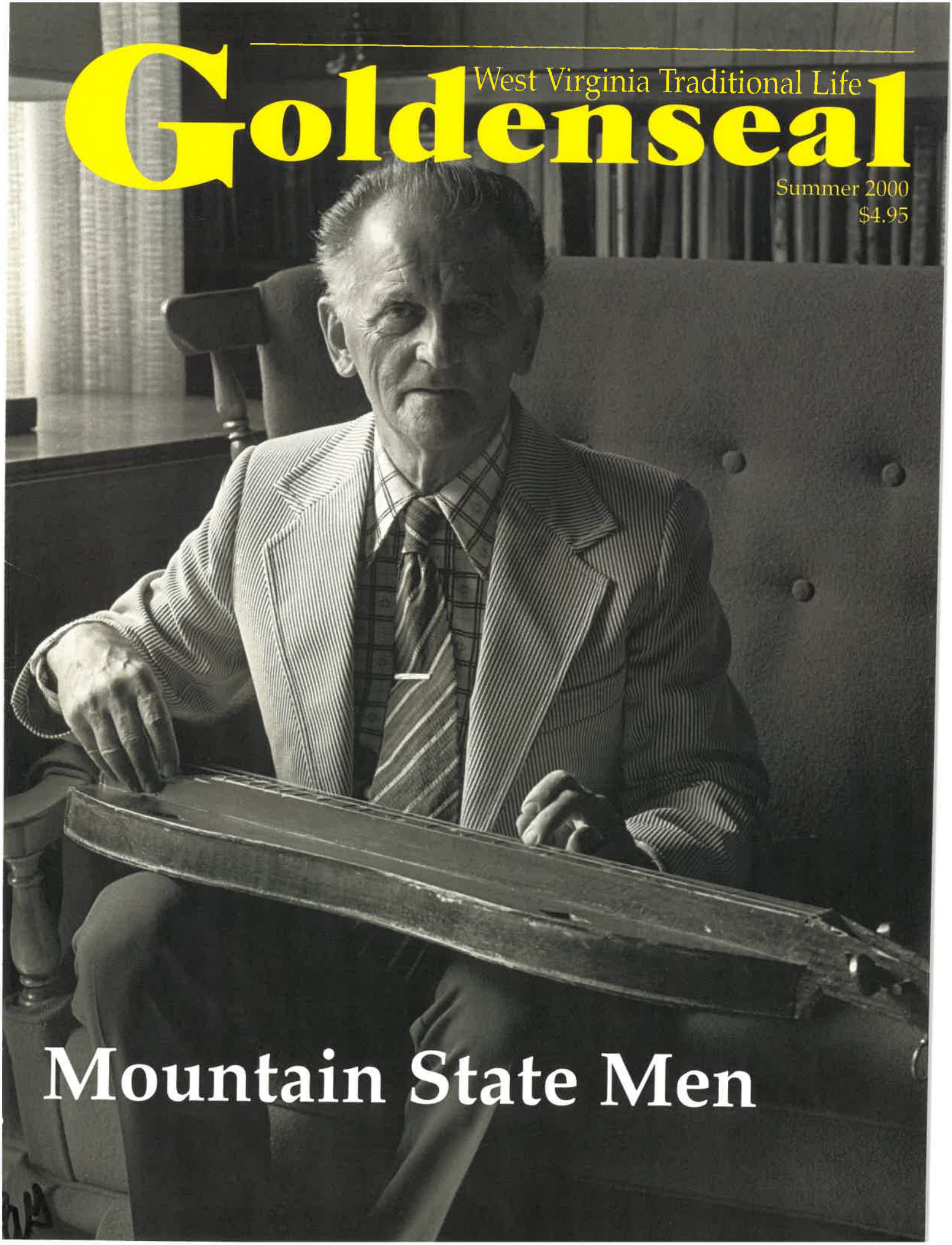
West Virginia Traditional Life

Goldenseal

Summer 2000
$4.95



Mountain State Men

From the Editor: Bus Trip to the Northern Panhandle

Welcome to the 100th issue of GOLDENSEAL. During our first quarter-century, there were two years — 1975 and 1978 — when only three issues of GOLDENSEAL hit the streets instead of the usual four. As a result, the Summer 2000 issue, which you now hold, brings our grand total of magazines to 100. How many do you have?

This special issue is dedicated to West Virginia men. It is the companion to our spring issue which, as you may recall, was devoted to the women of West Virginia. We now honor the men with this colorful collection of stories and interviews beginning with an account of how, in 1908, West Virginia became the site of the first Father's Day celebration. Our stories begin on page 9.

The big news, however, is our fall bus trip October 13-14, 2000. As promised, we are going to the Northern Panhandle. This is a beautiful, diverse, and much-overlooked part of West Virginia, and we'll show it to you as only GOLDENSEAL can — by taking you directly to the people and places you have come to know through the pages of your favorite magazine.

We'll meet in Wheeling, one of West Virginia's most historic cities and the original state capital. Bright and early Friday morning, our group will board a big, comfortable motor coach and local professional tour director Olive Watson will guide us through town. Our whirlwind Wheeling tour will conclude with a stop at the Lebanon Bakery where owners Ray and Janice Fadul will be our hosts. Those who wish may purchase tasty Lebanese snacks and coffee while we enjoy a mid-morning break.

Next, it's off to Weirton. "Unity in Diversity" is the motto of this ethnically rich steel town, and author Pamela Makricosta will present a program about her Greek immigrant ancestors. Pam will also show us around All Saints Greek Orthodox Church complete with its stainless steel exterior and ornate interior iconography. Our lunch at the church will feature Greek food, naturally.

Heading back up the Ohio River, it's north to Newell for a guided tour of the famous Homer Laughlin China Company, makers of Fiesta ware. After the factory tour, there'll be plenty of time for browsing in the gift shop — they'll even ship your packages home for you! From Newell, it's a short trip to Chester, the northernmost town in West Virginia and home of "The World's Largest Teapot."

Northern Panhandle bus tour stops, October 13-14, 2000.

Friday evening will be spent at historic Bethany College in Bethany. Internationally acclaimed country music singer and guitarist Doc Williams, a featured entertainer on the WWVA Jamboree for more than 60 years, will provide our evening program. This is a rare opportunity to meet and hear one of West Virginia's true musical legends in a relaxed and intimate setting.

Saturday morning, after a short driving tour of Bethany, we'll head to Moundsville to visit the old West Virginia State Penitentiary. This huge, Gothic structure was built in 1866 to house dangerous felons; touring this facility is (hopefully) as close as you'll get to doing hard time! We'll "make our break" from the prison in time for lunch at nearby Grave Creek Mound historic site, followed by a self-guided tour of the Delf Norona museum and a sampling of the annual Archaeology Day activities.

St. Joseph Settlement in far southern Marshall County will be our final stop. This pristine community was founded by German Catholics in about 1850 and remains today as a peaceful, beautiful, and uplifting place. Author M.A. Whiteman will meet us there and present a program about the settlement and its history. With superb architecture and a spectacular view, St. Joe's is the perfect way to conclude our tour of the Northern Panhandle.

I hope you'll join us for this once-in-a-lifetime visit to one of West Virginia's most unique regions. For more details and a registration form, please see the inside back cover.

John Lilly

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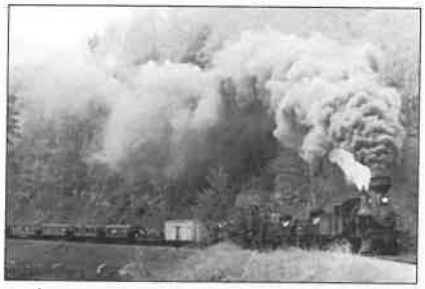

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On the cover: Dr. Patrick W. Gainer was a prominent educator, folklorist, and scholar from Tanner, Gilmer County, who founded the West Virginia State Folk Festival in 1950. This portrait was made by son Patrick A. Gainer in 1974. See story on page 58.

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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.

Mountain State Women

April 15, 2000
Philippi, West Virginia
Editor:
Thank you very much for the Spring 2000 GOLDENSEAL with the picture of my husband's grandmother on the cover [see "'Lovingly, Mama': The Letters of Viola S. Springer," by Barbara Smith]. I waited to write until feedback from relatives and friends was in. All comments were really positive and enthusiastic. Notes and calls came from Florida, Texas, California, New Hampshire, Virginia, and Tennessee — in addition to those in West Virginia. Amazing!

Viola S. Springer with daughters in about 1900.

Those of us who are privileged to have known Viola Springer and/or her family are very proud of her and her accomplishments.
Sincerely,
Barbara Springer

March 28, 2000
Ocala, Florida
Editor:
I received my copy of the spring issue of GOLDENSEAL. Thank you. I am very pleased that my Aunt Olive's story was included in this issue about the women of West Virginia [see "A Country Girl Comes Home: A Visit with Olive Workman Persinger," by Donna McGuire Tanner]. Michael Keller's photographs are the highlight of the article.

I also want to thank you for being so gracious and nice to my aunt and uncle. They both are very pleased that this article allowed them to meet you, especially since you share their appreciation of music. They are a nice couple and I feel lucky they are part of my family.

Under one of the photographs, you used the words "displaced West Virginians." That is such an accurate description of those of us who may have relocated to another area but still consider ourselves West Virginians.
Sincerely,
Donna McGuire Tanner

Thank you, Donna, for introducing us to these fine people. Olive and Bill Persinger are two of the warmest and most pleasant people I have met, and they are both fine musicians and singers. I look forward to seeing and hearing more from them and to reading your next article for GOLDENSEAL. *—ed.*

April 21, 2000
Wheeling, West Virginia
Editor:
Thank you for your recognition of the philanthropy and compassion of Sallie Maxwell Bennett in your spring edition of

GOLDENSEAL [see "'Able Courage': The Monumental Sallie Maxwell Bennett," by L. Wayne Sheets]. She was an incredible woman and mother, raised in an elegant era long lost, and who deeply mourned the loss of her son, Louis Bennett, Jr. The author, L. Wayne Sheets, captured the complexity of her character, but he also understood and wrote of her as a person.

St. Martin's Church in Wavrin, France, built in honor of West Virginia airman Louis Bennett, Jr. Photograph by David B. McKinley.

Accompanied by our youngest son, Bennett, my wife and I recently had the opportunity to visit the church in Wavrin, France, which Sallie funded in memory of young Louis. We were awed by the grandeur of the church. It could probably seat 400 worshipers at a service. Our tour was conducted by the mayor and his top aide — both of whom were quite knowledgeable of Mrs. Bennett's loving contribution to their community. Among their archives, they even have a wonderful photograph of "The Aviator" statue in Wheeling.

Because of Mrs. Bennett's generosity, the world truly became a little smaller. Her love for my great-uncle and his ultimate sacrifice will be long remembered through her efforts.

Thank you again for your interest and for producing such a wonderful magazine about our state and its rich heritage.
Sincerely,
David Bennett McKinley, P.E.

Smallest Church

March 30, 2000
Glasgow, Virginia
Editor:
The spring issue of your magazine was particularly exciting for me. Elizabeth Thurmond Witschey's article [see "My Memories of Logan: More Than Feudin' and Fightin'"] was so interesting. I lived in Logan from eight months until 5 years of age. My father was principal of Logan High School and I took ballet from Helen Cox Shrader.

Carl Feather's article [see "Our Lady of the Pines: The Small Church With a Big Heart"] was so meaningful as my husband and I both were raised in Tucker County. I knew a lot of Milkints from Thomas. The Feather family lived in Parsons when my mother was growing up, and one of the girls was her best friend.

Last but not least, my husband and I were at Berea College when Rush and Ruby Butcher were there. So, their story [see "A Pattern To Life: Folk Dancers Rush & Ruby Butcher," interview by John Lilly] was delightful for us to read.

We are new subscribers to your magazine and we love it.
Cecilia Stalnaker Repair

April 11, 2000
New Creek, West Virginia
Editor:
Thank you for the GOLDENSEAL book you all sent to me with my husband Marshall Fleming's write-up that Carl Feather had written in the Spring 2000 magazine [see "Smaller Than the Smallest"]. I also have the Summer 1992 issue that features "Stories in Wood and Metal: Marshall Fleming's Little Hidden Valley," by Woodward S. Bousquet. My husband really liked doing that work. I still have a lot of his woodcarvings.

I really miss him, and I don't get around too good since I broke my hip. But I worked up until 1998. I enjoyed working, but now I miss seeing the people. I worked at the Honeymooner Gift Shop for 32 years. I am almost 78 years old.

Thank you again for the magazine. God bless you all.
Yours truly,
Mrs. Janet Fleming

Old Christmas

February 7, 2000
Erwin, Tennessee
Editor:
On behalf of all of us at Erwin Presbyterian Church, I would like to thank you and your staff for the skillful reporting of Appalachian Old Christmas [see "Celebrating Old Christmas," Winter 1999]. Your coverage was generous and first-rate. A story like this, carried into the countless homes throughout West Virginia and beyond, not only is wonderful publicity for the Appalachian Old Christmas, but it also raises everyone's awareness of Christianity with its sleeves rolled up.

You deserve much of the credit for the enthusiasm and effort that the folks from West Virginia gave to this program. We had over 500 people in the seating spaces, along with others who stood up.

Thank you for your kindness and your professionalism. May God continue to bless your fine work at GOLDENSEAL.
Gratefully yours,
Reverend Tom Wade

We appreciate those kind words. We also appreciate the invaluable information which you provided to

us about Old Christmas traditions, and your work to sustain this unique holiday. —ed.

Bus Trip

March 13, 2000
Howey-In-The-Hills, Florida
Editor:
I was reminded by the Winter 1999 issue of the privilege it was to be a part of Road Trip IV. Both my husband and I thoroughly enjoyed the trip and learned a lot all along the way. We will not soon forget it. The people we met were delightful, too.

The icing on the cake was when we were almost back to Charleston and got stuck in traffic. That was when our leader/editor John Lilly whipped out his guitar and entertained us with a delightful song. I think it was "Railroad Bill," wasn't it, John? You were great and we loved it. The trip was unforgettable.
Thanks a million,
Betty Hardman Prater

Actually, I believe it was "Ghost Riders In the Sky," but I'll keep "Railroad Bill" up my sleeve in case we get caught in traffic in the Northern Panhandle this fall. I hope you'll join us for that trip! See the inside front and back covers for bus trip details. —ed.

Renewal Mailbag

April 2, 2000
Roanoke, Virginia
Editor:
I am renewing my subscription to GOLDENSEAL with one complaint. The problem I experience — and it happens every single issue — is that I devour the magazine from cover to cover as soon as it arrives. Then I have to wait another three whole months until the next issue arrives!

Seriously, I thoroughly enjoy the magazine and look forward to each issue. It is the one magazine I receive that I do read every line of every page. Very fascinating reading and always a treat. Keep up the excellent work.
Sincerely,
Gary B. Reid

April 4, 2000
Ocala, Florida
Editor:
Here is my check for another enjoyable reading year. My parents and husband are from West Virginia — I was born in Ohio. From time to time, there is someone or a place that is familiar. It's so nice to keep in touch with our roots.
Thank you for that opportunity.
Charlotte A. Smith

December 16, 1999
Culver, Indiana
Editor:
Although I have not lived in West Virginia for 50 years, I still refer to the beautiful place of my youth as home, and return as often as possible. Reminds me of the old story about people chained to a rock in heaven and someone asks St. Peter who they are. He replies, "Oh, they're from West Virginia and they'll go back home every chance they get." Indeed so.

At the age of 77, perhaps I will not get my wish to return permanently, but my many friends there keep me well informed, along with *Wonderful West Virginia* and GOLDENSEAL magazines. How proud I am of the work which goes into them.
Kudos to all!
C. A. Marshall

Young Jennings Randolph

Jennings Randolph with babysitter Minnie Shugars in about 1903.

April 7, 2000
Winchester, Virginia
Editor:
I am sending a picture of my Aunt Minnie and baby Jennings Randolph. She was his babysitter for a time. I don't know where this picture was taken, probably in the Oakland, Maryland, area or in Keyser. She passed away in 1989 — 98 years old. I thought maybe someone would like to have the picture. I didn't know where else to send it.

I enjoy GOLDENSEAL. I was born in Augusta, Hampshire County, 80 years ago.

Thank you.
Sincerely,
Juanita Savilli Belt

Thank you so much! This is the earliest photograph we have ever seen of one of our state's most prominent and influential sons [see "Jennings Randolph: 'Always Remember the Man and Woman by the Wayside of the Road,'" interview by Michael Kline and Gene Ochsendorf; Summer 1983]. We are proud to include it in this special issue devoted to Mountain State men. —ed.

GOLDENSEAL Good-Byes

Bess Richardson. Photograph by Mark Crabtree.

Bess Richardson of Blacksville, Monongalia County, passed away February 22, 2000. She was 96. Bess was featured in the Spring 2000 issue of GOLDENSEAL as part of our story about Blacksville pottery. Bess' husband Ed Richardson was one of the early students of this pioneering art and industrial education program, and later taught the pottery classes at Blacksville for 15 years. Bess was herself a student potter, and she shared with us her personal insights into this unusual pottery program. Sadly, Bess passed away shortly after we interviewed her, and before the story was published [see "Blacksville Pottery: Local Hands and Native Clay," by John Lilly].

Longstanding WVU mascot **Boyd Harrison "Slim" Arnold** passed away on February 27, 2000, at age 85. Slim is remembered by West Virginia University sports fans as the Mountaineer mascot who first put on the buckskins and started "totin' a firearm" for the cheering fans during his tenure as mascot from 1937-'40. Slim was shown in full costume, astride a pony, on the cover of our Fall 1996 issue, and was interviewed by author Mary Furbee for her article, "Slim Arnold: Mountaineer Emeritus."

WVU mascot Slim Arnold, late 1930's photograph.

Master clockmaker **Fred Reichenbach** of Triadelphia, Ohio County, passed away on November 10, 1999, at age 84. Fred and his spectacular clockwork graced the cover of our Winter 1996 issue, and were the topic of Cheryl Harshman's story, "Father Time's Workshop: The Grandfather Clocks of Fred Reichenbach." A Navy veteran of WW II, Fred spent his entire life as a resident of West Virginia.

Fred Reichenbach. Photograph by Michael Keller.

Dallis F. Morris, of Ivydale, father of Clay County musicians David and John Morris, passed away on January 24, 2000, at the age of 86. An accomplished guitar player in his own right, Dallis introduced his sons to traditional music during the 1960's and '70's. He and his sons initiated the Morris Family Old-Time Music Festival in 1969; the festivals continued until 1973. These popular musical gatherings were the subject of our Summer 1998 story, "'Ivydale': The Morris Family Old-Time Music Festivals," by Bob Heyer.

Dallis Morris with sons John, at left, and David in 1968.

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.

West Virginia Day celebration in Hinton.

West Virginia Day

Several activities are planned to mark West Virginia's 137th birthday as a state. The official anniversary takes place on Tuesday, June 20, 2000.

The town of Hinton has scheduled state birthday activities the weekend of June 16-18. An expansive Civil War traveling museum, 19th century children's games, a ghost tour, period music, and a giant birthday cake will be part of this year's festivities. Also included will be an authentic 1860's-style military ball to be held on Saturday evening, June 17, in the Summers County Memorial Building. A period church service will be held Sunday morning.

Most events will be held on the grounds of the Summers County Courthouse in downtown Hinton. For more information, call (304)890-9542 or (304)466-4544.

Independence Hall in Wheeling will celebrate the formation of the 35th state with events on Saturday, June 17, and on Tuesday, June 20. On Saturday, an encampment of Union and Confederate Civil War reenactors will be on the grounds of Independence Hall displaying authentic reproductions of period tents, uniforms, and rifles. Events will be presented from 10:00 a.m., until 4:00 p.m. There is no charge to the public.

On Tuesday, June 20, from noon to 2:00 p.m., West Virginia Day celebrations at Independence Hall will include speeches by actors portraying some of West Virginia's founding fathers, a cannon salute to West Virginia, the singing of popular Civil War songs and "Happy Birthday" to West Virginia, and the serving of birthday cake and punch. For more information call Gerry Reilly at (304)238-1300.

West Virginia's birthday will be celebrated in Charleston Saturday, June 17, at the Capitol Complex with live music and a birthday cake. For more information, call the West Virginia Celebration 2000 Executive Committee at (304)558-3488.

John Henry Days

The legendary steel-driving man will be the center of attention at Talcott, Summers County, July 7-9, as John Henry Days are celebrated. The Great Bend Tunnel near Talcott, completed in 1872, is the spot where many say that the man became a legend, and the song "John Henry" was born. GOLDENSEAL readers might recall our Summer 1996 cover story, "John Henry: The Story of a Steel-Driving Man," by Robert Tabscott.

Live music, parades, steel-driving demonstrations, and gospel singing will be included in the weekend festivities. All activities are free to the public and will be held at the entrance to the Great Bend Tunnel and in downtown Talcott. For more information or a free brochure, call (304)466-3640.

History and Heritage Days

Beverly, one of Randolph County's most historic communities, will celebrate Beverly Heritage Days on July 22-23. Historic home and building tours, living history scenarios, frontier and Civil War encampments, barbeques, and an auction will be included. Heritage crafters will also display their wares. Activities on Saturday will take place from 10:00 a.m., until 5:00 p.m.

On Sunday, July 23, the Mt. Isner Confederate Cemetery will be rededicated at 1:30 p.m.

Beverly Heritage Days are

sponsored by the Historic Beverly Preservation Committee in conjunction with Rich Mountain Battlefield State Park and the Randolph County Historic Society. For more information, call (304)637-7424.

The fourth annual Living History Days in Claysville, Mineral County, will take place August 5-6, sponsored by the Antique Log House and the Mineral County Historical Society. A Civil War encampment will represent Union soldiers of the 1st West Virginia Cavalry; also present will be pioneer-period campers. Heritage crafters will demonstrate basket weaving, chair caning, quilting, crocheting, tatting, spinning, oil painting, soap making, wood carving, furniture making, knife making, and other skills. The highlight of the weekend will be the Sunday sermon preached in the Claysville Church which was built in 1860. For more information, call (304)788-5129 or write to Living History Days, HC 72 Box 136, New Creek, WV 26743.

More Summer Fun

New Deal Days will be held on July 8, in Arthurdale, Preston County, the first homestead community of the New Deal program in the United States. A chicken barbeque, crafts demonstrations, a flea market, children's programming, and museum tours will be included. Tours of the Heritage Museum are central to New Deal Days, as Arthurdale proudly exhibits the Homestead House, a 1930's period homestead. Activities begin at 10:00 a.m., on Saturday and continue until dusk. All events are free to the public. For more information, call Deanna Hornyak at 1-800-571-0912, or check their Web site at www.arthurdaleheritage.org.

The town of Eleanor, Putnam County, will celebrate its 65th birthday as a New Deal homestead community June 23-25. Named for Eleanor Roosevelt in 1935, Eleanor is known today as "The Cleanest City in West Virginia." Anniversary events throughout the weekend include tours of the historic Red House, live music in the gazebo, and children's activities. Tours of the nearby Winfield Locks and Dam will take place on Saturday afternoon. A balloon release at 3:00 p.m., on Sunday will honor the original 150 homesteaders of

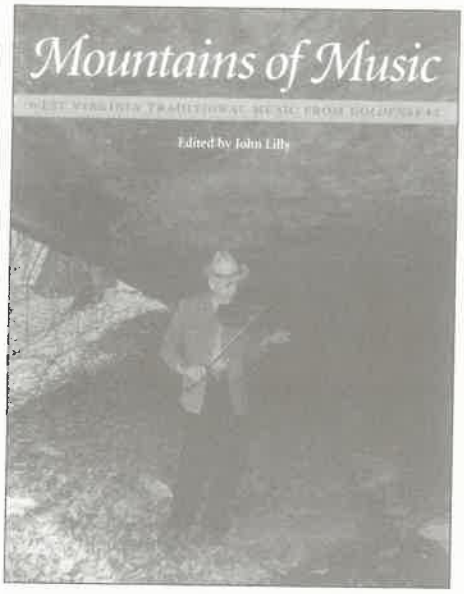
Welcome Pat Love

GOLDENSEAL welcomes Pat Love to our staff. Pat began his job as assistant editor on March 16, coming to us from the West Virginia Library Commission where he worked as a lithographer for the past 10 years.

Pat is an accomplished writer who has published several books of poetry and fiction, and is a former president of West Virginia Writers, Inc. The father of two grown children, Pat is a lifelong resident of Charleston. We are proud to have him aboard!

Pat can be reached by phone at (304)558-0220, ext. 134, or via e-mail at pat.love@wvculture.org.

MICHAEL KELLER



Mountains of Music: West Virginia Traditional Music from GOLDENSEAL gathers 25 years of stories about our state's rich musical heritage into one im pressive volume.

Mountains of Music is the definitive title concerning this rare and beautiful music — and the fine people and mountain culture from which it comes.

The book is available from the GOLDENSEAL office for $21.95, plus $2 shipping per book; West Virginia residents please add 6% sales tax (total $25.26 per book including tax and shipping).

Add *Mountains of Music* to your book collection today!

I enclose $____ for____ copies of *Mountains of Music.*

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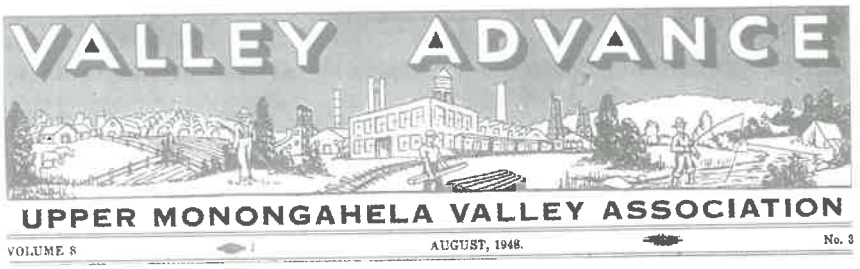
Eleanor. For more information, call Bill Reed at (304)586-9173.

Fort New Salem, located near Salem, Harrison County, plans a full schedule of summer activities. On Saturdays, July 15 and July 22, Fort New Salem offers Old-Time Summertime Socials featuring lawn games, musical entertainment, and old-time foods including homemade ice cream. The socials take place from 1:00 until 5:00 p.m. There is no admission charge.

On Saturday evenings, July 8, 15, and 22, Fort New Salem presents front porch concerts from 7:30 until 9:30 p.m., featuring traditional entertainment. Scheduled artists include Dwight Diller, Robin Kessinger, Kate Long, and Michael and Carrie Kline. There is an admission charge. For more information, call Carol A. Schweiker at (304)782-5245.

An old-fashioned gospel sing will take place at Mason-Dixon Historical Park near Core in Monongalia County, August 11-12. The fourth annual Mason-Dixon Gospel Sing will include several family groups including the Hale, Shreve, Riffle, and Lightner families, as well as the Crusaders, the Landing Lights, the Rising Sons, the Destinations, and the Singing Hands. All singers are encouraged to come early and sign up to sing. The event is free to the public. Friday's music begins at 7:00 p.m.; Saturday activities start at 2:00 p.m. For more information, call (304)296-3906 or (304)878-5668.

The 16th annual Jane Lew Fireman's Arts and Crafts Festival will take place September 1-3, in and around the Jane Lew Volunteer Fire Department building in Jane Lew, Lewis County. Over 100 crafters will show their handiwork in one of West Virginia's largest arts and crafts fairs. Music, food, and clogging by the Lewis County Cloggers will accentuate this central West Virginia gathering. All events are free to the public. For more information, call Juanita Stanley at (304)842-4095.

