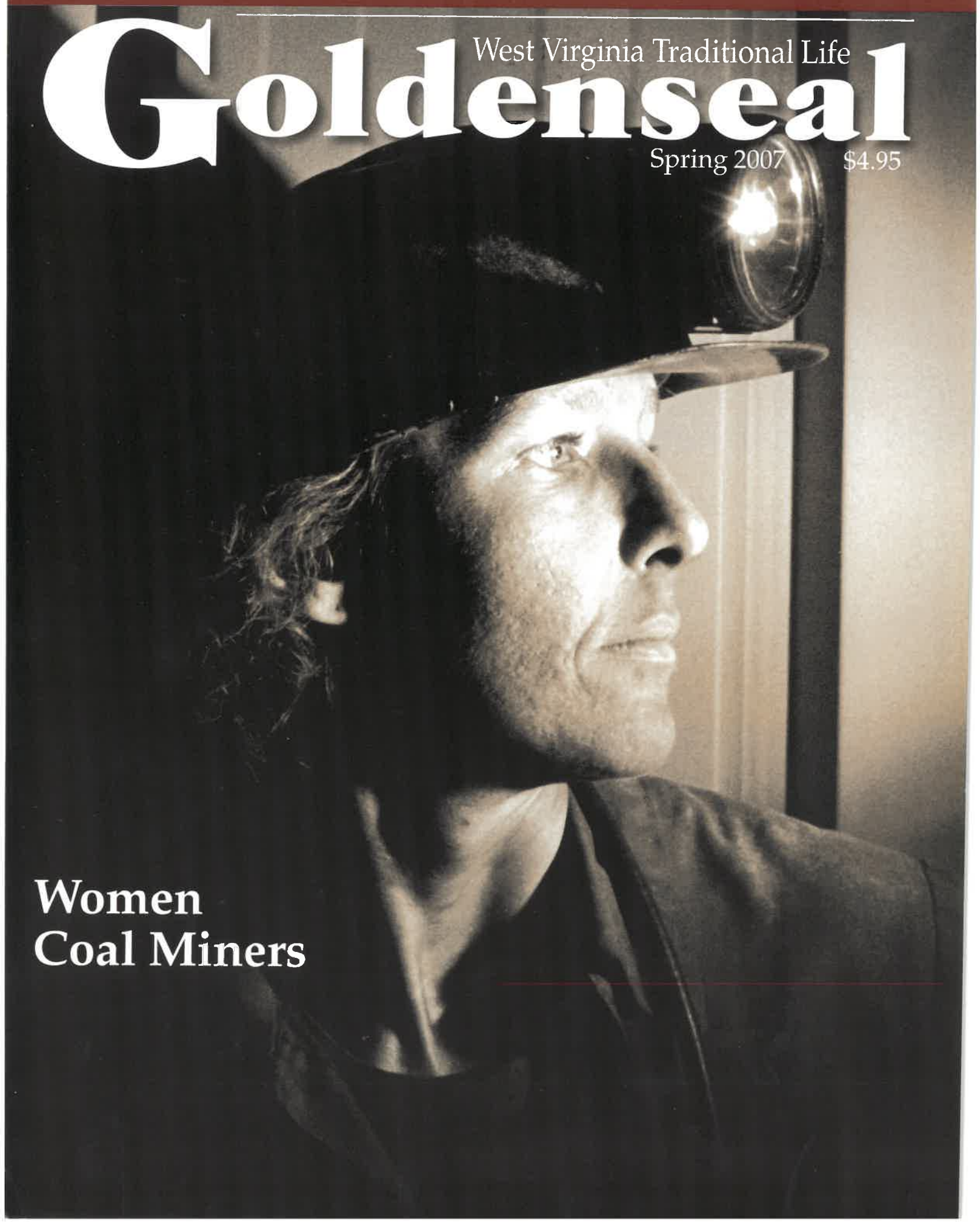
Harold Hayslett • Purple Fiddle • New Martinsville • Liars!

Goldenseal

West Virginia Traditional Life

Spring 2007 $4.95



Women Coal Miners

Folklife • Fairs • Festivals 2007

GOLDENSEAL's "Folklife • Fairs • Festivals" calendar is prepared three to six months in advance of publication. The information was accurate as far as we could determine at the time the magazine went to press. However, it is advisable to check with the organization or event to make certain that the date or location has not been changed. The phone numbers given are all within the West Virginia (304) area code unless otherwise noted. Information for events at West Virginia State Parks and other major festivals is also available by calling 1-800-CALL-WVA. An on-line version of this list, which includes links to many of the events, is posted on our Web site at www.wvculture.org/goldenseal/fflist.html.

March 16-17 8th Annual SistersFest
Sistersville (455-5907)

March 16-18 George Washington's Bathtub Celebration
Berkeley Springs (1-800-447-8797)

March 16-18 Irish Spring Festival
Ireland (452-8962)

March 17-18 W.Va. Maple Syrup Festival
Pickens (924-6288)

March 23-25 Upper Potomac Spring Dulcimer Festival
Shepherdstown (263-2531)

March 31-April 1 Wildwater River Festival
Webster Springs (847-5449)

April 21 Feast of the Ramson
Richwood (846-6790)

April 21 Pickens Ramp Dinner
Pickens (924-5415)

April 27-28 International Ramp Cook-Off & Festival
Elkins (636-2780)

April 27-29 Dogwood Arts & Crafts Festival
Huntington (696-5990)

April 27-29 Oglebay SpringFest
Wheeling (1-800-624-6988)

April 28 Adaland Mansion Heritage Days
Philippi (457-1587)

April 28 Helvetia Ramp Dinner
Helvetia (924-6435)

April 28 Wheeling Caboose Festival
Wheeling (242-8133)

April 30-May 5 New River Birding & Nature Festival
Oak Hill (1-800-927-0263)

May 4-5 Frontier Gathering
Kanawha State Forest (755-2990)

May 4-6 Engines and Wheels Festival
North Bend State Park (643-2931)

May 4-6 Scottish Heritage Festival & Celtic Gathering
Bridgeport (842-3457)

May 4-6 Spring Fest
Franklin (358-3884)

May 5-6 Steam & Gas Engine Show
Point Pleasant (675-5737)

May 9-13 Rendezvous on the River
Blennerhassett Island (420-4800)

May 11-13 13th Annual Bluegrass Festival
North Bend State Park (643-2931)

May 13 99th Observance of Mother's Day
Grafton (265-1589)

May 15-20 Bend Area Gospel Jubilee
Ripley (373-2286)

May 16-20 W.Va. Strawberry Festival
Buckhannon (472-9036)

May 19-20 Buffalo Heritage Days
Buffalo (937-2755)

May 19-20 Elizabethtown Festival
Moundsville (845-2552)

May 24-27 Ohio River Festival
Ravenswood (483-0633)

May 25-27 Spirit of Grafton Celebration
Grafton (265-3950)

May 25-27 31st Vandalia Gathering
State Capitol Complex/Charleston (558-0162)

May 26-27 Webster County Woodchopping Festival
Webster Springs (226-3888)

June 8-10 Spring Mountain Heritage Arts & Crafts Festival
Harpers Ferry (1-800-624-0577)

June 9 Pattyfest 2007
Morgantown (864-0105)

June 9-10 Hatfield & McCoy Reunion Festival
Matewan (426-4239)

June 15-17 Hometown Mountain Heritage Festival
Ansted (658-5065)

June 15-17 Mid-Ohio Valley Multi-Cultural Festival
Parkersburg (424-3457)

June 16-17 West Virginia Spring Wine Festival
Crab Orchard (252-9750)

June 19-23 West Virginia Coal Festival
Madison (369-9118)

June 21-24 Music in the Mountains Bluegrass Festival
Summersville (872-3145)

June 21-24 West Virginia State Folk Festival
Glenville (462-8427)

June 22-24 Old Central City Days Festival
West Huntington (781-2036)

June 23-24 Living History Days
Point Pleasant (675-5737)

June 28-30 Gassaway Days
Gassaway (364-5111)

June 30 Lavender Fair
Alum Bridge (269-7681)

July 1-3 Southern Boreal Bird Festival
Canaan Valley (1-800-622-4121)

July 3-4 Sylvester Dogpatch Reunion
Sylvester (854-0330)

July 5-7 Benedum Festival
Bridgeport (1-800-368-4324)

(continued on inside back cover)

Volume 33, Number 1 **Goldenseal** Spring 2007

p. 18

p. 34

p. 46

p. 10

p. 67

On the cover: Coal miner Libby Lindsay at Bethlehem Steel's Eagle's Nest mine near Van, Boone County, in 1993. Photograph by Christine Koci. Our story about West Virginia's coal mining women begins on page 10.

Published by the
STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA

Joe Manchin III
Governor

Kay Goodwin
Secretary
Department of Education
and the Arts

Randall Reid-Smith
Commissioner
Division of Culture and History

John Lilly
Editor

Gordon Simmons
Editorial Assistant

Cornelia Crews Alexander
Circulation Manager

BlaineTurner Advertising, Inc.
Publication Design

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.

Correspondence to:
The Editor
GOLDENSEAL
The Cultural Center
1900 Kanawha Blvd. East
Charleston, WV 25305-0300

Phone (304)558-0220
e-mail goldenseal@wvculture.org
www.wvculture.org/goldenseal

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

From the Editor

I used to be a tour guide. For three years, I worked at the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum in Nashville, Tennessee, showing visitors through the exhibits, pointing out items of interest (Dolly Parton's wig, Willie Nelson's running shoes, Elvis Presley's "solid gold" Cadillac, etc.), and answering questions. I enjoyed it and learned a lot. I also met wonderful people every day. Perhaps some of you — I wouldn't be at all surprised.

When I write these editorials for the magazine, I often feel like a tour guide once again. So please join me as I speak slowly, walk backwards, and give you a brief "tour" of this new issue:

The history of coal mining cannot be fully understood without a firm appreciation of the role women have played in the mines. Women labored beside men from the early years, kept the mines productive during wartime, and entered the labor force in large numbers beginning in the 1970's. Author Anna Sale has written a fine account for us, beginning on page 10.

Memories of rural life come from women with three distinct perspectives. Lucille Davisson fondly recalls Doddridge County farm life during her childhood years; Wilma Shriver harbors a lifetime of memories on her large farm in western Monongalia County; and Deborah Ross relives Decoration Day, what some older folks today still call Memorial Day.

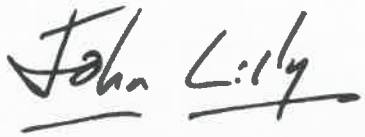
New Martinsville in the 1950's suited teenaged Daryl Michael just fine, as he writes beginning on page 40. Author Paul Gartner introduces us to renowned violin and cello maker Harold Hayslett of South Charleston. Harold's instruments are played by some of the finest musicians in the world, and we are pleased to feature him and his work in this issue.

From the other end of the state (and the other end of the cosmos, some might say) we take you to the Purple Fiddle, a quirky restaurant and live music venue in Thomas, Tucker County.

Beginning on page 64, we take our annual look at the popular Vandalia Gathering, held each year on Memorial Day weekend (or Decoration Day, if you prefer). Speaking of events, I hope you will peruse our annual Folklife•Fairs•Festivals calendar on the inside front and back covers. There is sure to be one near you, and I hope you'll take in the festivities.

Just as any museum tour closes by encouraging you to "visit our gift shop," I invite you to take a look at page 5 and thank you for considering the gift of GOLDENSEAL.

I hope you enjoyed your tour!



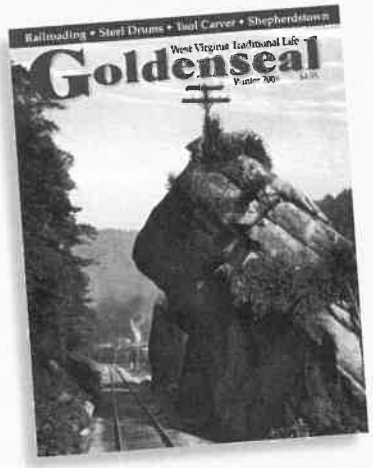
Letters from Readers

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.

Whitcomb Boulder

November 27, 2006
Lansing, West Virginia
Editor:
Thank you so much for publishing ["Whitcomb Boulder," by June Jones; Winter 2006, with assistance from my brother, Albert Pennington.] Albert and June Jones were very good with stories. He passed away two years ago in March. We miss him so much yet, I choke up.

He was a principal and teacher for 35 years. Actually, he was an "educator," always encouraging everyone to go to school. The family started a fund in the Beckley Area Foundation. This year, a student received a scholarship in his name to Concord College.
Thanks again,
Elsie Pennington Synor



December 29, 2006
New River, Arizona
Editor:
Terrific picture on cover of GOLDENSEAL winter issue. Must have been some job placing the utility pole on the rock outcropping.

We wish you a Merry Christmas and fruitful New Year. The GOLDENSEAL is a treasure.
J.J. Ward

Crew on BC&G's final steam run, February 27, 1965, at Dundon. Conductor Carsel Hamrick is second from the left. Photograph by Larry Fellure.

BC&G Railroad

January 3, 2007
Sutton, West Virginia
Editor:
I read with great interest the story by Alan Byer on the BC&G steam engine. [See "Recalling Bob Caruthers: Last of the BC&G Steam Railroaders"; Winter 2006.] Mr. Byer stated that Bob Caruthers was the last surviving crewman. My father is Carsel Hamrick, who is shown in the picture on page 12 of the story. I am writing in regard to the fact that my dad, the conductor on No. 4 engine for the BC&G, is still alive. He lives in Braxton County on his farm. Even though his health has failed in the last few years, his mind remains sharp and his memory is quite vivid of all the years spent on the railroad, from Dundon to Widen.
Gary L. Hamrick

Thanks, Gary. We appreciate your note and are pleased to learn that your father is doing so well. Please give him our best and extend our sincere apologies for the error. Thanks again for writing. —ed.

"Fiddling" Bill Baldwin

January 19, 2007
Ireland, WV
Editor:
Thank you for the wonderful article you put together on my

dad, "Fiddling" Bill Baldwin. [See "Music From the Past"; Winter 2006.] I have gotten many wonderful replies on it. It has come to light that my dad never took his bow apart in competition against Natchee the Indian [as I had written to you earlier.] My dad would not want to take credit for something that was not his creation.

Also, Dad died in 1987, [not 1986]. His brother, Sid, played guitar only, while Dad's other brother, Jesse, played the fiddle. I am sorry [for these errors], and I take full responsibility for what was written.

Sincerely,
Penny G. Berthel

Nice to hear from you, Penny. We are glad to set the record straight. —ed.

Clarence "Bones" Wright

December 19, 2006
St. Charles, Illinois
Editor:
Someone I'd like to meet is Clarence "Bones" Wright of Shepherdstown. [See "'You Never Know...': Clarence 'Bones' Wright of Shepherdstown," by Malcolm Ater; Winter 2006.] His pictures really seem to capture his spirit. The picture on page 61 still shows his magnetism. I don't doubt he has a good strong voice and can holler with the best, if given a reason. You know what I really liked? It was how he went through the Navy and what he did with [his] life thereafter: college educated, family provider, teacher, running an honorable and vital veterans hospital, accepting mayor, making huge strides for the town.

Although I'm from Illinois, I'm delighted with West Virginia storytellers, wood carvers, pumpkin carvers, whittlers, educators, sheriffs, miners, railroad engineers, musicians, steel drummers, grave diggers, mail riders, and respected activists.

Rejoice!
Roberta Davis

Groundhog

December 29, 2006
Winchester, Virginia
Editor:
It's always a pleasure to receive your magazine and to renew my subscription. The Winter '06 issue was a great issue. The rock in the cover photo and the story about it were fantastic.

I was also glad to see a groundhog featured in two places. I cut out the picture of the sketch to send to a South American friend who had asked me what a "ground hawk" was. I feel that now she will "get the picture," thanks to you.

Thank you very much.
Sincerely,
Peggy Brill

Clarence "Bones" Wright with friends on the streets of Shepherdstown. Photograph by Michael Keller.

Caroline Chamness, Bill Rainey, and pets.

Possums

January 17, 2007
Charleston, West Virginia
Editor:
Thanks very much for printing the photograph of my partner, Caroline Chamness, and Nina Pearl Possum in the winter issue of GOLDENSEAL. [See "From the Editor: Thanks Be"; inside front cover.]

Pearl, as we mostly called her, was perhaps the most gentle and intelligent animal companion I have known in my life. Her passing last October was sudden, unexpected, and mercifully quick. Caroline and I were with her. The loss was one of the saddest experiences of my life so far.

In December, we acquired two young possums, unexpectedly. A young woman — a chemistry major at Marshall University — rescued 11 babies from a mother possum who was killed by a car. Remarkably, the woman raised 10 of the 11 successfully to an age of seven months.

We took two of the males, whom we quickly had checked by our vet. We applied for and received permits to keep them. We've named them Merwin and Stokes. Merwin is very gentle and affectionate; Stokes is becoming a fine pet although he demands a certain amount of respect — and gets it. They both are fine, healthy fellows and I suspect, like Pearl, they will be ambassadors of their species, helping people learn about and understand their niche in God's creation.

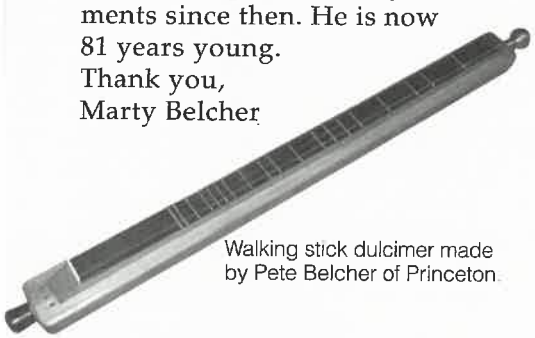
Again, thanks!
Bill Rainey

Photo Curiosity Response

December 8, 2006
Princeton, West Virginia
Editor:
I arrived home today and found the Winter 2006 issue of your magazine awaiting. When I came to the back inner cover, I was surprised to see a picture of Claude Keaton. [See "Photo Curiosity."] You asked any readers who knew Mr. Keaton to let you know. I personally did not know him, but my parents knew him. This is the reason I am writing to you.

My father is Pete Belcher, from Princeton. He made several "normal" instruments, such as dulcimers, autoharps, mandolins, violins, and psalteries. He has also made numerous unusual instruments and has experimented with many instruments that he made up.

One is a "walking stick" dulcimer, which can be used for a walking stick and, when you arrive at your destination, can be played as a dulcimer. My dad produced instruments prolifically until about four years ago, when he suffered a stroke that left him with short-term memory loss. I do not believe that he has produced any instruments since then. He is now 81 years young.
Thank you,
Marty Belcher



Walking stick dulcimer made by Pete Belcher of Princeton.

WVU Mountaineer

November 15, 2006
Parkersburg, West Virginia
Editor:
The GOLDENSEAL is the most interesting magazine now in print. The articles are down-to-earth.

The fall issue has one article that struck home. It was about the WVU Mountaineers. [See "WVU's Mountaineer: Mascot with a Mission," by Dan B. Fleming, Jr.; Fall 2006.] My neighbor, Bill McPherson, was the 1960 Mountaineer. Bill was an outstanding person. He was killed in Vietnam in December 1965. He was in the U.S. Army and had the rank of captain. Bill was an airborne ranger and spoke the Vietnamese language. I am sure he was a superior soldier.
Very sincerely,
David Beverlin

1960 WVU Mountaineer Bill McPherson. Photograph courtesy of West Virginia University Photographic Services.

Renewal Mailbag

December 22, 2006
Salem, West Virginia
Editor:
I owe you an apology. I decided not to renew my subscription. I threw my second notice in the trash while reading my current issue. About halfway through, I said to my wife, "This magazine is just too good. I have to renew."

Every article is interesting and informative. Since I was born in the '60's, the articles of times past are the most fascinating to me — better than a history class. Put me down for two more years.
Chip Lowe

Here's My GOLDENSEAL Gift List!

Please add the following name(s) to the GOLDENSEAL mailing list. I enclose $17 for each subscription.

Name _____
Address _____
_____

Name _____
Address _____
_____

[ ] I'm adding $5 extra per subscription (total $22). Please send the current issue along with the gift card!

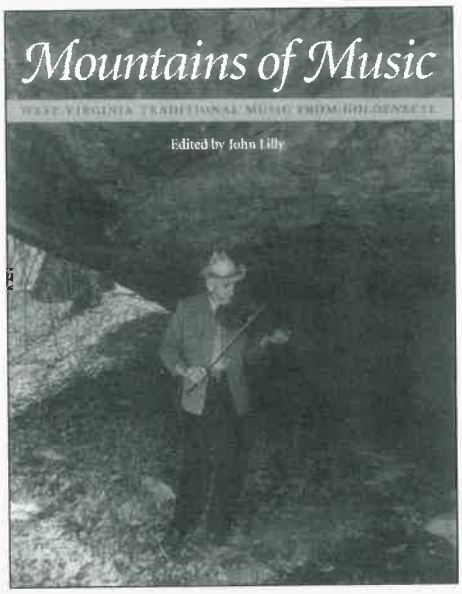
Gift Giver's Name _____
Address _____
_____

Name(s) to be signed on gift card:
_____

[ ] Add my name too! I enclose $17 for my own subscription.

Please make check or money order payable to GOLDENSEAL.

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



Mountains of Music: West Virginia Traditional Music from GOLDENSEAL gathers 25 years of stories about our state's rich musical heritage into one impressive volume. *Mountains of Music* is the definitive title concerning this rare and beautiful music — and the fine people and mountain culture from which it comes.

The book is available from the GOLDENSEAL office for $23.95, plus $2 shipping per book; West Virginia residents please add 6% sales tax (total $27.39 per book including tax and shipping).

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

— — — — — — — — — — — — —

I enclose $ ____ for ___ copies of *Mountains of Music.*

-or-

Charge my

___VISA ___MasterCard

#_____

Exp. Date _____

Name _____

Address _____

_____

Please make check or money order payable to GOLDENSEAL. Send to:

GOLDENSEAL
The Cultural Center
1900 Kanawha Blvd. East
Charleston, WV 25305-0300
(304)558-0220

Carmichael's Store

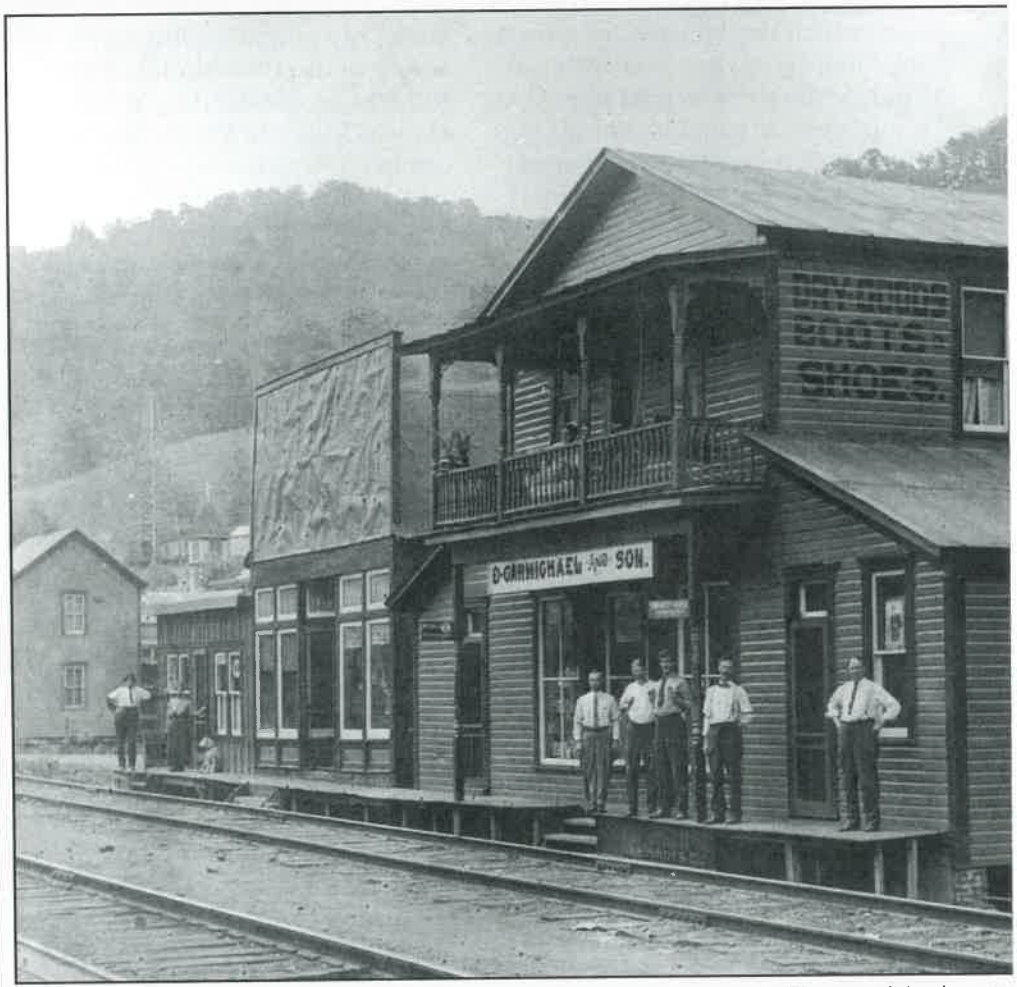
November 19, 2006
Vanceboro, Maine
Editor:

Around 1942 or 1943, my father decided I needed extra clothes for school and work. I was an active teenager and, like many, hard on clothes. At that time in New Martinsville, clothing was scarce and — if it could be found — expensive.

My father knew how to solve that problem. One day, we climbed into our 1939 Plymouth and drove east, 25 miles out the short line (road name also), to Smithfield. Smithfield had been an important supply center during the oil and gas boom around 1900 — and now a quiet village.

There was a large landmark building there: D. Carmichael & Son general store. To get to it, you walked down from a side road along the edge of a passing track to the store, and climbed up a broad stairway to a narrow front platform, which extended across the front of the large store building, as well as two neighboring businesses.

