time Herald, a publication of the Old-Time Music Group, marked its fifth year with the August-October issue. The quarterly magazine features articles about contemporary and historical figures in the old-time music community, lively record reviews, news from around the world, transcriptions of traditional tunes, and letters and opinion pieces.

The Old-Time Herald emphasizes both the roots of the music and contemporary expressions of the tradition, according to editor and founder Alice Gerrard. "The old-time music community desperately needed a

Mine Wars Book

The Goldenseal Book of the West Virginia Mine Wars, announced in the fall GOLDENSEAL, was published in late October. The book reprints 18 articles, plus additional short features, covering one of the most spectacular periods of American labor history. There are maps, a bibliography and more than 100 historic photographs. The articles were originally published in GOLDENSEAL from 1977 to 1991.

The 104-page oversized paperback book sells for $9.95 at The Shop at the Cultural Center and at bookstores statewide. Mail orders, including $2.50 additional for postage and 60 cents sales tax from West Virginians, may be sent to Trans Allegheny Books, 114 Capitol Street, Charleston, WV 25301.



forum to bring us together. We've filled that need, and the community has responded most positively."

The most recent issue included an article about DeFord Bailey, a Grand Ole Opry star from 1925 to 1941 and one of the most famous black performers of his era, and family stories told by the late fiddler Tommy Jarrell of North Carolina. West Virginian Melvin Wine, winner of the National Endowment for the Arts National Heritage Fellowship award, received congratulations in the issue.

The Old-Time Herald costs $15 annually and is published in August, November, February and May. The address is *The Old-Time Herald*, P.O. Box 51812, Durham, N.C. 27707; (919)490-6578.

Culture & History Support Group

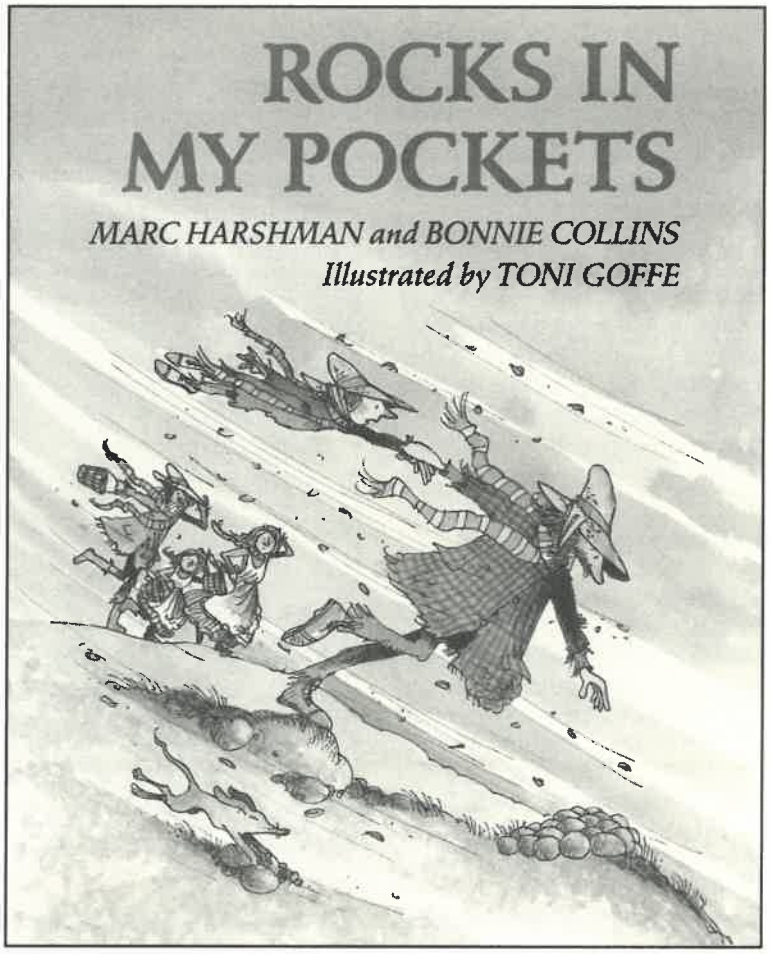
The Friends of West Virginia Culture and History was recently organized to support the programs of the Division of Culture and History. Members contribute financially and as volunteers. Some help with research in the Archives Library or pitch in on large mailings. Others assist in hosting special events.

Last summer the Friends made its first major financial grant, providing $1,500 to help the State Archives purchase the newly released 1920 manuscript census for West Virginia. The collection, totaling 137 rolls of microfilm, reproduces the actual census returns, with names and ages, occupations, place of birth and other information.

Friends members receive the quarterly newsletter, *Patterns*, discounts at The Shop at the Cultural Center, and invitations to special events. Those who join at higher membership levels receive subscriptions to *GOLDENSEAL* and *West Virginia History*.

Memberships begin with a student fee of $15 and range upwards to a family membership of $40. There are also membership levels for patrons, benefactors and corporate sponsors. A special volunteer member status requires 25 hours of donated time.

For more information about the Friends of West Virginia Culture and History contact Sandy Graff at the Cultural Center, Charleston, WV 25305; (304)348-0220.



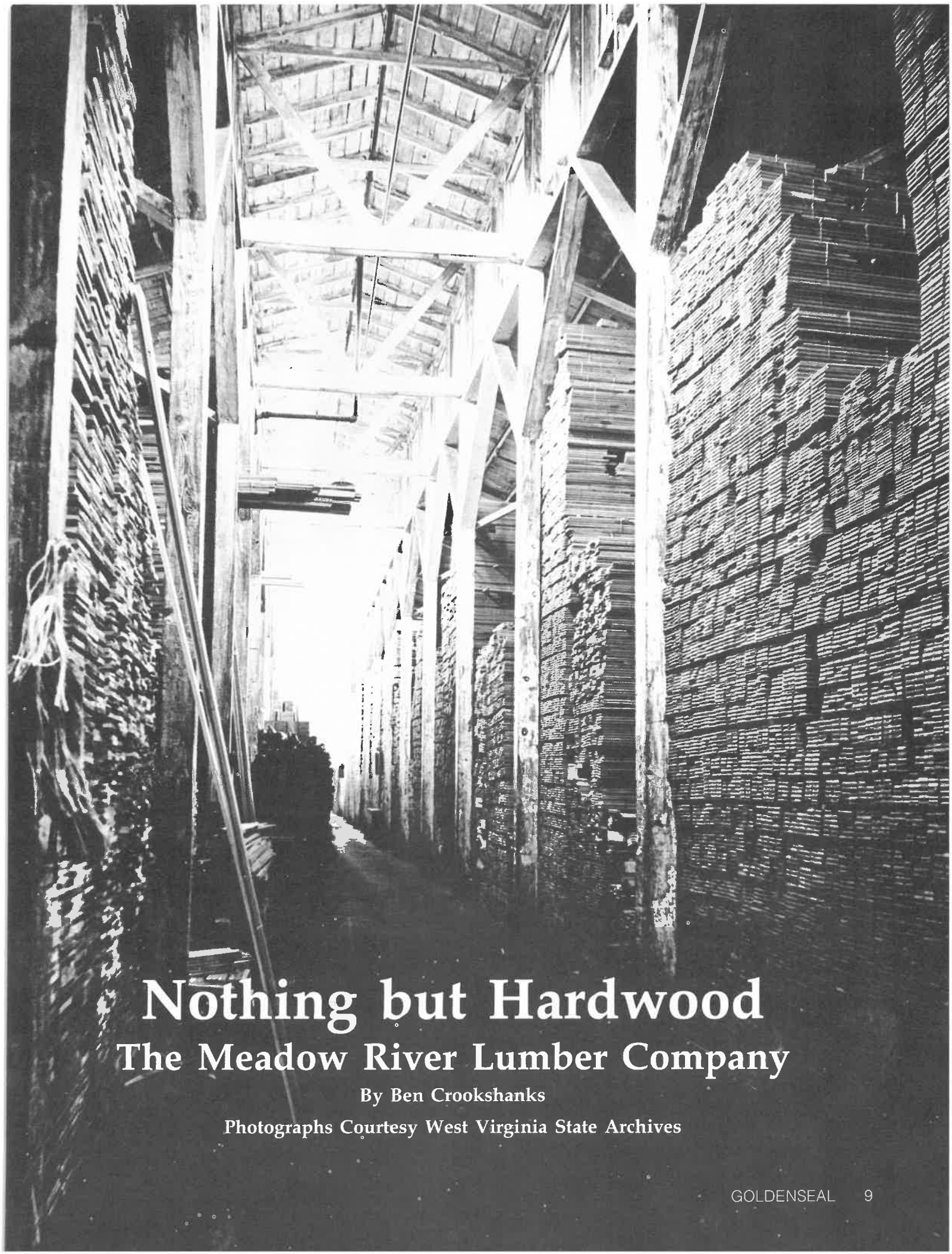
A Tale for Children

Marc Harshman and Bonnie Collins recently coauthored the children's book, *Rocks In My Pockets*. The story of the Woods family, who live on a farm "on top of the top of the highest mountain," is illustrated by Toni Goffe.

Harshman is a long-time resident of Marshall County where he is a storyteller, poet and elementary school teacher. He has written two other books for children, *A Little Excitement* and *Snow Company*. He credits the *Rocks In My Pockets* story to Bonnie Collins, traditional storyteller and 1990 Vandalia Award winner. Marc Harshman authored a 1989 GOLDENSEAL article on Bonnie. "With Bonnie the word storyteller covers a multitude of talents: musician, comedian, folk poet, songwriter and, yes, yarn spinner," he wrote. A native of Doddridge County, Bonnie lives today in a log house close to where she was born.

Rocks In My Pockets teaches the value of work and perseverance under trying times. Rocks were an integral part of the Woods's lives. Rocks kept their feet warm and kept the wind from blowing them away. Rocks provided entertainment — giving them games to play and something to hold onto as they told tales around the fire. When a couple of city ladies visit the family and "discover" their own reasons for collecting the rocks, things begin to happen. The Woods family finds their lives have changed forever and the city folks learn a valuable lesson — you hope!

Rocks In My Pockets is a large-format hardbound publication with many color illustrations. It is published by Cobblehill Books, an affiliate of Dutton Children's Books, and sells in bookstores nationwide for $13.95.



Nothing but Hardwood

The Meadow River Lumber Company

By Ben Crookshanks

Photographs Courtesy West Virginia State Archives

The big band mill was the heart of the Meadow River Lumber Company. Logs entered up the ramp at far right. Photographer and date unknown.

At the turn of the century, one of the last big stands of virgin hardwood in the United States was located in western Greenbrier County. Two Pennsylvania lumbermen, Thomas and John Raine, purchased this timber in 1906. And there, in a valley at the foot of Sewell Mountain, the brothers built the town of Rainelle and a huge hardwood sawmill. Their Meadow River Lumber Company operated for 60 years and outlived all of its contemporaries.

Thomas Willan Raine was born at Paddy Creek, Ohio, in 1851. While he was quite young, his family moved to Ironton, Ohio. After graduating from high school in Ironton, Raine taught school for one term in Kentucky. Later, he went to work for the Scioto Valley Railroad. Eventually he moved to Summerville, Pennsylvania, where he met and married Mary Carrier.

After the marriage, Raine bought a tract of white pine from his in-laws. He cut the trees into "square timbers," sledded them to the Clarion River and floated them to Pittsburgh. From that time on, Thomas Raine was a lumber man. He had his ups and downs over the years, but he managed to survive and even prosper at what was a very risky business. At one point, a depression hit the industry and Raine wound up $5,000 in the red. He bought a tract of oak on the Clarion River and made enough on it to pay off his creditors. After that, he resolved never to go into debt again.

Next, Thomas Raine purchased 13,000 acres of hemlock and hardwood on Maxwell Run near Empire, Pennsylvania, and in March of 1893 formed a partnership with his younger brother, John Raine. John had been born in Ironton in 1863. At age 13, he went to work in a lumber camp as a chore boy. When he was grown, he went into the grocery business. John was 30 when he joined his brother in the lumber operation at Maxwell Run.

This was a very successful venture. A couple of years before the Maxwell Run tract was depleted, Thomas left John in charge while he went to scout for more timber, this time in West Virginia. He formed a partnership with C. E. Andrews of New Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, and in 1901 the Raine-Andrews Lumber Company purchased a tract of timber near Elkins, on the lower reaches of Glady Fork of the Cheat River.

In 1903, the partners moved into the area and set up a big double-band sawmill and built the town of Evenwood around it. This was another successful operation, lasting until 1921. The profits from the mill at Evenwood helped to finance the Raine brothers' most famous and successful venture, the Meadow River Lumber Company.

That story began in 1906, when John traveled to Charleston on a timber buying trip. After many conferences, much negotiation and a little horse trading, he purchased 32,000 acres of virgin hardwood along the Meadow River in Greenbrier County for $960,000. A later purchase increased the holdings to 75,000 acres.

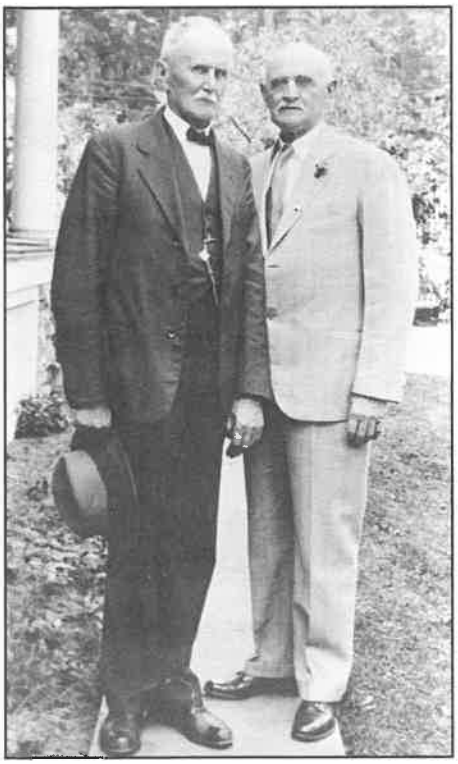
The Meadow River Lumber Company was incorporated in Evenwood on June 12, 1906. On May 18, 1910, the company changed its address to Rainelle.

Large band mills of the sort built by Meadow River replaced smaller circular sawmills as the West Virginia timber industry matured. The new mills operated on the same principle as the small band saws in home woodworking shops, cutting wood with a continuous band of flexible toothed steel. Band mills required a much larger investment than circular mills, and ironically a portable mill had to be brought in first, to saw the lumber to build the band mill to follow.

The spot the Raines chose for their mill — the future site of Rainelle—was a wilderness in 1906, 20 miles from the nearest railroad. They had to build a spur line to haul in their portable mill and other equipment and later to ship their products out. Thomas Raine formed the Sewell Valley Railroad and started surveying and construction of a railroad line to connect with the Chesapeake & Ohio Railway at Meadow Creek in 1907. Meanwhile, John was running a small lumber operation in Pocahontas County.

Construction of the Rainelle band mill began in 1909 and was finished in 1910. On September 10, 1910, at 5:00 p.m., the first board was sawed. From this small start, the Meadow River Lumber Company became a very major undertaking. With three band saws under one roof, it was the largest hardwood mill in the world. And from the beginning, it was strictly a hardwood operation.

The Rainelle mill could cut 110,000 board feet of lumber per day, on aver-



The Raines brothers—Thomas (left) and John—founded the company and named the Greenbrier County town for themselves. Photographer and date unknown.

age, and on one occasion cut 205,666 feet in a single ten-hour day. During the first year, the mill turned out about three million board feet. This rose to a record of 31,655,220 board feet in 1928. After that, the big mill averaged about 20 million board feet per year. It operated ten progressive kilns, and four box kilns for specialty items. At its peak, it employed 500 people. The company's boilers, fired with sawdust and waste from the mill, supplied electricity and steam heat for virtually the entire town.

At the beginning, Thomas Raine was president of both the Meadow River Lumber Company and the Sewell Valley Railroad. John Raine came to Rainelle in 1911 to help his brother lay out and build the town—almost entirely of Meadow River hardwood, of course. In 1912, Thomas retired from active management and John took over as president. When Interstate Commerce Commission regulations forced Meadow River to get rid of the Sewell Valley Railroad, Thomas personally bought the railway in 1921 and six years later sold it to the C&O. Meadow River reserved the right to haul lumber and build logging spurs off this railroad. Thomas spent most of the remainder of his life in Fairview, Pennsylvania, where he died in 1933.

Although marked by the paternalism common to many industrial towns of the South and the Appalachian region, Rainelle was in most ways a model lumber town. John Raine saw to it that the quality of life was a big cut above that of other boomtowns in the industry. Unlike many lumber barons who were absentee owners, Raine lived in his town and took a genuine interest in the welfare of the people. The well-built company houses were provided with running water from company wells, bathrooms and electricity. Each had its own lawn and garden plot. Raine even provided pasture for those employees who wanted to keep livestock. The company erected the first schoolhouse and supplemented the salaries of teachers to ensure full school terms. There was a company store, bank, theater, boardinghouse, and a fine church and parsonage.

On the negative side, the Meadow River Lumber Company was never notorious for paying big wages. This ultimately contributed to its downfall.

The original mill was in continuous operation from 1910 until August 24, 1924, when it caught fire and burned to the ground. John Raine immediately put his employees to work building a new mill. It was completed and in operation by March 9, 1925. The new sawmill was the same size as the old one, but prudently constructed of steel rather than wood.

John Raine stepped down as president in 1938 and died in 1940. Howard Gray, who started to work for Meadow River in 1910 as a saw filer, succeeded him. When he died in 1961, his son, Robert Gray, became the company's final president.

Meadow River stuck to its own ways throughout its long history. All timber was cut by company employees. For years, the firm used portable lumber camps. Each consisted of several specially-constructed rail cars. One was a pantry, stocked abundantly. The next was a kitchen car, with large stoves, and joining that was the dining car, with a long table down the middle. Another car was furnished as a living room and wash room. Two or three cars (depending on the number of men working at the camp) were fitted with sleeping compartments. The camp cars were left on a spur line in the woods. When it came time to move to another area, the whole camp

The Midland Trail

Rainelle sits astride historic U.S. Route 60, the former Midland Trail which traverses West Virginia from White Sulphur Springs to Huntington. The Midland Trail Scenic Highway Association, based in Rainelle, has developed a brochure promoting a portion of old 60.

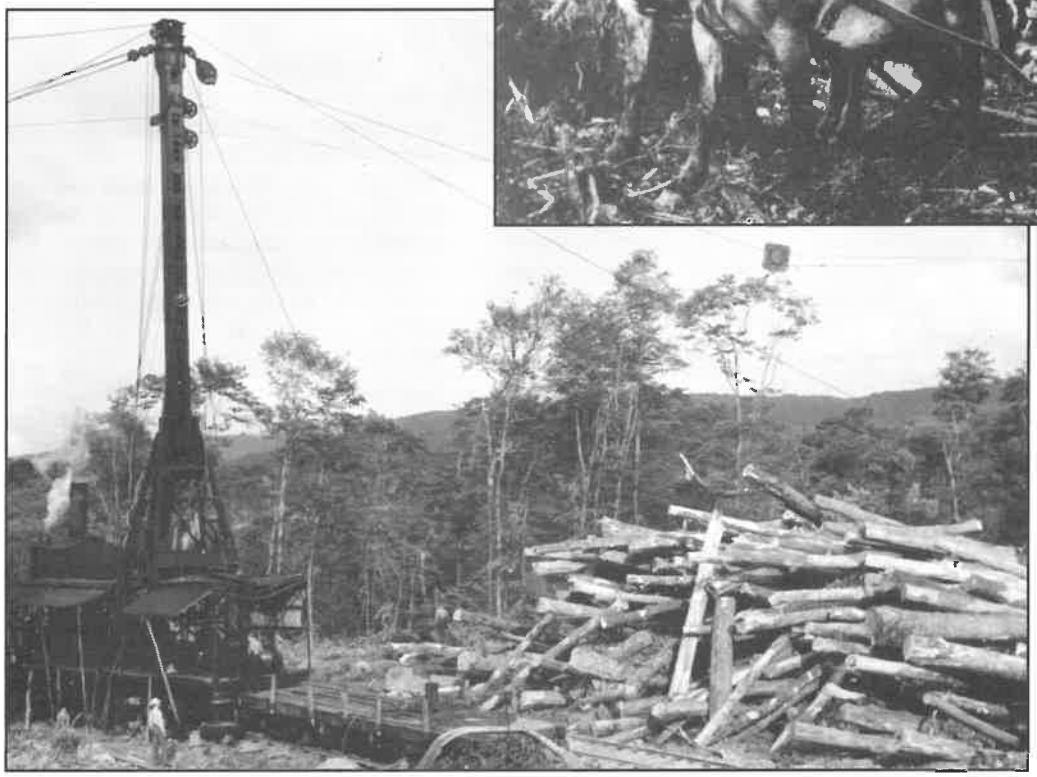
The names of Anne Bailey, Mary Draper Ingles, Daniel Boone, George Washington and Robert E. Lee are linked to the historic route. All traveled it at some point during its various stages of development. It was George Washington who first urged the Virginia Assembly to build a road from Richmond to the Falls of the Great Kanawha. Later the route was developed as the James River and Kanawha Turnpike.

The early road was filled with activity from morning till night. Stagecoaches traveled the Greenbrier River Valley and the high ridges of the Fayette Plateau. But the coming of the railroads reduced the busy turnpike to a glorified trail again, until the automobile revived its use.

The Midland Scenic Trail today includes 120 miles of Route 60. There are 18 different stops featured in the new brochure. The colorful folder has detailed descriptions of each place, with illustrations. Local events are also listed. Contact the Midland Trail Scenic Highway Association, P.O. Box 644, Rainelle, WV 25962. West Virginians may call 1-800-822-US60.

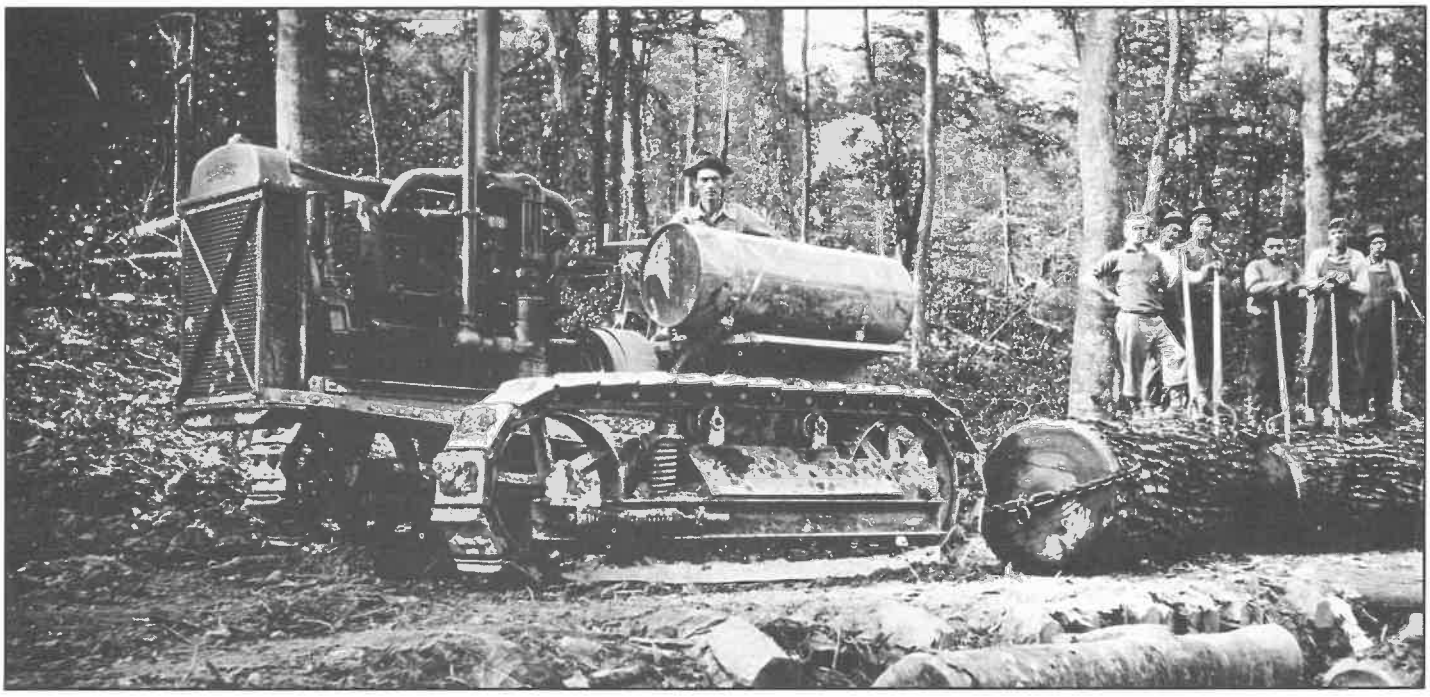
was simply attached to an engine and pulled away.

In the early days, timber was cut by hand with crosscut saws, skidded by horse to the nearest rail spur and loaded by steam loaders onto flatcars. During the 1930's, except in a few rare cases, the company stopped using horses and started using steam cable skidders and Caterpillar tractors exclu-



Woods Work. Meadow River logs were skidded by horses originally, but the company later shifted to mechanical means. The rail-mounted cable skidder (left) could bring in logs from hundreds of yards around, but Caterpillar-type tractors (below) were found to be more versatile. Photographers and dates unknown.

Opposite: This Barnhart loader used steam power to load logs. The company later designed modified loaders to handle tree-length logs. Photographer and date unknown.



sively. The cable skidder was a big derrick-like device, hauled around by rail. It was taken into an area, put on a siding, erected, anchored to a couple of trees on either side, and guyed securely. Then it would skid all the logs within a three-quarter-mile radius. With one set-up, as much as 2.5 million board feet could be harvested, taking from eight to 10 months to complete.

Loggers working for Meadow River were expected to be careful in felling timber to avoid splitting or pulling splinters out of a log. Any man who was reckless in this regard risked firing, because a split or a splinter out of a big log might ruin a lot of fine hardwood.

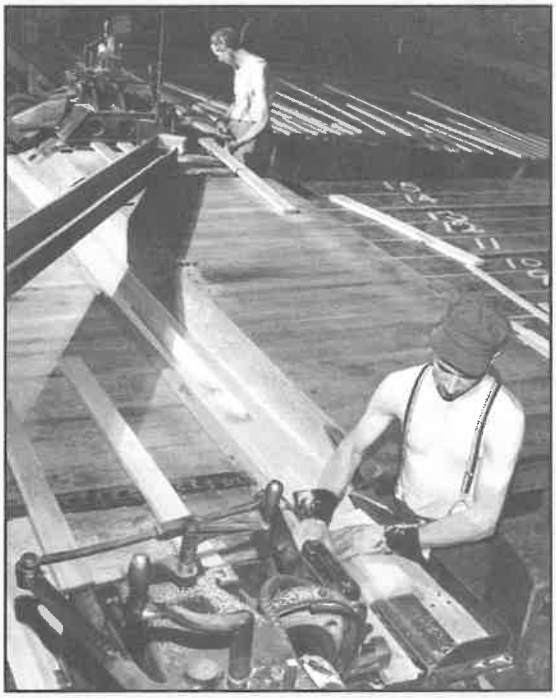
In 1939, Meadow River broke with tradition and started logging tree-length timber. The shop crew designed and built a special heavy-duty diesel loader capable of "heel booming" timber of any size. This loader could move under its own power, but it was found preferable to leave it mounted on one rail car, switching the log cars as they were filled. Full tree trunks were hauled to the mill without first being sawed into sections in the woods.

At the band mill the logs were dumped off the flatcars into a pond. The pond served as a storage place, washed the grit off, and provided an easy method of getting those long logs into the mill. The floating logs were pushed or pulled by pike poles over to an inclined trough called the "jack slip" or gangway. In the bottom of the jack slip was the "bull chain," an endless conveyor chain with cleats at intervals with sharp points that grabbed logs and carried them up into the mill.

Once inside, the log was measured by a scaler, then sawed off or "bucked" into the desired length by a 98-inch circular saw. Occasionally, a log would be too big around to be bucked this way and had to be finished by hand with a crosscut saw. From there the log was rolled onto the carriage. The carriage was pushed back and forth by a steam-driven piston. At full speed, the log carriage moved at nearly 120 miles per hour on its short trip past the band saw.

Sawed lumber was stacked to dry in the huge lumberyard. The yard contained 11 lumber docks, each 1,300 feet long, with lumber stacked almost 40 feet high. Railroad tracks were laid between the docks. All lumber was pushed on carts manually and stacked by hand. For some reason, Meadow River never switched to a modern lift-truck system. Another outdated method the company stuck with until the very end was the logging railroad, using some of the same Shay engines that are now at the Cass Scenic Railroad in Pocahontas County.

On the other hand, Meadow River pioneered the practice of clear cutting. In the 1930's, this was something new and radical. Now it is an accepted practice. Further innovation came in the 1950's with the purchase of a 23-ton, four-wheel-drive, rubber-tired skidder. The company's experimentation with this early model influenced later commercial developments.