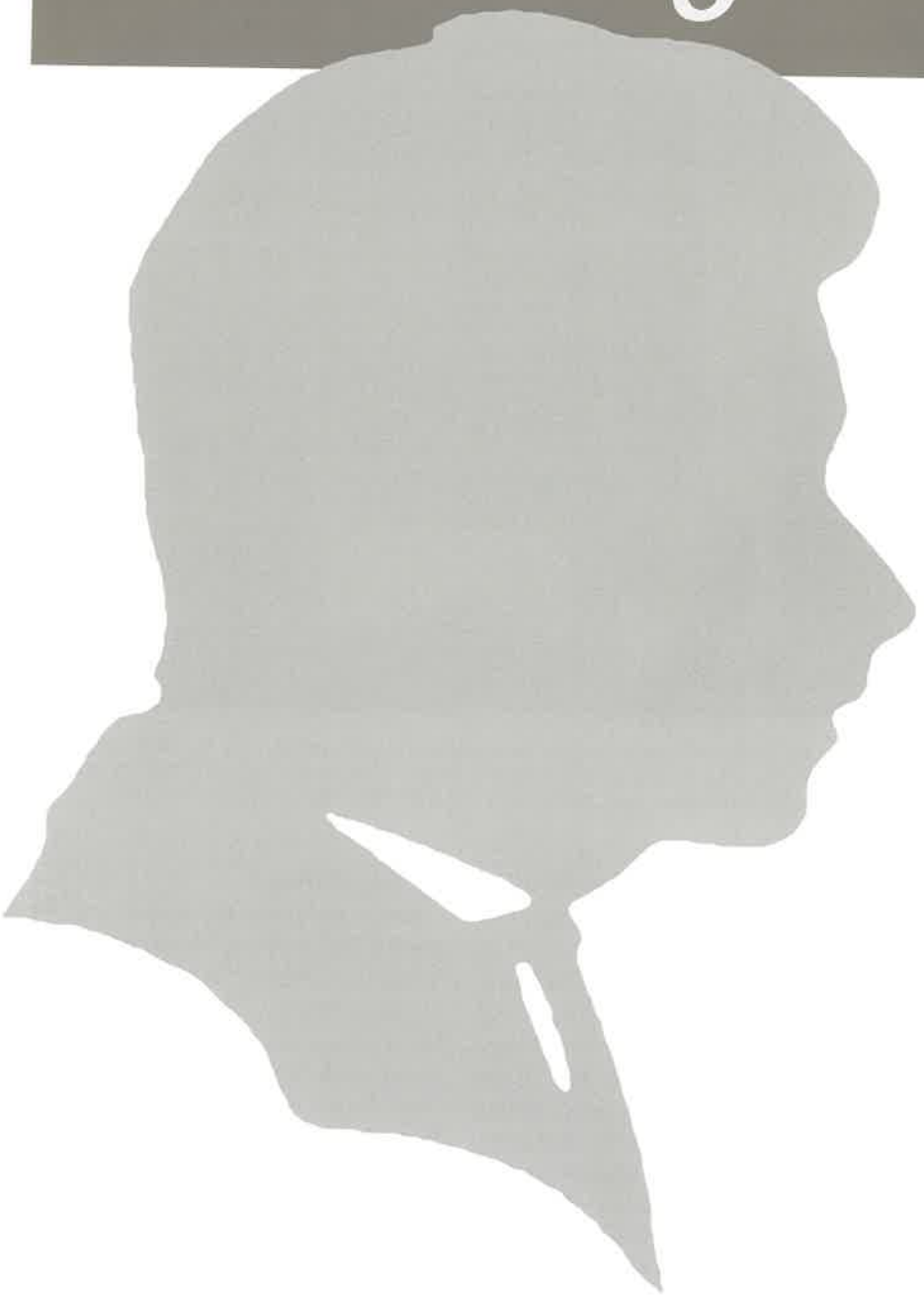


Upshur County Reprint

The Upshur County Historical Society has reprinted a 1948 newsletter of the Upper Monongahela Valley Association called the *Valley Advance*. The 12-page reprint offers a glimpse back into the area from 50 years ago. This recent addition to the Historical Society's collection offers news, agricultural tips, county fair announcements, personal interest articles, and rare genealogical information on the early Upper Monongahela Valley region. Copies are available from the Historical Society at $4.00 each. To obtain a copy or for more information, write to the Upshur County Historical Society, P.O. Box 2082, Buckhannon, WV 26201.

GOLDENSEAL Special Report

Celebrating West Virginia Men



From strong shoulders to skilled hands, West Virginia men are a unique breed. After celebrating West Virginia women in our spring magazine, GOLDENSEAL now recognizes the men of our state with this special issue. We'll learn how West Virginia became the first state to honor fathers with their own special day. Then we'll meet a sampling of fascinating West Virginia men who inspire us with their ingenuity, individuality, determination, and good humor.

See stories on pages 10-37, and elsewhere in this issue.

The First Father's Day

By Thomas Koon

The first celebration of Father's Day took place in Fairmont on July 5, 1908, less than two months after the first Mother's Day was celebrated near Grafton. This state historical highway marker was erected in 1985. Photograph courtesy of State Archives.

On Sunday, June 18, Father's Day will be celebrated across the country as our nation pauses once again to honor those called "Dad." Cards will be exchanged, gifts will be opened, and families will gather to recognize the strength, wisdom, and sacrifices of these special men.

What few people will recognize, however, is that this important national holiday began right here in West Virginia on July 5, 1908.

That year as Independence Day neared, Mrs. Grace Golden Clayton of Fairmont thought of the importance of fathers and how well-loved most of them are. Her own father, Methodist minister Reverend Fletcher Golden, had died in 1896, and she still missed his fatherly guidance. Then on December 6, 1907, a horrible mine explosion at Monongah killed more than 360 men, 210 of whom were fathers [see "December 6, 1907: No Christmas at Monongah," by Eugene Wolfe; Winter 1993 and Winter 1999]. 250 widows and more than 1,000 children were left grieving by this disaster. Thoughts of these lonely persons touched Grace Clayton deeply.

She was later quoted as saying, "It was partly the explosion that set me to think how important and loved most fathers are. All those lonely little children and those heartbroken wives and mothers, made orphans and widows in a matter of a few minutes! Oh, how sad and frightening to have no father, no husband, to turn to at such an awful time."

She suggested to her pastor, Reverend Dr. Robert Thomas Webb at Williams Memorial Methodist Episcopal Church, South, that fathers be given a special day to be honored and remembered. Dr. Webb was quite receptive, and the first Father's Day service was held at the church on July 5. Just two months earlier, on May 10, 1908, the first Mother's Day service had been held some 20 miles away at

Webster, near Grafton, under the leadership of Anna Jarvis [see "Mother's Day Revisited: 'But After All Was She Not a Masterpiece as a Mother and a Gentlewoman... ,'" by Marie Tyler-McGraw; October-December 1977 and Spring 1999].

Those who attended that first Father's Day celebration in Fairmont were impressed by the service and noted that the altar was decorated with ripened sheaves of wheat. The sermon was delivered by Dr. Webb.

Elsewhere in Marion County that Fourth of July weekend, however, a range of spectacles and boisterous activities vied for the public interest. Political figures delivered inspiring speeches (after all, it was an election year), onlookers thrilled as a hot-air balloon made its majestic ascent above the city, and the crowd gasped as a daredevil climber performed death-defying feats from the top of a tower. An estimated 12,000 people crowded the streets of Fairmont that day.

While the historic service held at the little church on the corner of Second Street and Fairmont Avenue had been well-attended and was warmly received, it apparently paled in comparison to the explosive July 4 celebrations going on around it. The idea of establishing a permanent Father's Day failed to immediately take hold in Fairmont.

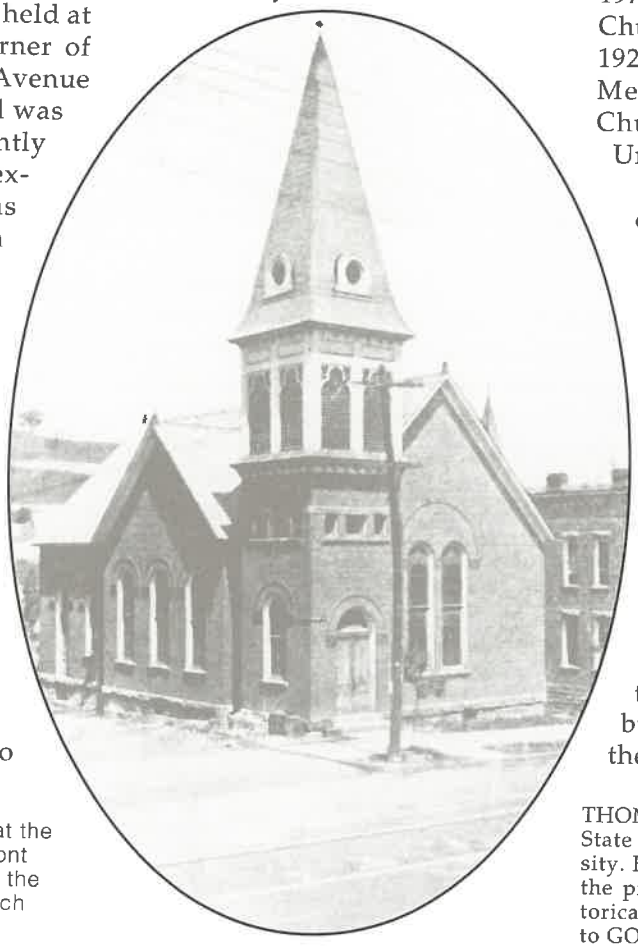
Elsewhere, however, other individuals had similar ideas and, over the next few years, Father's Day initiatives seemed to spring up from sea to shining sea. In Spokane, Washington, Mrs. John Bruce Dodd approached her minister with her idea for a Father's Day service in 1909, which led to the first official statewide observance of Father's Day in 1910 on the now-traditional third weekend in June.

Similar efforts were mounted in Portland, Oregon (1911), Vancouver, Washington (1912), Chicago, Illinois (1915), and Miami, Florida (1919). Whether these others were inspired by Grace Clayton's 1908 efforts in Fairmont will never be known, but Mrs. Clayton's well-documented work to organize the first Father's Day service has been officially recognized.

Highway signs have been erected on the edge of town which read, "Welcome to Fairmont — The Friendly City — Home of the First Father's Day Service, July 5, 1908." In 1985, a state historical highway marker was placed at the site of the rebuilt church by the West Virginia Department of Archives and History citing it as the location of the first Father's Day service.

Nationally, the observation of Father's Day was signed into law by President Richard M. Nixon in 1972. The old Williams Memorial Church in Fairmont was razed in 1922 and replaced by the Billingslea Memorial Methodist Episcopal Church, now called the Central United Methodist Church.

Grace Golden Clayton is shown here in her younger years. Photographer and date unknown, courtesy of Eleanor Clayton.



The Williams Memorial Methodist Episcopal Church, South, located at the corner of Second Street and Fairmont Avenue in Fairmont, was the site of the first Father's Day service. The church was razed in 1922.

Father's Day is celebrated here on the third Sunday of June each year. In 2000, the service will be held at 10:45 a.m. Everyone is welcome. For information, call (304)363-0129.

Author Ira M. Mohler, in writing about Father's Day for the Methodist publication *Together*, found wisdom in the words of a small boy. The youngster, though a bit confused about all the details, was quite clear about his feelings for his father. According to the young man, "My pop's tops not only on Father's Day, but on the other 4,280 days of the year, too!"

THOMAS KOON is a graduate of Fairmont State College and West Virginia University. He currently lives in Fairmont and is the president of the Marion County Historical Society. This is his first contribution to GOLDENSEAL.

My West Virginia Dad Rex

By Sheldon Harper

Rex Harper was born in Upshur County in 1900. He had a smile on his face, a twinkle in his eye, and a lifetime of stories to tell when this photograph was made in 1995. Photograph by Shel Harper.

My dad, Rex Harper, arrived with the dawn of the 20th century, but it outlasted him by five years. Born October 21, 1900, in Upshur County, he died January 8, 1996, in Cleveland, Ohio. Playful as always, he joked with the hospital nurses who tended his failing heart during his last days.

He spent most of his years, and all of his working life, with one partner. Velma Brown Harper, mother to my brother Bill and me, never left his side during their marriage which lasted 71 years, seven months, and seven days. During their last few years together, they were each other's eyes and ears as his hearing and her sight both faded.

Much like stepping stones that take you across an unfamiliar stream, Dad moved from one job to another to take his family safely across the decade of the Great Depression. With only one good ear and an incomplete grade school education, he "cut the mustard" during his working life as a woodsman, sawmill worker, traveling meat salesman, butcher, barber, confectionery owner, boxing referee, hotel owner, dry cleaner, grocery store owner, war plant guard, park ranger, painter, hotel maintenance man, and real estate salesman.

Rex Harper was the youngest of six children born to Peter Sheldon and Emma Cordelia McClain Harper at Straight Fork, a small community near Rock Cave in southern Upshur County.

Peter Harper died at age 34 in 1902, leaving six children under 12 years old in the care of his wife. Many years later, Dad described the event he didn't remember but couldn't forget: "He died on Christmas day and was buried the next day. I was two years, two months, and four days old. The doctors didn't know what he died from. Today they probably would.

"My oldest brother Ural was 11 then, not quite old enough to do a man's job. The neighbors would come and do all the farm work that the boys did later, when they were able. If you offered to pay 'em, they'd have none of it. Neighbors helped neighbors. Our family had

Harper

no grown men so I guess we got favored treatment."

The widow Harper did the gardening, knitting, washing, ironing, cleaning, and cooked three full meals — with biscuits — every day. At the spinning wheel, "she'd spin and sing," Dad said. "I can see her and hear her yet. After she'd get the roll of yarn she'd take it off and start another one. And when she got enough, she'd knit our socks and mittens and our stocking caps and sweaters. Everything that was usable she'd make out of that wool. You could hardly wear it out."

Dad "could hardly wait" for warm weather because it meant going barefoot and sleeping in the attic. "I loved the sound of rain on the roof. It was music." About dusk, hoot owls would entertain, and sometimes they'd swoop down and fly away with a small chicken.

Young Rex stands front and center in this photograph from 1903 with his mother Emma Cordelia McClain "Delia" Harper and five siblings. The empty chair commemorates Rex's late father Peter Harper (inset), who died in 1902.

Dad remembered that "Mother canned everything, including service — or "sarvis" — tree berries. The berries are small and red, about the size of the end of your little finger. When they're ripe they turn a little dark. We'd lay a clean sheet on the ground, climb the tree, and shake the branches. The berries would fall off onto the sheet and we'd haul 'em home."

Two Methodist churches thrived within sight of each other on Straight Fork Road for many years. Civil War antagonisms were slow to fade, and the Northern and Southern factions insisted on worshiping separately.

Generally, the McClains were South-leaning Democrats and the Harpers were Republicans who sided with the North. Relatives, and sometimes brothers, fought against each other. Two of my great-grandfathers split that way: McClain with the Gray, Harper with the Blue.

If you're ever lucky enough to get a 95-year-old man talking and recollecting through the eyes and ears of a preschooler seated on the

Uncle Skid Ferrell was a colorful Civil War veteran and a frequent visitor in the Harper home, where he thrilled the youngsters with his tales.

lap of a Civil War vet, you'd better write it down. I was, and I did. Here are Dad's vibrant words about his Uncle Skidmore "Skid" Ferrell:

"He was my great-uncle, my Grandmother McClain's brother. The name was first O'Ferrell but they dropped the 'O.' He was a Rebel soldier. Had a bullet scar on his face and an arm wound. Spent his life on horseback and visiting. Carried his things in his saddlebags. Everybody liked to see him come. He'd stay a few days or a week or two.

"He brought a lot of news from his travels in a radius of 15 or 20 miles. He'd set me on his lap at night around the fire and tell me stories. One was about a panther jumping from tree to tree, following him along. My eyes would get as big as saucers, and I'd believe every word."

Dad and Monter Harper were inseparable first cousins. Their dads were brothers, and their families lived a quarter-mile apart. Dad recalled their adventures with a cat-that-ate-the-canary grin. "Monter and I were about the same age. We roamed the hills almost every day the weather was fit. We knew every strawberry patch, every apple tree, plum tree, cherry tree, hickory, walnut, and chestnut tree. We knew where to find the best of everything at the right time of year.

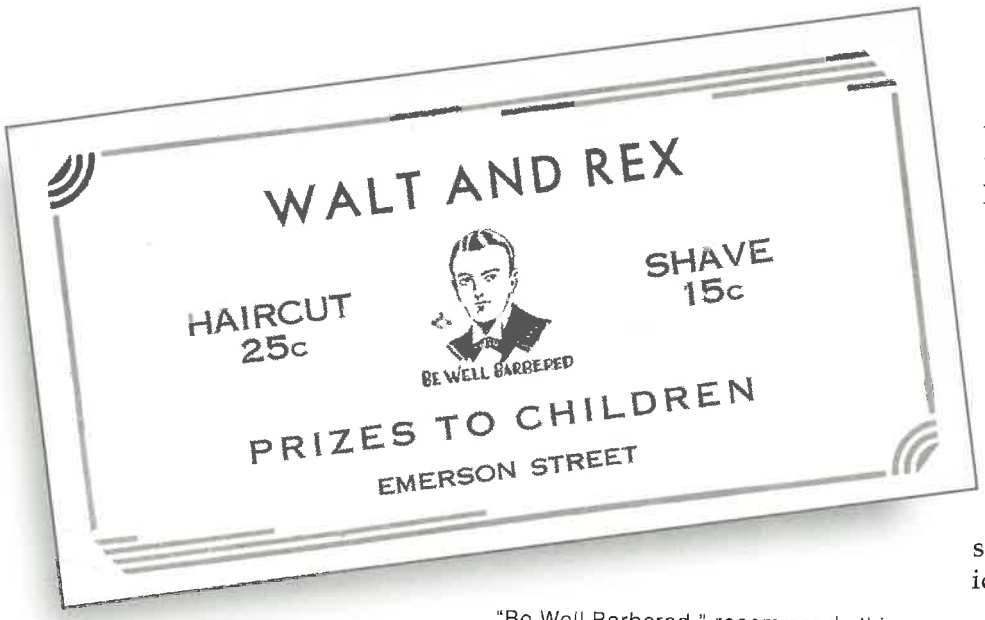
"We made a lot of our own games. Never a dull moment. Always something to do. If you didn't have what you needed, you made it. I don't remember ever having a lonely day."

I asked Dad if he wanted to reveal any misdeeds by him and Monter, previously undisclosed, now that the "statute of limitations" had surely passed, especially for eight-year-olds. He confessed to a few:

"Monter knew that his dad, my Uncle Bern, had wine hidden somewhere. We went looking, found it in the corn crib, and took a sip. Didn't like it. We told Aunt Lilly, Monter's mother, and we played drunk. She just laughed and laughed.

"Aunt Lilly used snuff, but hid it. Monter and I knew about it. We found it and put pepper in it. Later I asked Monter if she said anything. He said no, but she was real cranky

Rex, at right, and Monter Harper were inseparable first cousins. Photograph approximately 1906.



"Be Well Barbered," recommends this 1933 promotional ink blotter from Rex Harper and Walt DeBerry's barber shop on Emerson Street in Fairmont.

for a few days."

In 1912, the family moved from Straight Fork to Frenchton, about two miles across the hills. Frenchton was a thriving community, thanks in large part to the new railroad and its station for both passengers and freight. A post office, two hotels, and numerous enterprises served the population of about 200. Dad's mother cooked for several sawmill workers there.

In the Frenchton school, Dad met Velma Brown. She lived with her grandparents in a house built by her grandfather, the same house that she would later occupy as Mrs. Rex Harper.

Dad unloaded railcars at the local lumberyard for 30 cents an hour: "good money, then."

After their 1920 wedding in Huntington, Mom and Dad first lived in Akron, Ohio. Dad, at age 16, had followed four of his brothers to the rubber shops in Akron. His older brother Ural's "pull" and fibbing about his age got him hired at Firestone.

"Orders for tires from car companies meant hirings. Completed orders meant layoffs, and I'd go back to Frenchton," he recalled. "Then they'd call us again when they got another order. That's why we bounced back and forth so often between Frenchton and Akron."

Dad recalled their adventures with a cat-that-ate-the-canary grin.

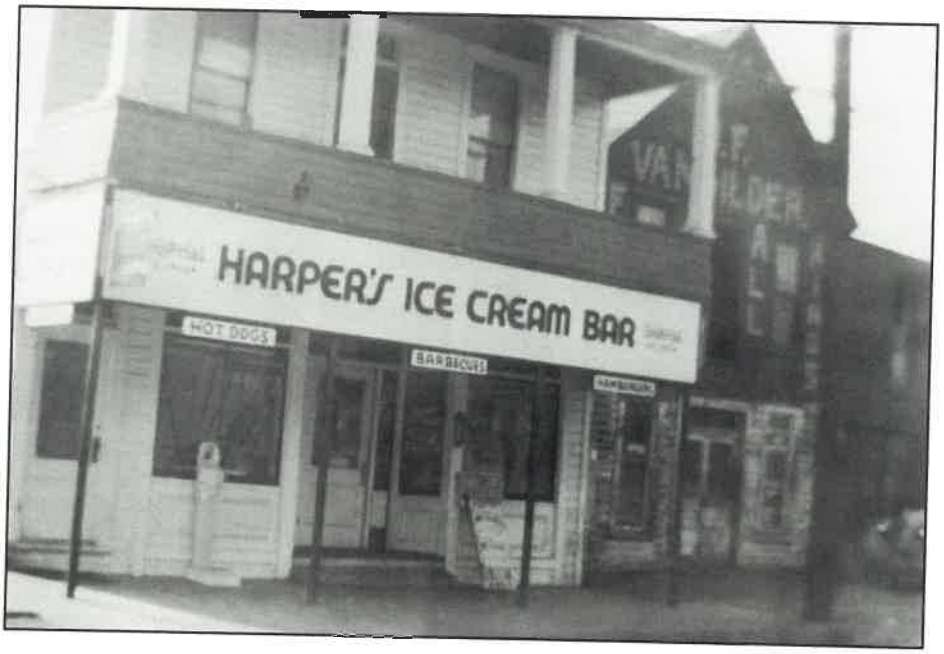
That's also why I was born in Frenchton in 1921, and my brother Bill in Akron in 1923.

On Dad's first trip to Akron, the rubber smell almost sent him right back home. "But it wasn't long till I didn't smell it at all." He liked the work, and was told that he was "the first one to build a cord tire at Firestone."

Shortly before our final move back to Frenchton, when Bill and I were two and four years old, we poured sand into our Chevrolet's gas tank. Although it was a new 1925 touring model, we weren't spanked. Wise beyond his years, Dad reasoned, "You didn't know it was wrong." But we got the message that it wouldn't be a good idea to do it again.

We moved to Fairmont in 1928. Dad got a call from family friend Edgar Talbot who reported that Swift & Company needed a meat truck driver. Dad was their man. Frenchton neighbor Guy Coombs helped load our furniture onto his flatbed truck and drove the 60 miles to "The Friendly City" where the Monongahela begins.

"I delivered meat to the coal company store at Scotts Run, a mining territory," Dad recalled. "On Saturdays, I'd go the store and help 'em sell the meat to the miners. They had to buy with scrip. If they



Hot dogs at Harper's Ice Cream Bar sold for a nickel in 1939 including Rex and Velma Harper's special sauce.

Rex and Velma Harper enjoyed 71 years, seven months, and seven days of marriage. They are shown together (left to right) on their wedding day in 1920, in 1939, in 1958, and on their 50th anniversary in 1970.

didn't want what the store had, they'd do without since they didn't have money to go anywhere else and their scrip was good only in the company store.

"The miners would line up at the counter and ask for a particular piece of meat. If a miner didn't like the piece they gave him and asked for a different weight or cut, they'd just take it back and he'd lose his place to the next man. So, he took it."

Dad drove the delivery truck about a year before moving up to the sales crew. But he left Swift & Company in 1932 because "it got to be dog-eat-dog. Times started going bad, and I decided to get out of it."

In 1932, at a barber shop on Emerson Street in Fairmont, you could literally get a shave and a haircut for two bits. Dad was the barber. He supported his family on income which often totaled less than a dollar a day. His three-year barbering stint began with no experience, no equipment, and no shop. But he also was no one else's man. Independent and confident, he figured he could learn barbering by doing it.

So he scrounged the necessary tools and materials, including a used barber chair which he bought with $10 he borrowed from his mother. Then he opened for business in a street-facing spare bedroom in the DeBerry house. Rent was five dollars a month.

By mid-1933, business had improved but it still wasn't great. Few businesses were great in the Great Depression. So Dad made a bold move: he raised the price of a regular haircut to 25 cents, and included a free candy bar for kids. The kids came, often with a parent, to get this tasty "rebate." A lot of mature-looking "kids" became regular customers. Women came too, because women got haircuts in barber shops then.

Dad demonstrated that you can gain more profit if you give some of it away.

Dad had demonstrated a point that would later be expanded upon in marketing books: you can gain more profit if you give some of it away.

I asked him if it was hard to learn how to cut hair. "I guess experience taught me," he said. "I started on the kids, of course, and at that time people were not too choosy."

Dad quit barbering in 1934 and, thanks to his Swift & Company experience, got a job at Ambrose Brandimarte's meat market on Merchant Street. This lasted until 1935 when he bought the first of three retail stores, each a business betterment, ending with a move to Akron in 1940.

The second store, located on State Street, featured "Harper's Hot Dogs." Although the nickel price was not unusual, the taste was unique. People liked the sauce which Dad and Mom had concocted. They made it at home in a big pot but never wrote down the recipe and, in later years, couldn't remember it.

I remember Dad telling of a Saturday that was "the best day we ever had," clearing $10 on total sales of $100. "Times were hard, but we just kept right at it. Lots of people had it worse than we did."

Many customers bought on

credit, much of which Dad never did collect. He understood that both creditor and debtor can keep their self-respect because of something you don't do, like hounding people for payment in those depressed days.

But there were fun times, too. In front of the store on Halloween, kids would hold a string across the street with tin cans on each end. Cars would catch the string and clatter down the street.

Dad was notoriously mischievous. Sometimes he would "improve" the flavor of the hot-dog sauce with a little hot pepper to test the tough-guy image cultivated by certain customers.

He worked seven days a week, enjoying "people coming and going all the time." We all helped out during those long six-to-11 days. We never took a family vacation longer than a day or two. Few families did.

In the middle and late 1930's, Dad worked some evenings as a boxing referee.

Rex made extra cash during the 1930's as a referee at local boxing matches. He is shown here with fighter Scotty Riffle in approximately 1938.

Before that time, he had done some boxing himself because "we needed the money." The need was not great enough, however, to overcome Mom's objections, so he got into refereeing the fights for promoter Hosea Wyer at the old Fairmont Armory.

He earned five to $10, depending on the "gate," for an evening's work. He remembered Fritzie Zivic, K.O. Christner, Buddy MacArthur, the McCann boys, Paul Oger, and Scotty Riffle. "Fritzie Zivic had been world champion. He fought there once or twice."

But the biggest name was Billy Conn, the fighter who reportedly "had Joe Louis beaten" years later but got careless in a late round. Conn's first professional fight, at 17, was in the Fairmont Armory in 1935. He lost by decision — Dad's decision.

Dad once did something that referees rarely do: he stopped a fight because of inaction. "They were just waving their gloves and leaning on each other. I don't remember their names, but they were headliners, with good records. I got a lot of

notoriety over that."

In 1936 at age 15, I got my driver's license. For a boy at that time, and maybe for any kid at any time, getting the official state approval to drive a car is a big deal. But for me, there was more.

Mother and Bill were visiting Aunt Greta and Uncle Ed Rusmisell in Frenchton and needed a ride home. Was it possible that Dad would trust me to go get them? I don't know how long he considered, but he gave me the keys to our Model A Ford and said, "Don't drive over 40." (The West Virginia speed limit at that time was 45.)

Surely moonwalker Neil Armstrong felt no greater thrill of adventure and achievement than I did as I drove those 120 miles — 60 solo, and 60 on the return trip with my mother's tensed silence and my younger brother's impatience at his two-year wait until he could do the same thing.

About 50 years later, I confessed to Dad that I hit 45 twice.

