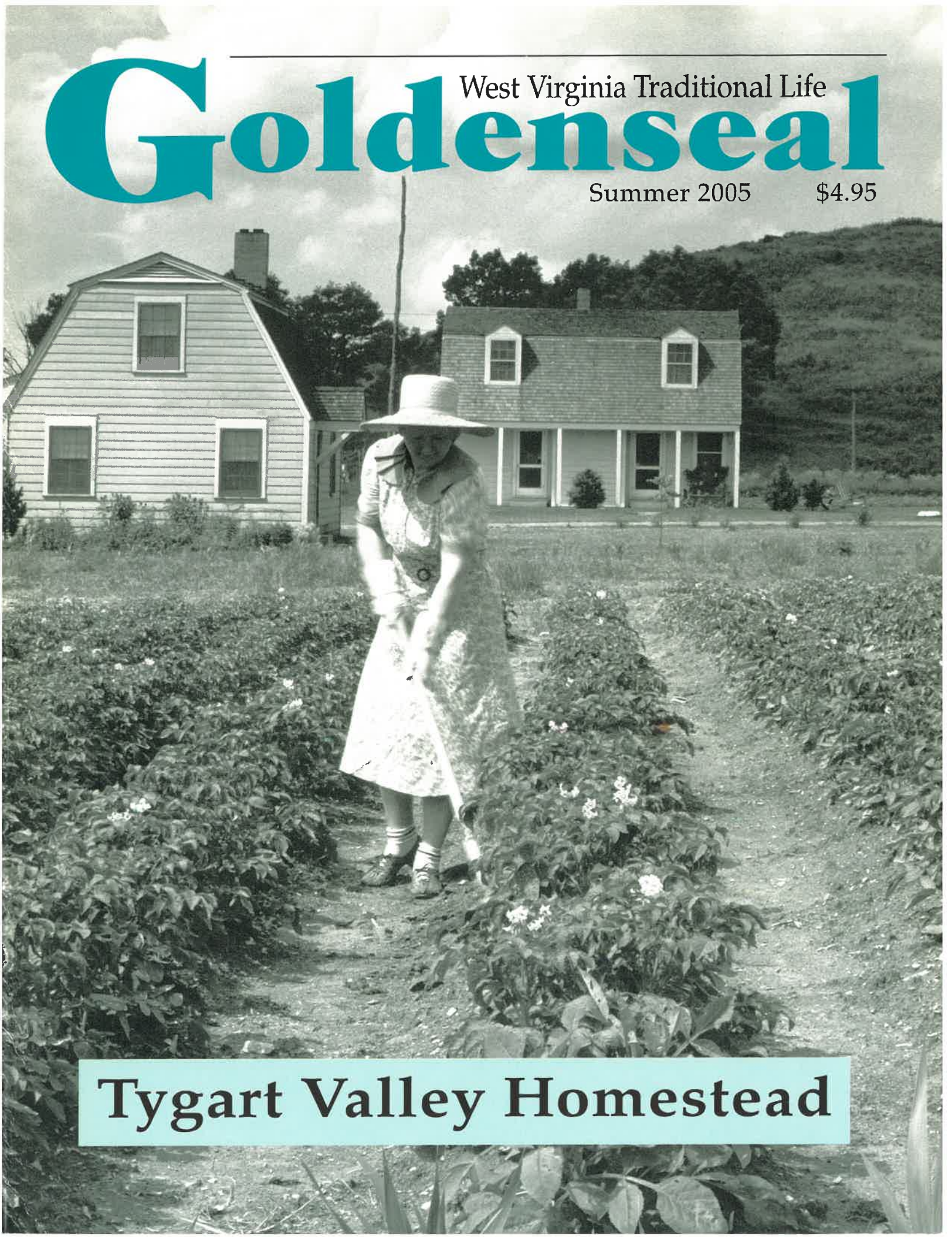
West Virginia Traditional Life
Goldenseal
Summer 2005 $4.95



Tygart Valley Homestead

From the Editor: Preservation Is Progress

Twenty years ago, or more, a bumper sticker caught my eye. Its three-word message still rings clear in my mind: "Preservation Is Progress." The sticker happened to appear on the instrument case of a very dedicated musician who revels in old melodies, old records, and old Gibson mandolins. For him, the sticker was a comment on the value of playing music that went out of fashion when his grandparents were in high school.

The same message, however, can be applied to nearly every aspect of our lives. Who doesn't treasure their family photos or heirlooms? Most communities see the value of saving historic buildings and neighborhoods. We even benefit from the memory of hard times and tragedy, reminding us of our losses and our shortcomings in the hopes of better days.

GOLDENSEAL readers are well-acquainted with this concept. What is new, however, are the many modern and inventive ways we now have to accomplish it. Several of these are highlighted in this issue.

Two exciting new projects are described in our "Current Programs*Events*Publications" section. Please take a minute to read our announcement about StoryCorps and its planned stop this month in West Virginia. StoryCorps is a new and ambitious project of oral history collection, encouraging family and community members to sit down and talk about the things that matter, and preserving these conversations on CD recordings. Participants receive one copy of the recording, and, with their permission, one copy is deposited with the Library of Congress for future generations. We are very pleased that StoryCorps has set aside special blocks of time while they are in West Virginia, exclusively for GOLDENSEAL readers. If you have ever wanted to record a page from your own family or personal history — or that of a loved one — this is an excellent opportunity. See page 6 for additional information.

Also in our "Current *Programs*Events *Publications" section is a brief announcement about the work of the West Virginia Cultural Heritage Tourism Program. These fine folks are working to educate communities across the state about the value — both cultural and economic — of promoting their local history and heritage to the traveling public. They are also working to educate state authorities about the importance of supporting and encouraging heritage tourism. In my opinion, this is not only the right thing to do, but the smart thing to do. While the state funnels millions of dollars into promoting outdoor recreation and the "gaming" industry, certainly the unique history and heritage of our fine state deserve equal time — and dollars. See page 8 for more details.

Another growing area of preservation exists within the world of self-publishing. Thanks to computers and print-on-demand publishers, many first-time authors are now able to share their autobiographies, genealogies, community histories, jokes, poems, and stories with the public in printed form. Many of these authors have sent copies of these independently published books to our office for review in recent years, and we are proud to tell you about more than a dozen of them in our "New Books Available" feature in this issue, written by Gordon Simmons. See page 68.

Of course, the West Virginia State Archives continues to do its usual excellent job in preserving our state's history, and we are glad to include a notice about its beautiful new book of photographs, recently published in commemoration of its centennial. See page 72.

GOLDENSEAL remains an important outlet, not only for these organizations to inform you about their activities, but for you, your family, and your community to tell your own story. We happily accept freelance manuscripts on West Virginia traditional life, and each issue includes as much of this heritage as 72 pages can hold.

I believe that the past and the future are one continuous experience. Here at GOLDENSEAL, we will do our utmost to bring this experience to you, for as long as you will support us with your subscriptions and gifts.

That sounds like progress to me.

John Lilly

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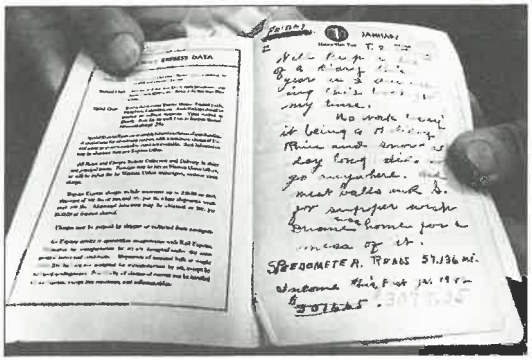

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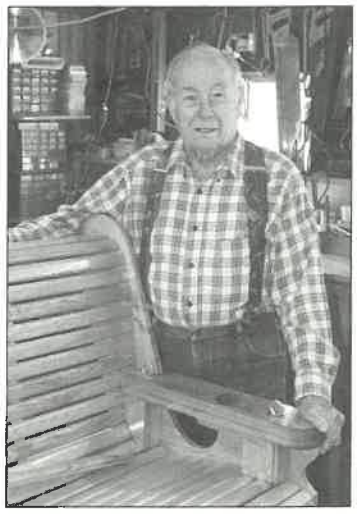
On the cover: A woman tends a garden at the Tygart Valley Homestead in Randolph County. Photograph 1939 by John Vachon, Farm Security Administration, courtesy of the Library of Congress. Our story begins on page 10.



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Published by the
STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA

Joe Manchin III
Governor

Kay Goodwin
Secretary
Department of Education
and the Arts

Troy Body
Commissioner
Division of Culture and History

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GOLDENSEAL (ISSN 0099-0159, USPS 013336) is published four times a year, in the spring, summer, fall, and winter. The magazine is distributed for $17 yearly. Manuscripts, photographs, and letters are welcome; return postage should accompany manuscripts and photographs.

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Periodical postage paid at Charleston, West Virginia.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to GOLDENSEAL, The Cultural Center, 1900 Kanawha Blvd. East, Charleston, WV 25305-0300.

The Division of Culture and History is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer.

Printed in West Virginia by
Morgantown Printing & Binding

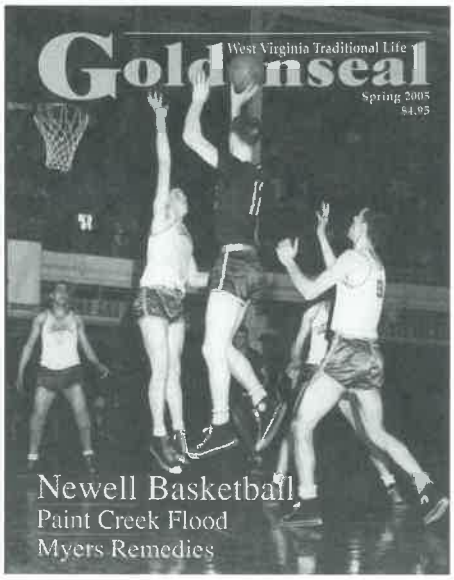
Letters from Readers

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.

Newell Basketball

Forwarded to GOLDENSEAL by author Bob Barnett, used by permission. —ed.

March 15, 2005
Huntington, West Virginia
Hey Bob,
I wanted to tell you how much I enjoyed your recent piece on Newell basketball [see "When the 'Big Green' Rolled: Newell's Championship Season," by Bob Barnett; Spring 2005]. Really well done.



I could almost write a piece just from the memories evoked by the cover of that issue. First, the uniforms. I immediately recognized them as early to mid-'50's "standard issue" for teams of that era. I started playing basketball at Williamstown in '56 on the freshman/junior varsity team. The high school team had just received new uniforms, and we got, well, the ones on the GOLDENSEAL cover. It was not a particularly good set of hand-me-downs. They were terribly worn and, not surprisingly, oversized for us skinny little pukes. I think my trunks were from a big center named Showalter. I could poke both of my legs in one leg of those shorts.

The belt buckle was broken, but it didn't matter. The waist was so big that I had to draw the belt so tight that the trunks gathered around my waist. And then I tied the belt in some goofy knot and hoped for the best when I jumped.

And the shoes. Well, we all recognize them as those universal Converse All Stars, although in "my day," we had advanced to the white ones. By my junior year, we were into the sleek-looking "low cuts," even though they required the ankle taping.

I vaguely recall that 1952 regional tournament. I guess I was in the fifth or sixth grade. I remember the crowd in our quite new, at the time — and rather spacious — gym. It was literally wall to wall, and the noise was deafening. I also recall how badly and quickly I wanted to grow up and be a part of that kind of experience.

Some of the schools you mentioned were familiar to me, too. We played Sistersville and Pennsboro on a regular basis, and I was in a couple of regional tournaments in Moundsville. Never got as far north as Wheeling or Weirton, however. We did cross the river to get whopped by triple-A Marietta on one occasion.

Along with Sistersville and Pennsboro, there were 12 other Little Kanawha Conference schools, including Williamstown. They were mostly A schools

(the B category had been abandoned sometime in the mid-'50's), except for Ravenswood, which was double-A. I think most of those schools are gone now, an outcome of consolidation.

I remember it as a really good time, a time when a lot of guys (sorry girls, but that was the situation) could participate in sports.

Well, I'll leave it at that. And with another thanks for taking me back to great times.
Dr. James Joy

Bill Jones in 1955.

Felton Dairy Truck

March 19, 2005
Phoenix, Arizona
Editor:
I hasten to suggest a high salute is in order for you and Tucker County Sheriff Tom Felton for the story of "Fleetie Bell" [see "'Fleetie Belle': Adventures of a Tucker County Milk Truck," by Tom Felton; Spring 2005].

Being one of the characters in that treatment, a river of sweet recollections floods my memory. Those were wonderful days spent among beautiful people in the enchanting lands of "Almost Heaven."

The GOLDENSEAL is like a drink of cool mountain water. Accordingly, may good things lie ahead for you and the staff as you continue your worthy endeavor.
With all good wishes,
Bill Jones

Paint Creek Flood

March 24, 2005
Baton Rouge, Louisiana
Editor:
I just got your spring issue of GOLDENSEAL. I could not stop till I read the whole thing, even the ads.

A story that interested me was "Water from Hill to Hill," the Paint Creek flood [see "Water from Hill to Hill: Paint Creek Flood of 1932," by Matthew Mitchell; Spring 2005]. I am sure my dad was there when that happened. He is gone now, and I would like to ask him — he was born in 1898 and died in 1961.

I remember him talking a lot about Cabin Creek and Paint Creek area. I was too young then to get the importance of it all, but reading that, I think he was there.
Thank you,
Bill Moore

Marie Robinette

March 8, 2005
Kinston, North Carolina
Editor:
I am very impressed with the GOLDENSEAL articles each issue. I am writing after reading the article authored by Dallas Jude with Marie Robinette on the Matewan shooting [see "Eyewitness: Marie Robinette of Matewan," by Dallas H. Jude; Winter 2004].

My family moved to Williamson in 1942, and, after a brief period in South Williamson, we moved to Red Jacket in 1946. My father was the safety and training director for Red Jacket Coal Company. Living in Red Jacket, I attended the Red Jacket Elementary and Junior High schools. I graduated from Matewan High School in 1955.

I am sure Mrs. Robinette is the last surviving eyewitness, but I would like to identify another eyewitness to the Matewan shooting. That witness was Mrs. Martha Hoskins. Mrs. Hoskins was our eighth-grade science teacher at Red Jacket Junior High. She was in her 70's and still teaching school with a passion during the late '40's and '50's.

Marie Robinette today in Matewan. Photograph by Michael Keller.

She would have been about 45 years old at the time of the shooting. Mrs. Hoskins loved to tell her students the story of the shooting as she remembered it, and she remembered it in great detail. It seems she lived up the hill from the train station and had a very good view of the station. Her story, as I remember it, follows most of the details recalled by Mrs. Robinette and others, recorded in many places today.

I would like to hear if anyone knows if Mrs. Hoskins recorded her version of the shooting, or if any other of her students can add to this story. I was like most eighth-grade students and missed the importance of the event and thus made no effort to record her thoughts.

I enjoy your magazine. It has caused me to further study the heritage of southern West Virginia, which is what good reporting should do.
Joe Plasky

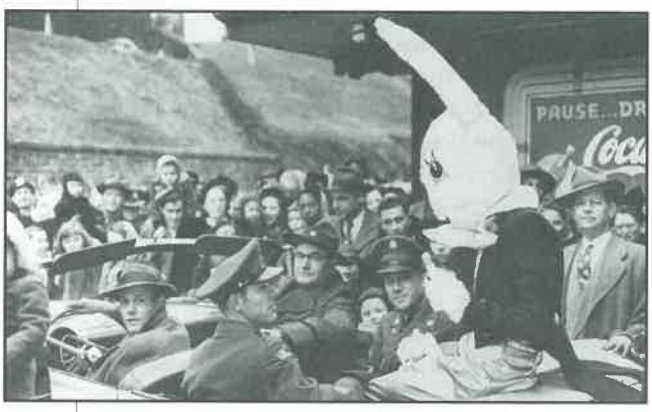
Friendly Glass

February 3, 2005
Sistersville, West Virginia
Editor:
What a nice article about a uniquely named town, glassware shop, and a great family [see *"West Virginia Back Roads:* Friendly Glass, Glowing Memories," by Carl E. Feather; Winter 2004]. Carl E. Feather has chosen a catchy title that has a triple meaning — Friendly, West Virginia; store glassware; and the Carr family. This is an excellent blend!

Friendly got its name from Friend Williamson and has had an interesting history, which once included an Ohio River ferryboat

Photo Curiosity Response

Thanks to the many readers who responded to our whimsical "Photo Curiosity" in the Spring 2005 issue, showing someone in a bunny suit being chauffeured in the back of a convertible with a military escort. All agreed that the photograph was taken during the late 1940's at the Welch train station. Tim Gilley of Altamonte Springs, Florida, points out that the courthouse and jail, as well as the WWI Memorial Building, are visible in the upper left-hand corner of the picture. Dr. Bernard M. Swope of Winchester, Virginia, identifies the gentleman with the polka-dot tie at the right as Bob Austin, manager of the local A.W. Cox Department Store.



Jim Rush as the Easter Bunny at Welch, April 1949. Photograph courtesy of West Virginia State Archives.

Imagine our delight, however, when the man in the bunny suit himself called our office. Jim Rush, currently of Chalfont, Pennsylvania, saw the photograph in the magazine and recognized it.

Jim grew up on Bottom Creek, near Kimball, McDowell County. In the spring of 1949, he was 17 years old, and his father notified him that A.W. Cox Department Store in Welch was looking for someone to be their Easter Bunny. He applied for the job and was hired — the bunny suit was a perfect fit. The job was to last 10 days in the afternoons, and all day Saturday. Jim writes about the experience in his 1998 self-published autobiography, titled *Memories of Use-Ta-Days*:

"They were convinced I had the personality to relate with children. You know, kinda like a springtime Santa Claus. To kick off the Easter season with a life-sized Easter Bunny was big stuff in Welch!

"On Tuesday morning, two weeks before Easter, I met Mr. Cox (the owner of the store), his assistant manager, and a driver. We headed out for Bluefield, 32 miles away. There we boarded the famous *Powhatan Arrow* passenger train headed back to Welch.

"Somewhere on the way back, I put on my Easter Bunny suit and was ready to depart the train upon [our] arrival in Welch. What awaited us was something else. The complete Welch High School Band, including majorettes, a big crowd of students, and many local town people were there. ... I was escorted to the back seat of a Cadillac convertible and headed off behind the band and through the downtown streets of Welch. The parade traveled down McDowell Street, where people at the courthouse and post office came out and applauded. The Easter Bunny was thrilled beyond description! We went on around to the beginning of Virginia Street to the front door of the A.W. Cox Department Store. I was led to 'Bunny Land' on the second floor, where I would be for the next 10 days.

"Many of my friends from school came and sat on my lap and whispered bad things to me. ... People who were of the Pentecostal faith had no regard for Easter Bunnies and thought it was Satan's ploy to take minds off of the true meaning of Easter. ...

"This was my first venture into a career in the retailing world, and I was paid $40 for 10 days. That was a lot of money for a fun experience."

The following autumn, Jim took a job at the store assembling and selling Christmas toys. He soon went to work for the J.C. Penney company, where he enjoyed a successful 45-year career in retail. And it all started with a parade and a bunny suit.

Thanks again to Jim Rush and all those who responded to our "Photo Curiosity!"

Louise Carr of Friendly, Tyler County. Photograph by Carl E. Feather.

service. My wife's maiden name was Friend, and the town of Friendsville, Maryland, comes from this last name, as well.

I agree [with the author]: Louise Carr is a good example for the character trait the name "Friendly" implies. I've known her since 1977, and she has always been pleasant, easy-going, and smile-prone. Likewise, her late husband Eugene had these qualities, and this article is a great tribute to him and his work. He would have felt very honored. This family has worked together, and Louise says the children are going to help her keep the store open.

I look forward to Carl's "West Virginia Back Roads" articles.
Sincerely,
Kelvin W. Feather

March 11, 2005
Saint Marys, West Virginia
Editor:
I wanted to thank you for the nice article in the winter issue on our mother Louise Carr. It meant a lot to our whole family and brought back a lot of memories of Mom and Dad. When my husband and I got married last summer, my mother and brother both walked me down the aisle. Although my dad had passed on, we all knew he was there in spirit.

A quick update: Mom's shop was affected by the floods of the last several months. My sisters, brother, and in-laws have helped clean up so she could reopen the first part of March.

Thank you for a wonderful magazine.
Sincerely,
Sara Hall

Sagebrush Round-up

February 7, 2005
New Martinsville, West Virginia
Editor:
Thanks for your wonderful Winter 2004 edition of GOLDENSEAL. You're helping keep our traditional country music, as we knew it, alive.

WMMN radio was a favorite in our home. I remember listening to just about all the performers that you mentioned in your article. We especially liked Grandpa Jones, Cowboy Loye, Buddy Starcher, Budge & Fudge, Cherokee Sue, and so many others.

When I was about seven years old, my dad Everett Rine bought a Cowboy Loye guitar and taught my brother Don and me to play guitar. We learned to sing many of the songs that WMMN performers sang. My dad played banjo and fiddle, so our family chose music to be our "thing."

Ray Myers, "The Armless Musician." From a 1939 promotional photo folder, courtesy of Ruth Jackson.

Ray Myers, "The Armless Musician" that you mentioned, appeared at Reader, Wetzel County, in 1939. I have a folder with nine pictures of Ray doing some of the incredible things he was capable of. He could open, pour, and drink Coca Cola with his feet. He could play guitar, comb his hair, and write. The folder is personally autographed by Ray Myers.

I'll be looking forward to the next issue of GOLDENSEAL. It doesn't get any better than that.
Sincerely,
Ruth Jackson

Love this Magazine!

March 20, 2005
Pendleton, Indiana
Editor:
Hello, my friend. Just wanted to drop you a line and say thank you for my GOLDENSEAL magazine. It's like a "visit" every three months — my one link to the people and traditional values I grew up with. I love this magazine!

It gets very lonely, but I'll manage. With 10 years finished and 10 more before me, I don't have much of a choice, I guess.

John, thank you, for doing a great job with GOLDENSEAL. It's a great thing to look forward to these days. I asked five people to subscribe this past year, and I think three actually did it. Maybe I'll get some pen pals I can ask, too! God bless you and yours.
Sincerely yours,
John Golden #963983

Hang in there, Mr. Golden. We appreciate your kind words about the magazine.

If any readers would care to write to inmate John Golden, please get in touch with us at the GOLDENSEAL office. —ed.

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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.

StoryCorps in West Virginia

StoryCorps, a new national program of oral history collection, will come to West Virginia from June 16 through July 1 to record personal and family stories at a mobile recording unit, stationed in Morgantown and Charleston. Known for their unusual StoryBooth permanently installed at Grand Central Station in New York, StoryCorps has outfitted specially designed Airstream trailers to travel across the country this summer to gather first-person recollections, and West Virginia will be among their first stops. Working in cooperation with West Virginia Public Broadcasting, StoryCorps will be in Morgantown June 16-20, and in Charleston June 23-July 1, and is seeking interview participants.

StoryCorps mobile recording facility.

Participants are coached in interviewing relatives, friends, or neighbors about family history, personal memories, immigration or work experiences, love stories, or other topics, in a private, comfortable setting. The resulting 40-minute sessions are recorded and, with permission, added to an archive in the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress. A CD copy of the interview is given to the participants in exchange for a voluntary $10 contribution. West Virginia Public Broadcasting hopes to compile edited versions of some of these interviews into radio features for broadcast in-state during the coming months.

Special blocks of time have been set aside by StoryCorps in Morgantown and Charleston, exclusively for GOLDENSEAL readers. These slots are available by reservation only, on a first-come, first-served basis.

To reserve a slot, call Leigh Rosenecker of West Virginia Public Broadcasting at (304)556-4934. For more information about StoryCorps, visit www.storycorps.net.

New Folklife Center Book

The American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress is the nation's foremost repository of recordings, photographs, books, and documents related to our nation's traditional culture. A new book, titled *American Folklife Center: An Illustrated Guide*, published by the Library of Congress, marks the Center's 75th anniversary. It presents an impressive overview of this archive, its history, and its collections, includ-

ing several direct references to West Virginia and Appalachia.

The book offers an account of the Center's origins, beginning with the 1928 addition of a folk music specialist to the Library of Congress staff. Other chapters include folk music and song, story and narrative, dance, material culture, and community life and celebration. An accompanying CD sampler recording includes a variety of music and other audio material from the collection, including riddles spoken by Maggie Hammons, recorded in Marlinton in 1972.

This attractive, 84-page, large-format paperback, with accompanying CD, sells for $18 and is available from the Library of Congress by calling 1-888-682-5557, or from the Superintendent of Documents, P.O. Box 371954, Pittsburgh, PA 15250-7954.

Eleanor Anniversary

From June 17-19, the town of Eleanor, Putnam County, will commemorate the 70th anniversary of its founding. Eleanor, originally called Red House Farms, was established in 1935 as one of three New Deal settlement projects in West Virginia [see "Tygart Valley Homestead: New Deal Communities in Randolph County," by Kathy Roberts, and related stories; page 10].

Eleanor Roosevelt, center, visits Red House Farms settlement in Putnam County, date unknown. Photograph by William Walters.

The anniversary weekend will feature food and entertainment, including two traditional dinners. There will be a special recognition ceremony for National Guard personnel returning from Iraq. Children's programming will include clowns, music, face-painting, and a magic show. Volleyball and a 5K run and walk are also planned. A portrayal of Eleanor Roosevelt by Ann Saville will be presented, along with church reunions, a barber shop quartet, gospel music, and a symbolic dove release on Sunday.

For more information, write to Marlane Crockett Carr, P.O. Box 202, Eleanor, WV 25070; phone (304)586-2409.

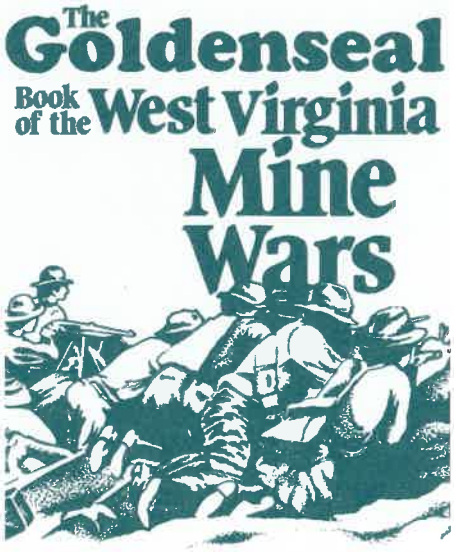
Native American Skills Classes

Summer classes in Native American skills, including survival basics, making a woodland blowgun or spear, and calling and tracking animals, will be offered on Saturdays during June and July by Early America Presents, an educational organization founded in 2004 by Joe and John Candillo of Huntington. Classes are conducted on a 25-acre wooded location, 15 miles from Huntington. The cost is $30 per session.

To register, or for more information, write to Joe Candillo, 5080 Newcomb Creek Road, Huntington, WV 25704; phone (304)523-4245 or visit www.earlyamericawv.com.

Byways & Backways Guide

Readers of GOLDENSEAL's popular "West Virginia Backroads" feature [see page 66] will appreciate a new free travel guide, available from the West



The West Virginia Mine Wars were a formative experience in our state's history and a landmark event in the history of American labor. GOLDENSEAL has published some of the best articles ever written on this subject. In 1991, former editor Ken Sullivan worked with Pictorial Histories Publishing Company to produce this compilation of 17 articles, including dozens of historic photos.

Now in its fourth printing, the book is revised and features updated information. The large-format, 109-page paperbound book sells for $10.95, plus $2 per copy postage and handling. West Virgina residents please add 6% state tax (total $13.61 per book including tax and shipping).

— — — — — — — — — — — —

I enclose $____ for____ copies of *The Goldenseal Book of the West Virginia Mine Wars.*

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Virginia Division of Tourism and Department of Transportation. *West Virginia Byways & Backways* is a convenient guide to the various designated National Byways, State Byways, and State Backways to be found throughout the state. This handy 64-page set of maps, directions, and descriptions fits easily in the glove box or over the visor in most cars and provides an introduction to popular attractions, such as the Historic National Road near Wheeling, the Coal Heritage Trail through southern West Virginia, the Midland Trail from White Sulphur Springs to Huntington, and the Washington Heritage Trail in the Eastern Panhandle.

Also included are out-of-the way drives, such as Cedar Creek Road in Braxton and Gilmer counties, Mountain's Shadow Trail in Monroe County, and the Little Kanawha Parkway from Burnsville to Mineral Wells.

