

Vol. 22, No. 3 • WEST VIRGINIA TRADITIONAL LIFE • Fall 1996 • \$3.95

Goldenseal

How about this 'Eer?

The Changing
WVU Mascot

One-Room Education

Goodbye,
Mr. Comstock

WPA Thanksgiving

Ghost Tales for Fall

& More!

From The Editor: Working Hard For Your Money

Don't get me wrong.

Fall is my favorite time of year, it really is. It brings important personal landmarks in my life, and it is just about our most livable season as summer's heat and humidity finally moderate down to a happy equilibrium. Things even smell better in the fall, it seems to me, and our mountain views lengthen perceptibly as the air clears — to say nothing of the spectacular annual color show that the Good Lord blesses us with simply for having the good sense to be West Virginians.

It is definitely the season to be out and about in the Mountain State, and it always sets me to itching for jeans and flannel and a little more quality time with a



certain briery patch of hillside paradise that I know of.

But my, what a busy time of year it is!

First and foremost, fall brings our biggest annual subscription drive, a make-or-break proposition for GOLDENSEAL. We will raise nearly two-thirds of our yearly budget between now and Thanksgiving — raise it or not be here when *next* fall rolls around.

So you can count on hearing from me soon, if your subscription expires in the fourth quarter, as most do. I'll enclose a renewal coupon and reply envelope with my letter, as usual, and then stand by to hear from you.

I've grown a little less hysterical about the annual subscription appeal only because I've become more confident of our readers' willingness to support the magazine. And believe me, we live by reader support in these days of tight government budgets. That means we absolutely count on you to do your part at renewal time.

After we get the subscription drive rolling in late September, we get rolling ourselves, on GOLDENSEAL's big bus trip in mid-October. Editorial Assistant Cornelia Alexander and I will host this year's outing. It promises to be a good one, with the GOLDENSEAL bus swinging in a big lazy circle from Charleston around to Randolph, Pocahontas and Greenbrier counties and back again.

We thank everyone who made the trip another quick

sell-out, and we appreciate the patience of the folks we had to turn down. We hope to do better by you next time.

I've squeezed in some travel of my own over the summer, including a memorable trip all the way up the Northern Panhandle just after West Virginia Day. It has been a long while since I've spent much time above Wheeling, and I was happy to be there. I got my supper in Chester, slept the night in Newell and spent a little money at the Homer Laughlin China Company outlet, and felt like an honorary Hancock Countian by the time I left.

I made a great trip the other direction three weeks later, to take part in the John Henry stamp festivities at Big Bend Tunnel on July 13. Talcott Postmaster Bill Dillon brought on Congressman Rahall and other speakers and really did the day up right. I was showing an out-of-state friend the wonders of southern West Virginia that weekend, and we rambled on into Monroe County. *Mother Earth News* had just named Monroe one of the ten best places in America, and it looked at least that good to me.

I worked in a few shorter jaunts as well, mainly photography runs with Mike Keller. Among them was the trip to photograph the Fedukovich article, producing the picture (left) of me and writer Kevin Andersen on the rim of New River Gorge. Kevin's the young guy, but you'll notice which one of us had the sense to ease up a few more steps from the edge of the canyon. That's age and experience, Kevin, not to be confused with growing timidity.

Incidentally, we got a doggone good lunch of beans and cornbread in Minden that day. The restaurant lady said she was from New Jersey, but she is catching on fast to judge from the cooking. My guess is that she married a West Virginia boy and he gave her a crash course in beans before he ever lured her back to Fayette County.

You'll find plenty more stories in this issue, in addition to Kevin Andersen's tale of miner Sedor Fedukovich. Fall is back-to-school time, and we cover both ends of the scale, from one-room schooling as documented by Marshall Professor Paul Lutz to a short history of the WVU Mountaineer mascot.

Other features cover subjects as diverse as mattress making, filmmaking and even windmill making, with a little politics sprinkled in as befits the election season. We have some ghost stories, as we always try to do this time of year.

It's a good issue, we think, and I hope you enjoy it and the other work we have done for you. If so, we need to hear from you — to receive your subscription renewal check just as soon as possible, to put it plainly.

We will get on with the many chores of fall, in the meantime, while wishing you the very best of this grand season.

— Ken Sullivan

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Goldenseal

Volume 22, Number 3

Fall 1996

COVER: Slim Arnold as the WVU Mountaineer, at Old Mountaineer Field in the late 1930's. Slim remembers those days very well in Mary Furbee's article beginning on page 34. Photographer unknown, restored by Greg Clark.

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Letters from Readers

GOLDENSEAL welcomes letters of general interest from readers. Our address is The Cultural Center, 1900 Kanawha Blvd. East, Charleston, WV 25305-0300. Published letters may be edited for brevity or clarity.

The Steel-Driving Man

June 27, 1996
Hinton, West Virginia
Editor:

I am always puzzled when someone questions whether or not John Henry was a real person and questions the tale about him beating the steam drill in the steel-driving contest.

I have lived in West Virginia all my life. I have heard many of the old people talk about John Henry, and many of them remembered when the event occurred.

One of them was my great-grandmother, Edna Huddleston Clark. She was the daughter of Nathan Huddleston, son of John Paddy Huddleston, one of the early settlers of the Kanawha Valley. She was born prior to the Civil War, and when I was a child she would tell me about happenings during the war. She married Richard Daniel Clark and later they moved to Hinton. She remembered the construction of the C&O Railway through the area. She was a fascinating lady with a wonderful memory. In her late 90's, she died in 1947.

She told me about John Henry and the steam drill. According to her, the news of John Henry beating the steam drill in the steel-driving contest spread all over the area and he was considered somewhat of a superman.

Great-grandma Clark, however, said that the death of John Henry was several days after he beat the steam drill. He became ill sometime during the night after the event and he died a few days later. There was a funeral for him a day or so after he died and he was buried on top of the tunnel mountain outside a white cemetery, his grave being across the fence. I do not know if this cemetery is now visible.

I hope this information will be another "proof" that John Henry was a person, that he did beat the steam drill in a steel-driving contest, and that the event is not fiction or symbolic.

Yours truly,
Joe C. Bigony



Betty Lynn Baker's statue of John Henry.

July 15, 1996
Oak Hill, West Virginia
Editor:

I was delighted to find the write-up on John Henry in my recent GOLDENSEAL, as I go by the statue often, and also because the picture of the [smaller] statue sculptured by my great-niece Betty Lynn Baker was a nice surprise.

Sincerely,
Mrs. G. M. Cooke

Thanks for writing. The State Mu-

seum, owner of the Baker statue of John Henry, had little information on the sculptor, and we're very pleased to hear from the family. — ed.

July 6, 1996
Lexington, Kentucky
Editor:

I was delighted to see the excellent article on John Henry in your Summer 1996 issue. I lived and worked around the Big Bend Tunnel area for many years in my youth and was always fascinated by the legend.

I am surprised, however, that you neglected to mention award-winning playwright Maryat Lee's reworking of the legend for her

"I am always puzzled when someone questions whether or not John Henry was a real person and questions the tale about him beating the steam drill."

EcoTheater company in Hinton. The play has been presented at the Big Bend Tunnel itself as well as at Pipestem State Park and many other locations throughout the area. Over the past two decades hundreds of local youth have been involved in *John Henry* and other EcoTheater productions, all of which draw upon local history and culture to make much more intriguing stories than anything you'll find on television.

I should disclose that I had the privilege of working with Lee on *John Henry* and other projects early on, and Jim Costa, upon whose version of the ballad you rely, did the music for the first *John Henry* production as well as for other Lee plays.

Although Lee herself died several years ago, shortly after moving to Lewisburg, EcoTheater companies have sprung up in other parts of West Virginia and half a dozen other states. They continue to present *John Henry* and many other plays which show how powerful our own legends and folklore can be.

Sincerely,
David T. Miller

We agree. EcoTheater does good work, and we last publicized their efforts in the Fall 1994 GOLDENSEAL. Readers will find a picture from the John Henry play in that issue. — ed.

June 12, 1996

Glenville, West Virginia

Editor:

I had to look twice at the Summer 1996 issue to realize that it was your publication in hand. See page 9 — John Henry [is] recognizable as a steel-driving man. The cover is a contemporary rendition of the man. Are we to remember this man as a colorful postage stamp? Or better to recall him as the man depicted on page 9?

With this cover, the magazine could be easily stored with the "popular" periodicals rather than with the esteemed *West Virginia Review*.

Sincerely Yours,
Elizabeth Turner

We'll be pleased to hear what other readers think about color in GOLDENSEAL. In the meantime, we'll be honored to sit on the shelf by the classic West Virginia Review magazine (1924-47), the labor of love of young Jennings Randolph, Phil Conley and others. — ed.

Fairy Diddles

July 9, 1996

Hendricks, West Virginia

Editor:

After reading all my GOLDENSEAL's I have to make a comment on the red squirrel (or fairy diddles). I see where some people say that the fairy diddles are so fast they couldn't kill them with a

rifle. Well, maybe they have slowed down, but I have killed 25 fairy diddles in one day with a .22 rifle.

*"I got three meals per day
and a night's lodging —
and eat up by fleas all
night long. The lady was
a nice, clean housekeeper,
but, oh, those fleas!"*

There were no gray squirrels around until I killed over 100 diddles, then the grays started coming in.

I'm in my 80's now and I started working at 13. I worked for a farmer 12 hours a day for \$1. I got three meals per day and a night's lodging — and eat up by fleas all night long. The lady of the house was a nice, clean housekeeper, but, oh, those fleas!

I have cut timber, stacked lumber, run a jackhammer, run dozers, worked in the coal mines, steel mills, fired a steam engine, run an engine, and served in the Atlantic, Mediterranean and Pacific during World War Two.

Now I'm retired and doing lots of reading. I sure enjoy the GOLDENSEAL. I have some extra copies I would like to trade for some I don't have, and I would love to complete an entire set. So if anyone has back copies to trade or sell I would love to hear from them.

Sincerely,
Ira Alkire
P. O. Box 124
Hendricks, WV 26271

You certainly have been reading back issues, since the fairy diddle debate goes all the way back to the Fall 1985 GOLDENSEAL! Readers will find copies of that still for sale in our back issues coupon — and maybe some folks can help you locate the other ones you need, Mr. Alkire. Thanks for writing. — ed.

Booger Man Mack Day...

July 30, 1996

Bluefield, West Virginia

Editor:

I wish to commend Jean Battlo for her article on Mack Day in your summer issue.

My grandmother, Nana Mae Day Parsons, was a first cousin to Mack and I have heard of the legend of this fearless lawman since my earliest childhood.

My uncle, Hobert Day, was participating in a moonshine operation when he was only 14 years of age. Sure enough, Mack jumped out of the bushes and yelled, "The booger man has gotcha!" He did, however, show a compassionate side and gave Uncle Hobert a "good talking to" and let him go — presumably due to his tender age.

Thanks ever so much for making my day and giving me the opportunity to renew my acquaintance with cousin Mack through the written word.

Sincerely yours,
Jean M. Lawrence

July 15, 1996

Fiddletown, California

Editor:

I was glad to see the article about my cousin, Malcolm Malachi (Mack) Day, in the summer edition of GOLDENSEAL. He was a man whose life was well worth remembering in West Virginia history.

The article was quite well written, and most of the basics were



Mack Day, from William Burleigh's book.

there, but it was only a short synopsis of Mack's actual life. Much more could have been included, as his life and activities were quite well documented.

I well remember that February day in 1925 when the news of Mack's death came to us via newspaper. Dad jumped up from his

*"I remember that
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almost shouting, 'They
killed the Battling
Parson!'"*

chair, where he had sat reading; he stormed around the room almost shouting, "G---n! They killed the Battling Parson!"

Mom nor any of us kids had any idea what he was talking about. When he finally calmed down some, he explained that the "Battling Parson" had been his cousin and had been killed by a moonshiner that he had gone to arrest.

Dad had headed west from Woosley, West Virginia, shortly after the turn of the century and settled in western Washington. He had had little contact with his West Virginia relatives from then on. Some family grapevine had obviously kept him informed, however. He was aware of a goodly number of Mack's exploits through the intervening years, and Mack's death really got to him.

Sincerely,
George R. Woosley

July 5, 1996
Moundsville, West Virginia
Editor:

The summer edition of the GOLD-ENSEAL came today and I found the story of Mack Day very interesting as I have in my files the book you mentioned by William Burleigh, *Mac Day, Crusader*. My father was working daily along with Mack Day. I was 14 when Mack was killed and I remember the fear in our house when Dad, L. N. Lambert, was appointed by J. H. Gadd, federal prohibition director, as replacement for Mack Day.

Sincerely,
Grace Lambert Friedly

...and the KKK

June 17, 1996
Charleston, West Virginia
Editor:

The article about [Mack Day and] the KKK in West Virginia, caused me to dig out a letter my cousin, Sarah Margaret Israel, had written to me about Klan activities in Clarksburg. She is a former grade school teacher. An excerpt from her letter follows:

"...in the early '20's I remember Ku Klux Klan activity in Clarksburg. They used to burn crosses from time to time at the summit of



The KKK in Clarksburg, 1920's. Courtesy West Virginia Collection, WVU.

Lowndes Hill and Pinnickinnick, sometimes one or the other, sometimes both at the same time. And Chet (a brother) and I both have a vivid recollection of a procession we witnessed one night, although we were impressed by the different aspects of it.

"The Klan must have been holding a state 'Konklave' here, and on that night they were marching from downtown to the East End, presumably to burn a cross on the top of

Pinnickinnick Hill. We had been to Grandma's and were standing at the corner at the end of Clay Street. Chet remembers that the Main Street hill coming down from Second Street looked like a 'river of fire,' for they were all carrying torches.

"I remember that, but I was more impressed by the sound of their feet. There was absolutely no talking, and I don't think there were any drums or other instruments,—just that eerie silence broken only by a kind of shuffling (rather than marching) of the hundreds of feet. It was terrifying to me and it still sends a chill down my spine when I remember it now."

Sincerely,
Bob Nozum

Brown Reunion

June 27, 1996
Monongah, West Virginia
Editor:

The Zinns mentioned in the Summer 1996 article, "100 Years of the Brown Reunion" by Peggy Ross, are my husband's ancestors. As self-appointed family historian, I am compelled to advise you that the genealogical information is slightly incorrect.

William Byrne Brown was *not* a child of Samuel Byrne Brown and Julia Zinn, because Samuel Byrne Brown wasn't married to Julia Zinn. Samuel Byrne Brown, born October 20, 1793, was married in 1820 to Permelia Zinn, sister to Major William B. Zinn of War of 1812 fame. The Major was the husband of Julia, Juliet Franklin Zinn. The Major and Julia had no children. This would make Julia Samuel's sister-in-law, not his wife.

Samuel Byrne Brown and Permelia Zinn had 11 children, of which William Byrne Brown was the fourth, born on July 23, 1829. William Byrne Brown's brother was Granville Brown who lived to be 92, was born on January 6, 1832, and may be the same Granville Brown pictured on page 19 of the article.

So William Byrne Brown was a nephew of Major and Aunt Julia

Zinn, and purchased "their fine farm." The Major died February 20, 1875, and Aunt Julia continued to live on the farm with William Byrne Brown, known as Byrne Brown, until her death on December 9, 1882. Rebecca E. Martin

The Bridge at Glade Creek

July 17, 1996

Hinton, West Virginia

Editor:

In Leona G. Brown's "Grandview" in the Summer 1996 issue, on page 36, in reference to timber business of the J. R. Beaty Lumber Company, she said in part:

"...the company built a small railroad to carry the logs down the mountain to a bandmill at Glade. A railroad bridge carried the cars of sawed lumber across the river to the main line. The supports for this bridge are still standing in the river just above the mouth of Glade Creek."

Dr. Eugene L. Huddleston, Michigan State University, and I did extensive research of the crossings at Glade for the New River Symposium, Pipestem, April 11-14, 1991. Ms. Brown's article is well written and interesting but the statements quoted above are inaccurate.

The small railroad she refers to was the Glade Creek & Raleigh, a narrow-gauge railroad, founded at Crow, July 18, 1891, running from Crow, where the mill was located to the end of line at Hamlet, a village at the mouth of Glade Creek on the south side of New River from Glade. By 1896 the line was extended from Crow to Beckley. In 1906 the GC&R merged into the Raleigh & South Western and the trackage was taken up between Crow and Hamlet.

The finished product was hauled to Hamlet and apparently crossed the river to be loaded in standard-gauge C&O cars for shipment to market. No evidence exists that there was ever a bridge at Glade prior to the one built in 1922 by The American Bridge Company (whose piers remain in New River today) for the standard-gauge Glade Creek Coal & Lumber Company. They had

a bandmill at Hamlet and were in operation from 1924 until 1936.

Sincerely,
Roy C. Long

We're not about to argue railroading with C&O retiree Roy Long, ex-telegrapher and ex-train dispatcher and regular railroad columnist for the Hinton News. He and Professor Huddleston are among the handful of people we usually ask about railroading, and we appreciate their feedback on this article. — ed.

The Foxy Reynard

July 15, 1996

Boynton Beach, Florida

Editor:

This is to thank GOLDENSEAL for publishing the words to the song "Bold Reynard," known to me as "The Fox Hunt" song. I was beginning to think I was going out of my mind.

In the 1920's the Snider family reunion was always held in Doddridge County, somewhere between West Union and Greenwood on the north side of old Route 50. My Uncle Lott Snider would take his family and me to the affair of-



"Between you and me, I thought I was going bonkers until I turned to page 33 in the summer issue of GOLDENSEAL."

ten. Every year he would be asked to sing. He always sang the same songs, "Bold Reynard" and "The Watermelon Song." He always got a lot of applause.

His son Jack, my cousin, and I ran together. We both liked to sing and with the help of his dad we learned the words to "Bold Reynard." We sang it quite often.

At age 15, my family left Wolf Summit. For years this song rumbled around in my head and quite often I would sing it to my-

Happy Holidays!



Fall in West Virginia finds folks getting ready for winter, and that means getting ready for the holidays. After Thanksgiving, Christmas is just around the corner. It's the time of year we all scramble to find special holiday gift ideas for friends and family.

You can simplify your shopping by giving the gift of GOLDENSEAL.

Sixteen dollars buys a year's worth of good reading. GOLDENSEAL brings out the best of the Mountain State, stories direct from the recollections of living West Virginians, backed up by the finest old and new photography. And even after more than two decades of publication, we can still promise that there's plenty of good West Virginia material for the new year. Stories that are just right for GOLDENSEAL and for you, not to mention those on your holiday gift list.

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self, sometimes out loud. *No one* seemed to have heard of it. I think some of the people thought I was a "little touched," especially when I sang the chorus. You have to admit the words are a little puzzling if you haven't spent any time around fox hunters.

About 1980 I went back to Clarksburg to visit old friends and relations. I went out to Quiet Dell to visit Jack. I had the words with me and showed them to him, even sang them. Imagine my surprise when he said, "I don't remember anything about them." He was of sound mind and did remember going to the reunion and where it was.

Between you and me, I thought I was really going bonkers — that is, until I turned to page 33 in the summer issue of GOLDENSEAL. There it was! Thanks to the memory of Rita Emerson, word for word what I had been singing for almost 70 years, not being sure if the words had ever been printed or sung by anyone but me and Uncle Lott Snider.

I am 82, and thanks to all of you good people I am still singing "Bold Reynard."
Respectfully,
Harold Carpenter

Brooks Smith

March 23, 1996
Hamlin, West Virginia
Editor:

What a treat to open GOLDENSEAL and find Andrew Dunlap's interview with one of my favorite musicians, Brooks Smith.

It is hard to imagine more fun than making music with Brooks and his good friend George Philips. Both gentlemen are patient teachers who love those old tunes and overlook any stray notes from those of us trying to learn.

There is no more fun to be had than a music session at Vandalia or Glenville with Brooks and George, playing "Indian Killed a Woodcock," "My Little Girl," "Too Young to Marry," "Whistling Rufus," "Soldier's Joy," "It's a Long Way to Tipperary," "Poca River Blues" —

and many others, for hours. Heaven on earth in the keys of A, D and G.

Last year at Glenville, after playing all weekend, my jaw hurt. On the drive home Sunday I figured out why. It was from grinning for two days straight!

Paul Gartner

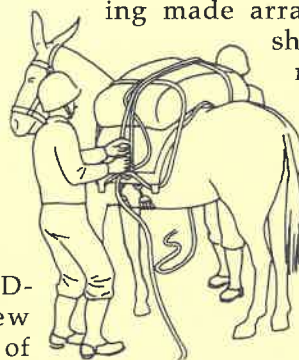
Pack Mules

March 13, 1996
Newport, Pennsylvania
Editor:

It was only recently that a friend of mine sent me a reproduction of an article in the Spring 1991 GOLDENSEAL.

It was an article on the use of pack mules in the West Virginia Maneuver Area. While it was informative it did not give the entire picture. I was the commanding officer of the 254th QM Pack Troop, having been sent in the winter months to Fort Dupont, Delaware, to arrange for the participation of my unit in training troops in the use of pack mules.

I accompanied my outfit to the West Virginia Maneuver Area, having made arrangements for the shipment of the animals. In February



Mule packing, from Army Field Manual 25-7.

1943 we swam the animals across the swollen Dry Fork River. We had several hundred soldiers who learned how to load and use the animals in very rugged country. I later learned that our training

was entirely directed for use in the Army's attack through the Italian Alps. Although the animals were never sent overseas, a number of the men of my troop were used in Italy with local mules and donkeys.

This past summer I attended the reunion of the West Virginia Maneuver Area units held at Kingwood. I was the only officer from West Virginia Maneuvers who attended.

Very truly yours,
Kenneth F. Moist, Major (retired)

"Who Could Refuse?"

Still More Cowpokes

We began hearing from the pony people soon after publishing Brooks Smith's pony-back childhood portrait in the Spring GOLDENSEAL. Subscriber Jan Christian of Charleston was the first to get in touch, lassoing your editor on his way home from work the very day the magazine arrived in the mail back in March.

We published Jan's picture in the Summer issue as a follow-up to the Smith photo. Since then a bunch of other pony portraits have landed here, though the identity of the enterprising photographer remains a mystery.

The original picture, as you may recall, was one of several photos used to illustrate Andrew Dunlap's article about musician Brooks Smith. There is nothing novel about children being posed on ponies in times past or even now, of course, but this pony's distinct markings prompted Jan to rifle through his old photos until he came up with a picture of himself on the same critter. Brooks was photographed in Charleston about 1926, and Jan in Beckley at about the same time.

That naturally got us to wondering just how far that pony had rambled,

and we now have two more confirmed sightings, one from Charleston and the other from about 30 miles up the Kanawha River at Montgomery.

Actually, we got three-for-one in the new Charleston photograph (left), which shows Iona Ross with her brothers Doy and Coy, ages four and three, respectively. Iona herself was born in 1924 and figures she was about

two in the portrait, giving us that same year of 1926 again.

Our other photo of the mystery pony (top) came from Terence Sherwood of Florida, nephew of George William Epling, the fellow actually pictured. This is the one made in Montgomery, and the year was 1926 or 1927, according to Terence. He says he himself was

there as well, but only three or four years old at the time and too scared to mount up.

Otherwise, we got a dandy photo of Bill McLean of Beckley (below) from a few years later and on another pony. Bill, the husband of GOLDENSEAL freelancer Lois McLean and a fine amateur photographer himself, says he is still grateful the camera man spared him the embarrassment of dressing up in cowboy garb.

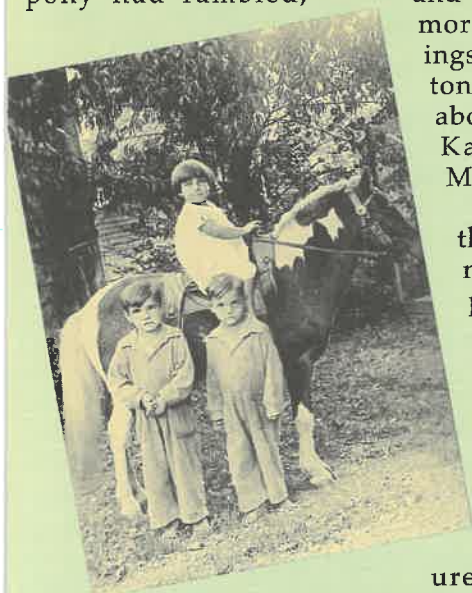
The office favorite for cutest of the bunch — sorry, Bill — goes to Alma Baker of Pruntytown (bottom). Alma says to refer to her as cow-person, thank you very much, and that she lived in Webster

County between Bergoo and Parcoal when the picture was made. She was older than the other kids and remembers the experience very well.

"Sometime during the 30's, a man came through bringing a small pony in the back of his car," Alma writes, adding that the back seat had been removed. "He took a picture of me on this pony. He provided the lasso, the chaps, the hat. My mother bought the picture. Who could refuse?"

And though Alma was on the wrong pony at the wrong time and place, that probably gets to the universal truth of the matter: Who indeed? What mother would turn down a picture like that of Alma, Brooks, Bill and the others?

Whoever he was, we bet the mystery photographer understood that very well.



Tom Brown's Music

Tom Brown retired last year from West Virginia University. He came to Morgantown in 1968 after receiving a doctorate in music education from Northwestern University. In 1971 Brown began collecting Appalachian music. For the next 25 years he visited with people across West Virginia, sometimes spending days at a time looking at family albums, listening, and recording ballads, hymns and fiddle tunes.

Tom Brown was working to explain the place of music in the lives of people he visited. Much of the music and related material he gathered is now housed at WVU's West Virginia and Regional History Collection. Brown donated his collection this past spring, turning over reel-to-reel and cassettes tapes, oral histories, photographs and other information.

"I tried to get as much information as I could," Brown said. "I wanted to know whether they only sang at night to get their kids to sleep, or what. Often I found that music was part of social gatherings — it got people together in isolated areas.

"Most of the people on these tapes were not stage performers," he continues. "A lot of them just knew a

didn't play at folk festivals and often didn't think of themselves as musicians."

The Thomas S. Brown Archives includes African-American folk music and spirituals from the southern part of the state, country church music, railroad chants, banjo music, and old ballads — some originally from the British Isles and some about notorious bank robbers or murderers of later days.

In addition to his teaching and fieldwork, Tom Brown gave numerous lectures, demonstrations and seminars on folk music for public, professional and educational organizations. He has judged many a fiddle and banjo contest in West Virginia and Pennsylvania, and served on the board of the Humanities Foundation of West Virginia and as an advisor to the National Endowment for the Humanities.



Perrie Shaffer of Tucker County is among the musicians included in the Brown Collection. Photo by Thomas S. Brown, 1976; courtesy West Virginia Collection, WVU.

years, and then continued by the county for several years after.

Tom Brown has finished collecting Appalachian music, he says, but his memories of his time on the road will stay with him.

"West Virginians are very outgoing, trusting, friendly, and welcome you into their homes," he offers. "Often they not only invite you for dinner, but expect you to spend the weekend." The size of Tom Brown's collection suggests that this professor of music education worked more than a few weekends.

Brown hopes people will use his collection of Appalachian music. For more information, contact the West Virginia and Regional History Collection, West Virginia University Libraries, Morgantown, WV 26506; (304)293-3536.



Tom Brown records the late Harvey Sampson in Calhoun County, July 1974. Courtesy West Virginia Collection, WVU.

few songs or hymns or played an instrument or two. The music is a good example of what people were performing in their homes. They

fiddles, banjo, clogging and other aspects of mountain music. The Webster County program was funded by a federal grant for four

"Those Weren't Bad Days"

Ritchie County Farm Life

By Larry Bartlett

My father Loran grew up on a Ritchie County farm, swinging a hoe in hillside cornfields. On occasional weekends, he went to a movie theater on the second floor of the A&P Store in Pennsboro, and watched as William S. Hart spurred a bronco across the silver screen. On weekdays there was always a Zane Grey novel in the hip pocket of his overalls, and he dreamed of being a cowboy.

Dad was never to become a bronc-busting buckaroo. But he spent the last half of his life in Colorado, never tiring of the clear, dry air and immense landscapes of the Rocky Mountains. His memories of West Virginia usually involved poison ivy, prickly heat, chiggers, red clay mud, and the weeds and low brush which



Loran Bartlett's story began in Ritchie County in the early years of the century. He poses here with sister Eleanor about 1913. Photographer unknown.

he referred to generically as "filth." Cutting filth with a scythe was his idea of perdition.

Yet, as Dad suffered through a terminal illness in the late 1980's, he grew nostalgic about his Ritchie County boyhood. One day he rummaged through an antique, stamped-tin trunk, searching for a photograph of the family farm. From the trunk he drew out a boxful of pictures that I had never seen before: 19th-century tintypes, turn-of-the-century photographs mounted on embossed cardboard, and snapshots from the World War I era.

There were photographs of small boys in Buster Brown suits and girls in intricately-frilled dresses; ladies in gingham gowns or puffy-sleeved shirtwaists and long, wide-sashed skirts; men in big hats and boots, some wearing walrus mustaches and others with flowing beards. There was a withered matriarch with a brass ear trumpet, and a host of hoary gentlemen who had fought in the Civil War. The Ritchie Countians in those photos seemed more exotic than any Hollywood cowboy. It was amazing to me that Dad could have grown up among such old-fashioned folk.

My father never dwelled on the past, so the box of photos had been stored away and ignored for half a century. Many were yellowing, battered and flecked with age spots. As Dad sorted through the pictures, he recognized some of the faces with instant pleasure; other faces were only half-remembered or utterly forgotten. He was even slow in identifying photos of great-grandparents.

"Old people didn't interest me when I was a boy," he explained. "I didn't pay much attention to them. Now, I wish I had."

Most of modern Ritchie County is covered by second-growth forests. But Dad's turn-of-the-century pictures showed a landscape of treeless hills, bordered by snake fences. In the photos, leather-topped carriages and Tin Lizzies bounced along country lanes, and ladies in wide, feathered hats rode side-saddle across meadows that are



Claude Bartlett and Snow Ward Bartlett, Loran's parents. Tragedy struck the young couple in 1910, when Claude, age 21, contracted typhoid fever and died. Photographers unknown.



now lost in brush and thickets. The countryside seemed to be fairly aswarm with people attending community picnics, holding family reunions, watching oil gushers spout from wooden derricks, and gathering by the hundreds to "cut filth" in local cemeteries.

"Those weren't bad days," my father mused. "I wouldn't mind going back and living them over again."

Dad had deep roots in Ritchie County. His great-grandfather Elijah Bartlett had moved there from Simpsons Creek, Taylor County, in 1859. Elijah built a two-story, split-log house on Upper Spruce Creek, in eastern Ritchie County, and cleared land for a livestock farm. My father was born in the log house on July 4, 1909, and was the son of Claude and Snow Ward Bartlett. A sister, Eleanor, was born the following year.