As "empty nesters" during and after World War II, Mom and Dad moved often: from Fairmont to Akron for a new business opportunity, from Akron to Florida's warm weather in 1952 to help Dad's bursitis, back to Akron for family reasons, back to Florida for the sunshine, back to Buckhannon to get away from the sunshine now aggravating Mom's glaucoma, and back to northeast Ohio to be near family because "we're getting old."

His weapon was a slingshot — his ammunition of choice was used hearing-aid batteries.

Mother died November 19, 1991. After 89 years of battling various ailments, her heart finally gave out. The phone call was not unexpected, nor did it come from Dad. Unable to speak, he asked the doctor to make the call from the hospital in Cuyahoga Falls, near Akron.

Dad wanted to stick it out by himself in their Ohio apartment. He did so for 18 months as other tenants, as well as Bill and I, looked in on him frequently.

In mid-1993, he moved into our downstairs apartment, living independently, yet only a few steps away for visiting and help from my wife Nita and me.

During his remaining two-and-a-half years here, Dad managed to add to his reputation for mischief by becoming the scourge of the neighborhood cats. His weapon was a slingshot — we always called them bean shooters — which he fashioned himself. His ammunition of choice was used hearing-aid batteries, a jar full of which I discovered when going through his things after his death.

In January of 1996, Dad's ashes were placed beside Mother's in the mausoleum at Rose Hill in Akron, Ohio, as they wished.

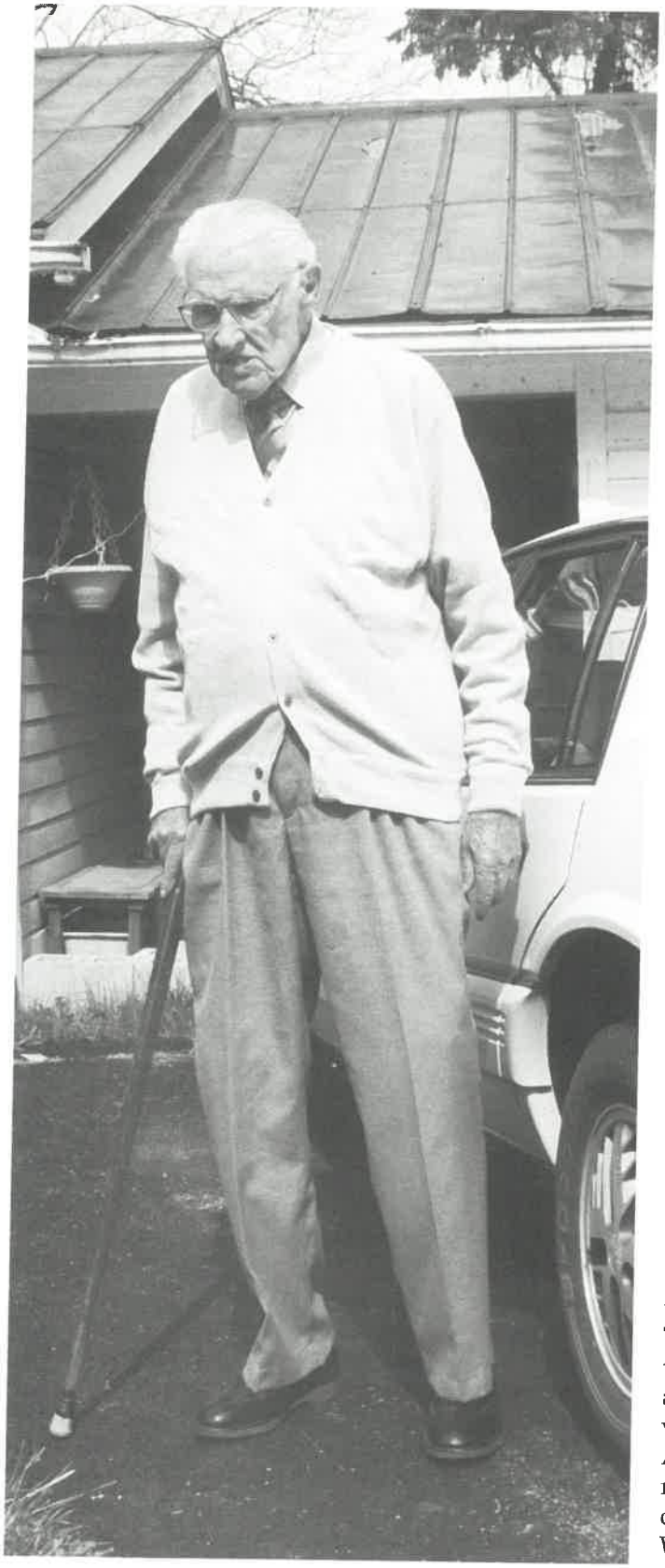
Bill and I decided to have a memorial service for him and Mother in Frenchton at the Methodist Church he had helped to build in 1921. He had told me that he was the last surviving member of that building crew.

Despite the snowy March weather, more than 100 relatives and old friends came to the memorial service. People whom Dad had known from childhood arranged it all. My East Fairmont High School "39er" classmates, many of whom had been customers at Dad's store in the late 1930's, presented a plaque: "In Memory of Rex Harper, Builder and Supporter, Frenchton Methodist Church."

That's my Dad — builder and supporter. At five feet eight, he stood taller than any man I've ever known.

SHEL HARPER

SHELDON HARPER was born in Upshur County in 1921 and graduated from East Fairmont High in 1939; he publishes their alumni newsletter. Currently living in Ohio, he graduated from Ohio State University in journalism. Shel has four children and seven grandchildren. This is his first contribution to GOLDENSEAL.



At age 95, Coach Weber stands over six feet tall and still has a sharp mind and a keen wit. As a young man, he was an accomplished athlete who played football, basketball, and baseball. At that time, he weighed over 200 pounds, "and not an ounce of fat," Bill says.

I was pretty perturbed over the thing. We had a meeting once a week, and the principals talked, and they asked me to make a talk. So I got up and I told 'em that there ought to be something done about the name of this high school. It's really a disgusting situation that the kids have to change from one name to the other. And I said, "I think the way things are going, we should call this Bunker Hill High School. Fight! Fight! Fight!" I don't know whether that went over good or not. A principal, a fellow the name of Forest Clark, resolved the name situation. They named it Tygart's Valley High School, which it is today.

I must tell you about the trip that we made. I think it was '27. We were playing some pretty good teams. At that day and age, we traveled upon the train. If we played Parsons, we took a three-day trip over there. We played Parsons one night, Davis one night, and Thomas another night. The players would stay with the opposing team players. They'd take 'em home and generally the coach would stay at a hotel, or the other coach might have room for him.

I decided we'd do something a little different and take the boys on a real trip. So I got it arranged and we played Pennsboro High School on a Saturday night at Mill Creek. We rested Sunday. We got on the train Monday morning to Elkins and we got on the C&O from there to Burnsville and played Monday night. They had gas lights and the gym was creosoted white all over; the lighting was terrific. We weren't used to something like that.

After we played there, we went on to a junction, got off the train, got on a boat. There was only a little tiny old road in there and it was impassable during the winter and that's why you traveled by boat. It was a mail boat with passengers on it and we traveled up and played Sand Fork. They had a little tiny gym in the basement of the high school. I found out later — no one told me — one wall was in bounds. To get through our zone defense, they bounced the ball against the wall. (Laughter.) We had never played like that, so we had some trouble accommodating.

We played Normantown next. From there we went to Gassaway. They had a practically new gym and it was the first time that I remember seeing folding bleachers. The Gassaway boys were known as the Big Red at that time; at least they had red uniforms on. At that day and age, the association made it so the home team wore white and the team that traveled wore dark colors. Anyway, we both came out to warm up; they had on red and we had scarlet, the old D&E colors. So I went over to the official and said, "We can't do it this way. We'll get mixed up and pass it to the wrong team, and so forth and so on. I think they should change uniforms."

He said, "Well, they won't do it. They're supposed to have white uniforms and they don't and they're not gonna change and I think maybe we just forfeit the

Beginning in 1930, Bill coached at Coalton, a mining community just east of Elkins. This 1939 team included, left to right in the front row, Louie Putzulo, Mickey Stalnaker, Mervin Gutshall (capt.), Kenneth Carter, and Tony Tarentelli; in the back row are Barney Russell (mgr.), Roger Bertolini, George Bennett, Junior Stevenson, John Jaggie, Edward Arbogast, and Coach Weber. Photograph courtesy of Roger Bertolini.

game."

I said, "No, I don't want to do that, we're on a trip and we come to play."

So we went ahead, got all mixed up, and we were behind at the half. I looked for a little bit, and I told the manager to get some towels and wipe the guys off. We had a big bottle of Mercurochrome. I made a swab out of cotton and put their numbers on their back and on their front with Mercurochrome. We were "skins" with numbers. The referee agreed on it, but he says, "If the numbers mess up, what will you do?"

I said, "We'll just call time out and I'll redecorate 'em." (Chuckles.) So, we went ahead and won anyway. Believe it or not, it was 19-18.

We did run a few times to 30 points, but that day and age, we jumped every time. We didn't have any shot clock. You could hold the ball as long as you wanted. Most of it was just man-for-man then. I had been to a coaching school out west and got into the zone defense, so we was playin' a three-two then.

Next, we went over to Sutton and played them. It gave us all together five games on the trip and one at home; in seven nights we played six games.

At Mill Creek or Huttonsville District High School, we had fairly good ball clubs. I enjoyed very much the coaching. During that time, there was a little junior high school over in Roaring Creek District. The town was a mining town, Coalton. It was settled by Italians that came directly from Italy. Just about a mile from there was Norton. Big mines. South was a little town by the name of Mabie and it had some mines in it also. Hundreds of people worked in those mines. Coalton only had junior high; two

Bill used trains, buses, cars, and boats to get his teams to their games back in the early days. Those road trips produced more than a few memorable moments. "We were preparing those kids for the big game of life," Bill recalls of his coaching years.

years of high school and then the kids rode a train from Coalton to Elkins High School.

In 1930, they had a board of education that was progressive and they decided to have a four-year high school. Dr. Guye Michaels was on the board of education at the time; he came to me and said we need a coach over there. He made it so pleasant — gave my wife a job — that I moved from the valley to Coalton. My salary was not much better than up at Tygart's Valley, but the Depression came along and it happened to be that there was hardly anyone employed at the time but the school teachers and the postmaster.

We started out and I had to teach all the fundamentals. Taught 'em pivoting and everything like that. I knew it would be a bad year for us because they had never had that much experience, and some of 'em were seniors even. But they were boys that really wanted to play. To help the thing out, we fixed an outside court up at the old grade school and put baskets there and gave them some shooting practice. We played about the same teams. And, of course, I had to play my old school, Tygart's Valley, and it was too bad that I was playing against the boys that I had coached. It didn't work very well. (Laughter.) We won about 12 games that year and it surprised everyone.

As the years went on, we got a bus and I decided then that we'd take a trip similar to that five-day trip we took when I was at Mill Creek. I had a fairly good team started and we was winning some games. We traveled by bus over to Troy and played them the first night on the trip. The second night we played Normantown. We were winning and a boy the name of Woodrow Harvey, my best scorer, ran into a metal beam that was holding the building up and got cut just above the eye. So I got him out, put a sub in, stopped the blood, and put a patch on him.

Later, I heard someone behind me in the rough bleachers say, "Now boys, watch that guy with the patch tomorrow night at Sand Fork." So I looked around and here was the Sand Fork coach, Burk. I got to thinkin' that Burk will ride Harvey. So I went over to the pharmacy and bought a little tube of "new skin," came back and put it on Harvey's cut. It looked pretty good, so I didn't put a patch on.

We went on by bus to Sand Fork that night. They had the same old gym and I knew about the bouncing the ball on the wall. I put a big patch about Stevie's eye. Pretty good guard, but couldn't shoot worth a cent. So, they came and jumped right on Stevie. He couldn't do anything, but he wouldn't have done anything. Harvey though, got loose from 'em 'til they finally discovered there was something wrong. That won the ball game.

We finally got a gym in Coalton. We got a WPA program and they

Bill Weber and author Gene Ochsendorf.

Coach Weber enjoys life and is quick to remember the good times. Some of his fondest memories are those of his family. Bill recalls his late wife Ida Wilson Jackson Weber as "not only a wife, but a pal." She shared his love of sports, coached girls' basketball, and worked with Bill as a scorekeeper at his games. Bill and Ida had three children: Margaret, Joanna, and Eddy, all deceased. Today, Bill has five grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

made a gym in the lower floor of the old company store. The ceiling was a little higher than the one at Mill Creek and people had enough room that they could shoot pretty well.

I had a family there the name of Gutshall, they was four boys in it. The first one I had was a tall lanky kid named Mervin Gutshall. He had the making of a good player because he was so interested. He listened to everything I told and he got out there and tried those things. He was successful, just a natural. The kind a coach loved to have. Along came Louie Gutshall, his brother. He made a fine player. And then came Mead who became a minister, and he was small. And then came Neil; he played some later in life at Davis & Elkins College and became a fine coach at another school in another county. I always said I would have liked to have had the fifth Gutshall. And this is what happened. There was a girl born to the Gutshall family during the only blackout we had in Randolph County during World War II. The reason it wasn't a boy is that the stork got mixed up in the dark and dropped the wrong person. (Laughter.)

It was quite a pleasure to coach at Coalton. I always believed that discipline was the first word in coaching and we tried to do that. Our practices were like classroom. And we had no foolishness and they understood it, the players, and I think it made a better team. The families backed me in everything. And if I put any harsh discipline on 'em, the parents came to me not as critical, with anger, but they thanked me for doing it. And they generally put the pressure on the kids and punished them at home for what they did at school. I hope that would be the case now.

During my coaching experience for basketball, my teams played 755 games. We won 530 and lost 225. I don't put the win and loss so much together, because the way I feel, it's the contribution that we made with the youngsters in the community, rather than the win and loss.

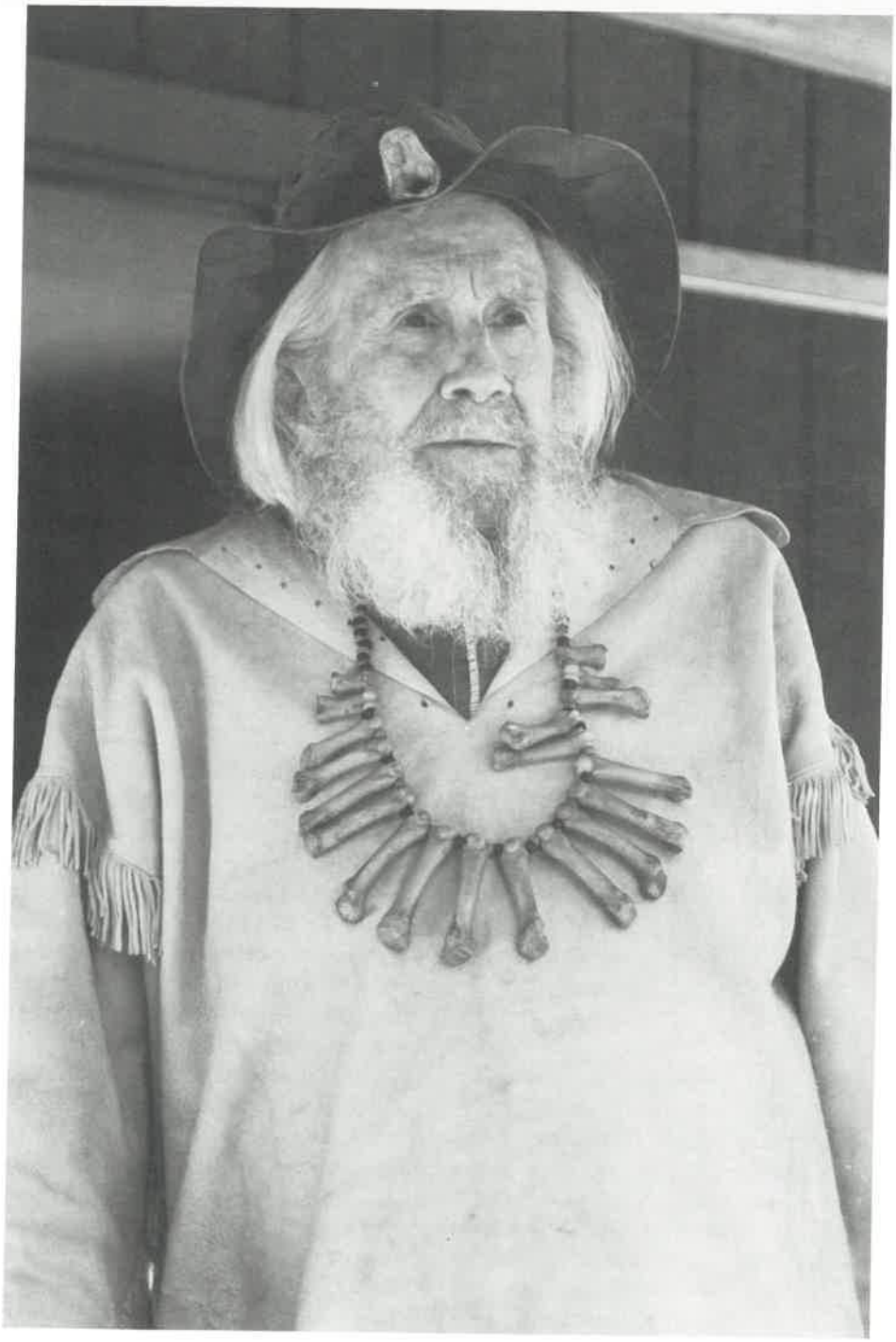
GENE OCHSENDORF grew up in the Northern Panhandle but has been a resident of Elkins for the last 20 years. He is a graduate of Ohio State University and is now employed at Davis & Elkins College. Gene is the father of six children and is an avid sports fan. His most recent contribution to GOLDENSEAL appeared in Summer 1983.

JOE BLANKENSHIP is a native of Elkins and chief photographer for the Elkins *Inter-Mountain* newspaper. His most recent photographic contribution to GOLDENSEAL appeared in Summer 1997.

The Randolph County Athletic Hall of Fame is housed in the back room of the Western Steer steakhouse, "on the five-lane" in Elkins. Bill points out his plaque during a recent visit.

One With Nature

By Jim Wilson



Coy Fitzpatrick turned 90 on July 16, 1999. Equal parts philosopher, handyman, naturalist, and historian, Coy lives by himself, far from the nearest paved road or modern convenience. He hunts, gathers, and prepares his own meals, sleeps under the stars, and has known a long life and a peace of mind few men ever experience.

When asked to what he attributes his longevity, Coy replies after a lengthy pause, "Doing as I please, when I please. Sleeping outside every night and starting the next day with a hot toddy. I've never used tobacco except for an occasional ceremonial pipe passed amongst friends in my lodge."

Since the mid-1980's, Coy Fitzpatrick has been known throughout the state as the "Monterville Mountain Man," a reflection of his unique lifestyle, and the result of the considerable public attention he has received for it over the years. Writer Tom Cater of the Elkins *Inter-Mountain* newspaper dubbed Coy, who lives near

Coy Fitzpatrick, the Monterville Mountain Man. 1999 photograph by Joe Arbogast.

Coy's E-Z Rest has all the comforts of home for Coy Fitzpatrick, a 90-year-old individualist who prefers natural surroundings. Photo by Joe Arbogast.

the Elk River in Monterville in the southern portion of Randolph County, the Monterville Mountain Man in a feature article in 1986.

So, what does a man do to earn this mystic title?

Let's go back to the beginning to answer that question. Coy was born in Rosedale, Gilmer County, in 1909, to Scott and Flora Jane Fitzpatrick. He was the first born, with two brothers and three sisters to follow.

Scott Fitzpatrick was a woodsman at the time, and later became a jack-of-many-trades. This career evolution was due mainly to a bum leg, Coy says. When his father was a young man, he stepped on an iron hoop in such a way that it sprang back and damaged his shin. Coy remembers when his father's skin was black from below the knee to his ankle.

The family could not afford a doctor, so Scott Fitzpatrick doctored himself. When his leg would flare up, he would treat the area with maggots. He devised a cloth sleeve with drawstrings at either end. He would fill the sleeve with maggots which would eat the dead flesh. Afterwards, he would untie the drawstrings and empty the maggots into a pot of boiling water. This primitive healing process took many days, during which time Coy's father was unable to work, making it difficult for him to hold a steady job.

"The pleasure I derived from hunting, combined with the knowledge that I was helping my family out, gave the woods a special meaning to me."

The family moved to Glenville when Coy was two years old. His father started a grocery store which lasted only two years. In a short time span, the family then moved from Glenville to Clarksburg, and then to Owens, near Shinnston in Harrison County. Coy started grade school in Clarksburg and continued in Owens. His father had landed a short-lived job with Consolidated Coal.

The family soon moved back to Clarksburg and Scott took a job as a grocery clerk. After school hours, Coy worked at McNickel's Pottery in Stonewood, sweeping floors in the evenings. This money helped their expanding family to buy necessities.

Coy's mother gave him a .22 caliber rifle for his 12th birthday. Coy hunted near his home for duck, groundhog, and squirrel, and acquired an immediate love for being in the woods, stalking his prey. His mother praised him every time he brought home meat for the table. This praise caused Coy to become an even more diligent hunter.

"The pleasure I derived from hunting, combined with the knowledge that I was helping my family out, gave the woods a special meaning to me. The outdoors became a natural environment that I was very comfortable with," says Coy reflectively.

Coy quit school after the sixth

Parents Scott and Flora Jane Fitzpatrick of Gilmer County. Coy was the eldest of six children; his family knew their share of hard times.

grade and took a series of part-time jobs in order to help his family. He worked for some local glass companies and Weirton Steel, doing odd jobs. The family lived close to the Pittsburgh Plate & Glass plant. Coy's good work habits were known to several of the foremen there, so anytime temporary help was needed, they sought out Coy.

After a restless youth, Coy joined the Navy in 1942. He returned to Clarksburg after the war.

He worked with the carpenters, bricklayers, mechanics, and electricians. At age 15, Coy worked all winter mixing asbestos with water glass for wrapping the steam lines in the boiler plant at Pittsburgh Plate & Glass.

When he was 16, he migrated to Toledo, Ohio, and worked full-time on the assembly line at Willy's Overland Automobile Company. Coy lived in a boarding house there and sent a portion of his pay home every week. Any boy who was able-bodied and could lie about his age with a straight face could get a job on an assembly line in Toledo.

Occasionally, a furnace would blow out back at Pittsburgh Plate & Glass, and one of the bosses would get word to Coy that his services were needed. Coy would high-tail it home and help reline the glass-making furnace with brick, after which he would return to his job on the automobile assembly line.

About this time, Coy got the wanderlust. He left Toledo by hopping a freight train, and landed in Wisconsin where he worked on a railroad for awhile. Unauthorized train travel became a way of life and a way to see the country for Coy during the next several months. One day he ended up in a small town in Mississippi by way of California. The janitor at the train depot befriended him and let him sleep in the boiler house as it was early December and the nights were chilly.

The next day, Coy asked the janitor if there was any work to be had in the town. The janitor informed Coy that there was a large plantation just outside town that was hiring tangerine pickers. Following directions, Coy went to the plantation at hiring time, which was 6:00 a.m., the next morning. This was where he came face-to-face with race discrimination for the first time in his now-17 years of life.

At the gated entrance to the plantation, there were two lines of people: the white people on one side, and colored people on the other side. A work truck was parked at the entrance. A white man stood on the bed of the truck and, looking in the direction of the white people, bellowed, "I reckon I can use all you whites. Pay is two dollars a day."

Turning his body to face the colored line he shouted, "I can use a few of you n------, too. Pay is a dollar for you n------."

The boss man then singled out a young colored man. "Boy, you got a woman?" "No sir, I just got me." To which the boss responded, "Go home n------, I can't use you."

The boss singled out another colored man and asked the same question. This man answered, "Yes sir, I've got my wife here and two kids." The boss responded, "Okay, you and your family can work for a dollar a day total. The rest of you n------ go home!"

Coy was shocked, but needed the money. He picked tangerines for the three weeks necessary to complete the harvest. Afterwards, he asked around town about other employment. A man told him to go out to the sawmill and turpentine plant. Coy went to the office and the manager told him that, yes, he could give him work for two dol-

Coy is a skilled hunter, fisherman, and cook. Here he prepares a meal on his elaborate outdoor cookstove. Photograph by Joe Arbogast.

lars a day. He further stated that, "I might have to fire a n----- to make room for you, but that's no problem. You can start next week."

Coy was deeply disturbed that he might cause someone with a family to lose his job. He was also profoundly upset with what he had witnessed regarding discrimination.

He hopped a train that day and headed home to West Virginia. The Mississippi experience had taught him a valuable lesson. "I worked with the colored and whites down there," he recalls. "The colored folks treated me better than my own kind. From that point on, I learned to treat any person as an equal, no matter what his or her race, color, creed, or religion happened to be. I shunned anyone who did otherwise."

Coy went to work full-time for Pittsburgh Plate & Glass. In 1930, he married Hester Davis. In the spring of '31, he was laid off.

"I would go around to the local farms and work all day for a chicken," he says. "A chicken would provide meals for two days. A bag of flour was 29 cents and eggs were a penny apiece."

A daughter, Myrna, was born to Coy and Hester in 1932, the same year that Coy was called back to Pittsburgh Plate & Glass full-time as a helper in the electrical shop.

Coy's father was also hired full-time at the plant, which by then was organized by the glass-workers union. When Scott Fitzpatrick's bad leg flared up and he had to miss work, he was protected by the union from being fired. This protection took a tremendous amount of pressure off Coy and his brothers.

Coy started taking an electrician's course by mail from the International Correspondence School. Even though he dropped out of school at an early age, he was well-read. In his travels, he read any book he could get a hold of on any subject. Today, his library is extensive with history — especially Native American history — being his favorite topic.

In 1937, a son named Spike was born to Coy and Hester. When Coy arrived at the hospital and realized that he now had a son, he picked him up and said to his wife, "Hester, you've given me a little spike buck."

Coy joined the Navy in 1942 and was assigned to the Seabees as a second-class electrician. He was later transferred to the fleet. He was sent aboard a repair ship for awhile, then later aboard a destroyer and a small aircraft carrier. After the war ended, he returned to Clarksburg and once again went to work for Pittsburgh Plate & Glass as an electrician.

In 1946, Coy's father passed away at age 68. That same year, Coy rented a camp on Dry Branch of the Elk in southern Randolph County near the Pocahontas County line. This place held special meaning for Coy. In 1923, his father and one of his friends brought Coy here to the Elk River in a Ford touring car. Coy's father and friend slept inside the car, and Coy slept underneath it.

"Maybe this is where I got my penchant for sleeping outdoor," he

laughs.

The next morning, Coy set out to find some native brook trout. He found a tributary across from what is known as the "Boat Hole," a few hundred yards below Whittaker Falls of the Elk. Coy was using an eight to nine-foot telescoping steel rod with a small brass open-faced reel which had no level wind. The rod was heavy, but the reel weighed no more than a full package of cigarettes and was only about two inches wide and two inches in diameter. This unbalanced outfit did not prevent Coy from catching a couple dozen six to eight-inch brookies that morning. Coy was about 13 years old at the time, and was used to being praised for bringing home meat for the table.

This time, though, he was scolded severely by his father for keeping over his limit of 10, which was the creel limit at the time. He was also scolded for fishing in closed waters. At the time all tributaries of the Elk were closed to protect the spawning grounds. This was the only time in his life that Coy remembers being in trouble with his father. "This made me very conscious of our game laws. I came to respect them at a very early age," Coy says.

After renting this camp, Coy began spending almost all of his free time on Dry Branch. He fished, hunted, and hiked the mountains with a passion. He would spend several days and nights in the high mountains without returning to camp. "I carried nothing but an old army blanket for comfort and protection from the elements," he says. "I wanted to see the vistas from the peaks of Elk and Gauley mountains. The only way to get to the tops was to follow the old narrow gauge railroad beds. The view from the top was always worth the effort.