That platform was functional. Up until 1950, everything but the daily mail was unloaded on it. It was the exact height of the floor of a boxcar. Merchandise for the big store would arrive in one or more boxcars. Boxcar doors would be opened, and brakemen would carry or trundle out the goods. The local would remain there until every item — sometimes a staggering amount — was unloaded.

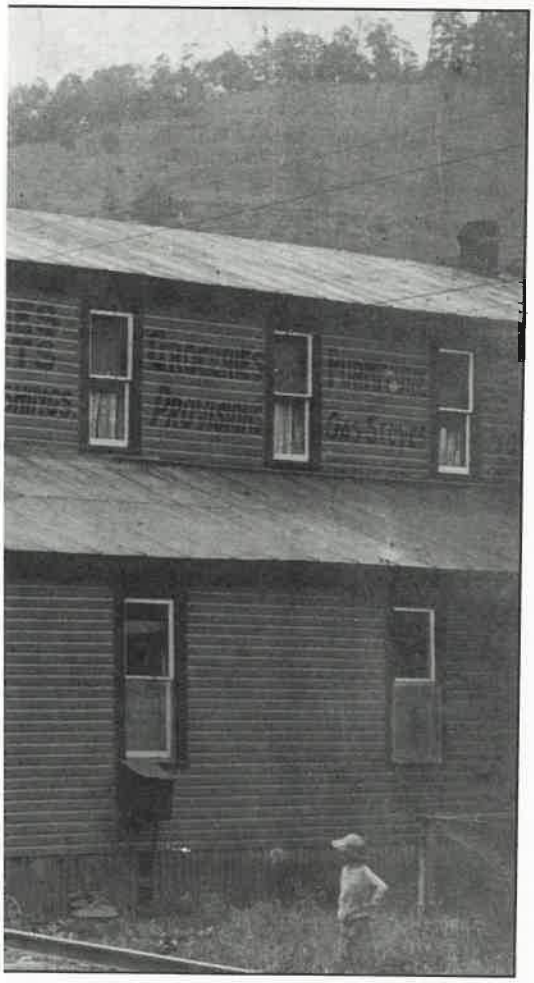


The D. Carmichael & Son general store in Smithfield, Wetzel County, about 1913. Photograph by James

This was an old country store. They didn't advertise, local people bought essential goods there, and the owners were content. They had made a lot of money during the oil boom, and everything in the store was paid for. Prices were reasonable, the interior dark and dingy.

Our buying trip? I don't remember a lot of it. My father purchased school and work pants for me in addition to overalls, gloves, ancient sweaters, boots, and galoshes.

There was another reason for our visit, as well. My father ran steam engines for the B&O in the Benwood-Fairmont Pool Turn and commonly would be away from home two-and-a-half or three days at a time. Toward the end of the war and during the months following it, he handled troop trains — hauling veterans returning from overseas or troops being transferred from East Coast bases to West Coast ports while the war was still continuing with Japan.



Noffsinger

Railroad life during those years left practically no time for social activities or hobbies. My father probably wouldn't have recognized the word "hobby" back then. But, occasionally, when he had proper rest and was waiting to be called, he would work at an old pursuit. He repaired harness.

He had grown up on a farm, handled horses at an early age, and worked as a teamster until he found employment with the B&O. Repairing old harness in our basement workshop renewed my father's ties with his early years on the family farm. He enjoyed it.

During the war years, new harness soon disappeared from most country stores, followed by the all-important copper rivets. My uncle in Ohio, busy at the mine and farm, had no time to travel and search for these scarce items, which were necessary for an old work horse he kept on his steep-sided hill farm.

Dad offered to find leather straps and copper rivets and, when he had time, to repair broken harness for him. At first, Dad obtained the items in New Martinsville, but farmers in our area soon exhausted these supplies.

My father had known about Carmichael's store for decades and knew that they had adequate supplies of harness, leather straps, buckles, snaps, and copper rivets. The store, even during the war years, had adequate supplies left over from the oil-boom years in Wetzel County.

So, our trip to Smithfield and Carmichael's store was not only to outfit a growing teenager with clothing, footwear, and caps, but also to purchase the necessary leather straps and copper rivets for harness. Farm work was vital work, also.

Borgon Tanner

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.

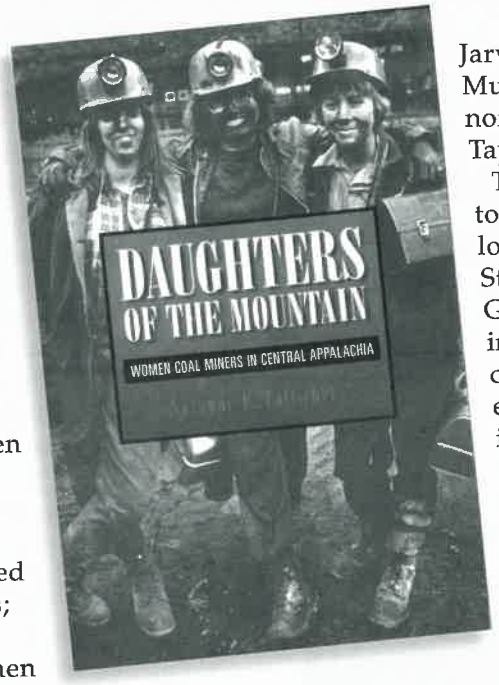
Celebrate Women Awards

On April 28, at Stonewall Jackson resort in Lewis County, outstanding women in a dozen categories will be honored by the West Virginia Women's Commission with the 2007 Celebrate Women Awards. Recipients are drawn from the arts, business, education, government, labor, and the sciences. There are also women recognized for "Mountaineer Spirit," professional service, public service, volunteer service, and achievement in sports. An additional category for "unsung hero" is also drawn from nominations, as well as a Commissioners' Award. The Celebrate Women Awards began in 1985.

Awards for an annual student essay competition will be presented in conjunction with the event. For information on the awards or the student competition, go to www.wvdhhr.org/women, or phone the Women's Commission at (304)558-0070.

Daughters of the Mountain

Daughters of the Mountain: Women Coal Miners in Central Appalachia, by Suzanne E. Tallichet, provides an in-depth account of the experiences of female underground miners at an unnamed unionized coal mine in southern West Virginia. Based on interviews conducted in the fall of 1990, with follow-up visits in the summers of 1995 and 1996, this new book contains a wealth of detailed information about the work experiences and work relations of several women who entered coal mining as an occupation.



The book explores topics including the sexual stereotyping and gender barriers faced by women in well-paying, traditionally male occupations; the process women experience as they progress from beginner to seasoned mine workers; relationships between women miners and the union; the ways in which mining has changed women workers; and coping strategies women have developed to deal with conditions in the industry.

Daughters of the Mountain, published 2006, is available as a 216-page paperback that sells for $20, or in hardback for $65. The book includes an index and an extensive bibliography. It is published by Penn State University Press, 820 North University Drive, University Park, PA; phone (814)863-1408 or on the Web at www.psupress.org.

Mother's Day

Sunday, May 13, 2007, will mark the 99th observance of Mother's Day since its founding by Anna Jarvis in Grafton. There will be commemorations at sites associated with Ms. Jarvis, including both the International Mother's Day Shrine in Grafton and the Anna Jarvis Birthplace Museum, four miles north in Webster, Taylor County.

Those wishing to visit the shrine, located on Main Street in downtown Grafton, can get information concerning hours and events by calling the Andrews Methodist Episcopal Church, phone (304)265-1589. Tour information, hours, and group reservations for the museum in Webster are available by calling (304)265-5549.

Memorial Day

May 28, 2007, will be the 140th anniversary of Grafton's parade in honor of West Virginia's U.S. war dead. Held each year on what was originally known as Flower Strewing Day, the parade culminates in the decoration of graves at Grafton National Cemetery on Walnut Street.

The Raleigh County Veterans Museum will commemorate Memorial Day by joining the annual parade in Beckley with military re-enactors from World Wars I and II, Korea, and Vietnam, riding in a World War II-era military Jeep. After the parade, there will be an open house at the museum, located at 1557 Harper Road in Beckley. For additional information, or to arrange a tour of the museum, call James Toler at (304)253-1775 or visit www.rcvm.org.

GOLDENSEAL Good-Byes

The Reverend Everett Francis Briggs. Photograph by Mike Furbee.

The **Reverend Everett Francis Briggs** of Monongah, Marion County, spent most of his life securing the memory of those who perished in the tragic 1907 Monongah mine explosion — the worst in U.S. history. [See "'I Know Them All': Monongah's Faithful Father Briggs," by Barbara Smith; Winter 1999.] Born 1908 in Massachusetts, Father Briggs came to Monongah in 1956 and began the arduous process of identifying and commemorating the fallen miners, many of them Catholic immigrants. Over the years, he erected monuments, tended cemeteries, ministered to surviving family members, and established a memorial nursing home, where he passed away on December 21, 2006, at the age of 98.

Chuck Morse, owner of Fountain Hobby Center in Charleston, died January 14, 2007, at the age of 76. Born in Huntington in 1930, Chuck and his parents moved to Charleston when he was a boy. In 1947, his parents established The Fountain, a dairy bar in North Charleston, where Chuck worked. The business soon carried medicinal supplies and other items and changed its name to Fountain Cut-Rate. To serve hobby enthusiasts who flew control-line planes nearby, the store offered hobby supplies, as well. Chuck opened a second shop on Charleston's West Side in 1955, finally moving the business to the corner of Bigley and Washington streets in Charleston in 1962, where his family still operates the popular and eclectic hobby store. [See "Fountain Hobby Center: Passing the Test of Time," by Melissa Smith; Winter 2003.]

Billie Cherry. Photograph by Bill Archer.

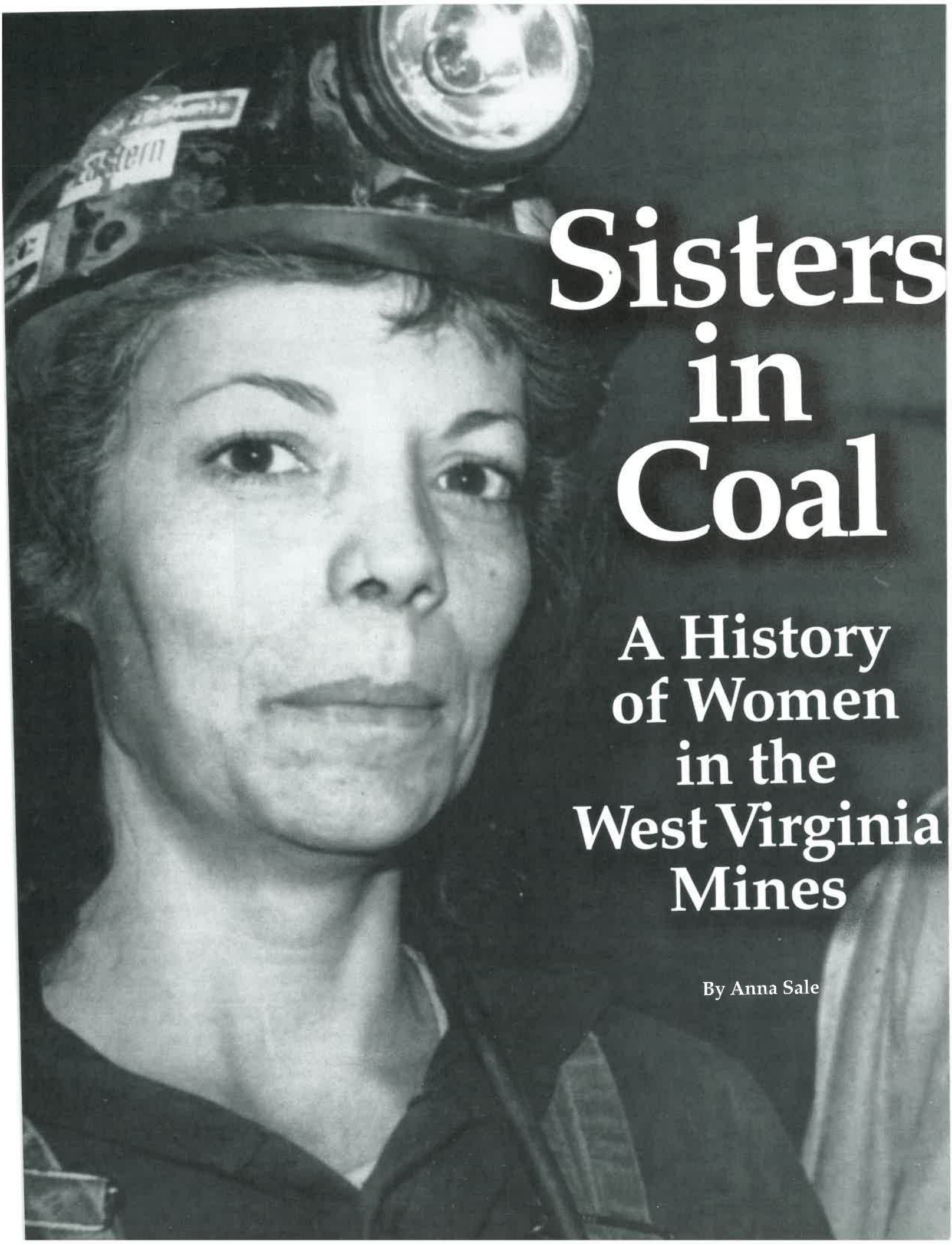
Billie Jean Cherry, 80, colorful and controversial Keystone banking executive, died December 28, 2006, in Lexington, Kentucky, where she was serving time in a federal prison for mail fraud and other crimes. She arrived in McDowell County in 1977 and became president of the infamous First National Bank of Keystone. The bank was an unprecedented money maker, amassing assets estimated at $1 billion by 1999, before being shut down by federal banking authorities. During happier times, Mrs. Cherry was elected mayor of Keystone, supported numerous community and arts projects, and owned the storied Jones Mansion. [See "Jones Mansion: The Checkered History of a McDowell County Landmark," by Jean Battlo; Summer 2005.]

Laurel Byer with ½ pound of Helvetia cheese. Photograph by Alan Byer.

Cheesemaking in Helvetia

Rick and Nancy Krogh of Helvetia, Randolph County, have revived the Swiss tradition of cheesemaking in a shop next door to their longtime beekeeping and honey operation. Their shop, the Cheese Haus, opened in late 2006 after introducing the Swiss cheese at the Helvetia Fair in September. The Kroghs use milk from Jersey cows raised on their farm just outside of town and expect to be producing 15,000 pounds of traditional Swiss Alpenzell — or mountain — variety of cheese each year. [See "Bärg Käss: Cheesemaking Among the West Virginia Swiss," by Bruce Betler; Spring 1994.]

For more information, phone the Cheese Haus at (304)924-9068, or visit the Kroghs on the Web at www.healinghoney.net.



Sisters in Coal

A History of Women in the West Virginia Mines

By Anna Sale

Nancy Dorset badgered the human resources office for a year and a half, and in 1978, she was finally hired at a Consolidation Coal mine outside Morgantown. It was time to break for dinner during one of her first shifts, and she'd worked up a hunger.

"I don't know if it was monkey business, being new, or being female, but I went up on a section sometime in the first two weeks," she says, "and when it came lunchtime, my bucket was nowhere to be found in the dinner hole."

She asked her male coworkers about her bucket, and they told her to look for it. "We only had 30 minutes for dinner, so I just decided I wasn't going to look for it. So I ate the boss' dinner," she says. Later on, when the boss found his empty bucket, word quickly got to him that the new woman miner had eaten his dinner. He confronted her, but Nancy took it in stride. "Well, I says, 'If you can find my bucket, you can have everything in it, but you've got to make those guys tell you where it was.'" Nancy says that's all she had to say. "That nipped that in the bud. No one ever tried that trick again on me."

For Nancy Dorset, it was the same no-nonsense approach that protected her dinner bucket that had drawn her to the mines in the first place. A single woman in her 20's, Nancy knew she loved exploring underground in caves and that she needed good-paying work. "The reason I wanted to work in the mines was that I was a cave explorer and did a lot of cave exploration on the weekends," she recalls. "Muddy, wet, underground all weekend. It seemed like working underground, getting dirty and whatnot during the week — and getting paid for it — might be an interesting situation."

But, Nancy says, it wasn't always easy. "I still came at a time when women didn't work in the mines

Miners Karen Woodrum (left) and Libby Lindsay at Bethlehem Steel's Eagle's Nest mine in Van, Boone County. Photograph circa 1986, by Bertien Van Manien.

Nancy Dorset of Morgantown worked as an underground miner in Monongalia County for 17 years. Today, she teaches mining engineering at Pennsylvania State University and is completing her doctorate in mining engineering at WVU. This photograph was taken recently at the Royce & Carolyn Watts Museum (formerly the Comer Museum) on the WVU Evansdale campus. Photograph by Michael Keller.

yet. They were more concerned with my marriage status than anything else. I was single and no kids, and they couldn't understand that." She wasn't the first female in her mine. Two women had already worked there, though one had quit. Nancy says her coworkers had a pool for how long she would last. She's not sure if there was ever a winner in that pool — she lasted until the mine permanently closed in 1995.

She says she just loved the work. "It's hard to get bored in a coal mine," she says. "I liked the coal coming off the face. I don't know what it is, but [there was] something about seeing that stuff go, and knowing it was going to improve somebody's life. Even though they might not recognize that their electricity came from coal, it was going to do something good."

Beginning in 1973, thousands of women like Nancy Dorset challenged ideas about who belonged underground. Women had been working in mines for centuries, but in the wake of federal civil rights legislation, this generation entered the mines in large numbers for the first time, carving out a place for themselves within the modern coal industry.

It was a time of upheaval. There was a new federal mine safety law, and grassroots movements had successfully organized for black lung protections for miners and environmental restrictions on strip mining. [See "'Let's Show Them What a Fight We Can Give Them': The Black Lung Movement in West Virginia," by Catherine Moore; Summer 2006.] Women drew on these movements' organizing models as they fought for access to mining jobs. They joined the union and moved up its hierarchy, and created their own organization to advocate for women's interests in the mines.

Civil rights legislation and a strong coal market enabled the entry of women into West Virginia's mines in the 1970's, but these were hardly the first mining ladies. Women worked alongside men from the earliest days of mining, centuries ago. Irene Adkins Dolin dug coal to heat her family's home in the 1930's, something women had been doing in Appalachia for at least a century. In Marat Moore's 1996 book, *Women in the Mines*, Irene recounted how she entered the mines as a girl, after her father got tuberculosis from the mines:

"I was 10, and my sister was seven. We had to go in and dig the coal to keep our family warm," she remembered. "We were lying down, and I'd take a sharp pick and hit it. I'd be digging out that coal and hear it falling. We'd lay our picks down, and me and my sister would push the coal into a 100-pound coffee sack until it was almost full. Sometimes we'd fill up two sacks, because it was a long trip back out to that hole."

There are historical records of women slaves working in mines in the early 19th century, but it was nearly 100 years later before women earned wages as miners. An 1887 statute in West Virginia expressly prohibited women from working in mines. The law was amended in 1907, though, to create a loophole for small family mines; penalties for hiring women miners only applied if a company had more than five employees. The prohibition against female employment in West Virginia mines was lifted altogether in 1925.

By that time, larger forces pulled

women in and out of mines. World War I drew more women into mining employment. After thousands of male miners joined the military, coal operators encouraged women to enter the mines, and in 1920, 275 women worked in West Virginia's mines. The Great Depression created a pull in the other direction. Seventeen states moved to protect male employment and prohibited employing women in mines, though West Virginia was not among them. The World War II effort created another labor demand, and more than 500 women found work in West Virginia mines during those years.

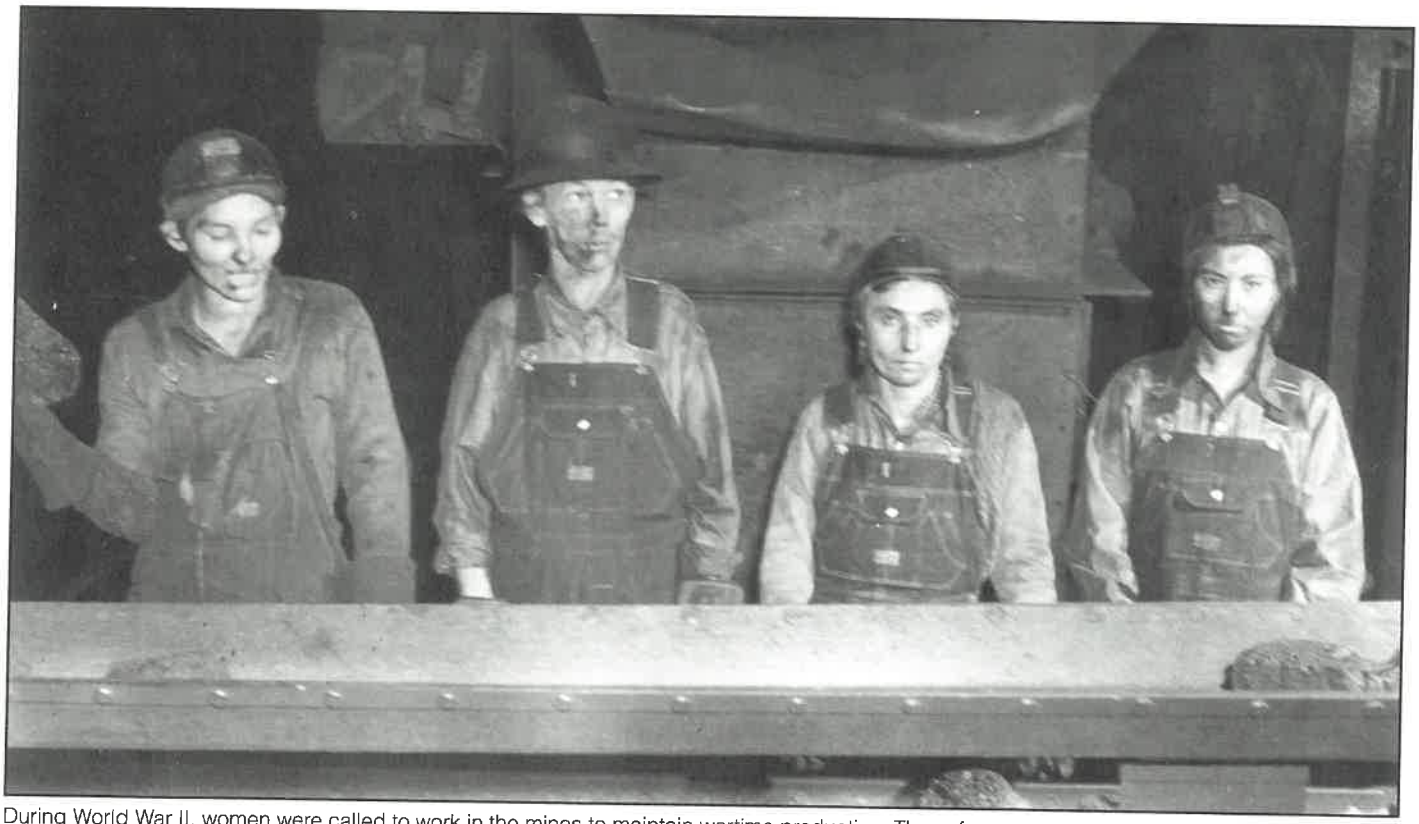
Amid these economic and political circumstances, social and cultural factors hindered women entering mines. Victorian social mores of the 19th century discouraged women from working outside the home, and superstitions warned that a mine would be cursed by danger if a woman entered it. "One of the most curious superstitions is that a woman's visit into a mine is disastrous," wrote George Korson in his 1965 book, *Coal Dust on the Fiddle*. "It is probably the most common superstition in the coalfields, anthracite as well as bituminous. Miners will cite instances of disasters following in the wake of a woman's visit. To outsiders, they may appear purely coincidental, but the mine workers insist upon a cause-and-effect rationalization." This folklore had a very real effect. For example, in 1936, First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt had to cancel a planned tour of a working mine in the face of local protest.

Beginning in 1973, thousands of women challenged ideas about who belonged underground.