Copies of *West Virginia Byways & Backways* can be obtained by phoning the Division of Highways at (304)558-3165 or by calling 1-800-CALL WVA.

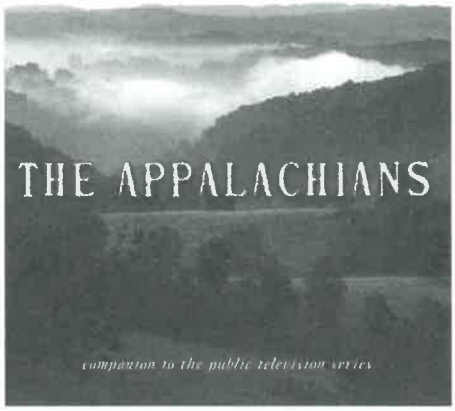
Cultural Tourism Workshops

A series of workshops designed to help bolster cultural tourism will be held around the state beginning June 21. The West Virginia Cultural Heritage Tourism Program, which is affiliated with the Preservation Alliance of West Virginia and the State Development Office, will conduct workshops for communities interested in utilizing cultural heritage tourism as a path to local economic development. Recent studies show that cultural heritage tourists spend more time and money than conventional tourists. The workshop is titled "Capturing the Heritage Tourism Dollar." Scheduled locations include Lewisburg, Beckley, Institute, Flatwooods, Elkins, Romney, and Wheeling.

Additional workshops and locations are planned for September. For details, dates, and times, phone Mitzi Miller at 1-800-982-3386, or visit www.pawv.org.

***The Appalachians* Premier**

A new film series, book, and CD release, all called *The Appalachians*, were released this spring. The three-part television series aired on West Virginia Public Broadcasting in May. The series, created by Braxton County native Mari-Lynn Evans, traces the history of the region from prehistoric times to the present. It includes extensive historical images and interviews with experts, residents, authors, and musicians.



On May 7, the Division of Culture and History presented a preview of the television series at a special event held in the Norman L. Fagan West Virginia State Theater at the Cultural Center in Charleston. Filmmaker Mari-Lynn Evans was present, as was writer and producer Phylis Geller. Live music was provided by West Virginia musicians Gandydancer, whose music is included in the film and on the soundtrack recording. The evening was organized by GOLDENSEAL magazine and was hosted by editor John Lilly.

For additional information about the film series, book, or soundtrack CD, visit www.sierraclub.org/appalachia/.

GOLDENSEAL Good-Byes

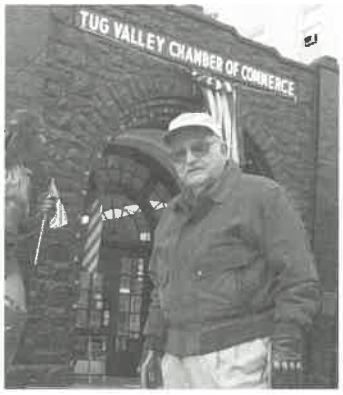
Charlie Blevins, retired Mingo County tavern owner and entertainer, passed away August 23, 2004. Charlie was a colorful and exuberant individual who ran the famous Red Robin Inn at Borderland, Mingo County, for 37 years. More than a simple mountainside watering hole, the Red Robin Inn was also considered a local museum, with antique musical instruments, coal mining equipment, war memorabilia, and photographs on display. Charlie was an expert banjo player and singer, and he frequently entertained guests with his rambunctious versions of old Appalachian tunes and ballads, as well as his own compositions, sometimes inspired by local political events. Charlie and his business were featured in a GOLDENSEAL story in our Winter 1982 issue, titled "The Coon Dog Truth: Charlie Blevins and the Red Robin Inn," by Michael Kline. Charlie Blevins was 78 years old.

Charlie Blevins. Photograph by Doug Yarrow.

Thomas Greco, a shoemaker and shoe repairman in Shinnston for more than 60 years, passed away on July 31, 2004, at the age of 93. The son of Italian immigrants, Thomas was an old-style craftsman. He grew up in Harrison County and began working in a shoe shop at the age of 11, where he apprenticed for several years with two older Italian shoemakers. Thomas started the Shinnston Shoe Shop on Pike Street in 1935 and had a flourishing business there until his retirement in August 1994. A celebrated military veteran, Thomas served in the U.S. Navy in the South Pacific as a Pharmacists Mate 1st Class during World War II. At the time of his death, he was the oldest member of American Legion Post 31 in Shinnston. Thomas was the subject of a story in our Summer 1993 issue, titled "Thomas Greco: Shinnston Shoemaker," by Norman Julian.

Thomas Greco. Photograph by Ron Rittenhouse.

Wallace Williamson Farley, of Mingo County, appeared on the cover of our Spring 2002 issue, standing in front of the world-famous Coal House in the downtown area of his beloved Williamson. Named in honor of the town's founder, Wallace was proud of his community. He graduated from Williamson High School in 1937, served in the U.S. Navy during World War II, then worked for Williamson Supply Company for 22 years. He later became manager of supply operations for the Mingo County Board of Education until his retirement in 1981. Wallace was a likeable and genial man, well-known throughout the Tug River Valley and well-versed in local politics and regional history. Author Robert Spence's Spring 2002 article is titled, "'I Never Wanted to Live Anywhere Else': Wallace W. Farley of Williamson." Mr. Farley passed away on February 6, 2005. He was 85.



Wallace W. Farley. Photograph by Michael Keller.

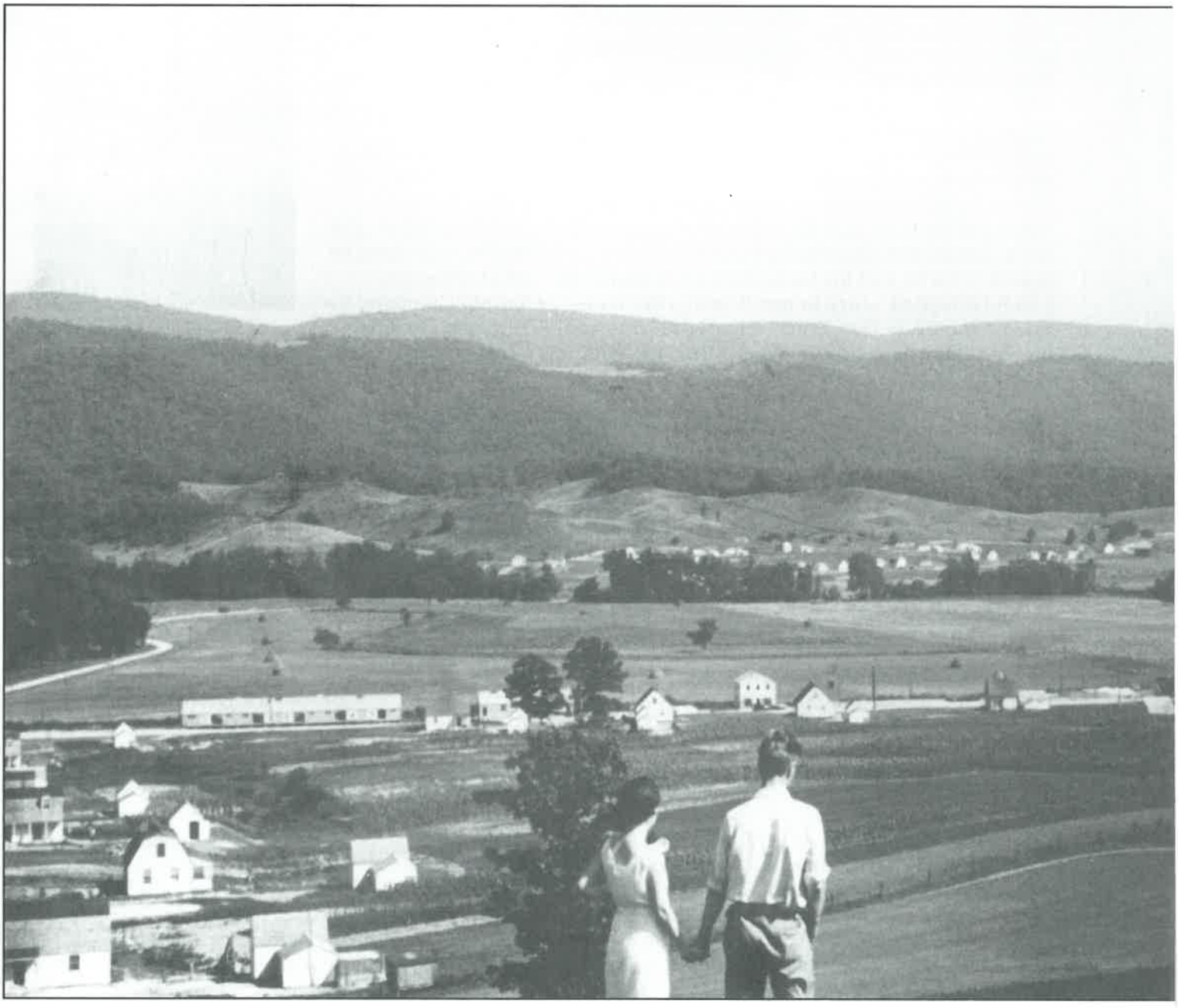
Eugene Carter Bridge

The I-64 bridge across the Kanawha River at Charleston, known as the Fort Hill Bridge, has been renamed in honor of longtime West Virginia labor leader Eugene A. Carter, according to a resolution passed this year by the State Legislature. Carter served as president of Teamsters Local 175 from 1936-74, as well as president of the West Virginia Federation of Labor from 1945-57. Carter was born in 1909 in Fayette County and began his working life as a driver for a local dairy company. During his 38 years as a labor leader, he was credited with providing inspiration and guidance to the labor movement in the state during a period of tremendous growth and change. He passed away in 1988. The bridge at downtown Charleston is now the Eugene A. Carter Memorial Bridge.

Tygart Valley

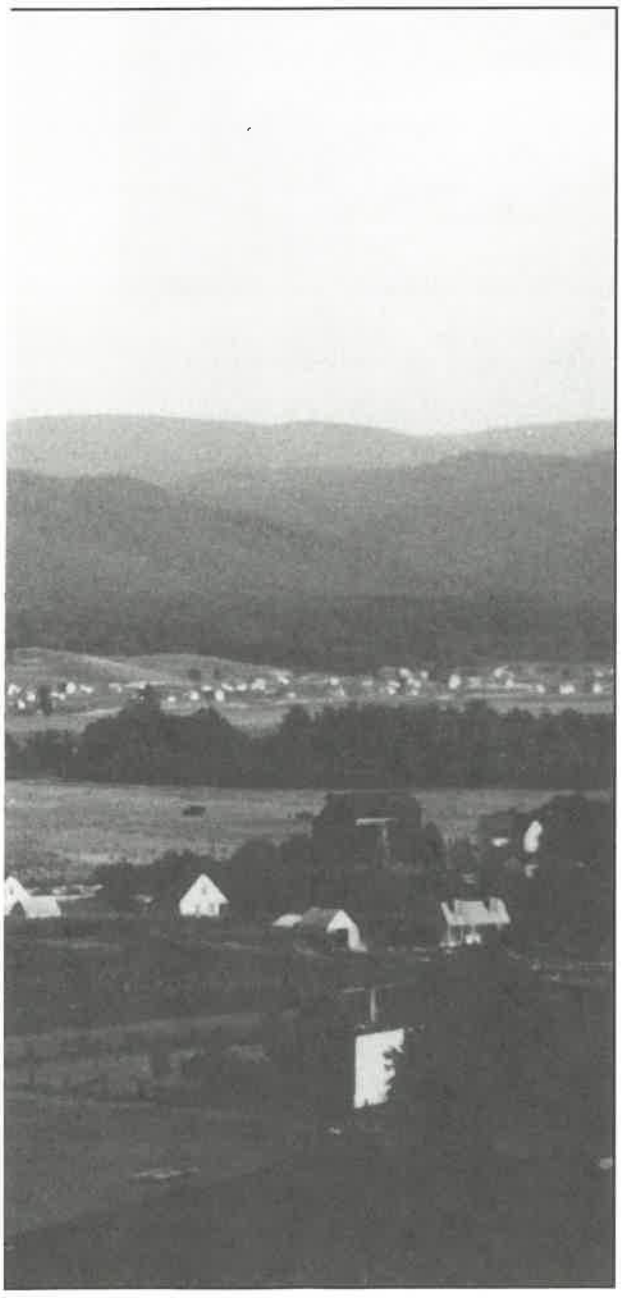
New Deal Communities in Randolph County

By Kathy Roberts



Homestead

The Great Depression hit West Virginia early and hard. When the bottom fell out of the coal and timber industries in the early 1930's, it left thousands around the state jobless, homeless, and hungry.



Left: A young couple gazes across the newly built Tygart Valley Homestead in Randolph County in 1936, comprising the communities of Dailey, East Dailey, and Valley Bend. Photograph by Carl Mydans, Farm Security Administration/ Library of Congress. Courtesy of the West Virginia State Archives, WVSA hereafter.

Beth (Guye) Kittle of Elkins recalls those days well. In 1933, Beth, her two brothers, and her parents moved from Pittsburgh back to West Virginia to live with her maternal grandmother in Montrose, Tucker County. "My father lost his job with the Pennsylvania railroad," Beth remembers. "We couldn't pay rent, and they came and took our furniture." For the next three years, the family stayed with her grandmother while Beth's father searched for work out of state.

That same year, the Roosevelt Administration established the Federal Subsistence Homestead Division, which oversaw the development of self-sustaining communities for unemployed industrial workers throughout the nation. These homesteads provided employment opportunities, farmland, and modern, affordable housing for some 25,000 families during the Great Depression. West Virginia was home to three of these homestead communities. They were located in Preston County (Arthurdale), Putnam County (Eleanor), and Randolph County (Tygart Valley Homestead). All were initiated between 1932 and 1934.

Beth Kittle was 10 years old in 1936 when her family moved to their new five-room house on plot H-18 in the Valley Bend community at the Tygart Valley Homestead. "It was exhilarating," she recalls. At first, Beth stayed with her grandmother while the family settled into their new home. "Grady, my brother, wrote me a letter when I was with Grandmother there," Beth recalls. "And he said, 'Guess what? We have a machine that makes ice cubes!' We didn't have a refrigerator at Grandmother's. In fact, I didn't

Beth (Guye) Kittle at her home in Elkins today. Beth grew up in the Tygart Valley Homestead community of Valley Bend and still has clear memories of her time there. Photograph by Kathy Roberts.

The Civilian Conservation Corps set up this temporary tent camp to house workers at East Dailey in 1935, before permanent facilities were built nearby at Camp Tygart. The CCC crews helped with the placement of field tiles, water, and sewer lines, along with planting and other work. Photograph courtesy of WVSA.

know what a refrigerator was. I was anxious to get to Valley Bend and see this wonderful machine."

The Tygart Valley Homestead was developed on approximately 2,500 acres of farmland between Rich and Cheat mountains, about 10 miles south of Elkins. Located along U.S. Route 219, the Homestead is made up of three small communities — Dailey, East Dailey, and Valley Bend — and a commercial/industrial center.

At Dailey, a lumber mill provided steady work for a ready and willing labor force. Also along Route 219 at Dailey, the Homestead Trade Center housed a restaurant, beauty shop, dentist office, dance hall, post office, and cooperative store. Nearby, a weaving shop, woodworking shop, and community toolshed facilitated the development of artisan skills.

Each of the 198 houses at the Homestead was built on a generous plot of land, ranging in size from 1.72 to 2.5 acres. The attractive, stylish housing and the outbuilding complexes on the Homestead enabled a progressive middle-class lifestyle, while at the same time facilitated subsistence agricultural practices.

The Tygart Valley Homestead was developed on approximately 2,500 acres of farmland between Rich and Cheat mountains, about 10 miles south of Elkins.

The compact, two-story houses were constructed of plaster and redwood frame, and featured oak flooring, knotty pine paneling, and exposed chestnut beams. Steeped in the American folk-revival movement of his time, Homestead architect Benjamin L. Smith created composite looks that drew from early American building styles — the Dutch Colonial with gambrel or barn roof, and the Cape Cod with an A-frame roofline. Houses varied slightly in their style, floor plan, and size, and in their position on the lot, helping to avoid the aura of institutional or company housing.

Josephine "Jo" (Kayes) Vanscoy points this out to me one June evening as we drive around the Homestead together. She was raised at Valley Bend, has spent her whole married life at Dailey, and is one of the keepers of Homestead history. As she speaks the names of the original homesteaders who occupied houses along the quiet streets of the neighborhoods, Jo describes what the layout of each house had been. "You knew what to expect when you walked into a house," she says. They all had four, five, or six rooms and were laid out on a similar plan. Today, however,

most of the Homestead houses have been structurally altered, she notes.

Jo's house in Dailey is no exception. Originally a four-room A-frame, it now has six rooms and a second bathroom, additions made when husband Glenn "Polly" Vanscoy's father came to live with them. Jo and Polly also turned the original living room into an office, where shelves hold boxes full of Jo's memoirs and Homestead documents: the original blueprints to her childhood home, the contract her parents signed with the government, receipts for purchase of a used washing machine and refrigerator the government sold to homesteaders.

She identifies herself as a "proud homesteader" and holds vivid memories of the day in 1936 when she and her family moved into their house at Valley Bend. "I do remember it was a snowy day in February, and the roads were icy," Jo reads from her memoirs. "Our driveway was nothing but mud. The house consisted of five rooms and a bath: three rooms on the first floor and two rooms on the second floor. A front and a back porch were unfinished."

The eastern part of the state was hard hit by job loss in both timber and coal, two industries closely linked with one another. Most of West Virginia had been deforested by 1920, and loggers in West Virginia's densest timber regions were stranded without work when the sawmills began shutting down. In turn, the decrease in timbering reduced the need for the coal-powered trains that transported lumber and work crews in and out of logging camps.

With strong support from Eleanor Roosevelt, U.S. Congressman Jennings Randolph from Randolph County successfully advocated for the development of the Tygart Valley Homestead, located in the heart of timber country. In December 1933, the Subsistence Homestead Division allocated $675,000 to buy the land and build the Homestead.

Arthur A. Wood, vice president of the Tygart Valley Homestead, Inc., breaks ground for the construction of the settlement in April 1934. Building superintendent I.M. Horton and project manager H.W. Truesdell are at left, looking at blueprints. Photograph courtesy of the Homestead School.

[See "Jennings Randolph: 'Always Remember the Man and Woman By the Wayside of the Road,'" by Michael Kline and Gene Ochsendorf; Summer 1983.]

Jo's parents Frank B. and Clara G. Kayes were selected to be homesteaders in 1934. Her father was building roads with the Works Progress Administration (WPA) at the time, having lost his job in the sawmills near Marlinton. Between 1934 and 1936, building the Homestead itself provided employment for homesteaders like Frank Kayes. Two days a week, homesteaders

Jo Vanscoy with husband Glenn "Polly" Vanscoy and great-grandson Bryce Lambert at the Vanscoy home in Dailey last summer. Photograph by Kathy Roberts. Polly Vanscoy passed away in January 2005.

Settlement houses and the surrounding hillsides are visible through the large windows at the dimension lumber plant at Dailey, where wood was cut to size, as ordered by furniture companies. Photograph 1939 by John Vachon, Farm Security Administration, courtesy of the Library of Congress.

worked without pay to build credit toward the purchase of their houses; the remainder of the week, they worked for 30 cents an hour. Members of Camp Tygart, the local unit of the Civilian Conservation Corps, helped to dig the cellars and water lines and plant pine and fruit trees around the Homestead.

After the Homestead was built, however, securing and maintaining steady employment was a major concern for homesteaders. The Tygart Valley Association, the local governing body at the Homestead, contracted with Gamble Brothers, Inc., from Louisville, Kentucky, to develop the Kenwood lumber mill. The mill was the largest and steadiest employer on the Homestead, providing about 150 jobs. Workers at the plant produced dimension lumber that was shipped back to Gamble Brothers, where it was used to build furniture.

Few Homestead women worked away from the home. They devoted much of their energy to tending gardens, canning fruits and vegetables, preparing meals, keeping house, and taking care of their families.

Homesteaders with farming experience worked the community farms, which produced potatoes, oats, wheat, and corn to sell at the cooperative store and at regional markets. In addition, some men used the tool and woodworking shop to make furniture for home use and to sell.

Many homesteaders also looked off the Homestead for work. Some did part-time logging or farming with relatives in the area. Others left the region altogether. Beth Kittle's father Louis R. Guye left his job at the Kenwood mill and joined the northern migration to Akron, Ohio, where he found better-paying work with Goodyear. His family remained at the Home-

During the Great Depression, many out-of-work timbermen and coal miners got a fresh start, thanks to federally sponsored settlement projects, such as the Tygart Valley Homestead. Here, a man returns home from his job at the Kenwood Lumber Mill at Dailey in 1939. Photograph by John Vachon, Farm Security Administration, courtesy of the Library of Congress.

stead, however. "Our father was seldom home for any length of time," Beth recalls. "Our mother basically raised us."

Few Homestead women worked away from the home. They devoted much of their energy to tending gardens, canning fruits and vegetables, preparing meals, keeping house, and taking care of their families. "One summer, Mother canned 700 quarts of food from our garden," Beth notes. "If we hadn't had our garden, we wouldn't have had much to eat, really."

Beatrice (White) and Lewis Barrickman were among the first homesteaders selected. The young couple had four children at the time, and they were all living with his parents in Mill Creek in a three-room house. "He worked at the Homestead during the week and came home on the weekends," Beatrice recalled. The Barrickmans moved into their six-room, gambrel-roof house in Dailey in 1935. "It felt strange at first, because I had never had my own home before," Beatrice said. "But we were glad to have our own home."

Dana Barrickman, Beatrice and Lewis' son, remembers that the family had a half-acre vegetable garden, a separate large potato patch, and berry vines growing up the hillside behind their house. The family also kept bees on their lot. "We were poor," he says. "But we always had plenty to eat."

In addition to their unpaid labor as homemakers, Homestead women contributed to the family economy through more direct commercial exchanges. Some women kept cows on the community pastures and would sell milk, butter, and cottage cheese to their neighbors.

Others put their sewing skills to work. Jo Vanscoy's mother did seamstress work at home, sewing mostly for clients from her immediate Homestead community, but also for people from Elkins. "She made dresses out of satin Gold Medal Flour sacks," Jo remembers. "All the little girls in Valley Bend had one." Her mother was a certified midwife, too, and received $15 for each birth she attended. She was present at all the Homestead births until the first government doctor and three nurses were hired in 1940.

Most Tygart Valley Homestead women worked in their homes. This woman is seen in the modern kitchen of her settlement home in 1936. Photograph by Carl Mydans, Farm Security Administration, courtesy of the Library of Congress.

The Trade Center at Dailey was a hub of activity during the Homestead's peak years. Today, the complex is vacant and is up for sale. This undated postcard view is courtesy of WVSA.

A weaving shop located near the Trade Center provided looms, materials, and weaving instruction. Those who participated in the weaving program learned to make rugs, scarves, pillowcases, aprons, and other items, which they could sell from their homes or from the shop situated along Route 219.

Olive Goodwin, who later founded the Mountain Weavers Guild, began weaving at the Homestead shop in Dailey when she was laid off from her teaching job at the nursery school in Valley Bend. Though some instructors were brought into the Homestead from Scandinavia, several Homestead women, including Olive Goodwin, were from local weaving families, and the shop aided them in keeping their West Virginia weaving traditions alive.

Homesteaders trade at the community store, located in the Trade Center. Photograph 1938 by Marion Post Wolcott, Farm Security Administration, courtesy of the Library of Congress.

World War II broke out and changed the dynamics at the Homestead. When Pearl Harbor was attacked, a lot of young men enlisted. "My brother Louis enlisted in the Navy," recalls Beth Kittle. "He was 17."

Jo Vanscoy's brother also enlisted, and she remembers that all three of her neighbors' boys were in the service. "You missed them," Jo says.

The absence of so many men created job opportunities for Homestead women. "I was one of the first women hired to work at the Kenwood Corporation [the mill]

during the war," Jo says. "At one time, they had 43 or 44 women working there. There was a woman on just about every machine and in the dry shed [at the mill]." In support of the war effort, the mill produced items for the military. In particular, Jo remembers the chestnut coffins. "I know us girls didn't like [that]," she recalls.

Jo worked at the mill from 1943 until 1947, when she and many of her female coworkers were laid off to free up jobs for men returning from the war. "My husband married me and took my job," Jo says, laughing.

Other young women migrated to Washington, D.C., to look for work during the war years. "I graduated in '43 from Tygart Valley, and I wanted to go to Washington and go to work," recalls Beth Kittle. "I was only 16, so my mother wouldn't let me go. But a lot of the girls at Valley Bend went to Washington and married soldiers they met in D.C. So a lot of the Valley Bend girls were scattered all over the United States."

In 1944, the mill and Trade Center were sold to private interests, and in 1947, the Homestead houses went up for sale. Many homesteaders opted to buy their houses. With the sweat equity they accumulated while constructing their houses and the monthly mortgage payments they had been making (between $12 and $14), homesteaders were able to buy their homes for around $3,000. This had been the approximate cost of construction 10 years earlier.

The cooperative industries, central to the New Deal subsistence homestead philosophy, did not last. The community farms, cannery, cooperative store, and weaving shop all shut down before the Homestead was sold. But the communities themselves have remained strong. Many homesteaders' children either stayed close to home, buying houses when they came up for sale in 1947, or have returned over the years to settle in the beautiful valley.

A woman works on a loom at the Homestead weaving shop at Dailey. Photograph 1936 by Carl Mydans, Farm Security Administration, courtesy of WVSA.

Dana Barrickman moved back in 1962 and bought a house in Valley Bend. "Our parents were getting older. Someone needed to help them," Dana says. The five-minute drive down Route 219 from Valley Bend to Dailey put him in easy contact with his parents. Twelve years ago, he and his wife Margie moved even closer to home when they built a spacious brick ranch house on the slope behind his parents' place in Dailey.

Many of the current residents in the Homestead's three communities are descendants of original homesteaders. But the natural beauty of the valley, the sound construction of the houses, and the rural, community atmosphere have attracted "newcomers" throughout the years, as well. Joe and Gloria Nitz moved to East Dailey in 1961, when Joe Nitz took a job at Lab Craft in Beverly. "We were looking for a good place to raise kids," Gloria recalls. The spacious lots at the Homestead provided ample room for children's play. And for the Nitzes, who produce and process much of their own food, their 2.25 acres allowed them to raise a large vegetable garden; apple, peach, and pear trees; a blueberry patch; pecan, black, and white

Beatrice (White) Barrickman, one of the first homesteaders selected, moved into her six-room house in Dailey in 1935. She lived there until shortly before her death in 2004. Photographer and date unknown.

The Kenwood Lumber Company Mill at Dailey, photographer and date unknown. Courtesy of the Homestead School.

walnut trees; and a grape arbor. "I wouldn't know what to do if I didn't garden," Joe Nitz muses. They have transformed their outbuilding complex into a woodworking shop, but have retained the original entranceway and stairs that lead down to the 8 x 12-foot cellar that fills up with canned goods, potatoes, and apples every fall.

Today, the Homestead School is the hub of community life. Constructed in 1939 halfway between Dailey and Valley Bend, the Art Moderne brick school building was the pride of the three Homestead communities when it was new. Helen (Phares) Tacy, whose family lived in the valley before the Homestead was built, remembers when the school opened. "Oh gosh, it was beautiful!" she recalls. "We were always told it was the best school in the state at the time. Which it probably was, in '39. Oh, it was so pretty. We had the upstairs; you had the balcony. We had our own

The Homestead Movement in West Virginia

In October 1929, rapidly declining stock prices signaled the collapse of Wall Street and the beginning of the Great Depression. Three years later, Franklin Delano Roosevelt won the presidential election against incumbent Herbert Hoover with the promise to give America's struggling population a New Deal, and voters in West Virginia joined the nation in welcoming the prospect.

West Virginia was hit hard by the economic woes. In 1932, coal production was nearly half of what it had been in 1927. In 1933, 12 counties in West Virginia had unemployment rates exceeding 45 percent.

To address the needs of a growing number of displaced workers, the federal government initiated an ambitious program throughout the country. Rural homestead settlements were created, which would include family homes, enough land to grow subsistence crops, and community-based industries to employ residents. Nearly 100 such resettlement communities were eventually established throughout the United States.

Between 1932 and 1934, three of these projects were established in West Virginia — on the Arthur farm near Reedsville in Preston County (see "Arthurdale: The New Deal Comes to Preston County," by Kathleen Cullinan and Beth Spence; April-June 1981); in Putnam County near Red House (see "Happy to Have a Chance: The Founding of Eleanor," by Rick Wilson; Spring 1988); and the communities of Dailey, East Dailey, and Valley Bend in Randolph County, known as the Tygart Valley Homestead (see accompanying story).

