

Synthetic Rubber • Lewis Hine • Cass • Eglon School

Goldenseal

West Virginia Traditional Life

Spring 2012

\$5.95

**West Virginia
Rocks!**

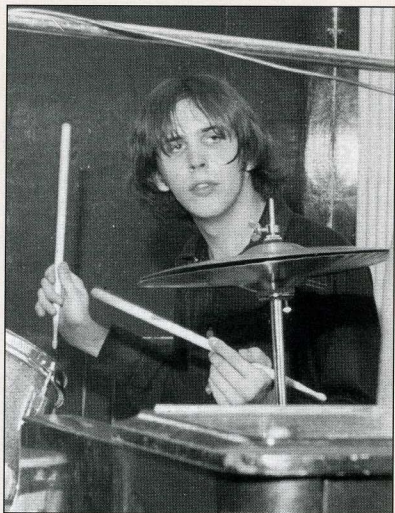


Folklife • Fairs • Festivals 2012

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 Sistersville (771-8699)	12 th Annual Sisters Fest	May 25-27 Rowlesburg (329-1240)	River City Festival of the Arts
March 16-18 Berkeley Springs (1-800-447-8797)	George Washington's Bathtub Celebration	May 25-27 State Capitol Complex/Charleston (558-0162)	36 th Vandalia Gathering
March 16-18 Shepherdstown (263-2531)	Upper Potomac Spring Dulcimer Festival	May 30-June 3 Philippi (457-2368)	Blue & Gray Reunion
March 17 Pipestem Resort State Park (466-1800)	26 th Annual Irish Heritage Festival	June 1-2 Grantsville (354-9725)	50 th Annual Calhoun County Wood Festival
March 17-18 Pickens (924-5096)	W.Va. Maple Syrup Festival	June 2 Caretta (875-3418)	Mountain Music Festival
March 23-25 Hurricane (562-0518)	Civil War Weekend	June 4-5 Hamlin (824-7748)	13 th Annual Bluegrass & Gospel Festival
April 14-15 Webster Springs (847-2145)	Wildwater River Festival	June 4-9 Cottageville (882-2049)	22 nd Annual Bend Area Gospel Jubilee
April 20-22 Huntington (696-5990)	Dogwood Arts & Crafts Festival	June 8-9 Clarksburg (624-5331)	Greek Food Festival
April 21 Richwood (846-6790)	74 th Feast of the Ramson	June 8-10 Matewan (426-6275)	Hatfield-McCoy Reunion Festival
April 21 Parkersburg (740-423-4744)	Scottish & Celtic Heritage Festival	June 8-10 Shenandoah Junction (1-800-624-0577)	Mountain Heritage Arts & Crafts Festival
April 27-29 Petersburg (257-2722)	20 th Spring Mountain Festival	June 9 Worthington (287-7240)	Lower West Fork River Fest
April 28 Helvetia (924-6435)	Helvetia Ramp Dinner	June 15-17 Ansted (1-800-927-0263)	Hometown Mountain Heritage Festival
April 28 Wardensville (897-8700)	64 th Annual Quartets on Parade	June 15-17 West Huntington (544-4880)	Old Central City Days Festival
May 4-6 Bridgeport (842-0370)	Scottish Heritage Festival & Celtic Gathering	June 15-17 Parkersburg (428-5554)	Mid-Ohio Valley Multi-Cultural Festival
May 5 Cairo (269-5006)	16 th Annual W.Va. Marble Festival	June 15-24 Charleston (470-0489)	FestivALL
May 5 Albright (329-3621)	Cheat River Festival	June 19-23 Madison (369-9118)	W.Va. Coal Festival
May 5 North Bend State Park (643-2931)	Engines & Wheels Festival	June 20 Blennerhassett Island Historical State Park (420-4800)	W.Va. Day Celebration
May 5 Huntington (522-1244)	Heritage Farm Spring Festival	June 20-23 Summersville (706-864-7203)	32 nd Music in the Mountains Bluegrass Festival
May 5-6 Point Pleasant (675-5737)	Antique Steam & Gas Engine Show	June 21-23 Summersville (636-4531)	W.Va. Quilt Festival
May 11-12 North Bend State Park (643-2931)	18 th Annual Bluegrass Festival	June 21-24 Glenville (462-5000)	W.Va. State Folk Festival
May 12 Bramwell (248-8381)	Bramwell Spring Home Tour	June 22-24 Hillsboro (1-800-336-7009)	Little Levels Heritage Fair
May 12 St. Albans (395-0155)	St. Albans Founders Day	June 28-30 Point Pleasant (593-2404)	22 nd Annual Point Pleasant Sternwheel Regatta
May 12-13 Webster (265-5549)	Mother's Day Founder's Festival	June 30 Romney (813-7265)	South Branch Valley Bluegrass Festival
May 13 Grafton (265-5549)	104 th Observance of Mother's Day	July 4-8 Marlinton (1-800-336-7009)	46 th Annual Pioneer Days
May 16-20 Buckhannon (472-9036)	71 st W.Va. Strawberry Festival	July 5-7 Cedar Lakes/Ripley (372-3247)	Mountain State Art & Craft Fair
May 18-20 Cass Scenic Railroad State Park (456-4300)	Cass Railfan Weekend	July 14 Arthurdale (864-3959)	New Deal Festival
May 18-20 Point Pleasant (675-7933)	Siege of Fort Randolph	July 22-28 Moorefield (530-2725)	68 th Annual W.Va. Poultry Festival
May 24-26 Fairmont (368-1123)	Three Rivers Festival	July 22-29 Summersville (622-0546)	62 nd W.Va. Gospel Singing Convention
May 24-27 Webster Springs (847-7666)	Webster County Woodchopping Festival	July 27-29 Wheeling (233-1090)	Upper Ohio Valley Italian Heritage Festival
May 24-28 White Sulphur Springs (536-5060)	Dandelion Festival	July 28 Terra Alta (1-800-752-7179)	Alpine Lake Bluegrass Festival

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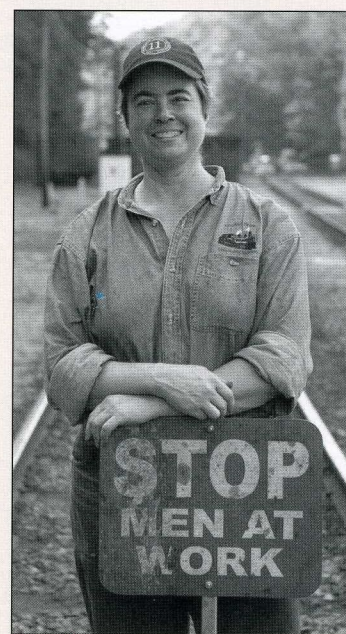


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On the cover: Norris Lytton performs at the Empty Glass in Charleston. Our stories about rock music in West Virginia begin on page 10. Photograph by Michael Keller.



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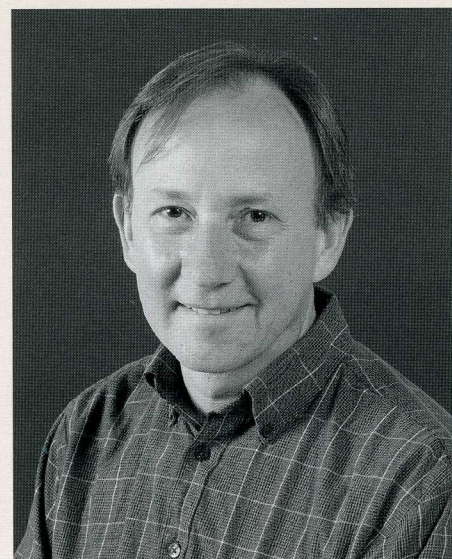
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From the Editor

The rock & roll era began more than a half-century ago. Over the years, rock music has played a big role in the lives of the so-called Baby Boomers, as they established their individuality and independence in the 1960's and '70's. When the civil rights, antiwar, and environmentalist causes commanded their attention, the music was there. As they went through school, courted, married, and began careers and families, rock music provided the soundtrack. Today, as the older "Boomers" retire, resettle, or, sadly, depart, it is often rock music that entertains, soothes, or accompanies them.

It is a part of our culture to be sure, and I felt it was about time we took it into account in these pages. I've never been much of a rocker myself — I'm more interested in traditional and old country music — but I know a worthy story when I see one. I hope you enjoy this special, if somewhat unusual, feature. It begins on page 10.

Another crucial topic in this GOLDENSEAL is Warren Woomer's description of the old Buna-S synthetic rubber operation at Institute during World War II. With Japan controlling 90% of the natural rubber supply, it was essential that the U.S. develop a system for creating synthetic rubber, primarily to make tires for military vehicles. Typical of the WWII generation, men and women made sacrifices, thought creatively, and worked hard to find a solution. The result was a huge distillation and polymerization plant along the Great Kanawha River at Institute, where



Photograph by Michael Keller.

they churned out the equivalent of 63,000 rubber tires each day. Our coverage begins on page 23.

Unless I am mistaken, we introduce GOLDENSEAL's youngest author in this issue. Kailey Dwire of Ellenboro, Ritchie County, age nine, offers a memorable tale of her lost hamster and what it took to find her. See page 64.

Cass railroad's first female fireman, a 100-year-old hardware store in Marlinton, historical photography from Lewis W Hine, farm life in Harrison County during the Great Depression, a one-room school saved from the ashes in Preston County, highlights from the 2011 State Liars Contest, and our annual Vandalia coverage and fairs & festivals listing fill out this issue.

No doubt about it, GOLDENSEAL rocks!

John Lilly

Letters from Readers

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

Belgian Glass

January 5, 2012

Clarksburg, West Virginia

Via e-mail

Editor:

I just finished the article about the Belgians in South Charleston. [See "In the Beginning. .. South Charleston's Belgian Roots," by Stan Bumgardner; Winter 2011.] I enjoyed reading the article. There were many such settlements in West Virginia, where Belgian glassworkers came as the glass factories in Charleroi, Belgium, were diminishing at the turn of the 20th century. Once gas was discovered in West Virginia, the glass factories followed. Wherever you see gas being drilled today, you likely would have found a glass factory 50 or 60 years ago.

When glass factories closed up in one town, it was common for the Belgian workers and their families to relocate to another glass-producing area. Several of the South Charleston Belgians ended up in

the Clarksburg area for that reason. A number of them belong to our organization, the Belgian-American Heritage Society of West Virginia (BAHS of WV). For more information, write to BAHS of WV, 340 Buckhannon Avenue, Clarksburg, WV 26301.

Sincerely,
Victoria Zabeau Bowden
Director, BAHS of WV

Bluefield Coal Show

December 28, 2011

Fairfax, Virginia

Via e-mail

Editor:

As a Golden Horseshoe winner, I really look forward to reading your fine magazine. I would like to single out your excellent article on the Bluefield Coal Show in your winter issue. [See "Where Coal People Meet: 2011 Bluefield Coal Show," by John Lilly; Winter 2011.] I am a native of Mullens, once a thriving coal and railroad center serving as the western terminus of



Belgian glassworkers in South Charleston, circa 1910.

The Goldenseal Book of the West Virginia Mine Wars



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

Now in its fourth printing, the book is revised and features updated information. The large-format, 109-page paperbound book sells for \$12.95, plus \$2 per copy postage and handling. West Virginia residents please add 6% state sales tax (total \$15.73 per book including tax and shipping).

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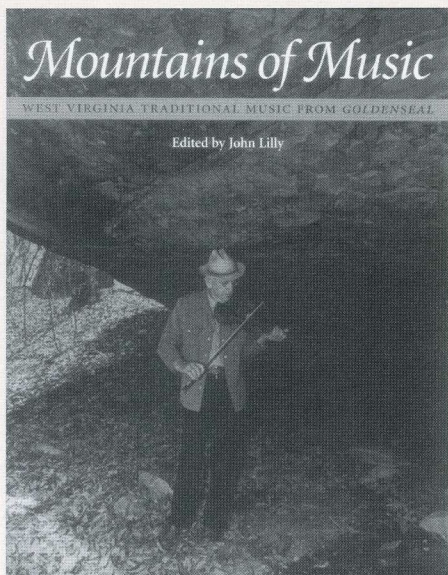
GOLDENSEAL

The Culture Center

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Charleston, WV 25305-0300

(304)558-0220



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 \$33.95, plus \$2 shipping per book; West Virginia residents please add 6% sales tax (total \$37.99 per book, including tax and shipping). Add *Mountains of Music* to your book collection today!

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the Virginian Railroad. One of the many attractions of living in this great community was the opportunity to journey to Bluefield for a number of festivities.

One of the major attractions in the 1930's, '40's, and '50's was the biennial coal show. The most likely sponsor was the Norfolk & Western Railroad (N&W), which was not only a major hauler of coal but also was a major consumer of coal, prior to its conversion to diesel engines. I suggest a minor fact check on your article, and that you indicate that the coal show was "resumed" in 1976, rather than "begun" in 1976.

Your loyal, humble, and obedient servant,
Paul C. Farmer

Thanks, Paul! We received the following from our friend Bill Archer in Bluefield.—ed.

December 29, 2011

Bluefield, West Virginia

Via e-mail

Editor:

The earliest date I have for the Southern Appalachian Regional Industrial Exhibit was 1934. It paused during the 1940's for the war, but kicked back into high gear in the late 1940's and early 1950's.

The biennial exhibit was open to everyone and attracted local citizens, who eventually outnumbered people associated with the coal industry. The old exhibits were held in the former N&W freight station and drew crowds of 10,000 and up. The last one I know took place for sure was the 1958 exhibit.

Peggy (Tolley) Perry — sister of Coach Rick Tolley, who died in the Marshall plane crash — was Miss Bituminous XIV. Of course, the Bluefield Coal Show emerged in 1976, and was reset in 1977 to avoid conflicting with the now-defunct biennial Pittsburgh Coal Show.

Hard to tell why the Industrial Exhibit died, but I think a leading cause might have been the N&W's conversion from coal- to diesel-powered locomotives.

Good hearing from you.

Bill Archer

Glenna Harrah

December 30, 2011

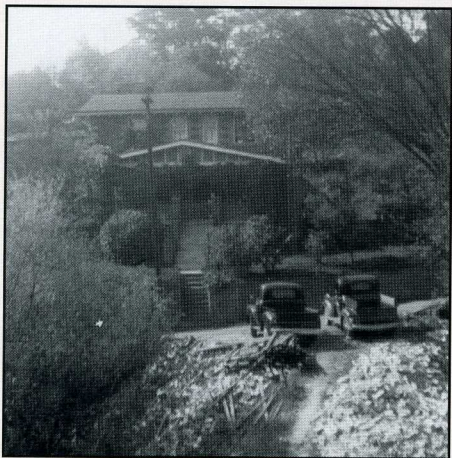
Via e-mail

Editor:

I really enjoy getting my copy of GOLDENSEAL and read most of the articles. On page 50 of the most recent issue, the picture of the Harrah house was captioned "circa



Miss Bituminous 1954 with Bob Howell (left) and Jim O'Brien at the Southern Appalachian Regional Industrial Exhibit. Photograph courtesy of Bob Howell.



The Harrah home in Charleston, circa 1950.

1920." It may actually be circa 1950. Note the trucks in the picture. [See "The Way It Was: Memories of Glenna Harrah Weaver," by Nadine Davis; Winter 2011.] Respectfully,
W.K. Creed

Yes, indeed, Mr Creed. The telephone pole visible at left is another indication of the correct time period for this photograph. Thanks for catching this one.—ed.

Osage

November 10, 2011
Charleston, West Virginia
Via e-mail
Editor:

I enjoyed reading your story about Osage. [See "I Am Going to Tell the Story" Al Anderson of Osage," by Norman Julian; Fall 2011.] It was Wesley Methodist Church alone that started the Scotts Run Settlement House. The work that became The Shack in Pursglove was started by the Presbyterian Church.

My mom, Mary Behner Christopher, was hired as a home mis-



Mary Behner at Scotts Run, date unknown. Courtesy of West Virginia State Archives, Mary Behner Christopher Collection.

sionary and given an abandoned schoolhouse at Stumptown in 1928 to start a Sunday School program. Her work quickly expanded into community charity and organizational work, and she got an old company store from the mining company, which she named The Shack.

In 2008 the state agreed to place a state historical highway marker at the site of the original Shack, along Route 7 near the veterans memorial. We were sure to include both centers in the wording.

Mom wrote diaries of her nine years there in the form of letters to her father, a minister in Clarksburg. I donated these to the State Archives, as they capture the Great Depression in its poverty and in the breakthroughs. She was quite a role model!

Sincerely,
Bettijane Christopher Burger

Small World

November 23, 2011
Kinston, North Carolina
Editor:

West Virginia is well known for keeping, sharing, and expanding its musical traditions. We were touring Ireland, just driving and stopping at things and places that interested us. On the Dingle Peninsula we stopped at the Celtic and Prehistoric Museum. The Dingle Peninsula is somewhat off the tourist paths and not heavily traveled. As we were the first customers that day, we practically awoke the museum director. His name is Harris Moore.

As we toured the museum, we noticed a hammered dulcimer that seemed out of place to us. We asked Harris about it, and he said it was his and that he plays it. Since we have roots in West Virginia and have some idea of a dulcimer, we asked him if he would play it. He did, and it was outstanding!

The next question we had was where did he learn to play it so

well? The answer really knocked us down. He learned to play at a summer music camp in Elkins, West Virginia! His story in his words:

"That was the summer of 1979 at the Augusta Heritage Workshop at Davis & Elkins College. John McCutcheon was one of the teachers. Guest artists included Sam Rizzetta, Paul Van Arsdale, and Jean Ritchie. I am originally from Connecticut and was on summer break from UC-Santa Cruz [California] at the time. I hitchhiked from my parents' house in Connecticut all the way to Elkins with a huge backpack and a giant, heavy hammered dulcimer. Plus it was about 92 degrees.

"I didn't make it in one day and got stuck hitchhiking in front of the Three Mile Island nuclear reactor,



Harris Moore. Photograph by Joe Plasky.

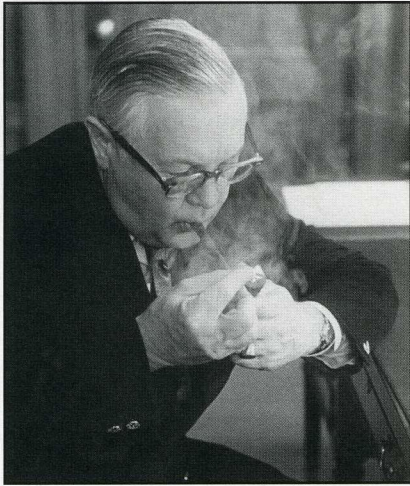
which had recently experienced the famous meltdown. That night, I slept somewhere in Pennsylvania in an abandoned house, which some children I met on the street had brought me to. I remember playing the dulcimer for them in the dark and spooky old house. It was kind of bizarre.

"I get folks from West Virginia in the museum from time to time, not all that often."

This is a great example of what a small world it is and the impact of mountain music worldwide. If anyone visits Ireland we highly recommend visiting the Celtic and Prehistoric Museum. Harris Moore will surely be glad to see you. Keep the music going!

Yours truly,
Sue and Joe Plasky

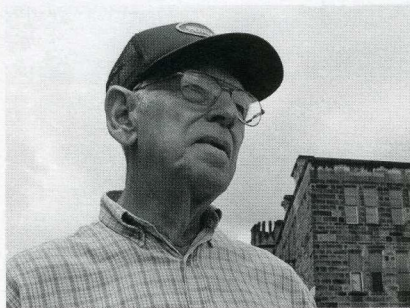
GOLDENSEAL Good-Byes



Hulett C. Smith. Photograph by David Cruise, courtesy of the West Virginia State Archives, Hulett C. Smith Collection.

Hulett C. Smith of Beckley, the 27th governor of West Virginia, died January 15 at the age of 93. Elected to the state's highest office in 1965, Smith signed into law the first state regulations governing surface mining. He also abolished the death penalty, established civil

service protection for state employees, and invested heavily in road construction. Born at Beckley in 1918, Smith worked in insurance and broadcasting before joining the U.S. Navy during World War II. He entered political life after the war. He returned to his family's insurance agency after leaving office, but remained an outspoken advocate for the environment.



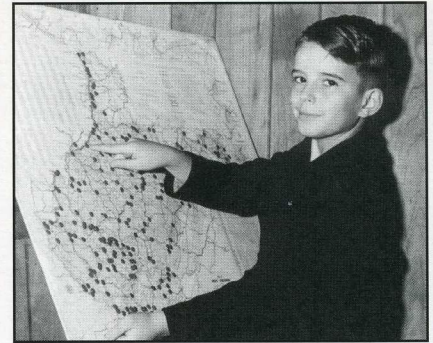
Bob Harness. Photograph by Carl E. Feather.

Bob Harness of Pleasant Valley, Marshall County, worked as a guard at the West Virginia State Penitentiary in Moundsville for seven years. During that time he took part in nine ex-

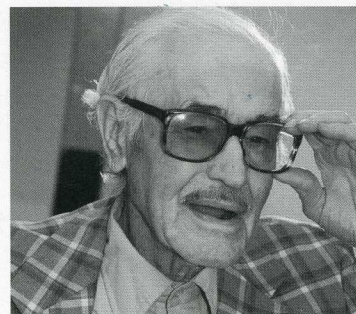
ecutions. His memories of those grim experiences are recalled in an article titled, "The Executioner's Story: Bob Harness and the Moundsville Pen," by Carl E. Feather; Fall 2005. An avid antiques collector, Bob was the former president of the Marshall County Historical Society. He died December 10 at age 87

Dan B. Fleming, Jr., originally from St. Marys, died at his home in Blacksburg, Virginia, on December 17. He was 80. A lifetime educator and author, Dan wrote the cover story for our Summer 2004 edition titled, "A West Virginia Boy at

the New York World's Fair." His photograph, at age seven, was featured on the front of that magazine. As an adult, Dan became a renowned social studies teacher, authoring several textbooks on the subject. He also wrote two books about U.S. President John F. Kennedy.



Dan B. Fleming, Jr. in 1939. Photographer unknown.

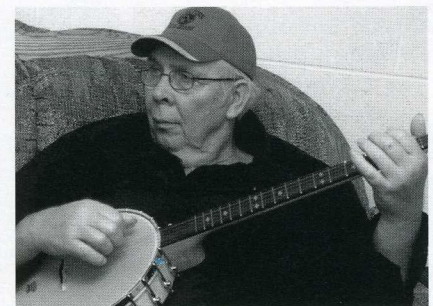


Wallace Horn. Photograph by Michael Keller.

Wallace Horn, longtime radio broadcaster from Chapmanville, founder and host of the *Friendly Neighbor Show*, died January 10. The weekly variety show featured live bluegrass, gospel, and old-time country music as

well as local news, advertisements, and commentary by Wallace. He was featured in the article titled, "'Pure Entertainment' Wallace Horn and the *Friendly Neighbor Show*," by Carolyn Harmon; Spring 2009. He was 91.

Melvin Cottrell of Crummies Creek, Calhoun County, passed away January 12, at age 68. A pipeline construction and heavy equipment mechanic, Melvin came from a



Melvin Cottrell. Photograph by Michael Keller.

long line of musicians. Melvin and his wife, Patty, bought an old building in 2002 near the Calhoun/Gilmer county line and created a community center featuring live old-time, bluegrass, and gospel music. Melvin and Patty and their music hall were the topic of a Spring 2008 article titled, "The Bear Fork Trading Post: Live Music in Calhoun County," by Kim Johnson.

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.

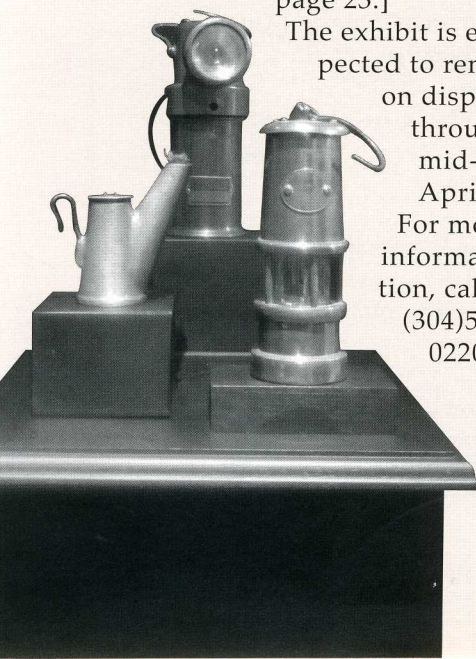
Chemical Industry Exhibit

"The Chemical Center of the World" is a new exhibit on display in the theater gallery at the Culture Center in Charleston, focusing on the history of the chemical industry in the Kanawha Valley. Dating from 1914 to the present day, the exhibit displays many artifacts from various facilities in the area. Items on display include laboratory equipment, historical photographs, household products, and garments made of synthetic fabrics. Also on display is a detailed scale model of the Synthetic Organic Chemical Manufacturing Unit of Union Carbide's South Charleston operation.

Union Carbide, DuPont, FMC, American Viscose, Monsanto, Allied Chemical, Westvaco, and Fike Chemical, among others, were once scattered throughout the Kanawha Valley from Alloy to Nitro and up the Elk River to Clendenin. These plants produced many commonly used products, including ammonia, chlorine, nylon, rayon, antifreeze, and others. [See "Victory Through Chemistry"; page 23.]

The exhibit is expected to remain on display through mid-April.

For more information, call (304)558-0220.



Mining Lamp Exhibit

The history of underground mining illumination is the topic of a new exhibit, on display at the Royce J and Caroline B. Watts Museum at West Virginia University through July. "Defying the Darkness: The Struggle for Safe and Sufficient Mine Illumination" chronicles the use of candles, oil lamps, carbide lamps, and battery-powered cap lights by miners through the years. The centerpiece of the exhibit is the controversial 19th-century flame safety lamp. Also included are photographs and prints of mine lamps in operation.

The Royce J and Caroline B. Watts Museum is located in the Mineral Resources Building on the WVU Evansville Campus in Morgantown. Admission is free. For more information, phone (304)293-4609 or e-mail wattsmuseum@mail.wvu.edu.

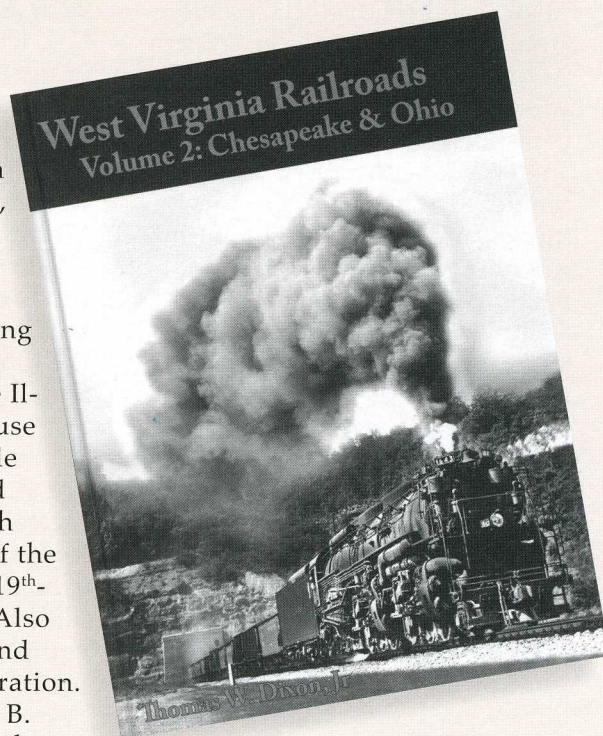
Railroad History

"West Virginia Railroads" is a four-volume series recently published by TLC Railroad Books, about the history of railroads in the Mountain State.

The first volume of the series, *Railroading in the Mountain State*, by Thomas W Dixon, Jr., presents an overview of the major railroad systems in West Virginia. Chapters include the B&O, C&O, Norfolk & Western, and Western Maryland, as well as railroads in the Northern Panhandle, short lines, and

logging railroads.

Oil wick lamp, hand-held battery lamp, and flame safety lamp on display at the Royce J. and Caroline B. Watts Museum at WVU. Photograph by Danielle Petrak.



logging railroads.

Volume 2. Chesapeake & Ohio, by Thomas W Dixon, Jr., is a detailed history of C&O in southern West Virginia, and contains chapters devoted to the Allegheny, Greenbrier, New River, and Kanawha subdivisions, including the branch lines of New River and Kanawha.

Volume 3. Baltimore & Ohio, by Bob Withers, is a comprehensive history of the B&O. This volume contains chapters on the different freight divisions of the B&O, and also passenger trains serving the northern and central regions of West Virginia.

Volume 4. Virginian Railway, by Lloyd A. Lewis, tells the story of the Virginian Railway, which was established for the purpose of hauling coal from the southern West Virginia coalfields to Norfolk, Virginia.

These books, which contain vintage photographs, maps,

operational data, yard layouts, and track diagrams, are available from TLC Railroad Books on-line at www.tlcrailroadbooks.com. For more information, call (434)385-4076.

The Western Maryland Railway Historical Society, Inc., recently published *Working on the Western Maryland: Volume II*, edited by Wes Morganstern and Leo Armentrout. This book is a collection of 29 interviews with retired engineers, conductors, bridge inspectors, clerks, and other former employees of the Western Maryland. A section at the end of the book includes pictures of the various types of steam and diesel locomotives used in the Western Maryland rail system.

Working on the Western Maryland: Volume II, a 208-page, hardbound book, is available from the Western Maryland Railway Historical Society for \$37, plus \$5 postage. Call Leo Armentrout at (410)299-9589 for more information, on-line at <http://moosevalley.org/wmrhs>.

Cass Railfan Weekend

The 45th Annual Cass Railfan weekend will take place May 18-20, at Cass Scenic Railroad State Park. Scheduled activities include a variety of train-related events, such as photographic opportunities, whistle blowing, and tours of the locomotive shop. Guided walking tours are also available of the historic logging town of Cass, founded in 1901 as a company town for employees of the West Virginia Pulp and Paper Company.

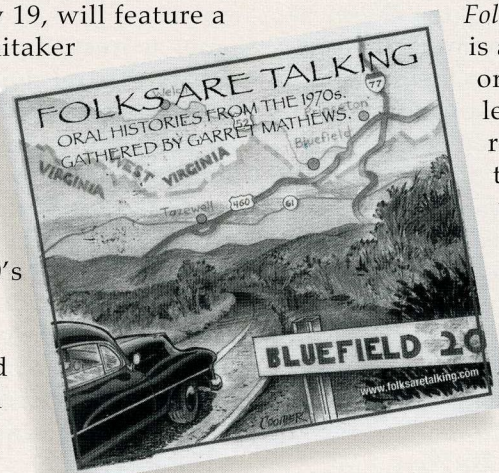
Saturday, May 19, will feature a train ride to Whitaker Station, where the Mountain State Railroad and Logging Historical Association has recreated a 1940's logging camp, exhibiting living quarters and equipment used by the loggers.

The train will continue on to Bald Knob, the third-highest point in West Virginia, with an altitude of 4,700 feet.

The Cass Railfan Weekend is sponsored by the Mountain State Railroad and Logging Historical Association and Cass Scenic Railroad State Park. Various weekend passes and ticket options are available. For more information, visit www.msrlha.org or call (304)456-4300.

Oral Histories

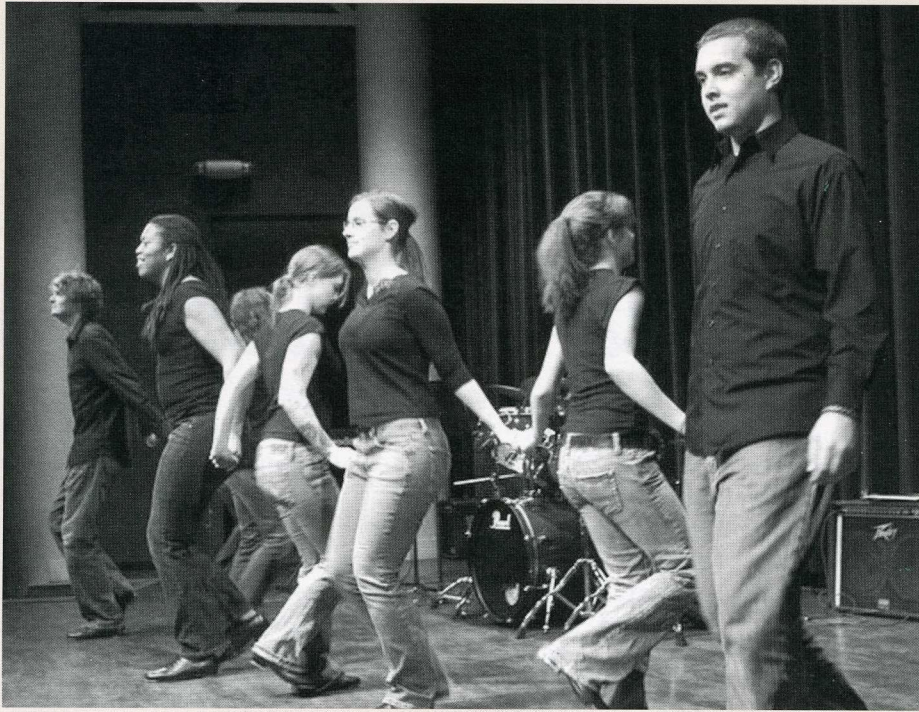
Folks Are Talking is a collection of oral histories collected by Garret Mathews in the late 1970's, when he was a feature writer for the *Bluefield Daily Telegraph*. Mathews, a GOLDENSEAL contributor, interviewed people



Sesquicentennial Timeline Milestones on the Road to Statehood

- **March 1, 1862** - Union troops from the 12th Massachusetts Volunteers marched into Charles Town and sang "John Brown's Body."
- **April 3, 1862** - West Virginia voters approved the new state constitution by a vote of 18,862 to 514.
- **April 5, 1862** - Confederate guerillas waged attacks in Braxton County, killing one man and cutting telegraph cables.
- **April 12, 1862** - U.S. Marshal E.M. Norton and U.S. Senator John S. Carlile (Unionist-VA) fought a fist fight on the streets of Wheeling.
- **May 11, 1862** - Union General B.F. Kelley and troops left Parkersburg in search of guerillas in Calhoun and Wirt counties.
- **May 13, 1862** - The Restored Government of Virginia in Wheeling passed a resolution granting West Virginia permission to separate from Virginia and form a new state.
- **May 23, 1862** - Union forces repelled Confederates at the Battle of Lewisburg.
- **May 24, 1862** - A Wellsburg resident was arrested and sent to prison for uttering treasonable and seditious language.
- **May 29, 1862** - Senator Waitman T. Willey (Unionist-VA) presented a formal petition to the U.S. Senate for the admission of West Virginia into the Union as the 35th state.