"Many a meal has been fashioned by me consisting of poke greens, young berry leaves, cattail roots, and fresh brook trout."

"Actually, I felt more at home in the woods than I did at camp. It's hard to explain, but nature completely surrounding me was much more comforting than hearing or seeing the occasional car pass the camp. There are no natural predators of man in our mountains. I became one with the wildlife and the natural surroundings."

Coy read incessantly on the wide variety of edible food sources in the wild: the fungi, wild vegetables, and herbs. His mother had taught him to recognize the good poke greens. "A man will not get fat in the wilds, but he can sustain himself nicely. Many a meal has been fashioned by me consisting of poke greens, young berry leaves, cattail roots, and fresh brook trout. Cattail roots are as good as potatoes any day. I would wash these meals down with sassafras tea," he says.

Coy knew in his heart that this was the area where he wanted to spend the rest of his life. He had been looking around for property for some time and finally found the place of his dreams. It was about a three-acre tract located on Valley Fork of the Elk, approximately 300 yards from where Valley Fork empties into the Elk River. Coy purchased the property in the spring of 1961. One of his grandsons, Mike McIntyre, age 10 at the time, helped him construct a crude dwelling which he named "Coy's E-Z Rest."

Coy went to nearby Beckwith Sawmill and asked about purchasing a chestnut board. When Coy explained to Mr. Beckwith what he wanted to use it for, the owner was so impressed that he gave Coy a straight seven-foot chestnut board, 28 inches wide. This board was to be used as his outside bed. That July, Coy spent his first night at the newly completed home away from home — under the stars, of course. On every occasion Coy stayed at E-Z Rest, he slept under the stars. In cold weather he used a sleeping bag, but mostly it was the old familiar army blanket.

While Coy relished his time in the wilderness, he still made his

About 30 years ago, Coy found camaraderie at a primitive rendezvous. These gatherings are held far from civilization and celebrate an older way of life. Coy is shown here with some kindred spirits at a 1995 rendezvous.

Coy and his dog Stoney on a trail bike in the 1970's.

way back to Clarksburg for work most Monday mornings. In 1974, Coy faced mandatory retirement from Pittsburgh Plate & Glass. He headed straight for the mountains. Hester did not share Coy's love of the outdoors, and elected to stay in Clarksburg and retain their home. Coy and Hester separated permanently but amicably, visiting each other often.

Coy started attending primitive rendezvous in 1969, the first one at Coburns Creek in Harrison County. Everything used or worn at these gatherings has to predate 1840. Coy was enthralled with this lifestyle and the camaraderie of the participants. He joined the Appalachian Rangers and later the West Virginia Muzzleloaders Association and the National Muzzleloaders Association. He has attended dozens of rendezvous all across the nation.

A couple of years ago, Coy decided the Upper Elk area was getting too crowded. With the encroachment of civilization depriving him of his serenity, he set out to find a second home that would better befit his lifestyle. "I remember when the five-mile length of Valley Fork Road had only about a half-dozen permanent residents and only one camp. Now there are dozens of residents and second homes. The river is being used a lot more, too," he says.

He realized that at his age, his second home shouldn't be located too far away. He found his little slice of heaven less than 15 miles from E-Z Rest. It is only a couple of miles outside Valley Head in Randolph County, but the contrast is the difference between night and day. Coy purchased the property in the area known as Windy Run. It encompasses 14 acres carved out of the Monongahela National Forest and sits at an elevation of 3,300 feet. The last mile of the trip up there is designed for foot or horse travel only, which is exactly the way Coy plans to keep it. In fact, there is still an old national forest sign about a quarter way up which warns: "FOOT TRAVEL ONLY."

Coy plans to divide his time equally between his two homes. Coy loves to have company from friends, family, or strangers; their only obligation is to sign his guest book. The signatures number in the thousands. No matter what your station in life, you are merely a "human being" when you set foot on Coy's property. Coy learned that lesson at 17 years of age in Mississippi.

"I figure I'll have most of my company at E-Z Rest. When civilization becomes a little too much to bear, me and Nattie (Coy's dog) will head up to Windy Run. I feel a little closer to heaven up there anyhow," he says with a faraway, visionary gleam.

JIM WILSON is an active member of the Outdoor Writers Association of America and the Southeastern Outdoor Press Association. He has contributed to *Wonderful West Virginia* magazine and other publications; his humorous column "The Country Store" appears weekly in the *Webster Echo* and the *Webster Republican* newspapers. Jim and his wife Betty live with their Pekingese dogs in a remote section of Randolph County. This is his first contribution to GOLDENSEAL.

Soaking up the sun, Coy finds peace in the simple pleasures of life. Photograph by Joe Arbogast

Recalling Printer Ken McClain

By Mariwyn McClain Smith

Russell Kenneth McClain in 1966. Photograph by the West Virginia Photo Company, Parsons.

Ken McClain, the founder of McClain Printing in Parsons, was my father. One of the most valuable lessons he taught his three children was the importance of a strong work ethic. Prevailing child labor laws held no sway in our Tucker County home as we walked around and around our dining room table in Parsons in the early 1940's. Collating small printing jobs, we walked in circles, picking up one page at a time. We stacked them neatly, and, when the small booklets were completed, we started again. We didn't know it at the time, but we were taking part in the early years of McClain Print-

A Lasting Impression

Ken McClain was the eldest of seven children. Parents, at left, Ernest Ferrell McClain and Mary Maud Potts McClain were married in 1907. Their children are, in back row from left, Russell Kenneth, Aleta Pearl, and William Hartzell; in the front row are John Randall, Edith Virginia, and Robert Ferrell. The youngest, Arra Vermell, died in infancy. Photograph of children taken in about 1920 in Upshur County.

ing Company.

Dad started to work in his early teens helping to support his younger brothers and sisters. The family lived in several communities in and around Buckhannon in Upshur County. The eldest of the seven children of Ernest Ferrell and Mary Maud Potts McClain, Russell Kenneth McClain left school after the eighth grade and went to work in the coal mines.

Dad's introduction to the world of paper and ink came in the early 1920's at the *Buckhannon Record*, "at the wooden end of a broom," as he put it. He quickly came to love the profession. He often said he was one of God's luckiest creatures: he thoroughly enjoyed going to work in the morning and never understood men who looked forward to retirement.

He moved to Martinsburg 10 years later to work on the daily newspaper, *The Journal*. There he met a high school senior, Christine Faith Reynolds, in June 1934. After a whirlwind courtship, they were married that August.

The first year of their marriage must have been quite difficult, although I don't remember Mom or Dad talking much about it. In 1935, for the second time in his life, Dad was diagnosed with rheumatic fever. As an infant, he had been carried on a pillow because the disease was so serious. This second time, he spent several months in bed. Following the birth of their son, Dad would crawl to the top of the staircase, slide down one step at a time, scoot to the steps outside Mom's parents' home and down another flight of steps, until a fellow worker could get him into a car so he could go to work. He was determined to support his own family!

After a brief stint at the *Tyler County Journal* in Middlebourne, Dad moved his family to Morgantown in 1936. Armed with a collection of books on how to become a printer, Dad went to work for the *Morgantown Post*. He requested the night shift so he could devote his days to buying used equipment and setting up a small

print shop in his garage. It was in Morgantown that my sister and I were born.

Although our mother missed her big old house in Martinsburg and the hubbub of her 11 sisters and brothers, Faith McClain loved living in Morgantown. My parents joined the big Methodist church at the head of High Street. When she and Dad built a new home, she assumed they would be there for life.

Rachel, Ed, and I visited Mom in Florida in 1983. While sifting through some of her things, we found a paper she had written. In reminiscing about those early years, she had written, "We were living in a new home we had built and had three small children: Ed was in the first grade, the two girls were three and five years old. The war was at its worst, but far away. DuPont had built a new plant near our home. Everything was booming, and life was good.

"Then Ken began talking about a new man who had come to work on shift, Larry Bergeron. He had told Ken about the little newspaper for sale in a little town called Parsons. I just let Ken talk and dream. At least, I thought he was just dreaming. Then that weekend we got into the old Terraplane and went to this 'unheard of little town.' Someone had sideswiped him pulling out of an icy side road. This seemed much more exciting than his talk of buying a newspaper. After all, who could buy a newspaper without money?

"Two weeks later, on a bitter cold snowy day, Ken loaded his wife and three children into that old car and started for Parsons. I will never forget coming into town over the old bridge through Bretz, and (climbing) those slippery wooden outside stairs to the apartment over the *Advocate* building."

Our family then returned to Morgantown. Mom went on to describe a "wonderful Christmas in our new home." Then, much to her amazement, two days later she signed papers to sell the new house and, on the first day of 1943, moved into that drafty old apartment where "there were brown bugs big enough to saddle, and holes in the floor that the girls could fall into and break a leg."

He requested the night shift so he could devote his days to buying used equipment and setting up a small print shop in his garage.

Dad held up the movers long enough to buy linoleum to cover the floor, and roach powder. When he discovered Mom crying, Dad asked, "Mama, why are you crying?"

"I hate you and this terrible place!" she told him. "He was so surprised at my outburst," she recalled, "that it made me laugh!"

That snowy January began the life work that Mom always claimed to dislike, but at which she proved to be quite capable. Mom and Dad were both Linotype operators. He was a hunt-and-peck typesetter; Mom often set galley after galley of perfect type.

In 1947, *The Parsons Advocate* reported that 148 students would graduate from Tucker County's three high schools: Davis, Parsons, and Thomas. In addition to those who would graduate after attending four years of classes, 10 men would be awarded "war diplomas," and eleven others — including Dad — would receive GED (general education development) diplomas. These men were encouraged to par-

Ken McClain had printing in his blood. He is shown here, at right, during the 1920's in the press room of the ***Buckhannon Record*** where he was introduced to the world of publishing.

Faith Reynolds McClain in 1960.

ticipate in the commencement ceremonies and there wasn't a prouder graduate of the Parsons High School class of 1947 than the GED valedictorian — my father.

As we three children entered high school, we had a choice: we could work in the front office or in the back of the shop. Ed ran presses until he was so tall his head hit the ceiling. I worked on subscriptions and did whatever was needed in the front office. Rachel chose to do janitorial work — that way she could work and talk (if Dad didn't catch her!).

Every Thursday evening, Rachel and I and one or more girl friends came in after school and prepared the newly completed *Advocate* for the post office. It was a long, messy, very hot job and we soon learned to wait until Dad went home for dinner before arriving so we could take our time and have a little fun along the way. It's also where we did some of our first experimenting with cigarettes.

Dad was not an easy taskmaster. He worked long, hard hours and he was a perfectionist. He expected the same of his employees, and he insisted that his wife and children set an example for everyone else.

Neither Mom nor Dad was ever still. When Dad was at home, there was always a pile of newspapers he exchanged with other papers throughout the state at his elbow. Mom was a very good seamstress, making many of our clothes. She could knit and crochet, made beautiful quilt tops, embroidered tiny exacting stitches, and did needlepoint. Both were voracious readers. He read only what had to do with printing; she often read three novels at a time.

Seven days a week, Dad dressed in a clean, freshly starched and ironed dress shirt, a tie, and a suit. When bowties were fashionable, Dad had several silk ties, and they were hand-tied. For several years, he wore hand-tailored suits, and at one time he and Mom had matching suits that had been hand-tailored. If he was going to a meeting in the evening, as he often did, he changed his shirt. It wasn't unusual for Mom to spend much of Saturday morning ironing 10 or 12 dress shirts. It was a job she felt was very important, hand-scrubbing the cuffs and collars before they went into the washing machine. In our mid-teens, Rachel and I were taught to iron Dad's shirts; there were to be no wrinkles in them!

While television was common in many cities, it was late coming to the hills of Tucker County. The first cable was being installed in the early 1950's and Dad asked that it be installed in our home in time for my 16th birthday. We turned off all the lights and closed the drapes — after all, the only comparison we had was a movie theater where we watched in the dark — and invited our friends. Much to our amazement, Dad loved TV! The

This 1893 photograph of downtown Parsons shows a mob putting court records into the courthouse, at center. Fifty years later, the building next to the courthouse, seen here behind scaffolding, became the offices of ***The Parsons Advocate*** newspaper and home to the McClain family.

Publishing was a family activity for the McClains of Parsons, shown here in 1956. Wife and mother Faith, seated at left, was a Linotype operator; son Ed ran the presses; daughter Mariwyn (our author), standing at left, managed circulation; daughter Rachel, standing at right, handled janitorial duties; father, husband, and publisher Ken McClain is seated at right. Photograph by the West Virginia Photo Company, Parsons.

man who had never stayed home at night discovered that, even though we could get only one or two stations, he thoroughly enjoyed it. He and Mom even came home for lunch and watched the soap operas.

Dinner was always a formal occasion. Dad left the shop at 5:00, and when he pulled into the driveway the dining room table was set and dinner was ready to put on the table. There was no excuse for being late for dinner. And, when Rachel and I became responsible for preparing the meal, there was no excuse for dinner being late. There was always a white damask tablecloth, often covered with ecru lace. Mom insisted on using white, 12-inch damask napkins and we each had a napkin holder at our place. We must have been the last family in West Virginia to be allowed the luxury of using paper napkins.

Many of our friends' families did not have a car or considered driving out of town a luxury, so it was Mom who often took Rachel and me and our friends on shopping trips for school clothes or our first evening gowns, and to parades where we marched with the band. Dad often filled the station wagon with giggling girls and took us to ball games.

For several years, he wore hand-tailored suits, and at one time he and Mom had matching suits that had been hand-tailored.

That same station wagon was the company delivery vehicle. Dad would be amazed to know that McClain Printing Company now has two delivery trucks which are on the road to Washington, D.C., nearly every day.

I was a sophomore at Davis & Elkins College when Dad was approached by two professors from West Virginia University. They were concerned that many of the state's most valuable early history books were out of print and might never be reprinted if Dad did not do it. The *Advocate* had never attempted anything so ambitious, but Dad was deeply touched by their faith in him and he accepted the challenge.

He bought a first-edition copy of Withers' *Chronicles of Border Warfare* for the unheard-of price of $50, carefully removed the front and back covers, and set me to typing the book. Since there were no photocopiers in the 1950's, and the typesetters could not possibly be expected to read the tiny letters, I spent that summer retyping the book. This was the formal beginning of McClain Printing Company.

The printing company was incorporated in 1958. Soon afterward, Dad was approached by Homer Floyd Fansler of Hendricks. Fansler wanted to write a history of Tucker County but had no money to pay for it. No history of the county had been written since 1884 when Hu Maxwell had traveled on horseback, county to county, writing histories. Fansler's 1962 history was the first of many books Dad was to print with only his belief that the book would some day be profitable. Fansler's *History of Tucker County* has been reprinted nine times.

McClain Printing Company has, since the early 1960's, printed — and often reprinted — histories of Barbour, Berkeley, Braxton, Cabell, Doddridge, Fayette, Greenbrier, Hampshire, Hardy, Harrison, McDowell, Randolph, Pocahontas, Preston, Randolph, Ritchie, Summers, Preston, Upshur, Wood, and Wyoming counties; and Dr. Earl

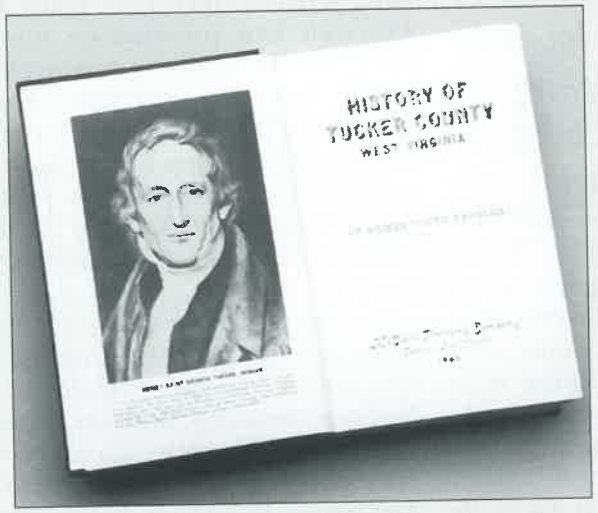
MICHAEL KELLER

McClain Printing Company publishes an extensive catalog of books with strong ties to West Virginia history and local heritage. GOLDENSEAL readers may be familiar with many of these titles including ***Bootstraps and Biscuits*** by Anna Lee Terry-Robe [see "Making Jam From Sour Grapes: Anna Lee Terry and Her Mountain Cookbook," by Mary Rodd Furbee; Winter 1997]. Jean Battlo, Mack Samples, and Mariwyn McClain Smith are among the other GOLDENSEAL contributing authors whose books are published by McClain. For a current catalog, call McClain Printing Company at 1-800-654-7179.

Core's five-volume history of early Monongalia County.

In addition, there have been hundreds of other titles, including several about the Civil War, genealogies, community histories, cookbooks, and hundreds of books of poetry that are dear to the hearts of the authors and their families and friends.

When my husband George and I moved to Parsons in March 1971, our son Kenny was about to celebrate his 10th birthday. Our daughters Barbara and Faith Anne were soon to be eight and two. Less than two weeks later, Dad showed the first serious symptoms that led to the diagnosis of Alzheimer's Disease.



The 1962 publication of Homer Fansler's ***History of Tucker County*** was the first of many local histories produced by McClain Printing Company. Photograph by Michael Keller.

George had edited the *Preston County News* in Terra Alta for 10 years, and he and Dad had come to share a deep love of each other, and of printing. George had been looking forward to sharing an office with Dad, but he was now forced to take over a completely new role. He'd been a newspaper editor, but the running of a large print shop was another matter. Because George's new work as manager of McClain Printing was a full-time job, I became editor of the *Advocate* that next week.

Dad was inducted into the West Virginia Printing Hall of Fame by West Virginia Institute of Technology at Montgomery in 1970. In 1971, he received the West Virginia Library Commission's annual Award for Contributions to Public Libraries, the first non-librarian to receive the honor. Dad had been very active in the West Virginia Press Association, serving as president in 1959. When Dad was inducted posthumously into the West Virginia Press Association Hall of Fame in 1985, his son Ed presented the eulogy.

Ed told the audience that if there had ever been a need for someone to invent male chauvinism, Dad would have been well-qualified to do so. Ken McClain respected

women, but truly believed that they had "their place." He believed, too, in blood: thicker than a lot of things! And he sincerely believed that only Republicans could be trusted. But it was family — names and generations of the family — that Ken McClain held closest to his heart. And yet today, Ed remarked, a woman is running Dad's newspaper, and a Smith is running McClain Printing Company. And, Ed added, "Both are doing a d----- good job!" (Dr. Edward F. McClain died of cancer on January 7, 1993, in Madison, Wisconsin.)

Dad died April 13, 1977, in Tampa, Florida. Mom remained in Zephyrhills, Florida, an area where several of her brothers and sisters and their families were living. She died there February 2, 1990.

Our family believes that Dad would be very pleased about the progress which has occurred in the more than 20 years since his death. In spite of the flood of November 1985 which resulted in more than $1 million in uninsured losses, George and our son — like Dad — pulled themselves up by their bootstraps and went back to work.

Dad would be very pleased about the progress which has occurred in the more than 20 years since his death.

McClain Printing Company quietly celebrated its 40th anniversary in November 1998 and, in March 1999, became the first printing company in West Virginia to operate one one-color press, two two-color presses, a four-color press, and a five-color press. How astounded Dad would be to see today's technology!

Although the printing of books is still important to the success of the company, it now represents only about 15 percent of the work. Unlike early years when the work came mostly from nearby West Virginia cities, there are now more than 200 small printers in West Virginia, Maryland, Virginia, Ohio, and the District of Columbia who rely on McClain Printing to produce jobs they are unable to handle because of size, run-length, or degree of difficulty of the work, as well as more than 300 individual businesses, brokers, designers, and end-users.

Ken McClain's son-in-law George Smith is now retired, and his grandson and namesake Ken Smith is vice-president and general manager of McClain Printing Company.

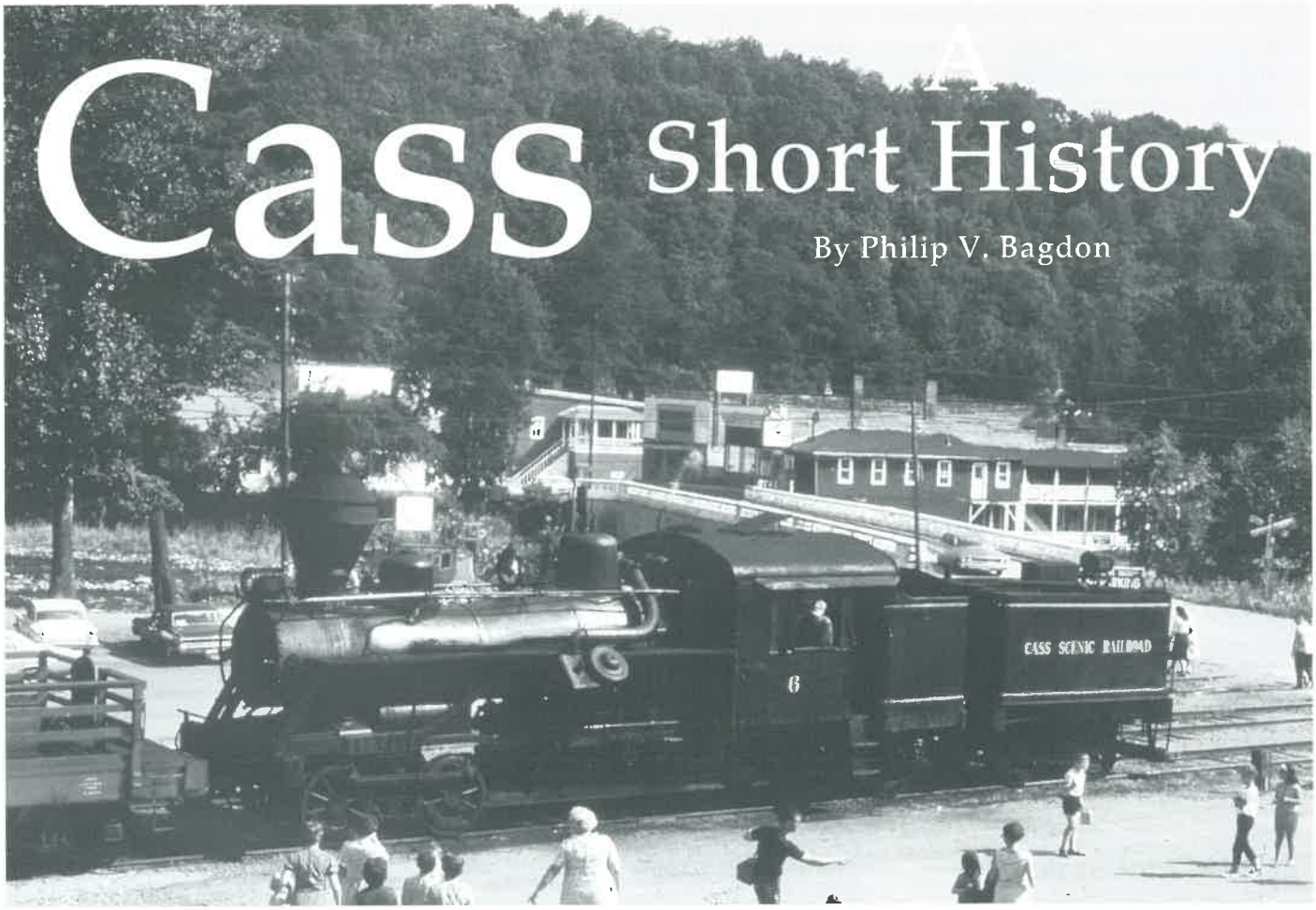
According to author Dorothy Davis,"(Ken McClain) was a symbol of the ambition, daring, honesty, and integrity that the Great Depression gave bright men and women who stepped forth into the world in the 1930's. We shall not soon see such strength again."

MARIWYN McCLAIN SMITH is a 1955 graduate of Parsons High School and a 1959 graduate of Davis & Elkins College. Except for a teaching stint in New York, she has worked at *The Parsons Advocate* all her life; she has been editor and co-publisher since 1971. She has three children and five grandchildren. This is her first contribution to GOLDENSEAL.

Ken McClain with youngest granddaughter Faith Anne Smith in 1972. Photograph by George A. Smith, Jr.

Cass Short History

By Philip V. Bagdon



Cass, established as a company town in 1900, was once a center of the West Virginia timber industry. Today, it is a state park and a popular travel destination. 1969 photograph by Philip Bagdon.

The town of Cass, Pocahontas County, is 100 years old. Once a bustling and productive company town, this year's centennial celebration offers us a unique opportunity to look back over Cass' rise, its fall, and its subsequent rebirth as a popular state park and tourist attraction.

The story of Cass begins with pulpwood. In the late 19th century, the timber and railroad industries were booming. Several members of the Luke family, together with Pennsylvania industrialist Joseph Cass, formed the West Virginia Pulp & Paper Company — today's Westvaco. In 1892, a forerunner to this company had built a successful paper mill in Maryland and now looked to expand their profitable "sulphite" papermaking business by locating a new paper mill in Covington, Virginia, about 10 miles east of the West Virginia border. They would need a massive supply of red spruce as a raw ingredient.

About 100 miles north of the proposed mill site, in the headwaters region of Shavers Fork in Pocahontas County, a rich forest of prime red spruce had been located. John G. Luke acquired more than 67,000 acres of this land during 1899 with the intention of harvesting these trees for pulp.

The only viable method for connecting these prime timberlands to the north with the pulp mill in Covington was via logging railroad from a point on the proposed C&O branch line. Surveys determined that the best rail route would be a tortuously steep grade up Leatherbark Run. Near the mouth of Leatherbark Run, within a few miles of the newly-acquired red spruce forest, was the small community of Leatherbark Ford — destined to become the town of Cass.

In April 1899, John Luke purchased a 136-acre farm at Leatherbark Ford and began making plans for a new company town to support the proposed pulpwood operation. Basic needs would include offices, a company store and

supply commissary, employee housing — a hotel for singles, family homes for managers and laborers — a schoolhouse, and an interdenominational church.

Before the town was built, however, the scope of the new venture expanded from the relatively simple process of harvesting and shipping pulpwood to a full-scale lumber enterprise. Enlarging the scope was mainly the work of Samuel E. Slaymaker, a land acquisition, timbering, and mill expert who had entered lumber sales and brokering. Slaymaker pitched the merits of expansion to company officials. There were persuasive selling points. WVP&P accepted the plan and decided to carry it out under a new subsidiary called West Virginia Spruce Lumber Company.

Slaymaker's ambitions to run a lumber mill on two shifts meant increasing the size of the proposed company town. A Slaymaker colleague, Emory P. Shaffer, was key to both the startup and the combined operation's long-term success. He arrived to assume the general manager's post in March 1900, and got to work immediately.