Dad's mother Snow was a tiny blonde Gibson Girl who was prone to fits of giggling. Her husband Claude was a large, ambitious, determined young man. Their brief marriage ended in tragedy.

Scattered among the photographs in Dad's old trunk are a few cards and letters that were written by his parents. That faded correspondence shows the flavor of their personalities. In June 1905, Claude sent a courting letter to Snow. The letter, written with beautiful penmanship, is briskly matter of fact.

"Dear friend," he wrote to Snow. "I have heard there will be preaching at Otterslide the first Sunday in July. If it will not be interfering with other engagements of yours I would like the honor of being with you on that date. Wishing an early reply I am yours, Claude Bartlett."

Later in their courtship, Snow took a railroad trip to Virginia, to see the Jamestown Exposition of 1907. From the exposition, she sent Claude a souvenir postcard with a note written in an excited, girlish scribble: "Am having the grandest time you ever heard tell of!"

During their brief marriage, Claude and Snow launched a variety of projects to improve the 200-acre farm on Upper Spruce



The young widow brought her children back to father Tom Ward's big house on Shady Lane.

Creek. They planted apple, cherry and pear orchards, and leased adjacent land to grow feed corn.

In 1910, the 21-year-old Claude hired a brother-in-law, Clovis Ward, to help dig a ditch across a boggy meadow. Apparently there was a bad well nearby, because Claude, Snow and Clovis were all stricken with typhoid fever. The two men died in misery, but Snow survived.

The little widow and her two babies went to live at the home of her father, Tom Ward, who owned a 122-acre farm near Berea. Tom lived in a big Victorian house at the end of a rutted, axle-breaking road called Shady Lane. He and his wife, Frances Frymier Ward, raised six children in the house, but it had become a place of empty rooms. Frances had died shortly before their youngest son Clovis succumbed to typhoid. Embittered by those deaths, Tom became a rather stern, withdrawn man. He tried to forget his sorrows through endless hours of labor in the fields and, from an early age, my father was expected to do the work of a full-grown farmhand.

Tom Ward's fields were planted

in corn, sweet sorghum, tobacco and vegetables. But the heart of the farm was a hillside apple orchard and a commercial cider press. "Granddad buried old horseshoes around the tree roots, to add iron to the soil," my father said. "Every spring, he'd go through the orchard and prune those trees back to the

"Old people didn't interest me when I was a boy. I didn't pay much attention to them. Now, I wish I had."

nub. No one could grow apples like Granddad."

My father disliked the long hours of farm labor, but he developed a righteous resentment of idle people. That resentment was aroused each time he was sent on an errand to the nearby town of Berea.

At the foot of the old covered bridge in Berea was a store and blacksmith shop owned by Mike Jett. Perpetually loafing on the front porch of the store was Mike's grown

son, Sky Jack. The sight of that young man's endless leisure was infuriating to my hard-working father. According to Dad, Sky Jack Jett spent his days in loitering, whittling, wise-cracking and horse trading.

At the time, horse trading was a glamorous vice, like billiards and poker. Horse traders would gather in the back alleyways of Cairo, Auburn, Pullman, Berea and other country towns. While sharing a bottle of whiskey, each man would brag extravagantly about his own horse and heckle the other traders. Then, they would challenge one another to race their mounts in a mud-splattering gallop. Finally, they would try to outwit each other in a trade.

One horseman might bait another by saying: "I'll swap my prime young mare for your spavined old nag, if you'll give me something to boot." The "boot" could be a small amount of cash, a knife or a pocket watch. Among Ritchie County traders, a knife was the favorite kind of barter. It was fashionable for each of the horsemen to wear, dangling from his belt, a long dogchain that was loaded with clasp knives. The knives were a skillful trader's tro-

The Stuff of Family History:

The Pallie Bartlett Papers

Larry Bartlett is one of the best we know at vividly recreating family history, especially the history of his own and related families in the hills of Ritchie County. The stories come from family recollections, he says, and also from the surviving papers and personal effects of people like Pallie Bartlett.

Great-grandma Sarah Palestine "Pallie" Bartlett died in 1930. That admirable lady would be almost forgotten if she had put her paid-up bills, receipts and out-dated records in the trash. But Pallie seems to have squirreled away every scrap of paper that came into her hands.

In 1987, I discovered Pallie's tattered leather file folder, bulging with household receipts and business papers. Pallie was born in 1861, but she had amassed obsolete property deeds and legal contracts that dated back to 1838. She had also saved turn-of-the-century tax bills, bank statements, IOU's, cattle-sale receipts, feed lot bills, dry-goods

store receipts, bills for cattle weighing and even postage-due notices from the mail carrier. One wouldn't have supposed that bygone farm life had involved so much paperwork.

Those moldering papers provide a record of rural economics in Ritchie County, and they give a glimpse of my great-grandmother's life and times.

Pallie married Lair Dee Bartlett, son of pioneer Elijah, in 1880. They lived at the Spruce Creek log house with their children, Daisy and Claude. Lair died in 1901, at age 54, and Pallie saved all of the bills resulting from his death. The records show that she paid \$26 to Lair's doctor, \$20 to the carpenter who made his coffin, and \$75 to a stone-carver for a marble monument.

Also, she left Lair's work boots sitting on the bedroom stairs for the next 29 years. That was a more personal kind of monument.

A few years after her husband's death, Pallie's children found mates

in a rather convoluted fashion. Her son Claude married Tom Ward's daughter, Snow. Tom Ward's son Boyd married Pallie's daughter Daisy. That made my father, Claude and Snow's son, double first cousins with Boyd and Daisy's daughter Hazel.

After Claude died of typhoid in 1910, my great-grandmother struggled to run the 200-acre farm by herself. Daughter Daisy and son-in-law Boyd lived nearby, but she was determined to be independent.

The only existing photograph of Pallie is blurred and out of focus. It shows her to have been a small, sturdy woman, with greying blonde hair pulled tightly back into a bun. Although diminutive, she was an active horsewoman, able to oversee the livestock farm on horseback and to ride into the town of Auburn on market days. In the late 1940's



phies and his stock-in-trade.

Sky Jack Jett wore a string of clasp knives on his belt as he loafed on the porch of his father's store, exuding an aura of worldly glamour. Occasionally, as Dad trudged up the steps to the store, Sky Jack made good-natured jokes about his work-stained clothes and sweaty brow. The grinning horse trader could never have guessed how much his jibes rankled the dusty farm boy. All through his life, Dad bore a seething and unreasonable grudge against that affable young man.

Of course, the Jetts are a highly-respected Ritchie County family, and I have no doubt that Sky Jack was a credit to society. I never met the man, but he is a hero of mine. I've always admired his amazing name and, unlike Dad, I've tended

to approve of his alleged lifestyle.

When I was growing up in suburban Parkersburg, Dad would put me in charge of "pulling filth" around our yard while he pushed the lawnmower. I'd whack at a few dandelions before pausing to play with ants and June bugs. "You're as trifling and dilatory as Sky Jack Jett," Dad would snap at me. Then, I'd tug at a few more weeds, muttering, "Way to go, Sky Jack!"

My father was guilty of his own peccadillos during boyhood. One debacle, which occurred in 1919, is especially memorable. In those days there was an oil boom in Ritchie County, and a crew of well drillers was renting rooms in Tom Ward's big old house. Tom warned the men that he didn't allow drinking or gambling on the premises. But every night, after Tom went to bed,

the oil workers would sneak out to the backyard privy to enjoy whiskey, cigars and a few hands of poker. They bribed my father to stand guard.

Evidently the boarders weren't particular about their lounging area. Tom took great pride in his house, but the privy was dilapidated. It was a warped three-seater, with a frayed carpet hanging across the entrance and a stack of old *Harrisville Gazettes* on the floor.

One fateful night in late September, Tom's renters sneaked into the privy with a bottle of whiskey and a deck of cards. Dad accepted his usual bribe — which paid for week-end cowboy movies — and stood guard in front of the outhouse. If he saw a light in his grandfather's bedroom window, he was to warn the gamblers.



A very few of Pallie Bartlett's papers, along with a family picture.

her black sidesaddle was still hanging on the wall of Boyd Ward's barn.

Pallie fussed over her taxes, and with good reason. A county sheriff's bill from 1911 shows that she had to pay a "state purposes" tax, a

county levy, a road tax, a building tax, a "special debt" tax, a real estate tax, a capitation tax, and even a one-dollar tax on her dog.

The total amount of these annual taxes was only \$32.63, but at that time she was selling heifers for \$9.80 per hundredweight. A bill shows that she paid \$12.40 to have two steers weighed. But she was able to buy a colt for \$5, and a yearly subscription to the *Harrisville Gazette* was only \$2.

During those tight-money days, local farmers assisted each other by making small personal loans. Pallie's file folder contains dozens of IOU's for money that she had borrowed or loaned. The IOU's are written in pencil on little scraps of colored paper, but their language is formal and they always state that an unspecified amount of interest is to be paid.

Pallie deposited her cattle-sale checks at the Exchange Bank in Auburn, usually withdrawing \$2 or \$3 for pocket money. While in Auburn, she liked to shop for calico, silk thread and fripperies at Howard Gluck's dry goods store. Howard's sales receipts are emblazoned with the motto: "Time is money."

Pallie's purchases were always modest. For instance, on July 13,

1907, she paid 43 cents for embroidery and 25 cents for a china dish. I'm grateful that she saved the sales receipt. It's oddly pleasurable to know what one's great-grandmother was doing on a summer afternoon, 89 years ago.

Pallie began to lose her energy in the late 1920's, and she finally went up the road to live with Daisy and Boyd. They gave her a bedroom with a window that looked out over her farm and the abandoned log house.

During the summer of 1930, Pallie became bedfast. On the night of July 16, my father and Hazel Ward sat by her bedside. These cousins seem to have been as emotionally close as identical twins. That might help to explain a strange event which occurred.

Shortly before midnight, Dad and Hazel saw a glowing light on Pallie's windowpane. In the glow, they saw the words: "July 17, 1930." Their grandmother Pallie died on that date, the following day.

Dad and his cousin were young moderns who scoffed at country superstitions. In later years, they always acted a bit sheepish when they talked about the ghostly writing on Pallie's windowpane.

— Larry Bartlett

The men smoked and drank until midnight. Then they came out of the privy and went to bed. Later that night, my father was awakened by an orange glow on the ceiling of his room. He looked out the window and saw the privy in flames. Apparently, a stray cigar butt had set fire to the stack of newspapers. Dad sat by the window all night, watching the outhouse sink into embers and ashes.

It was apple-harvesting season, and Tom Ward had been drinking plenty of raw cider. The next morning, he was awakened by an urgent call of nature. Clad only in his long johns, Tom raced down the stairway and out the back door, headed for the privy. But, instead of that homely little building, he saw a smoldering hole in the ground. Without slackening pace, that stern

old gentleman sprinted across the lawn, leaped over the fence and disappeared into a cornfield.

Later that day, Dad helped Tom Ward to rebuild the outhouse, and they did a fine job. The last time I saw the privy, in 1963, it was still a handsome building.

Dad's aunts and uncles often visited the farm, bringing the latest gossip to Shady Lane. A favorite visitor was his colorful uncle, Ledru Ward. During the oil boom years, Ledru made good money as a derrick contractor. He raced around Ritchie County in a Stutz Bearcat, indulging a taste for liquor and shouting his strange oath: "Son of a gun to Peeroo!" When I was a boy in the 1940's, I was taken to see Ledru on his deathbed. He gave me a fistful of coins to buy ice cream and candy, saying: "Son of a gun to

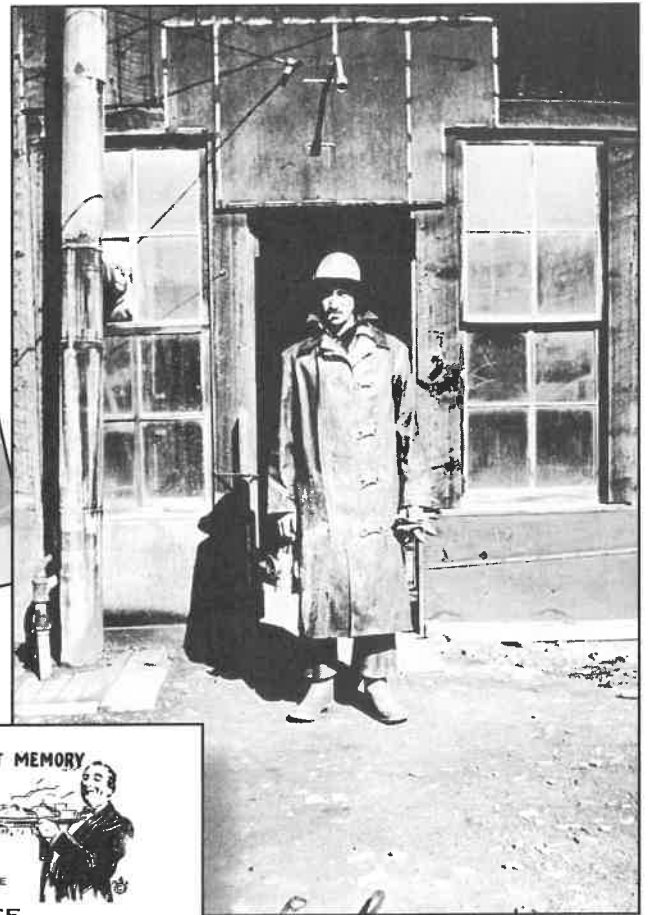
Peeroo, boys need to have fun." Those words seemed to summarize his high-spirited life.

Another exciting visitor to Shady Lane was Buckner Zinn, the husband of Tom Ward's sister Annie. During the Civil War, Buckner had served in Company E of the Sixth West Virginia Regiment. Dad remembered him as a frisky old gentleman who was bearded like a prophet. Buckner was a self-taught dentist and inventor, and he was the first farmer in Ritchie County to have electric lights. He built a water-powered generator on the Hughes River, and offered electrical shocks as a treatment for arthritis. He was also a skilled woodcarver, and he created intricate toys that were powered by a water wheel.

Two of Buckner Zinn's sons went



Ritchie County faded to a pleasant memory after Loran reached manhood and moved away. He worked in the family cafe in high school, but rolled west after graduation on an Indian motorcycle. He eventually found himself in Colorado (above right) and went on to make a good life there. Photographers unknown.



west to Wyoming in the early 1900's. One of the boys was an oilman, and the other worked as a big game hunter and guide. Both of the boys sent hunting trophies home to Ritchie County. The Zinn home at Oxford had grizzly bear pelts on the floor, and the walls were decorated with the mounted heads of big horn sheep, elk and mountain lions. The sight of those Rocky Mountain trophies helped to inspire Dad's cowboy dreams.

Tom Ward's habitual strictness was oppressive to my father. He found more congenial company a half-mile down Shady Lane, at the farm home of Tom's younger brother, Albert, and his wife Florrie. They were a cheerful, loving couple, and they encouraged Dad to slip away from his field work for an

occasional glass of cold milk and a batch of home-baked ammonia cookies. I have always been appalled by the idea of ammonia cookies, and I know of no recipe, but Dad declared that Great-Aunt Florrie's cookies were the best he ever tasted.

To relieve the isolation of farm life, Snow Bartlett took her children to Berea for community covered dish suppers, church picnics and quilting bees. In the winter-time, there were quaint events called peanut socials. Farm families would take a bushel of unshelled peanuts to a church in Berea. There they would sit around a hot iron stove to gossip, play games and munch goobers on frosty nights.

Snow was a playful, charming

woman, but after losing Claude she chose to remain a widow. When her two children became teenagers, she moved with them to Harrisville, so they could attend high school. To support the family, she operated the Bartlett's Cafe on Main Street.

Dad flipped hamburgers at the cafe after classes, but his eyes were set on the West. Upon graduation, he bought an Indian motorcycle, rode to St. Louis and entered Parks Air College. While working as a student at the college airport, he became acquainted with aviation pioneer Wiley Post, owner of the ill-fated airplane, *Winnie Mae*. Post later crashed *Winnie Mae* in Alaska, with humorist Will Rogers aboard.

After earning a college degree, Dad rode his motorcycle on a tour

of the Rocky Mountain West. Settling down for a while in Colorado's San Luis Valley, he worked in a timberline gold mine.

Tom Ward died in 1929, and Snow later moved back to Shady Lane. The rural economy was changing, farmhands were no longer available, and Tom Ward's immaculate fields soon became filled with brush and saplings. But Snow clung to the farm for decades, as the woods moved in, selling the property just a few years before her death. I've heard that the big house was later used as a hunting lodge.

Dad flipped hamburgers at the cafe after classes, but his eyes were set on the West. Upon graduation, he bought an Indian motorcycle and rode to St. Louis.

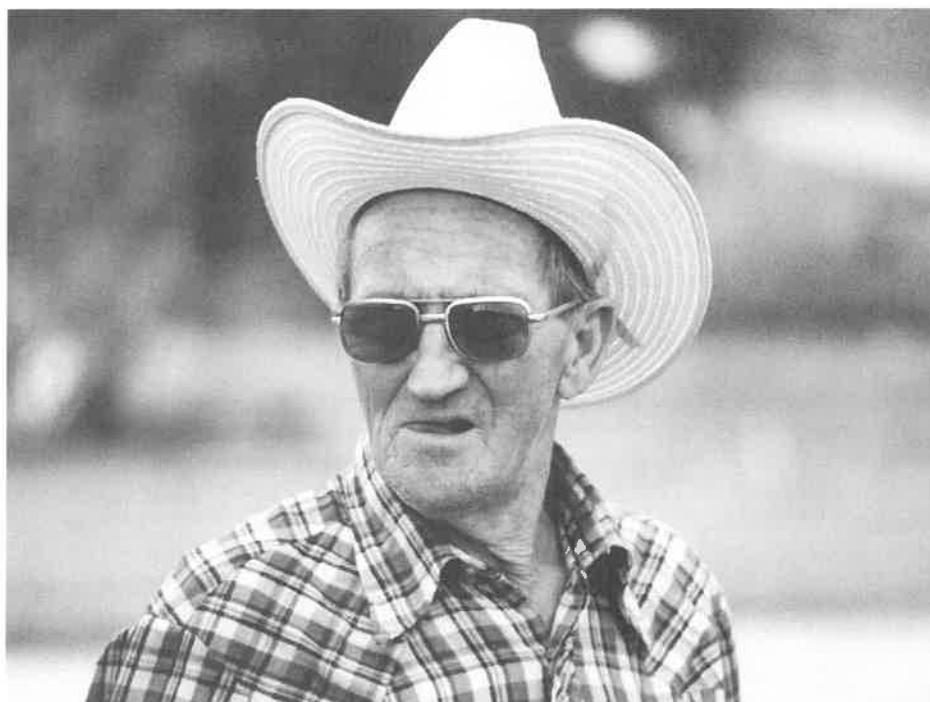
Dad returned to West Virginia in the mid-1930's, married Lucy Lamm and raised three children in Wood County. But he continually

yearned for the Rocky Mountains, and he wrote several cowboy songs that were published. In 1955, when the children reached college age, Dad and Mom moved to Boulder. He was overjoyed to be back in cowboy country. With a Stetson on his head and a cigar clenched in his teeth, he scrambled up alpine slopes that would have intimidated a mountain goat.

But the little town of Boulder grew into a city, beset with urban problems. Stetsons and cowboy boots were gradually replaced by baseball caps and sneakers. In his later years, Dad complained that Boulder had been overrun by hippies, yuppies, New Age mystics and bureaucrats. He never really found the romantic, golden West of his dreams.

In the late 1980's my father was stricken by a crippling illness. Although he had always been a man who lived for the future, his thoughts began wandering back to his boyhood in the hills of Ritchie County. Dad died in 1991. I'd like to believe that, on his trip from Colorado to the hereafter, he took a detour down Shady Lane.

After all was said and done, he loved that Ritchie County farm. ♣



Loran's thoughts turned homeward in his later years. This photo was made by son Larry, our author, in 1982.

Making Ammonia Cookies

Loran Bartlett fondly recalled Ammonia Cookies from his Ritchie County boyhood, but son Larry says he has never been able to find a recipe. With a few inquiries, we did.

We thank Claudette Hicks of Jackson County for discovering the following recipe in an old West Virginia Department of Agriculture cookbook:

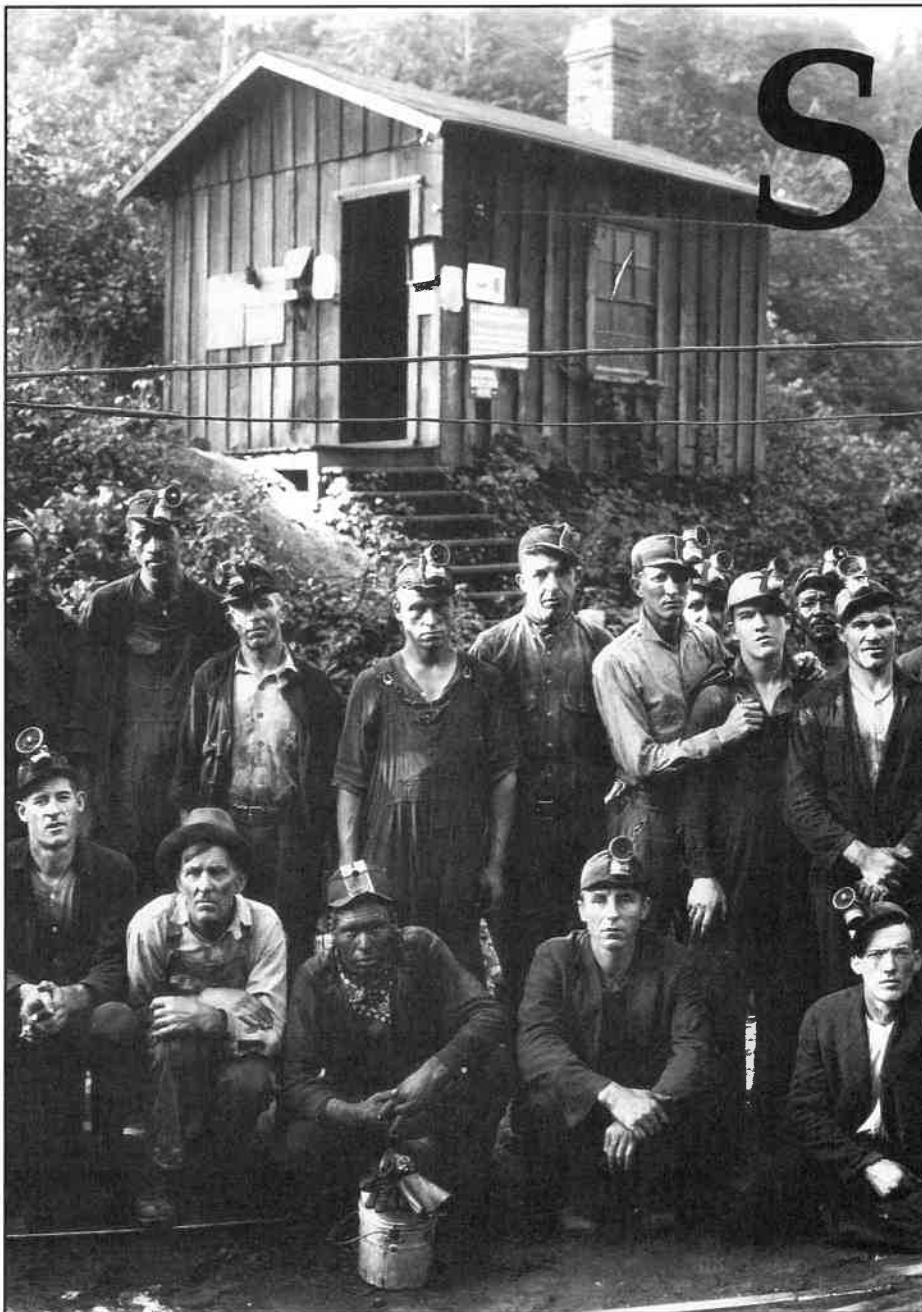
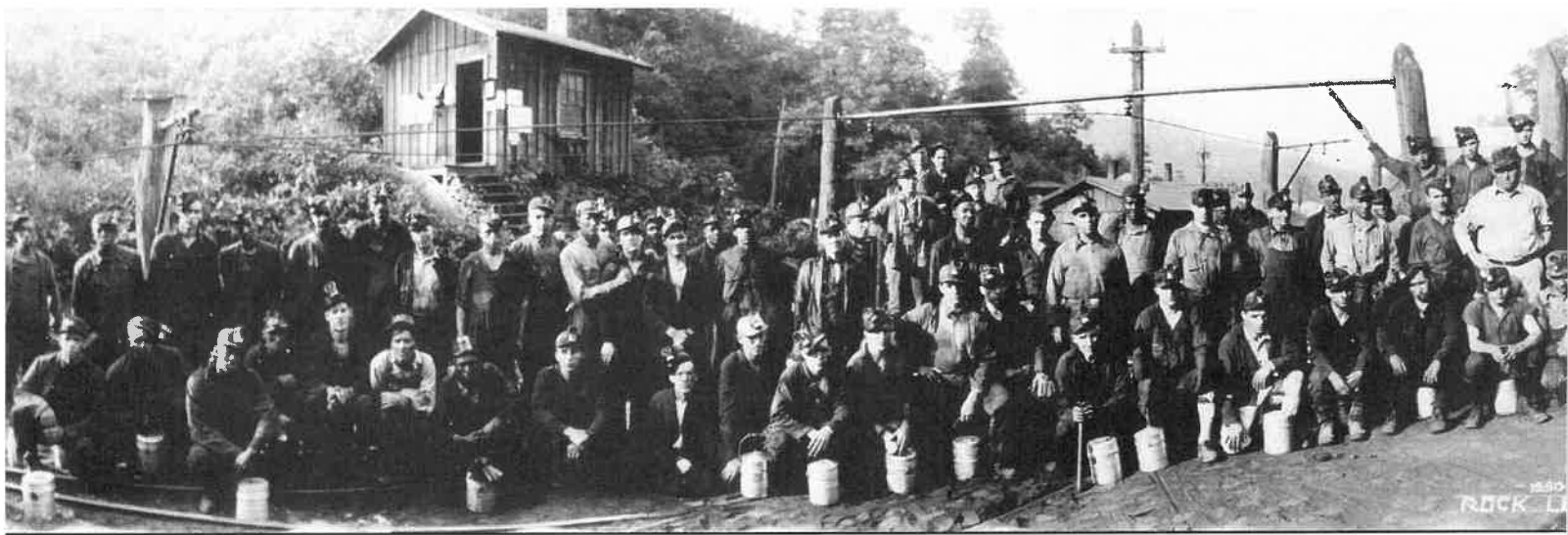
Ammonia Cookies

$\frac{1}{2}$ oz. ammonium carbonate
1 cup milk
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup shortening
 $1\frac{1}{4}$ cups sugar
1 egg, well beaten
 $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. oil of lemon or 1 oz. lemon extract
5 cups sifted enriched flour

Pulverize ammonium carbonate with rolling pin; add milk, let stand 30 minutes or until dissolved, stirring often. Cream shortening and sugar; add egg, lemon flavoring, and milk mixture. Stir in flour. Chill. Roll $\frac{1}{4}$ inch thick on floured board. Cut into 3-inch squares. Prick with floured fork. Bake on greased baking sheets in moderate oven (350 degrees) for 15 minutes or until lightly browned. Makes 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ dozen.

The tricky part will be to find the ammonium carbonate, otherwise known as baker's ammonia. None of the groceries or pharmacies we called carries it anymore, although your drug-gist may be able to order it.

Retired baker and GOLD-ENSEAL reader Ed Rada says the best idea may be to check with a commercial bakery. He says ammonium carbonate is routinely used by bakers, as a dry rising agent in certain recipes. His family's shop — Dutchess Bakery, still thriving on Charleston's west side — often made up small batches of baker's ammonia for customers who requested it in times past, Mr. Rada says.



Sedor

Sedor Fedukovich made his place in America the old-fashioned way, by hard work and perseverance. He immigrated in 1914, died in 1970, and dug a mountain of West Virginia coal in between.

He is remembered with respect by those he left behind.

My grandfather, Sedor Fedukovich, known by his new-found American friends as "Sam," came to West Virginia from Belarus or White Russia. Fleeing the spread of revolution and seeking a better life, Grandpa, at the age of 22 and with little more than the clothes on his back, left his family and friends in 1914. He would never see or hear from them again.

His journey took him across Poland to Bremen, Germany, where he set sail for America on the *Prince Vera Feldm*. The first thing he saw as his ship steamed into New York harbor was the Statue of Liberty. In later years he often said that it was one of the most beautiful sights he

Sedor Fedukovich made a long career in a small mine in Fayette County. He squats fourth from left in this excerpt from the larger panoramic photograph of Rock Lick miners. R.E. "Red" Ribble made the portrait in 1930.



Fedukovich

A New American in Fayette County

By Kevin Andersen

Photographs by Michael Keller

had ever seen.

Grandpa worked for a short time in New York, doing whatever odd jobs he could find. Moving to Baltimore, he worked first in a shipyard and next a sausage factory, then traveled on to Virginia where he worked as a carpenter at Fort Lee. While in Virginia, he heard of all the opportunities in the coalfields of West Virginia. He soon boarded a train bound for Thurmond, in the heart of the New River Gorge.

Thurmond, in its heyday, had a booming commercial district and outside the city limits were several saloons, gambling dens and houses of ill repute. The only way in or out was by train. Thurmond was in every sense a railroad town, for a time handling more C&O freight — coal, mostly — than either Cincinnati or Richmond.

Thurmond is still remembered as a rough place to visit, "hell with a river through it," but Grandpa

didn't spend much time there. He was immediately greeted by Theodore Olenic and offered a job. Mr. Olenic worked for the Rock Lick Smokeless Coal Company to recruit fellow immigrants arriving at the Thurmond train station. Grandpa went home with Mr. Olenic, rented

without money."

Grandpa began his mining career as a track layer inside the mine at Rock Lick. The work was back-breaking, especially with a ceiling only four feet high. Water was a constant problem in the mines, and many times Grandpa had to lay

*There was a saying at Rock Lick that you had to
"bring out a cut of coal, or bring out your tools."
There was nothing easy about a miner's life.*

one of his boarding rooms, and accepted the job at the Rock Lick mine. It was here that Grandpa later met my grandmother, Virgie Tincher, a young lady who worked for Mr. Olenic cleaning house. A few years later, Mr. Olenic built a small wooden bathtub for Grandma and Grandpa's first-born daughter. He mounted a silver half-dollar into it, saying "this way she will never be

track in places where the water was ankle-deep. Pay was based upon the total length of track laid during the two-week pay period. John Cobb, section boss at Rock Lick, praised Grandpa's work as a track man.