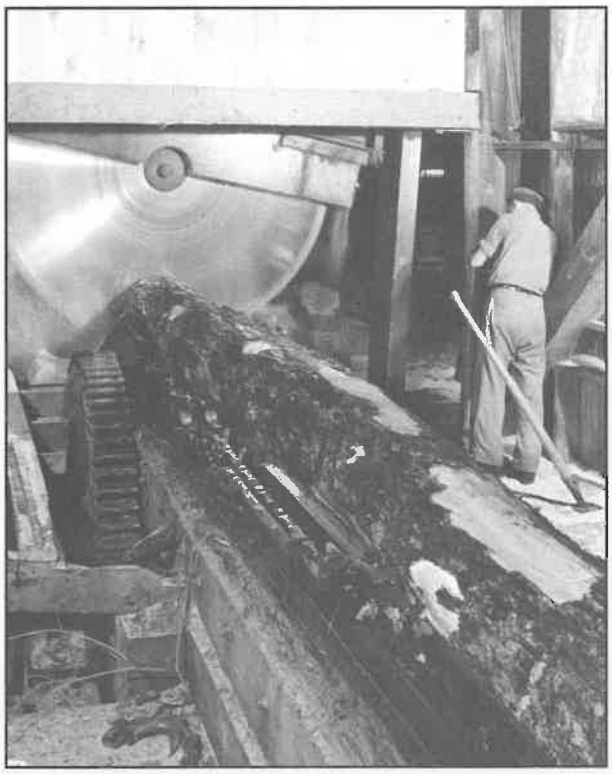
Working at the Sawmill

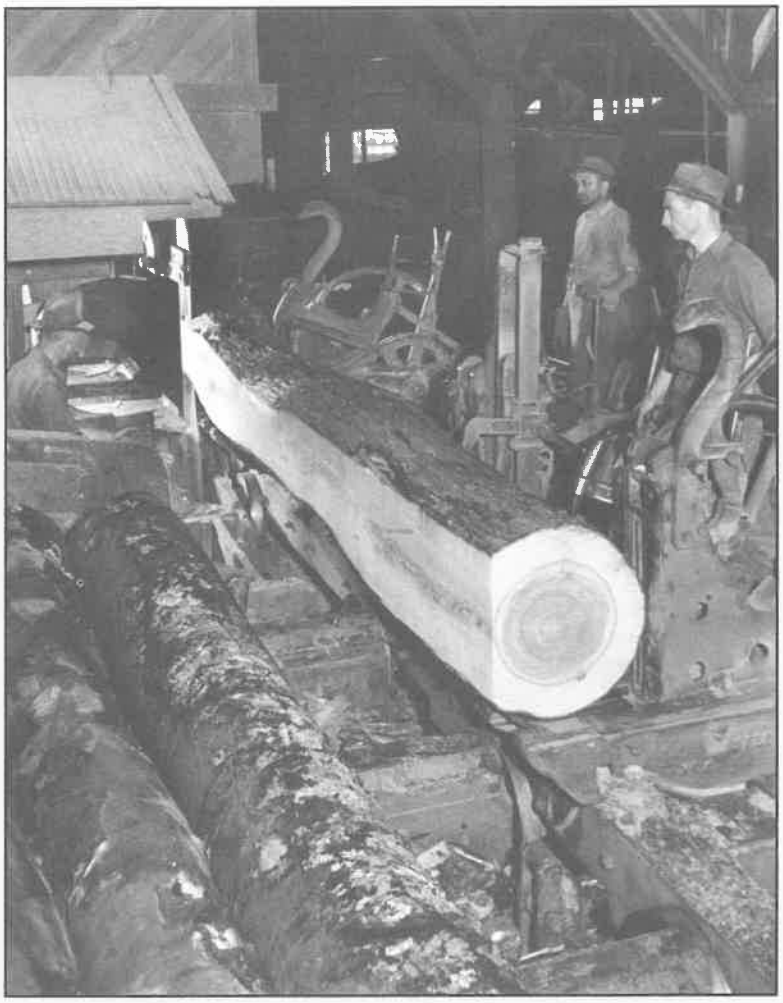
The Johnston and Johnston Photographs of the Meadow River Lumber Company

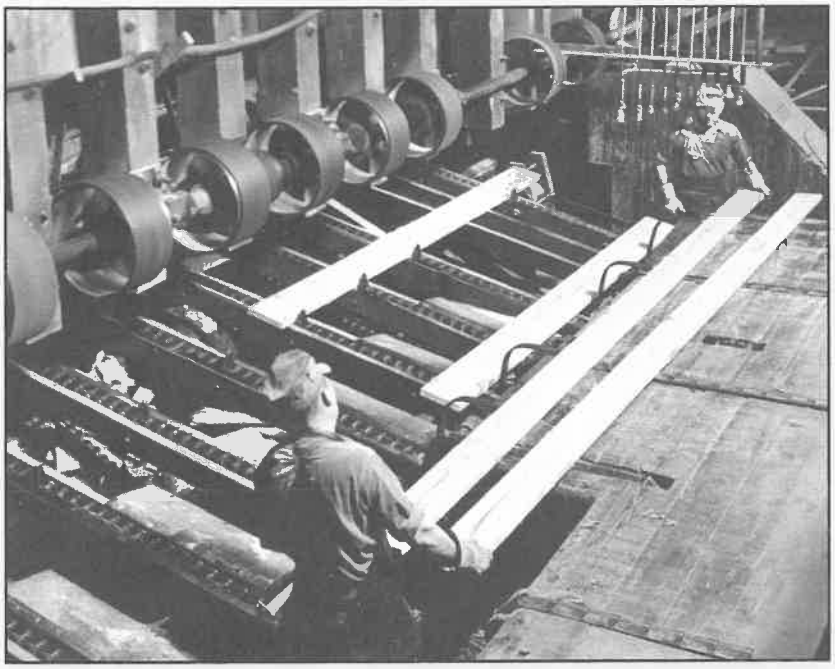
The Johnston and Johnston photography firm of Pittsburgh traveled to Rainelle in 1940, to photograph Meadow River Lumber Company operations for Johnston and Johnston client Gulf Lubricants. Johnston and Johnston left behind a fine folio of commercial photography, now part of the Meadow River collection at the West Virginia State Archives.

Flooring was the major Meadow River product. This unidentified worker (left) is finishing random-length flooring strips.

Meadow River used cut-off saws (below, left) as large as the main saws at many circular sawmills. Once "bucked" or sawed to length by a circular saw, a log passed through one of three band saws, below. The sawyer works at left.







Meadow River had a thriving furniture plant until labor shortages closed it during World War II. These men (right) inspect and bundle finished posts.

Glenn Rosewell operates the shoe heel machine (below) while foreman Clayton Bolton (right) and a visitor look on. Meadow River workers made hardwood heels for women's shoes by the millions, beginning in 1932.

Lumber passed through a variety of other saws and machines after leaving the band saw. These workers (left) check boards leaving a planer.

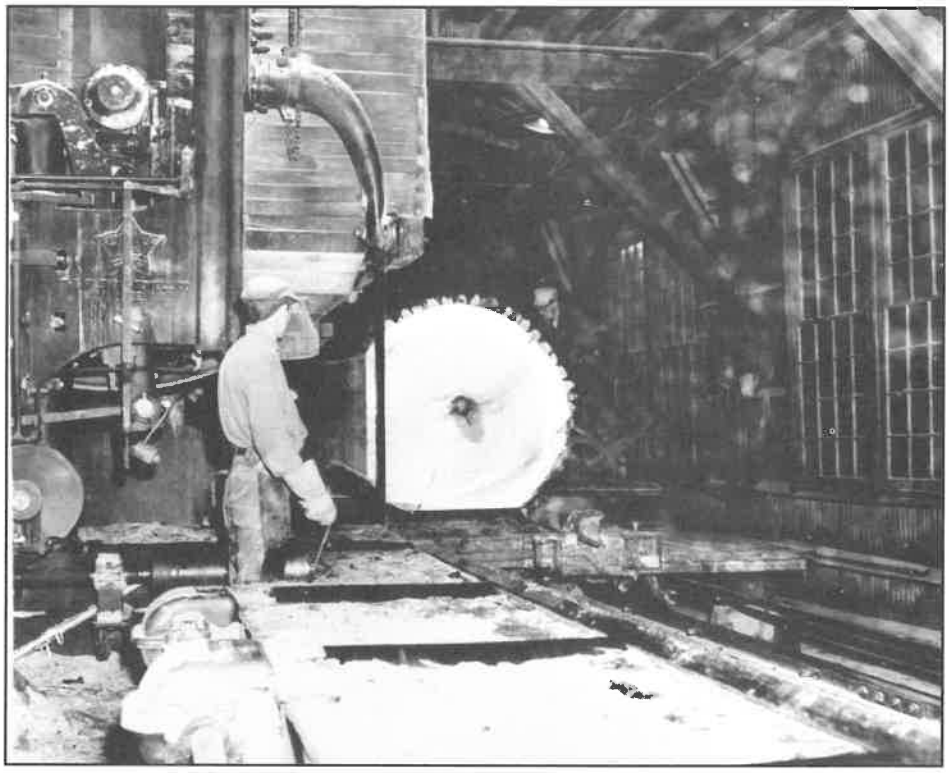
Meadow River manufactured specialty products ranging in size from ships' beams to shoe heels. Precision was important with all of them. John Surbaugh (above) gauges a representative shoe heel.

By cutting much of its timber from coal company land owned by others, Meadow River was able to hold in reserve thousands of acres of its own virgin timber. As late as 1971, 2,500 acres remained. With these reserves, the lumber company was able to fill orders that would be impossible today. One such order called for hard maple three inches thick, nine inches wide and 22 to 32 feet long, averaging 27 feet, but containing no more defects than was normal for 16-foot boards.

The product the Rainelle company was most famous for was its flooring. The mill produced an average of one million feet of flooring a month. This was shipped all over the United States and to many parts of Europe. Meadow River flooring was used in the Waldorf Astoria Hotel in New York City and in countless other public and private buildings.

Understanding the Band Saw

Only a small portion of the cutting band is visible here, as it enters the log. Most of the long, flexible blade is out of sight in the housing at left and under the floor. Photographer unknown, courtesy State Archives.



The removal of West Virginia's forests began with the arrival of the first settlers to the region and the clearing of the land for agriculture. During the 19th century, however, an increased national demand for wood products and advances in logging and lumber milling techniques combined with improved railroad transportation to cause the commercial cutting of timber to expand at a much greater rate. Developments such as the water-powered gang saw, the steam-powered circular saw, and finally the steam-powered band saw steadily increased sawmill efficiency and output.

Invented and perfected during the 19th century, the band saw arguably sits at the pinnacle of woodcutting technology. After the Civil War its incorporation into large scale lumber mills like that at Rainelle helped make lumber production one of West Virginia's leading industries. Sadly, the band saw's high-pitched whine also turned out to be the death knell for virgin timber in this state.

The band saws of 80 years ago differed widely in size, style, and setup. In simplest terms, this machine consisted of an endless steel band, with saw teeth along one edge, wrapped tightly around two wheels mounted one over the other. The wheels were separated so that there was sufficient length of blade running from one to

Meadow River turned out many specialty products as well. In 1932, a shoe heel plant was started. For more than 30 years, it produced four to six million women's shoe heels annually. A furniture plant operated until World War II, when it was closed due to a labor shortage. After the war, furniture production was not resumed. The planing mill made many types of wood trim, including stair treads and risers, baseboards, window frames, door jambs, molding, and so forth.

Over the years, the company also manufactured a number of unusual products such as chestnut coffins, special crates for crystal glass, white ash frames for Packard cars, maple for Ford car bodies and long ship beams for British submarine chasers.

Progress finally caught up with the Meadow River Lumber Company, however. The Rainelle operation was

Meadow River log crews lived in portable camps such as the one shown (opposite page), photographed near Anjean in 1953. Individual cars were set up for dining (above), sleeping, and other purposes. Dining photo about 1940, photographer unknown; other photo by Caterpillar Tractor Company.

the other to perform the sawing.

Band saws with individual wheels up to 11 feet in diameter and weighing 3,000 pounds functioned as a sawmill's primary saw, or "headsaw," which had the task of cutting the raw logs into more manageable pieces. These imposing machines sported bands up to 50 feet long and 18 inches wide that could cut 6,000 feet of wood per hour. Not surprisingly, the band saw had to be housed in a substantial structure and anchored firmly to withstand the stresses created during its operation.

On a large band saw the bottom wheel was mounted below floor level and driven by a leather belt or rope drive system that connected to a main line shaft powered by the sawmill's steam engine. The top wheel was an idler, turned only by the action of the bottom wheel and the saw blade, though it could be adjusted to tighten the saw blade and prevent its slipping on the wheels.

The process of converting logs to lumber began when a log arrived at the headsaw. The log was mechanically kicked onto a miniature rail car called the "carriage." Mounted solidly on rails and powered by its own steam piston, the carriage was built to hold the log firmly and carry it into the band saw in a straight line. The log was held on the carriage by steam-driven mechanisms which allowed the saw operator to adjust or turn the log in order to gain the most usable lumber. The sawyer gave instructions via hand signals to his helpers, the "setter" and the "dogger," who actually operated the mechanisms on the carriage. The sawyer was one of the most skilled employees in the mill, and also one of the highest paid since his judgment greatly affected the mill's total output.

At the push of a button the carriage (with the setter riding along) would shoot past the saw, then return, ready to go again, while the board just cut from the log was carried away on rollers. Thus the log was quickly divided up and sent on through the mill for further processing by an assortment of gang saws, circular saws, and smaller band saws. Occasionally two — and in rare instances such as the Meadow River Lumber Company, three — separate band saws were used as headsaws to lessen bottlenecks and insure a steady flow of boards and slabs into the mill. A high-production band mill could consume up to 17 acres of forest a day.

The band saw's popularity was due to certain characteristics which improved its performance over its closest rival, the circular saw. The band saw was better suited for large-diameter logs, cutting them faster and leaving a better finish on the wood. Yet the primary reason behind the band saw's success was that its thin blade created a much smaller cutting path or "kerf" than a circular saw, meaning less of the log was lost to sawdust.

The band saw did have drawbacks, however, which kept it from making the circular saw obsolete. The large amount of capital required to operate and maintain a band sawmill prohibited its use in all but the biggest operations. It was not portable, as the circular saw could be. Perhaps the biggest hindrance to its widespread use was the need for large stands of quality timber nearby to supply the band sawmill's voracious appetite for logs. These factors help explain why band mills, though more efficient and productive than the circular sawmills, have never made up more than a fraction of the total number of sawmills in West Virginia.

— Michael Caplinger

Michael Caplinger is on the staff of the Institute for the History of Technology and Industial Archaeology at West Virginia University. For more information about Institute programs you may write to the Institute for the History of Technology and Industrial Archaeology, Bicentennial House on the Mileground, West Virginia University, Morgantown, WV 26506.

Camp foreman O.G. Cales and people like him made Meadow River a hardwood legend. Mr. Cales was photographed by a Caterpillar Tractor photographer on May 28, 1953.

a paradox. While it pioneered many practices that have since become an integral part of the lumber industry, at the same time it clung to some other methods of doing things long after they were obsolete.

The old-fashioned way of manufacturing lumber and conducting business may have been comfortably familiar, but it was not profitable. As operating costs began to cut more and more into profit margins, management tried to compensate by keeping wages ridiculously low. In the mid-1960's, experienced workers were making little more than minimum wage at the Rainelle operation. A lengthy and costly strike in 1969 and the threat of another in 1971 had the owners running scared. During the winter of 1970, they sold out to timber giant Georgia-Pacific for $7 million.

Georgia-Pacific found the old mill could not operate at a profit and tore it down in 1975. The company built a new single-band electric sawmill at Snake Island, just outside the northern city limits of Rainelle. This mill currently employs 55 people and has an annual production of 15.5 million board feet.

Meanwhile the Rainelle plant and equipment were liquidated. The old Heisler and Shay logging engines and the machine shop were donated to Cass Scenic Railroad. The power plant was dismantled and shipped to Haines, Alaska. Many artifacts and documents from the mill went to the State Museum and State Archives in Charleston. The site of the original mill and lumberyard is now a shopping center.

So Thomas and John Raine are long gone, and their big band mill is no more. But their memory remains alive in the name of the town they built in the Meadow River Valley. Like other communities, Rainelle has had to grapple with the loss of industry and the rerouting of transportation, but the old lumber town remains very much alive today.

Meadow River Collection

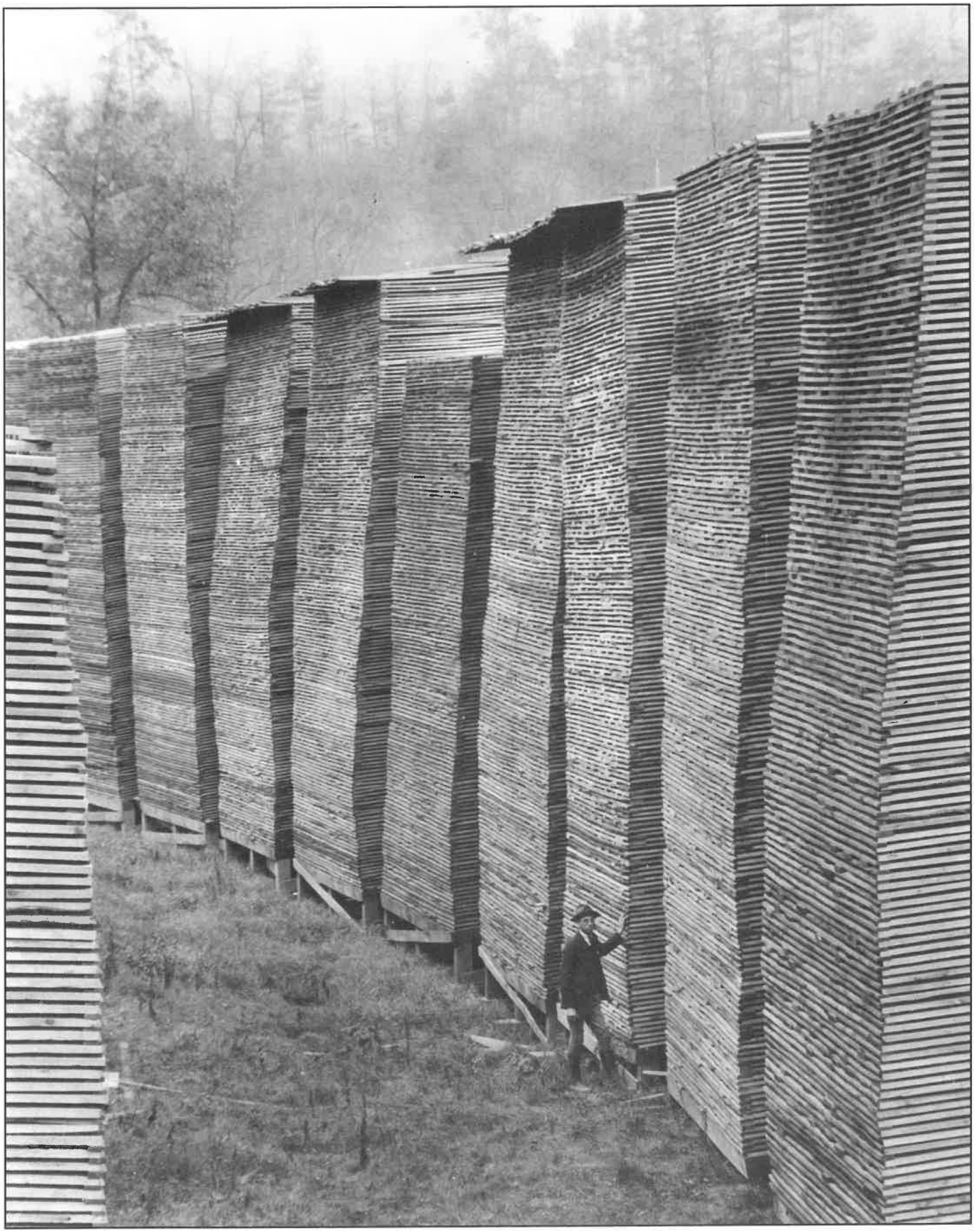
The historic photos accompanying the Rainelle article come to us courtesy of the West Virginia State Archives. They are part of a major Meadow River Lumber Company archival and museum collection housed at the Cultural Center in Charleston. Though it is mainly used as a research collection, certain components were assembled as a traveling exhibit which made stops at Cass Scenic Railroad, Rainelle's Meadow River Festival, the Forest Festival in Elkins, and the State Museum in Charleston.

The massive collection began to take shape in 1979 when George Collins, the son of a former Meadow River employee, contacted the Department of Culture and History. Mr. Collins, an official at Colonial Willamsburg, had put a lot of work into preserving Meadow River materials following the 1970 sale of the historic mill to Georgia-Pacific.

In 1980, Culture and History staffers under the leadership of archivist Fred Armstrong worked with Collins and Rainelle citizens to gather Meadow River's history through interviews, photographs, and acquisition of museum and archival materials.

Overall their efforts brought in more than 500 photographs, better than 25 taped interviews, documents, sales records, annual reports and brochures, as well as shoe heels, items of furniture, and other mill products. An unusual part of the collection is 3,500 vintage snuff cans which came from a much larger number lost when the mill was torn down. These cans belonged to workers at the mill who weren't allowed to smoke and rubbed snuff instead. Mill employees stacked thousands of empty cans between the studs in the walls of the lumber company buildings.

The Meadow River Lumber Company collection addresses the many aspects of life in a lumber boomtown — from the woods where the timber was cut to the railroads that moved it, the mill that processed it, and the town that drew its life from it. The logging history of Rainelle and other communities continues to interest state history officials, according to Armstrong. Anyone wishing to donate items of interest may call the Division of Culture and History at (304)348-0220; or write to the Cultural Center, Capitol Complex, Charleston, WV 25305.



Massive lumber stacks, averaging 20,000 board feet each, once covered acres of bottomland at Rainelle. Photographer and date unknown.

One Tree's Story

By Melinda Russell

Most of the millions of hardwood trees harvested in West Virginia have met the same fate as those cut for Meadow River — felled quickly in the forest, then hauled to the mill and made into boards or finished products with no ceremony whatever. It is an industrial process, designed for maximum efficiency.

One big Harrison County red oak met a far gentler fate on its way to becoming fine hardwood flooring. Writer Melinda Russell tells the story:

The leaves turned brown in late July 1988. Fearing that the big red oak in my Clarksburg yard might fall on a neighboring house, I contracted to have it cut.

The newly cut tree had a strong, wonderful smell, and its wood was unblemished by disease or decay. Following some excited conversation with the tree cutters, I decided to save the tree from the waste of sawing it into firewood for an evening's entertainment. I wanted to investigate the possibility of turning it into oak flooring.

Since Jim and I bought the house, we had talked of drywalling the basement, which had been built with extra high ceilings and partly finished with beautiful woodwork. Because we have oak floors in other rooms of the house, we had talked about installing oak flooring in the basement as well. When I looked at that giant tree lying on the ground, I hoped this was my opportunity to have the floor of my imagination.

Using a surveyor's tape measure once owned by my father, the tree cutters marked off sections and chainsawed the tree into four ten-foot logs. These ranged from 38 to 24 inches in diameter. The branches were hauled away, and the topmost portion of the trunk split into firewood. Then the big logs lay on the woodsy ground for several weeks, while Jim and I debated what to do.

Lee Gustafson, an architect and family friend, was the first person I questioned about making my logs into flooring. Like other people who eventually converted four raw logs into beautifully finished wood, Lee was initially skeptical. He was kind enough to advise me, while pointing out that buying white oak flooring from a regular retail source might be cheaper.

One unknown that I struggled with was the question of how much usable flooring this tree would yield. Several people made informed guesses, but no one could really say whether there would be enough wood to floor a room and a foyer area in the basement of our house.

Pushing these uncertainties and Lee Gustafson's cautions into the corners of my mind, I decided to go ahead. I took his suggestion to call Jim Bennett, who ran a sawmill in Doddridge County.

I had heard that sawmills will not ordinarily cut up trees that are located on developed farms or house lots. There is too great a possibility that long ago a nail was hammered into the tree or a horseshoe nailed on, and that some such steel object now lays concealed under the tree's bark, waiting to destroy an expensive sawblade and perhaps injure the sawyer. Fortunately, Bennett knew the property on which our house and tree were located. He believed that until recently the woods had been undisturbed and agreed to cut the lumber at his sawmill.

An employee of Bennett's, a man with the first name Engle, was by lucky chance taken with the novelty of the project. He had spent his life cutting trees as a logger, and working and supervising work at lumber mills. Engle contracted with another logger to bring a flatbed trailer to our acre of suburban property to pick up the four logs. I believe that without his enthusiasm, a trailer would not have been found, the location of the logs would have been deemed too much of a problem, or some other obstacle would have ended my dream.

I watched with fascination as the men worked, hooking each log with harpoon-like poles, known to loggers as peaveys or cant hooks. The hooks on the peaveys grabbed the bark of the logs, positioning them for the winch. Gears ticked as the winch dragged each log up a ramp of boards and onto the flatbed. When the men had three of the big logs loaded, the sun was going down. The work was dangerous and they decided to come back another day to load the fourth.

At Jim Bennett's mill, the logs were cut into boards approximately two inches thick. Engle carefully kept my logs from others at the mill, and, after they were cut, again segregated the rough-cut lumber of the tree that was special to me.

The next step in the Grand Plan was hauling the rough boards to a local wood manufacturer for kiln drying. This company is one of the foremost manufacturers of its products in the United States. They have huge kilns that dry hardwoods, to prevent their subsequent warping or rapid deterioration. My boards were there for nearly three months. Then Engle and the other logger brought the boards to our house and unloaded them in the garage, so more plans could be made.

I loved the rough appearance and the fact that the boards varied from about three inches to a foot wide. I would have been happy with an unfinished plank floor in my basement family room, reminiscent of the rustic floor of an early settler's cabin. But my practical husband, and good sense about splinters, prevailed. We decided that some further processing was necessary.

I made numerous phone calls, resulting in a building contractor hauling the boards to the Doddridge County Vocational School, where they were squared up and planed by vo-tech students. Then the contractor brought the treasured lumber home to 103 Forest Drive.

A more conventional processing step, after the kiln drying, would have meant sending the rough boards to a planing mill to be tongued and grooved, and turned into standard flooring. Besides the additional expense, that choice would have yielded less wood, with more red oak wasted on the planing mill floor. Anyway, I prefer the look our floor has to the look of standard three-inch tongue-and-groove flooring. Our boards are random in width and pegged in place, joined together with asymmetrical abutments.

Our author, floored in Clarksburg. The random-width oak planks are pegged in place. Photo by Michael Keller.

After the floor was laid, we found that we had leftover wood. I commissioned Jerry Warne, a furniture craftsman, to build a combination bookcase and desk. He cautioned that he might not have enough of my tree's wood to complete the piece. I insisted that he try. When he delivered the desk with its secretary-like top, he said there were two boards in the top portion that had come from his own supply of oak, but he would not tell me which ones they were. When I was applying the polyurethane varnish, I decided that Jerry's boards are the two verticals on the left side, viewed from the front. It pleases me to be able to detect them.

The project had turned out to be a wonderful sequence of chances and choices. I was delighted with the outcome. But what about the cost to satisfy the impulse that overtook me that early fall day when the big red oak was cut?

Well, the tree cutter charged $500. That was a cost we would have incurred regardless of the disposition of the tree. Otherwise, the total lumber cost for both the desk and the floor was $630; that includes hauling the wood back and forth from place to place, and the rough sawing, planing and edging, and kiln drying. We ended up with 400 square feet of usable wood, thus paying $1.58 per square foot for furniture quality lumber. The retail cost at our local supplier for standard oak flooring was $2.65 per square foot, plus tax.

So we came out a little ahead, even financially. But the real payoff comes when I sit in my light-filled room, looking out at snow-covered oaks and surrounded by ticking-stripe sofas and red tartan throws. My computer and keyboard sit on a handsome work station. I look at the oak floor, bare of any rug, and feel tremendous visual pleasure and the personal pride of saving a little nature for myself by inviting a big tree indoors.

Bill Jones (seated) with the Rhythm Rogues in 1933. The "Wheeling Jamboree" was not strictly a country show at that time, and Jones still specialized in pop tunes. Photographer unknown.

Silver Yodelin' Bill Jones

Interview by Barbara Diane Smik

William Wallace Jones, known as Silver Yodelin' Bill Jones to his fans, sings to his audience, yodels, does comedy, and plays his ukulele. At age 82, he is one of the oldest veterans of radio station WWVA's stage and radio show, "The World's Original WWVA Jamboree." Bill Jones experienced radio's earliest days in Wheeling, where WWVA is located. WWVA first started broadcasting in 1926. The next year, at age 18, Bill sang his first song over WWVA on the live Saturday night broadcast, which according to Bill was then called the "Midnight Jamboree." This was before the "Jamboree" became a stage show in 1933.

Country music was made in the USA and Bill Jones helped make it. The music he and his fellow entertainers sang and played on the "Jamboree" in 1927 was the popular music at the time, and not the country music the show later featured. He played a part in that transition, as he will explain in the pages that follow. Nowadays he plays a variety of music. Bill Jones continues to play his ukulele and always includes songs from his early days in radio when he sings before an audience. His most recent stage appearance was July 13, 1991, on the "Doc Williams & World's Original WWVA Jamboree Reunion Show," at the Capitol Music Hall in Wheeling, where the "Jamboree" is held Saturday nights.

Bill was born in Buffalo, New York, on May 6, 1909, and his parents moved to the Wheeling area when he was six months old. He and Wilma, his wife of 62 years, raised three children, Nancy, Donald, and Billy. They have seven grandchildren and three great-grandchildren, "all doing well," according to Bill.

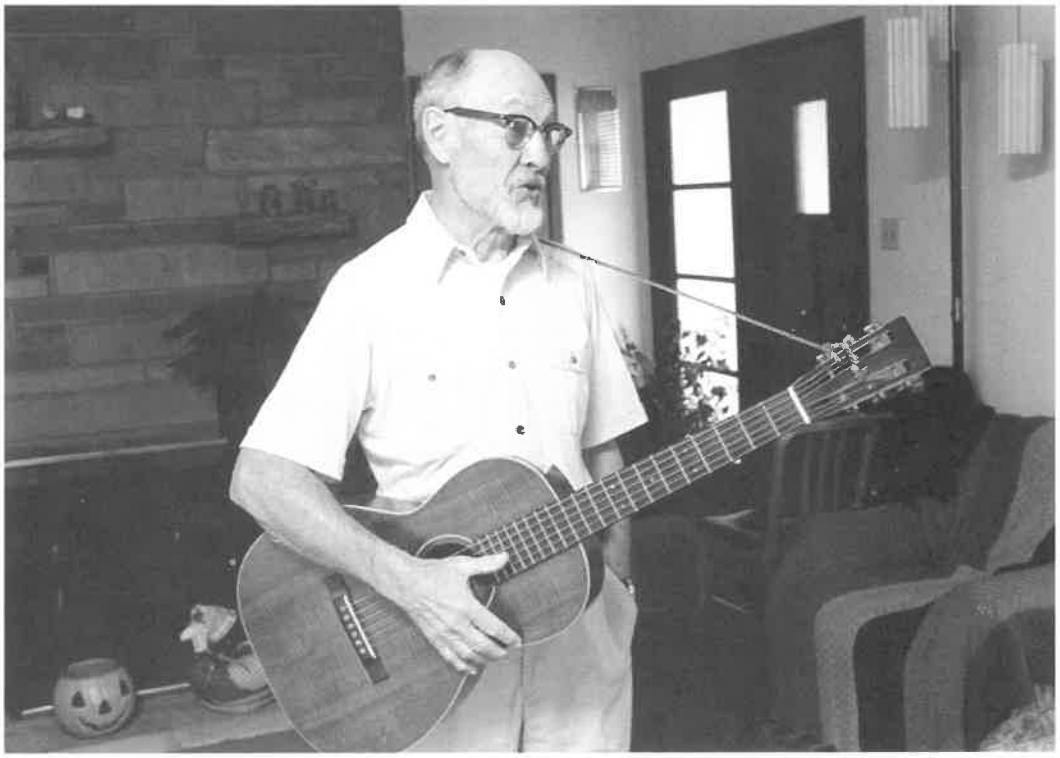
The important role his family played in his life is reflected in the fact that Bill walked away from show business in 1943. "I was married in 1929 and I figured I'd dragged my family around long enough," he explains. His radio and stage career had lasted 16 years, 12 of them at WWVA. His career also took him to station WEEU in Reading, Pennsylvania, in 1935, next to KDKA in Pittsburgh, and finally to WOR Mutual, a 77-station network in New York City.