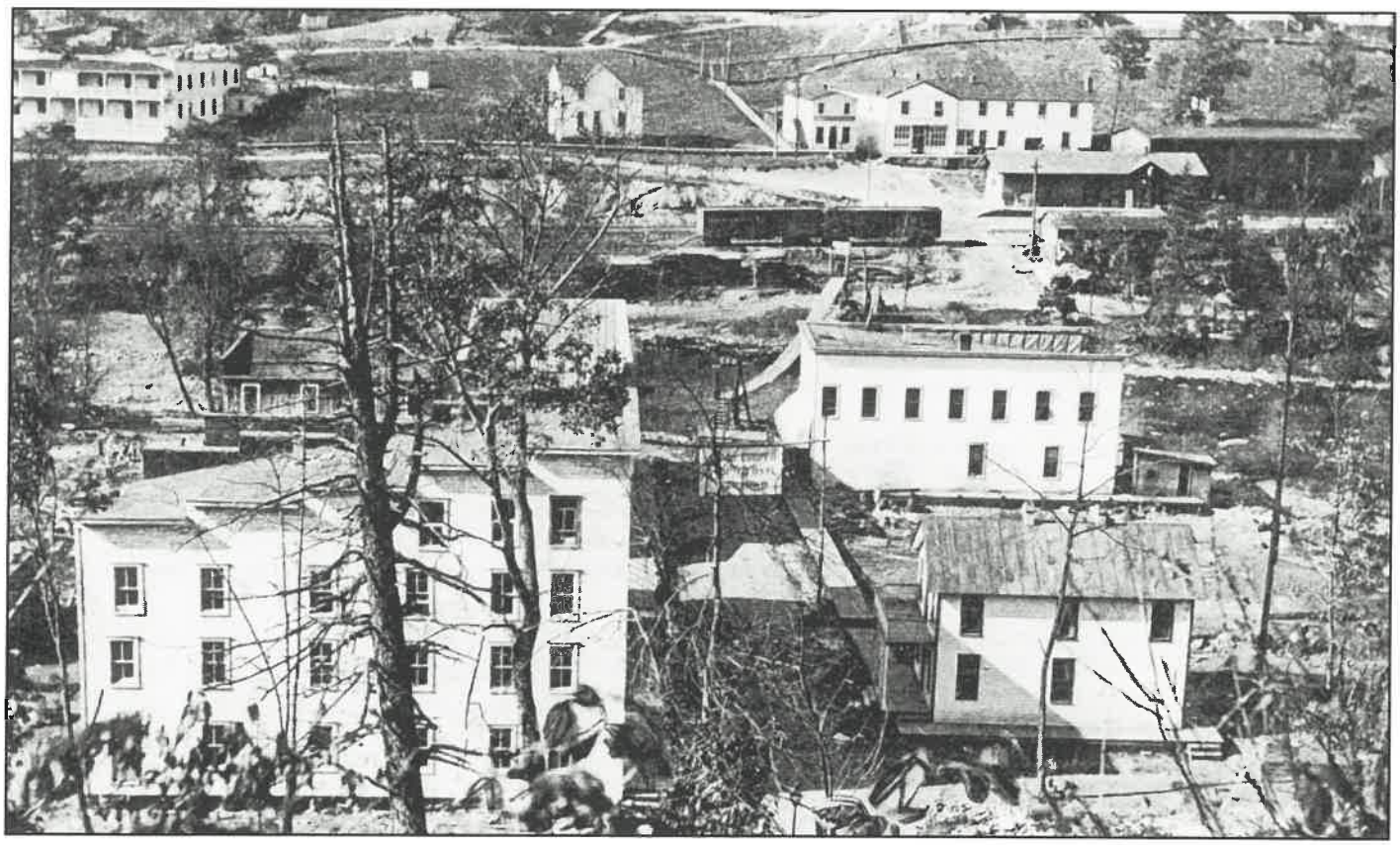
The company decided that it was not feasible to wait until the C&O rail line reached the site, so startup materials and provisions were tediously brought by wagon from Staunton, Virginia. Local sawmill operators, using portable sawmills, provided rough-cut lumber for the initial structures; they then worked at capacity to cut ties for the railroad grade into the timberlands.

The town of Cass was named in honor of business partner Joseph Cass.

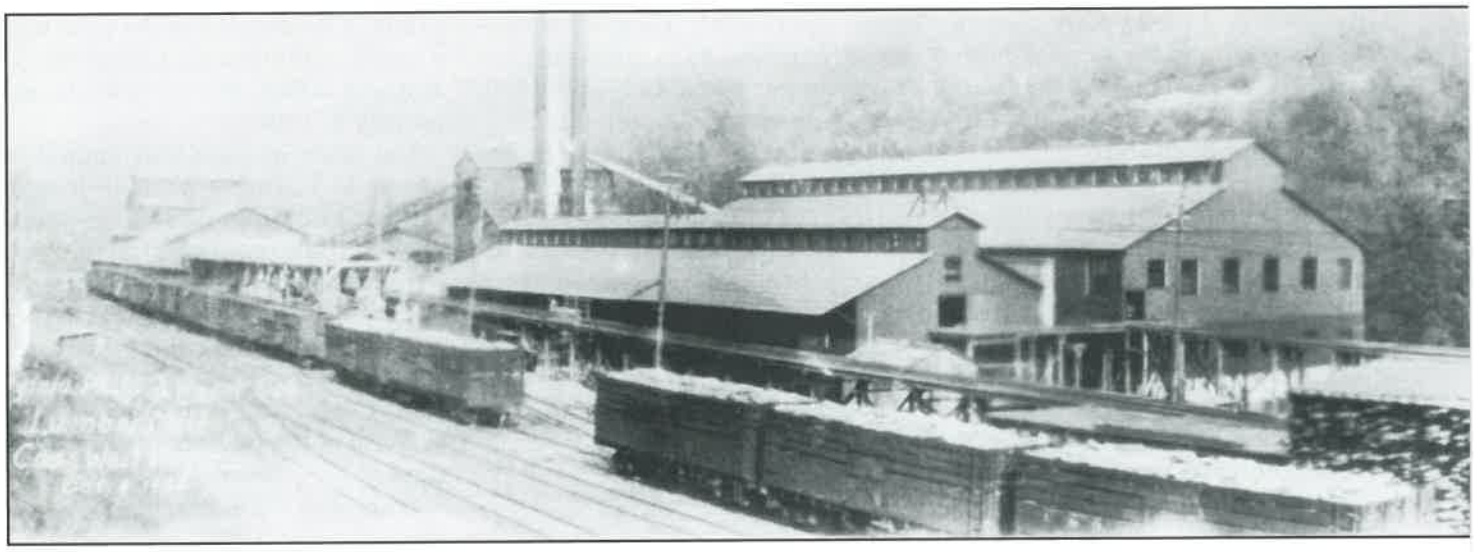
A two-story building with a kitchen, dining hall, and lobby on the ground floor, and sleeping area on top, accommodated Italian laborers who worked on the railroad grade. Also erected at the time was a small commissary. Camp No. 1, as it was called, served its first meal on July 4, 1900.

The town of Cass was named in honor of business partner Joseph Cass, the organization's vice-president and an incorporator of West Virginia Spruce Lumber Company. For a short time, Shaffer-Slaymaker correspondence continued to refer to "Leatherbark" despite a May 24, 1900, *Covington Sentinel* newspaper account of the place being renamed Cass.

When the C&O reached Cass on December 22, 1900, the company's rail route up Leatherbark Run and over onto Shavers Fork was nearly complete except for the rail-laying and spiking. Carloads of steel arrived five days later followed by the first locomotive — a 40-ton Shay, specially geared for steep mountain grades [see "Firing on the Grade: A Shay Summer at Cass," by Cody Burdette; Summer 1989]. The shipping of red spruce



By 1911, Cass was a busy place. This postcard shows Cass from the east side of the Greenbrier River with the train station and company store visible at top right. Courtesy of the West Virginia State Archives.



The West Virginia Pulp & Paper Company sawmill at Cass, 1923. Gay Studio photo, Philip Bagdon Collection.

for Covington began without fanfare on January 28, 1901. The two-car shipment of pulpwood was a humble beginning to a routine that would quickly grow by leaps and bounds.

Passenger service to Cass on the C&O from its mainline depot at Ronceverte, Greenbrier County, began in January 1901. Prior to this, most of those who came to Cass "rode shank's mare."

The Cass mill's first cut occurred in late January 1902. As with all band saw-equipped facilities, it required time to really get up and running. The intention was for the mill to cut all of the timberland's hardwood plus the larger red spruce logs.

Cass thrived from 1909 to 1920, corresponding with the peak production years for the pulpwood and sawmill operations. The total population of greater Cass is estimated to have been between 1,600 and 1,800. For a long period, Cass grade school enrollment hovered at around 400.

The company town was comprised of three basic districts. The large store and warehouse, meat market, business office, and railroad depot defined "Downtown." Up the hill, with its first row of houses hugging the river knoll, "Uptown" came to include more than 50 nearly identical two-story, weatherboard and wood frame family dwellings for mill workers, railroaders, machine shop and foundry employees, and clerks. There was also a mayor's office/jail, church, and Masonic lodge hall.

North of Uptown was the section predominantly occupied by management families. While it apparently had no official name, non-occupants tagged the area "Big Bug Hill," along with other names.

Cass thrived from 1909 to 1920, corresponding with the peak production years for the pulpwood and sawmill operations.

Those who didn't live in this exclusive district understood the unwritten rule: Stay out if you aren't invited or don't have business. The largest house in the managers' section was built for Charles Luke in 1916. After he left, the Shaffer family occupied the house for 19 years.

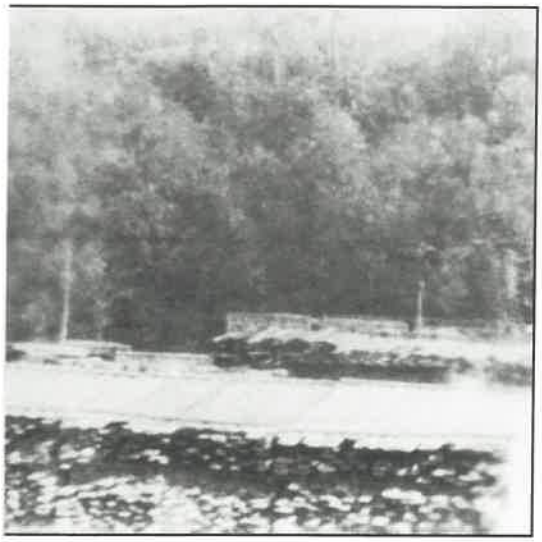
As it developed, greater Cass also came to include unincorporated East Cass and its outskirts such as Blackhurst Addition and Bohunk Hill, several areas to the south including Ralston Hill and Slabtown, and an area of company-owned dwellings near the extract plant south of town.

All company dwellings in Uptown and Big Bug Hill were built with running water — not to be taken for granted back in those days. Though it was never touted as a model community, Cass was well-designed and carefully maintained. Coal was delivered from the company store. A clerk visited each house daily for grocery orders and the company store wagon subsequently made deliveries. A doctor's fee was deducted from each worker's pay.

Two-hole outhouses and coal/wood sheds were features of all backyards. For many years, residents were allowed to let their cows wander around town between milkings. Picket fences kept the cows out of yards, and plank walkways provided pedestrian passage above the often-muddy streets.

The company store, the Pocahontas Supply Company, played heavily in town life — a place to meet and greet. C&O passenger train arrivals from the south were daily social events. Cass had neither a bank nor a recognized cemetery. A small number of immigrant laborers had been buried in a potter's field above town, but the bodies were later removed in favor of a tennis court.

Expansion of the woodland cut-



ting operations brought a corresponding rise in work-related accidents, and led to the establishment of the small Pocahontas Hospital at Cass in 1903. It lasted a decade; then those needs were handled in Marlinton.

In the mid-1920's, the Covington paper plant turned to other species for its pulpwood supply, eliminating its need for red spruce from Cass. Cass retained West Virginia Pulp & Paper Company's favor, however. While the mill remained profitable, coal had become a new area of interest for the company. Mining had been a side endeavor since 1908 — the original mission was to supply coal for the steam engines and the immediate needs of the town. The company eventually instituted production at various sites in its 178,000-acre holdings and began shipping more and more coal to its paper mill locations.

Fire destroyed most of the Cass mill complex in February 1922. New, higher capacity band saw and planing mills, as well as a large flooring products warehouse, were soon erected. Tallying the production of the first and second mills, one estimate is that during 58 years of activity, about 1.2 billion board feet of lumber were cut at Cass.

Emory Shaffer's retirement in 1933, in many ways, marked the beginning of the end for Cass. Shaffer was irreplaceable — a tribute to his all-round management and production acumen. The end had just about come for virgin timber; the last coal mine segment played out in 1939. In failing health, Shaffer departed Cass in 1940.

Ed Mower purchased Cass in 1942, and The Mower Lumber Company went on to cut second-growth timber for the next several years. Mower kept the mill running — though on a reduced scale — until Ed Mower's death in 1956; the mill closed for good on June 30, 1960.

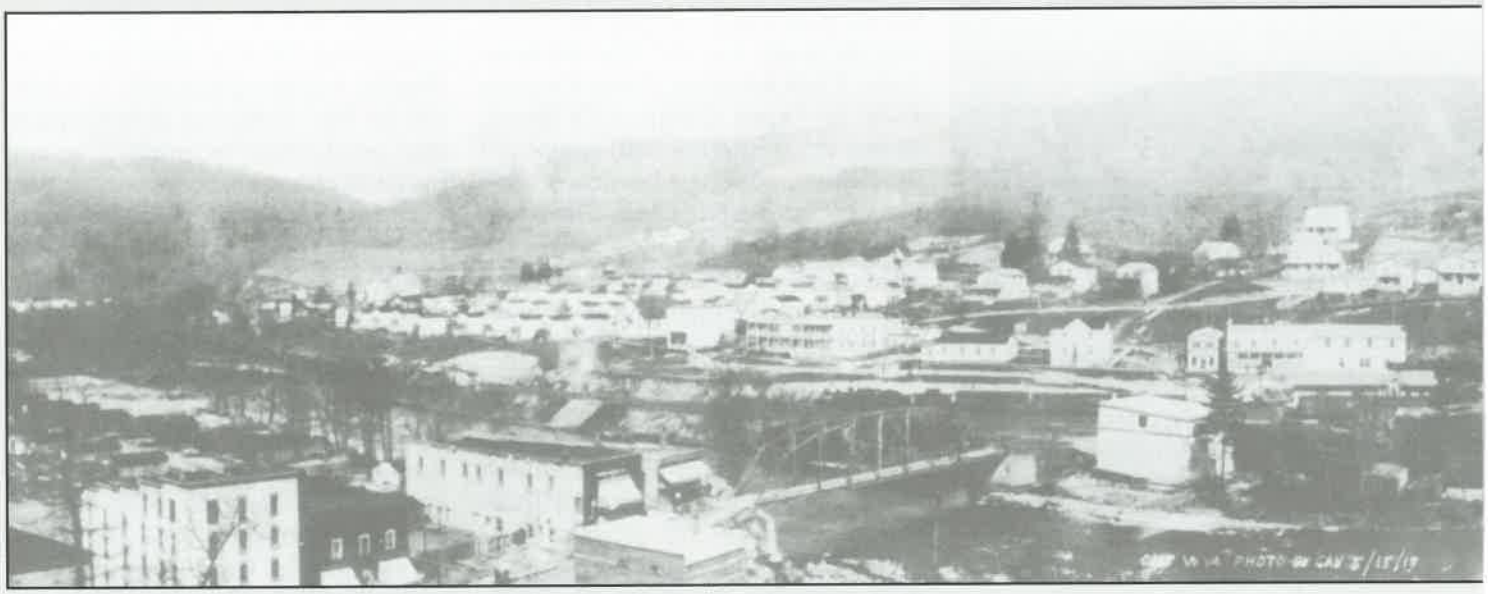
This year's Cass centennial is framed by living history of the iron-horse variety, resulting from a miraculous series of events which, in the following years, revived the railroad, its three remaining Shay locomotives, and assorted essential equipment and facilities.

Today's visitor can not only take an authentic steam-powered train ride high into the mountains, but may also explore an historic old company town and enjoy accommodations in one of the refurbished family dwellings. Year-round, Cass Scenic Railroad State Park rents houses for up to a week. During train excursion season (Memorial Day weekend through October), free interpretive walking tours of the town are offered several times daily.

Cass reverted to unincorporated status in 1985. Although a few of the old houses are still occupied as residences, Cass is now more of a museum and park than an actual town. Spearheaded by a group of locals, Cass Community Center, located in the former Presbyterian

Continued on page 44.

Satisfied smiles shone on the faces of these men in the Cass repair shop in 1964. Photograph courtesy of State Archives, Department of Natural Resources Collection.



East Cass is visible at lower left in this 1917 panoramic view. Gay Studio photo, Philip Bagdon Collection.

"Hell's Acre"
A Visit To East Cass

By Philip V. Bagdon

Heavy drinking, incredible brawls, sudden violence, and lurking danger: old East Cass was this and more. Located across the Greenbrier River from the company town of Cass in Pocahontas County, the district earned notoriety that rivaled infamous Keystone and Davis.

Effects of the east side situation were broader than law and order on West Virginia Spruce Lumber Company and West Virginia Pulp & Paper; more than a few skilled laborers got cold feet about venturing to Cass because of its rowdy reputation. Several early letters exchanged between company officials Emory Shaffer and Samuel Slaymaker lamented the woeful influx of intoxicants and the upswing in lawlessness. By January 1901, both men firmly recognized their dilemma.

Origins of what might best be described as the pleasure zone are rooted in the company's failure to secure enough east side land to prevent the rise of such a place. The company presence was limited to a "pest house" for quarantine, and segregated housing for African American families.

East Cass not only attracted wood hicks but hustlers, flim-flammers, thieves, and hangers-on.

Known as Brooklyn until at least 1906 when a fire decimated everything except a few dwellings, the area came to be called East Cass. Businesses here catered to the 1,000-plus woods force employed in the neighboring pulpwood and sawmill operations. Hotels, restaurants, dry goods stores, and barbershops served essential needs; amusement options ranged from pool halls, shooting galleries, and a sparring ring to saloons and speakeasies, gambling joints, houses of prostitution, and opium dens. Dirty Street was the place to go slumming. At least to some, this strip (the Riverview Hotel and adjacent shack clutter) was called "Hell's Acre." Many boom towns, it was said, had a half-acre of hell, but Cass was larger.

Considerable alcohol — beer in bottles, whiskey in barrels — flowed into Cass via the C&O. One early freight agent recalled how days without at least one whiskey shipment were few and far between. Additionally, liquor and narcotics were smuggled into town aboard passenger trains. There was

also a prolific element of local moonshine peddlers.

For most woodsmen, after an extended period of rigorous labor and rugged camp life, a trip to town was in order. The first step after drawing pay was hotel check-in and getting civilized — a first bath in months, shave, haircut, new clothes, and perhaps a new pair of "caulked" (spiked soles for logging agility) footwear.

Emory Shaffer described his labor pool as perpetually divided into thirds — coming, going, and working. Some of those cycling through drew only part of their pay and spent limited time in town — perhaps a day or two. Others were predisposed to drawing everything and spending until it was gone. Among themselves, the "wood hicks" were sometimes inclined to fistfight for no apparent reason. There were occasional murders, shootings, and knifing incidents.

East Cass not only attracted wood hicks but hustlers, flim-flammers, thieves, and hangers-on. The presence of females was limited to "soiled doves," speakeasy attendants, and merchants' wives. Men from the respectable side of the river might sneak across in the dark, but ladies kept their distance and ensured that their children did the same.

After the company section incorporated, a town sergeant was appointed but his presence had little impact on the explosion. Adding two "special policemen" in April 1903 likewise brought only marginal effects. The company made clear that intoxication and disorderly conduct on its side of the river were not to be tolerated; even the mayor got involved with making arrests. The district itself saw occasional raids, but East Cass essentially remained wide open.

Prohibition likewise put only a slight damper on proceedings; the big show continued until about 1920 when much of the timbering operation relocated to distant Elk River. From the mill's startup, there had been other, albeit smaller, crowds that patronized the district, so activities in East Cass shrank but didn't die. The last of the rough drinking establishments didn't close until well into the scenic railroad era.

Several later ventures attempted to attract park visitors across the river to East Cass; all attempts failed. Concerns that the historical value of Cass would be sullied by the east side's "Wild West" motif peaked after the old Alpha Hotel was bought by a flamboyant individual with intentions to spearhead development. Thankfully for Cass, the owner's attention wandered and the structure finally burned in 1972.

Granny's, a pizza place and game room located in an old 1940's-era church on the north side of the former main block, was the last surviving business; three structures on the other side of the street — all vintage commercial gems — served as reminders of times gone by. The 1985 flood brought unexpected closure to the long, colorful story. Lacking buildings, the area then lost definition to highway realignment. For most people, it's impossible to picture such a place ever existed.

The Alpha Hotel in East Cass, 1968. Photograph by Philip Bagdon.

Read More About Cass

Dr. Roy B. Clarkson was born and raised at Cass, and has devoted much of his life to documenting the history of this remarkable company town. He has produced two extensive books on the topic. They are *Tumult On the Mountains: Lumbering in West Virginia - 1770-1920* (1964), and *On Beyond Leatherbark: The Cass Saga* (1990). Both books are published by McClain Printing [see story on page 31].

Tumult On the Mountains is a history of the early lumber industry in our state with special emphasis placed on Pocahontas County and the early Cass operation. The 410-page hardbound book includes more than 250 pages of historic photographs, a logging glossary, and an extensive bibliography of books and state publications on the subject.

In *On Beyond Leatherbark*, Dr. Clarkson focuses exclusively on Cass, including 625 pages of detailed information, personal insights, and more than 200 photographs. Together, Roy Clarkson's two books provide more than 1,000 pages of information on Cass and the logging industry. These two titles are available at libraries and bookstores, or from McClain Printing by calling 1-800-654-7179.

The current issue of *Wonderful West Virginia* magazine, published by the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources, celebrates the centennial of Cass with a feature article written by Dr. Roy B. Clarkson. For more information, call 1-800-CALL-WVA.

Philip Bagdon, historian and the author of the accompanying GOLDENSEAL articles on Cass and East Cass, penned a short informational booklet in 1997 called *Essential Cass: An Overview of Cass Scenic Railroad State Park.* The 24-page self-published booklet includes a detailed map of the area and numerous color photographs of present-day Cass and its popular refurbished steam-train operation. Copies are available from Dog & Pony Show Productions, P.O. Box 1, Hinton, WV 25961.

church, survives today. Lefty Meeks still offers haircuts and shaves in the space he first rented from The Mower Lumber Company in 1950. Although its congregation is tiny, the Southern Methodist church remains active. The Masonic lodge hall also continues in service.

There are no surviving citizens from the town's heyday, but today's old-timers can still lend first-hand accounts of the years that followed. They can testify to the pristine conditions of the company sections, the frequent carousing and brawling that occurred across the river in East Cass, and the two shifts of band saws and whistle signals from the mill. Their recollections of family life, church and civic activities, special events, and simple pleasures are offset by memories of hard work on the company's behalf.

For a free brochure about Cass or additional information, write or call Cass Scenic Railroad State Park, Box 107, Cass, WV 24927; phone (304)456-4300.

PHILIP BAGDON was born and raised in Alexandria, Virginia. He first visited Cass Scenic Railroad State Park in 1964 and has pursued the history of Cass ever since. In 1976, he worked at Cass as a train commentator; he served as the park's seasonal historian in 1996 and 1997. This is his first contribution to GOLDENSEAL.

Steam-train excursions are a main attraction these days at Cass Scenic Railroad State Park. Trains such as this run from Memorial Day weekend through October. 1980 photograph by E.E. Burruss, Jr., courtesy of the State Archives.

Robert S. Hickman

Keeping the Company Store

Robert S. Hickman (1872-1954) came to Cass early and ran the company store there for 45 years. Photographer and date unknown.

By H. William Gabriel

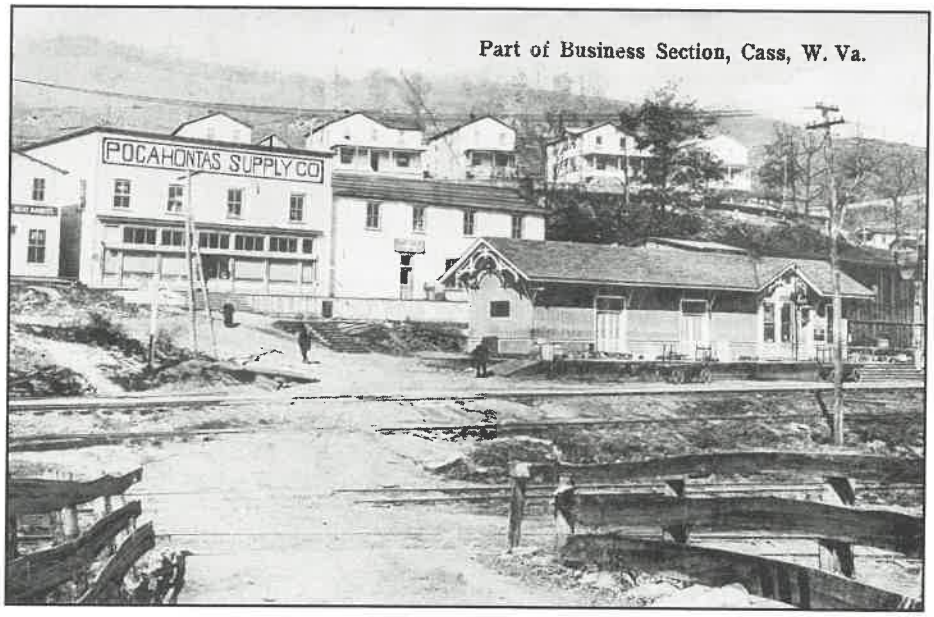
This year's Cass centennial reminds me of the long association my family has had with both Cass and Pocahontas County. As a child in the 1930's and '40's, I lived on a farm along Back Creek in Bath County, Virginia, just a couple of ridges and hollows east of Cass. The farm had been in the Hickman family for nearly 180 years, but opportunities in that narrow mountain valley were limited and each generation of Hickmans looked elsewhere to find jobs and spouses.

Thus my great-grandfather Roger Hickman crossed Allegheny Mountain in 1838 to wed Martha Ann Lockridge, the daughter of Colonel Lanty Lockridge of Pocahontas County, and brought her home to Back Creek. Roger eventually had three wives, 18 children, and numerous grandchildren — several of whom played large roles in the life of Cass. The first of those was Robert Sidney Hickman, Roger's 16th child.

Robert arrived in Cass soon after it was established and, in 1902 when he was 30 years old, became the general manager of the Pocahontas Supply Company — the company store in that company town. The first store building was destroyed by fire in 1918; the new store built to replace it was, except for the sawmill, the largest building in Cass.

The Pocahontas Supply Company stocked food, clothing, hardware, lumber, horse feed, and, as the letterhead stated, "supplies of every description" to meet the needs of the company railroad, the company sawmill, and the company employees. Cass employees bought on credit at the store, and the company deducted the amount owed on their next pay day. Described as one of the largest company store operations in the country, it was much different from the questionable company stores found in some coal mining towns; employees were not permitted to get into debt to the point of "owing their soul to the company store."

As general manager of the store, Robert S. Hickman lived in one of the larger company-owned houses up the hill west of the tracks in a section of town known irreverently by those who did not live there as "Big Bug Hill," "Snob Hill," or "Quality Hill." The house, as other company managers' houses, was probably built by the West Virginia Spruce Lumber Company and was sold to Hickman for $1.00 on



The Pocahontas Supply Company was one of the largest and most important buildings in Cass; it was thought to be among the largest company store operations in the country. It is still in use today, serving tourists and visitors at Cass Scenic Railroad State Park. This postcard from the early 1900's is courtesy of the State Archives.

the condition that, when his affiliation with the company ended, he would sell the building back for $1.00.

From 1919 to 1923, Robert Hickman was also the postmaster of Cass. He later served one term on the Pocahontas County Court and was a director of the Bank of Marlinton.

Robert Hickman kicked up dust and turned heads in this Packard automobile during the 1920's. This photograph shows him standing, at right, with his wife Julia, at left, and other relatives in 1925.

Over the years, he also helped his sister Lula as she and her husband acquired the shares of their siblings in the Hickman farm on Back Creek. Roger Hickman had left a very confusing will when he died in 1889, distributing ill-defined pieces of the old farm to a number of his surviving children. The two youngest sons, Robert and George, were to have the family home and some land, but they did not want to be farmers. So, the boys made a bargain with their youngest sister Lula G. Hickman to give their shares of the property to Lula if she would agree to remain on the farm and care for their mother.

A cousin of mine who was born in that house, Marian Rose Hoge MacKenzie, recently told me of Robert coming over the mountain to see Lula. "Uncle Bob was a smooth, smooth man and he married this Boston [actually Baltimore] woman," she recalled. "Julia was quite — they were very well-off. I don't know just what he did, but they had some money and he had made some money.

