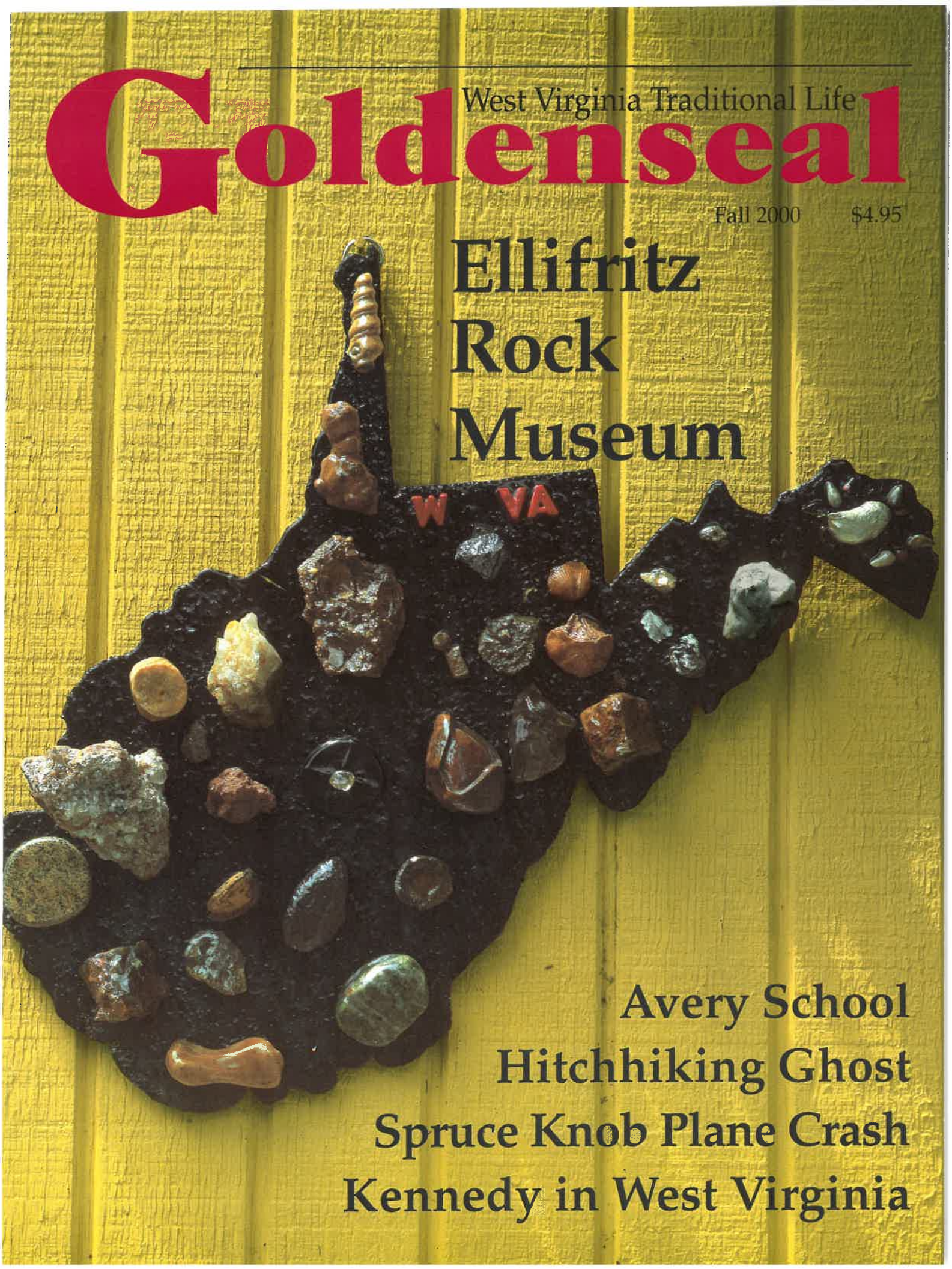
West Virginia Traditional Life

Goldenseal

Fall 2000 $4.95



Ellifritz Rock Museum

Avery School
Hitchhiking Ghost
Spruce Knob Plane Crash
Kennedy in West Virginia

From the Editor: Where Were You?

Do you recall where you were the day the stock market crashed in 1929? How about December 7, 1941? Or November 22, 1963? Each generation has its own unique set of memories and experiences, often associated with major historical events of the time.

More often, however, our most crucial memories are local and quite personal: when a child was born, the day a loved one died, a first romance, a painful heartbreak. While working on this issue of GOLDENSEAL, I am struck once again by the unfailing generosity of our contributing authors and story subjects who willingly share their memories and private lives with us through the magazine.

Bill Garnette barely escaped with his life in 1946 when his plane crashed near the top of Spruce Knob. After more than 50 years, he shares the chilling tale of his crash and miraculous rescue. I met Bill and his fine family at Spruce Knob last summer and, together with photographer Steve Shaluta and others, climbed to the site of the crash and viewed the remains of the wreckage. It was a moving experience. See Bill's story on page 56.

Earl Ellifritz, whose rock-encrusted map of West Virginia graces the cover of this issue, is a unique and delightful man. I've met Earl and his wife Edith on more than one occasion, and I'm impressed by Earl's particular view of the world. Not only does he find "Beauty In Rocks," as our story on page 8 suggests, but he sees art in most things which the rest of us would dismiss as plain, everyday objects. He and his museum are a real treat.

Legislative doorkeepers Ray Kinder and Bill Pauley have been buddies and singing partners for more than half-a-century. Their Happy Valley Boys quartet has been featured at churches, revivals, and gospel sings across West Virginia since 1950. Today, with fellow doorkeepers Cliff Napier and Parky Parkins, they are known as the Singing Doorkeepers, and spread joy and goodwill throughout the State Capitol with their music. They are warm-hearted, salt-of-the-earth gentlemen, and they can sing the spots off a dalmatian. Their story begins on page 24.

West Virginia Secretary of State Ken Hechler is one of the most recognizable personalities at the State Capitol. Visitors get a taste of his sense of humor as they enter his office and are greeted by two stuffed black bears and a handwritten sign which reads, "We support the right to arm bears." Behind this lightheartedness, however, is a serious man who has devoted his long career to state service. Seated comfortably in front of a huge, rare 35-star U.S. flag, Secretary Hechler shared with me his thoughts and memories of the 1960 West Virginia presidential primary campaign between John F. Kennedy and Hubert H. Humphrey. It was an exciting time for Mr. Hechler, and a moment when the eyes of the nation were on West Virginia. Highlights of our conversation appear on page 20.

Meeting these people is a humbling experience for me, as I am entrusted with the responsibility of carrying their stories to you. In most cases, these stories can be found nowhere else but in the pages of GOLDENSEAL. And, in the end, I am well-satisfied with the job we do in bringing West Virginia's best stories to you — attractively, consistently, and affordably.

I hope that you agree. And I hope that you will keep us in mind this fall when the majority of you will receive your annual subscription renewal letters. As you are aware, we receive no state funds to produce GOLDENSEAL, but rely entirely on you and other subscribers for financial support.

We are proud of the fact that we can produce a top-quality publication such as GOLDENSEAL entirely through subscription sales, and through the talents and generosity of our remarkable story subjects and contributors.

Thanks for being a part of it!

John Lilly

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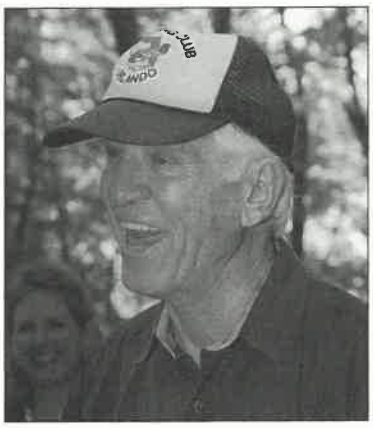

p. 56

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On the cover: Rock art by Earl Ellifritz is displayed at his museum in Rippon, Jefferson County. This piece features a variety of state rocks, including a West Virginia diamond at the center. Our story begins on page 8. Photograph by Bob Peak.

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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.

Cass

June 21, 2000
Palisades Park, New Jersey
Editor:
I read with much interest the articles by H. William Gabriel and Philip V. Bagdon about Cass in the Summer 2000 edition of GOLDENSEAL. My father, Frank Taliercio, was one of the first Italian immigrants to work for the West Virginia Pulp & Paper Company at Cass. He was 16 years of age when he came to America in 1903, and worked for that company all his life until his retirement in 1945. He was a father to eight children — five still living.

We have made several trips back to the old hometown in recent years and are happy to see Cass looking so great. The articles were very educational to me. Happy 100th anniversary, Cass.
Fondly,
Mary Dragovich

Rex Harper, Ken McClain

June 28, 2000
Parsons, West Virginia
Editor:
Just one day before the delivery of our summer issue of GOLDENSEAL, a cousin called to tell me he had written an article about his father which would be appearing in your Summer 2000 magazine. Both he and I were delighted that our fathers — Ken McClain and Rex Harper, who were first cousins — would be in the same issue [see "A Lasting Impression: Recalling Printer Ken McClain," by Mariwyn McClain Smith and "Rex Harper: My West Virginia Dad," by Sheldon Harper].

And coincidentally, one of your letters to the editor was written

Ken McClain. 1966 photograph by West Virginia Photo Company, Parsons.

Rex Harper. 1995 photograph by Sheldon Harper.

by a former neighbor, Cecilia Stalnaker Repair. It's truly a small world.

Our family thanks you for accepting our stories. We look forward to many years of your fine work.
Very Sincerely,
Mariwyn McClain Smith

Sweet Springs

June 14, 2000
Saint Albans, West Virginia
Editor:
We just love your magazine. I want to thank Rody Johnson for the story on Old Sweet Springs in your summer issue [see "Old Sweet Springs: A Lewis Family Legacy"]. It was very interesting to hear this story from a family member. It would be a shame if we lose this building like we have done with so many others.
Nancy Cook

July 10, 2000
Kenova, West Virginia
Editor:
I read the article regarding Old

Sweet Springs lodge in 1915, Monroe County. Photograph courtesy Charles Stacy.

Sweet Springs with much interest. In the early 1980's, my aunt, the late Allene McKinney of Mullens, was a resident of the property. At that time, it was called the Andrew S. Rowan home. As was mentioned in the article, the Rowan home was operated as a minimal care nursing facility by the State of West Virginia.

While walking through the property during these summertime visits, I could not help but see the immense possibilities that Sweet Springs had, many years after its glorious heyday. Although the interior had been "institutionalized," glimpses of past grandeur were visible everywhere. Enormous fireplaces and well-groomed lawns were just a small part of the excellence that once was Sweet Springs. One could almost see well-heeled families playing croquet in front of the hotel in the late 1800's. The place is magical.

Residents of West Virginia should be grateful that individuals like Warren Coleman step forward to save our treasures. It is my hope that whatever Mr. Coleman chooses to do with the property will be a success. Losing a special place like "Old Sweet" to time and deterioration should not be an option.
Clinton Burley

Coach Bill Weber

July 10, 2000
Beverly, West Virginia
Editor:
The article ["'Coach': A Visit with Bill Weber," Interview by Gene Ochsendorf; Summer 2000] as published doesn't reflect the fact that I returned to Tygarts Valley High School in 1946, along with R. W. Schoonover. Mr. Schoonover, who was at the time principal of Coalton High School, asked me to return with him to Tygarts Valley. I respected him and his discipline, so I followed him. I had been raised in the valley. I was born there. Those were happy years. I stayed there until my retirement in 1970 with a record of 282/144.

Coach Bill Weber. Photograph by Joe Blankenship.

During that time, I had some of my best teams — 1948, lost only one game; 1951, beat Elkins for the first time; 1952, beaten by Newel in the state semi-finals. 1954, 1955, 1960 — they were all outstanding teams. Made of good families — Cools, McCauleys, Currences, Sweckers, Carrs, Bartletts, Renfros, Markleys, Wamsleys, and Tacys.

Carl Tacy went on to coach at Marshall, then Wake Forest. In a 1977 interview with the *Winston-Salem Sentinel*, Tacy said, "Bill Weber was a father image, ...a genuine person. We are still very close. He is the first man I go to see when I go back home for a visit. We'll sit around and talk fishing while he ties flies. From my sophomore year in high school, I had coaching in mind. Bill Weber's influence certainly had a lot to do with it."

I am extremely sorry that the whole article, including my last 23 years of coaching at Tygarts Valley, was not published. I wish the entire expanded athletic program at Tygarts Valley continued success and a bright future in their new facility.

I also want to thank Gene Ochsendorf, John Lilly, and GOLDENSEAL magazine for their kindness and continued preservation of West Virginia history.
Sincerely,
Coach Bill Weber

Thanks for setting the record straight, Coach. My apologies to you and Tygarts Valley High School for shortchanging the latter portion of your long career. We appreciate your comments. —ed.

Fiddling Pheasants

May 15, 2000
Fairmont, West Virginia
Editor:
We were all pleased with your

The fiddling Pheasant family. From left, Rosa, John, Meredith, and Cathy. Photograph by Steve Rotsch.

article on the Fiddling Pheasants [see "The Fiddling Pheasants of Fairmont," by Torie Knight; Spring 2000]. Many of our friends and relatives have commented on it and ordered the publication to have a copy. Please give Torie Knight our thanks for a well-written article.

John's mother, Rose, is recovering from surgery and a broken hip. She's doing well. John is retiring from Fairmont State College this month. Cathy and Scott are looking forward to the birth of their first baby in early July.

Looking forward to future GOLDENSEAL issues.
Thanks again.
Louise Pheasant

June 2, 2000
Fairmont, West Virginia
Editor:
Well, a lot of folks from my area sure did enjoy the last GOLDENSEAL [Spring 2000]. I believe you should have gotten some new subscribers. It even went to church. The Pheasant lady comes from a large family, and most settled here. There are cousins by the dozen. Back a few generations, I'm related to them. Fine friends and neighbors.

Then, Carl Springer was a boyhood friend of my grandfather's. We all banked at his bank and were called by name when we walked in the door. It's gone now, and we are just a number — what a shame. So you see, you really hit Fairmont this time.

I made your '97 Winter issue with my *Bootstraps & Biscuits* book [see "Making Jam From Sour Grapes: Anna Lee Terry and Her Mountain Cookbook," by Mary Rodd Furbee]. I had never read your magazine before. I feel like I know you all well now.
Thank you,
Anna Lee Terry

Recalling Lena Kiser

June 13, 2000
Fort Gay, West Virginia
Editor:
I recently received a gift subscription to GOLDENSEAL. I really enjoy everything I read in the magazine. This all came about from a friendship I have with a

Lena Kiser. 1981 photograph by Doug Yarrow.

family who was featured in the January-March 1981 issue. The article was "To Marry a Soldier," by Bill Chambers — an interview he did with his grandmother, Lena Kiser.

I have been very blessed to become friends with Lena's children, one of whom was written about and pictured in that issue: Blanche Kiser Artis. Today, Blanche's health is very frail. I've been blessed to be a caregiver to her, enabling me to become friends with her sisters, one especially: Jerry Chambers. Jerry is the mother of author Bill Chambers.

I was given the 1981 issue by Jerry so that I could read about their mother and see the photos of Blanche. I enjoyed it so much that she and Blanche gave me a subscription. I just want your GOLDENSEAL readers to know that Lena Kiser's family are as special as she was. They are very friendly and very caring people. I am very fortunate to know them.

I really wish that our world today was as family-oriented as it was for Lena Kiser. I'm sure being a single mother in her time was very hard, but she kept her children and did the best she could. This world today doesn't know what it's like to have it hard, and I include myself. I just pray that I'm one-half the mother that Lena Kiser was. If so, I'm doing a good job with my children and have no regrets.
Sincerely,
Wilma Cook

Phoebe Snow Info?

May 15, 2000
Exmore, Virginia
Editor:
I am seeking the true story of Phoebe Snow. I have seen the name on railroad cars as the "Route of Phoebe Snow." I worked for a road construction contractor in Virginia named E. C. Bramham from Clarksburg in the mid-1930's, and he related to me this story about Phoebe Snow:

A large boulder had fallen on

Blacksville Pottery

July 17, 2000
Morgantown, West Virginia
Editor:
Enjoyed your article on Blacksville Pottery [see "Blacksville Pottery: Local Hands and Native Clay," by John Lilly; Spring 2000]. As a native of Blacksville, I threw a few pots and tea sets under the direction of Ed Richardson. I molded a little dog in junior high with Charles Tennant.

My oldest sister, Ruth Strosnider, retired in Blacksville and became a historian of the area. Some of your readers may know her book, *Strosniders In America*. Last week, as I went through her files, I found this super picture of Charles Tennant and his son with the famous tea set of Eleanor blue. I'm sure that Ruth would like you to have it at GOLDENSEAL as part of your permanent collection of photos.

Hope to see you on your fall bus trip.
Sincerely,
Joanna S. Nesselroad

What a thrill to have this picture of the founder of the Blacksville pottery program alongside his most celebrated work! Thank you for finding and sharing this wonderful image with us. We are looking forward to having you and Mr. Nesselroad with us once more for our bus trip, as we tour the Northern Panhandle this October. —ed.

Blacksville Pottery founder Charles Tennant and son Robert Tennant, with famous tea set made for Eleanor Roosevelt, late 1930's.

the railroad tracks across the river from Phoebe Snow's home and she knew a large coal train was due shortly. She swam across the river, ran far up the tracks, and managed to flag the train in time to prevent the wreck.

Perhaps some of your readers can supply the true story.
Very truly yours,
Ben Hawker

Subscription Renewal Mailbag

June 14, 2000
Halltown, West Virginia
The summer magazine was the best you have put out in a long time. I liked it very much.
Raymond Myers

June 20, 2000
Huntington, West Virginia
So sorry for the delay in payment. I was "downsized" last April, and my last renewal letter was in my desk at work. I love your publication! Please keep up the great work. Thanks.
Jay S. See

June 19, 2000
Akron, Ohio
This happens to be my favorite magazine that I receive. I look forward to getting it. It's a hard magazine to lay down and get to my chores. In December this year 2000, if God's willing and nothing happens, I am going to retire and am moving to Preston County. Keep up the good work and thanks.
Donald Funk

June 26, 2000
High Springs, Florida
I enjoy your magazine so very much. I lived in the Eastern Panhandle in Martinsburg, but I enjoy all the stories from all the counties. Keep up the good work.
Ruth Amos

Dr. Patrick Gainer

July 21, 2000
New York, New York
Editor:
After all this time, I immediately recognized Professor Patrick W. Gainer on your Summer 2000 cover [see also "Dr. Gainer: Folk Festival Founder," by Paul Gartner]. I was a student of his at WVU in the mid-1950's. Though a native West Virginian, much of his wisdom was initially lost on me, as I was more of a basketball player at the university than a student.

Dr. Patrick Gainer, at right, with Uncle Bud O'Dell. Photograph by Jack Cawthon.

Then one day, I must have been paying some attention in class, for I heard Dr. Gainer say, "You may not believe this, but our modern Appalachian speech is the nearest thing we have to Elizabethan English." I was hooked. I became an English major, and ever since, I have loved the folk music of West Virginia, the musicians and their instruments, and the warm and wonderful traditions they embody and represent.

I was very moved by the article, and I thank GOLDENSEAL for reminding me how remarkably fortunate I was to have Patrick Gainer as a teacher, nearly half-a-century ago.
With Gratitude,
Jim Brennan
WVU Class of 1957

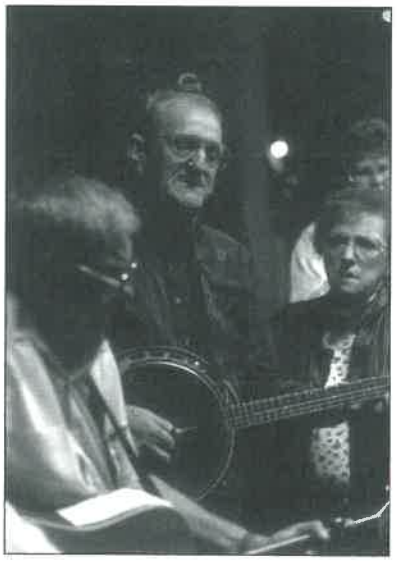
July 17, 2000
Morgantown, West Virginia
Editor:
The caption for the picture on page 59 of the Summer 2000 issue of Dr. Patrick Gainer making a recording of Uncle Bud O'Dell states, "Date and photographer unknown." The photo was taken by Jack Cawthon, well-known to readers of the *West Virginia Hillbilly* newspaper as the "Cawthon's Corner" columnist. During his student days at Glenville State in the mid-'50's, Cawthon was Dr. Gainer's regular photographer on the field trips he made into the mountains collecting folk tunes.

I once asked Jack if he drove for Dr. Gainer. He replied that no one drove that Studebaker but the owner — and there were times on some of the mountain roads when he wondered if the person in the driver's seat was driving or aviating, as they seem to bounce from one high spot to another.

Jack related that he was shooting pictures with the large No.22 flashbulbs — Army surplus. The night this picture was taken, after the recording session had ended and Jack had banged away with several powerful flashes, the old man said, "Boy, that lightning sure is fierce tonight." He had never been photographed by flash before.
Sincerely,
Carl B. Taylor
"Old Professor II" columnist,
West Virginia Hillbilly

State Folk Festival

June 8, 2000
Via e-mail
Editor:
On page 57 of the Summer 2000 issue, there is a picture of a gentleman and lady at the West Virginia State Folk Festival.



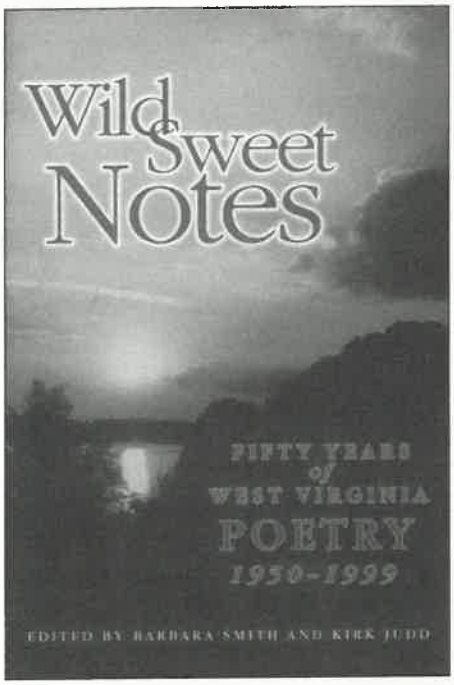
Mr. and Mrs. Rimer Kendall. Photograph by Devin Hartman.

Could these people be Mr. and Mrs. Rimer Kendall? Mr. Kendall is an ardent musician of Gilmer County. To me, this looks to be them in this picture.
Subscriber,
Virginia W. Buck

Thank you for that information. We are also pleased to learn that the 1999 spelling-bee winner pictured on page 56 of the summer issue is Michael Sink of French Creek, Upshur County. He won the spelling bee again this year. Congratulations, Michael. —ed.

Spelling-bee winner Michael Sink. Photograph by Devin Hartman.

New Books Available



Wild Sweet Notes: Fifty Years of West Virginia Poetry (1950-1999)
Edited by Barbara Smith and Kirk Judd

The first comprehensive anthology of poetry from the Mountain State is now available. Spanning five decades, the 418-page book contains the work of more than 130 poets, both living and deceased, from across the state. Many of these writers are familiar to GOLDENSEAL readers including co-editor Barbara Smith, who wrote the cover story for our Spring 2000 issue along with many other articles for GOLDENSEAL. Three of Barbara's poems are in the book.

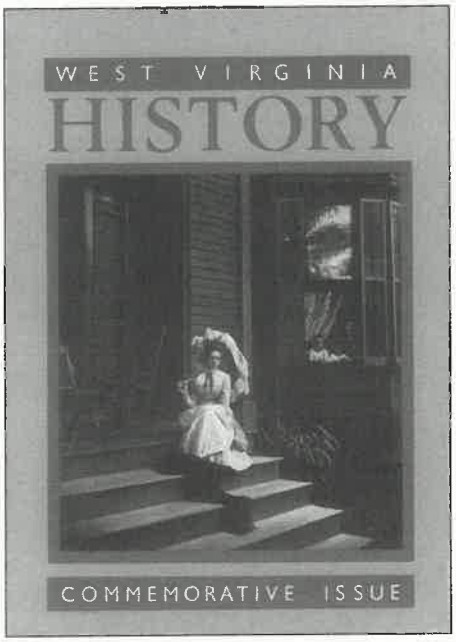
The book is published by Publishers Place, Inc., of Huntington. The hardbound edition costs $29.95; the paperback is $19.95. It is available in bookstores across the state or from the publisher by calling 1-800-394-6909 or (304)697-3236.

West Virginia History: Volume XLVII (1988)

The state's journal of history, biography, genealogy, and bibliography, published by the West Virginia State Archives, is well-known for its scholarly and authoritative articles.

This 1988 collectors' edition includes 146 pages of historic photographs taken from the files of the State Archives. While a few of these images have appeared in GOLDENSEAL or elsewhere, most of these rare photographs are published here for the first time.

Initially $12, the State Archives has now made this attractive publication available at the very attractive price of $3 per copy, plus $1.50 postage and handling, while supplies last. Send orders to West Virginia Archives and History, The Cultural Center, 1900 Kanawha Boulevard East, Charleston, WV 25305-0300, or call (304)558-0230.



Twentieth Century in Review

With the arrival of the year 2000, a number of commemorative books have been published by West Virginia newspapers.

Snapshots Of the 20th Century: A Photographic Look at the Past 100 Years in West Virginia is published by the *Charleston Gazette*. The 177 photographs and brief descriptions were selected by managing editor Rosalie Earle from the 312 "Snapshots of the 20th Century," which ran daily in the *Gazette* throughout 1999.

Profiles: West Virginians Who Made a Difference is another retrospective collection from the *Charleston Gazette*. These 50 brief biographies of newsmakers and historical figures from the last century were published weekly throughout 1999 in the *Sunday Gazette-Mail*.