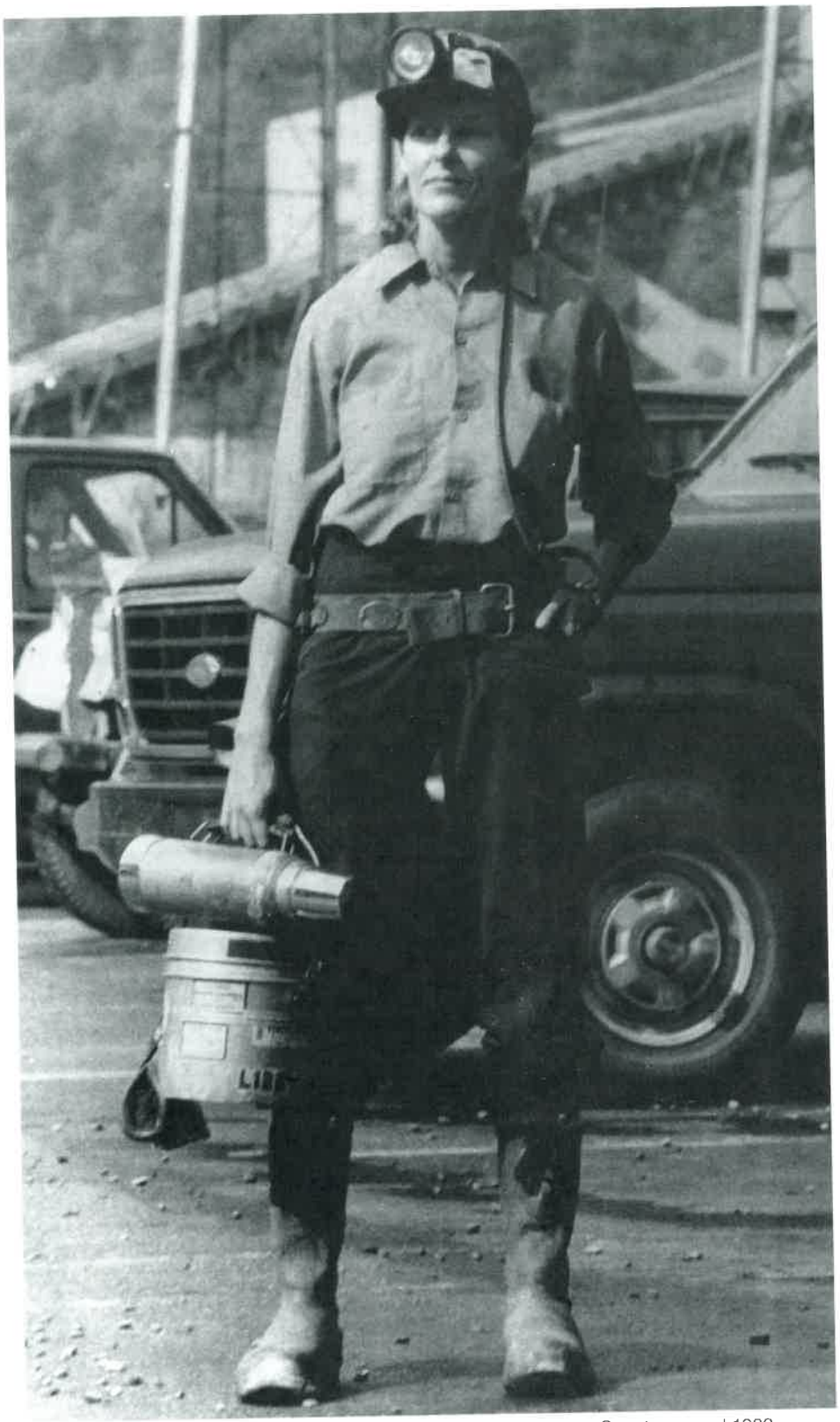
There were other concerns about how bringing women into mines would affect workplace dynamics. In 1942, a group of women were hired at a tipple in Southern West Virginia, but the United Mine Workers of America condemned the hiring. The union argued the hiring of women encouraged immorality. UMW District 29 President George Titles threatened to strike if the women continued to work at the mine. The women were fired, and union leader John L. Lewis declared that the situation in West Virginia had been "promptly adjusted."

Then, there were practical concerns of bringing women into what was previously masculine domain. Nancy Dorset remembers men complaining about not being able to go the bathroom wherever they needed to anymore, since she was underground. It would take new laws, and lawsuits to enforce them, before women could gain entry into mines in any real numbers.

Several civil rights bills provided the legal tools for women activists to open up mines for female employment. The 1964 Civil Rights Act prohibited sex discrimination



During World War II, women were called to work in the mines to maintain wartime production. These four women are being trained to "pick bone" — cull rocks and other debris from the coal as it moves along a conveyor belt — for Algoma Coal & Coke Company in McDowell County, 1942. From the left, they are Viola Vickers, Minnie Saunders, Alice Fulford, and Julie Powers. Photograph courtesy of Eastern Regional Coal Archives.



Libby Lindsay on her way to work at the Eagle's Nest mine in Boone County, around 1988. Photograph courtesy of *The Charleston Gazette*.

in hiring. The coal market sharply increased in the early 1970's, creating new demand for labor in West Virginia's coal mines, and women activists deliberately focused on opening up this coal employment to women. They recognized that technology had changed the physical demands of skilled trades like coal mining and saw mining as a new economic frontier for women.

The first woman in the modern coal industry was hired in a West Virginia coal mine in 1973, the beneficiary of federal affirmative-action mandates, though her identity is lost to history. It took litigation over several years in many Appalachian states to truly open up hiring to women. Bethlehem Mine Corporation began hiring women miners to stave off discrimination lawsuits, and by 1978, it was the largest employer of women miners, including mines in West Virginia. Other lawsuits resulted in six-figure settlements to women seeking employment and created affirmative-action programs for women in mines. The Coal Employment Project (CEP), a Tennessee-based advocacy group, brought a lawsuit in 1978 against 153 coal companies, including companies that operated in West Virginia. The lawsuit alleged a blatant pattern of discrimination in the coal industry. The federal government agreed to investigate the coal industry, company by company.

By the end of 1978, Consolidation Coal, the company that hired Nancy Dorset, agreed to pay back wages to women applicants and agreed to hire one inexperienced woman for each inexperienced man until women made up more than 30 percent of its workforce.

The CEP, formed in 1977, had its roots in both feminist and antistrip-mining movements. The group pursued its cause through legal channels; it also used the media to create public demand for changes. CEP shared its 1977 federal complaint with *The New York Times*, which ran a story when the lawsuit was filed. The group also became an advocacy organization for women already working in mines. It went on to form support groups for women, run sensitivity training for mine supervisors, and lobby the United Mine Workers union for support of women.

Opportunities for high-paying work were a major motivation for women entering the mines in the 1970's. For example, Nancy Dorset entered the mines because she liked exploring

underground, but the paycheck didn't hurt. Nancy recalls that no other job in the Morgantown area could compare to the pay and benefits for miners. "If I remember, the salary jump was something like $10,000 to $33,000," she says. "I ended up paying more in taxes than I had been making."

Nancy was single and had no children, but many women miners in the 1970's were single mothers who went underground to provide for their families. A survey of 25 women miners in West Virginia and five other Appalachian states found that 20 of them had dependent children, and 20 of them were single. A 1975 UMW survey of 200 union members found that more than half were the sole breadwinners for their families. The union concluded from the survey that there were two groups of women miners: divorced women in their mid-30's who supported children with their paycheck; and younger, single women, like Nancy Dorset, "who were generally in mining for the long haul, as a career."

Another West Virginia miner, Cathy Willis, was 28 years old and divorced in 1978. She told historian Carletta Savage that when she became a miner, she wasn't getting any child support from her husband and earned only $3.15 an hour as a secretary. She was hired at Consolidation Coal's Humphrey No. 7 mine in Monongalia County and worked there until the mine closed in 1996.

Over her 17-year mining career, Nancy Dorset did most of the jobs there were to do underground — belt cleaner, continuous miner operator, roof bolter, part-time fire boss, and others. She wore this hat every day, she says, and still enjoys placing it on her head. Photograph by Michael Keller.

Phyllis Hunter Woods (left) and Crystal Lucas at Bethlehem Steel mine No. 131, around 1977. Photographer unknown.

Lawsuits might have gained entry for many women into the mines, but once there, women miners had to assert a place for themselves within their company and their union.

Nancy Dorset recalls that it was initially a little tricky to figure out how to interact socially with her coworkers. "I don't think I ever developed a close working relationship, but I was willing to be social in the way they wanted to be social," she says. After working at the mine, she decided on a few occasions to stop off at the pub that catered to miners coming off their shift. "I think I only went three or four times. They got so they weren't nice to be around once they started drinking. They were sexually suggestive, and I felt preyed upon. ... After a few times there, that was enough."

For the most part, Nancy says she was happiest in the mine when she got to work on her own. She also focused on mine safety and started accompanying inspectors after only a couple of months on the job. She was elected to her local union's safety committee, but she wasn't welcomed with open arms. "I'll tell you, honestly, with the union, I

Men and women often work in tight quarters in the mines, resulting in some awkward social interactions. Here, Libby Lindsay prepares for her shift, under the watchful eye of her male coworkers. Photograph by Christina Koci, 1993.

encountered more prejudice than I did in the mines," she says. "It was bad enough that women were in the mines, let alone entering a voluntary position like the union. Even though I'd been voted on by the rest of the mine, that didn't mean that the rest of the people I was serving with had to like it."

Over time, Nancy says, she found acceptance at the union, first from the international, then from the local. Her experience paralleled those of other women miners in the 1970's. CEP vigorously lobbied the UMW for support of its legal efforts on behalf of women miners. The union rebuffed them once, but ultimately did pass a resolution of support. But it wasn't until 1982, when Richard Trumka became president of the UMW, that CEP felt it had an ally at the head of the union.

Nancy Dorset went on to work in virtually all capacities in the mine, from a belt cleaner on up to a continuous miner operator, roof bolter, and part-time fire boss. She was on a union committee that tested the first self-rescuer air packs underground. [See "Mine Rescue Curiosity Response"; Fall 2006.]

But when her mine closed in 1995, it looked like her career in coal was over. She was too far down the list, below more senior male miners, to hold out any hope of finding other mining work. She went back to school but found a way to stay in the coal industry. She now teaches mining technology at Pennsylvania State University and is scheduled to complete her doctorate in mining engineering this summer at West Virginia University.

The face of women in coal mining has changed. The generation of women who entered the mines in the 1970's have largely left mining. The CEP officially disbanded in 1999, as its membership waned from a peak of 1,000 members in 1984. A *United Mine Workers Journal* article on the organization's dissolution noted that at a recent conference, only 12 of the 50 attendees were working in mines. Retired West Virginia miner and CEP member Libby Lindsay was there. Five years earlier, she had written about the legacy of CEP in its newsletter:

"Sisters, we fought some big battles to get jobs and keep them, to make the mines safer for all miners, for parental and family leave, for workplace justice and human dignity. We fought sexual harassment from innuendo to peepholes, fought for bathhouses and for training on equipment. We fought for the union, and sometimes we fought the union itself. Some women were jailed for strike activity. Some women moved up and on. Some women were forced out through injury, and many through layoff. Some were killed. Some have died. I'll bet they didn't think what they were doing was remarkable."

In more recent years, coal companies have moved to incorporate women in their lobbying efforts. The Women's

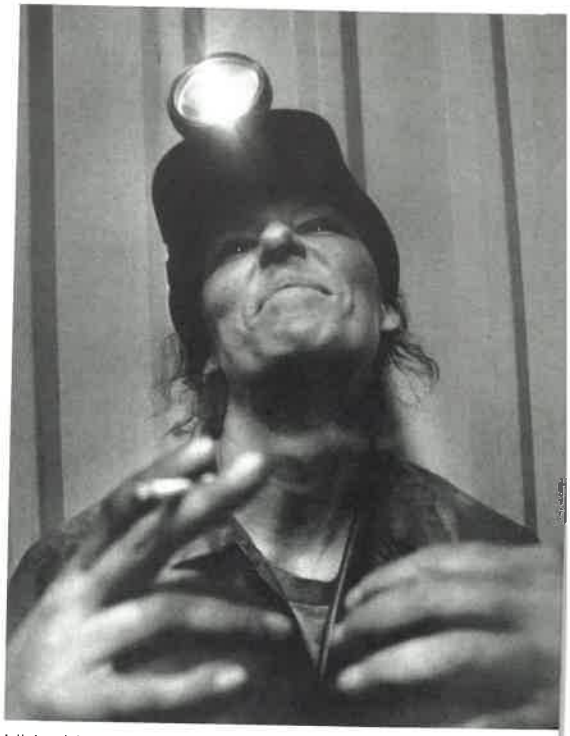
Mining Coalition, formed in 1993, makes an annual trip to Washington, D.C., to meet with lawmakers about the mining industry's policy priorities. Terah Burdette, a native of Frame, Kanawha County, and mine engineer for Arch Coal in Charleston, was the group's president in 2006. In 2005, she reported on their efforts in *Coal People Magazine*:

"We got a letter of thanks from Congresswoman [Shelley Moore] Capito," she said, "for our continued efforts to support the mining industry and showing how important mining is to women and the opportunities it presents for us." Burdette had a role model when she started her career in mining — her mother entered the coal industry in the early 1970's.

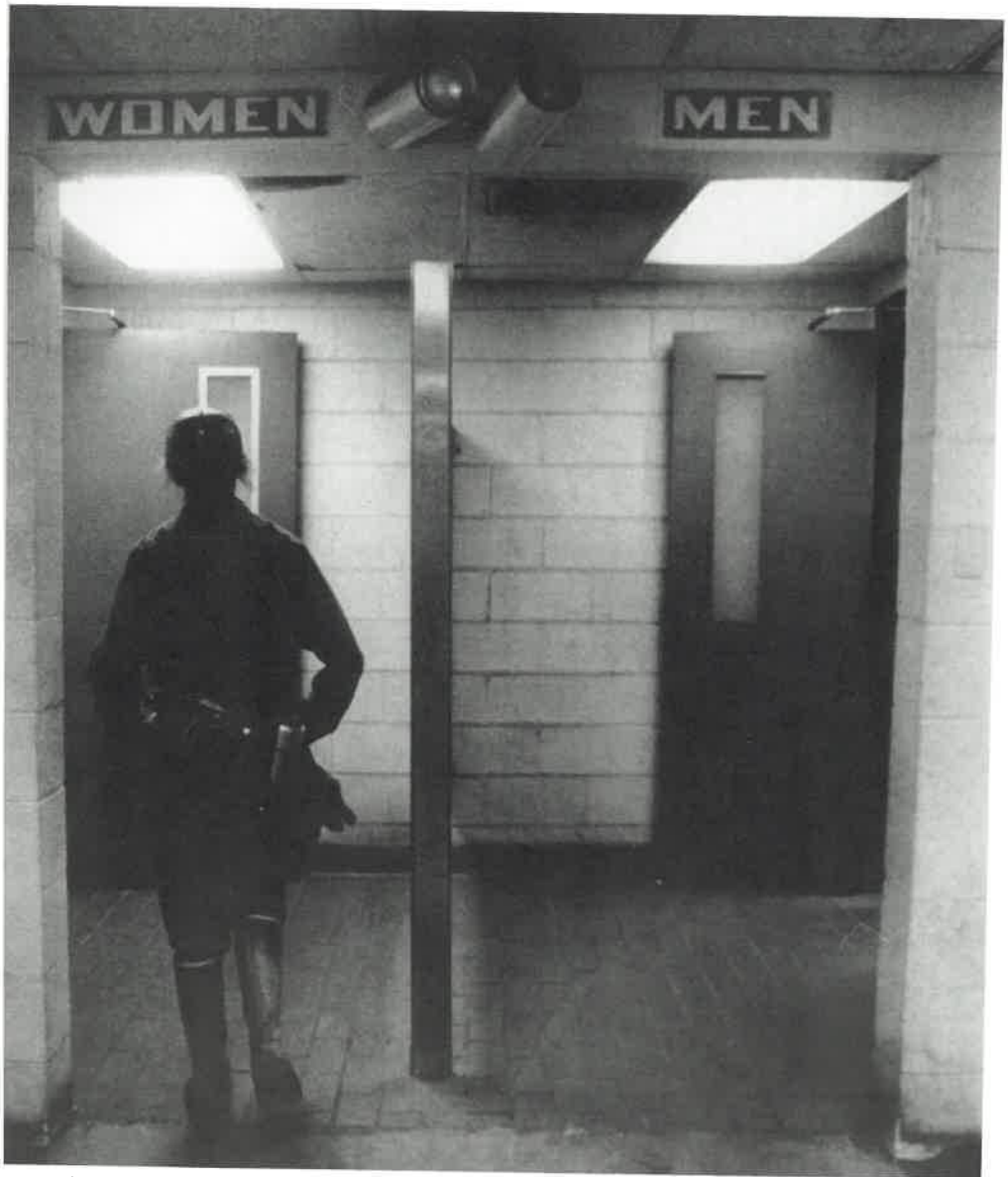
Today, it's not clear just how many women work as coal miners. A Bureau of Labor Statistics study found that women held only seven percent of the nation's coal mining jobs in 2004, and that included miners, mining engineers, executives, accountants, and administrative staff. That makes coal mining the most male-dominated field in the American labor force — with fewer percentages of women than logging, construction work, or auto repair.

For her part, Nancy Dorset is disappointed that nearly all of her students in her mining engineering classes are male. It's difficult to get an accurate count of how many women are currently entering the mines, but Nancy isn't optimistic. "We're not seeing women wanting to go into the mines as in the 1970's. Don't know if that's because of other jobs, or that family obligations prevent," she says. "I've talked to a few human relations people, and they say, no, they're just not getting women submitting the applications. It isn't even a matter of getting turned down. It's a matter of even getting the applications."

Nancy is hopeful that trend will change. She says coal mining has been good to her and thinks other women should consider it. "Especially in this day and age when marriage doesn't seem to last as long as it used to, I think for women to be able to be financially independent both while they're working and while they're retired is very important," she says. "And mining is one of the best ways."



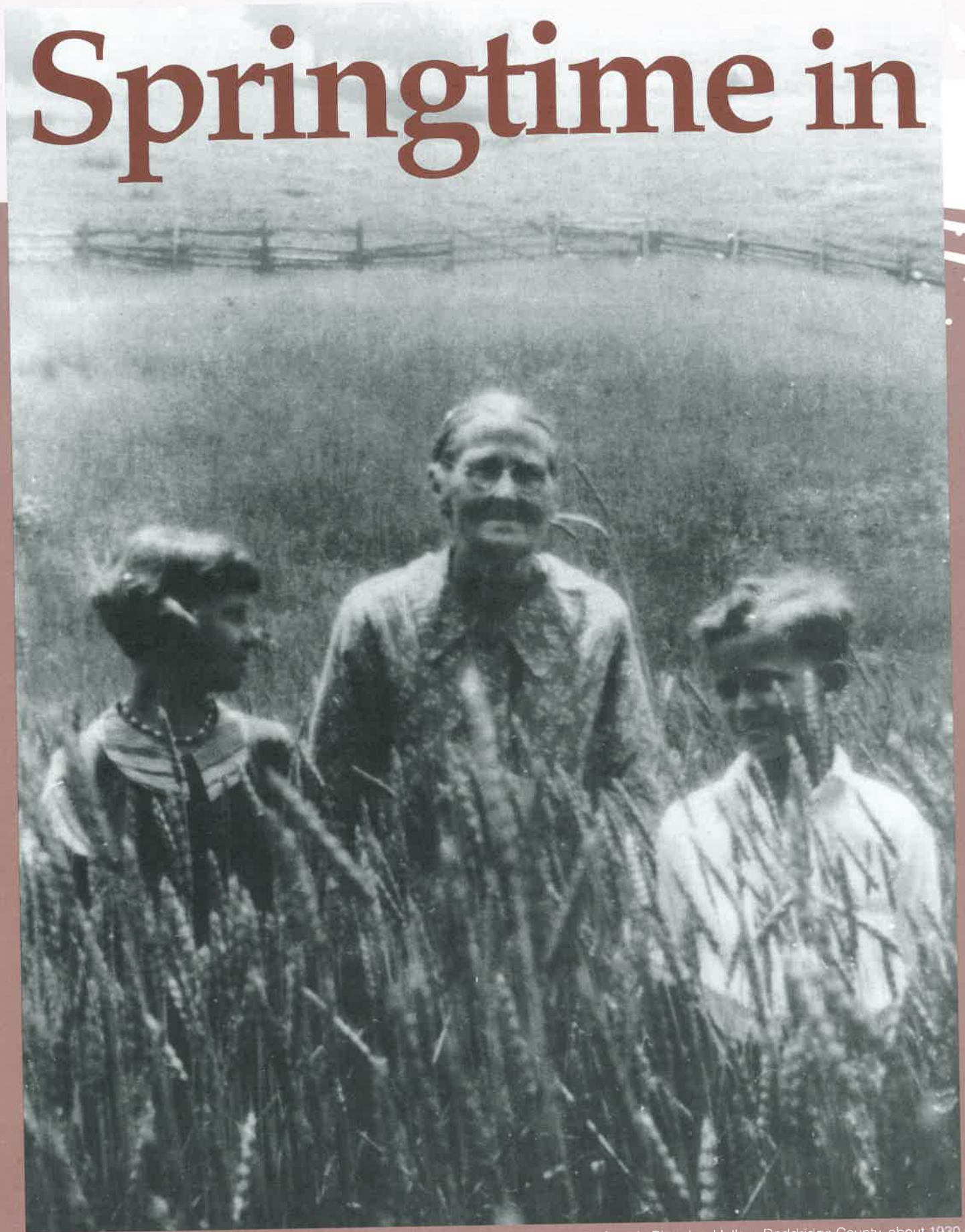
Libby Lindsay at the end of a shift. She was one of the first women hired in her mine, on February 9, 1976. This photograph was taken by Christina Koci in 1993.



Access to separate bathhouses, now taken for granted at many mines, was among the many battles fought — and won — by pioneering women miners such as Libby Lindsay, shown here in Boone County in 1993. Photograph by Christina Koci.

ANNA SALE grew up in Charleston, where she attended public schools. She received a master's degree in history from Stanford University and wrote her thesis on race relations and urban renewal in Charleston. Anna is a reporter for West Virginia Public Broadcasting. Her most recent contribution to GOLDENSEAL appeared in our Winter 2005 issue.

Springtime in



Siblings Lucille and William Kemper with grandmother Financia Miller at the Kemper family farm in Plaugher Hollow, Doddridge County, about 1930

Plaugher Hollow

By Lucille Kemper Davisson

I grew up on a farm near the small community of Grove, Doddridge County. The farm was located in Plaugher Hollow ("Plogger Holler"). I had four siblings: Helen, Ralph, Kathleen, and William Kemper.

William and I became the best of friends and were great playmates. He was born on November 1, 1924; I was two years older, born November 8, 1922. Just let one of us get out of sight of the other and we would always say, "Where's William?" or "Where's Lucille?" We did have our squabbles, though. I remember throwing a rock and hitting him in the head. A big bump came up right away. I begged him not to tell Mother, as she would whip me. Our mother used a switch pretty often, but our dad never spanked or whipped us, that I recall.

Our house was built with timbers taken from the farm. Long before we were born, our dad, Clyde Silas Kemper, accidently cut off part of two fingers in a sawmill. It didn't seem to bother him in his work. The house was built up on blocks, and we would play under the house with spools from thread, making all kinds of little roads and bridges. Since we didn't have television, we had to make our own fun.

One of our fun games was rolling a hoop, about 10 to 12 inches in diameter, with a paddle made from a piece of poplar wood with a cross piece nailed on one end. We would try to see who could keep the hoop rolling the longest time through mud and water, and so forth. Another game we played was throwing pieces of wood in the creek after a rain and pretending they were boats. We would race with them for a long way just to see who would win the race.

William and I slept together when we were young. We always seemed to have owls, and we didn't like to hear them at night, especially the young owls that we called "screech owls." They would try to hoot like their parents, and it was a terrible noise. We would try to get to sleep before they started calling.

Our house had large rooms. The

The Kemper children posed for this portrait in the mid-1920's. Standing in the front are, from the left, William, Kathleen, and Lucille. In the back are Helen and Ralph.

Standing in front of the Kemper family home in the early 1930's are, from the left, Aunt Biddie Bell, grandmother Finanda Miller, sister Kathleen, sister Helen,

bedrooms had no heat at any time. The winters were very cold and the beds even colder. Many nights, our mother would heat the old-fashioned irons on the stove, wrap them in a cloth, and place them at our feet in the bed. No electric blankets were available and, of course, no air conditioning for the hot summers.

We raised all kinds of animals on our farm: cattle, sheep, pigs, chickens, turkeys, ducks, and just about anything you can think of. It was our job to feed the chickens, gather the eggs, feed the pigs, and milk the cows. We had one cow, Ole Blackie, that liked to kick when we were milking her. We always had to put kickers on her so she wouldn't spill the milk pail. Kickers were something like handcuffs.

At Easter time, we would see who could eat the most eggs on Easter Day. A few days before, we would start keeping some of the eggs we would gather and put them in a safe place to surprise our mother the evening before Easter. She would say, "I wonder why the chickens are not laying more eggs. I hardly have enough to cook with." We thought we were fooling her, but she knew exactly what we were doing.

We had to walk to school, and by spring, the roads were very muddy. We always had to wear overshoes or boots, called "four-buckle arctics." We also had to wear long underwear. Once a week, we would take a bath in the washtub with water heated on the stove. We didn't have electricity, but we did have gas, so we had

on how much sap he had collected. Smaller amounts were boiled down on the kitchen stove. The syrup was very good on pancakes, but certainly was a lot of work.

I remember one of the most tantalizing fragrances was sassafras tea. That was our spring tonic. We were told it would thin our blood after a long winter. Whether that is true, I don't really know. William and I would dig the roots of the sassafras tree. The bigger roots provided the most intense flavor, though we often dug puny little roots. All the roots were scrubbed well, cut into pieces, and dropped into large containers of water. We would simmer the solution for several hours or until the water turned a deep red color. It was then time to remove the roots, and it was ready to drink. We always added a little sugar, and it was very tasty.

Our dad worked for the oil company as a gauger. He rode a horse to the different wells, and our dog Don went with him. One day, William and some of the boys from school set a haystack on fire at a neighbor's place about a half-mile away. The boys made William promise he wouldn't tell who did it. For several days, he didn't tell; the boys kept bullying him everyday not to tell. Finally, he couldn't stand it and did tell Mother. Nothing ever became of that as I recall, but it shows our parents raised us to tell the truth.

We didn't always enjoy the farm work, but we were expected to work. One chore we hated was cutting "filth." Filth was any weeds that were growing on cleared land. We were given a hoe, lined up in a row to cover an area about 10 feet wide, and cut mullen, pokeberry, thistle, and briers. If there were several of us, we could cover a large area in a short time.

Most of our animals were very gentle, except a red rooster, who would chase us every time we went near the chickens. He would peck us and sometimes fly into us, trying to spur us with the spurs on his legs. One big old buck sheep — the ram — liked to chase us, so we avoided going into the field when he was there. One of my favorite things was to ride a horse named Bill. I would saddle him myself. One day, I didn't get the saddle tight enough. As we were riding along, the saddle turned completely under his belly. I hung on until the horse stopped, almost immediately. I got off, put the saddle back in place, and rode on. He was a very gentle horse.

Our grade school building consisted of one large room where all eight grades were taught. Mrs. Gay Ruppert was our teacher for several years, followed by a Miss Bosely, Mr. Cooper, and Miss Pearle Maxson. I recall when Mr. Cooper was there as our teacher, we had a picnic and he made lemonade in a zinc bucket. That evening, both William and I were very ill and vomiting. I had

The Grove School, where the Kemper children received their primary education. Lucille, in the sixth grade, is seated at center with a plaid dress; William is seated in the same row, first boy on the left. He was in the fourth grade when this photograph was taken in about 1934. Teacher Gay Ruppert is seated second row from the top.

been vomiting, but finally felt well enough to do the chores. As I entered the barn, there was William lying in the haystack sick as I was. It was the lemonade made in the zinc bucket that had caused zinc poisoning of both of us and all the other students.