"They would travel to Miami in the winter and they drove this Packard. And, oh Lord, it was great seeing them come over in this great big Packard and Aunt Julia would come along. She was very ladylike and her house was exquisite, just exquisite, and she kept everything just shining.

"They lived in Cass, West Virginia, which was about 36 miles away. And her table service was just right up to the nine's, and they never had children."

On the other hand, my uncle Harry H. Hickman had a different view of Uncle Bob, as his Packard automobile sailed past my grandfather's house in a cloud of dust in the 1920's. "Uncle Bob was a phantom to the Peter Hickman children," Uncle Harry said. "We knew he existed. We knew where he existed in Cass, West Virginia, but we never saw him other than at a distance from our house, through the yard to the road. He'd make probably two trips per year, passing by our home, going one mile south to see his sister, but he never stopped to see us. He never even looked."

In 1942, the West Virginia Pulp & Paper Company sold the Cass timberland, railroad, sawmill, company town, and company store to the Mower Lumber Company. By then, Robert Hickman was 70 years old, but he continued on as general manager of the Pocahontas Supply Company for another five years, working for his grand-nephews. But that is another story.

Robert S. Hickman was 75 years old when he retired in 1947, after 45 years as general manager of the Pocahontas Supply Company. He may have had an agreement with Edwin Mower to remain in his home in Cass for the rest of his life, or maybe the Mowers decided he did not have to sell back to the company the house he had lived in for so long. While enroute to Florida in 1951 for one of their annual vacations, Julia McCoy Hickman fell and broke her hip. She died two weeks later at age 81. Robert Sidney Hickman was 82 when he died in 1954 in his house on Big Bug Hill following a long illness. They are buried in Mountain View Cemetery in Marlinton.

The house once occupied by Robert and Julia has since burned down, and only a vacant lot marks the spot where the Hickmans lived in Cass. However, the former Pocahontas Supply Company building is still in use, and reminds us of Robert S. Hickman and his service to the people of Cass and Pocahontas County.

ums. Steam-powered Lidgerwood skyline yarders at Cass were 35 to 40 years old, as were the Shay locomotives. In order to keep the antique machinery going, Mower used the foundry and machine shop in Cass to manufacture the needed parts. Even with the old equipment and a "breakdown" approach to maintenance, the Mower sawmills at Cass and elsewhere operated continuously while other companies closed their doors during slack business periods.

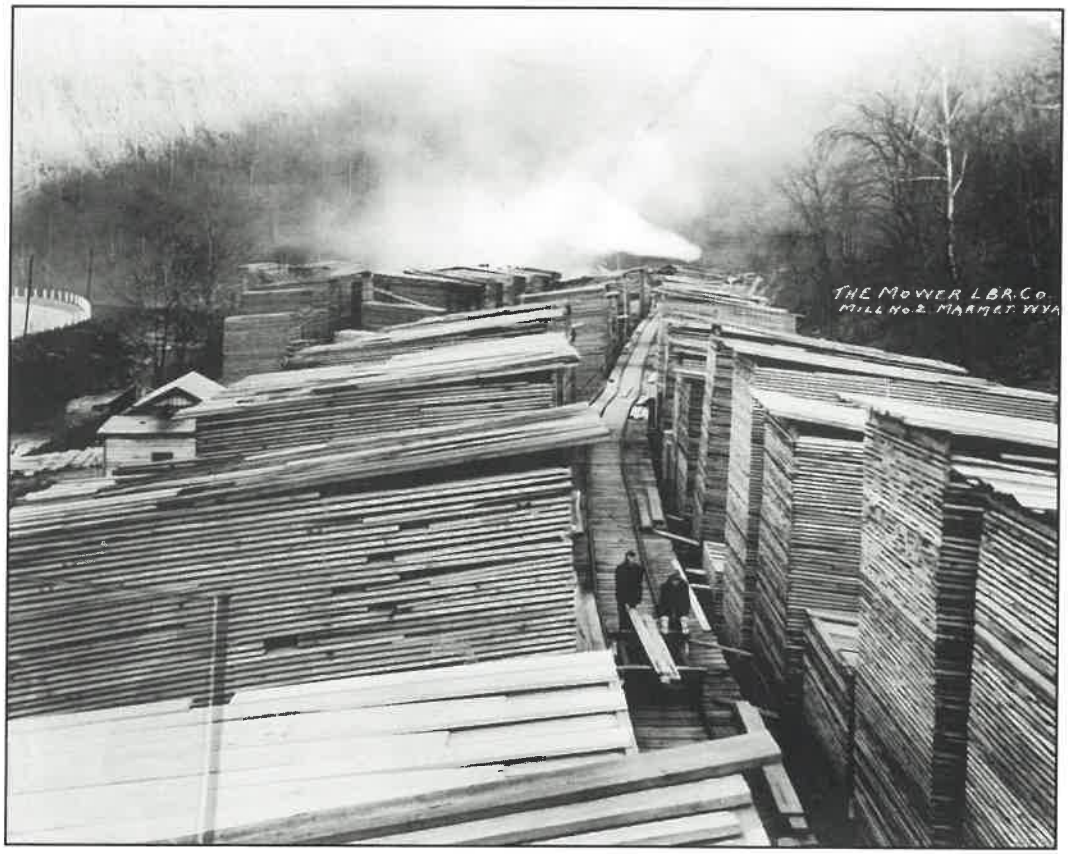
In buying those marginal sawmills, Edwin Mower not only found ways to keep them going and making money, but he also provided jobs for about 800 men and their dependents at the various locations.

Though some Mower sawmills were closed in about 1944, the company was still operating West Virginia sawmills at Cass, Dailey, and Nallen with planing mills and dry kilns in Cass, Dailey, and Charleston at the time of Edwin's death in 1956. The lumber business had made Edwin a multi-millionaire with a home in Charleston, an estate called Claymont Court near Charles Town, and Poca Dot Farms named for Pocahontas County and his wife Dorothy.

As so often happens in closely held family businesses, the company was unable to survive the death of its founder and president. Some years earlier, Edwin's youngest brother Donald Roger Mower joined the company, purchased about a third of his mother's stock, and became vice-president. With the death of Edwin, Donald Mower became the president of The Mower Lumber Company, but there seemed to have been continuing disagreements between him and Edwin's widow Dorothy over the operation of the company and its assets. The Charleston National Bank served as administrator of the estate and, after several years of turmoil, the bank ordered a liquidation of the company in 1960.

The antique equipment of the logging railroad and its rails were sold for scrap. A subsidiary of the Grace Steamship Lines acquired most of the timberlands. Donald R. Mower was left with a renamed business — The Don Mower Lumber Company — that was a mere ghost of The Mower Lumber Company. At Cass, he had a sawmill, a machine shop, a railroad right-of-way without track, and the company town. Don began renting out the company houses in Cass and, in 1962, he sold some railroad right-of-way and a small amount of acreage to the state of West Virginia for what would eventually become the Cass Scenic Railroad State Park. Donald R. Mower's heart attack and death in 1964 ended the era of Hickman family involvement with Cass that began with his great-uncle Robert S. Hickman, when the town was new.

Today, tourists can visit an old company town and ride a steam train up a 100-year-old logging railroad grade, but there may have been nothing left to see if Frank Edwin Mower had not bought the town in 1942 and kept it alive.



During the 1930's, '40's, and '50's, The Mower Lumber Company did a brisk business with sawmills and lumberyards in many parts of the state. These towering stacks were photographed at Marmet during the 1940's. Photograph courtesy of the State Archives, the Mower Collection.

H. WILLIAM GABRIEL is the second cousin of Edwin Mower, and the grand-nephew of Robert S. Hickman. Mr. Gabriel grew up in Virginia and earned a bachelor's degree in forestry from Virginia Tech. He later went west to seek his fortune, received a Ph.D. in forestry from the University of Montana, and spent 30 years in forestry from Alaska to Ecuador. This is his first contribution to GOLDENSEAL.

"Let's Keep It Traditional"

Dancing in the street at the 50th West Virginia State Folk Festival, last June in Glenville. Photograph by Devin Hartman.

June 17-20, 1999, marked the 50th anniversary of the West Virginia State Folk Festival. Held in Glenville each year on the third weekend of June, it is one of the most historic and authentic folklife events in the state.

When the big weekend rolls around, festival activities and people fill the streets of town, the campus of Glenville State College, and every hotel, motel, and campground for miles in every direction. Last year, along with many of the festival musicians and other participants, I took a bunk in one of the college dormitories. It wasn't luxurious, but it was convenient and affordable, and allowed me easy access to one of our state's most endearing and enduring annual events.

A grassroots affair in the truest sense, the festival is produced almost exclusively through the dedication and hard work of countless community volunteers. Through their efforts, the independent spirit of the earliest settlers in the central mountains has been admirably upheld.

Mack Samples of Clay County is a musician, dancer, dance caller, and educator who has had a long association with the festival.

"During the years that I was president of the folk festival committee," Mack explains, "the community support was always just wonderful. There was always somebody there to do whatever needed done. Many of these people work behind the scenes. They give hours and hours of their time. Everybody had the right idea of what the festival should be. The word was always, 'traditional — lets keep it traditional.' I have a lot of respect for the town for doing that."

Although there have been some changes during the last 50 years, the people guiding the festival have always been aware of the importance of keeping the original spirit of the festival alive. That's what makes "Glenville" — as most of us call the festival for short — such a unique experience.

Folk festival president Ginny Hawker, at left, joins Virginia Burns Blake at the unaccompanied gospel sing during the 1999 festival. Photograph by Devin Hartman.

Ginny Hawker, the president of the folk festival since 1995, has been vigilant in her efforts to see that the festival stays on track into the new century. As a result, the 50th West Virginia State Folk Festival resembled the first festivals in many significant ways, with the

The festival fiddle contest used to be held on the dance platform in downtown Glenville. This unidentified gentleman is competing in 1960. Photograph courtesy of the State Archives, West Virginia Department of Commerce Collection.

There was plenty of room in the shade for young musicians during the 1970's, as they came from across the country to participate in the Glenville festival. This photograph was made in 1972, photographer unknown.

Fern Rollyson in 1977. Photograph by Robert Cooper.

emphasis firmly placed on the traditions of the mountain people including their folkways, crafts, dance, and music.

Dr. Patrick Gainer of Tanner, Gilmer County, was the founder of the festival. He was an avid collector of folk songs and a singer; this personal interest undoubtedly led to music becoming one of the main focal points of the festival's activities.

The songs and tunes played during the festival concerts and featured programs are strictly those which have been passed down from generation to generation. Although very few young musicians at the festival today learned their music directly from family or community members, many of them have developed close personal relationships with the older players, and learn from them.

The living connection between the musicians of the past and those of the present was clear to me during the Saturday evening program last summer. I could close my eyes and hear the music of Russell Fluharty [see "Russell Fluharty: The Dulcimer Man," by Ken Sullivan; Winter 1986] and Worley Gardner [see "Worley Gardner: Mountain Music, Dance, and Dulcimers," by Mark Crabtree; Summer 1992] in the playing of Patty Looman [see "Patty Looman: Carrying On the Music," by Danny Williams; Winter 1995]. Ray Epler's tunes were carried on by Danny Williams and Judy Hudnall [see "Music from the Woodpile: Musician and Craftsman Ray Epler," by Robert Spence; Fall 1985]. Perhaps the most moving moments for me were listening to fiddler John Morris evoke the spirits of Lee Tripplet, Ira Mullins, Wilson Douglas [see "Wilson Douglas: Mountain Man and Mountain Musician," by Nancy McClellan; January-March 1977], and French Carpenter in his own haunting renditions. [The articles

about Russell Fluharty, Worley Gardner, Patty Looman, and Wilson Douglas are also included in our 25th anniversary collection, *Mountains of Music: West Virginia Traditional Music From* GOLDENSEAL. See page 7 for information. —ed.]

Contests for the fiddle and banjo have always been an integral part of the festival, with small prizes and sizable bragging rights at stake for some of West Virginia's finest musicians. There are an "over 50" and an "under 50" category for each instrument. In 1999, as in the past, musicians came from all over to compete. My favorite events at the festival are the over-50 contests. Through the years, I have always appreciated the opportunity to see and hear so many of these fine old-time fiddlers and banjo players. The 1999 contest didn't disappoint me.

Melvin Wine of Copen once again won first prize in the over-50 fiddle contest. Melvin, age 91, has been coming to the festival since the 1960's and remembers that Glenville was probably the first contest that he played after returning to the fiddle. "I quit playing for awhile," Melvin recalls. "I don't remember how I heard about the festival, but I started coming and have been coming ever since."

Glenville has always been a place where several generations of musicians have come together.

Glenville has always been a place where several generations of musicians have come together. There was a time in the not-too-distant past when I shared the concern expressed by many that the future of old-time music looked bleak due to the lack of young people learning to play the music. Glenville and similar festivals, however, have done much to dispel my concerns in this regard. All you have to do is spend some time listening to a few of the younger folks like fiddlers Zack Fanok of Monongalia County and Jake Krack of Calhoun County or singer Sarah Goldstein of Wetzel County to realize that the future of the music is in good hands.

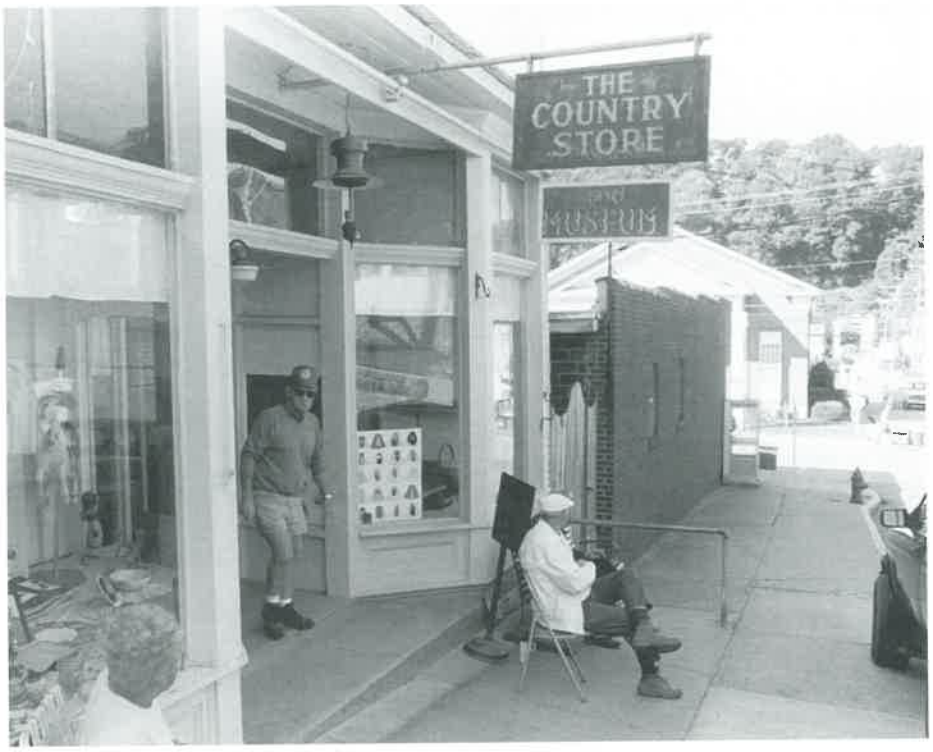
In addition to the official contests and the concerts, there is always lots and lots of informal music played throughout the festival. For many years, groups of musicians would gather under a large shade tree and play there for hours. These days, the parking lot of the Conrad Motel and the area behind the bank serve as the sites for the evening jams.

One of the distinguishing aspects of the festival is the strong emphasis which is placed on playing the old music simply for the joy of playing. For many years, none of the people who performed on stage were paid. Even today, those who are invited to be part of the formal music programs are given only a nominal sum to cover some of their expenses.

As Mack Samples explains, "People come here and play because they want to play. Nobody is trying to be a star. Nobody is trying to make money. I really think that's the great thing about the folk festival. To me, the music is to be enjoyed. I've never been strictly a preservationist. I like to play it, and if it gets preserved, that's fine. One thing that has impressed me over the years is how informal it's

Mack Samples first performed at the festival in 1961. He later became president of the folk festival committee, a position he held from 1979 until 1994. This photograph is from the early 1960's, photographer unknown.

Tom Luzader swings his partner in this photograph from the 1970's. Musician Frank George is visible at left with his banjo. Photograph by the West Virginia Department of Commerce.



The Country Store in Glenville serves as a museum, meeting place, shop, and crafts center during the festival. 1999 photograph by Devin Hartman.

been and how easily people mix in and out of different groups of people who are playing. I've been to a lot of festivals. It's not like that everywhere."

The original idea for the festival evolved from a class assignment which was part of a college course taught by Dr. Gainer at Glenville State College. In order to provide a hands-on experience to promote an appreciation of mountain heritage for his students, Dr. Gainer asked his class to go out into the community and bring in older residents who were still practitioners of the old-time ways of living. The assignment proved to be one worth repeating the following year, and, like many things in life, one thing led to another.

The first festival was held in June 1950. Its mission, according to one of the early festival programs, is as follows: "The West Virginia State Folk Festival is dedicated to preserving the remnants of the pioneer life and culture of West Virginia in music, entertainment, education, social, and economic activities to the end that citizens may appreciate and respect the achievements of their forebears."

Dr. Gainer, a distinguished man with a scholarly interest in the preservation of mountain culture, guided the festival in its early years. According to Mack Samples, "Dr. Gainer started the festival and the festival is definitely his legacy. At the time, it was pretty much his show. His interests in old-time music, singing, and dance were the main focal points of the festival. He had some very definite ideas about what was acceptable. He liked a cappella singing and solo performances with the fiddle or banjo. He didn't care for bands, and for a lot of years the guitar was not considered an appropriate instrument."

Dr. Gainer specifically searched for those individuals who were relatively "uncontaminated" by the world outside of their mountain homes.

Dr. Gainer insisted that the musicians who performed at the festival were true native West Virginians who didn't play music for a living. He felt that it was important that the music be a part of these people's lives and was something that came to them as part of their cultural heritage. He specifically searched for those individuals who were relatively "uncontaminated" by the world outside of their mountain homes.

Though time has brought a few changes, Dr. Gainer's influence is still felt today. After his departure from the festival in 1959, a number of other individuals have devoted themselves to guiding the event over the years. Two people who played major roles in keeping the festival going were Dr. Bryon Turner and Fern Rollyson.

"Bryon wanted to carry on what Pat had started," explains Mack Samples. "Then Mrs. Rollyson got involved and became the leader for the event for many years. I give them a lot of credit for keeping things on the right track during the early years. I think they did a very good job in keeping Pat Gainer's ideas intact and, at the same time, liberalizing the festival a little bit."

It was Fern Rollyson who initially got Mack involved with the festival. Mack came to the Glenville campus as a student in 1961. Soon after he arrived, he met Fern Rollyson. She had heard that he played the guitar and sang. Fern asked Mack to do a song on one of the evening programs at the 1961 festival.

Mack remembers being thrilled at having the opportunity to participate. "At that time, the programs were held in the school gymnasium," Mack says. "I recall that it was terribly hot in there and the sound was typical for a gymnasium. I sang 'Barbara Allen' and

Gilmer County weaver Veronica Hess McCandless demonstrates weaving at the Country Store in 1999. Photograph by Devin Hartman.

got a good response from the audience. That's when I got hooked."

Gradually, Mack became more involved. By 1963 or '64, he was sharing the master of ceremonies duties with Dr. Turner. Mack and Michael "Jim" Bush began to run the fiddle and banjo contests which, at that time, were held where the current dance platform is located downtown.

Mack left Glenville in 1964 for about 10 years, but he still made it back each June for the festival. When he returned to Glenville to work at the college in 1973, Mack became very much involved with the festival, serving as the president of the festival committee from 1979 to 1994.

Old-time square dancing has always been an important part of the festival, and Mack Samples was on hand last year to call and to dance. His great enthusiasm was infectious, and the cooler than normal evening temperatures made it a great weekend for dancing.

"I started to get interested in square dancing after being here as a student a short while," Mack says. "I would go down to the dance platform and watch Tom Luzader and Willie Reed. They didn't really teach me, but I watched them and learned. One of the things I noticed is that there were only six or eight squares that they called. If there was someone from outside who wanted to call something different, the dancers didn't want anything to do with it. If you've noticed, it's all four couple sets. There's no big circle stuff and no fancy western squares. They dance just very basic, simple square dancing that has been done in these hills probably since people settled here." [See "Join Hands and Circle: Old-Time Dancing Alive and Well," by Mack Samples; Spring 1997.]

There is strong community participation in these nightly dances, with lively music provided by a different group of musicians each evening. While everyone is welcome to join in the dancing, Glenville provides a rare chance to step back and admire these exciting central West Virginia dance traditions in action.

Traditional crafts and rural folkways are another important part of the Glenville festival. In early years, the festival included corn grinding demonstrations, horn blowing competitions, and a bench show for coon hounds. Weaving, basket making, spinning, and dulcimer making were included last year.

The Country Store in Glenville has long been an important fixture of the festival, functioning as a museum, shop, and meeting place. The Country Store is also a popular spot for craft demonstrations. Last year, weaver Veronica Hess McCandless of Gilmer County was at the Country Store working on an old union loom from the early 1900's. She has been a weaver for 25 years and has been an active volunteer with the festival for a number of years.

As she worked at the loom, she explained to me the reason behind her crafts demonstration. "We encourage the children to throw the

The West Virginia Belles have been a festival hallmark since 1957. Mrs. Bates, at center, represents Harrison County in 1971. Photographer unknown.

Competition is stiff at the festival spelling bee. The empty chairs here suggest that this young contestant is among the finalists in 1999. Photograph by Devin Hartman.

shuttle and beat the bar on the loom. Then they can take their foot and change the shed," says the Glenville native. "I hope that some of them may get interested enough to want to learn to weave."

Glenville is not a large city, and most of the festival activities take place right in the heart of town. As I walked out of the Country Store and headed down East Main Street, I found more crafts.

Phil Holcomb from Spencer sat under a shady tree and played a tune on one of his handmade lap dulcimers, built in a traditional style out of native hardwoods from the area around his home.

Further down the street, the Trinity United Methodist Church was the site of the quilt show sponsored by the Thimbles & Threads Quilt Guild of Glenville. The show this year had 60 entries all made by members of the guild. Before I left the building, I made sure that I cast my ballot for the People's Choice Award for the favorite quilt, though I'm thankful that I did not have to judge this show.

The folk festival wouldn't be the same without the West Virginia Belles, a festival hallmark since 1957. These women, all over 70 years of age, are chosen by civic organizations in their home counties and represent the true pioneer mountain spirit. They are the honored guests of the festival and are featured in a parade downtown and recognized at a special dinner. They are easy to spot with their old-fashioned dresses and colorful bonnets. This past year, 35 counties were represented by the folk festival

State Folk Festival Turns 51

The 51st annual West Virginia State Folk Festival takes place June 15-18, 2000, in Glenville. All activities are open to the public, and most are free of charge.

On Thursday, June 15, the festival gets under way at 2:00 p.m., with an Opening Reception at the Country Store. The first of three evening square dances will take place that evening beginning at 8:00 p.m. The dances are held downtown on a specially constructed wooden dance platform.

Friday, June 16, features a full schedule of festival events including the over-50 fiddle and banjo contests in the auditorium of the Fine Arts Building at Glenville State College beginning at 2:00 p.m. The evening concert in the auditorium begins at 7:00 p.m., with dancing in the street beginning at 8:00 p.m.

Saturday, June 17, is the busiest day of the festival. Activities include an unaccompanied gospel sing downtown at 11:00 a.m., the Lions Club parade at 1:30 p.m., and the spelling bee at 2:00 p.m. The under-50 fiddle and banjo contests in the college auditorium begin at 2:00 p.m., with the evening concert starting at 7:00 p.m. The dance downtown is at 8:00 p.m.

Jam sessions, workshops, crafts, and other festival activities are held throughout the day on Friday and Saturday, with music continuing well into the night. Special features this year include the Storytelling and Singing tents which run each day from noon until 5:00 p.m.

The festival concludes on Sunday morning with an open church service at 10:30 a.m., at Mount Pisgah Methodist Church located about eight miles west of Glenville on Route 5.

For more info, call (304)462-8427.

Belles along with some returning Belles, who are always welcome at the festival.

I spoke to four of these fine ladies about their experience at the festival. Jeannie DeVault and Maxine Witzgall were 1999 Belles from Monongalia and Marshall counties. They were joined by Helen Whetzel (a 1993 Belle from Monongalia County) and Dean DeVault (a 1994 Belle from Monongalia County). All of them were thrilled to have been a part of the festival and were very impressed with the treatment they received.

Last year's 50th anniversary festival also included traditional activities such as horseshoe pitching, the Lion's Club Parade and antique car show, the Saturday morning unaccompanied gospel sing, and an oral history tent. New additions included a singing tent and various workshops in music, singing, and dance.

One unique festival tradition began during the 1980's. Marianne O'Doherty, a social worker who worked with elderly residents at a continuous care facility in the Glenville area, became concerned that those residents were unable to participate in the festival. In an effort to bring a little bit of the festival to these individuals — many of whom had been previously involved in the festival in some way — she made arrangements to bring a group of musicians to the facility to do a program for the residents.

This past year, a van loaded up in the motel parking lot at 12:30 p.m., and carried volunteers to the Sunrise Continuous Care Center. The program, which lasted an hour or so, contained songs, fiddle tunes, and even a square dance. The residents enjoyed the program immensely.

One long-standing annual event for the festival is the old-fashioned spelling bee, a tradition that came out of the region's one-room schoolhouses. Words for the contest are taken from the *McGuffy Reader*, and anyone is invited to join in. There are an "over 16" and an "under 16" category. Running the spelling bee this past year were former teachers Wanda Bailey Reed and Mona Hinkle James and current teacher June Nonnenberg. They challenged contestants one at a time until a winner was selected in each category. The excitement of the event in 1999 was no less than I imagine it would have been in a one-room schoolhouse so long ago. Perhaps more importantly, the tradition lives on.

I think that the real strength of the West Virginia State Folk Festival is that, for 50 years, it has maintained its high quality, appealed to people of all ages, and remained focused on its original intention: to foster an awareness of our cultural heritage. It is an extraordinary testament to the remarkable spirit of West Virginia and its people.

Informal music and jam sessions continue well into the night at the West Virginia State Folk Festival. 1999 photograph by Devin Hartman.

BOB HEYER is a graduate of West Liberty State College and West Virginia University. He lives in Wheeling where he works as a teacher for the Ohio County schools, and as a musician. He and his wife, Barb, operate the Mountain Moon Coffeehouse. His most recent contribution to GOLDENSEAL magazine appeared in our Summer 1998 issue.

In 1949, Dr. Patrick Ward Gainer was a visiting professor at his alma mater, now called Glenville State College. Teaching a class in Appalachian culture, he asked his students to bring in people from the surrounding community to demonstrate the "folk arts" of their everyday lives. That classroom project took root, and in 1950, it became the West Virginia State Folk Festival.

Dr. Patrick W. Gainer (1904-1981), founder of the West Virginia State Folk Festival. Photograph by Richard Phillips, date unknown.

Dr. Gainer
Folk Festival Founder

By Paul Gartner

Local tradition was in Patrick's blood. The Gainer family emigrated to America from southern Ireland in 1725. They crossed through Maryland, came over Backbone Mountain, and moved into western Virginia, settling in what would eventually become Randolph and Barbour counties.

In time, one branch of the Gainer clan moved into Gilmer County, where, in the late 1800's, Lloyd McCubbin Gainer married Kathryn Gaston. Patrick Ward Gainer, their sixth child, was born in Parkersburg in 1904. When Patrick was a toddler, his father died of a ruptured appendix, and the young widow Kathryn took her brood back to Gilmer County. Patrick — who was called Ward by the family — grew up near Tanner on the farm of his grandfather Francis C. Gainer.

Dr. Gainer later told a writer that he was fascinated by the "ancestral voices" he heard in the surrounding countryside, like those of the old men in the Tanner general store. Many of these men were Civil War veterans. They talked of hard work, home remedies, and planting by the signs. They spoke in lively speech, colored with expressions like "I've been dauncy" (under the weather). "A lot of wisdom rubbed off," Gainer said.