(For more information, visit www.wvculture.org/history/sesquicentennial/timeline.html)



Davis & Elkins College traditional dance group performing at Tamarack. Photographer unknown.

from Mercer, McDowell, Monroe, Wyoming, and Raleigh counties, as well as some of the border counties of Virginia, about their lives, livelihoods, and memorable events.

Interviews include an early UMWA organizer, a 91-year-old female bootlegger, a cockfighter, a horse trader, survivors of mine tragedies, coalfield baseball players, and members of a snake-handling church, among others.

Folks Are Talking includes 28 interviews and old-time music by Mathews and friends. The two-CD set is available on-line at www.folksaretalking.com for \$17, plus \$3 shipping, or by mail from Garret Mathews, 7954 Elna Kay Drive, Evansville, IN 47715.

D&E Scholarships

Davis & Elkins College invites young dancers and traditional musicians to apply for substantial scholarships. In 2010, the college established an Appalachian string band and dance group, and also began including an Appalachian Studies minor in its curriculum. Qualified applicants will represent the school at various events

throughout the region as performers. This scholarship program will begin with the Fall 2012 semester.

Interested musicians and dancers may audition and apply for scholarships through the Augusta Heritage Center, which will manage the program. Contact Gerry Milnes for more information at (304)637-1334 or milnesg@dewv.edu.

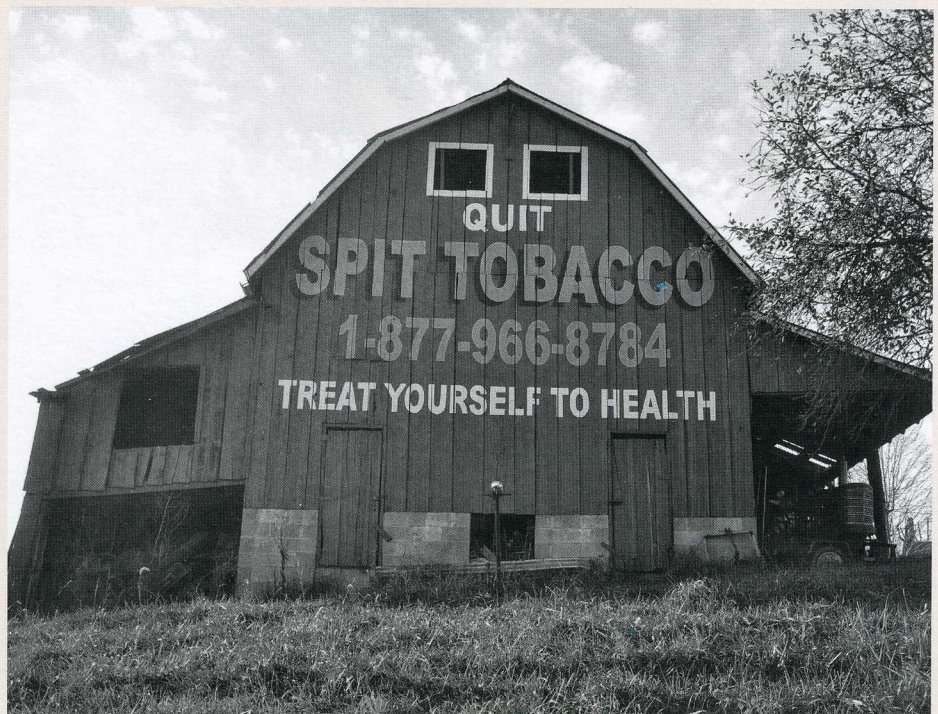
Anti-Tobacco Barns

The once-familiar sight of a Mail Pouch tobacco advertisement painted on a rustic barn is now being used by anti-tobacco groups to spread their message regarding the harmful effects of tobacco use.

Community Connections, the Southern Coalfields Tobacco Prevention Network, the West Virginia Division of Tobacco Prevention, area barn owners, and others have started painting barns in Monroe, Mercer, and Wyoming counties with tobacco-free messages and hope to extend their tobacco prevention campaign to all West Virginia counties.

Community Connections executive director Greg Puckett was inspired by the hundreds of Mail Pouch barns created by the Bloch Brothers Tobacco Company of Wheeling that were once a common sight across the West Virginia landscape. He determined to use the old advertising idea with a new perspective, and display a message that would inspire people to stop harmful tobacco usage.

Those interested in providing a host barn for the project may call Greg Puckett at (304)324-0456.



The Shades

By Bernie Helmick

Rockin' the Mountains

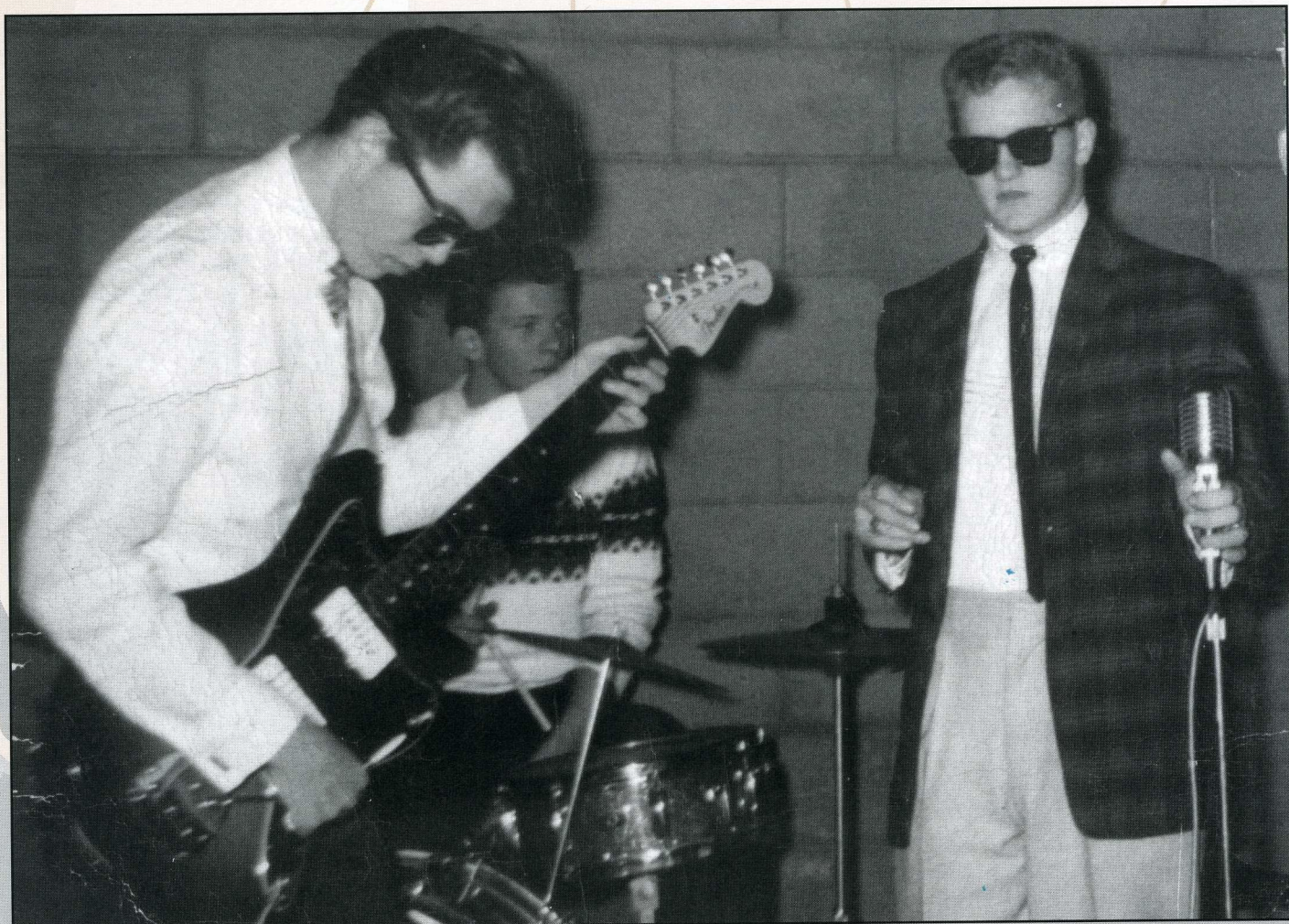
In Elkins in 1958 a group of us teenagers would drive to the top of Bickles Knob, second highest point in the state, to listen to faraway radio stations. Some I recall were WABC-New York, WLS-Chicago, and our favorite, WLAC-Nashville, Tennessee. The program we liked the most was sponsored by Randy's Record Shop. They played all the newest rhythm & blues (R&B) and pop music by

the original black artists. Most other stations would only play the cover tunes by white singers. We would order all the original records from Randy's and play them at YMCA dances and parties.

It was not long before we decided to start a band of our own to earn some money and, of course, meet some girls. The band was called the Shades, because of our very large,

dark sunglasses.

Nathaniel "Nat" Jackson was the musical brains of the band. He was black and understood what was needed to make this music. Jim Ketterman asked for and received a six-string guitar, Fonso Stalnaker was our bass man, Leonard Phillips played drums, Bill Hickman from Clarksburg was our sax man, and I was the lead singer. Over the years



Author and vocalist Bernie "Pooch" Helmick and members of the Shades rock & roll band at Elkins, circa 1958. At left is guitarist Jim Ketterman; playing drums is Leonard Phillips. Photographer unknown.



The Shades, in matching sports jackets, about 1960. From the left are Bernie "Pooch" Helmick, Leonard Phillips, Dick Collett (manager), Jim Ketterman, Fonso Stalnaker, Nat Jackson, and Bill Hickman. Photographer unknown.

many different people were added to and dropped from the band, but these were the original Shades. As our popularity grew, we hired a manager, Dick Collett, a student at Davis & Elkins College. He pushed us to expand to play the colleges and clubs. We soon began to play throughout the region.

We spent a lot of nights at Willow Beach, just outside of Clarksburg. Some readers might have fond memories of some of the other clubs we played as well. There was Snyders in Buckhannon; the Bridgeport Civic Center; Club Areo, the Hookey Nook, and the Cave, all these in Elkins; the Queen of Clubs in Philippi, the Owls Club in Oak Hill, and of course The Greenbrier in White Sulphur Springs.

One night, we thought we got our big break. We were playing a dance at Davis & Elkins College when Dick Collett was approached by a student who was a member of Dick Clark's family. If Dick Clark played your record on *American Bandstand*, you had a hit. This fellow was impressed with the band and wanted to know,

if he could arrange it, would we be interested in going to Philadelphia for an audition. Of course, we said yes!

Just as the arrangements were being worked out, everything was canceled. A congressional committee was investigating "payola" at that time. That's where unscrupulous record companies or promoters would offer disc jockeys and radio managers money or other payment in exchange for airplay. Dick Clark was one of the key figures in the investigation.

As a result, our audition got canceled. Needless to say, our dreams of fame, fortune, and girls vanished. But I did meet my wife while in the band!

We were not the only ones to start a band. The Prodigals, featuring Chuck Collins on vocals and Girard Folio on lead guitar, was one of the bands from Clarksburg, along with the El Salvadors. We became friends with some of the other band members.

I am 69 now. That does not seem old enough to have heard, "We don't serve this kind in here," but there were occasions when we did

experience the pains of segregation. Sometimes we had to eat in our cars because we had a black man in our band. They were talking about my lifelong friend, the late Nat Jackson, 1964 graduate of Purdue University, college administrator at A.B. College in Philippi, and successful businessman who gave much back to his hometown of Elkins.

When I read your article "Hidden in Plain Sight: The Greenbrier Bunker," by Bob Conte; Winter 2010, I remembered playing at The Greenbrier with the Shades. I recall driving underground and coming out in a room that was huge. We might have played in the bunker! That way we wouldn't drive the old people crazy. Just kidding! I am one of the old people now, and as I write down my memories, I hope your readers enjoy reading them as much as I did writing them. ✱

BERNIE HELMICK is a native of Elkins and a 1960 graduate of Elkins High School. He currently lives in Hilliard, Ohio, where he is a sales representative for wholesale jewelry stores. This is Bernie's first contribution to GOLDENSEAL.

By Terry Lowry

Days of Glory



Charleston and the Kanawha Valley have never been at a loss for musical talent and creativity, but the period between roughly 1965 and 1975 is considered by many musicians and critics as the “Golden Age” of rock & roll music in the valley. It was a time when many individual musicians and groups peaked in creativity and popularity, clubs and venues flourished, and fan support was massive.

The Esquires were a popular rhythm and blues band in the Kanawha Valley starting in the early 1960's. On stage, from the left, are Kelly Castleberry, Tennessee Jackson, Jack Bumgarner, Dick Gregg, drummer J.B. Neal, Bobby Lanham, Butch Evans, and Carl Nestmann in about 1967. The lone dancer is unidentified. All photographs courtesy of Terry Lowry; photographers unknown unless otherwise noted.



Rock Music in the Kanawha Valley

(1965-1975)

The decade began with a flurry of soul or rhythm & blues (R&B) bands, with Charleston's own Esquires leading the pack. The band featured Bobby Lanham, a man who epitomized the phrase "blue-eyed soul" on lead vocals, accompanied by Butch Evans on guitar, Carl Nestmann on bass, drummer Jimmy (J.B.) Neal, organist Jack Bumgarner, trumpeter Dick Gregg, and sax man Tennessee Jackson. This band was emulated by all others and exemplified the best in R&B music. This early version of the Esquires always brought down the house at such places as the Checkmate (Charleston), the Twin Maples (St. Albans), the Roaring Twenties (Charleston), the old Lee Street Armory, the South Charleston Recreation Center (beside Oakes Field), and Goldfinger (South Charleston), in addition to high schools, colleges, and summer jaunts to Myrtle Beach.

Racial integration was common in local rock bands well before it was accepted in the broader community. Here, vocalists Tommy Hill, at left, and Bobby Lanham sing with the Esquires in about 1968.



The group released two 45 rpm records. The first, released in 1967, was "I Can't Get Along Without You Baby" b/w "Just Loafin'," (written by South Charleston white soul man Turley Richards). The other was a 1968 reworking of a tune by Electric Flag called "Groovin' Is Easy" b/w "Can't Be So Bad" (originally recorded by Moby Grape), made during the latter days of this Esquires lineup in an attempt to stay current. Lanham departed the band to sing blues and gospel, and was later killed in a car wreck. The Esquires continue to perform today. Although a number of competent singers have fronted the band through the years, none has ever recaptured Lanham's intensity and soul.

Others bands close on the heels of the Esquires were the Barons, the

Eight Souls, the Fascinations, the Rooks, the Majestics, the Seven Seas (featuring a young Spurgie Hankins), and the Tiki Turbans. Possibly one of the best conglomerations, with

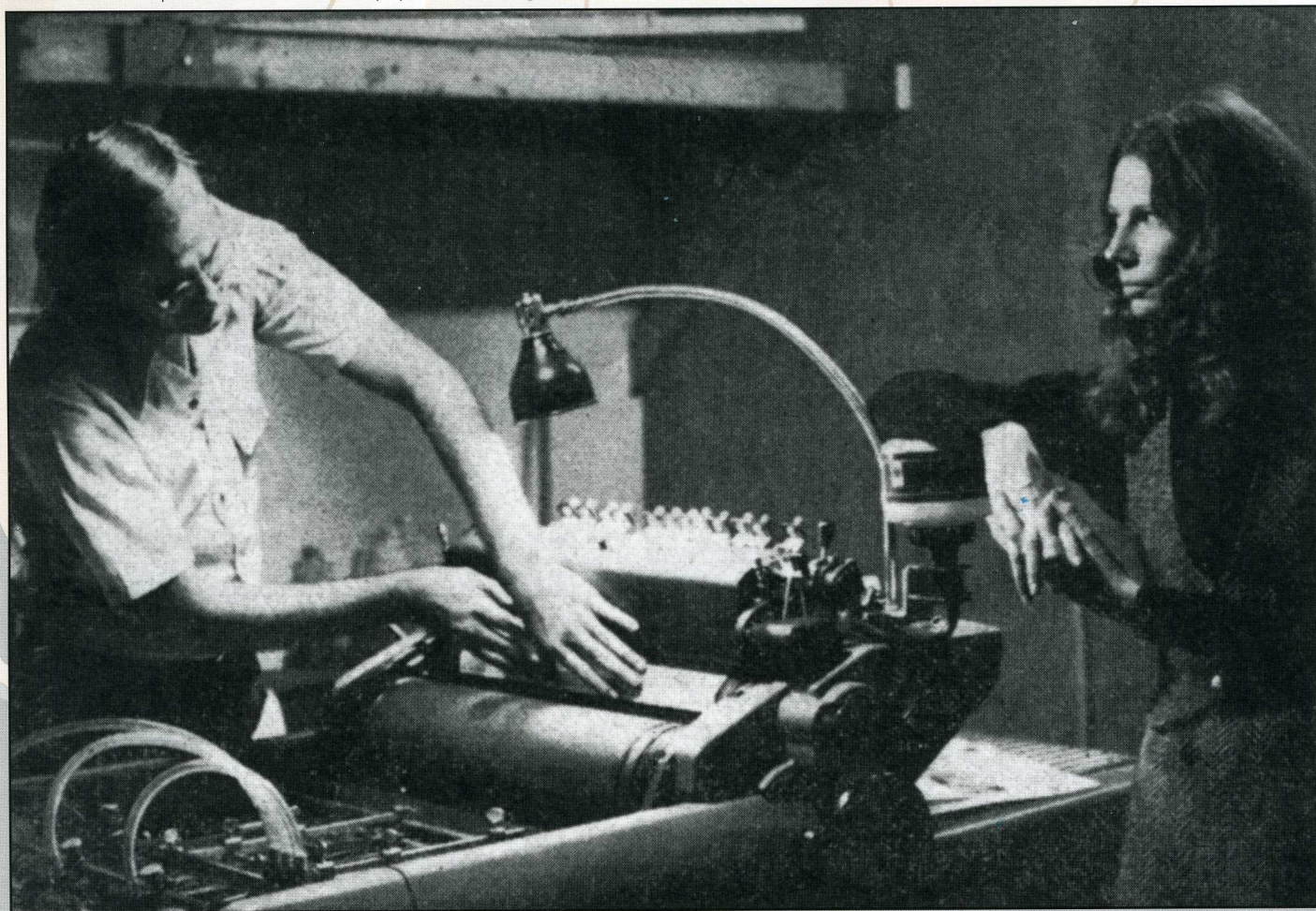
"Where there isn't a music scene, you create one."

racially integrated personnel, was the King Sound Interpreters, which featured Kai Haynes on bass, Curtis Price and Mike Lewis on guitars, and Ivor Sheff on keys. One group, the 7 Showmen, recorded a 45 rpm record in 1967 called, "You're The One That I Adore" b/w "You're Worth It All," which fared well on local airwaves. All of these musicians eventually went their separate ways, but they helped set the stage for the music that was about to burst upon the

local scene.

While these groups were catering to the soul music and dance crowd, five musicians from the St. Albans-Hurricane area were going against the odds in early 1965 and playing the music of the new "British Invasion," spearheaded by the Beatles, which had yet to make a significant mark in the valley. The young men were Tom Crouse (vocals), Joe Clatworthy (guitar and vocals), Paul Selan (bass and vocals), Robert Harris (lead guitar), and Charles "Pedro" Jarrett (drums). The band, called the Mojos, was extremely popular and developed a huge following at the Thunderball Club (St. Albans). In 1966 the band recorded "Go" b/w "What's She Done to Me," a 45 rpm record that reportedly was the highest-rated record ever on

Journalist Ray Brack, formerly with *Billboard* magazine, moved to West Virginia in 1969 and wrote a popular youth column for *The Charleston Gazette*. He also published his own newspaper and managed a music venue. Here, Brack adjusts a press while his wife, Carol, looks on.



Dick Clark's *American Bandstand* TV show. A year later they migrated to Columbus, Ohio, to pursue their dream of musical fame and in the process changed the band's name to the Muffetts (for legal reasons), replaced Selan with Steve Farley, and recorded a number of 45 rpm records under various names and with shifting personnel. But, as with many such bands, the success eventually came to an end.

By 1969, the music scene in Charleston and the Kanawha Valley had changed dramatically. One of the prime reasons for this was Ray Brack, a former executive editor of *Billboard* magazine, who moved from Chicago to Sumerco in Lincoln County in order to buy cheap land as part of the so-called "back-to-the-land" movement. Upon arrival he immediately began work at *The Charleston Gazette*, where he launched a youth-oriented page called "Thirteen-To-Thirty" or "T-T-T," which ran every Saturday.

Brack once stated, "Where there isn't a music scene, you create one," and without a doubt his weekly page helped to do just that. For some four years, his column was anxiously read each week by area musicians and fans. In 1973 he published his own

Mind Garage, one of the most important and influential rock bands to come from West Virginia, posed for this promotional photograph at Fairmont in 1970. Standing at the center is guitarist John Vaughn. Standing at right is bassist Norris Lytton. Seated in front is keyboard player Jack Bond. Seated at left is drummer Ted Smith. Seated at the top of the ladder is vocalist Larry McClurg. Photograph courtesy of Larry McClurg.



Story continues on page 18.

"Making Good Music"

From the mid-1960's through the mid-'70's, Charleston's rock & roll and soul music scene was unusually vibrant. Going out to hear live music on Friday and Saturday nights was the thing to do, and people regularly flocked to dozens of local clubs to hear their favorite bands.

It was, in many ways, the golden era of live rock & roll, for

listeners and players alike. The quality of the groups was surprisingly good — by most accounts equaling or surpassing those in larger cities. A number of the musicians went on to play with national groups, and some are still on their game 40 years later.

From the musician's standpoint, it was a time when you could actually make ends meet by playing on weekends — all but impossible now. Even by today's standards, the pay was good — often between \$800 and \$1,200 for two nights.

It was also a time of change — social and musical — that was both exciting and challenging. As is often the case, musicians were ahead of the curve socially. Many of the bands in the Kanawha Valley were racially integrated at a time when nationally — especially in the South — integration was the hot-button issue, and those opposed to it often turned to violence.

"As far as bands being integrated, it's hard for me to think about that now because things were so open," says South Charleston drummer Gordon Cupit. "There really wasn't any thought about that because they were integrated from early on. I can remember playing in little bands in junior high and high school that were mixed. It was all about making good music."

For two decades — from the mid-1960's to the mid-'80's — Gordon Cupit played in a number of the area's top bands, including Donny Kees & Sessions (Kees went on to a successful songwriting career in Nashville), rock



Above: Gordon Cupit playing drums with the band Pressure in about 1970, at Hurricane, Putnam County.

Right: Used hearses, such as this, were common transportation for rock bands during the 1960's and '70's. This 1954 Cadillac hearse belonged to the Esquires.



A Visit with Drummer Gordon Cupit

By Michael Lipton

groups Powerhouse and Heavy Rain, the New Wave-ish Defectors, and Bob Thompson's jazz-rock band Joi.

"At the beginning, you had your two factions of bands: the soul bands and the psychedelic bands," Gordon recalls. "I kind of alternated between the two. In the soul bands you made good money. In the rock bands you didn't make quite so much money but you had more fun."

Gordon turned to music as something of a profession when he graduated from high school. He notes that parental attitudes haven't changed much over the past 40 years or so.

"At first, they were a little reticent about me playing in clubs," he says of his parents' reaction to his career choice. "But that went away. After that, they supported me."

He was a member of both the Rooks and the Fascinations — horn-fired soul bands that featured legendary guitarist Randall Wray. At the time, the prominence of classic soul was being challenged by the so-called "British Invasion," which redefined rock & roll by adding a strong element of American blues. Gordon continued through the era when rock became open-ended and experimental, marked by extended jams, and finally to jazz, fusion, and the New Wave music of the early 1980's.

One thing that hasn't changed in the valley over the years is the supportive spirit that exists among the musicians. Although there were many hotly contested "Battles of the Bands," Cupit recalls the competition being healthy and friendly.

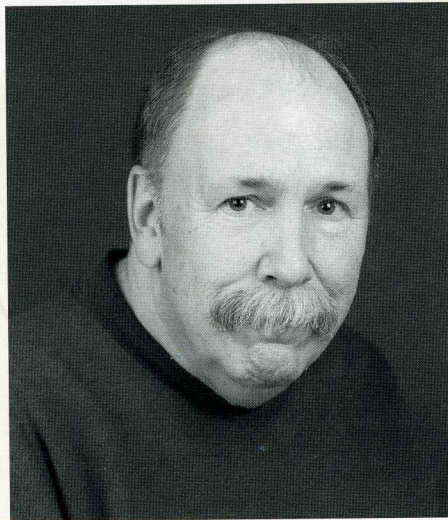
"There was a bunch of great players and I had the good fortune to play with a lot of them," he says. "All in all, musicians were kind of a big camaraderie. Playing in a band was like being in a club."

In terms of the logistics of traveling from gig to gig, West Virginia was a very different place in the 1960's and '70's. With I-79 mostly still on the drawing board, it took six or seven hours to drive to Morgantown. There were no four-lane roads and no fast-food restaurants.

Bars and clubs didn't have house sound systems, so bands had to bring their own systems and someone to run them. In addition, amplifiers, speakers, and other gear were much heavier and bulkier than they are today. Hearses were the preferred mode of transport although, as Gordon points out, they were only designed to carry the weight of a person or two and a casket — not a band's entire gear.

"Morgantown was an all-day trip," Gordon recalls. "That made your gig a 24-hour affair. A lot of times if you played a fraternity house in Morgantown you were doing good if you could stay over, play a second job, and rest up before you go back home."

The flip side was that you could almost always depend on a large and lively crowd.



Gordon Cupit today. Photograph by Tyler Evert.

"We had a following of under-age kids, and we would sneak them into the club," Cupit says with a grin. "One night, a couple of 15-year-old girls ended up dancing like go-go girls, and the owner threw them out."

In addition to large, always-packed clubs like the Checkmate Club (Charleston),

the Rathskeller (Huntington), the Garage (Beckley), and the Carousel (Clarksburg), there were a number of non-alcoholic venues for those under 18 (the drinking age changed from 18 to 19 in 1983 then to age 21 in 1986), enabling them to hear the same bands that played in the regular clubs.

"All the local rec centers had bands on Friday and Saturday nights," says Cupit. "A lot of bands would play the rec centers in the early hours and in the late hours would go play in the clubs."

Although Gordon went further than many local players in pursuing music — he moved to Florida in 1980 and played with several groups there to "test the waters" — the realities of life eventually caught up with him.

"It was a gradual thing," he says of his eventual decision to change careers. "Over the years I worked day jobs when I was in between bands or whatever. But when I came back and got married, that was more or less the last gasp at trying to make money at [performing]."

After his stint with the original Defectors in the mid-'80's, Gordon found his way into a career of computer drafting. Still acknowledged as one of the Kanawha Valley's best-ever drummers, Gordon Cupit is currently playing with veteran Charleston musicians Jackie Griffith and Norris Lytton.

Does he have any regrets?

"Sure, I think about what could have been," he says after a thoughtful pause, "but nothing that's going to eat me up. It fades as you get older, you know." 🍁

MICHAEL LIPTON moved to Calhoun County in 1973 and now lives in Charleston. Former co-owner of *Graffiti*, Michael is currently director of the West Virginia Music Hall of Fame. This is his first contribution to GOLDENSEAL.

newspaper, the *West Side Weekly*. He also briefly managed a concert hall on the west side, at the site of the old Jamboree Hall (the former Custer Theater). He eventually left to take a job as a printing director for the Appalachia Educational Laboratory, but his contributions to the area music scene during those early years were immeasurable.

By the late 1960's the national trend toward hard rock music had invaded the valley, fronted by such bands as the Bristols (with guitarist Dick Allowatt), Yesterday's Morning, Better Days, and the short-lived but highly touted Powerhouse, a group featuring guitarist Randall Wray, bassist Bruce Corey, drummer Gordon Cupit, and ex-Mojo Paul Selan. This group was known as Charleston's first true "super group", as both Wray and Cupit had come up through the ranks of the Rooks, the Fascinations, and other local soul bands, and both were considered by many to be among the best on their particular instruments.

Wray became a local legend with his intense, blistering, blues-based guitar work that could hold up against the best in the nation. During its short existence Powerhouse caught the approving attention of rock guitar giant Jimi Hendrix when he performed in Charleston.

Suddenly the valley flourished with original, creative musicians and bands, including such acts as Brick River from Dunbar and Pressure (with ex-Mojo Joe Clatworthy). Most notable around this time was Mind Garage, formed in 1967 with a mixture of Charleston and Morgantown musicians. The band recorded their first single in 1968 and hit the big time the following year when they recorded their first album for RCA Records. In 1970 they released their RCA album *Electric Liturgy*, a religious-themed LP, which led Wikipedia to describe them as the first Christian rockers. In reality, they were just plain hard rockers. Mind Garage toured extensively and played

most of the major music venues in the country alongside some of the top acts of the time.

The year 1970 proved to be a banner year. In January, Julia Sadd's House of Coffee provided live music at 822 Kanawha Boulevard, and in February the old Rialto Theater on Quarrier Street was turned into a Fillmore Auditorium-type venue. That spring, Charleston artist Robin Hammer began to plan the area's first-ever Earth Day Festival. By chance he crossed paths with Ray Brack and me. After some discussion it was decided to add live music in the hopes of drawing a larger crowd to the April 26 event.

The festival was held outdoors at Kanawha State Forest. All bands performed for free, and Gorby's Music provided amps. Mind Garage provided their sound system but did not perform themselves. The bands that did perform, however, set the bar for the local music scene. One of them was Heavy Rain, which included Randall Wray on guitar, Jimmy Neal from the Esquires on drums, Tom Stamp on bass, and Ralph Morman on vocals. The group performed only instrumentally, however, because Morman crashed his car on I-64 that day and nearly died from his injuries.

Opening the festival was Black Orchids, featuring John "Subhar-

Quiet performs at the 1971 Earth Day Festival at Kanawha State Forest. On stage, from the left, are drummer John Bridges, harmonica player Mike Baker, bassist Bill Light, and guitarist and author Terry Lowry.





monic" Wehrle on guitar, which laid down some of the best alternative rock ever performed in the valley. Other groups included Quiet, with Tom Benson on a sizzling blues-style rock guitar performing interplay with the blues harp of Mike Baker. I was fortunate to have been an original member and founder of this group. Sly Dog included a young Tom King on guitar before he switched to traditional music. Also appearing were Green Rox Transit and Wedge. The festival drew thousands, and the event was held annually for the next three years.

The popularity and creativity of so many local musicians created a complex problem for the area musicians union. Prior to the "Golden Age" the union had a near monopoly on the musicians and clubs in the area. Faced suddenly with so many outstanding non-union musicians — and venues willing to book them — the union took action, making it impossible or very uncomfortable for non-union players to perform in the area. The union eventually got involved in the festivals at Kanawha State Forest and made sure its musicians got top billing and were paid, while the non-union musicians were not given such recognition. This resulted in an end to the festivals at the forest. The union made other efforts to stifle new, non-union talent, without much success. Today, the local musicians

Guitarist Randall Wray and drummer Gordon Cupit perform with Heavy Rain in 1970. Photograph courtesy of the West Virginia Music Hall of Fame.

union has new management and enjoys a much-improved reputation among local musicians, both within and outside the union ranks.

The success of the first Earth Day Festival led to many follow-up concerts. On June 9, 1970, at the International Raceway Park in Ona, an outdoor concert was held featuring national acts Grand Funk Railroad, Zephyr, and Dreams, with local acts Quiet and Heavy Rain. The undisputed best set of the night belonged to Heavy Rain, with Gordon Cupit replacing original drummer Jimmy Neal. This time, Ralph Morman was able to front the band, delivering a set of original blues-rock powerhouse tunes.

With the now awe-inspiring Randall Wray on guitar, Heavy Rain seemed to be the group that would finally make it to the top. But it was not to be. The band eventually fell victim to the excesses of rock & roll and split up. Morman went on to record with Joe Perry of Aerosmith in the

Joe Perry Project and also appeared on a number of LP's with legendary British blues band Savoy Brown, before he returned home and formed the Ralph Morman Band.

Quiet also had a brief flirtation with fame, when Atco Records approached them, but divisions within the band and personnel changes eventually ended its road to success as well.