But Grandpa, like many mine workers, strove for a job as a coal loader. That offered the chance to make better money. Grandpa be-

gan his work as a loader sometime in the late 1930's. The job brought extra expenses to him. He now had to buy powder for blasting, fuses for igniting the charge, carbide and lamps for light, and blacksmithing for his tools. The coal operator sup-

plied the coal to dig and the cars to haul it out. Mining supplies, plus food and shelter, kept many miners in debt to the company store for years, some for the entire time they worked in the coal mines.

Grandpa's workday began with an early morning walk down Rock Lick Creek to the mine entry, about a mile. While waiting there for the "man trip" to take him and the other

miners underground, he would fill the bottom container of his lamp with dry carbide and the top reservoir with water. The water produced acetylene gas as it slowly dripped down onto the carbide. Cupping the reflector to allow the gas to concentrate as it escaped through the orifice, he would quickly slide his hand across the flint striker. This produced a flame and a loud pop. The flame intensity was adjusted by increasing or decreasing the rate of the dripping water.

Before going underground, each man placed his "check" — a small brass tag with his number stamped on it — on the check board. Upon exiting the mine, he would remove his tag. This system allowed the foreman to see if everyone had left the mine at the end of the shift. Checks left on the board after the shift would require a search of the mine, and any miner who forgot to remove his tag was in for a severe reprimand from his boss.

Grandpa would ride in one of the rail cars with the rest of the miners deep into the mountain to his workplace. In the early days, the cars were pulled in and out of the mine by mules and later by mine motors, actually small locomotives.

Once he got to his workplace, he began his day's work by taking his pick and undercutting the coal seam about three feet deep. This gap allowed the blasting down of the coal

from the coal face. To prepare the charge, he used his auger to drill a series of holes near the top of the coal seam and inserted his powder and tamping material. Next, he inserted the fuse and repeatedly called out, "Fire in the hole!" Then he lit the fuse and headed for cover.

In later years, a cutting machine was used to undercut the coal before each coal loader came to his workplace. "It looked like a chainsaw bar turned on its side and would undercut the coal about 12 to 16 feet wide and six to eight feet deep," according to Sedor's son, Philip. He said that there was a saying at Rock Lick that you had to "bring out a cut of coal, or bring out your tools." There was nothing easy about a miner's life.

Grandpa loaded coal into the car provided for him, taking special care not to load any rock. He would hang one of his brass checks onto the little hook on the coal car to insure that he would get credit for that load. Each miner was assigned his own personal identification number, and Grandpa's check was #1. The check-weighman, working outside the mine, weighed the car and credited Grandpa for the weight of coal he loaded, docking him for any slate or rock. Grandpa averaged about 12 tons a day and was paid every two weeks, at about 30 cents a ton.

Once, after leaving the Rock Lick office with his pay, he was jumped

Grandpa drew his .38 and marched the two thugs in front of him most of the way home. He said he wanted them out in front where he could keep an eye on them.

on the way home by two men who attempted to rob him of his money. Grandpa quickly drew his .38-caliber pistol, which he had hidden in his pocket, and marched the two thugs in front of him most of the



Sedor and Virgie, with daughter Helen. The couple had been together nearly 40 years when this snapshot was made about 1960.

plied the coal to dig and the cars to haul it out. Mining supplies, plus food and shelter, kept many miners in debt to the company store for years, some for the entire time they worked in the coal mines.

The prolific use of scrip helped to promote indebtedness. Scrip was a form of money, either a metal token or paper card, issued by the coal company as an advance on the miner's pay. The miner drew scrip if he needed money to make purchases before payday. Scrip could only be used at the company store, where the prices of the merchandise were highly inflated. Occasionally, other local merchants would accept scrip, at a fraction of its face value; either way, the miner was skinned. Any unused scrip could be redeemed for cash money on payday, but this didn't happen very often. The company store did have the advantage of offering almost



Mr. Olenic's boardinghouse, now occupied by his descendants, is one of Fayette County's oldest houses.

way home. He said he wanted them out in front where he could keep an eye on them. He let them go at a point where he could watch them for quite a distance, then he went on home.

In 1921, Sedor had married Virgie in the nearby town of Fayetteville. It was a union of old and new Americans, since Grandma's ancestry dates to pre-Revolutionary America and to some of the earliest families in the Gatewood area.

They continued to live with the

Olenics for two years and began raising a family. In December 1923 Grandpa and Grandma purchased a small house and four acres of land in Gatewood for the tidy sum of \$450. Eventually they had 12 children in all, Helen, William, Moxie, Elizabeth, Madeline, Philip, Almada, John, Wetzel, Virginia, Paul and Dorothy. Virginia died at birth. Grandpa gradually added onto their tiny two-room house to accommodate his growing family.

One of the handiest things he

added was a nice big kitchen sink, complete with a hand pump which drew water directly into the house from the cistern outside. He also built various pens for the chickens, rabbits, goats, and pigs, a smokehouse for keeping meat, a coal house and two large sheds.

Grandpa was a fine carpenter and took great pride in everything he built. Though nobody actually admits to having to share it with anyone, it has been said that he built one of the nicest two-seater out-houses in Gatewood.

The first piece of furniture he built was a blanket chest which rested at the foot of his bed. He kept a lot of his personal items in it, but the thing the children remember was his cache of coconut candy. Every now and then he would go to this chest and retrieve some of the candy and give it out as a special treat. Two of the children discovered that they could remove some of the screws from the hasp, which was always kept locked, and open the lid to help themselves. After they were finished, they carefully put the screws back. They figured no one would be the wiser, but I suspect Grandpa knew.

In the spring, he hitched up his horse. With his hands firmly grasping the plow handles and the reins draped over his shoulder and around his neck, Grandpa prepared to break the soil. Then he and Grandma would do the planting together. Since money was scarce, they needed a big garden to carry their big family through the long and cold winter months. Potatoes were by far their largest crop, followed by beans, corn and tomatoes. Grandma always planted a small patch of popcorn for the children.

It was hard work, day after day, but Grandpa and Grandma were hardy people and extremely self-sufficient. There were no government programs to fall back on in those days and little charity to be found, nor was any wanted.

While Grandpa was away working in the mines, Grandma kept up the garden, hoeing the corn and potatoes and pulling weeds. She

also tended the animals, for they tried to raise everything they needed right there on their little farm. They had chickens, pigs, rabbits, goats, and at one time or another a milk cow. The only things that they bought from the store were the things they could not produce for themselves, like sugar, salt and flour, and dried milk when they were without a cow. They walked

in the root cellar. Everything they could put up would be needed once winter arrived.

As soon as it was cold enough, Grandpa would butcher a couple of pigs. The family feasted on fresh meat, and preserved the rest in the smokehouse. The lard was saved for cooking and making soap. They could not afford to waste anything.

This time of the year was special

muslin cloth soft to the touch. Grandma always went with Grandpa to buy feed, so she could pick out the feedsack designs she liked most. Many of the designs were of flowers and were cut and sewn into underclothes for her girls. She sewed other feedsacks into pillowcases, upon which she then embroidered her own additional designs.

As the children grew older, they helped more and more around the house. On the days that Grandpa worked in the mines at Rock Lick, several of the children would take a horse down to the mine opening and wait for him to come out. This allowed Grandpa to rest on the ride back home.

At times, work slowed down to only a couple of days a week. Some of the children would go down to the small Rock Lick office to check if the mine would have work for the next day. They looked into the window, which was visible from the road, to see whether the sign read "Work" or "No Work." If there was work, the children came running back home and said, "Poppie, Poppie, they're working tomorrow." Too many times they came back slowly with the news of no work, again.

Life in Gatewood was not all work and no fun. Playing various games was a big part of summer days for the children. They used to love to shoot marbles and try to win their opponents cat-eyes. Other games, especially for the younger children, included jackrocks, checkers and the card game, "Old Maid." Dorothy remembers that sometimes they would play these games all day long.

Listening to the radio was always exciting for the Fedukovich family, and sometimes a little too exciting. During World War II, many people became suspicious of their immigrant neighbors' allegiances. Someone thought that because Grandpa had a radio, he must be spying on the United States and radioing messages back to Russia. It wasn't long before the police came and asked to see the radio. This is the only time I ever heard of my grandfather being scared of anything. He didn't know



Sedor's old homestead still stands, though the outbuildings he crafted are now mostly gone.

to town to get these items, which was cheaper than the company store when they had cash money. They made these trips to town about once a month.

Grandma was an exceptional baker, and the miners where Grandpa worked soon knew it. She routinely baked rolls and biscuits for him to take to the mines, to be sold to the other miners. For many years she used an old wood or coal burning kitchen stove for her cooking. In addition to her baked goods, she sold eggs and frying-size rabbits for extra income.

Late summer and fall brought harvest and canning. Grandma canned quart after quart of beans, tomatoes, blackberries, apples, cherries and peaches. Cucumbers were pickled in a large crock which she kept in the root cellar. The canned fruits and vegetables, along with the potatoes, were also stored

for the treats that Grandma made for the children. Among their favorites were baked apples, which had had the cores removed and filled with either sugar and cinnamon or sugar and cloves. Baked and salted pumpkin seeds, baked ears of corn, and chestnuts roasted on the Warm Morning stove added flavor to those fall days.

As soon as the snow began to fly, the children scooped up big bowls full for snow ice cream. They added cream, sugar and blackberries that had been canned earlier in the year. Dorothy, the youngest daughter, said she would eat that snow ice cream with her back to the Warm Morning stove and "just shiver, it tasted so-o-o good."

During the winter, Grandma caught up on the indoor chores. She spent many hours sewing quilts and clothes. The livestock feed came in brightly colored feedsacks, the

what was going on or why they were there but he showed the police his radio, no different than the kind other Americans owned.

Grandpa was proud of his new country, but he never quite forgot the old. He often took a casual walk with his eldest daughter, Helen, down to the Rock Lick company store. He told her stories about his father, Jimyon. She thought that "Jimyon" was such a beautiful name that she used it to name a stray cat that followed her home from school. One day, while Grandpa was out working in the garden, she saw the cat and jumped up. She called out, "Jimyon, Jimyon. Look who's coming, it's Jimyon!" My

horse, running loose on the road one foggy evening. Danny was a very large horse, purchased by Grandpa from the Rock Lick Coal Company, who had retired it from the hard work of hauling timbers.

Now Grandpa had the problem of how to dispose of the massive carcass. He had a neighbor hitch a team of horses to Danny and drag him to a suitable burial site. Then Grandpa and his son Philip dug and dug for the better part of the day.

Finally, Grandpa said, "That's enough." They rolled the dead horse into the hole, where it landed on its back. Danny's legs stuck straight up, and they realized that the grave was not deep enough. Not willing

grandparents themselves. Grandpa died in 1970 and Grandma in 1986. The old homeplace still stands, though many of the buildings Grandpa built have been reclaimed by the earth. The Rock Lick mine is little more than a depression in the side of the mountain, hard to locate now. Parts of the old road Grandpa used to walk to work and back still exist, although greatly overgrown from lack of use.

Many of the towns which once bustled with activity in the New River coalfield are now only names found on old maps and in the memories of those who called them home. Trains rarely pause at Thurmond, and then only for the



Writer Kevin Andersen (right) is thoroughly acquainted with his Grandfather Fedukovich's old Fayette County stomping grounds. He keeps Rock Lick company store scrip as a souvenir.



grandfather, thinking this was his father, threw down his tools and came running out of the field. Helen got a talking-to about that.

Every once in a while, Grandma and Grandpa would get into a disagreement about something, and Grandpa would joke about packing his things and going back to the old country, pointing his hand toward the east. It would be years later before their children realized that the old country wasn't just out of sight of their Fayette County home.

Life seemed to be one big adventure, with something new and different every day. Once a truck struck and killed Danny, their work

to dig any deeper, Grandpa grabbed his axe and solved the problem by working on the horse rather than the hole. They started shoveling and buried old Danny.

That incident stuck with Philip. He also recalls a gentleman who owned a trading post nearby who would bury all of his dead horses in a place known locally as the horse graveyard. He would leave their legs sticking straight out of the ground. Philip said it was the strangest thing he ever saw. "Some of them still had good shoes on them, too," he recalls.

All of Grandma and Grandpa's children are now grown with families of their own, many of them

occasional traveler who requests a whistle stop. The place is full of tourists during rafting season, but has few permanent residents. The Thurmond post office recently closed.

Much has changed over the years, but enough remains to remind me of the people who came before. On quiet fall nights at my home in Gatewood I can hear the steady rumble of a diesel train, its whistle echoing through the gorge as it passes through Thurmond. It is such a lonesome and distant sound, and one that carries my thoughts to times past, to the good, hard old days of Grandma and Grandpa Fedukovich. ❁

Like many native West Virginians, I now live out-of-state. I try to get back home from Tennessee as often as I can. Home for me is Beckley, in the southern part of the state, but a little piece of my heart will always be in Greenbrier County, where my family has a farm.

Some time ago I told Scott White, who now runs my grandfather's farm, that I was looking for an old dump truck that I could get cheap, to use for my never-ending renovation projects. He told me Frank McClung had one that he might be willing to let go. A few days later Scott called back to say that Frank's truck was a 1961 Ford with cattle

racks, silage boards and a dump bed.

"Frank bought it new in 1961," he mentioned, adding that "it runs good." Frank would sell it for \$800.

Perfect. I said I'd take it.

I couldn't make the trip from Nashville to Ronceverte until deer season, but Frank was willing to wait. On the evening of the second day of deer season, right after the supper dishes were done, I drove up from the hunting camp near the creek to the farmhouse to get Scott. We headed over to Pickaway in neighboring Monroe County to meet Frank and make the deal. Frank met us in front of his garage with the original title in the origi-

nal envelope. We needed a notary's signature to finalize the transaction, so Frank suggested we drive over to Charley Parker's house and get him to notarize the paperwork.

At 77, Frank is still spry after a long life of farming, and he knows the history of the area well. As we drove along, he asked me if I remembered my grandfather, who I'm named for, and we got to talking about the original Albert Updyke Tieche. Frank said he was a good man who could tell the value of anything just by looking at it.

"Now, he got that farm from Mr. William Lawton, didn't he?" Frank asked me.

My father had told me the story

Business, Country-Style

Buying a Truck and Hunkering Down with the Neighbors

By Albert Updyke Tieche II

Photographs by Michael Keller

Getting a man to sign on the bottom line is not all there is to doing business down in farm country. Our author took the time to talk a spell, and went home with a good truck and better memories.



about how my grandfather got the place, back in the early '50's before I was born. I told Mr. McClung it was my understanding that he'd gotten it from Mr. Lawton when Lawton-Jasper Motors ran into some financial trouble. I said I'd heard something about how Mr. Lawton might have had some other business problems as well. Frank said, "Uh huh, that's right."

I waited for him to pick up the story, but he just relit his pipe and

small people door on the left. It was warm inside from a wood stove, and Mr. Parker had covered the walls of the place with antique farm tools. It was quite a sight. He and Mr. McClung pointed out certain ones that were particularly old or strange-looking and asked Scott and me if either of us could identify them.

I could figure out what some of them were for, but Scott got more of them right than I did, even

Mr. Parker notarized it, and we climbed back in my truck.

The early winter darkness in farm country made it seem later than it was, so I was pretty surprised when Frank told me to turn the other direction out of Charley Parker's driveway. "Let's stop down at Beckett's for a minute," he said. We drove a mile or two down U.S. 219 to a big farm right beside the road. The house had a sign in front that said "Tourist Home," and a driveway lined with pickup trucks.

A low wooden building sat off to the left of the property, an old shed that had been added onto more than once. There was a little bit of light coming out of a window, but no sound at all. Frank walked up to the door and went in without knocking. Scott and I followed right behind him.

Inside, the building had the organized clutter of a place that sees a lot of activity on a daily basis. There was a workbench down the left wall, and various tools and farm

Frank's truck was a 1961 Ford with cattle racks, silage boards and a dump bed. Frank bought it new in 1961.

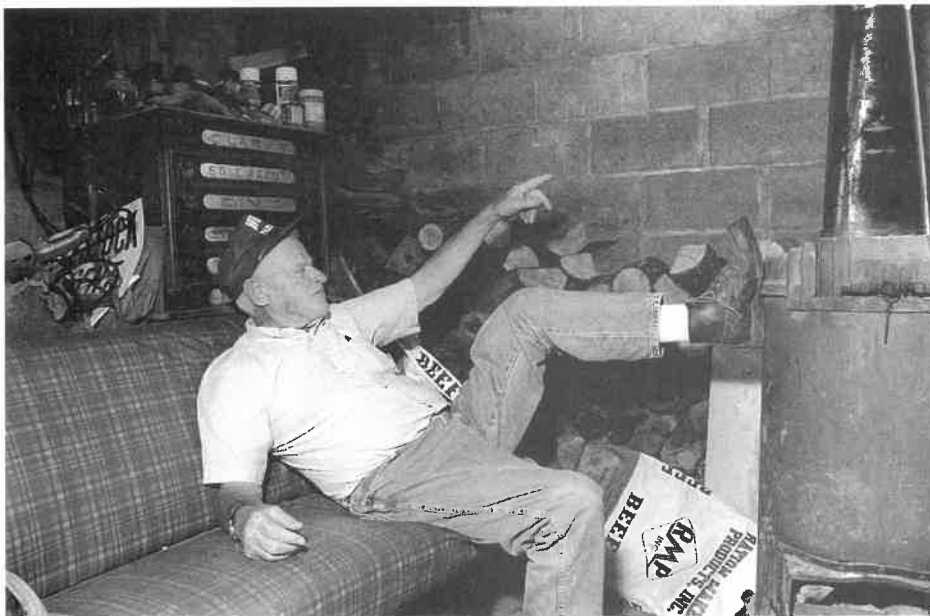
used it to point the way to Charley Parker's driveway.

Charley's wife told us her husband was out in his shed, so we walked across the dark yard to a new-looking outbuilding with big equipment doors in front and a

though he's 15 years my junior. He has the distinct advantage of being an active farmer descended from a long line of active farmers. I spend too much time behind a desk. In due course we accomplished what we came for: We signed the title,



The '61 Ford runs good, but still needs a little loving attention from our author now and then. Family snapshot, courtesy Albert Tieche II.



Frank McClung kicks back at The Hunkerdown. He's done his part, having nursed the Ford through its first 30-odd years.

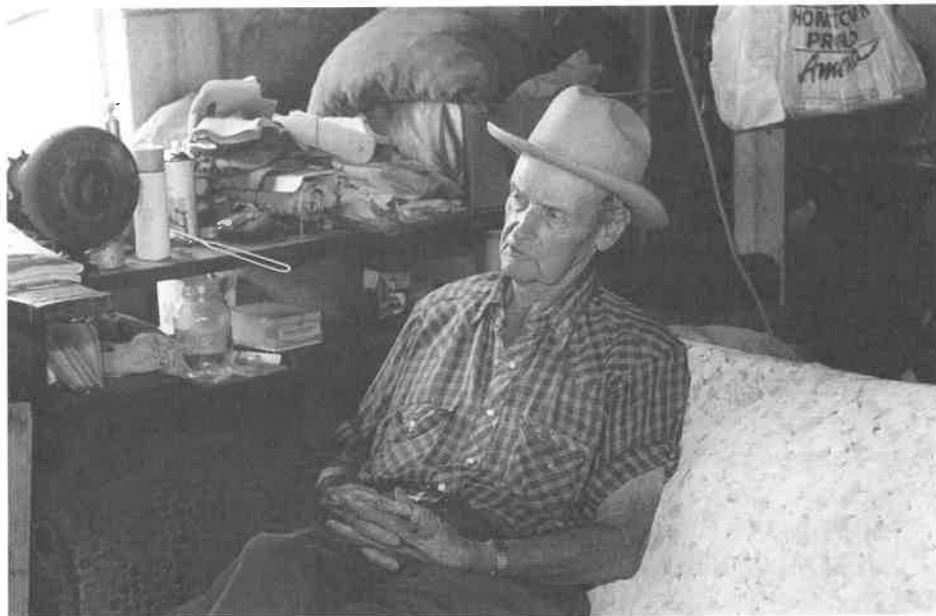
implements hanging from the ceiling to trap the unwary. I had to duck under more than one of them.

In the back a number of old upholstered chairs and couches had been arranged around a potbellied

This was The Hunkerdown, a welcome refuge from the world and wives. A place where men can feel like men — and their women know where to find them if they need them.

stove, the kind of furniture that women consider broken down but men consider broken in. Each piece of furniture was occupied by a man in farm clothes. Several lamps near the stove provided enough light for conversation, but most of the building was left dark. It was snug and warm and smelled good from the oak fire. I felt privileged to be allowed in.

As I found out shortly, this was The Hunkerdown, so named by the wives of the gentlemen who con-



Proprietor Jim Beckett holds down the corner seat at the rural gathering place. He's the man responsible for the Hunkerdown name.

gregated there after the day's work to ponder the state of the world and local affairs and whatever else took their fancy. The attraction of such a place is easy to understand but difficult to describe. These are male places, a welcome refuge from the world and wives. Cluttered and comfortable, where no one tells you to wipe your feet or put the lid down. A place where men can feel like men — and their women know where to find them if they need them.

Frank took on the job of making the introductions. "You boys know Scott White, don't you?" Approving nods and murmurs all around.

"And this is Dyke Tieche from Beckley. Dyke's people have the Tieche Angus Farm, you know."

I shook hands with Jim Beckett, owner of The Hunkerdown. The elder of the group, he was thin and straight and looked to be a contemporary of Mr. McClung's. "Nice to meet you," we both said.

"This is Mr. Moore." He was younger, about my age, and wore bibs and had thick wire-rim glasses.

"Mr. Hoke."

"And this is Dale Beckett, Jim's son."

"Mr. Beckett," I said, noting that he was in his mid-40's and looked like he could do a lot of work.

This continued around the room. Each of us met halfway to shake hands and say a polite word. Finally, the necessary courtesies completed, we newcomers took up seats or found comfortable leaning spots. Drinks were offered from an old refrigerator well-stocked with Pepsi. No alcohol is allowed in The Hunkerdown.

Three generations of Beckett men were in the room, and all of them farmed. Since Jim, the eldest Beckett, was a little older than my father, I



Dale Beckett (left) converses with a family friend on the grounds of the Beckett farm.

was surprised when Frank asked him how his mother was doing.

"She's pretty good," he said. "I was just up in her room before I came over."

Although I'm sure everybody in the room but me knew the answer, Frank asked Jim how old she was. It was a polite way of filling me in on the family background. It turned out she was 94 years old and had pretty much run the homeplace and its tourist home function just until recently. Apparently she was now confined to bed, but her children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren made the pilgrimage to her room each day to report on the

farm and the progress of their lives.

The talk turned to Bill Dickson, a local banker and farmer who had recently had heart surgery and who has since died. I knew Bill, since he owned a farm adjoining ours, and I felt pleased to be able to contribute to this part of the conversation. I asked if he'd really had a transplant like I'd heard, or just bypass surgery. Turned out it really was a transplant, done at Charlottesville, and we all mulled that over a bit, then moved on to his age and general state of health and what impact they might have on the progress of his recovery.

I mentioned the day Scott and I had met with Bill down on the creek that past August. Bill had been thin at the time and looked weak, but had asked to meet to show me where the property line was down by the Big Spring. There had been a mostly civil dispute about the location of that line for two generations; I was, in effect, the third to

participate in it.

None of the Becketts was familiar with that dispute, but we all agreed that Bill probably wanted to get it straightened out before he had to go into the hospital. Apparently he'd been fighting a heart problem for some time. According to the occupants of The Hunkerdown, his wife made him stick religiously to a low-cal, low-fat diet.

"The man looked like he could have used a cheeseburger or two," one of the Hunkerdowners allowed.

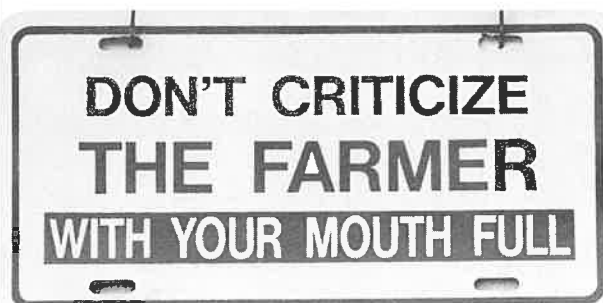
Occasionally, the eldest Beckett would open the top of the

stove to drop in one small piece of split wood. I wondered why he didn't put several pieces in at the same time and be done with it. Then I realized that his method allowed the constant addition of fuel without covering the glowing bed of coals with new wood, which would have lowered the heat output of the stove. The man knew what he was doing. Besides, it provided a nice rhythm to the conversation and kind of punctuated each story.

When it came time to leave, one of the Hunkerdowners told me he was glad to have met me. Another one looked me over and said, "Yeah, we'd heard about Tieches for years but nobody's ever seen one before."

Later, when I was alone in the truck headed back down to the creek, I started wondering where I could build a Hunkerdown of my own on my place in Tennessee. Then I thought about what my wife would say. I haven't gotten around to starting construction yet, even though I'm now the proud owner of a rather fine dump truck. *

Our thanks to former Goldenseal staffer Margo Stafford for help with this story. —ed



An auto tag tacked up at the Beckett farm suggests hardworking farmers don't always get all the credit due.



The entire student body at Horse Creek School easily fit on one page and in one room. Teacher Ed Viers is at center, with bow tie. Photographer unknown, 1941-42.

One Room

Ed and Julia Viers, Wayne County Educators

By Paul F. Lutz

Photographs by Michael Keller

One room was room enough for plenty of West Virginians to get a good start on their education. The state once had thousands of one-room schools, and Wayne

County alone had dozens.

No one remembers better than the teachers who taught there.

Eighty-four-year-old Julia Plymale Viers smiled and chuckled softly as she revealed how she “found” Ed one cold winter afternoon in 1934.

As the one-room school supervisor for the Ceredo District in Wayne County, Julia was making her unannounced visit to Lower Gragston Creek school. Upon arriving at about two o’clock in the afternoon she discovered the teacher, Ed Viers, sledding with his students well past the lunch hour and at least 30 minutes before afternoon recess. Ed, understandably embarrassed upon being caught frolicking with his students, promptly ordered the youngsters back inside the confines of the little white building.

Amazingly, some 45 years later, Julia and Ed would find each other again. Both had been widowed by then, and soon they married. Today, they share a large white frame farmhouse, built by Julia’s father in 1893 and situated on some 350 acres of land along Indian Branch Road in northern Wayne County. The land, now rented to a local farmer, was once part of a 700-acre tract



Ed Viers today. He taught at several one-room schools in Wayne County.

(Ed’s schools); not to mention Perry Ridge, Lost Creek, Sycamore, Joels Branch, Hubbardstown, Billy Branch, Trough Fork, Honey Trace, Genoa, Hickory Gap, Right Fork, Lick Creek, Stonecoal, Locust Grove and Crockett. Incredibly, the Vierses can rattle off not only the

names of the schools but also the names of teachers who taught in them a lifetime ago.

Prior to the state legislature’s creation of the so-called “county unit” system in 1933, each county divided itself into several local school districts, each with its own board of

Was Enough

belonging to Julia’s grandfather, who worked the place with the aid of a dozen slaves.

In addition to the old homestead Ed and Julia also share an encyclopedic knowledge of the one-room-school era of rural Wayne County. They say that before World War II dozens of tiny schools were scattered across the rugged ridges and up and down the narrow hollows of Wayne County.

The picturesque names are a lesson in county geography: Cedar Run, Stoney Point and Trace Fork (Julia’s schools); and Horse Creek, Lower Gragston and Queens Creek



Julia caught Ed playing hooky at least once during his early teaching years, but nonetheless the two later married.

education. Wayne County had seven school districts, stretching from the Ohio River southward to the Mingo County line. As the Vierses explained, teachers' salaries varied significantly from district to district, due to differences in population and tax base. Those districts in the north, from the county seat town of Wayne to the Ohio, offered the highest salaries, while the districts in the southern end of the county paid the least.

And the pay was often uncertain, as well. When I asked Ed and Julia if they were paid on time during the Depression years, they replied "no" promptly and in unison. Sometimes they went two to three months without a pay day, due to slow tax collections.

Ed shook his head and added, "Not only was a teaching job hard to come by and often characterized by tardy pay checks, but before you could even be considered for a job you had to contribute \$50 annually to the Wayne County Democratic Party campaign fund!" Julia then reminded Ed that being a Methodist was also a plus in securing a teaching position.

After contributing to the party for several years, Ed decided to take a stand in 1941. He refused the Democratic bagman's request for the yearly contribution, arguing that it was unfair and against the law. He still got a job that year, but he was banished to Horse Creek, way out in the boondocks. In retrospect Ed figures that his stubborn



Doris Finley (right) and Doreen Simpkins taught in one-room schools in Wayne County.

principles cost him a lot more than \$50, since he was forced to pay room and board near the school in addition to maintaining his residence in Buffalo. Not too long thereafter, he recalled, the illegal practice gradually disappeared.

Julia Viers, away for five years to earn a master's degree at the Uni-

One clearly had to have a calling and a sincere love for the profession in order to tolerate the vagaries of public education in rural West Virginia during the Great Depression. After graduating from high school, which itself often required much perseverance and hardship, one could take the state teachers'

Before you could even be considered for a teaching job you had to contribute \$50 annually to the county Democratic Party campaign fund. Being a Methodist was also a plus.

versity of Kentucky, missed much of the worst of the political exploitation of teachers. Nevertheless, upon returning to the classroom she was given a one-room school requiring a horseback ride of nine miles daily, round trip. Actually she didn't often get to ride all nine miles, because her horse refused to allow the saddle cinch to be pulled tight. This caused Julia to slide backwards when going uphill and lurch forward when going down, and more times than not she ended up walking half the distance to school and back.

exam and begin teaching the following school year. Depending on one's score, either a first-, second- or third-level certificate was awarded. Each carried a different salary but all required the completion of a minimum of six college credits per year toward the so-called Standard Normal Certificate. That was a two-year terminal degree in teacher education.

In 1933 Ed Viers took the state exam and scored high enough to earn a third-level certificate and a one-room school paying \$35 per month. Upon completing his Stan-

Herman Wellman, James Osburne and Mary Stepp, Lower Gragston School, 1942.



Doris Booth, Homer Viers, 1942.



dard Normal at Marshall in 1936, his monthly salary skyrocketed to a whopping \$113. He said it made him feel as rich as Rockefeller.

Julia started at a higher rate than Ed. She had completed some college work and began teaching in 1930 with a "Short Normal" Certificate, which brought her the handsome sum of \$85 per month. But, she recalled, during the Depression the school year sometimes lasted only seven or eight months due to low tax collections.