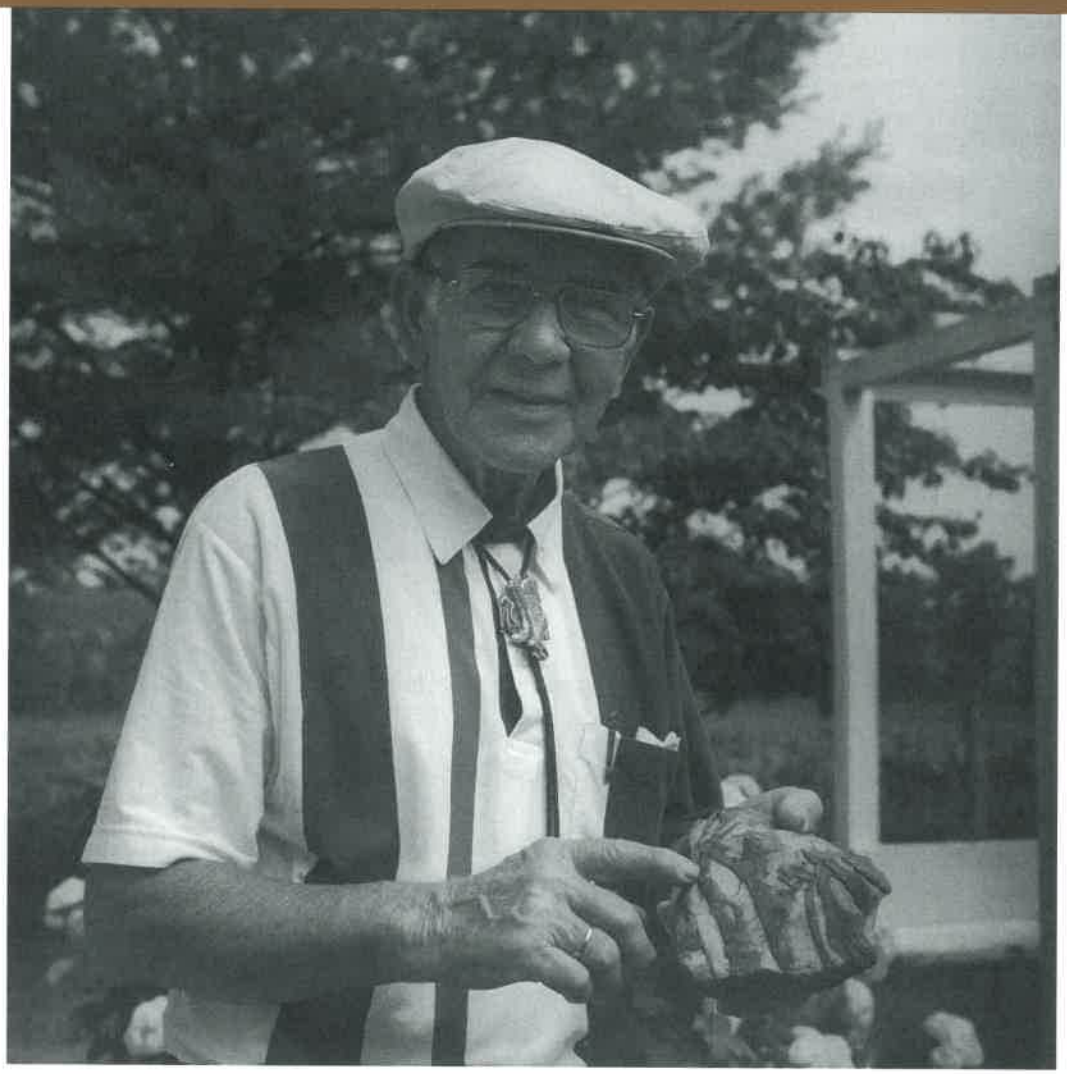
The two paper-bound books are available for $10 each, $18 for the pair, and all proceeds go to support *Gazette* Charities. Write to *Charleston Gazette*, 1001 Virginia Street East, Charleston, WV 25301, or call (304)348-5140.

Ohio Valley Memories recalls the last century in Wheeling and surrounding communities. It is published by *The Intelligencer* and *Wheeling News-Register* newspapers and features 128 pages of historic photographs with detailed and informative captions, compiled and edited by newspaper design editor Phyllis R. Sigal.

The handsome, hardbound volume is available for $39.95, plus $2.40 state sales tax and $4 shipping ($46.35 total), from *The Intelligencer/Wheeling News-Register*, 1500 Main Street, Wheeling, WV 26003; phone 1-800-852-5475.

Beauty In Rocks

By Carol Reece
Photographs by Bob Peak

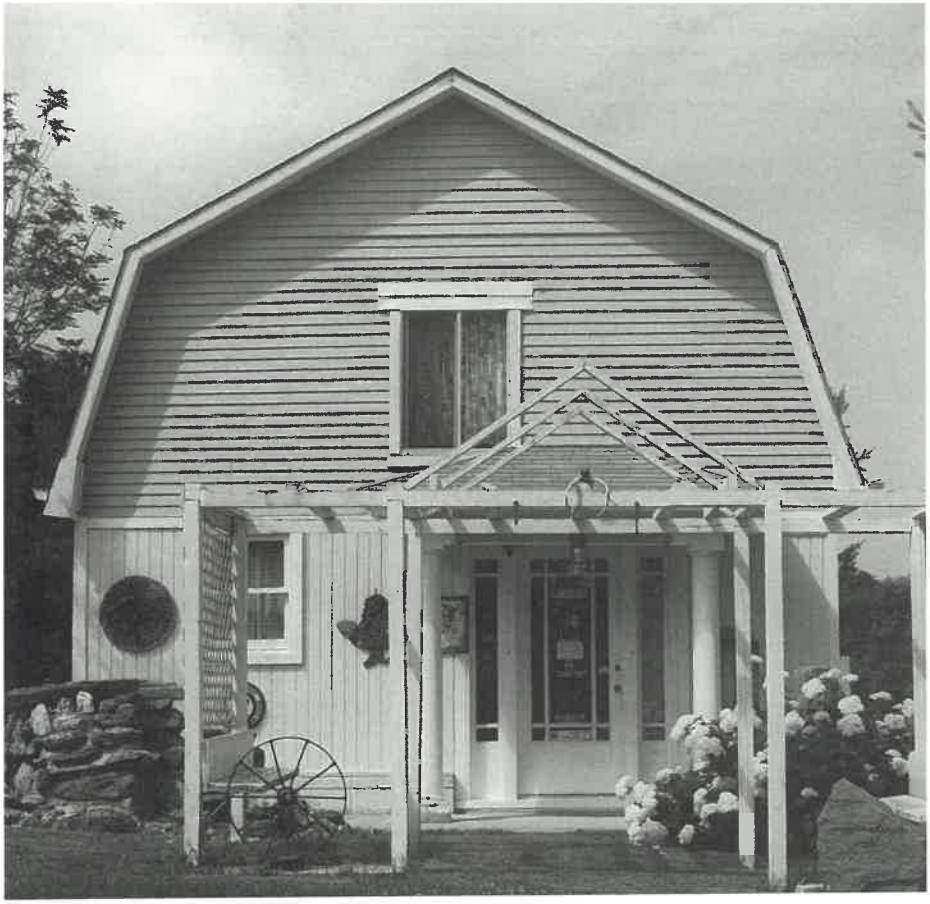


Earl Ellifritz from Rippon, Jefferson County, is an avid rock collector and a talented folk artist. Earl tells us that the dark streaks in this specimen "burn like coal."

Earl Ellifritz and His Museum

It is easy to miss the small town of Rippon, Jefferson County, if you are traveling on U.S. 340 between Charles Town and the Virginia line. It's even easier to miss the sign on the south end of town directing travelers to the Ellifritz Museum. At the end of the driveway is the home of Earl and Edith Ellifritz. Behind their neat, ranch-style home is a bright yellow, two-story museum dedicated to rocks and minerals.

I chanced upon the Ellifritz Museum when I was helping a friend to move. The museum's sign is adjacent to my friend's new home, and my curiosity was piqued when the landlord told me that the museum contained rocks and minerals.



The Ellifritz Museum is open from April till November, free of charge. For information, call (304)725-2816.

I have been a rockhound — someone who hunts for and collects rocks and minerals where they are found in nature — since I was old enough to walk and pick up pretty pebbles. It's not a genetically derived avocation, as no other member of my family is interested in rocks. So, it's always wonderful for me to meet other rock nuts who share my enthusiasm. I had to go and see what the Ellifritz Museum was all about.

What I discovered is a one-of-a-kind collection of rocks and minerals, found objects, and folk art which have been carefully gathered and are lovingly displayed. Museum curator, artist, and fellow rockhound Earl Ellifritz is the driving force here. He is a lively and friendly man in his mid-70's, and we quickly found much to talk about.

Retirement has afforded Earl the time to cater to his own passion for rocks. He started rockhounding as a boy of five. "I hunted barefoot in streams for shiny gold things," he says. "Since then, I always knowed that I'd find something — and I have been looking ever since."

One particular find changed Earl's life. "It happened around 1970, when we were fishing at Number Four Dam near Shepherdstown, Jefferson County," Earl says. "There was ice and snow, so I started back to my truck when I saw a fox go after a rabbit into the brush. I went in there to look and saw something sticking out of the snow and ice. The urge told me to dig it up. I said to my friends, 'This is what I was after.' I dug it up then, and brung it back to Indian Head, Maryland, where we lived while I worked at Naval Ordnance.

"It was kind of waiting for me to find it, and I wouldn't have if that fox hadn't gone after that rabbit."

"When I took it to work and washed it off, I noticed that the water was churning around the rock," Earl continues. "Then we sandblasted it, and we thought the sandblaster would blow up — it made so much light and color, the stone was so hard. Then we x-rayed it and found there were no holes in it — it was a solid 42 pounds. Later, I took it to the Smithsonian Institution, and it was eventually identified as solid beryl.

"It was kind of waiting for me to find it, and I wouldn't have if that fox hadn't gone after that rabbit. I didn't think it was beautiful, but I had this feeling that it was a rock I had to have. I felt that I had found what I was after. And that rock got me started in beauty in rock and making things."

The special 42-pound beryl crystal that Earl found while fishing started him on a new endeavor — crafting art objects using his rock and mineral finds along with other found and recycled objects. The crystal is now the focal point of a rock-encrusted TV sculpture. He removed the picture tube from an old cabinet TV and replaced it with the beryl crystal, bits and pieces of costume jewelry, small chunks of

Earl's unusual 42-pound beryl crystal is the centerpiece of this rock-encrusted TV sculpture. Earl has added to the sculpture over the years, and it is now on display in his museum. This photograph was made by Edwin A. Fitzpatrick in 1974.

various minerals, crushed rocks, and other found objects. It has a built-in light which illuminates the transparent minerals and faux gems. He has made two of these sculptures, and they are displayed in the museum.

Earl Ellifritz was born in Blaine, Mineral County, on July 7, 1925. His father Thomas was a coal miner. The family of nine later moved to Headsville, near Keyser, Mineral County, so that his father could work in the mines at Vendex, Maryland. They lived in a log house, but they later converted a stable to live in. The family cleared the land to farm. Earl recalls that they "farmed the land like the Indians did, by digging holes and dropping the seeds in."

They didn't have much money, so age seven found Earl picking berries for one cent a quart. Needing to work, Earl only completed the third grade. He hunted to help keep the family fed, often going coon hunting at night.

Earl's first adult job, at age 14, was helping to construct a rock building in Keyser behind Potomac State College. The job was part of a program of the National Youth Association that taught the stonemason's trade. "It was a tough trade," he remembers, "but I enjoyed it."

Earl's dad made moonshine out of wheat, corn, and barley. When he drank too much of it, he would go to a neighbor, Indian Kline, to get one of the medicines which the man made out of herbs and plants such as sassafras. Earl remembers that he used to find bottles in the junkyard and sell them to Indian Kline for use with his potions.

Earl worked as a stock boy for the Celanese Corporation near Cumberland, Maryland, before enlisting in the Army during World War II. He had 18 weeks of basic training. "That was rough," Earl remembers. He was in the 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment of the 82nd Airborne Division and made four combat jumps over Normandy, Ardennes, Rhineland, and central Europe. Earl suffered frostbite in Germany due to the snowy conditions when he and the soldiers had to lay on the cold ground for a long period of time. The pain and numbness made Earl think he had been shot.

Earl hit upon the idea for the museum after many years of bringing home booty from his rock-collecting trips.

After the war, Earl went back to the Celanese plant. There, in 1946, he met Edith Hyde who also worked at the plant. The two were married the following year; they now have three daughters, seven grandchildren, and five great-grandchildren.

Edith is from Mann's Choice, Pennsylvania. She says that she remembers "snow so deep, it covered the fence posts. There was eight in my family, and we walked to a one-room school. We was raised on a farm and never got candy, except at Christmas." They had a garden, though, and canned vegetables and deer meat.

Earl met Edith Hyde in 1946, and they were married the following year. Earl and Edith are shown here at about the time of their marriage. Photographers unknown.

Earl trained to be an electrician under the GI bill, and the couple moved to Baltimore, Maryland, where Earl worked at Bethlehem Steel. Later, he worked at the Allegheny Ballistic Laboratory in Pinto, Maryland, and for Naval Ordnance in Indian Head, Maryland. Though he worked away from West Virginia for some years, Earl says, "I always knowed I was coming back, because I'm a mountaineer man!"

Earl built their Rippon house himself — with help from his family — when he took an electrician's job at nearby Harpers Ferry Historical Park. A back injury there led to his early retirement. Earl is proud of the fact that, until the injury, "I always had a job, and now don't owe anything to anyone — not even a penny."

During the warm months — April to November — Earl hangs his museum sign out along U.S. 340, indicating that he is open. About 200 people a year make their way to the free museum for a tour. He advises people to call first to make sure he will be home.

Earl hit upon the idea for the museum after many years of bringing home booty from his rock-collecting trips. "I found I had so much stuff, and I wanted to share with boys and girls of all ages what they could do with pretty things they could find," he says. "I wanted people to know how I feel about rocks."

Earl is very handy. Edith believes that since Earl never learned to read that well, "he learned by doing, and made out alright." He has always liked to experiment and try different ways of doing things.

This is evident on the lawn leading to the museum, where large folk art sculptures made out of found objects and rocks are scattered about. One, which doubles as a light, is made out of the discarded first stage of a Polaris missile. A stone volcano serves as a holder for firecrackers on the Fourth of July. There's a massive stone barbecue, and a huge circular aquarium with built-in fountain, both made of hundreds of indi-

Earl perches on a ledge in the rock-built fountain he constructed in his backyard in 1976. Earl collected, transported, and placed each rock individually including the large boulder at the center — the largest rock he has ever collected.

Earl created "Mountaineer Man" by using different colors of crushed stone and pieces of deer antlers mounted on a wooden form. "Mountaineer Man" doubles as a scarecrow, watching over the Ellifritz vegetable patch.

vidually collected rocks and stones.

In the center of the lawn are several elaborate crushed-stone birdhouses on a pedestal. Behind that, a life-size "Mountaineer Man," also decorated with different colors of crushed rocks, stands watch over a well-kept garden. At the far edge of the property, quietly propped against a tree trunk, lies an old millstone.

Past a huge pile of hefty boulders and odd stones, is the entrance to his museum. Inside, all types of rocks and minerals are displayed on shelves and tables. It is easy to spend a couple of hours there.

He has a piece of petrified wood he found "below Franklin," examples of pure iron ore he collected close to Keyser, and hunks of black onyx. There is a chunk of silver which Earl melted out of a rock he found alongside a road in Keyser. Earl cut into it with his lapidary saw and says, "it looked like nails inside." He prizes a large, heavy specimen collected from Opequon Creek, near his home. He calls it a "star rock" and hints "that this might be a meteorite."

Earl is quick to point out that he approaches rocks and minerals "from a hobby way," for his own satisfaction.

The museum also contains an eclectic collection of other Ellifritz "finds" such as a plastic inflatable shark, a mural of a forest scene, paper party favors, glass bottles, and other oddities — proof of Earl's whimsical sense of humor, and his serious bug for collecting.

While certain museum displays are quite complex, Earl sometimes keeps his crafting simple by just painting a rock or mineral, or coating it with a glaze to make it shine. This actually mimics what the stone would look like if he had cut and polished it with lapidary equipment, as the technique brings out colors and patterns in the rocks.

Earl bought a few of his rock specimens from a lady in Hedgesville, Berkeley County, whose husband had been a rockhound and jewelry maker. Earl helped her sell off her husband's equipment and supplies. One rock he acquired at that time bends in the middle and then returns to its flat shape!

Most of the specimens in the museum and around his property, however, Earl collected himself. He's found what he calls "beautiful jade" around Harpers Ferry, but he warns that it is now illegal to pick up rocks from the national park. He has also searched for rock treasures along Opequon Creek in Jefferson County, the Hidden River area, and Cave Mountain below Franklin in Pendleton County. "From Keyser on up, the bigger the mountains, the more fossils you can find," he comments.

"You can find [rocks] just about any place," Earl says. "If there is a good little stream, I pick up ones with different shapes, colors, and weights. I pick them up and weigh them in my hand. Some little pieces can be heavy because they can be solid iron and lead. I have an idea what is in them when I open them up; I wouldn't carry them home otherwise," Earl says about his technique for rockhounding.

Earl is quick to point out that he approaches rocks and minerals "from a hobby way," for his own satisfaction. He says, "Science is good if a person wants to find out the name for something; it's okay. That's why I don't have the names on all the stuff in the museum."

Birdhouses by Earl Ellifritz.

Earl often comes up with his own names for things instead. Earl has a specimen in his museum that he calls "West Virginia Gold" because of the beautiful yellow needles inside. It is actually a variety of quartz known as rutilated quartz. Earl's "ruby" is really a translucent carnelian pebble.

"'Beauty in rocks' is my theme," says Earl, "so that's why I don't care about the names of things. If someone comes in and knows what they are doing if I don't, and he finds I have something precious, it makes no difference to me. Sometimes [the rocks] are even more beautiful inside, so I break them open."

Earl has developed a technique where he crushes rocks and minerals with a hammer, producing a coarse, pebbly material in an array of natural colors. After crushing, Earl strains the material. He then glues the stones to a board, ending up with rock-encrusted pictures.

These include a map of the world, valentines, Bart Simpson, depictions of Native Americans, the Ninja Turtles, and many versions of Batman. Many of these designs are hanging in the museum and decorate the exterior of the building.

Edith doesn't help Earl crush rock. She "has enough to do without it," she says. Nor does anyone else in the family. "But they want the pictures when they are finished, and they want them right now," says Earl. "When I want to borrow them back sometimes, they don't want to let them go."

"He's a good Indian giver," says Edith. "Kidding aside, Earl and I get along pretty good. We take care of each other. I think we have lasted so long because neither one wants to dominate the other."

"It's the best thing I ever done," Earl says, referring to his decision to marry Edith. "I have a wonderful family."

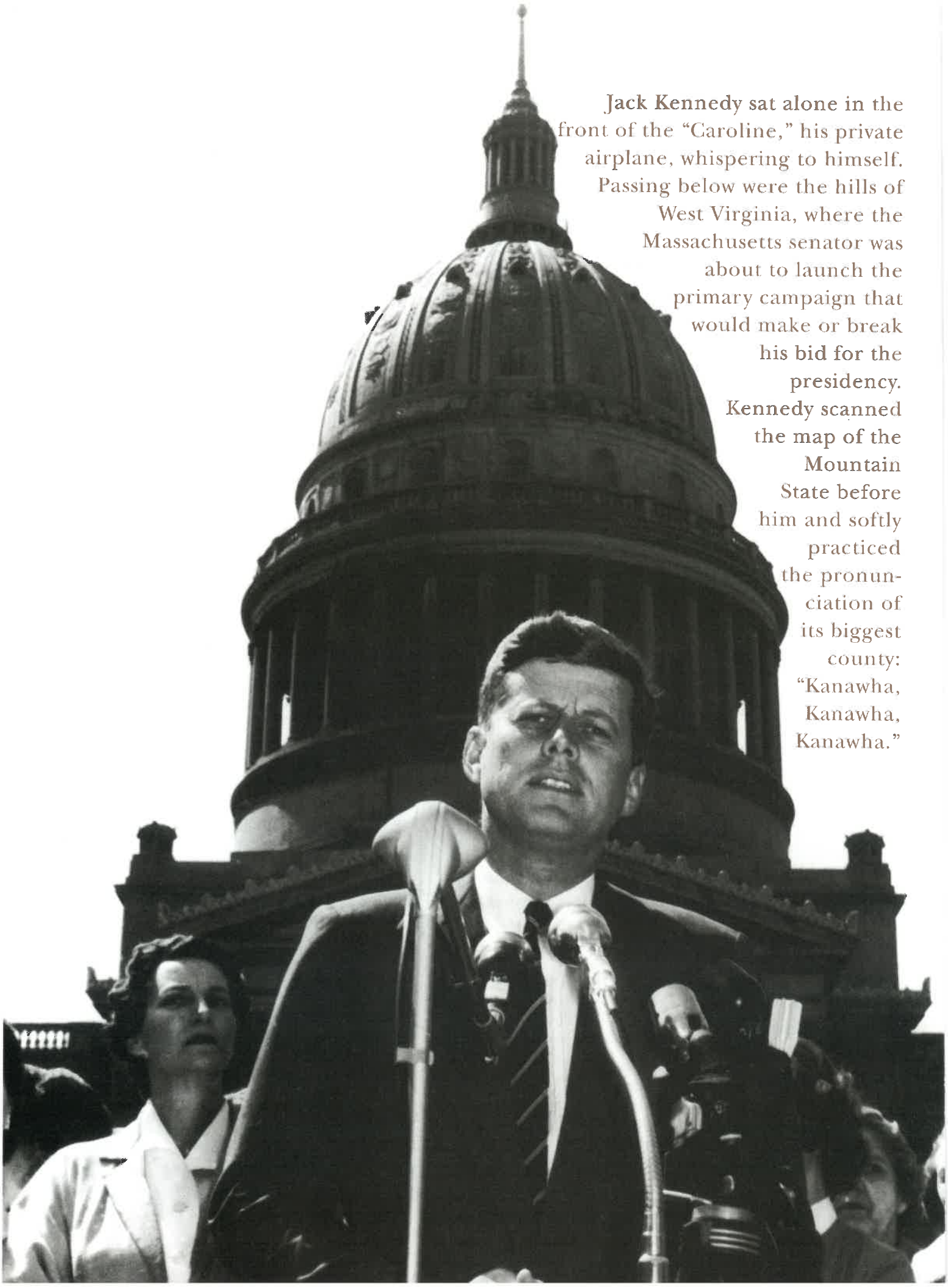
When Earl isn't busy with his rock art, museum, home repairs, or hunting, he volunteers his time. "I've been a volunteer for years and years," he says. He shows movies and slides at the senior center and at nursing homes in Jefferson County, and brings examples of rocks and his rock art to show to the residents.

Earl's attraction to rocks, and his ability to find beauty in common objects, is unusual. It's also inspirational, as indicated by the many enthusiastic comments left behind in the museum's guestbook. Once they have viewed the world through the eyes of Earl Ellifritz, these visitors see the earth as a more interesting and beautiful place.

Earl and Edith Ellifritz have been married for 53 years.

CAROL REECE is a native of New York who migrated to the Eastern Panhandle 25 years ago to enjoy the peace and quiet. She is a graduate of Hunter College with a degree in geology. Carol crafts metal jewelry and uses semiprecious stones in her designs. For the past two years, she has been a correspondent for *The Journal* in Martinsburg, contributing to the weekly "Neighbors" section. This is her first contribution to GOLDENSEAL.

BOB PEAK is a native of Annapolis, Maryland. He sold his graphic design studio in Washington, D.C., to travel the world on bicycle, chronicling the trip by photograph. He moved to Berkeley Springs in 1997. His photographs have been published in a variety of magazines including *Outdoor Explorer*, *West Virginia Bicycling Guide*, and *Adventure Cyclist*. This is his first contribution to GOLDENSEAL.



Jack Kennedy sat alone in the front of the "Caroline," his private airplane, whispering to himself. Passing below were the hills of West Virginia, where the Massachusetts senator was about to launch the primary campaign that would make or break his bid for the presidency. Kennedy scanned the map of the Mountain State before him and softly practiced the pronunciation of its biggest county: "Kanawha, Kanawha, Kanawha."

Kennedy In West Virginia

By Topper Sherwood

As he flew into West Virginia that spring of 1960, Kennedy was desperately in need of victory. His most visible opponent was Senator Hubert H. Humphrey of Minnesota, but as usual, most of the action was happening behind the scenes. Kennedy would eventually win the West Virginia primary, not just on personal charm — although this, too, was important — but on his campaign team's understanding of old-time mountain politics. West Virginia's politics were — and are — strongly based on what one historian has called its "oral political culture," established by local candidates and their supporters working on a "face-to-face, friends-and-neighbors basis."

West Virginia Secretary of State, A. James Manchin, introduces JFK to a crowd in Parkersburg in 1960. Wood County Democratic Party chairman Bill Richardson is at left. Photograph by Harry Barnett.

This is a world that John Kennedy understood very well. His grandfather, John F. "Honey Fitz" Fitzgerald, had been a bare-knuckles contender in the rough-and-tumble world of Boston politics. And his father, Joe Kennedy, was legendary for his political maneuvering during and after the Franklin D. Roosevelt administration. Wood County industrialist Robert McDonough, who coordinated the Kennedy campaign in West Virginia, called JFK "the smartest politician in the crew."

"He knew politics," McDonough told the John F. Kennedy Memorial Library in a 1964 interview. "He knew public relations, [and] he knew a way to get at people. His knowledge and methods were superior to any of his associates — and he had some mighty qualified and experienced associates."

Although also an influential Democrat in Washington, Hubert

Left: John F. Kennedy speaking at the West Virginia State Capitol. ***Charleston Gazette*** photograph courtesy of John F. Kennedy Memorial Library.

Candidate Hubert H. Humphrey and wife Muriel at a campaign stop in West Virginia. Photograph courtesy of West Virginia State Archives, photographer and date unknown.

Humphrey didn't control the following or the resources in West Virginia that Jack Kennedy eventually enjoyed. A former mayor of Minneapolis and an early supporter of civil rights, Humphrey was an aggressive campaigner whose down-home approach drew some support from working people. At the same time, however, his comparisons between rural West Virginians and Minnesota farmers struck some people as patronizing. One Eastern Panhandle journalist disdainfully remembered Humphrey telling a relatively prosperous crowd in Martinsburg, "I'll see [to it] that your old grandpappy doesn't go to the poor house!"

Although his family and friends were anything but working class, Kennedy could boast his own pro-union voting record. His speeches also reflected a strong awareness of the fact that more than 55,000 coal-mining jobs — about 40 percent of the total — had disappeared from the Mountain State between 1948 and 1957.

For his part, Humphrey tried to contrast West Virginia's economic troubles with the lifestyle and resources enjoyed by JFK, his family, and his wealthy circle of friends. "We are operating on Humphrey's energy and Humphrey's ability to campaign," the candidate from Minnesota said, "not on other people's money."

Hubert Humphrey had something else going for him. He was the frontman — albeit a reluctant one — for an extremely powerful group of anti-Kennedy Democrats led by house majority leader and presidential hopeful Lyndon Johnson. JFK's national campaign manager, Larry O'Brien, later confessed his amazement at the fact that Johnson and other national Democrats never really got their campaigns off the ground, even to the point of announcing their candidacies. They did, however, support Hubert Humphrey as a kind of last-minute "stop Kennedy" straw man.

"I kept waiting for the opposition to show up, but it never did," O'Brien wrote. "Kennedy's opponents had placed their hopes elsewhere. Johnson and [U.S. Senator Stuart] Symington were counting on political leaders [who] they thought could deliver their states [at the convention]. ...It always amazed me how other politicians underestimated Kennedy."

The local fight began in earnest as the Kennedy plane landed in Charleston on Monday, April 11. What followed were 30 days of whirlwind campaigning. Kennedy covered as much ground as he could during the four-week campaign, making and canceling appointments on the spot. Humphrey apparently did the same. According to historian and author Dan Fleming, "By the second week of the campaign, both Humphrey and Kennedy were crisscrossing the state like ants

Cartoon by Kendall Vintroux, April 12, 1960, courtesy of *Charleston Gazette*.

John Kennedy greets steelworkers in Huntington, April 11, 1960. Photograph by Tom Hamer, courtesy of *The Herald-Dispatch*.

foraging for crumbs."