By November of 1939, "I'd had my fill of New York City, and came back to Wheeling," Bill says. "I got in touch with WWVA and worked a short time with Jake Taylor's group, the Railsplitters. Then in late December, George W. Smith, WWVA's managing director, called me in and said they were planning on staying on the air all night long, and would I be interested in doing an all-night show with Big Slim, the Lone Cowboy. I was. So all that winter Big Slim and I did the all-night show six nights a week. Boy, you'd go through songs like crazy. I started at 1:00 and worked until 1:30, then he took over 'til 2:00, and we alternated half-hour programs all night long. I finished up at 6:00 'til 6:15 and then their regular daytime programs started."

The following year, Bill formed an act

Silver Yodeler Comes Back

Bill Jones will appear on Doc Williams's Jamboree reunion show in Wheeling on February 29, 1992. Call (304) 233-5511 for details.



He acquired the C.F. Martin guitar for $11 in 1940, Jones says. Mike Keller photographed him at his home near Wheeling.

with Lew Childre. They made personal appearances and sang on radio shows together. Bill, at this time, also did a solo 15-minute spot over WWVA from 9:00 until 9:15 a.m. His sponsor was the Quimby Bread Company.

Grandpa Jones, now a member of Nashville's "Grand Ole Opry," returned to Wheeling in 1941-42 for the second time. "Mr. Smith called me in and asked me to take Grandpa with me, as my group, the Buckeyes, consisted of four members, and most of the other acts had five," Bill remembers. "I agreed, and we called our act the Jones Boys. We worked together one season. In June of 1943, the war effort was making it difficult to make personal appearances, we couldn't get tires or gasoline. So we all went our separate ways. I went to a defense plant in Martins Ferry, Ohio, Grandpa went with a USO tour, and the Buckeyes dispersed."

Bill never returned to music full time. Since 1943, he has appeared on stage at various "Jamboree" anniversary shows and Doc Williams reunion shows in Wheeling, and also made an appearance at the Vandalia Gathering in Charleston in 1979. After leaving show business, Bill ran the Wheeling office for the Standard Register Company of Dayton and in 1960 formed his own company, W. W. Jones & Associates, a computer forms company.

In 1989, I interviewed Mr. Jones at his home. I found his recollections of his early years in show business a rich tale of radio's beginnings and country music's roots in Wheeling. Portions of my interview follow.

Bill Jones. I started my career in radio in 1927 with three friends, Gene Doughty, Art Lucas and Dick Decker. We were just out of high school and we called ourselves the Sparkling Four. We later changed our name to the Four Troubadours. We sang harmony and played instruments. Every Saturday night, we sang on the "Midnight Jamboree" over WWVA. It started at 12:00 and we worked 'til we got tired, until 2:30 or 3:00 a.m.

The studios, at the time, were in the Fidelity Investment Building on Main Street in Wheeling, where Boury Enterprises is located now. It was a bank. We'd come and press a button at the front door. The people upstairs would look out to see who you were and unlock the door. Then you'd walk through the bank up the steps, where there was a reception room and a studio. Between the studio and the reception room was something like a telephone booth or control room where the engineer or someone like that would sit. He'd take call-in messages for songs requested, and he'd pass this little slip of paper to us in the studio.

There'd be a piano in the studio and a microphone. We'd bring our own instruments. Whoever was singing would come in and do their part and they'd have places for the other people to sit around. It was just local people. We were all amateurs. We didn't get paid for this, it was just a lot of fun, like going to a party every Saturday night.

Barbara D. Smik. What were some of the songs you might have sung at the time? And could you tell us a little bit more about your group?

BJ. "Sweethearts on Parade," "I'm in Love With You, Honey," "Side by Side," "Lies," "Highways are Happy Ways"—popular music at the time.

Dick played Hawaiian guitar and Spanish guitar, Gene played tenor guitar, I played my ukulele, and Art played Spanish guitar. Later on when I went solo I learned to play the guitar and also played bass fiddle in a later group. The bass was my favorite instrument. When I was a little boy, though, I really wanted to be a clarinet player in a band when I grew up.

BDS. Did you have musical training in high school?

BJ. No. Actually, when I was 14, I knew a neighbor boy who had a ukulele. My older sister and brother got ukuleles, but I didn't. I wasn't supposed to touch their ukuleles, but when they weren't home, I did anyway. They were very popular then, ukuleles and coonskin hats. The kid in the neighborhood showed me how to chord, and I learned to play the instrument at that time, but my brother and sister never did.

BDS. What got you interested in the entertainment business?

BJ. My friends and I just started singing together in high school and discovered we could sing. I sang in a choir in high school. My mother met my father in Northumberland, Pennsylvania, where my father was the choir leader in a Baptist church. Mother was a soprano and sang in the choir. My father was a lyric tenor, and I never could sing as high as he could. Dad played cornet, his brothers and sisters played horns, so they had a little band. Music was always there.

When I was 16, I was in a couple of shows out in the country where we lived. The baseball team wanted to raise some money, so we sent away for a manuscript for a show called

Bill Jones invented the comic character "Pid Hawkins," second from right, while working with Denver Darling's band. Darling stands at center in this photograph made at New York station WOR. Photographer unknown, late 1930's.

"Always In Trouble." My brother, Danny, and I wound up with parts in the show. So that was the beginning.

I remember our family had a record by the "Two Black Crows," Moran and Mac. They did comedy back and forth, like Amos and Andy. They did blackface comedy; it was very popular then. I remember sitting down on the ground behind our garage, spending an afternoon, doing both Moran and Mac's parts on the record.

Whenever stock companies came to Wheeling on the stage, like Don Lanning, I'd never miss it. He was well liked in Wheeling. He'd do two different shows a week. Three days a week, they'd put on a show like "Mary," then the next three days of the week, they'd put on an entirely different show. He was always the lead singer in the shows, or plays. Intermission time, he'd come out and would sing again. He had a bunch of cute songs, like "How Come Red Riding Hood Was Always So Good, and Still Let the Wolf in the Door." Something like that. He'd hit Wheeling for maybe a month every year, and would appear at the Victoria Theater.

Anytime there was a stage show, if I could scrape up the 35 cents to go, I'd be there. One of my older sisters, Helen, was a nurse. She knew I loved that kind of stuff, so she'd take me. We'd go to a matinee. I was bitten by the show business bug very early.

My oldest sister, Annabelle, took me one time to see a show at the Court Theater in Wheeling. I was 13. There was a kid in it. He'd come out with a baseball bat, and he'd throw the ball bat down on the stage, and started raisin' a ruckus. And I'd think, "I can do that!" Then the quartet would sing "The Old Oaken Bucket." When they'd come to "bucket," they'd start going up and down like this. The bass fiddler was the comic, and he would be going up and down at the wrong time. He'd be going down, they'd be going up, and I thought this was great stuff.

BDS. So you were inspired by vaudeville entertainers?

BJ. Oh yes, I remember seeing Gallagher and Sheen, two little funny guys who would come out on the stage and sing, "Oh, Mr. Gallagher, Mr. Gallagher, do you remember the funniest thing you've ever seen?" And then Olson and Johnson and Sons of Guns. I remember seeing them when we were in New York City. They had this cute routine where you went into the theater and there was a guy in the lobby carrying around a tree about two feet high, and he was paging, "Mrs. Jones, Mrs. Jones, here's your tree. You ordered this tree, now where are you, Mrs. Jones?" And then when the show was over, you'd go back out through the lobby, and you'd see this 10-foot-high tree, and this guy screaming, "Mrs. Jones, Mrs. Jones! For pity's sake, Mrs. Jones, come and get your tree!"

BDS. Tell us a little of the comic character, Pid Hawkins, that you developed later on in your career.

BJ. I was doing comedy back in 1933 at WWVA, but it wasn't Pid. I joined a group called the Rhythm Rogues and we started doing personal appearances. We made up little skits that we did. One was a comedy boxing match. We'd have gloves that didn't fit, clothes that didn't fit. One guy swung at the other and he'd duck and smile, and next time around he got hit in the back of the head. Just crazy stuff like that.

Because I'd done some of that,

when Denver Darling came to Wheeling in 1935 and formed the Georgie Porgie Boys, he and the other group members, Fred Gardini and Willard Spoon, decided I'd do comedy. I became Pid Hawkins then. Our sponsors gave us a month to put an act together, before we left for WEEU in Reading. We rented a room at the Bridge Hotel in Wheeling, kept our instruments there, came over every day and practiced our trio. Denver sat down with a whole bunch of names for me as a comedian, and decided on Pid, named after an old guy on a farm where he used to work. Somebody else came up with Hawkins. Baggy pants comedians were very popular. I had hair then, and I'd comb it down over my face.

I did Pid Hawkins then in Reading, on KDKA in Pittsburgh, and in New York City. When I came back to Wheeling in 1939, I was still doing my comedy character. Pid spoke before I returned to Wheeling, but there was a fellow entertainer at WWVA who did the same country accent as me, and I felt everyone would think I was copying him. So Pid became a silent comedian. This was from 1940 to 1943. I worked a lot for the "Jamboree" with the comedian Crazy Elmer [Smiley Sutter]. Elmer and I would get together during the week and make up a comedy routine. We'd name the routine and would always do it right at the end of the show. The musical portion would always precede the comedy routine.

So when I came back to Wheeling in late '39, I worked with other comedians like Froggie Cortez [comedian with Doc Williams and the Border Riders] and Cy Sneezeweed. Also Joe Barker and Curley Miller worked with us on these comedy routines. We'd get together during the week, and we'd pick up a theme, and we'd try to think of what we could do to make that look funny — like an operation on Crazy Elmer, we'd make up a whole bunch of funny things about that.

Curley Miller keeps talking about the restaurant scene that we did one time. Pid Hawkins is a waiter. Curley just wants a snack, and I bring him a snake. Then he wants a chicken sandwich, and I come in with one of these big plates with a cover on it. So I take the cover off, and this little "peep" [baby chick] comes out. The peep was the comedy, because the peep starts to run across the stage and I'm chasing it with two pieces of bread.

Another time, they had a trap door in the stage and the audience hears some loud growling. They had a record or tape that produced the growling. So Pid Hawkins got one of those great big, long Kentucky rifles, went down the trap door, and then you heard a loud "bang," and he came back with a little tiny mouse. Just little silly stuff like that, and people roared and laughed. Just slapstick.

BDS. Where did you learn slapstick comedy? Did you write all these skits yourselves?

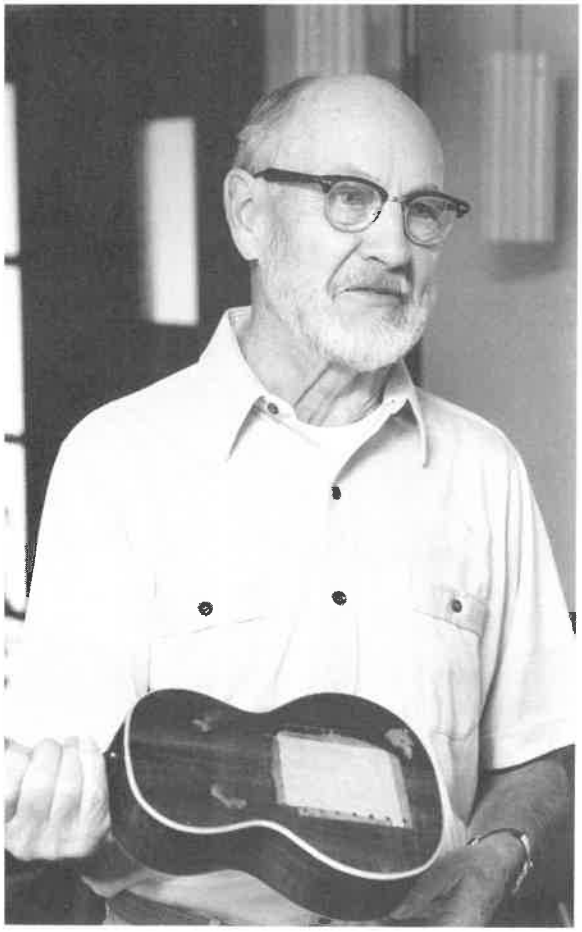
BJ. Well, yes. When you get into things, doing something like that, it kinda comes to you a little easier. I used to walk through a hardware store, and look at all the things in the store and wonder if I could make something funny out of that. And you get a gang together and just sit around and talk. And someone will say, "Hey, why don't we do that!"

BDS. Let's talk about all these colorful names your early radio groups were given. Was it usual to name the groups after their commercial sponsors?

BJ. Yes, it was pretty prevalent. In 1935, George W. Smith, then station manager of WWVA, put together the Peruna Panhandle Rangers, which consisted of Paul Myers on bass fiddle, Fred Gardini on accordion, Blaine Heck on guitar, and I did the vocals. Peruna was a medicine of some kind. The pitch was, "Try Peruna to help build up cold-chasing, cold-fighting resistance." I never tried it. This was back when they were pitching medicine a lot, like Cowboy Loye with his Texas Mineral Water Crystals.

For this we got all the way up to $5 apiece per program. But that wasn't bad in those days, for I was making $3.50 a day working at the Wheeling

The Mutual Network microphone carried Jones's vocalizing nationwide. Here he performs with the Musical Steelmakers on the Wheeling Steel program. Photographer unknown, 1940.



Above: Jones still performs occasionally, taking tunes from the 1925 playlist taped to the back of his ukulele. Photo by Michael Keller.

Below: Bill Jones, one of the first performers at the "Jamboree," is honored here (at right) at a 1975 reunion. Howard Donahoe, the announcer for the first "Jamboree," presents the plaque, with Elmer Crow at left. Photographer unknown.

Steel Mill in Martins Ferry, Ohio. So I'd work all day at the mill for $3.50 and come over to the radio station and make $5 for 15 minutes.

And when we formed the Georgie Porgie Boys later in 1935, we were named after a cooked cereal, which was the first cereal with vitamins in it. That was the sales pitch — vitamins. My first radio commercial was in 1930 with the Sparkling Four. We were on the air from 5:30 p.m. to 6:00, Monday through Friday, sponsored by Saegertown Gingerale. Up to that time, we never made a dime from our radio shows. I'd leave the mill at 5:00 p.m. to do the Saegertown Gingerale programs. I didn't have time to change clothes, so I did that program in my working clothes. Of course, nobody could see me.

BDS. Could you tell us about your transition from singing the pop tunes of the '20's to country music in the '30's and '40's?

BJ. People started requesting "hillbilly" songs about 1928. Holland Engle came to the "Jamboree" about that time as an announcer. He said he could do "Red River Valley." Gene Doughty said, "Well, Bill can yodel," so Holland'd sing the verse and I'd yodel the chorus. Then people started writing in for more. So I started mixing them up and started to learn some western tunes, the pretty stuff.

When I first appeared on the "Jamboree" stage show in 1933, though, I was still doing pop tunes. Several of the other artists that were there then, like Cap, Andy and Flip, and Fred Craddock and his group, were doing country or hillbilly music. When Cowboy Loye hit town about 1934 or late '33, the whole thing started to change over. We saw how well Cap, Andy and Flip were doing on their personal appearances. Maybe we'd go out about two nights a week and they were doing five nights a week. You finally begin to catch on.

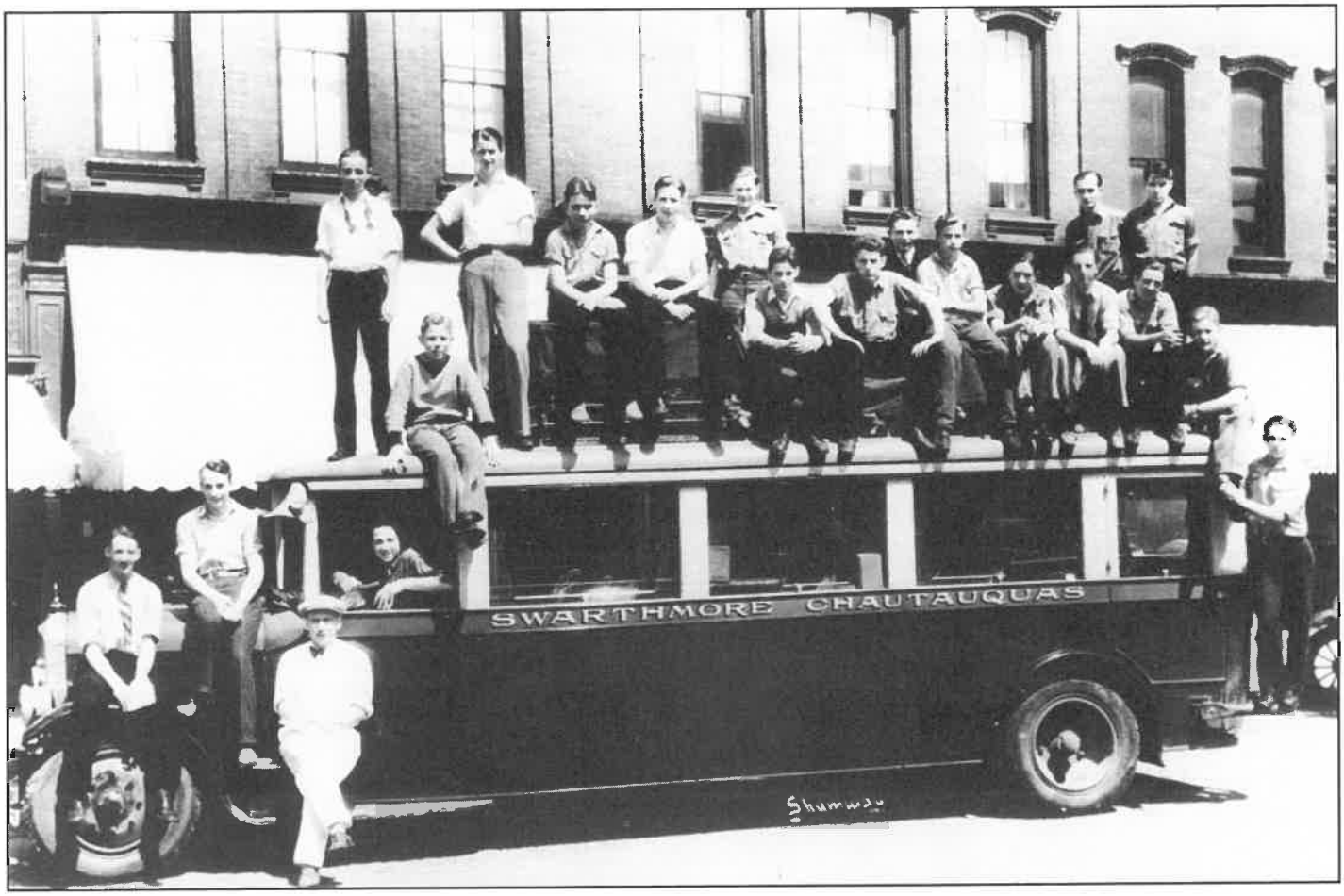
By 1934 I was pretty well changed over to country or western music. When we got this group ready to go to Reading, we did nothing else but western, hillbilly and fiddle tunes and such. Songs like "Red River Valley," "Home on the Range." Then I started to get the books from the Sons of the Pioneers. Bob Miller had a lot of tunes I liked—"Dear Old Western Sky," "Bury Me Not on the Lone Prairie." We were hearing their songs, so naturally we started doing them.

BDS. What did you enjoy most when you were in the business?

BJ. It was when I started doing the comedy as Pid Hawkins in Reading. I think I enjoyed that more than anything I ever did. That's also when I went into the music business full time, and became known as Silver Yodelin' Bill Jones. Announcer Howard Donahoe at WWVA first started calling me Bill Jones, the Silver Voiced Yodeler in 1929.

We worked up some real cute routines with Pid. You start with something that's a little rough, then you add something to it, drop some of it, then you get it to smooth out so that it's going real well, and you get the audience out there to laughing hard. That's the greatest enjoyment of all. One of the most exhilarating and satisfying feelings is to stand on the stage and do something and the crowd laughs a real, hard rolling laugh.

The author thanks Professor Ivan Tribe for writing ***Mountaineer Jamboree: Country Music in West Virginia*** *(University Press of Kentucky, 1984). The book was helpful in referencing some dates and names and provided encouragement, since there is little research available on the early history of country music in Wheeling.*



The Shadwell Boy Scout Band of Huntington was among the chautauqua acts touring Clarksburg in the late 1920's. Photographer unknown, 1927.

Chautauqua

Bringing Culture to Clarksburg

By Mary V. Stealey

Back in the '20's, when I was growing up in Harrison County, one of the highlights of our summer was Chautauqua Week.

Chautauqua. What a magical word! It conjures up visions of a big brown tent in an open field and a week of fun on long hot afternoons and cool summer evenings. Ask almost anyone of my generation if they remember chautauqua and you will see a big smile appear.

Chautauqua had something for everyone. Good music, drama, comedy, lectures. Even eminent divines. And all for the price of a season ticket — $2.50 for adults, $1.25 for children. It only lacked elephants, big cats and a man on a flying trapeze to rival the circus for top place on our list of delights. And it lasted for seven days and seven nights!

The chautauqua tents in Clarksburg occupied several different locations over the years. The first shows were set up at the old fairgrounds. Next they moved to the site of the old Central Junior High School building, and from there to a vacant field on Buckhannon Avenue in Goff Plaza, where many of our town's finest homes are located today.

The Goff Plaza location is probably the best remembered, but the chautauquas I recall were held in a big field behind the Madison Mines Greenhouses in Stealey Heights. I must have been six or seven when I saw my first chautauqua there, sometime around 1927 or 1928. Our house was only a block or so away and I remember walking over to the site with my

brother and sisters early on the morning of the first day to watch the workmen pitch the tent and set up the bleachers, then hurrying home for a quick lunch and returning for the two o'clock show.

The afternoon performances always had some special features for boys and girls. These generally included story hours, magic shows, mystics and games. Chalk-talk artists were popular too. The artist would set up an easel and sketch a picture while telling a story or reciting a poem to music. And sometimes we'd have classes in mat-weaving or paper cut-work featuring flowers and birds or animals.

After supper we'd rush through the dishes while Mama got ready. Then she would walk back to the tent with us for the evening performance. She never missed a one if there was "good" music on the bill — and there always was. She was a great fan of Madame Schumann-Heink, the famous Metropolitan Opera star, and we never tired of hearing about the time she saw the great diva at Moore's Opera House here.

The chautauquas brought us a wonderful variety of music — from symphonies to bell-ringers to yodelers. And if there was a violinist on the bill we knew we'd be treated to a fast rendition of "Flight of the Bumble Bee." Other musical numbers might include anything from the "The Rosary" to an Hawaiian show; or selections from *Madame Butterfly* to the rousing "William Tell Overture" or John Philip Sousa's "Stars and Stripes Forever."

Evening shows in the Chautauqua big tent usually featured a drama or a comedy and perhaps a specialty show or a noted orator. William Jennings Bryan was a favorite speaker on the circuit chautauquas. That was well before my day, but at least one older Clarksburg resident remembers when Bryan appeared here.

Many other long-time Harrison County residents remember those long-ago chautauquas. Local historian Dorothy Davis recalls going to the tent shows in Goff Plaza as a child. In fact, she once performed in one of their dramas with other children. "I don't recall the name of the play," she said, "but the other kids and I met every day at the tent for rehearsals with the drama coach and then we presented the play on Friday.

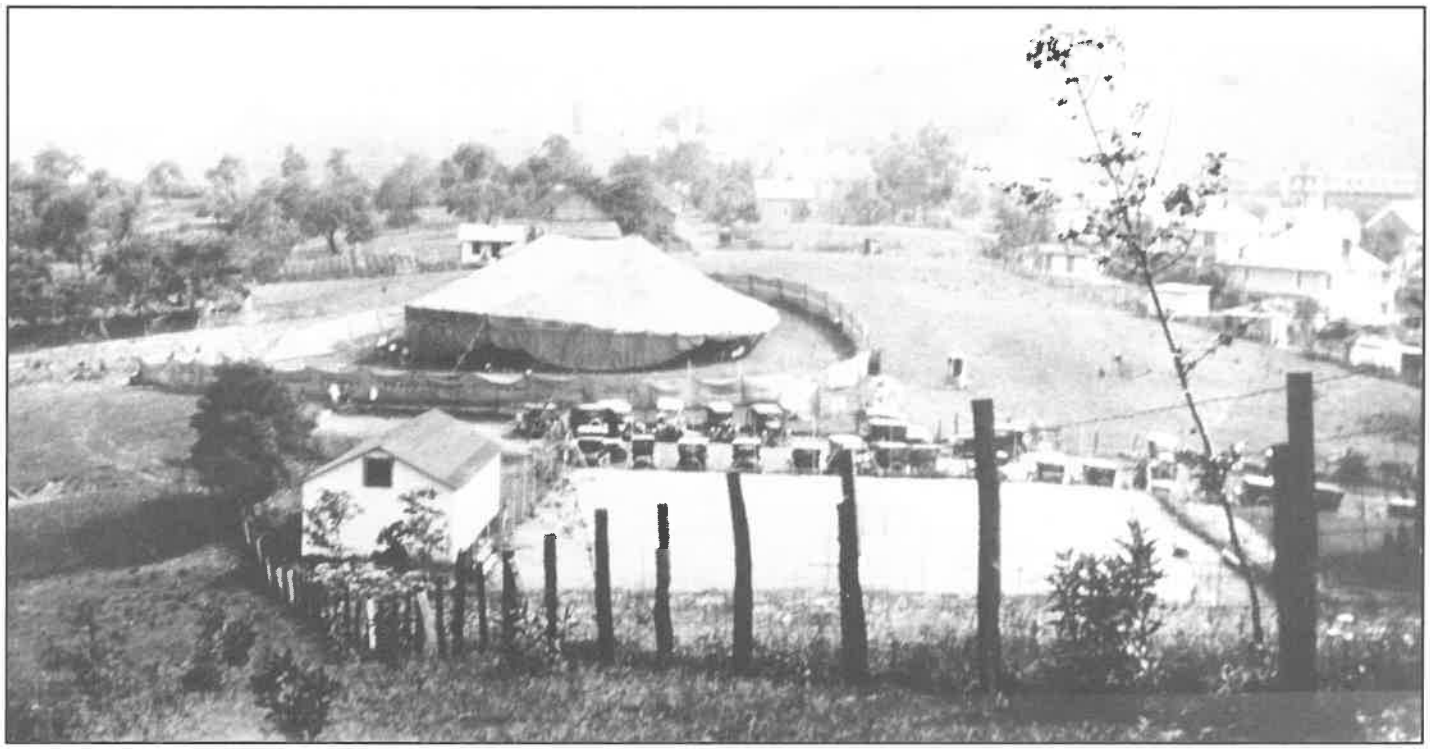
"*Everybody* came to the chautauquas," Davis adds. "They had big names, like Lowell Thomas, and the best musicians. The show always went on, rain or shine, and they always had a good-looking man to lead the music."

Anna Zinn, a long-time Broad Oaks resident, recalls the romantic music of the chautauquas. "We'd walk over to the big tent on Buckhannon Avenue," she said, "and I've never forgotten a beautiful couple who sang 'Tea For Two' to each other. They acted just like they were really in love."

Retired teacher Madge McDaniel remembers her parents bringing her to Clarksburg from nearby Zeising on the streetcar to see the chautauquas. "I'd stay with relatives in Broad Oaks and walk over to the tent," she recalled. She also remembers when Madame Schumann-Heink appeared, particularly a reception she gave for young people at the Waldo Hotel. "I was a junior in high school at the time and attended that reception with my entire junior class," she says.

Reverend Billy Sunday, the great evangelist, was a favorite on the chautauqua circuit and often made independent appearances as well. Orlan Fowler, who taught me arithmetic at Central Junior High School many years ago, remembers once going to Fairmont on the streetcar to see Billy Sunday. He recalls that a temporary tabernacle had been constructed for that occasion and the floor

Chautauqua promoters sought open fields when they came to Harrison County. This photograph was made in Shinnston in the 1920's. Photographer unknown, courtesy State Archives.



was covered with sawdust. "They passed dishpans around for collection plates," Mr. Fowler said, "and they were all filled to brimming, too!"

A popular feature of chautauqua was the election of young people as officers for "Junior Town." On July 1, 1924, the *Clarksburg Daily Telegram* reported that Miss Cornelia Goodman had been elected Junior Town mayor, with a full slate of other officers. The types of officials elected reveal the social concerns of the chautauqua movement, with almost all the junior officials serving on health and service boards or the "Law and Order Commission." The newly elected officers and council were to hold their first sessions the next morning, according to the paper.

Among the 1924 health officers was Miss Sarah Margaret Israel, who became my seventh-grade teacher at Central Junior High some ten years later. Miss Israel still resides in Clarksburg and remembers those Goff Plaza chautauquas well. She told me she has forgotten that particular election, but she does know the present whereabouts of most of the boys and girls named in the newspaper account. What she remembered best about the chautauquas was the music and dancing and the season tickets, good for all the acts all week long.

Those tickets were usually left for sale by a chautauqua advance man who would come to town about a month ahead of time to start his advertising campaign. In June 1924, the *Daily Telegram* reported: "E. B. Buller, first advance representative of Redpath Chautauqua, was in Clarksburg on Saturday, distributing advertising and discussing chautauqua plans with the local committee. He gave an interesting report on the seven-day program to be offered June 30 to July 6, inclusive. The usual quota of tickets was left for those patrons who have learned the wisdom of attending chautauqua by way of the season ticket route."

On the bill for that season were two plays, *Give and Take* and *The Meanest Man in the World*. Performers included the Hollybrooke Harpists; Elsie Baker, noted contralto; Miss Evelyn Hanson with a dress lecture and demonstration; the DiGiorgio Orchestra and "E. R. Root and his 10,000 Busy Bees." Lecturers were Thomas B. McGregor, Attorney-General of Kentucky; Waldo E. Stephens; Thomas A. Green of Washington; Judge George D. Alden of Boston (who, through a misunderstanding in booking, was replaced by the Reverend Dr. Daniel F. Fox of Pasadena) and the Honorable William E. Wenner of the Ohio Senate.