Other Wayne County teachers corroborate the Vierses' salary history. Elsie Perry Ferguson (who taught at Milum and Genoa) reported her 1926 salary as \$50 per month with \$6 increments for each year's experience. She also noted that she paid \$8 per month for room and board at a house near her school. Virginia Cole (Hubbardstown school) and Jean Patton recalled salaries of \$50 and \$54 per month, respectively, in 1934. Reba Kuhlke (Damron Ridge, Billy Branch, Laurel) remembered a monthly salary of \$91 in 1941, of which \$30 went for her car payment. She said she received no yearly increments during the 12 years she taught in one-room schools.

Once assigned to a school, a teacher faced challenges on all fronts. Often it was hard simply getting to and from the remote schoolhouses. District boards tried to locate schools so as not to require much more than a two-mile walk by students, but they gave no such consideration to teachers. They had to arrange daily transportation or board with local families.

Walking-distance schools meant that few days were missed on account of weather. Julia Viers explained that even when the creek was high a parent would bring a horse and the students would be

carried across, one-by-one. The parent would return when school was dismissed if the creek was still up at the end of the day.

As a rule, school buildings were constructed as cheaply as possible with rough-cut frames covered with lap-siding, often poplar, and topped off with the standard tin

roof. Depending on the site, schools might have three large windows on each side, or possibly four to six windows on a single side, whichever one provided the best chance for sunlight. Prior to World War II, most schools were outfitted with a potbelly stove in the center of the room, burning wood or coal. Chil-

One-Room Museums

One of West Virginia's smallest schools moved to the campus of one of the biggest when the one-room Union School was relocated to Marshall University in April of 1995. The Marshall University One-Room School Museum, on the corner of Fifth Avenue and Seventeenth Street, is meant to illustrate West Virginia's rural education heritage. Professor Paul Lutz, the museum's developer and director, says it also celebrates Marshall's history as a teacher-training institution.

In 1989 Dr. Lutz, Dr. Carolyn Karr and Dr. Steve Riddel began a major oral history project by assigning students to identify and interview former one-room school teachers. Before the project was finished, nearly 400 former teachers had participated. The audio tapes are available to the public for research purposes.

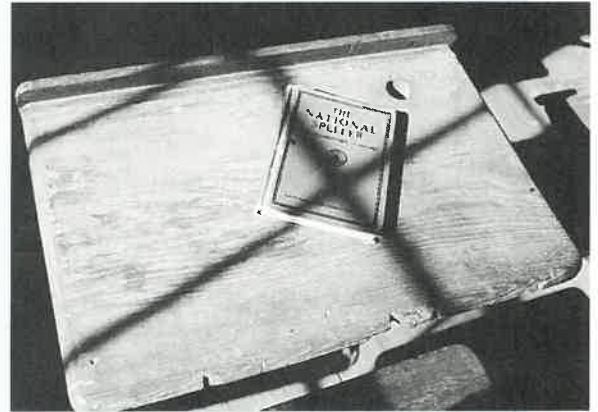
In 1990 planning grants from the Cabell County Commission and the City of Huntington got the museum project going. In 1994 Mrs. Tina Bryan of Cabell County donated Union School, dating back to about 1889, in memory of her husband.

The next year, Marshall alumnus Phil Cline funded the relocation and renovation of Union School in honor of his parents, Ovie and Jessie Cline. Both were one-room school teachers.

In October 1995 the museum was formally dedicated by Marshall University President Dr. J. Wade Gilley, himself a former one-room school pupil.

Old one-room school buildings dot the Mountain State, many in disrepair or adapted to other uses. Among those which may be visited by the public are school museums at the State Farm Museum in Point Pleasant, Fairmont State College, and the Southern West Virginia Youth Museum in Beckley. The Irish Corner School, restored by the Nicholas County Historical Society, sits at Nicholas County Memorial Park in Summersville. In Doddridge County, the historical society restored the Krenn School at New Milton.

For more information on the Marshall University museum or the oral history collection of one-room school teacher interviews contact Dr. Paul F. Lutz, History Department, Marshall University, 400 Hal Greer Blvd, Huntington, WV 25755; (304)696-2956.



A desk at Mission Ridge School, West Virginia State Farm Museum.

dren seated near the stove sometimes complained of being too hot while those farther away were often chilly due to uninsulated walls and drafty windows.

The front wall featured several sections of slate blackboard which were used by a constant parade of students. The students sat at one- or two-seat Peabody-style desks. Such desks, with their fold-up seat in the front, featured an ink well in the upper right-hand corner into which many a girl's pigtail was dipped by an ornery boy. Desks came in various sizes, to accommodate students who ranged from first grade through the eighth. The younger children sat up front near the teacher's desk, with older students toward the rear.

Outside, some schools had hand-pump wells while many others had none, simply carrying their water from the nearest house. Inside the school either a water bucket or water crock was filled with drinking water each day, with an additional bucket or pan reserved for hand washing. Although some schools may have allowed students to share a dipper, most children either brought their own tin cup or fashioned a makeshift paper cup for drinking.

Coal was often kept in a small shed outside. At a greater distance from the school, and from each other, were outdoor toilets for each sex.

The Vierses said the outhouses were routinely supplied with a Sears-Roebuck catalog, and Julia was surprised one year when the local board delivered a large box of real, honest-to-gosh toilet paper to her school. The prized toilet paper was not left in the outhouse but carried to and from by the student using the facilities. She remembered one nine-year-old boy who was so fascinated with the store-bought paper that once outside the school he put the roll on the ground, picked up the loose end and proceeded on toward the outhouse trailing the paper behind him all the way. Mission accomplished, he retraced his steps, re-rolling the toilet paper all the way back.

Small-Scale Schooling Today: Education at Sand Hill

Sand Hill School is located in rural Marshall County, atop a high, green knoll, 20 miles from Moundsville. With just three classrooms, it is one of the smallest in the state. The present building celebrated its 40th anniversary this past spring with an ice cream social, but earlier schools on the site go back 116 years.

Nowadays Sand Hill School is served by three full-time teachers, one for first and second grades, one for third and fourth, and one for fifth and sixth. The kindergarten is open all day, every other day. The school has, as well, a principal, janitor, and a cook but no cafeteria — children eat inside in bad weather and outdoors in the sunshine on good days. There are specialists who visit on a regular timetable.

The little school has always prided itself on having big expectations. Most significant of its recent achievements was its recognition in 1995 as a West Virginia School of Excellence, an honor received by only a handful of schools statewide. GOLDENSEAL freelancer Marc Harshman teaches fifth and sixth grades at Sand Hill, and he offers these reflections:

It is hard to imagine teaching anywhere else.

I have taught either at college or in other grade schools for over 20 years, but the past five years at Sand Hill have been the most special. I had not imagined that such intimacy could still be attained in an American school, an intimacy where parents and grandparents, neighbors and

friends all take a hand in the education of their children.

I am convinced that the small size of our school has played a large part in its success. These are really quite average children. Although



Teacher Marc Harshman, janitor Kate McCreary and cook Linda Hazlett at Sand Hill Elementary School. Photo by Cheryl Harshman.

we are a rural school, we are not immune to the problems facing other schools. We have our share of broken homes, of children with many types of disabilities, and the threat of substance abuse is real. But the impact of these factors is lessened due to the real oversight of a real community which sees all its children as its responsibility.

Day-to-day teaching at Sand Hill is quite different because of the split grades. The first year I thought I

might die from the extra work of preparing what were often two lessons in most subjects. And although I receive nearly a 90-minute break once a week, the absence of almost any other break required some adjustment.

But as time went along I began to like many of the differences at Sand Hill. Though there is extra work for me, it has become clear that having both grades in the same room provides benefits to the students. As the sixth grade overhears the fifth they receive a review of past lessons, for example, while the younger students get a preview of what's to come.

And because of the solid community support, I now have a volunteer who helps with the drudgery that eats up a teacher's time — running copies, doing lunch counts and so forth. So the extra work does not seem so bad. It is also true that I have far fewer discipline problems teaching here. Not having to deal as often with discipline more than makes up for the extra time spent in lesson preparation.

Strong community involvement contributes to good student behavior. Johnny knows that if he misbehaves at school today, Mom and Dad will know about it *today*. Likewise, if Johnny receives an award at school, he can rest assured that there will be congratulations awaiting him the next time he goes into the general store, the next time he enters the vestibule at Sand Hill Church, or the next time he attends his local Boy Scout meeting at a neighbor's home. This is what it means to live in a community. This is what it means to attend a community school.

"It takes a village to raise a child" is a familiar old saying, from which First Lady Hillary Clinton borrowed the title of her recent book, *It Takes a Village*. The wise words are usually considered to be African in origin, but they may never have been more real than at schools like Sand Hill here in West Virginia.

As a result of teaching in this little school I have come to see many of the priorities in contemporary education as perhaps a little less important than I previously might

have thought. Not that I reject the utility of the objectives listed in official state education goals, but witnessing the tremendous vitality which Sand Hill has achieved with such limited resources reminds me that the relationship of teachers, parents, and students remains the foundation upon which all else must

If Johnny receives an award at school, there will be congratulations the next time he goes into the general store, enters the vestibule at church, or attends his Boy Scout meeting.

be built. It is in the small school that such a relationship stands the best chance of being created.

The small school is an integral part of our West Virginia culture, surviving longer here than in many other places because of our up-and-down geography. And although these schools were never perfect, we nonetheless should recognize that they offered many benefits to past generations. It is those benefits we should seek to recognize, reclaim — and where possible, preserve.

As I survey current educational findings in professional journals and the news media, I find that one of the significant emerging issues for American schooling is school size. Articles in *Educational Leadership* and in the *New York Times*, for instance, suggest that small schools may have advantages over ever-bigger mainstream schools. In this light the model of Sand Hill School, and others like us, welcomes increasing attention.

Perhaps we have a significant role to play in pointing the direction in which American schooling should head as we approach the 21st Century.

— Marc Harshman

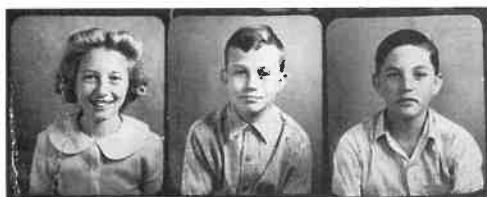
During those years Wayne County students had to furnish their own textbooks. The battered texts were passed down through the family and among relatives. Even into the 1920's and '30's many students used hand slates, measuring about eight inches by ten. Julia Viers recalled that teachers often spent their own money on books and supplies for less fortunate children. According to Earl Adkins, who taught at the Right Fork of Lick Creek, each fall the school board sent five boxes of chalk and two buckets — one for coal and one for water. That was his supplies for the year.

Julia and Ed Viers and other teachers like them were education pioneers who met the daily challenge of providing book learning for thousands of rural West Virginia children. Marie Asbury, who taught at Locust Knob, put it into a few words. "We had to be the proverbial jack-of-all-trades. We were the teacher, principal, janitor, nurse, guidance counselor, and more — all rolled into one," she said. "Furthermore, during World War II many of us registered people for sugar and coffee rations and even served as census enumerators."

The daily opening exercises had a religious and patriotic flavor. Julia Viers said that roll call was answered by each student reciting a Bible verse. This was followed by the Lord's Prayer, Pledge of Allegiance, and one or two patriotic songs, all of which took about 20 minutes. Nobody questioned prayer in the schools back then. "You see," Anna Perry of Perry Ridge school said, "we were just like one big family in those days."

Following the opening exercises, the morning hours were devoted to difficult subjects such as reading and arithmetic, while the afternoon was reserved for livelier activities dealing with such subjects as geography, music and spelling. Instruction in each subject typically began with the lower grades, with the teacher then moving on to the older students.

Upon completing their assign-



Evelyn Booth, Neal Odell and Bill Hall, 1942.

ments, the more advanced students served as teacher's aides by reviewing and drilling the younger children. This is known as "peer tutoring" in today's education jargon.

Class instruction was often followed by a period of individual recitation up front near the teacher's desk. Some schools had recitation benches where students awaited their turn to recite. "Students couldn't help but learn and relearn," observed Ed Viers, "due to the ongoing repetition of lessons by all the various grade levels."

Most one-room-school teachers reported few if any behavior problems. Parents instilled respect for teachers, and students knew that if a bad report reached home the punishment meted out there would be more severe than anything at school. There were no formal teacher-parent organizations in the 1930's, but everyone got together at the annual "pie social" where donated items were auctioned off to purchase school supplies. Teachers often received only

*Each fall the school board
sent five boxes of chalk
and two buckets — one
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That was his supplies
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one visit per year from a supervisor or board member, thus rein-



Small-scale education came to a major university campus when the Union School was moved to Marshall. Veteran one-room school teachers lined up at the blackboard (below) for a group portrait during a recent visit.



forcing the autonomy of the local school and teacher.

Students typically enjoyed a morning and afternoon recess of about 20 minutes each, plus a full hour for lunch. The students played a host of games, many involving the teacher.

Perhaps the most popular game, common to virtually all schools, was known locally as "Anthony Over." Students would stand on opposite sides of the school and take turns throwing a ball, often handmade, over the tin roof. If the ball was caught on the fly by some-

one on the other side, the student who had thrown the ball was disqualified and had to sit down. This continued until one of the last two survivors caught the other's throw and became the winner.

A special version of hide-and-seek was called "Can." A tin can was placed on a stump and the person designated as "it" used a baseball bat or stick to knock the can as far as he could. At the swing of the bat the other children ran and hid. The batter ran to retrieve the can and return it to the stump, then the hunt began. There was also "London



Author Paul Lutz has taken a big interest in preserving our rural education legacy. Here he visits Ed Viers at home.

Bridge," "Red Rover," "Drop the Handkerchief," "Go Sheepy Go," "Three Deep," horseshoes and other games.

Wayne County's education history is typical of much of the state. The one-room school was one of the most pervasive social institutions affecting West Virginians between the

two World Wars. Our hills and hollows left isolated pockets of population here and there across the West Virginia landscape. Before the coming of the automobile and good roads, people only a mile or two apart as the crow flies might be veritable strangers to each other.

This explains the need for the

4,551 one-room schools during the 1930-31 school year which served some 76,904 pupils. With improvements in transportation the little schools fell victim to changing times. By the mid-1950's the one-room school was fast joining the steam locomotive as only a memory of a bygone era.

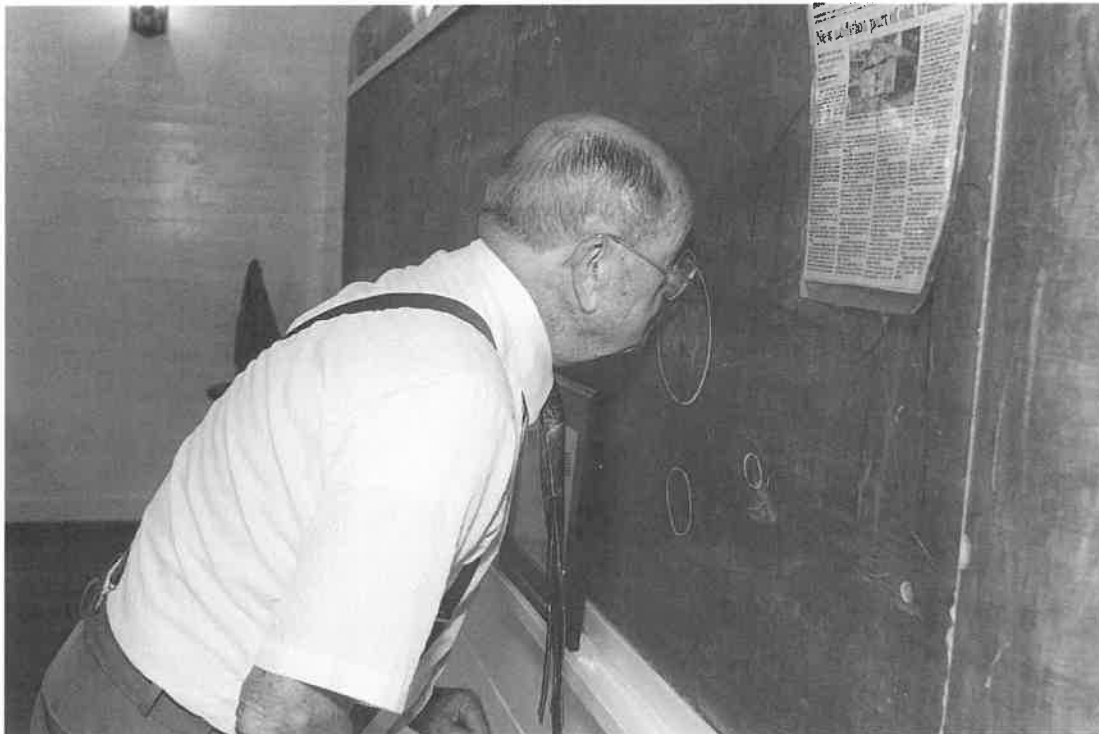
In recent years communities across the state and nation have seen fit to rescue a few of these nostalgic symbols of a simpler America and have transformed them into living museums, community buildings, and senior citizen centers. There is even a movement in some states to turn back to one-room education under so-called "charter school" legislation. Last June the *New York Times* reported

David Osburne and Elizabeth Christian, 1942.



the first increase in small schools in decades, with the number of one-room schools rising in one recent year from 430 to 442 nationally.

If the movement ever catches on, we have plenty of experts in West Virginia. Julia and Ed Viers are but two of some 400 one-room school teachers who have been interviewed by my students at Marshall University, and there are many more we haven't gotten around to yet. They represent a wealth of experience gained in the hard, good days of our past, and a reservoir of wisdom as we look toward our future. ♣



Ed Viers occasionally put a rowdy student's nose in the chalk ring, but only recently got around to trying it himself.

Slim Arnold: Mountaineer Emeritus

By Mary R. Furbee

Photographs by Mike Furbee

Eight decades of living hasn't slowed down 81-year-old Boyd Harrison Arnold, also known as "Slim." Ducking his lanky, six-foot-six frame through the doorways of his Grant County summer residence, he gathers refreshments, old photos and news clippings. Then, lunch and coffee served, he settles down with his visitors at the dining room table. Now the fun begins, for Slim is ready to spin a few yarns about his glory days as the WVU Mountaineer from 1937 to 1940.

Although other Mountaineers came before him, Slim Arnold was the man to put the university mascot into its present form. He traded in the earlier plaid lumberjack's shirt and corduroy pants for buckskins made from the hide of a bootleg deer. For this transformation we can also thank two unlucky off-season hunters, a Monongalia County sheriff, some visionary Morgantown businessmen and a tailor named Frank Andy.

"Mr. Clarence Johnson had a clothing store," Slim recalls. "Well, he and Gus Cumuntizis — who was head cheerleader at the time — had an idea. They and some of our other

Slim Arnold holds a portrait of himself as the WVU Mountaineer in the late 1930's. The pony was a real ham, he says.



buddies decided buckskin would be more in keeping with what the original mountaineers wore. And it just so happened that Sheriff Tom O'Hara had picked up some hunters who had illegally shot two deer. So he confiscated the hides. Then, as I recall, Mr. Johnson tanned the hides and Mr. Andy made the outfit."

Beginning as Junior Mountaineer in 1936, Slim brandished his old left-handed shotgun to get the festivities underway on home-game Saturdays. Then, with the band marching behind, he paraded up High Street, around Woodburn Circle, and into the old Mountaineer Stadium. And he did it on the back of a pony that had personality.

"The pony was owned by Peyton Deatrick, the son of

Dr. Lily Bell Deatrick, a chemistry professor and one of nature's noble people," he remembers. "That pony was a real ham. When someone had a camera, he'd instinctively raise up his head and ears to pose for the birdie. I think he enjoyed the game and praise as much as I did."

Others who enjoyed the old Mountaineer Stadium games, thanks to Slim, were kids who couldn't afford tickets. "It was during the Depression, you know, and a lot of kids didn't have any money.

They would try to sneak in, so I talked the gatekeeper and the ticket people into letting them come in for free

and sit in the bowl. I told those little hamheads that if they didn't behave themselves, they wouldn't get in the next time."



Relaxing at his Grant County summer home, Slim reviews memories of younger days in Morgantown.

Over the years, several of those children, now grown, have expressed gratitude for his kindness. People remember him, Slim says. "I've been recognized so many times — at Cape Canaveral, in Las Vegas at the blackjack table — oh, many places. There I am with grey

hair, years later, and they recognize me. I guess it really stuck with them."

"That pony was a real ham. When someone had a camera, he'd instinctively pose. I think he enjoyed the game as much as I did."

Some of Slim's most memorable adventures as Mountaineer took place in New York City. There he had the tail clipped off his coon-skin cap, nicks cut out of his bear-skin cape, and generally caused quite a stir wherever he went.

"Colonel Greer, who owned the old *Dominion News*, sponsored a trip

we took to New York City," Slim says. "We went to play Manhattan College and were staying at the McAlpin Hotel. Art Smith, who was the track coach and trainer, asked me to put on my outfit and go to this big soiree they were having. So I went up to my room and put on my rig. But when I got on the elevator, this young fellow who operated it took one look at me and screamed and shut the door. I had to call the bell captain to come get me, and meanwhile the operator was crouching in a corner, scared to death I was going to attack him!"

During that same New York trip, Slim says he ended up with a police escort because crowds engulfed him everywhere he went. "When I went out in my costume, people would crowd around. One time, a whole lot of policemen on horses showed up to break the crowd apart, and this police sergeant put me in his police car. He drove me back to the hotel and said, 'My God, don't come out again dressed like that, or you might get hurt.' Later, Art Smith made him an hon-



A 1938 Yankee Stadium pass is among Slim's mementoes. The Mountaineers lost but the Mountaineer himself had a great time, Slim remembers.

Mountaineer was having a grand old time in town."

Along with stirring up crowds inside and outside sporting arenas, Slim took in some memorable shows at New York night clubs. "We went over to the Manhattan Room in the Hotel Pennsylvania to hear Kay Kyser and Merwyn Bogue. You may have heard of Bogue — he was known as Ish Kabibble and used to be a drum major and assistant band director at WVU. He was quite a nice person and made it big with the big bands," he says.

Wearing his Mountaineer outfit, Slim was transported about town in a big white Cadillac, surrounded by chorus girls, and serenaded from stage with "West Virginia Gal," a slightly risqué song also known as "Nancy Brown." "I don't remember all the words, but some of it goes: 'She wouldn't give the Deacon what the Deacon was a-seekin', that's why she remains as pure as a West Virginia ham.'"

Slim recalls that New Yorkers thought he and the team were a



Slim rouses the crowd with a younger Mountaineer at a 1980's game at Mountaineer Field. Photographer unknown.

"bunch of hillbillies" — and that they had their own opinion of the New Yorkers.

"We went to the Battery to see the grand old lady, the Statue of Liberty. Those New Yorkers saw me standing by the road and they shouted out, 'There's that hillbilly, Boyd on the coyb.' We were tickled, of course. Those city boys may have thought we were hicks, but we out-slicked the slickers."

Back home, the intense rivalry between Pitt and WVU kept things lively for Slim. "The Pitt Panther and I, we really put on a good show. He would climb up on the goal post. Then I would pretend to shoot him

off. Back then the gun didn't fire, but we had sound effects. Boy, I'll tell you, that crowd went wild."

His college years as the Mountaineer were among the best times of his life, Slim says. But the road from his Grant County hometown to WVU hadn't been an easy one. "My father worked in the coal mines for 48 years, in grub-holes here and there. I sometimes worked with him on weekends and holidays while I was in high school. He wanted me to go to college and I wanted to go, too. But cash was in short supply in the early '30's."

Recollections of those early years in Bayard — a small Eastern Pan-

handle mining town with only the North Branch Potomac between it and Maryland — range from bitter to sweet. Slim recalls with sadness the poverty and tragedies that spurred his determination to leave the North Branch Valley and find a different way of life.

"I'll never forget when the miners were on strike, and people were evicted from their company houses. Some people lived in tents and little kids ran barefoot in the snow," he says. "There was the 'dinky' — the Shay engine. It would ride you up the mountain to the mine and back down again at the end of a shift. But when it came down the hill early, tooting its horn, you knew

"The Pitt Panther and I really put on a show. He would climb up on the goal post, then I would shoot him off."

there were dead and injured miners. Of course, back then there was no retirement, sick pay, or even burial money that I know of. One day when I was working, the mine fell in. No one was hurt that day, but that's when I said goodbye."

In contrast to his grim coal mining memories are Slim's fond recollections of his days at Bayard High School. His graduating class numbered 13, and naturally "everybody knew everybody." Probably the most fun, he says, was starting the school newspaper.

"It was called *The Ripples*. We needed a mimeograph machine to start it, which cost 50 bucks. Of course, we didn't have that kind of money; it was 1931 and we were flat broke. Well, I saw this chicken incubator in a mail-order catalog for \$15, and we bought that."

Slim goes on to describe how he and his classmates hatched chickens from donated farm eggs, sold the chickens, sold the incubator (twice, because the first buyer donated it back to them) and ended up with plenty of money for the

Mountaineer Week '96

The Mountaineer mascot is not the only WVU institution which celebrates the heritage of the mountains. This fall will bring the 50th annual observance on campus of Mountaineer Week, showcasing the best of West Virginia's culture and history.

This year's edition of Mountaineer Week, scheduled October 27 through November 2, offers the diversity we've come to expect from this lively event. Activities will center on the student center — the appropriately named Mountainlair — where the usual campus cuisine will be supplemented with cornbread, beans, and other country cooking. Heritage activities will include talks on Appalachian affairs, a fiddle contest, the annual quilt exhibit, traditional storytelling, a showing of rare films about West Virginia, and a top-quality arts and crafts show.

It was not always this way. When the event began in 1947 as "Mountaineer Weekend" it seems to have been primarily an excuse for drinking and making noise. Depictions of mountain heritage in those early days focused on the negative stereotypes of the hillbilly — out-houses, floppy felt hats, ragged clothes and liquor jugs.

Just as the Mountaineer traded in flannel shirts and overalls for his more dignified buckskins, the Mountaineer Weekend activities evolved over the years into a week-long expression of pride in our West Virginia heritage.

But don't get the idea that the

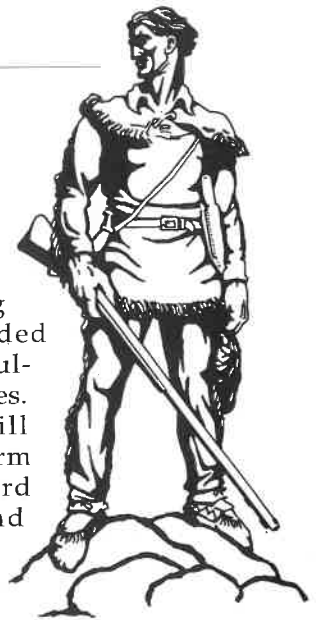
week is nothing but high-minded Appalachian cultural observances.

Students will compete in arm wrestling, beard growing, and cramming into the little high-tech transit cars which connect the Morgantown campuses. A college football game and a downtown parade will raise the decibel level of the celebration, and you can count on WVU students to discover some activities outside the official program. A few of them may still use Mountaineer Week as an excuse for drinking beer and making noise.

As GOLDENSEAL goes to press, organizers of Mountaineer Week have not yet settled on the final lineup of activities. There's always a good chance something surprising will be added to the schedule after students return to campus from summer vacation. The annual influx of new ideas makes Mountaineer Week one of the liveliest, least predictable heritage events in the state. But plan to stop by the campus anytime from October 27 through November 2. Whatever they're doing when you get there, it will be some great fun.

Many Mountaineer Week activities are open to the public, with others for students only. You may call the Mountainlair Information Desk, (304)293-3701, for more information.

— Danny Williams



mimeograph machine. Then, he continues, to pay for paper they sold advertisements to businesses and politicians. "All the politicians contributed but this one gentleman who didn't feel it was quite right.

He allowed as how I was a con artist, but he gave me the three dollars in the end. Still, I can't say I was sorry when he lost the election."

Slim guesses he "violated all the rules" by going to college. "Coal



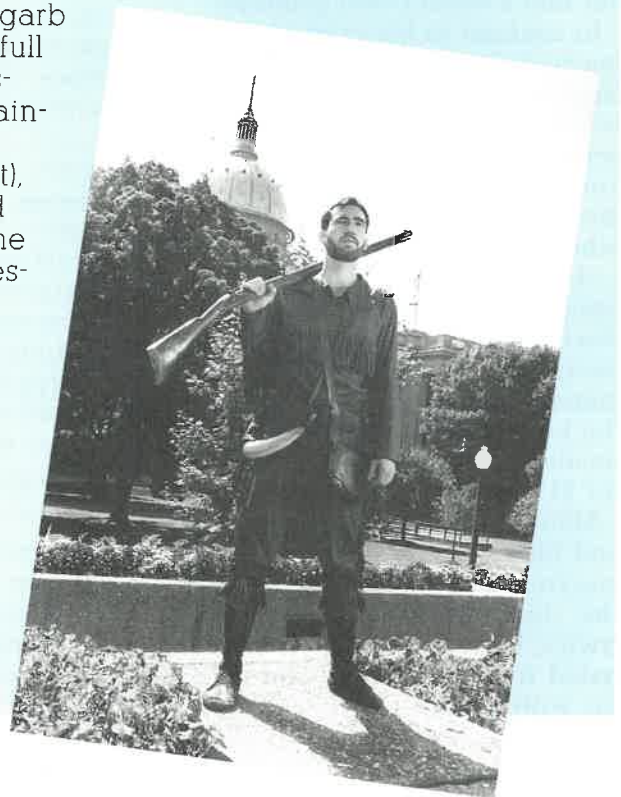
The Changing Mountaineer

WVU fans knew times had changed when Natalie Tennant (above left) became the university mascot in 1990, but actually the first woman Mountaineer was only part of a long tradition of change involving the colorful figure.

Early Mountaineers such as 1928's Buckwheat Jackson (above right) dressed more like West Virginia wood hicks — that's lumberjacks, to folks from elsewhere — than rugged frontiersman. Lawson Hill (left), Slim Arnold's immediate predecessor, had added a coonskin cap by the mid-1930's.

Slim himself originally wore pretty much the same garb but later adopted the full leather regalia reminiscent of today's Mountaineer. That gentleman is now Andy Cogar (right), recently photographed by Michael Keller at the State Capitol in Charleston.

The long gun seems to be the one item common to all Mountaineers early and late, male and female, for they all agreed that there are plenty of varmints sneaking into Mountaineer Field who deserve to be shot up a little.



miners' kids didn't think they could do that back then," he says.

But college didn't happen right away. After swearing off the mines and finishing high school, he did a stint of farm work. Then, like many other young men who came of age during the Depression, he joined the Civilian Conservation Corps, working as chief forestry clerk. It was there, in the Monongahela National Forest near Thornwood, Pocahontas County, that camp advisors rekindled Slim's dream of attending college.

