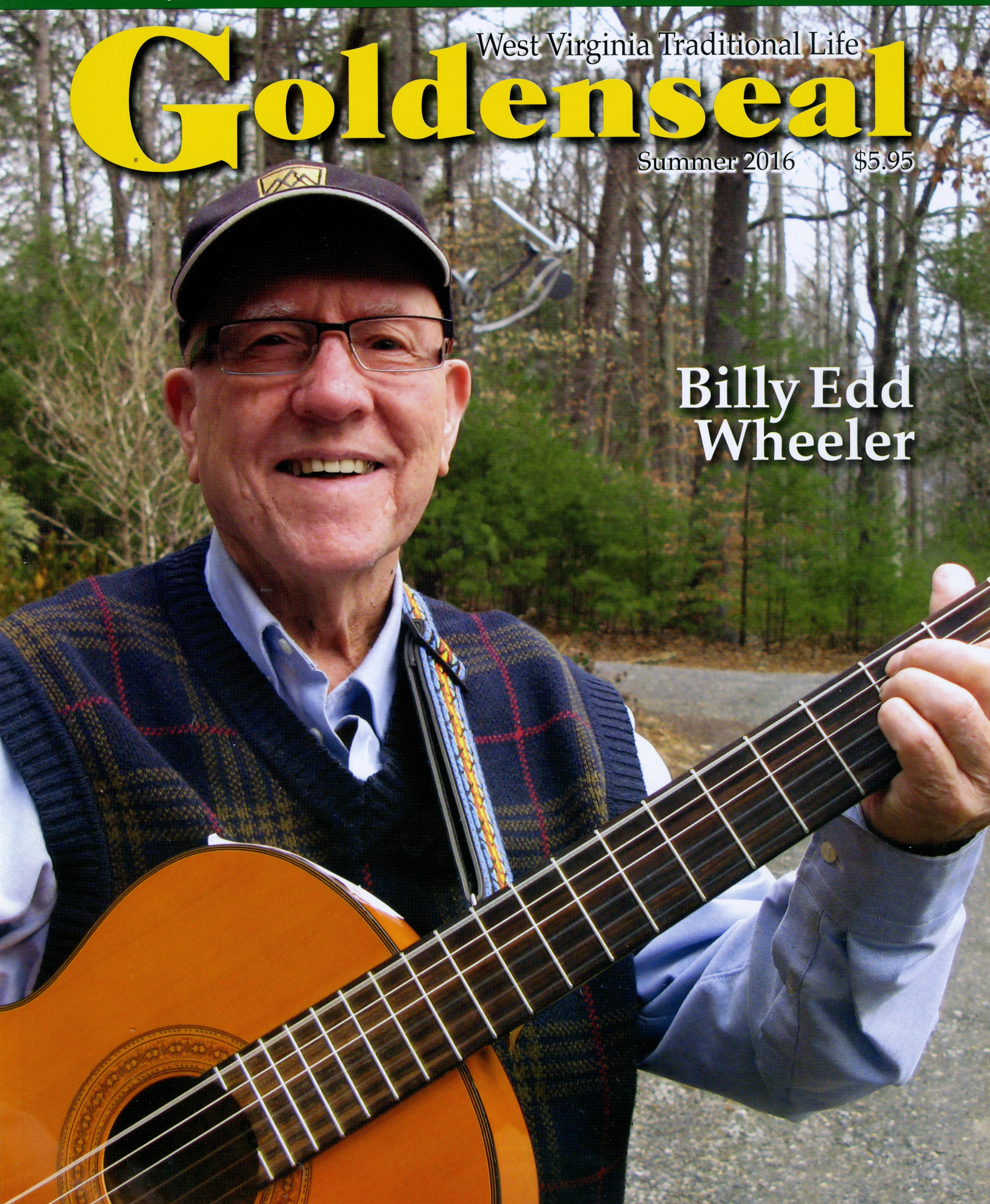
"Aunt Jennie" Wilson • Culture Center • State Fair • Berries

West Virginia Traditional Life

Goldenseal

Summer 2016 $5.95



Billy Edd Wheeler

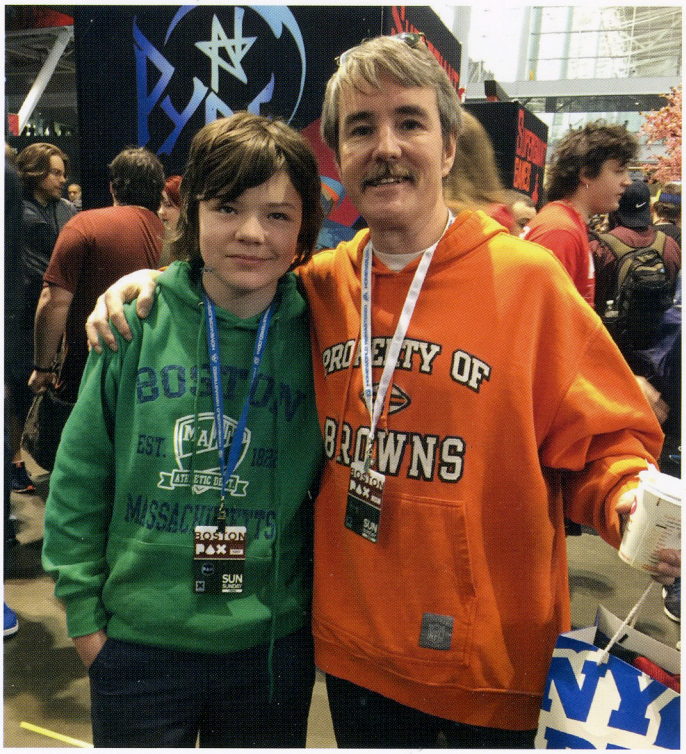
From the Editor

In April, my son Guy and I went to Boston for a gaming convention. We had a fantastic time, even as I embarrassed him—and showed my age—by asking where we could find Battleship and Stratego. Having lived in West Virginia my whole life, I always get a bit of a culture shock when visiting big cities, and it never takes long until I miss home. "Like a fish out of water," as my mother liked to say.

While strolling around Boston, I kept thinking about how so much of the Summer issue revolves around "a fish out of water." Our cover story about the great singer/songwriter Billy Edd Wheeler follows his journey from a Boone County coal camp to North Carolina, Kentucky, Yale, Manhattan, Nashville, and eventually back to the Tar Heel State—all while staying in tune with the Mountain State. As he notes, "I may have left West Virginia, but West Virginia has never left me." These roots are evident in so many of his songs, like "Coal Tattoo," "Red Winged Black Bird," and "High Flyin' Bird." Billy Edd also shares his memories of "Aunt Jennie" Wilson, the legendary musician and storyteller from Logan County.

First-time GOLDENSEAL contributors and self-described *city folks* Anna Dickson James and Steven Keith go in search of our food sources and enjoy distinctly West Virginian experiences at the State Fair and pick-your-own berry farms. Likewise, Kate Quinn, a "city girl" from Wheeling, relates some entertaining childhood adventures about her family's vacation farm in Ritchie County.

Other stories include F. Keith Davis' account of Johnse Hatfield's life, escape to Washington state, and eventual arrest as part of the Hatfield-McCoy Feud. Merle T. Cole brings us the unlikely tale of a State Police detachment located at a Fairmont mansion in the 1930s.



Our editor takes in a gaming convention with his son — and, as usual, embarrasses him.

Contributors Kim Weitkamp and Carl E. Feather take us along on their travels to Fayette and Barbour counties, and our new state folklorist, Emily Hilliard, asks a very simple, but yet complex, question: "What is folklore?" Finally, we celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Culture Center on the Capitol Complex.

As for me, I'm just glad to be back home in West Virginia with my shoes off and my feet dangling in a mountain stream.

Stan Bumgardner

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On the cover: Songwriter, musician, author, painter, and raconteur Billy Edd Wheeler, 2016. Photo by Kim Johnson.

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Letters from Readers

The Hatfields

March 14, 2016
Lewisburg, West Virginia
Editor:
I sent several selected excerpts from your excellent article "'Devil Anse' Hatfield: Soldier, Farmer, Feudist, Movie Star?" by Randy Marcum [Spring 2016] to Bob King, editor and general manager of *Films of the Golden Age* magazine. I feel certain it will be of interest to his readers with its insights as yet another well-researched example of motion picture history. A point I especially enjoyed was your telling of Emmett Dalton of the famous Dalton Gang making a seamless transition from gangster to film producer in the early days of movies. As pointed out, so far, there are no known prints of *The Hatfield-McCoy Feud* film, but maybe a reader of GOLDENSEAL or *Films of the Golden Age* might be of help, even to the point of identifying the cigar-smoking gentleman shown with "Devil Anse."

One final mention is that many in the motion picture industry follow in the steps of Emmett Dalton—that of a hold-up man.

Great story!
Jack Ballard


GREAT FEUD IS TO BE FILMED

Hatfields and McCoys to Enact Old Battles for Motion Pictures.

An August 1, 1915 issue of the *Clarksburg Daily Telegram* announces *The Hatfield-McCoy Feud*, a new film featuring "Devil Anse" Hatfield and other feud participants.

March 27, 2016
Towson, Maryland
Editor:
I want to comment on the Spring issue of GOLDENSEAL and the outstanding story of "The Hatfields." I was so impressed with the issue that I called Kim Johnson and ordered three subscriptions. One of the subscriptions went to Peggy Hatfield, who was married to Robert Hatfield. He was a direct descendant of the Hatfield clan.

Robert Hatfield's father and an uncle owned and operated the Ford dealership in Welch for a number of years. Robert's father was also a well-known boxing promoter, and one of his outstanding heavyweight fighters was a man known as John Henry Lawson.

I and my siblings grew up in Hemphill, which was an extension of Welch. I grew up with Peggy, and we both graduated from Welch High School in 1950. My brother (Tony) and I were very close friends with the Hatfield family.

Sincerely,
Dan D. Zaccagnini

March 28, 2016
Nashville, North Carolina
Editor:
Thank you so much for the Spring 2016 issue of GOLDENSEAL featuring The Hatfields. I had been intending to send a check to renew my subscription, oh my!

I also intended to write a letter to John Lilly a year ago when he retired from being editor. We take so many—indeed, too many—things for granted.

Just about every time I write, I cannot help but think of the first issue of GOLDENSEAL I saw in Mike Craver's house. He was a member of the Red Clay Ramblers, which sometimes played at folk music festivals in West Virginia. I knew the originals, then Mike joined the band. I eyed the beautiful, history-filled magazine, and I've loved GOLDENSEAL ever since. This was in the late 1970s.

God bless you all!

Emmett Frazier

"Appalachia"

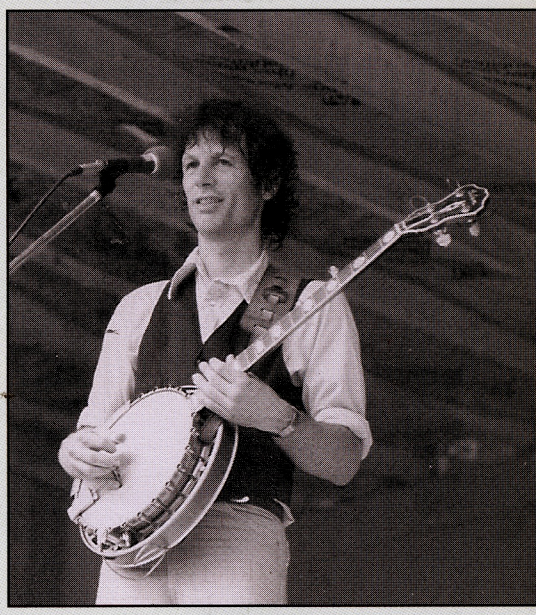
April 10, 2016
Vanceboro, Maine
Editor:
My father came from a large, poor family that originally lived in Gilmer County. While he was still a young man, the family moved into an old abandoned farmhouse along a back road to Romines Mill in Harrison County. Once when I was a youngster, my father took my mother and me to Gilmer County for a visit to the old family area. At one spot, he parked on the side of the road and said he would be gone for some time as he wanted to check on some graves in an old cemetery. We watched as he climbed up a steep path to a shelving area below the hilltop, and I marveled at the steepness of the path and wondered how others had ever managed to carry a casket up to that lofty location . . . and why?

The poem "Appalachia" solved the mystery of many years ago [See "Letters from Readers," Spring 2016]. In life, his relatives lived close to the earth. In their afterlife, they remained close to the hills that they loved. A stirring poem. The attentive librarian should be congratulated.

Borgon Tanner

John Hartford

April 18, 2016
St. Albans, West Virginia
Editor:
I loved seeing the article "John Hartford's Search for Ed Haley" by Brandon Ray Kirk in the Winter 2015 issue. I took some photos of Hartford in 1979 when he was performing at Foxfire Resort in Milton. My husband, Doug Yanak, was working in radio at that time and helped to run the sound system for the performers. When I met John, I told him my maiden name was Harford and wondered if we were related. He told me his last name was originally spelled Harford and that we could be. He knew more about the Harfords in the United States, but I haven't been able to find anything about the family history of my father, Delvin Dermont Harford. It was wonderful to meet him so long ago and to see that he was interested in some of the people of our wonderful state.

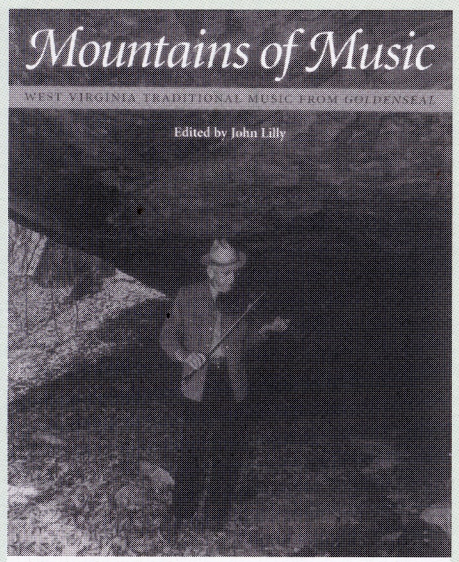


John Hartford performs in Milton in 1979. Photo by Elaine Yanak.

God bless you,

Elaine Yanak

Elaine's mother, Leta Mae Gwinn Harford, was featured in the article "Round Bottom: Home of the New River Gwinns" by Leona G. Brown in our Spring 1984 issue. –ed.



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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Announcements

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 review copies of books, recordings, and films but cannot guarantee publication.

Aunt Hat's Gravestone

Our Spring 2016 issue featured the article "Fairmont's Last Living Slave: 'Aunt Hat' Whitely" by M. Raymond Alvarez. The author led an effort to locate Aunt Hat's burial site and received donations from the Woman's Club of Fairmont to place a headstone on the grave. We're glad to announce that the stone was dedicated at a ceremony at Fairmont's Evergreen Cemetery on April 28—the 75th anniversary of Aunt Hat's burial—followed by an event at the Woman's Club.



Exactly 75 years after her burial, "Aunt Hat" Whitely's grave receives a proper headstone.



Apple Picking by Edith Lake Wilkinson (1868-1957), ca. 1914-1923. Carved woodblock.

Exhibit at the Huntington Museum of Art

The Huntington Museum of Art will present the new exhibit *A TALENT FORGOTTEN: The Art of Edith Lake Wilkinson* from July 2 through September 18, 2016. A free opening reception will occur on July 17 at 2 p.m., and the documentary *Packed in a Trunk: The Lost Art of Edith Lake Wilkinson* will be shown on August 23 at 7 p.m. as a Macy's Free Tuesday event.

Artist Edith Lake Wilkinson was born in Wheeling on August 23, 1868. Years after her 1957 death, her artwork was found inside a trunk in her Wheeling family home. The Huntington Museum of Art is the first West Virginia art museum to own original wood printing blocks by Wilkinson and sponsor a substantial exhibition of her work.

For more information, visit hmoa.org or call (304)529-2701.