Both candidates campaigned in West Virginia on the strength of their records in congress. Both had supported the Area Redevelopment Bill, calling for improvements in rural infrastructure and education, which had languished under Dwight Eisenhower's administration. But Kennedy spoke earnestly with a variety of listeners — from coal miners to garden clubbers — about such topics as the loss of jobs to automation, improving the state's ability to attract more defense contracts, and finding new uses and markets for West Virginia coal.

"[We could] ship American coal [overseas] and sell it cheaper [than we do now]," he told a group of miners at Slab Fork in Raleigh County. "But [foreign governments] refuse to take it in. They put up trade barriers against it. ...I think the State Department and the influence of the presidency have to be used to persuade them to accept American coal."

The biggest popular issue in the West Virginia campaign, however, wasn't related to labor, economics, or party politics, but to Kennedy's religion. Many Democrats had their doubts that a Roman Catholic could be a viable presidential candidate, least of all for the strong-willed Democratic voters of the Mountain State, where Protestants outnumbered Catholics 20-1. Kennedy's most paranoid opponents suggested that the federal government would be "ruled from Rome." The candidate tackled the issue early and head-on.

"I'm a Catholic," he told a crowd of several hundred gathered on the steps of Charleston's post office. "But the fact that I was born a Catholic, ...does that mean that I can't be President of the United States? I'm able to serve in congress, and my brother was able to give his life for this country [in World War II], but we can't be president?"

Robert McDonough was among

Kennedy speaks to a group of patients on the steps of the Huntington Regional Veterans Administration Center, April 25, 1960. Photograph by H. Eplion, courtesy of *The Herald-Dispatch*.

JFK paying his bill at the Smokehouse Restaurant in Logan. Owner Albert Klele, Sr., is at right; waitress at center is unidentified. Kennedy held many of his campaign press conferences at this popular "watering hole." Photograph courtesy of Frank Barker.

that crowd, and later said that he could actually feel Kennedy's audience changing its attitude toward the candidate during the speech. Kennedy made an even more eloquent statement during a televised debate with Humphrey, in which hundreds of viewers must have been similarly swayed.

"When any man stands on the steps of the capitol," Kennedy said, "and takes the oath of office of president, he is swearing to support the separation of church and state; he puts one hand on the Bible and raises the other hand to God as he takes the oath. And if he breaks his oath, he is not only committing a crime against the constitution, ...he is committing a sin against God."

An apron-wearing garment worker shakes hands with a future president during Kennedy's 1960 visit to a Huntington garment factory. Photographer unknown, courtesy of *The Herald-Dispatch*.

This candor was a different kind of political asset which Kennedy brought to bear in West Virginia, an asset that attracted financial backing, volunteers, organizational clout, and huge crowds. As a result, Kennedy's well-organized campaign was able to effectively distribute hundreds of thousands of stickers, cards, buttons, brochures — even reprints of a *Reader's Digest* magazine story highlighting the candidate's heroic World War II experience.

As the May 10 primary approached, the race became hotter. West Virginia's most seasoned mountain politicians were quick to realize that they had better get on board the Kennedy bandwagon. Faction leader Raymond Chafin, Democratic Party chairman in Logan County at the time, controlled votes and organized his own local slate of candidates, many of whom were against Kennedy. In his autobiography, Chafin describes the process of changing his mind about the Massachusetts senator:

"Our candidates were out there just blasting away at Kennedy," Chafin says. "He was getting popular, though, so our people were turning a lot of folks against themselves."

Chafin realized that John Kennedy had become increasingly popular among Logan County voters, making his faction's official support for Hubert Humphrey increasingly risky. Chafin admired Kennedy and his organization, and he secretly pledged his support.

"Imagine how hard this was for me, how complicated it was!" says the former Logan boss. "All my top candidates, who didn't really like each other very much, had one thing in common: They were all for Hubert Humphrey. And here I was, committed to helping the other fellow win!"

Chafin, like other local politi-

John Kennedy and brother Ted greet well-wishers in a Parkersburg receiving line. Many members of JFK's immediate family, other relatives, and close family associates played active roles in the candidate's West Virginia campaign. Photograph by Harry Barnett.

cians, decided to throw his machine's support behind Kennedy and used his influence to deliver large blocks of votes to the candidate on May 10. In exchange, JFK's industrialist friends made sure Chafin and other bosses had "plenty to work with" on election day, including political and financial support for their candidates from some of the most powerful industries in the region. Money from Kennedy supporters was officially used to hire election-day drivers and other poll "volunteers." Chafin asserts, however, that the money was also used to buy votes, a longtime mountain practice. In many cases, Chafin claims, local factions were able to control election officers who were working inside the polling places.

"Those boys in each house [precinct] are known as the 'Lever Brothers,'" one Logan Countian told *Life* magazine at the time. "And, man, on election day, they play the levers in those voting machines like 'Auld Lang Syne!'"

To local leaders, the Kennedy larder — supported by father Joe Kennedy's national fund-raising — seemed to be bottomless. Larry O'Brien later said that about $100,000 was spent to get Kennedy's name on West Virginia's most powerful slates. That figure is apparently low: Chafin says he alone accepted more than $35,000 from the future president's friends who apparently didn't blink at offering such figures to well-placed politicians.

Humphrey's own cash resources had long since petered out, forcing him to hammer away at his opponent's use of money in the campaign. "I can't afford to run around this state with a little black bag and a checkbook," he complained. "I can't buy an election."

O'Brien later said that any Kennedy funds given to local campaigns were "legitimate." Still, the issue of whether Kennedy "bought" the election has stayed alive for years. Chafin is quick to come to Kennedy's defense, insisting that the candidate's charisma — not his cash — is what attracted voters, forcing local politicians to get on board.

By election day, the political tension in the hills of West Virginia could almost be tasted. Kennedy was doubtful of victory, Humphrey was exhausted, and many mountaineers were wishing the whole thing would just go away. With all the behind-the-scenes maneuvering, almost everyone — including the *Wall Street Journal*, the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* newspapers — failed to apprehend Kennedy's grassroots popularity in the Mountain State. The national press largely ignored evidence to the contrary and predicted a Humphrey win.

"The press must have been really dumb," said former Governor W.W. Barron in a 1985 interview with author Dan Fleming. "If they had talked with the people and listened, they would have known Kennedy would win easily."

The thought was echoed by Wheeling *News Register* editor Harry Hamm, who said members of the media "talked

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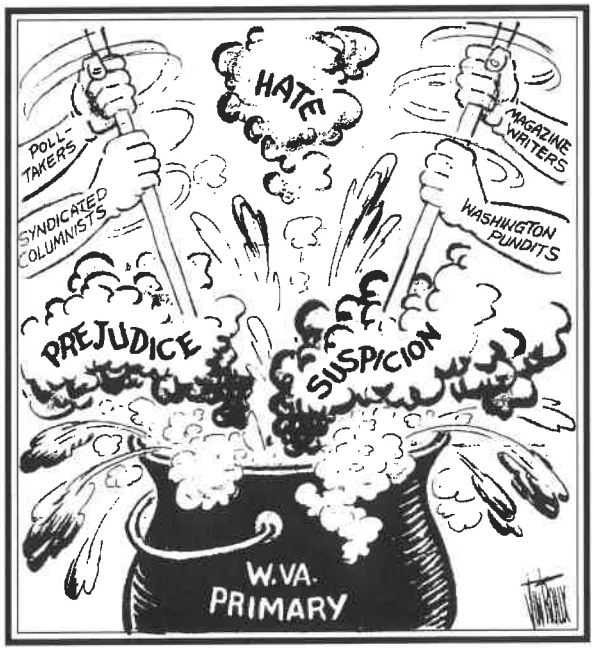


Cartoon by Kendall Vintroux, April 12, 1960, courtesy of *Charleston Gazette*.

Ken Hechler on JFK

Interview by John Lilly

West Virginia Secretary of State Ken Hechler was a young U.S. Representative in the spring of 1960, running his first campaign for re-election. A bright and energetic Democrat from West Virginia, he provided local information and research materials to both John F. Kennedy and Hubert H. Humphrey during their 1960 Democratic presidential primary campaigns. He also found himself caught up in the whirlwind of political activity and media attention which surrounded their do-or-die battle in the Mountain State. We spoke with Secretary Hechler recently about those days. —ed.

Ken Hechler. That was a very exciting time in West Virginia politics, and it resulted, I think, in the highest turnout of voters before or ever since.

John Lilly. Why do you think that was?

KH. Both Kennedy and Humphrey were very charismatic figures in a different way: Humphrey as a speaker, and Kennedy as a personality. They inspired a lot of young people to participate and take part in the political process. They don't have exciting role models today like they did in those days, or the kind of inspiration which was provided by both of those speakers.

I noticed one thing about Kennedy that really impressed me with his organization, as well as his personality. Whenever he'd be out shaking hands, he'd have a young lady with a stenographic notebook right with him. Just as soon as he shook hands with somebody, this young lady had that person's name and address and also some personal material. And within 24 hours, why, he or she would get a personally-autographed letter from Kennedy, which not only expressed pleasure at the opportunity of meeting that person, but also added enough personal material so that it made it much more than a form letter. This, of course, had a great impression.

Humphrey did not have the same kind of staff or the same kind of organization. I'll give you an illustration. I was serving in congress at that time, and I was so close to both Kennedy and Humphrey. Humphrey, as a matter of fact, had publicly endorsed me and written some letters on my behalf the first time I ran for congress in the primary, which was an unusual thing. And naturally, he sort of expected that I would do the same for him when he was in this tough primary. But, I told both Humphrey and Kennedy that I was going to help both of them with research materials, introduce them when needed, and give them both equal amounts of advice.

So one evening down in Beckley in Raleigh County, I had just attended a rally at the courthouse. Senator Kennedy said to me, "Now, I have an extra seat on the plane going back to Washington, if you'd like to ride back. I know you have to get back to congress tomorrow." So he said, "We're going to have a little meeting at 8:00 p.m. in the airport conference room in Beckley airport." And he said, "You're certainly welcome to come and attend that meeting, too." What impressed me about that meeting was that promptly at 8:00 p.m., into one door came Bob Kennedy, another door Ted Kennedy, another door Sargent Shriver. All the relatives and organizers came in. They had been in separate sections of the state. Without saying hello — they hadn't seen each other for quite a while — they started right off, "Well, here's what we need in Martinsburg. Here's what we need in Huntington. Here's what we need in Wheeling." It was almost like a well-oiled machine, like a well-rehearsed drama, the way that this unfolded. And there was very little argument. It was mainly presentation, what needed to be done specifically in terms of issues and personalities in each of these areas.

The very next night, I was with Humphrey in

West Virginia Secretary of State Ken Hechler, today. Photograph by Michael Keller.

Boone County in Madison. As we were going up the elevator to the ballroom where Humphrey was to speak, he sort of plaintively turned to one of his aides, a fellow named Bob Barry. He said, "Bob, do we have a table for our literature up there?" And the sharp contrast between the organization and the support staff of the Kennedy campaign and the fact that Humphrey had to ask whether or not they had a table for the literature, it became apparent that Kennedy's organization was superior.

JL. Why do you think the campaign got so much national attention?

KH. I think the religious issue was the big thing, because many of the national media felt that since West Virginia was 95% Protestant, we would follow the practice that we had recorded in 1928 when we refused to back Alfred E. Smith, who was running for president, because of his Catholicism. Of course, there was a tremendous lot of personal difference between Al Smith and John F. Kennedy. John F. Kennedy looked like an average person, whereas Al Smith looked like an Eastside New Yorker and spoke like an Eastside New Yorker. Kennedy's Boston accent never seemed to hurt him here in West Virginia.

JL. Why do you think Kennedy's success here was so pivotal? It was just one of many primaries, and one in which there weren't a lot of delegates at stake.

KH. It was a religious issue.

JL. If he could win on the religious issue here, that would be seen as an harbinger of his future success?

"It was [JFK's] personality, charisma, organization, and focusing on the issues that really interested West Virginians."

KH. That's correct. The fact that so many people had predicted that he wouldn't win here, and he was able to beat the odds, that was sensational in terms of national exposure and national attention. A lot of people say that he bought the election, yet it was far more than money. It was his personality, charisma, organization, and focusing on the issues that really interested West Virginians.

JL. What were some of those issues? Do you recall?

KH. Minimum wage was certainly one and, of course, the whole issue of poverty and what could be done to bolster the economy. He put a lot of emphasis on jobs and the economy. But he talked mainly about leadership and the importance of leadership in the presidency — the same type of issues that had motivated Franklin D. Roosevelt, Harry Truman, and others down through the Democratic years. To get America moving again. This was a contrast with the relative inactivity of the Eisenhower administration preceding him.

JL. Is it fair to say that you were influenced by John Kennedy?

KH. Oh, clearly, he was a big influence on me, particularly in terms of his interest in young people and the way in which he was able to inspire and excite young people to take part in politics. That's always been part of my effort in politics is to try to ensure that high school and college students have an opportunity, and also to listen to their hopes and their dreams and their goals. Many politicians don't do this because of the fact that they figure young people don't vote in as large a percentage.

I could never match the kind of charisma which Kennedy had, but I could certainly try to emulate his inspiration to young people.

U.S. Representative Ken Hechler shakes hands with President John F. Kennedy on the steps of the White House in about 1962. Photographer unknown, courtesy of Ken Hechler.

A big crowd turned out for this Kennedy rally in downtown Hinton, Summers County. Photograph courtesy of John F. Kennedy Memorial Library.

Continued from page 19.
to the wrong people, ...talked too much to themselves, and didn't go out in the field."

Little wonder, then, that Kennedy's own campaign leaders developed doubts of their own. At the last minute, Lou Harris was giving his employer's chances as "50-50," and Kennedy himself ended the West Virginia campaign by flying back to Washington to face what he thought would be defeat.

A close bond developed between John F. Kennedy and the people of West Virginia during his 1960 presidential primary campaign, a bond which continued throughout his presidency. ***Charleston Gazette*** photograph, courtesy of John F. Kennedy Memorial Library.

On primary day, however, the voters gave Kennedy a landslide victory of more than 84,000 votes over his opponent. Hubert Humphrey immediately withdrew from the national race.

"There isn't doubt in my mind," Kennedy said later, "that West Virginia really nominated the Democratic presidential candidate."

Once president, John Kennedy never forgot his debt to Mountaineers. Soon after he took office, West Virginia began reaping the benefits of federal aid for highways, building construction, and other projects. Black lung — then known as "miner's asthma" — was attacked as a serious health issue. The Kennedy administration's food-stamp program was tested in McDowell County, where

When voices are raised in the halls of government, it usually means that a heated debate is in progress over some burning political issue. On the floor of the West Virginia State Legislature, however, voices are also raised in sweet gospel harmony as the Singing Doorkeepers spread their message of faith and goodwill. For the past several years, House of Delegates' doorkeepers Ray Kinder, Clifford Napier, and Gerald "Parky" Parkins have joined with West Virginia State Senate doorkeeper Bill Pauley to create one of the most unique and powerful voices in state government — a gospel quartet.

Dressed in dignified suit coats and ties, the four singers work each day when the legislature is in session, quietly fulfilling their many duties as doorkeepers, such as distributing materials to the lawmakers before each session begins or manning the entryways into the legislative chambers while the sessions are in progress.

Baritone singer Cliff Napier has been doing this work for more than 10 years; it keeps him busy during the winter months while things are slow on his Wayne County farm. Tenor singer Bill Pauley, the mayor of Marmet, began doorkeeping on the senate side about seven years ago. Bill soon phoned his old friend and singing partner Ray Kinder, a retiree from the Libby Owens glass plant. Ray tells the story in his rolling bass voice:

"Bill called me one day. I was at the house — I wasn't doing anything. I said, 'What are you doing?'

"He said, 'I'm down here doorkeepin' for the senate.'

"I said, 'What's that?'

"He told me, and he said, 'Why don't you come down and get a job?'

"'Are you crazy?' I said, 'I don't want to work!' It was wintertime, so I said, 'Well, go get me an application, and you fill it out for me, see? You fill it out, take it over, and turn it in.' A day or two went by, and they called me at the house.

"They said, 'I thought you was comin' to work as a doorkeeper.'

"I said, 'Nobody ever did tell me!' It was about 10:00 then.

"They said, 'Yeah, we hired you.' I run and took a shower, put on my suit, and went down there. I been there ever since."

With Ray under the capitol dome, it didn't take long for the music to begin. One day, Ray, Bill, Cliff, and some others began singing for fun while relaxing on a bench in the lobby of the capitol. Before they knew it, 20 or 30 people gathered around them and began singing, starting a tradition of impromptu gospel music which has become a part of daily life at the state capitol during each legislative session.

Guitarist and lead singer Parky Parkins was soon brought to the House of Delegates. They became known as the Singing Doorkeepers and are now a frequent sight — and sound — throughout the state capitol. Several times each session, they sing on the floor of the senate or in the house chamber. More often, though, they sing in various offices around the building, down in the lunchroom, in the governor's office, or in any available hallway, nook, or cranny they can find. One way or another, they sing every day. As a result, they have developed a tight and polished sound one might not expect from a casual "pick-up" group of state co-workers.

There is another reason for their smooth blend and close harmony. Ray Kinder and Bill Pauley are lifelong friends who have been singing together for more than 50 years. Ray and Bill were neighbors growing up in the Ashford community in Boone County; they attended church together at the Mahone Chapel near Brushton. The pair sang together in choirs and casual groups for years before putting together the Happy Valley Boys quartet in 1950 along with two other local singers: Junior Spencer and Handley Barker.

When they first started out, the Happy Valley Boys knew only three songs including the classic, "Peace In the Valley." Ray recalls, "Someone over here at the Methodist church at Hernshaw bought us four green ties. I nevjer will forget that.

Bass singer Ray Kinder. Ray is the leader of the group, and is a doorkeeper for the House of Delegates.

Left: The Singing Doorkeepers harmonize on the floor of the West Virginia House of Delegates chamber. They are, from left, Ray Kinder, Cliff Napier, Bill Pauley, and Parky Parkins.

The Happy Valley Boys quartet in 1955 wearing their first suits. Pictured, left to right, are Ray Kinder, Bill Pauley, Aaron "Junior" Pettry, and Handley Barker. Photographer unknown, courtesy of Ray Kinder.

We wore those green ties with our white shirts, and we went to Logan at the old field house. They had a sing there." Many of the biggest names in gospel music were there at Logan that night including Wally Fowler, the Oak Ridge Quartet, the Florida Boys, and others.

"We had our three songs," Ray recalls with a laugh.

"And they got up and sang one of them!" Bill adds.

The Happy Valley Boys took the stage as planned, however, with their green ties and their three songs. They made a big impression, and they soon became one of the most respected and popular gospel quartets in the area. The group performed with the Swanee River Boys on television out of Huntington, won a televised talent competition, and frequently participated in revivals, church meetings, funerals, and gospel sings far and wide.

Ray and Bill were young men at the time; Bill was about 17 years old, and Ray was barely 20. "I worked at Libby Owens," Ray recalls. "I remember I'd come home of the evening, and Bill would be standin' at the head of the holler — big blonde-headed boy — waitin' to sing. We sang about every night. We loved it."

"We sang till the roosters crowed," Bill says.

"Yeah. On Fridays, if we had the money, my wife would run over here to Charleston and she'd get a roll of baloney. A whole roll. She'd put it on the table, stick that knife in it, and say, 'Go for it, boys!' Hey! Times was tough!" Ray says, laughing. "One time, [Bill] said, 'Listen. I'm gettin' tired of baloney. Can't you get something else?' I said, 'Hey! How about try and bring something!'"

Ray and Bill both laugh loudly at the memory of those lean years. They are obviously close friends, as evidenced by their good-natured ribbing and the relish with which they recall their many years of fun together.

When he was young, Bill lived in Brushton and worked at the Armco mines in Nellis. He remained a coal miner for 23 years while running several other businesses, too. "I expect I've run about five service stations, two or three restaurants — on the side," Bill recalls. He eventually came to Marmet and rented an American Oil service station, now the site of the local Sunoco station. "I rented that station and bought it," Bill says. "I rented a little house across the street. I used to sit on the porch and wait for a car to come in, back when things were slow, you know. I run that for quite a while, on the side. I still worked in the mines.

"Well, some of them asked me if I'd run for [city] council. I said, 'Well, I don't know. I might.' I got more votes than anyone! I got 615 votes. That's more than any of them got. More than the mayor or any of them. I was on the council [for a] couple of terms, and they asked me to run for mayor. So I run, and here I am," he says modestly. Bill has been the mayor of Marmet for the

Tenor singer Bill Pauley is a West Virginia State Senate doorkeeper. He also serves as the mayor of Marmet, a position he has held for the past 18 years.

past 18 years.

By the mid-1960's, the Happy Valley Boys were a well-established musical group with a record album and a long list of performance dates to their credit. Their reputation preceded them up the hills and hollers as they traveled throughout West Virginia performing at churches and revivals anywhere they were invited to sing. They usually received no money for these performances other than an occasional pass-the-hat offering to cover their expenses. Sometimes, they even donated this money back to the church.

In 1968, young Parky Parkins had just returned from military service in Vietnam. He attended his Grandfather Kirk's funeral where the Happy Valley Boys were singing. Already familiar with the group through their recordings, this was Parky's first opportunity to hear them sing in person. He was impressed.

"They really done a job on it," Parky says. "You couldn't beat it." The young musician became an admirer of Ray and Bill's group and eventually became friends with them. Parky was active in the local gospel music community, playing guitar in a number of quartets over the years, and occasionally singing. He frequently ran into Ray and Bill at various music gatherings, and the two older singers developed an appreciation of Parky's talent.

Parky is a retired diesel mechanic. He worked at Mack Trucks for 15 years, Smith Transfer for 11 years, and Carolina Freight for six years. He even worked as a mechanic for Bill Pauley for two years at one of Bill's service stations. "I finally got 30 years in the teamsters union and took '30 and out,' as they call it," Parky says. Shortly after his retirement, he got an offer from Ray and Bill to officially join their quartet. "Then I got in a different business — singin' in churches. It's a lot better business, to me," Parky says with a smile.

Parky's contribution to the group is considerable. He sings the melody on most numbers and supports the group with his simple, yet impressive, guitar playing. He also has an extensive repertoire of fine gospel songs which he teaches to the other group members at their weekly rehearsals.

Practice usually takes place either at Marmet City Hall where Bill has an office, or at Ray's home in Kanawha City. Though the song lyrics are usually written down, the men work out their harmonies and arrangements entirely by ear, rather than learning from printed sheet music.

Young Bill Pauley driving the Happy Valley Boys' lime-green VW microbus in 1966. Photographer unknown, courtesy of Bill Pauley.

The Happy Valley Boys released this LP recording in 1960 on the Charleston-based Christian Workshop label. The album is currently out of print.

Lead singer and guitarist Gerald "Parky" Parkins is a retired diesel mechanic and a doorkeeper for the House of Delegates.

"It doesn't take long to figure out the key," Bill says, noting that each member "sounds out" his own part. They enjoy singing many of the old, traditional hymns such as "In the Garden" and "Church In the Wildwood," along with some newer songs which they learn from other quartets and recordings. Aside from a little early experimentation with barbershop quartet singing, the group has always devoted itself exclusively to gospel music.

They are known as the Singing Doorkeepers around the state capitol during the legislative session, yet they still perform as the Happy Valley Boys during most of the year when they appear at revivals and churches. Lately, they have also been using the name Happy Valley Four. As Ray explains, "We're trying to get away from that 'boy' stuff. We were boys when we started, but now we're thinking about using the Happy Valley Four." There is even some talk of recording a new cassette tape as the Doormen's Quartet.

The name isn't too important to these fellows, however. What is important — and abundantly clear — is the friendship and pleasure they experience from singing together. It's easy to get them started, and hard to get them to stop, as one good song leads to another. Listeners get caught up in their enthusiasm, too.

"It's the feeling — the feeling of God's peace. That's what it's all about," Bill explains. The message behind the music is their motivation and their reward. "As much as we enjoy it, we feel like the people around us enjoy it," Bill says. "That little girl who answers the telephone in the governor's office, she asked us to come in there and sing her a song. We sang her a couple of

Baritone singer Cliff Napier was the first of the group to begin work as a legislative doorkeeper, a position he took 10 years ago for the House of Delegates. He originally took the job "just to keep busy" during the slow winter months on his Wayne County farm. These days, however, Cliff says that singing with the Doorkeepers is one of the most rewarding aspects of his job at the state capitol.

them. Tears were running down her cheeks. That makes you feel good to know that someone has got a blessing out of that singing. That makes it all worthwhile."

"We've sung for payroll clerks, and cooks in the cafeteria, and one of the delegates at his retirement party," Parky adds, noting that they seldom sing at openly political gatherings such as campaign events. Theirs is a different mission. "We prefer to sing at churches, or to get a little gospel music in the capitol where it's never heard that much," Parky says. "Maybe you get to sing a little gospel music for somebody down there that might not ever get to hear it anywhere else. We're not in it to be political singers, really. We do it for them 'cause we work down there. Just to get a little gospel down in the capitol, that's what we do it for."

Their message is very well-received within those marble halls, much to the group's delight. "I believe these old-timers didn't mean to separate God out of our government," Bill says, referring to the authors of the U.S. Constitution. "You take God out of anything, it's dead. You put God first, and everything else will work out for the best."

The Singing Doorkeepers are proud to live in a state where there is a strong Christian ethic, and they believe that these values play an important role in keeping things on the right track. According to Parky, "Maybe our government's not perfect, but it's better than everybody else's. I was over in Vietnam a year, and I don't think I wanted to stay. I was glad to come back to them old West Virginia hills."

The infectious quality of their music helps to make their message appealing to some people who might not otherwise accept such openly religious sentiments. The Doorkeepers have sometimes led the entire state legislature in songs of praise. "They seem like they just let go and have a good time," Parky says.

"We sang that 'Many Mansions' down there for old A.J. [Manchin]," Bill recalls. "He shouted all over the place. He just lost it! He said 'That's right! In my Father's house *are* many mansions!' Of course, he meant 'Manchins!'"

These days, along the sometimes-contentious shores of the Great Kanawha River, the sounds of government are a little more harmonious thanks to the Singing Doorkeepers.

JOHN LILLY is editor of GOLDENSEAL magazine.