This lineup must have been well-received, for a July 1st headline boasted: "CLARKSBURG'S CHAUTAUQUA OPENS TO BIG CROWDS AND COMMITTEE IS EXPECTING RECORD WEEK." The story went on to report: "The opening lecture by the Rev. Dr. Fox scored a complete success with every one of the hundreds of persons that crowded the big brown chautauqua tent on Buckhannon Avenue Monday night with his splendid address 'The Validity of American Ideals.' The California divine spoke clearly and his pleas for peace, or at least a conscription of every resource and all the manpower of the nation in the event of war in order to prevent a few piling up colossal fortunes while others are holding the battle line, drew much applause."

The DiGiorgio Orchestra was praised as "an unusually well-trained organization of musicians headed by Signor DiGiorgio and including Mrs. DiGiorgio and their two daughters...who played a prelude concert before the evening lecture." And the committee from the Clarksburg Ministers' Union, the organization sponsoring the chautauqua that year, "was greatly encouraged and predicted this season will be the best in the history of chautauqua appearances here," according to the *Daily Telegram* review.

One other interesting item in that story had to do with the address by State Senator Wenner of Ashtabula County, Ohio, whose subject was "The Hand at the Nation's Throat." The senator's "dominant thought was that education and civilization are running a close race with catastrophe in this nation and that unless there is less extravagance and more of the simple life ruin is just ahead. He flayed communism and other 'isms' that are undermining the nation."

Chautauqua's Golden Jubilee was being celebrated that year. Chautauqua had been founded 50 years before, in 1874, by Dr. John H. Vincent, Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and Lewis Miller, a businessman active in church affairs, as an adult summer school in Chautauqua, New York. Soon the movement grew, adding educational lectures and entertainment to the programs now being presented to large groups of all ages in the outdoor setting on Chautauqua Lake.

County historian Dorothy Davis recalls the chautauquas of her childhood. "Everybody went to the chautauqua," she says. Photo by Michael Keller.

In the early 1900's "circuit chautauquas" were begun as a commercial venture. These traveled around the countryside, presenting the same type of programs. The circuit chautauquas were privately financed and managed. They were not sent out by the Chautauqua Institution in New York, but they did closely follow the Chautauqua concept, bringing culture to small-town America.

At least three of these circuits traveled through West Virginia. The Redpath-Ohio Circuit, under the direction of W. Vern Harrison, originated in Springfield, Ohio, and covered 63 towns in West Virginia,

A $2.50 season ticket brought a week's worth of wholesome entertainment, with children half price. This newspaper ad is from the June 20, 1924, *Clarksburg Daily Telegram*, courtesy State Archives.

Kentucky, and Ohio from June until the first of September. The Swarthmore Circuit, run by Paul Pearson, father of newspaper columnist Drew Pearson, covered 13 states from May to September. It ran through 83 towns from Red Bank, New Jersey, to Charles Town, West Virginia. The Lincoln Chautauqua is known to have traveled in some western and central West Virginia counties in the World War I era.

Many Clarksburgers recall traveling by train as far as Mountain Lake Park, Maryland, to see the uplifting tent shows. In Lewis County the big tent was pitched on the grounds of the Weston State Hospital, and picnic lunches were often spread under the trees before the show began. Two former residents of Weston, now living in Clarksburg, remember these chautauquas.

Retired teacher Myrl Rohrbough recalls, "We lived on what is now South Main Street in Weston when the tent shows came. I can remember walking down to the bridge at First Street and crossing over to get onto the hospital grounds where the tent was. It was a foot bridge, no vehicles allowed, and sometimes we children would line up, three or four across, running over the bridge to the tent."

Charlotte Bailey, a long-time Clarksburg librarian now retired, also lived

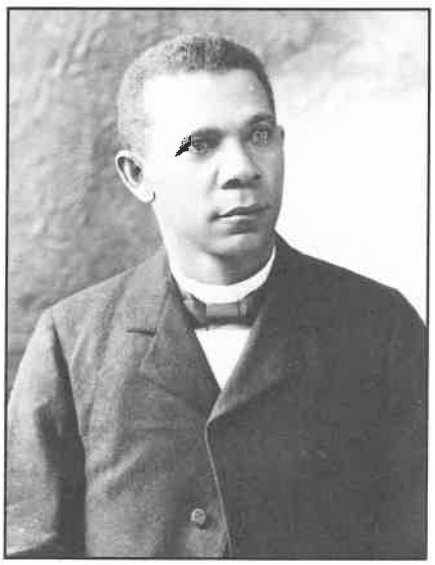
Chautauqua Today

The West Virginia Humanities Council recently revived the idea of chautauqua in the Mountain State. The new chautauqua emphasizes historical impersonations. The purpose is to "educate the general public through accurate historical characterizations," according to project director Ann Saville.

West Virginia's chautauqua characters include former governor Bill Marland; labor activist Mother Jones; Anna Kennedy Davis, a prominent Clarksburg resident born in 1841; songwriter Stephen Foster; black author James Weldon Johnson; railroad baron Collis P. Huntington; Eleanor Roosevelt; Booker T. Washington; and feudist Anse Hatfield.

The presenters divide each program into three parts. First a monologue is delivered in character, then the audience is invited to ask the character about his or her life and times, and in the third part of the program the impersonator steps out of character and addresses questions from the audience from the scholarly point of view. "Nothing is made up," Saville says.

The historical impersonations are presented at colleges, high schools, libraries, and for associations and nonprofit organizations. Saville says the programs are done on a year-round basis, with grants available to fund performances. For more information contact the West Virginia Humanities Council, Suite 800, Union Building, 723 Kanawha Boulevard E., Charleston, WV 25301; (304) 346-8500.



Booker T. Washington, photographed by Elmer Chickering. Courtesy National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution.

in Weston in those days. She recalled the nice programs the chautauquas had for children. "They had morning sessions for kids, not in the big tent but somewhere else on the grounds," she said. "I remember attending the summer school at Lake Chautauqua in New York, too," she added. "The New York Symphonic Orchestra always gave a performance in the big auditorium there."

Anna Egan Smucker, noted Harrison County children's author, said that her mother, Sarah Aldridge Egan, could almost be considered "a chautauqua baby." A chautauqua was going on when she was born in Toronto, Ohio, and everybody in town was there, even the doctor. They had to send someone over to the tent and get him out of there in a hurry.

Smucker recalled later attending chautauqua herself, particularly the morning sessions for children. These were held in a different area from the big tent, out in a cow pasture, she says. Two things stand out in her memory about those sessions. She learned how to make a soap carving and, being a city girl, she got her first introduction to "cow pies."

The circuit chautauquas were popular. To get a town on the circuit, an agent would contact community leaders (bankers, lawyers, educators and the like) and have them sign a contract to guarantee the sale of so many tickets and a site for the tent. The success of the circuit chautauqua depended on the cooperation of a town's active citizens. Clarksburg was fortunate to have such a group of interested businessmen.

Dorothy Davis recalled one year's planning committee in her *History of Harrison County*. "On June 8, 1908, the annual chautauqua and lecture course for the purpose of encouraging among citizens of Harrison County a desire for better literature, music, a deeper appreciation and higher regard for all things that tend to elevate, educate and refine humanity was incorporated by J. E. Law, A. W. Martin, Haymond Maxwell, Charles W. Worcester, F. O. Sutton, J. L. McMillon, J. Walter Duncan, L. W. Ogden and Taney Harrison."

Committees made up of businessmen like these would work with the Redpath Bureau to obtain interesting programs each summer. For example, Redpath Chautauqua records (now maintained at the University of Iowa) show that on April 7, 1923, Mr. Oscar C. Wilt, cashier of Clarksburg's Empire National Bank, wrote to the Redpath office in Chicago seeking the services of "some eminent divine of national reputation" for a "monster union religious service some time within the coming summer."

Mr. Wilt was offered three possibilities: Dr. Preston Bradley of Chicago, available in early June, terms $200; Dr. Robert MacGowan of Pittsburgh, available in June or late August, terms $125; or Maud Ballington Booth, "not an eminent divine but well known in the religious world," was available with her Independent Chautauqua tour July 31, August 1 or 3, terms $200, "or she might be willing to make a special trip from New York in early June or July." The Redpath records don't say which, if any, of these speakers was chosen for the proposed monster program.

Chautauquas continued to come to Clarksburg for a few more years, but with the coming of radio and the movies interest began to decline. Even during that Golden Jubilee year the *Daily Telegram's* entertainment page was advertising several big pictures. *The Lightning Rider* with Harry Carey was showing at the Orpheum Theatre; Moore's Opera House had Ramon Navorra and Barbara LaMarr in *Thy Name is Woman* and Harold Lloyd was appearing in *Girl Shy*, with *For The Love of Mike* as an added feature.

Then along came the talkies. In 1928 the Robinson Grand Theatre — "Home of the Sound Pictures" — advertised a return presentation of Al Jolson in *The Jazz Singer* (with Vitaphone). The cost of admission was 50 cents for adults, 20 cents for children, or 35 and 15 cents for the afternoon show. Moore's Opera House was now showing *The House By the Sea* starring Rin Tin Tin, the Wonder Dog.

By the late '20's local chautauquas were beginning to shorten their runs to five days or even less in some instances. A brief newspaper item in the summer of 1928 notes, "In West Union this year the local Chautauqua will consist of a five-day program of entertainment by the Redpath Circuit with performances at 3 o'clock and 8 o'clock." The only talent listed on the bill were the Filipino Collegians, performing in both the afternoon and evening shows, a lecture by Chester M. Sanford, and a concert by the Shadwell Scout Band of Huntington [GOLDENSEAL, spring 1986]. The paper also noted that the "annual Redpath Chautauqua will open for five days at the athletic field in West Grafton." Chautauqua was on the way out.

Sarah Margaret Israel was among the officers elected to the chautauqua "children's town" in 1924. Photo by Michael Keller.

Although the old circuit chautauquas are now long gone, they are not forgotten. There was something very special about them. It wasn't just that they brought "culture" to small-town America. I think it was the essence of sociability and the feeling of fellowship that they exuded. Chautauqua was a time of togetherness, chatting with neighbors while waiting for the show to begin, and sharing an evening of fun and entertainment with family and friends in a big brown tent.

Those tent shows had an aura of warmth and camaraderie that today's television, videos and rows of mall cinemas just don't provide. I'm glad I got in on it.

Left: A new Fokker F-10A receives a ground check at the Glen Dale plant. Photographer and date unknown, courtesy Wheeling-Ohio County Airport.

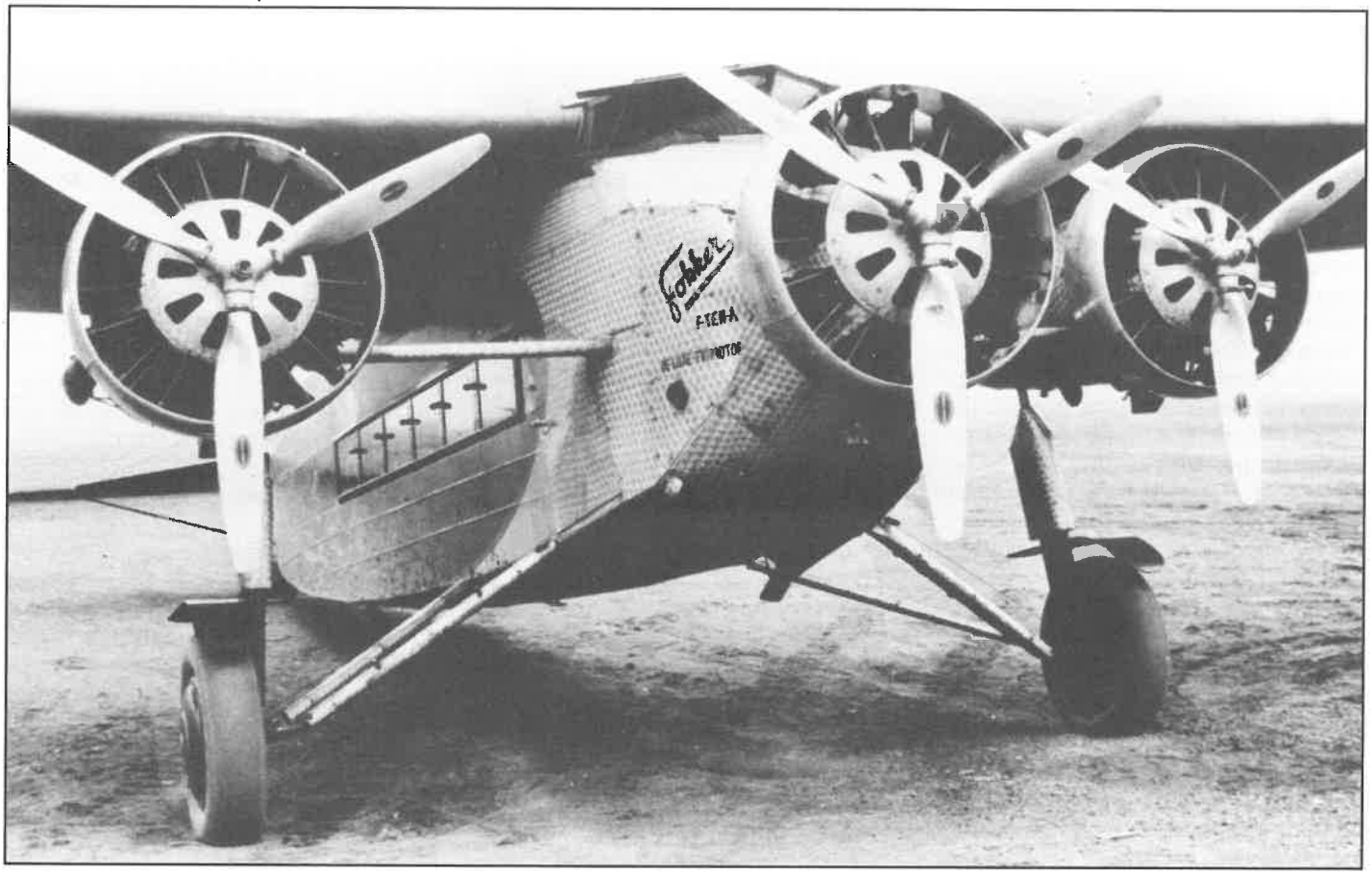
Right: Anthony H.G. Fokker, the aviation genius who gave the Red Baron wings, later brought the age of flight to Marshall County. "Flying and I grew up together," said Fokker, shown here in his first primitive plane, about 1910. Photographer unknown, courtesy Fokker Aircraft U.S.A.

Wings Over Glen Dale

When Fokker Trimotors Flew Over West Virginia

By Louis E. Keefer

Close up, an F-10A was a formidable workhorse. Carrying 12 passengers at 118 miles per hour, it was a favorite with early airlines. Photographer and date unknown, courtesy Fokker Aircraft U.S.A.



A casual passerby would never guess that the old red brick building in Glen Dale once housed the people and equipment that built America's best airplanes. Reading the now only faintly discernible name, "Fokker Aircraft," a visitor might feel a mild curiosity, but nothing more.

The Fokker name aroused a quite different emotion during World War I. In those awful days, the swarms of brightly checkered red-and-white Fokker fighters of Baron Von Richtofen's "flying circus" were dreaded all along the Western Front. The most deadly of all German aircraft, their reputation soon made "Fokker" a hated name and the Red Baron notorious throughout the world.

Their designer, Anthony H. G. (Herman Gerard) Fokker, was actually born in Java, the son of a Dutch coffee planter. He first had offered his services to Britain and France. When neither expressed much interest, he turned to the German government, which eagerly accepted his innovative fighter designs.

Fokker and his airplanes quickly earned worldwide respect. After the war, the young genius — he was only 28 in 1918 — decided to design and build commercial aircraft. Soon there were several successful Fokker plants, and in 1924 he opened his initial American plant in Hasbrouck Heights, New Jersey, near the Teterboro Airport. When business boomed, a second plant was opened two years later in nearby Passaic.

As the orders for new aircraft poured in, Fokker decided to establish yet a third plant. For its location, he picked a long stretch of level bottomland in Glen Dale, eight miles south of Wheeling, a mile north of Moundsville. Marshall County Courthouse records show that the Fokker Aircraft Corporation of America was incorporated on December 2, 1927.

The Glen Dale location had access to highway, rail, and water transportation, and to a pool of skilled Ohio Valley craftsmen. In addition, Fokker's conferences with the Ohio Valley Industrial Corporation had produced favorable terms for leasing a new plant to be specially built for him. An adjacent landing field and new railroad siding were part of the package. Plans called for an initial 100,000 square feet of floor space, with the intention of doubling that as business expanded.

Fokker, in his 1931 autobiography *Flying Dutchman*, said of his negotiations for the plant only that he had reached an agreement with some Wheeling businessmen who "were anxious to operate a factory to compensate for their decreasing steel industry."

Construction began on January 24, 1928, with R. R. Kitchen of Wheeling as the general contractor. The main assembly hall measured 100 feet by 200 feet, the longer side running north and south. Narrow balconies above the hall provided offices. The completed aircraft would be rolled out of huge, hangar-like doors at the north end.

The $2,000,000 plant opened in August 1928, and the first commercial

This Fokker publication is among the souvenirs left by the Glen Dale manufacturer. Courtesy Wheeling-Ohio County Airport.

Aircraft assembly was definitely not just men's work at Fokker. These workers pose by a fuselage under construction in April 1929. Photographer unknown, courtesy Wheeling-Ohio County Airport.

airplane built in West Virginia — a Fokker F-10A trimotor — took off from the grass airfield on December 13, 1928. Another 58 F-10A trimotors, as well as a few single-engine "Super Universal" models, would follow.

The F-10A, produced at Glen Dale and other Fokker plants, was a versatile workhorse. Among the airlines purchasing the plane were Pan American Airways (which bought the first one), Transcontinental Air Transport, and Western Air Express. The Army Air Corps and the air arm of the U.S. Marine Corps purchased modified F-10A's to experiment with carrying men and supplies.

One of these, displaying a large red cross painted on its white fuselage, was used as a "flying hospital" to transport Marines wounded in the 1927-28 American intervention in Nicaragua, sometimes called "Mr. Coolidge's Jungle War." With its high-lift wing and short take-off capabilities, the trimotor was undaunted by primitive airfields hacked out of underbrush high in the mountains.

Advertisements for the Fokker F-10A trimotor describe it as possessing an "all wood, veneer-covered, fully cantilevered wing, with fabric-covered tubular steel tail surfaces and fuselage." It was powered by three Pratt & Whitney "Wasp" engines, each developing 425 horsepower. The F-10A could carry 12 passengers, and cruise at 118 miles per hour.

Widely regarded as the best airliner in American service, the plane provided "pullman car luxury" plus "sensational performance with the utmost reliability for passengers and crew." Or so said the advertisements.

Fokker trimotors were a standard design recognized all over the world. The plane's image appeared on postage stamps and postcards, was cast into metal toys for children, was made into art deco lamps for American living rooms, and now and then was seen in movies featuring commercial aviation.

Moreover, Fokker trimotors were used in establishing many world records, among them Commander Richard E. Byrd's 1927 flight to the North Pole in the *Josephine Ford* and Captain Charles Kingsford-Smith's 1928 nonstop flight from the U.S. to Australia in the *Southern Cross*. When Amelia Earhart that year became the first woman to fly the Atlantic, she did so as a passenger in a Fokker trimotor, the *Friendship*.

The trimotor reputation was well-established by 1928, and the new plant at Glen Dale aroused considerable enthusiasm among local citizens. Dr. Robert Durig, a retired Moundsville optometrist, remembers how hard it was to stay in his eighth-grade classroom that autumn. "I ran down to the plant every lunchtime and after school, too, hoping to be the first to see a finished plane brought out the factory door, and I think I probably was."

"Eventually," says Durig, "the sight of the planes taking off and being test-flown back over the farms in nearby areas got to be routine and we hardly noticed them. I was never in the plant but I spent a lot of time gawking at the planes as they came out to undergo various ground checks. The Fokker people didn't make any effort to chase kids away, but none of us were allowed inside, either."

George Hummell, now a retired Glen Dale machinist, grew up in a house just north of the Fokker landing field. He remembers the Fokkers sometimes taking off over his home. (More often, as longtime flyer Dr. Durig recalls, they took off to the south because the prevailing winds were up the Ohio River valley.)

Hummell and his two older brothers often walked down to the plant to watch the planes being rolled out the doors and onto the airfield. "The doors were suspended from overhead tracks, and they opened up accordion-like from the center out," he says. "It took three men on each side to move them."

Hummell also can recall when State Route 2 between Wheeling and Moundsville was a two-lane, brick road, with streetcar tracks hugging the Ohio River side of the slope. "The fare to McMechen or Moundsville was five cents," he says. "The thrill that went with looking almost straight down to the river was entirely free."

Route 2 was the road William T. Brice used for his commute to the Fokker plant from the Woodsdale section of Wheeling. Brice, a retired State Road Commission official now living in Charleston, says that as timekeeper he had to be first to arrive.

"The plant opened at seven, so I had to get up at five in the morning in order to have enough time for the 45-minute trip through Wheeling, Benwood, and McMechen," Brice recalls. "Usually, I drove down, but sometimes I'd ride with a friend. In those days, there wasn't nearly so much traffic as today, and it wasn't a bad trip at all."

Former Fokker employee Paul Beebe and Dr. Robert Durig stand before the old Fokker plant on a recent visit. Durig grew up nearby and saw the first plane roll out. Photo by Michael Keller.

Bayard Young, a retired high school teacher from Glenville, was another of the first Fokker employees. In an article he prepared for the December 16, 1978, *Wheeling Intelligencer*, Young recalls that he and a man named Brooks Britton were hired August 1, 1928, as apprentice woodworkers at 25 cents an hour.

"My research (and my memory) has failed to set the date at which we started to build the first plane, although it was probably about November 1, 1928," Mr. Young wrote. "By this time perhaps 100 workers from the surrounding area had been hired. Gail L. Snyder from Gilmer County had been hired to mix the water-resistant glue for the flange, spar and wing departments; Tracy Somerville and Melvin Allen were working with Snyder in the flange department with Allen Monday, their foreman. I had been hired from Gilmer County for the spar department."

Young remembered that there were always a few new employees on whom practical jokes could be played. Some green hands might be sent to the stockroom to bring back a non-existent "dihedral," the angle at which the trimotor's wings sloped upwards from its fuselage. Others might be given a 55-gallon drum and told to fill it with "propwash," which actually refers to the airstream from a propeller.

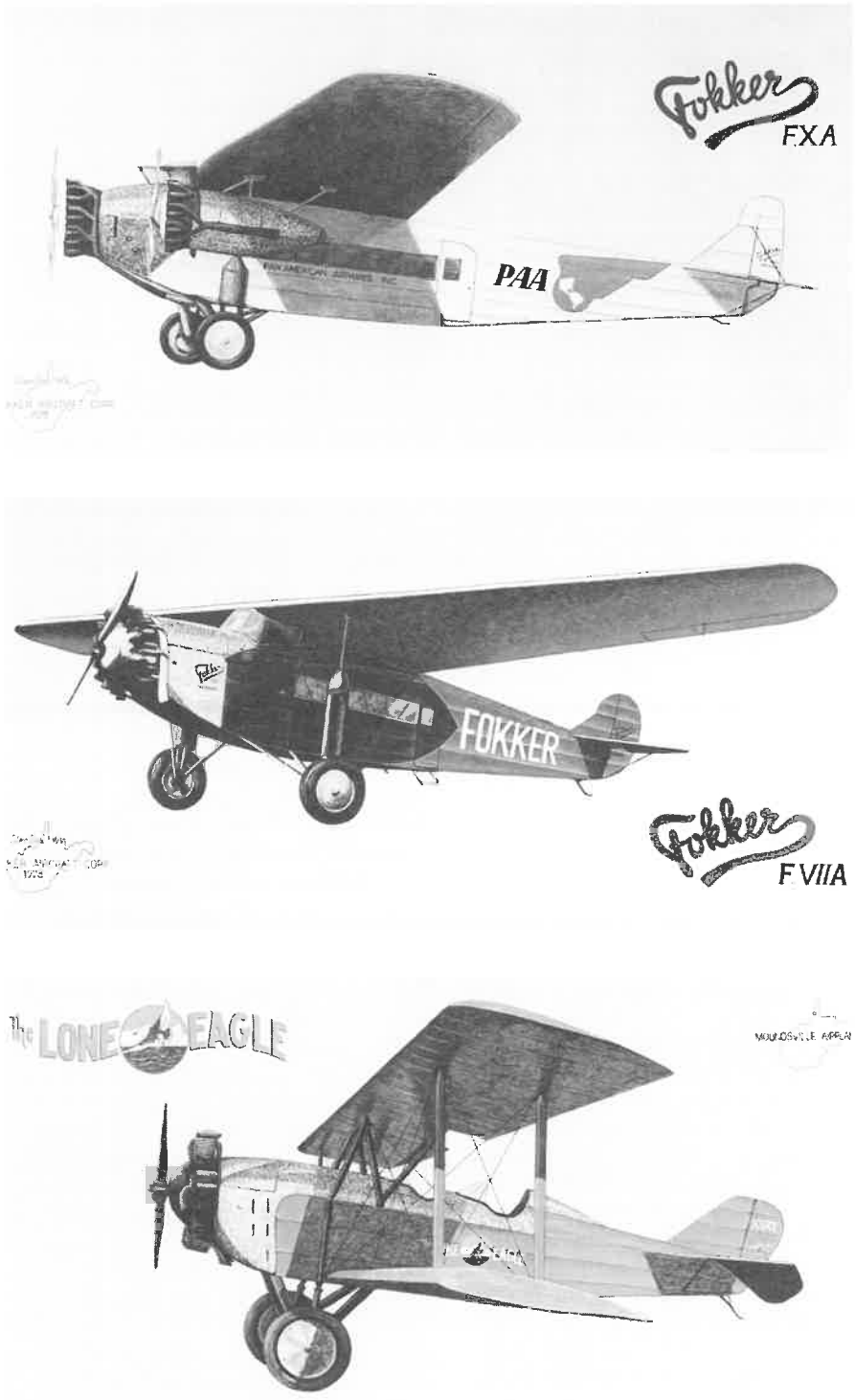
Fokker employees were required to sign an employment contract that spelled out various rules of behavior. Thomas Tominack, the manager of the Wheeling-Ohio County Airport, displays one of those contracts — along with many other Fokker memorabilia — in the outstanding aviation museum that has been created in the airport's lobby.

The contract's language is dated. Men were men in those days, and women were girls — though when in Fokker's employ they were expected to comport themselves as ladies. Glen Dale is spelled as one word, which was then correct. Among the provisions:

"The Glendale Fokker plant organization is the finest of its kind in the nation. Owing to the nature of the work, men and girls must work together. All men will conduct themselves as gentlemen and all girls as ladies.

"Our work must be clean, neat and exact. The factory will be kept in spotless condition. White uniforms are furnished at less than cost. They should be kept clean and laundered.

"Take a constant interest in your daily and training work for your own sake. Promotion is sure for those who merit it."



Planes of the Panhandle. Anthony Fokker promised Marshall County a future as a great aviation manufacturing center, and for a while it looked as though the dream would be realized. The Fokker F-10A (top) was built in considerable numbers at Glen Dale, along with fewer F-7A's (center). The "Lone Eagle" was built nearby by the Moundsville Airplane Corporation, which managed to make only three of the sporty planes. These airplanes are memorialized today in the Moundsville Airport in murals by artist Catherine Feryok. Photos by Michael Keller.

Preparing to fully staff the plant, the Fokker management held an open house in early August 1928. Great crowds of people, mostly from Glen Dale and Moundsville, but many from upriver towns, came to enjoy refreshments and to roam freely from one area to another. The *Wheeling News-Register* said there were at least 3,000 guests.

They heard speeches by W. P. Wilson, president of the Ohio Valley Industrial Corporation, by various plant officials, and by the legendary Fokker himself.

"The plant we have here now," Fokker told the crowd, "is the first step of what will come when we will drive into Glendale and see big hangars, great factories, a vast flying field." The pioneering aviator foresaw a time when "transport planes will blacken the sky. The Ohio Valley through this factory is going to enjoy the prosperity this vast expansion will mean."

The plant manager, D. V. Stratton, gave the longest talk, and the August 10, 1928, *Moundsville Echo* ran it all. Stratton stressed Fokker's training and promotion policies. "We will never go outside our own plant for filling higher positions," he promised. "Special courses for the sales department, service engineering, and factory management positions will be given, in order that the men and girls who have risen to foremanships may qualify for higher salaried jobs in the administrative branches of the business."

Wages at the Fokker plant, though competitive with those in other Ohio Valley industries, were not unusually attractive. Unskilled labor was paid 25 cents an hour. Foremen, tool and die makers, machinists, sheet metal workers, and other craftsmen might earn up to 90 cents. No doubt the real inducement to many young people was the chance to take part in "the world of tomorrow."

Residents of the Glen Dale-Moundsville area were familiar with aviation's rapid progress. Since 1920 there had been an airport just south of the new one developed by Fokker. Langin Field, named for Air Service hero James Joseph Langin, was a 3,000-foot grass strip between the Baltimore & Ohio tracks and the Ohio River.

The U.S. Air Service (later the Army Air Corps) developed Langin as a refueling stop for planes flying between Bolling Field in Washington and Wright Field near Dayton, Ohio. The military aircraft of that day were unable to make the flight across the Appalachian mountains nonstop.

Many famous flyers landed at Langin Field, as excited youngsters in the nearby towns well knew. Visitors included General William "Billy" Mitchell, leading an impressive formation of four twin-engined Martin B-2 bombers into the base; Charles A. Lindbergh, touring the nation in his famous Ryan monoplane, the *Spirit of St. Louis*, and Lieutenant James "Jimmie" Doolittle, flying an Army Air Corps pursuit plane. Doolittle was said to have flown under Wheeling's historic suspension bridge en route.

Small wonder that Fokker had no trouble recruiting young people to work for him. In the heady years of 1927 and 1928, hardly a day passed when the exploits of some daring flyer failed to make front page news.

Indeed, Fokker was not the only aircraft manufacturer in Glen Dale in 1928. That year, local businessmen formed the Moundsville Airplane Company to build a new sports plane, the "Lone Eagle." Charles F. Fasig was the designer and builder of the plane, with Captain J. W. Hunt as test pilot.

Unfortunately, only four of the handsome, two-seater biplanes were built before the company went out of business. Photos show that there were at least two designs: the first employing an in-line engine, the second a radial engine. The shapes of the rudders also differed somewhat.