Clifftop

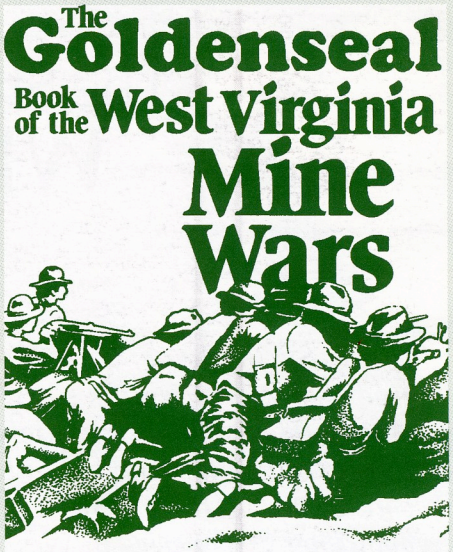
The West Virginia Division of Culture & History will host the 27th annual Appalachian String Band Music Festival at Camp Washington-Carver at Clifftop, Fayette County, August 3-7, 2016. Precamping will be available July 29-August 2.

The festival is a five-day mountaintop gathering of musicians and friends with contests, concerts, workshops, square dances, and camping. Over the history of this festival, lovers of string band music have come together from all 50 states and more than 20 foreign countries. Many return year after year to this festival, one of the best of its kind in the country.

For more information, visit http://www.wvculture.org/stringband/ or call (304)438-3005.



Jamming outside the Great Chestnut Lodge at the 2014 Appalachian String Band Music Festival. Photo by Tyler Evert.



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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The State Folklorist's Notebook:
What Is Folklore?

In our Spring issue, we introduced West Virginia's new state folklorist, Emily Hilliard. Emily will be writing a regular column for GOLDENSEAL about her discoveries in West Virginia folklore. –ed.

Whenever someone asks me what I do for work, the conversation often goes something like this: I say, "I'm a folklorist."

The questioner usually replies with something to the effect of "That's so cool!" Then there's a beat while he or she stops to ponder and works up the courage to ask sheepishly, "Now . . . what is that exactly?"

It's an understandable question. That's in part because as a discipline, folklore has been a somewhat nebulous topic—an intersection of anthropology, history, (ethno) musicology, American studies, and literature. A folklorist needs to be a historical jack of all trades, with knowledge of traditional music, dance, material

Here's one of our favorite photos illustrating West Virginia folklore. Sylvia O'Brien (1909-2001) of Clay County plays the banjo as her brother Jenes Cottrell (1901-1980) accompanies her with a stomper doll in the 1970s.



By Emily Hilliard

culture, foodways, architecture, occupational culture, and more, all from diverse cultural traditions. On top of that, the word *folklore* can be misleading, bringing to mind ghost stories or tall tales; people often assume I'm some kind of storyteller.

It's true that folklore can include local legends, but the field is much broader than that. I often say that folklore is "the art of everyday life"—creative daily expressions, such as a favorite recipe, an adornment on a house or in a yard, or an individual interpretation of a gospel song or fiddle tune. If the listener's eyes haven't glazed over by this point, I explain that most folklorists today, whether working in an academic setting or a public context like me, are trying to document, support, and sustain cultural heritage and community-based living traditions.

In West Virginia, this could include the annual Fasnacht celebration in the Swiss community of Helvetia, small-town square dances across the state, Lebanese food at the Mahrajan festival in Wheeling, stories of coal miners and loggers, African-American gospel traditions in the southern counties, pepperoni rolls with their Italian miner heritage, unique fiddling traditions, and much more.

West Virginia is known for its vibrant living traditions and traditional arts, and the work of folklore in this state is particularly important because it gives us a chance to honor and support the creative contributions of everyday West Virginians. I share the sentiment of Utah State Folklorist Lynne McNeill who said, "In folklore, everyone can achieve greatness. In folklore, the everyday lived experiences are legitimized and valued."

In this first year of the West Virginia Folklife Program—under the direction of the West Virginia Humanities Council—we're conducting a statewide folklife fieldwork survey, documenting traditional artists, tradition bearers, and community heritage through oral history, photography, and video. I'll be sharing some of this fieldwork here in a regular GOLDENSEAL column and in publications and programming, which could include exhibits, concerts, a master-apprentice program, heritage trails, and more. Because this work is ultimately about community and place-based cultural expressions, I welcome your input on the traditions and practices that should be included in this initial survey. If you'd like to let me know about traditional artists, heritage crafters, traditional musicians or dancers, local storytellers, or cultural celebrations in your community, please get in touch with me at Hilliard@wvhumanities.org or 1-844-618-3747 (toll-free).

EMILY HILLIARD is West Virginia's first official state folklorist. She worked previously at Smithsonian Folkways Recordings and the National Council for the Traditional Arts. Her work has been published by *Southern Cultures*, National Public Broadcasting, *Ecotone*, and the James Beard Award-winning *Gravy*. She also plays old-time fiddle and writes the pie blog *Nothing in the House*. This is her first contribution to GOLDENSEAL.

The Many **Faces** of **West Virginia**

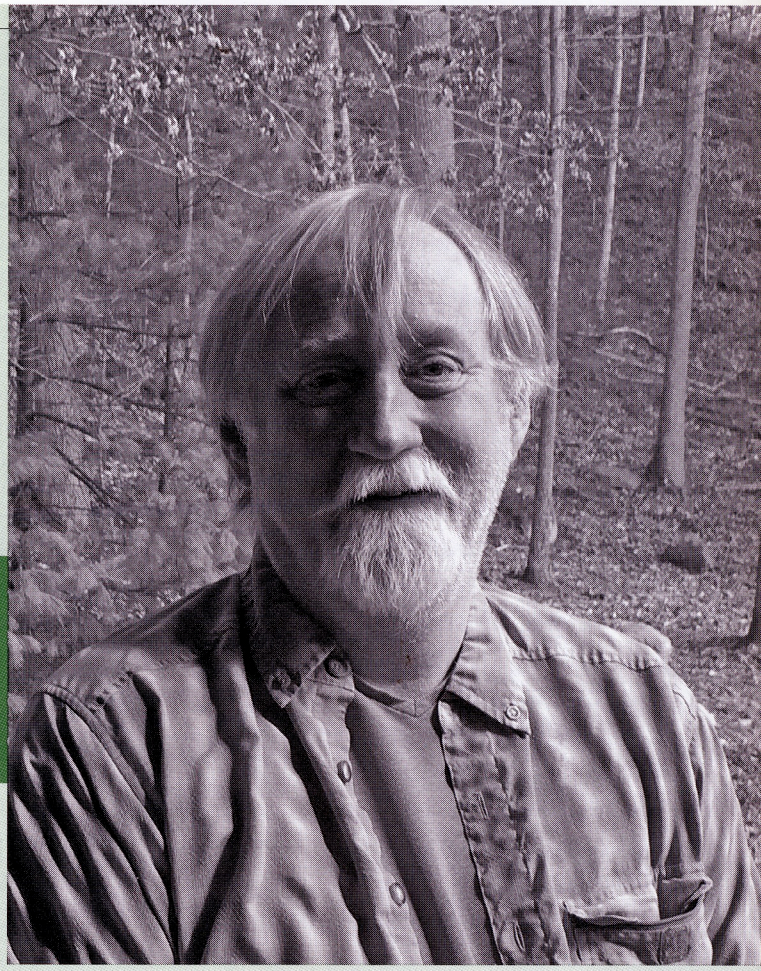
I'm always interested in things that link people together. In this article, it seems to be a river. Or is it?

Jerry Cook
Age 65, Fayette County

Jerry was born and raised in Indiana, where his uncle owned a company that hauled gravel from rivers. Jerry shadowed his uncle at work and spent a lot of time playing and canoeing on the rivers that snake in and out of the Hoosier State. As he grew, so did his love of rivers.

He led outfitting trips while attending college in Tennessee. His girlfriend, Lenore, helped him get enough money to buy his first raft.

"The first time I saw the view from Concho, looking down into the river, it changed me."



That was all he needed. He turned his love into a full-fledged business of outdoor retail and guided trips on the Nolichucky, French Broad, Ocoee, and other Tennessee rivers. He ended up selling his successful business to USA Raft. With enough money in his pocket, he took out a blank piece of paper and started listing out places where he might want to live. It came down to two: Northern California/Oregon or West Virginia. Since first stepping onto West Virginia soil 31 years ago, he's never looked back.

"The first time I saw the view from Concho, looking down into the river," Jerry recalls, "it changed me. In my whole life as a guide, there hasn't been anything before or since in nature that affected me as much as that moment."

And so began ACE Adventure Resort.

"I love the Gauley River. It's big and bouncy and a pure blast. This job never gets boring. It's my whole life, and I thrive on watching multi-generations turn off their phones, get off their couches, and realize they can do great things. The joy I see on the face of someone just off a zip line, coming in from a raft trip, or dancing at the Mountain Music Festival—that's why I do this. I can honestly say that here in this place, we have a whole world of adventure."

And he means it. I can hear it in his voice. He takes each person's happiness personally.

"I am going to be doing this 'til I die."

By Kim Weitkamp



Lenore Ateyeh Lund
Age 63, Fayette County

Born and raised in Brooklyn, New York, Lenore always wanted to move to the country.

"I used to tell my mom," says Lenore, "that someday, I was going to move to the country and have a little house in the woods."

"I knew it was the country I was looking for."

In 1979, she met Jerry Cook in Tennessee, and he took her on a raft trip down the Nolichucky.

"I had a blast and fell madly in love. We dated for quite a while. He was trying to start a company, so my mom and I helped him get his first raft. He paid her back, by the way!"

Even though Lenore and Jerry eventually broke up, they've remained dear friends. When he moved to West Virginia, she followed him and helped out.

"When I got here, I knew it was the country I was looking for. I'm humbled every day when I walk out and look down the valley at Arbuckle Creek, the mist resting on the mountains, and the sun rising down in the gorge where the Gauley runs. All the while, the train in Thurmond provides a comforting sound."

When Lenore first arrived, she took a raft trip down the Gauley River. The guide, a guy named Jack, went to dinner that night with her and Jerry. Jack and Lenore hit it off, got married, and have lived at ACE for the last 28 years. Lenore wears many hats at ACE, mainly doing administrative and accounting work. Jack is a whitewater guide, consummate storyteller, and harmonica player. Jerry comes to dinner once in a while, and the three have formed a strong friendship.

One of Lenore's greatest joys is to watch young folks come in from big cities. Most have never seen much more than cement and buildings. She thrives on that look of wonder on their faces as they watch the flying squirrels or play on the lake. It takes her back to her own childhood in Brooklyn and her desire to escape the hard-blocked city landscape.

"I love seeing people of all ages have fun, but the kids are my favorite. Their families have saved and scrimped to make this trip, and they come in from all over the world. I get to be a part of that. Very cool."

Jack Lund
Age 72, Fayette County

Jack is an interesting character, to say the least. Quick to put a harmonica to his lips and fast on the draw with a good story, every minute with him involves a laugh, even when the topic's serious. He's purposefully lived life without restraints.

As I ask Jack about himself, these are the first words out of his mouth, "My mom spent half my childhood in mental institutions."

It shows how much pain from those memories still lies close to the surface. He went to college, got into sales, and made a lot of money, but he wasn't happy.

"I dated a psychologist, and she told me that with my personality type, being a lot like my mom, that I should—no, needed to—make sure I did a job that made me happy."

He took her advice, sold his stuff, bought a van, put a canoe on top of it, and traveled the country looking for something to make him happy. He visited a friend who was running raft trips on the Nolichucky. Since he had nothing but time on his hands, his friend gave him a raft of people to take down the river.

"I'd never guided a raft in my life! My friend told me it was just like a canoe, except it didn't tip as easy, and it was filled with people. So I did it. When I got back, he paid me and said he'd see me the next day, and so it began—my long life as a river guide."

Jack soon moved to West Virginia.

"This is the big time for rafting, you know, compared to anything out there. In North America, it ranks number two and, in the world, number seven. I'd do it all over again tomorrow. I came to work for Jerry, and each day, my office walls were 1,000-foot canyons. I was never, ever late to work. As a matter of fact, I couldn't wait to get there. The remote beauty of this place never grows old."





View from the overlook at Concho, Fayette County, with the town of Thurmond on the right. Photo by Steve Brightwell.

"There are rivers that are more dangerous, and there are rivers that are bigger, but none that are as much fun."

When Jack would travel in his ACE clothing, he was constantly offered jobs. That's how much respect West Virginia river guides command around the world.

"There are rivers that are more dangerous, and there are rivers that are bigger, but none that are as much fun," Jack says with a smile.

Once he got to the Mountain State, there was no going back—not just because of the river and the stunning mountain vista, but also because of a woman.

"I was guiding a trip, and there she was: 6'1", 134 pounds of tan, lean muscle. I have no clue what she saw in me. It would take a scientist to explain it, a biological wonder. And the best part is she's as beautiful on the inside."

For almost 30 years, Jack and Lenore have had a great journey, and Jerry has been there the whole time. So has the river.

Jack doesn't guide anymore. Time, like a river, has worn him down a bit, but only in body, not in spirit. "These days, the only thing I'm riding is the greens, in a golf cart."

KIM WEITKAMP tours nationally as an author, public speaker, storyteller, performer, and singer/songwriter and believes West Virginia is one of the most beautiful places on earth. You can visit her Web site at www.kimweitkamp.com.



"You

By Michael M. Meador

All photographs courtesy of Billy Edd Wheeler except where noted otherwise

For more than 50 years, Boone County native Billy Edd Wheeler's music has inspired us, brought tears to our eyes, and made us laugh. His songs have been covered by artists as varied as Elvis Presley, Jefferson Airplane, Gram Parsons, Neil Young, Bobby Darin, and Richie Havens, who opened his set at Woodstock with Billy Edd's "High Flyin' Bird."

The first line of Billy Edd's "Jackson" is one of the most memorable in country music: "We got married in a fever, hotter than a pepper sprout." This megahit won a Grammy for Johnny and June Carter Cash and was later ranked by Country Music Television as one of the 10 greatest love songs in country music history. In 1980, Kenny Rogers had a blockbuster hit with "Coward of the County," which Billy Edd cowrote with Roger Bowling.