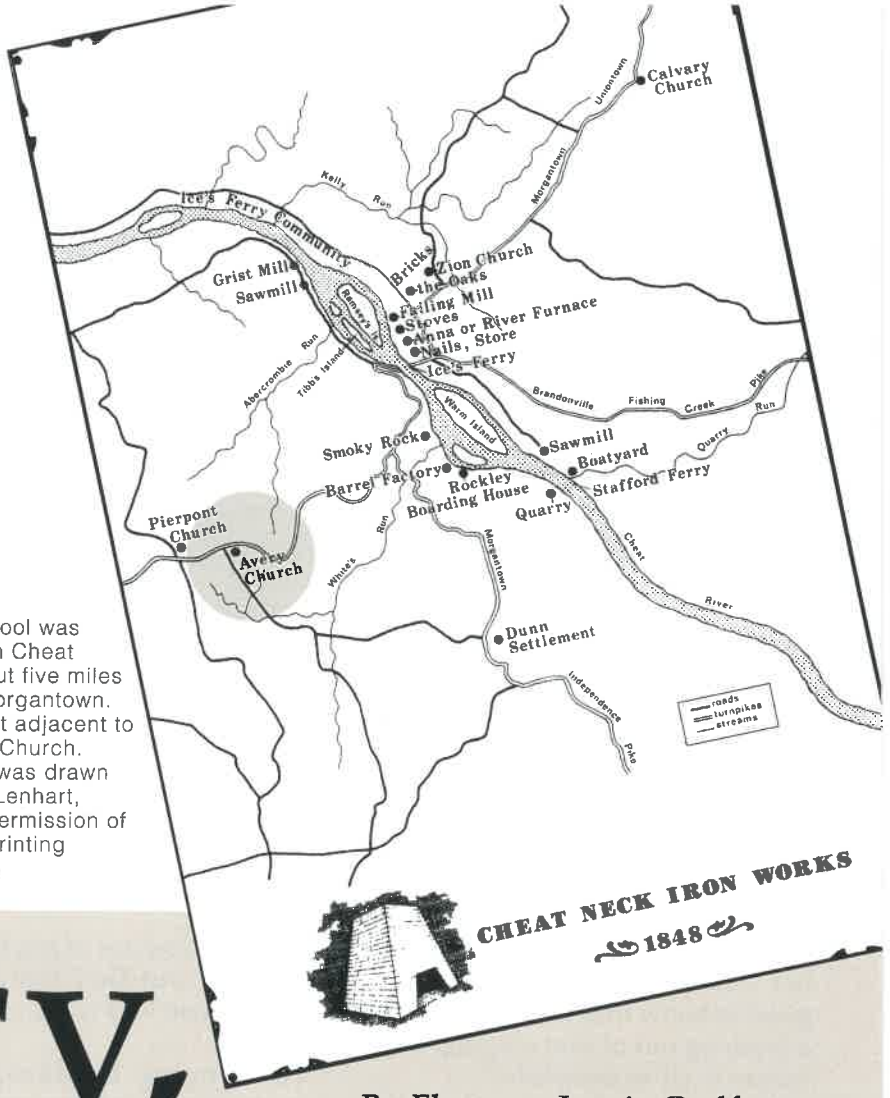
Ray Kinder and Bill Pauley join hands during one of their songs. The two lifelong friends have been singing together for more than 50 years. Cliff Napier is at center; guitarist Parky Parkins' hand is barely visible at bottom right.

"Avery, Dear Avery"

By Florence Lewis Godfrey

In my one-room school, there were many subjects I had not encountered by the time I had finished eighth grade. We had one book per subject, and research skills were not emphasized. Families provided their own books and some students may not have had the required texts. We had no baseball team, no marching band, no choir, and no school nurse. No principal's office, either.

There were limitations in attending a small school. But in pondering my early education, I feel that I gained pride in my state and my country and respect for authority. I learned to read and study in the midst of turmoil. I learned the importance of cooperation with a group, and I gained enough independence to develop as an individual.



Avery School was located on Cheat Road about five miles west of Morgantown. It was built adjacent to the Avery Church. This map was drawn by Diane Lenhart, used by permission of McClain Printing Company.

Avery School was on Cheat Road about five miles east of Morgantown, in rural Monongalia County. It was near the Avery Methodist Protestant Church on a flat stretch of land just beyond Pierpoint Hill. The road continued down another two or three miles past the school to Cheat River. After the State Line Dam was completed in 1926, this section of the river became known as Cheat Lake.

A path led from the road to the wooden building of Avery School. Inside the door was a cloakroom that extended to the restrooms on each side. A double door led into the classroom. Near the entrance on the right was a pot-bellied stove. Beside the stove was a coal scuttle, shovel, and poker. The coal supply was in a small shed outside. In wet weather, boots and "artics" were rested against the narrow shelf around the stove's bottom to allow them to dry.

On each side of the building were large windows with small panes. The glass contained chicken wire for protection against breakage. No shades or curtains were used. Two or three electric lights hung from the ceiling. The wooden floor was stained dark from frequent oiling.

Students' desks were on either side of the single aisle up the middle of the room leading to the teacher's desk, which was at the front of the classroom. Desks for the six-year-olds were small. All other desks were wide enough for two students and were attached to the floor by their heavy metal frames. Along the back of each desk top was a flat surface with a groove to hold pencils. Each younger pupil had a small slate for writing practice and arithmetic problems.

A blackboard extended the width of the building behind the teacher's desk. The bottom of the board was

convenient for a small child's reach; the top was almost to the ceiling. In front of the blackboard was a platform which stretched across the room. In one corner was a chair where a student might be forced to sit as a form of punishment. An American flag was in the other corner.

At the back of the classroom in the left corner was the library: a lone bookcase containing supplementary reading for some courses, a dictionary, and a set of books about American history.

I attended Avery School from September 1923 to March 1930.

School started the day after Labor Day each year and ended around Decoration Day — as May 30 was called — and in time for my birthday — which is still on May 29. Daily hours were probably 8:00 a.m. to 2:45 p.m., allowing for eight periods of 45 minutes each and two recess periods of 15 minutes.

Total enrollment was 30 to 35, grades one through eight. Each grade had four to six pupils. In my first grade, there were eight, as I recall, but in the eighth grade, there were only three of us. It was an indigenous student body. No minorities, immigrants, or other cultural or religious groups were represented. There were no special classes, no part-time students, no extra sessions for any reason. Most of the fathers were farmers or coal miners. My guess is that 75 percent of the students went on to finish high school, and 10 percent of those finished college or other training such as business school or technical courses.

I attended Avery School from September 1923 to March 1930.

Somehow, the teacher managed all eight grades at once. We did many activities together. She often read books and stories to the whole school. Penmanship was also practiced as a group. We made rows and rows of symbols in time to marching music played on the Victrola.

We did lots of memorizing. As a group or class-by-class, we learned multiplication tables, state capitols, and the counties of West Virginia. As individuals and in group recitation, we learned many poems. I recall "Hats Off: The Flag Is Passing By," "The Concord Hymn," "The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere," "Aye, Tear Her Tattered Ensign Down (Old Ironsides)," several Christmas poems, and parts of "Hiawatha." At my brother's instigation, I memorized the names of U.S. Presidents, and this helped me in many history exams.

We learned many songs. Teacher

The one-room Avery School in rural Monongalia County was in use from the 1800's until 1940. There is now a church parking lot at the former school site. This undated photograph of the school is from ***Easton-Avery Community History 1963***, by Ivan C. Owen.

The four Lewis children in 1927. They are, from left, Will, Eugene, author Florence, and Rose Ellen. All four children attended Avery School. This photograph was taken by their father, Arthur E. Lewis, courtesy of the author.

tooted the first note on a little pipe and we sang, lustily, without accompaniment, "America, the Beautiful," "Battle Hymn of the Republic," "Carry Me Back to Old Virginny," "Listen To the Mockingbird," "My Country, 'Tis of Thee," "O Columbia, the Gem of the Ocean," "Oh, My Darling Clementine," "Star Spangled Banner," "Yankee Doodle," and, of course, "The West Virginia Hills."

Our school song was written to the tune of "Maryland, My Maryland," by the students and teachers during my early years at the school. All I remember now are these significant lines:

"We all do love our teacher, dear./ She is the one who taught last year./ We come to school to learn and play,/ ...Avery, dear Avery."

Opening exercises each morning started with the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag. The teacher read a passage from the Bible, and then we sang a song or two.

The daily schedule was arranged so that while one class was having a lesson, the other students worked on projects or read from one of their textbooks. Sometimes I would read a book with my seatmate. Each of us waited until both had read a page before it could be turned. While we raced to finish the page,

We had to identify breeds of domestic animals and learn good farming practices such as crop rotation and seed preparation. This was the only "science" that I had in grade school.

I wonder if we absorbed its meaning.

Of all my assignments, those written arithmetic problems gave me the most trouble. "Would you add, multiply, or divide?" was my constant puzzle. I tried adding all the figures in the problem, subtracting them, dividing one by another, and would hope to come up with the answer in the back of the book. My mother teased me about these questions I had, saying "J'add?"

An agricultural course was required in the eighth grade. We had to identify breeds of domestic animals and learn good farming practices such as crop rotation and seed preparation. This was the only "science" that I had in grade school.

For geography class, we made maps and booklets. We pasted bits of coal and other products on a map of West Virginia. What a chore it was to fit all the countries of Europe on a sheet of paper using different colors of construction paper! Our booklets were probably similar to those prepared nowadays by young people except that we had to draw most of the pictures or the maps we needed. This could be done freehand or with tracing paper over a book's page. The teacher showed us how to hold a picture up to the window to copy it on another piece of paper. No photocopies for a dime in the 1920's!

A study of West Virginia history was required in the fourth or fifth grade. We learned how West Virginia became a state and something about famous people who came from the state.

When I started to school, I was six years old and in the first grade. There was no kindergarten or nursery school in the Avery community. My brother taught me to read. When he started to school two years ahead of me, he would bring home his reading book to show me what he had learned that day. I would ask him the words and learned to read right along with him. By the

time I entered school, I had already read the textbook and was, therefore, pushed from first grade to second grade during my first year. As a result, I was a year or two behind my classmates physically, socially, and emotionally all the way through high school.

Every Friday, we had programs by the students. I remember standing before the others and reciting poetry. I was a bit pretentious in my first three or four years of school, then I became very shy for several years when teachers were ever nudging me to "recite more."

Almost everyone belonged to the 4-H club, with its cooking or sewing projects for the girls and gardening or farm projects for the boys. Our teacher conducted the meetings. The county agent visited us now and then. The incentive for us to complete our projects was the promise of a week's summer camping at Jackson's Mill in Lewis County, still the state headquarters of the 4-H club. [See "Head, Heart, Hands and Health: The West Virginia 4-H Movement," by Michael M. Meador; Summer 1984.]

STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT OF FREE SCHOOLS
ELEMENTARY DIPLOMA TEST

HISTORY
April 10-11, 1930
Friday, 1:45-3:15 P. M.

1. Why did Europeans leave their homes and come to the American wilderness to live?
2. a. Why did the Articles of Confederation fail?
   b. What problems confronted the Constitutional convention when they met in Philadelphia in 1787?
3. What is a tariff? For what two purposes are tariffs levied in our country? What is the distinction, if any, between the terms "tariff" and "duty."
5. Why are the following battles considered important?
   a. Concord and Lexington
   b. Bunker Hill
   c. Trenton
   d. Saratoga
   e. Yorktown
6. Write a short paragraph on the Declaration of Independence, using the following outline:— (1) When adopted; (2) Where; (3) By whom written and signed.
7. Is it probable that West Virginia would have become a state without the Civil War? Explain your answer.
8. Explain the difference in the development of this country east of the Mississippi and that west of the Mississippi, considering the following phases of development;—area, population, large cities, number of railroads, and nature of products.
9. Mention at least three sources from which to get information about personal or events other than that given in your history textbook.
10. Give an account of one of the following:—
    1. Early settlers in West Virginia
    2. Blennerhassett Island
    3. Battle of Point Pleasant
    4. Salt Industry of West Virginia
    5. The Mound Builders.

Graduating eighth grade was no easy task in 1930. Students were required to pass a battery of tests including this challenging history exam.

We had Christmas programs at the school and at the church. The audiences were the same in both places. I remember one eighth-grade girl dressed in white, with cheesecloth draped from her arms, who did a pantomime to "Silent Night." It was beautiful! Later, while I was still young, she died and went on to become a real angel. At least, that was the attitude expressed in the community.

Frequently, we trooped down the road and into the woods for nature study. Teacher told us about trees and bushes, some of the animals we might see, and the wild berries that were edible. We were warned about the mine cave-ins and about snakebites. Most of us were without any protection from the weather or extremes in temperature. We just went as we were. We did not worry about any danger from a walk in the woods. Once a man went with us. The rumor was that he was the teacher's boyfriend.

Recess periods at our school were wild and noisy. Young children played hopscotch and tag. We did not jump rope in groups, but individual girls had jumping ropes and showed off their tricks and endurance. The boys played marbles. There was a large ring worn into the dirt for this game.

Teacher organized, coached, drilled, and participated in games for the whole group. One game was called Ante-Over the Schoolhouse. Last year, I found it in an encyclopedia. What a surprise! I always thought it was named for a student named Andy.

Other popular games were Run, Sheep, Run; Red Light; Drop the Handkerchief; Dodgeball; Prisoner's Base; and Shinny On Your Own Side. I did not find "Shinny" in game encyclopedias. In this game, there were two opponents, each armed with a broomstick pole. Between them was a tin can. The can was to be hit with the poles and it was quite a contest to see who would get it to the goal line first. This game caused many bruised and battered shins, hit by both the tin can and the poles. The game was initiated by the boys, but the girls played it, too.

In the wintertime, we played tag inside the building. One person put the name of another on the board. That person then chased the first one. If the first one could outrun

Teacher Mildred Hancock, back left, taught this group of Avery School students during the 1932-'33 school year. Eugene Lewis, our author's younger brother, is third from the left on the front row. Photograph by Commercial Studio, Morgantown.

the pursuer, he erased the name and wrote another name on the board. This kept everyone busy during snowstorms, almost the only reason we did not go outside for recess.

Accident victims were at the mercy of the teacher or families living nearby, since the nearest hospital was at least five miles away. Once, when I was no more than eight or nine, I was pursued by a group who were daring one of the boys to kiss me. I ran, but they bumped me against the corner of the building. For years I had a scar under my chin where I was cut and bleeding. Did the boy plant a hurried kiss on my face anyway? I don't know. I did run to the teacher dripping of blood. She probably bathed my wound, and the incident passed without comment.

As a little child, I was afraid of the big boys. When I was nine years old, one of the eighth-grade boys told me with great aplomb that he knew about "once every month." I sensed that this was something I should treat as a secret, but I did not know what he was talking about. I ran from his presence then, and ran whenever I saw him after that, for fear that he would say some other "bad thing" to me.

The county health agent, Dr. Farrier, came to the school to provide immunization against smallpox, typhoid, and diphtheria. Many parents would not permit their children to have the shots for fear that they would be harmful. Some children were simply kept out of school on those days.

Teachers could be sweet and friendly. They also meted out punishment in a firm manner.

It was the philosophy of the times to treat all students alike. If someone was mistreated, he could tell the teacher his problems, but she would mediate the dispute or take sides according to her own personality and attitudes. I remember a brother and sister whom the teacher chose to humiliate rather than to help. She sometimes led the students in making fun of them. Perhaps she was trying to shame them into getting cleaned up to come to school, but it seemed to me that she scolded them unnecessarily. I hope they survived their childhood and went on to better things.

Teachers could be sweet and friendly. They also meted out punishment in a firm manner. A ruler was used freely to crack the hand of anyone who did not obey them. Miss Genevieve Mason of Morgantown was my teacher until fourth grade. Miss Carrie Hartley and Miss Jeannette Hoard were teachers from my fifth to eighth grade. I met Miss Mason in the 1940's and was surprised at how young she was. As my teacher, she must have been less than 21 years old.

A great deal was expected of these young women. They worked alone. The county school superintendent

stopped by now and then, but for the most part, the teacher was in charge. She had to know all the basic subjects, be nurse, cook, recreational leader, psychologist, disciplinarian, and keeper of the coal fire. Being a role model was unspecified, but it was expected. Teachers had many restrictions on their personal as well as their professional lives.

Once, two substitute teachers had trouble controlling the classroom. My brother, in a spirit of daring and fun, prepared a tiny sign. It was framed with a copper wire which was twisted to form a handle beneath it. Behind the teachers' backs, he held it up for all to see and then furtively passed it to another student. This person passed it on. I think he got away with it. A little success. The note read, "It is a waste of time, soap, money, and labor for those teachers to be here."

The P.T.A. sponsored programs, festivals, and box socials. The school building was used for community gatherings before the Easton-Avery Community Building was erected in about 1927. This was a mile or so down the road toward town and about halfway between the two communities. There had been some friendly rivalry between Avery and Easton, and the new building tended to link the two sections into one community.

The general store was almost a mile down the road, but rarely did a child have pocket money. The daring of smoking a cigarette had not yet arrived at the elementary school level, and there was no alcoholism or drug abuse. Many families had hunting rifles at home, but the idea of using guns for threats or retaliation apparently never occurred to anyone. Even the naughtiest students had respect for the authority of the teacher. Teen pregnancies may have occurred, but that information was all hush-hush.

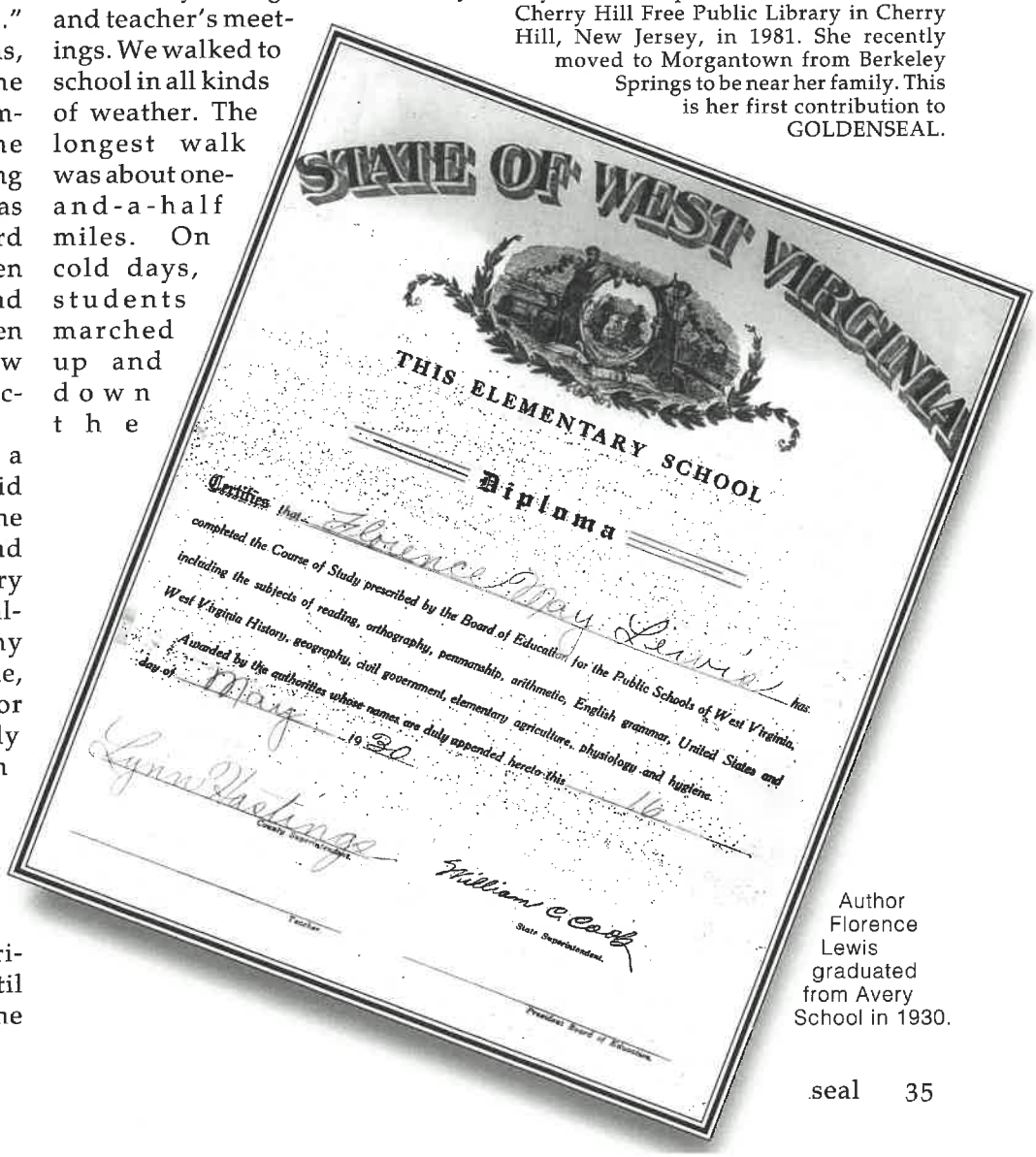
We were taught to be superpatriots, but I did not realize this until patriotism became an issue in the 1950's. As a child, I was taught that America did not need any other country and someone not of "our kind" was looked upon with suspicion. These may have been my family's attitudes, but they were also reflected in the school and in the community.

There were two churches: a Methodist Protestant and a Methodist Episcopal. I did not understand the difference between the two. Anyone who went to church was a Methodist. This was our world. China and Africa — even England — were as inaccessible as the moon. Nobody I knew even contemplated a trip across the country, much less across the ocean. The travelers we knew went to Pittsburgh, or maybe New York.

No buses ran on our road and few families had cars. School was closed only for legal holidays and teacher's meetings. We walked to school in all kinds of weather. The longest walk was about one-and-a-half miles. On cold days, students marched up and down the aisles to get warm. If some pupils were over-chilled, teacher would dip their hands in and out of water. Very few were absent because of the weather. Who would want to miss a day?

Whatever was lacking in my early education does not matter now. What remains is a happy glow of childhood and friendships, few though they were, that continued through the years. That community and family feeling is one aspect of American life that has almost faded into the past. Now, my memories will fade into the past as I get on with living in the present.

FLORENCE LEWIS GODFREY was born in Fairmont. When she was six years old, her family moved to Avery where she attended Avery School. Florence received her bachelor's degree in journalism from West Virginia University and her master's degree in library science from Drexel University in Philadelphia. She retired from the Cherry Hill Free Public Library in Cherry Hill, New Jersey, in 1981. She recently moved to Morgantown from Berkeley Springs to be near her family. This is her first contribution to GOLDENSEAL.


STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA

THIS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Diploma

Certifies that Florence May Lewis has completed the Course of Study prescribed by the Board of Education for the Public Schools of West Virginia, including the subjects of reading, orthography, penmanship, arithmetic, English grammar, United States and West Virginia History, geography, civil government, elementary agriculture, physiology and hygiene.

Awarded by the authorities whose names are duly appended hereto this 16 day of May 1930

Lyra Hastings
County Superintendent

William C. Cobb
State Superintendent

Teacher

President Board of Education

Author Florence Lewis graduated from Avery School in 1930.

In Harrison County, Fred Layman is often thought of as "The Keeper of the Culture." He is a devoted collector of anything related to regional history and is a walking textbook of local information.

Fred

Fred Layman collects anything related to Clarksburg or Harrison County history. He is shown here with his red, 1950 Chevy truck on Victory Lane at Veterans Day activities in 1999. Photograph by Norman Julian.

Fred is a cheerful man of average stature, nimble of body and mind. When you are around him, you never hear a discouraging word. Instead, he'll fill your ear with poignant stories and anecdotes, many of them delivered with humor and a twinkle of the eye.

Fred was born 72 years ago in rural Harrison County and grew up on the Sheriff Moore M. Reynolds farm known as "Hill Girt Farm." After living at the farm for 23 years, he married Peggy Lantz in 1953 and, for the first time, "lived in a home with indoor plumbing."

Fred and Peggy's home in Clarksburg is filled with his historical collections. There are scrap-

"Pretty soon, I was collecting anything I came across."

books full of it, chests of drawers of it, filing cabinets, desks, bookshelves, walls, entire rooms of it. He has collected so much that the valuables have spilled over into his garage and several outbuildings. He gets most of his collectable items from auctions, especially estate auctions, flea markets, and yard sales.

For many years, Fred was in a unique position to collect the culture of the county when he worked at the Harrison County courthouse from 1947 until his retirement in 1987. During his first years on the job, he was an elevator operator going between floors and hearing

Layman Saves It All

By Norman Julian

stories. Fred would eventually inform generations by telling anecdotes gathered through years of listening. He was later the building engineer for 26 years. He was also Harrison County Civil Defense Director for four years and a member of the Harrison County Emergency Squad for 10 years.

Fred was perfect for his various jobs. He is handy, but he has people skills, too. He's friendly, outgoing, likes to meet with old friends and make new ones. "So far as I know, I like all good Harrison Countians," he says, that eye twinkling. Nor has he ever met any piece of pertinent memorabilia of Harrison County that he didn't covet.

Tour his home today, and you will find it like a museum. Fred credits his high school English teacher, Helen Davisson Holden, with starting him down the collecting path. "She said we were living in historical times with the war just over and President Roosevelt dying," Fred recalls. "She urged me to start saving newspapers and anything about World II and other historical events. I started then and just kept on doing it. I'd get interested in first one area — like the newspapers — and then in something else — like matchbook covers. Pretty soon, I was collecting anything I came across."

Fred graduated in 1946 from Victory High School, and at ceremonies held there last Veteran's Day, he was named the first Outstanding Alumnus. Victory High School is better remembered in Fred's home — and brain — than anywhere else. Fred notes that the catchment area for the high school included the communities of Adamston, Arlington, Big Rock Camp, Catfish, Chiefton, Crooked Run, Despard (later Summit Park), Dawmont, Edgewood, Eris, Flag Run, Glen Falls, Glenwood Hill, Gore, Hepzibah, Katy Lick, Liberty Addition, Little Rock Camp, McIntyre, North View, Perry Mine, Reynolds Siding, Reynoldsville, Sardis, Whiteman Addition, Wilsonburg, and Ziezing.

William Layman, Fred's father, was a surveyor and bookkeeper for Dawson Mine Coal for 39 years. He is at the center of this 1920 photograph, flanked by two unidentified coworkers. Photograph courtesy of Fred Layman.

Victory has a proud history of athletic excellence having won state basketball titles in 1933 and 1941. Though the school had several undefeated football teams, it never won a title because playoffs weren't in vogue. Back then, only two teams were chosen to play for the title. It was a judgment call as to who got to go, and those teams with perfect records who didn't get selected felt cheated.

Victory drew athletes from strong native stock; many of these young men and women were used to working on local farms. Others were the offspring of European immigrants who worked in the

A smiling Fred Layman, at right, during his first month on the job as an elevator operator at the Harrison County Courthouse in July 1947. Fred worked at the courthouse for the next 40 years. He is shown with coworker Orley Fittro.

county's mines and factories. "We got along," says Fred of the ethnic mix. Through the years, Victory High provided a place for people to work out their differences in a way that taught true Americanism. When integration began in the 1950's, there were no problems. This writer was there.

In the spring of 1998, Fred established Victory Lane on the front lawn of the old high school. To date, he has taken orders for 1,700 bricks, each commemorating a student at the high school. In the last year, the walkway began to recognize "businesses that Victory students patronized throughout the history of the school," Fred says. "From leftover profits from the sale of the individual bricks, we financed bricks that recognize 160 county businesses."

As a courthouse maven, Fred collected old election ballots. One from 1908 includes not only Democratic and Republican picks, but Socialist, Independence League, and Prohibition candidates, as well.

Old photos have been an obsession for Fred. He likes to collect pictures of identical sites; only the dates change. Some of his memorabilia dates to 1780, and he has photos dating back to before the Civil War. Fred has taken pains to photograph every car he has ever owned, and the horse he rode before that. "I've been going over a 1914 photograph with a magnifying glass," Fred says, "and I can't find a car in there anywhere."

"Going over things" is a way of life with Fred, who perpetually examines his holdings. He is a neat person and the orderly array speaks loads about his work habits. In the winter, he relaxes in his two-stall garage, where a TV, radio, and Burnside stove are installed. His three-quarter-ton, red 1950 Chevy truck is housed in there, and on the walls is his collection of license plates.