He wasn't the first one to be spurred to further accomplishment by the conservation program. The CCC, a federal Public Works Administration agency, put unemployed boys to work building structures, clearing trails, and timbering on national lands. The CCC built to last, and many of its facilities remain in service today, but its real product was a generation of young men. Education advisors taught reading and writing, ran training programs and advised members about job and educational opportunities.

"One day I told this camp advisor I wanted to go to college but didn't have any money, and he answered that I shouldn't let that stop me. At that point, up walked 'Red' Healy — his real name was George Harris, and he'd been president of the WVU student body. He said to me, 'don't think you'd be the Lone Ranger working your way through college. I did it and you can, too.'

"So, what the heck, I figured, if these guys could do it, then I could, too." With that, in the fall of 1936, Slim Arnold spent his savings on a semester's tuition and one month's room rent, packed all he owned in a pasteboard suitcase, and took off for Morgantown.

To make it through college, Slim worked constantly. He was a bouncer at The Rendezvous on Wall Street, a former student hangout for "dancing and romancing, but you weren't allowed to do much romancing." He also washed windows, cleaned kitchens, rolled ten-

nis courts, hawked his own brand of furniture polish door-to-door, joined ROTC.

Yet despite all this work, Slim made room for an active social life. He was president of the sophomore class, and as a member of the WVU Social Committee and the 8-Ball Club, he says he knew 2,500 of the 2,800 students on campus by name. Weekly dances, swimming parties at Cheat Lake, bonfires and hayrides kept Slim and his friends entertained. He also performed with an exhibition square dance group, which is how he met Eleanor Roosevelt.

"Dr. Grace Griffen, head of women's physical education thought up what later became Mountaineer Week," he remembers. "She brought in people from all over the state for various dancing and fiddle playing and one thing or an-

tie and blue-and-gold socks, the High Sheriff ordered a punishment, Slim explains. The offenders were taken under the Old Mountaineer Stadium to have their hair cut into a ragged shape or be run through a gauntlet of howling seniors armed with wooden paddles, he adds.

With all these shenanigans, it's hard to imagine time for politics, but Slim managed. "I ran for office and managed a couple of other campaigns. We took it seriously, but also had fun. There were pictures, rallies, posters. I think about 70 percent turned out to vote — all but the graduate and law students, who didn't have as much to do with things on campus," he says.

Five years after arriving in Morgantown, Slim's college career came to an end and a new phase of his life began. "On June 8, 1941, I graduated with 25 cents, bought myself a

"My father worked in the coal mines for 48 years, in grub-holes here and there. He wanted me to go to college but cash was in short supply in the early '30's."

other; eight of us started a demonstration square dance group. Well, we went out to Arthurdale when Mrs. Roosevelt was visiting, and one of her aides came over and said would I do Mrs. Roosevelt the honor of dancing with her? So I danced a two-step square dance with her. She was a gracious person — one of the greatest I've met in my life."

Other highlights of late '30's, early '40's life at WVU revolved around disciplining wayward freshmen and running hard-fought campaigns for elected posts, Slim recalls.

As the High Sheriff of the Kangaroo Court, he often meted out punishments to freshmen who disregarded rigid pecking-order rules governing attire and behavior. The university administration turned a blind eye to these unsanctioned proceedings.

For example, if freshmen appeared in public without wearing the required beanie, blue-and-gold

bottle of beer and pack of cigarettes, and hitchhiked home flat broke — but with an education and a commission as a 2nd Lieutenant in the U.S. Army."

For the next few decades, the Army became Slim Arnold's life. At Fort Knox, he served in the West Virginia Platoon. For a time he was stationed in Panama. And, until the experimental unit was disbanded, he trained with the 71st Light Division "Mule Pack" at Camp Carson in Colorado Springs. "We were known as 'mule men.' We trained to work with mules who were going to be used to haul supplies through mountainous areas," he says.

During World War II, Slim also served in Europe, and he has strong memories of his experiences there. "At end of the War, we were the farthest east of all the Allied Forces. We overran a camp of Germans, where they had what was left of the Hungarian Jews. We saved them,



Slim Arnold had his fun as Mountaineer, but he takes a serious view of the WVU mascot. "He represents not only the university, but also the state," Slim says.

and I was the assistant chief in charge of setting up a rehabilitation hospital in a big school building for all the sick people," he says.

Slim has harsh words for those who question the extent of Jewish suffering during the war. "Now we have a few clods in this country," he says, "who say the Holocaust never happened. Well, I have some news for them, it did happen. They should have a little examination inside their skulls to see if there's anything in there."

The post-war military career of Slim Arnold boasts numerous achievements and on more than one occasion, he was directly involved

in notable historic events. For example, after the Korean War, he helped reunite prisoners-of-war with their families. Also, he was the technical advisor in charge of public information for the world's first televised nuclear explosion on April 22, 1952, at the Nevada testing ground.

Having achieved the rank of Lt. Colonel, Slim retired from the armed services in 1963. He worked as a civilian employee of the U.S. Air Force until retiring again in 1971. Since then, he and his wife, Dorrie, have spent winters in Florida, where they have a home near their sons and grandchildren.

In the summer, they return to Bayard.

And on a good many WVU home-game weekends, you'll find them in Morgantown, visiting with old friends and cheering on the football team. Slim has had many opportunities to celebrate his ex-Mountaineer status. He was recognized with other old Mountaineers in 1974, served as Grand Marshall of the WVU Homecoming Parade in 1983, and was honored as "the oldest living Mountaineer" in the 1995 Homecoming Parade.

Although other Mountaineers came before Slim Arnold, few

In the fall of 1936, Slim spent his savings on a semester's tuition and one month's room rent, packed all he owned in a pasteboard suitcase, and took off for Morgantown.

achieved his level of fame. It's not hard to understand why. After all, he and his contemporaries ditched the rangy country-boy look — an image reminiscent of the hillbilly stereotypes embodied in comic strips such as "Lil' Abner." Instead, Slim crafted a nobler image by donning the frontiersman garb more suggestive of heroes like Daniel Boone.

Knowing Slim, who bursts with native pride and firm convictions about exactly what the WVU Mountaineer represents, it is clear that this transformation was no accident.

"He represents not only the university, but also the state and her people," Slim declares of the Mountaineer. "Early settlers to West Virginia, they faced harsh climate, isolation, wars and economic hardship. And this resulted in the self-reliance and individuality characteristic of our citizens today. The state motto — Mountaineers are always free — that's the way it is and that's the way it should be." ❁

Tilting at Turbines

Nick Boinovych's Windmill

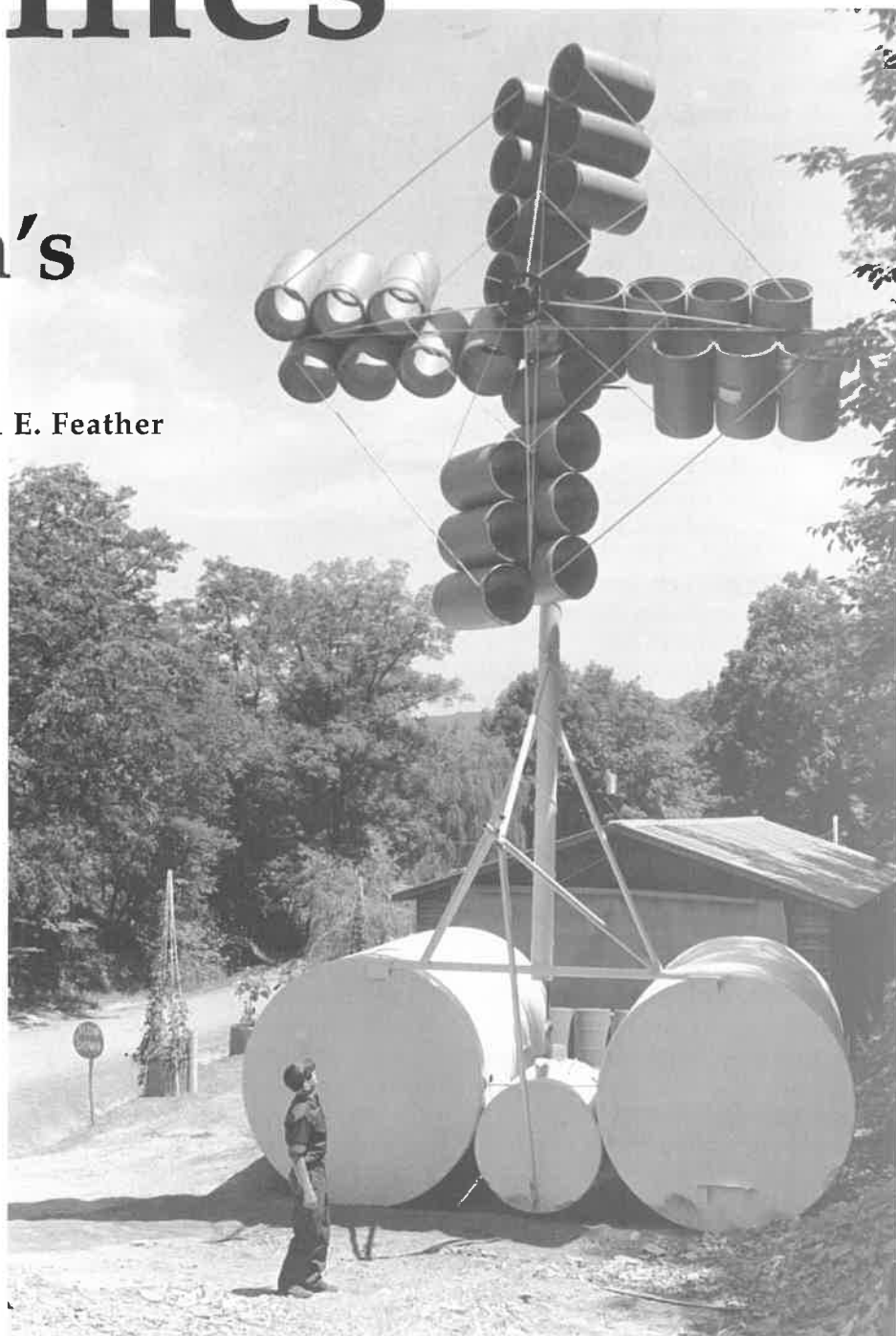
Text and Photographs by Carl E. Feather

There is a native ingenuity that runs among mountain people, and Mineral County's Nick Boinovych has it, in spades.

His homemade wind turbine may still have a few bugs, but there is nothing in the world wrong with his inquisitive way of thinking.

Give Nicholas "Nick" Boinovych 28 plastic barrels, some junkyard parts and five acres of land and he'll show a man how to become self-sufficient.

Boinovych is the inventor of the Wind Driven Honeycomb Electric Generating Turbine, a ten-dollar name for a homemade windmill. Visit his Mineral County home on a breezy day and you'll see Boinovych's improbable invention spinning in the wind 36 feet above the dusty road. It's an attention getter



The 38-foot-tall Wind Driven Honeycomb Electric Generating Turbine dwarfs its inventor.

that begs neighbors, tourists and state highway workers to stop for a closer look and afternoon of conversation with its creator.

Like his invention, Boinovych is an eclectic mixture. He comes out about equal parts mountain philosopher, inventor, philanthropist and businessman. Yes, he'd like to see the wind turn a profit as well as a turbine in this dusty valley. But at Boinovych's age — "67 and closer to heaven," as the slogan on his cap says — he's also interested in helping the next generation get back to the earth and gain self-sufficiency. That's the legacy he'd like to leave.

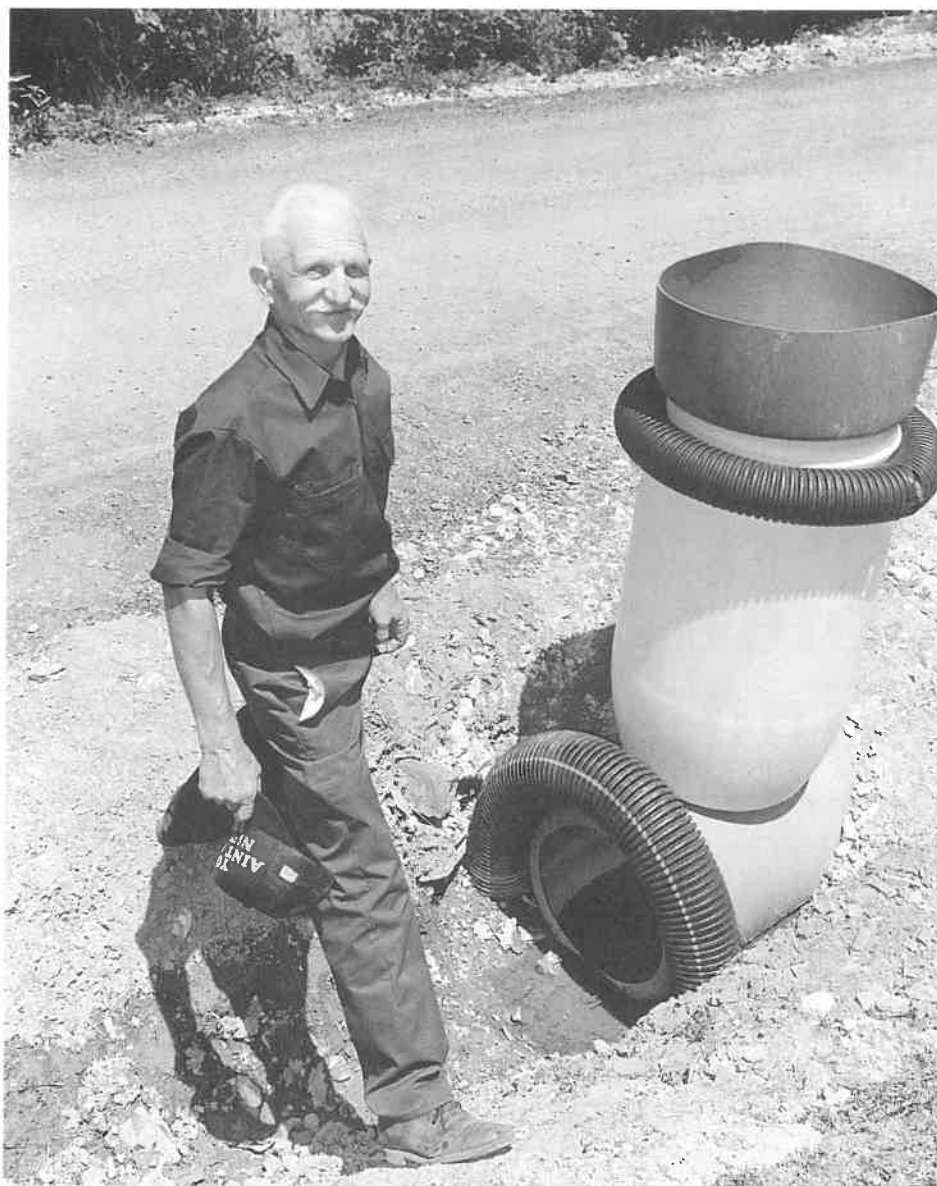
"My main thrust is to help mankind out as much as I can at this stage of my life," he says as we walk down the gray, little-traveled road to his turbine.

Before showing me the physical underpinnings of the mammoth pinwheel, the gregarious retired maintenance supervisor shares the philosophy and concern upon which the device is founded. Learned folks are likely to pooh-pooh his talk and tell him he's all wet in the head. They have done just that, Boinovych says. But the more you listen to Boinovych, the more sense he makes.

Nick Boinovych is concerned that Americans are running out of room — too many people, too little land. "Overpopulation will ruin any nation," says one of the many baseball hats he's had imprinted with his homespun philosophy.

"That's one of the best slogans I could have," he says. "If we don't stop the population in our country right now, I predict dire consequences within 20 years. If we don't stop overpopulation worldwide, you're going to have complete and total chaos."

He does some basic math with me to prove his point — with approximately 1.53 billion acres of private land in the United States and a population of 250 million, there's only six acres left for every man, woman and child in the United States. Boinovych sees five acres as self-sufficiency's critical mass, the absolute minimum for a person to support himself in decency and in-



Nick Boinovych finds plenty of uses for recycled barrels and plastic pipe. These mark the culvert at his Mineral County place.

dependence. It's time we slow reproduction and increase construction — of Nick Boinovych's Wind Driven Honeycomb Electric Generating Turbine.

The blue and white wind turbine looks like it could be a carnival ride, old-time Rube Goldberg contraption, or landmark for a recycling center. Its 20-foot, hinged steel mast is secured to two steel gasoline tanks, each eight feet in diameter. Snuggled between the large tanks is a smaller one that holds a wood fire, the heat from which is diverted to each of the larger tanks. What does a wood fire in the tank have to do with the wind turbine?

Nothing. The large tanks double as drying kilns for Boinovych's hardwood lumber. Boinovych simply uses the weighty kilns as a convenient base for his turbine.

A differential from a 1956 Ford automobile rests atop the pole and receives power from the four arms or rotors. Each rotor is nine feet long and holds a cluster of seven bright blue 50-gallon plastic barrels tilted at a 45-degree angle to the face of the wind. He purchases the slightly used beverage barrels for \$5 apiece from a man on Shirley Lane.

"The barrels are actually the arms," Boinovych explains. "Then

I got the arms reinforced with metal braces."

The turbine isn't light-weight, but spins into action with breezes as gentle as ten miles per hour. Boinovych says the barrels alone weigh about 500 pounds; the bracing adds another 300 pounds. The differential and mast bring the total weight to around 1,000 pounds. To accommodate maintenance, the entire unit is hinged just above the tanks. Using a backhoe to support the superstructure, the owner can ease the turbine to ground level where it can be safely worked on.

But Boinovych says the truly unique thing about his turbine,

Nick Boinovych is an eclectic mixture. He comes out about equal parts mountain philosopher, inventor, philanthropist and businessman.

what sets it apart from other wind-mills, is the broad capture area provided by the barrels. The top and bottom are cut off each barrel, essentially leaving a hollow plastic tube 30 inches in length and 22 inches in diameter. The barrels in each arm are in a lopsided configuration of three barrels above four, producing a honeycomb. The 45-degree angle exposes a maximum of interior and exterior surfaces to the wind.

"My knowledge of angles and experience in the Air Force indicated to me that the 45-degree angle is the maximum output angle," the inventor says.

The Berlin Airlift and Korean War veteran has been studying wind-mills most of his life. There was one on the old farm on which he grew up in Maryland, and it fascinated him.

"I've been toying around with the idea of this kind of concept for approximately 30 years," he says. "But I never really got to start imple-

menting this until about five years ago."

Boinovych's implementation began with building small-scale models on bicycle wheels and wooden arms, using sections of PVC pipe and cans as his wind-capturing devices. These prototypes now decorate his yard, prophetically displayed on discarded utility poles.

After several years of experimentation with angles and honey-combed clustering of capture devices, Boinovych built his working model in 1995. The turbine went through months of observation under all kinds of weather conditions: gusts of up to 70 miles per hour, heavy snowstorms and freezing rain. At one point in the hard winter of 1995-96, 400 pounds of ice and snow accumulated in the barrels without damage to the rotors.

"We got the technology here right now to jump on perfecting this concept," he says, lightly tapping me on the shoulder. "I have a philosophy that anybody with five acres of land, with this concept of capturing the wind, can actually make himself self-sustaining."

For Boinovych, being self-sustaining ultimately means pulling the plug, severing all connections with Potomac Edison and the monthly electric bill. Aside from electricity they must purchase to run their television, refrigerator, lights and power tools, Boinovych and his wife Dora are already nearly self-sufficient. Their 19 acres of woodlands and a woodstove keep them warm in the winter. Their water comes from the earth and not the water company. With a vegetable garden and few farmyard animals — and Boinovych's electricity-generating turbine — he could become independent and not have to emerge from the hollow until his burying day.

Boinovych believes his turbine holds similar hope to the whole world, and he's about to use five acres of his own land as a testing ground for that theory. The free power captured by the turbine will be stored there in three forms: kinetic, pressurized air, and electrical.

An electrical generator will be the

Apple Harvest Celebrated

The 23rd annual Burlington Old-Fashioned Apple Harvest Festival gets underway this October 5th and 6th. The event is held adjacent to Burlington's historic district, on the grounds of Burlington United Methodist Family Services in Mineral County.

The Old-Fashioned Apple Harvest Festival showcases crafts, bluegrass and gospel music, games and family entertainment. Exhibits are also a big part of the two days with a quilt show and sale, an antique auto show, and a big open-air flea market. A fiddle contest is planned, and a special postal cancellation will be available at the Burlington post office.

Family Services says Burlington's famous apple butter is the "featured attraction." It is prepared on-site, open kettle style from Eastern Panhandle apples. Much of the festival's food — including fresh apple cider, apple "burgers" and apple dumplings — is made from apples.

For those who get their fill of fruit, there's also plenty of country ham and homemade baked goods.

The festival, a "West Virginia Homecoming '96" event, includes a parade. Organizers encourage people to come early and stay late. The hours are 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Saturday and noon to 7:00 p.m. on Sunday. Admission is free. Contact Burlington Old-Fashioned Apple Harvest Festival, P.O. Box 96, Burlington, WV 26710; or call (340)289-3511 for more information.





This homemade log splitter has no trouble with man-sized logs. The old end-loader sits on blocks, its tracks rotating freely to carry logs to the big wedge in front.

primary source of power at the experimental site. Attached to the lower drive shaft of the turbine, the generator would supply the electrical needs of the home, storing surplus energy in a cluster of batteries. When the wind turbine can't muster up a few hundred watts from the generator, energy stored in the batteries could be released to the home's electrical system.

But what about extended calm spells? Would Boinovych have to call Potomac Edison and ask them to deliver a few kilowatts to tide him over until the next stiff breeze comes down the valley?

Not hardly, he says, for also attached to the turbine shaft will be a water pump and air compressor. The air compressor will fill a 10,000-gallon gasoline tank with

120 pounds of pressure. When there's no wind to drive the turbine, Boinovych will simply open the valve on the tank and let the pressurized air drive a turbine con-

The machine will split two 18-inch logs, 16 inches in diameter, every minute. Try that with your maul and wedge, the next time you amble out to the wood pile.

nected to an electrical generator. A side benefit — all the rusting gasoline storage tanks being yanked from the ground can be recycled to

store air for the self-sufficient homeowner.

The water pump will serve a similar function. Dry Run trickles across Boinovych's property and feeds a small pond. Boinovych's idea is to build a million-gallon reservoir above his house and use the wind power to pump water from the creek and pond to the reservoir atop the hill. In times of wind drought, the water could be released to the lower level, turning a water turbine and generating electricity in the process.

It's an ambitious project but arguably feasible for someone like Boinovych, whose landscape has the elevations and water supply for creating such a reservoir. But what about a homeowner trying to become self-sufficient in the middle

of Kansas, some place depressingly flat and with limited water?

"PVC pipe," says Boinovych. He envisions a cluster of 20-foot lengths of PVC pipe, each one three feet in diameter and stood on end. The pipes would double as the turbine's mast and store the water pumped by the mill on windy days. In slow times, the water could be released through a turbine to generate electricity. That's his solution to a lack of mountains and streams.

Boinovych's offbeat ingenuity may sound far out, but he's got plenty of working examples around his home that testify to its effec-

Chalmers end-loader, this one worn-out. The old machine is beached on some blocks so the tracks can rotate freely. The Allis Chalmers engine has been replaced with a 318-cubic-inch Chrysler automobile engine. A four-speed Dodge transmission has been placed between the motor and the loader's transmission to give Boinovych more low speeds and unlimited power.

Welded to the outside of the track are four head blocks at equal distances. Welded to the end-loader frame is a splitting wedge with horizontal and vertical fins. Boinovych

end-loader bucket. He conservatively estimates that the machine will split two 18-inch logs, 16 inches in diameter, every minute. Try that with your maul and wedge, the next time you amble out to the wood pile.

Along the front of his house are other examples of mountaineer ingenuity and recycling. The bottoms cut from the wind turbine barrels have been tacked to posts and are used as signs. "Slow Down," they warn passing motorists, in case the plastic-barrel wind turbine isn't enough to slow traffic. Barrels with their tops and bottoms removed have been filled with dirt and sport sunflowers almost as tall as Boinovych.

Across the street is a mailbox made from sections of a barrel. The mail lady likes it, says Boinovych, because there's no door to open and the design provides commodious quarters for the deliveries, perhaps royalty checks from his inventions. Atop the mailbox is the bottom of a second barrel, which can be used as a planter or a bird bath.

A white barrel stacked atop half a blue one serves as a culvert marker. He's got an idea to paint a Santa Claus on the white barrel and stick a light bulb in there for Christmas. If all goes according to plan, the Wind Driven Honeycomb Electric Generating Turbine will be pumping the amperes to that festive bulb by next Yuletide.

For Boinovych says the wind turbine has proved itself and he's ready to move it into its next phase of development: making it do something useful. He's working with Invention Technology of Pittsburgh to develop the wind turbine into a marketable and financially profitable product. A neighbor has already requested he build one for her yard.

Meanwhile, Nick Boinovych is collecting the equipment needed to build the auxiliary storage systems that will turn today's wind power into tomorrow's currency. Plainly, this man means business.

So look out Potomac Edison! As one of his baseball caps predicts, "You ain't seen nuttin yet!" 🌲



Even his mailbox reflects Nick's ingenuity. The mail lady loves it, he says.

tiveness. He walks over to the rusty yellow end-loader parked across the road. It's a 1960's Allis Chalmers TL-12 with a four-cylinder Mazda engine and automatic transmission in it.

"I wouldn't sell it for \$20,000," Boinovych declares. The combination provides a good workhorse for his homestead and gets excellent gas mileage, as well. "It's a sweet machine," he says. "That's my baby. I just love that little machine."

Up the road, where Boinovych is clearing timber from his land, he's found a new use for another Allis

fires up the engine, which hasn't been started in two or three months. It sputters briefly, then purrs. He hops down, grabs an eight-inch-diameter log and puts it in front of a head block on the rotating track. As the track moves toward the splitting wedge, the log is divided into four sections that tumble to the ground.

"I guarantee you," says Boinovych, beaming at the success of his invention. "It splits wood at idle speed. I can fill up that bucket in no time."

Boinovych is speaking of the big



The mattress program aimed to put good homemade bedding into West Virginia bedrooms. These ladies demonstrate the finished product. USDA photo, courtesy WVU Extension Service.

"A Splendid Job Done"

Mattress Making in the Great Depression

By Eric Waggoner

There is no better business for a nation than war, and no wars were better for business than the First and Second World Wars. Textile production, chemicals, steel, mining and retail trade — all boomed during the fighting. West Virginia prospered, as did the nation.

Between the wars, however, came an unprecedented economic collapse — the Great Depression. When the soldiers came home from World War One, when the military had no more need for rapid production of armaments, and when overall production of domestic goods slacked off after an initial postwar expansion, the country was faced with a troublesome combination — thousands of veterans attempted to re-enter the workforce just when the need for workers plummeted. Foreign trade was down, prices fell, and eventually the stock market crashed.

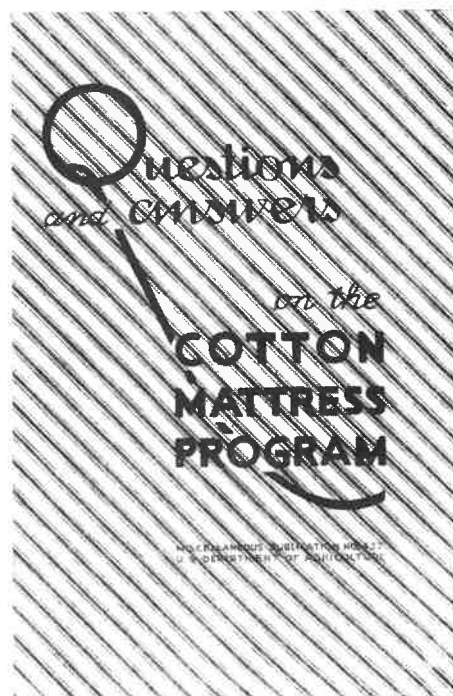
American cotton farmers were faced with an added problem, one which drove them under in large numbers. The Southern states had long been the nation's largest supplier of domestic cotton. But now the lush Imperial Valley, a western desert region newly irrigated by the Colorado River, was also being exploited for cotton production. Southern cotton farmers suddenly found themselves with a surplus — something they'd never experienced before.

Meanwhile, numerous West Virginia farm families slept on sorry mattresses, if they had any mattresses at all.

But the Great Depression was also the era of President Roosevelt's New Deal, a network of feisty public service agencies and work programs which aimed to revitalize the American economy and get people back to work. The idea was to rebuild from the local level up. The Agricultural Adjustment Administration, or AAA, was typical of the "alphabet agencies" making up the New Deal, and the grassroots solution it found to the surplus problem was also typical: The agency proposed to kill two birds with one stone, putting poor families to work

making their own beds while using up the extra cotton.

In West Virginia, the AAA found willing local collaborators in the Extension Service and the Farm Women's Clubs. The feds chose their partners well. Founded in 1913, the West Virginia Agricultural Extension Service already had a rich history of community activism. It helped rural communities to im-



The mattresses were made according to the book, including this one. The government issued several publications on the subject.

prove the lives of their citizens in countless ways, from making clothing to clearing well water to introducing new crops.

And although its title seems to describe a sort of ladies' auxiliary

banks, and other projects.

Officially, the mattress program was sponsored by three agencies: the Extension Service and the Federal Surplus Commodities Corporation, in addition to the AAA. In West Virginia, 35 of the 55 counties accepted the program. Once the local Extension offices elected to take part, a representative from each county, and sometimes two or three, went to a nearby government center to receive instruction in the making of mattresses.

It was recognized as a women's program from the start. The theory, as Nina Spiggle said, was that "women would more readily assume leadership if they are counseled with and have a part in the developing of the entire program, rather than being told what, when, and how to do. Spiggle, a Hampshire County extension agent, was chosen to travel to Washington to undergo training. She wrote of the program in a 1941 article for the *Extension Service Review*.

The women from the Extension Service and the Farm Women's Club assumed responsibility for personally contacting families eligible for mattresses. To receive a mattress, an interested family filed an application with the local Extension Service office; one mattress was allotted for each two members of the family.

According to Nina Spiggle, "Community cotton mattress work centers were then set up. I held a demonstration school in each center so that all farm women's club members could learn how to make a mattress. The community mattress

The theory was that women would assume leadership if they have a part in developing the program, rather than being told what, when, and how to do.

of the farming set, the Farm Women's Clubs operated in much the same spirit of community service. During the Great Depression, with nearly all families struggling to stay afloat, club members helped out with clothing drives, food

chairman then assumed full responsibility. The members who had been trained took turns in helping with the supervision. The mattress chairman spent an hour or two each day at the work center."