Billy Edd, who's never won a Grammy himself, has received virtually every other honor in the music world. He's a member of the Nashville Songwriters Association International's Hall of Fame and the North Carolina Music Hall of Fame. He was also in the inaugural class of the West Virginia Music Hall of Fame, in 2007.

write songs like people breathe"

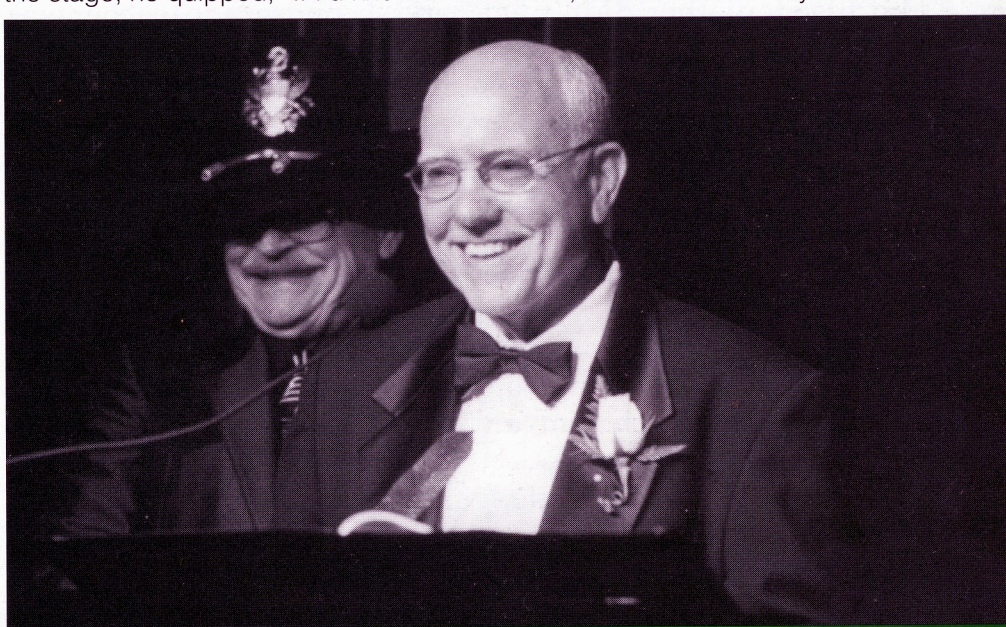
Billy Edd Wheeler, Renaissance Man

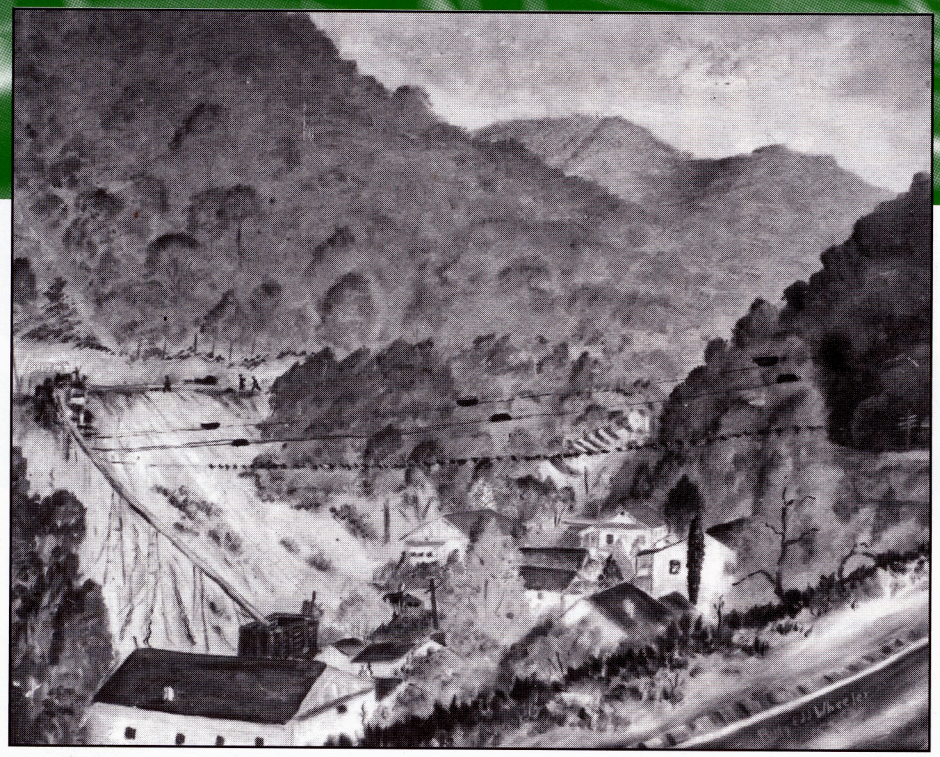
Billy Edd was born in 1932 in Whitesville. He didn't know his biological father's name until he was 11 years old and finally met him briefly when he was 17. He was raised by his mother's parents in Jarrolds Valley, about a mile as the crow flies from Whitesville. After his mother got married, she took Billy Edd to live with her and his stepfather, Arthur Stewart, who worked in the Anchor Coal Company's lamp house at Highcoal, about six miles from Whitesville. The town of Highcoal was run by Superintendent Van B. Stith, who Billy Edd remembers as "lord and king of the coal camp."

As in most coal towns, the houses of superintendents, foremen, and doctors were nicer than those of the miners. "We didn't have running water or indoor plumbing," says Billy Edd. "We had to carry water from a pump. We were at the head of the holler, so the creek was pure enough for us to wash clothes with it. My mother would put out a washing by boiling clothes in a big tub. I would stretch a piece of feed sack across that tub and hold it in place with clothespins. Sometimes, there would be a minnow flopping around!"

Highcoal was one of the many once-thriving West Virginia coal camps that have now reverted to ghost towns. But Billy Edd can recall the town's heyday: "The poolroom there was the center of activity. It was a very plain building, just cinder blocks, where you could get a haircut if you wanted to. And then you went on into the large room where on the right you could buy beer. On the left, you could buy candy and ice cream and soft drinks. In the back, that's

Billy Edd was amusingly surprised when he was inducted into the Nashville Songwriters Association International's Hall of Fame in 2003. When called to the stage, he quipped, "If I'd known I would win, I would've worn my hair."





Billy Edd painted this depiction of his old hometown of Highcoal in 1952.

where the men played pool. Upstairs, they used to have boxing matches, and I saw my first movie there, a black-and-white film about Frankenstein."

Billy Edd has mixed memories of those early years. He and his stepfather didn't get along very well. But he also remembers loving relatives with whom he stayed from time to time, such as his Aunt Jean at Peach Creek and Aunt Louise at Red Dragon, just a few miles from Whitesville Junior High. Another was his Uncle Vincent. Billy Edd used to ride, rain or shine, in Vincent's coupe, which had an uncovered rumble seat.

"One of my thrills in life," Billy Edd remembers, "was to sit on Uncle Vincent's lap and steer the car when I was five and six. He'd have his hands at the ready, but can you imagine how exciting that was? And you know those West Virginia roads were curvy, so that was a gigantic thrill for me."

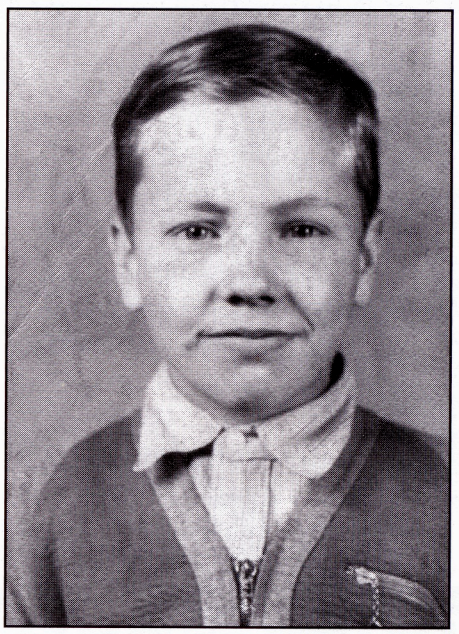
At Highcoal, Billy Edd went to a one-room grade school with a potbellied stove in the middle of the room. His first- and second-grade teacher was Sylvia Carter, who had a big influence on his life. Her husband, Clyde, was the number two man at Highcoal. Billy Edd moved on to Whitesville Junior High and then Sherman High at Seth. He remembers West Virginia Route 3 from Whitesville to Seth being like an "interstate" compared to the road up to Highcoal.

It was about this time when he started signing his middle name with an extra "d" because, as he noted later, he "liked the way it looked." At one point, Billy Edd took on a newspaper-delivery job, which inspired his first song, "Paperboy Blues":

I'm just a paperboy, rise up so early in the morning
I'm just a paperboy, rise up so early in the morning
I've got that lonesome feeling
Feeling comes on me without no warning
They say, Good morning, Mr. Paperboy
Man, it ain't no good mornin' for me
Good mornin', Mr. Paperboy
Man, it ain't no good mornin' for me
'Cause I hear that wind a blowing through them hickory trees

Billy Edd reflects on his first songwriting attempt: "It's not memorable, but I created it, and I was proud of it at the time."

Billy Edd's family didn't listen to music often. His first



Billy Edd Wheeler, age 5, Boone County, ca. 1937.

musical experiences occurred at an interdenominational church in Highcoal.' Billy Edd says, "There was a black man . . . who came to teach us shape-note singing: 'Do, re, mi. . . .' The shape of the note had something to do with where it was on the musical scale. One was a block, one was a half-moon, etc. That's why they called them shaped notes.

"And then one of my buddies, Paul Morton, had a small record player, and he played this gospel song, 'Talk About Jesus.' I remember, we played it over. It was well produced, and the harmony was great. That was one of the first commercial recordings that I heard.

"There was another guy who showed me some chords on the guitar; he was a coal miner named Gene Green. He could yodel like Eddie Arnold.

"I think I was about 12 when I got my first guitar: a Sears and Roebuck $14 guitar. It was an arched-top Kay, and the strings were so high off the fretboard your fingers would practically bleed from pressing down so hard. You had to really want to play on that guitar to stick with it. But after a while, your fingers would get calloused, and it didn't hurt anymore."

When Billy Edd was 12, he ran away from home, walking alone without a flashlight through an unlit mile-long railroad tunnel to reach Kayford in Kanawha County. He hitchhiked to his grandfather's house, about eight miles away at Eskdale. His mother and stepdad came to get him, but Billy Edd ran away again the next morning—this time, with a flashlight. When he got halfway through the tunnel, a coal train came roaring through and scared the wits out of him.



Billy Edd as a baby in his mother's arms, Boone County, mid-1930s.

Billy Edd stayed about a year with his widowed grandfather, who looked the other way as his grandson regularly skipped school at East Bank High. As Billy Edd recalls, though, his granddad wasn't so forgiving on one occasion.

"My granddad loved his green beans. He grew them in his garden. One time, he put some beans on to simmer with a piece of fatback to season them and covered it with water. He said, 'Now, Billy,



Billy Edd with his Uncle Vincent Wheeler at Elk Run in Boone County, late 1930s. Vincent lost part of his leg in the mines, later inspiring Billy Edd's song, "The Hole in Uncle Vincent's Wooden Leg." Billy Edd also fondly recollects steering Vincent's coupe.

every hour or so, you check them, and add some water. When I get home tonight, we'll have a good supper.' Well, I got out in the yard playing football with these boys, using an empty Carnation milk can for a football. All of a sudden, I smelled something, even out in the yard. And I said, 'Oh, Lordy!' My heart sank, and I rushed in to find that those beans were burned. Well, I took what looked like the good ones out and laid them aside. I scraped the burned ones out, added water, and put the unburned ones back in with the fatback."

Billy Edd learned a valuable lesson that day: once you've burned some of the beans, you have to throw them all away. Well, the burned beans were the last straw with his grandfather. He sent Billy Edd packing for home. The incident later moved Billy Edd to pen a skit at the Yale School of Drama that included the great adage, "Boys, you burn one bean, you burn 'em all!" It gave him his 15 minutes of fame among his circle of friends at Yale.

When Billy Edd was a teenager, Johnny Protan, who was once a top-ranked boxer in his weight class, tried to make a fighter out of him. Johnny later served as sheriff of Boone County in the 1960s and 1970s. Under Johnny's tutelage, Billy Edd won his first three-round fight and then took on Dexter Johnson, a promising African-American boxer who'd go on to win the state Golden Gloves Championship. Billy Edd lost to Dexter in a quick, bloody-nosed bout. Afterward, Billy Edd told Johnny, "I don't think boxing's for me. My nose bleeds too easy."

Johnny replied, "Ah, Billy, don't worry about it. You get your nose broke a few times, and the gristle will toughen up in there. It won't bleed anymore."

Despite Johnny's plea, Billy Edd put up his boxing gloves for good. It was about this time that he met a brother-and-sister missionary team from the Presbyterian Board of National Missions. Shirley Jo Smith and her brother Walter came to Highcoal to teach vacation Bible school. They changed Billy Edd's life when they told him about Warren Wilson Junior College at Swannanoa, North Carolina, near Asheville. The college also had a high school component. Students could earn much of their tuition by reporting early and working on the school's farm or dairy. Billy Edd jumped at the chance, and, in 1948, at age 15, he boarded a bus from Whitesville to western North Carolina.

"When I got on the bus in Whitesville," says Billy Edd,



Doc Jensen (right), who played the guitar left-handed and upside down, was one of Billy Edd's first big inspirations. He wrote and performed his own songs and was dean of Warren Wilson Junior College in Swannanoa, North Carolina. Doc lived near the college's dairy barn, where Billy Edd would milk 18 cows every morning.

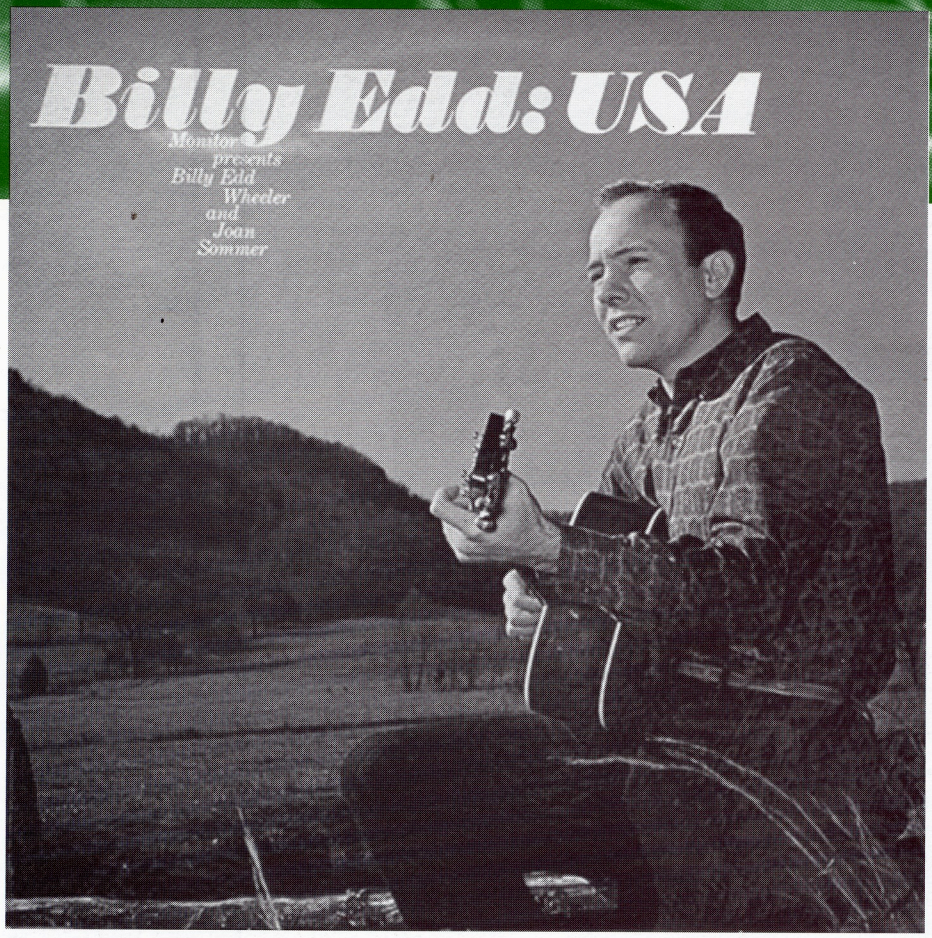
"I was startled because I'll be damned if a man didn't offer me a drink of whiskey! I thought it would have killed me if I'd tried it, so I just said, 'No, thank you, sir. I appreciate it.' I thought it was just one of my introductions to the big world out there, full of temptations and . . . who knows what else."

He was a student at Warren Wilson High School and Junior College for five years. "The school's premise," Billy Edd says, "was that physical labor was just as valuable as studies. It's part of the balance of life. They said, 'There's nothing shameful about working, and if you pitch in and do your job, learn to speak good English, you can sit down and dine with anybody . . . kings and queens. Because you're as good as they are.'"

Billy Edd worked hard, got an outstanding education, and was exposed to everything from classical to folk music. He was particularly influenced by the songs and the sound of Burl Ives. While attending Warren Wilson, Billy Edd met folklorist Richard Chase, who took him around the region, especially Beach Mountain, to collect local Jack Tales. Billy Edd had learned many of these from Richard's books. On one occasion, Dr. Arthur Bannerman, president of Warren Wilson, took Billy Edd with him to a conference in Gatlinburg, Tennessee. Richard was there and asked Billy Edd to tell one of his tales at a party. When Billy Edd finished, Richard complimented him. "Now that's the folk tradition. You didn't tell my story exactly. You ad-libbed and made it your own."