When Ray Brack left the *Gazette*, "T-T-T" was replaced by a column called "Freakshow," written by J.T. Rool — a pen name for writer Jim Carnes. When Carnes left, I took over the column. During this time I also started a crude, local fanzine called *Kanawha Rocker* [A complete set of *Kanawha Rocker* is available for viewing at the West Virginia State Archives Library. — ed.] I later worked as assistant music editor and music editor at the *Gazette*.

Although 1970 was definitely the high point of the decade, the music continued for five more years with plenty of originality and fan support.

Mike Baker of Quiet and guitarist Jack Griffith joined the group Kristina and recorded a 45 rpm record titled, "Things Are Gonna Be Alright" b/w "It Ain't Right," which sold very well regionally. Jack later joined Tom Benson in the highly popular Skiffle, which was offered a contract by Capitol Records and later recorded an

LP on the national level with Novo Combo (Polydor Records), a group featuring former Santana drummer Michael Shrieve.

Many other area musicians continued to give outstanding performances, but by 1975 the disco craze had taken hold, and Country & Western and dance bands had gained in popularity, contributing to the demise of the once-promising rock music scene in the valley.

As the years passed, sadly, so did many of the early performers — among them Randall Wray, J.B. Neal, C.C. Richardson, Bruce Corey, Bobby Lanham, Kelly Castleberry, Mike Lewis, Tom Stamp, Tom King, Rob Gillispie, Ernie Alexander, Steve Bailey, and Bob Bennett to name a few. Others drifted away from the music scene, including progressive guitarist John Wehrle, who now runs the Peoples Building on Summers Street, and Dick Allowatt, who is a successful area businessman.

There are still plenty of outstanding musicians who continue to perform in the Kanawha Valley. In September 2011 many of these musicians came together for the first time in more than 40 years to pay tribute to guitarist Randall Wray at Charleston's Empty Glass. The club was packed. Performers included Norris Lytton (Mind Garage), Gordon Cupit (Heavy Rain/the Fascinations), Butch Evans (Esquires), Kai Haynes (King Sound Interpreters, Joi), Jack Bumgarner (Esquires), Vickie Totten (Dragonwyck), Joe Stephens (Quiet/Dragonwyck/Quint), Greg and Tony





The band Quiet reunited at the Randall Wray tribute show in Charleston at the Empty Glass on September 24, 2011. From the left are guitarist Tom Benson, drummer Tom Fountaine, harmonica player Mike Baker, and guitarist Terry Lowry. Photograph by Michael Keller.

Wegmann (Wegmann Brothers), Doug Vermillion (Smoke Hole Canyon Band / Leon Waters Blues Band), John Bridges (Quiet / Dragonwyck), Michael Lipton (Big Money / Carpenter Ants), Jack Griffith (Kristina / Skiffle / Novo Combo), Paul Selan (Mojos / Powerhouse), Tom Benson (Quiet / Appalachian Mainline / Skiffle), Raymond Wallace (Leon Waters Blues Band), Diablo Blues Band featuring

John Compton, John Chickogee, Tom Fountaine, Keith McMillion, and Charlie Tee (Slaymaker / Carpenter Ants), as well as reunions of Quiet, Powerhouse, Dragonwyck, Leon Waters, and many others. Some who were present who did not get to perform included Joe Clatworthy (Mojos) and Paul Wilson (Production Company).

For one night the musicians who

reigned in the Kanawha Valley between 1965 and 1975 came together to relive their days of glory. 🍁

TERRY LOWRY was born in Charleston. A 1967 graduate of South Charleston High School, he holds a bachelor's degree in history from West Virginia State College. He has written extensively about the Civil War and is currently a historian at the West Virginia State Archives. This is his first contribution to GOLDENSEAL.

Tradition Rocks!

Many of the Kanawha Valley's leading traditional musicians got their starts between 1965 and 1975 either playing in rock bands or benefiting from the vibrant rock music scene and the subsequent popularity of all styles of live music at that time.

Guitarist Tom King, long considered one of the best of the musicians performing traditional music, began his career as an electric lead guitarist with various bands in the South Charleston area, including Sly Dog and an early version of Quiet. He was quite talented, but Tom Benson eventually replaced him

in Quiet. King soon afterward made the permanent switch to acoustic traditional music. He passed away in 1993.

Another who made the switch from rock to traditional styles was Paul Selan, who after leaving the Mojors pursued a successful career playing guitar and stand-up bass in bluegrass and old-time bands.

Although he never played rock music per se, champion fiddler Bobby Taylor once played in the Blues Mountain Band, along with former Esquires bassist Carl Nestmann. [See "Soul of the Mountains: A Visit with Fiddler Bobby Taylor," by

Josh Gordon; Fall 2010.]

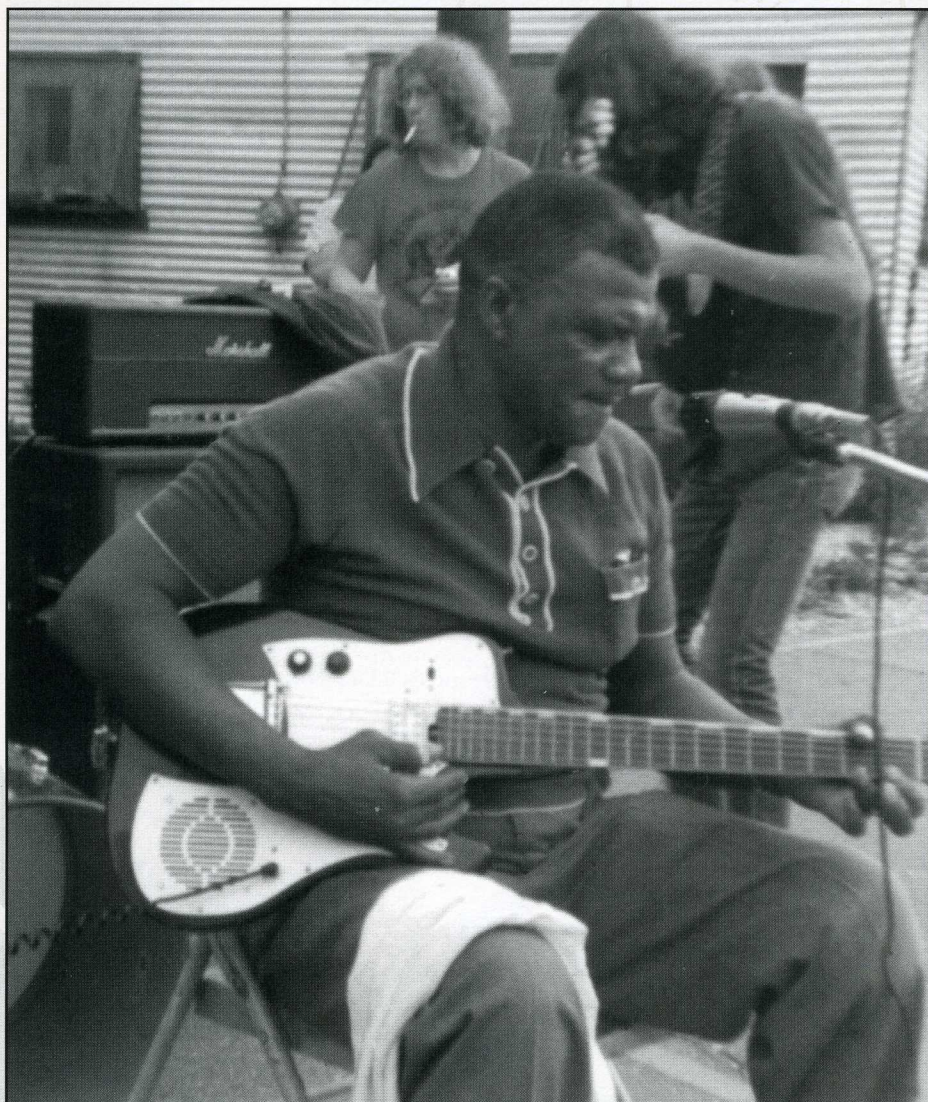
Authentic bluesman Clarence Clifford "C.C." Richardson of Charleston had a long and colorful history as a performer, once touring the country under the name of Peg Leg Bates with the Silas Green shows. His sound was most closely associated with 1930's Piedmont blues recording artist Blind Boy Fuller, but Richardson was also comfortable performing with many of the area rock musicians, such as Randall Wray and Mike Baker. At one point Richardson even fronted a group of young white blues musicians, called the C.C. Richardson Blues Band. He performed at many of the rock halls, rock festivals, and anti-war rallies, and recorded numerous singles and two LP's before passing away on the eve of a European tour in 1984.

Rock music venues and clubs, such as the Mordor and the Fraternity House, both in Kanawha City, openly accepted traditional musicians and bands.

Meanwhile, various traditional music festivals, such as the Morris Family Old-Time Music Festival at Ivydale, evolved or enjoyed a noticeable increase in attendance as a direct result of the sudden popularity of rock music and the associated live music scene. [See "Ivydale: The Morris Family Old-Time Music Festivals," by Bob Heyer; Summer 1998.]

Many rock musicians sought out the "real thing" by attending folk, blues, jazz, and old-time music festivals in droves. It was not unusual to spot rockers jamming backstage at such places as the John Henry Folk and Blues Festival at Beckley (later held at Camp Virgil Tate), Pipestem, Ivydale, Glenville, and at many college concerts. Some of these musicians would incorporate elements of bluegrass, jazz, old-time, country, and blues into their own music.

Be it rock & roll, blues, or traditional music, never had there been, or has there been since, such a devoted following for live music in the Kanawha Valley. — Terry Lowry



Traditional blues musician Clarence Clifford "C.C." Richardson and his band in about 1970. At rear is Randall Wray; at right is guitarist John Wehrle.

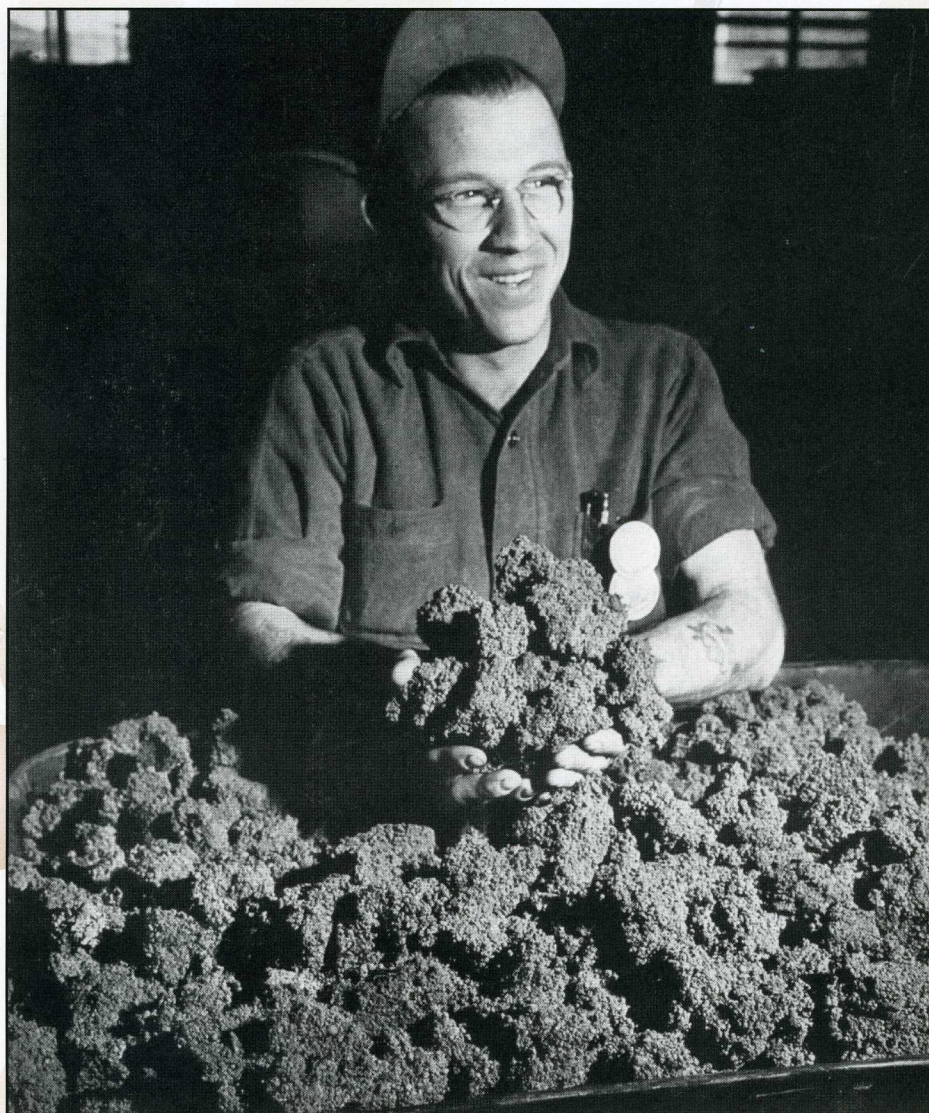
VICTORY THROUGH CHEMISTRY

Victory during World War II was dependent upon many factors, including the wise use of resources. With natural rubber in short supply, the federal government authorized construction of a huge and ambitious synthetic rubber plant in West Virginia.

*Author Warren Woomer, a former employee at the Union Carbide plant in South Charleston, has written extensively about the history of the chemical industry in the Kanawha Valley. His book titled, **The Institute Site: From George Washington to the World of Chemicals**, was published in 2000 by Aventis CropScience and is available through West Virginia libraries.*

Warren collected details about the synthetic rubber operation from former "Carbiders," Union Carbide company records, and old copies of the Carbide News. He shares much of that information with our readers.

In the following pages, GOLDENSEAL looks back at this crucial wartime industry.



The rubber plant at Institute was one of the largest and most modern in the world, producing the equivalent of 63,000 passenger tires each day. Here, a worker scoops a handful of dried crumb rubber, ready for baling. Once baled, the rubber was shipped to manufacturers, who melted it and formed it into useful objects, mostly tires. All photographs courtesy of Union Carbide unless otherwise noted.



"Just Get It Done"

Aerial view of the expansive Buna-S Rubber plant in Institute, Kanawha County. The immense complex was built in 10 months, an impressive accomplishment that normally would have taken as long as 10 years. Photograph 1945, courtesy of the West Virginia State Archives, Richard Andre Collection.

By 1943, Japan had already captured 90% of the natural rubber supply sources. Carbide and Carbon Chemicals Corporation (C&CCC) and U.S. Rubber Company (USR) undertook and completed one of the most challenging programs in support of the World War II war effort at a new plant located in Institute, Kanawha County.

In August 1940, C&CCC was asked to aggressively pursue investigations into the large-scale manufacture of the chemicals butadiene and styrene, the basis for synthetic rubber. Within six months, C&CCC had perfected a practical process, as well as advanced designs for equipment, to convert ethyl alcohol into butadiene. USR, one of the leading American rubber companies, was also working around the clock to determine how to turn those chemicals into Buna-S Rubber; they too succeeded in their

endeavors. For both companies it was a chemical process that had never been built or actually tried outside the laboratory.

In August 1941, the federal government authorized C&CCC and USR to build a plant for the Defense Plant Corporation to make synthetic rubber. They chose a site where there was enough flat land to build a large chemical plant with railroad and barge access — right in the middle of the main runway of Wertz Field, Charleston's only commercial airport.

Construction at the Institute site started in April 1942. Normally this effort would take 10 years. With dedication and the amazing effort of the personnel assigned to this project, however, actual facility construction and chemical production were achieved less than 10 months after groundbreaking. The more than

6,500 employees of C&CCC, USR, Blaw-Knox Construction Company; Ford, Bacon & Davis Company; and the local support groups took great pride in how they responded to such a demanding challenge.

The shortage of gasoline, meat rationing, and other factors did not deter the people from getting to work and doing their jobs. Car pools and rattletrap buses called "cattle buses" were the ways to get to work. The theme of the day was "Just get it done." War bond drives were held using payroll deductions, money was given to the Red Cross, and blood drives were held to send blood for wounded servicemen. Wages were 75 cents to \$1.20 per hour.

Since the plant was operating in the middle of the former 4,500-foot long runway, there were some very unusual events, especially when military planes landed at the old

Wertz Field site. A B-25 bomber and a C-47 transport filled with marines landed in the plant, creating quite a stir. The B-25 bomber made a hold-your-breath take-off. The C-47 took the train to Ohio. Nine U.S. Navy trainers and a fighter plane also landed at a truncated Wertz Field.

Steel was in very short supply in the 1940's, and the military had top priority. The Institute plant was receiving steel for pipes, tanks, and equipment, but warehouse beams and other items were being made from wood. The plan was to make pipe rack supports from telephone poles. With all the flammable chemicals, however, the wooden poles might burn and create a terrible problem. A Carbide executive in New York noticed the old Second Avenue elevated railroad, or Second Avenue

"El" as it was called, was being torn down. Carbide went to Washington, D.C., and obtained enough steel to build the pipe racks. They are still there today, as are many wooden beams in the original buildings.

On March 31, 1943, there were no ovations, speeches, or bands playing as freight car 28012 rolled slowly down the tracks and out the gate with the first shipment of synthetic rubber.

On June 10, 1943, however, four major radio networks (no TV then) and 200 dignitaries from Washington, D.C., came to Institute to dedicate the new chemical plant. Built in less than one year, it had already made one million pounds of a new material called Buna-S Synthetic Rubber.

Administrator W.M. Jeffers, director of the government synthetic

rubber program, had meetings, press conferences, and made speeches about how smoothly and quickly this "magnificent monument" was put into operation. He said, "They have been getting the job done with a minimum of friction... and from what I see, I'd say that West Virginians must be my kind of people."

In 1943, the facility produced 75% of the butadiene for the rubber program and more than 60% of the synthetic rubber. 🌿

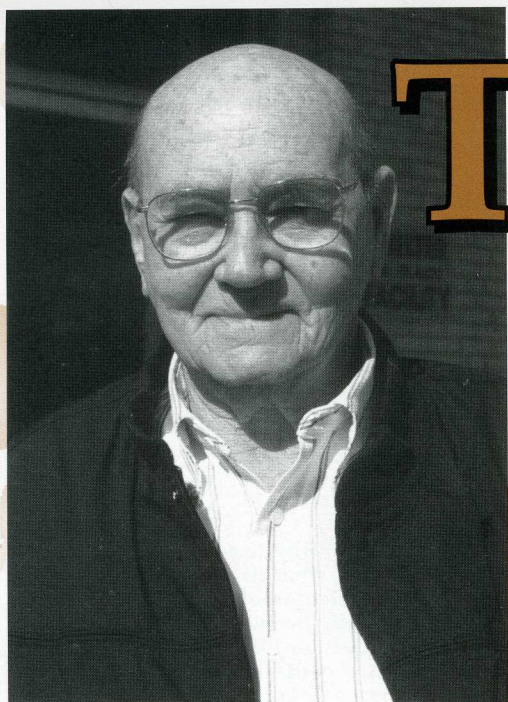
WARREN WOOMER has lived in the Kanawha Valley since 1954, when he came to work for the Union Carbide Corporation. He holds a master's degree in chemical engineering and worked at the Institute Plant and other Union Carbide facilities until his retirement in 1990. He is the author of *The Institute Site: From George Washington to the World of Chemicals*. This is his first contribution to GOLDENSEAL.

Synthetic Rubber in Institute

By Warren Woomer



Some of the 3,000 plant builders, shown here at a rally for the Red Cross at the rubber plant in 1943.



The Union

Franklin Jividen Recalled

Franklin Jividen worked at the Institute synthetic rubber plant as an operator until 1947, when the plant closed down. He then went to work at Union Carbide's South Charleston plant. He passed away in June 2010, at the age of 93. He shared these memories with Warren Woomer in 2000.

Franklin Jividen. Photograph by Warren Woomer.

I came to work for Union Carbide on October 1, 1942. I noticed on my pass that it had C&CCC, it wasn't Union Carbide then. There was an awful lot of mud. In fact, I drove a dump truck for a while hauling dirt. If you didn't have a pair of four-buckle arctics or a pair of high boots, you were in trouble. You would go in almost up to your knees, no matter where you went. It was really a big scramble to try to get the plant to working. There were signs everywhere: "Must be in operation by October 12."

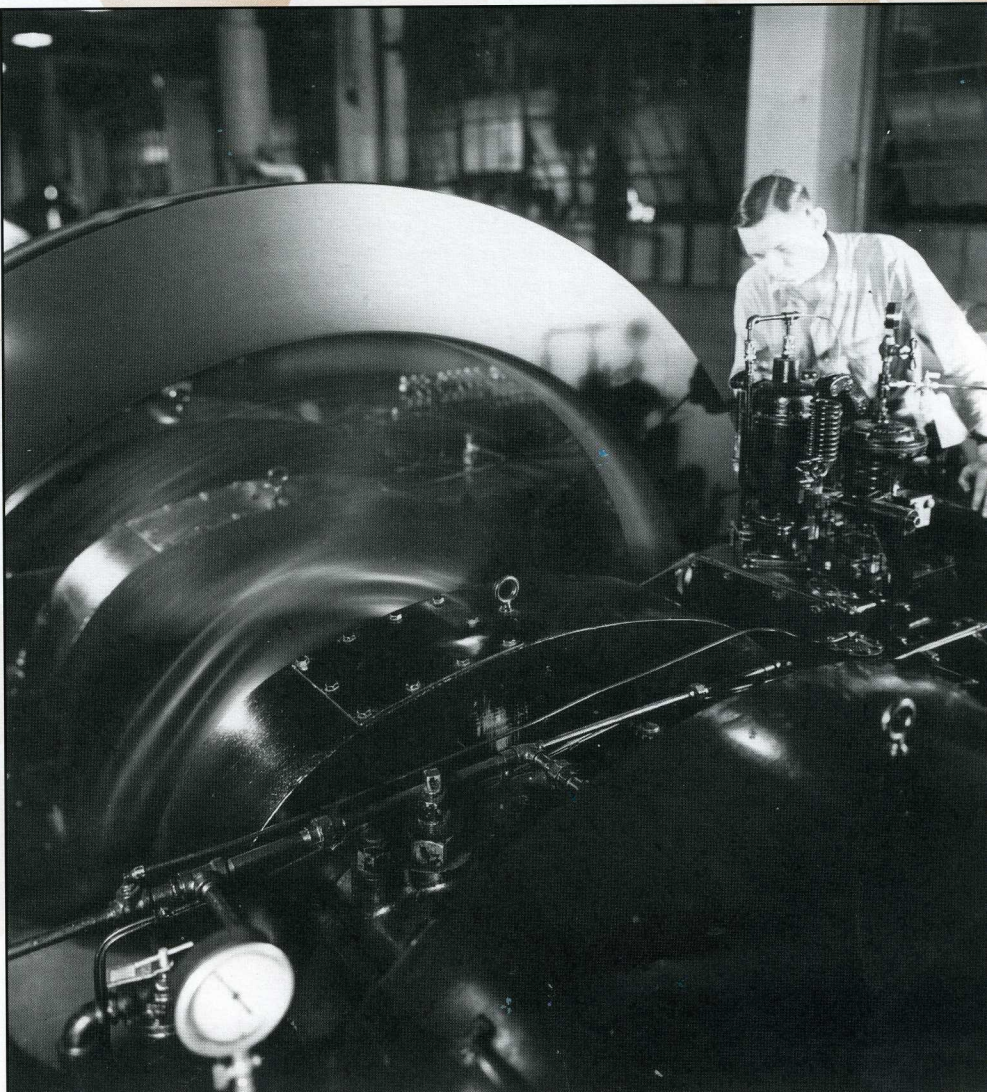
I didn't go through the labor gang when I was hired here, which was the usual way. Operators were then taken from the labor gang. They would bring Oscar Fudge in when they were going to hire. When it would come Oscar's time to ask questions, he would say "What you been doing boy?" I told him I had been driving a truck hauling meat, worked for Armour & Company. He said, "You mean you drive that truck and you take the quarters of beef off, put them on your back, take in the store and hang on the hook in the man's cooler?" I said, "Yes sir, that's right."

Compression was part of the process of making butadiene, a necessary ingredient for synthetic rubber. Here, Franklin Jividen operates a butadiene compressor.

He turned around and said, "Give this boy a job in operations."

They sent me to South Charleston for training. They didn't have anything in the world at South

Charleston that resembled this, but they shifted me from one place in the plant to another to things that might be similar. I worked at maybe five or six different places at South



Carbide Story

Charleston, and then they sent me to Institute, the Conversion and Distillation Unit No. 1 (C&D Unit No. 1). Ford, Bacon & Davis Construction went full out. Most of the heat they had was from salamanders — it's a big barrel with wood in it. That was the heat. We traced lines and tried to find a way the gas was going to flow from the compressors, trying to learn as much as we could. Finally they got the C&D Unit No. 1 up to where they thought they might run it.

Of course, there were an awful lot of things that weren't put together. They came to me — I was the compressor man — and I had eight big compressors in a building 180 feet long. The compressors were steam-driven with 400-pound superheated steam and 14-foot flywheels on them.

They came to me and said, "Frank, start a couple of them up. We are going to go."

I said, "Who?"

They said, "You." I told them they didn't have anything that resembled this at South Charleston.

They said, "You know more about it than we do. Let's get them going and start compressing some gas."

Well, we started compressing, and it was really a nightmare. Some of the bearings would get hot. The smoke would start flying. You would have to shut them down. Some of the check valves were in upside down or backwards. We really had a time. Finally, we got everything running. The only problem was we couldn't make any butadiene. Nothing worked the right way.

They had engineers in there. There were 30 to 40 people who had suits on. No one knew who they were, but they were from the Rubber Reserve in Washington. They tried and tried to get that unit to make butadiene, but they couldn't do it. They had a man



A laboratory technician checks the distillation units in the control laboratory at the Carbide plant. Butadiene was made from grain alcohol, and styrene was made from benzene and ethylene gas. They were then combined to make Buna-S rubber.

who had a doctor's degree who said he invented the butadiene process. They tried night and day. They sure did try to make it work. They stayed until they couldn't stay on their feet, slept a few hours, and tried again. They couldn't get it going. It would not work.

We had a fellow named Marshall Cunningham who worked at South Charleston in the acetaldehyde unit,

where there were big stills and converters that were something on the order of what they had there [at Institute]. He had worked there over 25 years. All of the officials went home at 12 a.m. or 1 o'clock, and Marshall said, "I am going to set this thing up similar to South Charleston." Marshall started changing pressures, temperatures, and everything else. You know, by 3 a.m. that man had

that unit rolling out butadiene, but it was nothing like it was supposed to run.

The man [with the doctor's degree] came out the next morning, and he looked at the temperatures and the gauges and then he started screaming and hollering, "Who in the world did this?" Marshall told him that he did.

"Change it back the way I want it."

Marshall said, "If you change it back, I'm going back to South Charleston. I put in 25 years and I can go back." He got his jacket

and dinner bucket and headed for the door. Someone ran and told the department head that Marshall was leaving. The department head came

We started putting the butadiene to the rubber people, and they started making the rubber.

running out. He ran after Marshall and collared him and talked him into coming back.

He told the man [with the doctor's degree] that the unit was making butadiene, and it would run that way until he told him different. That

unit lined out, started pouring the butadiene out, and the fellow with the doctor's degree started figuring. Of course, he didn't have a computer; he

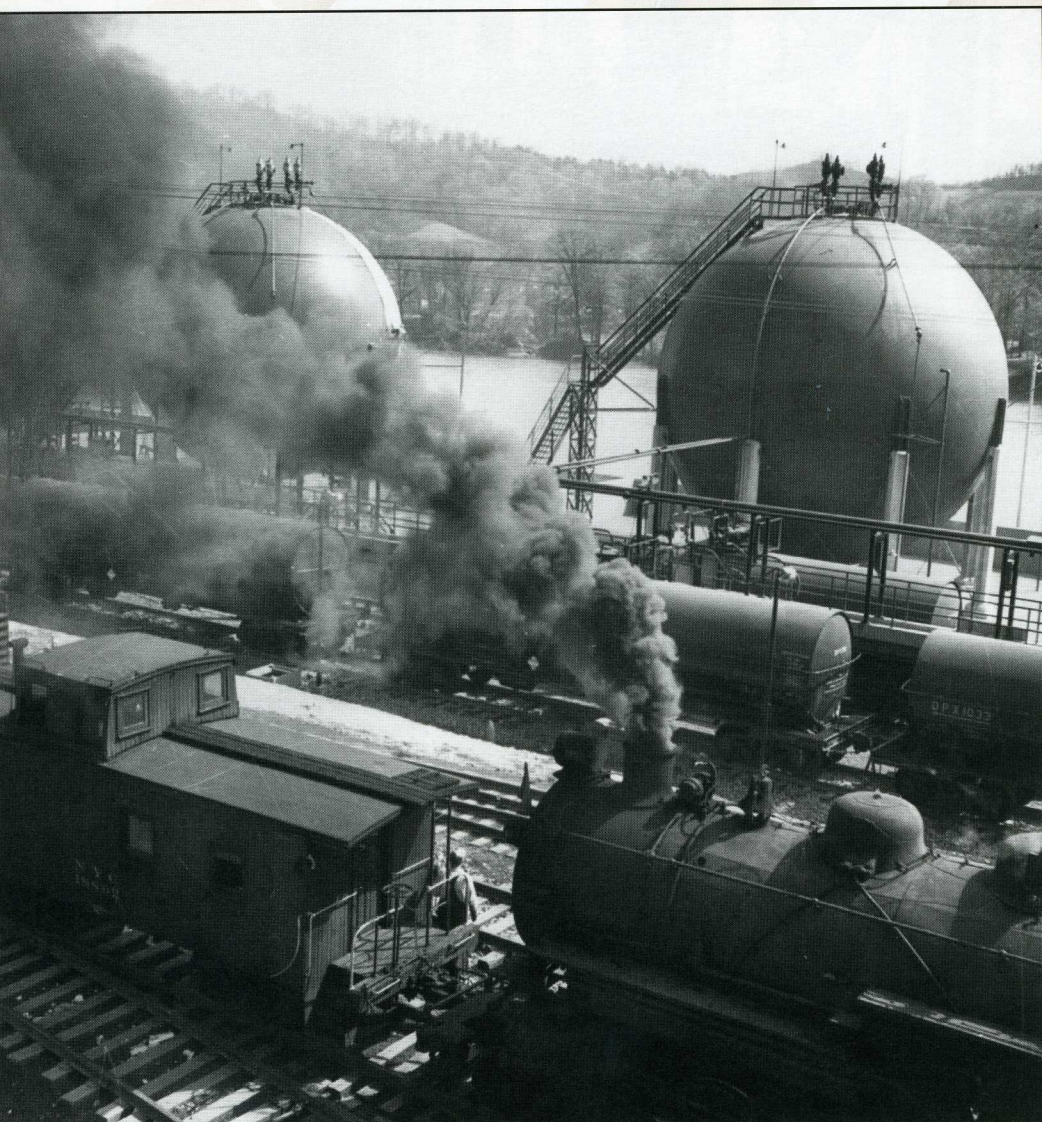
had slide rules and pencils and piles of paper. He figured all day long. He said it's impossible to run like this. It can't be. It's impossible.

Long after eight or 10 hours, he said, "I have

got it figured out." He said, "We set up these temperatures and pressures on the pilot unit at South Charleston." It was real small compared to this huge stuff. When you change it to these huge volumes, it changes the way it operates, and Marshall is right. This is the way it has got to run. It poured out the good butadiene, and everyone was tickled to death. We got that unit running.

They were working on Units 2, 3, and 4. They moved us to No. 2, and we went through the rat race again — the upside-down valves, the hot bearings, and everything else. We got that one to go. They moved us to No. 3. We had to start C&D No. 3. We got that one going, and then they moved us to No. 4. They got all four units going — pouring out butadiene. I think they owe that ol' boy Marshall Cunningham, who was a shift operator from South Charleston with a high school education. He figured the thing out and got the butadiene going. We started putting the butadiene to the rubber people, and they started making the rubber. Even the army was trying to operate with old melted-down rubber from old used tires.

The plant shut down when they stopped needing so much rubber. I believe it was 1947. That was a sad time for all those people. It was pitiful. In our unit there were four shifts, eight operators and a chief on each shift. In each unit there were four people that got a job at South Charleston. On my shift, I was the only one transferred to South Charleston. The others were laid off. 🍁



Butadiene and styrene from the Carbide plant were pumped to the neighboring U.S. Rubber facility for synthesizing into rubber. These round tanks held butadiene on the Carbide side.

Synthetic Rubber

How It's Made

By Ed Hile

The magic of chemistry is a mystery even to the average Charlestonian, who lives in one of the world's chief chemical centers. How coal and oil and air can be developed into stockings, plastics, perfumes, insect killers, ammonia, alcohol, and a thousand and one other things must perplex the chemists themselves on occasion.

But now the chemical industry is being utilized in the war effort, and among the things it must do to help the nation win the war is to produce synthetic rubber. The Carbide butadiene plant near Dunbar will be among the places upon which that important task devolves.

A chemist recently explained to me something of the mystery of how synthetic rubber is made. You may be interested in his description of the process:

It seems the process of making rubber from "coal and oil" involves what the chemists call "polymerization," which is the building of something from certain ingredients, or changing them into another compound.

Basic ingredients are butadiene, a colorless liquefied gas obtained from petroleum, natural gas, or alcohol; and styrene, derived from coal tar and petroleum hydrocarbons.