Dr. Robert Durig explains the variation in rudder design: "Fokker had agreed to look over the 'Lone Eagle,' and make suggestions on how it might be improved. Bill Hunt flew it onto the Fokker field, merely leaving Moundsville Airport, formerly Langin Field, and landing again almost as soon as he was airborne. The two airfields were separated by only scrub-covered pasture.

"I had gotten to know Bill Hunt, and I was hanging around just watching. I saw Fokker climb around the plane, and heard him tell Hunt that the tail wasn't quite right, and ought to be redesigned. Fokker was not a trained engineer, but he was a marvelously intuitive designer and a world-class test pilot. He was probably right about that tail assembly."

Tom Tominack works to keep Northern Panhandle aviation history alive. He and colleague Jerry Anderson have filled the airport with flight memorabilia. Photo by Michael Keller.

Striking four-by-eight acrylic renderings of the two versions of the colorful sports aircraft, differing tails and all, have been painted, from photos, by Moundsville artist Catherine Feryok. The paintings are displayed, along with those of several Fokker aircraft, inside the hangar of the Marshall County Airport.

Durig, who saw Fokker many times, describes him as having an extremely ruddy complexion and a distinctive "ski-nose." A halo-like fringe of dark hair framed his bald head, although he often wore an aviator's leather cap to conceal his baldness.

"I remember him well," says Durig. "His English wasn't very good, and he was rather a quiet man most of the time. When he spoke, however, the wise man listened.

"For example, I had an older friend

Anthony Fokker models fashions with the ladies in 1930. Following family and business misfortunes, he turned increasingly away from business as the decade progressed. Photographer unknown, courtesy Fokker Aircraft U.S.A.

working at the plant, who one day needed to turn a part on a woodworking lathe. Seeing no free machines, he set up on a metal-turning lathe. Fokker happened along and spotted this gross error at once. The great designer scolded my friend harshly, and promised to discharge him instantly should he repeat the mistake."

The plant offered unusual employee amenities. Among them were two complete tennis courts painted on the assembly room floor. The courts were available for employees to use during lunch hour and in the evenings. In October 1928, the *Moundsville Echo* announced that the Fokker Athletic Association, an organization designed to advance sports participation at the Glen Dale plant, had formed a "Fokker Pilots" football team and was ready to meet any foe.

Anthony Fokker needed happy and efficient workers in order to do with his aircraft plants what Henry Ford was already doing with his automobile plants — achieving quality mass production on an assembly line basis. Ford himself was applying his pioneering industrial methods in aircraft production, making him a major competitor in the field.

At first, Fokker succeeded brilliantly. Within a year, the Glen Dale plant employed 500 people, and could turn out two trimotors every week. Since most of the steps were accomplished by hand, this was an impressive pace.

David Dalzell, a retired Moundsville businessman, recalls that when he was 13, he had a chance to view the plant.

"Fokker had been in operation a year or so, and invited my dad to tour the factory. Dad let me go along. I remember it so well. Under the main assembly room floor, where they built the planes, was a great big basement room where they stored the wood. The room was humidity- and temperature-controlled, which they stressed was very important.

"My father asked why they were still making planes from wood when Henry Ford was already using metal in his trimotor, the famous 'Tin Goose.' The answer was that it was easier to fix a wooden plane than a metal one — the metal got all twisted in a crash and couldn't be replaced as readily as wood could be." Silver spruce plywood was shipped in from the West Coast.

Although Fokker's reliance upon all-wood wing construction eventually would be his undoing, for more than two decades his aircraft were famous for their safety and reliability. The company motto, always widely advertised, was "Fokker Aircraft — Safest in the World."

Then came the crash of an F-10A trimotor in a cow pasture near Bazaar, Kansas, March 31, 1931. All seven passengers and two crewman were killed instantly. The crash shocked the whole nation because one of the dead was Notre Dame's famed football coach, Knute Rockne.

Some said the plane had encountered severe turbulence inside a thunderstorm, others said it had iced up so badly that the pilot had simply lost

Robert Durig at Fokker Field. "I ran down to the plant every lunchtime and after school, hoping to be the first to see a finished plane brought out," says the retired optometrist, who later became a pilot himself. Photo by Michael Keller.

control. Some also suspected that the wing had already been fatally weakened by internal dry rot.

The Aeronautics Branch of the Department of Commerce first grounded all Fokker trimotors, but after an investigation, allowed them to return to service. Even so, the public's confidence in the Fokker design was forever shaken.

In fact, the Rockne tragedy was merely a final blow against Anthony Fokker's leadership in American plane manufacturing. Two years before, General Motors Corporation had acquired control of Fokker Aircraft. Anthony Fokker was retained as technical director, but what was intended to be a daring partnership would become an enormous failure — in part due to the Great Depression, which caused new aircraft sales to plummet, and in part due to the constant misunderstandings between automobile and airplane people at GM.

Fokker was crushed by the unhappy outcome. As noted by one biographer, "the Flying Dutchman himself entertained high hopes from his new combine with General Motors, which he imagined to be omnipotent, and that as partner with them, he cherished hopes of outwitting his mighty rival — Henry Ford."

Somewhat ironically, the only surviving Fokker trimotor, the *Josephine Ford*, named for Henry Ford's daughter, now hangs in the Ford Museum in Dearborn, Michigan.

On May 4, 1931, Anthony Fokker suffered a terrible personal tragedy. His ill wife, Viola, either jumped or fell from their 29th floor hotel room in New York City. For a time, Fokker had little enthusiasm for business. Although he became an American citizen and remained in the news, his interests centered around trans-Atlantic sailings and his motor vessel *Helga*.

The Louis Marx Toy Company bought Fokker's Glen Dale plant in 1934. Forty years later, having doubled its size, Marx sold the plant to the Quaker Oats Company. Today, the building houses the Wheeling Wholesale Grocery Company.

Anthony Fokker died December 23, 1939, at age 49, but his factories in the Netherlands have continued to build both military and commercial aircraft. The company recently sold a small fleet of F-100 jet planes to USAir. Occasionally they fly West Virginia routes, and it would be fun to think they tip their wings in salute to their trimotor ancestors.

Clair Bee's business was to teach boys sports and sportsmanship, as a coach and popular author. Here he works with students at the New York Military Academy, late 1950's. Photo by Donato's Studio, courtesy NYMA.

Mr. Basketball

The Clair Bee Story

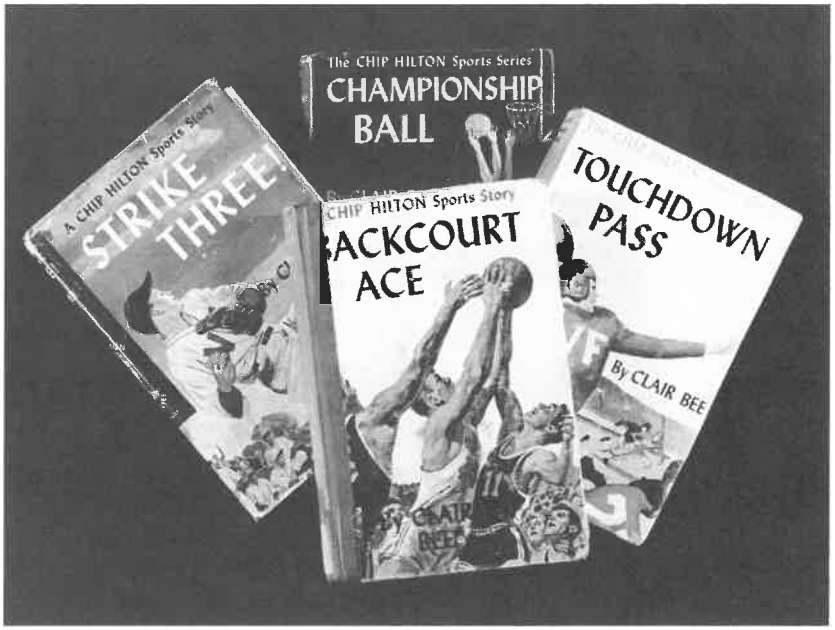
By Rogers McAvoy

If you were ten years old during the 1950's or 1960's you may remember Clair Bee's Chip Hilton books. This was the most popular juvenile sports series ever, next to the Frank Merriwell books written by Gilbert Patton and published around the turn of the century.

Clair Frances Bee was a West Virginian and a basketball pioneer as well as a successful writer. His birth is recorded in the Wood County Courthouse, although a note accompanying the record states that he was actually born at Pennsboro in Ritchie County. He was a descendent of the Bee families who migrated from New Jersey to West Virginia in the early 1800's with the Seventh Day Baptist movement.

The Bees first settled in Harrison County, then later moved to Doddridge and Ritchie. Ephriam Bee, Clair's great-grandfather, settled on Meat House Fork of Middle Island Creek where he became a farmer, blacksmith, hotel proprietor, postmaster, and land dealer. He was one of the moving spirits in the formation of West Union and Doddridge County. A signer of the West Virginia constitution, Ephriam Bee served in the first West Virginia legislature after running against Joseph H. Diss Debar, designer of the West Virginia state seal.

Ephriam's son and Clair's grandfather was Josiah H. Bee. Josiah married Mary Jane Davis, his second cousin, in Doddridge County in 1845. The family moved to Wirt County and



Above: A three-sport author, Bee wrote 23 juvenile novels. Fictional Chip Hilton was the star of "Valley Falls High School." Photo by Greg Clark.

Left: Bee attained national sports prominence at Long Island University. Here he and assistant coach (left) celebrate the 1949-50 season. Photographer unknown, courtesy LIU.

lived there between 1872 and 1883. They operated the Kanawha Hotel, located on the banks of the Little Kanawha River at Elizabeth. The hotel was a popular stop-over for boats hauling passengers and goods between Parkersburg and the interior regions of West Virginia. Josiah died there in 1876 following an injury inflicted by a horse. A few years after his death, Mary Jane sold the Kanawha Hotel and returned to Doddridge County where she died in 1905.

James Edward Bee, the youngest of the 11 children of Josiah and Mary Jane, was Clair Bee's father. He was born in Doddridge in 1871. Clair's mother was Grace Louise Skinner, although the young boy spent his formative years under the care of relatives on his great-grandfather Ephriam's old farm in Doddridge County. The most prominent person during this period of his upbringing was his grandmother Mary Jane. She and other relatives gave Clair a strong sense of family that was to remain with him throughout life.

After his grandmother's death, Clair accompanied his father to Grafton. There James Bee met and married Margaret Ann Skinner, a first cousin of Clair's mother. An uncle of Margaret Ann was an employee of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad and had established a boardinghouse for railroaders who needed a place to spend a night before taking another train back home. It was during these years, according to Clair, that he read hundreds of the five-cent paperback books that littered the boardinghouse and inspired his interests in sports stories.

Later, five children were born to Margaret Ann and James Bee. Clair, an older and lonely child, never became an integral part of his father's new family. He built a life for himself outside the family circle. He found ready acceptance in athletics, first in neighborhood sandlot games with boyhood friends, then at the St. Augustine School gym on that same hillside, and later at the YMCA on Main Street.

As Bee tells the story, he and his friends would sneak into the gymnasium above St. Augustine church and play for hours. The parish priests turned their heads the other way, happy to have the boys in church even if it was just for play.

Clair Bee and basketball were young together. His birth in 1896 came just five years after the first basketball game was played in Springfield, Massachusetts. Basketball was still in its formative years. In 1915, as a member of the Grafton YMCA team, Bee played against Clarksburg's Bristol High School in one of the first games where the zone defense was used and where the fast-break was originated. Cam Henderson, later of Marshall College fame, was the coach of Bristol High.

According to Bee and Henderson, the Grafton team rode the train to Clarksburg and walked to Bristol because a sizable snow had fallen the night before. During the first half, snow on a leaking roof began to melt, making the gym floor wet and slick. At halftime Cam Henderson ordered his players to position themselves in zones around the basket and remain there rather than chase opponents as they moved across the slippery floor. Before this, all defense was a man-to-man matchup. The fast break originated when a shot missing the basket was retrieved by the defense who then rushed to the other end of the floor in an effort to score before the opposing team could set its defense.

During his years at Grafton High School, Clair played three sports, first under the direction of Ward Lanham and then Jasper Colebank. He dedicated to their memory his first and most important technical book, *The Science of Coaching*. It is evident that he

draws heavily from the character of these two men in the development of Coach "Rock" Rockwell in the Chip Hilton series.

Bee's interest in sports through his high school years was not limited to playing. In 1914, his sophomore year at Grafton High, he was encouraged by an English teacher to write a story for a school contest. His story won first place and was published in the high school yearbook that year. The short story, titled "Bud's Loyalty," revealed elements that would become central themes of Clair Bee's philosophy of sports.

"Bud's Loyalty" is the story of a sports crisis. Two boys who are regulars on the high school basketball team are suspended just before the championship game for failure to pass chemistry. Bud Evans and Goady Williams are the fortunate subs in line to replace them on the team.

Bud is a fine student, especially in chemistry. And Bud, like Goady, has his heart set on playing in the championship game—but unlike Goady, he also has a sense of loyalty to his team and school. Bud decides to help Dot and George, the two regulars, with their chemistry so that they might make a passing grade. Goady refuses to help because he does not want to spoil his own chances of playing. Bud goes ahead with his plan, and with his assistance the school work is made up and the two regulars are reinstated. With Dot and George back on the team the championship is won.

When the game is over the crowd calls for a speech from the two stars

Clair Bee's First Story

Bud's Loyalty

Two boys were coming down the steps from the Millerville High School. The smaller boy was Bob Dotson, or "Dot," as he was popularly called. The other one was George Jones. Both were on the regular basketball team. "Dot" being captain and playing right forward while George played center.

The boys were talking and each was a little pale. But they had reason to be, for had not Superintendent Davis just suspended them from the basketball team, and all on account of their failure to pass in chemistry?

They parted silently, each knowing the other understood. The next day everyone knew the circumstances, and saw their chances for the pennant fading, for "Dot" and George were the heart of the whole team.

In the Pecos Valley High School League, Millerville and Parkton had defeated all other contenders and were neck and neck in the race, each team having won 12 games and lost two. Only one more game remained and that was with Parkton, to decide the championship.

The game was to be played in two weeks, and everyone knew that without "Dot" and George in their places the game was lost.

The following day's practice was very discouraging to the coach. "Dot's" and George's places were filled with inferior men and although they did their best, the team showed very poor playing.

Bud Evans and Goady Williams were the two fortunate "subs" who took their places. Bud Evans was a fine student, especially in chemistry.

Bud had his heart set on playing on the team, but he was loyal to his school. Knowing he was sacrificing his chances to play, he decided to help "Dot" and George with their chemistry, so that they might make a passing grade.

He told his scheme to Goady, and tried to get him to help too, but Goady, after hearing him through said: "Do you think I'm going to spoil my chances of getting to play by helping them make their grades? Let them do their own work."

"I want to play too, Goady," said Bud, "but I'm thinking of that pennant."

"Well, I don't care just so I get to play," answered Goady and walked away.

Bud hurried home to supper, and after the meal hunted up "Dot" and George.

They did not think the work could be made up in the short time left, but said they would try. For the next week, with the help of Bud, they worked heroically. The back work was made up, and Mr. Mills, the chemistry teacher, had a talk with the superintendent.

The next day "Dot" and George were informed they were eligible and might once more play with the team.

The day of the deciding game came at last, and the boys could hardly wait until the game started.

The Parkton team was equally anxious, and when the game was called started with a rush. What a game it was! Nip and tuck from beginning to end.

The score was tied, and there were two minutes to play. George at center gave the signal, and little "Dot" was down the floor like a streak of lightning. George got the jump on his opponent, and "Dot" had the ball in an instant. He threw it straight at George, who barely touching it, caused it to bound into the basket, and the game was won.

When "Dot" and George were dressed and outside the crowd called for a speech and "Dot," climbing upon the shoulders of George, told them how Bud Evans had sacrificed his own place on the team so that Millerville might win the pennant.

The speech ended, and in a moment "Dot," George and Bud were on the shoulders of the crowd. And Bud sitting there realized that "Friendship is, in itself, a friend, and never goes unpaid."

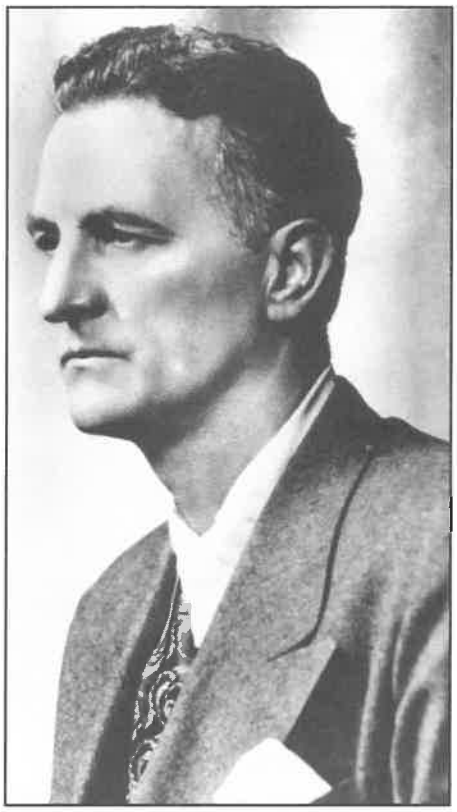
— From the 1914 Grafton High School Yearbook

who have won the game. George then explains how Bud Evans sacrificed his place on the team so that the school might win the pennant. With this revelation, Bud, along with Dot and George, are hoisted onto the shoulders of the crowd.

This is a hero story. Not just a story of heroes who win the game, but also of the hero who sacrifices himself to a higher cause. This theme recurs frequently in the sports novels that Clair Bee wrote decades after leaving Grafton High School.

Bee learned other lessons in high school sports. He was always smaller than his teammates and not a naturally talented athlete. What he lacked in size or ability he made up for in hustle. The local sports page of the *Grafton Sentinel* often cited Bee for his extraordinary effort even though he was seldom the high scorer.

On November 8, 1915, after Grafton played Clarksburg to a 6-6 tie in football, the *Sentinel* wrote, "Sensational work of Clair Bee is feature of the game. Cassel and Bee were the Grafton backfield starts and they were mighty hard men to stop. Cassel was so short that tacklers could seldom down him, while Bee, playing in a pair of tennis shoes, made gains on almost every attempt to advance the ball and played an all-around spectacular game."



Above: The LIU years were a time of solid accomplishment and sober reflection, as disaster followed closely upon spectacular success. Photographer unknown, courtesy LIU.

Below: Sports drawings from *Backcourt Ace*, published by Grosset & Dunlap, New York, 1961.

Later Bee would recall and reconstruct such experiences in the creation of his fictional hero. Many scenes and events from his childhood in Grafton would make their appearance in the Chip Hilton books. The site of "Valley Falls High School" is recognizable as a scenic spot on Tygart Valley River just five miles below Grafton. The sectional makeup of the town is expressed in rivalry between groups of boys known as Westsiders, Southsiders, and Hilltoppers. Bee's friends and fellow athletes of those years are later reflected in the teammates of Chip Hilton.

Years later, in a commencement address to the senior class at Grafton High School, Bee acknowledged his debt. "Grafton has always been my hometown. I loved it here. The friends I've made here have never deserted me. Growing up as a boy in the neighborhood of Knotts Avenue were wonderful years." Bee dedicated several of his Chip Hilton books to boyhood friends.

Bee left high school to enter military service during World War I. He returned to Grafton High for his senior year, graduating in 1920. Age and experience gave him an added advan-

tage that year. He served as captain of the football and basketball teams and wrote sports for the high school newspaper. In 1922 he followed two of his Grafton teammates to Waynesburg College in Pennsylvania. There, after playing in the first three football games of the season, an injury ended his athletic career. While unable to play, Bee continued to be involved in athletic activities of the college as manager, scout, and reporter. He graduated from Waynesburg in 1925.

After a year as a high school basketball coach in Mansfield, Ohio, Bee moved to Rider College in Trenton, New Jersey. He went to Rider to teach business courses but soon was asked to coach football and basketball. His career at Rider College was the beginning of his rise to basketball prominence. In three years his teams were 55-7, with successive records of 19-3, 18-2 and 18-2. His first team won its first 15 games, and the 1929-30 team became the first collegiate team ever to score 1,000 points in a season.

One of those 55 victories came at the expense of West Virginia University. Rider won this game by a 53-21 score. These early wins at Rider, when combined with later victories at Long Island University, gave Bee the highest winning percentage of any collegiate coach, an honor he still holds.

The play of the Rider College teams soon brought Clair Bee to the attention of the New York City basketball world, then the mecca of national collegiate basketball. In 1931 he accepted the coaching position at Long Island University. The university was a young institution with no sports tradition, no gymnasium and a schedule consisting only of local teams.

In 20 years at Long Island Clair Bee made basketball history. By the mid-'30's his teams were playing major basketball powers in Madison Square Garden. The 1938 season saw LIU featured in six of the 12 twin-bill games played in the Garden. In 1936 and 1939 Bee had undefeated seasons. His 43-game winning streak was the longest in the country before it was broken by Stanford University in Madison Square Garden before 17,623 spectators on December 31, 1936. Over a period of 13 years, LIU won 222 games and lost only three on their home floor at the Brooklyn Pharmacy College gym.

One of these three losses was to Marshall College in 1937. All together, Bee played his old friend Cam Henderson three times. Bee won two of these games, including one in Huntington.

In 1942 Bee ran into trouble with another West Virginia team. The LIU Blackbirds had won 24 of 26 games and were top-seeded, favored to win a third NIT championship. Seeded eighth and last were the West Virginia Mountaineers coached by Dyke Raese and led by Scotty Hamilton from Bee's hometown of Grafton.

The two teams met in the first game of the tournament. The Mountaineers pulled a stunning upset by defeating the Blackbirds 58-49 in overtime. In the second game WVU upset favored Toledo 51-39. These wins placed the Mountaineers in the championship game against Western Kentucky. With 20 seconds remaining before the final whistle, Roger Hicks stepped to the foul line with the score tied and sank the shot that won the game and championship for the Cinderella team from the Mountain State. These victories gave the Mountaineers their first national recognition in basketball.

Bee relinquished the coaching reins at LIU in 1944 and 1945. He spent these war years as an administrative assistant and commander at the Maritime Training Station at Sheephead Bay. Following his release from the Maritime Service, he returned to coaching at LIU. For four years he again had successful seasons with first-round losses in the NIT in 1947 and 1950. In 1951 his Blackbirds won their first 20 games.

On February 21, 1951, the St. Louis *Sporting News* released its All-American basketball team. Leading this mythical team was Sherman White of Long Island University who was chosen as player of the year. White was a big 6'8" center who was averaging over 27 points a game.

Then disaster struck. A week later the *Sporting News* declared its recognition of White null and void. Shortly thereafter the board of trustees of Long Island University voted to end all participation in intercollegiate sports and canceled its four remaining basketball games.

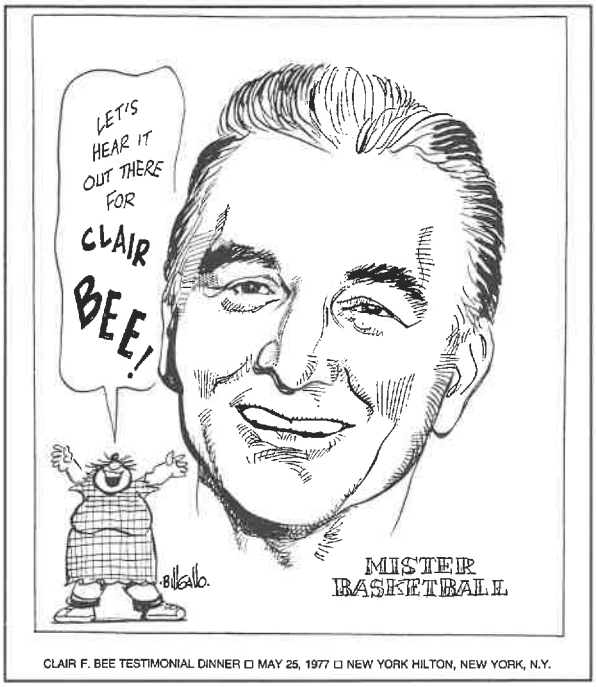
What precipitated these traumatic events was the disclosure by New York City's district attorney of the rampant fixing of college basketball games. Sherman White and two other regulars of the LIU team were implicated and later prosecuted. In all, by the time the investigation was completed, some 32 players at seven schools were found to be involved.

Bee was visibly shaken by the affair. He could not believe such things could happen. He stated his faith in his team as late as two hours before his three players were brought to the prosecutor's office for questioning. Three days later he addressed a crowd of 1,000 students at a street rally protesting the action taken by the LIU board. "I like your fine spirit," Bee said. "I want you to know that we are not through and that we will be back strong." But Clair Bee was not to be back.

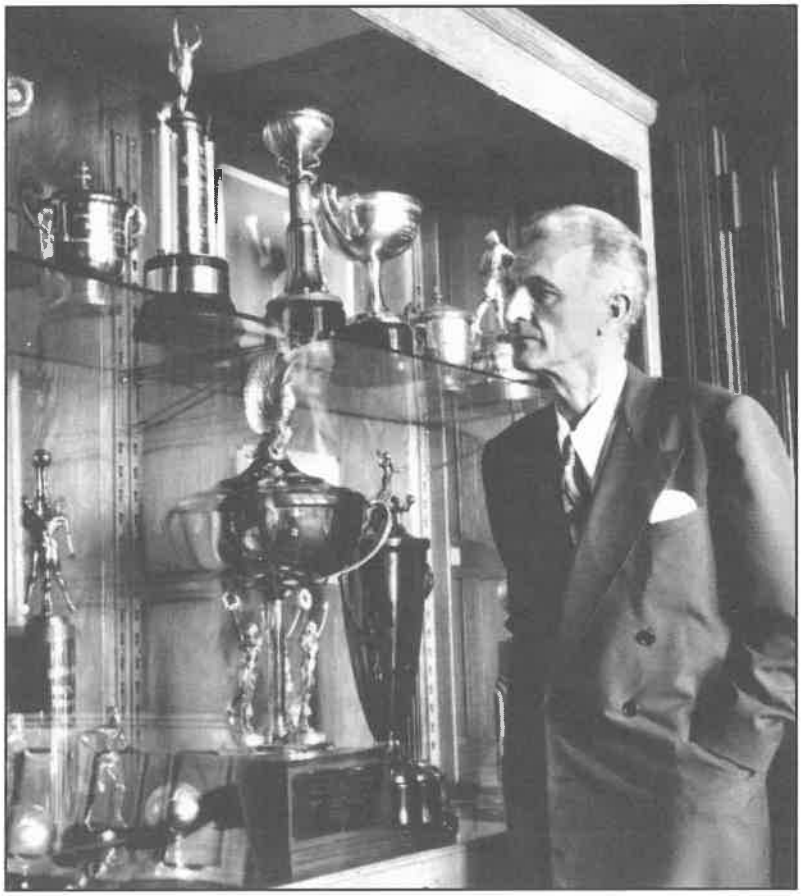
"I didn't believe it," he said in an interview years later. "I couldn't believe that anything like that went on." At the time one of his assistant coaches remarked, "Clair's done. If he lives through this and lives to see another basketball season, I'll be surprised." Bee did live, but he never coached another college basketball team.

In February 1952 Bee wrote an article for *Saturday Evening Post* titled "I Know Why They Sold Out to the Gamblers." In this he accepted much of the blame by being a "win-em-all-coach." Later in addressing a banquet Bee told his fellow coaches, "We—you and I—have flunked. We have not done the job that was expected of us in training the young people. I am not bitter. I am hurt, hurt desperately. When I was told that three of my boys had sold themselves it was a deep bereavement. I am not ashamed to say that I wept."

After the LIU scandal Bee tried professional coaching with a short-lived Baltimore franchise, and then became director of athletics and physical education at a New York military school. While there, Bee met the young head coach at West Point, located some five miles down the Hudson River. This was the beginning of a long and lasting friendship between Bobby Knight and Clair Bee. Knight first became acquainted with Bee through his Chip Hilton books, and now Bee became something of a father figure. Years later when Knight had moved from West Point to Indiana University, he would often bring



Above: Bee's old age was crowned by a big "Mister Basketball" testimonial dinner in New York City. The 1977 event was co-chaired by Bobby Knight and Frank McGuire. Program cover art by Bill Gallo, *New York Daily News.*



Right: Clair Bee left cases of trophies and a shelf of juvenile books. He died in Ohio in 1983. Photographer unknown, courtesy LIU.

Bee to campus to conduct a basketball clinic. Bee was with the Indiana team the year Knight won his first NCAA championship.

Bee's writing flourished after he left college coaching. During the early 1940's he had written several technical books on coaching basketball. In the late 1940's Bee wrote a fictional sports story about a hero figure named Chip Hilton. He took the manuscript to Grosset & Dunlap, publishers of juvenile books, for their consideration. They told him they liked the story, but what they wanted was a series. This was the beginning of the Chip Hilton Sports Series which reached a total of 23 volumes before Bee quit writing in the 1960's.

Chip Hilton is a three-sport man who excels in all. He is surrounded by a small handful of skilled athletes who, like Chip, are devoted to the team and the discipline taught by Hank "Rock" Rockwell. Coach Rockwell is not only a master of the game, but also serves as a spiritual guide who knows what is best for boys. While Chip's greatest accomplishments are athletic feats that contribute to victory, he never seeks individual glory but only to be an accepted member of the team. The protagonists in these stories are uncooperative boys whose activities deviate or distract from the accomplishments of the group.