After earning an associate degree from Warren Wilson, Billy Edd transferred to Berea College in Kentucky, where he graduated with an English degree in 1955. He then served two years in the navy as a student pilot and returned to Berea as part-time assistant alumni director.

Berea President Francis Hutchins asked Billy Edd,



The cover of Billy Edd's first album: *Billy Edd USA* (1961), featuring 15 original songs.



Johnny Cash and Billy Edd Wheeler, 1980s

"You know, we ask our faculty not to smoke or drink. Is that going to cramp your style?"

Billy Edd replied half-jokingly, "Sir, since I'm being hired part time, I'll only smoke or drink part time."

Dr. Hutchins chuckled and said, "Very well."

At Berea, Billy Edd got acquainted with Betty Cummings, the daughter of country music legend Red Foley. Red's other daughter, Helen, was married to 1950s' heartthrob Pat Boone. With Betty and Helen as the go-betweens, Pat recorded Billy Edd's song "Rock Boll Weevil" in 1959.

But Billy Edd's big breakthrough would take a couple more years. The Berea College Choir had recorded an album, and in between their choral numbers, Billy Edd sang a few folk songs—just him and his guitar. The album got into the hands of New York music producer Harold Newman. He liked Billy Edd's voice and got him a deal on a New York folk label, Monitor Records. In 1961, Billy Edd recorded his first album: *Billy Edd USA*, featuring 15 of his original songs.

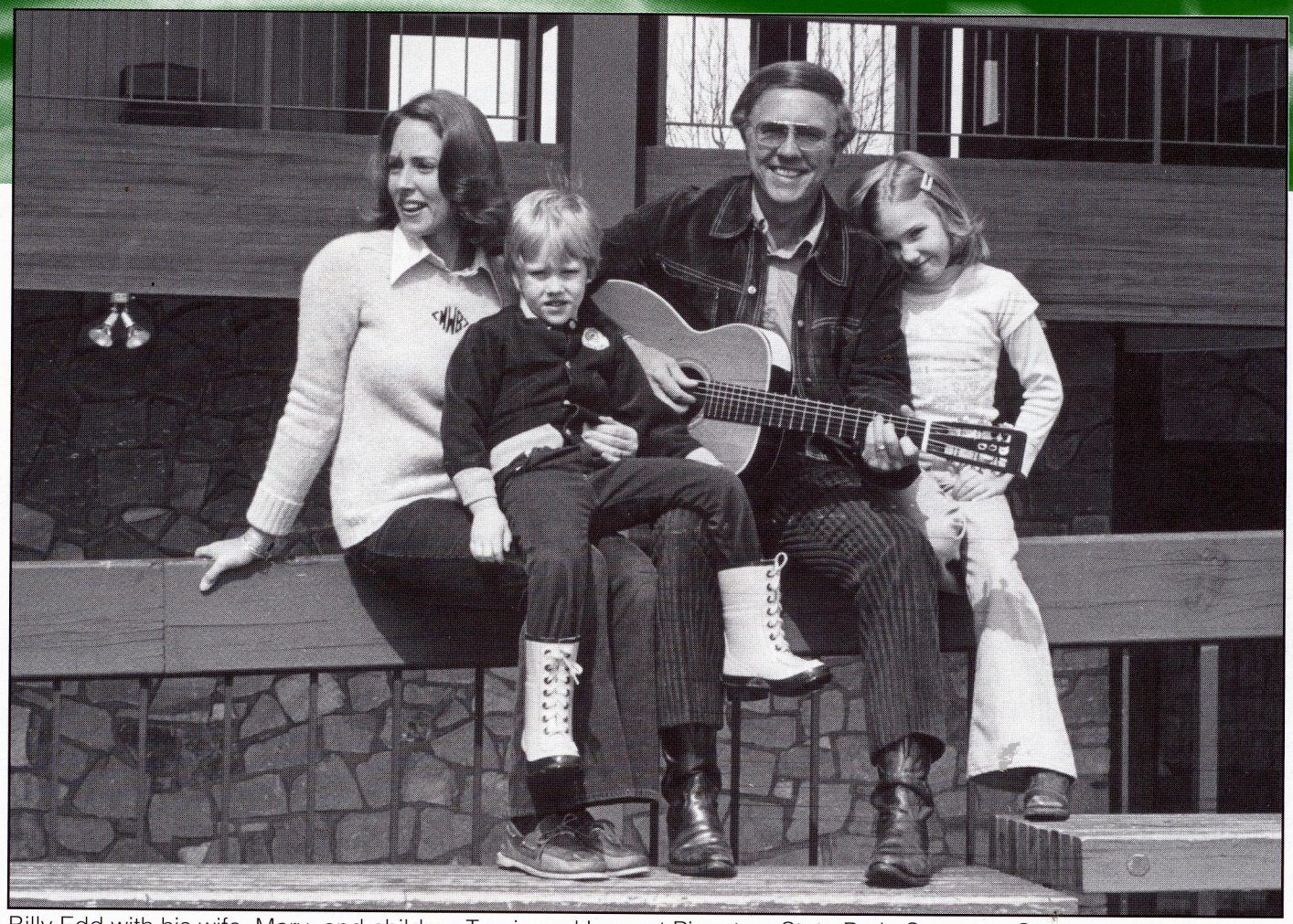
Encouraged by his success, Billy Edd resigned from Berea and enrolled in Yale University's School of Drama, majoring in playwriting. He rented the same room actor Paul Newman had lived in while attending Yale.

Billy Edd began traveling occasionally into New York City in search of folk-singing gigs. On one of these trips, he had a chance encounter with Norman Gimbel, who's remembered for writing songs like "The Girl from Ipanema" and "Killing Me Softly with His Song." Coincidentally, Norman's wife had just bought a copy of *Billy Edd USA*.

Billy Edd was flattered that Norman even recognized his name and got more enthused when Norman told him, "You're a natural songwriter. You write songs like people breathe."

But Norman quickly burst Billy Edd's bubble by adding, "Unfortunately, you're never going to make any money. You just write songs as they come out. You don't shape them and edit them down. Some of them have two or three themes instead of just one main theme."

Many budding songwriters would've given up right then and there; instead, Billy Edd asked Norman for advice. Norman took him to the Brill



Billy Edd with his wife, Mary, and children Travis and Lucy at Pipestem State Park, Summers County, 1970s.

Building on Broadway and introduced him to two of the most prominent songwriters and music producers in the industry. Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller had written, produced, and published 16 of Elvis Presley's biggest hits, including "Hound Dog" and "Jailhouse Rock" and co-written classics like "On Broadway" and "There Goes My Baby" for The Drifters. They later co-wrote "Stand By Me" with Ben E. King. After listening to Billy Edd's songs, they came to the same discouraging conclusion that Norman had but offered some constructive criticism and a word of encouragement. They promised to publish Billy Edd's songs but only if he could write and compose some that were more "commercial" and less "folky."

Billy Edd had been working on a western-themed song about a gunslinger. He'd laid it aside, however, because he didn't know enough about western lore, and it lacked a sympathetic leading character. About that time, a former teacher from Warren Wilson sent Billy Edd a photo of John C. Campbell, a renowned minister and educator who founded the John C. Campbell Folk School at Brasstown, North Carolina. Campbell was pictured wearing high-top boots and sitting on a horse. Billy Edd was impressed but remembered that in Highcoal, all the boys knew who could whip whom. He figured that a minister, even one as strong looking as Campbell, might get his faith challenged by one or two mountain men as he went from town to town preaching, marrying, and burying people.

Billy Edd recalled a song called "Mule Train," with a line that went, "There's a Bible in the sack for the Rev. Mr. Black." Immediately, he thought, "That's the name of my song, and that's my hero. He's not a gunfighter. He's a preacher. And the opening verse fits him as well as the one I wrote for the gunfighter."



Music legends (left-right) Merle Travis, B. B. King, Billy Edd Wheeler, Jean Ritchie, and Tom Paxton, early 1970s.

He rode easy in the saddle, he was tall and lean
And at first you thought nothing but a streak of mean
Could make a man look so down right strong
But one look in his eyes, and you knew you'as wrong
He was a mountain man, and I want you to know
He could preach hot hell or freezing snow
He carried a Bible in a canvas sack
And folks just called him the Rev. Mr. Black
He was poor like a beggar, but he rode like a king
Sometimes in the evening you could hear him sing:
I got to walk that lonesome valley
I got to walk it by myself
Oh, nobody else can walk it for me
I got to walk it by myself

He brought the song to Lieber and Stoller, who helped him cut it down from a lengthy 8 minutes to 3½. The next thing Billy Edd knew, the "Rev. Mr. Black" was being recorded by the Kingston Trio, the hottest folk group of the early 1960s. It was a hit and became one of the Trio's favorite songs.

Lieber also played a key role in shaping what is possibly Billy Edd's most famous song, "Jackson." Billy Edd sang him four verses, but Lieber suggested starting the song with the last one: "We got married in a fever."

Billy Edd argued, "I can't start at the climax. That's the climax of the song!"

Lieber shot back, "Oh yeah, you can. Just think about it. You can write better verses. And then you can end it with the same verse, which serves as a chorus. That is your chorus, even though it's the same melody." In 1967, Johnny Cash and June Carter Cash took "Jackson" to No. 2 on the Billboard charts.

As Billy Edd was becoming a "name" in the music business, some of his songs began to take on a more political tone. In 1962, he wed Mary Bannerman, the daughter of Warren Wilson Junior College's president. On their honeymoon, he wrote the hauntingly beautiful "The Coming of the Roads." His inspiration was a side visit to his grandfather, who lived at Sylvester in Boone County. While



Billy Edd (right) with Bobbie Gentry and John Hartford, late 1960s.



Billy Edd performs at the Mountain State Art & Craft Fair at Cedar Lakes, Jackson County, in 1971. Photo by Kim Johnson.

driving there from Marmet, he was heartbroken to see how a large mountain far ahead had been decapitated by strip mining. Billy Edd still remembers the feeling that came over him that day, "This was long before mountaintop removal was done, with blasting and all of that. This was just done by strip miners." The song, first recorded by Judy Collins, would become a staple of many other folksingers protesting conditions in the Appalachian coalfields.

Another of Billy Edd's anti-strip mining songs had a notable impact. In one instance, after hearing Billy Edd sing "They Can't Put It Back," West Virginia coal operator Lawson Hamilton said, "We *can* put it back, and, by God, we *will* put it back. I put a thousand dollars per acre in escrow, and I don't get it back until the state is convinced that my reclamation is working." He later gave Billy Edd a tour to show he was telling the truth. They became lifelong friends.

Billy Edd stayed in New York, writing songs and releasing albums for much of the 1960s. In 1968, he moved to Nashville to set up and manage the office of United Artists Music Group. The new job left him with more time to work on his own projects, including ones that brought him back to West Virginia.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, Billy Edd was a regular performer and workshop leader at the Mountain State Art & Craft Fair at Cedar Lakes. During this time, he fell in love with the irrepressible banjo playing and wit of "Aunt Jennie" Wilson of Logan County. He recorded an album of her music and stories and released it on his own label. Perhaps more than any other individual, Billy Edd introduced Aunt Jennie—already a local legend in Logan County—to the world. As he recalls, "She was a character, a wonderful West Virginia woman—honest, full of grit and humor."

In 1968, Billy Edd was approached by the group that would eventually become Theatre West Virginia to write an outdoor musical play about the Hatfield and McCoy Feud. The idea was the brainchild of the theater's founder and outgoing director, Norman L. Fagan, who passed it along to incoming director Ewel Cornett. Billy Edd initially hesitated because he was concerned about the negative image the play might give West Virginia; however, he went to the Beckley library, thoroughly researched the subject, and interviewed people who'd known participants in the feud. He took on the project, wove the theme of Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet into the story, and showed a more humane side to the Hatfields and McCoys. Billy Edd wrote the book and lyrics for the play, while Ewel wrote



Billy Edd chats with Willis Hatfield (left), the son of family patriarch William Anderson "Devil Anse" Hatfield, while conducting research for the *Hatfields & McCoys* musical, ca. 1968.

the music. *Hatfields & McCoys* was a rousing success and ran each summer at Grandview State Park in Raleigh County from 1970 to 2014.

Since 1970, Billy Edd and Mary have lived in the mountains of western North Carolina. Over the last half-century, Billy Edd has been one of West Virginia's best cultural attachés to the rest of the world. West Virginia themes and West Virginians figure prominently in his songs and writings. He's often quoted as saying, "I may have left West Virginia, but West Virginia has never left me!"

Several of his most recorded songs were inspired by his childhood in Boone County. "Coal Tattoo" describes a frustrated miner leaving the coalfields to find work elsewhere. Billy Edd notes, "I wanted to write a song about a coal camp burning out and people having to leave, just like I had to leave myself to go and make it somewhere else."

Traveling down that coal town road,
listen to my rubber tires whine
It's goodbye to buckeye and white
sycamore, I'm leaving you behind

The powerful lament "Red Winged Black Bird" likens the spot on the bird's wing to blood and its body to coal. West Virginia's Kathy Mattea, Judy Collins, and Billy Edd have all made stirring versions of these two songs. Another, based on fact, was "The Hole in Uncle Vincent's Wooden Leg." Vincent had lost half of his leg in the mines.

"High Flyin' Bird" is one of the most moving songs ever written about coal mining. Billy Edd drew upon his childhood in Highcoal, which was located in a narrow hollow where the sun would sometimes shine for only a few hours a day.

I used to have an old man, and
he worked in a mine
He never saw the sunlight, but oh
Lord, he kept on a trying
Then one day, my daddy, he up
and died, my daddy up and died
He had to fly away, and the only
way to fly was to die



Billy Edd Wheeler clowns with his dog Gracie Pearl in recent years.

In addition to *Hatfields & McCoys*, Billy Edd has authored outdoor dramas set in Ohio and Indiana and a folk opera for the National Geographic Society. He has written hundreds of songs, is a respected painter and sculptor, and is a poet with several published books. And anyone who's ever spent five minutes with Billy Edd knows how much he loves a good joke. He's written six books of humor: four with Loyal Jones and two by himself.

One of his favorite topics is outhouses—based again on childhood memories. His book *Outhouse Humor* is perhaps the definitive volume on the subject. And one of his most endearing songs is the classic "Ode to the Little Brown Shack Out Back." As Billy Edd notes, "A lot of research went into that song."

He has written two novels and is currently working on his memoirs, *When Angels Whisper*. Despite his busy schedule, at age 83, he still finds time to walk his dog Gracie Pearl twice a day.

Looking back on the past, he points out three pivotal moments: meeting the Presbyterian missionaries Shirley Jo and Walter Smith, getting his songs into the hands of New York music publisher Harold Newman, and meeting songwriter Norman Gimbel. "So those three coincidences," says Billy Edd, "changed my life. I think it's what we used to call in West Virginia '[outhouse] luck!'" –except Billy Edd didn't exactly say "outhouse."

I'll end this story with my own personal introduction to Billy Edd's music. I grew up in Princeton, and we had a radio on top of our refrigerator. One morning, probably in 1965, the DJ announced, "Now here's a song by West Virginia's very own Billy Edd Wheeler—something for you to think about while you're eating your breakfast!" And he played "Ode to the Little Brown Shack Out Back."