The butadiene, styrene, and other minor chemicals are cooked in a pressure vessel. Next the milky substance goes to "strippers," which remove unreacted butadiene and styrene. Then the liquid synthetic rubber is coagulated until it looks like what the chemist describes as "grayish white cottage cheese."

The substance is dried and shipped to rubber factories to be fabricated into tires, hose, gaskets, or whatever is needed.

Synthetic rubber, according to my informant, possesses one distinct advantage over natural rubber — its uniformity of quality. Too, it will not deteriorate with contact with oil. Whereas the quality and characteristics of natural rubber may vary with age of trees, climate, and geographic location, synthetic rubber can be controlled at every step of its creation.

The substitute's chief disadvantage is its high cost of production. As it stands now, the synthetic material could not compete with natural rubber in peacetime free markets. If you thought your tires were costly before rationing, you probably won't be able to stand the shock of price lists on synthetic rubber tires.

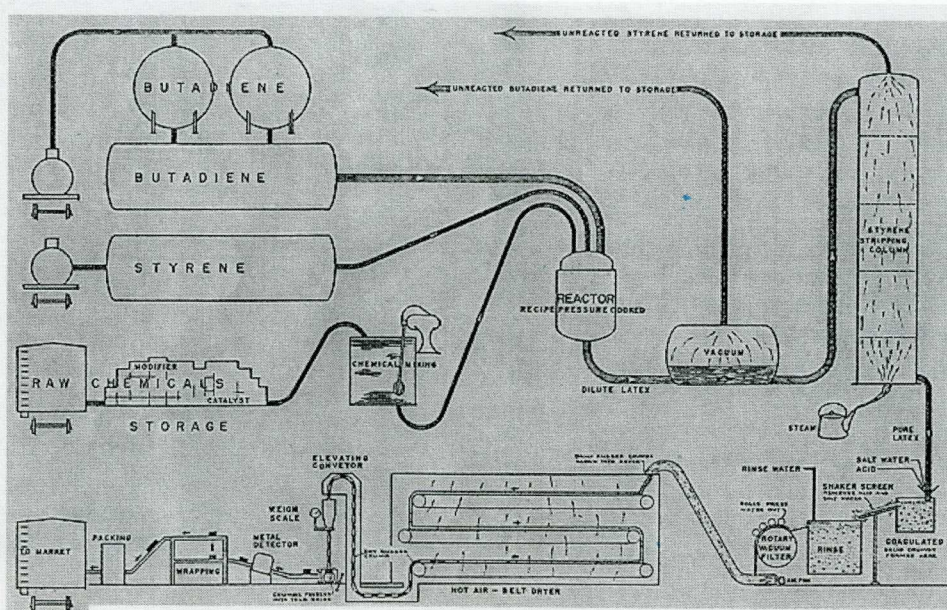
However, the continued development of synthetic rubber and consequent improvements in production methods are expected to lower its cost. Possibly by the end of the war it will be able to stand on its own feet, and Charleston will have another important industry on its expanding list.

Tests of passenger car tires, the chemist tells me, have shown the butadiene-styrene combination to be equal to natural rubber in tread wear. Practically all of the synthetic rubber output will be used for tires.

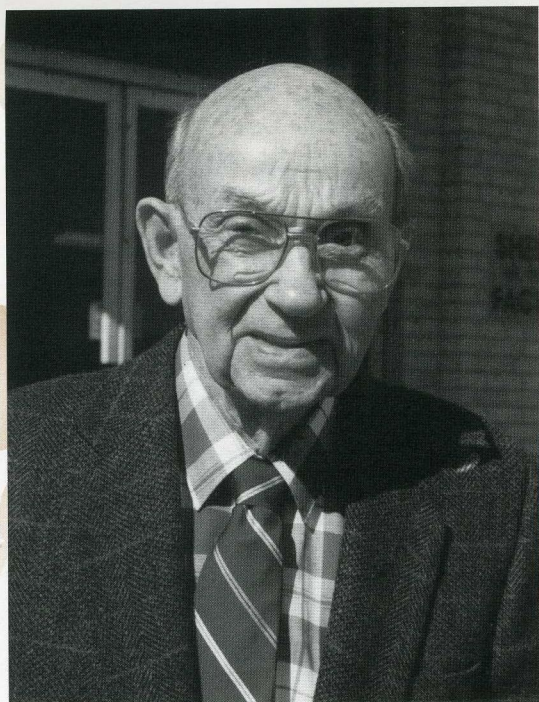
After the war shortage has passed, it is likely that synthetic rubber will find its way into gloves, raincoats, bathing suits, hot water bottles, sporting goods, and a wide variety of commercial and industrial articles.

Maybe Charleston, instead of Malaysia and the Dutch East Indies, will be the rubber-producing center of the world as a result of this war! Who knows? 🌿

This article originally appeared in the March 3, 1942, edition of the Charleston Daily Mail, used by permission.—ed.



SIMPLIFIED SYNTHETIC RUBBER MANUFACTURING PROCESS



The U.S.

Frank Sayre Recalls

Frank Sayre worked at the synthetic rubber plant during the early years of its operation. He was later employed as a sheet metal worker for various construction companies in the Kanawha Valley and vicinity. Now retired at age 93, he still lives in Charleston and shares these memories.

Frank Sayre. Photograph by Warren Woomer.

The plant area was part of the Wertz Field runway and the fields around it. The place was real swampy when we started, especially the Carbide area. They hauled dirt off Goff Mountain, down across the road — day and night. They used dumpsters where the load was behind the driver. Walter Clarke started hauling the dirt with several old dump trucks.

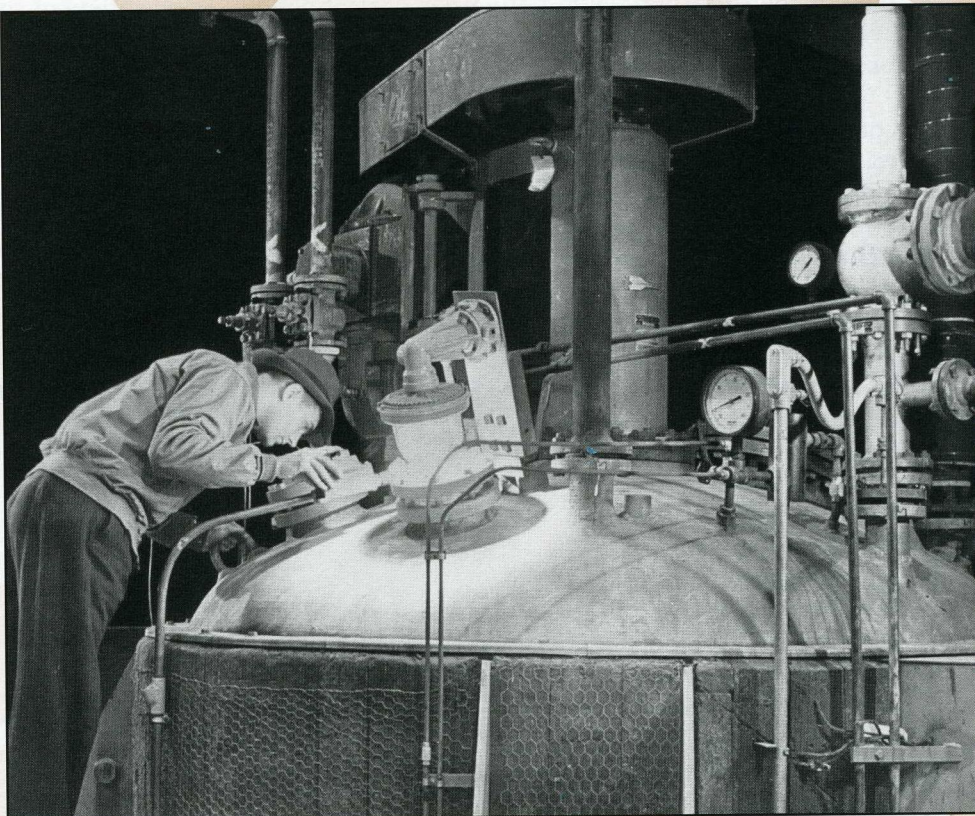
I never did work for U.S. Rubber at the rubber plant. I worked for the construction contractor, Blaw-Knox. I went over to U.S. Rubber when they started about 1942. My buddy and I were sheet metal workers. We were the first two applicants. He went to work for U.S. Rubber, but they turned me down since I had only one eye. I got a chance to go with the sheet metal workers in Blaw-Knox, so I went with that, followed that trade. There were many people working for Blaw-Knox then. I would say there were at least 3,000 or so. There were about 30 or 40 metal workers there at one time.

We first started when they put the dryers in. There was a chemical section where butadiene and styrene were mixed and then pumped into the mixing system, then the rotary filtering system, which dropped rubber off of it and was then chopped and

sent into the dryers. They had three main rubber polymerization lines. I worked all through the dryer area. We heard they couldn't buy dryers for rubber. Somebody found that peanut dryers would work. All our

dryers were old peanut dryers that came from peanut farms in Georgia and Alabama.

Everything was thrown together to work. A lot of it was trial and error. The dryers were conveyors, and



The combination of butadiene and styrene molecules to form synthetic rubber, a process called polymerization, takes place in a reactor at the U.S. Rubber plant at Institute. Here a worker peers in one window to monitor progress inside the reactor while a powerful lamp shines light through a second window.

Rubber Story



A 75-pound bale of synthetic rubber — the finished product — emerges from the hydraulic press. The Institute Plant produced 90,000 tons of synthetic rubber annually. Here plant manager George Graham, at left, and an unidentified worker inspect a finished bale.

steam lines heated them. There were three passes. An elevator carried these rubber crumbs up and scattered them onto the conveyor as it came through. They went through, fell back down, and hit another conveyor, went back, and made a loop and came back again before it went into the balers.

When they first started the baling of the rubber, the balers just dumped it off on the floor. The first bales stuck to the floor. People ran all over the valley to the drugstores to get talcum powder. They had to handle 75-pound bales by hand, put it in boxes, and

the rubber stuck to the boxes. They had no way of putting talcum powder on, so they poured it into a piece of the cheesecloth and tied it up so it wouldn't run through. People were daubing powder all over the bales before putting them in the boxes.

Engineering designed a system that the bale would go through and use air to blow on it. So we built the hoppers and containers for them and put that installation in so the bale would come through a tunnel. When the bale would come in, it would trigger an air hose [air jet], it would blow powder all over the

bale. So that worked fairly well, but they still had to handle them by hand.

Eventually, we built the bagging machines and put the whole line in, and they didn't have to handle it so much. A bale would come out and go into a bag. It was crudely automated by the time we left there.

All of our rotary filters that separated the water when they mixed the oil up were always wearing holes in them, and you had to solder them and patch them up. It was a wartime effort; it was anyway that you could do it. 🍁

The Lady is a Fireman

Text and photographs by
Carl E. Feather



Amy McGrew of Cass

Amy McGrew recalls the day she unwittingly attended a cosmetics party at a friend's house, where the demonstrator asked each lady to share the name of their favorite beauty bar.

"Lava," Amy said.

"No, I mean for your face," the demonstrator replied.

"Lava," Amy said.

Amy's job as a fireman on the Cass Scenic Railroad in Pocahontas County requires she exchange many of the traditional female niceties for the coarser mainstays of the male world. Her uniform includes steel-toed boots, insulated gauntlets, jeans, a blue-denim Cass SRR shirt, and ball cap. A few minutes after starting the shift, her crisp shirt is dappled with perspiration, cinders dust the back of her jeans, and soot from the engine encircles her neck. It only gets worse as the workday goes on.

"I find that, physically, getting the engine ready is more demanding than firing," Amy says, taking a break from

preening the locomotive and tender for the day's first run. "But once we get going, I'm sweating more than I'm working."

Hundreds of times during the 11-mile run to Bald Knob, she opens the locomotive's firebox, a 5x5x7-foot inferno on wheels, and artfully feeds the ravenous behemoth, ever mindful it could belch without warning and singe her eyebrows in the process. The temperature in the cab typically runs 20 degrees hotter than the ambient air; to counteract the loss of water through sweat, Amy drinks a couple of gallons of ice water during a typical firing shift.

Amy jokes that there are so many dangers on her job, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) wouldn't know where to start regulating it. Despite the dangers, Amy considers herself extremely blessed to be doing the work of a fireman on West Virginia's original scenic railroad, a job that many men wash out of and that women rarely

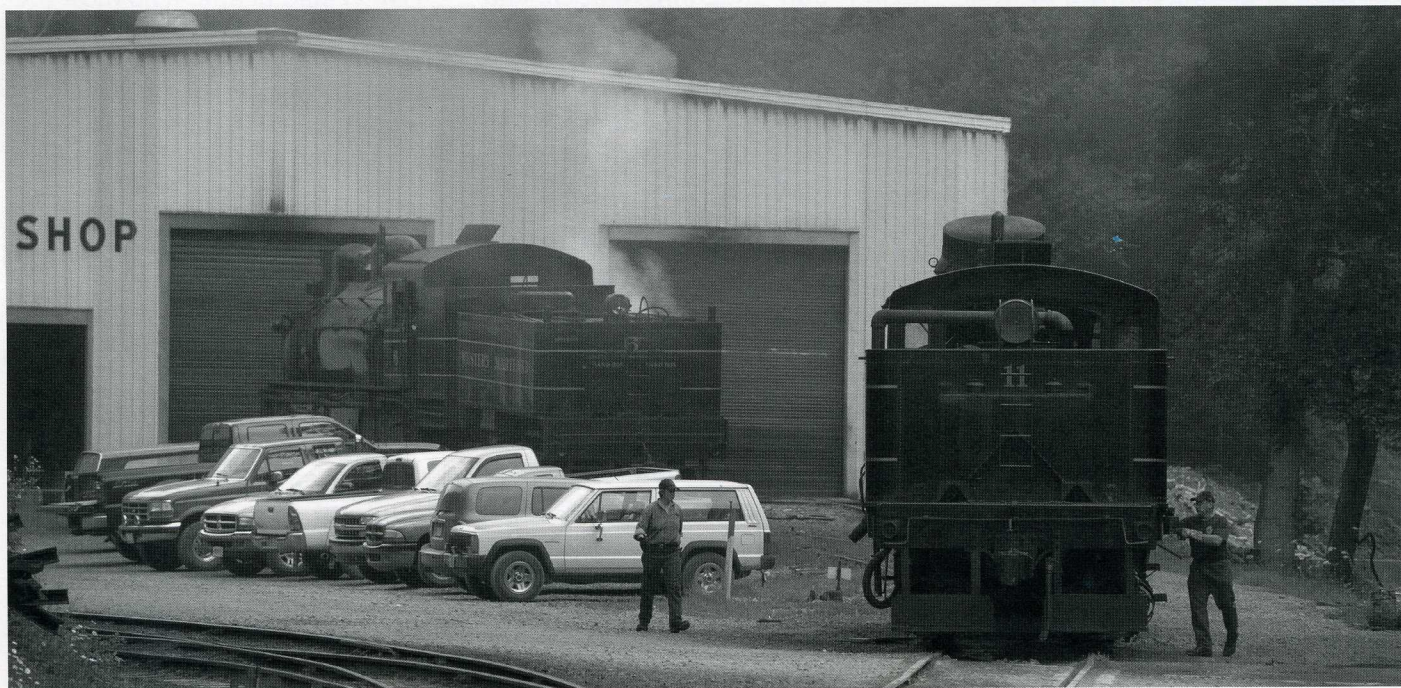
get the opportunity to attempt, let alone succeed at for five years.

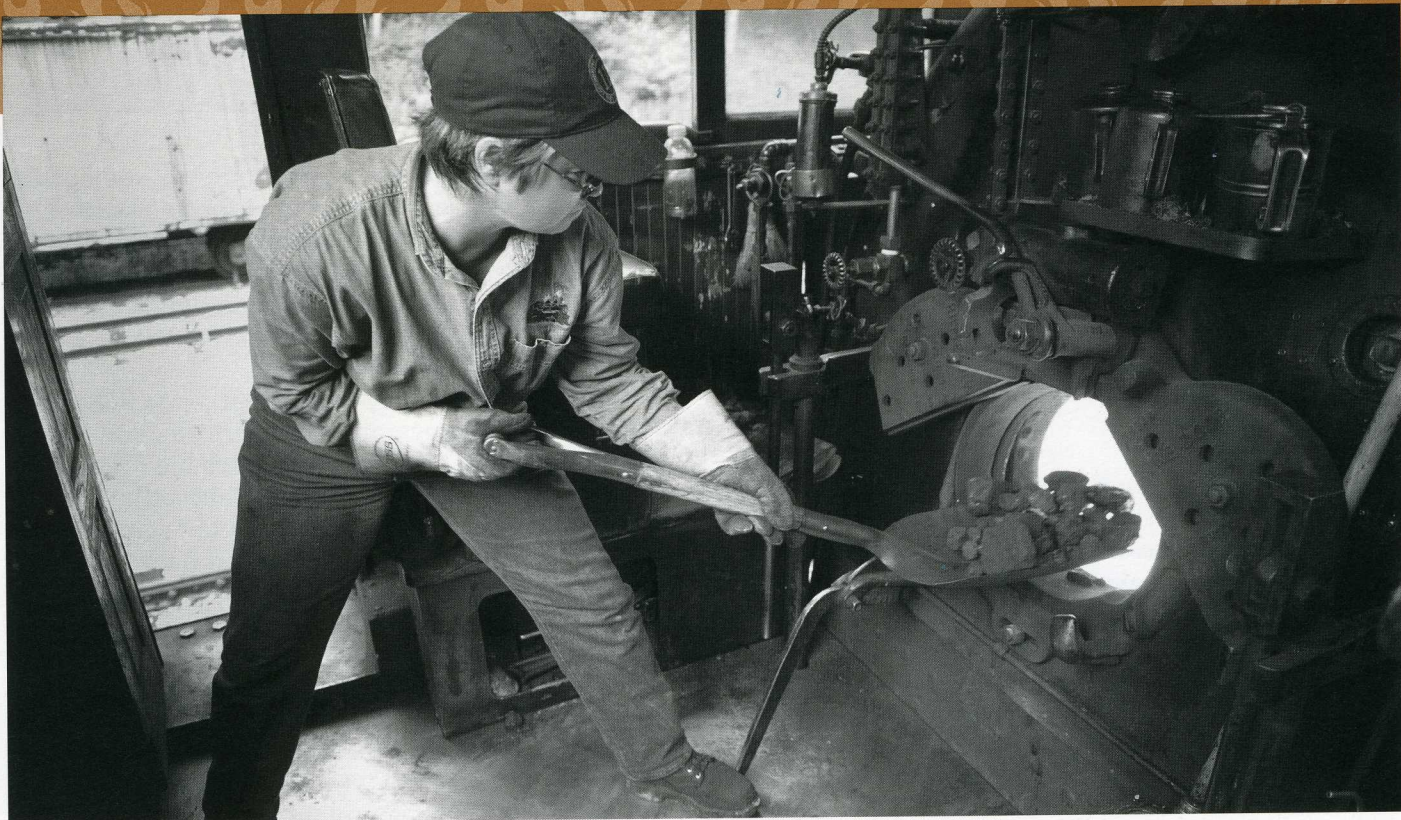
"It is a combination of the physical work and repetition," Amy says of the factors that force many wannabe firemen to drop out. "It is a very repetitive job."

Amy takes great pride in her perseverance and performance. "There has never been a female fireman [on the Cass Scenic Railroad], that anyone here is aware of," Amy says as she takes a break at Bald Knob on a hot, humid Sunday in late July. She notes, however, that during World War II, when many logging railroad engineers and firemen were called to military duty, their wives stepped up to the engine in order to meet the family's financial needs and maintain the flow of timber to the mills. But, on the company's records, the husbands were still running the locomotives.

Firing the locomotive is arguably the most physically demanding and potentially dangerous job on a steam locomotive. Amy says most people

Left: Amy McGrew, first female fireman for the Cass Scenic Railroad. Below: Amy heads toward her locomotive at the start of another shift at the Cass Scenic Railroad, where she has worked since 2006. Engineer Dirk Caloccia prepares to enter the cab at right.





Though her duties are several, Amy's primary responsibility is shoveling coal into the firebox of engine No. 11 and maintaining the proper head of steam to run this train up and down the mountain.

would flunk the screening application, if there were one.

"There are so many things you can't be afraid of doing this job," she says. "You can't be afraid of heights, you can't be claustrophobic, you can't be afraid of getting burned, hurt, or squished. And you have to like loud noises."

Watching Amy at work, there's no doubt that she suffers none of those phobias. Her pre-run routine includes a thorough cleaning of the locomotive and tender, which involves climbing the boiler jacket and wiping it down with a cloth. As she works, she gingerly avoids the myriad pipes carrying 200 pounds of steam pressure that could leave a nasty burn on her arms or face with one misstep.

"I usually get burned every couple of months, but sometimes it is every other week," Amy says matter-of-factly, her forearm bearing the marks of a recent encounter with the locomotive's heat.

Her cleaning work also takes her near the relief valves, which can pop

open at any time with a deafening hiss and blast of the super-heated steam that makes most observers jump. Amy admits she hates the noise, but at the same time she's in tune with it.

"I just know from the sound of them if they are going to open, and I'm aware of what direction the steam will go in," Amy explains.

She says that while the job is fraught with dangerous situations, being aware of her environment and having respect for the equipment go a long way toward keeping her safe, both on the train and in the shop, where she works during the winter months.

In the shop, the work can be just as strenuous and dirty as shoveling the several tons of coal that the locomotive will burn on a trip to Bald Knob. Amy says the dozen or so full-time employees who tear down and rebuild the engines and cars are a special breed of workers. They take great pride in their occupation, but also are very opinionated about how the work ought to be done.

"You are not going to get docile,

passive people to do this kind of work," she says.

Nor will you find claustrophobic folks in the shop. Amy says crawling into and working on the firebox and boiler are part of this nasty job.

"We've had people who didn't realize they were claustrophobic until they got halfway into the firebox," she says.

A passion for steam railroading is the common thread in this group. Amy is no exception, but hers is an acquired passion.

"I never had the slightest inkling I'd end up doing this," says Amy, whose only family connection to railroading was an engineer uncle.

"I've always admired any machine, good engineering, but trains never really caught my fancy until I rode [the Cass train]," she adds.

Amy did have an interest in airplanes at one time and obtained her pilot's license. It was good training for locomotive work, it turns out.

"Steam engines have personalities," she says. "They are like old war birds

[aircraft]. You can ask them for what you want, but you don't tell them."

"There are an amazing lot of similarities between steam railroading and airplanes. There's a lot of attention to detail, and a lot of respect for the equipment."

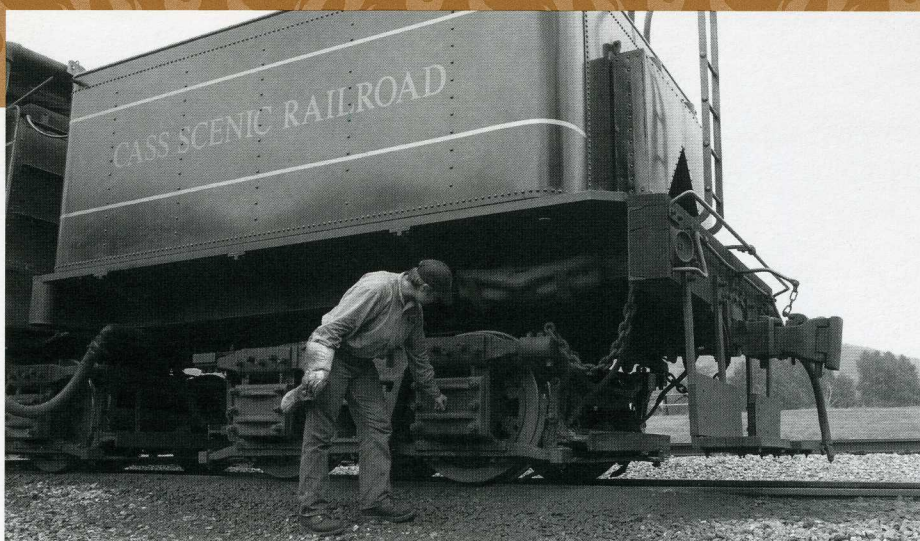
A native of the Columbus, Ohio, area, Amy took a "convoluted" career path to the cab of Shay No. 11. Her parents envisioned a professional career for their daughter, and Amy entered college with the goal of being a veterinarian. She abandoned academics to work as a horse trainer and stable manager. When the stable was unable to obtain liability insurance, Amy moved on, to a main-frame computer programmer job for the State of Ohio.

"I found out that wasn't the life for me," Amy says. "I prefer physical work, I like tangible jobs. I've done my time in cubicles."

Amy also spent several years as a residential/commercial electrician and did a stint as business manager of a television production company owned by her husband's family. When that business closed, both Amy and her husband, Jerry, went looking for new lines of work. At first, they planned to move out West with some friends. They were packed and ready to go when the friends backed out, forcing Amy and Jerry to re-evaluate their plans.

They recalled the Cass Scenic Railroad trips they went on almost every year and wondered if Jerry could get a job on the railroad. On a whim, in the middle of the night, they decided to drive to Cass and see if there were any openings. They arrived in the spring of 2006, when the state-owned railroad was interviewing for seasonal workers.

"It's not that hard to get a seasonal job," she says. "Most of the jobs here are part-time. Full-time positions are a lot more difficult."



Following a trip to the top of Bald Knob, Amy McGrew checks for hot spots.

The openings were track crew, brakemen, and shop workers — all of them physically demanding. Amy says she and Jerry assumed that he would be the one to get the job. But as a supervisor was showing Jerry around the shop, Amy decided to apply for a brakeman's job.

About two-thirds of the way back home, they called the railroad and discovered they'd both been hired — Jerry for the shop, Amy as a brakeman.

Hired on as they were before the season began, there was not an immediate need for brakemen, so Amy was assigned temporarily to the track crew.

"I loved it, absolutely loved it," Amy recalls. "After two days on that crew, I asked the track foreman if he'd mind leaving me on there." When he agreed, Amy became, to the best of her knowledge, the first full-time female track crew member in the railroad's history.

On average, the crew replaces about 300 ties annually. Much of the work is manual, without the benefit of the track maintenance machinery mainline railroads use, but track workers must know how to handle heavy equipment like backhoes. They also have to be able to walk long distances — every inch of track is inspected monthly by walking the line before one of the priceless locomotives rolls over it.

"Our track is maintained to a

lot higher standard than [mainline] railroad track because of the extreme mountain conditions," Amy says.

Amy stayed on the track crew for a year, then applied for a fireman's job. It was Dave Caplinger, now a supervisor at Pipestem State Park, who agreed to let Amy test for the fireman's job, officially known as Rail Tech II. No skills exam or formal training program was involved.

"There really is not a place to learn this, aside from firing," she says. "Even people who work on other [steam] scenic railroads and come here say it is a totally different environment with running on these mountains."

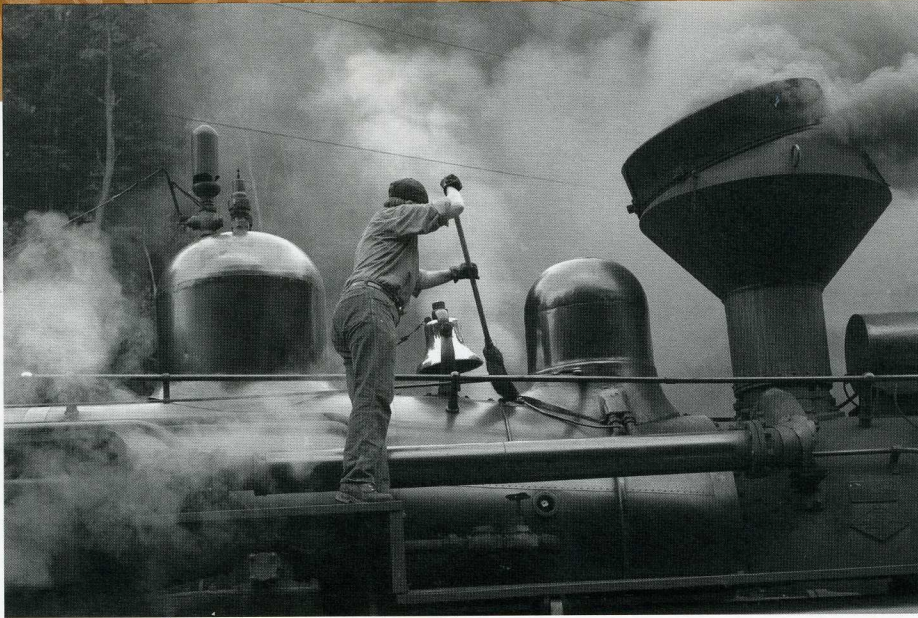
Amy says the shop and track crew are entry points for the job of firing the locomotive, which is usually seen as the training ground for an engineer's job.

"If I hadn't done [the track crew], I never would have been able to make it into the engine," she says.

As the first woman to attempt the job, Amy expected some hazing, and got it, from the male locomotive crew members.

"They firmly believed a woman would wash out and not be able to do this job," she says.

She was ready for the challenge, however. Amy says her years as an electrician exposed her to plenty of on-the-job aggravation, and she learned how to handle it. And the



Engulfed in smoke, soot, and steam, Amy takes a broom to engine No. 11 one of many jobs she performs as a fireman.

hazing that she got from her coworkers at Cass was not nearly as bad as she experienced as an electrician.

Amy trained for a couple days with another fireman, and from there "I just figured it out on my own," she says. While the basics can be learned in a few days, it takes years to master a job that Amy describes as half art and half science.

Every fireman has a preference for a particular style of "firing," essentially maintaining the steam. And that style is subject to the engineer's approval.

"I like to fire it lightly and frequently," Amy says, meaning that she adds small amounts of coal throughout the trip. "The fireman works for the engineer, and if I had an engineer who said 'Don't do it that way,' I'd have to go with his preference."

Assigned to Shay Engine 11, Amy is paired with engineer Dirk Caloccia, who endorses her firing style and work ethic.

"She's a good worker, hard worker," Dirk says. "I didn't think she could do it, because I'd worked with women in the coal mines, and most of the men would do their jobs for them. But she carries her own. I can't get her to sit down."

When she does sit, Amy's perch is on the left side of the locomotive cab,

opposite the engineer's seat. Her job is managing water and coal. There are two water glasses or gauges in the engine that provide both Amy and Dirk with the boiler's water level. From her seat, Amy has access to a long rod that enables her to inject water from the tender to the boiler. On a typical trip to Bald Knob, 3,000 gallons of water will be superheated by the boiler and escape into the atmosphere as steam.

It is Amy's job to do the initial filling from the water tank at Cass Shop; along the route, she gets assistance from the brakemen, who top off the tender from spring-fed reservoirs near the top of the line.

She also keeps an eye on the steam-pressure gauge, to make sure Dirk has the constant 200 pounds that the locomotive needs to climb grades that reach 11%. If the pressure drops to 185 pounds or less, the locomotive could stop in its tracks. If the pressure climbs above 200 pounds, the safety valve will pop, something Amy sees as a waste of power and indication of poor firing.

"I've only popped it twice so far this year," Amy says with a grin of pride.

There is no stoker on Shay 11. Every piece of coal that's fed into the

firebox comes off the end of a No. 2 coal shovel. Amy will shovel about three tons of coal into the firebox during the 11-mile trip to Bald Knob. Although she's never done it herself, she's heard of a fireman accidentally losing his grip on the shovel as it entered the firebox. Accordingly, a spare shovel makes the trip.

The coal supply spills onto the metal floor of the cab from the tender's bin. Several boards, about six inches wide and the length of the tender, restrain the coal. As the pile goes down, Amy periodically levels the supply with a long-handled, hoe-like implement. To provide easier access, she removes the boards as the supply dwindles and tosses them onto the back of the tender as if they were pieces of cardboard.