Arthurdale was home to a variety of enterprises, some worker-owned, including a general store, a gristmill, and the Mountaineer Craftmen's Cooperative Association, famous for

little basketball team and had a band and cheerleaders."

The Homestead School accommodated first through eighth grades and replaced the one-room schools in the valley that Homestead children had attended previously. Today, the school still serves the communities, offering Head Start and kindergarten through fifth grade. Recently, it has been at the center of historic preservation efforts.

When the fire marshal inspected the school in January 2002, he mandated renovations that would have altered some of the building's key stylistic features, including the beveled glass wall at one end of the hallway, the open balcony over the gymnasium that Helen remembers fondly, and the narrow

The Homestead School basketball team in 1955. In the front row, from the left, are Woody Swecker, Lowell Thomas, Bill Morgan, Delbert Shaffer, Joe Billy Swecker, Ricky Loudin, Tinker Yokum, Jerry Chandler, and Joe Hamrick. Standing, from the left, are coach Goff Cox, Mary Ann Hart, Junior Roberts, Jim Smith, Bob Dolly, Joe Shue, David Huffman, Irene Rossey, and principal Harry W. Douer. Courtesy of the Homestead School.

the preservation of traditional crafts, such as chairmaking and weaving. The Red House Farm, later called Eleanor in honor of First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, included a community farm and greenhouse, a canning plant, and a carpentry shop. At Dailey in the Tygart Valley Homestead, there was a lumber mill, Trade Center, and other initiatives.

Controversy and bureaucratic maneuvering dogged the rural-industrial communities from the beginning. On May 12, 1934, for example, Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes federalized decision-making at Arthurdale, effectively abolishing local autonomy. A year later, the Subsistence Homestead Division was placed under the Resettlement Administration, and the communities led a continuously precarious existence under the scrutiny of critics both inside and outside of FDR's administration.

In July 1937, Congress stepped in, mandating a policy shift away from community resettlement in favor of a tenant-purchase program. Months later, the Farm Security Administration (FSA) replaced the controversy-ridden Resettlement agency. Carrying out the mandate to dissolve the New Deal experiment in subsistence homesteads did not, however, proceed quickly.

It was not until 1942 that the FSA began liquidating government ownership in Arthurdale, and it took another two years before the Arthurdale Homestead Farm found a buyer in West Virginia University. That same year, the Kenwood mill and Trade Center of the Tygart Valley Homestead were privatized. In 1946, the federal government began encouraging the residents of Eleanor in Putnam County to buy out their homes, and the next year the Tygart Valley Homestead houses went up for sale.

In 1948, the last dwelling in Arthurdale was purchased. The social experiment of subsistence homesteads in West Virginia was over.

—Gordon Simmons

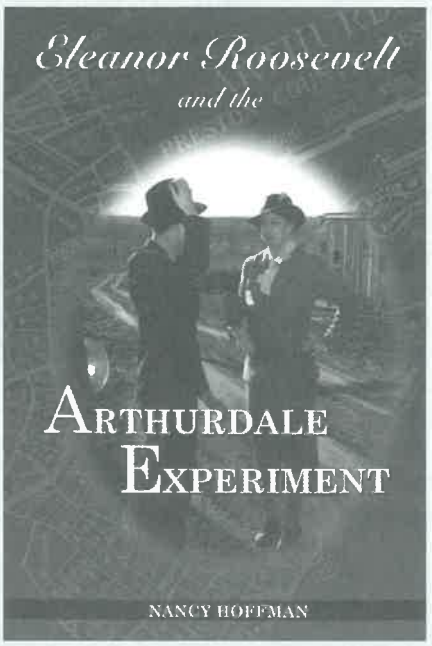
Eleanor Roosevelt in Print

In August 1933, First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt reported back to the White House on the grave conditions she observed amid the economically depressed coal miners in northern West Virginia. As a result of her visit, Roosevelt saw that Preston County would become the site of one of the first subsistence homesteads of the New Deal, designed to provide relief for those hard-hit workers and their families.

This was not the last time that West Virginia was the beneficiary of Roosevelt's devotion to the welfare of ordinary people. Her activism continued throughout her life, establishing Eleanor Roosevelt as one of the most significant historical figures of her time. Several recent books shed new light on this dynamic First Lady and her legacy.

The Life and Work of Eleanor Roosevelt, by Sarah and Edward Purcell, provides an overview of Roosevelt's 78 years and her influence on the course of the 20th century. This 245-page biography traces her life from a difficult childhood in New York to her death of tuberculosis in 1962. Special attention is paid to the ways in which Eleanor Roosevelt forever changed the role of First Lady in American public life. The book, part of the Critical Lives series from Alpha publishing, includes a list of reference sources and Web sites for further reading, along with information about relevant historical sites, including the Arthurdale Heritage New Deal Museum in Arthurdale. The paperback book sells for $14.95 and is available from Alpha Books, 201 West 103rd Street, Indianapolis, IN 46290; or on the Web at www.pearsoned.com.

An outspoken advocate on behalf of many causes, Roosevelt did not hesitate to petition, lecture, and otherwise influence those in power. Ample evidence of her determination to persuade others can be found in a new book, titled ***It Seems to Me: Selected Letters of Eleanor Roosevelt***, edited by Leonard C. Schlup and Donald W. Whisenhunt, a collection of letters from Roosevelt to world leaders, public figures, and personal friends. Included, for instance, is her letter to U.S. Attorney General Robert Kennedy in 1961, defending the Highlander Folk School against segregationist and anti-union critics. Also included is a 1934 letter to financier Bernard Baruch, in which she reveals that she is paying out of her own pocket the salary of the director of the Arthurdale school and complains of congressional opposition to the homestead experiment. The 282-page hardcover book sells for $30 and is available from the University Press of Kentucky, 663 South Limestone Street, Lexington, KY 40508; or on the Web at www.kentuckypress.com.



Eleanor Roosevelt and the Arthurdale Experiment, by Nancy Hoffman, examines the First Lady's 1933 visit to Scotts Run and the landmark homestead settlement that grew out of it. According to the author, the conditions in the Scotts Run community of Osage were so dire that radical influences were making headway in the coalfields, raising the specter of a workers' rebellion. The New Deal, including programs like the Civilian Conservation Corps, the Tennessee Valley Authority, and the Federal Subsistence Homestead Division, was the Roosevelt Administration's response.

The book describes conditions that led to the economic crisis in northern West Virginia, Mrs. Roosevelt's pivotal 1933 visit, and her subsequent efforts to establish a homestead community in nearby Preston County. From its dedication in June 1934, Arthurdale became both a model for future settlement projects and a lightning rod for those critical of the program. In time, the author indicates, even as the experimental community became an ever-greater political liability, the First Lady remained steadfast in her support of the project, visiting Arthurdale frequently and responding to homesteaders' repeated appeals to her for help, earning her the nickname of Arthurdale's "Angel."

The 97-page hardcover book sells for $22.50 and is available from the craft shop at Arthurdale Heritage, Inc., P.O. Box 850, Arthurdale, WV 26520; on the Web at www.arthurdale heritage.org; or by calling (304)864-3959.

At the same Web site is information about the upcoming New Deal Festival, July 9-10, at Arthurdale. Events will include crafts, tours of the community, live music, and family activities. Among the scheduled performances will be a portrayal of Eleanor Roosevelt by Patty Cooper. Call the above number for more information.

Joe and Gloria Nitz came to East Dailey in 1961, attracted by the wholesome community atmosphere and the spacious lot size. "I wouldn't know what to do if I didn't garden," Joe says. Photograph 2004 by Kathy Roberts.

glass windows in the wooden classroom doors. School principal Diane Hall called on Alan Rowe, National Register coordinator for the State Historic Preservation Office, for help in preserving the school structure without compromising contemporary fire code standards.

Since that time, there has been revived interest in the history of the school and the Homestead. In October 2004, community members celebrated the Homestead's successful nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. This means that the Tygart Valley Homestead is officially recognized as a national and local cultural resource and that federal funding will be available for historic restoration and preservation of its houses and other buildings.

Since her earliest years at the Homestead, Beatrice Barrickman had an eye for preservation. "She never wanted anything changed as long as she was there," her son Dana recalls. With the exception of an added utility room off the kitchen, the house and outbuilding complex remain unaltered. She also saved all the Homestead newspapers, which were published locally from 1935 to 1937 and have since been donated to a historical society.

Beatrice's house is empty now. She had been living at the Odd Fellows Home in Elkins before she died on September 14, 2004. As Dana's sister Norma Wamsley sweeps the colorful linoleum floors in their mother's empty house one late-June afternoon, she comments, "These rooms look small now, but when we were kids this seemed like a large room."

"We didn't know any different," Dana adds, with a chuckle.

KATHY ROBERTS grew up in Parkersburg. She is currently working on a doctorate in folklore at Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana. Kathy's most recent contribution to GOLDENSEAL appeared in our Fall 2004 issue.

Dailey as it appears today. Though the settlement passed into private ownership approximately 58 years ago, many of the original homes and outbuildings are still intact, and descendants of many of the original homesteaders remain in the area. Photograph by Michael Keller.

Ties that Bind

The Hahn Brothers of Hardy County

By Catherine Moore

Photographs by Doug Chadwick

John (left) and Wilbur at their family farm. Two of eight children, the brothers have remained close throughout their lives. Photographer and date unknown.

It's a cool, sunny, late-summer day in Dutch Hollow, Hardy County. The Hahn family has congregated at their old farmhouse, as they do most Sundays, for remembrance, home cooking, and laughter.

The rarely traveled one-lane road leading into the hollow is known as Sauerkraut Road, a nod to the area's early German settlers. The Hahns trace their ancestry back to the Rhine Valley of Germany and immigrants from there who arrived in the United States sometime in the mid- to late 1800's. The Hahns came over on a boat with members of the Michael family, and branches of both families settled in Dutch Hollow. They farmed and, when the demand arose, cut timber in the woods around their homesteads.

Two of the eldest members of the Hahn clan, John and Wilbur, carry on that tradition to this day. Both in their 80's, the brothers own and operate a small gasoline-powered sawmill on their farm, with some help from John's son Mickey. They can remember their father Lorenza spending winters cutting timber by hand in the Allegheny Mountains when there was no work to be done in the fields or orchards. Lorenza and other area farmers would walk many miles into the Allegheny front and set up camp for the season, working from dawn to dusk to harvest trees and help support their families.

"If you quit work, you die. So I want to stay around here and worry people. I don't want to take off right now, I want to worry people a little longer!"

Mind you, this is no automatic, push-button sawmill that the brothers operate — the men work hard at their trade. In the past, cutting timber and operating the mill were the brothers' main means of putting bread on the table. Today, neither must work to survive financially, but they keep coming over to the old farm from their homes in Wardensville every clear-skied morning nevertheless. They both believe, with good reason, that the activity keeps them healthy.

"We just like to be doing something," says John, a stocky man in suspenders with kind eyes and a small, eternal smile on his face. "I mean, you can't just sit around. We're lucky to be doing what we're doing."

"Oh yeah," says Wilbur ("Web," as his older brother calls him), the youngest of eight children who is described to me by other family members as "the ornery one." He wears a ballcap and dresses boyishly in baggy blue jeans and a white t-shirt. "If you quit work, you die. So I want to stay around here and worry people. I don't want to take off right now, I want to worry people a little longer!" he jokes.

The brothers started out together in 1939 peeling pulpwood. They walked out into the forest at daylight and cut large, old trees down with crosscut saws, then returned home at night.

"A man on each end," says John. "Every time you pulled, you thought it was going to be your last pull, 'cause it was hard work."

Wilbur looks thoughtful. "You know, there was a lot of art to that, though. If you got someone on the other end that could really pull a saw, it wasn't too bad on you," he comments.

John crosses his arms. "We cut 45 logs down there one day in a half a day with a crosscut saw and sawed 'em up. Yeah, I mean we could really work then. We sawed all that old pulpwood up in five-foot sticks. You keep in shape. They went through pretty good," he says, chuckling.

Before WWII and its increased demand for paper products, "You might say we just existed," John recalls. Then they started making a little profit, enough to hire employees. At their maximum output, they had seven employees working with them at the sawmill. At that time, they were allowed to take their sawmill into the forest and clear-cut on government land, a practice that still occurs, although today the

John (right) and Wilbur Hahn of Dutch Hollow, Hardy County, working at their sawmill. The pair have worked together since 1939.

John Hahn and his son Mickey at the sawmill in 1966. This is the same sawmill that the Hahn brothers use today, though it is now housed in an open-framed structure.

timber is hauled out in semi-trucks and milled at another location. The brothers dragged logs one at a time through the forest with horses and a wagon.

They remember when trees were bigger, when one single red or white oak could produce 3,000 feet of lumber. They remember seeing the stump of a yellow pine that measured 20 feet across. "There was an old lumber company come in here called J. Natwick that I reckon cut all that big timber back years and years ago, back when my father was young," says John. "They had an old railroad track that come here in Wardensville and also one up in Dutch Hollow to haul that lumber out on little steam engines with flat cars." Today, it's difficult to imagine the rumble of packed railcars disrupting the silence of Dutch Hollow.

Both men have also worked at some of the larger mills in their day, powered by great big steam engines that "throwed a lot of fire," says Wilbur, who remembers that your shirt could very easily ignite from the sparks. Fire was a huge safety hazard at these mills, and most of the mills eventually burned to the ground.

The timber industry in general is rife with occupational hazards, the men say. When a tree doesn't fall where it's expected to, "nine times out of 10 you got trouble," says Wilbur. "You gotta drag it down, 'cause it's hanging up in another'n. That's when it gets dangerous." He has a 14-inch scar from a hatchet wound incurred while chopping one tree out from another. "It gets your attention," he says. "You don't do it again. You know, it's funny how them there trees will brush you and get your attention.

"If the timber's froze, [the branches] come off quicker and fly faster," Wilbur continues. "And they come back and gouge into the ground a foot, maybe two-feet deep. Sometimes you can't even pull them out if you had to. When the timber's froze, the other trees will bend down, and then they'll throw a limb further. It's like a bullet."

"When they straighten up, that's

Eighty-year-old Wilbur Hahn with crossties and a double-bladed axe.

John Hahn, 82, dresses a belt on the brothers' sawmill. The motor is from a 1949 Buick Roadmaster.

when the limbs flies back," John adds. "I had one hit me on the heel out there, and it numbed my foot for a while. I've had a few to hit me a little bit, but not too much." But once a tree did fall on the tractor he had been sitting on just a few seconds earlier. "I jumped off and run when I seen it coming," he says. "It rattled me, but it didn't hurt me any."

The best thing to do when the tree you're trying to cut down is hanging in another one, says Wilbur, "is first-off to look how many limbs is hanging in another, which way they're going to go, what you're gonna do. You get out of there unless you want somebody to eat your dinner."

Today, the brothers select-cut red and white oak using chainsaws. They make railroad ties that they sell to a large lumber operation in Green Springs, saw boards that go to Pennsylvania to be made into furniture and flooring, and keep enough firewood for neighbors and friends. They've watched smaller timber operations like theirs — which at one time produced 3,000 feet, or better, on a busy day — give way to the giant companies, to which they now haul their wood. The big operations cut millions of board feet in a day, the men say.

John and his daughter Karen take me on a walk up to where the sawmill presently sits, past the family cemetery and above the fields once filled with the vegetables and grains that sustained the family of 10. John has already walked two miles this morning, but he seems to have no trouble making it up the hill to where the sawmill sits.

The Double-O' Frick, with its 52-inch blade, is a portable sawmill that can be transported to the site of the cutting, but it's been in its present location for about 20 years. The motor is from a 1949 Buick Roadmaster. "The old sawmill's about ready to fall down, but we don't fix anything until we have to, I reckon," says John. Nevertheless, between the two of them, John and Wilbur have kept the mill in good working order for more than 60 years.

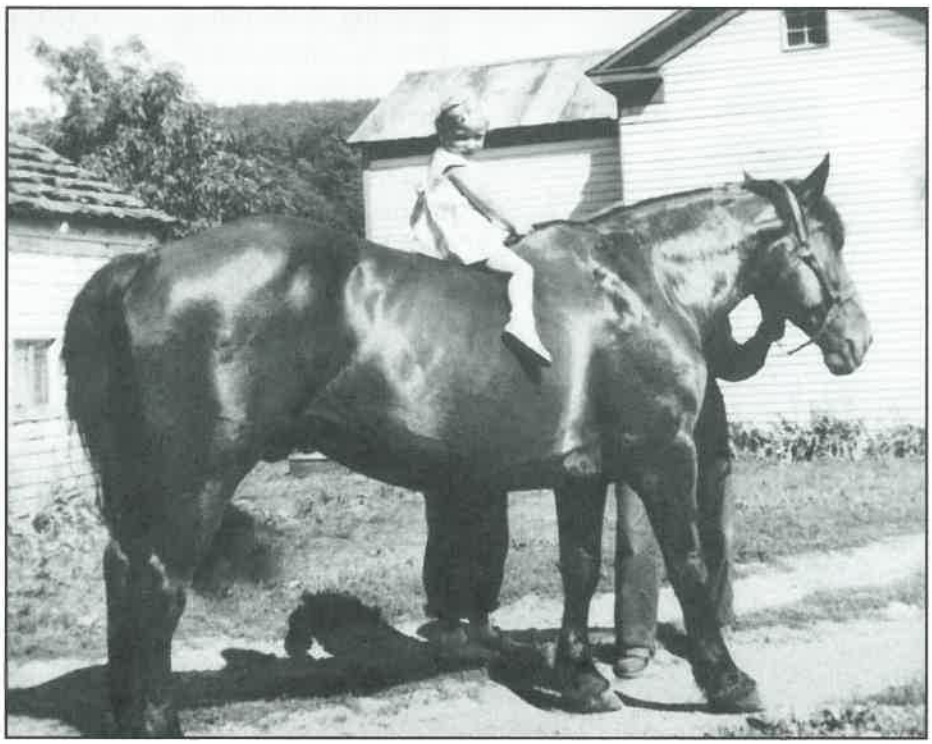
The Hahn homeplace, a two-story white clapboard house filled with antiques and family mementos, is well over 100 years old. Numerous split-log outbuildings encircle the house, including a granary, smokehouse, henhouse, and woodshed. The last permanent resident was John and Wilbur's father. No one lives there currently, but it remains the site of festive Sunday and holiday gatherings.

This Sunday, the family has gathered for an abundant supper, spread out on the old cookstove and prepared by the women in the family without the luxury of running water. The meal largely consists of vegetables raised on the farm, but includes other homemade country delicacies: green beans, squash casserole, corn, large pink tomatoes, baked beans, deviled eggs, hamburgers, hot dogs, melon, blueberry cobbler, and a large birthday cake for John's wife Elda (store-bought — shhh!). Memories in the family are often closely tied to food, and family members sigh with pleasure when the conversation turns to the cold apples they used to eat in the winter, buried in hay and earth in their yard. Making cider and apple butter was a family tradition, too. The whole family agrees that cooking for a bunch of people is preferable to only cooking for a few.

This tradition is traced back to John and Wilbur's mother Amanda Rebecca Michael, who kept eight children fed, as well as passers-by. "Everybody that come along that was hungry, why, she fixed a meal for them," says John. Wilbur adds, "If you left town hungry, it was your own fault."

Sauerkraut Road was just a rugged path when John and Wilbur were growing up. It was a treacherous route for their horse and buggy because it crossed the run 16 times. ("After you traveled it, you called it a lot of names," remarks Wilbur.)

Instead of risking an accident, most people traveled on the ridge road between Wardensville and the neighboring town of Rio. Shepherds on horses brought large flocks of sheep to graze that



Young Karen Hahn rides bareback on one of her father John's huge draft horses at the family farm. Photographer and date unknown.

sometimes filled the whole hollow, Gypsy families passed through on their perpetual wagon journeys, and peddlers who roamed the countryside brought necessary goods and services to isolated homesteads. The Hahn place was a kind of outpost along that road. "Dutch Hollow was sort of a go-between from here to over in Rio," says Elda. "And they about hit here at mealtime. They knew that they could stop and have a meal, rest, get water to drink, and be on their way." She sends me home with a brimming plastic sack full of John's pink tomatoes.

The Hahns, whose ancestors had beer gardens in Germany, also used to brew and bottle their own beer using a cake of malt, five gallons of water, barley, sugar, and a cake of yeast. The recipe "come natural," says John, smiling.

"Well, you know, everybody used to have a little bit. You had to cook your own if you wanted anything," Wilbur says. "The main part was to bottle it before it was ready and it was wild, what we call wild. If you bottled it too early, you had to drive a nail hole through the top and drink it through the nail hole. It had pressure. We had a lot of it blow up. It would clean your tonsils. You could brew what they call block-and-tackle liquor. You take a drink and walk a block and then tackle anything that come out of the holler."

The older Hahns have seen some dramatic changes in the Wardensville area in their lifetimes, not least of which was a wildfire in 1930 that burned whole mountains, for miles, down to charcoal. During that year, when only 17 inches of rain fell, wells were dry, crops were failing, and families were worried about making it through the winter. It was the time of the Dust Bowl. "The sun never got to shine right. It was red from that dust," Wilbur recalls.

After the fire, "Everything was just done," he says. "Old rattlesnake skeletons laying everywhere. It got so thick, it come back as huckleberries. I don't eat huckleberries no more because that's what I ate half my life was huckleberries." The destruction reached as far as the eye could see.

Known for their sumptuous meals, the Hahns share a family dinner in 1993. John is at center. Photographer unknown.

Wilbur (left) and John coax a log onto the skidder at their Hardy County sawmill.

They also remember when the forests, air, and streams were healthier, and lament the changes caused by pollution, which has in some ways completely transformed their childhood stomping grounds.

"A lot of trees are rotten anymore. And I don't know, we've got unhealthy air now," John says. "It's polluted. I saw that in the paper yesterday where none of the fish are fit to eat in any of these rivers, even the Shenandoah River. I fished over there about every Sunday when I was a boy, and we'd bring 'em home and eat 'em. Now you can't even eat 'em. And this river down here's the same way. It's got so much acid in it, it's killing those trees along the streams. You didn't used to have that. And they say that some kind of stuff comes out of that coal smoke and does it. Drifts for hundreds of miles.

"You know, a lot of oak trees here a while back, years ago, got what they called the oak wilt and died, but I think that was pollution. Most of them died on the lower side on the mountain where the planes landing in Washington [D.C.] come through, and they let the fuel out of the tanks so they can land.

"This future generation is going to have a hard time with the way everything's going. They're going to have to do something about this pollution business, or things are going to really get bad. But I don't know what they can do. It's going to be hard to straighten it out. It might get straightened out. I'm hoping it does."

"They say there used to be a lot of trout in that stream before they put the sawdust in it. But now the native trout are gone," adds Wilbur. Before the government regulated materials that could be dumped into streams, the waterways near some lumbering operations ran thick with sawdust, sometimes completely stopping up the flow, he says.

In a rapidly changing world, the brothers continue to keep an eye out for each other. Every day when her dad wakes up, Karen tells me, John goes over to the window, looks across the street at the house where his brother lives, and asks, "I wonder if Web's up yet?"

The brothers take care of each other and their family members selflessly. "If one needs something and the other one's got it, it belongs to him," says Wilbur. "We mostly know what the other's a'doing or even what he's thinking about."

John smiles, shrugs, and adds matter-of-factly, "Well, I guess we're all just used to being together, you know. Comes natural to depend on each other for different things."

CATHERINE MOORE is a native of Charleston, currently completing a degree in comparative literature at Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Catherine is a graduate of George Washington High School, where she was editor of the school newspaper. Her writing has appeared in *The Charleston Gazette* and other publications. Catherine's most recent contribution to GOLDENSEAL apeared in our Winter 2004 issue.

Rube Stump

Calhoun County's King of Swing

By Kim Johnson

Photographs by Michael Keller

Eighty-year-old Rubert "Rube" Stump of Apple Farm, Calhoun County, led an active and varied life. Born in 1925, he grew up during the hard times of the Depression years, was a Navy pilot in the Pacific during World War II, and kept his pilot's license current. He had a Ford-Mercury dealership in Glenville for almost 20 years, and remained keenly interested in preserving and restoring antique cars through to the end of his life. For years, Rube grew and sold Christmas trees. During his retirement years, he taught himself to build porch swings.

"I don't use any plans or blueprints when I build the swings," he said during a recent visit to his workshop. "I make up all the designs myself. When I first started building swings, I could see where improvements could be made here and there. Then I'd put those ideas to use on the next swing. Now all the swings I make have built-in magazine racks on the back and cup holders in the armrests. One of the things I've learned through experience is to drill a little hole in the bottom of the cup holder, so that any moisture accumulating there can drain out."

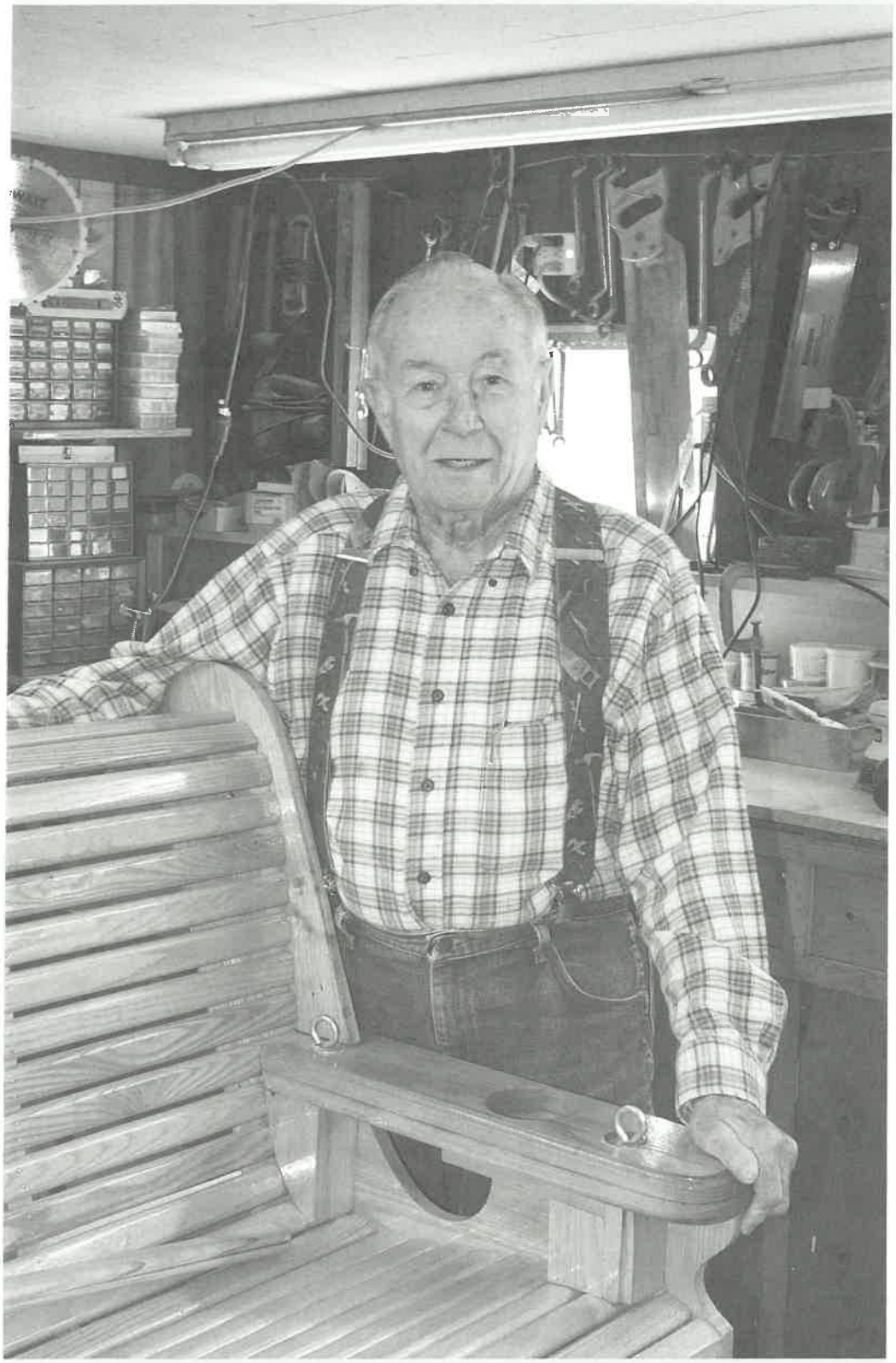
Rube was very inventive and original when it came to building his swings. They are all well-crafted, and each one is a little different from all the others.