During the year of Pearle Maxson's teaching at Grove, I was in the eighth grade and William was in the sixth grade. Our brother, Ralph, started dating Pearle and would take us on picnics with the two of them. I remember Ralph getting onto us for eating too many of the wieners.

When Ralph and sister Helen were starting high school in West Union, the only high school in Doddridge County, there were no buses to take them. Our mother and all the children moved to West Union so the older ones could go to high school. We lived in a building called the Opera House, across the street from the courthouse. Our dad stayed on the farm and continued to work for South Penn Oil Company. He came in on weekends.

Time passed, and in 1940, I graduated from Doddridge County High School. Our dad was transferred to Salem, and William transferred to Salem High School for his senior year. For one year, I attended Glenville State Teachers College. The next year, I transferred to Salem College, so I could stay at home and attend college.

When World War II started, all boys who were 18 years of age were required to register for the draft. William, being 18, registered as required by the United States Draft Board. I will never forget when William was drafted, seeing him walk down Valley Street in Salem by himself, going off to war. My mother and I were standing on the front porch watching him go.

I don't recall where he had to report, but he was finally sent to the European war zone and served in the Army in an anti-aircraft unit in the Battle of the Bulge. During that time, he was in a battalion moving to the battlefront, and his truck was the second in line. His truck developed engine trouble, and they had to drop out of line. The number three truck then moved up to take its place. A little later, a shell hit this truck, which was traveling in the number two position. All in the truck were killed.

A month later, a neighbor from the small town of Bristol, close to Salem, called us to say she was very sorry to hear William had been killed. Of course, Mother was very distraught at hearing this and sat all day on Sunday crying. I remember telling her, "I know it can't be true or the government would have sent a soldier to notify you." In fact, it was not true. Mother finally received a letter from William, written after the date he had been reported as dead. As it turned out, the son of this neighbor had written to his mother telling her the number two truck had been blown up, not realizing that William's truck had dropped back due to engine trouble. How that ever got through the censorship, we will never know.

Each home had a special flag in the window, showing how many soldiers were in the service from that household and in which branches of the military they belonged. William and Ralph were both in the service from our household, so we displayed an Army and an Air Force flag throughout the war.

My wedding to Russell Lee Davisson of Salem took place on May 12, 1944. William was home on leave and was busy driving various relatives to the Salem Baptist Church. A young man dressed in bib overalls asked William what was going on at the church. William replied, "My sister is getting married, come on in." The young man came to the wedding and also attended the reception in the church parlor. I remember seeing him eating cake and drinking punch. He was very nervous and his hands

Author Lucille Kemper in 1941, the year after she graduated from Doddridge County High School.

William Kemper as a young man, date unknown.

Lucille Kemper wed Ensign Russell Davisson in Salem on May 12, 1944. The couple eventually settled in the Charleston area and today live in Hurricane.

William Kemper stayed close to his family, particularly his sister Lucille, until his death in 1988. He is pictured here with his wife, Leora, in August 1988.

were shaking. Afterwards, he left, and as far as I know we have never seen him again. A week later, Russ and I were talking about the young man who attended our wedding. Russ thought he was some of my relatives, and I thought he was some of his. We both had a good laugh.

When William and Russ came home after the end of World War II, they decided to go squirrel hunting at our farm in Doddridge County, a pastime they had enjoyed several years before. William went on one side of the hill and Russ on the other. Before long, they had killed their quota and returned to the designated meeting place. Russ said those shots echoed from hill to hill, and he was sure a conservation officer was behind every tree. They returned to Salem with their loot, without being caught for hunting out of season.

William entered West Virginia University under the G.I. Bill. While there, he married Leora Hulstine on December 26, 1948. He graduated from WVU with a bachelor's degree in agriculture and a master's degree in horticulture.

Following college, William had a varied career, moving several times to pursue job opportunities. He and Leora lived in Maryland, Ohio, Charleston, Wirt County, Morgantown, California, and Arizona. He helped to develop the paper milk carton, did agricultural research on macadamia nuts and citrus, managed a children's home, and taught school.

I taught school in Harrison County until 1946 then settled in St. Albans after Russ accepted a job with Union Carbide. I later got my LPN and worked as a nurse for 11 years. Russ and I are now retired and live in Hurricane.

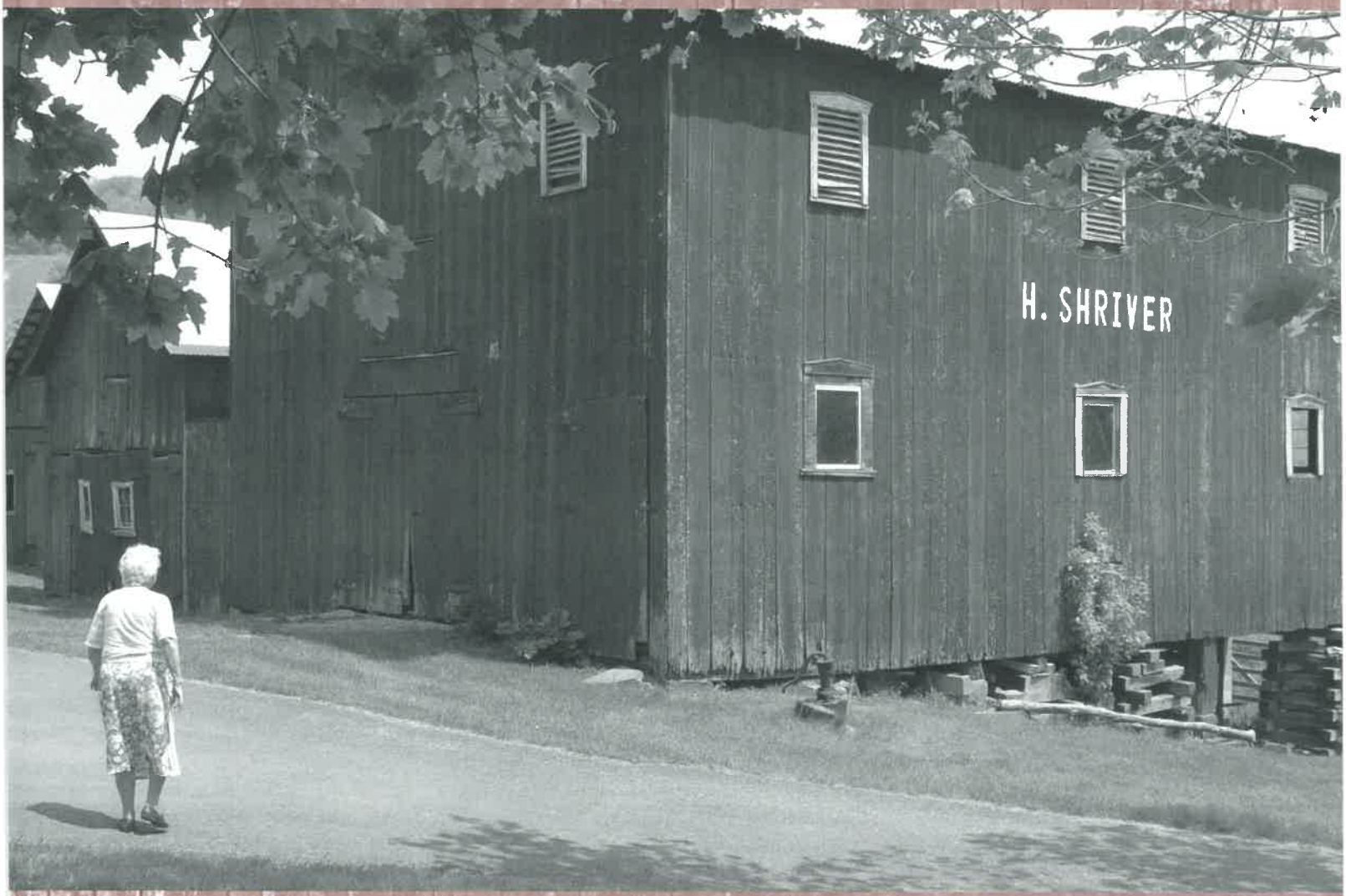
Though we left our home in the hollow long ago, William and I carried those early experiences with us throughout our adult lives. We stayed close to one another through frequent phone calls, visits, and reunions until his death in 1988. We were always grateful for the excellent education, fun times, and good start on life we got while growing up in Plaugher Hollow.

LUCILLE KEMPER DAVISSON attended Salem College in 1942. She has worked as a teacher and a licensed practical nurse, and is now retired and living in Hurricane, Putnam County. In 2002, Lucille published a volume of genealogy. This is her first contribution to GOLDENSEAL.

"I Just Have the Memory"

Wilma Shriver and her Farm

Text and photographs by Carl E. Feather



It's hard to miss Wilma Shriver's Route 7 farm in Monongalia County.

About 20 years ago, Wilma hired a man to paint "H. SHRIVER" in big, white letters on the sides of the two red barns that face the highway. The "H" stands for "Howard," her late husband, who died August 10, 1973, two days shy of his 59th birthday. It could as easily stand for "Henry D.," Howard's father; or Solomon Howard, his grandfather; or Howard Arnet, their son, who lives in the house up Wise Run Road that overlooks the farm, now operated by Howard Arnet's son, Greg.

Wilma had the family name painted on the barns because she gets a lot of company, and the barns provide an excellent landmark. For example, there are folks from Wilma's church, West Warren Baptist, who come to Wilma's home for chili suppers and Sunday afternoon visits. And there are out-of-state relatives who take the byway so they can visit with Wilma when they're passing through, as well as kin who come from all over for the family reunions held in her basement.

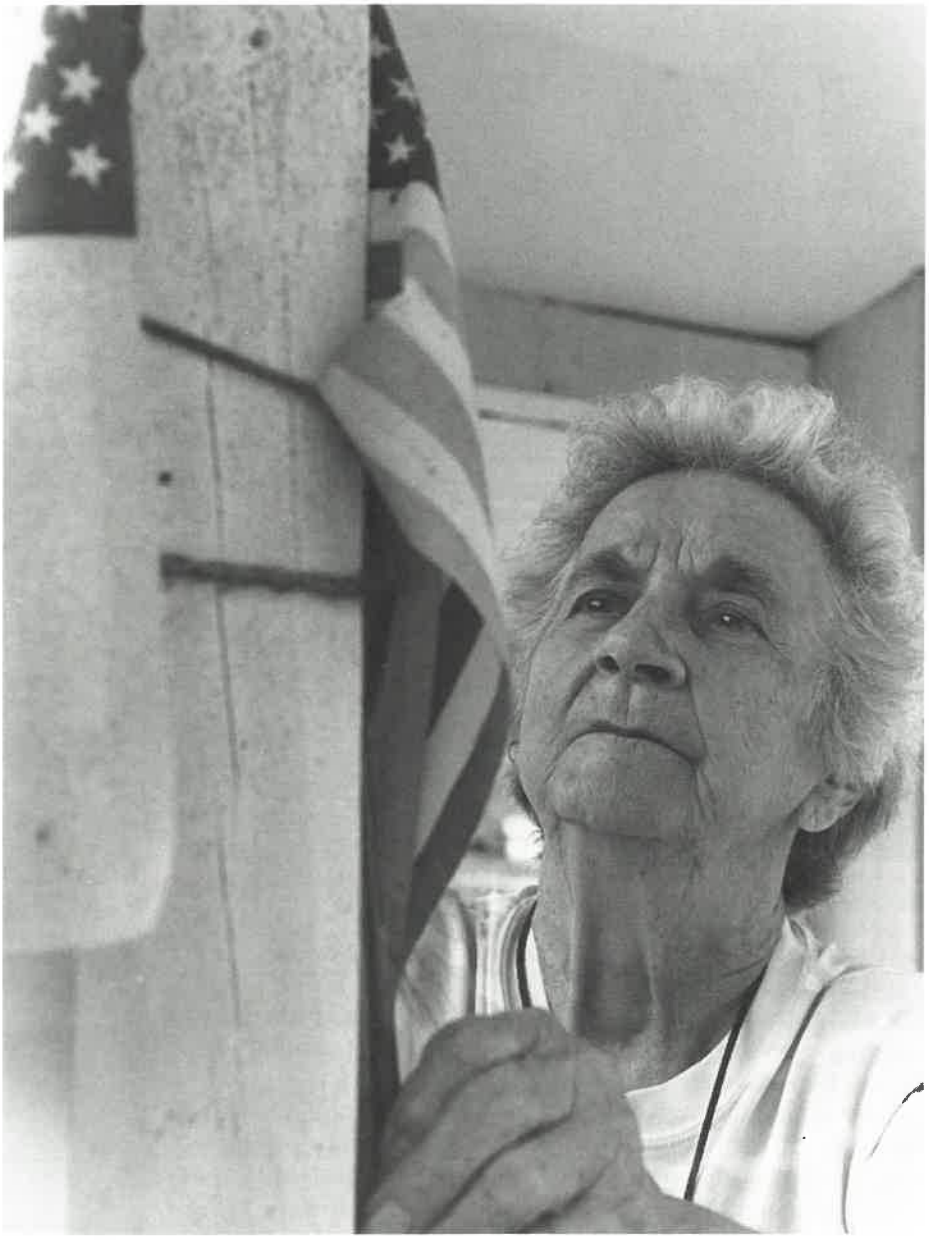
And then there were the 200 or so voters who once made their way to the Shriver farm every election day to participate in the democratic process. Wilma's 30- by 30-foot white, steel garage is where voters from Precinct 42 cast their votes for at least two decades, perhaps longer. "Time goes by so quickly," she says, trying to recall exactly.

Wilma tells me that these voters once reported to a building in Wana. But after that building was sold and razed, they were left with only a church as an option. And Wilma says the church people were split on making their building a house of votes. Wilma had just put up her new garage, and the local election official asked her if she'd mind hosting the election. "I had no reason to say no," Wilma says. That was more than 20 years ago. Today, local voters use the Wana Methodist Church Annex, where they have voted since 2005.

Ironically, until the general election of 2004 and redistricting of the precinct, Wilma's farm was outside Precinct 42. "Always before, we had to go to Wadestown," she says. "[In 2004], they brought me back to this precinct."

Wilma was paid $75 for the use of her garage, but she'd still have provided the service to her community even if payment were not provided. "I'm just glad to have them," she says. "You know, money doesn't mean anything."

Wilma enjoyed the parade of friends and neighbors on election day and the company of the five election workers who imposed upon her hospitality during the 14 hours they spent in the heated garage. When she had her new house built in 1996, Wilma selected a design with a rest room right off the back entrance so voters and workers wouldn't have to walk through her house to take care of business.



Wilma arranges small American flags on a post near her garage, where voters of Precinct 42 cast their votes for more than 20 years.

Wilma Shriver walks along her driveway toward a row of barns on her 243-acre property, located on Route 7 in western Monongalia County. The Shriver family has been here since the 1800's; Wilma moved to the farm following her marriage to Howard Shriver in 1931.

This old barn once held fleece gathered from the Shriver's flock of Hampshire sheep. Today, it is mostly used for storage. For Wilma, it holds many memories.

there, and of the morning they are so noisy. I can sit out here and listen to them."

She explains that the two-lane Route 7 was constructed through here in 1928. The byway it replaced ran right behind her house. Out the back door and down the driveway, the outline of the former roadbed becomes evident. It explains why the row of interconnected, frame farm buildings — a barn, grain house, and garage — open toward the old highway rather than Route 7, and why there's a hand pump at the corner of the barn near the former highway. Wilma says that there's a 90-foot-deep well under that pump and that the well supplied water to thirsty travelers and their horses as they traveled Route 7. The well also supplied water to the Hampshire sheep that she and her husband raised here after the war.

Down the old road, the way is impeded by a fence, enclosing a pasture to the east of her home and the row of farm buildings. There's a clearing between the last building and the fence. Wilma pauses there and explains that the spot has special significance to her and Howard Arnet — it's where Lutie is buried.

Lutie was a shepherd mix, named after a Mr. Luther, who gave them the dog when their son was a lad. Lutie and Howard Arnet grew up together, but about the time Howard was graduating from high school, Lutie died.

"He always said that took the joy out of his graduation," Wilma says.

Out in the field beyond the fence stands the farm's big red barn, "H. SHRIVER" painted on its front. Wilma says it's the oldest of the farm buildings, constructed in the 1800's using post-and-beam construction. Still in use, the barn cost $93 when it was built.

Past the row of red buildings, Wilma explains that one of the buildings was used to house the sheep, another for storing the sacks of coarse wool that they yielded. Her grandson, who raises beef cattle on the farm, now uses the buildings for his farm machinery.

The barn is a catchall, providing storage for anything and everything outdated or unneeded. That includes a homemade device that was used for filling burlap sacks with wool. It will never be used again and could be dismantled for its lumber, but Wilma doesn't want to part with it just yet.

Wilma apologizes for the clutter in the barn, but there are several items in there that help complete the story of this farm. First is a stack of walnut lumber awaiting a craftsman to turn

Wilma still keeps Howard's collection of custom-made horseshoes in the barn. He was once a champion horseshoe pitcher.

Wilma walks past the horseshoe court, where her late husband spent many hours honing his skills. "I used to keep it up in pretty good shape," Wilma says.

it into kitchen cabinets or furniture. The lumber came from a single English walnut tree that stood in their front yard. According to family lore, Sol Shriver ordered the tree and planted it, but, to Wilma's knowledge, it never bore any nuts. For decades, it provided shade and was yet another landmark along this highway.

"We had to take it down to get the house in here," Wilma says. Her son decided to have it milled into lumber with the plan of making furniture out of it, but a busy schedule and physical problems have retained the furniture in its raw form.

Leaving the former stall where the lumber is stacked, Wilma points out a row of horseshoes hanging over the stall wall. They are custom-made shoes that her husband used in his favorite pastime. Howard pitched horseshoes all over the region and was a state champion.

"He pitched all his life," she says. "Out of 100 shoes, he'd be in the upper 90's. He'd do it on and on. After the day's work was done, he was out there on his court."

That court is the last stop on our tour of the Shriver farm. Wilma says Howard, who had a heart condition, died while sitting in a chair at one end of the court. That makes this little strip of land especially bittersweet for Wilma, who seems lost in her thoughts as she walks the length of the court.

"I used to keep it up in pretty good shape," she says. "I felt I was doing it for him. But anymore, it doesn't have the significance. I just have the memory."

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.

Decoration Day

By Deborah McHenry Ross

The Knight cemetery, Braxton County, in 1961.

When I was a child growing up in Parkersburg, Memorial Day was equated with family, food, and remembrance of loved ones who had gone on before us. At that time, we called it "Decoration Day." Each year, my family traveled to the old Knight cemetery, located in Braxton County, where several members of my mother's family were buried. We came to pay our respects, clean and maintain the graves, and decorate them with flowers.

Located on private farmland with no easy access, my family walked approximately two miles of railroad track, beginning at Hires Run United Methodist Church, before climbing a steep hill up to the cemetery. Ascending this hill involved not only climbing over a barbed wire fence, but also walking through an active cow pasture. Stepping gingerly around "cow pies" and watching carefully for the occasional angry bull, we forged a winding path to the top.

Our footsteps followed paths that generations before us had trod, bringing deceased family members to their final resting places. We passed the ancient rose bush, reported to be the spot where my grandmother's funeral was preached before burial. According to family legend, caskets were carried to this spot either by train or across the nearby river by boat. Pallbearers were responsible for carrying the caskets up the hill to the cemetery.

Climbing up the hill was taxing. Although fortified by the picnic lunch we always shared on the grounds of Hires Run Church, we were still pretty well winded by the time we got to the top of the hill.

Nestled among tall oak and pine

Each year on Decoration Day, the McHenry family would gather supplies and make the long trek to the old Knight family cemetery in Braxton County. Here, our author's parents, Austin and Irene McHenry, undertake their annual journey in 1963.

trees, the lone cemetery quietly awaited our coming. A rusty iron gate, held shut by chicken wire, allowed our entrance to the graveyard. As the youngest, I did less of the work and spent more time wandering about, looking at old tombstones. I was always fascinated by the dates and writing on the stones. I was amazed at how young many of the people were when they had died. A few graves had no markers at all, only stones marking the head and feet of the person. Always alert for snakes that might be slithering about, my mother would call me back close to her, reminding me as I walked that it was disrespectful to the dead to actually step on the graves themselves.

Working together using spades and hoes, we cut back weeds and emptied faded flowers from vases, in exchange for new, colorful ones. Before I was born, I am told, my mother actually made the flowers for the graves. Using colorful crepe paper, she would fashion the bloom of the flower and then dip it carefully into hot wax to preserve it. Arranged in used coffee cans, these homemade flowers were quite attractive. In later years, she purchased plastic flowers for the graves of her parents.

My maternal grandparents, Scott and Sylvia Knight Barker, both died very young. Sylvia died at age 21 of complications from the measles, and Scott in his 30's from a ruptured appendix. My mother was only four years old when her mother died and 10 years old when she lost her father. Being orphaned at such a young age was difficult for my mother and her younger brother. She shared sad memories of coming across the farm as a child, standing at the fence, and looking over into the graveyard with tears in her eyes, crying for her deceased parents. However, Decoration Day was not only for remembering, but also for building new memories to share with future generations. Tears mingled with laughter as we shared old memories and created new ones that would fortify our family for years to come.

Author Deborah McHenry with her mother, Irene, in 1961.

Our work done, we would hike back down the hill and face another two-mile trek back to the church. Our day usually began early, and it was mid-afternoon by the time we returned. We would sometimes watch the afternoon heat "dance" on the railroad tracks as we walked along. We moved quickly, listening always for the sound of an approaching train. Many times, we made a quick exit down the side of the hill away from the tracks when an oncoming train was spotted. As the train rushed by with cinders splaying through the air and warning bells ringing, the engineer would wave at us as we waited by the side of the tracks for the great iron horse to pass by.

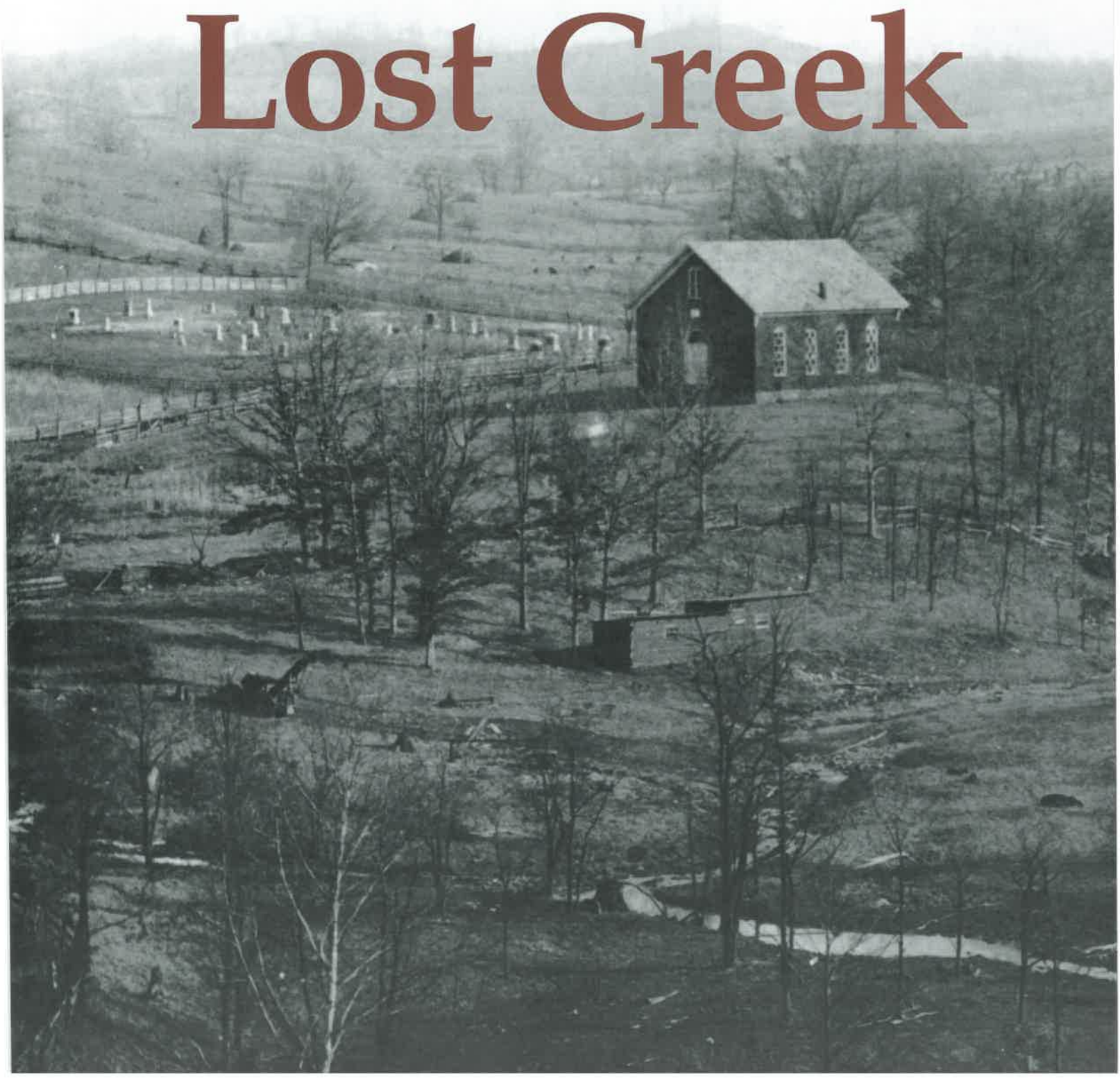
After we got back to the church, we would travel down Route 5 to our Aunt Beulah McHenry's house, located at Gilmer Station in Gilmer County. She lived with her elderly father, whom I affectionately called Uncle Losh. He saved gumballs and trinkets for me, and I looked forward eagerly to sitting on the front porch swing with him. A quiet man, he would listen patiently to my ramblings as we watched the traffic go by on the dirt road.