And superstition. According to Tanner resident Patrick A. Gainer, Dr. Gainer's son and namesake, it was thought that young Patrick Ward Gainer may have been a "posthumous child," born after his father's death. Such children were thought to possess special powers. People would come to the house seeking help.

Gainer estimated that he traveled 10,000 miles a year collecting and lecturing on folklore.

Dr. Gainer once said that, as a child, he believed the old notion that if four stalks came up from a bulb instead of three, a death in the family would soon follow. He recalled digging around lilies to cut a fourth stalk.

Local playmates told young Patrick about an old lady who lived way back on a ridge. She had the evil eye, they said. "Don't look her in the eye, or you'll get sick," they said. One day he was riding his horse and saw the old lady looking right at him. The farm boy was sure he was stricken — until his mother set him straight.

Gainer also recalled hours spent hoeing corn with a hired "third hand" on the farm, soaking up stories. As Patrick grew older, he heard more old tales and lore at the Gainer family reunion, held every summer in Gilmer County.

There were also more fundamental lessons. Gainer attended the one-room school at Tanner, and was schooled at home with the *Elson-Gray Basic Reader*.

Gainer was also years ahead of the ecumenical movement. While young Patrick looked forward to the yearly "subscription school" at the Tanner Baptist Church led by an itinerant teacher who taught shape-note singing, he was also a Catholic, like his mother. The rest of the Gainer family were Methodists; Patrick loved to sing the old Protestant hymns in local

churches.

As a teenager, he entered Glenville State Normal School, the forerunner of Glenville State Teachers College and, later, Glenville State College. He lettered in track, baseball, football, and basketball. Evidently, a football injury led him to focus more on academic pursuits, so he enrolled at West Virginia University.

At WVU, he became reacquainted with Carey Woofter, a lifelong friend who was now a faculty member. The two already shared an interest in folklore and began going on field trips together. This was in the days before tape recorders. If they were collecting a ballad, Woofter would write down the words, and Gainer would "catch" the melody by ear and write out the musical notation.

It was also at WVU that Gainer joined acclaimed folklorist Lewis W. Chappell on his field trips to Talcott in Summers County, where Chappell documented the John Henry legend [see "John Henry: The Story of a Steel-Driving Man," by Robert Tabscott; Summer 1996]. Gainer's notes later helped to verify Chappell's fieldwork when a rival published his John Henry research first.

In 1926, Patrick Ward Gainer married Antoinette Kizinski, with whom he raised five children: Patrick A., Michael, Miriam, Thomas, and Nicholas.

By 1928, Gainer had earned his master's degree at WVU. He did graduate work at the University of Chicago, and received a doctorate from St. Louis University where he served on the faculty for 14 years. While in St. Louis, he sang in local opera productions and on radio station KMOX, and during World War II, he served as director of training for the USO in New York City.

In 1946, he returned to WVU, where he taught Old World Folklore, Folklore of the Southern Appalachians, Milton, and 19th Century Literature until his retirement in 1977.

Dr. Gainer was a noted folklorist who combed the hills and hollows collecting songs, tunes, and oral histories and documenting West Virginia's traditional culture. He is shown here making a recording of Uncle Bud O'Dell, date and photographer unknown.

Gainer's lecture/recitals were popular with civic clubs around the state. He estimated that he traveled 10,000 miles a year collecting and lecturing on folklore. His lectures usually included singing and dulcimer music.

Audiences also heard his low opinion of popular culture. Gainer believed TV and radio killed the oral tradition. "The radio has probably had a marked influence on the killing of a culture among the mountaineers," he told one audience.

Gainer recorded two albums: "Patrick Gainer Singing Songs of the Allegheny Mountains and Folksongs of the Allegheny Mountains," and in 1963, "The West Virginia Centennial Book of 100 Songs." After his retirement, he wrote two books: *Witches, Ghosts and Signs: Folklore of the Southern Appalachians*, and *Folk Songs From the West Virginia Hills*.

Despite his doctorates in philosophy and philology of the English language, Dr. Gainer had the common touch. "He could talk without being uppity," his son says. Gainer would personally travel the hollows and pick up the singers and fiddlers who were scheduled to perform at the folk festival. Then he would take them home.

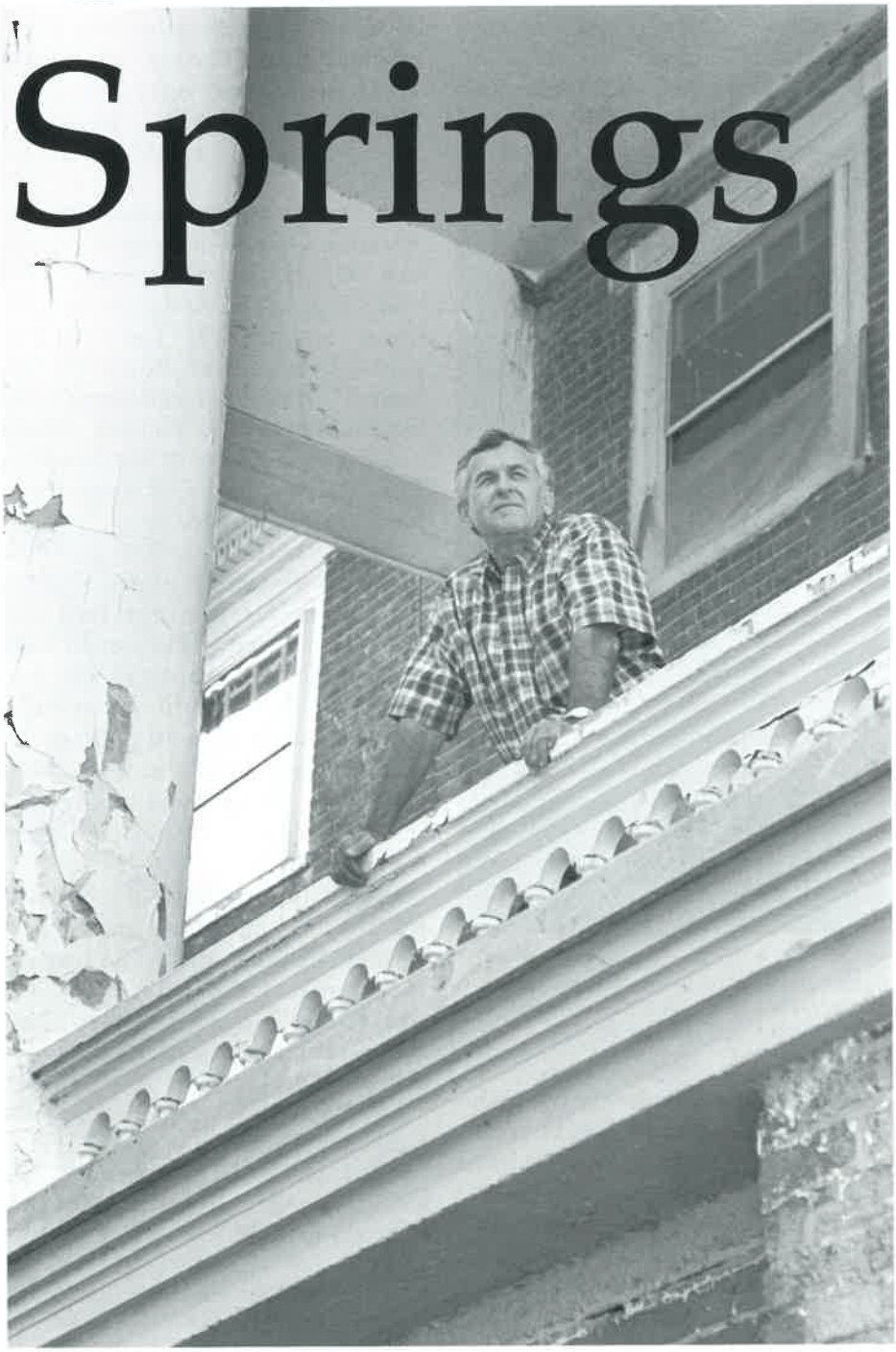
Dr. Gainer directed the festival for 10 years and was also a performer. In those days, the festival program featured little plays, his son recalls. "Some scene from home life — people would play games and sing."

Dr. Patrick W. Gainer died on February 22, 1981, at age 77. He is buried at Good Shepherd Cemetery, Tanner, surrounded by his beloved hills.

PAUL GARTNER lives in Lincoln County. A native of Ohio's Mahoning Valley, he moved to West Virginia "by accident" in 1977. He is a freelance writer and is a copy editor and writer for *The Charleston Gazette*. His most recent contribution to GOLDENSEAL appeared in our Fall 1997 issue.

A Lewis Family Legacy

Old Sweet Springs



Author Rody Johnson peers from the balcony of the old hotel at Sweet Springs, Monroe County. Established more than 200 years ago by one of his forebears, Rody has spent the past few years exploring the history of this once-glorious resort. Photograph by Doug Chadwick.

By Rody Johnson

In a beautiful valley in Monroe County just shy of the Virginia border, lies Old Sweet Springs, one of the most famous of the spring resorts. Founded by William Lewis in 1790, it still stands with its 300-foot-long brick building, spacious white columned porticoes, bath house, brick cottages, and shaded lawn. It carries with it a proud history, and generations of significance for me and my family.

A mile down the road from "Old Sweet," along Route 3, lives Lynn Spellman, a descendant of William Lewis. I first met Lynn the summer before last on a warm afternoon, and we sat on her front porch and talked. She is a distant cousin; we are both eighth-generation descendants of the pioneer John Lewis who explored and once owned great tracts of land west of the Alleghenies. John was William's father, but my

The Grand Hotel at Sweet Springs in about 1915. Also known as the Jefferson Hotel, the lodge was built in 1835; it is said to have been designed by Thomas Jefferson. Photograph courtesy of Charles Stacy.

relationship runs through William's brother Charles who was killed by Indians at the Battle of Point Pleasant in 1774. As Lynn and I chatted about our family ties, I discovered that she is the last living Lewis in the Sweet Springs Valley.

My first memory of Sweet Springs goes back to early childhood in the 1930's. I vaguely recall a farm and a squirrel hunting expedition with my father. My family moved from Charleston to Florida at about that time, but my mother and father always talked about Old Sweet. I heard stories that my great-grandfather, Charles Cameron Lewis, "C.C., Sr.," as he was called, had once owned the place and maybe even won it in a poker game. A picture of the resort hung on the wall of our Florida home showing the hotel buildings, the spring, and a horse-drawn coach delivering guests.

Twenty years ago while visiting in nearby Lewisburg, I drove down to Old Sweet and saw elderly people meandering about the lawn. At that time, it was the Andrew Rowan Memorial Home, a state institution for the aged. During my next visit, some years later, the place lay abandoned; a wire fence surrounded the property and grass grew high around the buildings.

Today, Sweet Springs is back under private ownership for the first time in 50 years. The lawn stays mowed, and there are signs of work going on.

The belief existed that these waters, with their high mineral content, cured diseases.

When I started spending the summers in Lewisburg three years ago, I decided that it was time to find out more about this enchanting place that has enamored my family for so many years.

The attraction of Old Sweet as a resort was primarily the spring water. Perhaps the first person to discover the curative powers of the water was William Lewis. During an exploration of the Sweet Springs Valley in the 1750's, he and a friend were chased by Indians. They hid in the marsh along the creek. It is said that the warm water felt so good that they stayed in the marsh all night. The next day, they reportedly came out, relieved of aches and pains from prevailing cases of rheumatism.

Word of this spring — along with the many other springs discovered in the remote Virginia mountains — spread eastward to the populous areas along the coast. With medical science in its infancy, the belief existed that these waters, with their high mineral content, cured diseases. The real cure, if any, probably came from the cooler, clearer air of the mountains compared to that of the coastal lowlands where cholera and yellow fever prevailed. Whatever the reason, these natural springs became popular summer destinations for the Eastern gentry, and Virginia's mountain spring resorts flourished.

William Lewis, his son, and his grandson ran Old Sweet Springs

for 60 years. It took the grandson, John B. Lewis, however, to give Old Sweet its greatest legacy, yet bring it to near financial ruin. Under John B., the resort underwent an expansion that made it far surpass the other Virginia spas. He replaced the rough log cabins with a brick hotel "of proportions such as were not to be seen anywhere else in the mountains, not even at White Sulfur," according to *Springs of Virginia*, a publication of the time. This building was referred to as the "Jefferson Hotel," named for Thomas Jefferson. Researchers and family members believe that Jefferson personally designed this spectacular structure.

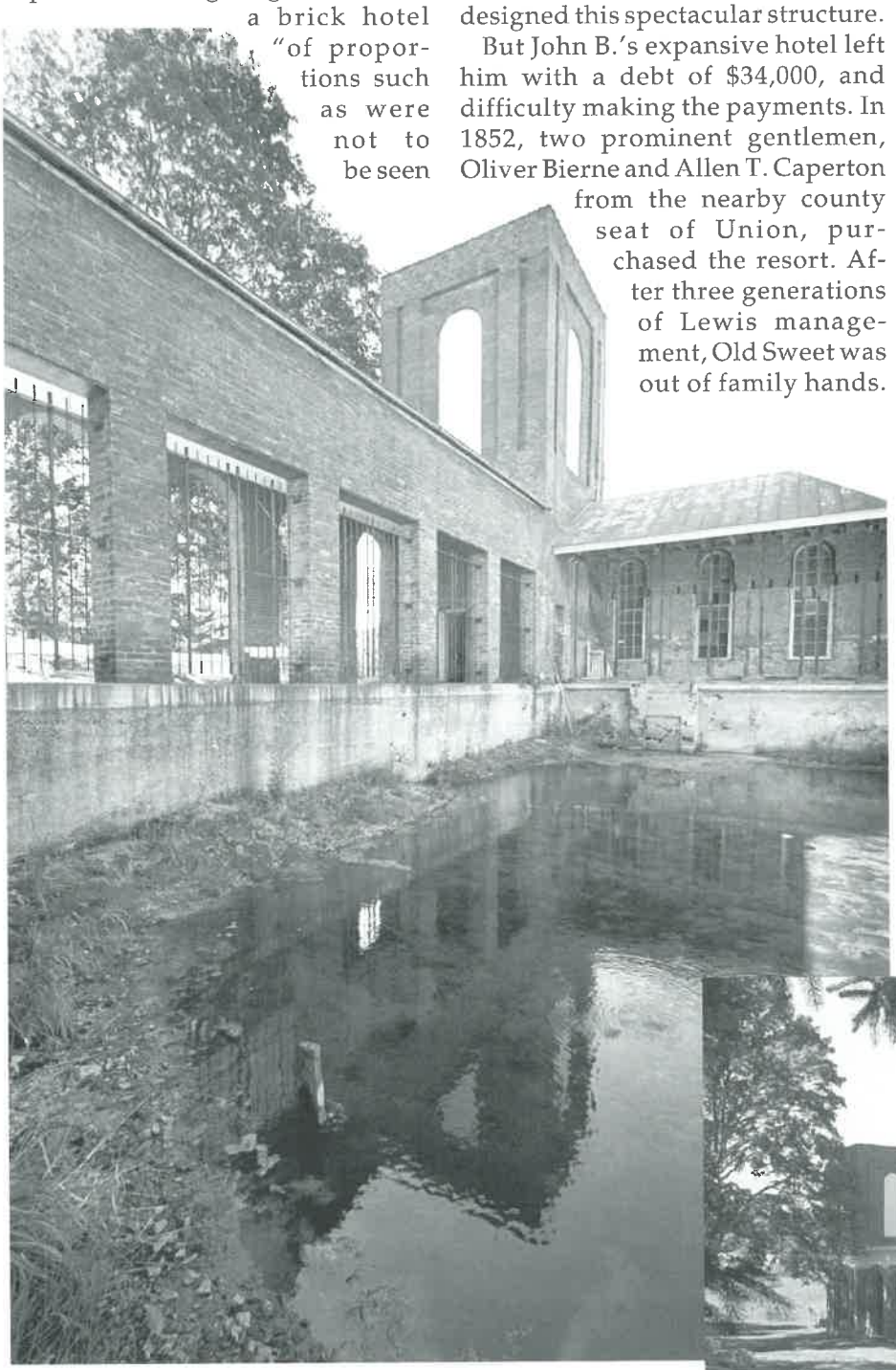
But John B.'s expansive hotel left him with a debt of $34,000, and difficulty making the payments. In 1852, two prominent gentlemen, Oliver Bierne and Allen T. Caperton from the nearby county seat of Union, purchased the resort. After three generations of Lewis management, Old Sweet was out of family hands.

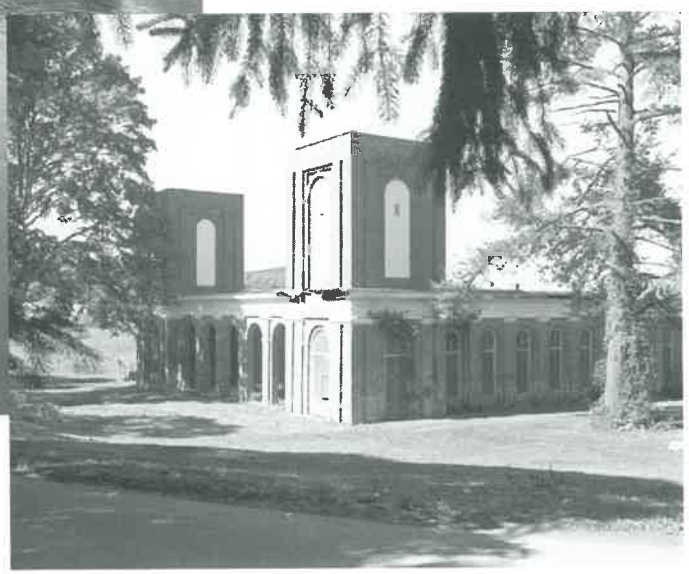
Bierne and Caperton added brick cottages extending out from the hotel toward the spring, and apparently had grand plans to construct several more cottages plus planned to build an exact replica of the huge Jefferson Hotel next to the spring.

Old Sweet enjoyed its most popular years prior to the Civil War. By the end of the three-month season in 1859, almost 2,800 guests had signed the register. Things were quiet during the war until Northern troops under General Hunter thundered through and ransacked the valley. Mercifully, Old Sweet was spared.

The resort re-opened after the Civil War but had lost much of its popularity. This occurred despite the railroad in 1870 reaching Allegheny Station, a 10-mile carriage ride to Sweet Springs. The Monroe County newspaper noted that the Old Sweet register on a July day in 1885 showed only 17 guests.

In describing the demise of the springs, author Stan Cohen in his book *Historic Springs of the Virginias*, lists the destructive effects of the Civil War, changes in the social systems of the South, advances in medical science, and the greater traveling flexibility of the automobile after 1900 as possible causes. "Summering at the spas was no longer fashionable," he notes.





The waters still flow at Sweet Springs. They were discovered in the 1750's by explorer William Lewis. Legend holds that he escaped an Indian attack by hiding overnight in a marsh on this spot. At right shows the springhouse today. Photographs by Doug Chadwick.

Brick cottages were added during the 1850's to accommodate the many visitors who flocked to Sweet Springs in the years preceding the Civil War. In 1859, almost 2,800 guests signed the register in a three-month period. Photographer and date unknown, courtesy of Charles Stacy.

These circumstances didn't faze Cam Lewis, the son of C.C., Sr., my great-grandfather. Great-uncle Cam purchased Old Sweet in 1902 from the Bierne family. He incurred a debt of $35,000 in buying the resort and its surrounding 1,218 acres. Why he bought Old Sweet is unclear since, according to one family member, he was never successful at anything. But he did modernize the place adding electric lights, a steam laundry, and a telephone line to Allegheny Station. He also built a small nine-hole golf course.

The *Monroe Watchman* newspaper commented in 1906, "The Old Sweet Springs closed a most successful season. Up to the middle of August, the Richmond Colony was the most numerous, but at that time the influx of West Virginians was so great that the Charlestonians carried off the palm for numbers, and also proved the most lavish entertainers."

Among those Charlestonians were Cam's brothers and sisters. Each had a cottage at Old Sweet. Included were my grandmother Anne, her husband Howard Johnson, and their four little boys. One of these little boys was my father, Kit Johnson.

My Aunt Pye, wife of my father's twin brother Howard, told me that the family would board the train in Charleston with their milk cow and children's pony and disembark at Allegheny Station. From there, they rode by horse and buggy down the valley to the resort with cow and pony in tow. They stayed in the family cottage near the bath house. Aunt Pye was a Baltimorian, but after marriage to my Uncle Howard, she readily accepted the family's West Virginia traditions. As the last of the Johnsons of her generation, she lives in Lewisburg, still spinning family stories.

By 1909, Great-uncle Cam was in trouble. He hadn't paid corporation taxes or the $15 to the state of West Virginia for a golf course license. The Biernes repossessed the property. Cam's father, C.C. Lewis, Sr., was a Charleston bank president and the owner of coal property. He stepped in and, through legal action and his financial resources, got the property back in 1916 for a total cost of $60,000. As hard as I searched, I found nothing that said my great-grandfather won Old Sweet at a poker table. A year later he died, and John Lewis, Cam's younger brother, took over and ran Old Sweet.

Charlie Stacy, a Lewis cousin, family historian, and retired Charleston attorney, tells the following story about John Lewis. "The Lewis family accountant came from Charleston to audit Old Sweet's books," Charlie says. "There to meet him was a revenue agent. As the two sat having dinner in what was now called the Grand Hotel they watched as John Lewis went from table to table charming his guests. The revenue agent asked the accountant, 'Does Mr. Lewis run this place for pleasure or for profit?' The accountant said he didn't know. 'Well, go ask him,' said the agent. The accountant came back with Lewis' answer: 'I receive d----- little of either and am going to sell to the first d----- sucker that comes along.'"

In 1920, John Lewis did find a buyer, and sold the resort facility and half the property for $70,000.

Operations in the 1920's and '30's are vague; Old Sweet changed hands a couple of times and even closed its doors in 1928.

It took a movie a year later to revive interest in the resort. "Glorious Betsy," previously a stage production, told the story of Napoleon's brother Jerome's love

This striking photograph of the basement colonnade was made in 1906. Photograph by Wallace, courtesy of Charles Stacy.

for Betsy, a Baltimore belle. According to the movie with scenes of the Jefferson Hotel, the pair met at Old Sweet in 1803. The couple in real life never set foot in the area and, of course, the hotel at that time was a log structure. However, the lovely scenes of Old Sweet resulted in a new set of investors. But by 1938, after another foreclosure, D.N. Taylor of Roanoke purchased the resort for $30,000.

Mr. Taylor was the smart one. In 1941, he sold Old Sweet to the state of West Virginia for the grand sum of $150,000. It became a tuberculosis sanatorium and, later, the old people's home. The state in 1974 lengthened the Jefferson building and added a fourth portico.

During the 1930's, despite the resort no longer being in the family, my mother and father and his brothers continued to be frequent visitors to Sweet Springs. But now they stayed with Cousin Sadie, a descendant of the William Lewis side of the family. She was revered by my father and his brothers and was considered a close cousin. It was at Cousin Sadie's farm that I stayed as a child.

There are many stories about Cousin Sadie. My Aunt Pye Johnson says that my Uncle Howard once walked into Cousin Sadie's house wearing dirty boots. She said, "Don't you come in here with those boots on."

"But Cousin Sadie, you let the sheep come in."

"That's O.K. They live here; you don't."

Last summer, as I sat on Lynn Spellman's front porch, we looked across the fields and could see the remains of Lynnside, an imposing antebellum home where three generations of her family once lived. Trees and tall grass almost obscure the still-standing brick walls.

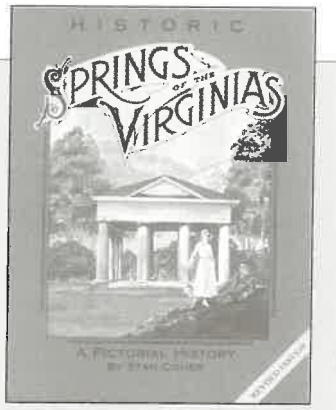
Lynn told me about when the home burned in 1935. The volunteer fire department rushed to the village of Lindside, some 20 miles away, rather than to Lynnside. There were no insurance and no money to restore the structure, so the family moved into the tenant's house, the two-story farmhouse where Lynn and her husband live today.

Lynn is a pleasant, unassuming woman in her 50's. Her grandmother, Lavallette Lewis Keiley who lived at Lynnside, moved from the valley to New York City after a divorce. Lynn's father and mother were married in New Jersey and moved back to Sweet Springs when Lynn was four. Her father worked in the family feed store and did surveying. Except for a year at Wheeling College, Lynn has lived there ever since. Her husband owns a small store near their house; their daughter attends college at the University of New Orleans. A sign lying next to the garage indicates that Lynn does bookkeeping.

Old Sweet Springs today is in the hands of a fellow by the name of Warren Coleman. He is a 70-year-old North Carolinian, a former owner of a nursery and landscaping business in Charlotte who likes to restore historic structures. In 1996, he saw an advertisement in the *Wall Street Journal* that the old resort was going to be sold at auction by the Bank of White Sulphur Springs. He drove up, took a look, and decided that he had to have the place.

When the state of West Virginia closed down the Andrew Rowan home for the aged in 1991, they gave it to Monroe County. The county had grand ideas of converting it into a drug rehabilitation center. They borrowed $1,300,000 from a local bank, then walked away

Taking the Waters



Monroe County's Sweet Springs is one of more than 80 springs in our region.

Stan Cohen's *Historic Springs of the Virginias* is a well-researched and concise book on the subject designed for the casual tourist as well as the serious student. Complete with maps, photos, and descriptions, *Historic Springs of the Virginias* even contains menus from some of the ornate hotels which sprang up around these healing waters. Some of these resorts are still very much in operation from Capon Springs in Hampshire County to The Greenbrier at White Sulphur Springs in Greenbrier County.

Cohen also includes many out-of-the-way springs and several which are now lost to the road maps including Blue Sulphur Springs in Cabell County and Lithia Springs, Gray Sulphur Springs, and Crystal Sulphur Springs in Virginia.

Originally published in 1981, *Historic Springs of the Virginias* is in its sixth printing. It is available in libraries, at bookstores, or by calling Pictorial Histories at 1-888-982-7472.

from the place when drug rehabilitation became an out-patient process rather than in-patient treatment.

Warren Coleman bought what he calls Jefferson Place for $336,000. He said something to me which, in a way, explains his purchase. Standing on the 100-yard-long front porch of the old hotel with its four porticoes towering over us, he asked, "How many places designed by Jefferson are in private hands?"

Coleman has fixed the Jefferson building so that it doesn't leak and is protected from further deterioration. He is refurbishing a couple of the brick cottages so that they are livable, and he hopes to restore the bath house and spring. He operates without an architect, general contractor, or drawings. He has refurbished historical buildings before, including an old castle in Blowing Rock.

Lynn Spellman and the rest of the people in Sweet Springs Valley wonder what Warren Coleman is going to do with the place. I asked him. He replied, "I don't know." But the facilities give Coleman ideas about potential uses for the property. The large kitchen in the Jefferson building which is still in good shape from its old people'sa home days makes him think that the old resort could be a cooking school. Chefs could come from Europe, he says. Or it could be a sports rehabilitation center. Athletes could recondition their bodies while reviving their souls with the beauty of the surroundings. Coleman certainly hasn't said the place is available, but people keep calling. Whatever develops, his intention is to slowly restore the site as much as possible to its original grandeur.

As Warren Coleman and I walked around the grounds, he looked across the shaded lawn at the magnificence of the Jefferson building and said, "I don't own this place. It belongs to the people. I'm a caretaker. You don't own history."

All those Lewises buried up the hill in the old family cemetery, I figure, must be pleased that Old Sweet Springs is back in the hands of someone who loves it and might give it a future. Lynn Spellman agrees.