"Each swing takes from 40 to 75 hours to build," he said, "depending on the size or the amount of decoration involved. Sometimes, people want a little fancier decoration for their swing, which makes each of them unique. The plainer swings don't take as much time to make. I usually make them from poplar and paint them white with two coats of good oil-based enamel.

"I've never made a swing from maple," he added. "When it's dried, maple is an extremely hard wood. One time, I ran some maple through a planer, and I could see sparks flying off the planer blades. I don't like to work with maple, gum, or persimmon, because they're all such hard woods. Hickory is almost as bad, but not quite so much as the others."

All of Rube's swings include a drink holder in the armrest and a magazine rack on the back. This unusual "combination swing" is made of black walnut and red oak.

Most of Rube's swings are made from either red oak or walnut. They are stained and sealed with polyurethane, and sell from about



Rube Stump with one of 157 porch swings he built on his family's Calhoun County farm.

$245 to upwards of $600. Rube was always thinking of ways to make his swings better or maybe just a little different than before. He recently came up with the idea of making what he called a combination swing.

"I made the first combination using black walnut and red oak," he said. "I'm also building a mini-swing that's only 48-inches wide that can be used on the smaller porches being built on some of the newer homes.

"My standard swing measures 52 to 58 inches. The queen size is 62 to 68 inches, and the king size is 72 to 78 inches. I've also made one super-king size that is 84-inches wide, but I don't plan on making many more as big as that one. Swings of that size are heavy and hard for me to work with."

Some people prefer to have their swing out in the yard instead of on the porch, and Rube devised a special design for those. "I make an A-frame for yard swings about 10-feet high. The higher you can get the chains, the longer glide you get from the swing. I go to junkyards to get springs from inside the hoods of old pick-up trucks to use at the top of the chains," he said. "There is a manufactured spring for swings, but I've found them to be a little stiff. I like the truck springs because they make a softer, springier seat. There used to be a junkyard at Sand Fork that I kept stripped of all their springs."

Over the past 25 years, Rube constructed many different items from wood, including fold-up stools, gun cabinets, and corner cupboards. He also made several toy train sets with all the cars, a few clocks, and countless picture frames for family and friends. Rube reframed all the sports and class pictures now hanging at Calhoun County High School.

"After I'd done some of these other woodworking projects, I began to get requests from people who wanted porch swings," Rube said. "I found out that I really like making the swings. They are fun to make and easier to build than the gun cabinets or corner cupboards."

Rube went into great detail when describing how he made the swings. All of his woodwork was handcrafted from timber cut on his farm. Through knowledge and

Rube at work in his shop. The hoses are part of his dust exhaust system.

first-hand experience, he developed a process that worked well for him.

"All the swings are contoured to fit the body and are very comfortable. All the slats are rounded with no sharp corners, and all are individually hand-sanded," Rube said. "When making the slats, I rip the board $1\frac{1}{4}$-inch wide, then turn it up and rip it down the middle, which makes the slat a little over $\frac{1}{2}$-inch wide. By the time I run it through the planer on top and bottom and plane both sides, the slat is down to $\frac{3}{8}$-inch wide. Each slat is then run through a router to round the corners off. The slats are then nailed to the frame with brass brads. The holes for them all have to be drilled because the wood is so hard.

"When nailing the slats to the frame, I use spacers to keep them straight and even all the way across," Rube continued. "I switch the spacers around at about every third slat just in case one spacer is just slightly bigger than the others. Even a minuscule difference will cause the slats to be crooked overall.

"Every time I make a swing, I never know exactly how many slats it's going to take, so I always have a few extras left over. When someone buys a swing, I like to give them a couple of extra slats just in case they ever break one, so it could be replaced."

Rube discovered his talent for woodworking relatively late in life. "In an indirect way, my brother Hughart got me interested in making things with wood," Rube said. "After World War II, we went into business together with Stump Motors in Stumptown. It was a used-car lot, and we did a pretty good business. Later on, I moved to Glenville and opened a Ford-Mercury dealership while Hughart stayed in Stumptown selling bulldozers, John Deere farm machinery, and he also ran a junkyard. In the mid-1970's, he took in a table saw and a joiner as a trade-in towards some equipment."

It was this transaction that eventually led to Rube's woodworking. "Hughart brought the saw and joiner out to our family farm and stored them in an outbuilding," Rube said. "After Hughart died in 1977, I found the tools at the farm, and when I started trying to make a few things with them, I found out that I really enjoyed working with the wood."

Woodworking was an immediate attraction for Rube. "I bought more tools and built a workshop for them at the farm," he said. "That first shop was way too small, so I built another that was 18 x 20 feet. I got along in there pretty good, but when I started making the porch swings, I realized that I needed more room. I knocked the end out of the building to add more space, and now my workshop is 18 x 40 feet."

Rube was a very creative man with a natural curiosity about how things work. When the saw-

dust started piling up in his workshop and the dust from the sanders made it hard for him to breathe, he applied his Appalachian ingenuity and came up with a solution to his problem.

"I made an exhaust/dust system for the shop so it would be comfortable to work in. I hung four-inch sewer pipes through the rafters and connected hoses to it from all the machines in the shop. This is all controlled by a remote-control fan that sits in the lower end of the shop," Rube said. "With the remote control, I can turn on the table saw and the blower at the same time, and then I'm in business. The sawdust is taken through the pipe and blown outside into a big pile. I still get some dust from the hand sanders, but the main bulk of it all goes outside."

Cars were always a passion for Rube, who owned a Ford-Mercury dealership in Glenville for nearly 20 years. Rube is pictured here with a Mercury convertible in about 1950. Photographer and location unknown.

At one time, he and Bill Griffith, a longtime friend from Glenville, bought a sawmill together. "We cut some of the timber on the farm with that sawmill. When that bad ice storm hit in the winter of 2003, it uprooted a lot of the timber around here," Rube recalled. "We cut and logged the trees out, then skidded them up to the sawmill and sawed them into lumber. Some of the trees were so big that we had a hard time working with them. The bigger ones couldn't be skidded with the tractor, and I had to use a bulldozer for them.

"We stacked the lumber in the barns and outbuildings so it could air dry. I always paint the ends of the boards, so when any moisture evaporates it can't come out there," Rube said. "The paint seals the ends of the boards and forces the moisture to come out the sides. The boards will split if moisture comes out the ends."

Rube was careful about drying and storing the lumber. "I try to cure it for at least five years. If the lumber is stacked in a barn loft with a tin roof, you can get by with drying it for only three years. The moisture content needs to be about .9 percent, or so," he said. "I use a moisture meter to check all the lumber, and I've never had any moisture problems at all. I don't like to use kiln-dried lumber, because it is usually dried down to .6 percent, and I think that's too dry."

Rube's workshop is located on his family homeplace at Apple Farm in southeastern Calhoun County. That now-extinct village was located on Rush Run near Sand Ridge and the Gilmer County line. During the early 1900's, Apple Farm was a bustling community consisting of a post office, two general stores, an IOOF lodge hall, a grist mill, several houses, and a coffin factory.

A dozen, or so, porch swings built by Rube Stump. Each swing is unique, varying in size, materials, color, and other details. "I make up all the designs myself," Rube said.

The Stump homeplace in Calhoun County. Today, the 518-acre property includes the entire town of Apple Farm. Rube's shop is at the lower left-hand corner of this picture. Photographer and date unknown.

"Back then, when a person died, they were buried the next day because there was no embalming done at that time," Rube said. "There was plenty of timber on the hills surrounding Apple Farm to supply the factory with wood for the coffin construction."

Although it's not found on most maps anymore, Rube remembered Apple Farm as a thriving and busy place. "Herman Witte operated one of the general stores, and my grandfather Ellsworth Stump owned the other," he said. "Granddad's house was built about 1880 and was in the middle of Apple Farm. The community post office was located in his cellar top. People from all around the area were constantly coming and going to town for work or to conduct whatever business they had."

Rube's father Sull Stump, as a young man, ran a

This community photograph was taken at Apple Farm, in front of the Ellsworth Stump house in 1918. Three generations of Stumps lived in this home, including Rube. The double porch, seen here, was demolished in a storm and was replaced by the current single porch, visible in the top photograph. Photographer unknown.

flatboat on the Little Kanawha River. He hauled dry goods and supplies from Parkersburg to Grantsville, then up Steer Creek to Stumptown. Whenever the boat came to a riffle in the river, farmers on the shore would hitch their horse teams to the boat and pull it up over the riffle so it could go on upriver, Rube said. [See "'It Was Crowded Up There': Paddlewheelers on the Little Kanawha," by Joy Gregoire Gilchrist; Summer 1994.]

A few years later, Sull married Treacy Jane Wilson, and they moved to Morgantown in about 1920, where Sull found a job at Mississippi Plate Glass. "My brother Hughart was born there in 1923, and I came along in 1925," Rube said. "When the Depression came in 1929, things were tough for just about everybody. We couldn't stay in Morgantown, so we moved back to Apple Farm to survive.

"Due to the Depression and bad times, my granddad came close to losing the store and his farm," Rube recalled. "My dad had managed to save about $300, which he gave to my granddad, who in turn deeded him half of the farm. People in big cities all over the country were out of work and starving, but we survived by planting big gardens every year and also raising some livestock. The only things we used from the store was maybe a little coffee or sugar. We ate cornbread twice a day, and maybe once in a while we'd get biscuits for breakfast. Everything was raised on the farm."

When Rube's grandfather died, Sull Stump bought out the other heirs and maintained the homeplace. "After my father died in 1976, my mother wanted to continue living on the homeplace as long as she could," Rube said. "I was living in Glenville then, and I went to the farm about three days a week to visit mother and do a little woodwork. She lived on the farm until she got sick in 1991. Then we brought her to live in Glenville, where she passed away in 1994."

Rube added to the original farm over the years, as adjoining properties came up for sale. Now the farm is 518 acres, encompassing all of the original village of Apple Farm. Although Rube and his wife Pat kept a home in Glenville, Rube made the 20-mile drive to Apple Farm several times a week. He liked to keep the old homeplace up, and especially enjoyed spending time in his woodshop.

Rube relaxes on his own swing, mounted on a specially constructed A-frame in his garage.

"I like being able to create something from start to finish that people can use for relaxation and enjoyment," he said. "I've always really enjoyed sitting in a swing. I made an A-frame for my swing here in the yard that gets a real workout all summer. I get in that swing under the shade tree and shove it back as far as I can, then throw my feet up in the seat. The swing takes off, and before it stops I'm sound asleep. It'll swing for four or five minutes without stopping."

Rube was proud of the fact that all of his swings were made from the hardwoods that were harvested on his farm. "There is a lot of good West Virginia hardwoods on that land: red oak, wild cherry, white ash, and black walnut. Parts of the farm have been timbered over the years," he said, "but some areas haven't been touched since about 1900, and some of the other trees are about 80 years old — the same age as I am.

"I have arthritis in my hands now. I don't know how much longer I'll be able to keep working in my shop, but I want to do it as long as I can. I number all the swings I've made, and now I'm up to number 157. I hope my health holds up long enough to make it to number 200."

Sadly, Rube's health did not hold up. He passed away unexpectedly on March 31, 2005, as this story was being prepared for publication. He will be greatly missed. —ed.

KIM JOHNSON was born and raised in Clendenin, where she still lives. She received her degree from Glenville State College. Kim is a banjo player and frequent participant in the Vandalia Gathering. Her most recent contribution to GOLDENSEAL appeared in our Spring 2004 issue.

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

Days at the Knights of Pythias

By Bob Masters

Time was when every small West Virginia community had at least one fraternal organization. These organizations played a very important role in the business and social lives of the communities in which they existed. Next to the schools and the churches, they were often the only centers of activity for many area residents. In northern Wetzel County, Burton had its Odd Fellows, Littleton had its Masons, and Hundred — which lies midway between these two towns — had its Knights of Pythias. The Hundred lodge, number 84, began in 1894

Members of the Knights of Pythias lodge 84 in Hundred, Wetzel County, during the early 1950's.

Postcard view of Hundred, early 1900's. The building that housed the Bank of Hundred and the Knights of Pythias lodge is at the lower right (see circle).

and continued up until the mid-1950's. The first chancellor was the Reverend F.G.W. Ford.

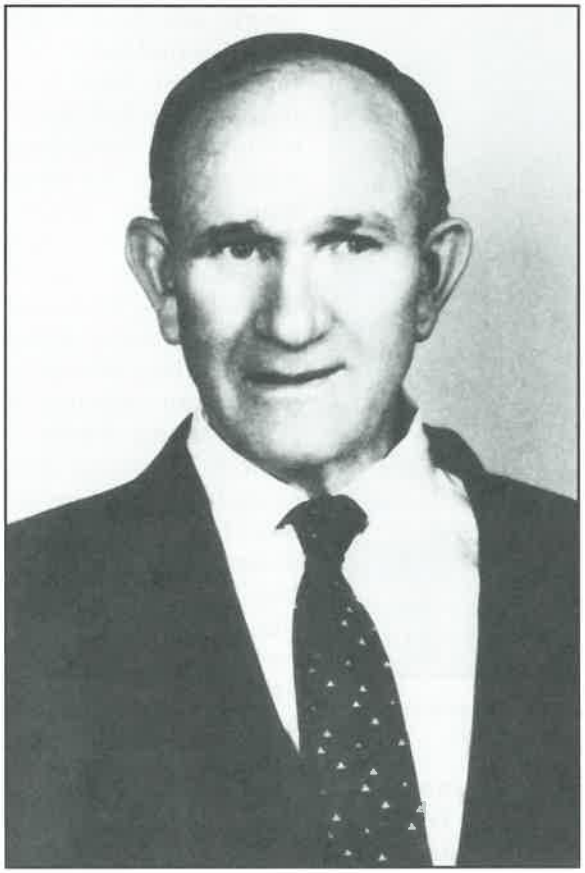
When I was a child growing up in Hundred, my father belonged to the Knights of Pythias. He held various offices in this organization and was chancellor in 1946. The lodge had 93 members that year, in a town whose total population numbered 706. [See "Growing Up in Hundred: A Wetzel County Retrospective," by Bob Masters; Summer 1999.]

The lodge hall occupied the entire third floor of a three-story building that also housed the Bank of Hundred on the ground floor, with Dr. J.S. Church's dental practice and the Short Line Telephone office located on the second floor. This building still stands, but has been given over to other uses.

At the top of the stairs to the lodge area, there were double doors that opened into a small antechamber. Between the antechamber and the main part of the lodge hall, there were two more double doors with peep holes in them. In order to be admitted into the inner sanctum for meetings and other official lodge functions, members had to repeat a password. Adjacent to the anteroom, there was a large kitchen. The main part of the lodge quarters was a long meeting room with carpet on the floor, brass spittoons placed here and there, and tables arranged in two rows throughout the length of the room. Several huge and ornate oak cabinets with glass doors were situated at intervals along the walls. These cabinets contained paraphernalia, such as robes, headgear, swords, shields, and other items used in lodge rituals. At the far end of this long hall, there was a small stage with a lectern, a piano, and other accoutrements for speeches, presentations, and entertainments. Immediately behind the stage there was a ceiling-high canvas partition painted with heroic-sized figures and scenery, depicting events from the lives of Damon and Pythias, whose story provided the *raison d'etre* for the Knights of Pythias. The whole place had a mysterious quality and a regal majesty about it.

Behind the canvas partition there was a poolroom with a single old-fashioned, slate-topped table. My father often went over to the lodge hall in the evenings to shoot pool with some of the other members. Jeff Taylor, Bill Lambert, Bill Higgins, Uncle Marion Bartholomew, and other cronies would often join him there after supper for an evening of pool. Many times, I would go along and spend the entire evening playing around inside the meeting area or watching the pool game. I remember being in the hall on rainy winter evenings, listening to the click of pool balls and hearing the conversation and laughter coming from the poolroom. I learned expressions such as "bad lick," "scratch," "sewed up," "shake the tree," "pea pool," "nine ball," and "rotation." I also learned how to choose a good cue

Author Bob Masters as a young boy in Hundred.



Everett Rush of Hundred. Rush's entertaining talks at the Knights of Pythias "big feeds" were a highlight for author Bob Masters.

stick by rolling it along the table, how to chalk up a cue, and how to use the rake. However, I never did learn how to play the game very well.

Later, when I was older and in high school, my father would give me his key to the lodge hall. Some of my friends and I would go to the poolroom and play late into the night. We would smoke Marsh Wheeling stogies, talk about girls, and speculate on our various futures. Once in a while, we would get a little rowdy, and the telephone operator downstairs would complain to a lodge member. Consequently, all privileges would be suspended for a time, but eventually we would be allowed to resume our pool shooting at the lodge hall.

Throughout my childhood, the Knights of Pythias lodge in Hundred held what my father and his lodge brothers referred to as "big feeds." These events were sit-down dinners held in the lodge's meeting area. Practically the entire community was invited to these affairs, which were free of charge. Insofar as I can remember, the menus were fairly simple, but the food was good and abundant, with large portions of creamed chicken on biscuit, mashed potatoes, green beans, and cole slaw. Dessert was pumpkin pie. After dinner, several members of the lodge, including most of the officers, would be asked to make a few remarks. Even as a child, I was impressed by the ability of these people to speak in public. Some made smooth, effortless introductions. Some told humorous, and presumably fabricated, stories about various members of the lodge.

One such raconteur was Mr. Everett Rush. Mr. Rush suffered from crippling arthritis and was able to stand only with the aid of crutches. But when he took the podium and told one of his many funny stories, Mr. Rush brought down the house with laughter. Other members gave more serious presentations on the meaning of friendship and brotherly love, apropos to the Knights of Pythias. At one of these dinners, my father gave a talk about the lives of Damon and Pythias. I was amazed at the time because I had not realized that he was such an accomplished speaker.

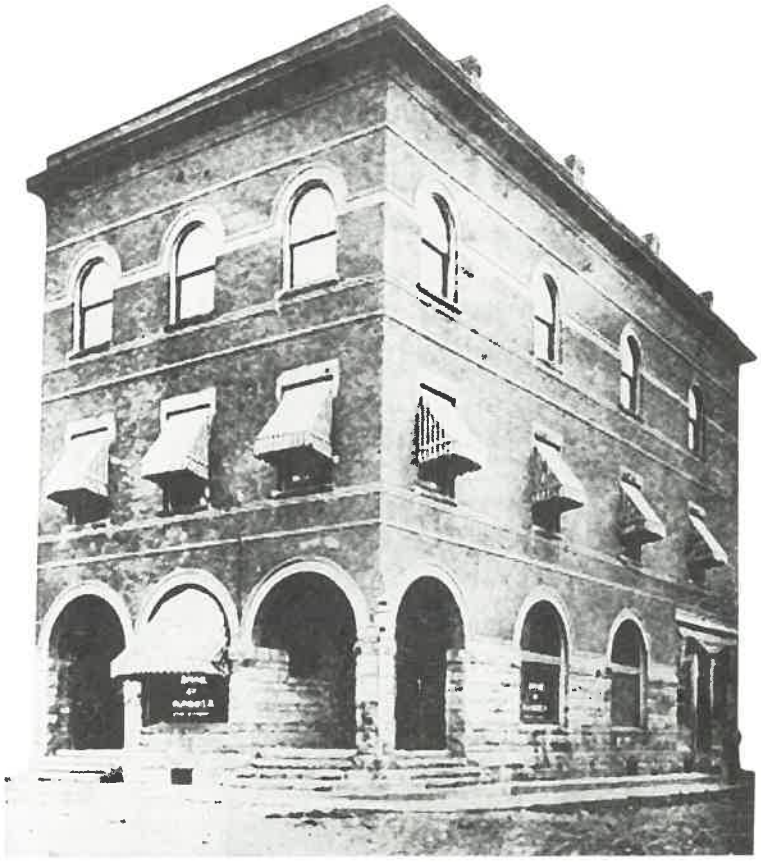
After the speaking, there was entertainment. This included everything from someone playing "Little Brown Jug" on the piano while a second person made a puppet dance on the end of a paddle, to a selection of numbers performed by a local "hillbilly" band. An area carpenter, W.O. Haines, usually concluded the entertainment by playing some mournful song, which sounded like background music for *The Twilight Zone*, on his hand saw. It was a grand time. The hall was crowded with happy, smiling people, and everyone seemed to be enjoying themselves to the fullest. A minister gave the closing prayer. The lodge brothers congratulated one another on the success of the event, and everything was over until the next "big feed."

From time to time, the Hundred lodge would put on something called the ADK for other Pythian lodges in the area. I never did learn what ADK stood for, or the

Delmont Masters, our author's father, was chancellor of the Knights of Pythias lodge in 1946.

purpose of these affairs, but I did see some of the contraptions that were used on these occasions. Prior to these affairs, my father would bring certain devices home for cleaning and repair. I remember one device in particular, which ostensibly was used to test one's strength. This apparatus had a handle that one pulled up and a gauge that showed the amount of weight being lifted. However, when a person pulled on this handle, a board came up from behind and struck him a sharp blow on his backside. At the same moment, a blank cartridge discharged somewhere within the device. I personally fell victim to this machine, much to my father's amusement.

On the Fourth of July, some of the older Pythian brothers would dress in their lodge robes and hats. With dress swords in fancy scabbards at their sides, they would ride on the back of Fred Berdine's lumber truck in the town parade. They joined other entries, including the Hundred High School band, the town's single fire truck, an assortment of church floats, several new automobiles belonging to local dealerships, and the red-fox hunters club, whose members led a number of dismayed-looking hounds along the parade route. The Pythian brothers would sing hymns, *a cappella*, as the parade moved along the main street of town. The whole affair was quite a sight.



The Bank of Hundred building in 1929. The Knights of Pythias lodge was housed on the third floor.

The Bank of Hundred no longer exists. The dentist and telephone operator have long since passed on. The Knights of Pythias Hundred lodge has been defunct for many years. The three-story, brick building that housed these activities now serves a number of different purposes. I often think of the many good times that we had in the old lodge hall and recall the many fine people who were affiliated with this organization — all part of one small town's past.

BOB MASTERS grew up in Hundred, Wetzel County. A graduate of West Virginia University and George Peabody College, he was director of library science at Fairmont State University for 18 years, where he retired in 1999. Bob's most recent contribution to GOLDENSEAL appeared in our Summer 1999 issue.

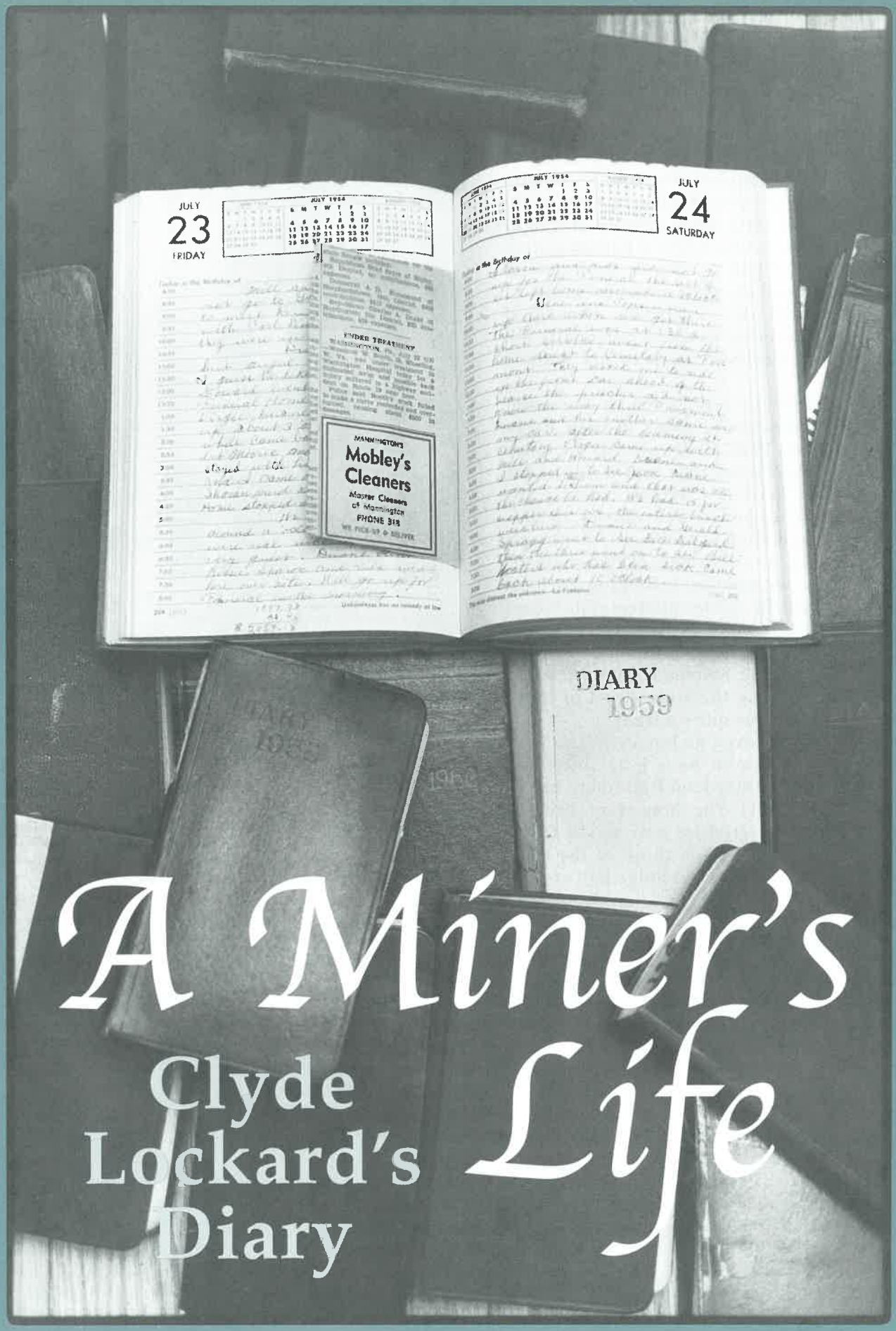
The Legend of Damon and Pythias

According to Greek legend, in about the fourth century B.C., a citizen named Damon had been condemned to death by the King of Syracuse and was being held for execution. His friend Pythias voluntarily became a hostage in his stead while Damon went home to bid his family and friends farewell. Each of these friends was willing to sacrifice his life for the other.

John Banim, Irish poet and dramatist, wrote a play based on this friendship, which was first produced in London in 1821 and has since been staged many hundreds of times. Familiarity with the Banim play encouraged Justus H. Rathbone of Utica, New York, to organize a fraternal order on the basis of such friendship.

In response to the hatred and hostility that existed during the Civil War, Rathbone decided to do something to promote brotherly love throughout the nation. In 1864, he founded the Order of the Knights of Pythias to foster friendship, charity, and benevolence. It was the first such organization to be chartered by an act of the U.S. Congress.

The Knights of Pythias have long been active in West Virginia. Currently, there are 19 Knights of Pythias and affiliated lodges in the state, with a total active membership of about 780.

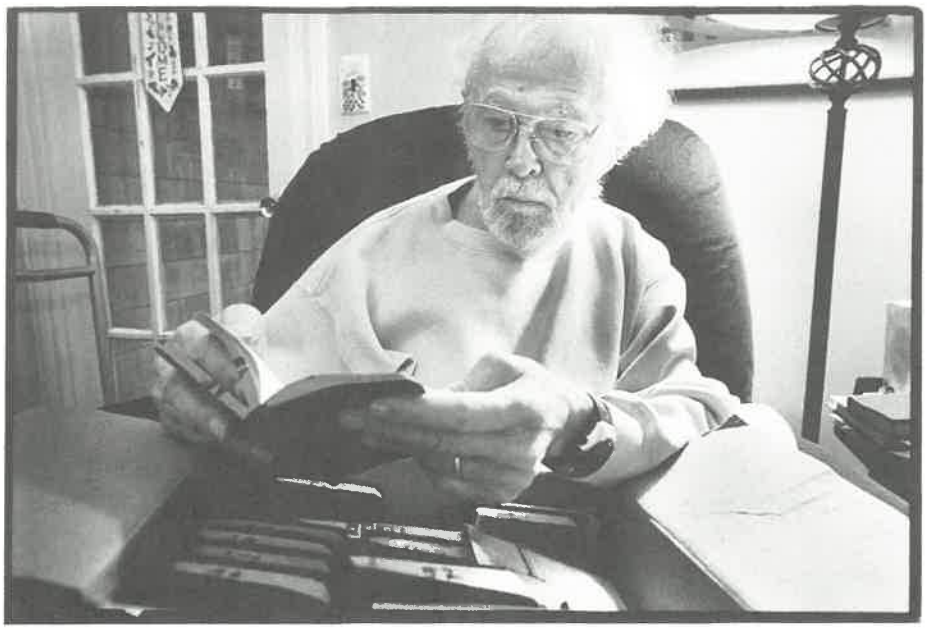


A Miner's Life

Clyde Lockard's Diary

By Duane Lockard

Photographs by Neal Menschel



Author Duane Lockard reviews his father's diaries at Duane's home in Massachusetts. Clyde Lockard's diaries span 22 years, from 1943 until his death in 1965.