My mother and sisters would spend their time in the kitchen with Aunt Beulah. Famous for her brown beans, always kept ready on the stove, she would knead baking-powder biscuits and cut them with the sharp edges of a baking-powder can while regaling us with tales of small-town life. Many Decoration Day evenings were spent round her table.

My mother and aunt are now gone, and my sisters and I have not made the trek to the cemetery for many years. However, each Decoration Day takes me back in memory to more simple times with my family as a child growing up in West Virginia.

DEBORAH McHENRY ROSS was born and raised in Parkersburg. She earned a bachelor's degree from Marietta College in 1981 and a master's in education from Western Carolina University in 1997. Deborah has taught for more than 25 years; her work has been published in *Mailbox Magazine*. This is her first contribution to GOLDENSEAL.

The Old Brick Church at Lost Creek



The Lost Creek Seventh Day Baptist Church has deep roots in southern Harrison County, dating to post-Revolutionary War times. The current church building, seen here in the early 1900's, was dedicated in 1872. It burned 15 years later then was rebuilt in 1887, using the same bricks.

By S. Thomas Bond

During my childhood, every Saturday — known to us as the Sabbath — we would dress in our best clothes and go to church. The church my parents, sisters, and I attended was the Lost Creek Seventh Day Baptist Church, and both of my parents could trace their paternal lines and memberships in the church back to shortly after the Revolutionary War. The church still serves, located a mile north of Lost Creek in southern Harrison County. It is visible from I-79, looking toward the east perhaps 300 yards.

By local standards, the church is very old. They celebrated the sesquicentennial in 1955, when I was 21, and the bicentennial in 2005. My direct ancestor, Richard Bond, and his family were among the founding members of the church in 1805. The Lost Creek area was raw frontier, and the founders numbered only 10, but seven more members were added in the first six weeks. The first log church was built in 1806 on land that is now within the town limits of Lost Creek. The building standing today by the road from Lost Creek to Mount Claire is a plain, rectangular brick church. It has a high ceiling and is large enough to seat about 70 congregants. It was dedicated in 1872. The use of brick for church construction was unusual in this area at that time, and people immediately began referring to it as the "Brick Church." Though other brick-built churches can now be seen in the vicinity, local people still know this original building as the "Old Brick Church."

In some ways, the church in my youth was much the same as it always had been. The polity, or form

More than 30 men have pastored at the Lost Creek Seventh Day Baptist Church since it was organized in 1805. At left is the Reverend John L. Huffman, pastor during the 1880's; photograph by S.L. Crandall. At center is Reverend Marion Van Horn, pastor 1944-47. At right is Reverend Rex Zwiebel, pastor 1948-55. The current pastor is Don Shackleford.

of government, was standard Baptist, dating to pioneer times: minister chosen by the congregation; associations of churches in various areas of the nation; annual conference of all the churches in the United States; deacons (and later deaconesses) to assist the pastor and decide on matters of faith; and church meetings of all members to decide on business matters, conducted by a moderator and recorded by a clerk. The organization remains the same today.

A lot of good feeling and mutual respect exist among members, without regard for social status outside church. In the past, there was much respect for learning. In my youth, most people in the congregation were related, and many still are.

The distinctive theological positions were the seventh-day (Saturday) Sabbath and baptism by immersion. Beyond that, at the time of my youth, the church presented the liberal (Northern) Baptist ideals. There was considerable latitude between individual Seventh Day Baptist churches, because there is no hierarchy.

Seventh Day Baptists from the beginning strongly disapproved of slavery. Before the Civil War, the Lost Creek church was located in slave territory, since West Virginia was still part of the state of Virginia. One of the members, Abel Bond, married a Maryland girl, whose uncle made her a present of a slave girl named Lottie. Since her best protection was to stay with a family who respected her, Lottie continued with Abel's family and became an active member of the Lost Creek church. On reaching womanhood, Lottie wanted to marry Manuel, another slave and a member of the church. Abel disapproved, but gave his permission anyway.

Lottie and Manuel wed and raised several children. Abel, who had by this time been ordained a deacon in the church, offered to free Lottie and her children and pay for their transportation to a free state, if someone could be found to provide a place for them. They could not remain free where they lived, because the law stipulated if a free black stayed beyond a certain number of days in Virginia, he or she could be sold again into slavery. Lottie chose to stay with Abel and his family.

Some years later, Manuel's owner sold his farm to Eli and Moses van Horn, who were Seventh Day Baptists. He sold Manuel to another farmer further away from the church. Manuel was unhappy with his new situation and asked Eli and Moses to buy him, as well, and allow him to return to the cabin where he had lived for so many years. So, Eli and Moses bought Manuel. The church now had two members who owned a third member, and a deacon who owned a female slave and her children.

In 1856, the Lost Creek church and its sister Seventh Day Baptist church at Salem applied to join the Eastern Association of Seventh Day Baptist churches, and the Lost Creek church was rejected. There was an extended discussion with churches east and north, trying to explain the situation. Among the statements made by the Lost Creek church were:

"We regard American slavery as a sin of great magnitude in the sight of God, and a flagrant violation of the rights of our fellow man, and it is our duty to use all of our influence against it"; and "The relation of master and slave does not exist in the Lost Creek church, in the proper sense of the phrase, and only technically, and the church is not justly chargeable with sustaining slavery."

Others disagreed, however. The debate became so heated that the Lost Creek church withdrew its application, saying to the other churches, "Our usefulness to each other and to the cause as coworkers [is] paralyzed if not destroyed."

The members who were slaves

The Lost Creek Seventh Day Baptist Church today. Photograph by Michael Keller.

considered women's work, and these women were used to long days on the farm. Men weren't deemed good enough to do cooking and were thought to be too careless about washing dishes, but they were allowed to dry dishes.

The Lost Creek church had an oyster supper almost every year for more than 100 years, with time out for World War II, when oysters were not available. The last one was held in 1969. The tradition was discontinued when TV came in and younger women worked more outside the home.

The cemetery across the road from the church has graves that date to the Civil War era. Some families have five generations buried there. Graves are arranged by family plots. Fifty years ago, there was an arch over the entrance to the cemetery, but it and the fence that kept out cattle being driven along the road have gone. Lost Creek was once a very active cattle shipping center, so this fence served an important function. [See "My Early Days in Lost Creek," by Lud Freeman; Fall 2002.]

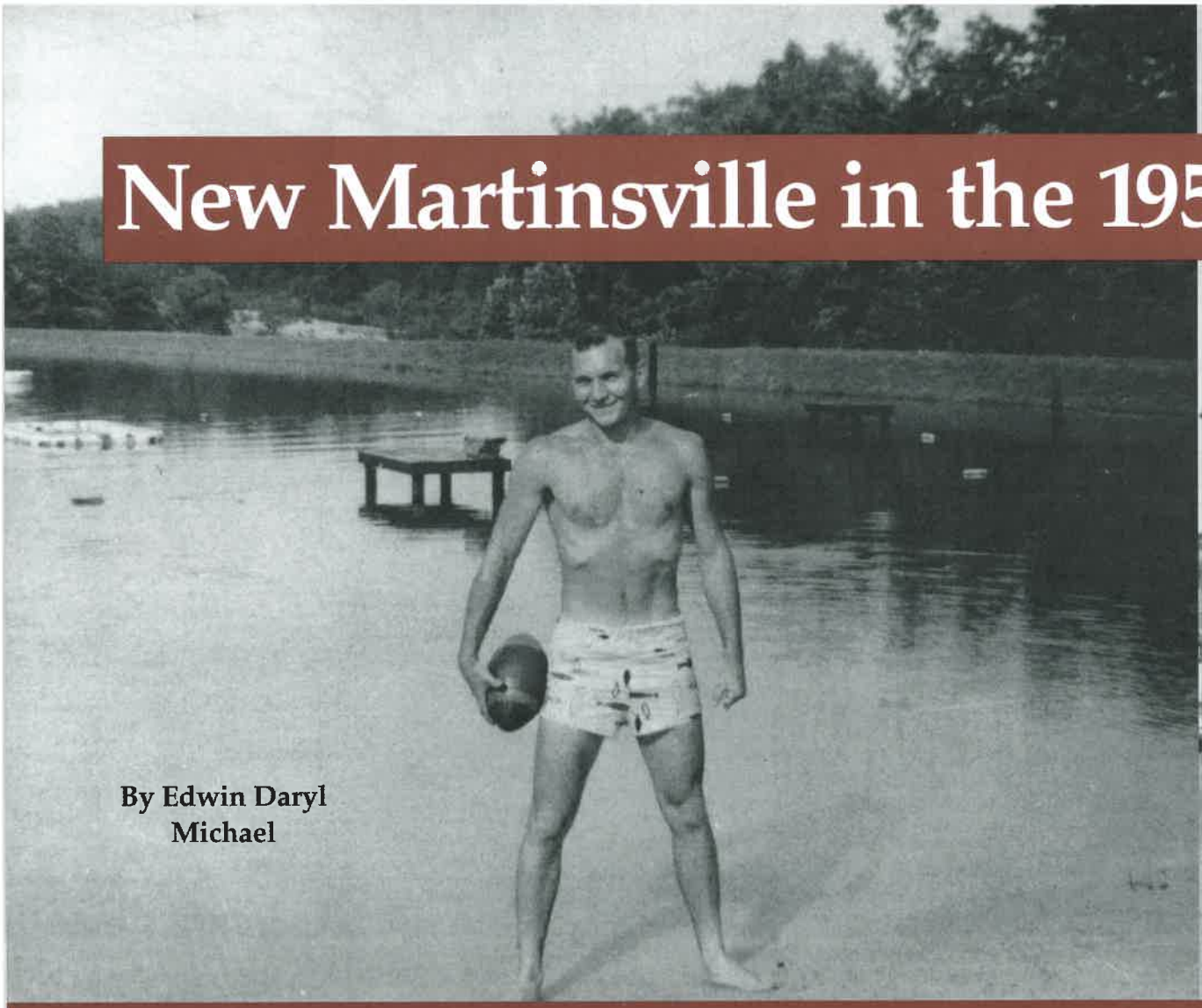
There are three other cemeteries nearby that the church has used in times past. One is near the interstate, where the road goes out of Lost Creek toward West Milford — the site of the "Frame Church." This was the third church building occupied by the congregation, which was also the first one not built of logs. Another cemetery is located farther on down that road, a half mile before South Harrison High School, the site of the second log church. The third cemetery is located near Quiet Dell, one of several "preaching stations" in an area where many Seventh Day Baptists once lived. In these earlier cemeteries, there are no family plots — each newly dug grave was situated by the last one.

The Seventh Day Baptists were a rapidly growing church on the frontier, comparable in number to the Methodists. They spread across the continent but did not grow after a certain point. The loss of the Seventh Day Baptist Theological School at Alfred University in New York, at about the time of the Lost Creek church sesquicentennial, resulted in a shift toward fundamentalism.

The Old Brick Church in Lost Creek is still quite active. Since my youth, they have built an addition for the Sabbath School (which functions like a Sunday School), and a brick parsonage within easy walking distance of the church. Hard roads and easy access to I-79 have made travel faster and more convenient, but the church institutions and its character remain much like they were when Western Virginia was the frontier.

S. THOMAS BOND has spent most of his life farming and teaching in the Lost Creek vicinity. After graduating from Salem College, he earned a master's degree at West Virginia University and a doctorate in chemistry from Kent State University. Now retired, he taught for 19 years at Salem College, 15 years at Bridgeport High School, and six years at Hartman Magnet School in Harrison County. This is Tom's first contribution to GOLDENSEAL.

New Martinsville in the 1950's



By Edwin Daryl Michael

Teen Years in

Author Daryl Michael was all smiles when this photograph was taken at a New Martinsville summer camp in the 1950's.

It was my good fortune to be a teenager in New Martinsville during the 1950's. I moved there in 1953 from Shinnston, when my father, Edward Michael, along with his brothers-in-law, Hugh Garrison and Brooks Gump, opened G.M.G. Plumbing & Heating Company. Those were kinder, gentler, more innocent times.

In the 1950's, this Ohio River town — the seat of Wetzel County — was nearly ideal for a teenager. With a population of 4,084 in 1950, New Martinsville provided almost every recreational opportunity a typical teenager could desire. The centerpiece was the city park, where one could enjoy the swimming pool, tennis courts, lighted basketball court, and lighted softball field. Two other ball fields were located in Brooklyn, that portion of town south of Fishing Creek. There were organized high school sports and American Legion baseball. More casual baseball, basketball, and tennis playing at the city park involved pickup games, with little or no adult supervision. George Woods, who coached high school football, basketball, and baseball, provided limited supervision at some of the summer nighttime basketball games.

I had no opportunity to play tennis until moving to New Martinsville, but after discovering this challenging sport, I spent many summer hours playing on the city park courts. The park was only three blocks from my house, so I could ride my bike there in almost no

a River Town

New Martinsville's Main Street. This 1950's postcard view is courtesy of the West Virginia and Regional History Collection, West Virginia University Libraries.

time. I have vivid memories of beating Johnny Joe Mensore in singles and then later teaming with him to win the city championship in doubles. One summer, we were invited to play in the state tennis tournament in Charleston and ended up being narrowly defeated in the doubles finals.

New Martinsville has historically been a leader in providing recreational opportunities for its youth. As early as the late 1800's, this progressive town offered a large fairgrounds, complete with a racetrack for harness racing and bicycle racing. By 1907, Magnolia High School fielded the first football team in Wetzel County. When lights were added to the football field in 1931, it was one of the first in West Virginia to have night games. Nine years later, Bruce Pool, an impressive above-ground structure built of native stone by the CCC, was opened to the public. [See "Diving Into History: Pools of the Northern Panhandle," by Catherine M. Jourdan; Summer 2002.]

While the city park provided summer recreation, the town boasted a bowling alley, a pool hall, two local movie houses, a youth center, and several ice-cream parlors for winter recreation. We had a citywide curfew during weeknights — the fire siren signaled when it was 10:00 and all youngsters had to be home or headed home.

Most places where teenagers hung out had at least one gaudy pinball machine and a flashing jukebox full of large 78 rpm records. There were so many memorable recording artists during the 1950's that it is difficult to select the ones we enjoyed most. One of my favorites was Tennessee

The Robert L. Bruce Municipal Swimming Pool in New Martinsville in the 1950's. This above-ground, oval-shaped pool was built during the New Deal and is still in use today.

Ernie Ford, singing "Sixteen Tons." For those who wanted action on the dance floor, a dime in the jukebox would bring forth songs suitable for jitterbugging. But if you wanted to hold your partner a little closer, there were plenty of songs to match that mood, as well. Of course, we also had the "King." I remember sitting on a couch in Elaine Davis' house, watching Elvis Presley make his national TV debut on the *Ed Sullivan Show* on September 9, 1956.

In addition to the local movie houses, we had not one, but two drive-in theaters. One night a week, we loaded up as many passengers as possible for the dollar-per-carload special. On other nights, we would sometimes stuff one or two individuals into the car trunk to save on entry fees, letting them out after we were inside the drive-in. Many summer nights were spent with a carload of friends watching an exciting movie on the big screen, listening to the loudspeaker that could be brought into our car. Car heaters were added after a few years and made it possible to watch movies when the chill of autumn was in the air. The only problem I remember was that the car windows would sometimes fog up during cold weather, making it difficult to see the screen. What more could a teenager in the 1950's want?

New Martinsville was first settled in 1780 by Edward Dulin (now spelled Doolin), with the first cabins being built near the point of land where Fishing Creek enters the Ohio River. This long, narrow town — approximately ½ mile wide by five miles long — is bordered by high hills on the east and the Ohio River on the west. Although the topography restricted the town's development, it provided access to numerous recreational opportunities for outdoor-minded youngsters who lived in town.

I greatly enjoyed fishing and hunting as a teenager. It was an easy walk to the wooded hills behind town or to the fields along Doolin Run for hunting, and to Fishing Creek or the Ohio River for boating and fishing. Although small game animals were common, large game animals were so scarce as to make hunting them almost a waste of time. A few wild turkey and white-tailed deer roamed the hills and hollows of Wetzel County, but hunters were lucky to see either, let alone harvest one. However, gray squirrels were abundant in the forested hills behind town, providing great sport and even greater eating. My mother, Isolene, had learned to cook wild game while growing up on Plum Run, and one of her specialties was fried squirrel, biscuits, and gravy. We hunted rabbits along the railroad tracks above and below town, and groundhogs in the many hayfields scattered along the ridges east of town. On Sundays, when hunting game animals was not legal, we shot rats at the city dump. Most garbage collected in New Martinsville was dumped over the hill in a deep hollow up Doolin Run. Bill Ebeling, Don Morris, and I would often take our .22-caliber rifles and see who could shoot the most rats, always running out of ammunition before we ran out of targets.

Fishing Creek was an unpolluted stream and supported large numbers of smallmouth bass and channel catfish, plus an assortment of other game fish. I had a small, wooden johnboat that we used for fishing, exploring, and taking girls for rides.

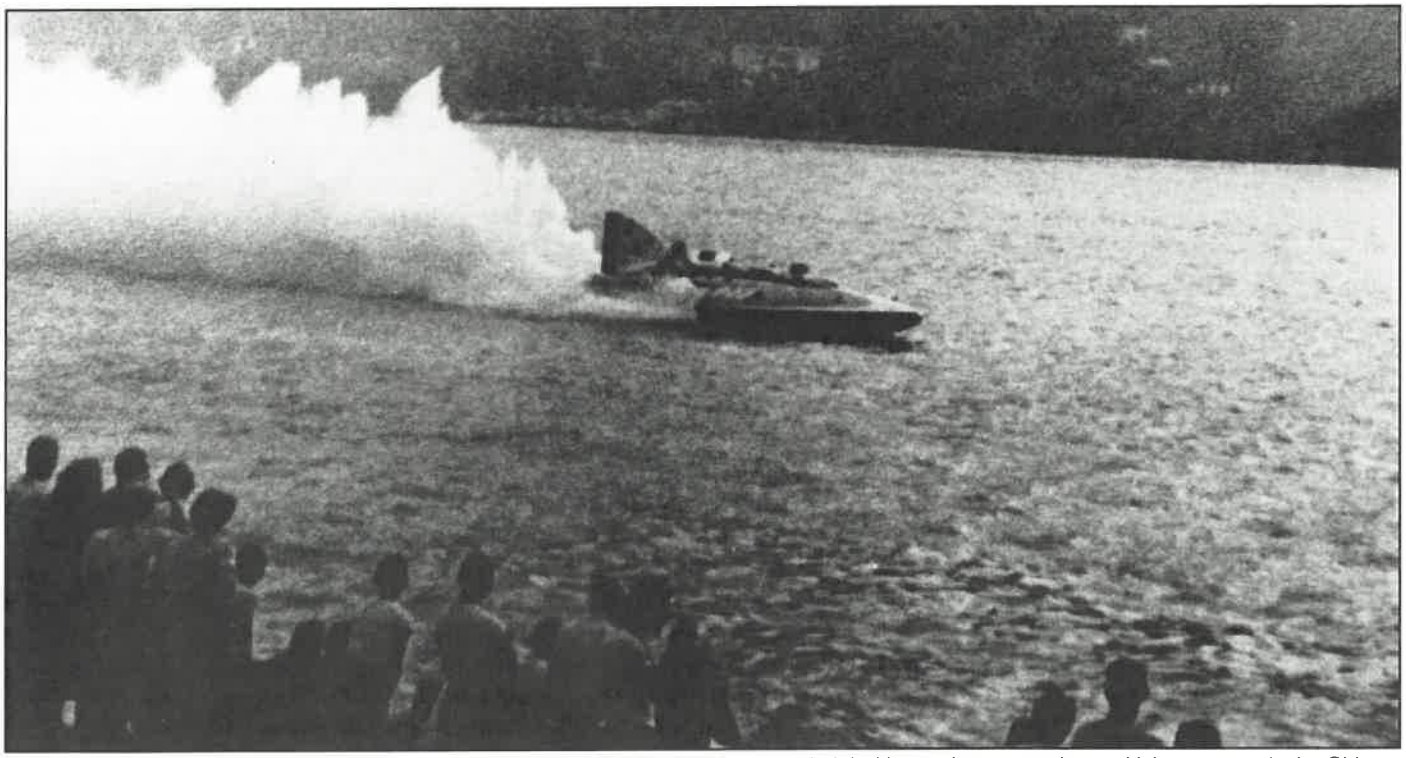
Work's Drive-In was one of two outdoor movie theaters popular with our author and other New Martinsville teens during the 1950's.

An avid athlete and outdoorsman, Daryl Michael is pictured in his football uniform in the 1955 Magnolia High School yearbook.

Mary Jo Rogers still has not forgiven me for "accidentally" dumping her into the cold creek. We never took my johnboat onto the Ohio River, but we did spend many days and nights fishing for bullhead catfish and carp from its banks. Due to pollution from industrial plants located upriver, these were the only game fish that lived in the Ohio River. Boat docks behind the yacht club provided a safe place to fish, where we did not have to worry about the dense poison ivy so prevalent along most riverbanks.

The yacht club also provided another noteworthy form of entertainment that was unique for a small river town — the New Martinsville Regatta. The two-day race, which was usually held during July, attracted some of the largest and fastest boats in the world: a record 178 mph in the time trials one year. As many as 50,000 people lined the Ohio River shoreline, where the main attraction was an array of large racing boats powered by airplane engines — Gold Cup boats named *Miss Pepsi, Miss DeSota,* and *Miss Tempo*. The locks and dam situated a short distance downriver of town created the "New Martinsville Pool" — a fairly straight stretch of river more than one mile in length that created near-optimum conditions for a high-speed race course. My friends and I spent many hours watching large cranes lift racing boats from trailers onto the river and cheering our favorites as they roared up and down the Ohio. There was a shortage of motels in New Martinsville and nearby towns, and many boat drivers were boarded by families in town. My family was fortunate to have a driver stay with us during several regattas. In addition to earning a few dollars room rent, my brother, Roger, and I got pit passes to view the boats and the drivers up close.

The river, which was responsible for the creation of New Martinsville and provided so many recreational opportunities, also brought times of hardship. Almost annually, spring floodwaters would inundate a major portion of the business district, located within two blocks of the river. As teenagers, we failed to comprehend the horrible economic losses caused by waters slowly rising onto Main Street and into the stores and restaurants located there. Fortunately, our family home and G.M.G. Plumbing & Heating were located high enough so that the floods were no threat. While devastating, the floods provided opportunities for teenagers to earn a few dollars spending money. During several floods, I helped carry clothes from the main floor to the second



Some of the fastest boats in the world competed at the New Martinsville Regatta each July. Here, a jet-powered racer kicks up water in the Ohio River while some of the 50,000 spectators look on; date unknown.

Author Daryl Michael with prom date, Lois Schupbach, in 1955.

floor of Winer's Clothing Store. There were no elevators, so the owners were glad to pay us to haul suits, shirts, and pants, plus boxes of ties, shoes, and socks up the wooden stairs to the second floor, where they would be safe from the damaging floodwaters. Don Mason and I must have made 500 trips up and down those steep, creaky stairs.

The hills that form the eastern border of the city and provided hunting opportunities made possible another form of recreation, as well. Several roads climbed from State Route 2 up onto nearby ridges, where some of my high school classmates lived. I have fond memories of one specific road — the one leading up Whiteman Hill. At several vantage points along the road, one could park a car and watch the barges traveling the Ohio, watch the sun set over the Ohio hills, or watch the colored lights of vehicles, houses, and businesses in town below. Such sights were best enjoyed when shared with a close friend, and many nights I did indeed share the sights from Whiteman Hill with a special young lady.

Like so many of the small West Virginia towns along the Ohio River in the 1950's, New Martinsville lacked a bridge crossing to the Ohio side. The nearest bridges were located at Moundsville to the north and St. Marys to the south. However, we did have a small ferryboat at New Martinsville to haul cars, trucks, and foot passengers. As I recall, the ferry could carry six cars and would take one commercial truck at a time. The operators charged 25 cents for a car and five cents for a pedestrian. The car ferry used the same stone-paved landing that had been used during the early 1900's by large paddle wheelers.

The ferry was the focal point of one special memory I have of the Ohio River. After graduating from Magnolia High School, I attended Marietta College in Ohio. Marietta is another Ohio River town, located about 50 miles downriver from New Martinsville. I had no car of my own and usually rode back and forth on weekends with my roommate, Howard Gilger. On those weekends when I could not get a ride with Howard, I would hitchhike. Only the St. Marys bridge crossed the Ohio River between Marietta and New Martinsville. If the driver who picked me up in Marietta was going up the Ohio side, I would ride to Duffy then take the ferry across the river to New Martinsville. After departing the ferry, I had a half-mile walk to my home. If the driver who picked me up was crossing the bridge at St. Marys, I would cross the river with him then resume hitchhiking up the West Virginia side of the river. Reaching the New Martinsville city limits, I had only a one-block walk from the highway to my home.

On one particular Friday afternoon in March, I was headed home to New Martinsville. With several other college students, I stood along Pike Street in Marietta with my out-stretched thumb indicating that I needed a ride. Luck was with me that afternoon, or so it seemed. After traveling short distances with two rides, the third vehicle that picked me up took me all the way up the Ohio side of the river to Duffy. I thanked the driver for the lift, grabbed my suitcase, and hurried down to the ferryboat landing. I had noticed that the river was quite high as we drove up Ohio Route 7, but never gave it anymore thought as I discussed football with the driver. When I reached the ferry landing, I discovered, much to my surprise and dismay, that the ferry was not running. Dangerous floodwaters coming downriver from Pittsburgh and Wheeling had forced cancellation of all ferry operations.