He has collected postal envelopes that originated in the Harrison County towns of Cherry Camp (1892), Romines Mills (1880), and Sardis (1879). Canceled checks from municipalities that were later incorporated into Clarksburg include Adamston, North View, and Stealey. "In the early 1900's, they had their own mayors, police chiefs, and so on," says Fred.

And then there are telephone directories going back to 1931, as well as an old, black 1920 magneto wall phone. He owns all but two *West Virginia Blue Books* and stuff from a new interest in his life — Australia!

Fred is still on the journey, still collecting. The new FBI complex, with approximately 2,500 jobs, is important to the county, and to Fred. It is possible that even the federal government doesn't have records of the complex as

The former Victory High School in Clarksburg, now Adamston Elementary School, was the site of Veterans Day services last fall. Here, principal James Eakle presents the first Outstanding Alumnus award to Fred Layman. Photograph by Norman Julian.

A sample from Fred Layman's extensive collection of historic letterheads.

complete as Fred's.

Is there anything Fred doesn't like to collect? It is the matchbook covers. Though he started on them in the 1940's, "after filling three albums in a short time, I quit," he quips. Though as the "keeper" he is, he still has the ones he had already collected.

Fred knows that he won't live forever, so what will happen to his treasure in the future? "It would be nice for somebody to have these things someday," he says. "I like people to come and enjoy it. For kids, it's good history." Some of it may be kept in his family, but he would like much of it to find its way into museums. "There is no plan as of yet pertaining to the future disposal of my historical items," he says.

If any credit is attached to him for his Herculean effort, he quips in typical, twinkle-eyed Fred Layman fashion, it might read something like this: "Retired Harrison County employee saves it all."

NORMAN JULIAN is a frequent contributor to GOLDENSEAL and a columnist for *The Dominion Post* newspaper in Morgantown. He is the author of four books with strong West Virginia connections including the novel *Cheat,* and his latest book *Legends: A History of West Virginia University Basketball.* He is a graduate of Victory High School and West Virginia University. His latest contribution to GOLDENSEAL appeared in Winter 1998.

Fred Layman among his treasures. Photograph by Norman Julian.

As Fred Layman Sees It
Harrison County History

By Norman Julian

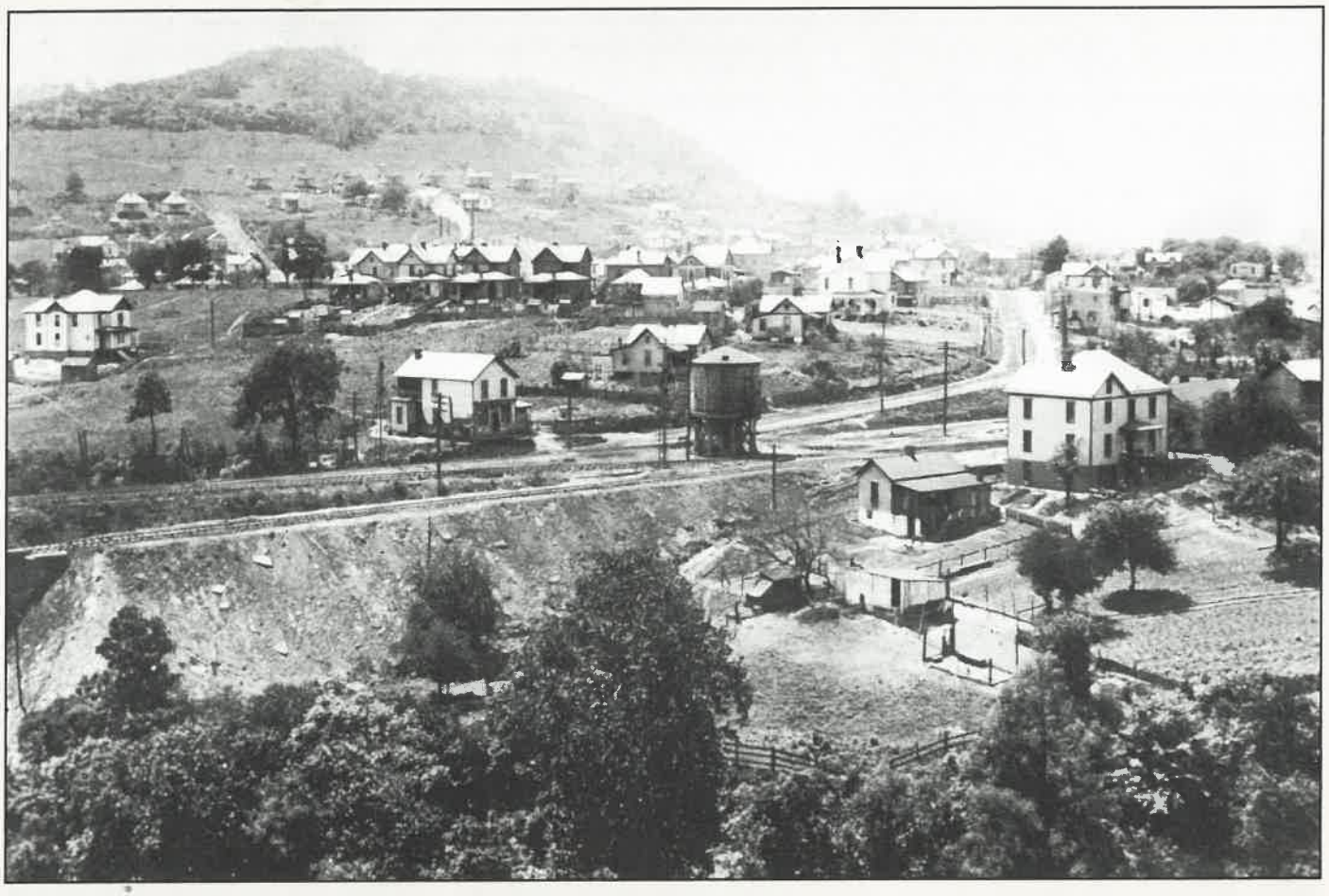
If artifacts could talk, Fred Layman's collections would have many stories to tell. Perhaps the most interesting of these would be the history of Harrison County. Through Fred's vast collection of historical items and documents, it is possible to trace the development of this region, made even more meaningful by Fred's personal insights and wit.

Clarksburg, the seat of Harrison County, sits astride the confluence of Elk Creek and the West Fork River. Its location as a river town made Clarksburg an early trading site.

The Harrison County Courthouse in Clarksburg in 1987. All photographs courtesy of Fred Layman, photographers unknown.

Fred, in his way, has followed that tradition well. "I learned to swim in it," he says, referring to the West Fork River. "When I was growing up, you could find work just about anywhere on a farm for 50 cents a day. We'd work in the hayfield all day and head for the river in the evening."

Highways and railroads soon came to Clarksburg, as well. Route 50, the original George Washington Highway, still goes through town. When the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad extended its main east-west route across West Virginia in the mid-19th century, a large railyard in Clarksburg served several rail spurs extending into nearby counties. Fred remembers the mournful wail of the coal-powered steam engine whistles at night, and the cough-and-stutter as they tried to pull grades with a long string of coal-laden



Roads, rivers, and rails made Clarksburg and its surrounding communities the center for commerce in the region. This 1902 photograph shows the Adamston section which, at the time, had its own form of government. It now lies within the city limits.

hoppers behind.

"I miss the smell of coal smoke," he says. "Just about every house heated with it. Hardly anybody got a cold back then. The Skinner family down here had seven kids and they never got colds. They had a coal stove in each room. I still use it in the winter in my old Burnside stove in the garage."

Agriculture and timber characterized early economic life in the county. "I grew up on the Moore M. Reynolds farm and life was good," says Fred. "That farm was typical of the way of life in the county. We had everything — hogs, turkeys, peacocks, guineas, chickens, horses, donkeys, cows, rabbits. We even had a bear in a cage down there for a while. We grew every kind of vegetable — wheat, corn, fields of beans and potatoes, turnips, cabbage — all the veggies. Every farm had an orchard — apples, pears, red and yellow cherries, peaches. We raised grapes. People were more self-sufficient then. The food was better. Nobody starved.

"We didn't have to buy much of anything. Most of the time, the mothers made the bread. About the only food we bought at the store was bananas and oranges. We didn't get electric until 1940 on the farm, so we kept food in the cellar. I wouldn't change that life for the world. It's pretty hard to beat those days. I think I'd rather go back to the old days."

"It's pretty hard to beat those days. I think I'd rather go back to the old days."

For much of Fred's life, the Carnation Milk Company was a major local employer. "A couple hundred people worked there," he recalls. "Farmers kept cows and sold the milk. The company's motto was `Milk From Contented Cows.' In the mornings, [the farmers] would put the milk out in containers along the highway, and the truck drivers in tractor-trailers would pick it up and dump it in the tank. They picked it up in surrounding counties, too. They went as far as Hundred in Wetzel County."

Eventually the agricultural aspects of the county gave way to the predominance of industry. "Weirton Steel was an early employer but left because of union trouble, I heard," Fred says.

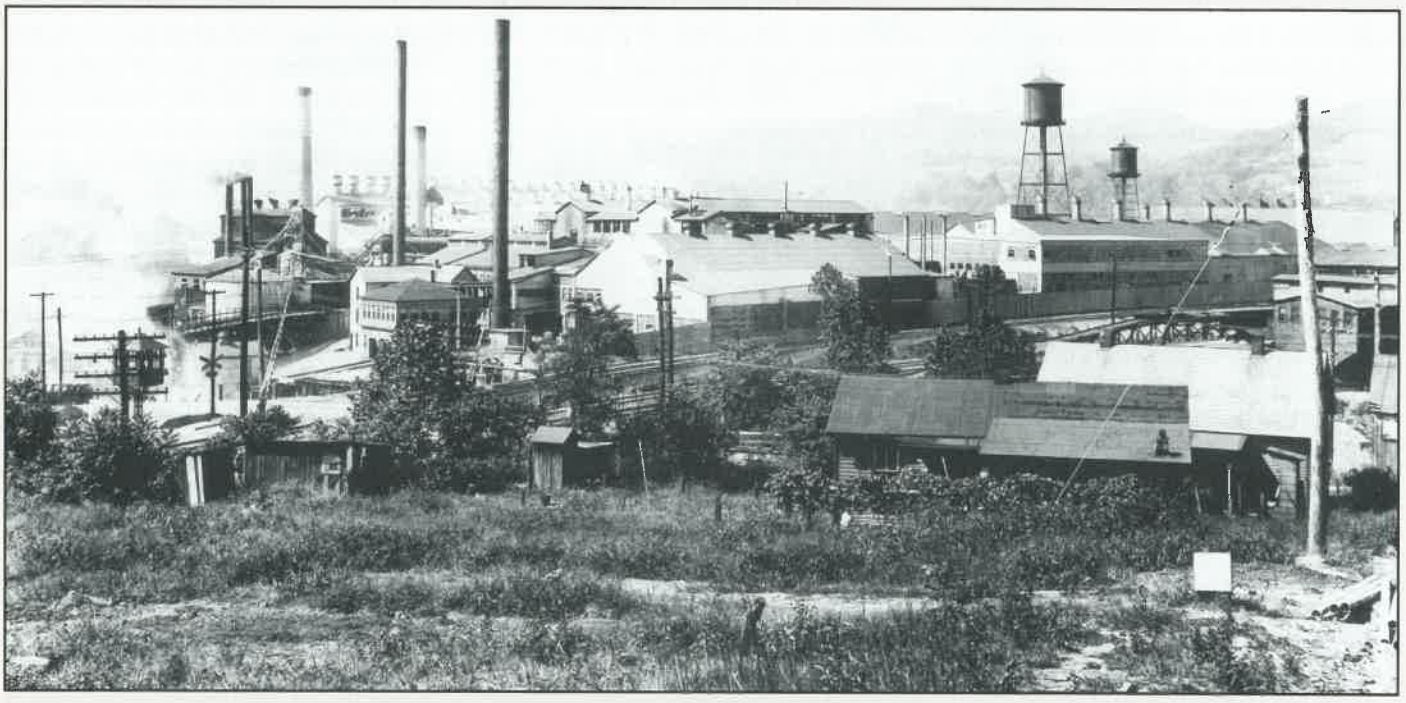
As soon as gas wells were drilled, the availability of cheap gas encouraged the glass industry. "The glass industry was probably the mainstay during my lifetime," says Layman. He starts naming the factories. "At the peak time, there were 17," he says, including Hazel-Atlas. In 1936, a Clarksburg Chamber of Commerce publication listed 2,300 employees there, 600 of them

The Harrison County poor farm in 1924. An automobile dealership is located on this site today.

women. For decades, it was the county's largest employer. It was later named Continental Can, Brockway, and Anchor Hocking, reflecting changes in ownership.

Other glass factories that employed hundreds included Pittsburgh Plate & Glass, Rolland, Adamston Flat, and Akro-Agate, once the largest marble factory in the world. McNichol China was noted nationwide for its products.

"The coal mines were a major employer," he says, "although most of the coal has been mined out." The same 1936 Chamber of Commerce brochure listed 20 coal mines working at the time. The biggest, Consolidation Coal, employed 986 miners. Eight other mines employed 100 or more. Fred knows the names of many additional smaller mines. Among his collections are photographs of the old coal tipple at nearby Dawson Mines, where his dad William Audrey Layman worked as a book-



The Hazel-Atlas glass plant was among Harrison County's largest employers when this photograph was made in 1924.

the way to Deepwater, ushered in the coal-mining era in this region. Somewhere in its beginning, the die was cast for the village of Cedarburg to emerge as Otsego, the coal camp. The Virginian, already the "richest little railroad in the world," was poised to haul Otsego's high-grade metallurgical coal 446 miles to the seaport of Newport News for delivery to worldwide markets, and to industrial centers throughout the nation who craved the smokeless, high-energy coal.

I suspect that Otsego was probably more like other coal camps than it was different. There was a special combination of people and mine operators here, however, which produced a camaraderie that still survives among the miners' offspring. When we have our Mullens High School graduating class reunions, we always recognize those of us who were raised in a coal camp as opposed to Mullens town proper.

Otsego was built on the bottoms formed by Cedar Creek as it enters into Slab Fork Creek, a major tributary to the Guyandotte River. When I was young, Slab Fork Creek was teeming with aquatic life, still untouched by pollution. Smallmouth bass and rock bass, commonly called "redeyes," were lurking for a hellgrammite on an angler's hook.

There was only one street in town, unpaved except for the coal fines that had fallen from overloaded trucks making local deliveries. A whitewashed board fence that ran down both sides marked the street's boundary. The fence protected fairly new, wooden-framed houses that lined both sides of the street, all freshly painted white, each accessible by a gate in front of the house. Each house was a clone of the first, standing like soldiers frozen in formation.

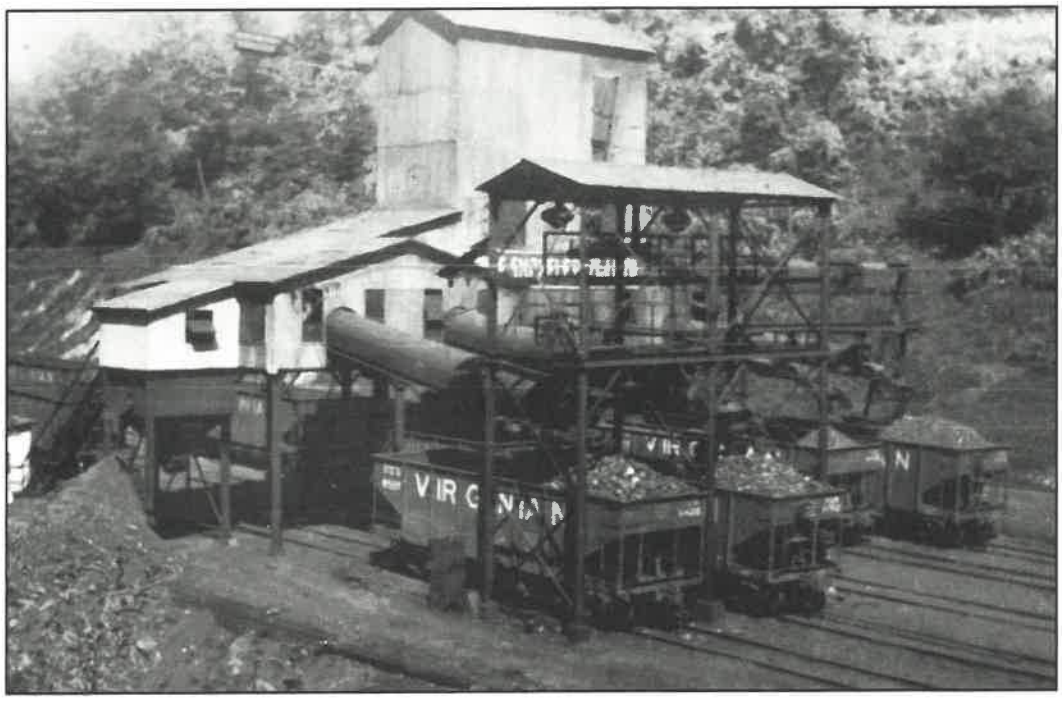
Over the winter months, numerous potholes formed in the street; they were caused by the wetness and freezing coupled with the constant pounding of loaded coal trucks. Whenever the superintendent thought that spring weather had arrived, the utility men would fill up the potholes with material that appeared to be half coal and half soil. That was before ash was available from the burning slag pile.

As summer approached, the street began to dry leaving a thin layer of coal dust clinging to every blade of grass, the wooden fences, front porches, and to everything else that was close to the street. The color tones would range from black on the fence bottoms nearest the street, to grayish-white on the front porches of the houses.

In general, the coal camp was laid out in a lineal fashion because of the V-shaped valley. There was only room for one street, two rows of houses, Slab Fork Creek, and one set of railroad tracks. The superintendent's house was located in the most convenient spot, away from the traffic generated by the mine and company store.

Every mine operation developed a slate or slag pile. During the winters of the 1930's and '40's — the "hobo years" — transients slept next to the visible flame or warm glow of the slag pile. If the breezes blew the wrong way, they never woke up because of the poisonous gases. You can be assured that each survivor had a terrific headache the next day. I can recall the grown-ups talking about burying several hobos during that time.

Otsego went from a boomtown to a sleepy little settlement in about 25 years. It existed for merely one generation — mine! I was born in



Coal was Otsego's lifeblood, and this tipple was at the heart of the operation. 1940's photograph courtesy of Thurman Miller.

1935. Sometime during the summer of '35, Mom, Dad, and I moved into our first new home at Otsego. It was the third house up the street from the superintendent's house. My brother Richard and sisters Edna and Margaret were all born in that house. It's one of the few still standing.

I have many pleasant memories of growing up in Otsego. I remember the hot showers that we took as youngsters at the mine bathhouse, which was built after World War II. It was our first contact with indoor plumbing. We stood under those hot showers holding on to the chain for what seemed to be an eternity, until our bodies had the wrinkles of a prune. When we were too small to reach the shower chains, the taller boys would tie them off or make an extension for us.

Our basketball rims and sled runners were made and repaired at the mine machine shop.

There were the many evenings of "knowledge" gleaned from conversations around the pot-belly stove at the company store during the short days of a long, cold Appalachian winter. That is where I first learned about FDR, John L. Lewis, coal mining techniques, politics, and religion from a coal miner's viewpoint. I also learned how to chew tobacco and the technique of how to spit on the red, hot spot of the pot-belly stove to cause the spit to ricochet and not stick. Almost every miner chewed tobacco since it was illegal to smoke inside a mine, and my brother and I had a steady supply of chewing tobacco from searching our dad's work clothes before Mom washed them.

One of my favorite places was the vacant lot across the street from our house. Some of my fondest memories and scariest moments are related to this lot. During the Christmas season, a large community tree would be erected and decorated there; if the weather cooperated, Santa Claus would pass out presents for each child from

Author David Halsey at two years of age in Otsego, 1937.

the bed of a large truck. All of the miners' children received one major gift plus ample candy, fruit, and nuts for the entire family. When the weather didn't cooperate, we would all gather inside the Union Hall at Caloric. I remember how crowded it was, but no one minded. Santa always showed up with gifts.

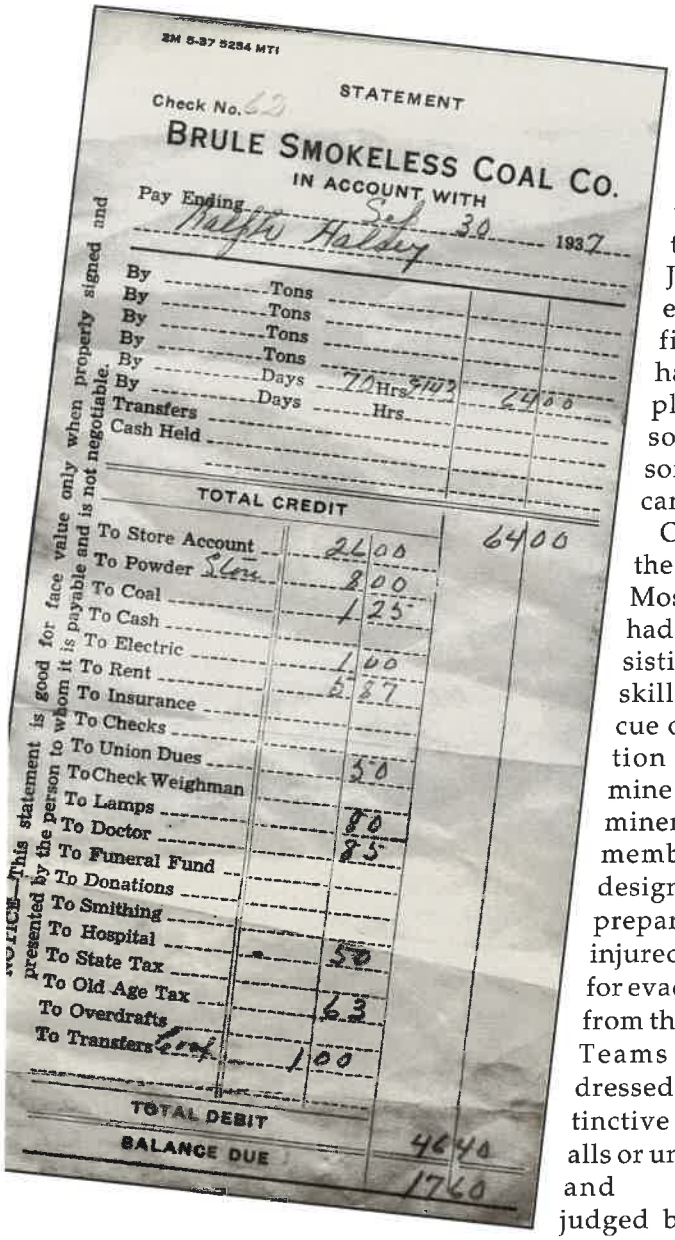
There were the many evenings of "knowledge" gleaned from conversations around the pot-belly stove at the company store.

Late one summer day when I was about five or so, I was playing on the vacant lot, running to and fro, when all of a sudden the ground began to give way. I slowly sank into the ground. An opossum ran from a hole in front of me, obviously disturbed by the sudden intrusion. I was barefooted and wearing shorts and I felt several hard objects rub my feet and legs as I sank. The ground had swallowed my legs up to my crotch! Later I would learn what I felt that was so cold and damp. It was the entrails of a horse that had been buried in a shallow grave in the far corner of the lot a few weeks before. I can still vividly feel those rib bones rub my legs as my feet slowly sank in between them!

Years later, after we had moved to nearby Pierpoint, I learned that the horse was the same one that the paperboy rode each week when he delivered the *Grit* newspaper. I remember watching him lazily ride up the street with his leg draped across the saddle so he could doze, or pretend to doze to fool us. You had to be alert because his favorite pastime was to use us kids as targets when he delivered the paper. Each porch was only five or six feet from the board fence, so we were easy targets.

There was not much room in the front yards for flowers, but a lady at one house had planted some type of flowers that the horse seemed to like. As the horse passed this house, he would stop and take a bite. It seems that the lady's husband decided to shock the horse so that he would leave the flowers alone. He laid a wire along the top board of the fence near the flowers and attached the wire to the house current. The current electrocuted the horse and shocked the paperboy. I finally knew why the paperboy and his horse didn't come around anymore.

On the Fourth of July, folks would be assembled on the grounds of the Otsego School by mid-morning. Some family names that I recall are Marshall, Meadows, Van Camp, Sarver, Jenkins, Cook, O'Dell, Yates, Lewis, Whitt, Rhinehart, Lamboni, Baker, Hilton, Franau, and many, many others. As people gathered, the bread, cake, and pie truck arrived as well as the ice-cream truck, all compliments of the Brule Smokeless Coal Company. Clyde Acord's band, consisting of guitar, fiddle, and mandolin, entertained. Clyde harmonized with the others as they stood under a



STATEMENT

Check No. 62

BRULE SMOKELESS COAL CO.

IN ACCOUNT WITH

Pay Ending Sept 30 1937

Ralph Halsey

By ____ Tons				
By ____ Tons				
By ____ Tons				
By ____ Tons				
By ____ Days	70 Hrs	3.00	24 00	
By ____ Days	____ Hrs			
Transfers				
Cash Held				
TOTAL CREDIT				64 00
To Store Account			24 00	
To Powder			8 00	
To Coal			1 25	
To Cash				
To Electric			1 00	
To Rent			5 00	
To Insurance			2 87	
To Checks				
To Union Dues			50	
To Check Weighman				
To Lamps			80	
To Doctor			25	
To Funeral Fund				
To Donations				
To Smithing				
To Hospital			50	
To State Tax				
To Old Age Tax			63	
To Overdrafts				
To Transfers Cash			1 00	
TOTAL DEBIT				46 40
BALANCE DUE				17 60

NOTICE—This statement is good for face value only when properly signed and presented by the person to whom it is payable and is not negotiable.

A pay statement from September 1937 shows the wages and the deductions taken from the earnings of the author's father, Ralph Halsey. After rent, union dues, company store account, and other expenses were debited, Halsey took home $17.60 for this two-week period, considered good wages at the time.

large oak tree in the schoolyard.

Clyde was a local musician and miner. Picnic tables were placed nearby to take advantage of the shade. These tables were made from the same rough, sawmill green lumber as the mine timbers and cribbing logs. The waiting and anticipation to have all the cake and ice cream that we could eat was our toughest problem, as one of the adults would keep us children in line and under control. Needless to say, we kids would glut ourselves from eating too much when our time finally came.

Labor Day celebrations were just as elaborate as those on the Fourth of July. Normally, the gathering would be at a ball field in Caloric. Otsego had a baseball team that played a doubleheader — sometimes more — with some other club from a coal camp or town like Mullens.

Other entertainment was the mine rescue competition. Most coal mining operations had several rescue teams consisting of trained individuals skilled in various mine rescue operations. The competition involved a simulated mine emergency or injured-miner scenario. Each team's members performed certain designated tasks, for example, preparing an injured miner for evacuation from the mine. Teams were dressed in distinctive coveralls or uniforms and were judged by time and the quality of their efforts. Folks from the camp would voice their encouragement and cheer for the home team but recognized and respected the efforts of the visiting team, too.

Everyone, even us kids, realized the importance of their talents and bravery since we all had seen and lived through mine disasters. We had all experienced that unexplainable empty and scared feeling when the mine whistle would not stop blowing. I can remember the heartache after a mine explosion killed several miners. Almost without exception, every mine disaster meant death.