Clyde Lockard spent most of his working life in and around West Virginia coal mines. His daily thoughts and activities during those years are preserved in a collection of diaries he kept between 1943 and 1965, which have been passed down to his son, author Duane Lockard.

Born in 1889 in Bulltown, Braxton County, Clyde received an eighth-grade education at a one-room school, then went to work. Initially, he helped his family with farm chores, then left home at age 17 to find his own way. [See "Bulltown of My Youth," by Duane Lockard; Summer 2003.]

Clyde's first job was in a factory, where he tended a clothespin-drying machine. Saving money from this job, he went to Cincinnati, where he enrolled in barbering school. He then returned to West Virginia and barbered in several towns in the north-central part of the state, eventually landing in Shinnston. There, at age 30, he began loading coal at the nearby town of Owings.

Unaccustomed to the physical demands of handloading, Clyde complained that the tools wore blisters in his hands, which would bleed and stick to his gloves. He eventually overcame these discomforts and embarked on a long career as a coal miner, with all the hardships, rewards, and challenges that came with it.

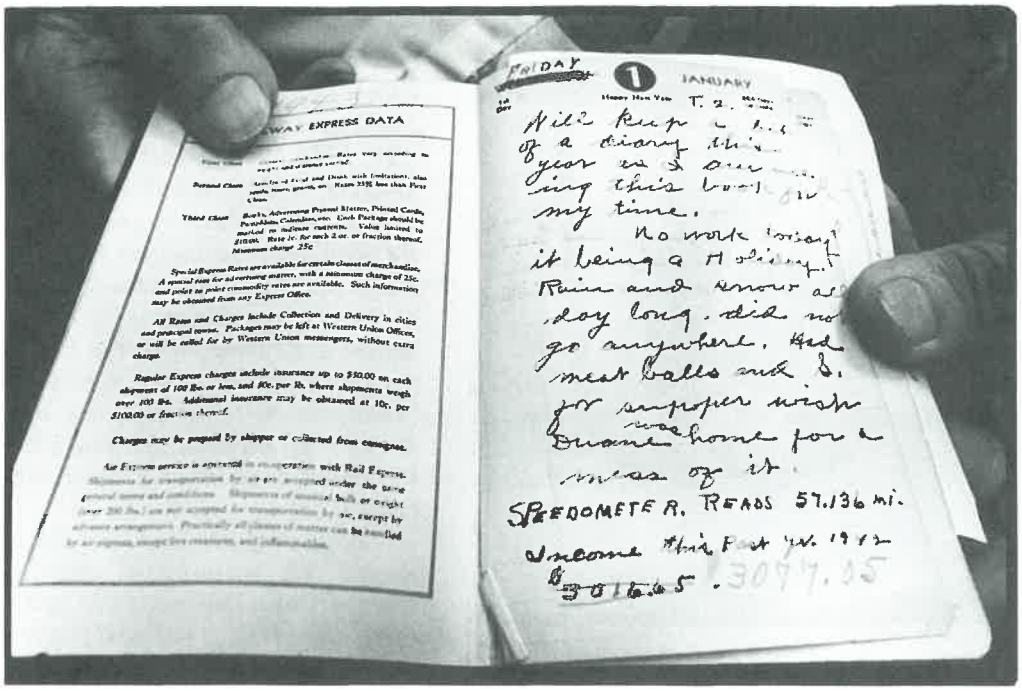
In 1920, Clyde married Virgie Walters — his first wife had died in 1918 of tuberculosis — and the family soon grew to include two sons and a daughter. When work slowed at the Owings mines, the Lockards moved to Reynoldsville, the first in a series of moves as the family followed the shifting fortunes of a miner's life. Between 1910 and 1938, the Lockard family relocated nine times.

Finally, in 1938, Clyde and Virgie moved to Monongah, Marion County, where they remained for the rest of their lives. The Great Depression lingered in the area and tested the Lockard family's strength and ingenuity. Often, the mines would only run one or two days a week, and money and food were scarce. At these times, Clyde's 1926 two-door Oldsmobile proved a vital asset. By removing the back seat, Clyde fashioned a makeshift truck and hauled coal and food for his family and others.

When the war intervened, work increased at the mines. But war also brought changes for the Lockard family. Clyde's son from his first marriage, who had been living with a Quaker aunt, was a conscientious objector and spent most of the war years in C.O. camps. Son Duane entered the military and served in Europe. The couple's daughter Sharon married a young man who was about to be drafted.

Clyde Lockard and son Duane in about 1925 at Bulltown, Braxton County. Photographer unknown.

It is at around this time that Clyde Lockard's diaries begin, specifically on New Year's Day 1943. He writes about coal mining and about work around home, about his impressions of life in the town of Monongah, and about the lives of his family. He continued to write the daily notes for the rest of his life — 22 years. Many of his entries are insignificant, and he never develops any subject extensively. But the journals do tell the reader much about the man and his world.



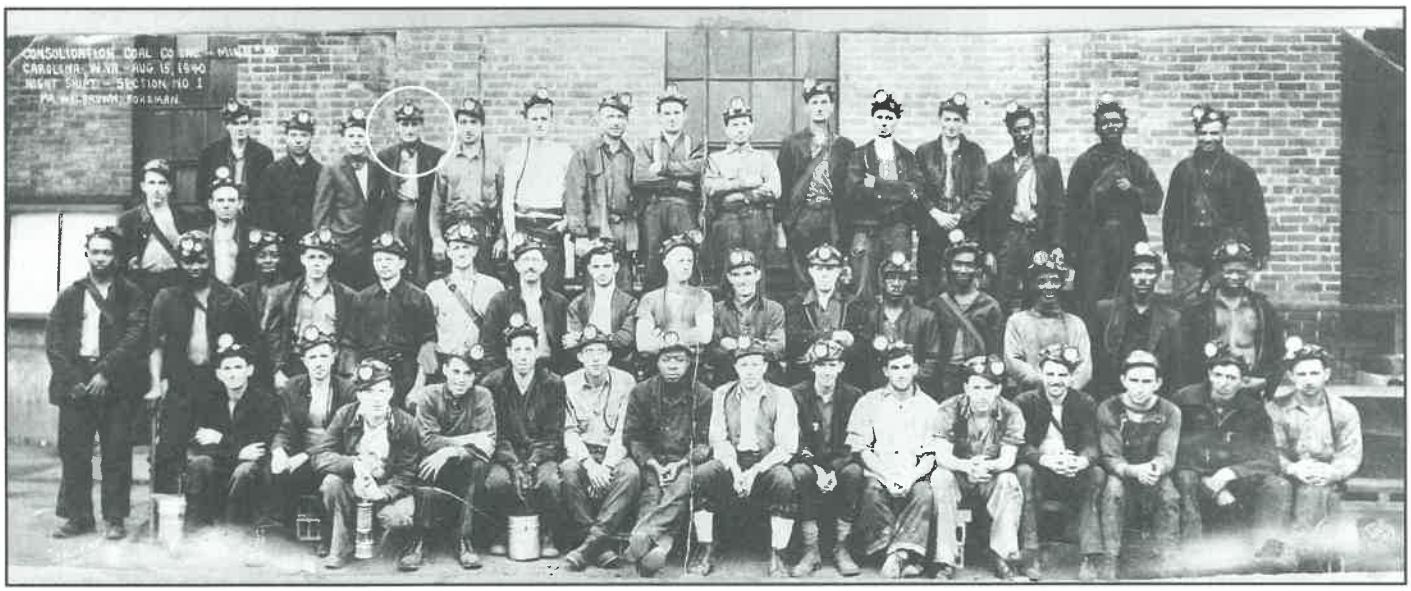
January 1, 1943, the first entry, says: "Will keep a bit of a diary this year, and I am using this book for my time [i.e., his records of hours worked and tonnages of coal loaded]. No work today, it being a Holiday. Rain and snow all day long, did not go anywhere. Had meatballs and S. for supper. ... Speedometer reads 57,136 mi. Income this past year 1942 $3,077.05."

The next day was a Saturday. This notation appears: "13.18 @ 74.5 $10.35. Got two stamps for gasoline today. Cost $1.37. Loaded eight cars today and got done around 12:15 o'clock." That is, he loaded 13.18 tons of coal, which earned him $10.35 at a rate of 74.5 cents a ton. He paid 23 cents for a gallon of gas, and he and his partner together loaded eight cars of coal, cars that held about three tons of coal each.

There were many days when Clyde filled in at the mine for a buddy who got sick, hurt, or for other reasons — like the first day of hunting season — was not at work. In September 1943, he reports: "Worked by myself today. Got six nice cars and was done by 12 o'clock. Air is bad in the place — makes you feel tough nearly every day." In that shift, he loaded 21 tons of coal and earned $15.20. During the second week of April 1943, he averaged 19.05 tons of coal a day. In June of 1944, he worked alone again and loaded eight cars, or 27 tons, for $20.10.

Such enormous amounts of coal loaded were not the norm by any means. Clyde's average was closer to 15 tons. But even that is a considerable work output by a man in his middle 50's and weighing around 150 pounds. After six days of such exertion, he usually spent Sunday in bed recuperating. Sometimes he spent the day driving 150 miles (round trip) from Monongah to Bulltown and back, on roads that were hilly, crooked, and narrow.

This strenuous life began to exact a toll upon Clyde, however. When the war ended, he gave up loading



Clyde Lockard is fourth from the left in the back row (see circle) in this group photo taken at the Consolidation Coal Company mine #86 at Carolina, Marion County, in 1940. Photograph by Tallent Photo.

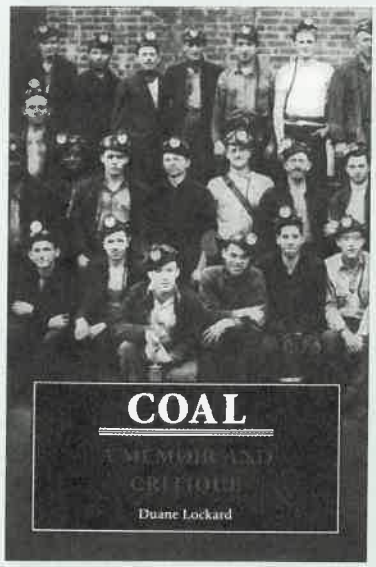
Coal: A Memoir and Critique

In his 1998 book, titled ***Coal: A Memoir and Critique***, author Duane Lockard presents a pointed appraisal of the industry that has been a dominant force in West Virginia for more than a century.

Using his own family's experience in the coalfields as a starting place, Lockard expands into the general history of coal mining in West Virginia, as well as the likely prospects for its future. In the process, the author analyzes the difficulties and problems that have historically plagued the industry and its workforce. The economic, social, and health-related effects of coal in the past are shown to have persisted as ongoing political and environmental issues in the present and future.

Lockard finds the underlying continuity between all of these problems to stem from an unchanged pattern of corporate power. Making a seamless transition from personal memoir to social analysis, Lockard fuses his family's experience with his academic skills as a university professor without any loss of clarity in narrative style.

As a result, ***Coal: A Memoir and Critique*** remains readable throughout, even in those passages where



Lockard challenges conflicting analyses and arguments. He disputes, for example, Crandall Shifflett's revisionist depiction of a benign though paternalistic industry, using his father Clyde Lockard's story, as well as evidence from the broader historical record, to illustrate his point. [See accompanying article.]

The 208-page hardcover book sells for $29.95 and is available through bookstores; from the University Press of Virginia, P.O. Box 400318, Charlottesville, VA 22904; or on the Web at www.upress.virginia.edu.

money. For this he needed a license, and for the license he and Virgie moved to Florida where, despite his uneasiness at being a student, he successfully attended barbering school. He practiced the trade for some months in Virginia, but he and Virgie found they could not stay away from West Virginia and soon returned home.

Clyde's inclination to supplement his retirement pay was reaffirmed by a sudden and unexpected reduction of the miners' pension by 25 percent — from $100 per month to $75. The cutback furthered Clyde's ambivalence about John L. Lewis, the autocratic and colorful head of the United Mine Workers of America. (Lewis' tenure as president of the UMWA was about the same as Clyde's tenure as a mine worker.) Although he was sarcastic about Lewis from time to time, Clyde nevertheless had respect for Lewis' achievements and those of the union. He called his dues "John L. dues," and called his pension "John L. checks." Like most miners, Clyde took pleasure in the way Lewis would stand up to the coal operators. With his sarcasm, his hyperbole, and often-flowery Victorian language, Lewis lent a vicarious sense of "telling them off" to miners who had little or no opportunity to communicate with the distant absentee owners of the mines.

"I guess I will go to town tomorrow.
I want to see the Dr.
I am so short of breath."

Despite his negative comments about the UMWA, Clyde was not anti-union. On the Taft-Hartley law of 1947, he writes: "The bill passed. Don't look good for a workingman now." He noncommitally reports that miners refused to work the day following passage of the bill. Clyde was not given to organizational activity. He was no joiner, and no causes provoked him to participate. He went to only one meeting of his local union, and that was at the urging of his son, who was studying labor unions in college.

No doubt Clyde's apprehension about unions was related to his generally conservative orientation. Among his brothers, Clyde was the only one who held a more-or-less Republican point of view. He notes that he voted for Dewey against Roosevelt in 1944 and was unhappy that Truman prevailed over Dewey in 1948: "Election N.G.," he comments. These Republican inclinations were thin, however, and did not survive the 1960 election. The day before the Kennedy-Nixon vote, he writes: "I hope it goes to Kennedy tomorrow."

Clyde's approach to politics was similar to the rest of his social relationships, as he remained cool and undemonstrative. When his son surprised him by traveling 800 miles to visit on his 75th birthday, he notes in his diary only that his son "had a day off and

Clyde and Duane Lockard at Duane's graduation from Yale University in 1952.

decided to come down," making no comment about the reason for the visit. His quiet demeanor was a direct inheritance from his family — no one of his siblings ever wasted a word that could be avoided. He, his father, and his brothers could sit in the summertime on the broad front porch at Bulltown and say nothing for what to an impatient boy seemed to be hours. Virgie was just the opposite — an indefatigable talker who was nearly driven out of her mind when people would sit and sit and just sit some more, saying nothing.

Sublimated as Clyde's feelings may have been, that certainly did not mean he was devoid of emotions or attachments to those close to him. Among the people who mattered most to him was his grandson Carl. Clyde's daughter Sharon, who had married very young, left her parents to take care of her three small children from time to time, especially after her husband died at an early age. It was not long before Carl, the firstborn of these children, became very special to his grandparents, and in time they came to consider him as their own child. Once, after Carl had been with them for months and attended a local school, they urged him to take his education more seriously. But their efforts went unrewarded: "Carl went to school today, but he is not trying to study. He brings books home and never looks at them." When Carl failed to be promoted one year, it saddened his grandparents, who had hoped he would "make something of himself" in the conventional manner. For Carl, cars, hunting, and fishing had a higher priority.

In 1959, Sharon and her second husband abruptly took her children and moved to Florida. The loss of his grandchildren troubled Clyde so deeply that he virtually began talking to himself, entering in his diary daily greetings and lamentations to Carl. Soon, every entry ended with a brief red-ink postscript to the boy, wishing him well, asking him to keep his hair cut, and to write home to West Virginia.

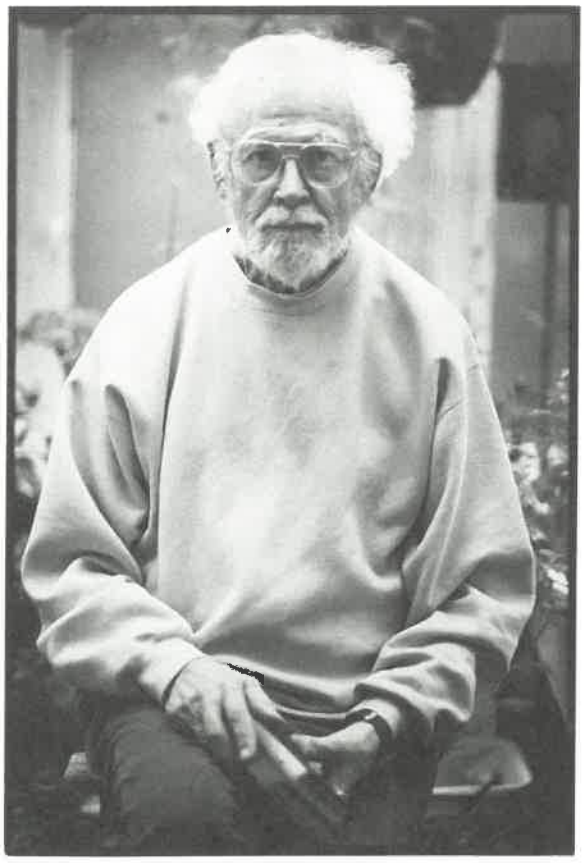
Entries soon became longer, reflecting new pressures. "Study hard and have a good time after lessons. I hope I can get down to see you this winter," he writes in October 1959. The next day: "I have not felt right since you left, Carl. Maybe I will feel better someday. Study hard, Carl. Nite, Carl." And in April 1960: "Carl, one year ago this morning I got up at 8:30 to wake you for school, and you were gone. I watched for you at noon and at 4:00 both but did not see you. That night I heard you had left for Fla. You will never know how that hurt me. I was not very well anyway. I am just now feeling about as I should. Can't hear too well, but can see good, but not as 40 years ago. Nite, Carl." About a month later, Carl and his family visited home. The special entries ended as abruptly as they began.

In the early 1960's, Clyde and Virgie were doing well — relatively speaking. His black lung, and a knee that she had disabled, slowed them down, but they still got around. She went to bingo games and various

Clyde's old carbide lamp, a souvenir from his years in the mines.

church functions. He visited Bulltown, worked in his gardens, and made improvements on the house. Although they didn't stop raising and preserving food for tomorrow, the search for a supplemental job now seemed unnecessary. Their concerns over their daughter and grandson seemed to be pushed to the side for the moment, especially when Carl signed up for a hitch in the Army.

Virgie's leg got worse and ached painfully, making it difficult for her to get around. In May 1964, she had a stroke, paralyzing her right arm and leg. On her return from the hospital, Clyde began a course of home care for her, serving as nurse, cook, and house cleaner. For months, Clyde would not leave the house without arranging for someone to stay with his wife.



Duane Lockard today.

Gradually in 1963, and more so in 1964, Clyde felt himself increasingly sick. In time, he complained that he had almost no strength at all and that his stomach hurt constantly. He became progressively weaker and thinner, weighing less than 120 pounds. Shortly before Virgie's stroke, he writes: "I spaded up about one-third of the garden, and it was nice spading. I can't do very much work in one day — too short of breath — have to take it easy." A week later he notes that he "spaded a strip about seven- feet wide nearly across the garden. Got tired and worn out ... took my time [but] it was too much for me. Went to bed at 9 p.m." He stayed in bed most of the next two days.

"I spaded up about one-third of the garden, and it was nice spading. I can't do very much work in one day — too short of breath — have to take it easy."

During this period, Clyde describes in his diary dinners that neighbors brought them or ones ordered from the only restaurant left in Monongah, but almost always he adds: "But of course I couldn't eat any of it." Increasingly, the couple came to depend on neighbors and friends to drive them to clinics and doctors' offices, to stores for groceries, and other errands. At times, it was awkward. Some people would promise to do things that they didn't do in fact — which meant the task wasn't accomplished as it should have been. But, in the circumstance, one could hardly complain about one's neighbors. On the other side, the couple sometimes worried about the burden they put on friends who did what was promised.

During the spring of 1965, the diary entries became shorter, many of them primarily health notes for himself and Virgie. The stomach pain became constant and more severe. June 1, 1965: "I am tired of being sick at my stomach all the time." The final entry in his own hand is on June 10, 1965, noting that some neighbor boys had finished painting the back porch and that he would be going to another doctor's office in the morning. Some days later, he was taken to the West Virginia University Hospital, and his ailment was determined to be stomach cancer.

The last entries in the diary were written by Carl. July 8: "Grandpa ask me to wright in his book but I just don't feel right doing it the way he did."

July 24: "11:45 Grandpa died. Uncle Howard and I went down around 10:30. I went to see Grandpa. I knew he wouldn't last. They had a Parsparator breathing for him."

And, finally, July 28: "They buried Grandpa today — their was quite a few people there. Grandma did remarkably well today, and she didn't cry as much as I expected her to. This is a great loss for her. He was the most wonderful person in the world, in my opinion, and, I'm sure, others', too. I loved Grandpa a lot."

DUANE LOCKARD was born in Harrison County and attended Fairmont State and West Virginia universities before earning a Ph.D. in political science from Yale University. He retired in 1984 from Princeton University after teaching political science there for 25 years. Now living in Massachusetts, Duane is the author of several books. His most recent contribution to GOLDENSEAL appeared in our Summer 2003 issue.

NEAL MENSCHEL is photographic director for the Salt Institute of Documentary Studies in Portland, Maine. From 1991 to 1995, he was director of photography for the *Christian Science Monitor*. He is currently working on a book on traditional Appalachian music and culture. This is Neal's first contribution to GOLDENSEAL.

"The Best of Times by Far"

A Visit With Sue Dingess of MacDunn

Interview by Ericka Bain

As the miners were accumulating coal in the Fayette County town of MacDunn, Sue Dingess was gathering memories. Sue was born in MacDunn on August 28, 1941. At that time, Koppers Coal Company employed 303 miners at MacDunn. They also gave work to two special people in Sue's life: her parents Vernon and Alice Mayes, who both worked for the coal company store.

Sue was raised in coal mining communities until she was 18 years old. I interviewed her recently at her St. Albans home, which Sue shares with her husband Ronald. She discussed with me many of the experiences she had as a child in the coal camps. Just as the miner's light would be used for a better view, Sue gave me a little "light" so I could see more clearly what growing up in a coal mining community was like.

Sue (Mayes) Dingess today at her home in St. Albans. Sue has vivid memories of her early years, growing up in the Fayette County coal community of MacDunn. Photograph by Michael Keller.

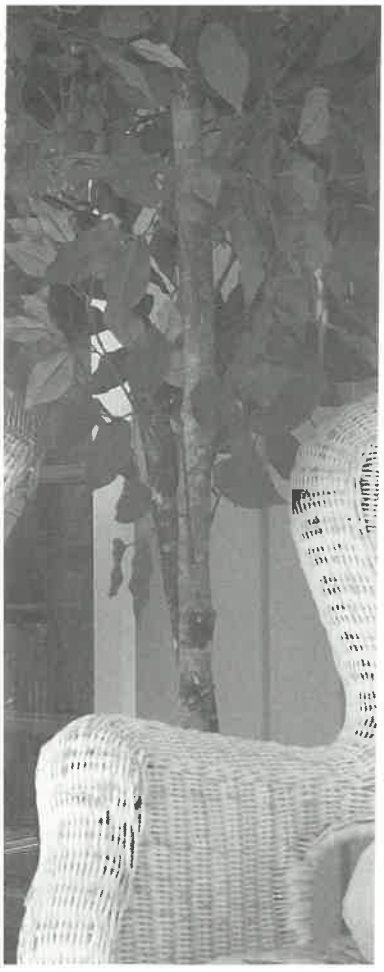
Sue Dingess. I was born in a converted railroad boxcar in an area known as Eagle Flats. In the coal towns, there was not enough houses for everyone. As a house would become available, you could apply for it, and we did move. I know we didn't live there when I was five, so it was somewhere between birth and five years old when we moved into a house. I remember the house that we lived in. It was build on the side of the hill. When you go into the coalfield area, the mountains close in on you, and you are really in a valley. The house, the back of it kind of sat on a hill with stilts on the front of it. All I remember of the house was it had one bedroom, a living room, and a kitchen.

Ericka Bain. What did your parents do in the town?

SD. Both of my parents worked in the company store. My mother was the bookkeeper, and my father was a meat cutter.

EB. Did you hang out a lot at the store when you were younger?

SD. With my dad, constantly with my dad. It used to scare me when Daddy would go into the freezer to bring out a piece of meat to cut up and the door would close. I thought, oh God, what if he can't get out of there! Even as a big kid, I still didn't like that. When I was in junior high school, I would get off the bus and go right to the store. Daddy would cut me a big piece of longhorn cheese. Then you could buy crackers in little individual packages. He would buy me a Coke, cheese, and crackers, and I would sit there and talk to him. They would have to clean everything up and wash at night. A lot of times, then, we would walk home together.



EB. Is it fair to say you were a "daddy's girl?"

SD. Very much so!

EB. Besides hanging out with your dad at the store, what else did you do within the community for enjoyment?

SD. We had weenie roasts, went sleigh riding. The mines provided summer camp at Greenbrier for the children, and they also brought in portable roller rinks.

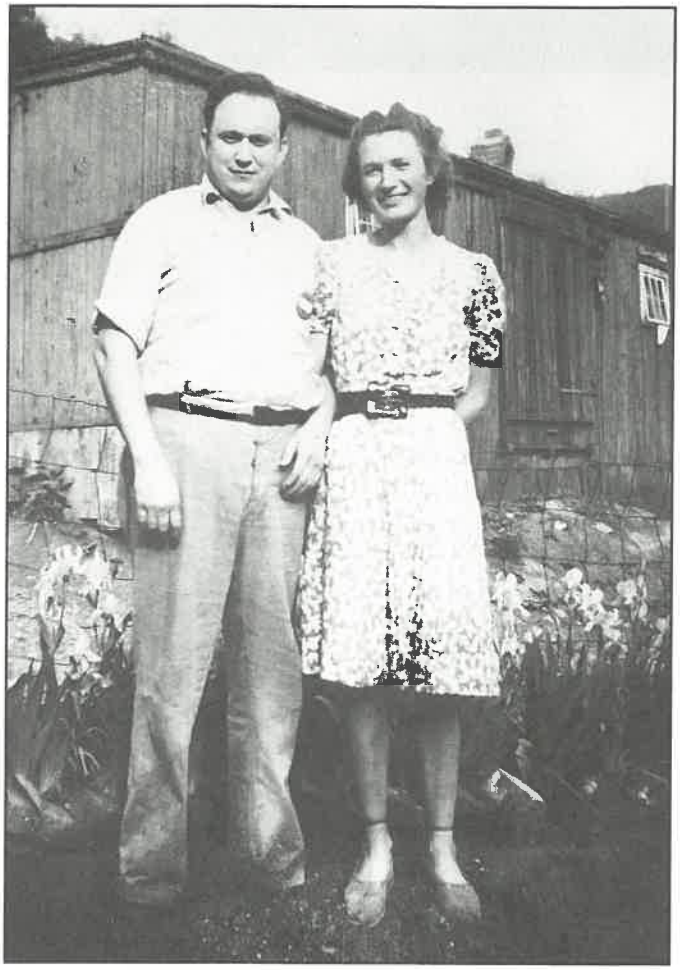
EB. Did you play a lot with other children in the coal mining community?

SD. Oh yes! In the evening, we would all get out there and play ball or what is called "fox in the ridge" — a game similar to hide and seek. All of the coal companies also had a community center. They would bring in shows. Though I do not remember who they brought in, I do remember the cowboy movie star Lash LaRue coming to the theater. Every Christmas when we were little, Santa Claus would also come to the community center.

EB. Did you ever witness any scary situations within the community or explosions at the mines?

SD. Well, my dad was shot.

EB. Your dad was shot?



Sue's parents Vernon and Alice Mayes at MacDunn, early 1940's.

Sue and her brother Joe in 1944.

SD. Yes, my dad was shot in a hunting accident in 1945. My mother had been teaching school in a two-room schoolhouse. She didn't go to college. They called it an emergency teaching certificate. My mother taught school during World War II, when there where so many people gone and woman were working in factories.

Daddy was squirrel hunting, and of all things, he didn't have the safety on his gun. He slipped on a log. It was early in the morning, and he shot himself in the stomach. There was a man named Hudge who found my daddy. Daddy pulled himself out of the woods. And Hudge, I do not remember how old he was, but he seemed ancient to me. He could have been 40, I was so young. But he heard Daddy yelling for help, and he got him down to the side of the main road.