The immediate goal of the pro-



Baled cotton first had to be fluffed, as demonstrated by an unidentified woman at Jackson's Mill (above). Neighbors usually gathered in groups to do the work, as shown in the Tyler County photo at right. Photos courtesy WVU Extension Service.

gram was to provide good free mattresses while aiding the embattled cotton farmers, but the Extension Service workers and Farm Women's Club volunteers saw a broader opportunity as well.

Here was a chance to involve their neighbors in their particular brand of community service.

"The farm club members considered this an opportunity to demonstrate to non-club members something of the training and benefits that members have received from the farm women's program and an

opportunity to reach more people, especially those of the lower-income level," Spiggle reported. "Every cotton mattress committee member was given an opportunity to serve in some way — by giving supervision at the cotton mattress work center, contacting eligible families, or caring for equipment."

In the same article, Putnam County home demonstration agent Hazel Usner noted that some men were taking part as well as the women. "Many men have sent word through members of the county Triple-A committee, relatives, or friends, or have come in person or written to the county home demonstration agent, requesting a

impassable with a car during the winter months."

Jessie Lemley, who served as home demonstration agent for both Pleasants and Tyler counties, observed at the time that the primary means of spreading the word about the program was the time-tested community grapevine. "There has been a little newspaper publicity but not a great deal," she reported.

The poor families themselves were supposed to do the majority of the work, with Extension agents and club members merely providing assistance and supervision. After stitching the shell of the mattress at home, the families were to bring the empty mattress to the work site to have it stuffed and sewn up.

It was a sizable undertaking. As Sara Kidd recalls, Roane County alone "had 1,300 approved applications." These families had not had the training which their local volunteers had undergone and had to



cotton-mattress work center in their communities," she happily reported.

"In several communities men have ridden horseback and taken applications for mattresses," Usner added. Most of the communities receiving the mattresses were, she wrote, "located in a remote section of the county on dirt roads that are

make do with the written instructions, which caused some problems.

"Families were supposed to stitch up the ticks at home and bring four adults to do the work," Kidd remembers. "Often the ticks were poorly made and had to be restitched at the site. And so often they brought children to do the



Fluffed cotton was put into the mattress shell, which was supposed to be sewn at home and brought to the work site. Photo courtesy WVU Extension Service, 1942.

work, which was a problem." Extension agents and Farm Women's Club members soon got used to doing most of the work themselves.

Genevieve Krafft recalls the Braxton County program as being full of all-day labor. Her Aunt Lucinda Mollohan's house was the place chosen to make the mattresses, being close to the center of the county.

"Some of us had to walk three or four miles to get there," she remembers. "We would carry a biscuit or so in a little sack with an egg or jelly — go sit all day and pick cotton or pull it apart to get it light and fluffy. We were given blue and white striped ticking to take home and sew together."

For Krafft, as for so many of the women, it was a family affair. "I carried an 18-month little girl on my hipbone lots of mornings when I worked on those mattresses, and four little ones under eight years walked with me three and a half miles to get to work."

Their labor was not without more serious sacrifices. In a few counties infected cotton, Extension historian Gertrude Humphries writes, "resulted in the serious illness of some of the persons who worked with it.

In most of the centers, some of the workers were affected in the nose and throat by the dust and lint from even the best cotton." Mrs. Philip Alexander of Charleston recalls that

"I carried an 18-month girl on my hipbone lots of mornings when I worked on those mattresses, and four little ones walked with me to get to work."

one woman "suffered eye damage, apparently from dust, and had to seek medical help from a specialist in Texas."

And how did the mattress makers spend their long working days? The actual construction method varied, but most local projects stuck to the plan outlined in the USDA manuals.

The surplus cotton was shipped from the Southern farms to the local train station in 100-pound bales, and a piece of ticking ten yards long and 32 inches wide was provided for each mattress. The mattresses were made entirely of this material, right down to the

mattress handles.

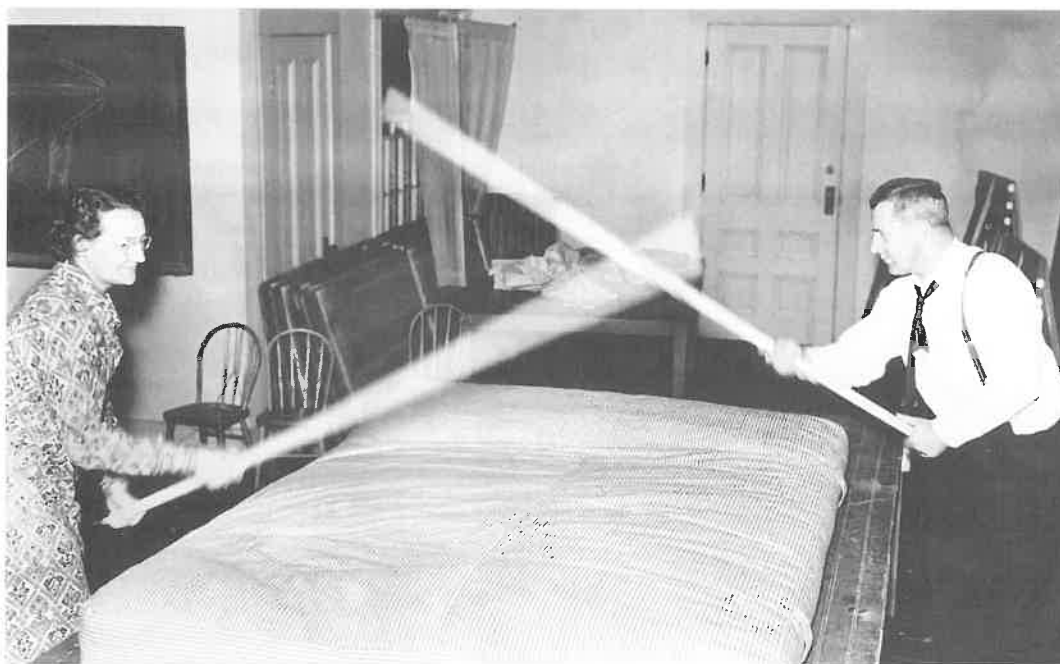
First, two 81-inch pieces were cut from the end of the bolt of ticking. From the remainder, a six-inch strip was torn lengthwise down one side, leaving a piece 198 inches long by 26 inches wide. Two more 81-inch pieces were cut from this, and the remaining short piece was cut into four strips, about six inches by 36.

The four 81-inch pieces, sewn together into two big pieces of equal size, served as the top and bottom sides of the mattress. The long six-inch strip served as the boxing, and ran all the way around. The bottom of the mattress and the boxing were sewn together, and the top portion was sewn to the boxing on one side. The resulting shape was something like a floppy fabric box with an open lid.

Approximately 50 pounds of cotton was used to stuff each mattress, but as Genevieve Krafft recalled the cotton had to be pulled or "fluffed" before it could be used. Raw cotton lint, when it grows in the pod, grows not in a straight line but winds back again and again upon itself, creating a dense, tightly packed fiber. The bends created in the fiber tend to be very sharp, and fluffing cotton can be painful work.

After the cotton had been fluffed by hand, a fourth of it was placed in the ticking and the top was folded over, closing the "box." The loose side was pinned down, and — as Gertrude Humphries observed — never had there been so much beating and fluffing by men and women and county extension agents. Volunteers would beat the quarter-full mattress with long bamboo poles, to further soften the cotton and incorporate air into it. When the first beating session was completed, the volunteers would unpin the top flap, fold it back, and repeat the process with the next layer of cotton, and the next and the next.

Sealing the filled mattress required a series of downward diagonal needle strokes, entering the mattress about three-fourths of an inch from the seam on the top, and exiting about half an inch down the side. The stitches had to be pulled tight with each stroke to seal the seam. When



Mattresses were given a good pounding upon completion and several times while being stuffed. This one lacks only the corner roll and tufting. Photo courtesy WVU Extension Service.

one side was finished, the mattress was flipped carefully, to prevent shifting the fluffed cotton, and the process repeated on the other side. The result was a raised fabric bead all the way around the mattress edge, top and bottom.

To keep the cotton from bunching once the mattress was sealed,

Never had there been so much beating and fluffing by men and women and county extension agents. Volunteers would beat the mattress with bamboo poles, to soften the cotton.

tufts were sewn into the finished product. Each mattress had five staggered rows — rows one, three and five with seven tufts, and rows two and four with eight.

The tufts were marked on the mattress ahead of time. A long tuft-

Erma Meadows helped her mother make this mattress in Mercer County in the 1940's, and it remains in use today in nearby Summers County. Photo by Michael Keller.

ing needle, drawing three or four yards of twine, was driven all the way through the mattress, looped around "buttons or whatever we used — maybe leather pieces," according to Reba Roach of Hampshire County, and drawn up through the mattress again. This process was repeated with the next tuft, and the next, and so on until the twine ran through all the tufts on the mattress. The tufting twine was then cut at the midpoint between tufts, and simple square

knots tied at each tuft. The knots had to be of equal tightness, or the resulting mattress would be uneven and uncomfortable.

After the tufting, the work was done. Proud families could carry their new mattress home at the end of the day.

The mattress program was a big success, according to those involved. Gertrude Humphries notes, "In the 337 mattress-making centers in which over 701 communities participated, about 6,800 families made over 10,000 mattresses." Furthermore, "1,906 women leaders gave 4,219 days to this work. Also, 424 men leaders gave 857 days. If this isn't volunteer lead-

ership of a high order, what is?"

The quality of the work has stood the test of passing years. Mattresses made in the 1940's were still in use as recently as 1992. Genevieve Krafft may speak for all the volunteers who gave their talents.

"I think these mattresses had a splendid job done on them," she observes. "I still have one of mine, gave two away — raised a family of nine on mine." ❁

Our thanks to Joanna Nesselroad for help with this article.— ed.



Ellis Dungan at work in 1962. The movie man was back home and well established in Wheeling by then. Photographer unknown, courtesy Wheeling News-Register.

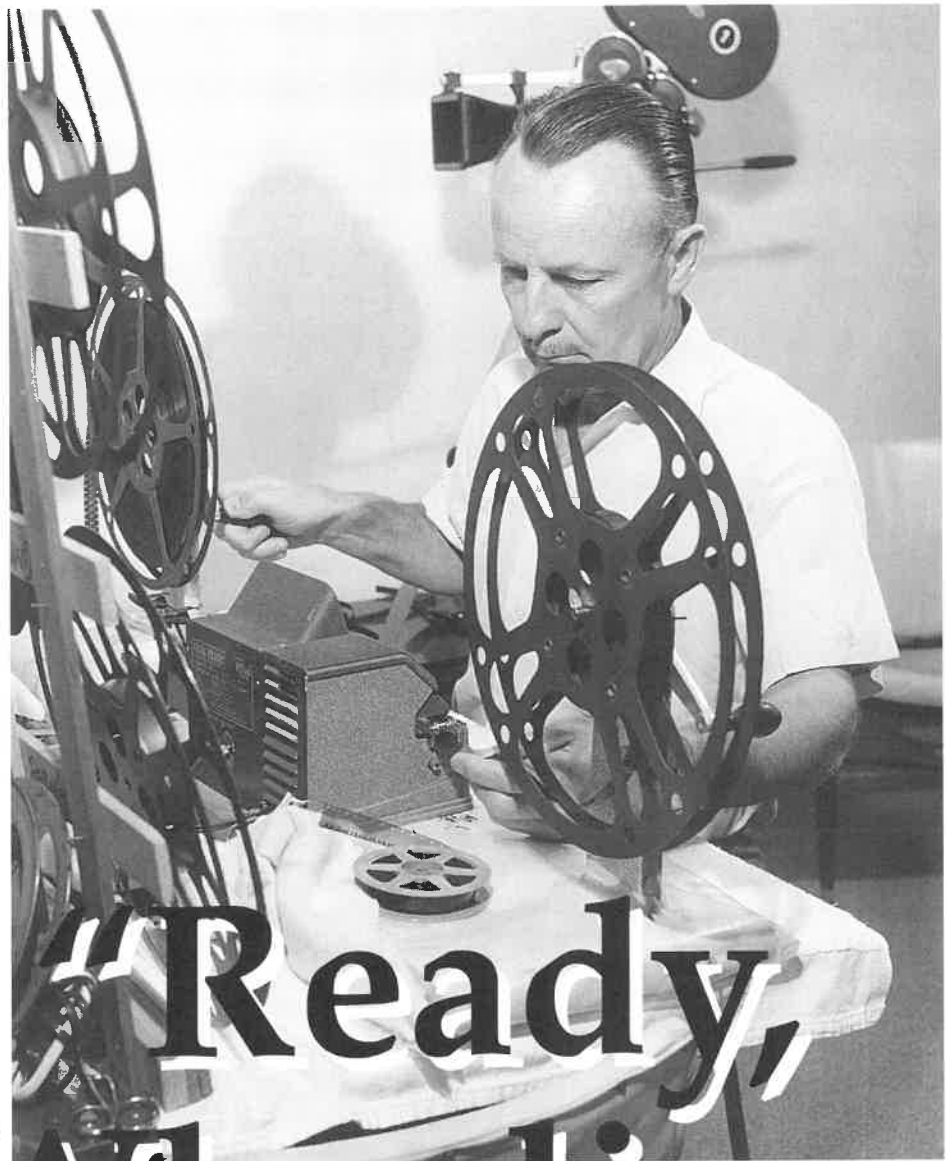
Ellis Dungan, a resident of Wheeling for the past 35 years, spent the 15 years from 1935 to 1950 producing feature films in India. These black-and-white movies, mostly in the Tamil language, were action films the entire family could enjoy.

Ellis first went to India right out of college. He was one semester short of obtaining a degree in cinematography and motion picture production from the University of Southern California. An Indian student at USC offered him a job in his father's film studio in Bombay. So Ellis took a leave of absence and sailed to India, planning on staying six months.

He had brought all the latest Hollywood film techniques with him, and since the Indian film industry was in its infant stages he was welcomed with open arms. Ellis directed 17 feature movies, several of which have become classics. His stay stretched to a decade and a half, and he spent the following eight years commuting between India and Hollywood.

Wheeling looked like heaven to Ellis Dungan when he returned home to the Ohio Valley.

"When I returned to the United States in 1958, I found the upper Ohio Valley exciting, booming, thriving, all the



"Ready, Wheeling and Able"

Movie Maker Ellis Dungan

By Barbara Diane Smik



Dungan moved directly to India from film school at the University of Southern California. Here he works with Indian filmmakers in Madras. Photographer unknown, 1945.

industry belching smoke, everything bright, newly painted, green grass, which you don't get very often in India, where everything is brown, even the golf courses," he recalls.

"I'd decided to settle in Wheeling. I was born in the Barton, Ohio, post office building, where my family lived and my father was postmaster. Barton is about ten miles west of Wheeling. I arrived on May 11, 1909, the son of Ellis Wilson Dungan and Mary Dixon Quimby. My mother once told me I came C.O.D.

"When I returned to the Wheeling area, my father had already passed away, at age 84 in 1947. My mother was living in Wheeling with my uncle, Dr. W. A. Quimby, a practicing radiologist in the city.

"I felt Wheeling was my home," Ellis continues. "I can remember as a ten-year-old child going to my father's dance studio, which he operated at 1515 Market Street in Wheeling, on the second floor of the building. I used to go in and help him sand and clean the dance

floor. He taught all the latest dance steps, such as the fox-trot. My father would go to New York every year to learn new dance steps, then bring the dance steps back to Wheeling."

After Ellis got settled in Wheeling, it wasn't long before he decided to make a film. "I'd brought my camera equipment from India and, at the time, had the wherewithal to produce the movie. I had so much faith in this valley, [was] so excited about it, I said, 'Let me put it on film just for my own pleasure.' I thought local people

might like to see it.

"I don't think a film had ever been



Talking shop on a Paramount movie set. Dungan's career brought him into contact with Bing Crosby and other stars. Photographer unknown, 1947.

The Statehood Story on Film

Ellis Dungan's film *For Liberty and Union*, produced in 1977, is an historical drama about West Virginia's separation from Virginia. Today the film is shown to visitors at West Virginia Independence Hall in Wheeling, formerly the U.S. Custom House. The building is featured in the film, and it was there that the State of West Virginia was founded.

For Liberty and Union illustrates emotions people felt over the division of their home state of Virginia and also touches on many of the issues that had to be resolved before West Virginia could become the 35th State of the Union in 1863.

After visitors view the film at Independence Hall, they are invited to see the Statehood Exhibit and tour the historic third-floor courtroom where statehood debates took place in 1861 and 1862. The office of the governor of the Restored State of Virginia is on the second floor.

Those who can't make it to Wheeling may borrow *For Liberty and Union* through the West Virginia Library Commission's Film Services Division. It may be reserved at public libraries throughout the state, along with several other Dungan films, including *Tarzan Goes to India*.

For Liberty and Union may be purchased for \$20, plus \$2.50 shipping, from the West Virginia State Archives, The Cultural Center, 1900 Kanawha Blvd. East, Charleston, WV 25305; (304)558-0220.



Governor Pierpont's office is among the sites featured in *For Liberty and Union*. Photo by Rick Lee.

made on the Wheeling area before. As far as that goes, I don't think a professional motion picture film had ever been made on West Virginia before. After *Wheels to Progress* was released and shown to various civic groups and organizations in Wheeling, Charles Bachmann and George Seibert, Ohio County legislators, suggested that I screen it for

"I remember as a child going to my father's dance studio. He would go to New York every year to learn new dance steps, then bring the dance steps back to Wheeling."

the legislators in Charleston. I did, and I received a standing ovation after the viewing of the film!"

Ellis called on local talent in the making of his movie. He talked with fellow Rotarian Paul Miller, a production assistant at radio station WWVA, about the film. Mr. Miller suggested Lew Clawson, then

WWVA staff announcer and master of ceremonies at the *Wheeling Jamboree*, as narrator for the film.

John and Pinkie Williams, friends who were associated with the Wheeling newspapers, put Ellis in touch with Haze Cochran, city editor of *The Intelligencer*, who wrote the narration. According to Robert DeFrancis, now the general manager of the *Intelligencer* and the *News-Register* and a leader in the Wheeling Area Chamber of Commerce, Mr. and Mrs. Williams can be seen in *Wheels to Progress*. They are the couple ice skating at Oglebay Park, moving toward the camera and smiling. The Williamses still live in Wheeling.

First, Ellis filmed and edited his documentary, then Haze Cochran viewed the film, made notes, and wrote the script — scene by scene.

"People and wheels!" Haze's narration proclaims. "The people increased in number and the wheels increased in speed! Whirling wheels, industrial wheels, speeding; turning; on land and on water!" Continuing the theme, the narrator refers to Wheeling as "the hub."

And that is how *Wheels to Progress*,

photographed and produced by Ellis Dungan, came to be. He originally had about an hour and a half of color film, which he edited down to 32 minutes. The Williamses suggested various places to go and things to film. Ellis recalls, "I traveled around in an old beat-up used car, up and down the Ohio River from New Martinsville south of Wheeling to Chester in the north. I covered as much of the Upper Ohio Valley as I could."

The resulting film is a smorgasbord of scenes of historic interest, including the Continental Can factory, the Wheeling Stamping Company, Fostoria Glass in Moundsville, Hannah Coal Company's gargantuan strip mine shovel, "The Mountaineer," and Bloch Brothers Tobacco Company in Wheeling. B&O and Pennsylvania Railroad trains are shown, as are barges on the Ohio, the construction of the Wheeling tunnels on I-70, and country music stars Doc Williams and Wilma Lee and Stoney Cooper on stage at the *Wheeling Jamboree* in the old Virginia Theater (now torn down). Cadets march at the old Linsly Military Institute in Wheeling (it's now co-ed, non-military,



The Dungans married late, but happily. This photo shows Ellis and Elaine at home in 1973. Photo courtesy Wheeling *Intelligencer*.

and located at another site), and a younger Ellis Dungan makes a telephone call from a shelter in a beautiful snowy scene at Oglebay Park.

Ellis, by the way, says he filmed himself using a timer on his camera. His color film is a visual treat to the eyes.

He had in mind to present the film as a gift to the Wheeling area and to the Rotary Club to be used as a promotional piece. "I invested substantially, out of my own pocket, to produce this film, and never got any of my investment back until now. Actually, I never expected to get any of my money back."

When Ellis says "now," he means the present, for the film was recently made available on videotape. Ellis Dungan is beginning to see a return on his initial investment 36 years after the original production of the film. The videotape, entitled *Wheeling 1959 — Wheels to Progress*,

was co-produced by Ellis Dungan and Zee Productions.

Gary Zearott, owner of Zee Photo and Zee Productions of Wheeling, is responsible for the marketing and distribution of the videotape, which was first offered for sale last Christmas. According to Gary, he and Ellis first met about two years ago in an elevator downtown. Ellis saw Gary carrying an art case, and said, "I see you're an artist, too." Gary had previously heard of Ellis's fame as a film producer from Chris Bowie, his friend and Mr. Dungan's stepson.

Gary Zee, as he likes to be called, has been involved in documenting life in the Upper Ohio Valley for over 15 years, and in the collecting and marketing of historical photographs of the valley. He was keenly aware of the value of *Wheels to Progress* and convinced Ellis Dungan to make the film available in video for sale to the general public.

"I don't think they were as excited about this film 36 years ago, as they are now!" exclaims Ellis. "We seem to be turning our interest today unto history. People like to review lives, events and compare them with today — to the violence and sex we see in our movies and TV today."

He continues, "There is no censorship in Hollywood today. It's gotten away from the family films that I always produced. I spent eight years in Hollywood, traveling back and forth from Hollywood to India, to produce films and shoot scenes for Hollywood studios. I worked on such films as *Tarzan Goes to India*, *The Jungle*, and *Harry Black and the Tiger*. These were films that the whole family could go see without being offended. I also was a big-game photographer, and wild-life animal trainer, and captured and transported wild animals back to zoos in the United States."

Ellis played the lead role of Frank Buck in MGM's *The Big Hunt*, a Sherwood-Dungan Production, in 1958. He shot 52 jungle adventure TV films, half-hour programs starring Andy Devine, from 1952 to 1958.

Ellis Dungan Productions was formed in 1960 with offices in Wheeling and Pittsburgh, with Ellis as sole owner. Through this company, he produced educational and promotional films for industry and organizations throughout the state

"I traveled around in a beat-up used car, up and down the Ohio River from New Martinsville south of Wheeling to Chester in the north."

of West Virginia, and in other states.

Among Dungan's many films on West Virginia are *Ready, Wheeling and Able*, for Wheeling Steel, now Wheeling-Pittsburgh Steel; *A Work of Heart and Hand* (narrated by Lowell Thomas and shot mainly at the West Virginia Art and Craft Fair

at Ripley); *West Virginia, a Land for Relaxation* (narrated by Chet Huntley for the West Virginia Department of Commerce); *Personal Rapid Transit — Ride of the Future* and *Portrait of a University* for West Virginia University; and *The Good Zoo and How it Grew* (sponsored by Laurence and Barbara Good in association with Oglebay Park). *Wild, Wonderful West Virginia* was an official travelogue produced in 1980 for the West Virginia Department of Commerce. Nowadays many of these films reside in the State Archives in Charleston.

A film Ellis Dungan is particularly proud of is *For Liberty and Union*, produced for the West Virginia Independence Hall Foundation in Wheeling in 1977. "Documentary films can take different forms," explains Ellis. "When I made *Wheels to Progress*, I was on my own financially, so I made a narrative documentary because you can produce one with a smaller budget. You can also use live action with docudramas, as I did on the film *For Liberty and Union*.

"They're expensive, though," adds Ellis, "as you must hire actors and additional technicians."

This historical drama, dealing with the birth of West Virginia and its separation from Virginia during the Civil War, used the Wheeling Custom House as backdrop. The building, known today as West Virginia Independence Hall, served as the capitol of the Restored Government of Virginia from 1861 to 1863.

On a more personal note, Ellis fell in love with Elaine Runner of Wheeling and they married in 1965. Elaine was Wheeling's only female certified public accountant for years, and a partner in her family's Griest's Drug Store business.

"She was a great help to me, particularly in finances," Ellis says. "At times, though, we had our differences of opinion on money matters. She was always saying, 'Ellis, you're not selling yourself good enough. You're giving your work away. You're not getting what you're due.' So we'd fight and she'd usually get the better of me."

Elaine died in 1994, but before

See It for Yourself

The videotape *Wheeling 1959 — Wheels to Progress* was produced in 1995 by Ellis Dungan and Zee Productions. Thirty-two minutes of fully narrated, rare color footage show Wheeling and the Ohio Valley as it was in 1958 and 1959. When Ellis Dungan originally made *Wheels to Progress*, the film was seen locally but not widely distributed.

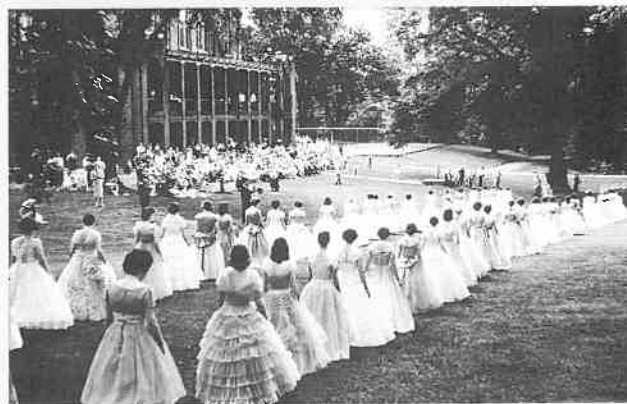
Gary Zearott of Zee Productions told of his first meeting with Ellis Dungan, and how it led to producing the video. As the adjoining story says, the two men first met and introduced themselves in an elevator. After their conversation got around to Ellis's filmmaking, Gary asked what had happened to his old Wheeling movie. The eventual result of their chance meeting was the jointly produced *Wheels* video.

The current *Wheels to Progress* contains original narration by Lew Clawson, who recorded material written by Haze Cochran at WWVA radio. The script accompanies Dungan's dramatic filming of local industries and institutions, emphasizing the every day hard-working bustle of the busy valley. Dungan also captured the gentler side of life with colorful scenes of Mount de Chantal Academy, Oglebay Park ice-skaters, Bethany and West Lib-

erty colleges, and numerous churches. her death she knew that her greatly loved husband would be inducted into the Wheeling Hall of Fame that year. Ellis also was honored as the Wheeling Jaycees "Citizen of the Month" on release of *Wheels to Progress* in 1959, and he has received many other awards. They include



The Wheeling waterfront, as captured by Ellis Dungan in 1958.



May Day at Mount de Chantal. Both scenes from the film, *Wheels to Progress*.

erty colleges, and numerous churches.

Mail orders for the Dungan video may be sent to Gary Zearott, Zee Productions, 31 Bishop Street, Wheeling, WV 26003; (304)242-0419. The cost is \$23, including shipping and tax for West Virginia residents. Copies are also available at the Doc Williams Country Store at 10th and Main Streets in downtown Wheeling.

national and regional honors for *Wild, Wonderful West Virginia*, *For Liberty and Union* and other films. In 1989, he received the Brent Galyean Award for outstanding contribution to film and video, a lifetime achievement award from the West Virginia International



Ellis Dungan at work in the mature middle years of his career. He made films throughout the region after returning to West Virginia. Photographer unknown, 1960's.

Film Festival.

A few years back, Ellis sold most of his filmmaking equipment to a couple of college students from Fairmont who wanted to get into the film business. Ellis quoted a price they thought was fair, and the young filmmakers were glad to put the old pro's gear to work. "They're now in Pittsburgh, I believe," he says, "making a film with my equipment."

The last film Ellis made with the equipment he sold was called *Josiah Fox — Architect of the United States' First Navy*. This was a tribute to his great, great grandfather, who de-

signed the Navy's first ships, "Old Ironsides" (the *U.S.S. Constitution*) and the *U.S.S. Constellation*, among others. Josiah Fox and his wife, Anna Miller Fox, who were Quakers, moved to Wheeling in 1811 after Josiah retired from the Navy. He had intended to build ships in Wheeling because of the abundant timber and labor supply, but gave up the idea.

Ellis explains, "There was an embargo on shipping to Europe, at that time, due to the war between England and the United States." So Josiah Fox instead purchased a 200-acre farm in Colerain, Ohio, in

1813.

This particular film was made as a legacy for Ellis's family, but he doesn't necessarily mean it to be his last word. "I'm not content," he says. "There's much more. At present, I have nothing in mind. When you reach my age, you take it one day at a time."

Joe Unitas stopped by to see Ellis as he and I concluded our interview. Joe, who shares a famous name with his cousin Johnny, is the owner of Unitas Photography of McMurray, Pennsylvania, and a long-time friend of Ellis. In fact, Joe worked for him for 20 years, as his chief lighting technician.

"Working with Ellis was easy," Joe says. "Ellis taught me that lighting is the most important thing in photography, both stills and motion pictures. He was the one who was responsible for me to have the life I have as a photographer."

"We traveled all over. I know the state of West Virginia better than I know my own state, as a result of working with Ellis Dungan."

"We traveled all over the state. I know the state of West Virginia better than I know my own state, as a result of working with Ellis. Ellis is a rare person, and I am honored to have had the opportunity to work with him."