Otsego was a "we are family" type of town. That is to say, whenever a miner's son reached his 18th birthday, the son could have a job with the company. If he chose to go underground, he needed a sponsor or mentor, such as his dad, uncle, older brother, or a close neighbor. Someone had to take responsibility for teaching the rookie how to become a coal miner and to prepare him for his miner certification after one year.

When he was 19 years old, my dad, Ralph Halsey, came to work at Otsego. It was shortly after his mother's death in June 1928, and

The Otsego baseball team in about 1948. The player at center with the ball and glove is Gus Rhinehart. All of the players worked in or around the mines.

Underground mining is a dangerous and highly skilled occupation. Here, mine electrician Vescar Rhinehart checks some wires along the main entryway of the Otsego mine in about 1947. Brule Company photograph, courtesy of the author.

Erin Smokeless Coal Company was the operator at that time. By 1936, he had seen the good, bad, and punishing misery of mining coal. There were 20-some mineable seams layered inside the mountain, with coal in each seam ranging in thickness from about 30 inches to about 50 inches. The seam at the Otsego drift mine location was about three-feet thick. My dad learned to do virtually every job and chore that needed to be done to mine coal. With only an eighth-grade education, he was as industrious and reliable as a person could be. He was always looking for ways to improve and to excel, and his word was his bond. [See "Mine Mishap," by David Halsey; Summer 1992.]

During his career of 23 years at Otsego, my dad was part of a mechanized mining revolution, as the Otsego mine went from a "pick and shovel" operation to the nation's most modern coal mine. He eventually became a mine foreman. I remember, as a 10-year-old boy, spending many winter nights watching Dad disassemble and reassemble his miner's safety light in preparation for the fire-boss test and certification. I learned to do it, also. A fire boss is the guy who travels the entire length of the active mine sections between shifts to ensure its safety for the miners.

By the mid-1930's, Dad had emerged as a natural leader, leading by example without boasting. He soon became involved in the

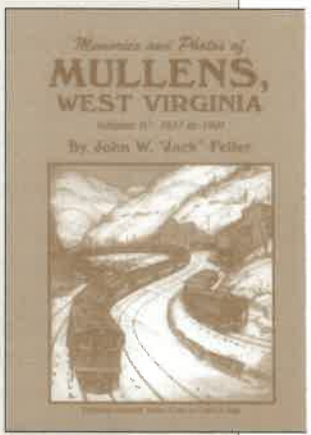
Wyoming County Reading

Otsego was located three miles from Mullen, the largest town in Wyoming County. Kids from Otsego, including author David Halsey, attended Mullens High School, and the people from Otsego and Mullens shared many other close ties.

The history of Mullens, including outlying communities such as Otsego, is detailed in a series of books by Jack Feller called, *Memories and Photos of Mullens, West Virginia*, published by the author. The four volumes are arranged chronologically.

Volume One features the time period from 1894 until 1925, when the narrow agricultural valley was transformed into a growing town and railroad center with a booming, coal-based economy. Volume Two continues with the 1926-'31 time period, when the local coal boom was interrupted by the Great Depression. Volume Three, 1932-'36, depicts the rebirth of the local coal industry, the rise of labor unions, and achievements in local athletics and social amenities. Volume Four, which has just been released, covers 1937-'41: a period of economic growth in response to the war-driven European demand for coal, and the eventual United States entry into the war.

Each volume is highly detailed and illustrated. Volume Four, for example, contains 540 pages and more than 500 photographs. Together, these four volumes represent a level of local history found in few communities of any size, and one which is remarkable for a town the size of Mullens.



Copies are available from Jack Feller. Volume Four is $25 plus $2.50 shipping and handling; other volumes are $20 each, plus $2.50 shipping and handling. For more information, call Jack Feller at (304)294-6220, or write to P.O. Box 295, Mullens, WV 25882.

United Mine Workers of America local union leadership, and on December 28, 1937, he was elected to represent Local 6195, District Number 17, United Mine Workers of America, at the 35th Consecutive Constitutional Convention in Washington, D.C.

This way of life seemed immune from significant influences from the outside world until the young men returned home from World War II. Upon their return, each contributed subtle changes to our personal habits and added new words to our slang expressions and new places to our vocabulary. Other major changes came when the mobility and information revolutions arrived in the 1950's, thanks to the automobile and the television.

By this time, it was too late for Otsego. As a coal camp, it was aged. The mine — the very heart of the community — was soon to close and most of the contiguous structures torn down for scrap. The mining camp just faded away.

The summer after completing sixth grade, I got to attend a two-week nature camp at Oglebay Park in Wheeling, courtesy of the coal company. We met the company bus at the appointed time with baggage in hand and started an all-day trek to Camp Russell at Oglebay Park. There, we had the time of our lives. There were bird walks before breakfast, arts and crafts before lunch, games and sports and swimming before dinner, and campfires and astronomy before bedtime. Every company dependent from sixth grade through ninth grade was eligible to attend the nature camp for two years for free. Dad paid for my third year.

As I walked across the stage of the Mullens High School auditorium in 1953 with my diploma in hand, one of my favorite teachers, the late Mrs. Madge Kaman who taught us how to release all those magnificent chemistry mysteries, handed me an envelope as I started to step off the stage. She said to protect it, because it was valuable. As I sat down in the seats reserved for graduates, I opened the envelope and discovered that I had been given a four-year scholarship to any school that I chose — no obligations — compliments of the Brule Smokeless Coal Company and the parent company, the Oglebay Norton Corporation. This was how I made my exit from a once-grand, but now aged, coal camp called Otsego.

I was fortunate to receive the many benefits and blessings that were provided to us without having to risk life and limb a mile or two inside a mountain.

As an offspring of a coal miner, I was fortunate to receive the many benefits and blessings that were provided to us without having to risk life and limb a mile or two inside a mountain mining coal as my father and his father had done. My parents' dreams for all of us were to find a safer life away from the heartaches and physical hardships that awaited all coal miners.

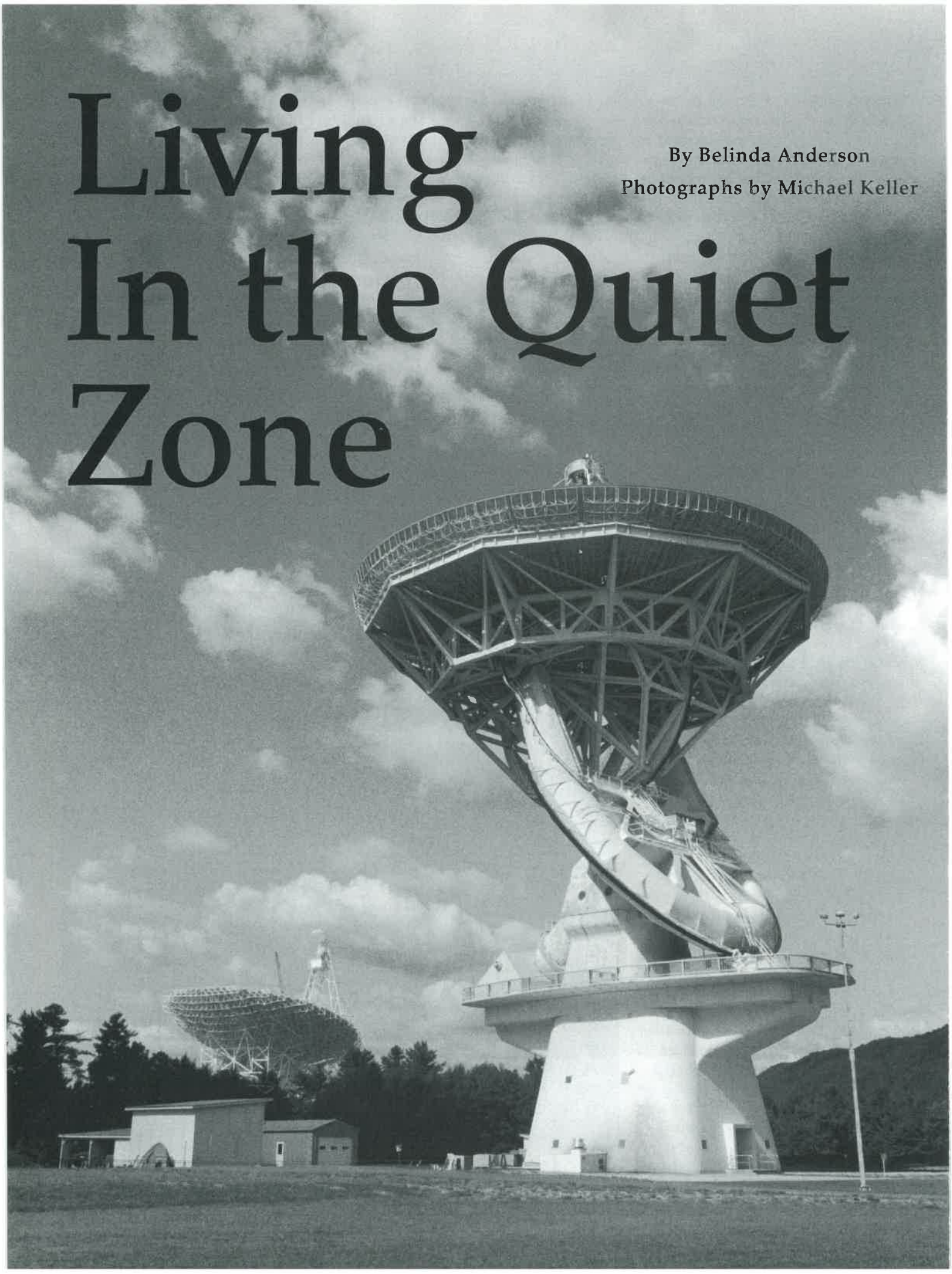
As a teenager, I knew that there was a bigger world out there from the many stories that guys would tell upon their return home from World War II. That is probably what influenced me to become a military pilot and a civil engineer. My dreams took me far away from the prospect of becoming a coal miner. There was nothing about the mines that appealed to me. I simply wanted to see what was on the other side of the mountains!

DAVID HALSEY was born in Pierpoint in 1935, and moved to Otsego later that year. He currently lives in Woodstock, Virginia. He graduated from Mullens High School and earned an engineering degree from Marshall University. He is a retired colonel from the Army Corps of Engineers; Halsey received commendation for his work as operations officer during the 1972 Buffalo Creek disaster. His most recent contribution to GOLDENSEAL was in the Spring 1996 issue.

Coal miner Ralph Halsey with his four children in Otsego, about 1944. They are, from left, Richard, author David, Edna, and Margaret Halsey.

Living In the Quiet Zone

By Belinda Anderson
Photographs by Michael Keller



Huge, white, man-made blossoms perch on squatty stalks in a remote mountain valley in Pocahontas County. Astronomers call them radio telescopes. Scientists use these gigantic tools to capture faint electrical signals from outer space. Yet these structures seem almost organic, as first one then another rotates gently, angling each concave face to better listen for whispers from the sky.

These quiet giants have changed the landscape of Deer Creek Valley and the lives of its inhabitants. In 1958, when a National Radio Astronomy Observatory facility was established in Green Bank, the remoteness of the area made this a good site to collect signals with a minimum of man-made interference. These huge telescopes soon brought the world to the valley.

Velma Turner was a young farmer's wife then, never expecting that the new observatory would deliver people of other cultures — scientists and their families — right to her doorstep. Because of the presence of the observatory, one day she found herself taking tea with a German, on another occasion learning from an Indian how to wrap a sari.

One of her sons goggled at the gigantic radio telescope equipment being trucked by his house, never imagining that one day he would be an electronics engineer at a corporation that provides high-tech equipment for submarine sonar systems and spacecraft computers. Another son trained his telescope at the darkened, star-studded sky. His future would lead to the observatory itself, where today he works to help coax the secrets from the universe.

The observatory still looms large in the life of Velma Turner — literally. From her white frame house, she can see the sunlight bouncing off the new Green Bank telescope: with three acres of surface area and at 16 million pounds, the largest fully steerable radio telescope in the world.

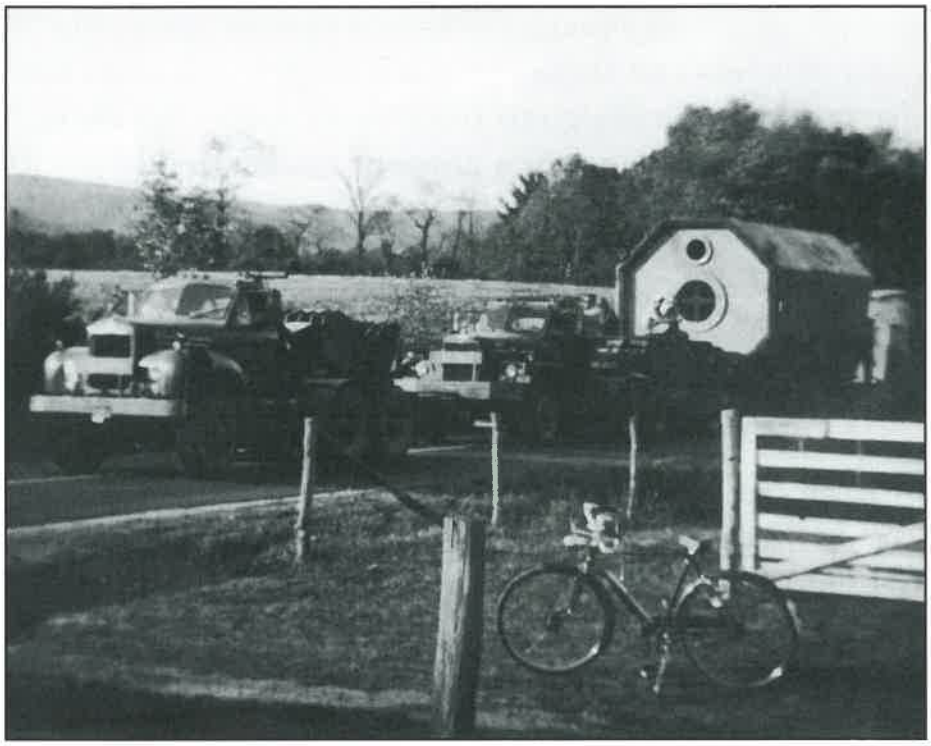
Velma and her husband, the late E. Reed Turner, bought 11 acres in the valley in 1947. "We wanted the children to be close to the highway to go to school," she says. Her husband worked at a local tannery but also wanted to do some farming. "My husband always liked to keep a cow, sometimes a calf with it, several chickens."

Velma had married a widower with a young daughter, Gladys. Then came two sons, Jerry and David. And then came the rumors about changes coming to the valley. "We didn't get a definite answer for quite a while as to what was really going on," she recalls. "People in the community would talk. I know one called me and said, 'You'll never be able to live there because I hear there's going to be a large airport across the road from you.' Everyone seemed to be so confused."

There was some animosity, too, as the government's right of eminent domain was exercised, taking some homes and farmland. "We didn't worry too much," Velma says. "We thought, well, if it will better the

Left: A 140-foot radio telescope at the National Radio Astronomy Observatory at Green Bank, Pocahontas County.

Velma Turner has lived in the shadow of the observatory since it was established in 1958. She is shown here in her front yard with one of the observatory's eight telescopes visible over her shoulder.



When construction of the observatory began, large trucks carrying heavy loads of strange-looking gear were a common sight in Deer Creek Valley. This 1959 snapshot shows two trucks pulling in tandem, hauling a rare daytime load past the Turner home.

look up in the heavens. I was just fascinated by the night sky." He's been an electronics technician at the observatory now for three decades.

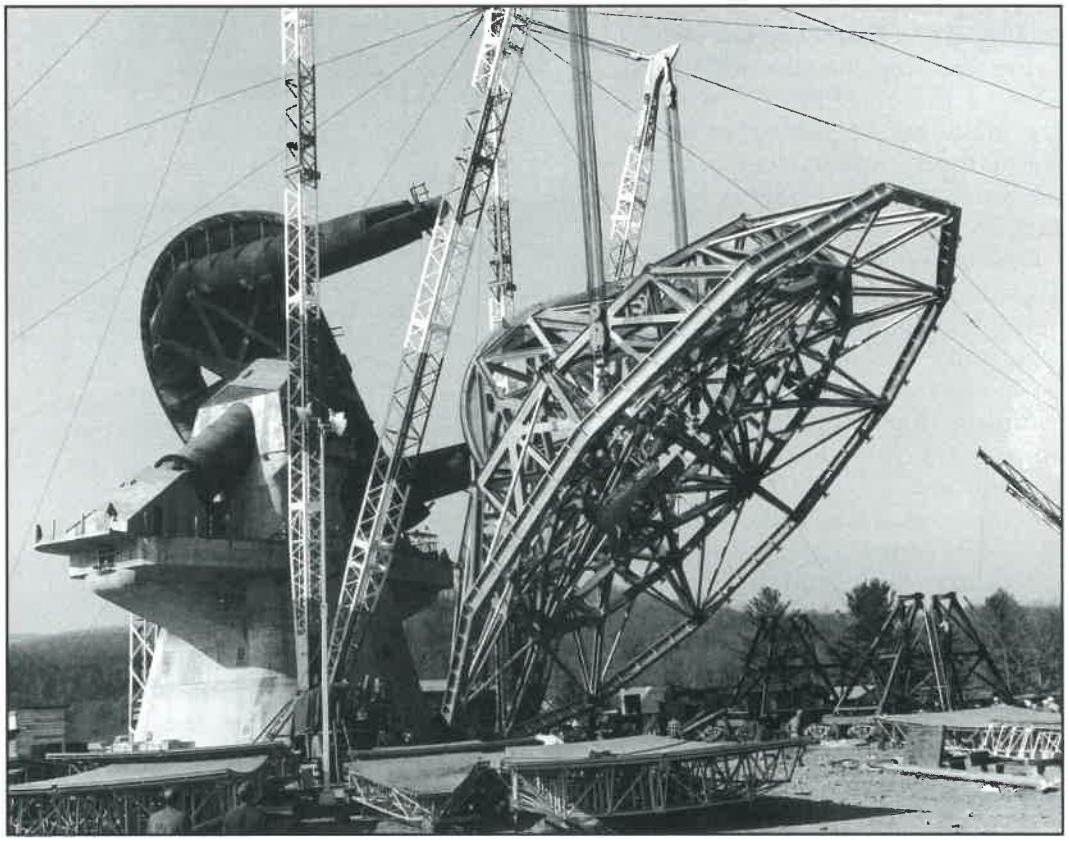
His younger brother David, now an electronics engineer in Manassas, Virginia, got the opportunity to build test equipment for the observatory while he was in high school. He still remembers the coming of the telescopes. "The neatest thing I remember was the real heavy equipment moving down the road. They would take three or four semitrucks, hook them together to move big items. The one telescope had a big shaft that must have been 100 feet long."

When he got the chance to see the telescopes assembled on site, David was astounded at their mammoth size. "I'd never seen anything that big that could move," he says, referring to the ability of the telescope dishes to rotate on their bases.

community, whatever they're doing, we won't worry about it."

The children found the new enterprise exciting. Because of daytime traffic on the roads, the observatory crews moved their equipment at night. "They'd come in the wee hours," Velma remembers. "We'd set the alarm and get up and watch them come up the hill. This house just seemed to shake! We wondered what each piece was going to be."

"I thought it was very entertaining," says son Jerry, age 52, who still lives nearby. "I've always been a curious type, always liked mechanical things. I was always interested in astronomy. I had a little telescope. I'd go out on the lawn at night and



Onlookers in the foreground are dwarfed by this massive radio telescope under construction during the early 1960's. Photographer unknown, courtesy of National Radio Astronomy Observatory.

Velma watched in fascination at the rapid construction of ten houses in the sheep pasture across the road from the Turners' home. "You'd hear them at daybreak, trucks pulling in. By that evening, you could pretty well figure what the house was going to look like, they put them up so fast. I enjoyed that." The new development was called the Rabbit Patch, because so many of the young professionals moving in were starting families.

"Those children loved to come over and play. So many of the children had never seen a cow milked." Once, when she poured a glass of milk for a neighbor boy, the little fellow told her, "No thank you, Mrs. Turner. I like milk from the store. That milk you're giving me is just made out of green grass and water."

The Turners learned about other lifestyles, too. She had never been to a tea — didn't know what one was — but when she was invited, she walked over to the Rabbit Patch. "They would have it in the morning hours, with cookies. They brought their ways of living, and I know I entertained them."

When the observatory was established, so was a National Radio Quiet Zone. It covers approximately 13,000 square miles in West Virginia and Virginia. All permanent ground-based transmitters within the zone must be coordinated with the observatory. Rumors flew about what residents would and wouldn't be allowed to use, but Velma says it really didn't affect the family's lifestyle. "They tried to find a way for you to go on with what you were doing without interfering with their work."

In fact, living in the quiet zone became a dynamic experience for her. "I felt like I would have had an everyday life — cooking and canning and gardening and all that." Without the observatory's presence, Velma says, "I would have had a very quiet and lonely life. It's brought new things and new people."

This vehicle, nicknamed the "ice-cream truck," was used by observatory personnel to monitor radio interference within the National Radio Quiet Zone surrounding the observatory. Standing in front of the truck is frequency coordinator Wesley Sizemore. 1990 photograph by Sherry L. Sizemore.

One of the new things it brought was a vehicle that tracked local electrical signals interfering with the telescopes' surveillance. David remembers seeing the observatory's white panel truck. "It was full of electronics gear in the back. They would ride around the town, looking for things that caused interference. We called it the 'ice-cream truck.'"

"I would have had a very quiet and lonely life," Velma says. "It's brought new things and new people."

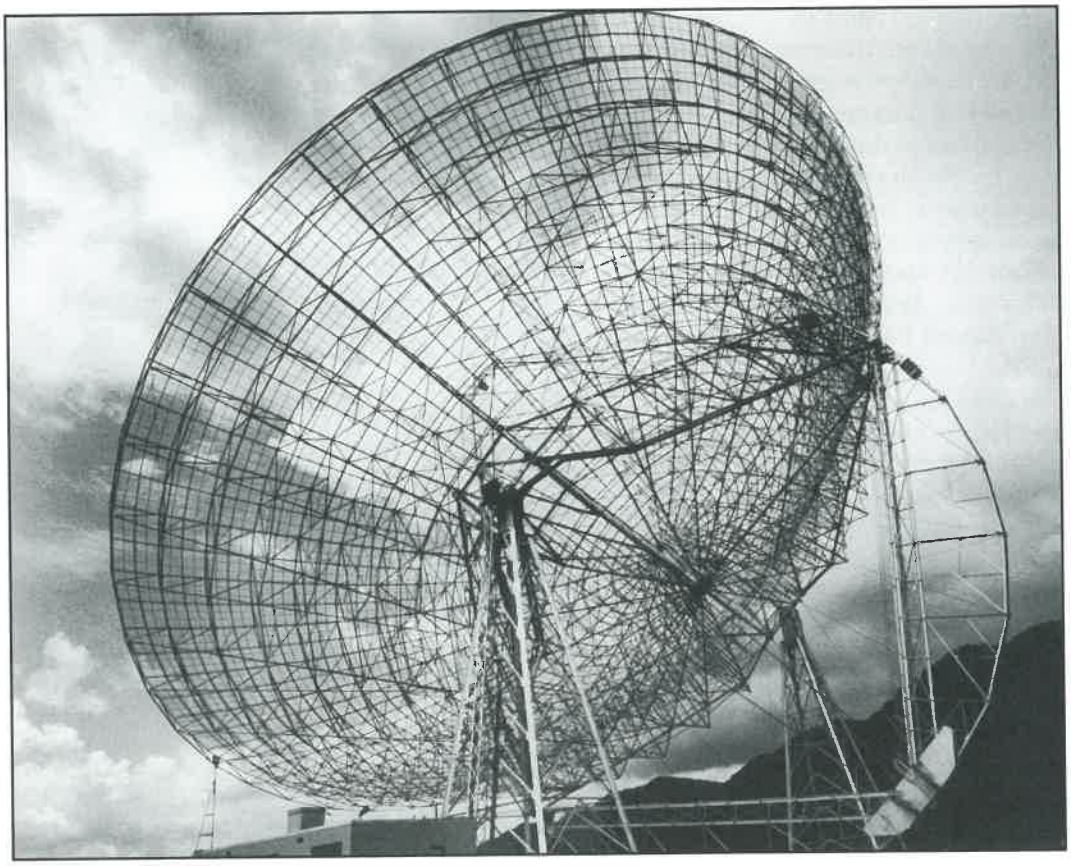
David was playing in the basement with his electric slot-car set one evening when the "ice-cream truck" pulled up to the house. His mother went outside and asked, "What's happened? Is there interference here?" The observatory employee traced the interference to David's race cars. He offered to set up a shield, but David chose to just put the set away.

Tracking down a source of interference sometimes benefits both the observatory and the citizens of the community. "Every time something happened with my television set — my picture would disappear or roll — it was usually interference that was the cause," Velma says. That's how she came to know Wesley A. Sizemore, who has been frequency coordinator of the National Radio Quiet Zone for 16 years.

"Relatively speaking, it is quieter here than anywhere else in the world," says Sizemore, an outgoing guy with the ability to explain science simply. "Now, admittedly, the Arctic, the Antarctic, the deep dark Amazon may indeed be quieter, but it is not economically feasible to operate a telescope there."

The Green Bank site offers several advantages. "The first thing you look for is an area that is rural in nature and will remain rural in the future," Sizemore says. The area around the observatory is surrounded by a lot of state and national forests, which will preclude development. "Secondly, you want terrain shielding. You want natural barriers to man-made signals. If you look at the topography around Green Bank, you will see that we

are in a high mountain valley, with about a five-degree horizon around us." The quiet location is absolutely essential in order for the telescopes to receive the extremely weak signals emanating from space. "The energy released by a single snowflake landing on the ground is more energy than has been received from space by all radio telescopes on earth since the beginning of radio astronomy," Sizemore says.



Photograph by Arnout Hyde, Jr., courtesy of West Virginia State Archives, date unknown.

Sizemore's monitoring equipment alerts him to interference within the quiet zone. Once, he was riding in the interference truck when he saw a signal in the part of the radio band reserved for military aircraft. "I tuned that signal in and I heard country music playing. Right away, that triggers a bell," he says with a grin. "There's no military aircraft going to be flying around playing country music. So I tracked it down to a lady's radio that was malfunctioning. The radio was not only receiving that station, but it was retransmitting that station on a different frequency. I took her radio and destroyed it and bought her the next better one, same manufacturer."

Wesley Sizemore is passionate about the observatory and its mission, and proud of the fact that it is located in West Virginia. "You don't expect to find this level of technology back in the hills of West Virginia," he says. Behind him is the new 100-meter radio telescope, the largest of its kind in the world.

Another time, he noticed interference that would show up for a few seconds, then disappear, then reappear. Sizemore tracked that source to a doghouse, where a heating pad with a short in it was warming the backside of an old dog. Sizemore replaced the heating pad.

Some citizens, like Velma Turner, will call Wesley Sizemore if they suspect their television or some other appliance might be a source of interference. "By and large, the community appreciates us being here," he says.