Daddy had a car out in the garage, and my mother didn't know how to drive. I believe it was a Ford. Years ago, you pushed a button to start them. And of course, it was standard. There was no automatics yet. I don't know about the telephone, because people didn't have telephones, but an ambulance was called. Daddy was sitting in a ladder-back chair on the side of the road, off the main road. He had a huge hole in his stomach, and he asked Mother for water. I can remember thinking it was going to come out of the hole. I was so young.

My mother and Hudge put him in the car, and my mother drove him to meet the ambulance. They didn't think Daddy would live. I remember my Uncle Earl coming to pick up my brother and I because they thought he was dying, and Daddy wanted to see us kids.

EB. But he did live?

SD. Yes. When he came home, Mother was teaching. And sometimes, I would go to school with Mother. Other times, I stayed home with Daddy.

EB. How long did your mother teach?

SD. Just until things settled down again. Then she went back to the store.

EB. Did you ever hear any mine explosions during your time living in the community?

SD. I heard a lot of things, but I was small. I don't have a lot of memory of that. I can remember seeing ambulances when I was younger, but it wasn't until we moved over to Wharton I really remember [that]. In Wharton, what they had if there was a accident in the mines was a siren that alarmed.

EB. When did you move to Wharton?

SD. Mom and Daddy first worked for the General Department Store in MacDunn. Then in 1952, they were transferred to Eastern Gas & Fuel in Wharton, which is in Boone County. That was the only time we really moved. We may have moved

Vernon Mayes worked as a butcher in the Koppers Coal company store at MacDunn. He is shown here in his work clothes, behind the company store in 1942.

Sue's fifth-grade picture, taken in 1952, when she attended Powellton Elementary School. The family moved to Boone County later that year.

to a different home in the community, but we didn't move but one time from MacDunn to Wharton. What would happen was different companies bought out these companies. The last company my parents worked for was Island Creek in 1955 or '56. Then several mines and stores closed.

EB. You say in Wharton was when you began to notice the accidents?

SD. Now, I can remember seeing ambulances and things when I was younger, but when I moved over there is when I really remember [seeing them]. As I got older, I can remember the siren going off and bolting straight up in bed and wondering whose father may have been killed. All my friends' dads worked in the mines, other people that Daddy or Mother worked with at the store, their husbands were miners. You were just so intertwined with these people.

EB. When you became a little older, did you work at the store with your parents?

SD. No. Now, my brother did. My brother delivered groceries in the store. I did work. I did babysitting. Everyone wanted me as a babysitter, because I cleaned their house. I would make so much money, because people would really appreciate you doing that.

EB. Is there any special event that you remember, or something that sticks out in your mind as a memory you will always cherish?

SD. Every Sunday, weather permitting, Mother and Daddy took us someplace. If we went on a picnic, Mother would either get up early and fry the chicken and stuff or cook on Saturday. At that time, they worked until noon on Saturday and were off Wednesday afternoon. You talk about something that was a big event to me was coming home from school and Mother being home. Because if Mother was home, there was always food. The house was always warm. I looked forward to Wednesdays.

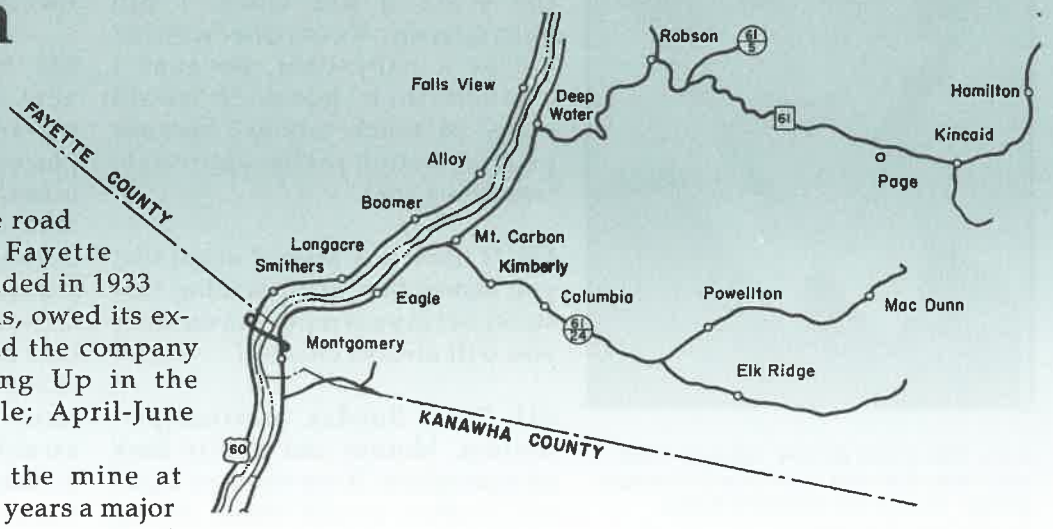
EB. Why do you believe growing up in a coal mining community was special for you?

SD. It was not like growing up now. They have all of this transportation now and easier to get places. We had to rely on each other, because that was all we had. Even your friends — if one person had a car, they would pick up everyone they knew. Growing up in the '50's was the best time to grow up, in my mind. In the coal town, it was very sheltered but relaxed. No one was afraid of being outside or not locking their doors. I would not trade my childhood in the coal camps for anytime — best of times by far, and best place.

ERICKA BAIN was born and raised in St. Albans, where she still resides. A 2004 graduate of West Virginia State University, she conducted this interview as a class project in West Virginia history. She is currently a teacher at Alum Creek Elementary School. This is Ericka's first contribution to GOLDENSEAL.

"Growing up in the '50's was the best time to grow up," Sue says. Photograph by Michael Keller.

MacDunn and the 1934 Train Explosion



Located two miles up the road from Powellton in Fayette County, MacDunn was founded in 1933 and, like so many coal towns, owed its existence to a nearby mine and the company that ran it. [See "Growing Up in the Coalfields," by Birdie Kyle; April-June 1980.]

Koppers Coal operated the mine at MacDunn and was for many years a major commercial operation in West Virginia and elsewhere in Appalachia. The largest independent coal producer in the United States by 1944, Koppers owned 25 mines in West Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Kentucky, producing 14 million tons a year and owning reserves of 800 million tons.

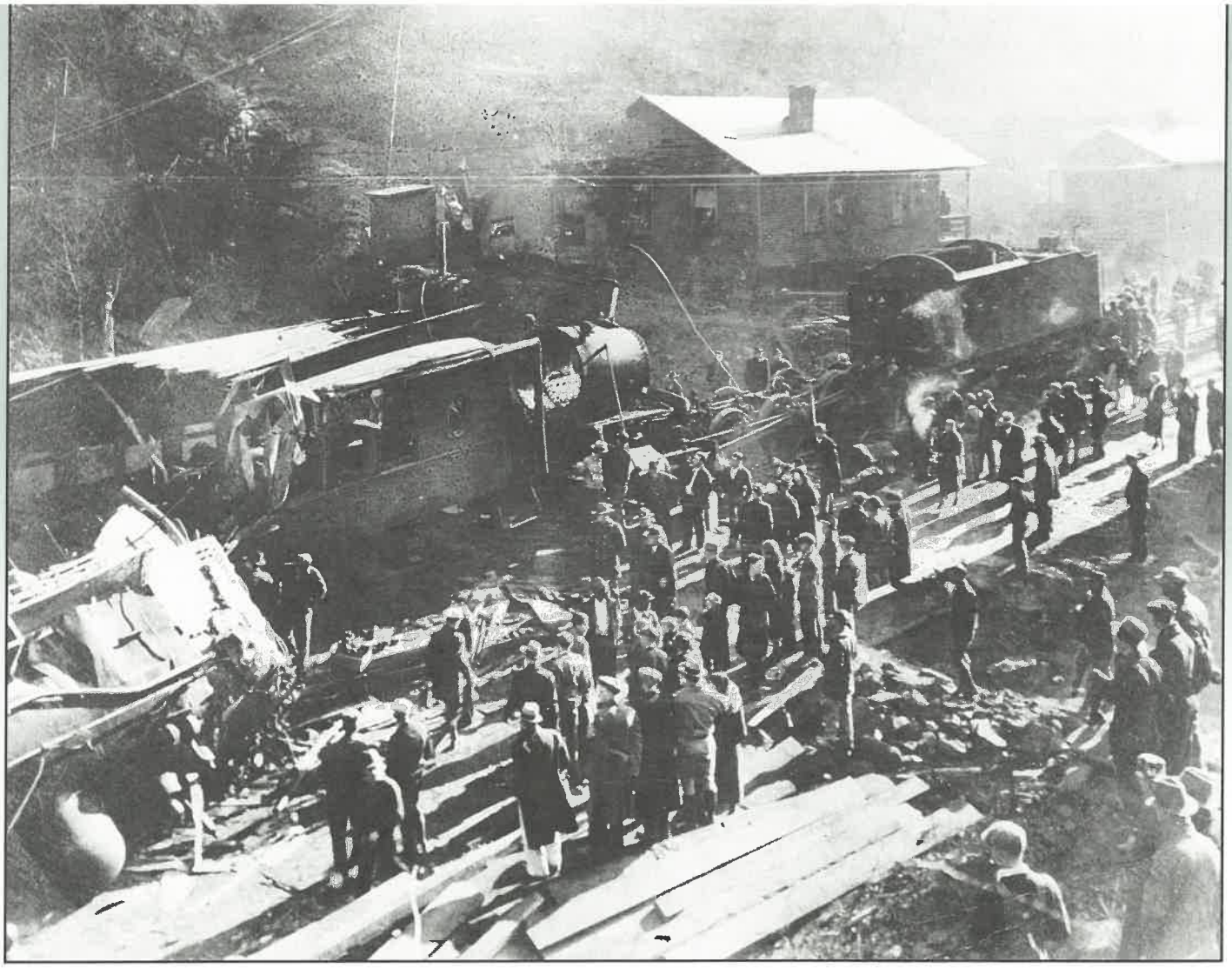
In its early years of operation, Koppers was largely associated with the development of the beehive coke oven and the production and sale of coal tar. The company had, in fact, been named for German engineer Heinrich Koppers who developed a coke oven capable of efficiently recovering chemical byproducts of the coking process.

From 1917 onward, coal production was a major component of Koppers' corporate development. Coal and coke operations in the area of Powellton and MacDunn date back to the 1890's, and beehive coke ovens remain visible there today, if unused. The No. 5 mine located a few miles from Powellton was, at one point, the third-largest coal operation owned by Koppers, employing as many as 900 workers, and was one of the largest operations of any coal company in the Kanawha-Fayette field. To transport such an extensive workforce, the company ran a passenger train between nearby communities in the hollow of Armstrong Creek, moving miners to and from No. 5 between shifts.

In the early morning hours of December 27, 1934, the Koppers train was on its usual route, and had pulled into MacDunn on the farthest end of the run. The four passenger cars were filling up, leaving standing room only. As the train prepared to get underway, an estimated 350 workers were onboard.

Without any reported warning, the engine's boiler exploded. Remnants of the boiler cleared the tender and struck forcefully against the first passenger coach, accompanied by escaping steam. Newspaper accounts at the time estimated that as many as 100 miners were in the lead car when the explosion occurred. Miners and townspeople uninjured by the explosion rushed to the rescue of those who had not been killed outright in the blast. Makeshift transportation was found to rush


The Charleston Ga
Established 1867
The State Newspaper—Member of The Associated Press
Charleston, West Virginia, Friday Morning, December 28, 1934
16 Killed, 8 May Die, 34 Other
In Locomotive Boiler Blast
Where 16 Powellton Miners Were Killed, Three Score Injured
States Must Provide More Relief Funds
Federal Outlays Will Be Less Next Year; Plan Framed by President And His Aides
Work, Not Cash Grants, Emphasized at Meeting
$136,791,268 Is Allotted By U. S. For Journey Jobless Needs

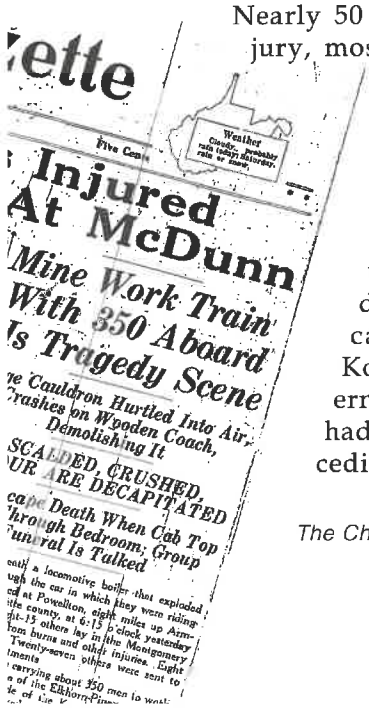


Aftermath of the December 27, 1934, train explosion at MacDunn, in which 18 people were killed. Photograph courtesy of West Virginia State Archives.

dozens of wounded to a hospital in Montgomery, where the staff was swamped with incoming patients.

In the end, the death toll was placed at 18, including engineer William Blankenship and fireman Delmar Oxley, both of Powellton. Nearly 50 passengers sustained serious injury, mostly burns of the face and hands caused by steam or lacerations from the impact of debris. Apart from the engine crew, all those killed and hurt were from the demolished first coach.

It was later determined that the water level in the boiler had fallen dangerously low that morning, causing the catastrophic blast. Koppers executives insisted to government investigators that the engine had passed a safety inspection the preceding August. The reason for the inadequate supply of water was never determined.


ette

Five Cents

Injured At McDunn

Mine Work Train With 350 Aboard Is Tragedy Scene

Cauldron Hurtled Into Air, Crashes on Wooden Coach, Demolishing It

SCALDED, CRUSHED, UR ARE DECAPITATED

Death When Cab Top Through Bedroom; Group Funeral Is Talked

The Charleston Gazette, December 28, 1934.

L.T. Scott lived in a house adjacent to the railroad tracks at MacDunn and was an eyewitness to the explosion. He later put the tragedy to verse. Here is an excerpt:

> The air was filled with death cries,
> And was clouded with hot blinding steam;
> They knew not what had happened
> When they heard their comrades scream.
>
> The fireman was dashed against the rocks,
> The engineer was hurled into the air;
> They found them in a tangled mass
> Blood chilling, lying there.

MacDunn continued as a company town of Koppers Coal into the 1950's, with no further large-scale mishaps. Like so many of the boom towns that sprang up around West Virginia during the heyday of King Coal, little evidence remains today of this once-thriving community of miners and their families, or of the tragic explosion that rocked this hamlet in 1934.

Jones Mansion

By Jean Battlo

The Jones Mansion near Maybeury, McDowell County. Photograph by Michael Keller.

The Checkered History of a McDowell County Landmark

Travelers on Route 52 in McDowell County look up on the hillside near the present-day town of Maybeury and wonder at the gleaming white mansion perched high above the road. The elegant Jones Mansion — long a landmark in this rugged, coal-laden community — is currently being renovated as a bed-and-breakfast inn. But this grand structure hides a storied past that includes early industrial opulence, a shocking murder, and legal intrigue.

The house was built in the early 1900's by the eldest son of millionaire coal baron Jenkin Jones, namesake for the nearby community of Jenkinjones. Born to poverty on September 25, 1841, in Glyn Neath, Wales, Jenkin Jones was forced to become a coal miner at the age of eight when his father died.

In the early 1860's, Jones set sail for America. He first went to the anthracite mines in Pennsylvania and, in 1863, came to Clifton Forge, Virginia. In 1872, Jenkin Jones became involved in developing the emerging coalfields of Fayette County. Among the first coal operators to see the potential of the southern West Virginia coalfields, Jenkin Jones leased a tract of 1,400 acres from the Flat Top Coal Land Association in the mid-1880's, and with partner John Freeman — for whom another area in McDowell County was named — opened Caswell Creek Coal & Coke Company. The Caswell Creek company, which was incorporated into the Pocahontas Fuel Company in 1907, became the third-largest coal producer in these coalfields, operating into the 1980's.

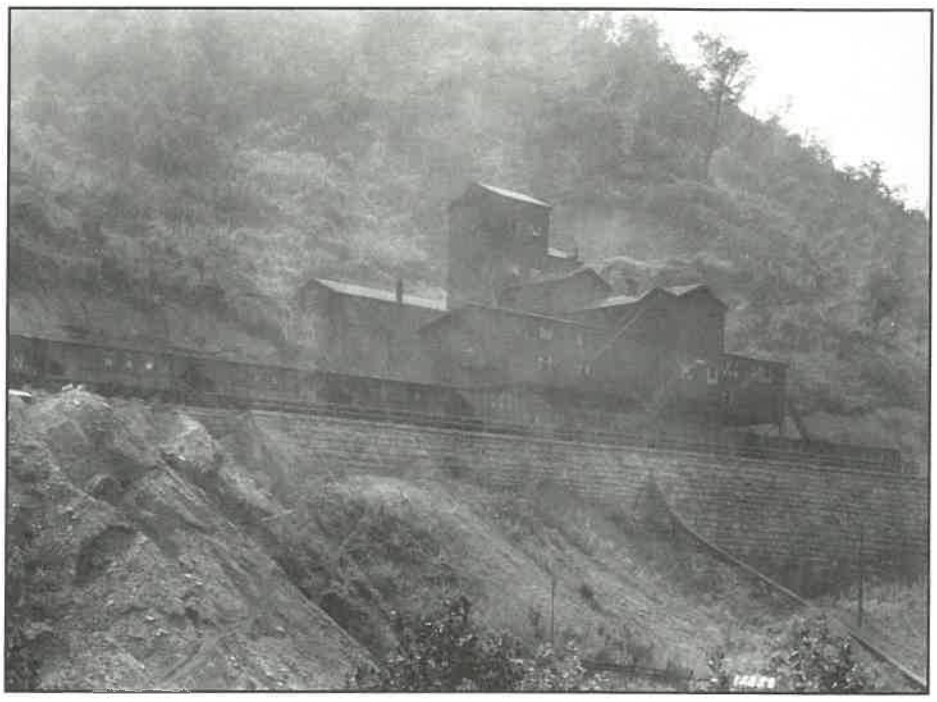
In addition to his coal empire, Jenkin Jones successfully invested in a number of other enterprises in southern West Virginia. In May 1900, Jones was one of the organizers and first vice-president of the McDowell County Bank in Welch.

Jones married Martha Elwood in Pennsylvania, and they had three children: James Elwood, Edward, and Mary. He — and, even more so, his eldest son James Elwood Jones — played significant roles in the origins of the banking and business system in Welch and in the nearby towns of Northfork and Keystone.

Jones and his son were widely praised by miners and local organizations for paying fair wages and for the care they showed for their workers before the union began. Jenkin Jones was well-liked and was noted for his characteristic Welsh love of music and poetry. He died in 1916 of tuberculosis at his home in Simmons, near Bramwell.

Jenkin Jones (1841-1916) came from Wales and founded a successful coal empire in southern West Virginia during the late 1800's. Photographer and date unknown, courtesy of Eastern Regional Coal Archives, hereafter ERCA.

Long before his death, Jenkin Jones had already edged the family torch toward his son James Elwood. Born 1872 in Treverton, Pennsylvania, James — who was known in his adult life as "Colonel" — became one of the



Pocahontas Fuel Company tipple No. 7, at Jenkinjones, McDowell County, 1931. Courtesy of ERCA.

James Elwood "Colonel" Jones (1872-1932) assumed his father's coal interests and became a prominent figure in southern West Virginia in his own right. He built the Jones Mansion in about 1900. Photograph courtesy of ERCA.

best-known figures in West Virginia over the next four decades. Following his father into the coal business, he was vice-president and general manager of Pocahontas Fuel, became a leader in the Coal Operators Association, and served 24 years on the McDowell County Court. He was even nominated as the Republican candidate for the U.S. Senate in 1930, before losing to Democrat M.M. Neely. He built the Jones Mansion and lived there with his wife Edith, daughter Nancy, and son Jimmy.

The Jones Mansion was spacious, where omega-shaped Tiffany-style windows endowed the long ballroom with a view that included lavish gardens, a pool, and the wildwoods beyond. Colonel Jones could walk to the rim of his realm and overlook a whole camp of company houses, oversee four of his mines and two of his company stores, and view the bustling train station at the bottom of the hill.

A gifted engineer, Jones invented and developed a number of machines for loading and handling coal and slate, one of which bore his name. In 1918, he dug a 100-foot-long tunnel beneath his mansion property, to allow miners a direct passageway between their homes and the mine.

On November 25, 1932, Colonel Jones had a fatal heart attack while playing cards at the Jones Mansion.

According to Judy Henderson McDaniel, the current owner of the house, the Colonel's death might have been due, in part, to the loss of his daughter Nancy. At the time of his own death, Colonel Jones was still mourning hers, though the circumstance of her passing is still debated. Some say that Nancy contracted tuberculosis and died in Paris. Others in the region say that Nancy died in a car accident; some claim to remember seeing Nancy's body laid out on a chaise lounge in the Great Room of the mansion, covered in flowers.

Soon after the Colonel died, Mrs. James Elwood Jones left the home and region. Judy McDaniel says she was told that Mrs. Jones had never liked living in the coal-mining region and is thought to have returned to her native New York.

The house eventually became the property of the Pocahontas Fuel Company, and the history of its occupancy over the next two decades becomes rather fuzzy. According to Mrs. McDaniel, the coal company generally kept it occupied with various residents through the 1930's, '40's, and early 1950's. A family named Sproles lived there for a while, she says. There was a still-unidentified teacher living there when the Henderson family bought the house from Pocahontas Fuel for the rock-bottom price of $15,000 in 1954.

Dell and Grace Henderson lived there with their two young children: daughter Judy and son David.

The Jones Mansion and grounds, as they appeared in about 1930. Photograph courtesy of Judy McDaniel.

Dell and Grace Henderson with grandson John at the Jones Mansion in 1962. The Hendersons bought the mansion for $15,000 in 1954, and it remained in their family until 1998.

A few years later, they also purchased the old Pocahontas Fuel Company store nearby and turned it into a grocery, called Henderson's Market. Their store became the hub of activity in the Maybeury/Switchback area, and the home rang with the happy sounds of growing children.

Dell passed away in the early 1970's, and Grace Henderson remarried in 1974 to a man named Paul Haynes. According to Judy McDaniel, her new stepfather took an active interest in the house and property, keeping the place up, maintaining the structure, and planting beautiful gardens. Judy gives a good deal of credit to Paul Haynes for the excellent present-day condition of the mansion.

When Grace passed away in 1995, Judy became the owner and, in 1996, asked her brother David and his wife Jeanette to move into the house in order to keep it occupied. They agreed, not knowing the tragedy that would befall them there less than two years later.

"Police Looking for Suspects in Deaths of Three: Members of McDowell Family Are Found Shot Dead in Home," read the headline in *The Charleston Gazette* on Tuesday, February 17, 1998. Family members had been concerned that they had not heard from Jeanette or David over the weekend. When the Hendersons did not show up for a family gathering in Virginia, authorities were called in, and their bodies, along with the body of Jeannette's mother Martha Barber, were discovered in different parts of the house.

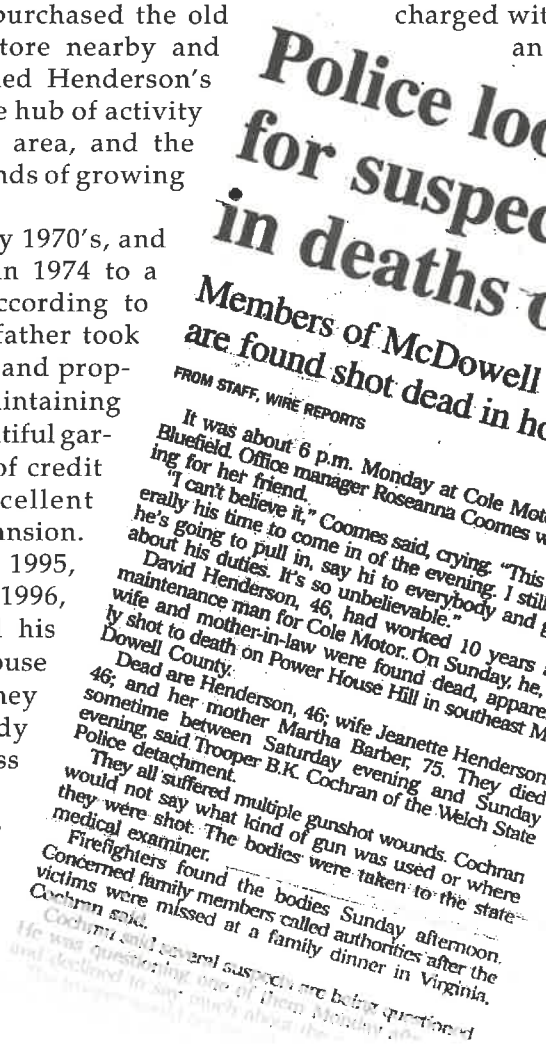
According to Trooper B.K. Cochran of the Welch State Police detachment, the victims suffered multiple gunshot wounds, apparently having died sometime between Saturday morning and Sunday morning. The entire Welch detachment of the State Police were on the case immediately after the bodies were discovered, working around the clock trying to solve the crime.

"They were just good people," neighbor Hazel Mitchem said. "They would do anything in the world for you."

Steve Copolo noted that Jeanette was such a caring daughter that she had taken a leave of absence from her job to look after her ailing mother. Martha Barber had only recently moved from her home in Nemours, Mercer County, when the attack occurred.

Stanford "Tony" Allen was a local Vietnam veteran who lived in a mobile home in Barlow Hollow. Allen was arrested on February 26, 1998, and charged with the murders. He had been having an affair with Jeanette Henderson, and on Valentine's Day, 1998, apparently broke into the house and, at some point, confronted and shot the three victims. His motive was never established. In October 1998, Allen was indicted on three counts of homicide and was convicted the following year. He is currently serving a life sentence without parole at the state penitentiary in Mount Olive.

Following the tragedy, Judy McDaniel auctioned off the mansion. Mrs. Billie J. Cherry, then president of the First National Bank of Keystone, purchased it in June 1998 for a reported $160,000. When asked how she felt about purchasing a



Police looking for suspects in deaths of 3

Members of McDowell family are found shot dead in home

FROM STAFF, WIRE REPORTS

It was about 6 p.m. Monday at Cole Motor Co. in Bluefield. Office manager Roseanna Coomes was looking for her friend.

"I can't believe it," Coomes said, crying. "This is generally his time to come in of the evening. I still think he's going to pull in, say hi to everybody and go on about his duties. It's so unbelievable."

David Henderson, 46, had worked 10 years as a maintenance man for Cole Motor. On Sunday, he, his wife and mother-in-law were found dead, apparently shot to death on Power House Hill in southeast McDowell County.

Dead are Henderson, 46; wife Jeanette Henderson, 46; and her mother Martha Barber, 75. They died sometime between Saturday evening and Sunday evening, said Trooper B.K. Cochran of the Welch State Police detachment.

They all suffered multiple gunshot wounds. Cochran would not say what kind of gun was used or where they were shot. The bodies were taken to the state medical examiner.

Firefighters found the bodies Sunday afternoon. Concerned family members called authorities after the victims were missed at a family dinner in Virginia, Cochran said.

The Charleston Gazette, February 17, 1998.

Mrs. Billie J. Cherry, owner of the Jones Mansion from 1998 until 2002. Mrs. Cherry was the former president of the controversial First National Bank of Keystone, and is currently serving time in prison for crimes related to the bank's financial dealings. Photograph by Bill Archer.

house where such a tragedy had occurred, Mrs. Cherry responded, "That was the past. I intend to give it a joyful future."

And that she did over the next few months. Among the most hopeful signs in the region during the late 1990's were the plans and community improvements made by Cherry, who was also the mayor of Keystone. She bought the old clubhouse in Landgraff and turned it into the Cherry Key Inn, which in time boasted a replica of the famous Globe Theater stage nearby, also financed by Cherry.

Renaming her new home the Blair House — Blair was her mother's maiden name — Cherry set out to renovate the mansion and make it a modern showplace. One of her first renovations was the pool. Cherry hired local contractor Vira Rose for the construction, and Rose was particularly innovative with the shape of the pool. She designed the deck in the omega fashion, so one could look out from the omega-shaped windows inside and see the shape repeated outside, outlining the pool. Lawn parties were held, and the pool was enjoyed by many guests. The first July Fourth was a special celebration at the Blair House; echoes of the past mingled with the promises of "a joyful future."

Born to poverty, Mrs. Billie J. Cherry had a circuitous personal and economic journey to her success in McDowell County, which came about largely via her friendship with banker J. Knox McConnell. McConnell was born on December 13, 1926, in McKeesport, a suburb of Pittsburgh. He became the first president of the Micronesia Development Bank in Saipan. In 1977, bringing with him his longtime friend and business associate Mrs. Cherry, McConnell came to West Virginia as president of the First National Bank of Keystone.