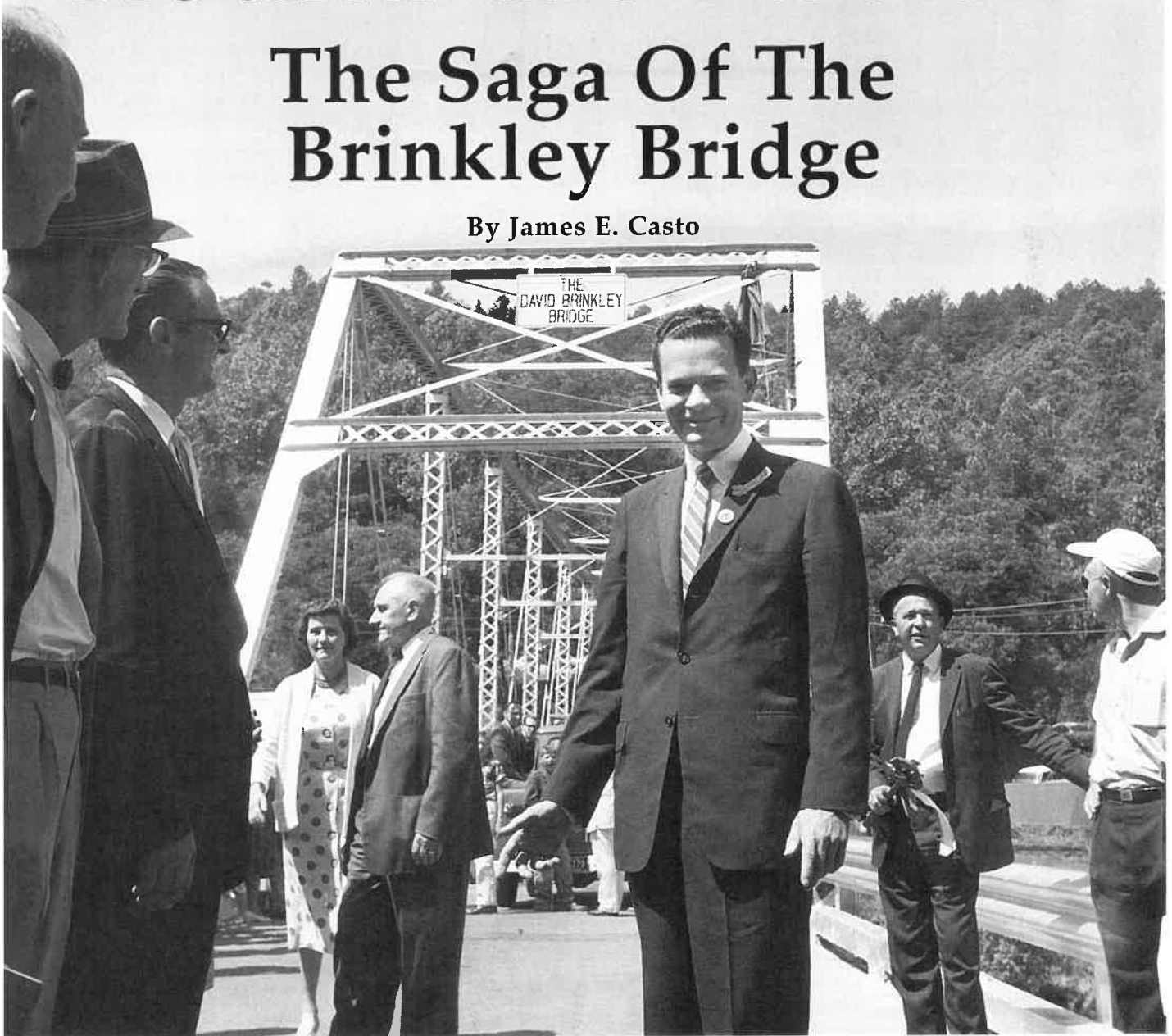
Ellis Dungan has that kind of effect on people. He told me that one of the reasons for *Wheels to Progress* was to instill civic pride in Wheeling. I believe he achieved that when he first produced the film decades ago, and the film still is achieving that purpose today. The Wheeling area, which includes small communities up and down both sides of the Ohio River, is a great place to live, and to be from.

I know. I was born and raised in Wheeling, and Ellis's film makes me proud. ♣

"A Rattle Heard 'Round the Nation"

The Saga Of The Brinkley Bridge

By James E. Casto



Native sons and daughters who make good frequently are honored by the folks back home by having a street or avenue named after them. But West Virginia boasts a bridge named in honor of a popular television newsman who was born in North Carolina, has spent most of his

professional career in Washington, and visited West Virginia only briefly.

How a Wayne County bridge came to be named for TV newsman David Brinkley is an intriguing footnote to West Virginia's historic 1960 presidential primary. At the heart of the bridge saga: a rattle that was heard around the nation.

nation's most-watched TV shows.

West Virginia's moment in the national political spotlight proved to be a dubious blessing, for many of the visiting reporters focused on the state's problems. Brinkley was no exception. In April of 1960, while filming a pre-primary news report at an old, one-lane bridge on what was then U.S. 52 just outside the

many Wayne County residents had been struggling to accomplish for years — get the old bridge repaired.

Built in 1907, the bridge across Twelve Pole Creek long had been the subject of complaint.

In 1957, the bridge was given a posted weight limit of 5,000 pounds. Yet the next year it was still being traveled by a school bus carrying students to and from Ceredo Elementary and Ceredo-Kenova High School. Even empty, the bus weighed 8,000 pounds, far in excess of the posted limit.

On February 28, 1958, a loaded school bus plunged into the Big Sandy River near Prestonsburg, Kentucky, killing 26 children and the bus driver. Pointing to that tragedy, Wayne County parents said they feared a similar tragedy at the Twelve Pole bridge.

In response, the school bus driver began stopping at the bridge and unloading his students,

who walked across the bridge. The driver then piloted the empty bus across the span and the students boarded it again on the other side. Eventually, state school officials ordered the driver to halt that practice and instead use another, more time-consuming route. Teachers grumbled because it made the students late for class. The youngsters were equally unhappy because they were late getting home from school in the afternoon.

On March 21, *The Herald-Dispatch* quoted Robert D. Hatfield, then district engineer with the State Road Commission, as saying he would recommend the span be closed. He said that based on an inspection by the commission's bridge engineer he believed the span was unsafe.

The bridge, however, was kept open, with the 5,000-pound limit, while state officials pondered its repair or replacement.



The bridge had been posted down to 5,000 pounds before refurbishing, a problem for school buses and other heavy vehicles. Photographer unknown, courtesy Huntington *Herald-Dispatch*.

West Virginia's 1960 primary was a magnet for journalists, dozens of whom flocked to the state to chronicle the epic clash between John F. Kennedy and Hubert Humphrey. West Virginia proved to be the end of the line for the Humphrey campaign, and Kennedy's victory here helped give him the momentum he needed to win the Democratic nomination and, later, the White House.

Among the many newspeople who came to West Virginia to report on the hard-fought primary was David Brinkley, then the co-host of "The Huntley-Brinkley Report." The nightly NBC newscast featuring Brinkley and fellow newsman Chet Huntley was one of the

corporate limits of Wayne, he had the inspired idea of holding his microphone down to the dilapidated

He had the inspired idea of holding his microphone down to the bridge's creaky wooden floor. Viewers nationwide heard the floorboards pop and groan as cars and trucks rumbled across.

bridge's creaky wooden floor. Viewers nationwide heard the old bridge's floorboards pop and groan as cars and trucks rumbled across it.

Brinkley's TV report lasted only two or three minutes but in that brief time he accomplished what

Previous Page: David Brinkley, looking good, stands proudly by his Wayne County namesake. Photographer unknown, courtesy West Virginia State Archives.



Fine automobiles and a festive crowd took part in the Brinkley Day parade on June 17, 1961. Photographer unknown, courtesy *Herald-Dispatch*.

Then David Brinkley showed up — microphone in hand.

Stung by Brinkley's report, State Road Commissioner Patrick C. Graney immediately ordered the bridge closed. In a lengthy statement to the media, he said the shut-down was for repairs the state had had in mind for some time. The old wooden floor would be replaced and the bridge painted, he said.

Graney insisted that the closing of the bridge and Brinkley's broadcast were coincidental. "A new floor had already been planned for this year," he said, "but the old floor deteriorated more rapidly than had

been expected."

One month and two days after being closed, the old bridge was reopened with a new floor and a shiny new silver paint job. The weight limit was raised to 22,000 pounds.

And that might have been the end of the story, had not some unknown soul come up with a bright suggestion: Why not invite Brinkley back to dedicate the reinforced, re-floored, repainted bridge? For that matter, why not name it after him? People in Wayne County had started calling it the "Brinkley Bridge" the day after the news-

man's broadcast. Why not make it official?

A call was placed to Washington. "Yes, I remember that bridge," Brinkley replied. "And I'll be most happy to come back."

So, June 17, 1961, was proclaimed "David Brinkley Day" in Wayne. Banners were put up around town, a big parade was organized and the Wayne Chamber of Commerce voted Brinkley an honorary membership. Large signs erected at each end of the renovated span identified it as "The David Brinkley Bridge."

Cutting the ribbon officially opening the renovated span, Brinkley quipped: "This is the quietest bridge I ever saw."

Formal dedication ceremonies were conducted at the Wayne High School athletic field, and included remarks by Senator Jennings Randolph, Congressman Ken Hechler, Governor W. W. Barron, new State Road Commissioner Burl Sawyers and, of course, Brinkley.

Sawyers said Brinkley had performed an engineering miracle, comparable to the Great Wall of China, the pyramids and the Panama Canal. The newsman, Sawyers said, had repaired a bridge with a microphone.

At a luncheon in the school cafeteria, Brinkley crowned Glenna Damron, a 16-year-old high school senior as "Brinkley Day Queen."

In remarks at the luncheon, Brinkley said that "outside of West Virginia there is an awareness that West Virginia is on the move." He said the state had had its share of bad publicity in recent months, but he pledged to see that it got "some good publicity" as well.

That night Brinkley appeared again, this time at a private dinner staged at the Hotel Prichard for State Road Commission employees and invited guests. He spoke briefly, thanked those responsible for naming the bridge for him and then sat down. He said he had given four speeches during the day and felt that was enough for him — and his audience.

The big doings over, Brinkley flew back to Washington.

Ourselves as Others See Us

The late folk artist Dave Tamplin was one West Virginian who remembered David Brinkley's characterization of the Mountain State very well, and who took offense at it. Mr. Tamplin put his aggravation into a painting, prominently featuring Wayne County's "Brinkley Bridge."

people in West Virginia and how they were starving, and I set down and I painted that 'West Virginia Son in 1963 in the Eyes of David Brinkley.' Now, that's what West Virginians looked like in David Brinkley's eyes."

Viewers with their own eyes open will see that Mr. Tamplin packed plenty of cultural cliches into his

a patch on his knee. "And there's his bear skin and his other little skins and his couple chickens," Mr. Tamplin pointed out in the interview. That's his mother washing clothes by the creek.

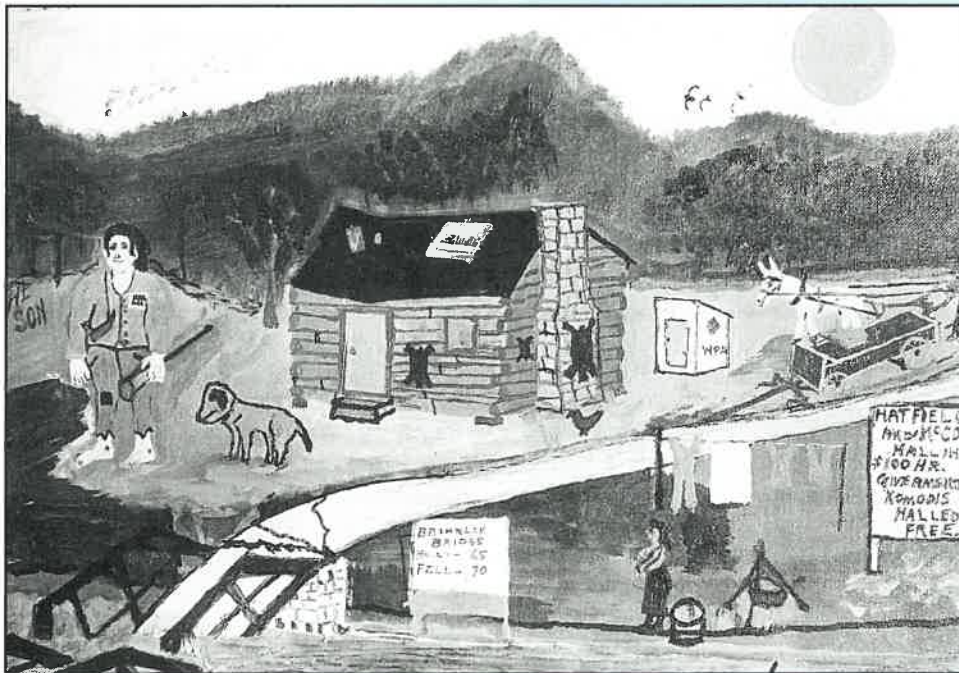
And squarely in the creek is the famous Brinkley Bridge, with a sign saying "Built — 65; Fell — 70." Dave Tamplin's dates are a little off, but his sentiments are clear: "The damn fools, they built a bridge and they called it the Brinkley Bridge," he said. "After a couple or five years it fell."

Tamplin, descended from the early settlers of his Kanawha Valley community, was one of the West Virginia folk artists located by Elaine Eff in a statewide survey in the late 1970's. Eff, now Maryland's director of cultural conservation programs and formerly a consultant to the Museum of American Folk Art, the Smithsonian and other institutions, was working under contract to the state of West Virginia at the time. The painting was originally published with the 1979 GOLDENSEAL article, which featured Tamplin and others.

Eff called her article "A Whole Lot to It, Buddy, A Whole Lot More than Meets the Eye," and she got a whole lot of common sense out of Mr. Tamplin.

"You take an educated person, he'll see those things and he'll write it all down," he told her. Dave Tamplin got it down in his own plain way with a paint brush, and there is no mistaking what he thought about it all.

— Ken Sullivan



Dave Tamplin's painting of the Brinkley Bridge, from a 1979 GOLDENSEAL.

"Every evening him and Chet, newscasters, was on television. Every evening he had something to say about the poor people in West Virginia," Mr. Tamplin said in a 1979 GOLDENSEAL interview. "I claim he wore out six cameras taking the same picture.

"So every night he had something to say about the poor

picture, including a WPA outhouse and a sign advertising a Hatfield-McCoy hauling company. "That's after they became friendly," he explained, and the sign indicates that they haul government commodities — "komodis" in the painter's unabashed spelling — for free.

The native son, labeled "The Son," in case anybody missed him, stands at left, with his gun and his dog and

But that by no means was the end of the strange saga of the Brinkley Bridge. Motorists were grateful for the work that had been done on the span, but they still were stuck with an old one-lane bridge that was quieter but no wider.

In 1966, Wayne Mayor Otis Skeens complained that in recent years he had seen two different sets of plans for a new bridge but there was just one hitch: the plans never got off the drawing board. "We need a new bridge badly," he said.

Some Wayne residents, tucking their tongues firmly in their cheeks, suggested that a logical addition to the one-lane "David Brinkley Bridge" would be an adjacent "Chet Huntley Bridge" that could carry traffic in the opposite direction.



The famous bridge was finally laid low by an overweight truck. Here workers prepare the truck cab for removal from the site. Photographer unknown, courtesy *Herald-Dispatch*.

By 1970, the old bridge had badly deteriorated again. The load limit was slashed and school buses once again diverted. "David Come Back — We Need You," pleaded a headline in the *Huntington Advertiser*. State highway officials undertook temporary repairs, enabling the load limit to be restored to its previous level.

On July 1 of that year, state Highways Commissioner William S. Ritchie Jr. told a dinner meeting of the Wayne Chamber of Commerce that the bridge "definitely" would be replaced. And in September, a

crew started core drilling in the creek, hailed as the first step in construction of a new, two-lane span.

Then fate stepped in to provide yet another twist in the story.

About 9:00 p.m. the night of September 22, 1970, the old bridge collapsed under the weight of a flatbed tractor-trailer rig. The two men in the truck, which had been hauling a giant shovel boom, scrambled to safety with minor injuries.

The south end of the narrow span pulled loose from its abutment and dropped, with the truck, into the

ten-foot-deep creek at a 45-degree angle. The north end remained attached. The two men crawled out of the truck cab, which had sunk to window level in the creek, and walked up the sloping bridge floor to the bridge's north end.

Word quickly spread and hundreds of people gathered at the creek to see the fallen span.

It took workers more than a week to retrieve the shovel boom and the truck carrying it from the creek. They then weighed the truck and the boom and found they totalled 52,000 pounds — 16 tons over the span's posted ten-ton weight limit. Eventually, the driver was fined \$100, plus court costs of \$7.70, then the maximum fine for violating a bridge weight limit.

Some Wayne residents suggested an adjacent "Chet Huntley Bridge" that could carry traffic in the opposite direction.

In December, a \$464,673 contract for construction of a new, two-lane replacement span was awarded. Work on the new bridge began the following February and it was dedicated on October 15, 1971 — just a bit more than a year after the old span's collapse.

On hand for the dedication was Governor Arch A. Moore, Jr., who referred to the old bridge as a "typical" rickety West Virginia bridge.

Like his predecessors, Governor Moore got in a few points of his own. "For a decade West Virginia has lived with the mark of the old bridge, but now we're living in a different time..., a different age," he told the listening crowd.

Conspicuous by his absence at that day's ceremonies: David Brinkley, who was not invited.

Unlike the old bridge, the new span carries no name. But that makes little difference.

Everyone in Wayne County still calls it the Brinkley Bridge. ♣

Between Twistabout and Dismal

Flying Dogs and Ghost Frogs at the Haunted Mud Hole

By Patricia Samples Workman

I never had the privilege to meet Addie Dawson, but in listening to the tape recording she made, all the marvelous tales and folklore, I can imagine what a wonderful person she must have been.

Addie was born and raised in Clay County, and always lived in the Prociuous and Twistabout region except for a brief period at Clendenin. She worked as a cook at one of the local schools.

She loved to tell her stories. She could do all kinds of funny voices and characters. She also sang quite well. She liked to recite poetry, folklore and childhood memories. She collected ghost stories and other tales from older friends and relatives when she was young. When her own children were small, she told them special stories. Some were the old tales, some she had made up, and others were inspired by the Bible. Addie was a devout Christian from an early age.

Addie was a sweet little lady, and I was saddened when I learned that she had passed away a couple of years ago.

In the tape she recounts her fa-

vorite stories of Christmas, recites old poems, gives medicinal remedies, and tells ghost stories from Twistabout and Prociuous. Addie actually recorded the tape for her niece, Linda Burdette Bird. Apparently several copies of the tape were made for family and friends over the years, as they learned of its ex-

All of a sudden, one of the children said, "Mammy, Mammy, did you see that dog a-flying?"

istence. My copy came from my aunt, Erma Botkin, a friend of the Dawsons.

It was on Addie's tape that I learned about the haunted mud hole. Another source of information I referred to was a little book, *Twistabout and Thereabouts*, authored by the late Hubert Dawson, also a native of the area.

This story begins a long time ago, up on a lonely ridge in Clay County, where the headwaters of Twist-

about and Dismal creeks meet in a low gap. Water naturally drained into this area from several directions and no matter the season, a puddle or mud hole could be found there.

The low gap also became a junction for five different wagon roads. One led to Horner's Fork, one to the head of Dulls Creek, one down Twistabout Creek, one out the Twistabout Ridge and one out to the Big Ridge. There was also a footpath down to Dismal Creek.

"Well then, on up the road, on up the Twistabout Road and to the edge of the woods, was supposed to have been the haunted mud hole," is the way Addie begins the tale.

"Now, I never was much afraid of the haunted mud hole myself. I've heard very many mysterious things about it. Even though I've passed by the mud hole by myself of a night," she'd say, "I never had any occasion to be frightened."

But some of the local residents of Prociuous and Twistabout had had plenty occasion to be frightened at the low gap. Several people had not only heard noises, but had ob-

served some startling and strange sights.

Alice, Addie's mother, was one of them.

Once, long ago, Alice and her two small sons, Addie's brothers Enos and Grover, had been somewhere visiting. The boys were just wee tots, little young'uns as mountain people would say. They were walking past the mud hole that day on their way back home. Cub, the family's wooly black dog, had followed behind. Soon they heard him trailing a rabbit through the brush thicket, down below the road.

Then suddenly, quick as a flash, as Alice put it, "Here comes this flying dog by the side of me, and its feet wasn't a-touching the ground nowhere."

Alice told the story many times, and Addie said she would always measure with her hand to show how high the dog was off the ground. Alice said that the dog just flew along, its furry feet never touching the ground. It flew back and forth, all around the mud hole and even up by the edge of the woods.

Now, Alice was naturally scared almost to death, but she never let on to her children. Then one of the little tykes said, "Mammy, Mammy, did you see that dog a-flying?" Thinking fast, she told Enos and Grover that it had probably just been Cub coming to them from out of the woods, not flying at all.

But that was for the children. Alice later confided to one of her friends that Cub hadn't been anywhere close to where they'd seen the flying dog.

Another eerie incident occurred in the low gap late one dark night. Mr. Walter White was traveling by horseback down the road on Twistabout Ridge, approaching the mud hole. As he slowly rode along the deserted lane, the woods were silent and the night as black as pitch.

All of a sudden, he felt a strange and peculiar presence. The gentle old horse was uneasy and had almost spooked. Just at that moment, an unseen, unearthly being crept up behind Mr. White on his horse. The ominous presence rode in silence behind the fearful Mr. White

— its icy breath on the back of his neck. It chilled his very heart. Then when this unfortunate fellow was almost within sight of his home, the sinister creature slid from the horse and slithered into the underbrush.

Theories varied as to why the low gap was haunted. Some said that a cruel murder had occurred many years ago, exactly at this junction in the road. Perhaps someone had



Friends recall storyteller Addie Dawson as a short person, so you will have no trouble picking her out here. She poses here near her Twistabout home, with sister Ruby Samples and Ruby's husband, Tommy, and Goldie Samples Samms behind. Photographer unknown, 1940's.

attacked an innocent wayfarer or maybe the victim was a traveling peddler, murdered for his gold. No one was sure.

Others said that the site of the mud hole had once been a gallows, that the ancient oak had served as a hangman's tree. According to local historical lore, a group of Confederate soldiers had been passing through when they came to believe that a member of their unit was a Union spy. As the story unfolds, this unlucky soldier was hanged by his angry comrades for treason.

The Rebel soldiers left his wretched, broken body swinging

from a rope hastily tossed over a big branch of the oak tree. As time passed, what was left of the poor fellow's body dropped into the mud hole.

In later years, travelers would hear a big object come crashing down out of the tree. It happened just about any time of the day.

Addie said, "Now, I don't know whether the thing was heard of the night or not, but many, many people heard it of the day time. I've heard different people tell about hearing it, and they said it would sound as big as a cross tie."

Or maybe just about as big as a hanged man's lifeless body, one can't help but think.

Whatever it was, the object would come flying down out of the oak tree. No one ever actually saw it hit the ground. But when it did, Addie stated, "A loud thunderous sound could be heard — and never a twig or leaf would be out of place."

According to Addie, "It would almost scare the daylights out of old Granny Burdette. Mommy saw it too, or heard it, rather." Addie said that other members of her family had also heard it over the years.

And there were other manifestations of the uneasy state of affairs at the crossroads.

Late one evening, along about dusk, a group of young people were walking home from a church meeting. As the group approached the mud hole, a couple of the girls boldly vowed to try to holler up the ghost when they got there. And sure enough, when they came to the edge of the water hole, one of them said, "Come up out of there ghost."

Another bold girl said, "Why don't you come and get me, ghost!"

It just about did. For as the group started past the mud hole out flew a ghostly flapping thing. It appeared white and clothlike.

The spooky white object flapped and flopped, then proceeded to wrap itself right around the feet of the two brash girls. As they struggled, the strange presence became more tangled around their feet and legs. As hard as the girls fought, they never actually managed to strike the object. "They'd kick at it,

but they couldn't hit it," Addie said.

The girls survived, although little the wiser. "No one ever found the origin of the flapping object," Addie said. To this day, it remains another mystery of the mud hole.

Many years later, a Mrs. Nottingham moved in nearby, into a house that a Samples family had built. When the state put through the paved road, the men cut down a big oak tree.

Now, Mrs. Nottingham didn't know that the place was supposed to have been haunted. One day she and her children were out visiting Addie and her family. Mrs. Nottingham said, "You know, my children got out one day and got some pieces of wood from an old oak stump. We burned them in the chimney and the woodburning stove."

She said, "The queerest looking lights came out of that wood that you ever saw in your life. Colored lights came out of the fire."

Addie said, "Ah, it was probably foxfire."

Then the woman said, "No, I know what foxfire is, and it wan't

foxfire!"

Addie then asked, "Well, did you know that oak tree was supposed to have been haunted?"

No doubt the Nottinghams were more careful of their firewood after that. But times were changing at the low gap. The tree was gone and soon the mud hole followed. When the road from Dulls Creek and out the Twistabout Ridge was paved, the wet spot was filled in and covered with asphalt. The road work ended the mud hole, if not quite the haunting.

For late one night, one of the Samples boys, Enos or maybe Amos, was walking past where the old mud hole had been. All of a sudden, in the still summer night, he began to hear frogs jumping into puddles of water. Then, just as quickly, he heard frogs singing and croaking in the dark of the night. Young Samples scrambled to the ground. He was certain there must be some water, but none could be found and he searched high and low.

According to Addie, even that was not quite the last tale told. That

honor went to a Mr. Grose and his family, who were passing by in their pickup truck. When they got to the place where the mud hole had been, something came up out of the paved road that looked like a little tornado.

Addie related, "It twirled around, and around, and around the road. It was a grayish, tannish-looking cloud of a thing. It just twirled around, and then it disappeared." The startled Mr. Grose concluded it was a cloud of dust, but some other people wondered.

For the old-timers still remembered the old stories. And some of them, folks born and raised in the community in the days before pavement and pickup trucks, still do. A few attribute the strange occurrences, the odd apparitions and eerie sounds, to the presence of ghosts.

Who can say, for sure? Certainly there have been enough goings-on to make thoughtful people think.

And according to Addie, "This is just some of the mysterious things that have happened on the Twistabout Ridge." ❀

Curing the thrash: "It looked like his feet was clean"

*P*ediatricians call it thrush today, and they recognize it as a minor but aggravating oral infection to be treated by modern prescription medicine. Old-timers like Addie Dawson recalled other ways of curing "the thrash."

Ma, she always thought that if a man that had never seen his father would blow in a baby's mouth, that was a sure cure for the thrash. So when one of her babies would get the thrash somebody would go for Bill Brizendine, because Bill's dad was supposed to have been killed in the Civil War, and he had never seen him.

I can just see Bill yet, though I was very, very small: He would lay the baby across his lap, and

put his mouth right down over the baby's mouth and blow down in its throat.

Of course, Bill died with TB, but we didn't pay much attention to the germs. Then later on when some of the later children got the thrash, Ma didn't have Bill around to blow in his mouth. Especially Gene, he took a thrash bad one time. She'd heard that if a man that wasn't any kin to a baby would take his shoe off, and give it a drink of water out of his shoe, that that would cure the thrash.

So Ma, she gathers little Gene up, and she goes down to Mrs. Deems, and Ernest was there. Ernest was a young man, getting ready to go off courtin' that night. And Ma said it looked like his feet was clean,

looked like his socks was clean, so he took his shoe off, they put the water in there and poured it down Gene's throat. And I guess the thrash got well.

Well, then later on Mrs. Deems' baby took a thrash and I can remember yet a-seeing her coming up one hot day, a-carrying little Lizzie. "Oh, Alice, I want you to give Lizzie a drink out of your shoe, because she's got the thrash."

Ma, she went out and she took her old shoe off at the well and she soused that baby good with that water, right down its little throat.

That was for the thrash.

— The late Addie Dawson,
from a tape recording.

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 event announcements and review copies of books and recordings, but cannot guarantee publication.

RFD Centennial

October 1 is the 100th anniversary of rural free mail delivery in the United States. West Virginia, one of the country's most rural states, is the place it began.

Rural free delivery officially became a permanent service on October 1, 1896, in the Jefferson County communities of Charles Town,



Halltown and Uvilla. Though money was appropriated by Congress in 1890 to test the system in small towns and villages, it took six years to make RFD a reality.

It was Postmaster General William L. Wilson, a West Virginian, who did so. Wilson, himself from Charles Town, was a past president of WVU and a former U.S. Congressman. In all he selected 44 routes in 29 states, taking care "to choose territory widely divergent in physical features and in the occupation and density of its population." Of the first five routes, three were established at Charles Town about 18 miles each in length. The Halltown route was 12 miles long and Uvilla, 20 miles.

A Winter 1987 *GOLDENSEAL* article by Margo Stafford explained how postal service in the country worked before that time: "Until 1896, there was no rural delivery of mail in the United States. Although more than half the country's 76,000,000 people lived in rural areas at that time, they were forced to call at their local post office to re-

ceive or send mail."

Early rural mail carriers had to be part weatherman; part telegrapher, carrying messages neighbor-to-neighbor; a know-it-all, being up to date on everything from the price of eggs to election returns; and a traveling post office as well, selling stamps, postcards and money orders.

Charleston hosted the 92nd annual convention of the National Rural Letter Carriers' Association in August, as carriers were invited to "come back to the state where rural free delivery began." A new U.S. postage stamp, based on a photograph of an early rural carrier alongside his horse-drawn mail wagon, was issued in Charleston on August 7.

Capitol Walking Tour

A new guide is available for visitors to West Virginia's capital city. "An Historic Walk through West Virginia's Capitol" is a 24-page, softcover booklet that guides people through the Capitol, explaining the building's architecture and directing them to the state legislative chambers and other special areas.

The walking guide also takes in the Capitol grounds with detailed descriptions of statues, fountains, and the West Virginia Veterans Memorial. The nearby Cultural Center and Governor's Mansion are highlighted, too.

The booklet is filled with photographs by state photographers Michael Keller, David Fattaleh and Steve Shaluta, Jr., and several historic photographs from the State Archives. It also includes a map of the Capitol, with precise directions telling those taking the tour which way to go and what to look for. One section is devoted to the history of the State Capitol and its various loca-

tions in Wheeling and Charleston.

Visitors to the Capitol Complex may look for the walking tour guide at the front desk of the Cultural Center and the rotunda in the Capitol. The tour booklet is dedicated to the memory of historic preservationist Rodney Collins who died early this year. He provided much of the information for the walking tour guide.

More Help For Chestnuts

The chestnut blight, which came to this country on imported nursery stock at the turn of the century, wiped out about all of West Virginia's chestnut groves by the early 1950's. Today West Virginians are fighting to bring back the magnificent trees, as described in a Winter 1995 *GOLDENSEAL* article.

Now extra help is available with the formation of an American Chestnut Foundation chapter in the Mountain State. The West Virginia Department of Agriculture's *Market Bulletin* says the ACF hopes to "put the American chestnut, king of the eastern forests, back on its throne."

The American Chestnut Foundation was founded in 1983. The group encourages research to control the American chestnut blight and actively breeds disease-resistant trees. In 1989, the ACF established a research farm at Meadowview, Virginia.

A new ACF chapter will complement the work already being done by West Virginians such as Leslie Baldwin of Boone County, Concord College professor John Elkins and the West Virginia Division of For-



estry. Baldwin and Elkins are active in the American Chestnut Co-operators Foundation, a separate group with a similar name.

For more information on the American Chestnut Foundation contact Don Kines, P.O. Box 217, Davis WV 26260; (304)259-4821. You may contact the Chestnut Co-operators at 2667 Forest Service Road 708, Newport, VA 24128; (703)552-5943.

Gauley Mountain Reprinted

The Pocahontas Communications Cooperative recently reprinted Louise McNeill's *Gauley Mountain*, a collection of verse that has been called West Virginia's epic poem. Louise McNeill was state poet laureate from 1977 until her death in 1993.