I was in a quandary. It was getting dark, and even though I could see the Wetzel County courthouse and many of the other buildings that formed downtown New Martinsville, I had no way of getting across the river. As I walked from the ferry landing back up to the highway, I had a decision to make. Should I hitchhike 30 miles upriver to the Moundsville bridge or hitchhike 30 miles back downriver to the St. Marys bridge? I decided to be an opportunist and do both. There was not a lot of traffic on the road that evening, and I could hear cars coming before they got close enough to see me with my thumb extended. The first car that passed was headed upriver but did not stop to give me a ride. The next car was headed downriver, so I quickly ran across the road with my suitcase and motioned with my thumb back toward the St. Marys

I vividly recall sitting on a porch swing, walking through snow, and attending parties with girls named Clara Lou, Kathleen, Elaine, Lois, Angie, and Franne.

Musical Wood

Violin Maker Harold Hayslett

By Paul Gartner

If you ask Harold Hayslett about violins, be ready for a long answer. As his patient response unwinds, he touches on tools and toolmaking, mathematics, trees, growth rings, local musicians and instrument makers, wood, woodworking, and violin history — centuries of it. One musician calls him "a walking encyclopedia on the finest details of violin making."

You could say Harold has spent a lifetime with violins. He was a teenager when he saw his first. Captivated immediately by its shape and beauty, he had to make one. Now in his 89th year, Harold is still building them, and musicians from around the world are struck by the beauty of — and sound that comes from — a Hayslett violin.

Harold's tidy basement shop in his South Charleston home has produced violins and cellos that are now in Australia, New York City, Kansas, California, Florida, and Massachusetts among other places. A vice president for Victoria's Secret owns a Hayslett cello. Doctors here and abroad own his violins and cellos. Classical musicians in West Virginia and across the country prize his instruments.

Some of West Virginia's top traditional fiddlers also sing the praises of his instruments and talk about their distinct qualities. More than one Vandalia Gathering blue ribbon has been captured with a "Hayslett," as they are known.

"When I first played the one I have, it was a loaner from Mr. Hayslett," says St. Albans musician and Vandalia blue-ribbon winner Jenny Allinder. "We were asked to play at the debut of [the film] *Building a Cello with Harold* and thought it would be nice to all play Hayslett instruments.

"The one I ended up borrowing — No. 48 — made my whole body vibrate. It has a very dark, responsive tone. I realized I could not give it back, so I bought it. I just know what I love. I have played many other fine instruments, [but] I have never found one that makes me feel like that one does."

Fiddler Bobby Taylor echoes those sentiments. "Every owner knows in

bridge. I hightailed it back and forth across the road more than 20 times before a pickup truck traveling south offered me a ride. There were a couple houses near the ferry landing in Duffy, and I have often wondered what the residents thought of the hitchhiking teenager who did not know whether he was coming or going.

About 30 minutes after leaving the Duffy ferry landing, I walked across the St. Marys Bridge. At six p.m., I finally got a ride to Sistersville, followed about 15 minutes later by a ride all the way to New Martinsville. Home at last, only five hours after I had left Marietta!

Hitchhiking was considered a safe means of travel during the 1950's, and it was not unusual to see persons with out-stretched thumbs standing along most roads and highways. In addition to hitchhiking between Marietta and New Martinsville, I hitchhiked to work daily during summer employment with the West Virginia Department of Highways (four miles) and Columbia Southern Chemicals (nine miles).

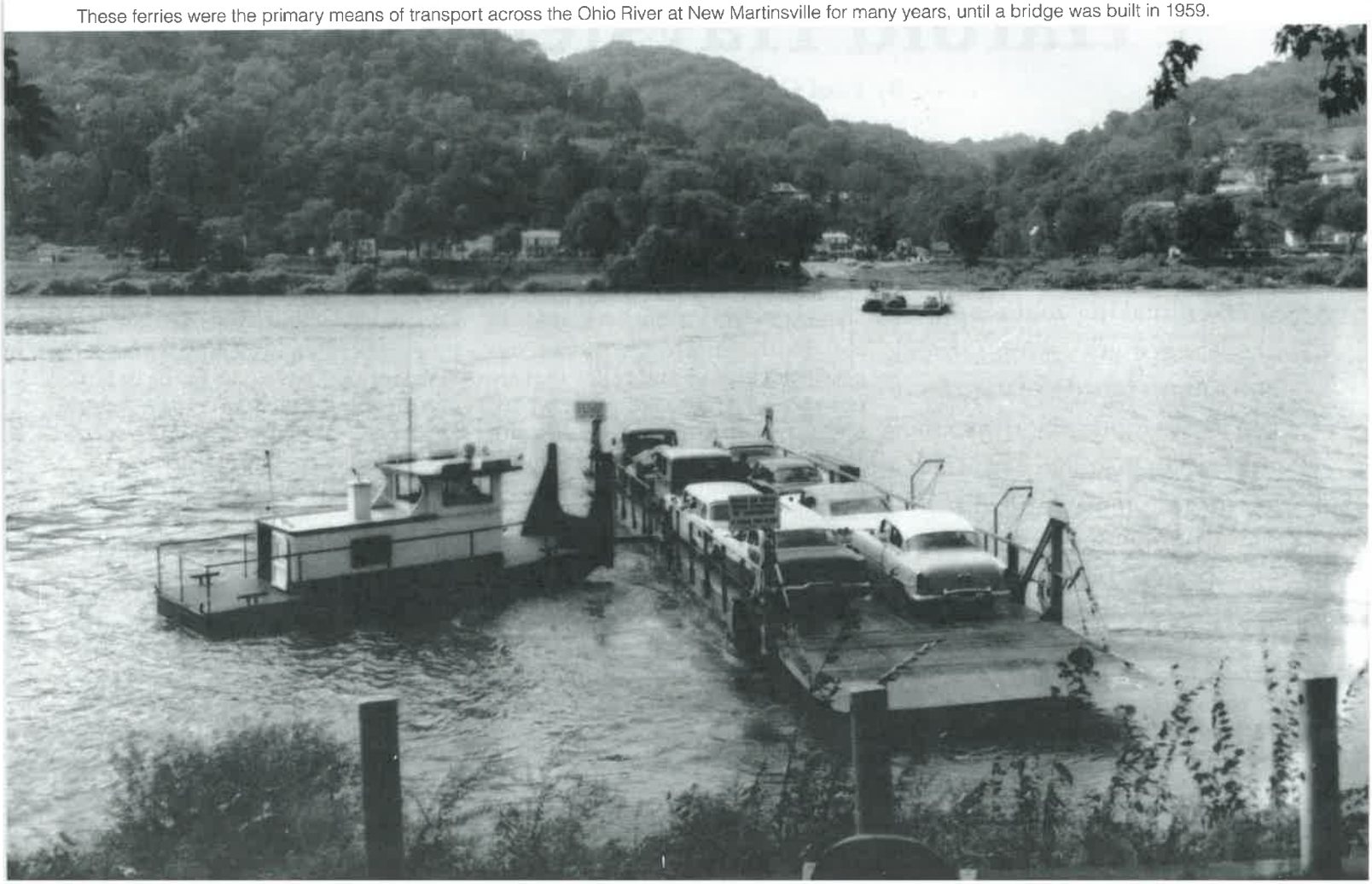
Although I have been fortunate to live in many wonderful places and have had many interesting experiences and a rewarding life, some of my fondest memories are those of being a teenager in New Martinsville. I vividly recall sitting on a porch swing, walking through the snow, and attending parties with girls named Clara Lou, Kathleen, Elaine, Lois, Angie, and Franne. My first paying job was usher at the movie theatre, while my second was stock boy at a local grocery. My pay, 50 cents per hour, was put into a savings account for such important things as buying a prom corsage for Elaine Davis.

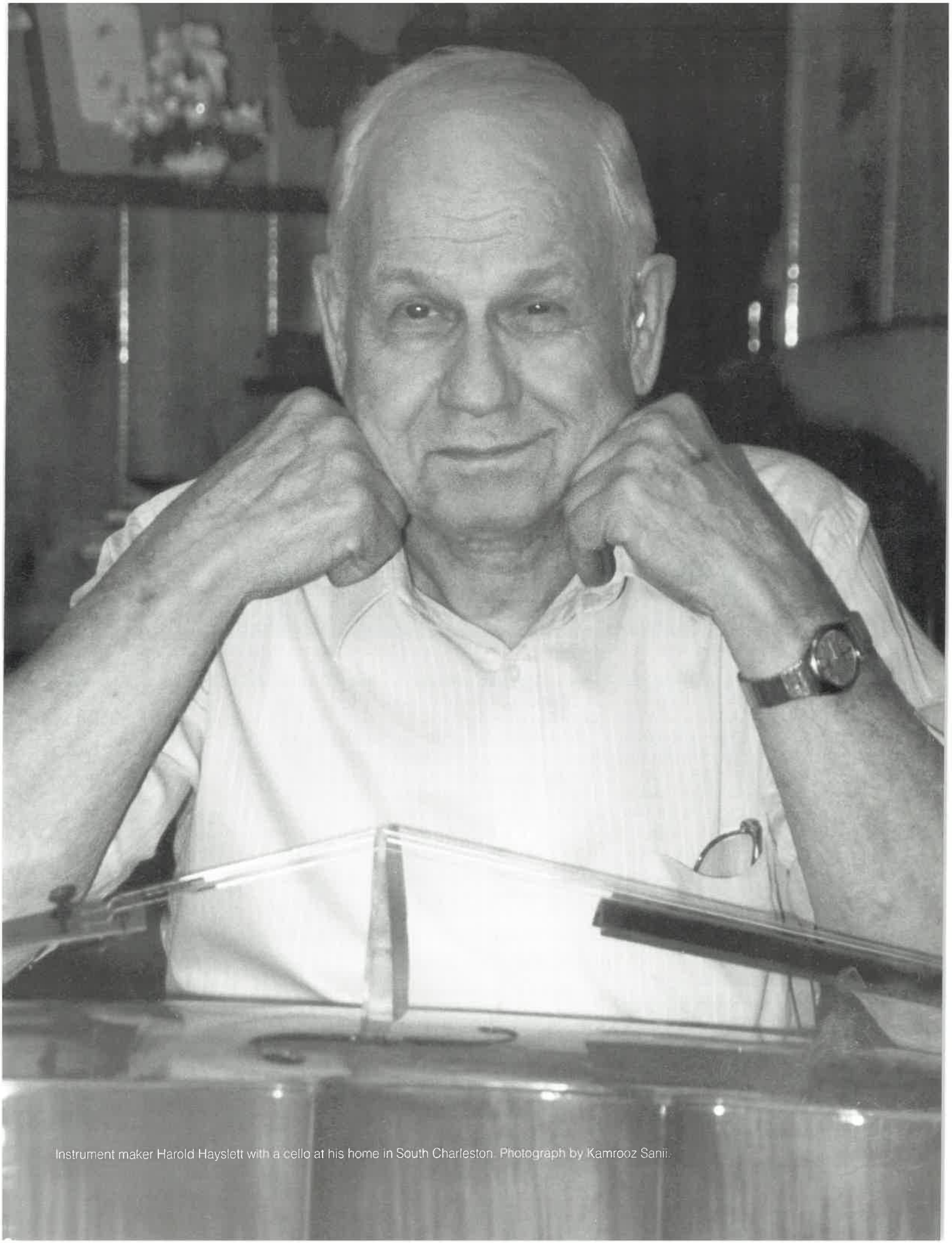
Since the Korean War had ended in 1953, New Martinsville teenagers of the 1950's had no wars to worry about. Chances for employment were good. Columbia Southern/PPG, a chemical plant located nine miles north of town, was the largest employer in the area, and many of my classmates were hired there soon after graduating from high school. The largest employer in town was Viking Glass, which produced glassware unmatched by any plant in the world.

Most of my classmates were born in or near New Martinsville, while a few, like myself, moved there as teenagers. After graduation, several moved away to seek employment elsewhere in the state or in some other state. While some had their lives cut short before seeing all the changes that have taken place in their Wetzel County birthplace, others have lived their entire lives in the immediate area. Regardless of birthplace or present place of residence, my classmates and I were indeed fortunate to have been teenagers in New Martinsville during the 1950's.

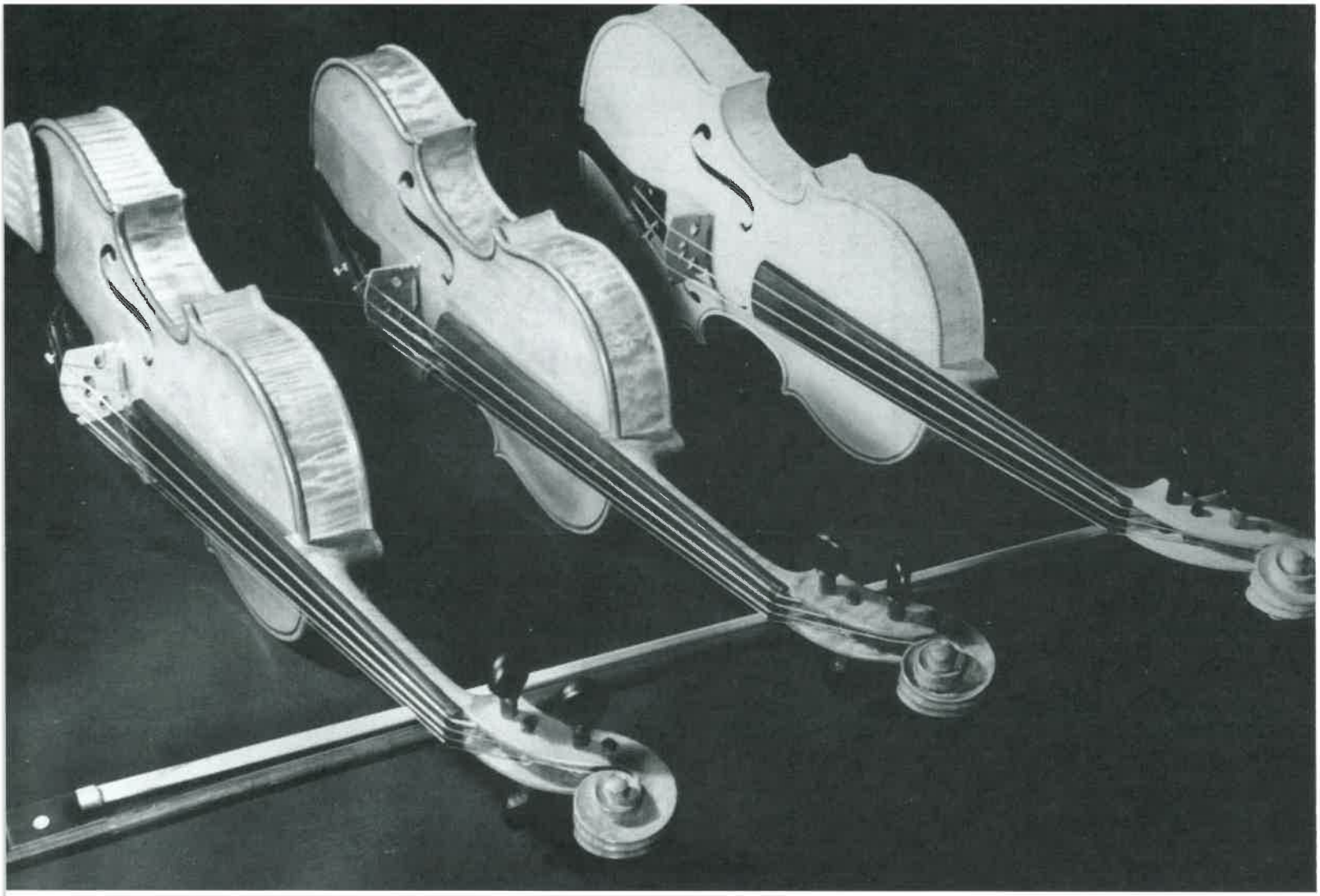
EDWIN DARYL MICHAEL, a native of Plum Run near Mannington, holds a Ph.D. in wildlife ecology from Texas A&M University. He taught at West Virginia University until his retirement in 1997. He is the author of more than 100 published works, including the book, *A Valley Called Canaan: 1885-2002*. His most recent contribution to GOLDENSEAL appeared in our Fall 2005 issue.

These ferries were the primary means of transport across the Ohio River at New Martinsville for many years, until a bridge was built in 1959.





Instrument maker Harold Hayslett with a cello at his home in South Charleston. Photograph by Kamrooz Sanii.



Harold Hayslett's first three violins: Numbers 1, 2, and 3, from left to right. Photograph 1955, courtesy of *Carbide News*.

their heart that they have the best one," says Taylor, a nationally known Kanawha Valley fiddler, who owns Hayslett No. 19. "There is a certain warmth in his instruments that surpasses old and new instruments."

Bobby thinks highly of the maker, too. "The rich and wonderful tone of a great violin reflects the spirit and soul of the wonderful man who made it," he says.

Charleston musician Bob Webb, who co-produced the documentary *Building a Cello with Harold* with filmmaker Bob Gates in 2000, says, "Harold is someone who really has been able to integrate the linear side of building an instrument—studying up on the craft and acquiring good building skills — and the other side of that, which is the intuitive, the non-linear, of trusting how they feel in your hands and to your ear.

"It's all in his hands," Webb continues. "He very seldom measures anything. He has an absolute ability to understand the wood."

Pretty good for a Putnam County boy. Harold was one of five children born to James and Martha Henderson Hayslett and was raised on a farm near the Lincoln County line.

"I was born on Route 34, about where Clymers Creek comes in," Harold says. "It was pretty much in the southern edge of the county." He was born December 26, 1917, during World War I. His father served in the Army overseas. After the war, James Haylsett worked for United Fuel.

"They had a gasoline plant at one time on Turkey Creek," Harold recalls. "After that, he was working in the fields, repairing leaks and so on. Then he decided he wanted to farm, along about sometime in the 1920's. So we moved up on Trace Fork. From then on, he was on the farm."

It wasn't long after this that Harold built his first instrument. He laughs when asked about it. He had seen a banjo that belonged to a neighbor, so he made one of his own from a lard can lid and a board. He was five years old.

"I raveled screen wire to make strings," he says. "No, I couldn't play it. But it would make a noise."

Harold was 15 when he saw his first violin. "I didn't get to see them very often. One was across the hill on Clymers Creek. One was up Lick Creek a way. When I saw a violin, that thing captured me," Harold says. "The outline and the mystery,

"The rich and wonderful tone of a great violin reflects the spirit and soul of the wonderful man who made it."

the old Italian ... all that stuff."

So he made one. "I drew my own pattern," he recalls. "I didn't have any instructions or wood or anything. It was probably half-sized."

He improvised as he went along. "I couldn't bend dry wood, and I didn't know you could heat it and bend it," he says. "So I bent my ribs out from hickory around a form and let them dry that way."

Tools were scarce. "I might've had a drawing knife to thin those ribs out," he says.

Harold has always been handy with tools. There was the time he built a lawnmower from washing machine parts, or when he fashioned a tractor from a Ford Model A automobile.

"I cut [the frame] off and put a rear end in it out of a Model T truck," he explains. "They had a worm gear to the rear end, and you could get quite a bit of power with that worm gear. But it was so light I had to sandbag it and put chains on the wheels."

As a young man, Harold worked for P.E. Holtz meatpackers. Then World War II started. Harold enlisted and took his Army basic training in Louisiana, followed by artillery school at Camp Hood, Texas. He was a platoon sergeant in the 3rd Platoon, E Troop, 106th Cavalry Group. They were mechanized cavalry with 75 mm howitzers mounted on light tanks. They landed in France soon after D-Day. The fighting was fierce.

"One night, we were at a crossroads, and we tried to dig slit trenches," Harold recalls. "It was the hardest ground you ever saw. They were shelling this crossroads. We shouldn't have been there. If I'd been in a recon troop, I might not have been here. They were about 80 percent [casualty] replacement," Harold says. "Recon troops protected our guns."

In December 1945, he came home. Harold earned his GED and enrolled at Morris Harvey College in Kanawha City. "I was general academic," he says. "I was taking subjects that I could have gone onto engineering. That's what I wanted to do, but they didn't have anything but chemical engineering."

Staff sergeant Harold Hayslett in Chartres, France, 1944.

Harold went to work as a pipefitter for Union Carbide in 1946 and stayed until his retirement in 1980. He is seen here with fellow Carbiders, seated in the back row, second from the left; photographer and date unknown.

After a year, he decided to go to work at Carbide. At the Institute plant, he was a pipefitter and worked in the instrument and construction departments.

"A pipefitter gets into a lot of things," Harold says. "We would take a blueprint and go out there and measure and figure out a route to go. And we had to measure the pipe, the crooks, and turns and make sketches of it to send to the welders."

On August 24, 1946, he married Louise Carpenter. Born five years and one day apart, the Haysletts have known each other all of their lives. The pair celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary this past summer. They have two daughters: Deborah Hayslett, a teacher at George Washington High School in Charleston; and Dr. Carolyn Suppa, who teaches at Marshall University's graduate school. Carolyn has two daughters: Laura, now in her third year at West Virginia University, where she plays in the steel drum band; and Cara, who is a senior at George Washington High.

There is a tradition of violin and fiddle making in the Kanawha Valley.

The Haysletts still live in the comfortable South Charleston home that Harold built in the late 1940's, with fireplace and pine-paneled living room and a workshop in the basement.

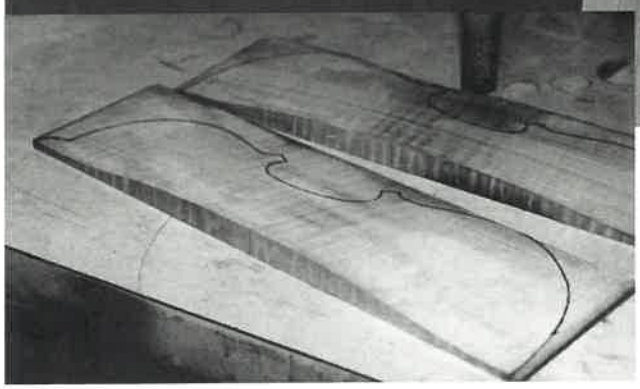
In 1954, Harold came across an old violin at a secondhand shop on West Washington Street in Charleston. Curious about the Antonio Stradivarius name and 18th-century date inside his purchase, he made inquiries at Galperin's, a local music store. A worker there directed him to Ivan Allison, a violin maker who lived on the West Side.

"That was when I really got started," Harold says. "The first one was in October '54."

The fact that Harold would find a local luthier is not so surprising. There is a tradition of violin and fiddle making in the Kanawha Valley, and there was once a violin factory on Charleston's West Side. John Carlisle, an employee of the Charleston Violin Company, went

Harold carving a violin scroll in his South Charleston workshop. Photograph 1955, courtesy of *Carbide News*.

Harold uses a special scraping tool to carefully shape the top of a violin. Photograph by Michael Keller.



These pieces of maple will be glued together, then carved to make the back of a violin. Photographer unknown.

on to make high-quality violins for Wurlitzer, and later on his own. The violin factory operated for a few years before World War I and manufactured low-grade instruments for the catalog trade. Other Kanawha Valley builders whose instruments have been documented are George Dudding, Doug Fields, and O.O. Henderson.

Harold ordered wood from Chicago via mail order and got a pattern from Allison. "I didn't study under him, but he helped me. I'm mainly self-taught," Harold states.

Since that first violin, there have been 78 others. And 50 of them were made from the same tree — a black maple in Hurricane.

"It was somebody's shade tree," Harold says. "There was a fellow down in Hurricane knew I wanted the log, but he wanted a log, too. He found this maple down there. He went and cut it, and it was hollow. He took it to the mill, and they wouldn't saw it 'cause it was a hollow tree." It was completely sound except several inches inside.

"After he couldn't get it sawed, he let me have it," Harold says. With a cross-cut saw and his brother's help, they sawed it into three-foot lengths and split it.

"When it was green, it split fine," Harold says. "It grew straight. [This was] just a year or two after I made my first one."

Wood for the tops and backs of violins is quartersawn. Picture a 34-inch log stood on end. The round end is cut in sections, like a pie. The slabs that result are 1⅛ inch thick on the outside end and taper to ½ inch thick. Harold looks for the most resonant wood he can find. He selects a piece and starts tapping, listening closely.

"Along about a fifth of the length of it, if it is even thickness, is where the note is," he says. "The more you get [it] to ring, the better it is."

Spruce is used for violin tops, and maple for the back and sides. Harold takes two pieces from the same block of wood "that grew together" and glues them lengthwise with the thick ends together. These

"Gold Medal for Cello Tone," presented to Harold by the Violin Society of America in 1980. Photograph by Michael Keller.

pieces form his top and back. They are carved out with finger planes and tap-tuned to a specific note with an electronic tuner.

But first he glues the sides together in a form and adds the blocks to the bottom and sides of the violin. Then he cuts the purfling — a design on the outside edge of the top of the violin. He also attaches arching under the top and a bass bar, which runs along the length of the body, under the low strings. "When you have got the body together," Harold says, "you got it sanded down, scraped down, trimmed up, and all that, then you mortise the neck in there."

He attaches the fingerboard temporarily with just a few spots of glue.

"I fit the tuning pegs, and you can fit it up to make a sound post," Harold says.

Then he strings it up. "Sometimes you might want to take it apart," he says, "and see if it needs anymore tuning on the top and back. Or make a new top. I've got several of the darn things that I took off and replaced."

When the sound and look of the instrument suits him, Harold applies his finish out in his backyard. "I don't have a varnish room," he says.

Most violins take a while to come alive. On the other hand, he says, "I've had some of them that I thought sounded better when I first strung them up than later on."