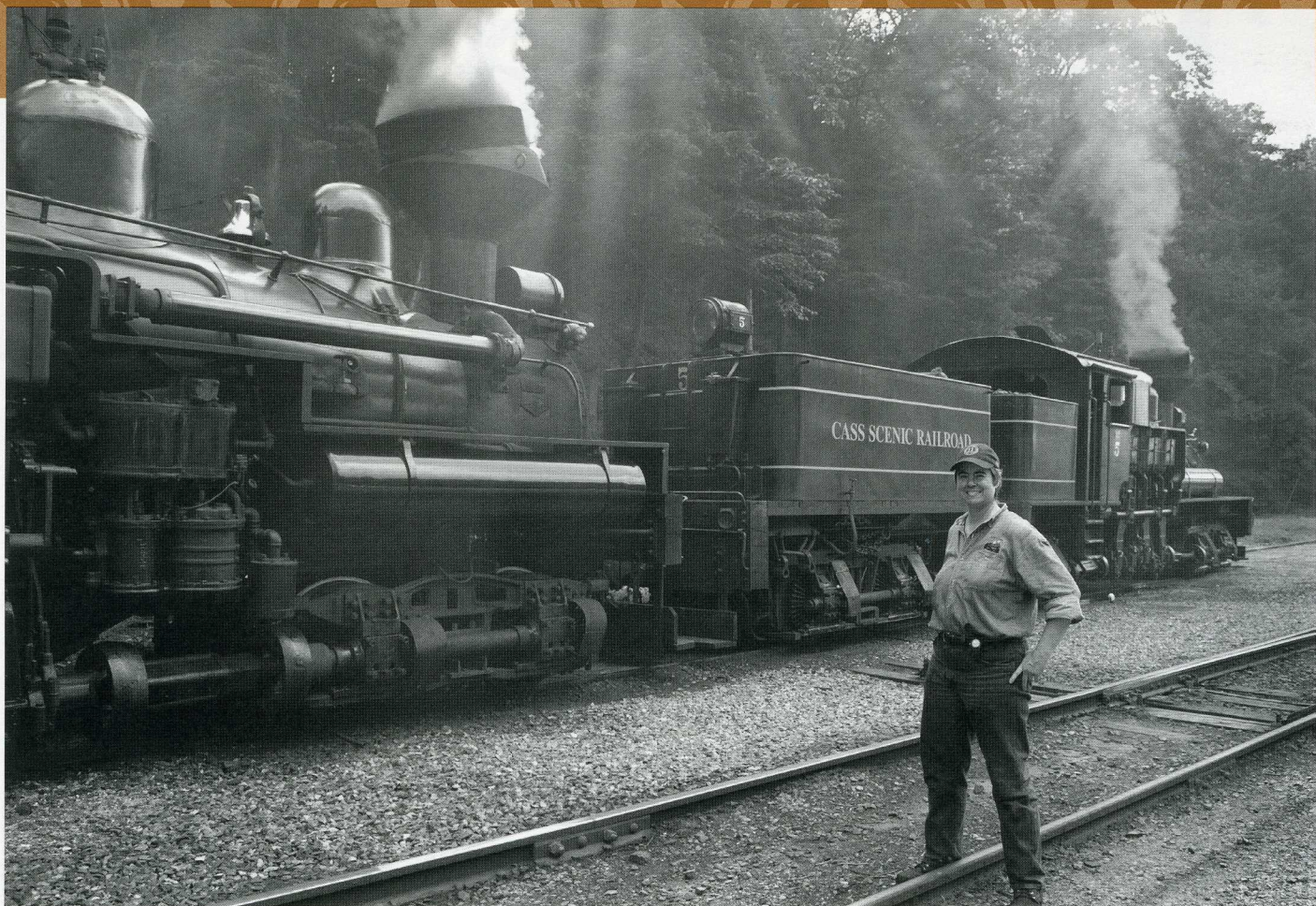
Amy keeps a tidy work area. When she's not watching gauges, injecting water into the boiler, manicuring the coal pile, or firing the engine, she is sweeping up the chunks of coal and "bug dust," the fine coal that scatters across the cab floor.

Amy doesn't have much input into what kind of coal is put in the tender, but if she had her way, it would all be bug dust.

"A lot of firemen don't like it because it will mat up in the firebox," she says. "But I have learned to really like the dust, now that I'm acclimated to it. I like it wetted down; it actually burns better if it's wet."

The art of firing the engine involves two things: spreading the fire evenly across the floor of the firebox and anticipating the steam needs of the engine.

"It matters a lot more where you put the coal rather than how much you put in," she says. "When I am firing, I am looking to where my next firing is going to go, and I need to be building steam for what the need will be 30 seconds to three-to-four minutes from now. I'm always thinking about all of this."



Though her job is dirty, loud, and hazardous, Amy McGrew says she loves being a fireman for the Cass Scenic Railroad.

Uneven firing can produce "thin spots" of fire and provide an opening for cold air to rush into the box. That will bring down the steam, but worse, the extreme temperature difference can damage the boiler.

"The fireman is actually in a position to do more harm to an engine than anyone else," Amy says.

Temperatures inside the firebox reach 2,500 degrees. A bit of that inferno leaks into the cab every time Amy opens the firebox just long enough to feed a shovelful of coal into the pit, making for hot work.

"I have been known to sit in the Leatherbark Creek at the end of the day," Amy says.

She uses gauntlets to protect her hands from the blistering heat, but when she takes her seat for the few seconds between each firing, Amy removes the heavy gloves.

"The best way I find to cool down

is to let my hands get out in the air," she says.

Because she must assess the distribution of coal in the brilliant glow of the firebox, Amy wears sunglasses designed for the smelting industry. But a danger she can't anticipate is when the firebox occasionally belches flames and smoke at her, the result of sudden deceleration, which deprives the fire of draft.

"I lose my eyebrows once or twice a season," she says. Most firemen endure these dangers because they have the engineer's seat in sight. Amy is happy doing what she does, however.

"I don't have any desire to change seats," she says. "I've let myself get booted out of jobs before, and I don't intend to do that again."

Amy and Jerry have divorced since moving to Cass, but they remain co-workers, with Jerry firing an engine, as well. Amy lives alongside the

railroad track less than a mile from the shops and usually walks to work. She grows vegetable gardens in the summer, although there is little spare time to work them. In the winter, if she can get the grime off her hands long enough to handle the white fabric, Amy enjoys quilting.

She loves her job as a fireman and insists she be referred to as a fireman, not firewoman.

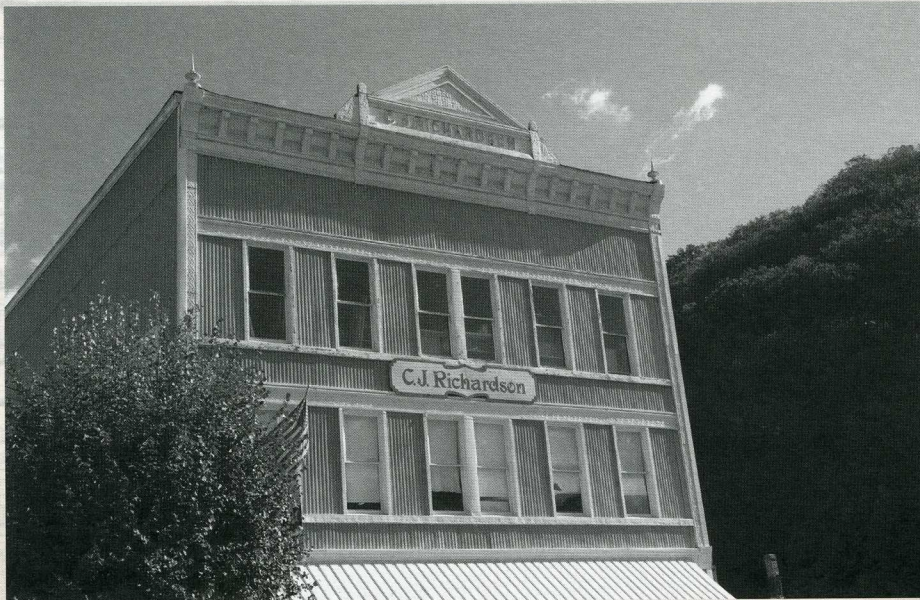
"I've earned it," she says.

Her only regrets are that she didn't discover this job and West Virginia much earlier in life.

"I can come in here in a foul mood, and by the time we are halfway up the mountain, I got this big old stupid grin on my face," she says. 🍁

CARL E. FEATHER, freelance writer and photographer, is a resident of Kingsville, Ohio, with family roots in Preston and Tucker counties. He is a regular GOLDENSEAL contributor.

"Fair Dealing"



C.J. Richardson built his hardware and furniture store on Eighth Street around 1904, when the railroad extended its line into Marlinton. Built along the tracks, freight was delivered to the store by rail four times a week in its heyday.

Text and photographs by
Carl E. Feather



Founder C.J. Richardson in 1897
Photographer unknown.

Richardson's Hardware in Marlinton

Charles McElwee "Googie" Richardson III, 84, admits that the way his family's furniture and hardware store in Marlinton does business is outdated. But after more than a century of successfully doing business "the old way," there's little point in changing.

"It was built to do business 100 years ago," Googie says of the three-story building that houses the eclectic store. "We've been advised not to modernize it; it might do more harm than good."

Googie is the third generation of Richardsons to own C.J. Richardson Hardware and Furniture; his co-owner son, Terry, is the fourth. By their reckoning, the store is the oldest family-owned business in Pocahontas County. It's certainly one of the most nostalgic.

Bulk hardware is stocked on shelves that cover the wall behind the wooden

counter that runs for most of the store's 100-foot depth. Three rolling wooden ladders, one of them original to the 1905 building, provide employees access to the merchandise that stretches from the pine floors to the 12-foot-tall tin ceiling.

The task of filling orders from this wall of shelves and bins falls upon a half-dozen clerks who hustle about the store from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Saturday, answering questions, taking phone calls, writing up orders, and scheduling deliveries with early 20th-century tools — pens, paper, landline telephones, credit account registers, calculators, receipt books, and want lists maintained on paper. The only computer in the place is used for bookkeeping, and it was just in the past decade that Richardson's began accepting credit cards.

A hardbound journal kept at a mid-point opening in the long counter is

used to keep track of special orders, deliveries, service calls, and other events — a system that's been used for more than a century.

"Anything that comes in and we have to remember as far as sales, service, this is how we keep track of it," says Terry, who pulls a 1906 ledger from the shelf for comparison. "One hundred and four years later, we are still using the same system."

Likewise, many of the store's original fixtures for sorting and storing bulk hardware remain in service. Triangle-shaped drawers hold all manner of fasteners in free-standing, hexagonal units built from wood and painted black. A section of one wall is devoted to legacy wooden bins containing all manner of galvanized pipe fittings.

The store's center aisle accommodates pegboard and free-standing, re-





Charles "Googie" Richardson behind the counter of his family-owned hardware store, where he makes hand entries into a journal book.

volving displays, but veteran clerks say these are relatively new merchandising concessions. They recall a time when the entire aisle was a row of tables upon which featured merchandise was displayed. That tradition is still practiced toward the front of the store, where small appliances and seasonal needs are kept front and center for all who enter the store's heavy wood-and-glass door.

The first two stories of the Marlinton landmark are dedicated to selling — hardware, paint, household needs, and appliances on the first floor; furniture, bedding, and flooring on the second. The third floor is for warehousing; a freight elevator provides access to the upper floors. When the elevator is lowered, one sees that storage bins for pipe fittings were built into a shaft wall. Store clerks describe the building's top floor as a place of discovery and

history. A while back, one of the clerks stumbled across a wooden case of crosscut saws still in the original packing from the early 1900's.

Any deficiencies in functionality in the original store are mitigated by a modern, metal building that stands across a parking lot and provides more warehousing for lumber, drywall, and other large merchandise.

Googie and Terry oversee the entire operation. "I do mostly purchasing and deal with the paperwork," Googie says as we sit in the store's office, a cramped space under the stairs that lead to the second floor. "I do occasionally wait on customers, but I can't lift heavy things."

"He's the CEO," says Terry. "I spend most of my time on the floor, and he spends most of his time back here in the office."

Whether in the office or behind the

counter, Richardson values of hard work and honesty govern the way they do business, Googie says.

"We've always been honest, fair-minded, and fair dealing," he says. "I'm sure not everyone is going to agree with that, but I think honesty has been one of the biggest factors [in the store's longevity]."

Googie says his grandfather, C.J. Richardson, was a mining engineer who grew up in Alabama and went to work for a gold mine operation in South America. He contracted malaria and was advised by his physician brother, Dr. T.S. Richardson, to move to a region with a healthful climate. C.J. chose the Virginia / West Virginia border, more so for its abundant fish and wildlife than healthful environment.

As the logging boom spread across the state line from the forests of

western Virginia, C.J. detected opportunity. In 1901 he established his hardware business in Marlinton on the west side of the Greenbrier River, near the spot where routes 219 and 55 intersect today. He built nearby a stately home that stands to this day adjacent to the Pocahontas County Museum on Route 219

Googie recalls his grandfather as a Christian man who insisted his family always have a time of prayer in the mornings prior to going about their business. The store was always closed on Sunday, a tradition that remains to this day.

Googie says his grandfather always wore a white shirt and tie to work and enjoyed the perks of being the boss. "Back then, the business owner didn't do any manual work. He went home and took a nap for a couple of hours and spent a lot of his time hunting and fishing. You can't do that anymore," Googie says.

Much of C.J.'s outdoor sporting activity was done along the Jackson

River in Virginia, where Googie and Terry own property known as "Camp Richardson." It remains an important getaway for the family, especially Terry who enjoys hunting.

When C.J. learned that the C&O Railroad was coming to Marlinton, he relocated his business to a new, 12,000-square-foot building on Eighth Street, near the site of the railroad's depot. The store opened in 1905.

"The railroad ran alongside the store, and everything was shipped in by rail," Googie says. "We unloaded a boxcar directly into the store. They had a freight depot right there, and we'd get freight four times a week."

Googie feels that the store's heyday was 1910 to the mid-1930's, when it supplied many of the logging camp operations in the region. He recalls a time when harnesses, horse collars, and other items pertaining to logging with draft horses hung from the ceiling on a pipe that stretched from the front to the back of the store.

"They sold a set of harnesses every day. Now we never get a call for them," Googie says.

Several family members, including C.J.'s brother-in-law, Andy Thomas, also worked in the store. Andy's service was particularly remarkable — for 50 years he was the one who opened the store every morning and in that time never took one vacation or sick day.

"Mostly he checked in freight and orders," says Googie, recalling Andy's work there.

C.J.'s brother, Ed, also worked in the business. A fiddler, Ed and other string musicians from the region gathered in the store on Saturday evenings to play old-time music. Whitney Daugherty, Charlie Lovelace, and Greenbrier Dotson are some of the musicians Googie recalls playing in the jam sessions, which came to an end in the mid-1950's.

Likewise, the store was a community gathering place in the 1930's, when radio was the new entertain-



Co-owner Terry Richardson, pencil tucked behind his ear, waits on customers at the store. Above him hang musical instruments — Terry is an accomplished guitarist — and to the left is an old-fashioned scale. Nails are still sold by the pound.

ment fad.

"We had a radio in the front of the store, and that was the gathering place," Googie says. When television came in, the store placed a set in the front window, although the picture on it was hardly worth showcasing. The nearest stations were in Oak Hill and Roanoke, Virginia.

"If they could see a picture at all it was wonderful, even though it was mostly snow," Googie recalls.

Googie worked in the store during high school, when his father, Charles II, and uncle, Craig Richardson, owned it. From there, he went to Fork Union Military Academy. He spent two years in the U.S. Army, 1945 to 1947, then went to work in the family business. Eleven years later, with two young children — Vickie born in 1953, and Terry in 1954 — Googie re-enlisted. He was sent to Germany, then Fort Knox, and stayed in the military until 1965.

After bidding farewell to the army for the second time, Googie purchased a Western Auto dealership in Richwood. A motorcycle enthusiast, Googie added a Honda motorcycle dealership to his hardware business and ran a successful operation until 1975, when his father became ill and requested Googie take over for him. Googie sold his store in Richwood and returned to Marlinton. More than 35 years later, Googie still puts in an eight-hour day at the family business.

"His whole life has been about working," Terry says. "We all wish we could be as sharp as he is at his age."

Googie inherited his father's share of the business when Charles II died, and then bought out Craig's interest when his uncle passed away. Googie is a Pocahontas County treasure, with a reputation for playing practical jokes on customers and other business owners.

One of his all-time favorites involved another Marlinton businessman, Guy Van Reenen, who owned French's Diner. In the middle of the night, Googie and a clerk from his store



Hexagonal storage units hold bulk hardware, as they have for decades at Richardson's.

bolted a damaged commode to the sidewalk in front of the diner and put a sign on it, "For diner customers only."

"We decided that would be a good place for it," Googie says. "It was there just until [Guy] came to work."

On another occasion, someone broke into the diner and stole some hams. Googie and his cohorts conspired to make Guy believe they were the guilty parties. "He took it hook, line, and sinker," Googie says. "He even brought the police in on us."

As with his father, Terry took a circuitous route into the business. He earned a degree in biology and worked in construction before the call of his childhood home became so strong he decided to come back to Pocahontas County to raise his family. Terry has been a full-time worker in the store since 1983. As for that biology degree, he doesn't use it much in a hardware store, but says it does come in handy when he has to help his daughter with homework.

Regardless of which Richardson has been at the helm, a knowledgeable sales staff has maintained the store's reputation as an outlet for both goods and practical information.

"When people walk in here they know they are going to get attention," Terry says. "They love knowing that they spoke with

somebody."

Terry says the store has had "a real cast of characters" over the years, present players included.

Ira "Buck" Turner is the veteran clerk of the dozen or so employees who work at Richardson's. He does everything from ordering metal roofs to testing water for customers who purchase the air-injection water treatment systems. "Buck is a local legend," Terry says. "People come in here constantly asking him how to do this and that."

Buck has been fielding questions for 30 years and has yet to run out of answers. "I came in here one day, and they were unloading rolls of roofing," Buck says. "They asked me if I wanted to stay and help unload the truck. I stayed and I've been here ever since. I'd been unemployed for a year, and Craig walked in, took my hands, flipped them over [to look at the palms] and said 'You'll do.' That was back in the good old times."

His wife, Cheryl, a.k.a. Cookie, came to work in 2002.

"She used to come in every year and help us do the inventory," Terry says. "She learned where things were, and one day we needed help and asked her to come in."

Perhaps because of the unusual nickname that his father assigned to him at an early age, Googie insists



each employee have a handle. For example, Steven Sharp looked like a "Figaro" to Googie, who pinned the nickname onto the clerk. "Now he even signs his name as 'Figaro,'" says Googie, who has named other employees "Cicero," "Pluto," and "Ice Cream."

The store's bookkeeper is Lana Clark, who has been there more than 30 years. Googie, who has nothing to do with computers, depends upon Lana's constant stream of numbers to make the business decisions upon which the financial health and future of the store rest.

As clichéd as it sounds, Richardson's is a place where relationships are built upon service. The store sells glass and screening material, and if you're not handy with such things, clerk Jerry Davis will make the repairs for you.

The store also prides itself on providing in-house service for just about everything it sells, including all the appliances except televisions and other complex electronic items. In radio's heyday, the store had one employee, Ralph Dilley, whose only job was selling and servicing radios

and the large batteries required to operate them.

"That used to be a big business," Googie says. "We also kept one man to service Maytag washing machines with gasoline engines. I haven't laid eyes on one of those in many years."

The hardware side of the store is affiliated with True Value; the appliance side is a General Electric and Hotpoint dealer. Terry says customer demand drives the inventory — the store is the only appliance dealer and full-service hardware for a radius of about 50 miles, so it must be diversified. And if there is an item that a customer requests but is not in stock, Richardson's will gladly special order it.

There are several traditions associated with the store. Every morning, 15 minutes before the doors open at 8 a.m., an employee grabs a broom and sweeps the sidewalk in front of the store. In the winter, the walk is cleared of snow and salted, sometimes the entire length of the block, to make an accommodating path for customers.

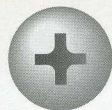
For as long as Googie can remem-

ber, the store has held a front-page advertising spot in the *Pocahontas Times*, Marlinton's newspaper. The two-column advertisement usually features a product or service, but Googie says the store does not run sales unless a manufacturer provides promotional pricing.

Every Christmas, the store holds a drawing for prizes — a rifle is usually the top prize, followed by furniture and appliances. At one time, Richardson's gave away a new automobile as the grand prize. The winning numbers for the drawing were posted in the store's front window, drawing crowds and business to the store.

"The last time we gave away an automobile was in the 1950's," Terry says. "Jewell Scott in Hillsboro was the winner. Jewell lived to be almost 100 years old, and every Christmas season he would get a [contest] ticket and remind everyone that he won that car."

A more recent store tradition involves a cocker spaniel named Bill Richardson, a pet owned by Terry and his wife, Nathalie. The dog comes to work with Terry most mornings. As Terry goes about his tasks, Bill



Every morning before the store opens, employees sweep the sidewalk in front of the store. Doing the honors this day are Terry Richardson, at right, and Steven "Figaro" Sharp.

makes the rounds of the town, stopping at the elementary school where Nathalie is a teacher. After visiting her classroom, Bill heads back to the store to collect his treats and check his mail. Yes, Bill gets mail and lots of it, especially political advertising and credit card offers.

Googie says having Bill around the store reminds him of the days when his father ran the place. "Dad always kept basset hounds," Googie says. "When my dad was living, there was usually a basset hound in here, stretched clear across the aisle. The customers had to step over him."

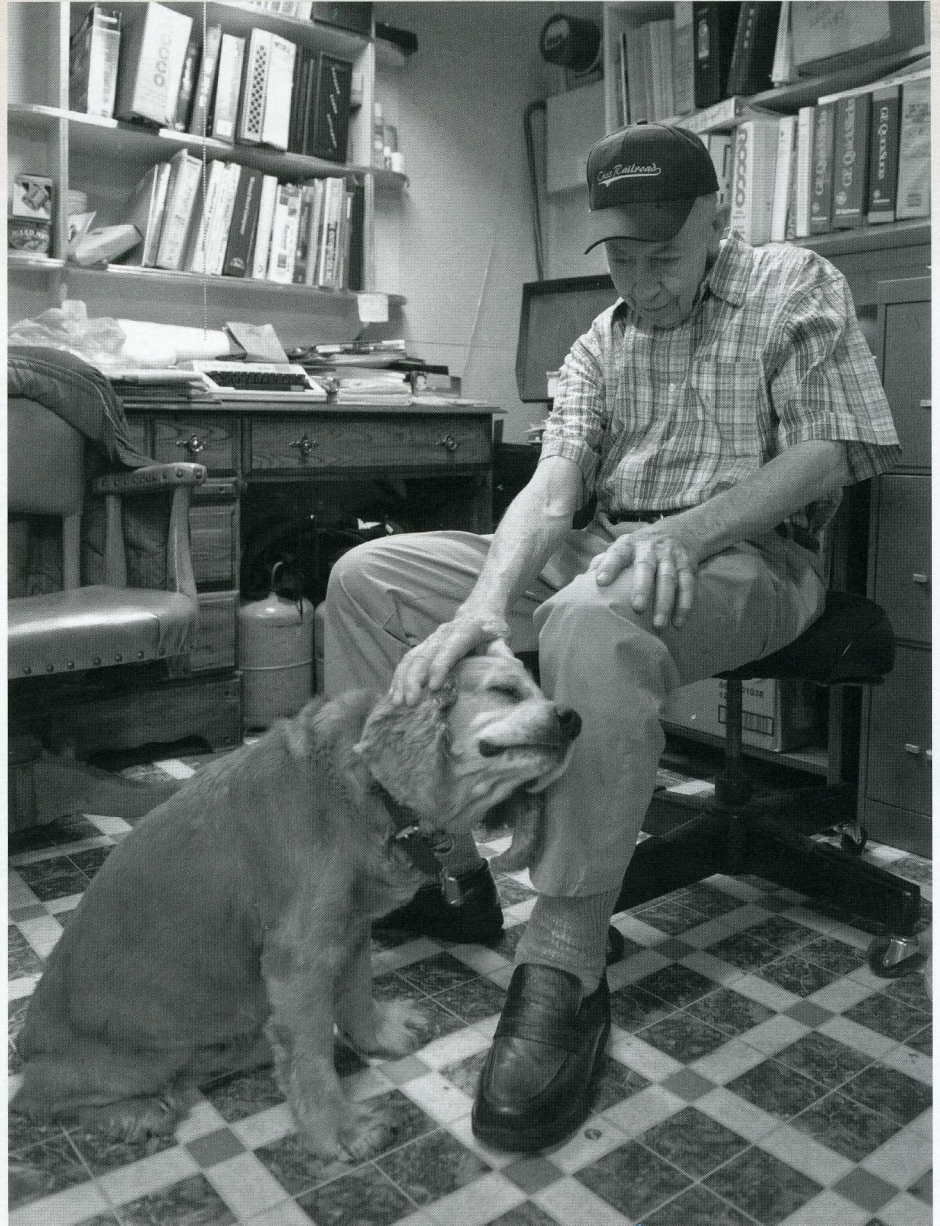
These traditions temper the hard times, the worst of which were the floods of 1985 and 1996. The 1985 flood caught the owners unprepared — there was no flood insurance and the waters rose to six feet on the first floor. Virtually all the merchandise, valued at more than \$100,000, had to be discarded.

"The boss threw me the keys and walked out," Buck says, recalling their first look at the devastation. "There was a refrigerator that had floated up and was resting on the top of a wire rack. You could walk under that thing."

Googie says that what saved the business was the fact that customers found themselves in the same situation and needed to purchase appliances, furniture, and other goods destroyed by the deluge.

There were floods in both the winter and spring of 1996. The winter flood came upon the valley so suddenly there was no time to evacuate. The second story became a refuge for not only the Richardsons' employees, but also those from a neighboring pharmacy. The merchants and several employees spent 14 harrowing hours riding out the flood on the store's second story.

"We couldn't come downstairs because the water was over our heads down here," Googie says. "Also, propane tanks had washed down and were hitting objects and the building. You could see the gas gushing out of them in the water."



Googie (man) pets Bill (dog). Bill is the store mascot. He is well-known around town and routinely gets mail addressed to him at the store.

All it would have taken was a spark, and we would have had the choice, either drown or burn up. We felt pretty lucky [to live through that], to tell you the truth about it."

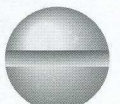
The spring flood proved more of a nuisance than anything else, and in both cases, the store quickly returned to serving its customers' needs as soon as the waters receded.

While Googie has survived three floods, an extension cord stretched across an aisle nearly did him in.

"I was running in here, and I tripped across a cable and landed on top of my head," Googie says, describing an

accident that occurred several years ago. "I didn't know I had broken my neck, but after several weeks I started to get dizzy whenever I looked up. The doctor told me I'd get paralyzed from the neck down if they attempted to operate, so I'm stuck with it" — "it" being the turned-down position he must hold his head.

Despite the injury and its consequences, Googie insists upon working and has no plans of stopping. "When the bell rings, that's when I'll go," Googie says. "I'll keep working if I'm able to keep going until then." 🍁



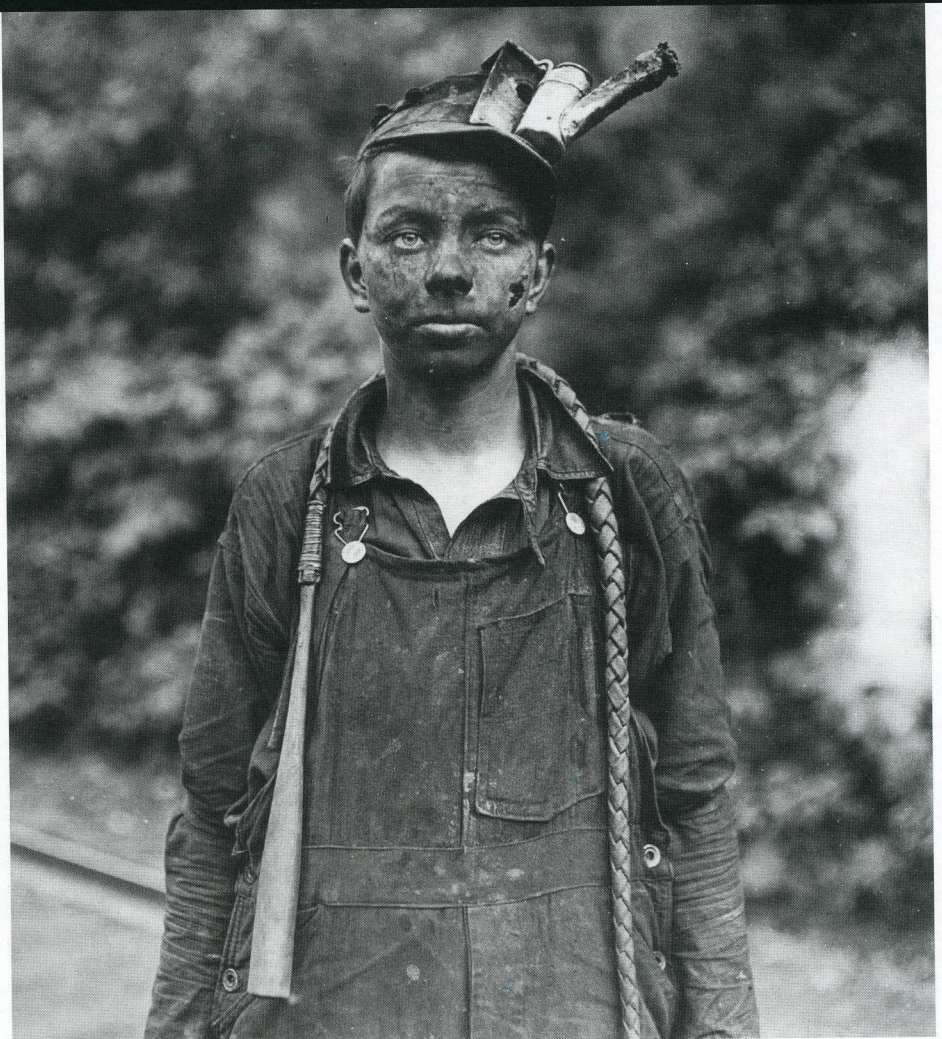
In Close Touch



Photographer Lewis Hine

By Raymond Alvarez • Photographs by Lewis W. Hine

Portrait of Lewis W. Hine as an older man, by photographer Sol Libsohn. Courtesy of New York Public Library and the estate of Sol Libsohn.



Known for his poignant photos of child labor, Lewis Hine's early work in West Virginia focused on the coal and glass industries. This young boy was a driver in the mine at Brown, Harrison County. Photograph courtesy of West Virginia & Regional History Collection, West Virginia University Libraries.

with Reality

[Quoted matter from Lewis W. Hine's notes.
—ed.]

"Pleasant Green School — one-room colored school near Marlinton, West Virginia — Pocahontas County. It is one of the best colored schools in the County, with a capable principal holding a first-grade certificate. All the children are Agricultural Club workers." Photograph courtesy of the Photography Collections, University of Maryland, Baltimore County.



Lewis Wickes Hine (1874-1940), one of the most important American photographers of the 20th century, did some of his most memorable work in West Virginia. A Wisconsin-born educator, he studied sociology at the University of Chicago, Columbia University, and New York University. When he accepted his first teaching position in New York City in 1901, the principal gave him a camera so the students could learn photography. Hine quickly saw the potential of this educational medium and took students out of the classroom to photograph their environment. This included frequent trips to Ellis Island, to document myriad immigrants who arrived there daily. Between 1904 and 1909 Hine made more than 200 glass plates (negatives used to make prints) and eventually came to the realization that his true vocation was photojournalism.

In 1906 he left teaching to become a staff photographer for the Russell Sage Foundation, a New York City benevolent society. One of his early assignments took him to the steel mill

districts of Pittsburgh, where he documented the industry and working conditions. In 1908 he published a collection of photographs of tenements and sweatshops, hoping that these photographs would help bring about public awareness. During this time, the National Child Labor Committee (NCLC) asked him to join their staff as a full-time photographer. From 1908 to 1916, he traveled extensively throughout the country for NCLC, photographing children working in sweatshops and factories. In this role he became a pioneer in the field of documentary photography, using a camera to record images as a means to achieve social responsibility and reform in manufacturing and labor practices.

Many of his photographs from this period were taken in West Virginia

at glass factories and coal mines in Marion, Taylor, Monongalia, McDowell, Harrison, and Kanawha counties. His images captured somber-faced young children working as helpers, finishers, and packers in the glass plants, as well as trapper boys in the mines.

His handwritten notes at the time documented poignant stories about each subject. For example, Alfred, a 14-year-old trapper boy in a mine located near Grafton, told Hine he worked for several years during vacation but was going to school in the fall. Hine asked if school is more fun and recorded Alfred's response: "This yere hain't no fun!"

Another note by Hine from a photo taken at the Travis Glass Company



"Betsay (sic) Price — First year high school at her club sewing. 4-H club work — Marlinton, W.Va." Photograph courtesy of the Photography Collections, University of Maryland, Baltimore County.

in Clarksburg: "Machine that blows 4 milk bottles at a time. No lung blowers employed. Manager says machines are fast coming into play in bottle industry, plans eventually to have machines in place of carrying-in boys."

Hine's tour of West Virginia started in Wheeling. From there he traveled south, visiting the Barnesville Mine, the Gaston Mines, and Monongah Glass in Fairmont, as well as the Mannington Glass Works in Marion County. In Clarksburg, he took photos at Crescent Glass before taking the train to southern West Virginia. His 1908 photo titled "Drivers and Mules," taken in Gary, McDowell County, is one of his most famous photographs, often featured in reference texts and historical illustrations. Much of Hine's work from this pe-

riod was featured in the "Coal Life Project," an exhibition that opened at the West Virginia Cultural Center in 1981 and later traveled to other parts of the state as well as the 1982 World's Fair in Knoxville, Tennessee.

Some activists at the time criticized that Hine's images were not "shocking enough." He countered that people were more likely to lend support if they felt the photographs recorded the reality of the situation rather than sensationalizing the subject matter. His photographs published in pamphlets, magazine articles, and the press helped to inspire significant legislation. In 1916 Congress passed the Keating-Owen Act, which placed restrictions on employment of children under 14 years of age.

During and after World War I,

Hine photographed American Red Cross relief work in Europe while he continued to freelance for NCLC, creating a series of "work portraits" that emphasized the human contribution to modern industry.

In the fall of 1921, Hine returned to West Virginia, but he did not seek out subject matter from within the state's populated towns with factories and coal mines. This time, he traveled to remote locations in Pocahontas and Webster counties. Rather than capturing scenes of despair, poverty, and solemn-faced workers in harsh work environments, he turned back to his experience as a teacher and concentrated on rural, often remote, mountain schools and the education that was being offered there.