Chartered in 1904, the Keystone bank was associated with the former McDowell County Bank in Welch, and the Joneses had been part of its successful liftoff. Under McConnell, Cherry, and her associate Terry L. Church, this bank — located in one of the most economically depressed regions in the United States — became the number-one bank in the country, to the chagrin of much larger banks in New York and other cities. For a time, the bank offered unheard-of interest rates to its customers.

On September 1, 1999, the world learned the source of that success. Though long in coming, the fall was rapid once it began. In 20 years, J. Knox McConnell had allegedly raised the bank's assets from $17 million in 1977 to $500 million at the time of his death in 1997. One unidentified banker noted after the fall that McConnell was so economically astute that, had he lived,

Omega-shaped windows are part of the unusual interior design of the Jones Mansion. Photograph by Michael Keller.

the FDIC might not have ever caught up with the discrepancies.

Upon McConnell's death, Billie Cherry became the new bank president and was expected to continue the success of what was once called the "Million Dollar Bank." However, with the rumored $4 million left her by McConnell, her budding Cherry Key Inn, and her new mansion home, Cherry chose to retire from the bank presidency. She was still chairman of the bank board in September 1999, however, when the Office of the Comptroller and Currency, citing "apparent fraud," closed the bank. At that point in time, the FNB of Keystone claimed assets of $1.1 billion. The OCC claimed that $515 million in loans that had been processed by the bank were still on the books.

Judy (Henderson) McDaniel grew up in the Jones Mansion and is its current owner. She has plans to convert it into a bed-and-breakfast inn. Photograph by Michael Keller.

The venerable old bank was closed, then dissolved, and the FDIC was given receivership, eventually claiming more than $800 million in losses. Cherry, Church, and Michael Graham are all currently serving prison sentences following their convictions of various crimes. Billie Cherry lived in Blair House until her conviction became final in 2002.

Once more, silence fell in the halls and on the lawns of the old Jones Mansion, broken only when the FDIC auctioned off the furniture and art objects.

Judy McDaniel happened by the house one day and encountered a real estate agent, who had been hired by the FDIC to sell the property. One thing led to another, and in the end, Judy and her husband Dana purchased the house for an undisclosed sum. For Judy, this was a chance to go home again in a way that few people are able.

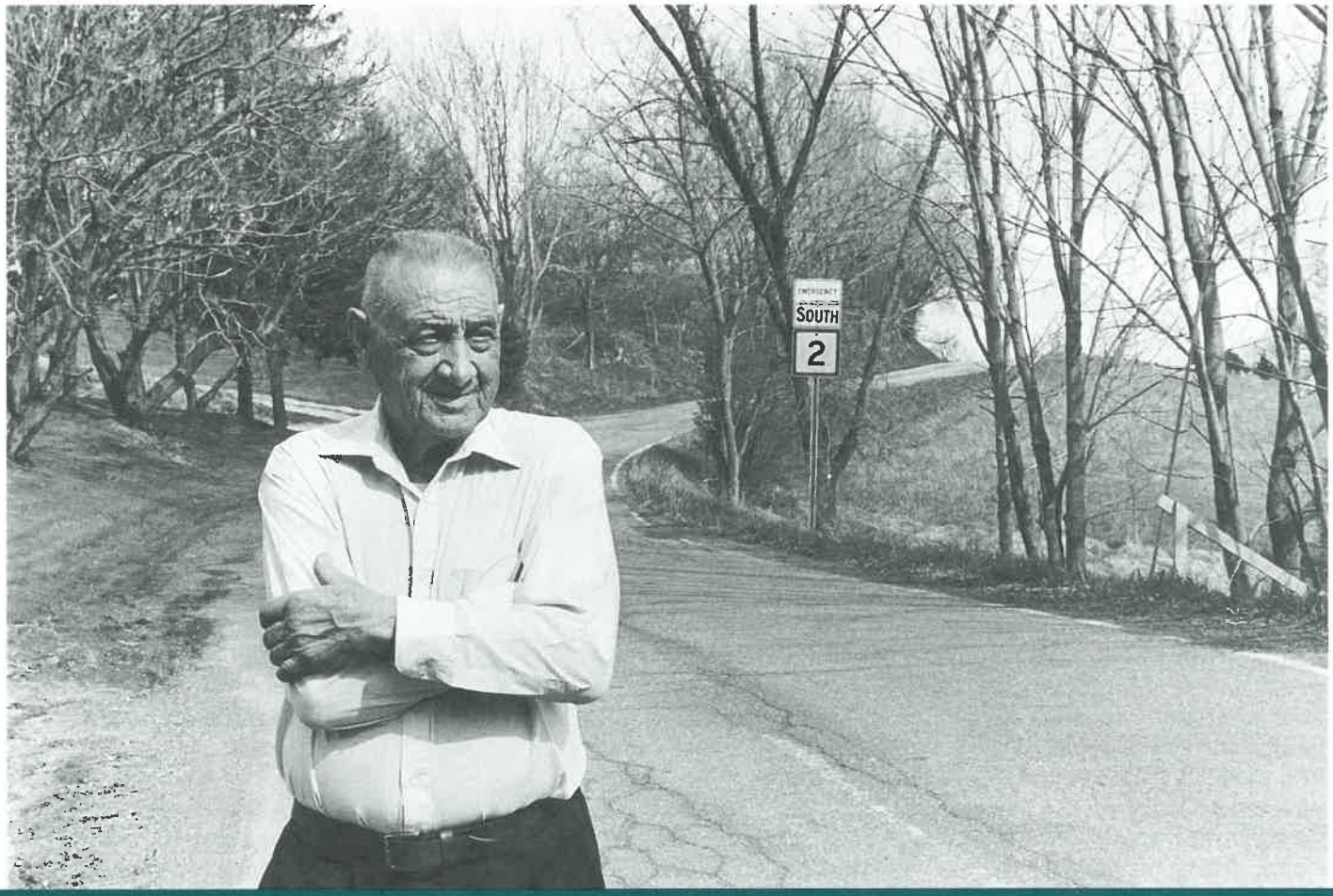
Judy first moved to this place at the age of 11 with her parents, when they purchased the house from the coal company in 1954. She lived here until her marriage at age 19, then lived with her husband and son in an adjoining bungalow on the property until age 25, when they moved to another home in the Maybeury vicinity. Later, following a divorce and remarriage, Judy and her family relocated to Florida. Judy maintained her McDowell County ties, however, visiting frequently and keeping tabs on the place, through the late 1990's.

During a recent interview, Judy reflected on her happy childhood years at the mansion. Friend and neighbor Theresa Canoy recalls, "As children, we didn't think of it as the Jones Mansion, and we certainly didn't think of it as history. It was just our friends' home, and we played up here."

Now that Judy and Dana have bought back the Jones Mansion, plans are under way to turn the magnificent site into a homey bed-and-breakfast inn. Judy says that they hope a "joyful future" will once again ring out across the estate. She is doing extensive research and intends to replicate as nearly as possible the details and decor of the Jones era, from period furnishings to the etched emblems of the British flags in the niches of the wood in the Great Room.

Though the future bed-and-breakfast inn is still unnamed, local residents of the "free and independent state of McDowell County" await with hope that this now-fabled mansion will reign again with happy guests in its fine bedrooms, laughter around the dinner table, greetings in the ballroom, music on the lawn, and children splashing and giggling in the pool.

JEAN BATTLO was born in Kimball, McDowell County, where she still resides. She is a teacher, poet, and playwright, and has had works produced by professional and community theater companies. Jean is the author of *McDowell County in West Virginia and American History*. Her most recent contribution to GOLDENSEAL appeared in our Winter 2004 issue.



"Mayor" Ivan Gorby of Bowman Ridge

Text and photographs by
Carl E. Feather

Ninety-year-old Ivan Gorby stands in front of his home on Bowman Ridge, Marshall County.

"A man told me the other day that he'd give $100 to see you," says Ivan Gorby, as we settle into his living room for an afternoon visit.

"Really?" I naively inquire. "Who is he?"

"Some blind man," Ivan quips, his eyes twinkling with the delight of a 90-year-old who'd just pulled a big bass from the old fishing hole.

Ivan is the de facto mayor of Bowman Ridge. The ridge is one of countless Allegheny Mountain foothills that rise abruptly east of the Ohio River in Marshall County at the base of West Virginia's Northern Panhandle. A casual traveler who ventures into this maze of ridges and hollows knows his location only by the signpost at the intersection at which he last turned. I suppose a man could enter this maze in spring and still be searching for an exit come fall unless he swallows his pride and asks for directions back to Route 250.

Ivan's house is at the corner of Bowman Ridge Road and Big Grave Creek Road, known locally as Roseby's Rock Hill, which descends the steep ridge to its namesake community. To the southeast is Sallys Backbone Ridge; to the west, Roberts Ridge; and to the east, Glen Easton and Goshorn Ridge.

There's no Gorby Ridge, however, a mystery given the ubiquitous presence of the family name in these parts since 1835, when Ivan's great-great-grandfather John purchased 500 acres on this mountain. Of that original acreage, Ivan owns only six — sufficient for his garden, house, apple trees, and other needs.

More significant to our story, however, is the land that the Gorby family once owned but donated to the common welfare of the community. This includes the knoll upon which the Bowman Ridge United Methodist Church and Bethel Cemetery rest a couple of miles east of Ivan's home, and the land upon which three Gorby schoolhouses were built, a half mile to the west of his house.

The first schoolhouse was a log structure. Ivan says it stood on the south side of the road, where schoolhouse patrons now park their pickups and cars. The second was built 1894-95 and served the community until May 1923, when a lightning strike set it on fire. The schoolhouse burned to the ground, but the community rallied and built a third one. The new building was constructed off-site in sections then shipped to Roseby's Rock on the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad. From there, it was hauled to the top of Bowman Ridge and assembled on the former site of the second schoolhouse.

Ivan attended the Gorby schools from 1920 to 1927. When busing became available in 1932, the board of education abandoned the building. Ivan says his ancestor's original grant provided that if the property were no longer used for education, it and the building would revert back to the heirs. The school board, however, saw things differently and scheduled an auction.

On the day of the sale, Ivan says that his grandfather Ezekiel Grant Gorby showed up and challenged the proceedings. "Grandpa said, 'You can't sell it,'" says Ivan.

"And they said, 'Yes, we can.'

Three different Gorby schools have sat on or near this site on Bowman Ridge, dating back to the 1800's. This unidentified group of students posed in front of the second schoolhouse in about 1920. After this building burnt in 1923, the third schoolhouse was constructed on the same stone foundation. Photographer unknown.

Today, local residents use the Bowman Ridge Community Center — the old Gorby schoolhouse — for community dinners, bingo games, dances, voting, socials, and weekly jam sessions.

"And Grandpa said, 'Let's go to the courthouse and read the deed off.'" Grant Gorby proved his point and stayed the auction. Ivan says the school board member said the building could rot for all he cared. "And Grandpa said, 'Okay, let it rot!'" says Ivan.

It did not rot, but was revived as a meeting hall for community groups, like 4-H and the Farm Women (Bowman Ridge Extension Homemakers), which was organized June 24, 1937. With Grant's blessing, these groups leased the building for several decades.

Georgia Leach Jordan, who grew up on Bowman Ridge, joined Farm Women in 1947 after her husband came back from the service and they settled down on Bowman Ridge. Georgia's mother Ethel and daughters Connie Crow and Shelley Jordan were members, as well.

"We learned to do things, like make crafts, or we'd give to anybody who needed help," Georgia says, summing up the organization's work. "We'd have socials there, too."

By the late 1980's, most of the

Ivan tunes up his banjo in preparation for the Saturday night Bowman Ridge Opry.

Blackboards and roll-up maps from the building's schoolhouse days are still visible as musicians immerse themselves in a high, lonesome song on Bowman Ridge. They are, from the left, Carl Ebert, Roy Coen, Don Geary, and Frank Tharp.

Farm Women had moved away or graduated to one of the graves that dot the spines of these ridges like sandstone and granite goose bumps. They decided to give up the building, says Georgia.

People in the community, however, wanted to maintain a local place for voting, holding socials, and playing music. They formed the Bowman Ridge Community Association and approached Ivan about using the former schoolhouse, which was still under the school board's control. "So what I do is just lease it from the board of education for a dollar a year," says Ivan, who serves as president of the association.

Membership in the association costs $10 a year; a roster of paid-up memberships is displayed on a sheet of flourescent orange poster board on the meeting room wall. The roster, however, has not been updated since 2003, and Georgia guesses that total paid memberships amount to only 13 or 14.

The community center consists of one large room with a wooden floor and light-blue walls and ceiling. One section of the room is the original schoolhouse and retains the blackboards upon which Ivan and many other Bowman Ridge students learned to cipher and spell. The tattered roll-up maps — more historical oddities than useful learning tools — still hang on one side of the blackboards.

The original section of the community center also includes a small kitchen and a unisex restroom that put the privy out of business. Several years ago, to make the building more accommodating to square dances, a 16 x 38-foot section was added to the original schoolhouse, doubling the space available for community dinners, bingo games, dances, and jam sessions. Robert Harness, Gene Leach, Delbert Farnsworth, Shelly Jordan, Nick and Jean Frohnapel, and Bruce and Diane Midcap did much of this remodeling work, says Ivan.

The walls are decorated with photos of musicians who have played

Ivan has been playing the fiddle since childhood. Here, he plays a tune on a violin that has been in his family for more than 168 years.

Ivan Gorby, left, with brother J.E. at their grandfather's farm in about 1924. Photograph by Otha Gorby.

at the center, fair ribbons from the days of 4-H use, and a proclamation that sheds light on how Ivan Gorby became mayor.

It reads, "Important notice: After the votes have been counted and recounted, including the absentee ballots, by the Bowman Ridge Official Vote Counting Committee, the incumbent mayor, Mr. Ivan Gorby, will retain the office of mayor the next term. Good luck, Mayor Gorby. Truly a friend to all. Exceptance [sic] speech tonight 11/11/00."

An oak rocking chair, purchased by members of the association, is designated as the "Mayor's Chair" by a brass plaque on its headrest. The chair sits near the wall, under a portrait of Abraham Lincoln. Pointing to the portrait, Ivan tells me that old Abe spoke to him when he stopped by the center earlier in the week.

"I said, 'What you doing, Abe?'" Ivan recounts, setting me up for another joke. "You know what he said?"

"What?" I ask, knowing that once again I've been had.

"He said, 'Nothing. Nothing at all,'" Ivan says.

Ivan credits Ezekiel Grant Gorby for this sense of humor that keeps everyone on their toes.

"Grandpa always liked to have fun," Ivan says. "I guess I was raised that way."

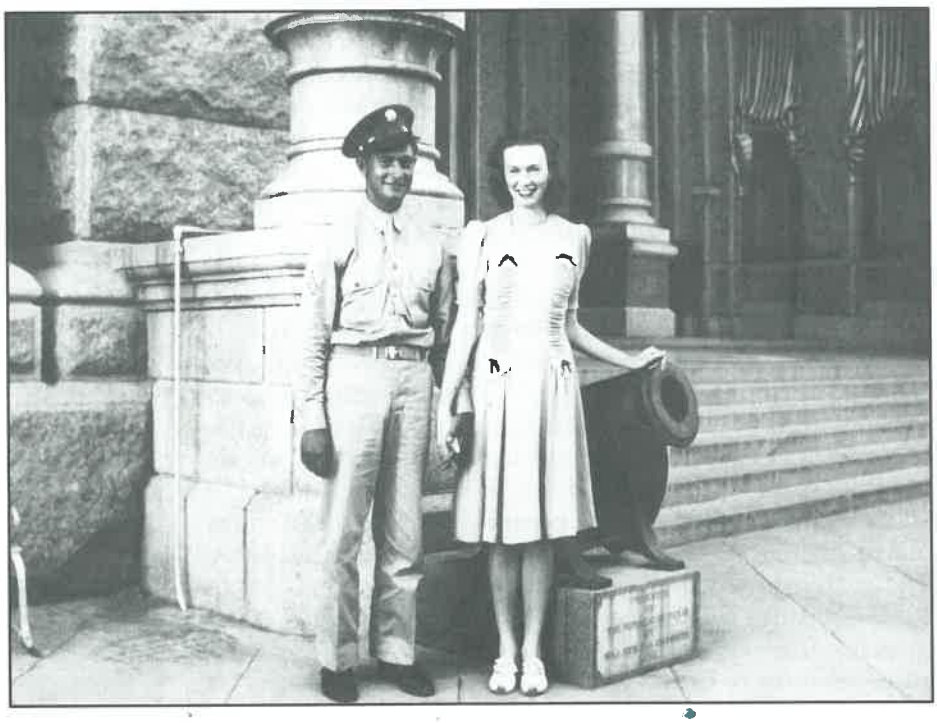
Ivan, the first of five children born to Perry and Pearl Martha Gorby, made his appearance on the ridge March 16, 1914.

"When I was born, my mother lacked just one of having twins," Ivan says. Ivan's parents divorced when he was four or five years old. His father headed off to Alabama. Ivan and his brother J.E. went to live with grandparents Grant and Amanda Gorby on their farm across the road from Ivan's birthplace. The three girls — Ada (Gonta), June (Barger), and Alice (Hummel) — went to live with their mother at her family's homestead.

His grandfather's farm was about 130 acres. "We had cattle, sheep, horses, hogs, and we raised a lot of our grain," Ivan says. "In the morning before my brother and I went to school, we got up at five o'clock, cleaned the barn out, fed the stock, milked the cows, and separated the milk. Grandma would have breakfast ready, and we ate breakfast and walked to school."

Fortunately, the walk to school was short — less than a half mile — thanks to the generosity of his ancestor. When the evening chores were done, Grant would break out his fiddle and play it for the boys. Ivan says his grandfather never told him where he got the fiddle, but he knew it came into the family about the same time John Gorby purchased his land on the ridge.

"Grandpa's fiddle has been in the family 168 years," says Ivan. "He



Ivan met his future wife Jayne while he was in the service and stationed in Texas. The couple are pictured here in Austin in 1942, around the time of their marriage. They moved back to Bowman Ridge in 1945. Photographer unknown.

was just a young kid when he got it. But I never heard him say how he got it."

Grant sensed that Ivan had some musical talent, and when Ivan was either eight or nine years old, he asked him, "Will you try to play a banjo if I go to town and get you one?"

"I told him, 'I'll try, Grandpa,'" Ivan says. A few days later, Grant presented Ivan with a basic, inexpensive, five-string banjo.

"I had no idea how to play it," Ivan says. "Grandpa tuned her up, he showed me chords on it, and I got to playing with him." Ivan doesn't recall the first tune his grandfather taught him, but he imagines it was a hymn. "He liked the church music, like 'The Old Rugged Cross,' stuff like that," Ivan says. Once Ivan had demonstrated his ability to learn an instrument, his grandfather showed him how to play the fiddle and mandolin, as well.

"He can play anything that has strings on it," says Ivan's eldest son Robert.

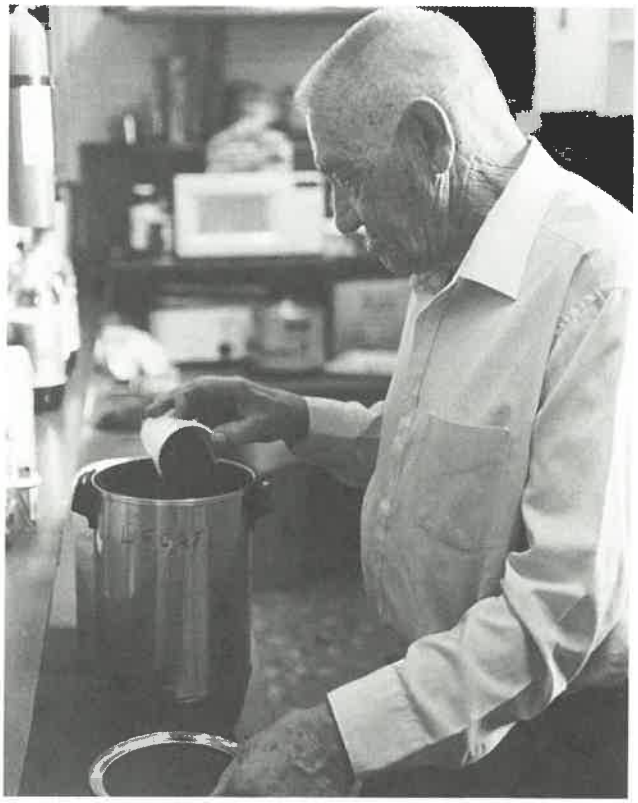
Like his grandfather, Ivan plays by ear. "I listen to it and play it. That's all it takes," he says. "The way I think about music, if it's not born in you, there's not much use in trying to learn to play."

Several other musicians from neighboring ridges joined Ivan and Grant in playing music. They included Lawrence Games, a guitar player from Blake Ridge; Russell Emory, a banjo player; and Buna McClintock, an organ player, at whose house the musicians gathered for their jam sessions.

Tunes were learned from other musicians and by listening to the radio. Ivan's grandfather had the second radio set on the ridge. Grant and a friend, who was manager of Langin Field, the Army airfield at Moundsville, spent six months building a battery-powered set and stringing antennas from Grant's farmhouse.

"They strung an aerial wire, I expect 200-feet long, about 30 feet in the air, and the first station they got on there was Omaha, Nebraska. Everybody was tickled about that. We'd have people over there every night listening to that radio," he says.

Schoolhouse socials, informal gatherings at neighbors' houses, and church services provided venues for musicians on the ridge. Local musicians rarely had the chance to play beyond their home communities or Moundsville. Many of the musicians went to the WWVA "Jamboree" in Wheeling to listen, but seldom to play.



Ivan arrives early every Saturday night to make coffee and see that everything is in order for the weekly gathering at the community center.

"This is the truth if I ever told it," Ivan says. "There was a feller out here on Lindsey Lane, about nine miles out, he drove a school bus, and at that time you bought your own bus. He'd come out to the forks of the road on a Saturday night, and if anybody wanted to go to the 'Jamboree,' all he wanted was the 55 cents to get in, and we'd have a busload to go in. Anybody who wanted to go to the 'Jamboree,' he'd stop for you. All he wanted was enough money to pay his way to get in. Bonar was his name."

Ivan finished elementary school, but he says going to high school would have involved walking down the hill to Roseby's Rock, catching a train, and taking it to Cameron — the closest high school. "There weren't that many who went to high school here," he says. "There wasn't anywhere to go."

Ivan worked on his grandfather's farm until he was 15, then got a job working with a housing contractor named Ed Masters. Masters built new homes along Route 250 during the Great Depression. When the Ohio River ravaged Wheeling Island in 1936, Ivan worked on the clean-up crews. [See "When the River Came to Our House: Riding Out the Flood of 1936," by Geraldine Jacobs Baker; Spring 1997.]

Ivan was on a crew that was building a skating rink when his draft notice arrived in July 1941. His assignment at Randolph Air Force Base, Texas, was to Ivan's liking.

"I was always crazy about airplanes," says Ivan, who serves on the Marshall County Airport Authority. "In 1927, Lindbergh landed here at Moundsville, and it just seemed like I got attached to airplanes."

Ivan's innate mechanical ability and interest in flying earned him stateside positions during World War II. In August 1942, he was shipped to the Army Air Forces Bombardier School in Big Springs,

After the evening meal, musicians tune up in the corner, women chat and visit, and men play cards. Cardplayers, from the left, are Dale Loy, Bill Cox, Beryl Dobbs, and Nick Frohnapfel (holding two queens).

Texas. He received B-17 and B-24 crew-chief training, as well as co-pilot and aircraft maintenance instruction. While stationed in Texas, Ivan met his wife Jayne Smith, an Austin native who was volunteering at a USO canteen. They were married September 19, 1942. After Ivan was discharged November 4, 1945, he and Jayne headed back to Bowman Ridge.

"I wanted to come back here," Ivan says. "That's what I wanted — to come back and build a house here."

Eventually, five children were born to the couple: Robert, Betty Ann (Estep), Linda (Delbert), Alice (Martin), and Jimmy. Ivan got a job at Triangle Conduit in Moundsville in 1946 and worked there until retiring in 1965. He supplemented his income by repairing cars and other machinery in the shop he built in the basement of his house.

"He was Mr. Fix-It in the community," son Robert says.

One of Ivan's traditions, growing horseradish for the community, came out of his car repair business. Ivan says he did a brake job for a man who didn't have the seven dollars to pay him for the work. Instead, he gave Ivan an old-fashioned apple cider press, which Ivan uses to make cider from the fruit raised on his property and to grind the horseradish he grows in his garden. In 2003, he raised, processed, and canned 98 pints of the condiment.

Grant Gorby entrusted the family violin to Ivan a few years before he died. For more than 60 years, Ivan has played the well-worn instrument all over the ridges and throughout the Moundsville area, at church socials, nursing homes, and community jams.

Every Saturday afternoon, Ivan packs his violin and banjo in his car and drives the half mile to Bowman Ridge Community Association Center. With Georgia Jordan's help, he makes the coffee and sets the potluck table for the

Gene Leach enjoys a dance with Pauline Beckett at the Bowman Ridge Community Center in Marshall County. Pauline and her husband Ed drove over from Ohio on a recent Saturday night.

weekly "Bowman Ridge Opry," an open jam session of bluegrass, country, and traditional artists. No one can remember how long ago the jam sessions got started, although photographs on the wall suggest it's been held since 1990.

"We've been here ever since we started it," Ivan says, slyly. There's no cover charge for this gathering of friends, which gets under way by 7 p.m. and goes until 11 p.m. every Saturday, regardless of weather, crowd size, or lack of pickers. Sometimes, there are just enough musicians to form a bluegrass quartet; other times, upwards of two-dozen performers gather to jam and learn from each other. Ivan joins them on the fiddle or banjo, and usually performs a solo or two during the course of the evening.

The association offers hot dogs and sloppy joes for a donation, and just about every person who walks through the door contributes a bag of chips or pretzels, a cake, pie, bowl of fruit, or plate of vegetables to the food table. After the meal, men form foursomes to play cards while their wives dote over the new baby on the ridge and catch up on family happenings. Those wanting a breath of fresh air gather under a small picnic shelter alongside the road.

Ivan is the "ambassador" of the Bowman Ridge Community Association and welcomes every person who comes through the door.

"These people treated us like we were family, like they've known us all our lives," recalls musician Frank Tharp of his first visit to the community center in 1993. "It was just like homecoming. It's a good bunch of people. They enjoy what you do."

"It's the fellowship mostly," says Don Greary, a bass player from Follansbee. "It's a nice place to come. We truly have fellowship."

Frank Tharp drives an hour to get to the venue, with no expectation of payment. Like the other musicians, he does it for the camaraderie and smiles. "If you can get them people sitting back there grinning like a butcher's dog, you know you are doing something right," he says.

"If you can get them people sitting back there grinning like a butcher's dog, you know you are doing something right."

An adviser with the nationally acclaimed Wheeling Park High School Bluegrass Band, Frank describes Ivan as "an old-fashioned fiddle, old-fashioned banjo player."

"He gets a little off key, but that's part of the fun," Frank says. "The fun is getting back on key."

Some of the attendees, like Ed and Pauline Beckett, drive over from Ohio to enjoy the camaraderie and music. "Everybody has been treating us like we're family ever since we come here," says Ed.

Even Marshall County Commissioner Howard Lee "Biggie" Byard occasionally stops by to sing a couple of songs with the band.

"He's a fine gentleman," Howard Lee says of Ivan Gorby. Then he tells how Ivan recently used an innocent question as a springboard for one of his jokes.

"I asked him how he was doing, and he said, 'I'm getting so old, it took me two hours the other night to watch *60 Minutes*,'" Byard says.

CARL E. FEATHER lives in northeast Ohio, and has family roots in Preston and Tucker counties. His book *Mountain People in a Flat Land* is published by Ohio University Press. Carl is the owner of Feather Multimedia, a freelance photography and writing business. He has been lifestyles editor at the *Ashtabula Star-Beacon* since 1991. Carl is a regular contributor to GOLDENSEAL.

Quick with a joke, Ivan is famous for his sense of humor. Here, he shares a laugh with Pauline Beckett.

West Virginia Back Roads

Text and photographs
by Carl E. Feather

"Your Move"

Honor and Checkers in Matewan

Men don't talk much when they play checkers, especially if the topic is unrelated to the game. I discovered this while trying to interview Jimmie Stacey and Charles Woolum on a sultry afternoon in early May. The men were deeply engaged in the final stages of their first match of the day when I stopped at Jimmie's home on Buskirk Avenue in Matewan, Mingo County.