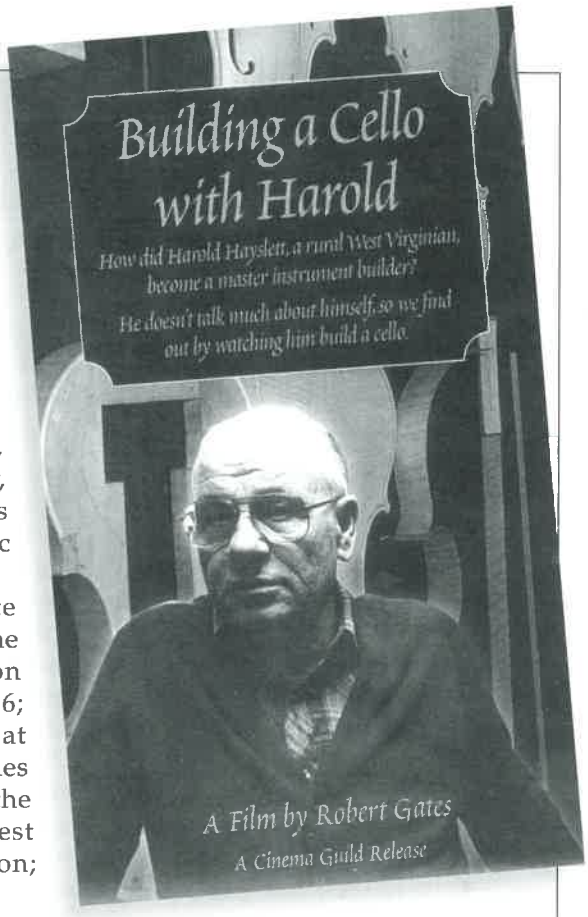
Harold on Film

Building a Cello with Harold is a feature-length film directed by Bob Gates. First produced in 1996, it was re-released as a video with new art and design by the Cinema Guild in 2002. The movie documents Harold Hayslett, retired Union Carbide pipefitter and renowned violin maker, as he makes a cello from start to finish.

Opening with Harold's search through the woods of West Virginia for the elusive curly maple tree that he favors for instrument building, Bob Gates follows the internationally acclaimed craftsman back to his South Charleston workshop and through each step of the process, with Harold's informative commentary and humor on display throughout. At the completion of the cello, the video ends with musician — and the film's co-producer — Bob Webb performing on the finished product.

The 2007 Vandalia Gathering in Charleston will feature two showings of the film documentary. The video will be screened in the Cultural Center on Saturday, May 26, at 12:00 noon, and on Sunday, May 27, at 1:30 p.m. Showings are free and open to the public [see page 70].

Copies of the 105-minute video sell for $79.95 from the Cinema Guild, 130 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016; 1-800-723-5522, on the Web at www.cinemaguild.com. Copies are also available through the reference library of the West Virginia Library Commission; phone 1-800-642-9021.



Joe DePollo built his general store in Thomas in 1915. Pictured here are owner Joe DePollo (with hat), son Jim standing at left, and son Johnny barely visible at far right. Photographer and date unknown.

Kate kept a scrapbook of places and things she wanted for her life. She'd slipped into that book a brochure from the Sweet Body & Soul Café. It was déjà vu when she and John saw the place that fateful day in the summer of 2001. John also recognized the town: He'd gone through it at the age of 12, enroute to Canaan Valley with his family.

John is a West Virginia native, the son of John and Judy Bright. John's father was a Nicholas County entrepreneur who, along with his brother, Bill, founded Bright of America, a successful paper goods printing company, no longer in the family. John's father had started the business while still a teenager, after selling a number of his photographs to national magazines. Thus encouraged, he decided to go into the greeting card publishing business, using his photographs as illustrations for the cards. The business took off and diversified into other products and ventures.

John grew up in this entrepreneurial environment. When he headed off to WVU, John did so with the assumption he would work in a family business after college. But, like his father, photography set the direction for his life.

"I started college as an accounting major, but I changed when I discovered photography was a lot more fun," John says.

Receiving his liberal arts degree in 1987, John worked 11 years for the Morgantown *Dominion Post* as a staff photographer. Driven to be the best in his field, John decided to pursue his master's at Ohio University, which led to an internship with the *Washington Post*. By 1999, John had reached the top of his profession and was feeling all the stress that came with that.

"Photojournalism is one of the most stressful jobs in the world," says John. "You combine that with all the traffic and congestion [in the Beltway]. I could just feel that road rage creeping into my life."

He moved to Morgantown and tried freelancing as a commercial photographer. It was during this time he and Kate became acquainted. In January 2001, John gave up his studio to take a job with Governor Bob Wise. The job meant a move to Charleston for John, but he and Kate continued to develop their relationship via visits and e-mail. That correspondence sometimes focused on their dreams of owning a business in a remote corner of the state. In July 2001, John and Kate met in Tucker County to explore some possible business locations.

"We didn't know where we wanted to live or what our occupations would be," he says. "We were just touring the mountains looking for historical

Kate and John's wedding, on December 21, 2001, was the first event to be held in the building after the couple took possession of it. "We got married on the stage just two days after it was built," recalls John. Photograph by Martin Valent.

buildings. If we could figure out a way to live in one of them, we would."

It all came together when they looked in the window of the former DePollo's Store.

"We immediately started thinking it would be a great coffee shop and Appalachian music venue," John says. "And right there, we had our first business disagreement."

John says he tacked on the idea of selling "good beer," and Kate informed him she would not raise her children in a bar. They compromised: Their business would sell beer, but only specialty brews.

Things happened rapidly after that. Kate discovered she was pregnant. The terrorists attacked. John recalls the panic in Charleston and being evacuated as part of the governor's entourage.

"She didn't want to live in Morgantown, and I didn't want to live in Charleston," John says. "[The attacks] kind of made it more urgent, more of a priority. We really felt it was important to move farther into the country."

They made an offer to purchase the building and, in one evening, Kate wrote the business plan for their music café. They found a lender who shared their vision and closed the deal. Kate and John were married December 21, 2001 — the first function they held in the building after obtaining the title. "We got married on the stage just two days after it was built," recalls John.

They applied the rehabilitation skills Kate acquired restoring investment properties and homes. John says the 85-year-old building presented plenty of challenges: a leaky roof, missing radiators, and major cosmetic updating to the store and two stories of living quarters above it. "We spent two weeks sleeping on the floor of the store, beneath the papered-up front windows, because there was not heat upstairs yet," says John, recalling those early days of ownership.

While most of the original fixtures from the old store had been stripped out and sold, a few, like the rolling ladders and green counter, survived and were reinstated. The prior owner had added some unusual touches of his own, like a pair of eight-foot-tall bears carved from logs, immense brass ceiling fixtures, a metal elk head, and built-in oak bookcases.

From the outset, they were determined to make the café a venue for the kind of traditional and acoustic music they had enjoyed back in Morgantown. To ensure a quality listening experience, John sold his photographic gear and purchased professional sound equipment.

The task of decorating fell upon Kate, who has a knack for creating atmosphere with discards. Under Kate's touch, old wooden ladders hung sideways become shelves for antiques and West Virginia artifacts. Old advertising signs, hats, watering cans, photographs, toys, and household wares line the walls and

fill the shelves that once held John DePollo's stock.

The café's furnishings are equally funky: old auditorium seats, odd tables and chairs, and well-worn living room furniture. The furnishings and decor came from antique stores and abandoned houses. "We're the kings of salvage," Kate says proudly. "I love trash."

Even the café's name is secondhand. It came from a love poem Kate wrote for John and left on their refrigerator door. They had tossed out dozens of names before finally settling on that poem's two words, Purple Fiddle — words that succinctly, if not mysteriously, sum up the café's ambiance.

The café held a soft opening February 1, 2002, with J.B. Tenney on the stage. Neither John nor Kate had any restaurant management experience, so they eased into the business with weekend hours only. Further, Kate was pregnant, working full-time as a counselor in Garrett County, Maryland, plus raising and home schooling three children while trying to get the business ready to open.

On June 28, 2002, Kate gave birth to their son, Silas, in the Jacuzzi bathtub in their living quarters above the café. John says a band was playing downstairs while Kate was in labor.

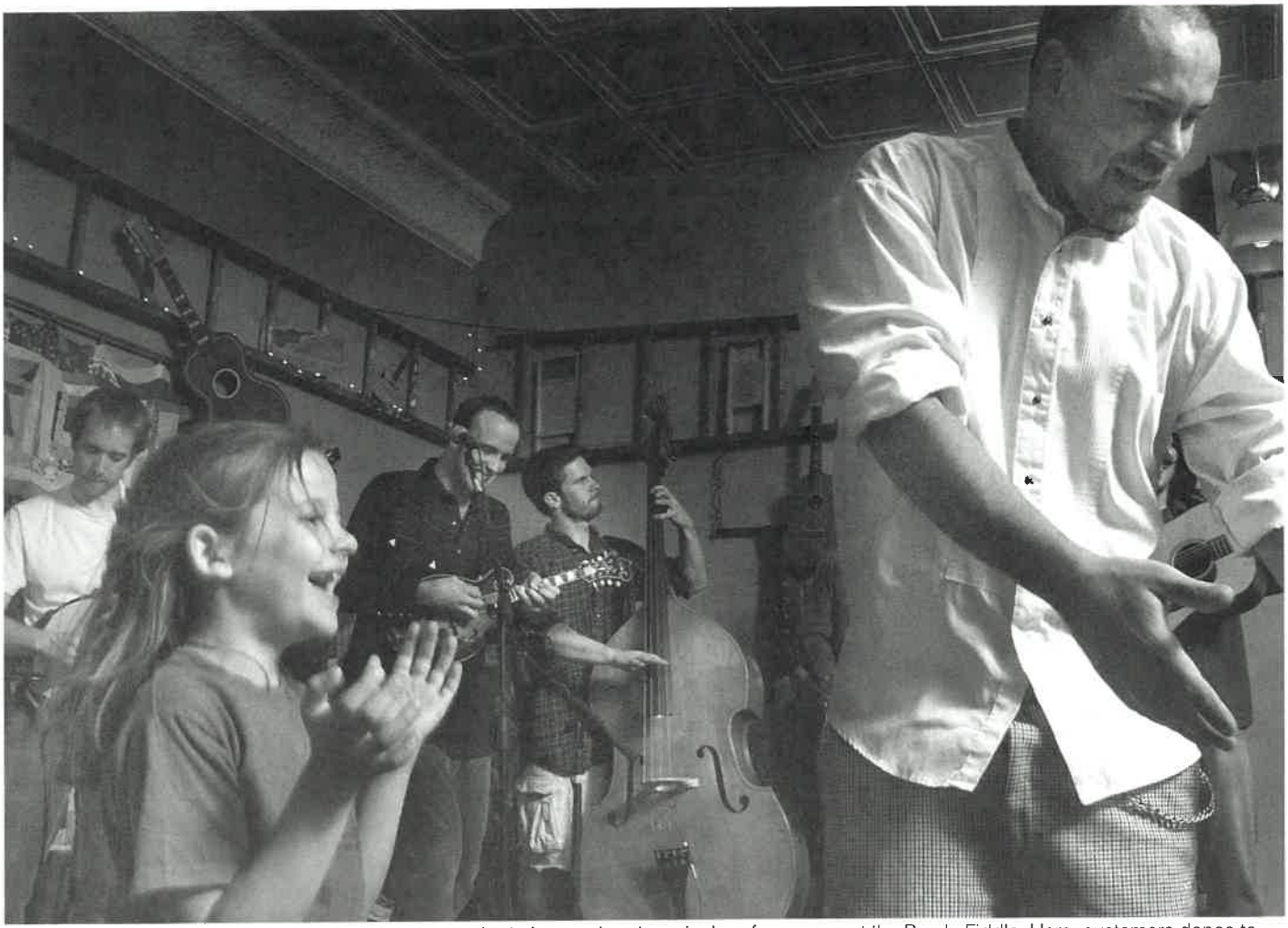
"I literally came down and I had to turn up [the volume on their sound system], because Kate was concerned about the crowd hearing her birthing upstairs. At 10:45, I came down and told all the customers they had to go home. About 20 minutes later, Silas was born."

The café got a significant boost when, during their first year of operation, the *Washington Post* did a positive review of this eclectic destination in the middle of nowhere. More recently, articles in Pittsburgh and New York media have helped introduce the Purple Fiddle to an urban audience looking for a safe destination that preserves traditional American culture.

"Especially after 9/11, people were going to be more apt to drive to West Virginia for a vacation than they were to fly to an island," says John. "Where else can you go and have a gourmet organic beer and bring your kids and watch your kids dance in the front of a concert and feel safe?"

Bed-and-breakfast owner Susan Moore of Davis says the nightspot definitely filled a niche in Tucker County.

"It's great," says Susan, who owns



The music tends to be lively and the audience energetic during weekend musical performances at the Purple Fiddle. Here, customers dance to the music of the Biscuit Boys. Live music is featured at least three nights a week. Photograph by John Bright.

the Bright Morning Inn. "It gives the tourist here something to do at night. We really needed that. There's more of a demand for it than I ever realized."

Bill Smith, executive director of the Tucker County Convention & Visitors Bureau in Davis, says the Purple Fiddle has brought a reliable source of entertainment to the county, giving daytime recreational visitors something to do at night.

"John does a really good job of keeping musical entertainment in the Purple Fiddle," Bill says. "It's good to be able, when someone asks what is there to do at night, to send them down to the Purple Fiddle. Nine times out of 10, they are going to have a blast down there."

"It's just the fact you can find something like this in Thomas, West Virginia," says Shaena Parsons, a Davis resident who was working at the Purple Fiddle in the fall of 2006. "I can come to Thomas and have a hippie chick serve me wonderful coffee."

Shaena is alluding to herself. "My mother hitchhiked to Woodstock," she says. "I grew up in the country and was taught to be simple and be happy."

Indeed, the ideas and people who gather around the tables and green service counter of the Purple Fiddle are as diverse as the decor and music. College students with tattoos, ragged jeans, long hair, and body jewelry rub shoulders with accountants, federal government workers, and suburban-dwelling professionals. Young families with small children and gray-haired retirees visiting the nearby state parks are equally at home in the accepting environment. Kate says there are times you can "just feel the love in the room."

"I think we're pretty open-minded, accepting people," Kate says. "That's one part of it. The other part is that we wanted to create an atmosphere that felt like my living room — no rules, anything goes."

To that end, a large, red, upholstered chair — a wedding gift — provides the best seat in the house. Kate says so many things have happened in that chair over the years, she plans to write a children's book about it.

"It has become the home of our cat, I nursed our son while sitting in there, and I sat there while I was pregnant and exhausted. We used to have a quasi-homeless man who slept there. He was my friend. He's dead now, and I haven't sat in the chair since then. It's his chair."

Hanging behind the stage is a collection of quilts, photographs, purple fiddles, and a plastic chicken missing a beak. The chicken came with the store and lost its beak when a musician kicked it off stage one night. The quilts are mostly family heirlooms made by Kate's maternal grandmother and great-grandmother. The photographs are of the many musicians who have shared their music on this stage.

Although bluegrass and traditional

Twin brothers Joe and John DePollo play polka music for an annual gathering at the Purple Fiddle, in honor of their late father, Johnny DePollo. The twins were born upstairs in the old DePollo building. Photograph by John Bright.

The Purple Fiddle has brought new life, especially nightlife, to downtown Thomas since opening in 2002. Photograph by Carl E. Feather.

acoustic music are at the core of the styles played here, the Purple Fiddle has hosted blues, jazz, original, reggae, and world music performers, as well. Most of the musicians are local or from surrounding states, but increasingly national and international acts are seeking a night on the Purple Fiddle stage.

"I have been amazed," says John, who almost always has the Purple Fiddle's stage booked three months in advance. "To get some of the top bluegrass bands in the world and to have them say this is one of their favorite places to play is so flattering."

"One of the reasons we like it is the location," says Ben Sidelinger, half of the New England duo Shiftless Rounders. "We really like to come to this area, and we like the music from this area. For us, it's a good gig. It's a nice-sized room, nice atmosphere, and good audience. It's also a good networking spot for musicians."

Although Kate and John have separated and Kate no longer lives above the café, they remain business partners and share equally in its profits and responsibilities. They recognize that each partner brings special talents to the table: Kate handles the menu, food preparation, interior decoration, and grant writing, while John takes care of bookkeeping, marketing, and working with the artists. Both of them have a deep sense of their venture's place in the history and culture of Thomas.

"Where else can you go and have a gourmet organic beer and bring your kids and watch your kids dance in front of a concert and feel safe?"

Every summer, musicians Joseph James and John Charles DePollo return to their parents' store to perform a polka concert. The performance is rooted in the sons' former tradition of throwing a big party for their father on his birthday, August 29. The DePollo family would invite the entire town to this celebration. Although John DePollo is gone, the Purple Fiddle perpetuates his legacy of hospitality and celebrating life on Front Street.

"The building has really good energy," says Kate. "I think that energy comes with the building from the DePollos. We have good energy here, but we didn't create it. This building was built on music and culture, homemade wine, and fish fries."

A list of upcoming shows, menu, and other information is available online at www.purplefiddle.com; phone (304)463-4040.

West Virginia Back Roads

Text and photographs by
Carl E. Feather

Hobart Ellifritt and his Bluebird Motels

Most motorists either go too fast or focus too narrowly on the road in front of them to notice the multicolored bluebird boxes along the highways and interstates that fan out from Clarksburg. Measuring 6 inches wide, 11 inches tall, and 5¼ inches deep, the boxes are designed to attract eastern bluebirds, not motorists.

Clarksburg resident Laurie Givens raised my awareness of the boxes one warm Saturday afternoon in early October. Laurie is a daughter of the late Hobart Ellifritt, the Clarksburg resident whose retirement was devoted to building, placing, and maintaining these boxes throughout northern West Virginia. She is the curator of Hobart's meticulous records concerning these boxes, which were his retirement passion.

As of the close of 2001, her father had built 3,752 bluebird boxes since beginning the project in 1984 with just 15 boxes. He gave or sold some of the boxes to property owners with a similar interest, but Hobart personally placed hundreds of them along the highways. Laurie has no idea how many are still out there.

"He would just pull off the side of the road and put one up on a fencepost," says Laurie.

According to the records kept by her father, he placed boxes along U.S. Route 33 east to Buckhannon, on U.S. Route 50 between Clarksburg and Parkersburg, along Interstate 79 both north and south of Clarksburg, along Interstate 68 from Morgantown to the Maryland line, and on U.S. Route 19 from Interstate 79 to Summersville. Several boxes were placed in Clarksburg's Veterans Park.

A native of Greenwood, Doddridge County, Hobart Ellifritt spent his adult years in Clarksburg, where

Laurie Givens of Clarksburg checks on a bluebird box constructed and placed by her father, Hobart Ellifritt, along U.S. Route 50, east of Clarksburg.

2006 LIARS CONTEST

Here are the first-, second- and third-place winning stories from last year's State Liars Contest, held at the 30th annual Vandalia Gathering in Charleston. Congratulations to the winners!

Adam Booth Huntington
First Place

"Look Out for those Virginians"

Beware the future! Mankind has said it for generation after generation: Beware the future!

Well, friends, let me tell you. I've been to the future, and I know what it's like. Now in the future, people are saying, we got to watch out for global warming. That's rubbish. And, in the future, other people are saying, we're all going to die from the bird flu. You know what? Some guy made that up. Because in the future, the real thing that we all have to watch out for is people from Virginia.

And it all starts out like this: Twenty years from now is going to be a sad, sad day for the state of West Virginia, because at the wonderful old age of 109 years, the honorable Senator Robert C. Byrd finally decides to retire, and he moves to a grand old mansion in Bramwell, where he spends the rest of the 24 years of his life.

But in his absence, we're going to have to find a new senator to take his place. It's going to become one of the biggest political events in all of American history. I tell you what, the fund-raising is going to be vicious. And the campaigning will be malicious.

But the election will be unanimous, because the one that we choose to fill his position is one that's been in the Capitol for many years. In fact, he's just as strong-willed and unmoving as the first Byrd. Because, that's right, the next senator will be a statue of Senator Robert C. Byrd. And Senator Statue Byrd will plow into the Senate like a boulder coming down the mountain.

First-place winner Adam Booth of Huntington. Photograph by Michael Keller.

Like I said, that's just the beginning of it. Because when that happens, the state of Virginia is going to see that West Virginia has elected a statue and see it as the gates opening, so that they can realize their master plan — the plan they have been trying to accomplish ever since West Virginia seceded in the 1860's. See, people don't know it today, but Virginia is trying to take West Virginia back. I mean, who wouldn't want us, right?

So when that happens, when they see that our state is seemingly weak, they're going to gather all of their people and mobilize as troops and generals. And they're going to march all the way along the border of the two states, so we're going to have to retaliate.

So everyone of us is going to become a troop and a general. You don't have to be a statistician to understand that seven million Virginians is quite a bit more than two million West Virginians. So, with those odds, it's going to look pretty grim. And all the

The late Hobart Ellifritt, a traveling paint salesman, constructed 3,752 bluebird boxes between 1984 and 2001. Many of the boxes have not been maintained since his death in March 2003.

This demonstration nest and eggs, covered in cellophane, were used by Hobart when he gave presentations to school children about bluebirds and their habits.

he made his living as a traveling salesman for Blue Ridge Talc, a paint company.

"He was used to driving, because that's what he did for a living," Laurie says. "He was always on the road."

Laurie says her father's original interest in bluebirds was sparked by a 4-H project he built while a boy.

"That was the first bird that came to his box when he was in 4-H, and he fell in love with them," she says. "When we were kids, he didn't have anything to do with it. He picked up the hobby after he was semiretired."

He built the boxes in a basement workshop. Laurie says her father was always bringing scrap lumber home from lumberyards he'd serviced on his paint route. Laurie's daughter, Amy Corcoglioniti, recalls going grocery shopping with her grandfather and having him ask for the empty grape crates. He salvaged the end pieces of the crates for his bluebird boxes.

The boxes were painted different colors, often in a multicolored scheme, such as a white roof with orange sides.

"He always had a lot of paint at the house. After all, he was a paint salesman," Laurie says. "He always used different colors for his boxes."

Hobart visited the boxes periodically to perform maintenance, clean out the old nests, and replace damaged, vandalized, or stolen boxes.

"He would go out in the spring," Laurie says. "He always had a station wagon filled up in the back with bird boxes."

Amy sometimes accompanied him on those journeys.

"I had to carry the tools and help clean out the bird boxes," Amy says.

An index card was assigned to every box that Hobart placed along the highway. The cards noted the location of the box, dates of maintenance, and the box's success or failure in housing a brood of bluebirds. He used a coded system of abbreviations and colored highlighters that Laurie has only partially cracked.

Some of the entries read, "Dead young," "Ants," "BB," "Empty, wasps," "Eggs," "Chicks," "Coon," and the one Ellifritt hated most of all, "Sparrow."

"He just hated sparrows," says Amy of the bluebird's natural enemy. "If he'd see a sparrow's nest in the box, he'd say, 'Oh, those darn sparrows.' He despised sparrows."

Hobart was a member of the American Bluebird Society and enjoyed presenting programs about the birds to school and civic groups around the region. Amy says that her grandfather always gave the children bluebird boxes to put up in their yards. He regularly placed letters in the local newspaper offering boxes for $6 each.

Hobart made his last maintenance run in the fall of 2002. He became ill that Christmas season and died at the age of 82 on March 4, 2003.

Since then, the boxes have gone unattended. Although Hobart had five children — sons James and William of Clarksburg, and daughters Laurie, Nancy Havener of Kentucky, and Betty Dotson of Parkersburg — Laurie says the family members just don't have the time to devote to the work like their father had. She hopes a scout or nature club will adopt the project and resume cleaning out the boxes and repairing or replacing the damaged ones.

"It would be a great project for a Boy Scout group," she says. Groups interested in continuing Hobart Ellifritt's work should write to Laurie Givens at Rt. 1 Box 315A, Clarksburg, WV 26301.

way from Harpers Ferry to Green Bank, from Marlinton to Welch, is going to be a very sad affair.

Virginia will sweep into our land like a plague across the mountains, and it will look like we have no future. Until — over the horizon, something comes. And the Virginian troops will be petrified with fear.

"Look, is that some kind of flying saucer?" Well, not really. But all of us will turn and look, and see, and smile, and know. And thousands upon thousands of West Virginia voices will say it together:

"Tamarack!"

"Tamarack!"

See, during the first Byrd administration, he made sure to plant a giant, supersecret weapon close to the border of the two states in the event that Virginia ever tried to take West Virginia back. And, so, his vision is coming to life.

Tamarack will come soaring across the horizon, breaking the clouds open like a brilliant beam of sunshine, and riding on top of Tamarack will be Senator "Stonewall Statue" Byrd. And coming out of the spinning, soaring Tamarack will be delicious gourmet foods, right into the mouths of the weakened bodies of the soldiers. And also out of the doors will come giant armoires and beds and chests-of-drawers, and they'll fall on the Virginian troops, crushing them 10 at a time under each meticulously handcrafted and beautiful piece of furniture.

And also out of these doors will come fine musical instruments direct into the hands of the West Virginia troops, so that they can sound the battle cry of freedom: "O'er the hills, the beautiful hills."

And we will all go and defend the land that is rightfully ours.

And then in one final tactical swoop, Tamarack will fall out of the sky in the middle of the Virginian troops. And outside of Tamarack will be a parking lot so massive, and a traffic pattern so completely confusing, that the Virginian troops will have no choice but to surrender on the spot. And peace will reign in the land.

And we, West Virginia, will completely forgive Virginia, under two circumstances. One, that the state of Virginia officially change its name to East Virginia, and two, that the new state of East Virginia change the name of its capitol from Richmond to New Charleston.

This will not only commemorate the great victors of the second great civil war of the United States of America, but it will also completely eradicate from the face of this earth the response, "Oh, I've been to Richmond," whenever you tell someone you're from West Virginia.

And so, friends, I have two parting bits of advice as I leave you. One, wherever you go, whatever you do, look out for those Virginians. And two, don't beware the future. Look forward to it.

Second-place winner Rich Knoblich of Wheeling. Photograph by Michael Keller. Third-place winner was Dallas Jude of Matewan. A special youth award was also presented to Karl Smakula of Elkins.

Rich Knoblich Wheeling
Second Place

"High Price of Gas"

Friends, I'd like to explain to you exactly why you're paying such high prices at the pump.