As a former teacher, Hine was adept at communicating with children and

wanted to get as much information as possible regarding their lives. In the years he photographed children in the factories, he often could estimate a child's age by determining their height. Often these worksite visits were limited by owners, so his shots were quickly done, sometimes surreptitiously as he often posed as an inspector to gain access. For his visit to Pocahontas County, however, Hine had plenty of time to talk to students and teachers, finding what they valued. Hine typically penned handwritten notations for each photo and later typed information on cards that he attached to his glass negatives. Ironically, his work from this period of his career was originally characterized as formally stiff and unimaginative compared to his powerful images for social advocacy

captured decades before. However, what remains in this particular selection shows insight into rural West Virginia life in the early '20's.

What he discovered at Pocahontas County's rural schools were good facilities, competent teachers, and engaged students, including many who were active in 4-H. Hine decided to capture their learning of life skills and vocational education at a time when parents could not provide these resources in rural or remote farm life. He noted the presence of "consolidated schools" built to replace simple one-room schools, though many had only a few rooms and were not large facilities.

He included visits to schools for black children in the county and found them to be good foundations for learning. Many of his photo-

graphs were close-up portraits of the students, and several showed the students engaged in vocational activities. He also visited the West Virginia State Fair and photographed youth displaying agriculture and livestock.

Hine's notations regarding the schools included where they were located, what facilities they had, transport systems, and caliber of the faculty. This particular series is unusual in comparison to the photographic themes that marked his earlier career. Rather than providing a documented series on the lack or needs of the students, these photos portray a bucolic essay on the quality of education in Appalachia. A few of the photos in the collection note limited incomes of the families, but the overall theme is one of pride



"Greenbank Consolidated School. Loading up the buses for a six-mile haul." Photograph courtesy of the Photography Collections, University of Maryland, Baltimore County.



"Third year high school girl in the chemical laboratory — Greenbank Consolidated School, Oct. 7 1921 " Photograph courtesy of the Photography Collections, University of Maryland, Baltimore County.

in accomplishment, whether it be the student or the school system at the time. Nothing stereotypes or demeans the people of West Virginia in these photos. Instead these pictures celebrate rural self-sufficiency, responsible citizenry, and minority education.

His notes on students often indicate their goals or aspirations for projects; he comments on award-winners in state and local 4-H competitions. In his visit to Minnehaha Springs, Hine captured an image of an ebullient young man whom he described as "putting the ha-ha in Minnehaha" and who "aims to show what he can do." Another boy with disability from an injury was described as being a more productive (and scientific) farmer than his father.

"Buckeye Graded School — typical two-room consolidated school in Pocahontas Co. There are 15 like this. Very small playground and they are up against and in the fork of a main traveled road and branch road. One of the two school buildings abandoned to make this school was moved and turned into a woodshed. Oct. 6, 1921 " Photograph courtesy of the Photography Collections, University of Maryland, Baltimore County.

It is not known whether these photographs were used for any particular project by NCLC or another philanthropic group, as Hine freelanced during this time in between assignments for the Red Cross. By the 1930's, the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) commissioned Hine to

photograph that immense undertaking and the impact it had on the relocation of rural people. In 1936, Hine was hired by the Works Progress Administration (WPA), but that work was not completed. The last few years of Hine's life were marked by professional struggles as federal and corporate patronage of his services

began to diminish. There was not much interest in his photography, past or present, and Hine had great difficulty earning an income. In January 1940, he lost his home in a bank foreclosure. Lewis Hine died in near poverty later that year. He was 66.

After his death, Hine's son Corydon Hine donated his father's prints



and negatives to the Photo League, a cooperative of amateur and professional photographers in New York City, after finding little interest elsewhere. Eventually this collection of 10,000 photographs was transferred to the George Eastman House.

Appreciation of Hine's work was rekindled in 1967 by Judith Gutman, a specialist in the field of social history of photography, with the publication of *Lewis W Hine and the American Social Conscience*. She followed this with other works, including *Lewis Hine 1874-1940: Two Perspectives*. Other books followed, including *America & Lewis Hine: Photographs 1904-1940*. At least five reference books on Hine's work have been printed in the past 15 years. Today, 5,000 of his photographs from WPA and TVA are found at the Library of Congress and in many important

collections around the country. He is widely recognized for his photography and humanitarian work.

The Pocahontas County photographs in this article are reprinted with permission of the Albin O Kuhn Library and Gallery of the University of Maryland, Baltimore County. UMBC's Lewis Hine collection includes over 5,000 captioned NCLC photographs that Hine took in 32 states. UMBC completed the purchase of the Hine collection from the NCLC in 1974, including Hine's meticulous notes on each photograph. The West Virginia and Regional History Collection at the WVU Libraries also contains several Hine photographs from the turn of the century, as does the West Virginia State Archives.

In 1909, Hine wrote, "Whether it be a painting or photograph, the

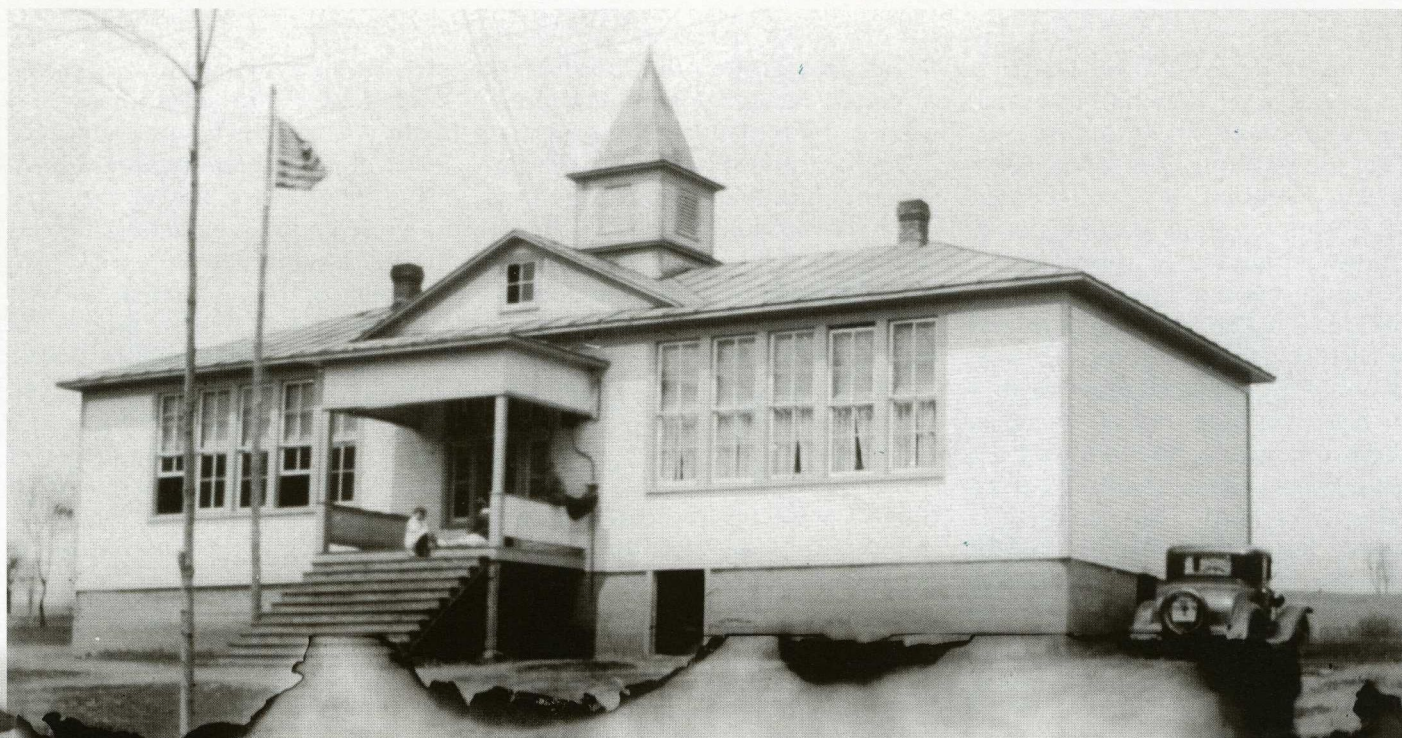
picture is a symbol that brings one immediately into close touch with reality. In fact, it is often more effective than the reality would have been, because, in the picture, the non-essential and conflicting interests have been eliminated."

Like many famous artists and authors in history, Hine's talent was largely unrecognized by the public during his lifetime. Today, however, these indelible images of long ago are still on exhibition, the subject of historical research, and appreciated for their contribution to America's social change in the 20th century. ✱

RAYMOND ALVAREZ, a native of Fairmont and a graduate of West Virginia University, holds a doctorate in health administration from Central Michigan University. Raymond is a frequent contributor to GOLDENSEAL, his most recent contribution appearing in our Fall 2009 issue.

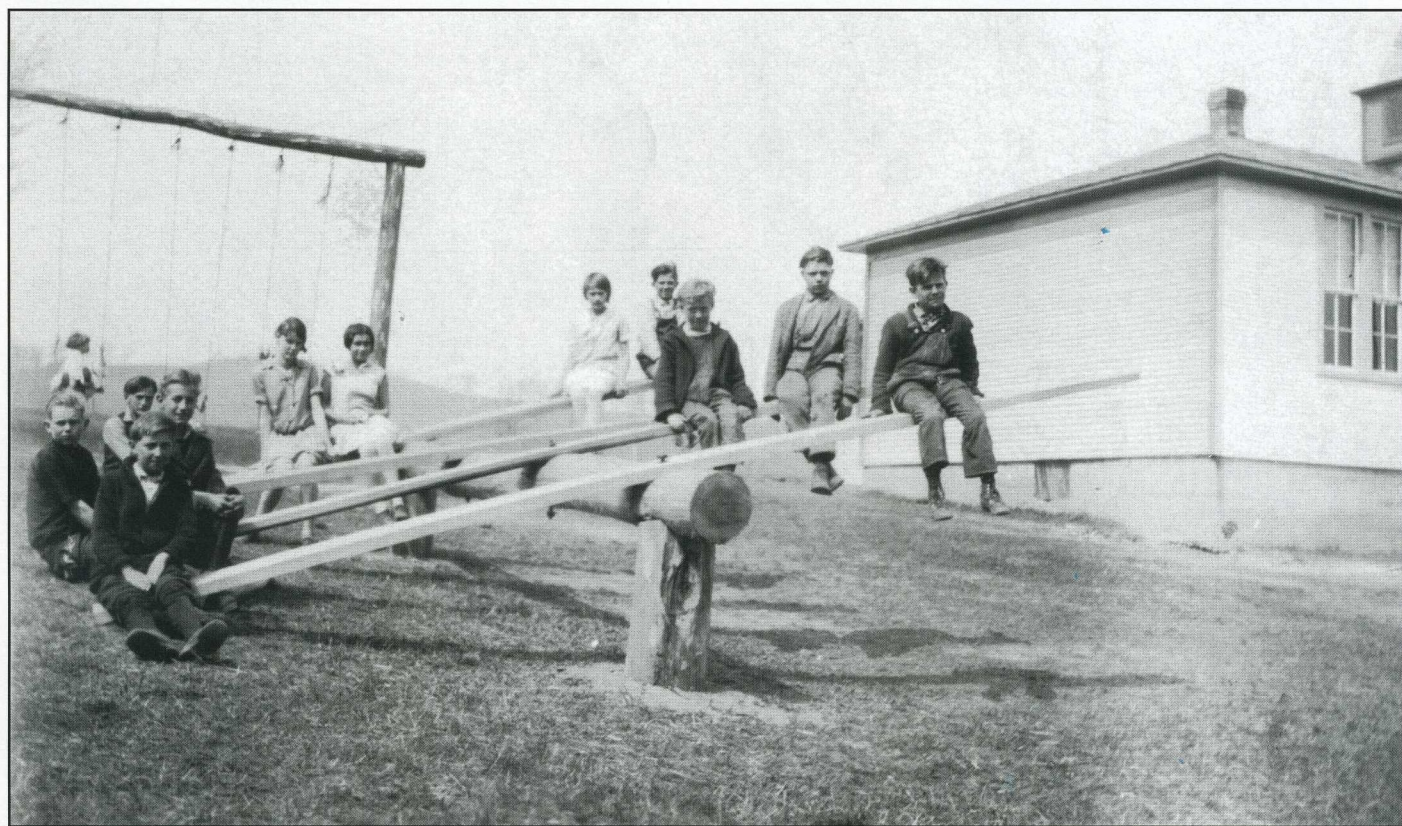


"A pupil in the Pleasant Green School, Pocahontas County." Photograph courtesy of the Photography Collections, University of Maryland, Baltimore County.



From the Ashes

Above: The Eglon School in Preston County, about 1924. Below: Students at the playground of the Eglon School in 1928.



Saving Eglon School

By J. Michael Fike

The Eglon School was destroyed by fire on a cold and snowy Saturday morning, March 7, 1959. Constructed in 1923, the building had been the educational home for children in grades one through six who lived in and around the small community of Eglon, Preston County. While the devastation of any public building takes on an immediate historical significance, it was the aftermath of the fire that proved to be the most remarkable.



Ruins of the Eglon School, destroyed by fire on March 7, 1959.

Little is written of the history of the school buildings in Eglon. One brief snippet from the early 1930's indicates that "the memory of our oldest citizens takes us back to the time when school was held in a log cabin." Later, a one-room, plank timber schoolhouse was built. As the community's population increased, a mercantile store that had been built by John Felty was converted to a primary classroom. In 1911, the original one-room plank structure was doubled in size with the addition of a second story. School was held in this building until a new school

was constructed in 1923, destined to meet a fiery doom in 1959.

This 1923 school building was modern for its time in its design and function, composed of two classrooms, restrooms, and a dining/kitchen an-

nex in the back. Each classroom was equipped with a cloak room that also served as a teacher material storage area. One classroom housed the early grades while the other served grades four through six. Area residents recall that the structure was accented with impressive architectural innovations: double sliding pocket doors providing wide entrances to both classrooms, plenty of chalkboard space, and public restrooms with private stalls. This building was erected by contractors

portive of efforts to provide a hot lunch for all, and a cook had been hired at some previous time to complete the four-person staffing team.

People of the community gathered each late summer and fall to process and preserve donated vegetables and fruits to fill the pantry for the coming school year, supplementing efforts by the federal government to provide nutritious food for school lunch programs. Apples, peaches, pears, green beans, and corn were brought to the

school and processed for storage, with much of the work being conducted outdoors.

People of the community gathered each late summer and fall to process and preserve donated vegetables and fruits to fill the pantry for the coming school year.

George W. Sell & Son, at a cost of \$1,670.

The school claimed an average yearly enrollment of 30 to 35 students, two teachers, and a part-time custodian. The people of Eglon were very sup-

Many former students have vivid memories of dishes that would be in direct violation of current child nutritional regulations. It was not uncommon during the fall months to see steaming platters of apple

fritters in the middle of each dining table, which could be accessed only when students ate everything on their plates. Some students recall that the delicious fritters were frequently offered on those days when the menu included the infamous USDA-issued canned spinach. Homemade sauerkraut was kept in covered crocks in the kitchen pantry, ready to be scooped out for an occasional meal.

Others recall the community canner in nearby Aurora, where donated meat was preserved, by volunteer labor, in assorted sizes of tin cans to be used for school lunches throughout the year. Ruth Parks, who served as PTA president for a while, was one of the canning coordinators.

At the time of the fire, the school staff included custodian Ai W Fike, primary teacher Coleen Shaffer, and intermediate teacher Frank Stemple. Frank also served as school principal. The school cook was Dottie Edeburn

(Mrs. Herbert Edeburn); Elsie Harsh (Mrs. Jesse Harsh) also cooked during her residency in Eglon.

Custodian Ai W Fike discovered the fire upon entering the building during his normal weekend check of the school. Due to the cold temperatures brought on by a late winter storm, it is likely that Mr. Fike went to the school to add coal to the furnace on this cold Saturday morning. His home was a half-mile from the school, and he immediately returned home to report the fire. Oakland, Maryland, was the closest source of any trained firefighting agency, but the firefighters had to travel 13 miles on snow-covered roads. The Oakland weekly newspaper, *The Republican*, captured the facts of the failed effort to save the school in a brief report the following week: "The three-room school building at Eglon was completely destroyed by fire last Saturday morning. Due to the high

wind and blinding snow storm, the flames were not discovered in time to save the building."

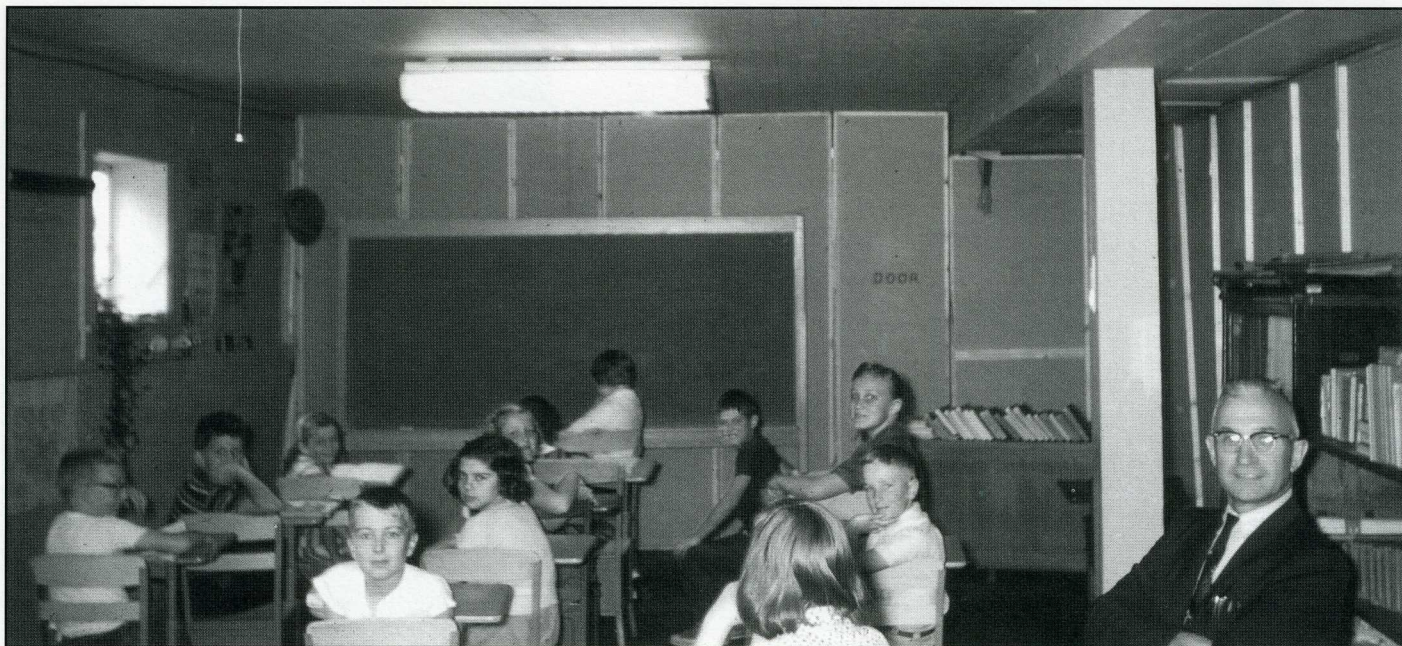
While the Oakland fire department arrived too late to prevent the total destruction, much of the kitchen and dining room furnishings in the building and some food were saved. Remarkably, this devastating fire resulted in only one day without school. The building burned on a Saturday, and school resumed the following Tuesday in the basement of the Maple Spring Church of the Brethren, located about one mile south of the burned school site.

Even with only roughly 30 enrolled students, relocating an entire school facility in such a short time was an accomplishment. Local residents recall some of the quick planning and preparations that occurred during those few short days.

As the newspaper reported, items from the kitchen and dining room



Eglon School students, grades one to three, at their new home — the Maple Spring Church of the Brethren — in 1960, following the fire. The teacher is Coleen Shaffer.



Principal Frank Stemple at right with grades four to six in a makeshift classroom in the basement of the Maple Spring Church in 1960.

were rescued from the burning building, largely due to the fact that the fire originated in the front of the structure and the kitchen was located in the rear. Those salvaged items were sheltered for a short time in nearby barns.

The Maple Spring Church of the Brethren is located on State Route 24. Built in 1888, the structure was the church home for approximately 200 congregants, many of whom were school patrons. The pastor, Allen Pugh, was the father of two daughters, Wanda and Patricia, who were enrolled at the school.

School custodian Ai Fike also served as the church's custodian, adding an element of consistency between the two locations. The day after the fire was a Sunday. As church attendees gathered that morning, the fire was much more of a discussion topic than the planned Sunday school lesson. While no one remembers specific actions taken, Arvin Harsh and Rose Ina Harsh, both active parents of children in the Egdon School, recall that there was no question about what needed to be

done. The Maple Spring Church was the only building in the community that could provide enough space to house the school.

Consequently, without a lot of discussion, the offer was made to bring the salvaged items to the church, along with whatever the Preston County Schools central office, located in Kingwood, could provide on short notice. Since the church had a kitchen and restroom facilities in the basement, it was determined that the remainder of the basement space could be converted to two classrooms, with enough room left open for a dining area.

The Maple Spring Church was the only building in the community that could provide enough space to house the school.

Somehow, between the Sunday decision to bring the school to the church and the dawn of the following Tuesday, March 10, the church basement was transformed from a parochial setting to a secular one.

Community members say that "we just did what we needed to do." Several

people recall that the salvaged items from the burned building needed to be cleaned, due to the smoke and water damage. Others recall that the surfaces of some of the student dining tables were damaged, but that a quick, fresh coat of paint (school-bus yellow, to be exact) was all that was needed to get them back in service.

Two of the bright yellow tables are still being used by the church today. One of them, with short legs to accommodate younger diners, has served the nursery Sunday school class adequately for the past 50 years. Regardless of the condition of the salvaged items, community volunteers

made quick work of cleaning, painting, and reconditioning anything that could be put back into use.

The Maple Spring Church was named for an

abundant fresh-water spring that bubbled from the ground just across the road. Sometime after the church was built, the water was piped underground to a stone fountain constructed beside the church building. The water flowed freely by gravity and has been a steady source of drink-



Students board Dale Roth's school bus at the end of a day of classes in the basement of Maple Spring Church, visible at right.

ing water for years. The spring was also adequate for the needs of the school. An auxiliary pipe was added to the outdoor fountain to bring the fresh water supply inside. Many of the students at the school recall the "delicious sweetness" of Maple Spring water, both inside and out.

One of the more modern items salvaged from the burned school was the electric freezer. At that time, frozen food was a rather progressive and rare idea for the Eglon community. The school, however, did possess a freezer, and it added to the community's food preservation capabilities. The freezer found its way to the church basement, where it served its storage function for the school cook. In 1961, when the school no longer occupied the church, the freezer was sold at public auction, along with other items that were no longer needed. Marvin and Ellen Harsh, who were married that year and were preparing to set up house-keeping, purchased the freezer and moved it to their home. To this day, it continues to operate, preserving the Harshes' frozen beef.

As the students, teachers, cook,

and custodian took their places in the Maple Spring Church basement just three days after the school fire, not all alterations had been completed, nor had all supplies been replenished. Only some of the kitchen and dining room items had been salvaged, and all classroom contents had been destroyed. County school administrators were quick in providing new textbooks and classroom furniture, but it took several days to gather what was needed and deliver the items to Eglon.

Furthermore, the open basement space needed to be divided into two classroom areas. This need was met with lightweight panels, composed of a soft "wallboard" material. Electrical lighting required some updating, with the addition of fluorescent fixtures. All of this was accomplished with little interruption to the instruction of the students, who continued to acquire what learning they could through more direct methods of teaching, particularly through listening to the teachers and reciting facts.

Transportation of students to the old school site had been accomplished by one school bus, operated by Dale

Roth. Dale and his wife, Avenell, were the parents of twins who attended the school, Mary Roth Rembold and Gary Roth. Many of the students lived in the Eglon village, with an easy walk to and from school. Dale looped his bus around the outlying areas of the community, picking up students who lived too far from the school to walk. The new location was on State Route 24, a hard-surfaced road with a fair share of traffic. Although the Maple Spring church was situated just a quarter-mile from the Eglon village, it was considered too dangerous for children to walk along the busy road, with the exception of Scott Teets and Mary "Bitsy" Teets Shepherd, whose farm was adjacent to the church lot. After the fire, Dale simply changed his bus route to include those who had previously walked to the old school location. A central pick-up/drop-off point was established at Fike's Store for those children who lived in the village.

The church was surrounded by a generous amount of grassy lawn space. This provided an adequate playground area, although frequent reminders were issued about the

dangers of the well-traveled road in front of the church. Playground equipment, such as swings and seesaws, was moved from the old school site to the church yard.

Practically all church functions and activities occurred on weekends or during weekday evenings. The dining area was adequate for church dinners, and the kitchen arrangements allowed for school food supplies to be kept separate from those of the church. Only rarely did the needs of the church facility coincide with the running of the school, mainly during the occurrence of funerals. Since these events usually took place during the day and oftentimes during the school week, care was taken to separate the activities.

Rare as they were during the time the school occupied the church, funerals were conducted in the sanctuary upstairs; the schoolrooms were quiet and orderly. On at least one occasion, the deceased was a notable citizen of the community, known to all residents, young and old alike. Prior to that particular funeral service, the opportunity was offered to any student who wished to do so to go upstairs and file past the coffin as a show of respect.

Adequate space was available in other areas of the church for Sunday school classes, leaving the "school" areas untouched during routine Sunday activities within the church. Some of the former students of the school, however, who were also attendees at Sunday school and worship services, recall jokingly some feeling of confinement, reporting to the same place six days a week!

The converted school space served the community for a year and a half, until the Egton School was incorporated into the Aurora School, four miles away.

All in all, the sharing of space was a positive experience, bonding the community through a concerted effort to overcome adversity. For the remainder of the 1959-1960 school year and the entire 1960-1961 academic year, 30-some public school students were offered the protection



Author J. Michael Fike is at center in this 1960 snapshot, with classmates Mary Teets and Reid Martin.

and loving support of a community church. Teachers taught and students learned, whether it was Monday-through-Friday readin', 'ritin' and 'rithmetic or the hallmarks of Christianity on Sunday morning.

The church was not stifled in any way as it carried on its mission to the community and beyond, and the school did not compromise its goal to enlighten the children of the community to the joys of learning language, mathematics, science, and civics. The United States flag found a rightful place on the front of a building which normally would not display such an object of allegiance. For those who gathered to worship and those who came for a public school education, the sweet water

of the Maple Spring quenched their thirst, one and all. 🌿

Thanks to Linda Winters Lewis of Egton, Erma Shaffer Heis of Arthurdale, and Naomi "Patsy" Crowe Nair and Michael Nair of Aurora, without whose diligent assistance this article could not have been accomplished. Their contributions include personal memories and links to many of the other residents who recalled the facts of the school fire and the subsequent community response. — J Michael Fike

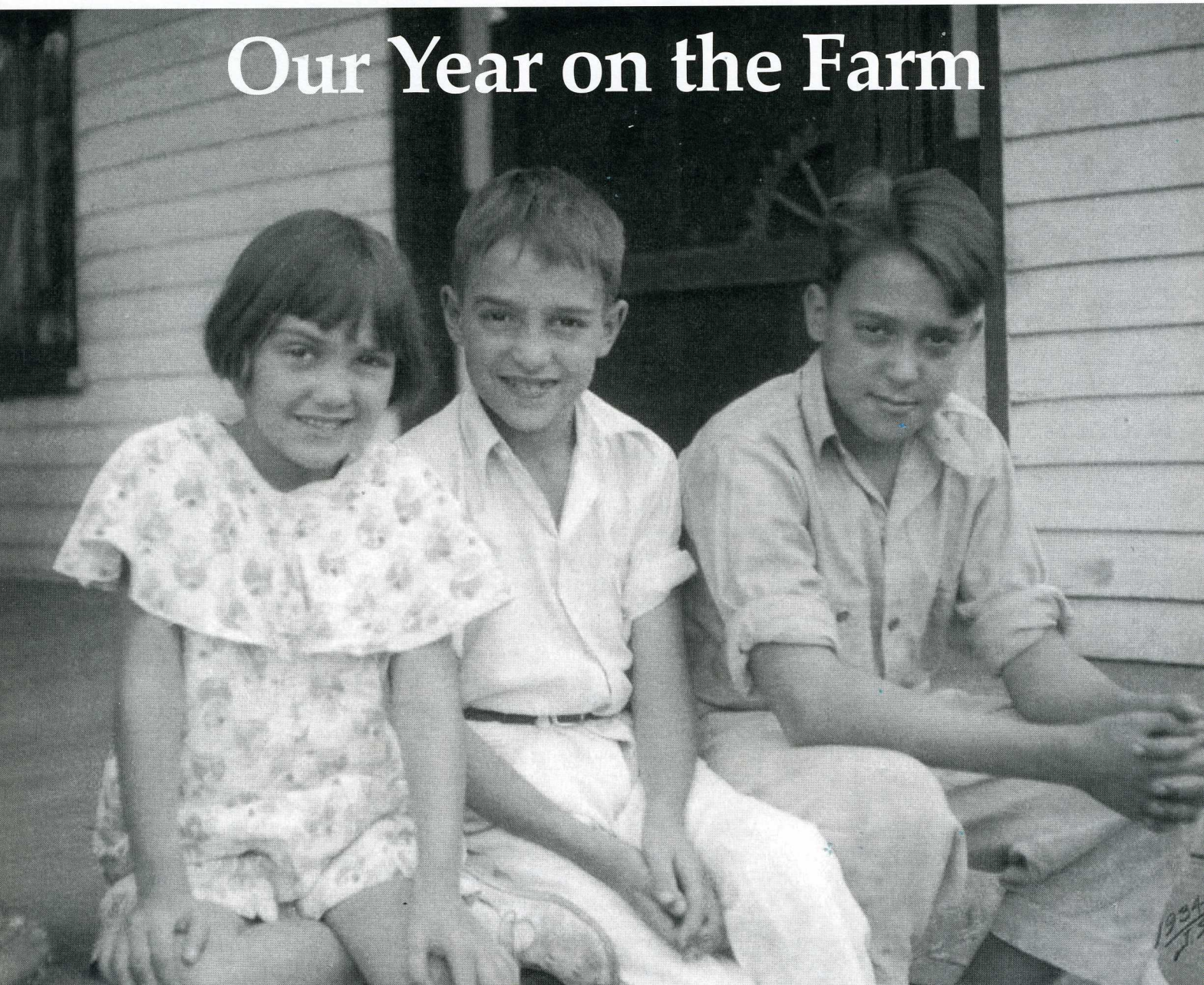
J. MICHAEL FIKE is a native of Preston County. Mike earned a master's degree in counseling from West Virginia University and is currently a counselor for Monongalia County Schools. This is his first contribution to GOLDENSEAL.

Surviving the Great Depression

By Charles E.
Brannon

Illustrations by Duane Ellifritt

Our Year on the Farm





"The house itself had a large kitchen, a living room, a bedroom downstairs, and two rooms upstairs."

In the early spring of 1932, our family was living in Shinnston. The household included my mom Lillian, dad Leland, brother Bob (age 7), sister Doris (age 4), and myself (age 9). My father was a carpenter and a painter, and work was very hard to find. When work was available the pay was no more than 25 or 30 cents an hour.

He was doing some painting for an older lady there in town. One day she asked my dad if he knew of a family that might want to move to a small farm that she and her brother owned, in exchange for some farm work. She said her brother stayed there at the farm, and he had one room upstairs that he lived in. In addition to the farm work, the family would look after the old fellow, feed him, do his washing, and keep his room clean. She and her brother would furnish a work horse along with a cow or two for milk and butter.

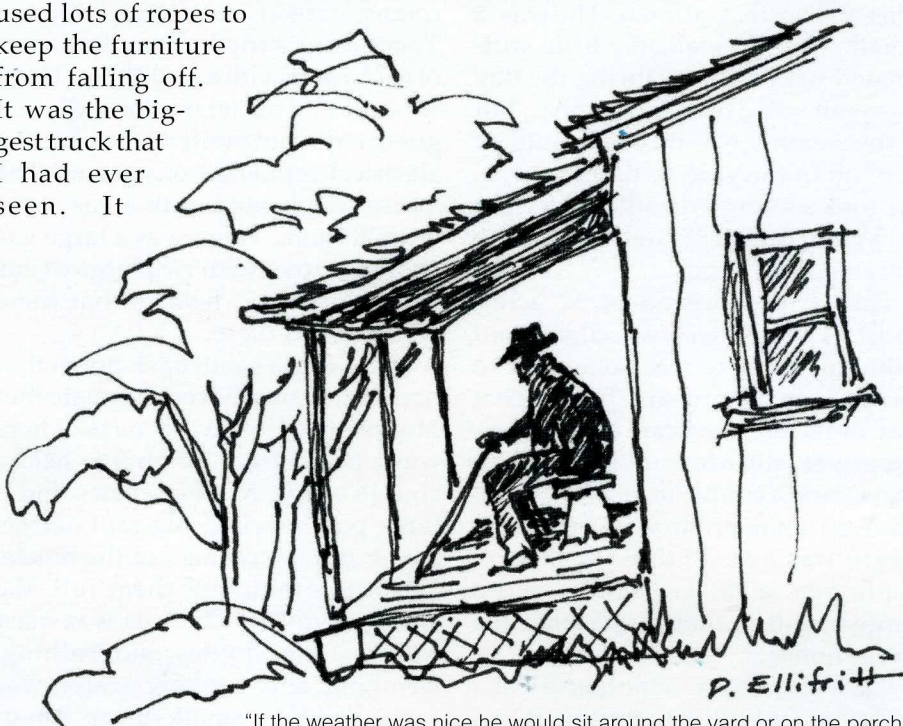
My dad told her that he and his family might be interested in it. He talked it over with my mother, and

they decided that they would try it. They figured life could not be any rougher than what they were going through at the present.