Sizemore himself is passionate about the observatory. "We have the best radio receivers in the world. We are the proving ground for receiver technology. You don't expect to find this level of technology back in the hills of West Virginia. You're in a rural area, yet you're doing something that makes

a contribution to the body of mankind's knowledge without giving him a way to destroy himself. That's why I enjoy radio astronomy."

Some of that knowledge has provided broad benefits. The computer algorithms used to make sense of astronomical data, for instance, have been used in medical imaging technology, helpful in diagnosing certain health problems.

"The quiet zone, I treat it as a national resource just like Yellowstone," Wesley says. "It's a wilderness area that, once it is gone, you don't get it back. It's our last, best access to the spectrum without pollution from man-made signals.

"We also help to preserve the rural nature of the community. You don't have people running around with cell phones or beepers hanging off their belts." Sizemore acknowledges that not everyone views that as an advantage. "If you're looking for a fast-track environment, you're not going to find it here. But if you like the rural, peaceful environment where you can raise your children, this is the place.

"I sometimes suspect that's one of the problems with society is that we're going too fast. We're not stopping to smell the roses." He pauses. "Or look at the stars."

BELINDA ANDERSON is a native of Monroe County now living in Greenbrier County. A former newspaper reporter, Belinda currently works as a freelance writer, teaches writing workshops at Carnegie Hall in Lewisburg, and is adjunct faculty at the Greenbrier Community College Center of Bluefield State College. Belinda has written for *Wonderful West Virginia* magazine, and other publications.Her most recent contribution to GOLDENSEAL appeared in the Summer 1999 issue.

About the Observatory

The National Radio Astronomy Observatory at Green Bank is located on State Route 92/28 in Pocahontas County, about 25 miles north of Marlinton.

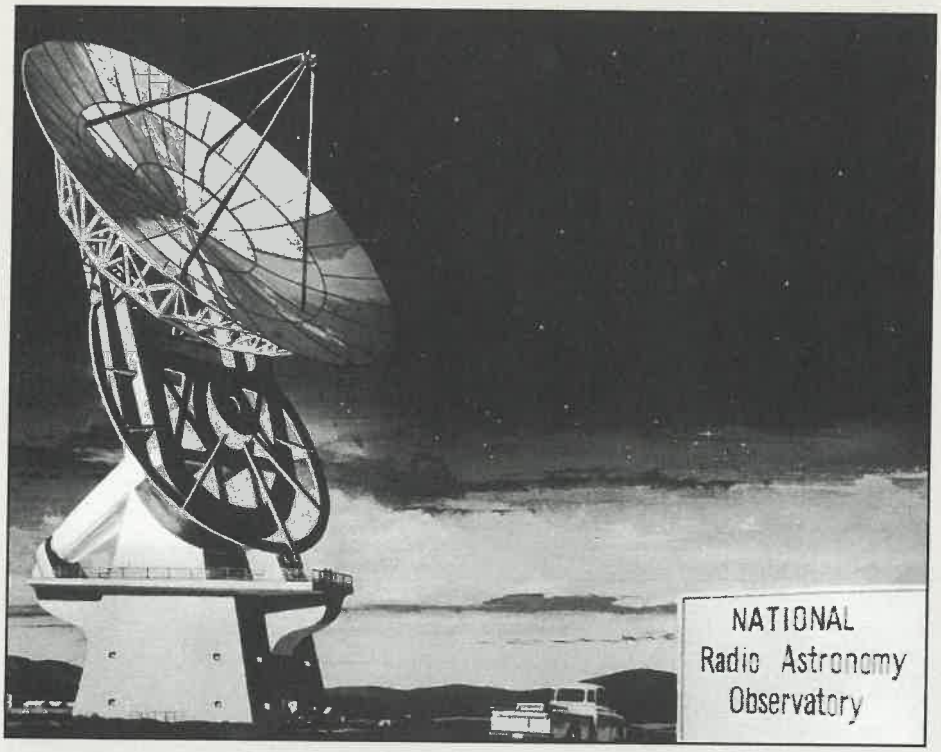
From this isolated location, radio astronomers study faint radio signals attempting to learn more about the universe. Research topics include the distribution of mass in the universe, the nature of time, and the chemistry of space.

The Green Bank facility is home to eight radio telescopes including a nearly completed 100-meter telescope. Once in operation, it will be the world's largest fully steerable radio telescope, capable of detecting radio sources several billion light-years from our galaxy.

The National Radio Astronomy Observatory at Green Bank is a facility of U.S. National Science Foundation, a federal agency. The NRAO also operates radio telescopes in New Mexico and Arizona and has offices in Charlottesville, Virginia.

Free tours of the Green Bank observatory are offered daily, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., from Memorial Day through Labor Day, and on weekends in September and October. Guided tours include educational exhibits, demonstrations on radio astronomy, an audio-visual presentation, and a guided bus tour of the radio telescopes. Self-guided walking or bicycling tours are offered throughout the year.

For more information or to receive a brochure, write to National Radio Astronomy Observatory, P.O. Box 2, Green Bank, WV 24944, or phone (304)456-2011. Information is also available on their Web site at www.gb.nrao.edu.



Artist's conception, courtesy of the West Virginia State Archives, artist and date unknown.

A Spruce Miracle

By Bill Garnette

Photographs by Steve Shaluta

Knob

In January 1942, our nation was a few weeks into World War II. Thousands of guys registered at their local draft board, while others voluntarily joined up so as to have their choice of military service. I couldn't decide. Army? Navy? Marine Corps? I opted to wait till my "number" came up, wait for fate to make the decision for me.

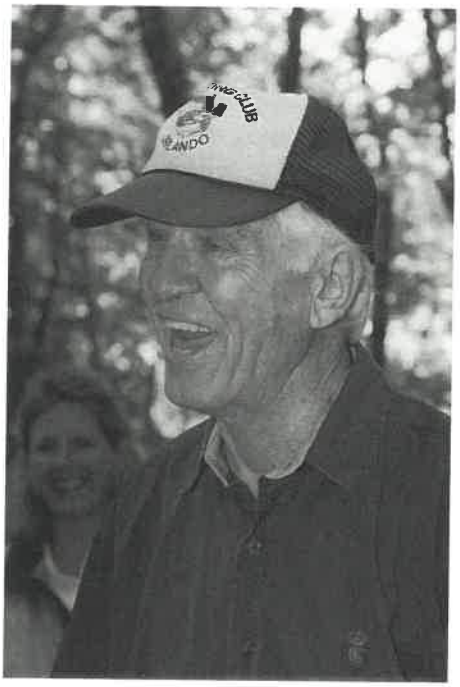
Spruce Knob in Pendleton County, at 4,861 feet above sea level, is West Virginia's highest point. It was also the site of a harrowing experience for Navy pilot Bill Garnette in 1946.

In the meantime, the Army Corps of Engineers had hired me as a laborer on Ohio River lock repair. During the week, I had room and board up the river near the work site, and I came home to Huntington on weekends. I returned to work on Mondays when my ride showed up, usually before dawn. On a certain Monday morning, I quietly let myself out the front door to await my ride to work. To my surprise, sitting on the porch was my high school best friend, Marty, drinking from one of the milk bottles our dairyman had just left.

Stealing our milk was kind of his calling card, a habit from the past. We would walk to school together passing the bottle back and forth until it was empty. Marty hurriedly told me that he was between trains, that his time was short. He went on to say that he was a Naval aviation cadet in the V-5 program and that he had already completed three months of training to become a Navy pilot. If he successfully completed the additional nine months of training, he would receive Navy wings and a commission as an ensign.

I bombarded him with questions about the details and took it all in. It was as simple as going to the Navy recruiting station downtown! Seeing my excited reaction, he was quick to tell me about the demanding physical exam; he expressed doubts that I could pass it due to the deviated septum I had picked up in my several Golden Glove thumpings.

About 15 minutes into our chat, my ride drove up. I went to the curb and told the guys that something had come up, and that I would not be going to work. Marty took them up on their offer for a ride; it was to be eight years before I would see him again — in the 1950's. By then, he was a captain with Lake Central Airlines, flying DC-3's.



Author Bill Garnette, today. Daughter Jill Garnette is at left.

When the Navy recruiting office opened that morning, I was there on the steps, figuratively waving my high school diploma. I left the recruiting office to obtain the three required letters of recommendation, with which I returned in the

Bill and first wife Jewel Effingham Garnette in Huntington. They were married in Pensacola, Florida, on May 19, 1944 — the same day that Bill received his Navy wings. Photographer and date unknown, courtesy of the author.

afternoon, all from solid citizens. Well, at least two were solid, and the other one was solid enough. The officer provided me with a voucher to ride old No.2 of the C&O railroad line to Washington, D.C., the next morning. He gave me the address of the Naval Aviation Cadet Selection Board.

When I reported there, the testing began: vision, hearing, nose, throat, and "turn your head and cough." Written exams were graded on the spot. All had gone well with the math and with the physical exam — the Navy ignored my nasal deformity. I had tested satisfactorily in all respects and was sworn in. Thrilled that the Navy now owned me, I boarded the No.1 train and returned home to Huntington to await my training orders.

Navy pilot Bill Garnette in the 1940's. Photographer and date unknown, courtesy of Penelope Garnette. At right, Navy lieutenant and Huntington native Reginald Parsons. This photograph was taken from his newspaper obituary which appeared in 1946.

The six-month wait for orders put me a full year behind Marty, but I squeezed in a few college credits in the meantime. I received my first set of orders late in the fall of 1942, and underwent various phases of flight and ground school training at five different bases over the next year-and-a-half.

On May 19, 1944, at Pensacola, Florida, I was married. I also acquired Navy wings and a commission as an ensign on that same day.

A fighter training squadron on the West Coast soon picked me up, and I qualified in landings aboard a training carrier. I later became part of an Air Group; the entire group of new fliers had to requalify as fighter pilots, dive bomber pilots, and torpedo pilots before going aboard the carrier which carried us out to the Pacific.

These were typhoon days, Kamikaze days, Iwo Jima days, Okinawa days. After the Japanese surrender in August 1945, we returned to Hawaii and a month later were back in the states. I was lucky all the way — had some close calls but never put a scratch on any of my airplanes.

Upon reaching home, I immediately put in a request for active duty and transfer to the regular Navy. After using all my accumulated annual leave, I was returned to active duty and reported on orders to Naval Air Station, Norfolk, Virginia, pending action on my transfer application. Upon arrival there, I found that I had no orders; I had only to appear at fleet headquarters each day to check whether orders for me had come. Receiving none, my days and evenings were free.

I lolled around at the gym, wrote letters, watched movies at the base theater, and occasionally wandered into the "O" Club. I'd been in Virginia about three weeks, when, on a Wednesday evening in March, I

This is the sight that greeted rescuers responding to Bill Garnette's calls for help after his crash. This photograph of the wreckage was taken by Naval crash investigators. The fore section of the plane lies to the right in this picture; the tail section is to the left. The plane missed clearing the top of Spruce Knob by about 100 feet.

belly scraping across boulders the size of an outhouse, the fuselage finally wedging between two trees and a huge outcropping of rocks. Fortunately, there was no fire. The fuel tanks, nestled inside the wings, were intact a safe distance from the engine's heat.

Although semiconscious with no sense of time, I realized that I was still strapped into the rear cockpit, injuries undetermined. All was quiet. The only sound was a faint hissing as moisture from a slight mist fell upon still-hot engine parts. No sound or movement emanated from the forward cockpit. Beginning when I found myself shivering from the damp cold, some things began to make sense. I desperately needed my leather flight jacket — I'd taken it off before we left the small airport because the sun's heat on the cockpit had been stifling. I'd stowed it in what was now an inaccessible gear compartment, jammed shut by two trees squeezed against the fuselage.

The only sound was a faint hissing as moisture from a slight mist fell upon still-hot engine parts.

I undid the seat belt, shoulder straps, parachute chest buckle, and leg straps. While I was now free to exit the airplane, I became aware of a couple of disabled limbs which might not contribute much to my efforts. The right side of the cockpit was closer to the ground than the left, so I elected to get out on that side. I have no memory of how I accomplished that. I know that my right leg was not functioning, and the same for my right arm and shoulder, but somehow I got it done. Leaning down over the coaming into the cockpit, I fumbled my way to the parachute pack and wrestled it over the side, toward me. A gingerly hop forward on my left leg put me near enough now to see Reggie's head, slumped forward slightly, chin on chest. I spoke to him, calling him to "wake up," but saw no movement nor heard any sign of life.

I surveyed the scene. A few paces to the right, away from the wreck, I saw a cube-shaped rock about 18 inches square and high. Behind it, stood a thin vertical rock, like the back of a chair. Dragging the parachute behind me, I inched my way to the "chair," boosted the 'chute onto the "seat," and planted myself atop the 'chute pack. The exertion failed to bring any noticeable warmth, so I began digging at a

Although scavengers have carried off most of it, pieces of Bill's plane could still be found more than 50 years later. Here, Bill examines a section of the wreckage with Doug Brown. Doug is a retired undertaker from Franklin; he drove the ambulance which carried Bill off the mountain.

corner of the parachute packing, trying to snake out a small pinch of the nylon canopy. With a little more effort and some shifts of my behind, I pulled out enough fabric to drape a bit around my shoulders. It wasn't a down quilt, but it was a big improvement and shielded me from the dampness of the drizzle. I continued easing out more folds of parachute cloth and swathing my upper body in it.

I also worked, with little success, on ridding my mouth of an excess of blood, now beginning to dry thickly on my nose and shredded upper lip. I knew about most of my injuries by this time, but I was blessed with a kind of cognitive numbness that didn't provide space for fright. I thought vaguely of steps I might take to survive, but most of the time I was unconscious or semiconscious, unable to focus clearly on my situation. One moment I would find myself planning what route to take down the mountain; the next, realizing that I was encircled within a stockade of trees and shrubs, huge rocks all around me, few smaller than the one upon which I was sitting. The slope descended at a 45-degree or steeper angle.

The timber stands on this mountain represented thousands of board feet of lumber. Lightning strikes not being uncommon, a narrow trail had been fashioned as a means to slow forest fires and to assist in cutting-off areas already ablaze. The trail was barely wide enough to accommodate a team of mules, and snaked its way up and around the mountain, one switchback after another. A prominent feature was a ditch on the uphill side of the trail, about two feet wide and a foot or so deep.

The fact that the trail existed, joined with the coincidence of my regaining consciousness during the briefest of moments, saved me! Through a daze, I heard a human sound below, not a voice, but a nanosecond of the sound of steel scraping against rock.

With all the volume I could muster, I quickly yelled, "Help!" (although, not to split hairs, my "p" was silent).

A strong voice rang out, "What's the matter?"

I replied, "Plane crash!" (again the "p" was silent).

Again the voice came back, "Anybody hurt?"

"Hell, yes!"

"Hold on, we're coming!"

At the time, I could not comprehend the critical importance to my salvation of the plural pronoun. Now I heard two male voices! As they scrabbled toward me, I heard their quiet curses about slow

Doug Brown in about 1954 at Brown Funeral Service in Franklin. The vehicle shown here was used as both an ambulance and a hearse; it is very similar to the one which Doug drove up Spruce Knob to rescue Bill Garnette in 1946. Photograph courtesy of Doug Brown.

Dangerous Spruce Knob

The east side of West Virginia's highest mountain is scarred by the wreckage of planes which have failed to negotiate its 4,861-foot summit.

When GOLDENSEAL joined author Bill Garnette in trying to locate the remnants of his 1946 brush with death, we were confounded by contradictory stories and conflicting directions on where to find the Spruce Knob wreckage.

Adding one more coincidence to this almost-eerie tale of tragedy and rescue, photographer Steve Shaluta came into contact with Mr. Fay Bennett, a lifelong resident of Pendleton County who grew up — and still lives — at the foot of Spruce Knob. Fay knows that mountain as well as anyone, and was able to lead Steve — and eventually the entire Garnette family and GOLDENSEAL entourage — to the exact site of the 1946 wreck.

Nearby, there are at least two other wreck sites. In June 1950, a twin-engine B-25 Air Force bomber was en route from Olmstead Air Base at Middletown, Pennsylvania, to its home base near Ogden, Utah. The huge aircraft crashed into the east side of Spruce Knob at about daybreak killing all nine men aboard. Local residents helped in the grim recovery effort which left victims and wreckage hanging from trees over a wide area. *The Pendleton Times* newspaper reported that the disaster was the worst loss of life on record in the county up to that time.

On November 13, 1960, a small civilian business plane crashed at the very top of Spruce Knob killing both passengers. Nelson P. Jackson, a 49-year-old retired Air Force colonel from Maryland was piloting the plane for the Joy Company; his passenger was 23-year-old Roger Bell, an industrial engineer also from Maryland. While the pilot was killed by the impact and subsequent fire, passenger Roger Bell managed to crawl or walk away from the wreck. According to undertaker and ambulance driver Doug Brown who was involved in the recovery of bodies, Bell walked for six miles with third-degree burns over 60% of his body, before expiring just a short distance from help.

In all, at least 12 people are known to have died in plane wrecks on the treacherous east slope of Spruce Knob. Bill Garnette — lucky number 13 — is the lone survivor.

progress, skirting around rocks too large to climb, grasping brush and sprouts which gave way with the force of their weight, with nothing substantial to support their upward struggle. By the time they reached me, both were puffing and winded.

The older man — the "voice" — was first to pop his head over the final barrier and come to my side. He was clad in a blue jean jacket, which he peeled off and placed around my shoulders. He introduced himself as Uncle Matt and his companion Bob, a distinctly younger man. Both wore bib overalls. In this situation, Uncle Matt was in command. He saw that the sight of me was too much for Bob: me, seated on my perch, battered face, snow-white parachute splattered with red flecks like a house painter's drop cloth.

After Bob recovered himself, Uncle Matt assigned him duties, one of which was to search the aircraft for any medical kits. When we were alone, I told Uncle Matt that I thought Reggie might be alive, but he told me that he had already determined that was not the case. Earlier, I had blubbered some maudlin sobs of thanks to Uncle Matt. Now, my emotions spilled over anew, and I shed a few more tears.

Now, my emotions spilled over anew, and I shed a few more tears.

It was then that I heard Bob crashing his way downhill through the brush. He'd been dispatched to get help. I was still on the mountain, alive, fading out a little, dazed, but saved!

When I came around again, Uncle Matt was still by my side and eager to keep me lucid.

He was anxious to establish our names and who needed to be notified of our plight and location, but it was not an easy chore for either of us. The injuries to my mouth and face required me to spell each garbled letter of my name and Reginald's, but the real challenge was in naming the Navy people to be notified. Uncle Matt was, of course, unfamiliar with Navy acronyms. We finally got it all right, but later it brought a laugh to describe to others the problem of deciphering the lengthy acronym of the U.S. Navy entity having control over me: "COMFAIRLANT FLEET, NAS Norfolk." Translation: "Commander for Air, Atlantic Fleet, headquarters Naval Air Station, Norfolk, Virginia."

We had no way to tell the exact time of the crash, but Uncle Matt went to the rear cockpit and said that the cracked glass on the instrument panel clock had pushed against the hands, stopping them at 11:10. He estimated that when they heard my cry, a couple of hours

had probably passed since we'd been down. He and Bob had been scooping leaves and other flammable debris from a ditch on the uphill side of the narrow trail so that a lightning strike wouldn't be as likely to jump across the trail and ignite a larger area.

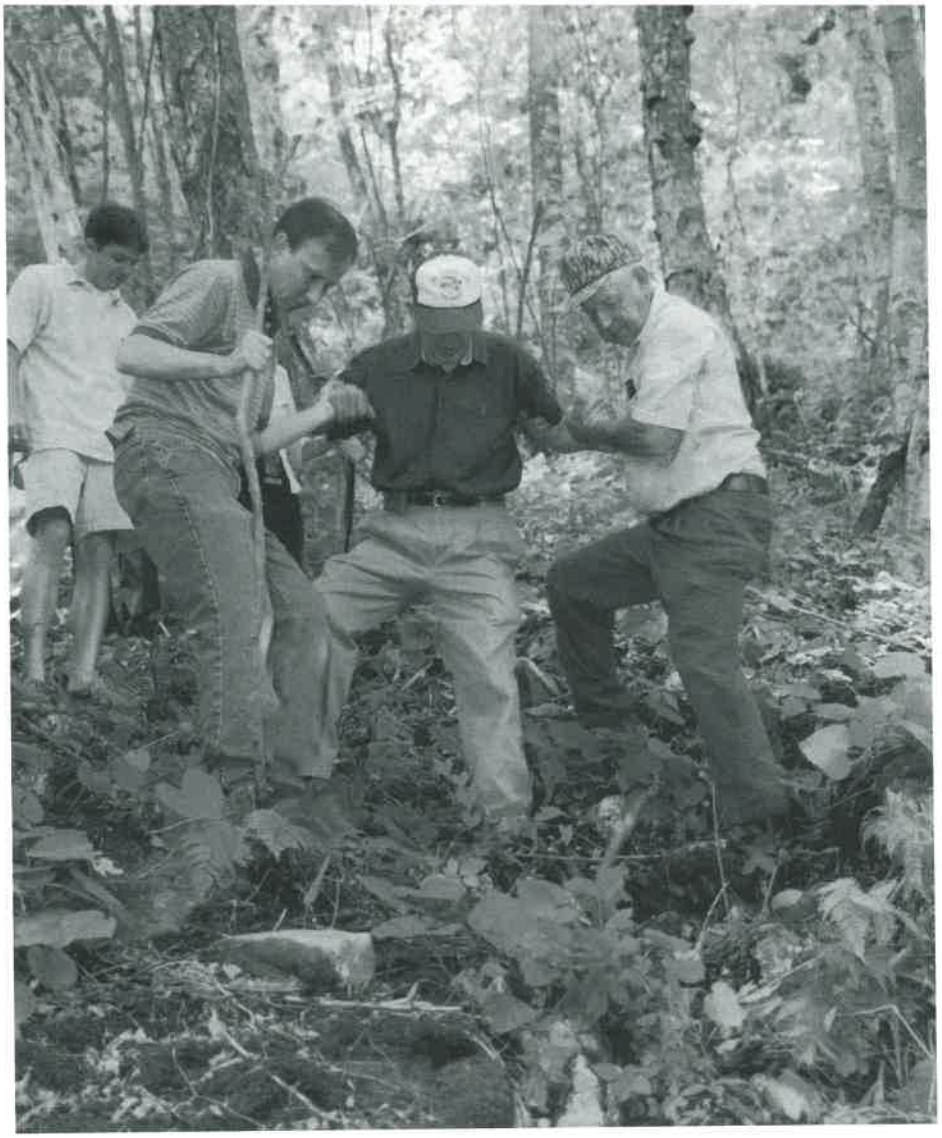
They were both part-time employees of the forest service, and had been working their way down the mountain when they heard my faint cry. He asked if I'd heard them earlier, and I replied that I'd heard no human sound prior to hearing metal scrape against rock. He said Bob was bringing up the rear, getting the last of the "little stuff" out of the ditch and that it was probably Bob's shovel I'd heard. He casually stated that, had it been a few moments later, they would have been out of earshot, further on down. He went on to say that this job was a semi-annual chore — spring and fall — and added puckishly that no one would be making any more "scraping sounds" on Spruce Knob until next fall.

I had drifted off into my previous stuporous condition by the time Bob returned with three helpers in tow. I recall some conversation concerning how to go about transporting me down to the trail, but I had no input into their plans other than to suggest that they use the straps and canopy of my parachute to fashion a litter. Movement of my right leg to any position other than vertical was agony, and, as I moved to get off the parachute, I fainted dead away.

When I came around, the rescuers had cut two poles, had attached the 'chute straps to them, and were in the process of spreading the canopy cloth over the entire rig. My suggestion that one of the big guys test it for strength was accepted, and it passed. All that was necessary was to place me on the litter, the memory of which is only a painful blur. But memory is clear as to the trip down to the trail. There was a man supporting the end of each pole. It was the responsibility of the fifth bearer to go alongside, sweeping away the branches that whiplashed back toward me. I recall that the guys on the uphill side were bent over, trying to keep the litter level. They held their poles close to the surface while the arms of the two on the lower end were straight up. Even then, the hill was steep enough that the litter itself was at a precarious downward angle. The rescue party kept up a chatter of encouraging words to me, and I picked up on their humor as we slipped and slid our way down. Miraculously, they never once dropped me.

Upon reaching the trail, the two bearers at my feet rested their poles on the ground and quickly scooped up a thick bed of leaves as a cushion for the litter. Then the two at my head lowered me to the ground. With the jouncing and bouncing at the end, I reverted to my previous state of semiconsciousness and went into a kind of rest period.

I emerged to the sound of a gentle and soothing feminine voice from somewhere above me. I was unable to see its source, but when I turned my head a little to the left, I saw the hem of a calico dress brushing the tops of a pair of high-top, lace-up black shoes, the same as those worn by my grandmother each day on Grandpa's farm, a couple of hundred miles away. She spoke only a few words, but the caring and sym-



With a little help, Bill Garnette made it down the rugged side of Spruce Knob for a second time following his recent emotional visit to the site of his 1946 plane crash. Fay Bennett, at right, is a local resident who remembers hearing the crash; Fay was instrumental in leading GOLDENSEAL and the Garnette family to the crash site. At left is editor John Lilly and Bill's grandson Luke Swetland.

pathy expressed in her trembling voice touched me to the verge of tears, and I made some mumbling attempts to assure her that I was okay. I never learned where she came from or how or why she got to the site. Sadly, she is the only unidentified principal of those involved in my rescue. Maybe I made her up.

An emergency vehicle arrived after a while, and I was passed into it through a wide rear door, litter and all, placed upon a padded cot, and covered with a blanket. Then we set out for the nearest town, Franklin. During the 15 miles of winding road we traveled to get there, I got acquainted with the gentleman in the rear. His was the town's only funeral home, and he also operated an ambulance service with the help of his son, our driver, up front.

Upon arriving at Franklin, the vehicle entered a driveway and halted alongside a residence, part of which was devoted to a doctor's office. The doctor came out promptly and climbed into the vehicle. After a couple of "tsks, tsks" along with a shake of his head and a few kind words, he pulled back the blanket, located a suitable spot on my right arm and injected a heavenly dose of painkiller. As the morphine began doing its duty, the funeral director told me that we were 40 miles from each of two hospitals — one to the east, the other to the west — and asked me if I had a preference. I opted for the Virginia facility, reasoning that the Navy would prefer me to be in an area most accessible to a military hospital. We'd long ago used up daylight, and I, too, was used up.

I spent the next six days at a hospital in Harrisonburg, Virginia, where I was initially treated by an orthopedic surgeon who appeared to share my interest in flying. He talked and asked a lot of questions as he moved around the table, sewing, patching, wiring, and splinting. I later came to believe that he was humoring me, as a distraction.

As I passed in and out of consciousness in my recovery room, I recall seeing three figures standing at the foot of my bed. One-by-one, I identified their anxious, tear-stained, but smiling faces. Here were my mother and dad who, since their divorce when I was only a wee one, had rarely been in the same room together. The third presence was that of my high school sweetheart, the former Jewel Effingham, who had pinned my wings on me and married me at Pensacola, so many months before. I was able to comprehend what they were saying, but was unable to respond.