I'd met Jimmie earlier that afternoon, as he was walking the trail that hugs the concrete flood wall around Matewan. He'd been fishing with his youngest son Chuck, but the Tug Fork was too turbulent at his favorite spot, so he was heading back to his front porch.

He invited me to stop by and have a cold soft drink with him. But by the time I found Jimmie's house, Charles, a retired coal miner from Pigeon Creek, had arrived for an afternoon of checkers. Anything else I would learn about either gentleman would be done at the risk of interrupting the player's concentration and costing him the game — and his honor as a checkers player.

Between the "Your move's" and "I think you got me's," I learn that Charles lives about six miles from Matewan. He and Jimmie originally met some 20 years ago and enjoyed challenging each other at cards and checkers. When Jimmie moved back to Matewan after spending time working in Ohio, he decided to track down Charles. They resumed their games as though they'd never stopped.

Jimmie Stacey (left) and Charles Woolum play checkers on Jimmie's front porch in Matewan. The competition between the two men dates back 20 years.

Each man has his own reasons for playing.

"Just to pass the time," Charles says.

"I like to win," Jimmie says with a hearty laugh. "That's the name of the game. But I don't do much of it."

They play with brown and ivory-colored discs lifted from a backgammon set. Charles contributed the board.

Jimmie Stacey's fingers hesitate as he reconsiders his next move against opponent and friend Charles Woolum.

At one time, it was probably a commercially produced cardboard checkerboard that folded in half, but someone refurbished it by hand-painting the squares with white and green paint.

"Somebody Charles knew painted it," says Jimmie. "They didn't do a very good job." The quality of the checkerboard, however, is of no consequence when it is the bridge between two friends.

Checker players have unique styles, just as tennis pros, baseball players, and golfers. Jimmie hunches over the board throughout the game, cuddling in his round hand the checkers won from his opponent. His blue T-shirt soaked with perspiration, Jimmie periodically dabs the sweat from his grizzled face with a red bandana.

If Charles is sweating, he doesn't show it through his long-sleeve plaid shirt. He coolly sits straight in the chair and leans over the board only when about to make a move. He collects his winnings on one corner of the board and keeps his hands flat on his dungarees when he's not moving a checker. He puts his hand to his face in a pensive moment only when the game hangs on his next move.

Jimmie studies every move, to the obvious irritation of Charles, who prefers to strike as soon as it's his turn. "I move fast," Charles says. "I don't study. If I make a bad move, I make a bad move. Most people like to study," he adds. "I like to talk and have fun."

Jimmie is like most people. While he studies his next move, Charles tells me that he's played in checkers competitions, but never won a title. "I ain't good enough," he tells me. "I ain't no good. Not for playing competition."

But he is formidable competition for Jimmie.

"Let's see, you ain't got but one or two moves, and they aren't too good," Charles says as Jimmie studies the dismal situation spread out before him.

"He's getting ready to make a boo-boo," Charles says as Jimmie lightly presses a stout finger on one of the few checkers he has left on the board.

"I'm sort of in a mess," Jimmie confesses, then makes his move.

Charles moves and swiftly collects three ivory pieces from the board.

"You're in bad shape, boy," he tells Jimmie.

Two more moves and the game is over. They set up the board for a second game, and Jimmie takes the lead after a few moves. Jimmie wins the second game of the afternoon, they reset up the board, and Jimmie once again takes the lead. He starts whistling a tune that sounds like a medley of old-time hymns. I ask them if they ever play for money.

"I don't gamble," says Charles.

"I don't either," adds Jimmie. "I did, back before I went to church. But I don't do no more of that stuff."

They go back to their game, and, as Jimmie once again takes the lead, both men become more-than-casually engrossed by the dozen or so pieces of plastic on the crudely painted green-and-white board. This is no time for interviewing; a man's reputation is at stake. I don't want to be the one to swing the outcome. I quietly bow out, thank them for the pleasure of their company, and head north out of town.

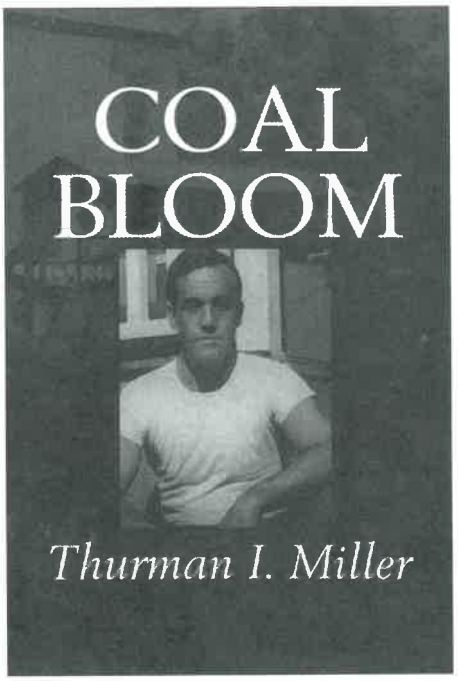
I imagine, at some point much later that afternoon, one of them looking up from the board and asking the other, "Who was that guy who was here asking all those questions and taking pictures?"

And the other one says, "I dunno. Play another game?"

New Books Available

By Gordon Simmons

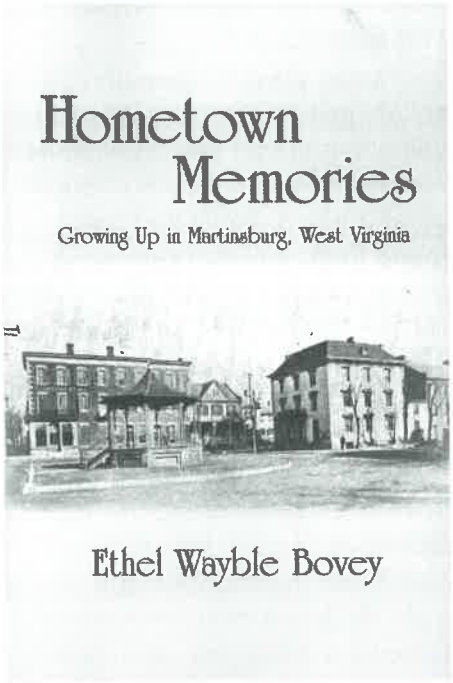
Spurred on by the computer revolution and the innovation of print-on-demand, self-publishing has become far more common and accepted over the past few years. Personal memoir and local history are often prime topics for this new breed of independent authors, and the resulting increase in self-published books is evident here in West Virginia, as it is elsewhere.



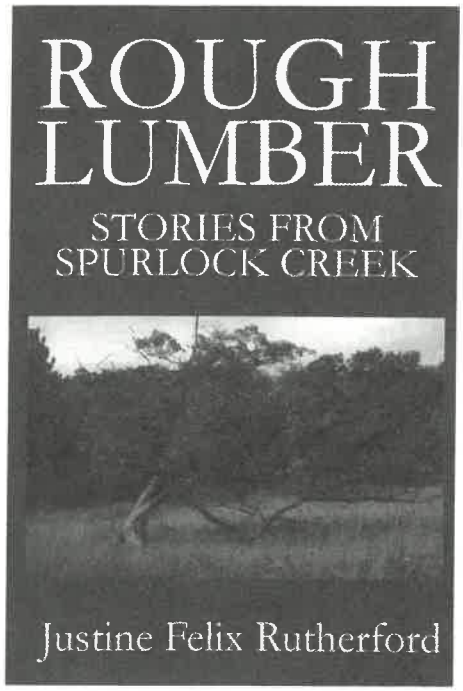
Thurman I. Miller's ***Coal Bloom*** is a memoir of growing up during the Great Depression and World War II years in the coal country of Wyoming County, on a small farm near Otsego [see "Otsego: Remembering a Wyoming County Coal Camp," by David H. Halsey; Fall 2000], and in the Raleigh County mining town of Helen. The book includes descriptions of everyday rural practices, work life in the mines, life during the Depression, and the author's service in World War II. In later chapters, Miller describes his encounters with renowned dramatist Maryat Lee, a transplant from New York and founder of the EcoTheater. He also includes his experiences with VISTA volunteer Dr. Joanna Roberts of the Appalachian Health Cooperative. Miller's memoir goes on to consider the social changes that have come to those parts of rural West Virginia that, for many decades, depended on the coal industry. Published in 2003, the 192-page paperback is available for $16.95 from iUniverse, on the Web at www.iUniverse.com, or by calling 1-877-823-9235.

The coal camps and mines of Raleigh County are the setting for an autobiography by Roy Boserman, titled ***It Wasn't Easy ... From Cradle to Grave: Stories of an Appalachian Coal Miner.*** Collected, edited, and published in 2002 by his wife Minnie Jane Boserman and granddaughter Pamela Boserman Kisamore, the book is composed largely of Roy Boserman's own first-person recollections of his life as a coal miner. The descriptions of work life are illustrated throughout with black-and-white photography gathered by the editors, depicting industrial and family subjects. The 95-page paperback sells for $12 and is available from McClain Printing, 212 Main Street, Parsons, WV 26287; phone 1-800-654-7179.

Journalist Ethel Bovey has collected feature stories and columns she wrote for the *Martinsburg Journal* and more recent essays written since her retirement into a book titled ***Hometown Memories: Growing Up in Martinsburg, West Virginia.*** The result is far more history than autobiography. Subjects include local institutions such as the historic Apollo Theatre, the Matthews Foundry, and King's Daughters Hospital, as well as historical topics such as Martinsburg's role in the early automotive industry [see "The Norwalk: Martinsburg's Motor Car," by Daniel J. Friend; Summer 2003] and the Auburn Wagon Works, which temporarily switched from making farm wagons to coffins during the 1918 influenza epidemic. The 205-page paperback, published in 2003, sells for $18. A second volume by the same author, titled



Hometown Reflections: Life and Times in Martinsburg, West Virginia, was published in 2004 as a 296-page paperback, and sells for $20. Both books can be ordered from Mountain State Publishing Services, 70 Whitings Neck Road, Martinsburg, WV 25401; phone (304)263-1441.



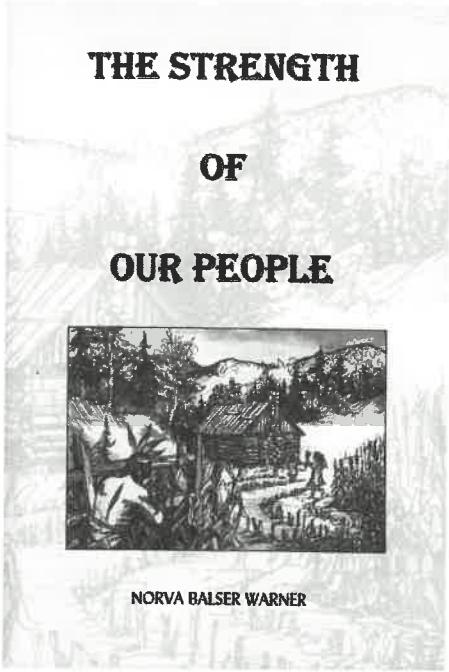
Rough Lumber: Stories from Spurlock Creek by Justine Felix Rutherford is a memoir of growing up in Cabell County, including accounts of her schooling in Milton and Huntington, and her adult career as a nurse at St. Mary's Hospital. The book is set in the Great Depression and afterwards. According to Rutherford, rural farm life was short on modern conveniences, but not on daily contact with nature or on family life. These and other remembered experiences are vividly retold in this 2002 release. The book is a 143-page paperback and is available for $11.95 from iUniverse, on the Web at www.iUniverse.com, or by calling 1-877-823-9235.

Memories of his mother Bertha Dodd are the subject of a book by Paul Dodd, who went from a childhood in Griffith Creek, Summers County, to Harvard University and a career in government service. ***The Gospel According to a Mountain Momma*** draws on entries from his mother's diary, starting in the late 1950's, as well as his own youthful recollections. Finding her to be representative rather than exceptional, the author makes the case for the pivotal role of strong women in the daily lives of rural Appalachian families. Published in 2002, the 141-page paperback sells for $12 and can be ordered from McClain Printing, 212 Main Street, Parsons, WV 26287; phone 1-800-654-7179.

With a focus on Randolph County, ***Our Proud Mountain Roots and Heritage***, by George R. Triplett, is strong on both local history and genealogy. The 371-page hardcover, published in 2003, contains sections and photographs on railroad history, Cheat Mountain, the town of Bemis, Cheat Bridge, and Green Bank High School. There is also material on the family histories of 15 surnames with strong Randolph County ties. The author includes a section on Appalachian culture by Marshall University professor O. Norman Simpkins. Particularly useful, and not always present in self-published books, is the inclusion of a 24-page index. The book sells for $35, plus $4 shipping, from George R. Triplett, 317 Henry Avenue, Elkins, WV 26241; phone (304)636-7335.

Heartland of the Middle Fork Revisited, by Shirley Gower, is a history of the small town of Ellamore in Randolph County. The book chronicles the town from its beginnings as an inn on the Parkersburg-Staunton Turnpike in the mid-1850's, through the railroad and logging boom of the early-20th century, to its subsequent decline. Published in 2000, the 221-page paperback has photographic illustrations throughout and includes an index, an early-settler genealogy, and separate chapters on the Moore Kepple Mill, local schools, and churches. The book sells for $17 and can be ordered from Shirley Gower, HC 71 Box 160, Ellamore, WV 26267; phone (304)472-3818.

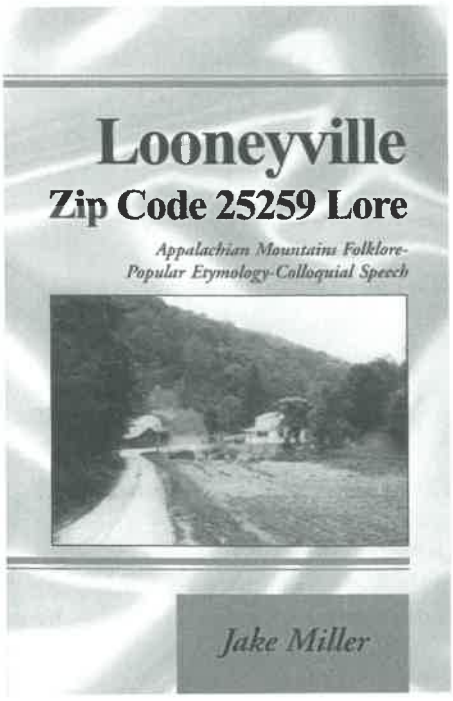
The history of the settlement period of the Kanawha Valley is chronicled in Norva Balser Warner's ***The Strength of Our People***, released in 2004. The frontier period is covered by examining the early families that made homes along the Kanawha River beginning in the 18th century, including the Morris, Young, Balser, Slack, Hudnall, Elswick, and Byrd families. The extensive historical and genealogical research evident here extends up to and including the



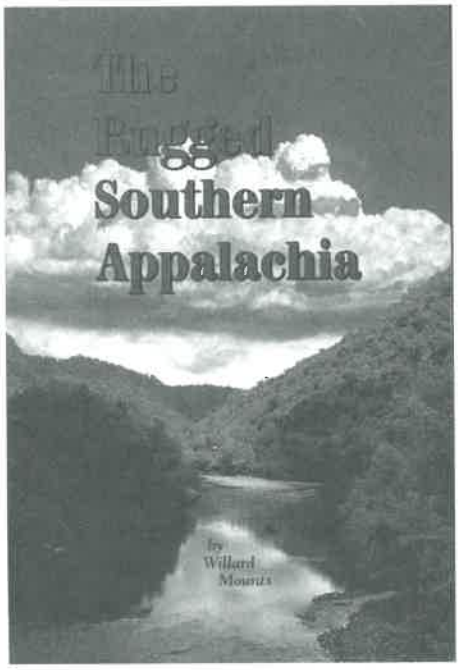
Civil War period. The book also contains a bibliography and index. The 307-page paperback sells for $16.98, plus $3 shipping, from Norva Warner, Route 2, Box 171, Parsons, WV 26287; phone (304)478-2344.

A Valley Called Canaan: 1885-2002, by wildlife biologist Edwin Daryl Michael, blends the human and natural history of the Canaan Valley. Because of its unique geological character, the area — described in great detail in this book — is habitat to an exceptional range of plant and animal life. In the book, the author's 30-year study of the region's biodiversity is communicated through a fictionalized and entertaining narrative. Published in 2002, this 223-page paperback sells for $9.95, plus $2 shipping, from WCS, Inc., 374 Horseshoe Drive, Morgantown, WV 26508; phone (304)594-9380.

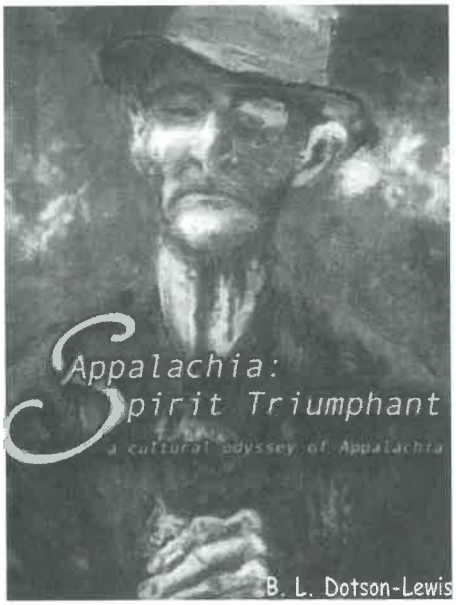
In ***Looneyville Zip Code 25259 Lore***, author Jake Miller downplays memoir and local history, preferring to examine folkways. There is a chapter on local speech, arranged in the form of a dictionary, as well as chapters on ramps and moonshining. Published in 1999, humorous anecdotes are used throughout as the author discusses local customs. The 148-page paperback sells for $20.99, and is published by Xlibris. It is available on the Web at www.xlibris.com or from the author at 205 Old White Trail, White Sulphur Springs, WV 24986; phone (304)536-4372.



Two volumes of local lore and history in Pendleton County center on the area known as Smoke Hole. Written by D. Bardon Shreve and Estyl C. Shreve, these often-humorous stories and portraits of colorful local characters are set in the 1930's and '40's. ***A Place Called Smoke Hole*** is a 205-page paperback published in 1997, and ***More About Smoke Hole*** is a 194-page paperback published in 2000. The books sell for $10 each from Estyl C. Shreve, P.O. Box 841, Franklin, WV 26807; phone (304)358-2638.



Early historic events and more recent topics in West Virginia and Eastern Kentucky are the focus of Mingo County native Willard Mounts' ***The Rugged Southern Appalachia***, released in 1997. There are chapters on the settlement period in the region, the Hatfield-McCoy Feud, and the West Virginia Mine Wars. Of contemporary interest are chapters on the illegal drug trade in Mingo County and the Soviet-financed bridge at Vulcan in the late 1970's. Eastern Kentucky's Alice Lloyd College and the Christian Appalachian Project are also given separate chapters. The 176-page paperback includes an index and sells for $14.95, plus $2 shipping, from Ginwill Publishing Company, 2585 S. Holly Place, Denver, CO 80222; phone (720)842-5256.



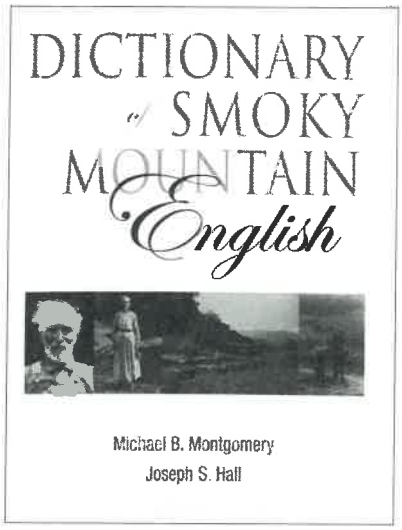
A wide-ranging treatment of Appalachian culture is found in B.L. Dotson-Lewis' ***Appalachia: Spirit Triumphant***, published in 2004. A large-sized paperback illustrated with photographs throughout, the book includes numerous oral histories on a range of topics, the history and culture of coal country, black lung, the Buffalo Creek Flood, and profiles of famous West Virginians such as Ken Hechler, Senator Robert C. Byrd, and Jessica Lynch.

The author is a teacher who draws on her classroom experience to amass this collection of articles of regional interest. The book sells for $18.95 from Betty Dotson-Lewis, Nicholas County Schools, 400 Old Main Drive, Summersville, WV 26651; phone (304)872-3611.

GORDON SIMMONS is editorial assistant at GOLDENSEAL.

Dictionary of Smoky Mountain English

Published treatments of Appalachian speech have, with few exceptions, tended to be humorous and anecdotal. There have been two books that attempted serious analysis — *Southern Mountain Speech* (1961) by Cratis Williams and *Smoky Mountain Voices: A Lexicon of Southern Appalachian Speech Based on the Research of Horace Kephart* (1993) — but neither book exceeds 200 pages.



Despite the growth of Appalachian studies in the latter half of the 20th century, the need for a more comprehensive glossary of the distinctive Appalachian dialect had gone unmet, until the ***Dictionary of Smoky Mountain English*** was published in 2004 by the University of Tennessee Press.

Beginning in 1937, North Carolina folklorist Joseph S. Hall researched the everyday speech of the inhabitants of the Southern mountain region, in and around the Great Smoky Mountains National Park of eastern Tennessee and western North Carolina. More than 65 years later, his work, and that of his successor Michael B. Montgomery, has become the basis of this important new reference.

Despite its limited geographical focus, the 710-page book has much application to the region as a whole. Numerous entries are common to the Southern mountains generally. Names of plants and animals, as well as terms relating to the medicinal use of herbs and folk medicine, rural mountain practices of farming and cooking, religious traditions, and moonshining, are all found in this work.

Many West Virginians will recognize verbs such as "aim to" and "reckon," nouns such as "conniption" and "snakebite medicine," "jackleg" used as an adjective, and "poorly" used as an adverb. The distinctive grammar and vocabulary of Southern Appalachian speech is given extensive attention. In addition to the several thousand entries, the dictionary also includes introductory chapters on the background and compilation of the research, its scope and sources, a user's guide, and sections on grammar, syntax, and pronunciation, as well as a bibliography.

A hardback selling for $75, the ***Dictionary of Smoky Mountain English*** is available from the University of Tennessee Press, 110 Conference Center, Knoxville, TN 37996; phone (865)974-3321 or on the Web at www.utpress.org.

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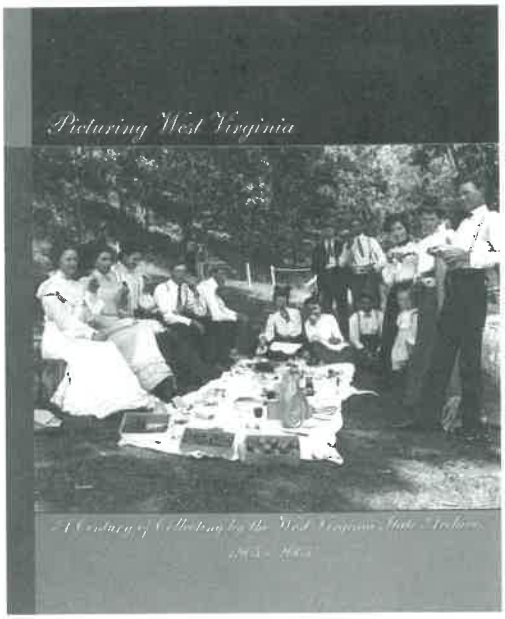
Picturing West Virginia

A new book titled ***Picturing West Virginia: A Century of Collecting by the West Virginia State Archives 1905-2005*** features 150 photographs from the tens of thousands of images housed in the State Archives collection in Charleston. The publication is described by agency director Frederick Armstrong as "eclectic," ranging not only across the state and through a century and a half, but also depicting a wide variety of subjects.

Some images are of historical significance, such as the West Virginia centennial celebration on June 20, 1963, picturing President John F. Kennedy, Senators Robert C. Byrd and Jennings Randolph, and Governor William W. Barron. Another photograph shows a dark plume of smoke rising to fill the sky on November 20, 1968, following the explosion of the Farmington No. 9 coal mine.

The book also includes numerous scenes of everyday life from different locales across the state at different times. There are city street scenes, festivals, parades, picnics, and school children. Many of these historical photographs have appeared in GOLDENSEAL magazine over the years.



Picturing West Virginia is a 124-page, large-format paperback with black-and white photography throughout. It sells for $12.95 and is available from the West Virginia Division of Culture and History, The Cultural Center, 1900 Kanawha Boulevard East, Charleston, WV 25305; phone (304)558-0230 ext. 166.

Goldenseal

Coming Next Issue...

- 1985 Flood Revisited
- Turkey Calls
- "Old Sparky" in Moundsville
- Roxy Ellyson at 105

PHOTO CURIOSITY

Have you ever heard of goats being used to pull coal? Well, it's true, and here's a photo to prove it. These hard-working animals are removing a load of coal from a mine somewhere in West Virginia, we believe. This image comes to us courtesy of George Bragg. Judging by the condition of the coal car and the fact that the miner pictured here is using a carbide lamp, we can assume that this picture was taken sometime between 1890 and the early 1920's.

The harness and chains on the goat seen at right indicate that the animals were used in a team. The larger goat at left appears to have a collar with a ring, though he looks to be unchained. The dirt on the goats' knees and front legs suggests that they have been working in some pretty low coal.

It would be a tremendous coincidence if a reader would be able to identify this individual miner or this particular mine, we realize. However, we welcome any further information about the use of goats or other animals in West Virginia coal mines. We'll publish the results in a future issue. No kidding!

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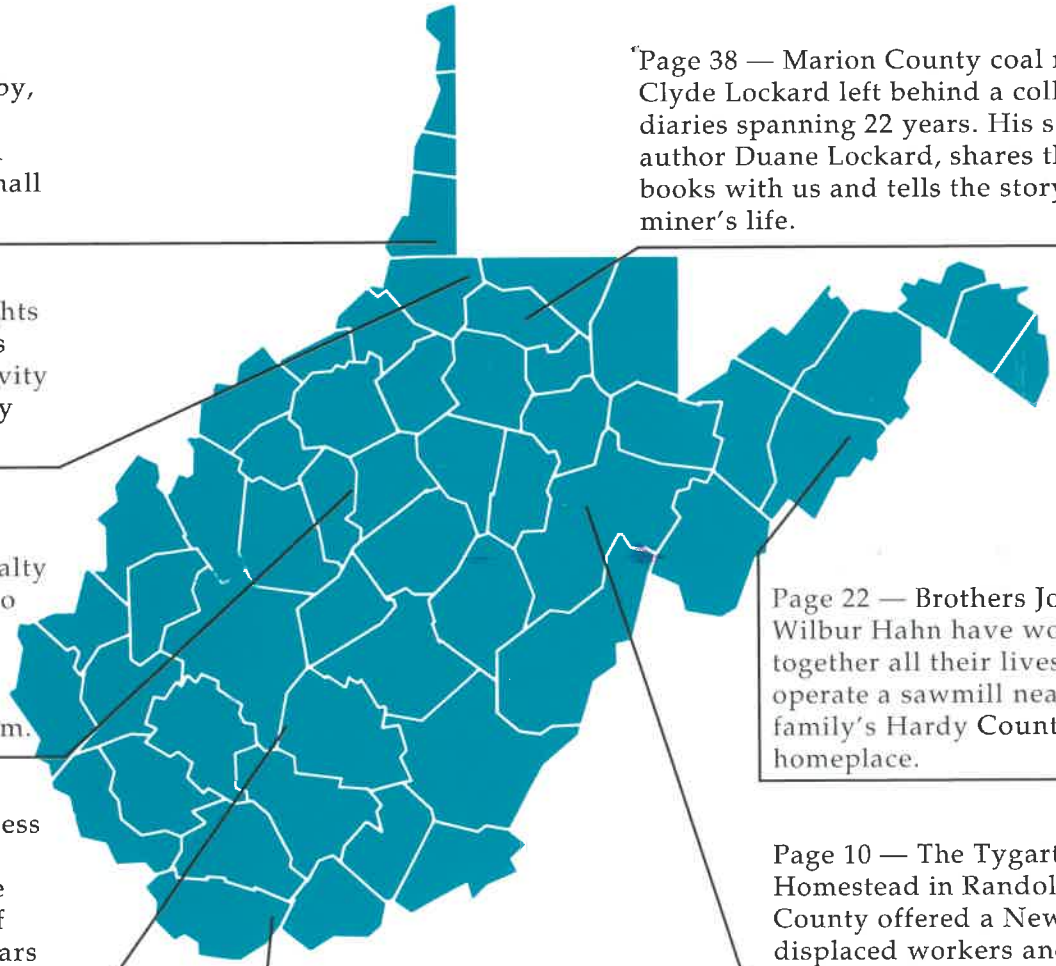

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