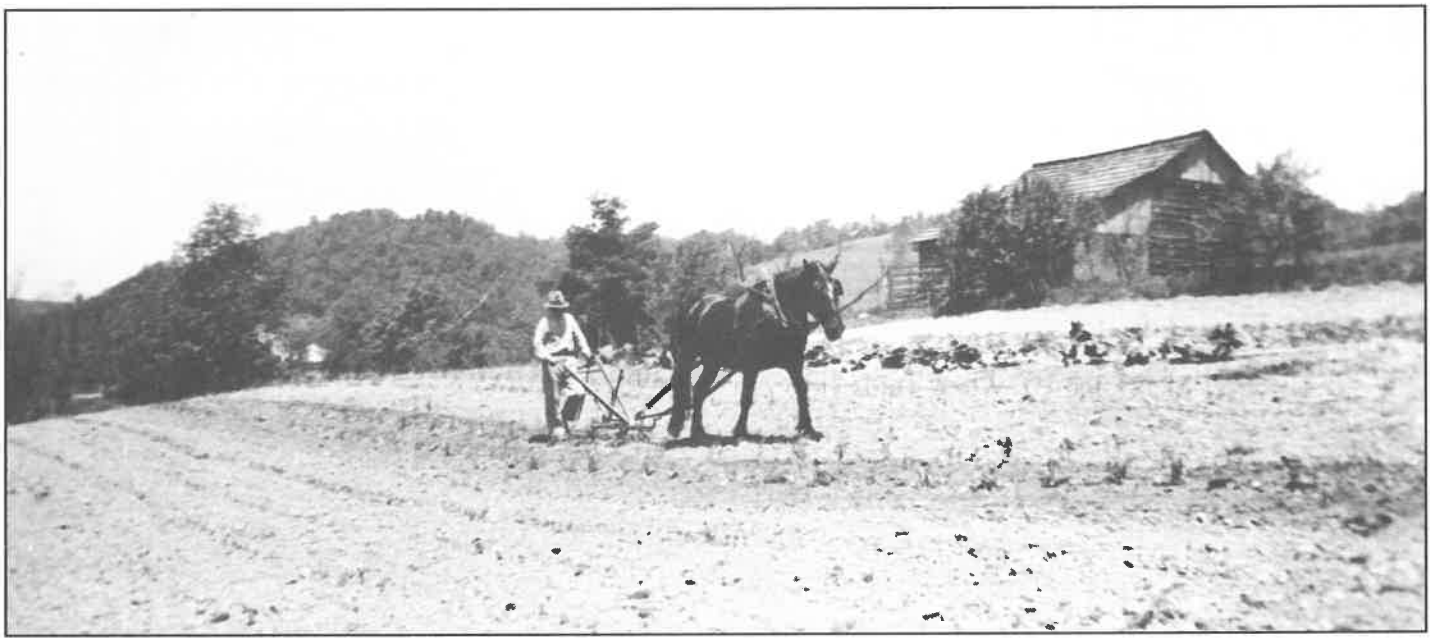
Youths of the latter type were likely to go wrong. Bee had learned that as a boy on the streets of Grafton and attributed his salvation from such a fate to the influence of organized athletics and the adults within sports who helped him. He never forgot this, and no doubt the LIU scandals revived many fears from his boyhood years.

In the 1960's Bee began to receive the acclaim of the basketball world for his many contributions to the game. In 1964 he was inducted into the West Virginia Sports Writers Hall of Fame. He would join in that elite group his former high school coach and mentor, Jasper Colebank. Bee was to gain membership in five other halls of fame, including the Helm Foundation and the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame.

On May 25, 1977, hundreds of friends, former players, and coaches from throughout the basketball establishment gathered at the New York Hilton to pay tribute to "Mister Basketball." Bobby Knight and Frank McGuire served as co-chairmen of the event. Proclamations were received from the president, state legislatures, and governors, including one from Governor Jay Rockefeller, proclaiming that day "Clair F. Bee Day" in West Virginia.

Clair Bee was past 80 now, and he lived several more years, dying at the residence of his daughter in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1983. He left a powerful impression on friends in the sports world.

"In the first half of the century, Clair Bee was Basketball," Bobby Knight said. "There wasn't a thing he did that didn't affect the game, and there wasn't a thing that affected the game that he didn't do. He was one of the most singularly brilliant minds ever involved with athletics, and one of the two or three greatest analytical basketball minds we've ever had. He had such a clear, brilliant grasp of what had to be done. He was a coach in the truest sense of the word." ✱



"A forge was almost as essential as the land itself," author J.Z. Ellison says. Father A.D. Ellison, shown here, was in charge of farm and forge. Photo by Anne Maddy Ellison, date unknown.

While the Iron Is Hot

From Blacksmithing to Modern Welding

By J. Z. Ellison

Before acetylene welding and electric arc welding, a blacksmith shop with a forge was almost as essential to a farm as the land itself, if you expected to make a living by your farming. We had one at our place on Hans Creek, in Monroe County, and there were three others within three miles — the Peter Larew, George Vawter, and Uncle Billy Dunlap farms each having one.

And every town had a blacksmith shop. Over Kibble Hill from us, Bill Helvey in Red Sulphur Springs could make most anything — he could work iron like wood, shaping and fitting any way it was needed. In Greenville, where we went to high school, was Walter Mann, another good blacksmith. Walter was a little stubborn. He worked only when he wanted to work. He would say, "I'm busy. Can't do it." But if you were to tell him that somebody said it couldn't be done he'd say, "By God, it can" — and then he would do it.

I can't recall any two blacksmiths who could do more with metal than Bill and Walt. But Granddaddy — John Zachariah Ellison, for whom I was named — and his helper Letch Dillon did a pretty good job.

Granddaddy was a Civil War veteran. He lived to be 93 years old and was near the end of his ability to do heavy work by the time I was old enough to help in the blacksmith shop. One of my earliest recollections of working on the farm is of pumping the large wood and leather bellows while he worked.

The shop consisted of the forge, an anvil, a variety of hammers and tongs, and a bellows. The forge was a four-foot-square wooden crib about two feet high, filled with clay soil. In the corner of the crib the clay was scooped out to form a basin about 10 inches across and eight inches deep. This hole held the "crow's nest," an iron bowl about six inches in diameter and six inches deep. It was settled snugly about two or three inches below the level of the soil to hold the fire. A round hole covered by a small grate in the bottom of the crow's nest kept the fire from dropping into the air pipe and let the air from the bellows blow into the fire. Only a small but very intense fire was required.

The bellows consisted of two heavy, roughly heart-shaped boards, three feet across at the wide end and tapering down to a point. The two boards were connected to each other all around with heavy leather, shaped to fit, making the air chamber. When the leather needed replacing the better part of two cowhides was required, but the leather was never replaced during my time on the farm.

The top board of the big bellows was

mounted on two posts, one on each side. The weight of the bottom board pulled open the air chamber, drawing in air through a valve. A hook in the center of the wide end of the bottom board held a chain which connected to a long pump handle on a fulcrum over the bellows. By pulling down on the pump handle, the bottom board was drawn up, closing the air valve and forcing the air into the pipe leading to the crow's nest where the fire was laid. When I pumped the bellows I had to hang onto the handle or it would go up out of my reach. Then one of the men had to pull it down to me.

The fire was started with kindling wood, then charcoal or coal was added. Sometimes Granddaddy made charcoal from hickory, but coal was preferred if it was available. To get coal, people from our area went to the railroad depot in Lowell where they could buy it in small amounts. We took burlap bags to carry the coal, but some people took baskets. The coal was high-grade and produced very little ash. It was too precious a commodity to use anywhere except in the forge, until after World War II when transportation improved and we could bring it in by the truckload.

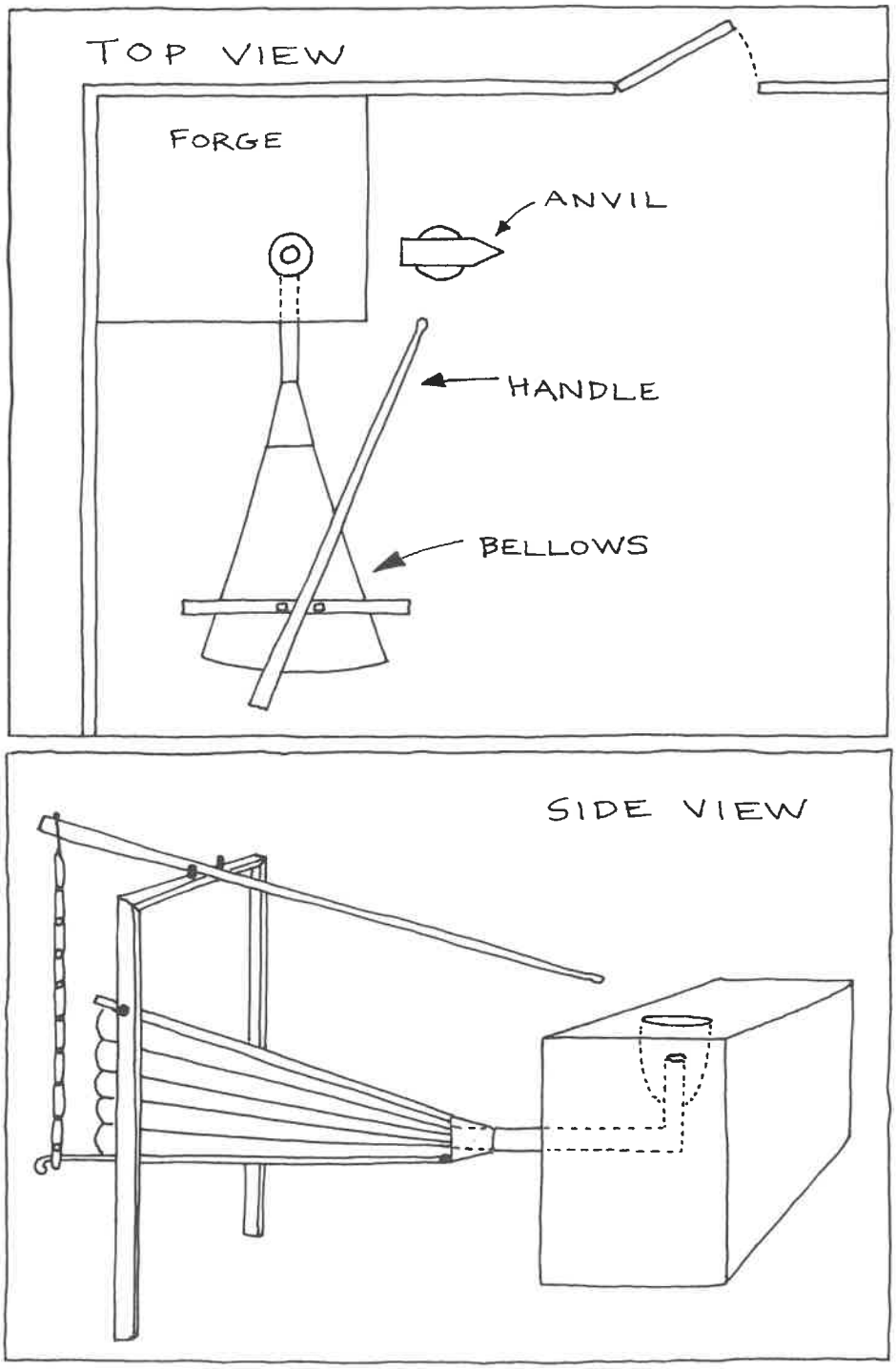
My most vivid memories of the blacksmith shop are of Granddaddy welding a break in the long iron rod that carried the hayfork, operated by ropes and pulleys, into the barn loft. It seems a breakdown happened at least once every hay season. The rod carried a heavy load and was under great stress as the big fork swayed high in the barn loft, carrying the hay from the hay wagon to the mow. A great commotion occurred whenever the fork rod broke, for it brought the haying operation to a halt. Repairing the rod was a job that could not be delayed. The cured hay would lose quality from either rain or sun if left too long in the field.

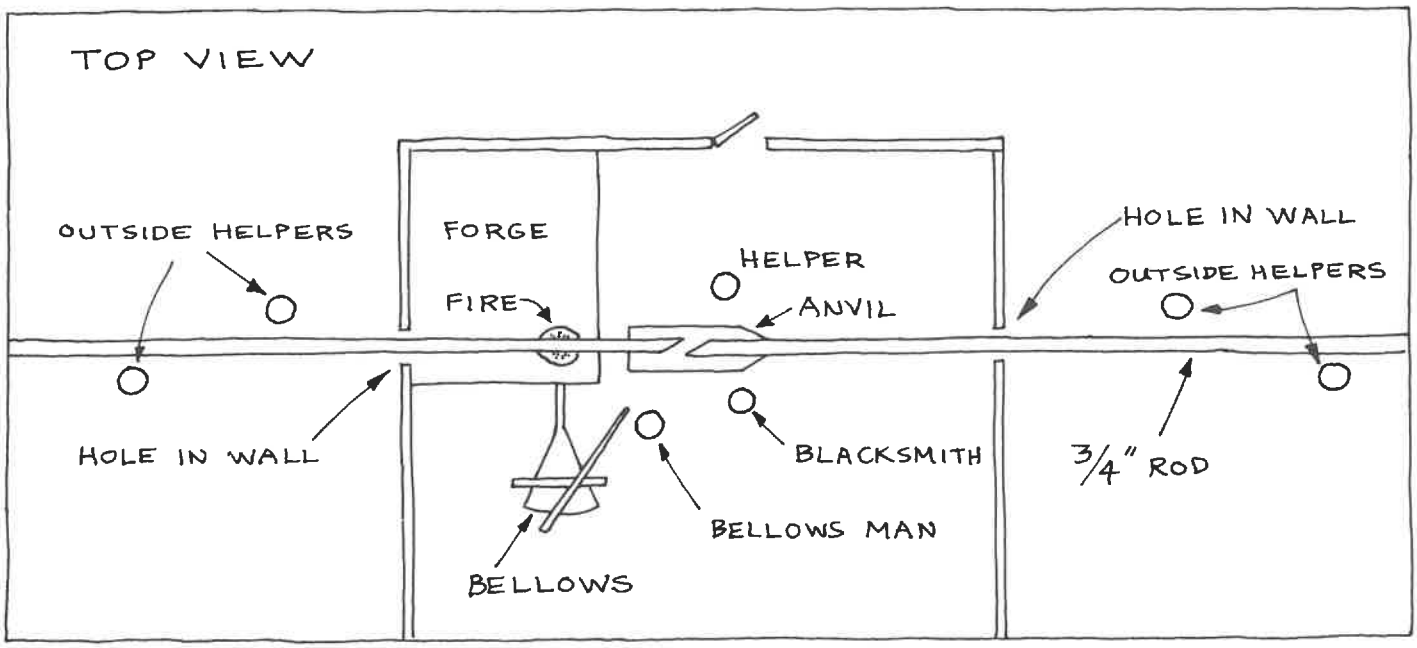
The rod was 60 feet long, very heavy, and required a crew of six or seven men to get it to the blacksmith shop and then back in place at the barn. We ran the rod through holes in opposite walls of the shop, so that the break could be centered over the fire with the ends extending out each side. The anvil was moved from the large white oak stump, where it usually sat, to a temporary stump near the forge.

Six men and a boy were required for this job if the break was near the center of the rod — two men on each side of the shop outside; Granddaddy and Letch Dillion at the forge; and me on the bellows. If the break was near one end of the rod the forge crew could handle the short end, so a full crew was not needed. Fortunately, there was no shortage of hands. Letch lived on our farm and had two sons who also worked for us. We could get extra help in the neighborhood when needed.

When the helpers were ready and everything was lined up, the fire was started with wood, the coal added and the bellows pumped. When the coal glowed orange, the fire was ready. The ends of the break were put over

The farm blacksmith shop was set up for simple efficiency. Our sketches show the approximate layout of key components—the forge, bellows and anvil—at the Ellison farm. Illustrations by Colleen Anderson, based on drawings by J.Z. Ellison.





Welding the 60-foot hayfork rod was a job bigger than the Ellison blacksmith shop. The solution was to run the rod in one side and out the other—and then coordinate three crews, none of whom could see the others. Illustration by Colleen Anderson, based on a drawing by J.Z. Ellison.

the fire in turn, the metal heated to a cherry red and hammered on the anvil until the ends were flat enough to overlap.

From then on the men on the opposite sides of the shop had to coordinate their movements to hold the overlap together and put it back on the fire. When the iron sparkled like the Fourth of July, glowed orange, and began to flow, Granddaddy threw borax on it. Heat causes iron to rust, or oxidize, rapidly. When the iron was hot enough to flow you could see the oxide floating on the surface and borax was the "flux" used to clear it away. If the oxide and other impurities were not cleared away the iron would not thoroughly fuse together when struck on the anvil.

The critical movement arrived when the iron was flowing clear and sparkling over the forge. Then Granddaddy would yell, "Ready, go!" The men on the outside would ease the two ends of the rod the few inches to the anvil, which they could not see. Granddaddy would strike the glowing, overlapped iron. It would be pulled back to the fire and the operation repeated. Sometimes somebody outside would jiggle the rod and break the first weld as the second was being struck. That would happen about twice and all hell would break loose.

That is when I got my Master's Degree in swearing. The shop was a school all its own. It didn't suit my Presbyterian grandmother, but my Primitive Baptist grandfather had a vocabulary to express his feelings when things didn't go to suit him. Tradition says he was unmatched on the creek.

But eventually the rod got welded. When it was finished, the two pieces of iron were as one. It was hard to see where the weld was, or to tell who had been mad at whom. The long mended rod was put on two wagons to haul it back to the barn, and everybody hoped that job would not have to be repeated that summer.

I remember only one time when we had to go to a neighboring farm to use their forge, again for a broken rod. Our shop was being repaired and the forge was not usable. Granddaddy was no longer working in the shop so my daddy, Addison Dunlap Ellison, was in charge. He took Letch and Letch's two sons, Henry and Bud, with two wagons down to Uncle Billy Dunlap's forge.

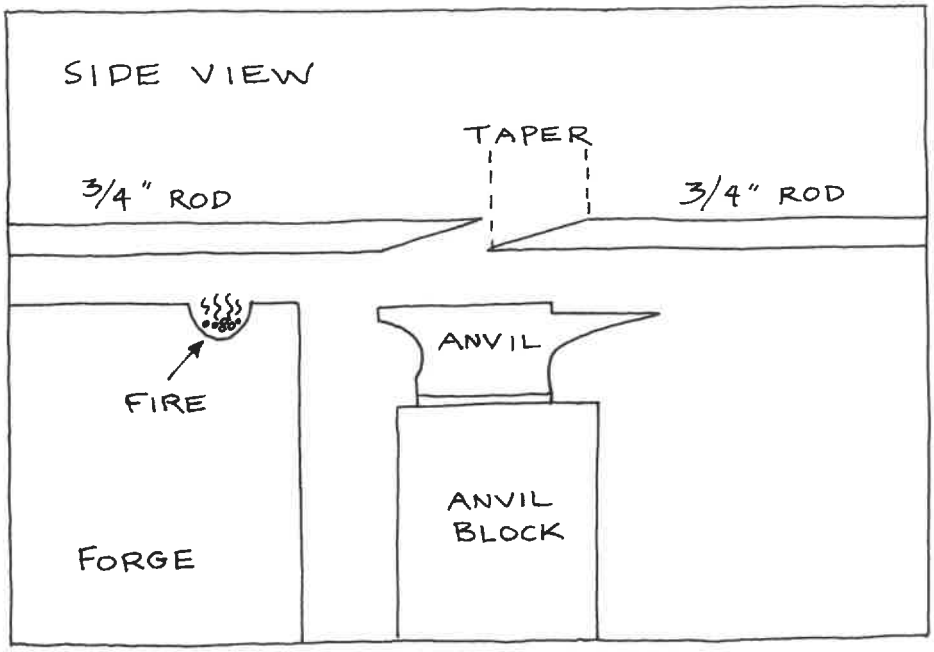
I was in school that day. When I got home late that afternoon the men had not returned so I had to do the job Daddy usually did — milk the cows. Mother had cooked supper and was trying to keep it warm. Time and again she walked to the porch and looked down the road, asking of nobody in particular, "Why doesn't he come?"

About dusk we finally heard the wagons. I ran down to the road to open the gate, and I'll never forget the sight. Henry and Bud looked like toads, their faces and necks were so swollen. Bumble bees had built a nest in Uncle Billy's bellows and the boys were badly stung before the bees were destroyed. The fork rod got welded, but it was a long and painful day for the crew.

Once, when I watched Granddaddy sharpen a mattock by heating it in the forge and drawing it out, I asked him why he didn't sharpen it on the grindstone. He told me you lost too much metal that way. As firm as the iron itself, "waste not, want not" was a rule to live by on the farm. Later, I learned to sharpen and temper tools at the forge.

The cutting edge of many tools had to be tempered, a heating and cooling process which hardens the metal. Cold chisels and punches would not be hard enough to cut other metal unless they were tempered. Spuds, used in digging post holes, and mattocks used in rocky soil had to be tempered so they could break rocks.

The grain of the metal is changed by tempering and tools can be improved or ruined depending on how they are heated. Making a tool the right degree of hardness was a very particular job involving watching the color and the



Everything came together at the anvil on the hayfork welding job. "When it was finished the two pieces of iron were as one," our author says. Illustration by Colleen Anderson, based on a drawing by J.Z. Ellison.

changes that occurred when cooling the tool in water. A bucket of water was always a part of the equipment in the blacksmith shop.

To begin tempering, the tool was heated a cherry red and drawn out to a sharp edge, then dipped a short depth into water to cool the cutting edge. It was quickly removed from the water. Heat from the tool would move toward the edge which had been cooled. The main part of the tool would show colors like a blued shotgun barrel, all purple and sometimes like a rainbow, changing as it cooled.

As the tool continued to cool, a gray color would move down toward the cutting edge. As it got near, the entire tool was plunged into water to cool so that no more heat would move into the edge. You wanted only the cutting edge, perhaps an inch into the tool, to be tempered, otherwise the entire tool would be so brittle it would easily break. Gauging the color of the metal correctly was important as it told you how the temperature was changing, when to heat and when to cool.

There were other jobs for the blacksmith. Wooden-wheeled wagons had iron tires which had to be tightened from time to time. As wagons were pulled over rocks in fields and creeks the iron tires stretched so that in time they would come off the "filler" — the wooden circumference of the wheel. In the blacksmith shop the iron tire was cut, a small section removed, and then the break welded back together.

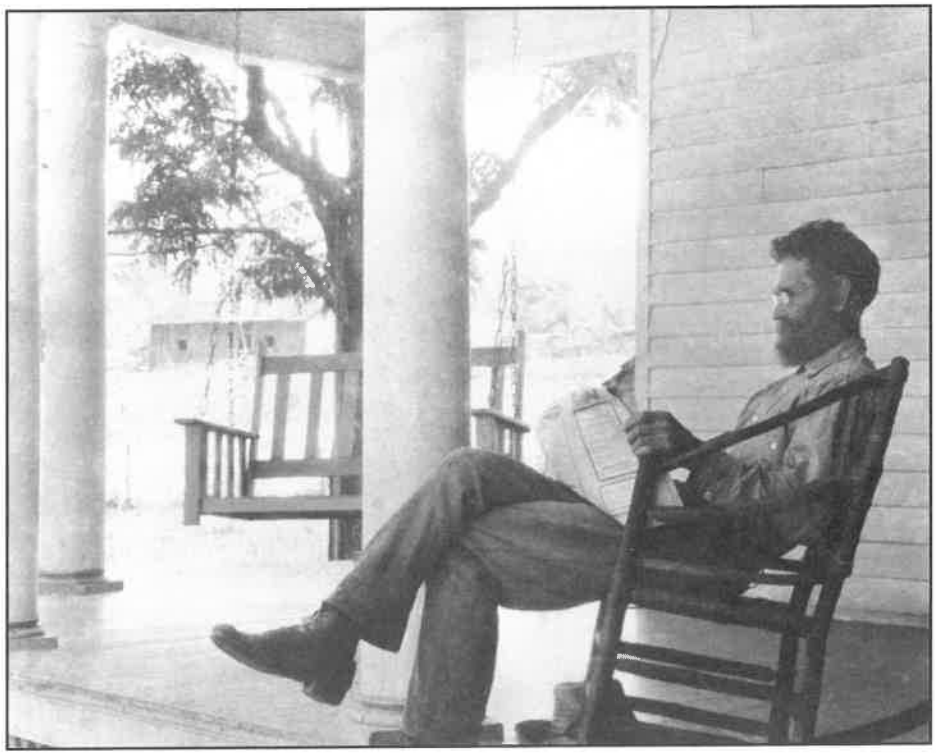
The welded tire was then laid on a circle fire, the size of the tire, to evenly expand the metal. Next it was slipped over the wood filler and water poured on to prevent the wood from catching fire. As the iron cooled, the tire shrank until it was tight on the filler. In Greenville, Walter Mann had a tire shrinker, a large circular metal vise which drew in the hot iron without cutting it. That tool made fitting the tire to the filler easier, but Greenville was many miles from our farm.

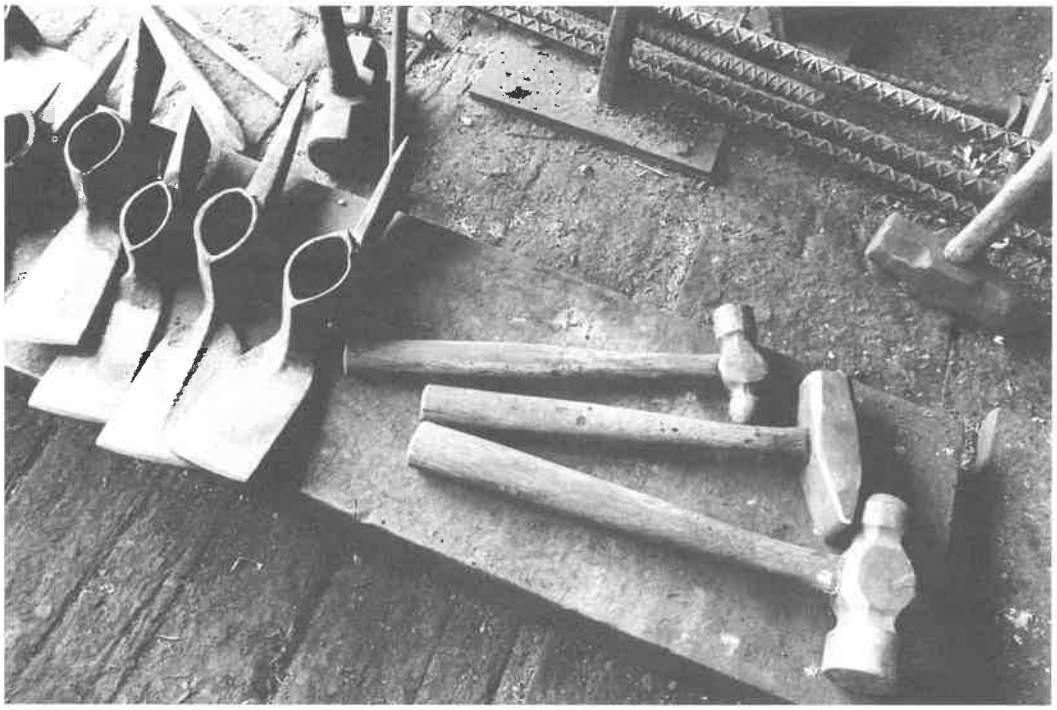
Weather also affected the wheels. In very dry times, the wood shrank enough to loosen the tires. Then we pulled the wagons into Hans Creek overnight so the fillers could absorb enough water to make them tight in the tires. We always tightened wagon wheels this way before going on long trips. One such trip was to Rich Creek, Virginia, 15 miles away, where we took railroad ties from Granddaddy's sawmill to trade for fertilizer at Asa Adair's store. The Virginian, an electric railroad, went through Rich Creek, making it the nearest rail depot.

I learned many things from Granddaddy, such as how to shape and draw metal and fit horseshoes. But when watching him weld the hay rod when I was very young, I never understood the technique that produced the weld, and it was never explained to me. It was years later that I learned how to weld from another man.

My lesson came about unexpectedly when my father sold a boundary of timber to the Hill brothers from up

Grandfather John Zachariah Ellison had a vocabulary unmatched in the neighborhood for expressing his aggravation when things went wrong. Family photo, 1920's.





Heat, skill—and good, heavy hammers—were the essence of the tempering process. J.R. Dillon of Raleigh County used these hammers to temper the mattock blades at left. Photo by Doug Chadwick.

near Union, and I went to work on the sawmill that was moved in to work up the timber. Luther Ridgeway owned the steam-powered sawmill and moved it to our farm, about half a mile from the house. I got a job with Luther, working as cutoff man.

One day we ran short of timber. The fellows in the woods couldn't bring out the logs as fast as we needed them so Luther sent the fireman, Pete Bostic, and the offbearer, Ratliff, into the woods to help.

Luther used chain to hook logs to his Caterpillar tractor and some needed mending, so he asked me to help him weld the links. Luther had a small portable forge, anvil, the tools that went along with the sawmill, and a small supply of coal. He also had some lap links — repair links that had been opened up, ready for mending chain.

When I got the fire going, Luther stuck a lap link into the fire and tapered it to about a 15-degree angle on each end. Then he put the other two links into the first one and returned to the fire. I pumped the bellows until the sparks started to fly and orange-colored iron began to flow.

Luther put borax on the metal, pulled it out, hit the lap link one lick and put it back in the fire. He did that about four times. I asked why he didn't hit the thing three or four times when first taking it out of the fire. He said, "You hit it one lick and it welds, but if you move over a half inch to hit a second stroke it could be too cold to weld and you would break the first one." The blacksmith must strike while the iron is hot.

In 1937, I took an eight-week course in arc welding and acetylene welding at West Virginia University. When I got my own farm I got oxygen and acetylene tanks from Southern Oxygen Company, Bluefield. They charged $35 for lifetime demurrage rights for the tanks, and whenever they needed filling I took them back. After World War II started, I taught arc welding and acetylene welding in the shop at Greenville High School and repaired machinery brought in by farmers. The welding equipment was supplied by the U.S. government as a way to help farmers who could not buy new parts or machinery due to wartime shortages. After the war, electricity came to my farm and I bought an arc welder.

I relished the pleasure of watching two pieces of metal flow together and become one under the steady focused heat of the new welding equipment — something you could not see when using a forge and anvil. Yet the old method has its charm, as well as its practical use when you need a stationary source of heat with both hands free to manipulate the metal. Even now I use the coal stove in my shop as a forge when wanting to shape small pieces of iron, grateful for skills that I learned from Granddaddy and men like him.

Our author as a youngster. The farm blacksmith shop stands at left rear. Family photo, about 1925.

The Great Kanawha joins the Ohio River at Point Pleasant, and there's sometimes more than enough water to go around. This photo of Tu-Endie-Wei Park is by Tawney Studio, Gallipolis, probably 1948.

The Worst Since Noah

Point Pleasant Floods

Irene B. Brand

"The most disastrous flood since Noah's time has just swept the Ohio Valley and hit Point Pleasant a blow that will be felt for some years to come," reported the *Mason Republican*, April 10, 1913. During that deluge the Ohio River reached a crest of 62.8 feet at Point Pleasant, two feet higher than any previously recorded flood and well beyond the flood stage of 40 feet.

Lyda Garland, a lifelong Mason County resident, has experienced many of the area's floods. She recalls, "Mother always said I got washed in on the flood, for I was born in 1913. They were at our house cleaning up after the flood to get the place ready for me, and she was pulling curtains out of the silt deposit when I announced that my arrival was close at hand.

"In fact, not only my mother, but two of her aunts were expecting when the flood came, and their husbands didn't know what to do with them. But since my Aunt Sue's family owned the Point Pleasant Dock Company, located near the mouth of the Kanawha River, the three women took refuge on a boat that was having the hull repaired at the dock. They put the women in the upstairs staterooms and let them float around on the Kanawha."