You see, I was visiting the folks at the old homestead on the mountain. And, while I was there, I had the opportunity to attend the Chili Chow-down & Moonshine Festival. You see, you sit there and you sample that chili, and after a while you got to cool off your tongue and cleanse your palate. The way you do that is you take a swig from a quart mason jar filled with 180-proof rocket fuel distilled from corn. Zero carbs, no trans fat. It's like Grandpa Jefferson says, if you want to be healthy, drink your veggies.

There's a variety of chilis you can taste, such as Rupert's Rip Roarin' Bunblaster, guaranteed to bring you to your knees. But you'll have to get in line if you want to sample High-Fallutin' Rootin' Tootin'. It's made by that Russian chef, Yuranus B. Burnin. As for me, my preference is to eat Gastrointestinol. I like to take some and serve up a crockload to the family back home.

Mountaineers have always known that chili and moonshine are environmentally friendly and safe sources of natural gas. Provided you're upwind. Well, it seems over in Washington, the folks at the Department of Homebrewsky Security caught wind of our gas. So they sent their gas expert, Dr. Bean

O'Lobbyist. Dr. Bean O'Lobbyist, he came over to investigate the gasification process. And, I got to tell you, his sniffin' around and examining raised quite a stink at the festival.

Well, our demonstrator was Aunt Annie, an 86-year-old Slavic fireball, who's full of beans herself. We filled up the tank of her vintage pickup truck with chili, extra beans, and then topped it off with a jug of moonshine. We piled in, she turned the ignition key, and blue flames shot out of the rear of the truck. She stepped down on the accelerator of her chili chariot, and pretty soon we all cut loose into the bowels of space.

We woulda' made it to Uranus, but the moon's gravity force caught hold of us. As we were swingin' around the moon's backside, that's when the seams of my britches gave way from all the chili I'd been eatin' all morning. There were three full moons that month — an astronomical first.

Annie reached under the seat. She pulled out a pair of bib overalls and tossed them on over to me. Then she pulled out a picnic basket. She started handing me bread and salami and some Limburger to make sandwiches.

Wouldn't you know, that truck started to backfire just as I cut the cheese. I didn't know what to do. But Annie, she knew what to do. She reached in and she pulled out a mason jar filled with moonshine. She handed it over to me, and she said, "Take care of this."

I knew what to do by instinct. Like Indiana Jones, I kicked out the windshield of that truck with the heel of my boot. I crawled my way over the hood of that truck. I swung my legs around, and I stood on the bumper. I found the latch. I pulled open that hood. I poured the contents of that jar directly into the carburetor. I slammed the lid down. I crawled my way back, and I settled in my place. All without unbuckling my seatbelt.

Aunt Annie looked at me in absolute disbelief. "What was that all about?" she said. "I just wanted you to loosen the lid so I could take a swig."

But it was too late. The engine was runnin' smoothly, and we all putt-putt-puttered our way back towards earth.

People on the ground could tell when we re-entered the atmosphere, because they heard a loud sonic boom as we broke wind. Annie managed to steer that pickup truck on back to the parking lot.

I got to tell you, folks, it was a rough landing. Those old trucks, they don't have much in the way of safety features. But please, I'd like you to remember, if you ever get into this situation, whoopie cushions make excellent airbags.

Well, we no sooner landed and we climbed out, a fellow from the EPA came over and started questioning Annie about noise violations and air pollution and odors. Quick-thinking Annie, she blamed it on the dog.

As for that fellow from the Department of Homebrewski Security, he just shrugged his shoulders and said, "Rich, frankly we've got enough windbags over in Washington blowing it out the rear. We don't need anymore." And with that, he turned, and he walked off.

And, folks, he never did write up a report about the discovery of our cheap alternative source of fuel. And that's why, when you pull up to the pump, you pay through your nose for gas.

Dallas Jude Matewan
Third Place

"Amen!"

You know, West Virginia has been blessed with an abundance of natural resources: coal, oil, natural gas, and timber. And recently, West Virginia has opened up a new resource. The lottery and the Powerball have brought in a lot of money into West Virginia, and it's allowed us to create a lot of programs for senior citizens, allowed us to spend a lot of money for education and a lot of programs which we normally wouldn't afford. And over the years, not only has the lottery provided a lot of money, but it's provided a lot of stories. I'm sure that all of you people have heard stories about the lottery.

I've always been interested in it, and I've collected those stories. Today, I'm going to tell a story about the lottery that involves my grandpa.

My grandpa and I went to church together for years and years and years. He was a fine man. He was real emotional. He'd always holler, "Amen! Amen, brother!"

When he got to be 89 years old, he got the old-timer's disease, and instead of hollering "Amen!" he started hollering, "Hell, yes!"

The preacher told him, "Say now, listen. Nobody in this church can holler, 'Hell, yes!'" So they kicked my grandpa right out of the church.

Two months later, Grandpa hit the West Virginia lottery for $5 million. He went down to the company store, and he told everybody, "Now listen, if they hadn't kicked me out of the church, I was going to give them half that money."

So the deacons picked up on that, and they got together with the preacher. And they said, "Now listen, preacher. Ain't there no way we can get this man back in this church?"

And the preacher said, "Hell, yes!"

Vandalia Time!

Photoessay by Michael Keller

The sights, sounds, tastes, and rhythms of the Vandalia Gathering come alive each Memorial Day weekend at the West Virginia State Capitol Complex in Charleston. This free annual event celebrates the Mountain State's finest traditions, and you're invited.

Culture and History photographer Michael Keller shares these images from the 2006 Vandalia Gathering.

2006 Vandalia Winners

Vandalia Heritage Award — Ethel Caffie-Austin, Kanawha County

Fiddle (age 60 and over)
1 - Junior Spencer, Frankford
2 - Elmer Rich, Morgantown
2 (Honorary) - Harold Burns, Yawkey
3 - Don Jones, Scott Depot
4 - Boyd Phillips, Elkins
5 - Mack Samples, Duck

Fiddle (under age 60)
1 - Meredith Pheasant, Fairmont
2 - Chance McCoy, Martinsburg
3 - Jenny Allinder, St. Albans
4 - Jared Nutter, Meadow Bridge
5 - Jake Krack, Orma

Fiddle (age 16 and under)
1 - Meredith Pheasant, Fairmont
2 - Aesop Brown, Hurricane
3 - Jerrica Hilbert, St. Albans

Old-Time Banjo (age 60 and over)
1 - Mack Samples, Duck
2 - Bernard Cyrus, Fort Gay
3 - Ted Samples, Harrisville
4 - Charlie Loudermilk, Frankford
5 - Ben Carr, Wilsie

Old-Time Banjo (under 60)
1 - Tim Bing, Huntington
2 - Adam Hurt, Charleston
3 - David O'Dell, West Logan
4 - Doug Van Gundy, Elkins
5 - Pete Kosky, Charleston

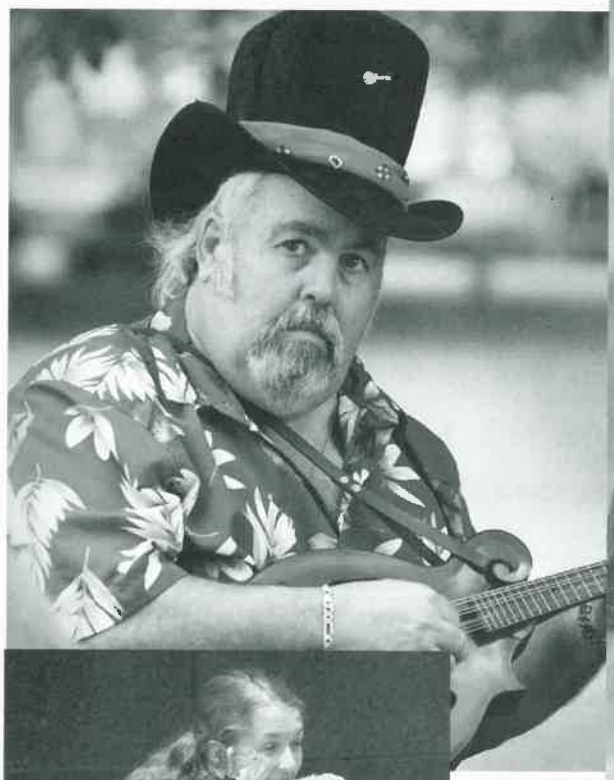
Mandolin
1 - Brandon Bentley, Sumerco
2 - Dan Kessinger, St. Marys
3 - John Putnam, Looneyville
4 - Robin Kessinger, St. Albans
5 - Rachel Singleton, Summersville

Bluegrass Banjo
1 - Butch Osbourne, Parkersburg
2 - Zach Life, Murraysville
3 - Doug Cossin, Mount Alto
4 - Ben Harrington, Artie
5 - Ron Seebaugh, Parkersburg

Lap Dulcimer
1 - Alan Freeman, Renick
2 - Dave Haas, Cross Lanes
3 - Timmy Gillenwater, Griffithsville
4 - Bernard Cyrus, Fort Gay
5 - Tish Westman, Mabscott

Lap Dulcimer (age 16 and under)
1 - Katie Stricker, Charleston

Flatpick Guitar
1 - Robin Kessinger, St. Albans
2 - Matt Lindsey, Dunbar
3 - Brandon Bentley, Sumerco
4 - Dan Kessinger, St. Albans
5 - Josh Moody, St. Marys



31st Annual Vandalia Gathering

May 25-27, 2007

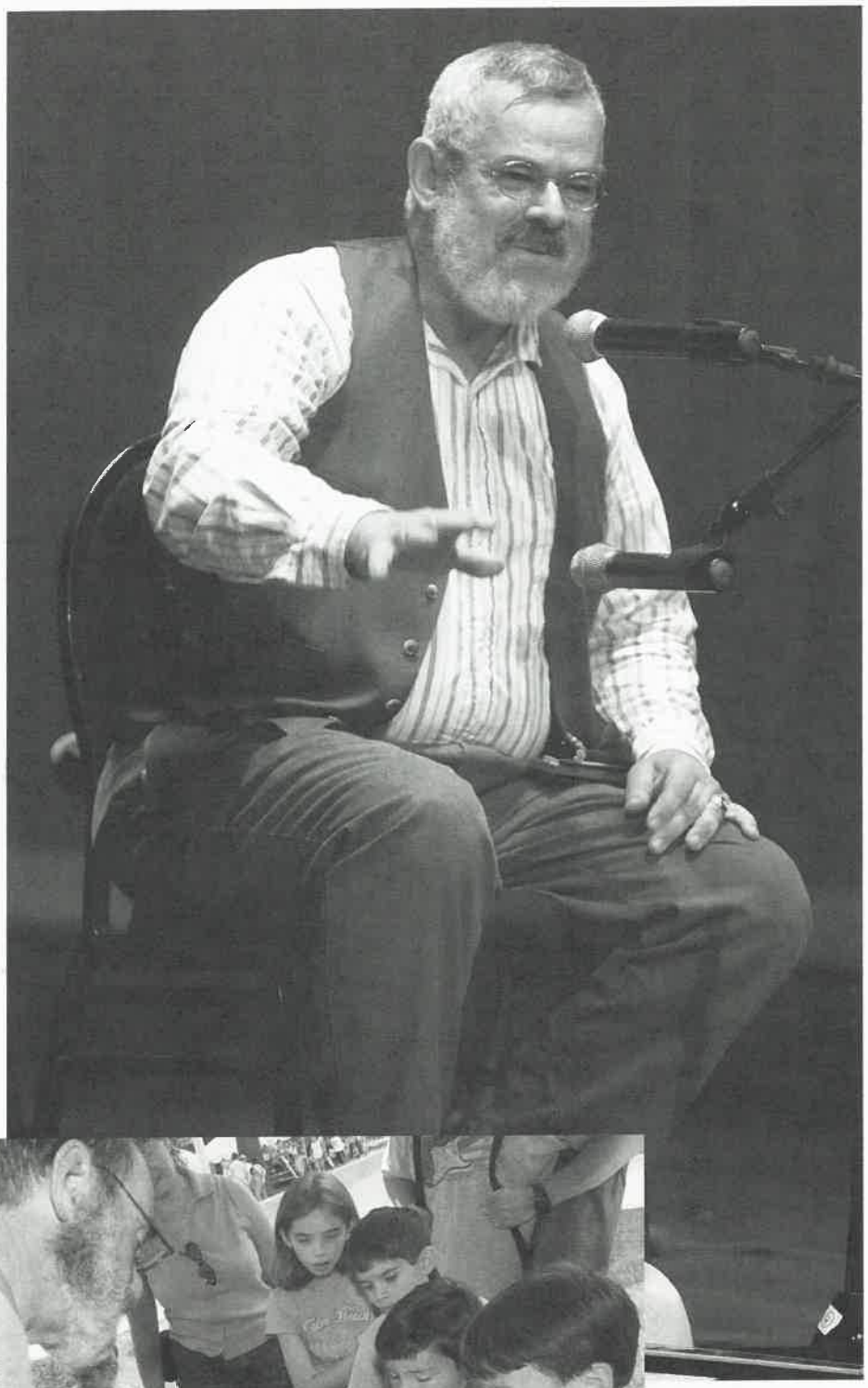
State Capitol Complex — Charleston, West Virginia

Friday, May 25
7:00 p.m. Concert

Saturday, May 26
11:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Appalachian Heritage Dancing, Jam Tent, Kids' Activities
12:00 noon - 5:00 p.m. Performances, Contests (Fiddle, Bluegrass Banjo, Mandolin)
12:00 noon - 5:00 p.m. Old-Time Square Dancing, Flatfooting
12:00 noon - 1:30 p.m. Film (*Making a Cello with Harold* [Hayslett])
6:30 p.m. Awards Ceremony and Concert

Sunday, May 27
12:00 noon - 5:00 p.m. Appalachian Heritage Dancing, Jam Tent, Kids' Activities
12:00 noon - 5:00 p.m. Performances, Contests (Old-Time Banjo, Lap Dulcimer, Flatpick Guitar)
12:00 noon - 5:00 p.m. Old-Time Square Dancing, Flatfooting
12:00 noon - 1:00 p.m. Storytelling
1:00 - 3:00 p.m. Liars Contest
3:30 - 5:00 p.m. Film (*Making a Cello with Harold* [Hayslett])
6:30 p.m. Finale Concert

All events are free and open to the public. For more information, call (304)558-0162 or visit www.wvculture.org/vandalia.



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

Back Issues Available

____Summer 2002/*Princess Margy Sternwheeler*
____Fall 2002/Flatwoods Monster
____Spring 2003/Stained Glass Dome
____Fall 2003/Artist Boyd Boggs
____Winter 2003/Weaver Dorothy Thompson
____Summer 2004/1939 World's Fair
____Fall 2004/Grafton Trains
____Winter 2004/Toymaker Dick Schnacke
____Summer 2005/Tygart Valley Homestead
____Fall 2005/Coke Ovens
____Spring 2006/Pepperoni Rolls
____Summer 2006/Elaine Purkey
____Fall 2006/Pumpkin House
____Winter 2006/Whitcomb Boulder

Stock up on GOLDENSEAL back issues! Purchase any of the magazines listed above for just $3.95 each, plus shipping, while supplies last. Pay just $2.50 each, plus shipping, for orders of 10 or more.
Better yet, take advantage of our Deluxe Gift Package: receive all 14 back issues listed above, plus a copy of the book *Mountains of Music: West Virginia Traditional Music from* GOLDENSEAL, a copy of *The* GOLDENSEAL *Book of the West Virginia Mine Wars*, and a full-color reprint booklet featuring our 1985 Homer Laughlin China article, all for only $50 plus $4 shipping. That's a savings of more than $30 off the regular price!
Treat a friend or treat yourself to this memorable collection of GOLDENSEAL books and magazines. Take advantage of our new Deluxe Gift Package, and celebrate West Virginia traditional life!

(Please include $1 shipping for orders of 1-3, $2 for orders of 4-9, $4 for orders of 10 or more.)

I enclose $_____for_____back issues of GOLDENSEAL.
-or-
Charge my ____VISA____MasterCard
#_____
Exp. Date _____

Name _____
Address _____
_____

Please make check or money order payable to GOLDENSEAL.
Send to:
GOLDENSEAL
The Cultural Center
1900 Kanawha Blvd. East
Charleston, WV 25305-0300

New To GOLDENSEAL?

We're glad to make your acquaintance and hope you want to see more of us. You may do so by returning this coupon with your annual subscription payment for $17.
Thanks — and welcome to the GOLDENSEAL family!

I enclose $_____for a subscription to GOLDENSEAL.
-or-
Charge my
___VISA ___MasterCard
#_____
Exp. Date _____

Name_____

Address_____

_____

Please make your check or money order payable to GOLDENSEAL.

Send to:
GOLDENSEAL
The Cultural Center
1900 Kanawha Blvd. East
Charleston, WV 25305-0300
(304)558-0220

ADDRESS CHANGE?

Please enter old and new addresses below and return to us.

OLD

_____
Name

_____
Address

_____

NEW

_____
Name

_____
Address

_____

Coal Camp Memories

The lives of women in West Virginia mining communities are seldom studied or celebrated, but this is the subject of *Coal Camp Memories*, a new DVD from Fayette County actress and playwright Karen Vuranch. Based on Karen's one-woman theatrical production by the same name, the DVD follows the life of Hallie Marie, a composite character based on individuals whom Karen has met and interviewed over the years. Over the course of the 78-minute, one-act performance, Hallie Marie matures from a 10-year-old girl, to a young woman, a mother, and finally an old woman wise with years.

According to Dr. Fred Barkey, GOLDENSEAL contributor and professor emeritus in history from Marshall University, "*Coal Camp Memories* dramatically illuminates an often neglected but vital dimension of coal life and culture — the female perspective."

Karen Vuranch has been a full-time, professional actress and storyteller for more than 20 years, specializing in roles with historical significance. Recurring characters she portrays include Pearl S. Buck, Mother Jones, Clara Barton, Mary Draper Ingles, and others. Karen has been on the roster of the West Virginia Humanities Council's History Alive! program since its inception.

Coal Camp Memories is available for $20, plus $3 shipping, from WV Enterprises, P.O. Box 383, Fayetteville, WV 25840; online at www.wventerprises.com.

Goldenseal

Coming Next Issue...

- Linger Chairs
- Red Jacket Safety Day
- Photographer Ferrell Friend
- Soap Box Derby

(continued from inside front cover)

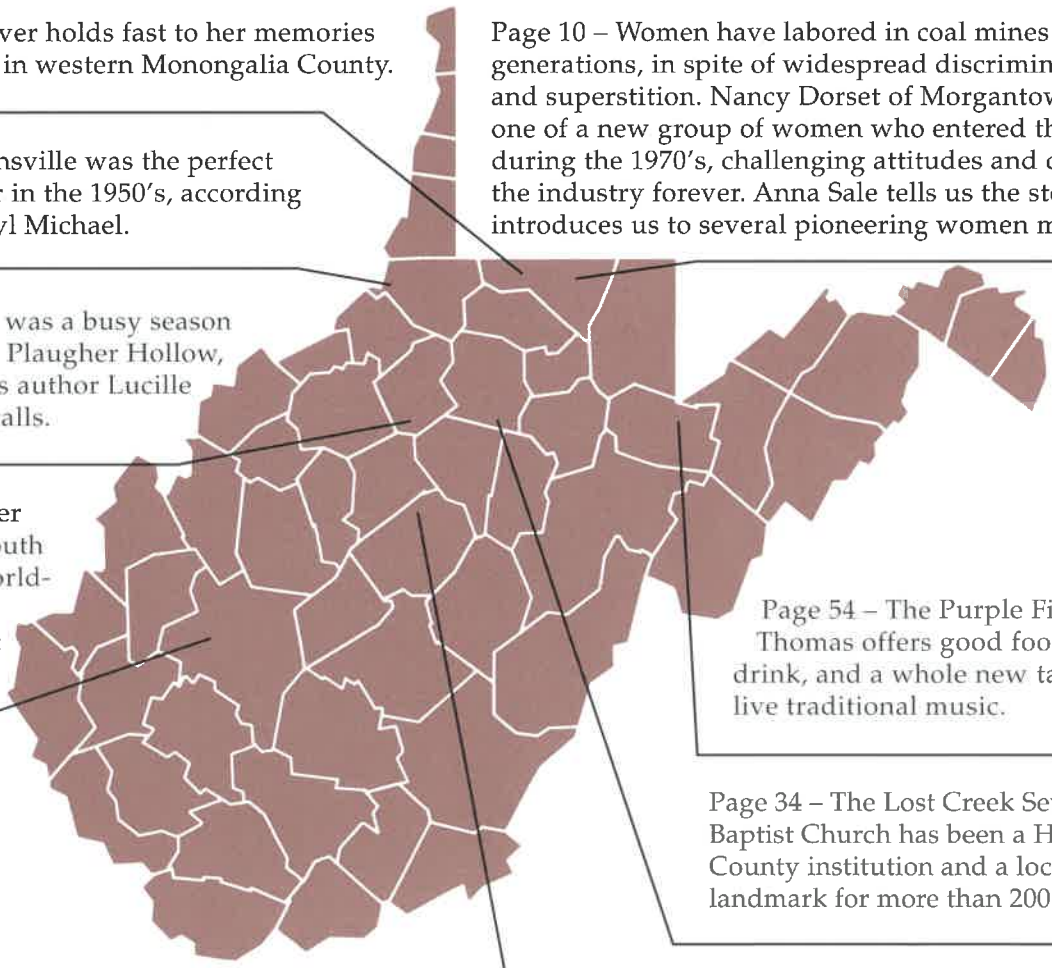
July 5-7 Point Pleasant Sternwheel Regatta & River Festival
Point Pleasant (675-6788)
July 5-8 Mountain State Art & Craft Fair
Cedar Lakes/Ripley (372-8159)
July 14-15 New Deal Festival
Arthurdale (864-3959)
July 18-21 Durbin Days
Durbin (1-800-336-7002)
July 27-29 Upper Ohio Valley Italian Heritage Festival
Wheeling (233-1090)
August 1-5 Appalachian String Band Music Festival
Camp Washington Carver/Clifftop (558-0162)
August 2-4 West Virginia Blackberry Festival
Clarksburg (622-3206)
August 3-5 Multifest
Charleston (421-1585)
August 3-5 Pickin' in Parsons
Parsons (478-3515)
August 6-11 Magnolia Festival
Matewan (426-6624)
August 8-11 Big Coal River Festival
Whitesville (854-1224)
August 10-12 Augusta Festival
Elkins (637-1209)
August 10-12 Logan County Arts, Crafts & Antiques Fair
Logan (752-1324)
August 10-18 State Fair of West Virginia
Fairlea (645-1090)
August 11 Mountain Festival Cook-Off
Canaan Valley (1-800-622-4121)
August 12 Mahrajan Lebanese Festival
Wheeling (233-1688)
August 24-26 Appalachian Festival
Beckley (1-877-987-3847)
August 25-26 W.Va. Honey Festival
Parkersburg (485-6437)
August 31-September 2 Oak Leaf Festival
Oak Hill (663-1608)
August 31-September 2 W.Va. Italian Heritage Festival
Clarksburg (622-7314)
August 31-September 3 Stonewall Jackson Heritage
Weston (1-800-296-1863) Arts & Crafts Jubilee
September 1-2 Apple Butter Weekend
Blennerhassett Island (420-4800)
September 1-3 Paden City Labor Celebration
Paden City (337-9370)
September 3 Miners' Labor Day Celebration
Racine (854-1749)
September 6-8 Country Roads Festival
Pennsboro (659-2116)
September 7-9 W.Va. Black Heritage Festival
Clarksburg (623-2335)
September 8 Braxton MonsterFest
Flatwoods (765-3300)
September 8-9 Hampshire Heritage Days
Romney (822-7221)
September 8-9 Helvetia Fair
Helvetia (924-6435)
September 8-9 15th Annual Mule & Donkey Show
Sutton (364-8364)
September 13-16 Treasure Mountain Festival
Franklin (249-5117)
September 14-16 CultureFest 2007
Pipestem (320-8833)
September 15-16 Country Roads Festival
Ansted (658-5282)
September 15-16 Grape Stomping Wine Festival
Summersville (872-7332)
September 15-16 Harvest Moon Arts & Crafts Festival
Parkersburg (424-3457)
September 15-16 Mothman Festival
Point Pleasant (675-9726)
September 27-29 W.Va. Molasses Festival
Arnoldsburg (655-7371)
September 28-30 Fall Mountain Heritage Arts & Crafts Festival
Harpers Ferry (1-800-624-0577)
September 29-30 Annual Leaf Peepers Festival
Davis (1-800-782-2775)
September 29-October 7 Mountain State Forest Festival
Elkins (636-1824)
October 5-6 Pine Bluff Fall Festival
Shinnston (592-1189)
October 5-6 Southern W.Va. Italian Festival
Bluefield (589-3317)
October 6 October Sky Fall Festival
Coalwood (297-2999)
October 6 Oktoberfest
Bramwell (248-8004)
October 6-7 Apple Butter Festival
Berkeley Springs (1-800-447-8797)
October 6-7 Country Fall Festival
Point Pleasant (675-5737)
October 11-14 W.Va. Black Walnut Festival
Spencer (927-5616)
October 12-14 Lumberjack Bluegrass Jamboree
Mullens (294-4000)
October 18-21 Mountain State Apple Harvest Festival
Berkeley County (263-2500)
October 20 Bridge Day
New River Gorge (465-6517)
October 26-28 Fiddlers Reunion
D&E College/Elkins (637-1209)

GOLDENSEAL requests its readers' help in preparing this listing. If you would like your festival or event to appear in the 2008 "Folklife • Fairs • Festivals," please send us information on the name of the event, dates, location, and the contact person or organization, along with their mailing address, phone number, and Web site, if available. We must have this information by January 15, 2008, in order to meet our printing deadline. GOLDENSEAL regrets that, due to space limitations, Fourth of July celebrations are no longer included in the listing.

Goldenseal
The Cultural Center
1900 Kanawha Blvd. East
Charleston, West Virginia 25305-0300

PERIODICALS

Inside Goldenseal



0 94295 76645 1 71