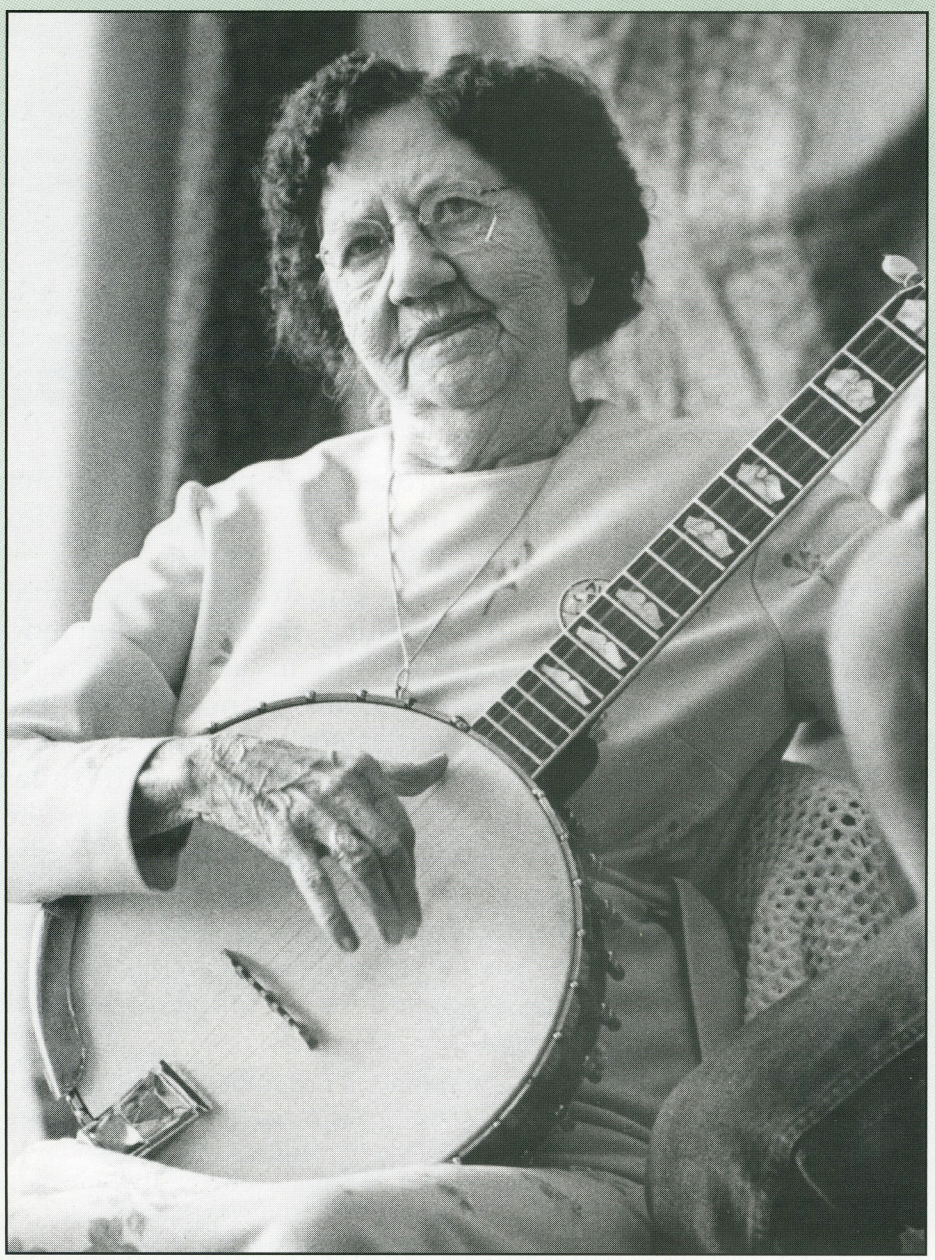
Billy Edd finished his chorus with the unforgettable line, "Don't let'em tear that little brown building down 'cause there's not another like it in the country or the town!" My normally reserved mother broke out in peals of laughter and said, "Thank goodness for indoor plumbing!"

On our drive to school that morning, she laughed out loud and told us about how as a child, she'd once gone to the outhouse and found a blacksnake curled around the toilet opening. Billy Edd's music brought it all back to her. His songs have an extraordinary way of doing that—whether they inspire us, bring tears to our eyes, or make us laugh.

MICHAEL MEADOR, a native of Hinton, grew up in Princeton, attended Concord College (now University) and Marshall University, and is a graduate of the West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine. He has published many articles in GOLDENSEAL. His most recent contribution was in our Fall 2015 issue.

Remembering "Aunt Jennie" Wilson

Virginia "Aunt Jennie" Wilson (1900-1992) of Logan County was one of the best old-time banjo players and storytellers in West Virginia history. Aunt Jennie was featured on the cover of our Spring 1984 issue and received the 1984 Vandalia Award, West Virginia's highest folklife honor, for lifetime achievement in traditional music. Billy Edd Wheeler became close friends with her in the 1960s and recorded an album of her music and stories, A Portrait of Aunt Jennie Wilson. *Here, he recounts some of the tales she told him. –ed.*



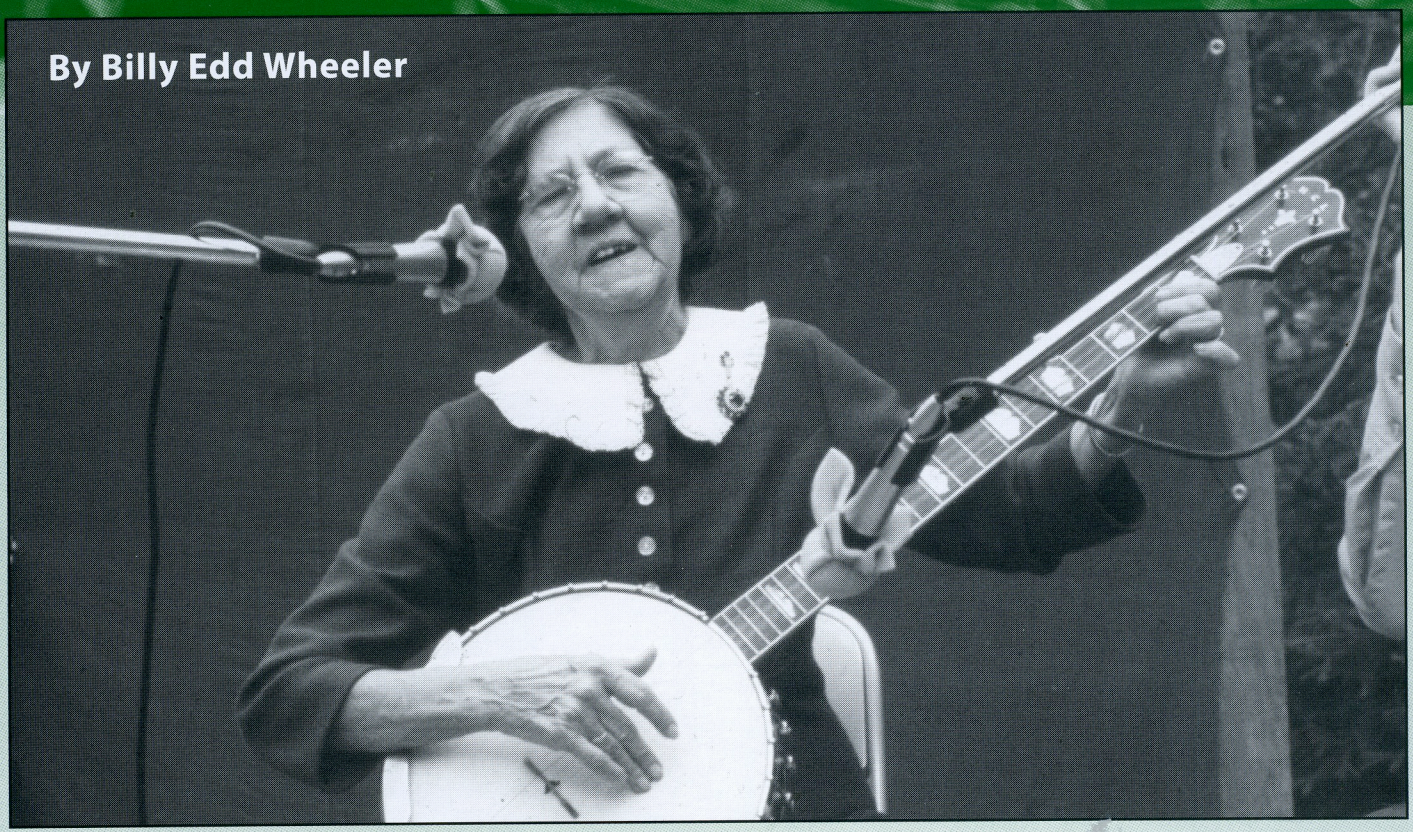
I met "Aunt Jennie" when we were both performing at the Mountain State Art & Craft Fair back around 1965. She was full of stories. I just fell in love with her. She'd tell me about incidents she'd had. And one of her admonitions to women was, "Buddy, it pays a woman to learn how to shoot a gun. You don't know when you're going to be in a tight place and want to get out of there."

I'm telling you, she was feisty. She went to a barn dance. She called her fellow bandmates *musiciners*. She was upstairs, and a fight broke out. She told me, "Somebody fired a shot that went square through my banjer, and I didn't know if I was shot. I slewed that banjer down by my side and checked to see if there was any blood. People was fighting, men



Left: Aunt Jennie Wilson performs at one of the first Vandalia Gatherings in Charleston in the late 1970s. Right: Billy Edd (far left) with Aunt Jennie Wilson of Logan County and Frank George of Roane County at Warren Wilson College in Swannanoa, North Carolina, 1970s. Courtesy of Roger Bryant.

By Billy Edd Wheeler



Aunt Jennie Wilson at a music festival in the late 1960s.

and women. I walked through that crowd almost paralyzed, just like Frankenstein. I went downstairs, and the minute I stepped outside, somebody shot a horse, and it fell dead right at my feet. I saw the man I'd rode to the dance with. He'd locked hisself inside of an old Model T and wouldn't open the door and let me in. Too dern afraid to open the door. I'll tell you, I never went out with that coward again, even if he did have the only Model T in the county!"

She followed the creek bank to her uncle's house, where she was staying. Her uncle questioned her about the incident, "Well, I reckon there was a fight up there, and probably somebody got shot or stabbed or something?"

Aunt Jennie said, "Oh no, it was right peaceable."

She wrapped up this story by saying, "I didn't want to tell him the truth. I thought it was kind of exciting, and I might want to go back there again!"

One time, I drove her down to Warren Wilson College in North Carolina to play a show. Down in the Beckley area, a woman driver cut across right in front of me, and I almost hit her. And just like that, Aunt Jennie said, "Young lady, that's a good way to get your picture in the paper and your [rear end] in the morgue." I mean, it just came out!

My wife, Mary, and I were having lunch with her, and Mary saw scars on Aunt Jennie's arms and upper back. When Mary asked about it, Aunt Jennie said, "I was dating a feller in another county and was fixing to go see him, when a man said, 'I don't think you'd better do it. That man's dating a woman there who's carrying his baby.' And I said, 'You don't tell Aunt Jennie what to do. Buddy, I'd druther die at a man's feet than be outdone by him.' So I went on, and when me and him was dancing, that woman walked up and said, 'You're not a dancing with my man.' From that, she took out a knife and started cutting on me." Mary asked, "What in the world did you do?" Aunt Jennie replied, "Well, I had a knife too, and let's just say I didn't back down. Honey, have some more of them beans."

She was one piece of work! She was a mountain woman like none I'd ever met. She had a great sense of humor. One of her sayings was, "Don't take no more on your head than you can kick off at your heels." To me, that's the West Virginia version of the Peter Principle—a lot of people are promoted beyond their capacity to do the job.



The Culture

West Virginia's "Treasure

Forty years ago this summer, the West Virginia Science & Culture Center (now known familiarly as the "Culture Center") was dedicated on the State Capitol Complex in Charleston. For four decades, it's been a showplace for the state's artistic, cultural, and historical heritage. From the West Virginia State Museum and Archives, to the Norman L. Fagan West Virginia State Theater, to the State Historic Preservation Office, to the Commission on the Arts, to the Library Commission, to events like the Vandalia Gathering, the Culture Center spotlights what makes West Virginia the amazing place it is.

While construction of the center now seems like a no-brainer, it was far from inevitable when first proposed in January 1966 as part of a new capitol master plan. At the time, the entire campus consisted of only the capitol building and two state office towers—one of which was known as the *DMV Building*. By the mid-1960s, though, the size of government had far outpaced available office space on the complex, so the state was renting buildings all over Charleston. As such, the master plan emphasized new office buildings and more



Photo by Steve Brightwell.

Center House"

By Stan Bumgardner

"Much of our artistic beauty is our very life itself. This is what we'll strive to capture in the [Culture] Center." –Norman L. Fagan

parking—a never-ending problem that still exasperates state workers and visitors alike.

Seventh on the priority list was an "Archives and History Building," ranked below new office buildings, a storage warehouse, and a cafeteria. Ever since the capitol was dedicated in 1932, the state museum and archives had been crammed into makeshift spaces in the basement and top floor of the building—areas too small to accommodate thousands of artifacts and millions of documents. The space constrictions also meant that larger artifacts and collections had to be rejected and sent out of state. A notable example was an intact post office building that served the community of Headsville in Mineral County from 1860 to 1914. The state museum was unable to house anything of that scale, so the old post office was rebuilt in the Smithsonian's Museum of American History.

Despite the desperate need for an Archives and History Building, it remained low on the priority list in favor of office space. In the years after the master plan was developed, the most prominent additions to the campus were two modern-looking office towers, now referred to generically as





Governor Arch Moore and Arts and Humanities Director Norman L. Fagan (shown here in 1976 talking to Moore at the Culture Center's dedication) were the building's biggest advocates. Courtesy of the West Virginia State Archives (hereafter WVSA), Culture Center Collection.

Buildings 5 and 6, which were completed in 1971.

The tide began to turn, though, when Arch Moore became governor in January 1969 and quickly familiarized himself with the master plan. Norman L. Fagan, executive director of the West Virginia Arts and Humanities Council, invited the new governor—whom he had never met—to attend the council's next meeting. Fagan had made a name for himself as head of the West Virginia Historical Drama Association, which produced the statehood play *Honey in the Rock* each year at Grandview State Park in Raleigh County and was about to launch Billy Edd Wheeler and Ewel Cornett's musical *Hatfields & McCoys*.

Fagan didn't hear back from Moore before the Arts and Humanities Council meeting and assumed the governor wouldn't be attending. Fagan recalls that meeting: "All of a sudden, the door flies open and in walk two state troopers followed by the governor." Moore was possibly the most gifted politician the state has ever known. As he sauntered around the room, he greeted all 15 council board members by name—a memory skill that would astonish friends and foes alike throughout his career.

Moore soon called Fagan and asked how he could give the arts and history a much needed boost. Fagan didn't hesitate, saying, "The state museum is an embarrassment, and the state

A building being demolished in 1973 on the future site of the Culture Center. Photo by Earl Benton, courtesy of Charleston Newspapers.





The left side of this aerial photo, taken before the construction of the Culture Center or interstate, shows cars parked along Duffy Street and the "Rose City Block," which were demolished to make way for the center. Courtesy of the WVSA, Department of Commerce Collection.

Library Commission is located in a commercial storefront. You need a building that can house the museum, archives, Library Commission, and Arts and Humanities."

After that meeting, Moore and Fagan began ironing out the principal details for what would become the Culture Center. Fagan noted that the two had immediate chemistry, perhaps in part because of their military backgrounds but also because, as Fagan puts it, they were both "dreamers."

In April 1969, only three months into office, Moore announced publicly that the Culture Center would be a top priority for his administration. He asked the legislature to increase the Office Building Commission's authority to issue revenue bonds for $35 million to support state parks and mental hospitals and to construct an "Archives and History Building." He estimated the cost of the new building to be in the $8-10 million range.

There was initial resistance, both politically and in the community. Secretary of State Jay Rockefeller, who was already planning a run against Moore in 1972, opposed the project because of the state's financial struggles and a large deficit in

the state's road fund. Moore countered that the two issues were unrelated and pushed onward.