Although fewer than 20 residences in Point Pleasant escaped inundation in that flood, only one life was lost, an infant child of the Charles Hayman family. A barge hit the shanty boat home of the Haymans and turned it over, causing the child to drown.

Mrs. Garland's childhood home was located on the street fronting the Ohio River north of Tu-Endie-Wei Park. They frequently moved upstairs to escape flood waters.

"Dad would put the furniture on wooden horses, but one time the water rose higher than the horses, and we lost quite a bit then," she recalls. "The only thing we moved out of the house was the player piano because it was so heavy we couldn't get it upstairs or prop it up very good. The Point Pleasant Transportation Company sent men to move the piano, but it cost $50 to move it out and $50 to return it. A hundred dollars was a lot of money then, so after one flood, we didn't bring it back to the house. Dad said, 'Let's sell that old thing and buy a smaller piano.'"

Mrs. Garland remembers that her husband missed most of Point Pleasant floods. Captain Garland, who re-

Men and boys worked in gangs to clear the streets after the flood of 1913—the "worst since Noah," according to the newspaper. Photographer unknown.

tired several years ago after 44 years of experience on the rivers, piloted boats from Pittsburgh to New Orleans.

"I was on the river in most of the floods," he says, "but I liked the floods. We could go anywhere then, behind the islands, or take shortcuts. As a pilot, I liked floods."

Mrs. Garland says Point Pleasant residents calmly considered the rising waters. "People today fret and worry about floods, but you know, we weren't scared. We went to the store, laid in a big load of food, cooked a pot of beans and ham and took it upstairs with us."

Mrs. Garland worked at the G. C. Murphy store during the 1937 flood. The stock was moved upstairs, and when the water was high enough for people to row by the second story windows, the employees started selling. "The water wasn't high enough to get in the upstairs, but it was high enough for us to crawl in the windows. We did that for several days while people were cleaning up. We sold necessities like mops, buckets, brooms. They even bought material by the yard. I don't know what that was for, probably mop rags."

Official reports indicate that the storms of January 1937 produced another bad one, arguably the worst flood of record in the Ohio Valley. The rainfall averaged 10 inches over the Ohio basin during a 20-day period, making it impossible for meteorologists to predict a crest.

Sunday, January 30, was a day for sightseeing in the flood of 1927. "We are just three blocks from the. . . end of Main Street," according to an anonymous note on the back of this picture. Photographer unknown, courtesy Charles H. Stone.

The *Point Pleasant Register's* headlines on January 21 indicated a probable crest of 54 feet, but almost nine feet more than that covered the city six days later when the rising waters inched to a halt. According to the newspaper on February 4, "Point Pleasant counts flood loss. Second greatest in history has crest 62.7." But don't tell that to the old-timers, who insist that the 1937 flood stopped at 62.8 feet, the exact level of the flood 24 years before.

Due to the uncertainty in predicting the 1937 high water mark, a few merchants delayed moving their stock until they had to wade through water to clear their buildings. At the Evans Grocery on Main Street, men formed a line, similar to a bucket brigade at a fire, and passed sacks of flour from the store front up to the second floor of a building next door. Two men stood in a boat to complete the chain, and others waded deep water to pass the bulky articles.

During the 1937 flood it was estimated that 80 percent of Point Pleasant was covered by water. Since all of the downtown churches were either flooded or surrounded by water, worship services were discontinued. Churches remained closed for many weeks, because after the water receded, buildings had to be cleaned and dried. Considering that water might stand on the streets for as many as 13 days, as was the case in the 1936 flood, to move back into a building in less than a month was record time.

Clifford Dunn, a farmer residing along U.S. Route 35 on the south side of the Kanawha River in Mason County, has had ample experience trying to outfox the flood waters.

"My recollections of floods start out at Pliny in Putnam County," he reports. "I crossed the river from Pliny to Buffalo to go to high school. We had some pretty good-sized floods during the time I was going to high school from '32 to '36, but the flood I remember best was after I graduated from high school.

"In 1937 the flood stretched from hill to hill, and another fellow, Lewis Sheets, and I spent our time in a johnboat, either helping people move or catching drift. We'd take the boat, go out on the river, and we'd pull all kind of things over to the bank.

"We saw lots of logs, houses, and chicken coops. One of the things I remember most was when we saw a No. 3 washtub floating down the river. We pulled over close to where the washtub was, and in the tub was an inner tube and an old Rhode Island Red hen. We put a wire on the tub and hooked it to the back of the boat and pulled in toward the shore. When we got about 20 feet from the bank, that old hen flew out of the tub and took off up the hill. I can remember that vividly," Dunn says with a chuckle.

"There's another unusual incident that I remember so well. Route 17, which is Route 35 now, was a gravel road. Everybody was either in a boat or wading around in the water, but here came a couple of guys down the road in a Model A Ford. They got in a little too deep and their car conked out on them — got water in the distributor or something. There they were sitting in their car, and a bunch of us around there watching. So two fellows came along with a johnboat with two sets of oars, and they hooked a chain on the back of that car, and three or four of us with hipboots on walked on both sides and pushed the car back up on dry land. I thought that was funny."

Dunn says that living conditions were primitive during floods, but every family learned to cope. "I was living with the Sheets family, and all the family left to go to the country except Lewis and me, and we stayed to look after the house. There were about four inches of water on the floor, and we'd tie up the johnboat to the side of the house and bring the chain inside. When we got ready to go to sleep, we'd get in bed, take our boots off and set them in a chair, and sleep there with that four inches of water in the room.

"To cook, we'd lift the caps off their old-fashioned wood stove and set a blow torch down in there. We fried some pretty good bacon and eggs on that old blow torch."

Businesses coped as best they could, moving stock to upper floors and sometimes selling goods out the window. These buildings at Fourth and Main no longer stand. Photo by Lyda Garland, March 1936.

January 1937 brought flood waters to the roof in some cases. This photo looks north, up the Ohio, from the New York Central bridge. Photographer unknown, courtesy Charles H. Stone.

In the early 1940's, Dunn moved to Point Pleasant where he taught vocational agriculture at the high school for 33 years. He remembers the floods of 1945 and 1948. Dunn lived in upper Point Pleasant out of the flood plain, but he helped people move from the danger zone.

"One year I went down to help Charlie Bechtle," he recalls. "That was a mistake, for he ran a hardware store. The next time I was smart enough to choose somebody whose stuff wasn't so heavy.

"That was the time I remember seeing Carl Fruth in his barber shop cutting hair. He had on hip boots, and the water was up around his knees, but he was still cutting hair.

"It seems like instead of being a sad time, especially in Point Pleasant, it was a happy time, and a lot of people celebrated by getting drunk. The liquor store did a big business before the water closed it. But I also remember that everybody tried to help everybody else.

"One time, I can't pinpoint which flood this was, we went down to the lowest section of Point Pleasant, called Kingtown, to move people out. We used Coast Guard flats with outboard motors on them. We'd pull into a house and start loading their furniture. We stopped at one home, and the family still had a fire in their stove and wanted us to move it."

The furniture was covered and left on the flats, stored in public buildings, or in the homes of friends. Items were also stashed on the bridges, and no one remembers any instances of looting. Extremely heavy furniture, such as pianos, was often left to the ravages of the river.

With a laugh, Dunn recounts, "In one stucco house, we started to move a bed and rats came from under the furniture and ran up the stucco wall. I'll never forget how those rats run up that stucco wall, then they'd fall back into the water."

In 1971 Dunn started farming. Five years later he moved to the farm, but his flood worries were far from over. Almost every year he loses bales of

Moving Up with Captain Stone

Captain Charles Henry Stone, retired river man, has contributed information to GOLDENSEAL stories on West Virginia waterways over the years, and was himself the subject of a feature article back in 1985. Writer Irene Brand figured he'd have something to say on the subject of flooding, and she wasn't disappointed.

Charles Stone's boyhood home on the banks of Kanawha River was flooded many times before the Point Pleasant flood wall was built. Like other families the Stones managed by moving themselves and their possessions upwards to progressively higher levels inside the house. Captain Stone recalls that food in the cellar got first attention, with the family working upward as the muddy water rose.

"We usually knew if it was going to be a bad flood, or maybe one or two feet," he says. "If only a few feet, we'd put the canned stuff up on the top shelf. In the early days, the furnace was a coal one, so all we had to do was let the fire die down, and use grates, gas stoves, or electric hot plates upstairs. Mom could turn out a pretty good meal on a grate.

"Our floods weren't flash floods," Captain Stone emphasizes. "We always had time to move on up a little farther. Dad had been on the river all of his life, and he had access to the locks and their reports, as well as contacts in Pittsburgh. Once he knew what the rainfall was at the headwaters, Dad could just about pinpoint a flood."

Charles Stone was stranded below the Gallipolis locks when the flood of '37 hit, but he came home by taking passage on the *Iroquois*, the government sternwheel boat that carried provisions from Gallipolis to Point Pleasant.

"When I got home," he recalls, "Mom was worried because the river was still rising, and Dad was busy helping people in Henderson move out of the water. He had put our refrigerator up on empty barrels, had moved out the baby grand piano, and had stored some of the more valuable things on our steamboat, the *Tu-Endie-wei*. He'd rolled

hay, and occasionally some livestock, to the river. Once he ruined a truck motor by running through flood waters on the highway.

"First year we moved to the farm, we had a bunch of cows stranded down on the lower side of Five Mile Creek. Several of the neighbors helped me, and we went down there with a johnboat, cut the wire fence, and herded those cattle to safety with that johnboat. We all had on hip boots, and sometimes we had to jump into the water and head them off, but we got them all out except one old cow. The water was pretty deep, but that cow decided to go the wrong way, and the last I saw of her, she was going down the creek. I don't know where she landed."

The farms along the lower Kanawha are losing land to the river, but according to Dunn this isn't necessarily caused by floods. "Our floods don't wash away topsoil. It's mostly back water, which is slow, so we don't get much damage with back water, although some crops do drown out. As far as actual erosion, we get very little. Fact is, in floods we probably get more deposit than we do erosion, especially along the creeks. We do accumulate lots of trash, plastic bottles and the like, with every water rise. We push it up in piles and haul it away. Next year, it's back."

Captain Charles Stone's boyhood home was flooded many times. Stone's father, also a river captain, built it to withstand high water and wanted no flood wall around it. Photo by Michael Keller.

the curtains up over the rods and had left the blinds hanging. The mantel was full of small things, and all the pictures were still on the wall.

"So I borrowed a small johnboat and rowed in through an open window, and cleaned off the mantel, took the curtains and blinds and pictures and handed them to Mom on the steps. She was happy to get all of those things moved upstairs.

"The water lacked 18 inches reaching the second floor of the house. I'd get up in the night and measure the water. It wasn't coming fast, but it wasn't at a standstill, and you worried as long as it showed a little rise. We stayed upstairs for 14 or 15 days, for we had to clean up the house and dry it out before we could move back. It was a job to clean up, but we started sweeping before the water was gone, swept out the mud and silt, and then washed with clean water as the flood went."

— Irene Brand

Betty Sue Kauff, now a resident of Point Pleasant, lived in Henderson, the town opposite Point Pleasant on the south side of the Kanawha, during her childhood, and her memories of floods are pleasant ones. Like Clifford Dunn, she believes that flooding brought out a spirit of cooperation and camaraderie among the townspeople.

"Residents in the lower sections of town would be evacuated first, and the workers stayed ahead of a flood. When everyone was moved to safety, people partied, for what else was there to do?"

During the 1948 flood, when the river rose 15 feet above flood stage, Mrs. Kauff's family moved from their one-story house to share the second floor of their neighbor's house across the street. "There were ten of us living upstairs with a dog, cat, parrot, and chicken — all of us crowded in with our furniture. We ate the chicken, and if the water had stayed up much longer, we'd have eaten the parrot too."

Mrs. Kauff remembers being in Point Pleasant at the State Theater on the night the city was being isolated by rising waters. "Gone With the Wind" was featured that night, and throughout the evening, announcements would be made that certain roads would soon be closed by water, and people would get up and leave. Access to the bridge across the Kanawha River to Henderson wasn't cut off until after Mrs. Kauff had time to finish viewing the three-and-a-half-hour movie. Boaters passing down Main Street in later stages of that 1948 flood were greeted with a strange advertisement on the theater's marquee. The title of the Civil War film had been changed to "Gone With the Flood."

Although residents made the best of a bad situation, all of the big floods were costly. Mason County's loss in the 1937 flood was estimated at $250,000, and the merchants of Point Pleasant took steps to prevent future catastrophes of that nature. A meeting was called to discuss what options they had. Several ideas were considered, such as moving the courthouse to higher ground, and the abandonment of all business establishments and households below Sixth Street to turn the area into a national park.

After much consideration and con-

Paradoxically, residents recall floods as happy times, bringing people together. Here Clarabelle Dunn and son Jimmy smile from a boat prow in 1948. Photographer unknown.

sultation with the federal government, a process which lasted several years, the city fathers decided to build a flood wall. This $3,000,000 project was finally dedicated July 4, 1951. From that time, Point Pleasant has been spared flood destruction — but not every citizen wanted that protection.

Captain Charles Henry Stone, a lifelong student of river lore, saw many floods from his boyhood home on a high spot near the mouth of the Kanawha. When the flood wall was built, Stone's father stubbornly opposed the construction, and fought to keep his house outside the wall.

"Dad didn't want to be behind a flood wall," Stone says. "He knew the river flooded when he built there, and he didn't want to be cut off from the river." Water didn't enter the Stone residence until it reached eight feet above flood stage, but in the first 50 years of this century, the Stones moved upstairs 15 times. In spite of that, the elder Stone didn't want his river view obstructed.

But even though his father opposed the flood wall, Captain Stone believes the construction was good for the city. "Those who were responsible for building the flood wall worried about it," he recalls. "It put Point Pleasant in debt — a lot of money for a little town — but the bonds are all paid off now."

In the year the flood wall was completed, it was estimated that the community was saved $150,000 in two small floods. Now that Point Pleasant has little to fear from rising water, the old-timers have forgotten the hardships of those days and nostalgically yearn for the era when neighbors rushed to help one another in a time of crisis.

Captain Stone reminisces, "During floods everybody helped each other. People were so much different than today. I just don't find the helping hand as during the day of floods. If you need help now, you have to go to an organization. Back then, if you needed help, all you had to do was holler out the window."

Commerce continued, as much as possible. In this photo milk canisters, collected by barge from flood-bound farms, are transferred to a truck. Photographer unknown, 1948.

Smoke and Cinders

Railroading Up Big Sandy and Back in Time

By Bob Withers

It is a sight once common in my part of the state: A warm Wednesday sun burning off the last wisps of fog above the Big Sandy River as No. 1218, a behemoth of a steam locomotive, storms through the valley. Belching black plumes of coal smoke skyward, she showers the hills and hollows along the Norfolk Southern right-of-way with photogenic exhaust and grimy cinders. High pressure steam powers the 70-inch drive wheels which propel her through rolling bottoms at an earth-shaking 40 miles an hour.

This August 7, 1991, scene could be from the 1940's or '50's, except that the huge engine is pulling a passenger train instead of a time freight or coal drag. And because alongside the train on the Tolsia Highway (U.S. 52), runs a miles-long string of traffic that is moving at an identical pace.

Such is the first excursion of "Huntington '91," the annual convention of the National Railway Historical Society, along Norfolk Southern's heavy-duty main line between Kenova in Wayne County and Iaeger in McDowell County. Nearly 2,000 people have secured seats on five special trains. Many more are tagging along to "chase" the runs on highways, gravel roads, mud paths and anywhere else they can, to catch the 1218 and other old engines on film or tape.

The titan's brute power is a tribute to the skills of men of a generation ago at the Roanoke, Virginia, shops of NS predecessor Norfolk & Western. Designated as "class A" by the railroad, the 1218 left the shop on June 2, 1943. She and her 42 sisters used to forward trains at up to 70 miles an hour in level country.

The A's had two "pony" wheels that guided them around curves and through switches and four trailing wheels to support their Gargantuan fireboxes. They were what railroaders call "simple articulateds," a special breed of locomotive that sported two sets of cylinders and two six-wheel sets of driving wheels under a single long boiler — so in railroad jargon, they were 2-6-6-4's; in effect, two engines in one. The front engine was hinged to allow movement on tighter curves.

Rail buffs detrain after the 1991 excursion from Kenova. No. 1218, recently uncoupled from the cars, stands by in the background. Photo by Frank Altizer, courtesy *Huntington Herald Dispatch*.

No. 1218, photographed in profile on a similar excursion near the Ohio River Bridge in August 1987. Photo by Jay Williams.

For once, the pesky Tolsia coal trucks have met their match. The 1218 is limited to 40 miles an hour — preventive medicine for the old engine's stiff joints, officers say. Chasers at the head of the pack stay beside the engine, running their camcorders and letting everyone behind them fume. One fellow in a gray Ford pickup drives and videotapes at the same time. Another fan, in a beat-up maroon van, lets loose occasionally with a piercing set of diesel horns mounted topside, ruining the tape-recording efforts of fans all around. Some chasers crank out footage from open doors or gaping trunks while others drive. A few run on the berm, risking everyone's necks for a better position. The long parade holds several of the coal trucks captive; their drivers have no cameras and likely see little nostalgia or humor in their predicament.

But nostalgia there is. In her heyday, the 1218 routinely powered 150-car coal trains weighing 11,000 tons and stretching more than a mile. During World War II, she and her patriotic siblings handled heavy passenger and troop movements. They moved entire tank divisions, with flatcars for the tanks, baggage and boxcars for equipment, and sleeping cars for officers and men.

But the diesel locomotive's economy and simplicity eventually caught up and the old iron horses were put out to pasture — or sold for scrap metal. The 1218 itself managed to survive. Retired in 1959, she and two other A's were sold to Union Carbide in South Charleston to generate steam during peak demands and emergencies. When her work there was finished, she was donated to the Steamtown Foundation at Bellows Falls, Vermont, in 1964, and was transferred to the Virginia Museum of Transportation in Roanoke in 1970 for static display. Rehabilitation was started in NS's Birmingham, Alabama, steam shop in 1985, and the gleaming giant began excursion service in 1987.

Last August's trip was a day for remembering. Some of the passengers reminisced about the September 1952 morning on which a whistle-stop special brought candidate Dwight Eisenhower to Kenova, looking for his first presidential victory. By the time two of the N&W's streamlined class J steam engines — the 611 and 613 — yielded control of their 18-car train to four shiny B&O diesels for the trip up the Ohio River to Wheeling, Ike had made an impromptu appearance on the back platform and snagged a few more votes.

Politicos among the rail fans reminded anyone who would listen that this was an important day in Eisenhower's campaign. His vice-presidential candidate, Richard Nixon, had recently been charged with having a secret campaign fund. Eisenhower let Nixon dangle for several days before revealing whether he would keep him on the ticket. The night before Ike's arrival in Kenova, the California Senator had delivered his impassioned "Checkers" speech in defense of the fund, but the night ahead would tell the tale. Then the running mates met face to face in Wheeling, where a greatly relieved Nixon learned he was still Ike's boy.

The whistling of the 1218 keeps breaking memory's hold, bringing riders back to this strange time warp that features a working steam locomotive in the computer age.

The fragrance of burning coal blends well with honeysuckle. Local residents crowd onto crossings and overhead bridges for a better look, not minding the blinding rush of smoke and cinders. Housewives still in their gowns dance on front porches to the 1218's staccato cadence and clanking driving rods — until its screeching "hooter" whistle cuts loose and they slam their hands over their ears. Grown men and women lean out of the coaches' Dutch doors to grab a shot on the next curve, ducking back in with thick deposits of cinders filling their ears and shirt pockets.

The 1218 pauses at Prichard so passengers can disembark and take pictures. It backs out of sight and charges forward so video cameras can record a prize-winning panorama for grandchildren yet unborn. Then it backs up again and picks everyone up. Among those who detrain is a young blind man, tapping his cane against rails and ties without missing a step in the rough stone ballast. He is wired with special headgear that records engine sounds in stereo.

Now the train is under way again, and the chasers return to life too. Many of them — and the train passengers also — are far too young to remember steam railroading like it used to be.

Once, steam moved virtually every train in the nation. Diesels and electrics were looked upon as intruders, experiments. By the late '50's, though, diesels began displacing steam engines by the thousands. The N&W held on longer than most railroads, with its last remnants of steam puttering around in the Williamson area until the spring of 1960, recalls Lloyd D. Lewis, a railroad historian. The last runs began on May 6 of that year, with No. 2191 handling the Second Pigeon Creek shifter between Williamson and Kermit, and yard engine 291 taking care of switching duties in the terminal. When a hostler killed the fire in the 291 shortly after midnight on the morning of the 7th, N&W steam was dead.

Neither can many of the fans know the rich history of the route upon which they are traveling.

In 1882, the Norfolk & Western Railroad was little more than an amalgamation of four predecessor lines between Norfolk, Virginia, and Bristol, Virginia-Tennessee, with a branch from Hagerstown, Maryland, grafted into the main stem at Big Lick (now Roanoke). The next year, company president Frederick J. Kimball set out to build a branch line down the New River Valley to tap the rich deposits in southern West Virginia's Pocahontas Coalfield — and in the process change the railroad's character and destiny forever.

Quickly the branch was constructed, extending from the main stem at Radford, Virginia, and crossing into West Virginia at Oakvale in Mercer County. It traveled onward a total of 80 miles, to Elkhorn in McDowell County, west of Bluefield. The branch's first carload of coal was dispatched to Norfolk on March 13, 1883.

But President Kimball wasn't satisfied. In 1890, the N&W purchased the Scioto Valley & New England Railroad between Columbus and Petersburg (now Coal Grove), Ohio. Kimball envisioned an "Ohio Extension" to connect the main line at Elkhorn with the new property to the west. The lines would connect just beyond the Ohio River and give the railroad a through route between Norfolk and Columbus.

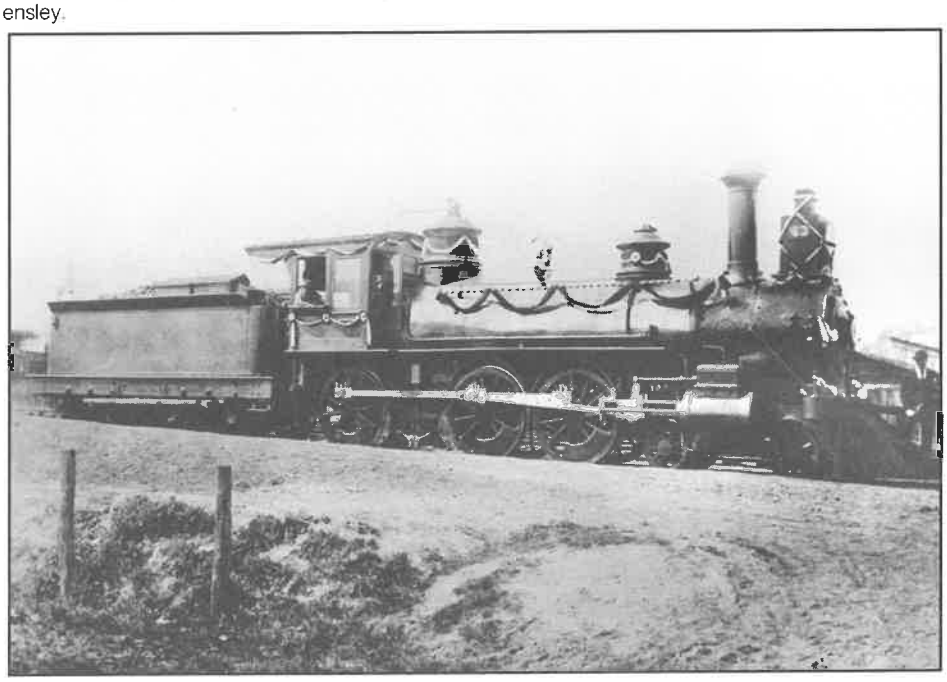
"Construction started at both ends of the project in 1890," explains Tim Hensley, resident vice president for rival CSX Transportation at Huntington and a local rail historian. "It proceeded westward from Elkhorn and eastward from Kenova."

The Elkhorn crew proceeded northwestward along the Tug Fork of the Big Sandy River through Welch, Iaeger and Williamson. The Kenova crew proceeded up the Twelve Pole Creek Valley by way of Wayne, Dunlow and Wilsondale. At the same time, a massive five-span bridge was erected across the Ohio River and a short stretch of track was extended to connect with the SV&NE line on the Ohio side.

The toughest obstacle was the summit between the Big Sandy and Twelve Pole watersheds. Engineers overcame the barrier by drilling the 2,851-foot Dingess Tunnel.

"The extension was finished in 1892," Hensley says. "An inspection train was operated for General Manager Joseph Sands on September 22, and the first through train followed September 24."

N&W No. 43 (right) brought the modern age of railroading to southwestern West Virginia as the first locomotive to cross the Ohio River Bridge, in 1892. Norfolk & Western president Frederick J. Kimball (left) was responsible for his railroad's expansion westward. Kimball photo courtesy State Archives; other courtesy N&W, collected by Tim Hensley.



Soon the extension became the road's main line. "The route changed N&W's personality from that of a Southern railroad — hauling tobacco, cotton, livestock and other agricultural products — to that of a through trunk route that opened vast deposits of bituminous coal," Hensley notes.

But he adds that timber and coal deposits along the Twelve Pole line didn't develop as well as the company had hoped. Grades and curves were always a problem as well. So, ten years after the extension was opened, the company launched a new route, veering over to Naugatuck in Mingo County and following the Big Sandy Valley all the way to Kenova.

Westbound coal trains, primary merchandise service and most passenger runs were transferred to the "Big Sandy Low-Grade Line" when it opened in 1904, Hensley explains. The Twelve Pole line kept lesser sealed freight, eastbound coal empties, a local freight run and a local passenger train. Once the Big Sandy line was double-tracked in 1926, the Twelve Pole line was relegated to branch-line status before being abandoned between Wayne and Lenoir in 1933.

Townsfolk are out in force as the 1218 roars across the Route 37 road crossing at Fort Gay, where the Big Sandy splits into the Tug and Levisa forks. This time, a gruesome memory surfaces — of one dreadful, careless moment.

It was 12:16 p.m. on Friday, February 8, 1957, when a Fort Gay woman, Beatrice Higgins, started across that crossing in her automobile with her daughter, a majorette at Fort Gay High School, and three other students. That afternoon Fort Gay was to host Crum in a basketball game. Mrs. Higgins was returning the four students to the school, 75 yards from the crossing, after lunch.

At the same moment, the eastbound "Powhatan Arrow," a sleek Cincinnati-to-Norfolk passenger train with a speedy dawn-to-midnight schedule, was racing through town at 60 miles an hour, approaching the crossing. Behind its bullet-nosed class J — it was the 607, Tim Hensley says — were the customary modern coaches, diner and tavern-lounge observation car. Also on this day, there was a private car filled with high N&W officials — including the company's president, Robert H. Smith.

Mrs. Higgins didn't stop. Maybe she was in a hurry, maybe distracted. For reasons that no one will ever

The Williamson station at a time when the Norfolk & Western was the vital lifeline for the Tug Valley. Photographer unknown, late 1930's; N&W photo, collected by Tim Hensley.

Railroading became a way of life for generations of southern West Virginians. Wife Bess bids N&W engineer Walter T. Carter good-bye in this photo from the early 1950's. Photographer unknown, Tim Hensley Collection.

know, the woman ignored highway flasher signals and the train's repeated whistling. She turned from Railroad Street, paralleling the railroad, onto West Virginia 37 and across the first of three tracks. The 607 knocked the vehicle into the air as its horrified engineer and fireman, L. C. Chapman and M. J. Duncan, watched helplessly.

Now the view of passengers riding in the observation car included the ghastly sight of a twisted, contorted automobile flying 220 feet through the air. All five of the auto's occupants were thrown out and killed instantly. The bodies were strewn along the tracks as grief-stricken teachers and students gathered from the nearby school.

It was a dismal day for the engine crew. These were the first fatalities of the 66-year-old Chapman's 47-year career. On top of that, his train progressed less than an hour up the line when it struck another vehicle. This time it was a truckload of concrete blocks whose brakes had failed at a Chattaroy crossing. No one was killed, but a man riding on the load was injured. When the truck was hit, the man was knocked to the ground. Blocks rained all around him, but none hit him. A passenger on the train saw it all.

Thankfully, no accident mars our August excursion run. The wide bottoms of Tug Fork narrow as the 1218 edges closer to coal country. Occasionally she passes a hollow with a tarpaper shack, wringer washer on the porch and three or four vehicles in the yard, maybe a row or two of corn clinging to a rocky cliff. At other times, the locomotive runs along electric slide fences marking off dangerous rocks that might decide to dislodge boulders big enough to send the train into the river.

Suddenly passengers begin ooooh-ing and aaaahing. They are gawking out coach windows at the best view yet of the locomotive from inside the train. The 1218 is negotiating Sand Bar Bend, the sharpest curve between Kenova and Williamson, three miles west of Kermit.

"There's a story about that curve," Hensley says, proceeding to relate the tale.

In the early '50's, No. 86 was N&W's hottest freight train, usually operated on the Portsmouth-to-Williamson portion of its run by engineer Walter T. Carter. Lucian "Hook" Plymale was a regular engineer on No. 4, the eastbound "Pocahontas," a fast passenger run that carried sleepers on an overnight schedule on the Cincinnati-to-Bluefield leg of its dash to Norfolk. The two trains customarily ran at about the same time, leaving Portsmouth, Ohio, in the early morning hours on N&W's double-tracked line.

Carter made a game of it. He always tried to run around the hot-tempered Plymale during No. 4's Kenova passenger stop. On one particular night, he really got Plymale's goat.

Carter was nudging his class A out of Portsmouth's Star Yards as Plymale, pushing his class J streamliner for all it was worth, edged around him. Carter "stayed under his smoke" all the way to North Kenova, Ohio, and, sure enough, at that point his train crossed over to the westbound main line so it could pass the passenger train during its Kenova station stop. "That's the last he saw of me," Carter crowed later.

Operator Fritz Leichner, at KX Tower just beyond the station, gave Carter a big highball. He answered with his whistle. He was happy now.