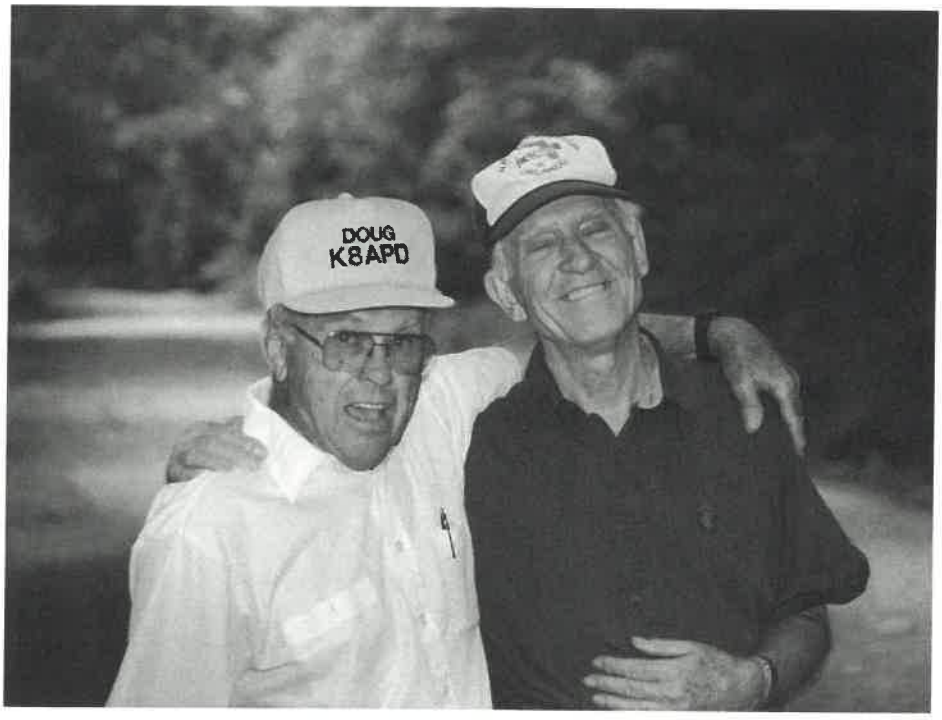
One-by-one, I identified their anxious, tear-stained, but smiling faces.

Six days after arriving at Harrisonburg, and against the recommendation of the civilian orthopedic surgeon, the Navy flew me back to Norfolk in a small twin-engine airplane, still bound, mummy-like. The takeoff was from the same small airport Reggie and I had used, but, to the best of my knowledge, there was no request this time for a "hot pilot" takeoff.

For the next 23 months, I was sequestered — half in surgery, the other half in rehab — first at the Norfolk Naval Hospital, then I was transferred to the Philadelphia Naval Hospital. In the matter of my lengthy recovery, treatment, and rehab, I cannot praise too highly the support and encouragement I received from my faithful, always-at-hand spouse as she sat at my bedside, day after boring day. She was a source of strengh as she endured my whinings and overlooked my sometimes hopeless state.

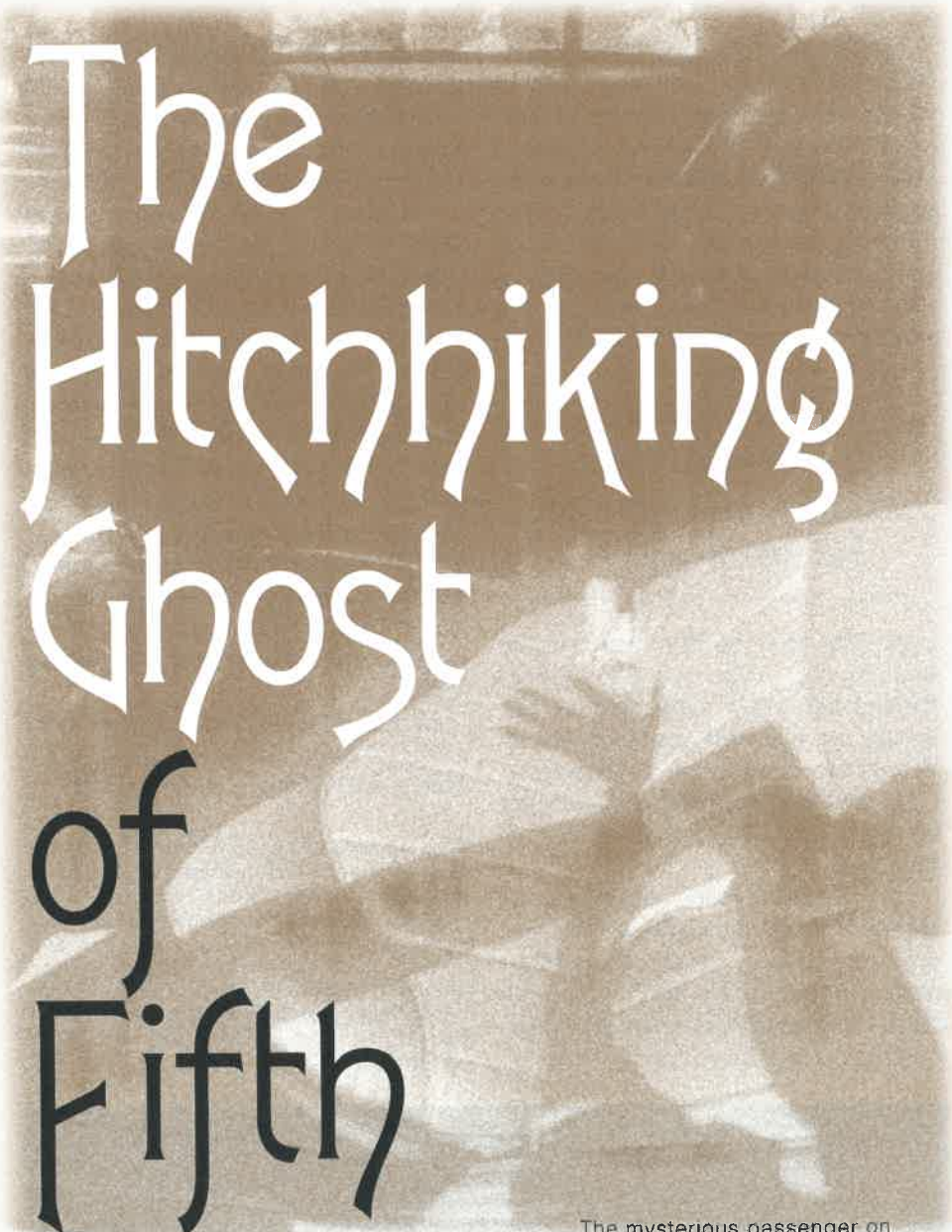
At the end of 1947, I was discharged from the hospital and officially retired from the Navy.

BILL GARNETTE is a native of Huntington and a graduate of Huntington High School. He holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Missouri School of Journalism, with honors. After retiring from the Navy in 1947, Bill had a career with the United States Civil Service Commission Investigations Division. He currently lives in Florida. This is his first contribution to GOLDENSEAL.



Happy to be alive! Bill Garnette and Doug Brown at Spruce Knob.

The Hitchhiking Ghost of Fifth Street Hill



The mysterious passenger on Huntington's Fifth Street Hill is said to disappear when she reaches her destination. Photograph by Michael Keller.

By Joseph Platania

Fifth Street Road is one of the major thoroughfares leading south out of Huntington. The three-lane blacktop road makes a long, steep climb up Fifth Street Hill from its base at a stone bridge across Fourpole Creek to its crest. From there, the road levels off briefly before it slopes down to the I-64 interchange and then goes south into Wayne County.

For more than 50 years, there has been a story in circulation that late at night when it is raining, a young woman stands at the top of the hill and beckons motorists to pick her up, only to vanish when reaching her destination. The mysterious rider has been dubbed by cab drivers, "The Ghost Girl of Fifth Street Hill."

The first published account of this ghostly tale was in a Huntington newspaper on October 30, 1942. The article states that a few days earlier, a driver for the Black & White Cab Company left off his fare at a dance hall on Fifth Street Road early in the morning. At about 4:30 a.m., he started back toward Huntington. It was then that he encountered the mysteriously vanishing hitchhiker.

According to the cab driver, "When I got to the top of Fifth Street Hill, a girl hailed me from the roadside. I stopped, opened the door, and she got into the rear seat. It was pretty cold, but she did not have any coat or hat on, just a skirt and thin blouse. I thought that was funny and said, 'It's pretty cold without a coat, isn't it?' And she replied, 'I haven't worn a coat for nine or 10 years.'

"I asked the girl where she was going and she told me to let her off at the bottom of the hill. I drove down the hill about 20 or 25 miles an hour, stopped at the house, and turned around to collect my fare and let the girl out. She was not sitting in the seat. I thought maybe she had fainted or something and fell off the seat, so I looked down on the floor. But there was nobody there. I looked back up the road and couldn't see anybody, so I drove back to the taxi headquarters. I said to the dispatcher, 'I've just been gypped out of a quarter,' and I told him what had happened.

"He said he had heard of that same thing happening to a Yellow Cab driver about a year before in the same place, and called up the Yellow Cab office

and asked them about it. They said it happened to one of their drivers."

Since the first sighting, the hitchhiking ghost has reportedly been seen hundreds of times. A November 1958 newspaper story reports that "she never says a word and she always disappears from the car like a puff of smoke when it reaches the stoplight at the bridge."

According to the 1958 article, the story behind the apparition goes as follows:

"Quite a few years ago, a Huntington couple took their daughter and her fiance to Wayne to be married. It was in the early spring, just the season for marriages, and the wedding went off without a hitch. However, on their way back, rain started coming down in a slow drizzle, the kind that makes roads slick. At the foot of the hill, just before coming to the bridge at the corner of Fifth Street and the boulevard, the car overturned and the bride was killed. Ever since then, but especially in the early spring and only when it's raining, the bride reappears on the hill. Standing at the top and wearing her white dress, she thumbs a ride from passing motorists."

In 1977, a Marshall University student tape recorded an interview with John Fields, a retired Milton resident, who related this version of the ghostly story:

"A cab driver came along somewhere out on Fifth Street Hill and this woman dressed in a wedding gown with no coat on flagged him down. He said, 'Where to?' and she gave him an address somewhere in West Huntington. He said to her, 'Aren't you cold out this cold night with no coat on?' And she said to him, 'I don't get cold.' And he drove down there and parked at the number she had given him, and he looked back to let her out and nobody was there. Well, he got his hair all raised up so he knocked at the door and an old lady came to the door. And he says, 'Lady, I've had a terrible experience that I can't figure out.' And he told her what had happened. She said, 'That's my daughter.' She said that she died. She added, 'She comes back every four years.' He got out of there and quit his job."

Bob Cook is office manager for Taxi Service, Inc., the operator of Yellow Cab in the Huntington area and a former cab driver. Bob states that he hasn't heard anyone tell any new stories about picking up the Fifth Street Hill ghost in about a decade. In the version that he recalls, the young woman was "bedraggled" in appearance and wore a veil. He adds that drivers of Greyhound and Trailways buses also have reported picking up the young woman standing at the top of Fifth Street Hill. They have told similar stories to the ones that cab drivers have related, that she would board their buses, but when they arrived at her destination she had disappeared.

As a child, Bob lived with his grandparents on Fifth Street Road. He first heard about the ghost from his grandfather who drove a cab for a while and knew a lot of the stories. After he retired from military service in 1975, Bob took a job driving a cab for the former Black & White Cab Company. Some of the older drivers would talk about their experiences with the apparition riding in their cabs 20 or 25 years earlier, or repeat stories they had heard from other drivers from both the Black & White and the Yellow Cab companies. According to the drivers who had picked her up, she always gave her destination as "downtown," but by the time the cab had reached the bottom of the hill, she had disappeared.

Bob Cook is a former Huntington cab driver and is now the office manager for Taxi Service, Inc. He has heard tales of the hitchhiking ghost all of his life. Photograph by Michael Keller.

Cook says that there have been so many cases of the ghost being reported, that it is impossible for him to believe that it is a hoax.

JOSEPH PLATANIA, a Huntington native, earned his B.A. and M.A. at Marshall University. He has worked for the West Virginia Department of Welfare and the U.S. Veterans Administration, and is now a freelance writer whose work is published in the *Huntington Quarterly* and other publications. He has contributed to GOLDENSEAL for many years, most recently in Fall 1999.

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.

Weaver Honored

Tucker County weaver Dorothy Thompson was recently named as a recipient of the prestigious National Heritage Fellowship for the year 2000 by the National Endowment for the Arts in Washington, D.C. The 79-year-old Canaan Valley resident has been weaving since the age of ten. The fellowship recognizes her as a master weaver and as a teacher of this ancient, challenging art.

Weaver Dorothy Thompson. Photograph by Gerry Milnes.

The National Heritage Fellowship was established in 1982 to honor select individuals for their lifetime of commitment to the traditional folk arts. Braxton County fiddler Melvin Wine received the award in 1991, and Morgantown steel drum artist Elliott Mannette was a 1999 recipient.

Dorothy Thompson will travel to Washington, D.C., in September to accept the award. She will be honored along with other fellowship recipients at a public concert on September 22, at George Washington University's Lisner Auditorium. The concert is free and open to the public. For more information, call Rose Morgan at (202)682-5678.

Slavery Lectures

A series of lectures on slavery in West Virginia is planned this fall in Charleston. The series runs from September 21 through November 4 and is titled "Moving Toward Freedom: Slavery and Resistance." It is sponsored by Marshall University Graduate College with support from the West Virginia Humanities Council. The series of 10 lectures will cover topics ranging from the Underground Railroad, to the role of women in the resistance of slavery, to the use of slaves in the Kanawha Valley saline industry.

The first presentation will feature author Edward Bell who will speak on his award-winning book *Slaves In the Family* on September 14, at 7:30 p.m., in the theater of the Cultural Center in Charleston. The remaining lectures in the series will be held at Grace Bible Church, 600 Kanawha Boulevard, in Charleston.

All programs are free and open to the public. For a full schedule or additional information, call the West Virginia Humanities Council at (304)346-8500.

Veterans Memorial Update

State veterans were honored on November 11, 1999, as the last of four sculptures was unveiled at the West Virginia Veterans Memorial at the State Capitol Complex in Charleston.

The final statue depicts a Vietnam-era Marine; it joins other lifelike, bronze images of a World War II sailor, a World War I infantryman, and a Korean War aviator. All figures are the work of West Virginia artist P. Joe Mullins. They represent the four major conflicts of the 20th century and the four major branches of military service.

West Virginia Veterans Memorial. Photograph by Michael Keller.

A complete list of the 10,300 veterans enshrined on the memorial is available on the Internet, along with additional information, at www.wvculture.org/history/wvvets.html.

Goodbye, Cleta Long

Cleta Mae Cross Long, 63, of Parsons, passed away July 8. Best known for her writing and poetry, she was named Tucker County's Poet Laureate in November 1992. She was awarded the Distinguished West Virginian award by Governor Cecil Underwood this past spring.

Cleta Long. Photograph courtesy of WNPB-TV, Morgantown.

Cleta had been a reporter and columnist for the *Parsons Advocate* since 1971.

She wrote five books including two poetry books, two Tucker County history books, and her autobiography *Dry Fork's Daughter*. One of her poems is included in the new state poetry anthology, *Wild Sweet Notes: Fifty Years of West Virginia Poetry* [see page 7].

Cleta was a frequent participant in the Augusta Heritage Arts Workshops at Davis & Elkins College in Elkins; she competed in the most recent West Virginia State Liars Contest at the 2000 Vandalia Gathering in Charleston.

She was loved by many and will be greatly missed.

More than 230,000 West Virginians served in the military during World War II, far more than in any other conflict. An effort to erect a national World War II Memorial on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., is gaining momentum in the state. The West Virginia drive to support the building of this new monument is spearheaded by Larry Legge of Barboursville. For more information, write to Larry at 104 Bartow Drive, Barboursville, WV 25504-1102, call (304)736-5340, or e-mail llegge@msn.com.

Railroading

Three historic steam excursions are planned along a little-used section of track in Pocahontas County this fall. Dubbed "Train Rides Into History," the seven-hour trips begin and end at Cass. The town of Cass celebrates its 100th anniversary this year and was featured in our summer issue.

While the usual route taken by Cass Scenic Railroad trains follows the rails up to Bald Knob, these special excursions will travel a different route to the old logging town of Spruce, climb to the "Big Cut," then run down the Shaver's Fork of the Cheat River to Twin Bridges before returning to Cass.

"Train Rides Into History" also include detailed narration and commentary by local railroad historians and a printed trip guide, emphasizing the historical aspects of the journey.

These special excursions are offered on Monday, September 25; Tuesday, September 26; and Monday, October 2, departing Cass at 10:00 a.m. each day. They are sponsored by the Mountain State Railroad and Logging Historical Association. Cost is $40 per ticket. For more information, call Bob Hoke at (301)725-5877, or write to him at 6304 Kaybro Street, Laurel, MD 20707; e-mail bobhoke@erols.com.

Rolling stock of a much smaller scale will arrive at Tamarack on November 4-5, for Trainfest 2000. Several model railroad displays will be in operation, and model

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railroad collectors and enthusiasts will gather for the weekend. West Virginia craftspeople will display and demonstrate toy trains and other railroad creations. Musicians will also play train songs in the auditorium. Trainfest 2000 is free and open to the public.

Tamarack is located in Beckley along the West Virginia Turnpike at exit 45. For more information, call 1-88-TAMARACK, or visit www.tamarackwv.com.

Archaeology Month

October is Archaeology Month in West Virginia, and the theme this year is industrial archaeology. Dozens of events are scheduled around the state, most with an industrial flavor.

The Easton Roller Mill will be the site of Mill Day on Sunday, September 24. The historic grist mill is located just east of Morgantown at the intersection of U.S. Route 119 and Star Route 857, near the Easton-Avery community [see "Avery, Dear Avery," by Florence Lewis Godfrey; page 30]. Free activities are scheduled from 9:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m.

Equipment at Easton Roller Mill. Photograph by Dr. Emory Kemp.

"Wheeling in West Virginia" at the Oglebay Institute Mansion Museum in Wheeling is a special exhibit highlighting the early development of Wheeling and its industrial heritage. Drawn from the extensive holdings of the Oglebay Institute and from private collections, the exhibit opened in mid-July and will remain on display until October 9. There is an admission fee. For more information, call Oglebay at (304)242-7272.

Grave Creek Mound historical site in Moundsville presents its ninth annual "Native American Artifact Exhibit" on Saturday, October 14, from 10:00 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. Free activities include displays of private artifact collections, pottery making, flint knapping, and artifact identification. We will stop here as part of our upcoming GOLDENSEAL bus tour [see page 72]. For more information on Grave Creek Mound, call (304)843-4128.

Many other Archaeology Month activities are planned during October throughout the state. For a complete schedule or for more information, call Dan Bonenberger at (304)293-2513, or Laura Lamarre at (304)558-0220 ext. 711.

Jefferson County Brochure

West Virginia's easternmost county is home to Earl Ellifritz and his rock museum, featured on the cover of this issue of GOLDENSEAL. Travelers to historic Jefferson County may wish to obtain a copy of a brochure produced by the Jefferson County Chamber of Commerce. The brochure is called, "Discover... Jefferson County" and includes a map, a calendar of events, a guide to local historic sites and attractions, and descriptions of the area's many points of interest. Jefferson County includes some of the state's oldest

towns including Shepherdstown, Charles Town, and Harpers Ferry. The free brochure is available by calling the Chamber of Commerce at 1-800-624-0577 or writing to P.O. Box 426, Charles Town, WV 25414.

Fall Folklife Events

Autumn is a favorite season for travelers in the Mountain State and a good time of year to enjoy the many folklife events scheduled across the state.

The Treasure Mountain Festival will be held September 14-17 in Franklin, Pendleton County. The 32nd annual event is one of the area's premier attractions and includes fiddle and banjo contests; old-time square dancing in the street; turkey-calling, owl-hooting, jousting, horseshoe, and muzzleloaders' competitions; and a re-enactment of the burning of Fort Seybert. Most activities are free to the public, with a small admission charged for special events. For more information, call Linda Long at (304)358-2668.

The Elmer Bird Music Fest is planned October 15 in Hurricane City Park. The third annual event honors Putnam County banjo player Elmer Bird, the "Banjo Man From Turkey Creek." Elmer received the 1996 Vandalia Award and was featured in the Summer 1997 issue of GOLDENSEAL. He passed away in 1997. The one-day memorial festival begins at 2:00 p.m., and features an informal jam session on a covered stage. All musicians are welcome to participate and are invited to register in advance. For an application or further information, call (304)562-5896.

Elmer Bird. Photograph by Michael Keller.

The Augusta Fiddlers' Reunion is one of the biggest and best gatherings of older traditional musicians in the state. Now in its 11th year, the Fiddlers' Reunion takes place at Davis & Elkins College in Elkins on October 27-29. Popular fiddlers Melvin Wine, Woody Simmons, Glen Smith, and Lefty Shaffer are regular participants, along with many great musicians who seldom perform in public including Leland Hall, Elmer Rich, Rosa Pheasant, and others. They are featured in free performances throughout the day on Saturday, October 28, at the college's Hermanson Center. There are admission fees for other weekend activities including an evening concert and square dance. For more information, call the Augusta Heritage Center at (304)637-1209, or check their Web site at www.augustaheritage.com.

The Something Old/Something New Craft Show will be held on Saturday, November 4, at the Gilmer County Recreation Center in Glenville. This local craft show is sponsored by Crafters in the Glen, a Glenville-based crafts cooperative. The fifth annual show will feature 20 to 30 local artisans displaying handmade jewelry, baskets, and quilting. The show will run from 9:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m., and is free to the public. For more information, write to Leona Beall at 930 Mineral Road, Glenville, WV 26351, or call her at (304)462-8291.

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Bus Tour 2000

A few seats are still available on our upcoming GOLDENSEAL bus tour of the Northern Panhandle, October 13-14!

We'll gather in historic Wheeling, where we'll enjoy a brief driving tour before stopping for a tantalizing break at the Lebanon Bakery. Then, it's on to Weirton where we'll see the spectacular All Saints Greek Orthodox Church, have a program on local Greek heritage, and enjoy a Greek lunch.

Fiesta ware by Homer Laughlin. Photograph by Michael Keller.

Next stop is the world-famous Homer Laughlin China Company in Newell, makers of Fiesta ware. We'll tour the factory and visit the gift shop there, before we continue down the road to West Virginia's northernmost point — Chester, home of the "World's Largest Teapot!"

Our final stop on Friday will be Bethany College where we will stay in their comfortable lodge and conference center. Legendary country music singer and WWVA radio star Doc Williams will provide our evening program.

Saturday will take us to Moundsville for a guided tour of the imposing and historic state penitentiary, and a visit to nearby Grave Creek Mound and Delf Norona museum for lunch and a sampling of Archaeology Day activities. Our last — and most picturesque — stop will be at St. Joseph Settlement, high atop a ridge in extreme southern Marshall County. The view from here is breathtaking! We'll arrive back in Wheeling late Saturday afternoon.

The cost of the tour is only $185 plus tax, per person, double occupancy($195 single occupancy). This covers travel, four meals, one night's lodging, admission and program fees, delicious snacks each day, and a commemorative booklet of GOLDENSEAL articles about our stops.

For a registration form and further information, see the Summer 2000 issue, or call (304)558-0220 ext. 153.

Goldenseal

Coming Next Issue...

- Woodturning
- Slovenes in Richwood
- Armstead Mining Family
- Coon Hounds

PHOTO CURIOSITY

Presidential candidate John F. Kennedy faced an uphill battle in West Virginia during the 1960 Democratic presidential primary campaign [see "Kennedy In West Virginia," by Topper Sherwood; page 14]. JFK made a concerted effort during his campaign to familiarize himself with state political leaders and to learn about their concerns.

This wonderful photograph from the West Virginia State Archives shows the candidate in action, presumably in a southern West Virginia coal camp. Historians at the State Archives, however, are unable to pinpoint the location or name the individuals with whom Kennedy is conferring. GOLDENSEAL also passed the photo among some knowledgeable political veterans at the State Capitol, but to no avail.

Do you recognize this place or any of the gentlemen with whom Kennedy is speaking? If so, please contact us at the GOLDENSEAL office.

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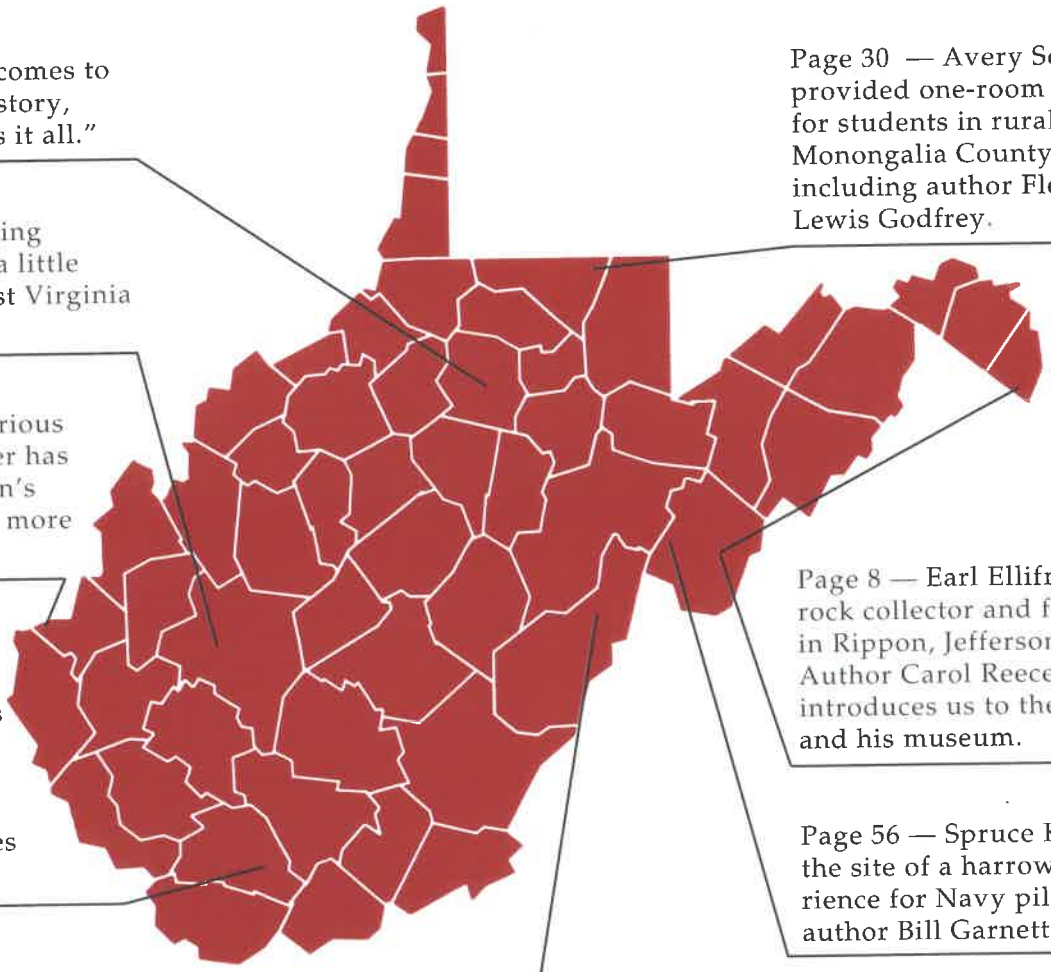
Inside Goldenseal



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