Then, there was vocal opposition from local business people and residents whose property would be acquired by eminent domain for the new facility. The proposed construction site would take out an entire city block, referred to locally as the Rose City Block—named for the Rose City Cafeteria at the corner of Duffy and Washington streets. Some people had lived and worked in the Rose City Block as long as the capitol had been there. In a fit of hyperbole, barbershop owner Bob Barker compared the governor's eminent domain actions to Hitler. However, there were some legitimate complaints, including Michael and Mary Collias, who'd operated the Swan Superette since about 1945. The state paid them only $3,000 in relocation fees.

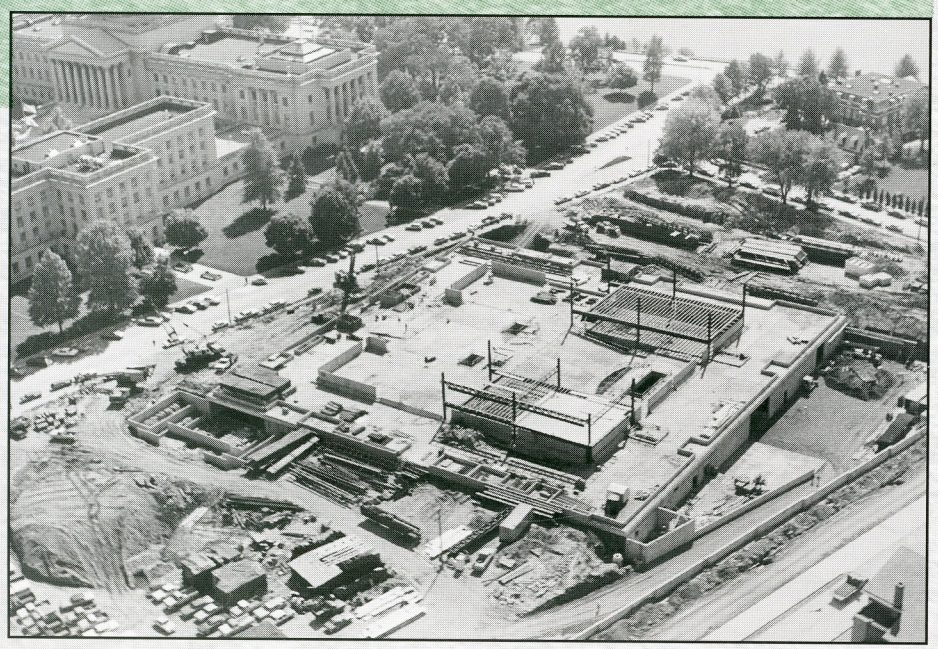
Without question, Arch Moore was one of the most controversial and polarizing figures in West Virginia history, but he knew the game of politics like nobody else. For example, despite overwhelming Democratic majorities in both houses of the legislature, the Republican Moore frequently pushed through his own projects. The Culture Center was a prime example. Largely due to his behind-the-scenes maneuvering, the legislature authorized the Office Building Commission to increase its indebtedness from $27.5 million to $60 million to cover the costs of several projects, including the Culture Center.

Despite local protests, demolition of the Rose City Block began in March 1973. The architectural firm of C.E. Silling & Associates—fresh off its completion of the WVU Coliseum—designed the center. Initial plans had called for a building with three wings, with a cafeteria in the center and a large reflecting pool in front. By the time the design was revealed in 1973, however, Moore had scrapped the pool, fearing that some might use it for bathing and recreation. The cafeteria also had been eliminated because Moore and the architects had learned from other libraries and museums that food should not be prepared in the same building that houses "ancient keepsakes."

The center was designed to be 60 feet high, shorter than either wing of the capitol, to avoid overshadowing Cass Gilbert's masterpiece. It would be built from the same Indiana Limestone as the capitol. Earlier additions to the complex, particularly Buildings 5 and 6, were and are still harshly criticized for not blending in with the capitol's look and feel.

And there was a new addition to the plans: a theater. By this time, Fagan had moved to Washington, D.C., first to work for the new John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts and then to serve as director of Performing Arts and Public Media Programs for the National Endowment for the Arts. Even though Fagan was more than 350

This aerial photo from Charleston Newspapers shows the Culture Center under construction in 1973 and the giant pit that earned the nickname "Archie's Bunker."





The Culture Center's glass windows capture the reflection of the state capitol, 1976. Courtesy of Charleston Newspapers.

miles away, Moore still relied on him regularly for advice. Fagan emphasized to Moore the importance of "having an appropriate venue to showcase and document West Virginia's performing artists." He wanted West Virginians to have a Kennedy Center-like venue they could be proud of. Thus, the West Virginia State Theater—now named for Fagan—was born.

When Moore revealed the designs publicly, he spoke emotionally of the center's significance. Journalist John G. Morgan described Moore's vision as a "rich panorama of archives and history and the arts all coming to life in a West Virginia treasure house."

Foundation work began in 1973 as contractors excavated an enormous crater to the west of the capitol and poured 52 65-foot caissons to support the five-story building. The center had become the governor's pet project, and the massive crater sparked a catchy nickname: "Archie's Bunker," inspired by the popular television program *All in the Family*.

Moore was involved in every facet of the building's construction—down to choosing paint schemes and engaging Bloch Brothers Tobacco of Wheeling to paint a Mail Pouch barn sign

in the museum. He was on the construction site so often the builders called him "The Boss."

His close ties to the project prompted one of the great anecdotes in Culture Center history. Near the end of the project, contractors began etching these words above the entrance:

ARCHIVES HISTORY LIBRARY
MUSEUM THEATER

The workers took a break after etching the H in ARCHIVES. One of Moore's top political foes was Democratic Senate President William T. Brotherton. That day, Brotherton was walking by the construction site and fumed, "I knew it! I knew he'd name it after himself!" The building was not, in fact, named for Moore; although, his efforts are honored with a bust of him on the balcony.

Moore dearly loved the building he'd helped shape. As work neared completion in 1976, he bragged to local reporters that the "Science and Culture Center is and will be very much alive with the energy of West Virginia." He then personally led the journalists on a tour through every nook and cranny of the building. When asked how he knew so much about it, he proudly shot back, "After all, it *is* 'Archie's Bunker.'"

The governor tended to one piece of unfinished business. He sent word to Washington that Norman Fagan *must* be the director of the new center. Fagan remembers that he debated his decision for 10 or 15 seconds before accepting.

Harley Warrick, known as the last of the Mail Pouch barn painters, paints one of his iconic signs in the West Virginia State Museum in the basement of the new Culture Center, 1976. Photo courtesy of the WVSA, Department of Commerce Collection.

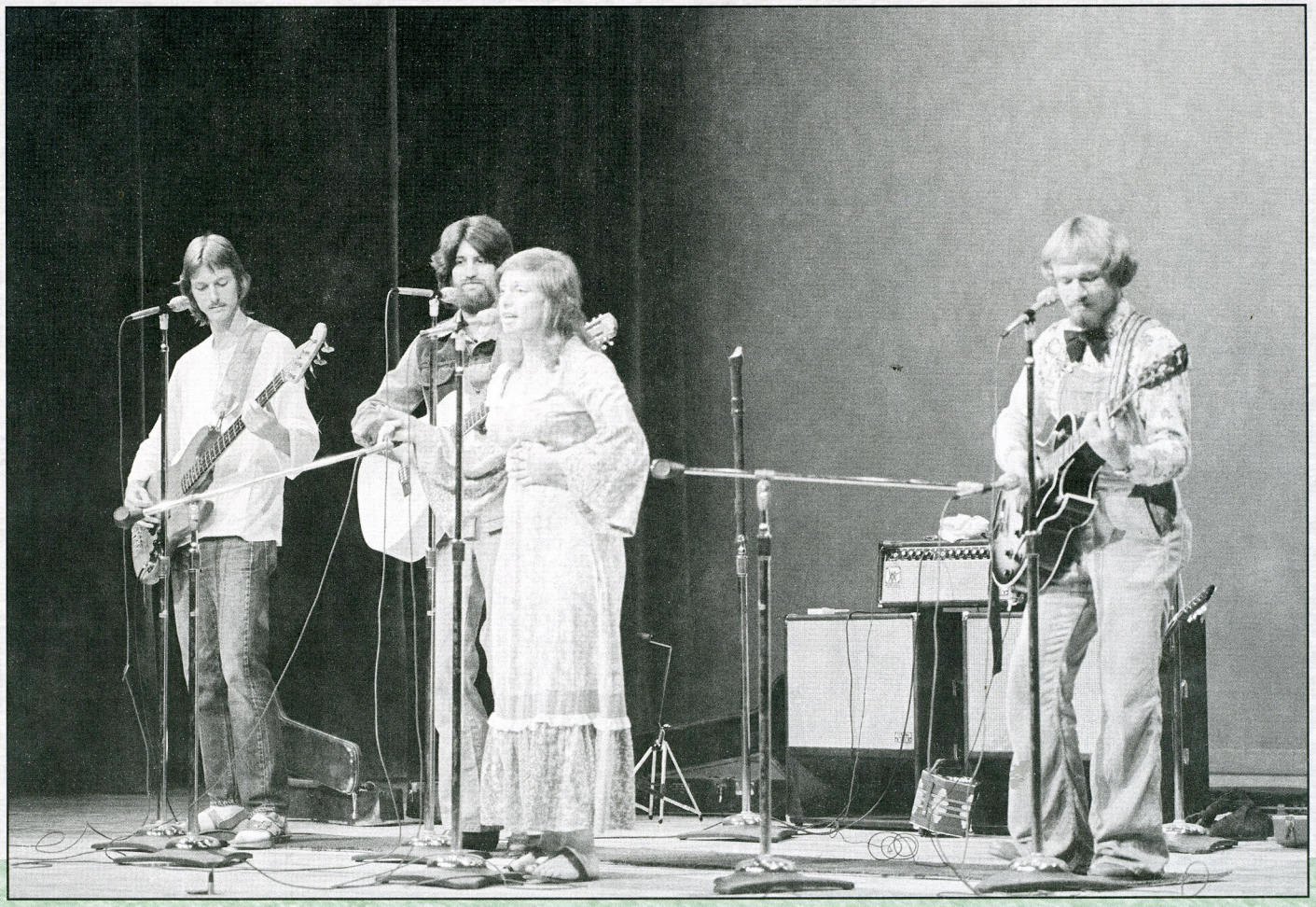


Shortly before the building's opening, Fagan commented that the Culture Center was "nicer than the Kennedy Center, which cost $70 million."

The Culture Center had gone considerably over its estimated $8-10 million budget, coming in around $14 million. Fagan added, "The governor has insisted that only the best of everything be put in the center, and that's what's in it, the best." In early 1976, the legislature investigated how the governor had finagled the extra funding without authorizing the sale of more bonds. Moore, who was constantly under the microscope for his handling of money, had paid for the overrun by collecting rent from the financially strapped Department of Highways, which had moved into Building 5. Legislative attorney Jack McCarty looked into the matter and determined that Moore had acted improperly, but not criminally, in imposing the rent.

The center was supposed to be dedicated with a three-day event on the weekend of June 18-20, 1976—a joint celebration of West Virginia Day and the nation's Bicentennial. However, one contractor didn't finish on time, so the dedication was postponed to Sunday, July 11, with festivities from noon until midnight. An estimated 30,000 West Virginians poured in to get a glimpse of their new Culture Center. The Valley Bell Dairy donated enough ice cream to feed 15,000 but ran out halfway through the day.

The dedication featured outdoor and indoor performances,



The Putnam County Pickers perform in the West Virginia State Theater for the Culture Center dedication. The band featured future members of the Mountain Stage Band Steve Hill (far left) and Ron Sowell (far right), along with Rusty Wells on acoustic guitar and Sandy Sowell on vocals. Photo by Steve Payne.

including puppet shows; the Abbey Brass Guild, featuring WVU faculty members; the Charleston Jazz Band; the Wild Turkey String Band from Morgantown; and folksinger Roger Bryant of Logan County. The variety was just as diverse in the theater. Fagan kicked off the ceremonies by thanking First Lady Shelley Moore for her contributions to the project and then introduced the governor. Moore called the center a "historical, scientific, and cultural tapestry of a mountain people" and an "opportunity to understand ourselves better as West Virginians." He ended by exclaiming, "I'm proud to be a West Virginian!" The approximate 500 audience members erupted in a spontaneous standing ovation.

After Moore concluded his remarks, the Charleston Symphony Orchestra (now West Virginia Symphony Orchestra) struck up Aaron Copland's "Fanfare for the Common Man." The symphony was followed by a virtual jukebox of West Virginians: the Putnam County Pickers, featuring future members of the Mountain Stage band, playing their unique combination of jazz, bluegrass, country, and rock; classical pianist Dr. Charlotte Giles of

West Virginia State College (now University); the Currence Brothers, a bluegrass band from the Randolph-Upshur county area; Trapezoid, a fixture in the early days of the center, from Randolph County; the Newsome Gospel Chorus of Charleston; the Wheeling Symphony Orchestra; and, finally, wrapping up the late evening, the Morris Brothers Band, a popular old-time group from Clay County. After the opening, even the project's harshest critics became believers.

One urban legend has floated around about the Culture Center for 40 years. Rumor has it that Governor Moore rushed the building to completion for his daughter Shelley's wedding reception. That legend can be put to rest. According to Fagan and news accounts from the time, Moore did push contractors to finish the job more quickly but only so the center would be ready before the Bicentennial on July 4, 1976—a deadline the contractors missed by a week. Shelley, now a U.S. senator, didn't marry Charles Capito until November of that year—more than four months after the dedication. The lavish reception for his daughter's wedding in the Culture Center's Great Hall was likely the proudest moment of Arch Moore's governorship—occurring only two months before he left office.

The next year, Norman Fagan became the first commissioner of the Department of Culture & History, under incoming Governor Rockefeller. Relying on his connections to the National Endowment for the Arts and state support, Fagan launched many of the events that would become most closely associated with the Culture Center: the Vandalia Gathering, Dance Festival, Contemporary Theater Festival, Juried Art Exhibition, Black Cultural Festival, Poetry Festival, and Jazz Festival, to name a few. He also initiated a technical assistance program to support communities, government agencies, individual artists, and cultural organizations.

The only thing missing from the Science & Culture Center was the science. There was virtually no science in the entire building other than a geology display in the museum. Recognizing this, Fagan subtly began dropping the word "Science" from the name, hence it's now called simply the West Virginia Culture Center—or just Culture Center.

Over the past four decades, millions of people have visited the center, which is also home to the popular West Virginia Public Broadcasting radio program *Mountain Stage* and a renovated state museum, which opened in 2009. The Culture Center continues to make West Virginians proud of our state and has fulfilled Governor Moore's vision of becoming West Virginia's "treasure house."

Come help us celebrate the 40th birthday of the Culture Center on July 16, 2016. For more details, visit http://www.wvculture.org/.

STAN BUMGARDNER is editor of GOLDENSEAL magazine.

The band Trapezoid entertains the crowd in the Great Hall at the dedication of the Culture Center. Photo by Steve Payne.



Early Events at the Culture Center



The Black Cultural Festival (above) premiered in 1981. The first Vandalia Gathering in 1977 featured tents with musicians from different counties. Clarence Cottrell plays harmonica at the Calhoun County booth (below).







The West Virginia Jazz Festival, featuring the Preservation Hall Jazz Band (above) in 1977, and drumming legend Butch Miles (below)—who grew up in Hinton—in 1979.



The West Virginia Dance Festival (shown here in 1981) provides in-depth learning experiences for dancers and their instructors.



The West Virginia Juried Exhibition (shown here in 1979) features the best of Mountain State artwork, including paintings, sculptures, printmaking, drawings, photography, mixed media, and crafts.



FAIR MINDED

Photographs and text by Anna Dickson James



Sonora (left) and Shelby James of Charleston visit the State Fair of West Virginia in 2015.