Gauley Mountain is a verse history of West Virginia, which is rep-



Gauley Mountain cover illustration.

resented in the book as the semi-fictitious "Gauley." McNeill's poems run from the first settlement in the early 1700's through the hard times of the 1930's. *Gauley Mountain*, originally published to national acclaim in 1939, had been out of print in recent years. The commemorative edition includes four critical essays on McNeill as a person, a poet, a teacher and an historian. GOLDENSEAL editor Ken Sullivan contributed the essay on "The Poet as Historian."

Gauley Mountain: A History in Verse, a 100-page paperback, may be ordered for \$12 from Pocahontas Communications Cooperative, Dunmore, WV 24934.

Earlier this year, Louise McNeill's writings and personal papers were donated to the West Virginia and Regional History Collection at WVU by her son Douglas Pease. Sixteen boxes of correspondence, family history, photographs, draft copies of recent publications, notebooks and unpublished poems and stories were given to the archives.

A Children's Story

Cheryl Ryan of Moundsville has published her first children's book, *Sally Arnold*. The story of friendship between a young girl and an old mountain woman is told through Ryan's sensitive text and paintings by illustrator Bill Farnsworth.

Young Jenny Fox has come to stay with her grandfather for the summer and help out at his store. At first she is not only bored and a little lonely, but she views elderly Sally Arnold as an oddity and someone to be feared. Jenny doesn't understand why Sally is always col-

History Journal Published

Volume 55 of the annual journal *West Virginia History* is now in print and available from Archives and History at the Division of Culture and History. The journal "features articles, documents, book reviews, and notes on the economic, political, social and cultural history of West Virginia and the Appalachian re-

Franklin and Marshall College explores the issue of civil liberty in a war zone in his article on a Fayette County native, James B. Hamilton, who was arrested by Confederates and imprisoned in Richmond. Richard R. Duncan at Georgetown University writes about McNeill's Rangers and their May 1864 raid on Piedmont.

Fifty pages of muster records of West Virginia's First Infantry include a physical description of each soldier along with age, birthplace, occupation, date and place of enlistment, rank and other comments. Other articles deal with frontier heroine Betty Zane and scientific medicine in southern West Virginia during the industrialization of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Robert Maddox of Marshall University draws on the subject of his book *The Senatorial Career of Harley Martin Kilgore* for an article on Senator Kilgore's role in exposing questionable business practices of American companies that dealt with the Japanese prior to the 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor.

Book reviews, book notes, and recent accessions to several West Virginia collections conclude *West Virginia History* Volume 55. The journal may be ordered by sending a \$12 check or money order to Archives and History, The Cultural Center, 1900 Kanawha Blvd. East, Charleston, WV 25305.

gion," according to its editorial statement.

The Civil War dominates the current journal. Lou Athey of

WEST VIRGINIA HISTORY



VOLUME 55 1996

lecting "things to make into something." Through her own wanderings and a near mishap, the shy girl comes to learn what the old woman and her old ways are all about. It's a lesson the reader knows will last Jenny a lifetime.

Author Cheryl Ryan is better known to GOLDENSEAL readers as freelancer Cheryl Ryan Harshman. She has written for the magazine since 1989, most recently in her Summer 1995 GOLDENSEAL article on the traditional art of scherenschnitte. Cheryl is a storyteller and a children's librarian in Marshall County, and herself the mother of a curious young girl. She has also written school textbooks

North House Museum map was reproduced from an original pocket map attached to a leather wallet.

The wallet belonged to Joseph H. Bunker who died in 1903. It was a gift to the museum from Louise Young Gossett and Joseph Young. The original map is now on display in the museum's Greenbrier Room along with other items from the Bunker household — such as a child's hoop dress dating back to 1860, a gentleman's waistcoat from the 1820's, an 18th-century corner cupboard, and many letters, papers and photographs.

The Bunker house was home to several Greenbrier County families and many of their historical items have also found a new home in the collection of the North House museum. The Stage & Steamboat Routes maps are being sold for \$10 each. For more information phone (304)645-3398 or contact the North House Museum, 301 West Washington Street, Lewisburg, WV 24901. The museum is open Monday through Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Eastern Panhandle Festival

Shepherd College invites West Virginians and their friends and neighbors to its first Appalachian Heritage Festival, to be held in historic Jefferson County in October. The weekend celebration features music, poetry, dance, storytelling, arts and crafts, and free workshops. Except for two evening concerts, all events are free and open to the public.

Festival-goers will celebrate the state's heritage on October 11 and 12, Friday and Saturday, on German Street in Shepherdstown and on the Shepherd College campus. Old-time, bluegrass and gospel music are on the schedule with performances by fiddle champion Dave Bing; musician and master storyteller Jim Costa; singers Hazel Dickens, Kay Justice and Ginny Hawker; and multi-instrumentalist Tracy Schwarz. Poets Kirk Judd and Rita Quillen will be there, and musician Mike Seeger will serve as fes-



The Goldenseal Book of the West Virginia Mine Wars

The West Virginia Mine Wars were a formative experience in our state's history and a landmark event in the history of American labor. GOLDENSEAL has published some of the best articles ever written on this subject.

In 1991, editor Ken Sullivan worked with Pictorial Histories Publishing Company to produce *The Goldenseal Book of the West Virginia Mine Wars*, a compilation of 17 articles that appeared in the magazine from 1977 through 1991. Dozens of historic photos accompany the stories.

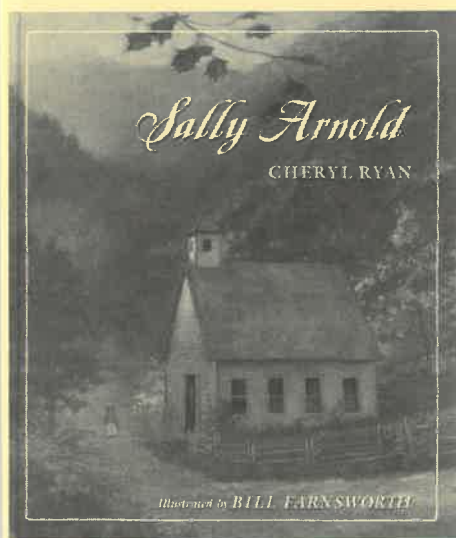
The first printing of the Mine Wars book sold out in 1993. Now it has been republished in a revised second printing. The large-format, 104-page paperbound book sells for \$9.95 plus \$2 per copy postage and handling.

I enclose \$_____ for _____ copies of *The Goldenseal Book of the West Virginia Mine Wars*.

Name _____

Address _____

Please make check or money order payable to GOLDENSEAL. Send to:
GOLDENSEAL
The Cultural Center
1900 Kanawha Blvd. East
Charleston, WV 25305-0300



and supplemental reading books.

Sally Arnold, a 32-page hardback book, sells for \$14.99 in bookstores. It is a publication of Cobblehill Books, 375 Hudson Street, New York, NY 10014.

Rare Map Reproduced

The Greenbrier Historical Society's North House Museum in Lewisburg recently reproduced a rare, full-color 1836 Stage & Steamboat Routes Map of Virginia. The map, roughly 18" by 26" in size, includes what is now West Virginia and neighboring parts of Ohio, Kentucky, Pennsylvania and Maryland.

The map shows all of Virginia's roads and towns of the time as well as 1830 population figures for counties and the city of Richmond. The

West Virginia

MOUNTAIN MAJESTY

The West Virginia Division of Culture and History brings you an exciting new book about the Mountain State.

West Virginia: Mountain Majesty was written and photographed by West Virginians. Journalist James E. Casto wrote the text, and chief photographer Gerald Ratliff produced a memorable view of the Mountain State, using his own photos and those of more than a dozen other top photographers. The new book includes hundreds of full-color scenic photographs and many historic views.

West Virginia: Mountain Majesty is a large-format, lavishly illustrated 260-page hardbound volume, wrapped in a beautiful full-color dust jacket or available in a special leatherbound edition.

I enclose \$____ for ____ copies of *West Virginia: Mountain Majesty*.

Please send me ____ copies of *West Virginia: Mountain Majesty* at \$39.95, plus \$3 shipping and \$2.40 sales tax for West Virginia residents. (total \$45.35 per copy).

Please send me ____ copies of the leatherbound edition at \$59.95, plus \$3 shipping and \$3.60 sales tax for West Virginia residents. (total \$66.55 per copy).

Name _____

Address _____

Please make check or money order payable to GOLDENSEAL. Send to:
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Charleston, WV 25305-0300

tival folklorist. In addition to the heritage performances, historic tours, exhibits, and reenactments are also planned.

The festival is funded in part by a grant from the West Virginia Commission on the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts. Tickets for the evening concerts are \$7 for the general public, \$5 for seniors and Shepherd College faculty and staff, and \$4 for students and those under 18. Tickets may be ordered in advance at a discount. For more information call the Shepherd College Center information desk at (304)876-5497.

Local History Published

Recently the Ritchie County Historical Society published *Ritchie County, West Virginia Cemeteries Through 1993*. Research for the book was actually started years ago by genealogists who recorded several cemeteries in the county.

The historical society found these records were just the beginning of a big project. To complete the book, the group's members did extensive work from oral histories, WPA files, and veterans records, not to mention plenty of old-fashioned "leg-work" traipsing around graveyards and gravesites. The end result is a book of tombstone readings from more than 300 cemeteries in Ritchie County. The hardbound publication, 852 pages long, was designed for easy use. Ritchie County is divided into four districts, and the cemeteries in each district are listed in alphabetical order.

Ritchie County, West Virginia Cemeteries sells for \$40, plus \$3.50 shipping. Orders may be sent to Ritchie County Historical Society, 200 South Church Street, Harrisville, WV 26362.

According to GOLDENSEAL free-lancer Peggy Ross, a similar book is available in Preston County. *In Remembrance*, Volume I, includes tombstone readings from across Preston County. Names were taken from monuments in 17 cemeteries. The 250 page, softbound publication costs \$22, plus \$2.50 shipping, from Janice Cale Sisler, P.O. Box

113, Bruceton Mills, WV 26525. For either book, West Virginia residents must add 6% sales tax.

Driving Berkeley County's Past

The Berkeley County Historic Landmarks Commission recently drew up a unique driving tour of Martinsburg and the surrounding area. It is about 100 miles long and takes from eight to ten hours to complete. Twenty-seven properties and historic districts are included.

Berkeley County was one of the first settled areas in West Virginia. A brochure outlining the driving tour notes that the county has a wealth of historic, architecturally important buildings dating from the 1740's into the 20th century. Many are included on the National Register of Historic Places.

The tour starts at the Belle Boyd House, also a part of the National Civil War Discovery Trail and the home of the famous Confederate spy. Other homes on the tour include the Hughes-Cunningham House which dates back to 1771; the Owen Tudor Hedges House, dating to 1861; Edward Tabb House or "Rural Hill," built in 1778; and the Prospect Hill mansion, built in 1795 and now a bed-and-breakfast inn.

Drivers are also invited to take in the historic districts of Swan Pond, Jones Mill, Harlan Spring, Hedgesville, Tuscarora, Ridge Road, Gerrardstown, Bunker Hill, Mill Creek and Darkesville. Bunker Hill Mill, part of the Mill Creek Historic District, was featured in the Spring 1991 GOLDENSEAL.

After the houses and historic districts, drivers may want to take in the Snodgrass Tavern, one of the oldest buildings in the state. Portions of the log house and nearby outbuildings date back to the 1740's. It was a tavern for more than 100 years, and lists George Washington and Henry Clay among its patrons. Another unusual stop is the 1909 Dam No. 4 Hydroelectric Plant, on the Potomac River near Scrabble.

An informative brochure is available. There is also an excellent walk-



Thurmond, as photographed by Doug Chadwick.

ing tour guide to Historic Properties of Martinsburg. For more information contact the Berkeley County Historical Society at the Belle Boyd House, 126 E. Race Street, Martinsburg, WV 25401; (304) 267-4713.

Mountain State Press

Mountain State Press at the University of Charleston has been in operation since 1978, "publishing books by West Virginians and about West Virginia." A recent list includes a dozen works of both historical and popular interest. *John Young, Lieutenant at Elk: Early Settlement of the Kanawha Valley* by Orton Jones, essays by columnist Alice Faye Bragg in *This Holler Is My Home*, and *Mom & Ramps Forever* by Barbara Beury McCallum are among them.

Mountain State Press has also published *The Hills Are Calling* by Irene B. Brand, an occasional contributor to GOLDENSEAL and an award-winning romance writer, and a book by Catherine Reynolds King titled *Cargo of Memories: Saga of the Majestic Showboat*. Mountain State Press offers a Best of West Virginia Writers series, each book featuring winning entries from the annual competitions sponsored by West Virginia Writers, Inc. The titles include *Catching the Crow*, *And Now the Magpie*, and *Beyond the Magpie*.



Chadwick Panoramics

Doug Chadwick's work as a freelance panoramic photographer often takes him out of state and away from his Pocahontas County home.

Yet a few years back Doug travelled across West Virginia to work on a special commemorative project in honor of West Virginia's 125th birthday celebration. He photographed a series of four panoramics of historic West Virginia views, still available for sale.

The highly-detailed, full-color photographs were taken with a 1920 Cirkut Panoramic camera. The camera, once popular for group photos of coal miners and other outdoor portraits, rotates on a tripod to produce pictures several feet long.

Buyers may choose from four panoramic subjects — the Capitol Complex, the New River town of Thurmond, WVU's Woodburn Circle, and downtown Wheeling. The Capitol Complex (10" by 58") was shot from the roof of a nearby building when the gilding of the dome was underway. The Thurmond photo (10" by 56") shows

the old railroad town as it appeared in the movie *Matewan*.

Woodburn Circle (10" by 57") features the three oldest buildings on campus — Martin Hall, Woodburn Hall, and Chitwood Hall — set on a lush lawn and surrounded by hedges and large, old trees. Wheeling, old and new, is the final subject in the series. This 10" by 59" panoramic includes West Virginia Independence Hall, the old B&O railroad terminal, an 1896 church, and a view of Market Street.

Readers know Doug best as a longtime GOLDENSEAL freelancer, whose work has appeared in the magazine since the first year. His panoramics may be bought at The Shop at the Cultural Center in Charleston or from Doug Chadwick, P.O. Box 99, Hillsboro, WV 24946.

The photographs are \$50 each including postage and handling. West Virginians must include 6% sales tax. Sets of all four panoramics signed and numbered by Doug Chadwick sell for \$200 plus sales tax.

Recently Mountain State Press published *Nadine and Vinson* by Patricia E. Call. The book is a daughter's recollections of a mismatched but loving couple. *Behold the Man* is Jean Battlo's newest book — a lyrical reflection on the life of Jesus Christ. Battlo

is a McDowell County poet, playwright, and teacher and has written several articles for GOLDENSEAL about her home county.

The press welcomes inquiries from readers with an interest in West Virginia subjects. For a price list and ordering information write to Mountain State Press, University of Charleston, 2300 Mac Corkle Avenue SE, Charleston, WV 25304; or call (304)357-4767.

A WPA Thanksgiving

By Joann Mazzio

In the summer, Webster County's Camp Caesar rang with the shouts and laughter of gangs of 4-H campers.

But one wintry November day in the depths of the Depression years, the silent camp became the setting for one of my most memorable Thanksgivings.

The snow clouds battled the sun that day, with the sun looking like it might be the winner. My father, Walt G. Berry, was a painter, and he had been at Camp Caesar since early morning, getting some outside painting done while the weather held.

Maybe because our father had to work on Thanksgiving, and maybe because money was a little short, our parents were trying to make this holiday special for us kids. Now, from the viewpoint of my own parenthood, I can appreciate their efforts and what the day meant to them.

We were going to have a picnic on Thanksgiving, and we weren't going to have turkey sandwiches, nor cranberry sauce, nor pumpkin pie. Sue was six, Dave was eight, and I was ten, just the ages when children cling to old traditions. We had already voiced our objections.

And I was bothered by something beyond tradition that my brother and sister were too young to know about. My father's job at Camp Caesar was a WPA job. These three letters I had been taught to abhor. I couldn't understand how we could be planning a joyful Thanksgiving picnic on the very spot where my father was being humiliated.

In a county where Franklin Delano had replaced Jefferson Davis as the most popular name for new baby boys, my father was a staunch Republican and outspoken critic of FDR's New Deal. Now here he was working for an agency whose very name stood for the make-work Democrats.

I knew jobs had been scarce. The

coal mines worked part-time and paid in scrip, the lumber mills sat idle, and businesses closed with depressing regularity. Painting became an unaffordable luxury. At home, I overheard snippets of worry. "License for the car..." "Lose house if..." "Taxes due..."

As Mother drove us from Webster Springs, timing our arrival for my

father's lunch break, we kids were still complaining.

"We're not having a turkey because we're poor, ain't we?" Dave asked. Would Mother correct his grammar first or his heresy?

"Don't say 'ain't,'" the teacher in her corrected automatically. Then she gusted spiritedly, "No, we're not poor. Poor people don't have a



Our author Joann (right), with brother Dave and sister Sue, at about the time of the WPA Thanksgiving. Photographer unknown, about 1936.

car like we do. Poor people don't have a nice house. Poor people don't have picnics on Thanksgiving."

"And poor people don't have oyster stew like we do," Sue said, showing a dangerous tendency toward sanctimony.

"Oysters taste like boogers," Dave muttered and kicked the back of Sue's seat.

At Camp Caesar, we drove past the stone cottages to the huge dining hall. As soon as the car stopped, Dave and Sue slammed out and ran toward the steps where our father sat cleaning a brush. He looked up, his ruddy face showing mock surprise. The straight line of his mouth crinkled into a grin.

Sue leaned against him while he wiped his hands. He put his arm around her and tousled Dave's hair. I wanted to be there, too, against

"In hard times, a man's got to do things he might not like," my father said.

"It's work, and I'm doing an honest job of it."

the rough painter's overalls, savoring the sharp turpentine smell and feeling those callused hands on my hair. But I held back, making a show of helping Mother get our lunch basket from the car.

"Where we gonna eat?" Dave yelled. "Inside. Let's eat inside. This is where the kids eat in summer." We stood on the wide porch that rimmed the octagonal frame building. The big double doors shone wet with dark green paint.

"It's cold in there," my father said. "Let's eat out here on the porch. Help me move this table into the sun."

Mother covered the table with a cloth and put out soup bowls to hold it down in the wind. When we sat down, I was at my father's right hand.

"Oyster crackers," Daddy said, "We have to have oyster crackers with oyster stew." Mother held up a box of crackers. They both

laughed at a before-you-kids-were-born memory.

The picnic was taking on a festive air, but I couldn't join in. I resented the gaiety. It wasn't right.

"How come you're working today?" I asked my father. Mother was suspicious of my tone and frowned at me. I couldn't look at him. I looked at his right hand lying on the table. Freckled so thickly that it looked tanned, that rough hand was gentle enough to drop warm sweet oil into a daughter's ear to soothe an earache.

"Because I've got a job to do."

"You're just working on Thanksgiving so no one will see you, because you're ashamed of working on the WPA," I spit out.

The arm cords tightened and drew the hand into a tight fist.

"Joann," Mother warned.

The hand opened and looked vulnerable. I burst into great gulps and sobs. My father tentatively touched my shoulder, then hugged me into his side. I buried my face in the woolen shoulder and kept it there until I smelled the turpentine and the buckle of the overalls bit into my cheek.

"These are hard times," he said. "In hard times, a man's got to do things he might not like. It's work, and I'm doing an honest job of it and I'm going to get paid." He looked at me to see if I understood his compromise with his principles. In a dim way I did, and I knew he didn't want any pity from me. He was a proud man, and he'd do what he had to do, even if it meant buckling under to hard times.

He pushed his paint-splotted handkerchief at me. "Mop up your face, and let's start being thankful. I've got to get this trim finished before that storm breaks."

Mother unwrapped the towels that insulated the big Mason jars, and spilled steaming butter-stained stew into each bowl. As she ladled out the oysters, Dave put his hand over his bowl and said, "Don't put them boogers in my bowl."

"Those boogers," Mother corrected automatically. We all whooped in loud, throat-clearing laughter. ❄

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Our Writers and Photographers

KEVIN ANDERSEN spends much of his time scouring the back country of his native New River area. He works for the State Forestry Division, and in his spare time he is a woodworker. Kevin plans to return to school this year to study law at West Virginia University. This is his first contribution to GOLDENSEAL.

LARRY BARTLETT, a native of Wood County, returned to West Virginia after being away for 39 years. He earned his Master of Fine Arts at Tulane University in New Orleans and went on to work as a college instructor, reporter, cartoonist, and art director in New York City, New Orleans, and Colorado. His last contribution to GOLDENSEAL appeared in Winter 1995.

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

CARLE E. FEATHER lives in Ohio, but traces his family back to Preston and Tucker counties and visits West Virginia as often as he can. He has worked as a freelance photographer for more than 20 years and a freelance writer for more than ten. He is now lifestyles editor at the *Ashtabula Star-Beacon*. His last contribution to GOLDENSEAL appeared in Summer 1995.

MARY R. FURBEE of Morgantown is a reporter for the *Times-West Virginian* in Fairmont. She has worked for public television and wrote the book, *Complete Guide to West Virginia Inns*. This is her first contribution to GOLDENSEAL.

MIKE FURBEE works for the WVU School of Medicine as a researcher, and is an accomplished photographer and a fine traditional musician. He plays mandolin and fiddle with the Morgantown group Curmudgeon and others, and writes his own tunes as well. Mike teamed up with wife Mary to tell Slim Arnold's story, taking the photographs for the article. This is his first contribution to GOLDENSEAL.

MARC HARSHMAN lives in Moundsville where he writes children's books and teaches at Sand Hill School. He is an accomplished storyteller and a regular participant in Vandalia Gathering and other events across the state. His last contribution to GOLDENSEAL appeared in Spring 1989. Marc's wife Cheryl co-authored that article and made the photograph of him at Sand Hill School for this issue.

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

PAUL F. LUTZ teaches history at Marshall University. He has directed efforts to preserve West Virginia's one-room school heritage since the late 1980's and first approached GOLDENSEAL about a story on his research a few years back. Dr. Lutz recently completed a book on former Governor William Marland. This is his first contribution to GOLDENSEAL.

JOANN MAZZIO was raised in Webster County. She attended West Virginia Wesleyan and then WVU, where she earned a B.S. in aeronautical engineering, the first woman to receive such a degree there. She now lives in New Mexico, and in what she calls her "third career" has had two novels published and numerous magazine articles. This is her first contribution to GOLDENSEAL.

BARBARA DIANE SMIK is from Wheeling, the daughter of country musician Doc Williams. She earned a B.A. and a master's degree from the University of Pittsburgh. She credits movie maker Ellis Dungan with "graciously turning over his life's work" to assist her in writing the article in this issue. Her last contribution to GOLDENSEAL appeared in Winter 1991.

ALBERT UPDYKE TIECHE II was born and raised in Beckley. He left there for Nashville to be a country singer, though that ambition was sidetracked when he began a family and a career in engineering. His ties to his grandfather's farm on the Greenbrier-Monroe county line bring him back home often to deer hunt and visit. This is his first contribution to GOLDENSEAL.

ERIC WAGGONER is a Charleston native and a graduate of West Virginia Wesleyan College. He is now a graduate student at Arizona State University. Eric is a musician and a writer in any spare time he can manage, playing guitar at festivals in his home state each summer. His last contribution to GOLDENSEAL appeared in Fall 1990.

PATRICIA SAMPLES WORKMAN, who is pursuing a degree in social work and psychology at Glenville State College, has worked for the State Department of Human Services for nearly 15 years. Though she was born in California, Patricia says her ancestors on both sides are fifth- and sixth-generation West Virginians. Her first contribution to GOLDENSEAL appeared in Spring 1996.

Remembering Jim Comstock

Jim Comstock, the founding editor of the *West Virginia Hillbilly* and the grand old man of West Virginia newspapering, died May 22nd. He was 85 years old, a fact that was celebrated in his hometown of Richwood with great vigor this past February.

Mr. Comstock often kidded about how he got started in the newspaper business. It happened during his Navy days in a place about as far away from West Virginia as you can get — the Island of Guam. In a 1980 interview with GOLD-ENSEAL editor Ken Sullivan, Comstock remembered how he landed in a litho-offset engraving plant while stationed on the island.

"The man looked at my card and he said, 'I see you were a printer back in civilian life, along with being a schoolteacher.' And I said, 'Yes, I was.' He said, 'Well, start printing.'"

He never quit. As a young man just back from World War II, Jim Comstock founded Richwood's *News Leader* in 1946. He co-owned the newspaper with his son Jay up until the time of his death. His original partner, Bronson McClung, with whom he first founded the *News Leader* and ten years later the *Hillbilly*, was a former high school student of Comstock's.

The *Hillbilly* sought to be "a country, community paper for an entire state," Comstock said. And soon Jim Comstock became the state's favorite country editor. When he sold the paper after 35 years, Mr. Comstock continued to write his "Comstock Load" column for the back page of the *Hillbilly*. Readers demanded it.

Jim Comstock used his papers to crusade for projects both serious and not-so-serious. He edited and published the 51-volume *West Virginia Heritage Encyclopedia* that includes state history, folklore, ghost stories, superstitions and music among its subjects. He established the whimsical University of Hard Knocks for individuals who had made good without a col-

lege degree.

His Richwood "Past 80 Party" honored the state's octogenarians, eventually including himself. When governors and U.S. Senators showed up, Comstock made sure they put on aprons and actually "served the people" for a change. He worked to save Pearl S. Buck's birthplace in Hillsboro and to establish the Cass Scenic Railroad.

The June 6 *Hillbilly* honored its late founder with special columns of reminiscences and praise. Old partner Bronson McClung remembered Comstock for his "brass," saying he was seldom "intimidated by anyone or anything." Brad Gain, a columnist recruited by Comstock in 1991, remembered that the "*West Virginia Hillbilly*" was the outlet for all the wit, state pride,

human compassion, and outright playfulness that was Jim Comstock."

The *West Virginia Hillbilly* was "edited by an editor who can't write, for people who can't read," according to the masthead in Comstock's day. But Jim Comstock didn't really believe that, nor do the readers who remember his words with respect and his quirkiness with affection.

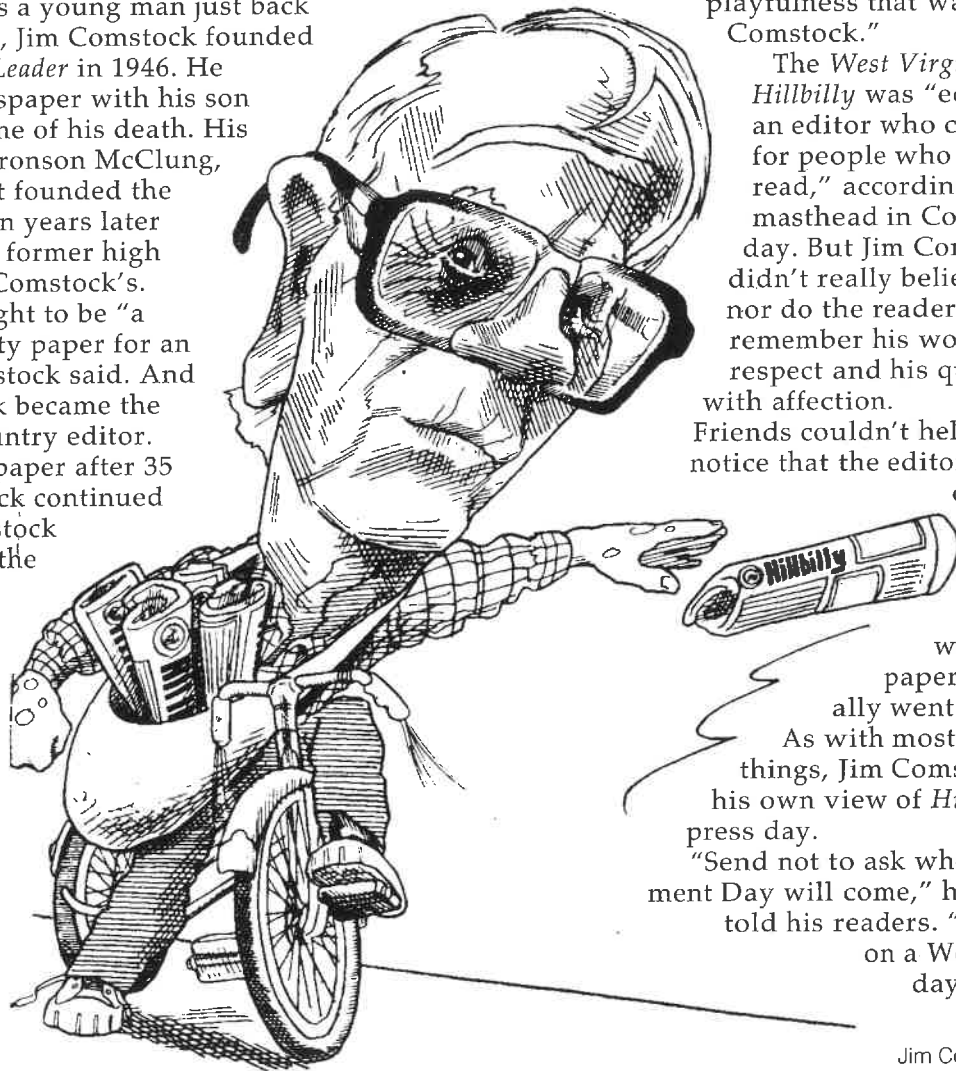
Friends couldn't help but notice that the editor's editor

died on a Wednesday — the day the

weekly paper tradition-ally went to press.

As with most other things, Jim Comstock had his own view of *Hillbilly* press day.

"Send not to ask when Judgment Day will come," he once told his readers. "It'll come on a Wednesday."



Jim Comstock was West Virginia's favorite paperboy. Caricature by Taylor Jones, courtesy *West Virginia Hillbilly*.

Inside Goldenseal

Page 51 — Ellis Dungan has filmed the wilds of the jungle and the wonders of West Virginia during his long career. He returned to the Ohio Valley after years overseas.

Page 9 — Ritchie County wasn't big enough for a young man yearning to go west, but memories carried him home again in later years.

Page 57 — Newsman David Brinkley made such a fuss over a Twelvepole Creek bridge that they renamed it for him. Jim Casto says the busy span had troubles ahead.

Page 26 — Ed Viers taught at Horse Creek and other places in Wayne County. He and wife Julia recall a time when one room was room enough for a good education.

Page 34 — The Mountaineer has shown up for WVU ball games for a long time. You can bet he'll be back this fall.

Page 41 — Nick Boinovych of Mineral County is a man with a big turbine and bigger plans.

Page 46 — At Jackson's Mill and other places, West Virginia women made 10,000 mattresses during the Depression. It was a time when government helped those who helped themselves.

Page 22 — Writer Dyke Tieche bought his truck in Greenbrier County, took care of the paperwork in Monroe, and met plenty of neighbors in the process.

Page 16 — Sedor Fedukovich made an American of himself working in the coal mines of New River country.