So as soon as school was out, we loaded everything we owned on a big old truck that Dad borrowed off of a fellow he worked for. We used lots of ropes to keep the furniture from falling off. It was the biggest truck that I had ever seen. It

had solid rubber tires on it and a big chain — like a bicycle chain — on each side that ran from the back of the motor to the rear wheels.

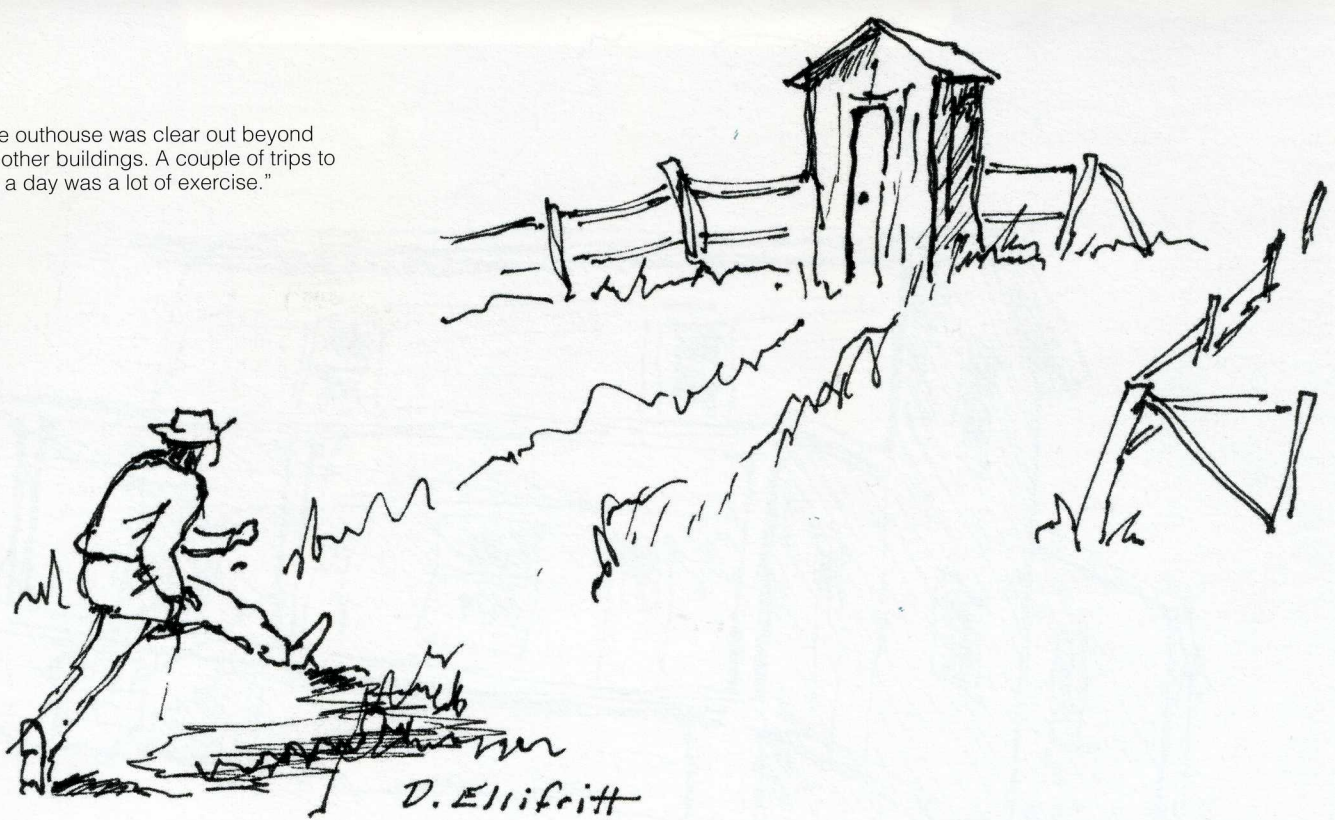
We headed up State Route 20 to Dola, a distance of about 12 miles. There we turned off of Route 20 onto Bennett's Run for a distance of about



"If the weather was nice he would sit around the yard or on the porch."

Left: Doris, Bob, and author Charles Brannon in 1934.

"The outhouse was clear out beyond the other buildings. A couple of trips to it in a day was a lot of exercise."



a mile-and-a-half. The farmhouse was newly painted. There was green fence around the yard and lots of flowers of every kind — it was a beautiful setting.

So it was time to meet the old gentleman that we were to live with for the next year or so. He was probably in his middle 70's, and he and I eyed each other about the way two strange bulldogs might. His name was Elsworth Coffman. He was a small man and walked a little stiff-legged with a cane. During the day he spent some time in his room, but if the weather was nice he would sit around in the yard or on the porch. He took a liking to brother Bob right away and to sister Doris. He and Bob became fast friends.

The farm consisted of 52 acres, most of which was woodland and quite hilly. There was an acre or so that was an old orchard. Although it had not been taken care of for years, there were still a few apple trees with leaves and a couple of pear trees that showed some promise of fruit later. There was a small three-stall barn, a pig pen, a chicken house, and a large building that they called the grain house.

Close to the back of the house was a cellar house built into the hill. It had

a small room over it, about 16 feet square. The cellar house was built with huge stones, and three sides of it was underground. It stayed cool on the hottest days. The outhouse was clear out beyond the other buildings. A couple of trips to it in a day was a lot of exercise.

The house itself had a large kitchen, a living room, a bedroom downstairs, and two rooms upstairs. All of the rooms were at least 18 feet square. There was a drop light in the center of each room with a pull chain. There was not one outlet on the walls — I guess it did not matter for we had no electrical appliances of any kind. The house was heated with a gas stove in each room. There was a large gas cooking stove with two large ovens in the kitchen. I believe that there was free gas there.

There was a small back porch that had a small two-burner hotplate that Mother used on wash days. There was a broad front porch that held a couple of big rocking chairs and a large porch swing. Big rain barrels stood at three corners of the house. When the rain kept them full, the water from these barrels was used for washing clothes and bathing. Drinking and cooking water was furnished by a small spring, about

30 feet from the back door. It was my job to keep two large water buckets in the kitchen filled at all times. There was a dipper hanging by the buckets for drinking.

The owners furnished two cows and a horse, and we had about 30 chickens and two pigs. The cows gave a couple of gallons of milk a day, so we had plenty of milk, butter, and eggs to do us. If we had more than we could use, we would take the extra to A.E. Rogers' general store and filling station at Dola. We would get 10 or 15 cents for a dozen eggs or a pound of butter. But you had to take products out of the store — no cash was given. I remember once that Oxydol detergent had a promotion going on where if you bought a box of soap you got a Donald Duck puzzle. My mother gave me enough eggs and a pound of butter so I could take advantage of the offer. I practically ran the mile-and-a-quarter to get that puzzle and worked it until I about had the cover wore off of it.

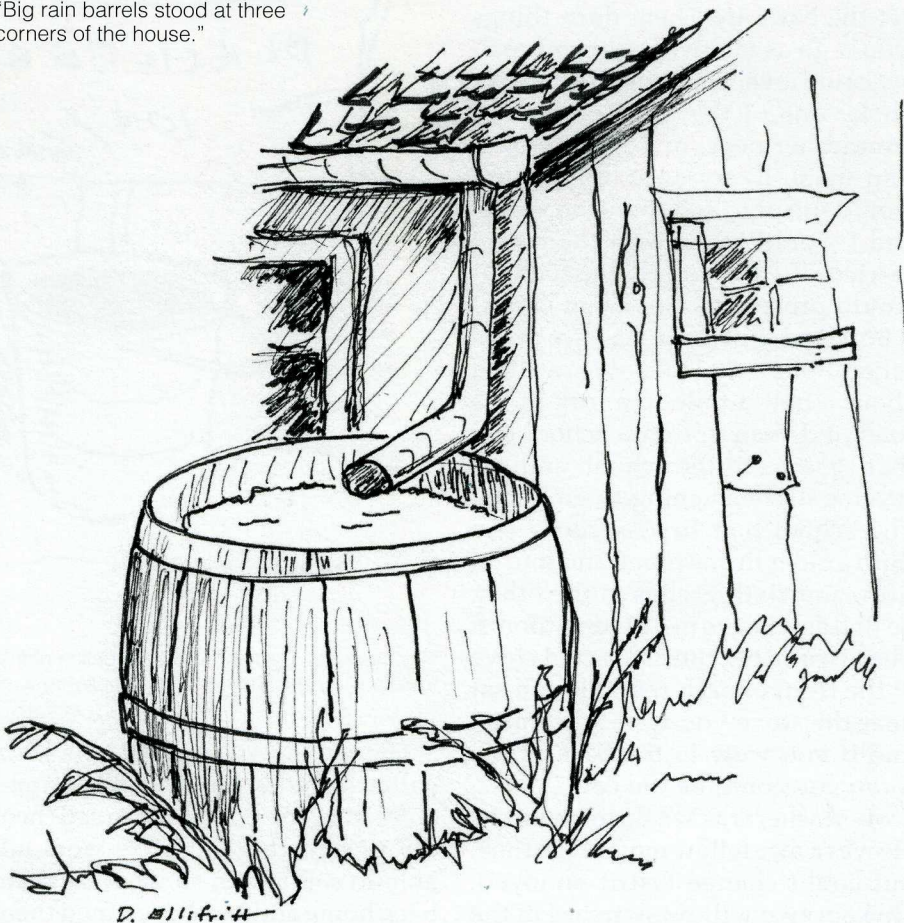
The first horse we had was a large, brown, young animal and was a joy to work. He was slow and gentle. It was a little lame in one leg, however, and I guess maybe that is why we got rid of it after a few months. The owners brought us a small, white

bundle of dynamite to replace the first horse. This horse was named Kit, and the poor thing had worked in a coal mine all of her life. Poor old Dad cussed that horse to a fare-thee-well. If you were plowing with her and you hit a rock or root, she did not stop. Either the root or rock came out of the ground or it broke the plow. That horse would take off, and Dad's feet would about leave the ground. One time Dad was bringing a sled-load of fodder off of a hill and stopped to close the gate. That horse took off by herself with that sled and ran through another set of bars and ran on and tried to go into the barn pulling the sled. When Dad caught up to her, he got her attention with a scoop shovel and then gave her an awful talking to.

Old Mr. Coffman got along with the family pretty well. He never complained about the food or anything else. I guess we were all trying to make the best of the situation. Mom done all of the washing on a washboard. She always thought that she had to boil some of the clothes before washing them, so that made her wash days long. It was hard on women in them days, taking care of a family without washing machines or any other appliance.

Dad did some painting in Shinnston and Lumberport when he could get the work and the old Ford would

"Big rain barrels stood at three corners of the house."



run. He kept the truck parked on a hill so he did not have to crank it to start the stubborn thing. It was a single-seater, open on the sides. If we went anyplace Bob and I had to sit in the back and face the rear. Dad had a couple of powder boxes

he would put in the back for us to sit on. I was always sort of embarrassed when a car would come up behind and follow us. I always thought they were talking about us. I often think of those days when I come up behind a truck and people are riding in the back. I think some of them look a little embarrassed, too.

Besides the painting, Dad did other work when it was available. The state was upgrading the road that ran in front of our farm — one of President Roosevelt's WPA projects — and Dad would get a few days of work on the road each month. The wages were about two dollars a day for that. Also Dad would go into the woods and cut mine props. They had to be a certain size around and a certain length and a certain kind of wood. Dad would stack them by our front gate, and, when he had a truckload, someone would come and pick them up. It is hard to believe, but he only got five cents apiece for them.

Every evening I would have to



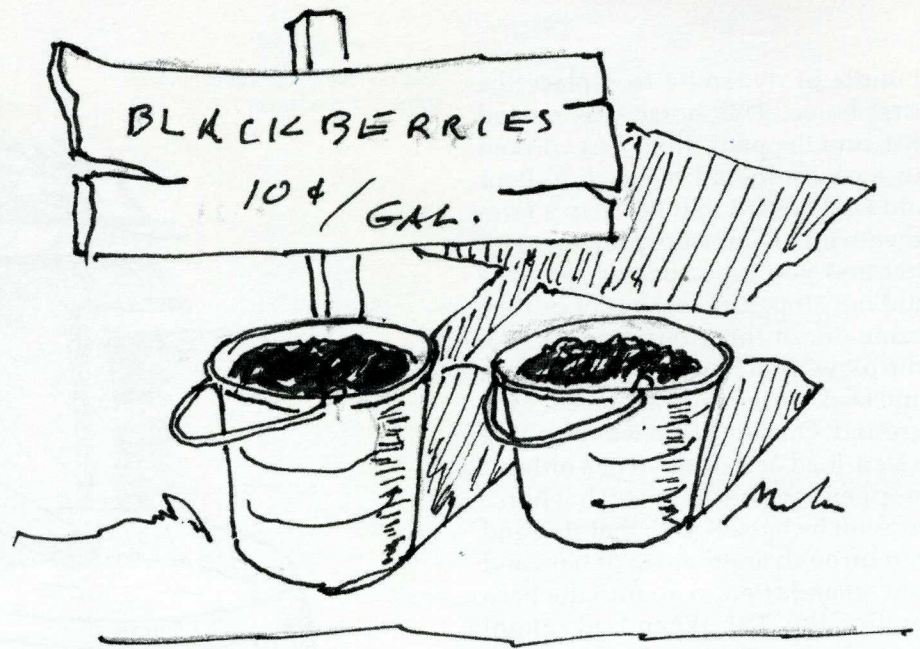
"The owners furnished two cows and a horse, and we had about 30 chickens and two pigs."

get the cows in. Them darn things would go as far away as they possibly could, even back into the woods. Lucky one of the cows had a bell around her neck, or I never would find them. Every once in a while I would run onto a copperhead snake, and I would kill it with the cane I carried. If I would see one today it would probably scare me to death.

Bob and I went to a two-room schoolhouse at Dola. We walked about a half-a-mile to a fork in the road and then got on a school bus that took us to the school, and the reverse in the evening to go home. The school had first, second, and third grades in one room, and fourth, fifth, and sixth grades in the other. So Bob and I were in different rooms. There was a big Burnside coal stove at the front of each room. If you sat near the stove you were too warm, and if you were in the back of the room you could be too cold.

My teacher was Mr. Burman Zircle. He was a nice fellow most of the time, but could change fast if annoyed. He kept two willow switches in the corner of the room that he used for crowd control, if needed.

We had a large blackberry patch on the top of the hill behind our house. One time, the whole family was picking berries. After we had a few big buckets full, they told me to stay and watch that the cows did not get into them. I got distracted some way, and the cows got in them and ate a couple gallons before I noticed it. I sure caught the devil over that.



D. Ellifrit

"The next day, Dad and I took six gallon of the berries to Shinnston and went door to door trying to sell them for 10 cents a gallon."

The next day, Dad and I took six gallon of the berries to Shinnston and went door to door trying to sell them for 10 cents a gallon. We were not able to sell a one, so we took them back home and Mother canned them for us.

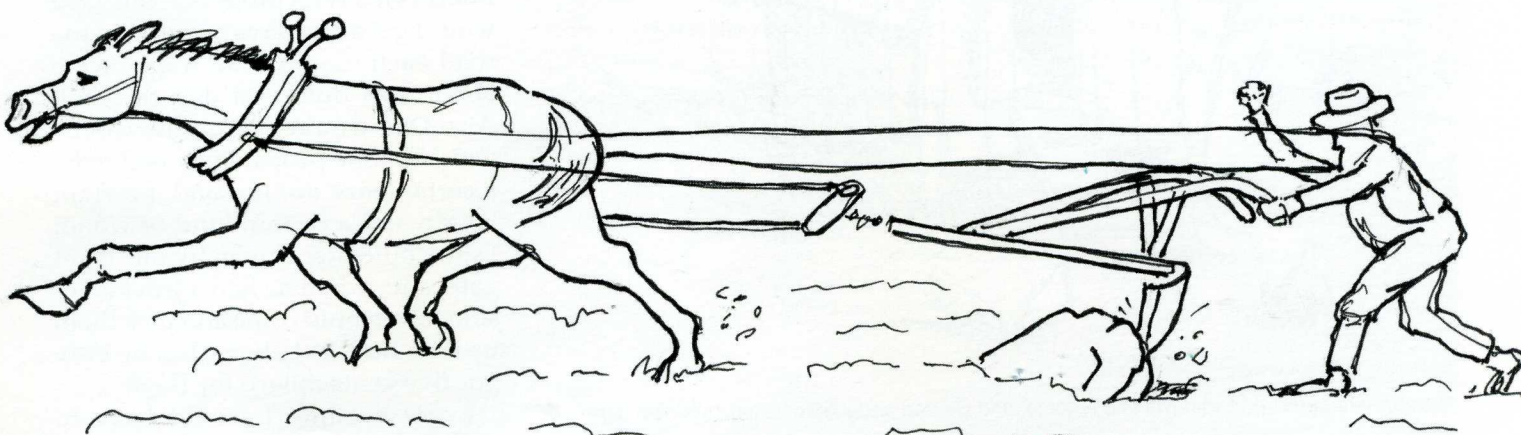
The government had a program that gave a 25-pound bag of flour to needy people once a month, and we sure fit that category. It was given out in Lumberport. If the car was not running, or to save gas, Dad would sometimes hitchhike or walk the seven or eight miles to go get it. This one day it had been pouring the rain down all day. Dad had left walking that morning to get the

flour, and about dark we seen him walking back up the road. He had taken his old raincoat off and had it wrapped around the flour to keep it dry. When I look back at the things our parents had to do to eke out a living, it about breaks my heart.

Baths on Saturday night were taken in a big galvanized tub in the middle of the kitchen floor. All three of us kids used the same water unless we were really dirty. Afterwards, we each put on a clean suit of underclothes, whether we needed it or not.

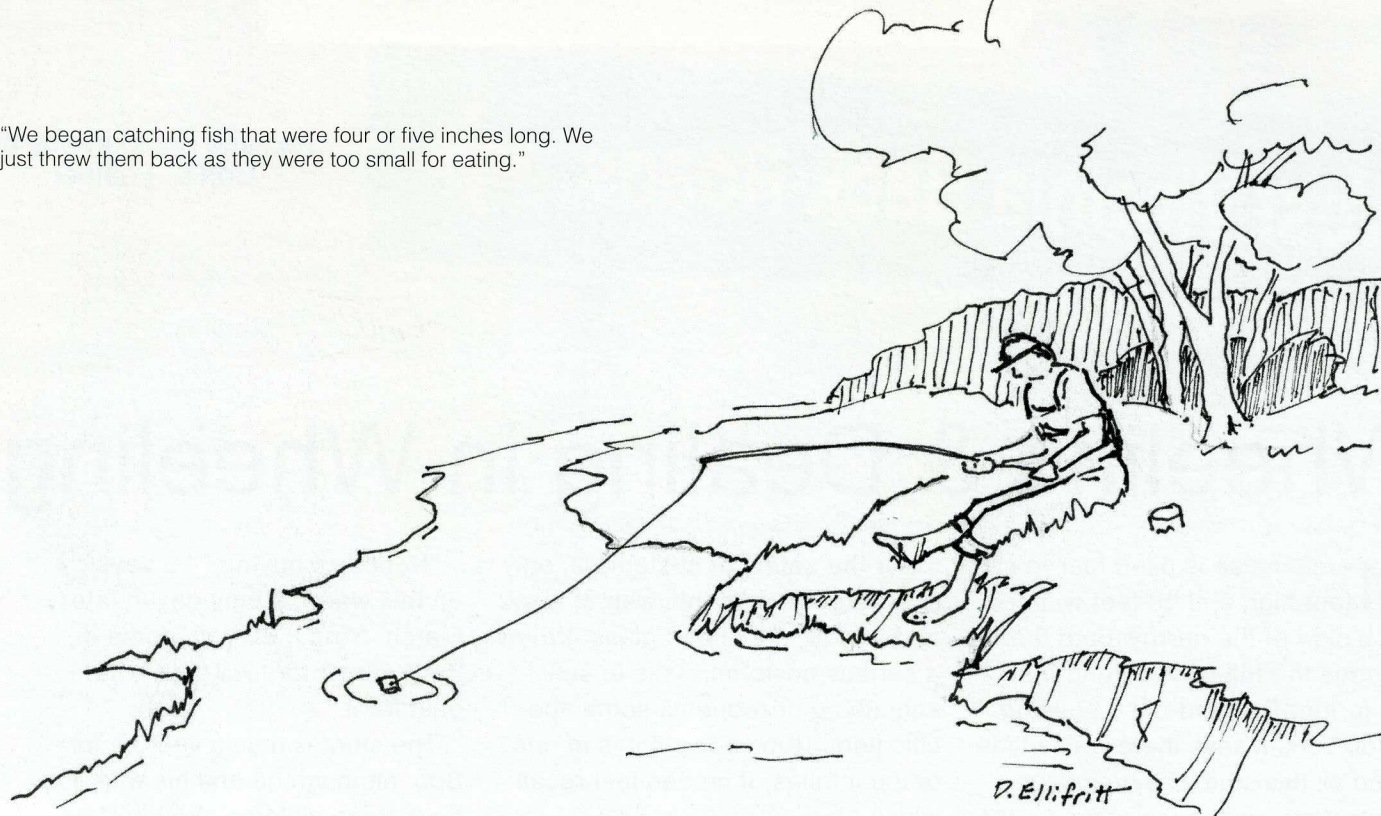
On the front porch us kids would get into that big swing. We would swing in the evening and listen to the bullfrogs in the creek across

"That horse would take off, and Dad's feet would about leave the ground."



D. Ellifrit

"We began catching fish that were four or five inches long. We just threw them back as they were too small for eating."



the road and the crickets and the whippoorwills. We had no radio or evening paper, so that was about all one could do for entertainment. In our imaginations, it was a vehicle that would take us anywhere in the world that we might think of.

I had a couple of bad days that summer. One was when we were swinging pretty high and I jumped out of the porch swing onto the oak floor. I was barefooted, and I ran a big splinter into the ball of my foot. It was too large and too deep for Mother to get out, so she went down the road to a neighbor's house who had a phone, and called the young doctor in Lumberport. He came a couple of hours later and had to cut the flesh to remove the splinter.

Another bad day was when I was down to the spring getting water and a friend of mine was coming down the road. I went out to meet him. I had to cross an old worm-wooden fence, and there was a large wasp nest on it. I knocked the nest loose, and them wasps stung me all about the face about 20 times. The next two days I spent in bed, my eyes swelled shut. My nose and my lips swelled and turned wrong-side out. I was really a mess.

I caught my first fish while I lived

there. A friend and I walked to Dola, and behind the store there was a stream called Ten Mile Creek that had sunfish in it. We had brought some string and a safety pin that we bent into the shape of a fish hook. We found a willow reed, and we were all set. We began catching fish about four or five inches long. We just threw them back as they were too small for eating.

There was a little swimming hole up the creek a bit, and we went in there one day. I went under the water, and when I came up there was a little water snake draped around my neck. Goodness, it about scared me to death! That is why the rest of my life I never cared to go into a river or lake, for I always remember that snake episode.

We attended a little Baptist church in the community of Rose Bud, called the Rose Bud Baptist Church. Bob and I would put on our white sailor suits and Mother and Sis their best bib and tucker, and away we would go. Dad always sat in the car on the road, he did not attend with us. He usually had a Sunday paper to read. Where he got the newspaper I do not know.

By the summer of 1933, we had enough of the farm life. We moved

back to Shinnston into a house on Station Street. We remained in that little town until all of us kids got out of school.

In the spring of 1989, my sister, my wife, and I drove up to see the old homestead. Sorry to say it was not the pretty setting that it was 60 years ago. There were no fences, all the outbuildings were gone, and a concrete garage stood where the barn used to be. We went by the little Rose Bud church, however, and it looked great. I was sure there were services still being held there.

I drove back there again in 2010, and the old house had the windows and doors boarded up, and the front porch had been removed. It seems time takes its toll on everything. 🍁

CHARLESE. BRANNON was born and raised in Shinnston, where he graduated high school prior to joining the navy during World War II. In 1950, he moved to Clarksburg and worked 40 years as a carpenter before retiring. Charles is the author of *The First 75 Years*, a memoir of family history. His most recent contribution to GOLDENSEAL appeared in our Winter 2007 issue.

DUANE S. ELLIFRITT received a Ph.D. in structural engineering from West Virginia University. Dwayne retired from the University of Florida in 2000 as professor emeritus of structural engineering. Duane's most recent contribution to GOLDENSEAL appeared in our Summer 2011 edition.

West Virginia Back Roads →

Text and photographs by
Carl E. Feather

Wheeling & Dealing in Wheeling

Merchandise is piled four to six feet high and 10 feet wide on each side of the narrow path that extends the full 90-foot length of the former five-and-dime building.

Bob Yocum says there was a time when all this stuff was organized. There were even showcases for the delicate items. Somehow, through years of hauling in and making room for more, things became seriously discombobulated, creating two gigantic, interlocking puzzles of merchandise and what Bob calls “junk.” One senses that the careless removal of just one piece would precipitate a cascade of merchandise upon oneself or the street.

For the safety of customers, only Bob ventures into this web of wood and wicker, metal and glass. When a serious customer asks to see something or requests some specific item, Bob knows if it is in one of these piles, if he can just recall which one.

Yocum’s Antiques has occupied 2253 Market Street in Wheeling for 40 years, give or take a couple. Bob didn’t plan to be in the antiques business, it just happened. Now, in his late 70’s, Bob wonders if it was serendipity or just a bad turn of events. He’s got a lot of stuff, and hardly any buyers for it these days.

“Nobody’s buying,” he says on this warm, sunny day in late March. “And if they do come in, they want it for less than what I paid for it.”

The store is a solo venture for Bob, although he and his wife, Iris, have three children. A Glen Dale resident, Bob spends most weekdays at the shop, except in the winter, when it just doesn’t pay to open the store, turn on the lights, and run enough heat to make it bearable.

Bob’s held a variety of jobs in his lifetime, but he always tinkered with buying and selling antiques as a sideline.

“I sold out of a place out on [Route] 88 for a while with another guy [Bill Williams],” Bob says, giving the condensed version of his business’ biography. “He’s dead now, and he was way younger than me.”

He said the 1970’s were probably about the best years for antiquing in the Ohio Valley.

“When I first came up here, it was good. I had two buildings; it made it pretty handy for me. Now, I got it cluttered up too much,” he admits.

Bob says his store was a regular stop on antiques dealers’ shopping circuits.

“I used to have people come in here from California, all over the world,” Bob says. “They’d come through and buy a good bit of stuff. Now, gasoline has gone up, and



Bob Yocum stands with some merchandise on the sidewalk of his antiques store, a former five-and-dime in Wheeling’s Centre Market district.

that's just about killed that. I think it's ridiculous."

Bob acquired his stock by going to auctions, buying stuff from people who walked in the door, and shopping at other second-hand shops in the Centre Market district of Wheeling.

He bought the stuff firmly believing it would have some resale value down the road. But the market's gone bad. People have lost their appetite for the \$15 chair that needs a new rung or seat and several fresh coats of varnish.

"There used to be people who would work on these," Bob says, surveying the jumble of dozens upon dozens of odd chairs. "Now, they want it to be in good shape before they'll buy it."

Bob has refurbished chairs for sale, too, and he displays them on the street along with the other choice items from his shop: an old copper boiler, brass fire extinguisher, trunk, and railroad lanterns. He says buyers still have a healthy interest in the latter, as well as advertising signs and miners' lunch buckets. The buckets, dents and all, are snapped up by men and women who work in the coal mines around Wheeling and appreciate the tin construction and design associated with the trade.

While his shop has no specialty, Bob has found items of local interest or origin to be reliable sellers. Halfway back in the building, Bob points to an old piece of wooden farm machinery.

"There's an old corn sheller that come from Wheeling," he says. "They used to sell, but even those things aren't selling anymore."

Near the front of the store, where the sunlight does what it can to brighten the jumbled collection, Bob points out a pair of Paden City glass horses. There was a time



It might look disorganized to some, but after 40 years, Bob Yocum knows where everything is located in his overstocked antiques store.

when these equestrian beauties would sell shortly after going on the shelf, but virtually nothing gallops out of the store these days.

"One woman said she wanted both of them, but I couldn't find the other one to save my neck," Bob says.

Some of the merchandise has personal significance to Bob, like the automotive oil bottles that, in the early days of motoring, were filled with motor oil from barrels. Bob says his first paying job was filling these kinds of bottles at a service station in Moundsville.

"The oil would come in a five- or 10-gallon tank. You'd pump it out of there; I think it took like one-and-a-half cranks of the pump to fill one," he recalls. "That was my first job, and the state got after me because

I wasn't old enough to work there. [The owner] just paid me a little bit of money. I was glad to get it."

Nearly 70 years later, life hasn't changed much for Bob Yocum. Work still doesn't pay him a whole lot of money. He breaks into a slight grin when someone pauses to look, and a downright smile when they select a purchase from the stacks of goods, which Bob fully anticipates to leave as an inheritance for his children.

"They'll get it whether they want it or not," he says. 🍀

Yocum's Antiques is open by chance, usually between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday. It is located at 2253 Market Street in Wheeling.

My Lost Hamster

By Kailey Dwire

One Wednesday morning at 6:00 a.m., I woke up and found my little Buttercup was out of her cage. The tube on her cage was snapped. We couldn't find my pet hamster anywhere.

My mom, Teresa, my brother, Joshua, and I looked everywhere. We looked behind the refrigerator, stove, under things and we still couldn't find her.

That evening, Mommy picked us up from school and we searched some more, but Buttercup was nowhere to be found.

Thursday morning and evening we searched again. I was starting to get worried and mad. This was not funny anymore. I feared my little Buttercup was gone forever.

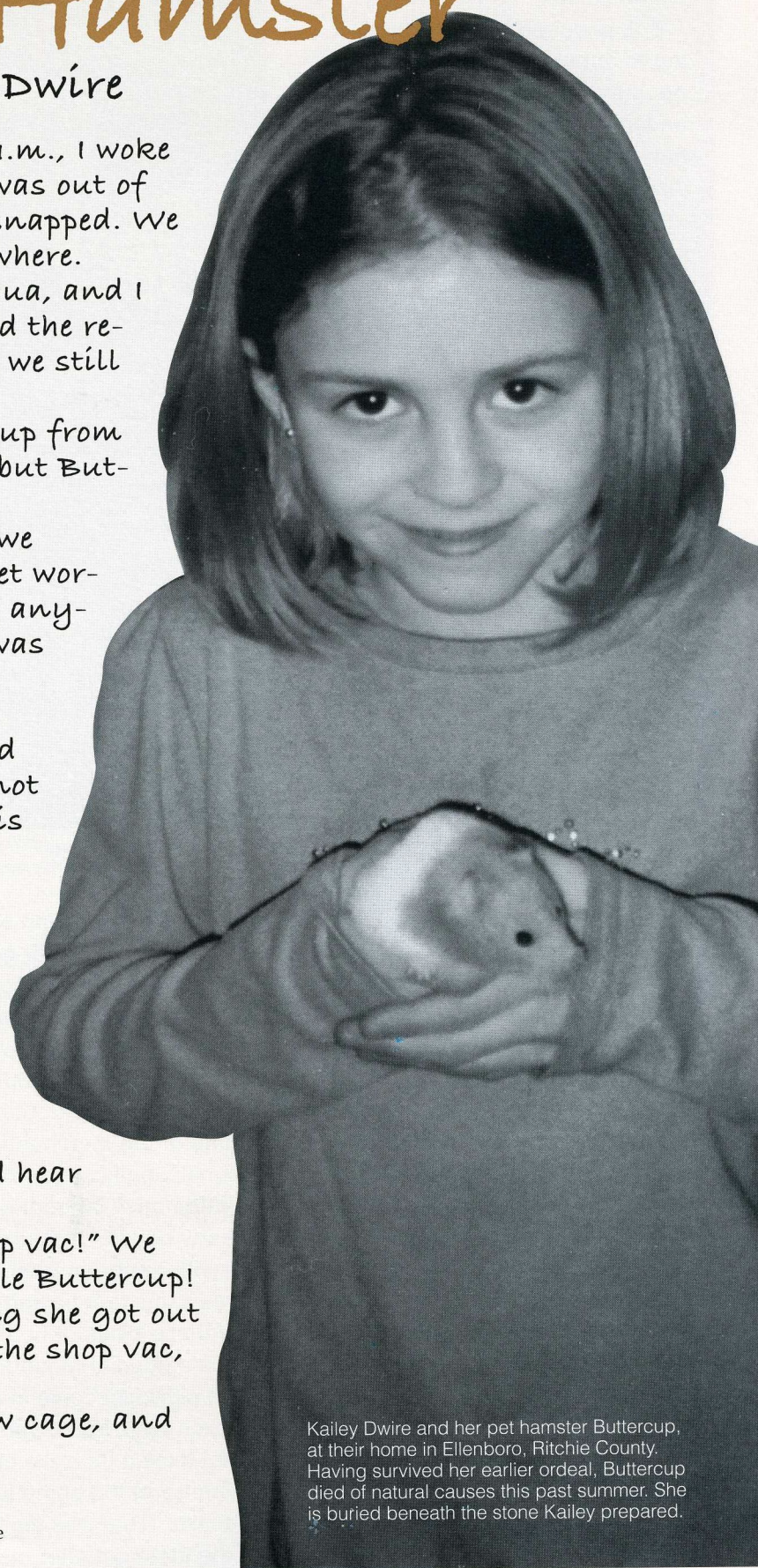
I went out in my yard and dug a little hole. I got a concrete block and wrote on the top, "Buttercup, body not found, February 2011." The grave is still in our yard as a reminder of what could have been.