My girls and I were born in big cities. I was born in Tucson, had my oldest in Philadelphia, and my youngest in Seattle. We got used to the cement, bustling activities, and neighbors so close we could hear them flush their toilets and change their TV channels. Where we live now on the East End of Charleston, squirrels and stray cats are the only wildlife, and our "green space" is a 5 x 3-foot patch of dirt outside our rented apartment. I struggle to keep spindly, dehydrated impatiens alive and toss away the unopened seed packets I buy each fall with good intentions. Our one thriving plant I can't even identify. It is invincible and needs no care except pruning, but I let it grow so wild that it spills onto the sidewalk. A neighbor once clipped it down when I wasn't home.

We're city girls, through and through, and isolated from the world of agriculture that produces our fruits and vegetables, meat, and other necessities. We could easily be convinced that magic is responsible for the jars of honey, cans of beans, and boxes of meat we buy at Kroger—instead of an army of workers, backed by science, who create these products for our table.

By the time we city types pay for our pork chops in tidy Styrofoam containers, we're so disconnected from their origins, it would be easier to picture farmers picking neat, bloodless chops off trees instead of the reality: live animals being herded for slaughter and processing. Our blackberries could have been spat like Skittles from a machine into flimsy plastic containers rather than plucked from prickly bushes warming in the sun. Intellectually, we know where our food comes from, but there's a heart-separation. The hard work of harvesting and preparing the food for consumption has been done for us.

But for my citified daughters and their citified mom, that distance between the origins of our food and our supper table might as well be like driving to the moon. That's why our annual pilgrimage to the State Fair of West Virginia means so much to us. We don't just get a lesson in agriculture at the fair; it's far more than that. For us, the fair is a magical place, enticing enough to lure my girls off their phones and away from their friends. For this one day every year, my daughters and I feel more connected with one another, with our state, and with our community.

When my girls and I visited the fair last summer—as we've done every August since 2010—we experienced all the usual things. We stood in long lines for homemade cinnamon rolls dripping with butter and hot frosting and then to Trudy's Dairy for frozen bananas. We followed up that treat with tangy barbecues, sweet brown beans with cornbread, deep-fried Oreos, and a powdered-sugar elephant ear. We enjoyed the games and rides and then paid a buck to see a "real live" zombie and another dollar to see the world's smallest horse. We tossed dimes into old thrift store glasses and ashtrays, hoping to win a vintage Bugs Bunny jelly jar. We even heard Kanye West blasting from speakers that mingled with the sounds of an old-style carnival barker.

"Everyone's a winner!" the barker yelled. I thought this was a nice, modern advance in the carnival world. My 14 year old tossed dull darts at underinflated balloons until she walked away triumphantly with a Rasta Banana.

As much as we loved the food and games, though, we spent the bulk of our time with the plants, the animals, and the people who work with them. Our first visit, as always, was to the brainy bristle-backed pigs. We stretched our arms through the bars, scratched behind their ears, and gave their rumps a good pet. We walked through dusty, fragrant barns with fans trained on the soft, clean bodies of Holstein dairy cows and Angus beef cows that the farmers, their wives, their children, and their workers relentlessly maintain. We read the names of the farms, admired the blue-ribbon winners, and watched the folks clean stalls, bathe goats, blow-dry horses' tails, and polish hoofs for show. It's hard, dirty work that also requires intelligence and skill.

It's a world we'd never know without the State Fair of West Virginia.

One of our favorite places is the birthing barn. Last year, we watched a cow go through the



Shelby James pets a sleeping pig at the State Fair.



Sonora and Shelby James caress a baby calf, which was born only hours earlier.

birth process, and when things were progressing too slowly, the farmer got concerned. He adeptly reached into the mother and tied a thick, coarse rope around the unborn calf's legs. The cow stood eerily quiet and still as if she knew the man was there to help. I stared in amazement. The crowd around us leaned in and watched intently. We held our collective breath. I looked at the mother next to me, and she looked back at me. We were strangers experiencing this together, and we smiled at each other in wonder. The farmer braced himself and gave a long hard tug. A half-born calf, as still as a stone, slept at the end of the farmer's rope. The mother cow lowed. One more strong pull, and a blood-soaked sac of hair and bones fell on the soft straw floor. The crowd gasped. There was a silence among the spectators as we weren't sure if everything was okay, and then the mother began licking her calf. The calf wiggled its ears and kicked. The crowd let out a sigh and cheered. We looked around at one another and then back at the calf. I hugged each of my daughters. "It's a boy!" the farmer bellowed. I was so caught up in the moment and so much a part of the experience that I echoed his words, "It's a boy! It's a boy!" I wished I'd had cigars to hand out.

A few feet from the birthing barn was a nursery where, every year, two docile calves with eyes as big as boiled eggs rest in a shelter. Amazingly, visitors can walk into the shelter and pet the hours-old calves, whose fur is as soft as velvet. There's never anyone monitoring the calves. There's not even a line leading up to them. We stepped over a hay bale that keeps the animals in, petted the sleepy calves, and cooed to them gently. We were as close to our food source as anyone could possibly get.

"This is where our milk comes from," I whispered to my girls. It'd be easy to fall victim to a gentler way of thinking—to imagine only nostalgic-looking farms as they appeared in Grandma Moses' paintings, with perfectly rounded trees, light-beige ground that's never muddy, the sheep bleached white, and hens with fluffed feathers. But I was yanked from this way of quaint thinking when we tried our hand at milking a goat, with assistance from Rod White and A. J. Carpenter of MAC Dairy. The barn smelled of pungent dung. The goat, tied to a stake, was skittish and shy. When my daughter crouched on the stool to milk her, both the goat and

my daughter were nervous. Perhaps sensing this, the goat bucked and put her hoof in the pan of milk they'd been filling up for a while. A. J. had to dump all the precious liquid because of potential fecal contamination.

Farming can be messy and frustrating, but Rod simply smiled and retrieved a new bucket. "Don't worry about it," was all he said, and then he asked me to give it a try. I smelled the soft animal fur of the goat, heard her loud chewing in my ear, gripped her teat firmly, and pulled. Milk shot straight out in a stream so small I thought it'd take a whole morning to get enough to cover a small bowl of Wheaties. Still, Rod celebrated with me and said in a gregarious voice, "You're doing it!" And I was. I'd milked a goat.

Not long after, we moseyed over to the garden, where we met Mike Myles, a 10-year certified master gardener. Like everyone we've ever met at the fair, Mike was incredibly gracious and generous with his time. Escorting the three of us on an impromptu tour, he was sharp and knowledgeable and reminded us about the science of farming. We stopped at a tall vine dangling a few feet above our heads, and he challenged us to find the vegetables on it. We finally saw a small, green bead of fruit that, by its markings, resembled a teeny tiny watermelon, or maybe a pickle. I'd never seen anything like it before.

"It's a Mexican cucumber," he told us, and popped one into his mouth.

"We're allowed to eat these?" I replied.

"It's the last day," he said and handed one to each of us. The crisp, juicy cucumber was full of fresh flavor. We felt special and lucky, just like when we saw the calf being born. Just like when there was no line to milk the goat. Just like when we got to pet the big-eyed docile calves.



Food and entertainment go hand in hand at the State Fair. Here, Sonora James sinks her teeth into an ear of corn while taking in the chainsaw competition.

Mike explained how they have to keep the pH in the soil just right, how there are appropriate times to water, and when to withhold water for a greater yield. He talked about hybrid tomatoes and what it takes to create certain flavors and textures. I longed to slip on some gardening gloves, dig in the dirt, and break up rough soil until it yielded dark, soft beds for seedlings. I wanted to water the sprout, encourage the vine, and pop one perfect cherry tomato that I'd grown myself into my mouth.

I was suddenly tired of plastic containers and those thin plastic produce bags we put every vegetable in. The fair had me longing to trade them for a sun hat and a woven basket so I could gather my own.

Across from the garden was a free lumberjack show, sponsored by Stihl. The show was clearly a marketing scheme to sell products—a mock competition between two college-age men outfitted in plaid shirts, loose-fitting dungarees, and long beards I imagine they'd grown for the gig. At first, I was disillusioned by the apparent marketing ploy, but there was a crowd, and my girls seemed interested. I was reminded of tonic salesmen and the fact that there's nothing new under the sun. Much like the zombie attraction we'd seen earlier, the performance was an old concept in a new form. So, I gave in. We grabbed some fresh roasted corn on the cob and found a spot on the bleachers to watch as the men sawed designs into logs and



Anna, Shelby, and Sonora James wrap up a long, enjoyable day at the State Fair of West Virginia and begin looking forward to next year's journey.

climbed poles with just their feet and a hank of rope. They were impressive. What they did was an art. It was clear they'd practiced many hours, and my girls and I cheered wildly along with the rest of the crowd.

The show's winner held his chainsaw above his head and looked a bit like Magic Mike, cavorting for the ladies while revving his impossibly loud chainsaw engine for the children and men. After the show, I spotted the contestant-performers after they'd changed into their skinny jeans and T-shirts. Without the plaid shirts, but still fully bearded, they looked more like hipsters on summer break from college. The line between them and the past was so thin.

The 2015 fair was winding down, so we headed out past the grounds and back up through the barns, where we'd parked. I felt so overwhelmed with gratitude for the day that I shouted rather loudly, "I love the fair!"

A man in his late 50s or early 60s was sitting on a folding chair outside one of the barns. He was fit and wearing a white T-shirt, jeans, and a red baseball cap with an M&M's logo.

"What do you like about it?" he asked.

I replied, "The animals, the shows, the people, the food, the games."

"Do you have any animals here?" he asked. He wanted to know if we were showing. I felt flattered.

"Nah, I'm a city girl," I said. "You can have a rabbit," he said.

I suddenly beamed. I don't know why I reacted so strongly. Perhaps it was the sense of community, or how genuinely friendly West Virginians are, or perhaps it was how he opened the door and essentially said, "Here's a chance for you, a confirmed city girl, to take part in the fair." If I wanted, I could actually be part of the experience and not just an observer.

Since that day, I've revisited his words many times. And I've revisited our day at the fair. I now work a little harder on the green patch beside our apartment. I buy more of my fruits and vegetables from local farmers at Charleston's Capitol Market. I've even looked into buying my meat from small local farms. And I've affectionately remembered the newborn calf and the crowd's cheer and the pigs we scratched and the way the cucumber tasted, plucked straight from the vine.

The 2016 State Fair of West Virginia will be held at Lewisburg August 12-21. You can find out more by visiting http://statefairofwv.com/ or calling (304)645-1090.

ANNA DICKSON JAMES, who has a master's degree in fine arts in Creative Writing from Queens University of Charlotte, is an assistant professor of English at Southern West Virginia Community College. She's won numerous awards in poetry, short fiction, and novels from West Virginia Writers, Inc. Her most recent work appears in the 2016 *Anthology of Appalachian Writers*. You can reach her on Facebook or at her blog site: http://annadicksonjames.wix.com/writer. This is her first contribution to GOLDENSEAL.

The Roots Run Deep

Photographs and text by Steven Keith unless noted otherwise

Some of my fondest childhood memories were planted in the berry patches and fruit farms of Appalachia.

My parents would load up the station wagon with empty buckets for the drive along dirt and gravel roads, my sister and I craning our heads out the window in anticipation of that first glorious sight—soon to be followed by the sweet, sweet taste of fresh mountain-grown fruit. Rows and rows of it, as far as the eye could see, just waiting to be plucked. And sampled, of course.

My sister and I took our "quality control" jobs very seriously, tasting at least one strawberry or blueberry from every fistful—you know, just to make sure our harvest was good enough to take home.

"You're not eating too much, are you?" Mom would ask, with a knowing grin.

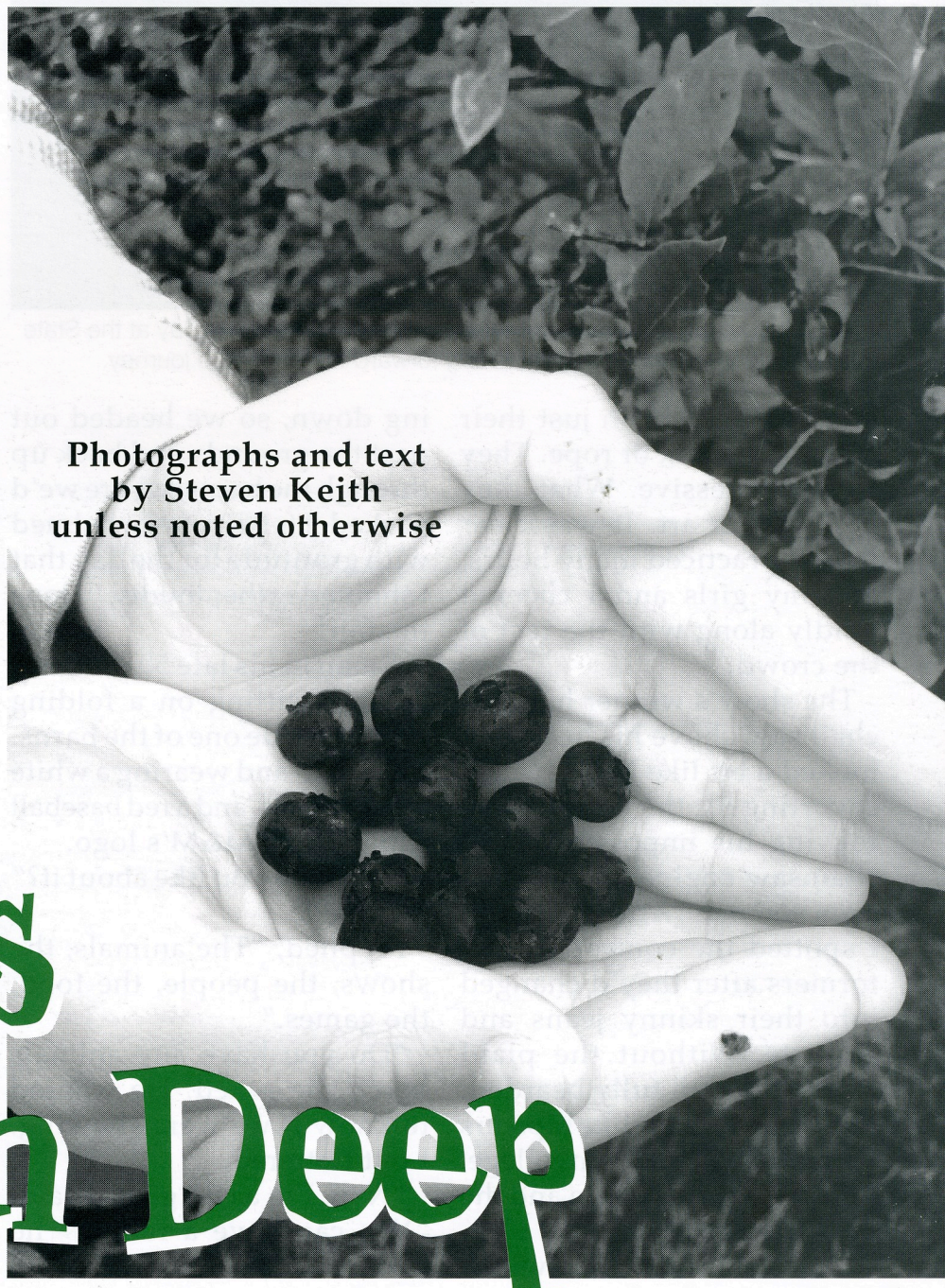
"Oh no!" we'd insist. But the Technicolor blue, purple, and red stains circling our mouths said otherwise.

Hours later, we were sunburned, exhausted, and scratched to bits. Our tummies were bloated with nature's bounty. We'd fall fast asleep on the ride home, hugging a bucket in each arm and dreaming about how soon we could go back.

These are the experiences I cherish from my childhood, which is why it's so important to provide them to my own children now. They've spent joyous hours picking blueberries in Clay County, apples in Greenbrier County, and various other fruits of the land during hikes throughout our great state.