Author Rody Johnson visits with distant cousin Lynn Spellman just down the road from Old Sweet. The pair estimate that they are eighth cousins; Lynn is the only surviving Lewis still living at Sweet Springs. Photograph by Doug Chadwick.

RODY JOHNSON was born in Charleston, but has lived most of his life in Vero Beach, Florida. He spends his summers in Lewisburg. An electrical engineer by trade, Rody published a weekly newspaper in Florida for many years. His freelance articles have appeared in various newspapers and magazines; his novel *Different Battles* was released in 1999. This is his first contribution to GOLDENSEAL.

Doodle Was a Tough Old Bird

By Larry Bartlett

Life was cheap in the years following World War II. Dime stores sold small living creatures to be used as children's toys. For a few coins, children could buy a salamander on a string or a silver dollar-sized turtle with a hand-painted design on its shell.

Author Larry Bartlett, at left, is eight years old in this 1946 snapshot, made in Vienna, Wood County. Sister Gwelda Lou holds her doll while 11-year-old brother Eddy pets Doodle the rooster. This photograph shows the notorious Doodle during his docile younger days.

During the Easter season, dime stores sold baby chicks that were dyed in pastel hues of yellow, orange, pink, blue, or green. In the post-war years, Easter chicks were more popular than the Easter Bunny. Humane laws were eventually passed to ban the sale of dyed chicks because the gaudy little hatchlings were too helpless and frail to be treated as pets. Children literally loved them to death. If an Easter chick lived to adulthood, it had something to crow about.

In 1946, my five-year-old sister Gwelda Lou, (now Gwen Zimmerman of Boulder, Colorado), bought a pale green Easter chick at a dime store near our home in Vienna, Wood County. She named the chick "Doodle" and treated it tenderly. My older brother Eddy and I often threw Doodle in the air in an effort to give it flying lessons. Despite many nose dives and crash landings, the chick survived our childish games and grew up to be the most sadistic, blood-thirsty rooster that ever strutted the earth.

Vienna was a pleasant town, yet Doodle may have been a victim of his environment. Our family lived on a street of small, neatly kept homes near a grey, dust-spewing factory. Between our house and the factory was a dense stand of thorny locust trees, festooned with tangles of greenbrier vines. The wooded area was called the "Chicken Lot" because hidden deep within its thorny gloom were cages containing gamecocks which were bred to fight and to kill. Each morning at dawn, those iridescent-black fighting cocks would awaken the neighborhood with hoarse, raucous crowing that sounded like roars of rage. Although Doodle never saw those ferocious birds, he could hear them in the little woodland, and I think he fell under their influence.

The Chicken Lot and its war-like denizens belonged to our neighbor Jack Findlay. Mr. Findlay adored my little sister Gwelda Lou, and called her "Old Honey Gal." He was a brilliant, eccentric man

who could play the piano with his toes, and who loved the illegal sport of cock fighting. Often, Findlay emerged from the Chicken Lot with bloody talon-slashes across his arms and hands. He forbade us children to explore the Chicken Lot woods because he said the fighting gamecocks were dangerous.

As Doodle began to mature during the summer months, my brother and I learned how dangerous a chicken could be. Doodle shed his green fluff, sprouted white feathers, and began to peck and claw us when we tried to give him flying lessons. We quickly abandoned the game, but Doodle didn't relent in his attacks with beak and talons. The backs of my legs became covered with welts and bruises, while my derriere appeared to be decorated by a massive purple tattoo. Having intimidated my brother and me, Doodle refused to allow us off the porch. He was the cock of the walk, he ruled the roost, and we were low in the pecking order. The evil Easter chicken played happily with my sister in the backyard that summer, while I became a studious, reclusive lad, fond of the Great Indoors.

It wasn't easy for him to be a lion of industry when a chicken chased him to work every day.

By the time school opened in September, my brother and I were afraid to leave the house without an escort. One of my parents would walk up the street with us when we left for school to ward off Doodle's furious assaults. Doodle was too discreet to attack my mother and father. They had both grown up in rural Ritchie County, and Doodle seemed to sense that they were skilled in the country art of neck-wringing. But as the winter wore on, Doodle often emerged from his lair beneath our back porch to assail the mailman.

When the summer of 1947 arrived, Doodle was fully grown. He was a burly, swaggering bully, with a tall red comb, a cruelly arched beak, mad yellow eyes, and leg spurs that seemed to be as long and sharp as sickle blades. Mr. Findlay declared that Gwelda's haughty white rooster had the spirit of a fighting gamecock. Yet, despite his fighting spirit, Doodle was devoted to my sister and he followed her around the yard like a playful puppy.

That summer, the dreadful Doodle discovered a new enemy. His fury became fixed on the manager of the dust-spewing factory down the street from our house. Each morning, the plant manager rode the streetcar to Vienna from his (we assumed) palatial home in Parkersburg. He would get off the streetcar and stroll down our block, wearing a snap-brim fedora, a crisp suit, and carrying a shiny leather briefcase. The neighborhood mothers, clad in flowered house dresses and aprons, would be sweeping factory dust off their front porches as he sauntered past. The plant manager would graciously tip his hat to the housewives and address friendly remarks to the neighborhood children. He was genial, dapper, and a man-of-the-world.

On a bright June morning, my sister and Doodle were playing on the sidewalk as the plant manager strolled by. The man patted my sister's head in a paternal way, and Doodle attacked. The rooster sank his spurs into the man's legs, plunged his beak into the seat of the man's pin-striped trousers, and sent him running down the street in shock and disarray. Thereafter, the plant manager didn't dare use the sidewalk. Each morning, he walked down the middle of the street with a tense, furtive expression. As he neared our house, he clamped the fedora on his head with one hand, tucked the briefcase under his arm, and broke into a run. Immediately, Doodle launched an assault with flapping wings, stabbing beak, and enraged bellows. The dapper plant manager would arrive at work frazzled, sweaty, and winded.

One morning, my mother was sweeping factory dust off the front porch as the manager sprinted past our house with Doodle in hot pursuit. Mom shooed the chicken with a broom, and the manager promptly begged her to keep Gwelda's rooster off the street. It wasn't easy for him to be a lion of industry when a chicken chased him to work every day.

My parents took Doodle to the Wirt County farm of my Uncle Frank and Aunt Eleanor Surface. There, they said, Doodle could fulfill his nature by assaulting livestock and wild animals. After a few weeks, we drove out to the Surface farm to see how Doodle was doing. My sister dashed down to the barn in search of the rooster, while the rest of us joined Aunt Eleanor on the front porch for a glass of iced tea.

"Gwelda won't find Doodle," Aunt Eleanor told us sadly. "A while back, that rooster went up to the highway and attacked a little red sports car. He's dead."

"Did you bury Doodle?" asked my brother.

"No," said Aunt Eleanor. "I fried him up and served him for dinner."

"Did he taste good?" I asked with a spiteful smirk.

"No, that was the worst chicken I ever ate," she said. "He was a tough old bird."

LARRY BARTLETT is a native of Wood County and holds a Master of Fine Arts degree from Tulane University. Larry has been a frequent contributor to GOLDENSEAL since 1995. His most recent effort appeared in our Winter 1999 issue.

Films on West Virginia and Appalachia

Donna Calvert, manager of Library Services at the West Virginia Library Commission, provided GOLDENSEAL with the following list of films and videos about West Virginia and the Appalachian region. The West Virginia Library Commission has what it feels is the largest collection of mountain movies and tapes anywhere in the country. These videos and many others may be borrowed at public libraries throughout West Virginia. To learn more about these films and videos, or hundreds of others in the film library, call (304)558-2045 or 1-800-642-9021 from inside West Virginia.

All Shaken Up: Mountaintop Removal Blasting and Its Effects On Coalfield Residents
32 min. 1998 Omni Productions
This film was produced locally in the summer of 1998 by Charleston filmmaker Bob Gates and reporter Penny Loeb who interviewed 45 West Virginia residents affected by the blasting required for the form of strip mining called "mountain-top removal." The video shows damage to wells and houses, and describes the psychological effects of round-the-clock blasting on residents who live in the proximity of the mines.

Applewise
29 min. 1997 Appalshop
Anthony Slone directs an insider's portrait of the Mullins family and their struggle to maintain and manage one of only two remaining family-run apple orchards in southwest Virginia. The film explores issues of self-sustaining agriculture and sustainable land management, corporate competition, pesticide use, and the family unit.

Photograph by Michael Keller.

Ceredo-Kenova
14 min. Ceredo Mayor's Office
This short film provides a brief history of Ceredo and Kenova, Wayne County, two small West Virginia cities with distinct charm and beauty. The film features scenic photography of each town's main attractions and shows them as places of homespun charm and hospitality.

Coalmining Women
40 min. 1982 Appalshop
Interviewed at home and on the job, women coal miners tell of the conditions that led them to seek employment in this traditionally male-dominated industry and the problems they encountered once hired. Directed by Elizabeth Barret, the film traces the significant contributions women have made to past coalfield struggles and the importance of their newer position as working miners.

Digging Deep: The Cost of Cheap Energy
25 min. 1998 ABC News Nightline
Ted Koppel hosts a look at the impact of the automation of the coalfields, the most important development in mining coal in West Virginia since the 1950's. Chief reporter Barry Serafin and others visit various mine sites in West Virginia and talk to residents as well as mine operators who have been affected by the huge machines now used in the largest mines east of the Mississippi River.

Dreadful Memories: The Life of Sarah Ogan Gunning
38 min. 1988 Appalshop
For decades, Sarah Gunning wrote and performed hauntingly beautiful ballads about the lives of working people. This video documentary introduces viewers to this woman and her music, and reveals the influence she has had over the years. Directed by Mimi Pickering, the video intercuts Sarah's most affecting songs with rare documentary film clips and photographs of early mining life. Comments from relatives and such friends as Pete Seeger, Hazel Dickens, and Archie Green help to tell Sarah's story and speak of her personal strength and cultural significance.

The Eleanor Roosevelt Story
90 min. 1965 (1997) Kino Productions
This recently reissued documentary is an intimate and moving portrait of one of the most remarkable women in American history. It is the story of a lonely, unhappy child who became the most admired and respected woman of her time. It was written by celebrated poet/playwright Archibald MacLeish, with narration by Eric Severeid and Mrs. Francis Cole.

Eleanor Roosevelt at Arthurdale.
Photograph courtesy of West Virginia and Regional History Collection, West Virginia University.

Fiddles, Snakes, and Dog Days: Old-Time Music and Lore in West Virginia
60 min. 1997 Augusta Heritage Center
West Virginia's ancient folklore and traditional music are presented here in their natural context. Interviews are augmented with fiddle music as older

residents relate tales, beliefs, and seasonal observances which have been shaped by time and handed down from generation to generation. It is directed by GOLDENSEAL contributor Gerald Milnes.

Fight to Save Kayford Mountain
15 min. 1998 Lisa Millimet
GOLDENSEAL contributor Lisa Millimet, a New Hampshire resident who once lived in West Virginia and still owns land here, videotaped the effects of mountaintop removal mining in the Kayford area. Larry Gibson, who is leading a one-man fight to save his family's 50 acres at Kayford Mountain from mountaintop removal, is the focus of this short documentary.

Fond Memories Scrapbook
60 min. 1994 WSWP-TV
This nostalgic look at life in southern West Virginia is one of two videos produced by local television station WSWP. It features the reminiscences of longtime residents, personal photographs, home movies, archival film, and present-day video of life in the Mountain State.

Fond Memories Scrapbook II
30 min. 1996 WSWP-TV
This video is the second installment in WSWP-TV's nostalgic series about life in southern West Virginia. This video includes railroad steam engines, G.C. Murphy's department store, and recollections of the State Fair of West Virginia.

George Washington: The Unknown Years
52 min. 1997 Acorn Media
Many years before George Washington led the nation to independence, his youth was filled with failure and frustration. As a surveyor, he spent much time on the frontier mapping western Virginia. With dramatic reenactments and commentary by noted historians, this documentary tells the story of Washington's coming of age and the rocky road he took to becoming an important figure in American history.

Harley Warrick: Last of a Breed
30 min. 1996 Kellas-Grindley Productions
On October 29, 1996, Harley Warrick painted a Mail Pouch Tobacco sign in the Wheeling Artisan Center. This is a video of that project during which he speaks about the 45 years he spent with Bloch Brothers Tobacco Company traveling through 20 states, and painting over 20,000 Mail Pouch signs.

Harry M. Brawley: Making a Difference
30 min. 1993 PBS
Harry Brawley was an educator, broadcaster, politician, and historian, and is credited as the father of public broadcasting in West Virginia. Narrated by Charleston attorney James McIntyre, this video includes interviews with many of Brawley's friends such as former Charleston mayors John Hutchinson and Chuck Gardner, and fellow broadcasters Ernie Saunders, Joe Ferris, Frank Annand, and Bill Kelley.

Kanawha: The Magic Valley
8 min.
1952 Ray Rogers
In 1952, a Union Carbide employee who enjoyed watching movies decided to make his own movie about his home: the Kanawha Valley. Edited to the beat of "An American in Paris," scenes of the city include the Capitol and waterskiing on the Kanawha River. This film is the first known color production made in West Virginia, and reveals a feeling of the optimism of the times.

Kanawha Valley Homes
15 min. 1995 WCHS-TV
WCHS-TV personality Natalie Tennant reports on three unusual Charleston homes: Henry Elden's "Glass House," "The House on the Hill" thought to be the oldest house overlooking the valley, and professional football player Denny Harrah's home.

Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Coal
53 min. 1974 Xerox
This 26-year-old film shows that although West Virginia has an enormous wealth in coal, the state's health services, education, housing, and quality of life are well below the national average. This documentary discusses the role that coal companies have played in this economic imbalance.

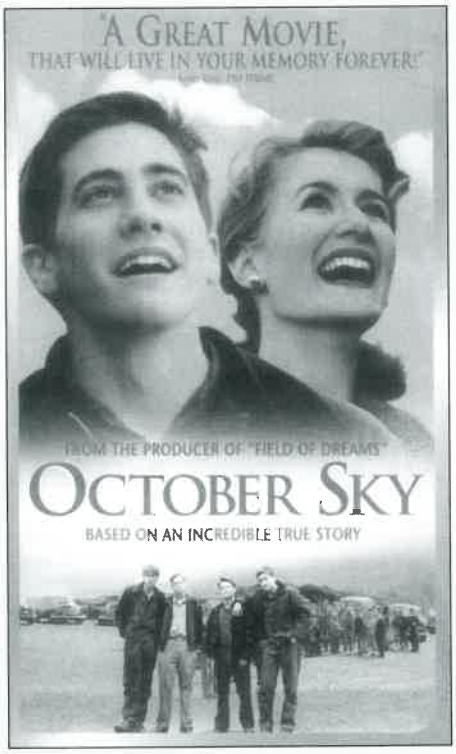

Shay #4 at Cass. Photographer and date unknown.

Logging Railroads: Modeling the Prototype
60 min. 1996 Green Frog Productions
This video is an in-depth look at the railroad and the logging industries. It examines not only the operations of several logging railroads, but also shows how the trees were cut, loaded, and then unloaded at the sawmills. Featured logging railroads include Ely-Thomas, Mower, Westsider, and others.

The Minors
28 min. 1994 Jonathan Halperin
Stanford University film student Jonathan Halperin chose Bluefield as the subject of his documentary on the world of minor league baseball. Using *cinema verite* techniques, he explores the real world of small-town baseball, as seen in the film *Bull Durham.*

October Sky
108 min. 1999 Universal Pictures
Now available on video, this popular film is based on the true story of Homer Hickam, Jr., the introspective son of a West Virginia mine superintendent who nurtures his dream of sending rockets into outer space. Homer's boy-


Harley Warrick in 1984. Photograph by Michael Keller.



hood dreams become reality, changing his life and the lives of everyone living in Coalwood, McDowell County, in the late 1950's. This fictionalized autobiography is based on the book *Rocket Boys* by Homer Hickam, Jr.

President Clinton Visits Charleston, West Virginia
40 min. 1993 WCHS-TV and WOWK-TV
President Clinton came to the State Capitol on August 9, 1993, to celebrate the signing of his 1993-'94 budget and to present his "Change Has Come" health care reform kick-off speech. A joint production of two Charleston-area television news departments, the video features Mayor Kent Strange Hall, congressmen Bob Wise and Nick Joe Rahall, Governor Gaston Caperton, and U.S. Senator Jay Rockefeller.

President Clinton Visits Huntington, West Virginia
240 min. 1996 WSAZ-TV
This extensive video includes WSAZ-TV's coverage of President Clinton's campaign stop in Huntington on his road to reelection. In addition to the president's campaign addresses, the video includes speeches by U.S. Senator Jay Rockefeller and Democratic gubernatorial candidate Charlotte Pritt.

Raise the Dead
52 min. 1998 James Rutenbeck
This video is a journey into tent meetings and store-front churches throughout the Appalachian region, concluding at a revival in War, McDowell County. Evangelist H. Richard Hall has conducted these camp meetings since the late 1940's.

Rough Side of the Mountain
57 min. 1997 Appalshop
In the past 20 years, many mining companies and factories have closed their doors leaving behind rural communities with crumbling infrastructures, soaring unemployment, and inexperience in self-governance. *Rough Side of the Mountain*, directed by Anne Lewis, documents the efforts of citizens to rebuild their communities in two southwest Virginia company towns: Ivanhoe and Trammel.

See Yourself in the Movies: Charles Town, West Virginia, 1941
60 min. 1990 James Surkamp
This 1941 promotional film was made by Charles Town's Lions Club, recreating daily life in the small Eastern Panhandle town just before World War II. It includes a list of names identifying 576 persons shown in the video, and serves as an invaluable documentary source of local history.

Spring Hill Cemetery
60 min. 1994 Richard Andre
This unique video features a walking tour of a historic Charleston cemetery by noted Kanawha Valley historian and GOLDENSEAL contributor Richard A. Andre. Local actors play various celebrities who are now buried in one of West Virginia's largest and oldest cemeteries.

A Stitch in Time: A History of Quilt Making In West Virginia
45 min. 1995 WSWP-TV
This television documentary is a visual celebration of the history of quilt making in the Mountain State. Quilt makers of the 1800's and early 1900's are honored; the video also explores various ethnic groups which settled in West Virginia and looks at each group's particular quilting style. We also hear from present-day quilters who express why they believe the craft has endured all these years.

Thurmond, West Virginia
22 min. 1996 Laura Harrison
Thurmond, Fayette County, situated on the banks of the New River, was once a thriving community. Today, it stands as a ghost town in the making. This film, directed by Laura Harrison, looks at the history of this classic coal town, while subtly probing deeper issues about the importance of community and the identity of a place.

Twisted Laurel
30 min. 1999 Augusta Heritage Center
The video, directed by folklorist Gerald Milnes, is a follow-up to Augusta's 1997 *Fiddles, Snakes, and Dog Days* release. This installment focuses on the natural resources of the mountain forest, and how West Virginians have used these resources in their folk culture. Examples include chair building, basketry, musical instrument construction, and herb gathering.

The West Virginians
25 min. 1996 PBS
Narrated by Chris Sarandon, this documentary features short biographies of a variety of notable native West Virginians, alive and dead, in and out of the state. Some of these are U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd, Henry Louis Gates, Jr., James "Buck" Harless, Lawrence Kasdan, Kathy Mattea, and many others.

Wheeling 1959: Wheels of Progress — Volume 1
32 min. 1995 Ellis Dungan
This fully narrated vintage film features rare color footage of Wheeling and the Ohio River Valley as it was in 1958 and '59. Narration by Lew Clawson accompanies Ellis Dungan's dramatic filming of local industries and institutions, emphasizing the everyday hard-working bustle of the busy valley, along with the gentler side of life.

Vandalia Award 2000

Banjo player Brooks Smith is the proud recipient of the 2000 Vandalia Award, presented to him on Saturday evening, May 27, during the annual Vandalia Gathering at the Capitol Complex. The prestigious award is given by the Division of Culture and History to one individual each year, recognizing a lifetime of contribution to West Virginia's traditional folk arts.

Born in Jackson County on April 3, 1923, Brooks grew up in Kanawha County and is a lifelong resident of West Virginia. He was the subject of a feature story in GOLDENSEAL in Spring 1996, "Brooks Smith: The Making of a Banjo Player," interview by Andrew Dunlap.

In the story, Brooks talks about carrying his banjo under his arm as he walked over Goff Mountain to take lessons as a 12-year-old boy. He later joined with other Kanawha Valley musicians to play for dances and various local functions. He performed on WCHS radio in Charleston, as well as on WKNA as a member of the Happy Valley Ramblers during the late 1940's.

Brooks was drawn to both popular and traditional music and developed a versatile banjo style which makes him unique among most old-time musicians. He is capable of playing hard-driving dance tunes with the best of them; he is equally at ease playing subtle back-up or imaginative chords to accompany a slow waltz or an old song.

This mastery of the banjo has enabled Brooks to play with many skilled musicians through the years. It has also earned him a generous collection of prizes, awards, and ribbons from West Virginia musical gatherings.

Brooks has also attracted the attention of many younger musicians. He has taken a number of them under his wing as students, producing some of the finest next-generation banjo players in the state including Kim Johnson and Andrew Dunlap.

Brooks Smith received the prestigious Vandalia Award on May 28, 2000. Brooks is seen here playing his banjo at the 1991 Vandalia Gathering. Photograph by Michael Keller.

Aside from his musical prowess, Brooks has been a credit to his family and community in many other areas of his life. He served in the armed forces and was awarded the Purple Heart for his sacrifices in France during World War II. He later enjoyed a long career as a draftsman with Union Carbide in South Charleston.

Brooks married the former Westine Miller from Dunbar in 1945, and they raised three children: Doug Smith of Cross Lanes, Dwain Smith of Dunbar, and Debbie Smith Dawson of Cross Lanes. Today, Brooks and Westine have seven grandchildren and one great-grandson.

GOLDENSEAL congratulates Brooks on receiving this year's Vandalia Award!

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PHOTO CURIOSITY

Do you recognize these musicians? Fiddler Bob Taylor brought this photograph to our attention and asked our help identifying these people. Judging by their clothing, furniture, and vehicles, we estimate that this picture was made at a festival or reunion at least 50 years ago. If you can shed any light on this mystery, please write to us at the GOLDENSEAL office.

Goldenseal

Coming Next Issue...

- **Kennedy 1960 Campaign**
- **Otsego**
- **Spruce Knob Plane Crash**
- **Ellifritz Rock Museum**

GOLDENSEAL ROAD TRIP

MICHAEL KELLER

Homer Laughlin Fiesta ware.

Northern Panhandle * 2 Great Days * October 13 - 14, 2000 * Fall Foliage * History, People & Places

GOLDENSEAL hits the road once again this fall with a unique tour of West Virginia's Northern Panhandle. We bring the pages of GOLDENSEAL to life by visiting the people and places you've read about in the magazine. Please join us!

* Homer Laughlin China Company
* Doc Williams musical performance
* Lebanon bakery
* Greek church tour, program, and food
* St. Joseph German settlement
* Wheeling driving tour
* Chester teapot
* Bethany College and village
* Moundsville prison
* Grave Creek Mound historic site and Delf Norona museum

We meet in Wheeling on Friday morning, October 13. After a brief driving tour and a stop at Wheeling's Lebanon Bakery, we follow the Ohio River north to Weirton and sample the local Greek culture and cuisine. Our next stop is the world-famous Homer Laughlin China Company in Newell and a behind-the-scenes look at how Fiesta ware is created. We see the town of Chester and "The World's Largest Teapot" before arriving at Bethany College for the night. Country music legend Doc Williams, our guest of honor, will present the Friday evening program. Saturday includes a tour of the old West Virginia State Penitentiary in Moundsville, a stop at Grave Creek Mound, and a scenic visit to St. Joseph Settlement before making our way back to Wheeling.

MICHAEL KELLER

Doc Williams.

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Full Payment Must Be Received By August 15, 2000.

Your cost includes all tours, meals, gratuities, lodging, entertainment, overnight parking in Wheeling, and a keepsake book of article reprints. West Virginia state sales tax (6%) not included.

Cost per person for double occupancy - $185 (plus tax $196.10)
Cost per person for single occupancy - $195 (plus tax $206.70)

REFUNDS/CANCELLATIONS MUST BE MADE 45 DAYS PRIOR TO DEPARTURE

The fine print: GOLDENSEAL assumes no responsibility for damage, injury, loss, accident, delay or inconvenience from whatever cause during this trip, nor for damage or theft to cars parked during the trip. Space is limited and is offered on a first-come, first-served basis. We reserve the right to change the tour itinerary if necessary, or to cancel the trip due to conditions beyond our control (including insufficient participation), with full refund in the case of cancellation.

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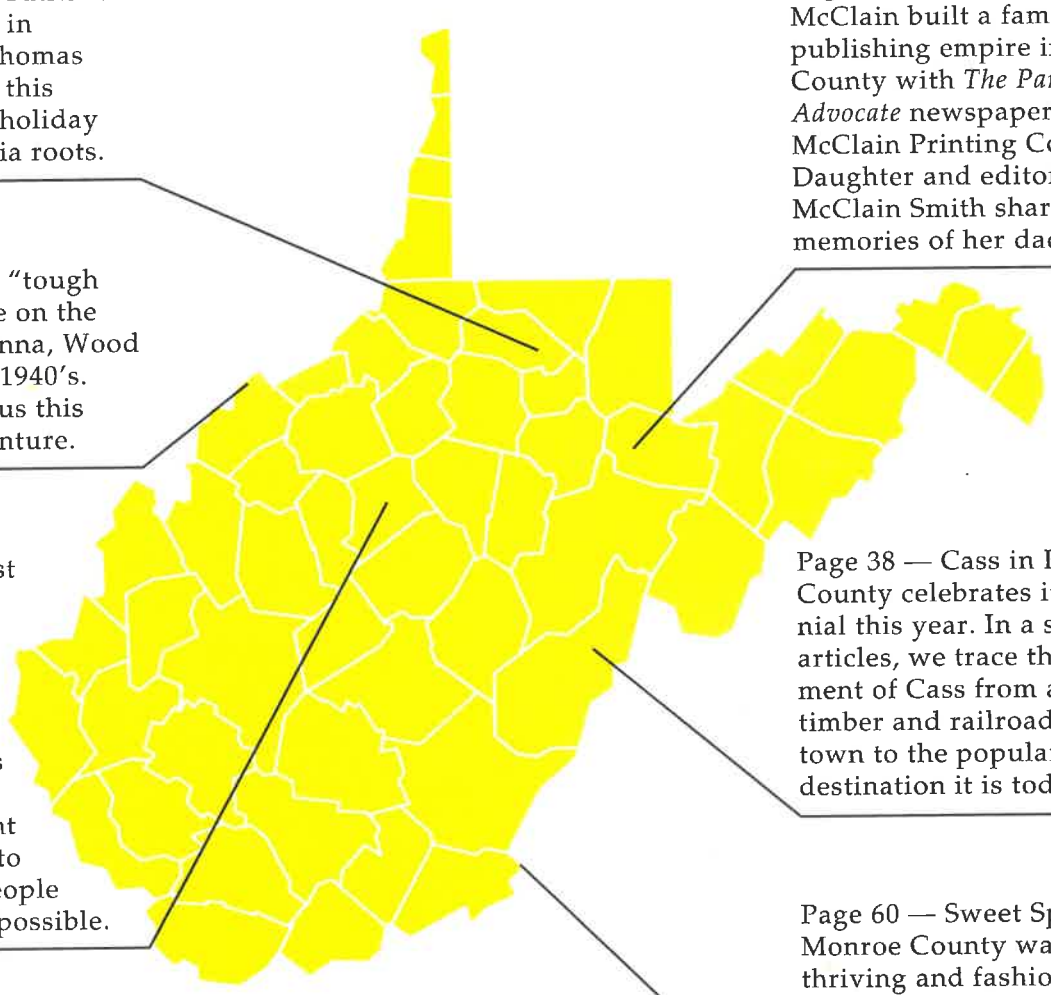

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