On Friday we again searched morning and night. My daddy, Donnie, helped us that evening. Grandma Corabelle Lamp told me to let Toby, my little Yorkie dog, find her.

About 7:00 p.m. that evening, Toby started barking and we could hear something in the shop vac.

Mommy screamed, "It's in the shop vac!" We lifted the lid, and there was my little Buttercup! Guess what? On Monday morning she got out of her cage again and she went to the shop vac, but we knew where to look.

Mommy and Daddy got her a new cage, and she never got out again. *



Kailey Dwire and her pet hamster Buttercup, at their home in Ellenboro, Ritchie County. Having survived her earlier ordeal, Buttercup died of natural causes this past summer. She is buried beneath the stone Kailey prepared.

KAILEY DWIRE is nine years old and attends Ellenboro Grade School. This is her first contribution to GOLDENSEAL.

2011 LIARS CONTEST

The 35th annual Vandalia Gathering in Charleston included the popular — and often outrageous — State Liars Contest. A packed house heard it all. Once the dust had settled, the judges awarded the following:

Biggest Liar (First Place) – Adam Booth, Shepherdstown

Bigger Liar (Second Place) – Pete Kosky, Charleston

Big Liar (Third Place) – Bud Anderson, South Charleston

Youth Award – Dice Johnson, Dunbar

Honorable Mention – Ricky Neal, Bluefield

Congratulations! Here are a few highlights.



Winners of the 2011 State Liars Contest at the 35th annual Vandalia Gathering. From the left are Adam Booth (first place), Pete Kosky (second place), Bud Anderson (third place), and Youth Award recipient Dice Johnson. Photographs by Tyler Evert.

2nd place –
Pete Kosky, Charleston
Demolition Football

When I was a kid, my grandparents had a farm way up in rural Ohio and I used to spend my summers up there. It was a blast! I ran around with all my cousins. They were real country kids. My grandparents passed away when I got to be in my early 20's, and I didn't get up to Ohio much after that.

Last year I decided to go up and see my cousins. So I went up there around Thanksgiving time. They still have the old homeplace there. I went out to the farmhouse, and I went out to the barn. My cousins were out there. It was a Friday evening, and they were in coveralls and drinking beer. They started telling the West Virginia jokes, and I started telling the Buckeye jokes, you know.

Then they said, "Hey, we want to take you to a football game." I said, "Okay." So we all got in the trucks and took off. We drove past the high school and the high school field was dark. We drove past the middle school and the field was dark. I thought, "Now what kind of football game is this?"

We got outside of the town, and we were driving down a two-lane. Then we got on a gravel road, then we got on one of the lanes that go between the fields.

We got to a gate, and there was a kind of home-made guard shack with a poly tarp and this guy sitting next to a cooler. He had a mean dog and a shotgun and a pint of vodka. He just waved us through. We went in. When we got to this old farm site, that's when I realized it wasn't high school football, it wasn't midget league, it wasn't two-hand touch. It was demolition football!

Well, what demolition football is — and I found out in a hurry because I didn't know anything about it since we're not as cultured as they are in Ohio. The football was an empty 55-gallon drum, and you use your vehicle to push the football over the goal. And you can go over, through, or under the other vehicles, and that's expected. On the offense, they have like a Dodge Dart and a GTO, and the other team had a El Camino. They'd taken the robo-deer from the highway, and they had it tied on the hood and the batteries were still good and the deer head was jerking back and forth.

The referee was drinking a beer, and instead of a whistle he had an air horn. The defensive line were all farm tractors. They had a 35 Ferguson and a Kubota and a couple of John Deeres. On the sidelines they don't have bleachers, but everybody parks like they're at a drive-in movie.

They had a woman with a pop-up trailer, and she had a little body-piercing thing going. She had a lawn chair in there with a gallon of isopropyl and an old Bedazzler. You remember them things? She's in



Pete Kosky.

there poppin' nostrils.

In the chicken coop they had a betting parlor in there, and this woman — now I've got a double chin, but this woman had three chins and she had a spider tattooed on one of them. She was doing the betting.

And then they had a Buckeye barbecue set up, too. They had a car tire with a car hood on top of it, and they would light the tire on fire and the car hood was the grill. They had deer hams wrapped in foil on top of that. And they had homemade German potato salad and Paisano red wine.

They were passing around this homemade hard cider in a plastic jug. I know most of you probably at least once in your life have had a good slash of moonshine out of a Clorox bottle. Well, this wasn't a Clorox bottle, and I was taking a couple of drinks of that cider and I looked at it and it read "Teat Sanitizer." There was an anatomically correct drawing of a cow udder with its protuberances being dipped in the nozzle of this bottle. I mean, these people they lived close to the earth, you know

Anyway, so there's all these noxious fumes going up, there's lots of noise and mud. I'm not a big noise person, and I don't like the fumes. If demolition football could be considered an escape from everyday life for a few hours, that cider jug was my escape from demolition football.

I was hitting that hard cider, and the next thing I knew I was looking at the stars. I was on my back and in the bed of my cousin's pickup. They said there was a raid coming, and we were busting down that

gravel road to get out of there. Of course me being an outsider, they wanted to protect me and they put me in the truck to get me out of there.

I don't know who won the football game, but I really learned three things from this: One, I'm just going to stick to Nerf football in the yard with my nephews. Two, I'm just glad to be a West Virginian. And three, I'm going to think long and hard before I cross that river again.

3rd place –

Bud Anderson, South Charleston
"F" Words

This is a story about my favorite friend, Fred Flarkenfruckel. He's a famous, ferocious, forest-fire fighter. He lives at 444 Front Street, Fort Lauderdale, Florida, and he drives a fast F-150 with full-time four-wheel drive. Fred goes go out to Flicka's favorite field and he hauls back a lot of that funky filly farm fertilizer and he sells it in feed bags.

Fred comes from a very dysfunctional foster family. His foster father, he's really a foul old guy, and he likes to fake flossing his front teeth. Sometimes his false teeth fall out, so now he's finished with fresh fruit. But he ain't finished with Efferdent, Freedent, or Fix-A-Dent gum.

Fred's father he really liked Pontiacs — Poor Old Dad Thinks It's A Cadillac. But see Fred, he liked F-O-R-D, Ford: First On Race Day, Found On the Road Dead, and Frustrating Old Rebuilt Dodges.



Bud Anderson.

Fred had a few very frugal Ford Festivas and Fiestas, and now a famous Focus. It's front-wheel drive, of course, and it's very frugal with the fossil fuel, which is very important when the gas is four bucks. Now Fred he also loved Ferraris, but he had to finance those. They're a little pricey, up over 40 grand, and that's for a used '94 model. So Fred goes to First Federal when he finances all of his Fords, you see.

One day, Fred had to forfeit all of his fast cars because he fell five flights. Fell off the fire tower in a furious flash, and he fell right onto the philodendron flowers and flattened them. He fractured his femur, so he got furloughed by the fire chief who found him some federal funding and sent him to Fairfield University to attend pharmacy school, but he flunked freshman physics.

Fred kind of follied into Phi Phi Phi, that's the fiendish fraternity. They get out in the front yard of the frat house and they fling Frisbees. The favorite food for Fred and all of his frat brothers was flounder. It was fresh and flown in from Finland every Friday.

Fred was fond of females. He had his favorite fragile femme fatale. Fred would go out on Firestone Drive with Francesca. Francesca would really get into that little car that he had. It was a Ford Falcon, four-door, four-barrel, four-speed, four-on-the-floor. It had those fold-down front seats, and he and Francesca they would get a little frisky. They'd fold them front seats down, until one night they got found by the fuzz. You should have seen their funny faces. Francesca just had on a few flowers, and Fred just had on his fedora when they were found. They were confused with some fugitives who were wanted for forgery, and they were framed! Luckily Sergeant Friday and Frisco found the facts, all the facts, and Fred and Francesca were freed forthwith.

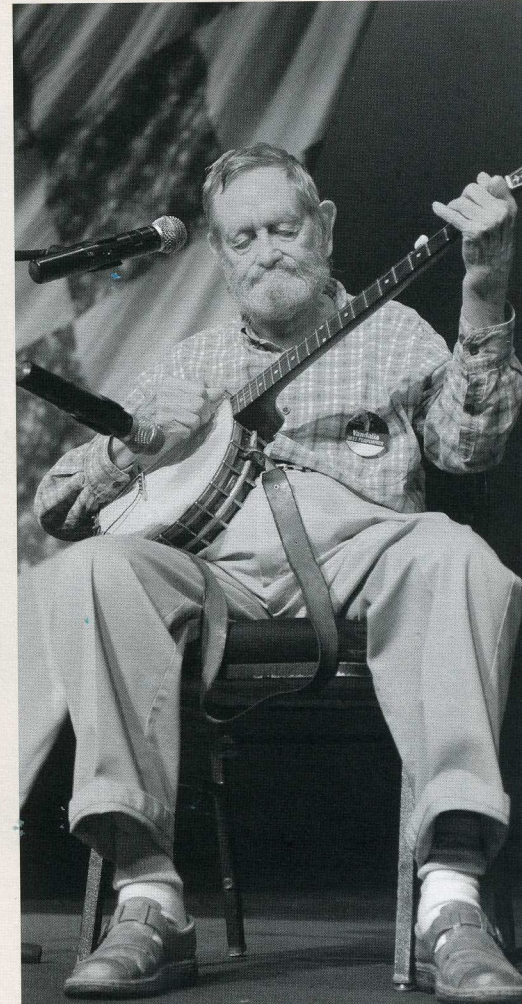
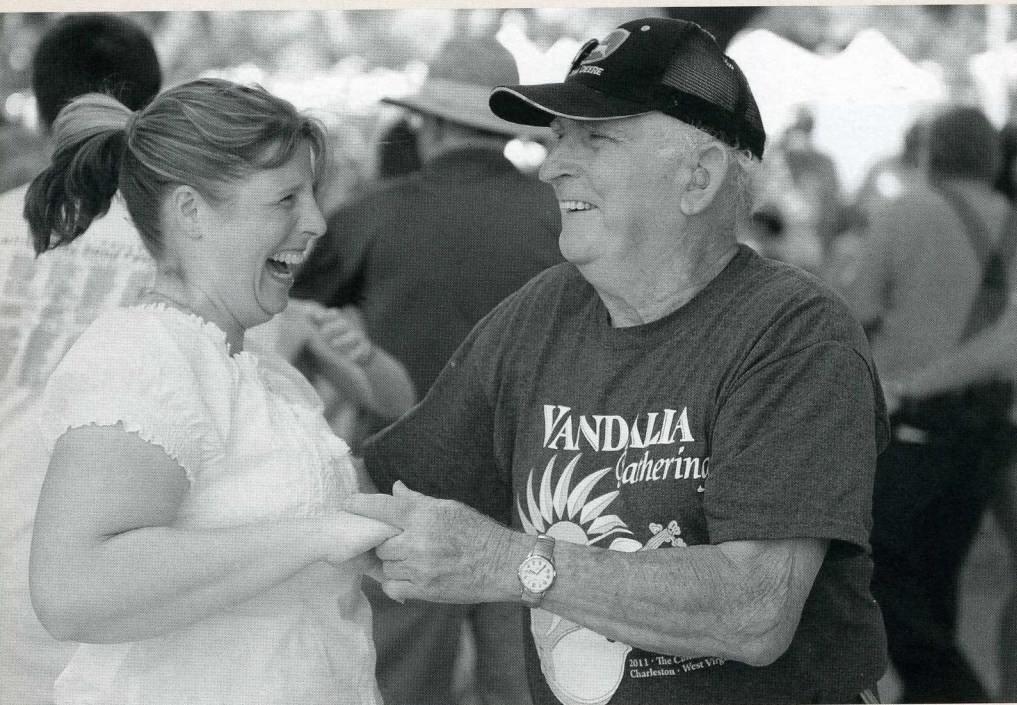
Fred fell into about 50 or so failed careers. It seems that Fred was very fond of formidable fighters like Famous George Foreman, and Smokin' Joe Frazier. But see, he was a featherweight fellow. Few featherweights were as fierce as Fred, until one time he flubbed up in the final round when he was fighting Ferocious Franz from Frankfort. Fred was flirting around with his fiancé, and Franz just whacked him in the face, flacked him, and flailed him in the forehead till he dropped him and he fell flat out on the canvas.

Fred still recalls those favorite days he used to have when he would fly, flat-out, down the salt flats in his fuel-injected, fully blown, funny car, and also when he would go down the four-lane on Front Street, flying so fast that his fenders were flapping and he flung flash on his mud flaps till his Firestones went flat.

Finally, folks, my 550 seconds is full, so on behalf of Fred, Fanny, Father, and Francesca, I bid you a fond farewell. 🍀

VANDALIA TIME!

Each year on Memorial Day weekend, the West Virginia State Capitol grounds host the Vandalia Gathering, a fun and festive celebration of the traditional arts. Performances, contests, jam sessions, dancing, crafts, food, kids' activities, storytelling, and surprises highlight this free, family-friendly event. In 2011, the Vandalia Gathering marked its 35th year. On the following pages are photographs and contest results from last year, along with a schedule for the upcoming 2012 Vandalia Gathering. Make plans to join us!



Above: Vandalia Award recipient and dancer Lou Maiuri and partner, Photograph by Tyler Evert.
Right: Vandalia Award recipient Franklin George. Photograph by Tyler Evert.

2011 Vandalia Winners

Vandalia Heritage Award — Buddy Griffin, Glenville

Fiddle (age 60 and over)

- 1 – Elmer Rich, Morgantown
- 2 – Gerry Milnes, Elkins
- 3 – Jerry Lewis, Nettie
- 4 – Lester McCumbers, Nicut
- 5 – Mack Samples, Duck

Fiddle (under age 60)

- 1 – Dan Kessinger, St. Marys
- 2 – Ray Cossin, Mt. Alto
- 3 – Jerica Hilbert, St. Albans
- 4 – Andy Fitzgibbons, Elkins
- 5 – Bella Zucker, Morgantown

Old-Time Banjo (age 60 and over)

- 1 – Jim Mullins, St. Albans
- 2 – Bob Shank, Bruceton Mills
- 3 – Ben Carr, Wilsie
- 4 – Ken Sheller, Elkins
- 5 – Eugene Parsons, Orma

Old-Time Banjo (under age 60)

- 1 – Andrew Dunlap, St. Albans
- 2 – David O'Dell, Glenville
- 3 – Kevin Chesser, Elkins

- 4 – Chad Ashworth, St. Albans

- 5 – Paul Gartner, Yawkey

Bluegrass Banjo

- 1 – Brandon Green, Sophia
- 2 – Calvin Leport, Henderson
- 3 – Doug Cossin, Mt. Alto
- 4 – Blaine Johnson, Beaver
- 5 – Karl Smakula, Elkins

Flat-Pick Guitar

- 1 – Swanagan Ray, Ripley
- 2 – Dan Kessinger, St. Marys
- 3 – Matt Lindsey, Dunbar
- 4 – Brandon Bentley, Sumerco
- 5 – Richard Adkins, Cross Lanes

Flat-Pick Guitar (age 15 and under)

- 1 – Logan Jones, Davis Creek
- 2 – Isaac Putnam, Looneyville
- 3 – Bryant Underwood, Charleston

Mandolin

- 1 – Matt Hiser, Spanishburg
- 2 – John Putnam, Looneyville

- 3 – Brandon Shuping, Williamson

- 4 – Karl Smakula, Elkins

- 5 – Bob Smakula, Elkins

Lap Dulcimer

- 1 – Emily Prichard, Beckley
- 2 – Will Manahan, Elkview
- 3 – David O'Dell, Glenville
- 4 – Martha Turley, Ona
- 5 – Timmy Gillenwater, Griffithsville

Lap Dulcimer (age 15 and under)

- 1 – Will Manahan, Elkview
- 2 – no award presented
- 3 – no award presented

Pound Cake

- 1 – Shonnette Koontz, Charleston
- 2 – Judy Grigoraci, Charleston
- 3 – Image Baker, Charleston

Apple Pie

- 1 – Lynn Divjak, Charleston
- 2 – Ella Hoffman, South Charleston
- 3 – Cassandra Atkins, Charleston



Above: Highland dancers in the Great Hall. Photograph by Tyler Evert.
Right: Bass fiddles propped against a tree. Photograph by Evan Hass.



36th Annual Vandalia Gathering

May 25-27, 2012

State Capitol Complex, Charleston, West Virginia

Friday, May 25

7:00 p.m. Award Presentation
and Concert

Saturday, May 26

10:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. Craft Circle,
Food

11:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Appalachian
Heritage Dancing, Kids
Activities, Storytelling

12:00 noon-5:00 p.m. Music
Contests (Fiddle, Bluegrass
Banjo, Mandolin), Old-Time
Square Dancing, Flatfooting,
Performances

1:00 p.m. Pound Cake, Apple Pie
Contests

3:30 p.m. Pound Cake and Apple
Pie Walk

6:30 p.m. Concert

Sunday, May 27

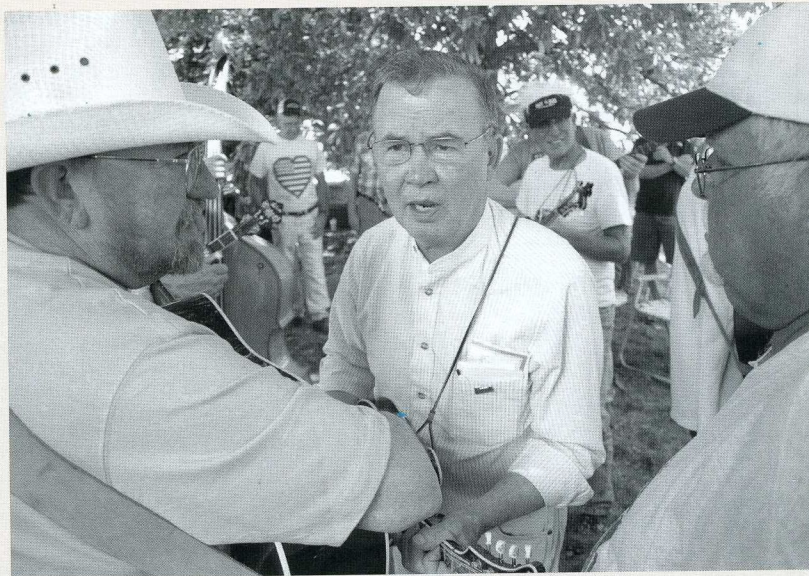
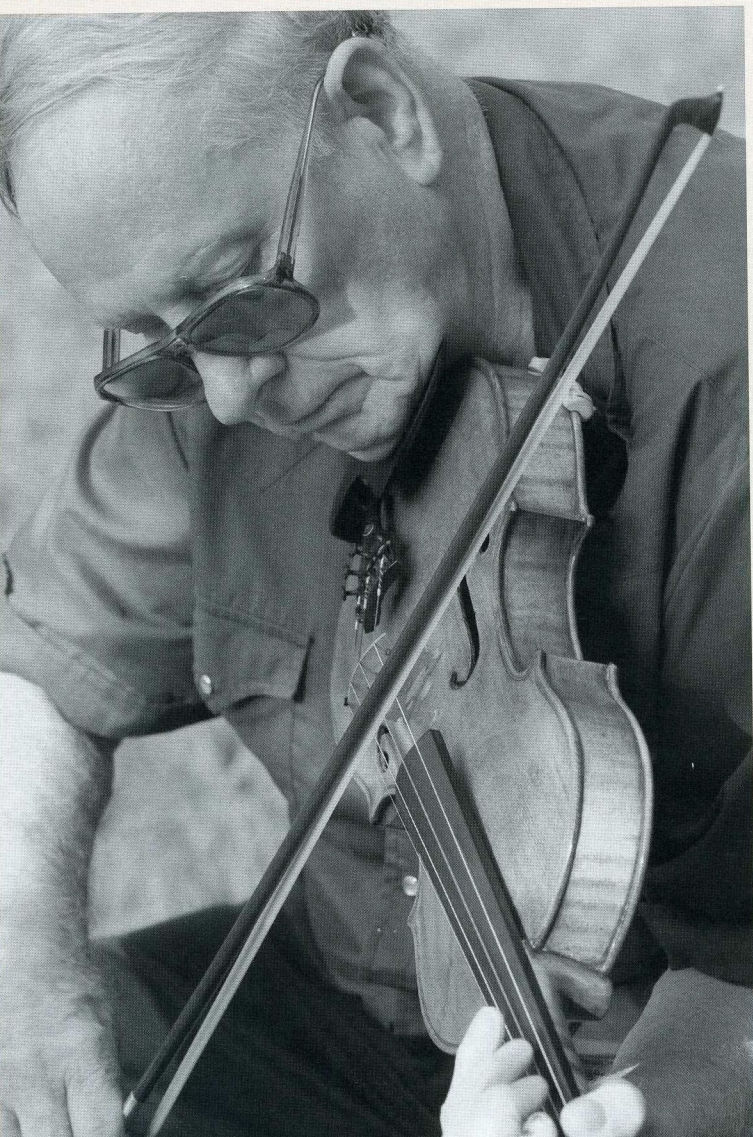
10:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. Craft Circle,
Food

11.30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Gospel Sing

12:00 noon-1:00 p.m. Storytelling

12:00 noon-2:00 p.m. Cross Stitch
Contest

12:00 noon-5:00 p.m. Music
Contests (Old-Time Banjo, Lap
Dulcimer, Flat-Pick Guitar),
Appalachian Heritage Dancing,
Kids Activities, Performances,
Old-Time Square Dancing,
Flatfooting



SPECIAL \$1 OFFER

Back Issues Available

- ___ Fall 2003/Artist Boyd Boggs
- ___ Winter 2003/Weaver Dorothy Thompson
- ___ Winter 2006/Whitcomb Boulder
- ___ Fall 2007/Seneca Rocks
- ___ Winter 2007/Photographer Lloyd Gainer
- ___ Spring 2008/Dancer Lou Maiuri
- ___ Summer 2008/Fenton Glass
- ___ Winter 2008/Coal Art
- ___ Spring 2009/Bernard Cyrus
- ___ Summer 2009/Back to the Land
- ___ Fall 2009/Spanish West Virginia
- ___ Spring 2010/Pilot Steve Weaver
- ___ Summer 2010/Chickens!
- ___ Fall 2010/Robert C. Byrd
- ___ Winter 2010/Weir High School Band
- ___ Spring 2011/Stepping!
- ___ Summer 2011/Trolleys
- ___ Fall 2011/Forest Festival
- ___ Winter 2011/Berkeley Castle

ATTENTION! Due to space limitations, we must reduce our inventory of back issues immediately! For a limited time and while supplies last, receive any available back issue of GOLDENSEAL for just \$1, plus shipping. Choose from any of the issues listed here, or request a favorite back issue not listed. If we have it in stock, you may purchase it for just \$1, plus shipping.

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1:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m. Liars Contest
3:30 p.m.-5:00 p.m. Gospel Workshop
6:30 p.m. Finale Concert

Crafts vendors offer stained glass, jewelry, wooden toys, wood turning, native plants, handmade wood items, hand-sewn items, pottery, handmade flutes, crochet,

wooden furniture, leather, twig art, gourmet specialty foods, musical instruments, blown and hand-painted glass, and rag weaving.

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



Above: Bing Brothers Band with fiddler Jake Krack. Photograph by Evan Hass.

Facing page, far left: Unidentified fiddler. Top left: Glen Cecil (at center) in a jam session. Bottom left: Mandolin. Photographs by Tyler Evert.

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 \$20. Thanks—and welcome to the GOLDENSEAL family!

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Decoration Day

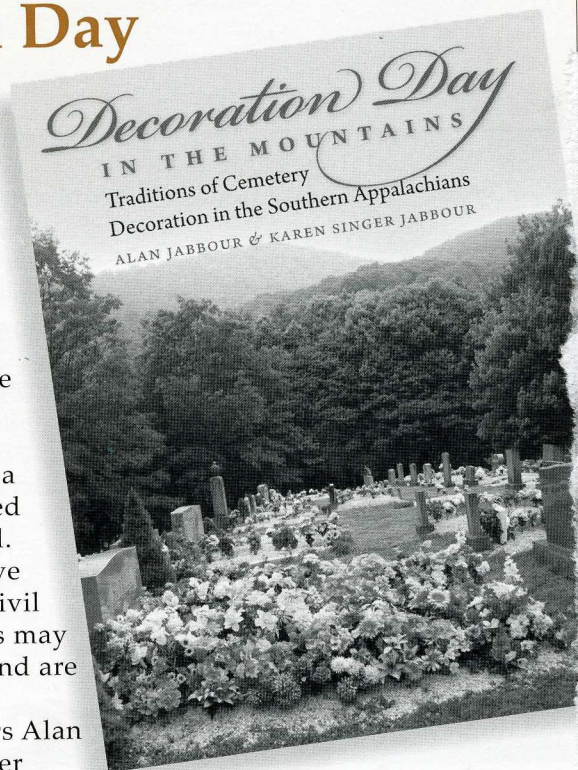
Honoring those who have gone before is a rich tradition in Appalachia, where family cemeteries and grave sites receive loving care and attention. Among these traditions is the group practice of cleaning a cemetery in the late spring or early summer, putting fresh flowers on the graves, and holding a religious service followed by dinner on the ground. Thought by many to have originated in the post-Civil War era, these traditions may date to an earlier time and are still in evidence today.

Folklorists and authors Alan Jabbour and Karen Singer Jabbour have researched and written about this topic in their book, *Decoration Day in the Mountains: Traditions of Cemetery Decoration in the Southern Appalachians*, published in 2010 by the University of North Carolina Press. The 256-page large-format, hardbound edition includes color and black-and-white photographs, a map, appendices, notes, bibliography, and an index. Alan Jabbour, former director of the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress, collaborated with his wife, an accomplished photographer, to create this unique

and insightful volume.

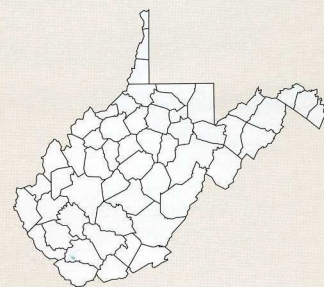
Centering their work in Western North Carolina, the Jabbours look at cemetery traditions from across the region, including flower choice and arrangements, headstone design, musical and religious aspects, and historical and political context. Neither maudlin nor sentimental, this interesting book discusses a delicate subject in a respectful and detailed manner.

Decoration Day in the Mountains sells for \$35, plus shipping, and is available on-line from www.uncpress.unc.edu, phone 1-800-848-6224.



Goldenseal Coming Next Issue...

- Kelly Axe
- Arthurdale
- Bing Brothers
- Billy Sunday in Wheeling



continued from inside front cover

July 28 Hillsboro (653-4891)	NettleFest	September 20-23 Clay (587-7323)	Golden Delicious Festival
July 30-August 4 Richwood (846-2596)	Cherry River Festival	September 21-23 Point Pleasant (675-9726)	Mothman Festival
August 1-5 Camp Washington-Carver/Clifftop (558-0162)	Appalachian String Band Music Festival	September 27-29 Arnoldsburg (655-7371)	W.Va. Molasses Festival
August 2-4 Parsons (478-3515)	Pickin' in Parsons	September 27-30 Kingwood (379-2203)	Preston County Buckwheat Festival
August 2-4 Nutter Fort (622-3206)	W.Va. Blackberry Festival	September 28 Prickett's Fort State Park (363-3030)	W.Va. Storytelling Festival
August 3-5 Charleston (347-7663)	Multifest	September 28-30 Shenandoah Junction (1-800-624-0577)	Mountain Heritage Arts & Crafts Festival
August 4 Helvetia (924-6435)	Swiss National Holiday	September 28-30 Waverly (679-3611)	Volcano Days
August 10-12 Elkins (637-1209)	Augusta Festival	September 29 Marlinton (1-800-336-7009)	W.Va. Roadkill Cook-Off
August 10-12 Paw Paw (947-5600)	Avalon Folk Festival	September 29-30 Capon Bridge (856-1118)	Capon Bridge Founders Day
August 10-18 Fairlea (645-1090)	State Fair of West Virginia	September 29-October 7 Elkins (636-1824)	76 th Mountain State Forest Festival
August 12 Wheeling (233-1688)	Mahrajan Lebanese Heritage Festival	October 4-7 Salem (782-3565)	28 th Salem Apple Butter Fest
August 13-18 New Martinsville (455-4275)	Town & Country Days	October 4-7 Milton (634-5857)	W.Va. Pumpkin Festival
August 17-19 Ranson (725-9610)	Jefferson County African American Cultural & Heritage Festival	October 5-6 Huntersville (1-800-336-7009)	Huntersville Traditions Day
August 22-September 2 Oak Hill (1-800-927-0263)	Oak Leaf Festival	October 5-6 Shinnston (592-1189)	Pine Bluff Fall Festival
August 24-26 Beckley (252-7328)	Appalachian Festival	October 5-6 Bluefield (589-3317)	Southern W.Va. Italian Festival
August 25-26 Parkersburg (1-800-752-4982)	32 nd W.Va. Honey Festival	October 5-7 Wheeling (1-800-624-6988)	Oglebay Fest
August 31-September 2 Weston (1-800-296-7329)	Jackson's Mill Jubilee	October 5-7 Wardensville (874-3424)	Wardensville Fall Festival
August 31-September 3 North Bend State Park (737-4411)	W.Va. Monarch Butterfly Festival	October 6 Webster Springs (847-7291)	Bergoo International Cook-Off
August 31-September 2 Clarksburg (622-7314)	33 rd W.Va. Italian Heritage Festival	October 6 Huntington (522-1244)	Heritage Farm Fall Harvest Festival
September 1-2 Blennerhassett Island (420-4800)	Apple Butter Weekend	October 6 Holly River State Park (493-6353)	Irish Road Bowling
September 1-2 Holly River State Park (493-6327)	Holly River Festival	October 6 Coalwood (297-4960)	October Sky Festival
September 1-3 Rowlesburg (454-2441)	Rowlesburg Labor Day Celebration	October 6 Bramwell (1-800-221-3206)	Oktoberfest
September 6-9 Pipestem (320-8833)	CultureFest 2012	October 6-7 Burlington (289-6010)	39 th Annual Old-Fashioned Apple Harvest Festival
September 7-8 Summersville (1-866-716-0448)	43 rd Nicholas County Potato Festival	October 11-14 Spencer (927-5616)	W.Va. Black Walnut Festival
September 7-9 Clarksburg (641-9963)	W.Va. Black Heritage Festival	October 12-14 Twin Falls State Park (294-4000)	Lumberjackin' Bluegrass Jamboree
September 7-9 Hedgesville (264-8801)	W.Va. State BBQ and Bluegrass Festival	October 18-21 Martinsburg (263-2500)	32 nd Mountain State Apple Harvest Festival
September 8-9 Moundsville (845-6200)	Elizabethtown Festival	October 20 Fayetteville (1-800-927-0263)	Bridge Day
September 8-9 Romney (822-3647)	Hampshire Heritage Fest	October 20-21 & October 27-28 Hinton (466-5420)	Hinton Railroad Days
September 13-15 Sistersville (652-2939)	44 th Annual Oil & Gas Festival	October 27 Cass Scenic Railroad State Park (456-4300)	Halloween Train
September 13-16 Franklin (358-3884)	Treasure Mountain Festival	November 2-4 D&E College/Elkins (637-1209)	Fiddlers Reunion
September 15-16 Hawks Nest State Park (658-5196)	Country Roads Festival	December 7-9 Prickett's Fort State Park (363-3030)	18 th Century Christmas Market
September 15-16 Helvetia (924-6435)	Helvetia Fair	December 8 Fairmont (366-0468)	Feast of the Seven Fishes

GOLDENSEAL requests its readers' help in preparing this listing. If you would like your festival or event to appear in the 2013 "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 7, 2013, in order to meet our printing deadline. GOLDENSEAL regrets that, due to space limitations, Fourth of July celebrations are no longer included in this listing.

Inside Goldenseal

Page 62 - Times aren't what they used to be for Bob Yokum, who has been selling used goods in Wheeling's Centre Market for 40 years.

Page 56 - Charles E. Brannon and his family survived the Great Depression through hard work on a hardscrabble farm in Harrison County.

Page 23 - Synthetic rubber from a chemical plant in Institute was critical to the war effort during the early 1940's.

Page 12 - Rock & roll music had its heyday in the Kanawha Valley during the 1960's and '70's, according to author Terry Lowry.

Page 38 - Richardson's Hardware is the place to go for everything from nuts and bolts to furniture and appliances in downtown Marlinton.

Page 50 - The Eglon School in Preston County was destroyed by fire in 1959. Miraculously, the school was back to holding classes in only three days, thanks to a local church and the hard work and generosity of its members.

Page 10 - The Shades were an early rock & roll band in Elkins during the late 1950's.

Page 44 - Photographer Lewis W. Hine captured some memorable and endearing images in Pocahontas County during the 1920's.

Page 32 - Amy McGrew is a hard-working woman who can fire a steam locomotive with the best of them at Cass Scenic Railroad State Park.