Hook Plymale was no doubt grum-

All Aboard Train 10

I grew up in the southern end of West Virginia, in McDowell County. The railroad was our primary mode of transportation. To me, the Norfolk & Western was the most wonderful railroad in the whole wide world. Its freight and passenger trains ran from Norfolk, Virginia, to Cincinnati, Ohio; with a branch line running from Portsmouth, Ohio, to Columbus, Ohio; and another branch running from Roanoke, Virginia, to Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

We lived in the clean little town of Crozer and had to walk down the road a piece to the railroad station at Elkhorn. Our parents were staunch Calvinists who had emigrated from Hungary and spoke only Hungarian. At least six times a year my father, my mother, and my brother Frank and I took the forenoon Train No. 10 to Pocahontas, Virginia, to participate in Hungarian Reformed Church holy communion services. The services were held in the Presbyterian Church, whose fine people really practiced their Christianity by sharing their sanctuary with us.

We rode the train from Elkhorn to Bluestone, where we changed to a train that backed into Pocahontas. In those days the passengers were served by a "train butcher." No, he didn't cut and sell meat. He carried two large baskets—much bigger than picnic baskets of today—filled with newspapers, magazines, candy bars, toys and sundry other items. He walked the aisle singsonging "peanuts, popcorn, Nabisco wafers, dromedary dates...." And when the train neared Bluestone, he added, "and change trains at Bluestone for Bramwell, Pocahontas and Boissevain."

— A Recollection from
Stephen Sziarto

bling as platform men finished loading mail and express onto his train. He tried to catch Carter all the way to Williamson without success. Carter's secret was the auxiliary tender coupled to his huge class A that made a coaling and water stop at Prichard unnecessary. No. 4's class J — even though it was pulling a through passenger run — didn't have that luxury.

So by the time Plymale entered the engineer's locker room next to the Williamson station, Carter had yarded his freight train, put his engine away and walked out of the long maze of tracks.

Then Plymale ran into R. G. Riddlebarger, an assistant road foreman of engines, and was dismayed to find out that the company official had been riding his passenger train that evening. Worse yet, Walter Carter was standing by when Plymale's superior lit into him.

"Running a little fast, wasn't you, Hook?" Riddlebarger admonished the hogger. "I thought you was going to turn 'em over in Sand Bar Bend back there."

We'll also have some company brass on our return, as it turns out. The shadows are lengthening in the Dry Fork Valley at Iaeger as the 1218 is coaled and watered for the trip home. The private car of retired NS board chairman and chief executive officer Robert B. Claytor is added for the run back to Kenova.

An unabashed steam fan, Claytor is not to be found on his sparkling carriage after it is spliced into the excursion train. Rather, he sits on a small seat straddling the coal doors of the 1218's tender, keeping an eye on the pressure gauge.

Why is a retired executive enamored with such outdated inefficiency as a coal-fired steam engine?

"They're fascinating," responds Claytor, who often takes a turn at the throttle when he shows up for these trips. "When I was growing up, that's all there were on the railroads. I had never heard of a diesel when I was a little boy. I was fascinated by steam then, and I still am."

Claytor gives most of the credit for the current Norfolk Southern steam program to his brother, W. Graham Claytor, who was president of predecessor Southern Railway several years ago and is now president of Amtrak, the nation's passenger-hauling railroad. It was during Graham Claytor's years at Southern's

Engineer Carter, posing proudly in the cab of an N&W class J locomotive in Williamson. Photographer and date unknown, Tim Hensley Collection.

Rail buffs like the man at left have learned the practical use of protective goggles. These excursionists were photographed near Kenova in 1983, courtesy *Huntington Herald Dispatch*.

On to the Ohio

Coal operator John J. Lincoln (1865-1948). Photographer and date unknown, courtesy Eastern Regional Coal Archives.

McDowell County coal operator John J. Lincoln witnessed the building of the N&W Ohio Extension in the early 1890's. The following first-hand account by Lincoln is excerpted from Stuart McGehee's "A Busy Time in McDowell History" in the fall 1989 GOLDENSEAL. Lincoln, quoted here from a 1938 speech, describes his impression upon arriving in McDowell as a young engineer in 1892.

Elkhorn, I found, was practically the end of the division. The passenger trains ran no further.... Steel had recently been laid as far as Northfork, though little ballasting had been done, and the construction trains were pushing their supplies on to this point where they were unloaded and placed in temporary warehouses and hauled on down the grade as fast as possible by mule teams. It was a busy time and place.

All down the line, and clear on through to the Ohio, as fast as the territory could be opened up, were strung the contractor's camps on the various sections. The hardest problem was to get supplies and food for men and mules through to the camps in the central section. Miles of temporary roads had to be built in several sections as there were no roads and much of the region was still a primitive wilderness.

Attracted by the building of the railroad and the opening of the mines, men were here from pretty much all over — from the C&O fields, the Pittsburgh district and the anthracite region of Pennsylvania, and even from the gold and copper mines of the far northwest and the gold and diamond mines of South Africa. Negroes from Virginia and the Carolinas did most of the work on the railroad grade and were working, too, as miners. They were paid a "dollar and a dime for ten hours time," as they chanted it. Later this was increased to $1.25 per day.

Foreigners were coming in, principally Hungarians, Slavs and Russians for the mines and North-of-Italy men for the masonry work on the coke ovens.

There was the usual sprinkling of professional gamblers, both white and black, among the men in the construction camps of the railroad and among the camps of the coal companies. Some of these were very quiet and quite gentlemanly. A few were of the loudmouthed, bragging type. Seldom a weekend passed without several shootings and sudden deaths.

Virginia had licensed saloons for the sale of liquor. Pocahontas was the chief source of supply for this region. West Virginia had local option. It was very local and very optional — particularly in the southern section of the state.

The new line to the Ohio was completed so that trains could be gotten through in the late fall of '92. This whole region when under construction was often referred to as "the last frontier" and usually lived up to its reputation.

— John J. Lincoln

Steam excursionists seek the sort of railroad history reflected in this photo of a Wayne County track gang. Foreman Walter Perdue (in dark suit) posed with his men in 1915. Photographer unknown, Tim Hensley Collection.

helm that the program evolved from the occasional use of small locomotives to system-wide tours of big mainline engines.

"My contribution," Robert Claytor smiles, "was seeing that two of the largest and best steam locomotives ever built [the 1218 and restored class J 611] were taken out of storage and added to the program. I will take credit for that."

As the 1218 chugs out of the coalfields and heads back toward Kenova, cinders pile up in the seats and floors of the open-window coaches, giving travelers a literal taste of rail travel in the days before air conditioning. Riders are subdued now, being rocked to sleep by the train's gentle swaying and soothed by the hot, wet blasts of steam that rush into the cars when they enter tunnels.

Those outside remain active even at dusk. The chasers are still on the roads, where there are roads near enough. When the train slows for bad track or a bridge repair job, they slow too. The Tolsia truck drivers must be livid! As the 1218 emerges from tunnel number seven and eases past "pig train" 234 at Webb in Wayne County, its engineer is outside his diesel cab, waving animatedly. The piggyback trailers that whiz past coach windows serve to bring passengers back to the present, reminding them that Norfolk Southern is — despite what they have seen today — a modern railroad. Normally, it hosts no steam engines or passenger trains. But it does carry massive amounts of freight — 63.2 million tons of coal, coke and iron ore and 65.8 million tons of merchandise freight during the first half of 1991 alone.

It is after ten o'clock when weary passengers climb off the gritty excursion deep in the Kenova yard. They stumble past the 1218 as its stack quietly simmers and its throbbing air pumps keep the arteries of the brake system pressurized.

The old engine has worked a 14-hour day. It has hauled, first 24, then 25 cars loaded to the vestibules with close to 800 passengers. And she isn't even breathing hard.

Book Review:

Hill Daughter Louise McNeill

Louise McNeill calls *Hill Daughter,* her new poetry collection, "my last book." Fans hope it's just her latest. Either way, it's an excellent introduction to our state's poet laureate.

McNeill dedicated *Hill Daughter* to her husband Roger Pease, who died in 1990. "His hand and sometimes his red pencil had touched the pages of several of the books from which the poems in *Hill Daughter* were selected. He knew, also, my old box of scraps. Some of these dusty lyrics had been lying in the box for fifty years," she notes. Her publisher did good service in bringing those old lyrics to light and in patiently gathering others from McNeill's previous publications.

Editor and poet Maggie Anderson helped put the book together, then wrote a sensitive introduction. Anderson places McNeill in the regional literary tradition popular between our two great wars. McNeill writes personal poetry based on Appalachian themes, and she does it consciously and proudly. "Writers from this region are often tempted to deny the language of home," Anderson says. "Louise McNeill does not."

McNeill bounces off our state's ruggedness to an abstraction encompassing all of creation, writing of primordial seas and atom bomb alike. When heads get dizzy with her stretching of time and space, she grounds us again in solid West Virginia grit. People in her poems know rock and stone intimately. Readers who know her native Pocahontas County countryside will understand.

I once lived nearby and recently had the chance to visit her ancestral homestead. The Pocahontas farm still raises crops, animals, and McNeills. On a September afternoon, three generations of McNeill men piled Chuck Daugherty, my husband Bill and me into Jim McNeill's red Blazer and we bounced through pastures and meadows full of late summer wildflowers, back toward the mountains. Jim looks just like his sister, even to the half smile when he listens.

We followed no visible road. Thirty feet in front, a black and white dog loped along, seemingly leading us. "He doesn't like to ride in the truck," said Blix McNeill, the poet's nephew.

McNeill land out by the hard road is contemporary, with a large house on a hill, neat fences, and fat sheep, but as we drove back toward the mountains, the country became wild and remote.

These mountain pastures have been worked by McNeills for nine generations. Jim, his son Blix, and Blix's son Jamie share a respect for the land, and for the ancestors now buried at the top of the hill.

Blix knows his aunt's books well; as tire tracks slowly mowed down goldenrod, milkweed, and sunflowers he pointed out places mentioned in her work. We had been talking about McNeill's recent autobiography, *The Milkweed Ladies,* and as we pulled up to a hay barn, young Jamie silently pointed out the milkweed to me. Built by a McNeill when he got home from the Civil War, the log barn is still in good condition.

This high farm is ringed with mountains. Land that once held crops now raises wildflowers. McNeill's childhood home itself now serves as a barn. Even the porch is stuffed roof-high with hay. Up the hill, the family cemetery holds burials from the 18th century. We wander among headstones, feeling for the dates when erosion defeats our eyes. The family has lived and died in this mountain valley since before our nation was born.

Jamie's birth brought joy to Louise McNeill's heart, for this grand-nephew is the only male in his generation to bear the family name. Blix's family lives across Route 219 on 60 acres he farms with the help of a M.A. in agriculture from West Virginia University, but he also is a partner in a Ford dealership in Marlinton. He loves his land and has found a way to stay here.

Spending an afternoon in McNeill country gives me hope as well as insight. It is plain that her poetry arises from this place and those who populate it. She casts them into rhyme and definite rhythms without sounding amateur. In "Granny Saunders," one

of the character poems originally published in her 1939 book, *Gauley Mountain,* McNeill lists the wild herbs, and the croup, chills, sprains and pains they cure. Then:

> And for uncertain maladies
> The northwest bark of dogwood trees.

Sometimes she uses sprung rhythm to show disjointedness and the harshness of a landscape where settlers wrestled a living from newly tilled ground. McNeill knows about hard living.

Concerned with the state's tumultuous history, she often tells of timbering and coal. In "Stoic" she writes:

> You, with the lamp and pick, what is your labor
> In that dark and fetid hole
> Where the black damp seeps and the black rats gnaw the timbers?
> *Stranger, I dig for coal.*

The poem's last verse shows simple inevitability.

> And how will you live when the rocks of a gutted mountain
> Shatter your beam-held sky,
> And the rescue digs, and your wife goes blind with waiting?
> *Stranger, a man must die.*

— Maureen Crockett

Hill Daughter: New and Selected Poems *is published by the University of Pittsburgh Press. The 140-page book sells for $12.95 paperbound and $24.95 hardbound.*

Cabin Creek Quilts Coming Back

Cabin Creek Quilts is one of three major quilting cooperatives still operating in West Virginia. Although its membership and sales are only a fraction of what they were when the worker-run organization was in its prime, the Kanawha County co-op is determined to make a comeback.

Cabin Creek recently inaugurated its new headquarters in Malden's historic Hale House. Now members and volunteers are busy updating the co-op's wares and marketing system.

Cabin Creek Quilts' new home is just a few miles from the historic creek that gave the co-op its name. The building is close to the busy West Virginia Turnpike. This will make Cabin Creek Quilts readily accessible and allow it to target travelers and to offer quilting demonstrations to group tours.

In the mid-1970's, the heyday of quilting as a cottage industry, several dozen quilting co-ops helped more than 1,000 West Virginia women supplement their incomes. A decade later, skyrocketing marketing costs, coupled with rising foreign competition, forced most of them to close. Although Cabin Creek Quilts never shut its doors, membership decreased by about half as orders dropped off.

James Thibeault, one of Cabin Creek's founders and now a leader of the drive to rejuvenate the co-op, says people can buy Appalachian-style Chinese quilts for under $100. Comparable American-made quilts from Cabin Creek cost about $650.

"This means the Chinese quilters are being paid much less than we would ever offer our workers," Thibeault says. "Consumers don't think about this. They are shopping for a trendy look and aren't mindful of a quilt's art or heirloom value," he added.

To combat this foreign competition Thibeault, who now acts as Cabin Creek's non-paid director, organized a volunteer board of business leaders. Together they determined that the co-op's wares needed to be made visible and the product line adjusted to current buying habits.

The co-op plans to offer more products and to update its fabrics and designs. Although the business built its reputation on traditional Appalachian quilts used as bedding, it now produces everything from patchwork pillows and placemats to wall hangings. Members say they can diversify their art without sacrificing quality.

Hope Osborne, a long-time co-op seamstress and former board member, now spends her days "swatchin' things out" as she calls it. Osborne explains that she and another woman select and cut fabrics to send to the seamstresses who work at home. Osborne is enthusiastic about working with new material, color schemes, and patterns.

"I'm one of those people who's always walking around dreaming up things in my head but I never get to try any of them out," she says. "Now we can really experiment. Who knows what us ladies will come up with."

Cabin Creek Quilts also has broadened its cultural diversity, sampling other traditions in addition to the Ap-

Bessie Keen (left) and daughter Hope Osborne are enthusiastic backers of Cabin Creek Quilts. "Mom wouldn't miss any of this," Osborne says. Photo by Susan Leffler.

palachian mainstream. Co-op member Sherry Westfall recently completed a series of eight wall hangings designed around colorful reverse applique work done by Southeast Asian refugees. The series was displayed during the headquarter's opening celebration in October and will travel to San Francisco this spring.

The co-op plans to collaborate with native American and Southern quilters and perhaps market their works as well. Eventually Cabin Creek hopes to become a center for "American" rather than strictly Appalachian quilting, according to group leaders.

Osborne says she and other co-op members are full of ideas and ready to do whatever it takes to succeed. The mother of seven who's been widowed for five years says her life revolves around the drive to revive Cabin Creek Quilts.

"It's an important thing for a whole lot of women," Osborne says. "Not just economically, but for their lives too. When you get older, things happen and you get lonely. The co-op really helps with that."

Osborne learned to quilt from her mother, Bessie Keen. Keen, who is 81, lives on Social Security and what she earns sewing for Cabin Creek. Nowadays she often goes to work with her daughter to help her "swatch out" and fold fabric.

"Believe me, Mom wouldn't miss any of this. She's one of those people who has to be in the middle of everything," Osborne says. "Cabin Creek has really been a godsend for her."

Both Keen and Osborne acknowledge that it's going to take long hours and hard work to recapture consumer attention. James Thibeault, meanwhile, is so confident of Cabin Creek's future that he's already making plans to rebuild its work force.

"There's a tremendous need for jobs out there," he says. "Our goal is to give people an alternative to commuting miles for a minimum wage job."

Thibeault, who helped organize the original co-op as a VISTA Volunteer, says Cabin Creek Quilts will have a new VISTA worker next year. This will allow the cooperative to recruit and train new seamstresses for Cabin Creek's expanded operation.

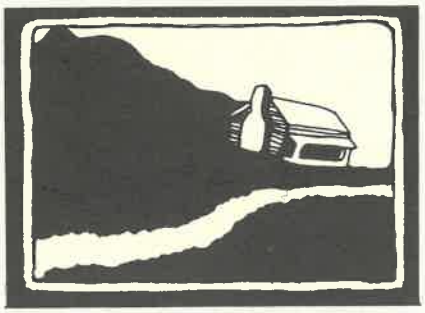
— Susan Leffler

Christmas wreaths are among the products offered by Cabin Creek Quilts. Photo by Susan Leffler.

Patchwork Products

A lot more than quilts are sold by Cabin Creek Quilts at historic Hale House in Malden. Shoppers can choose from an increasingly wide selection of patchwork products while browsing through the elegant old mansion, once home to Dr. John P. Hale and now part of the Malden Historic District.

Items such as placemats, pillows, and wall hangings come in a variety of traditional quilt patterns, including the double wedding ring, fan, log cabin, and flying geese. Most smaller items such as tree ornaments and toys are made with solid-color and calico-print fabric.



Cabin Creek Quilts

A few of the specialty items available in addition to traditional bed quilts:

—Pillows in a wide variety of patterns and colors.
—Small and large wall hangings.
—Potholders, hot mitts, and aprons in quilt patterns.
—Placemats in quilt patterns with matching solid-color or print napkins.
—Clothing, including a crazy patch midi skirt, a ruffled folk skirt, T-shirts with patchwork applique, and a patchwork tote bag.
—Christmas decorations, including a large braided door wreath, stuffed calico tree ornaments, and Christmas tree skirts.
—Dolls, teddy bears, and soft clutch balls for children.

Cabin Creek products are made with cotton and polyester blends and stuffed with polyester or cotton batting. The co-op stocks a full line of fabric and quilting supplies. Catalogs are available, and both custom and mail orders are accepted. Cabin Creek Quilts is located at 4208 Malden Drive, Malden, WV 25306; (304)925-9499.

Joe Dobbs at the mike. His program goes out over public radio each Saturday night. Photo by Susan Leffler.

Music Man Joe Dobbs

Profile by Susan Leffler

"Wait a couple minutes 'til I get this thing on the road and you can start with whatever tune you want to," says the gray-bearded man with the headphones clamped tightly over his suede cap. "Um, um—this board is hotter than a firecracker tonight," he mutters, eyeing the volume controls on the big electronic console in front of him.

The man at the control board is Joe Dobbs, host of West Virginia Public Radio's popular "Music from the Mountains."

Dobbs is a well-known Appalachian fiddler and owner of the Fret 'N Fiddle music store in St. Albans, near Charleston. He plays music from the mountains, indeed, and also from the British Isles, the Cajun bayous, and occasionally from other folk traditions. You can hear his program every Saturday night from 8:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. on the state public radio network. Tonight he's hosting a show being taped "live."

"Okay, we're ready for a sound check," he tells members of the bluegrass band Appalachian Fever. "Watch my hands and I'll tell you if you need to move up or to back away from the microphones," he says to his studio guests.

Dobbs is well qualified for his weekly stint behind the controls. During younger days as a musician the Louisiana native played nearly every kind of fiddle music from old-time to Texas swing. For part of that time he earned his living managing a commercial radio station in New Mexico. Since opening Fret 'N Fiddle in 1975, Dobbs has become a pillar of the West Virginia traditional music community and a nationally recognized authority on stringed instruments.

"That's a mighty pretty guitar you have," he says to Appalachian Fever's Ted Workman. "Beautiful inlay work. Tell the listeners a little about your instrument," Dobbs says. Workman explains that it was made from Brazilian rosewood by South Charleston guitar maker Dale Crouser.

The group cranks up a lively dance tune and a string breaks. While it's being changed bass player Jim Perdue points at the gut strings on his instrument. "Need to shave my strings a little," he says to Dobbs.

"Well, I'd try mineral oil on them first," advises Dobbs as he puts a CD of Celtic music on the air.

Dobbs is an avid patron of traditional and string band music. He likes to bring local groups like Appalachian Fever into the studio as often as he can. He also tries to help regional musicians by playing their tapes and publicizing their festivals.

"I come in contact with a lot of unknown musicians in my store and I like to give them some exposure," he says. "On my show I try to emphasize people who play within the listening area, and maybe their neighbors don't even know it," Dobbs adds.

"Music from the Mountains" also has an occasional foreign guest in the studio. Dobbs says a group of Finnish musicians came into his store a few years ago and before the afternoon was over he had lent them all instruments and invited them to play on public radio. "They were shocked," he chuckles.

Australian musicians Rod and Judy Jones have also appeared on "Music from the Mountains." The Joneses have their own radio show featuring old-time Appalachian music back home in Sydney. They make West

Dobbs fiddles with Dave Bing and Mack Samples (right) at the 1991 West Virginia State Folk Festival at Glenville. Photo by Susan Leffler.

Virginia a priority stop on their occasional trips to America, swinging by the GOLDENSEAL office and the Dobbs show.

Dobbs pre-tapes many of his shows, as he's doing tonight. He explains that most musicians, including himself, usually work on weekends. Saturday night is no time to be locked up in a radio station.

As the CD winds down the mountain music man shuffles through a pile of handwritten notes and pulls a postcard out of his pocket. He reads a list of upcoming musical events and festivals that include several in southern Pennsylvania. Dobbs says the show always gets a lot of mail from Pittsburgh, and also the Washington, D.C., area. He attributes this to the popularity of West Virginia Public Radio in neighboring states.

"Working with public radio has been a very pleasant surprise," he says. "Nobody ever leans over my shoulder and tells me what to play. Why, in commercial radio the wives of advertisers used to call and try to tell me what to do," he recalls.

Dobbs first passed through West Virginia selling records in the early 1960's. He liked the state so well that he settled here in 1967. Since then he's become an important part of the traditional music scene. He regularly performs at festivals such as the Vandalia Gathering in Charleston, the West Virginia State Folk Festival at Glenville, and the Stonewall Jackson Jubilee at Jackson's Mill. When not on stage he's generally under a shade tree talking shop and jamming with other musicians.

In 1975 he opened his music store, the original Fret 'N Fiddle in Huntington. It was a hobby at first, but word spread and soon area musicians were showing up there every Saturday to talk and play.

The store picked up a thriving repair business and Dobbs gradually started selling new and vintage instruments. In 1982 Fret 'N Fiddle moved to its present location in St. Albans and now does a large international mail order business.

Dobbs, who has six children and four grandchildren, enjoys teaching music and demonstrating various types of stringed instruments both in the public schools and at the Augusta Heritage Workshops each summer in Elkins.

And in the rare moments that Joe Dobbs is doing something not related to music? Well, he puts on his black leather, jumps on his huge Honda Goldwing motorcycle, and roars off into the sunset. Honest.

The West Virginia Public Radio network includes FM stations WVEP Martinsburg, 88.9; WVNP Wheeling, 89.9; WVPN Charleston, 88.5; WVWV Huntington, 89.9; WVPG Parkersburg 90.3; WVPB Beckley, 91.7; WVPN Buckhannon, 88.9; and WVPM Morgantown, 90.9.

Back Issues Available

If you want to complete your GOLDENSEAL collection or simply get acquainted with earlier issues, some back copies of the magazine are available. The cost is $3.95 per copy. A list of available issues and their cover stories follows. To get your back copies, mark the issue(s) you want and return with a check for the right amount to GOLDENSEAL, The Cultural Center, Capitol Complex, Charleston, WV 25305.

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Goldenseal Index

Volume 17, 1991

Articles which appeared in Volume 17 are indexed below, under the categories of Subject, Author, Photographer, and Location.

In the Subject category, articles are listed under their main topic, with many articles cross-referenced under alternate Subject headings. When more than one article appears under a heading, the order is alphabetical by first word of title. Each entry is followed by the seasonal designation of the issue, issue volume and number, and page number. Short notices, such as appear in the regular column, "Current Programs, Events, Publications," are not included in the index.

The index for the first three volumes of GOLDENSEAL appeared in the April-September 1978 issue, and the index for Volumes 4 and 5 in the January-March 1980 magazine. The index for each successive volume appears in the final issue of the calendar year (e.g., Volume 16, Number 4).

Subject

Author

Photographer

Location

In This Issue

IRENE B. BRAND, a lifelong resident of Mason County who earned her B.A. and master's degrees at Marshall University, writes Christian romance novels. She is a member of West Virginia Writers and the Romance Writers of America, and taught at Point Pleasant Junior High School for 23 years until her 1989 retirement. She is the author of 14 books, including ten contemporary and historical novels. Her last contribution to GOLDENSEAL appeared in the winter 1990 issue.

GREG CLARK is photo preservation archivist for the Division of Culture and History.

MAUREEN CROCKETT was born in New York State and attended City University of New York, West Virginia University and other institutions. She lives in St. Albans and works as a freelance writer, photographer and illustrator. She contributes regularly to *Wonderful West Virginia* magazine. Her last contribution to GOLDENSEAL appeared in the summer 1991 issue.

BEN CROOKSHANKS is a native of Rainelle and a former disc jockey for WRRL in his Greenbrier County hometown. He now works as a freelance writer and devotes much of his time to producing material for tourist information radio station WIWS in Beckley. He has published articles in *National Enquirer* and *Guns and Ammo*, among other publications. This is his first contribution to GOLDENSEAL.

J.Z. ELLISON, born in Monroe County in 1915, grew up on a family farm that dates back to Revolutionary times. He attended WVU and is a former sales representative for John W. Eshelman & Sons. Ellison has been involved with several agricultural associations, including the West Virginia Poultry Association and West Virginia Farm Supply. His last contribution to GOLDENSEAL appeared in the fall 1991 issue.

LOUIS E. KEEFER was born and raised in Wheeling and holds degrees from Morris Harvey College, West Virginia University and Yale. He is a retired planning consultant and now lives in Reston, Virginia. He has published two books and numerous articles. His last contribution to GOLDENSEAL appeared in the fall 1991 issue.

MICHAEL KELLER is the chief of photographic services for the Division of Culture and History.

SUSAN LEFFLER is the folk arts specialist for the Division of Culture and History.

ROGERS McAVOY was born in Webster County and grew up in Grafton. He earned a Ph.D. from Indiana University and has been a professor of educational psychology at WVU for the last 30 years. He has published in professional journals and is now writing a biography of Clair Bee, who fits into his professional area of interest — hero myths. This is his first contribution to GOLDENSEAL.

MELINDA RUSSELL grew up in New Jersey, but has lived in West Virginia since 1972. She graduated from Rutgers University with a B.A. in English and attended WVU law school, later working as a lawyer for Consolidated Gas. Melinda, a knitter herself, is interested in Appalachian crafts and craftspeople. This is her first published work and her first contribution to GOLDENSEAL.

BARBARA DIANE SMIK earned a B.A. in English literature and a master's in secondary education from the University of Pittsburgh. The daughter of country music star Doc Williams, she grew up with the music and has managed Doc's Wheeling "Country Store" for several years. Her last contribution to GOLDENSEAL appeared in the winter 1988 issue.

MARY V. STEALEY, a Clarksburg native and current resident of that town, is a retired government secretary. She is a member of Professional Secretaries International, West Virginia Writers and other organizations. Her last contribution to GOLDENSEAL appeared in the fall 1990 issue.

BOB WITHERS, a Huntington native, is a copy editor at the *Huntington Herald Dispatch* and pastor of the Seventh Avenue Baptist Church. A Marshall University journalism graduate, he describes himself as a lifelong railroad enthusiast. He has written for *Moody Monthly*, *Trains* and *Grit*. His last contribution to GOLDENSEAL appeared in the summer 1989 issue.

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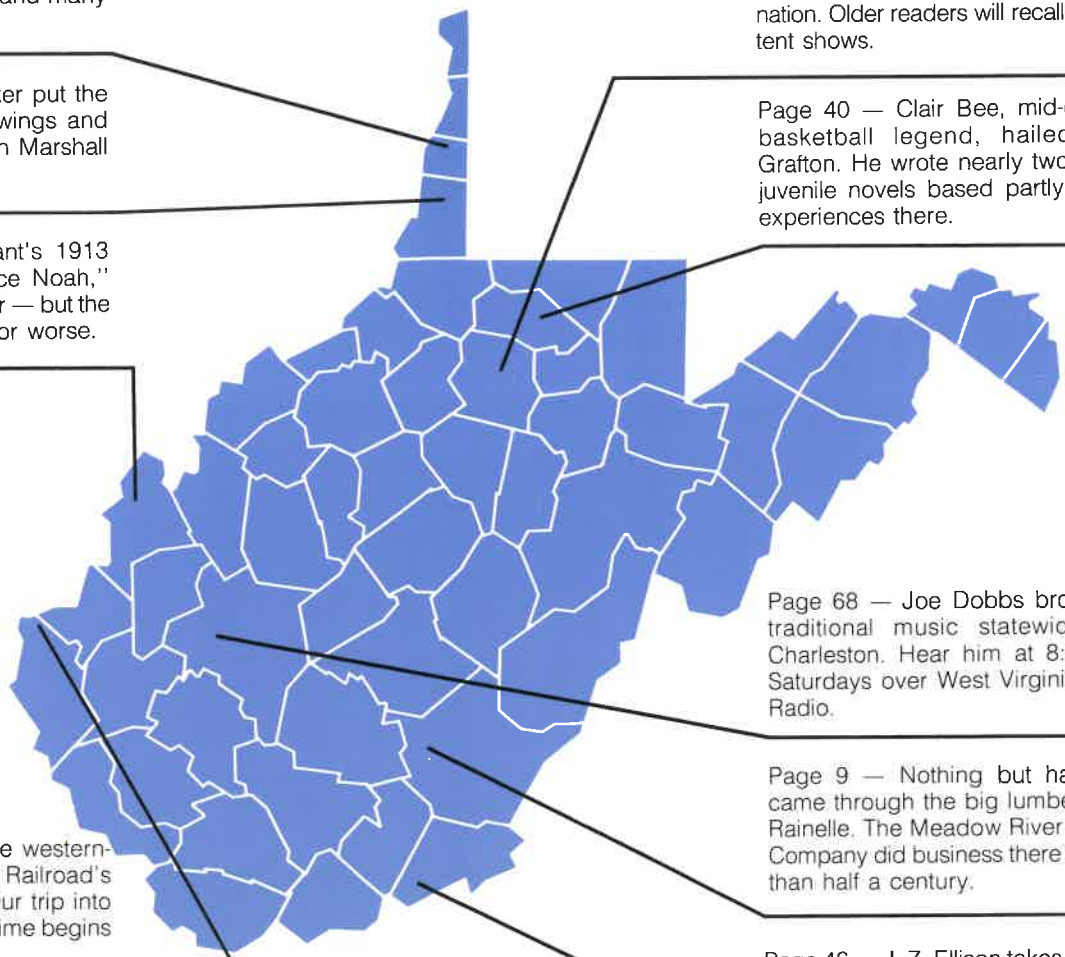

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