Our family fruit-picking tradition mirrors so many others

Freshly picked blueberries at Blueberry Hill at Flat Top in Mercer County.



throughout the hills and hollers of West Virginia, a state blessed with an abundance of farms, pick-your-own patches, farmers markets, and roadside stands bursting with juicy blueberries, strawberries, raspberries, blackberries, and more.

At places like Blueberry Hill at Flat Top in Mercer County, The Briar Patch at Mount Hope in Fayette County, Herot Hall Farm at Kenna in Jackson County, or Orr's Farm Market at Martinsburg in Berkeley County—just to name a few—you can plop a ripe berry in your mouth, feel the juice dripping down your chin, and taste something almost heavenly.

For most West Virginia fruit growers, their passion for farming is rooted in deep family traditions. Mary Beth and Lester Lind of Barbour County both grew up among gardeners, albeit on opposite sides of the country. As a child in Oregon, Lester earned his spending money by picking all kinds of berries on his family's large farm. Thousands of miles away in West Virginia, Mary Beth's

White Oak Berry Farm at Renick in Greenbrier County.



Berry Farming in West Virginia

family often took "truck trips" around the state to pick any ripe berries they could find.

"Strawberries, blackberries, huckleberries, raspberries, elderberries, cranberries, it didn't matter," she said. "And if we picked enough wild strawberries or blackberries, Mom would make delicious homemade jam for us!"

But berry picking wasn't just a fun activity for her family members. It was part of their livelihood. "When my father was a boy, he picked and sold strawberries to help pay for his college and medical school tuition," she recalls. "Then later, as a country doctor, he sometimes got paid with wild berries, especially the wild huckleberries from Dolly Sods."

Her father's ingenuity is part of what inspired her and Lester to start farming in Randolph County in the early 1980s.

"We wanted to raise our own food and sell quality food to local markets. We started out growing a variety of vegetables and some fruits—strawberries, blackberries, and blueberries—but eventually started specializing in blueberries over time."

Business was good, but when they moved to Barbour County around 2010, they decided to cut ties with farming. "We really thought we were done, but that didn't last long," she explained. "It was still in our blood, so when the opportunity presented itself, we decided to experiment with a high tunnel." High tunnels, or hoop houses, are unheated greenhouses that extend growing seasons by protecting crops from damaging elements like wind, storms, cold, and heat.

"We planted red raspberries and also experimented with some Northwest berries from Lester's Oregon roots, like boysenberries, Marion berries, and some Triple Crown blackberries."

White Oak Berry Farm is one of many sites in the Mountain State where fruit lovers can pick their own berries.



It wasn't long before they were hooked once again, and their Whole Life Farm in Barbour County has been going strong ever since.

"To this day, we still do all the picking ourselves and sell the fruit to farmers markets, restaurants, and grocery stores."

Just not quite all of the fruit.

Mary Beth always leaves enough behind to do some cooking herself. She's even written her own cookbook, *Simply in Season*, featuring recipes bursting with sun-ripened, farm-fresh fruit. Sitting down to enjoy a homemade slice of blueberry pie, still gooey-warm from the oven? It doesn't get much better than that.

Like the Linds and so many others, Max and Anne Robinson also trace their love of fruit back to the days when they plucked it from rows, patches, and trees as kids. They now enjoy helping others create their own memories as owners of White Oak Berry Farm at Renick.

Anne still remembers picking berries on Little Knob above Spring Creek in Greenbrier County and cherishes the family time it provided.

"It was such great fun," she recalls. "There was the camaraderie of the family together and the promise of pies and jam when we returned home." Now, she sees other families sharing similar moments.

"One of the most enjoyable parts of this whole experience is to see the husbands and kids who first came to the farm only because their wives or mothers insisted, but now they come back on their own because they love it so much. Then, we eventually see kids growing up and bringing their own children and grandchildren back.

"I think we offer the best of both worlds at White Oak Farm—great blueberries and fun family time," she said. Parents, grandparents, great-grandparents, and children can all come together, stroll out into the patch, and talk about what they are going to do with the berries when they get home.

"There are no thorns, no crawling on the ground, and the buckets fill up quickly. Many folks tell us their visit is one of the highlights of their summer."

Max and Anne had long dreamed of starting a pick-your-own farm. They bought the land they're now on in early 1993 and wanted to plant their first blueberry bushes that fall. But Max had been studying horticulture at West Virginia University and knew he needed to adjust the land's naturally sweet limestone soil to accommodate acid-loving blueberry plants. His plan worked, and the farm's first berries were ready to harvest in 1997.

But the birds beat them to it. After that setback, they installed bird netting, and the next crop was a blooming success. While Max and Anne have raised other crops and animals (like red raspberries, blackberries, garden produce, and lambs), blueberries have always been their main focus.

"People love picking blueberries because they are delicious



A winter's worth of blueberries, ready to be frozen for fresh keeping.

and so wonderful for baking," she added. "Their appeal is timeless."

And she feels like picking your own fruit has the same appeal. Although some may view it as an older, dying tradition, a recent surge in farm-to-table eating and back-to-nature experiences has made berry picking trendy again.

"There is such an interest in knowing where our food comes from, and being able to see where it is grown and how it is grown," she says.

"While it is true there are fewer farmers raising our food these days, the number of customers who want fresh natural food is increasing. I think it will stay that way for future generations, which is great for West Virginia because we have such a strong rural agricultural tradition with great small farms."



The official court of the West Virginia Strawberry Festival at Buckhannon. Date and photographer unknown. Courtesy of Noel Tenney.

Noel Tenney of the Upshur County Historical Society is working on a historical narrative about Buckhannon's West Virginia Strawberry Festival,

Your Berry Farm Bucket List

Looking for a great place to pick your own fresh fruit? Or perhaps you'd like to tour a working farm, make your way through a corn maze, or play in a fall pumpkin patch? Here are a few fun spots to check out across the Mountain State:

- **A & A BERRIES**, Fayetteville: blackberries, blueberries, raspberries, strawberries (304)574-4160 or (304)640-2648
- **BLUEBERRY HILL**, Flat Top: blueberries (304)787-3930
- **BLUEBERRY RIDGE FARM**, Bunner Ridge: blueberries (304)368-8294
- **THE BRIAR PATCH**, Mount Hope: blueberries, blackberries, raspberries, honey in season (304)877-2448
- **COLD RUN VALLEY BERRY FARM**, Berkeley Springs: blackberries, blueberries, raspberries (black), strawberries (304)258-2828
- **FLORAL ACRES**, French Creek: blueberries (304)924-6462
- **HEAVENLY BERRY FARM OF WV**, Exchange: blackberries, raspberries (304)765-2281
- **HEROT HALL FARM**, Kenna: blueberries, picnic area, birthday parties, weddings (304)993-7799
- **McCONNELL BERRY FARM**, Morgantown: blueberries, blackberries (304)291-0015
- **ORR'S FARM MARKET**, Martinsburg: blackberries, blueberries, cherries, flowers, grapes, muscadine grapes, pumpkins, raspberries (red, black), strawberries (304)263-1168
- **SHADY OAKS BLUEBERRY FARM**, Poca: blueberries, raspberries 1(888)304-5638
- **SIZEMORE FARM**, Clay: blueberries (304)587-4670
- **WEST VIRGINIA FRUIT & BERRY**, Bridgeport: blueberries, blackberries 1(888)982-3779
- **WHITE OAK FARM**, Renick: blueberries (304)497-3577

which celebrated its 75th year in May. It's a project near and dear to his heart.

"There is something special about picking your own berries and going right into the kitchen to make shortcakes, jams, preserves, and much more," he says. "My paternal grandmother, Nora Ann Butcher Tenney Sayre, loved wild strawberries and knew where all the best fields were. At times, she commandeered all of her grandchildren (there were 19 of us) for her wild berry jaunts."

Noel says she always gave them large buckets that had to be filled completely, but one time, they tried to fool her by stuffing the bottom half of their buckets with leaves, then covering them with berries.

"Of course," recalled Noel, "she was not fooled—and we had to go back and refill our buckets with much closer supervision. It was all worth it, though, because she made the best strawberry shortcake ever."

He explained how she would make sweet biscuit dough, roll out thin rounds about 12" in diameter, put butter on each layer, and bake them in the oven.

"Then she sliced lots of strawberries, sweetened them just right, and spread them between each layer, stacked up maybe five layers high with berries on top, all covered with fresh whipped cream. In her early years, she had worked as a cook in a lumber camp in Webster County, so she knew how to make lots of anything," he remembers. "It was all certainly worth the work and the wait."



As West Virginia's Commissioner of Tourism, Amy Shuler Goodwin spends a lot of time promoting the Mountain State's abundant pick-your-own farms for visitors in search of an authentic back-to-nature experience. But it's a job that comes naturally since she's one of the busiest berry pickers around. Every summer, you'll find her exploring the state's farms in search of something wild and wonderful growing there.

"I pick berries with my boys every year at Blueberry Hill. It's my favorite thing to do."

And those memory-making days with her family yield some short-term benefits as well.

"I freeze at least 20 pounds for the winter," Goodwin says. "Homemade blueberry pancakes every Sunday in the winter is a tradition at our house."

A tradition still deeply rooted in the fields and farms of West Virginia.

STEVEN KEITH writes a weekly food column as "The Food Guy" for the *Charleston Gazette-Mail* newspaper in Charleston. He can be reached at (304)380-6096 or by e-mail at wvfoodguy@aol.com. You can also follow him on Facebook and Twitter as "WV Food Guy," on Instagram and Pinterest as "WVFoodGuy," or read his blog at http://blogs.wvgazette-mail.com/foodguy/. This is his first contribution to GOLDENSEAL.

Johnse Hatfield

By F. Keith Davis

From atop the mountain, Johnson "Johnse" Hatfield stepped toward the edge of a lush, wooded ridge. Lighting his worn corncob pipe, he took several long puffs of homegrown tobacco and looked over the point, surveying his surroundings. He could see several miles in every direction, even though a thick fog was rolling into the valley below.

It was early June 1898, and Johnse had recently returned home to southern West Virginia from the Great Northwest. It was relatively early in the season, before the annual summer flooding of the Guyandotte River. Johnse wanted to amass as much timber as possible, wait for the summer floods, and float the logs downstream toward Logan and then on to Huntington. He planned to ship a smaller amount by rail, still a relatively new form of transportation in that part of the state. By using both methods, he could keep his logging team gainfully employed while making a good profit.

Courtesy of the Coleman C. Hatfield Collection.



From the rim, Johnse could see the crew wrapping things up in the dirty logging camp. It felt good to be home, breathe the mountain air, and once again have the respect of his father, William Anderson "Devil Anse" Hatfield. Devil Anse, in addition to being the leader of the Hatfield clan, was one of the largest landowners and most prosperous timber operators in the region.

Historians have long debated when exactly Johnse Hatfield headed west. Some believe he might have left as early as 1894. Coleman A. Hatfield, the late Logan County historian, attorney, and son of Johnse's brother Cap, reported that Johnse headed west in 1896.

In Washington state, Johnse worked on various logging crews while hiding out from recovery agents and detectives who wanted to collect the bounty related to old Hatfield-McCoy Feud charges. From the time he was a pre-teen, Johnse had worked for his father as a logger, but he really honed his skills in the tall, dense forests of Washington and British Columbia.

Violence and Mayhem after the Vendetta



In the late 1890s, Johnse Hatfield oversaw a logging operation in Mingo County. This photo shows lumberjacks skidding logs in Logan County around the turn of the century. Courtesy of the Coleman C. Hatfield Collection.



The logs were skidded by horse, mule, or oxen to be milled. They were then tied together and floated downriver as a raft. Courtesy of the West Virginia State Archives (hereafter WVSA).

Randolph McCoy, patriarch of the McCoy family and mortal enemy of the Hatfields, had heard rumors of Johnse being on the lam out west. Such information likely leaked from Johnse's resentful ex-wife and Randolph's niece Nancy McCoy Hatfield Phillips, who was now married to "Bad Frank" Phillips, the once deputized gunslinger and nemesis of the Hatfields.

It didn't take long for Randolph to bankroll a posse of bounty hunters, helmed by well-known detective Dan Cunningham, to track Johnse across the American frontier. Living as a fugitive in various timber camps along the Snoqualmie River, Johnse dodged Cunningham's band, eventually traveling as far as British Columbia to avoid capture. Although Johnse had several close calls, the pursuers never caught up with him. He later remembered, "I never spent such terrible hours as I did watching them hunt for me." A family friend in Washington even helped him fake his own death—and not for the first time—by sending a lock of Johnse's hair back to his folks in West Virginia.

Johnse eventually grew weary from years on the run. He realized he couldn't travel long enough or far enough to avoid the McCoys' fury or the recovery agents' greed. He decided he'd be safer if he returned to the Appalachian Mountains and his father's protection. Besides, he desperately missed his kinfolk and his way of life back home in the hills.

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Johnse, born in 1862, was the eldest child of Devil Anse and Levicy Hatfield. He was at the center of the most violent and most romantic tales of America's most famous feud. Although there'd been earlier violence between the Hatfields and McCoys, the most deadly era of the feud started in 1882 with the murder of Devil Anse's brother Ellison by three of Randolph's sons in Pike County, Kentucky. The Hatfields retaliated by killing all three McCoy boys firing-squad style. Most historians believe Johnse was not only a



Despite the violent role Johnse played in the feud, he's best remembered for his short-lived romance with Randolph McCoy's daughter Rose Anna. This is the only known photo of Rose Anna. Courtesy of the WVSA.



The illustration of Rose Anna and Johnse is from John R. Spears' *A Dramatic Story of a Mountain Feud*. Courtesy of the WVSA.

participant in the execution, but one of his father's "right-hand men."

Johnse also took part in the horrifying New Year's Massacre of 1888, when the Hatfields burned Randolph's cabin; bludgeoned Randolph's wife, Sally; and killed two more of his children, son Calvin and daughter Alifair. The McCoys accused Johnse of beating Sally with the butt of a Winchester and leaving her for dead with permanent brain damage. The Hatfields, on the other hand, blamed Sally's attack on their equally violent uncle, Jim Vance, who'd led the raid. For the Hatfields, Uncle Jim Vance was a convenient scapegoat because he'd been gunned down by a posse just days after the massacre. A month after the raid, Kentucky officials arrested nine members of the Hatfield clan but couldn't locate Johnse, his brother Cap, or their father, Devil Anse, who all seemed to have vanished into thin air on the West Virginia side of the Tug River.

While these two events show the violent side of Johnse, he's probably best remembered in history—thanks to romanticized books and movies—for his ill-fated romance with Randolph McCoy's daughter. In his book *The Hatfields & McCoys*, author Virgil Carrington Jones told about how the handsome womanizer Johnse first met Rose Anna McCoy in 1880 at an Election Day in Pike County. Jones wrote that Johnse immediately "hatched a plot as old as Eve" and swept Rose Anna off her feet. They slipped away from the crowd into the dense woods and began a short-lived love affair, which only intensified problems between the two clans. The doomed relationship ended soon after.

Many believe the romance produced an illegitimate child, Sarah "Little Sally" Elizabeth, who died as an infant in 1881; however, investigating the story in 1948, Jones couldn't find sufficient evidence of the birth. At the time, he spoke with Pricey Scott. In the 1880s, Pricey's mother, Nancy Jane Burns, lived just up the road from Rose Anna. Nancy Jane told Pricey she was certain Rose Anna had come down with the measles and lost the baby.

After separating from Rose Anna, Johnse married her cousin, Nancy McCoy, the first of his four marriages. The late Logan County historian Robert Y. Spence asserted that Rose Anna died in 1888, perhaps succumbing to grief over the

loss of her child and lover; although, other reports—as well as her gravestone—suggest she died in 1889.

During the 1880s, when the feud was at its peak, Johnse was often considered the most conceited, unpredictable, and unstable Hatfield. Time and distance, though, can sometimes have a mellowing effect. When he returned to Logan County from Washington state in or about 1898, he started reinventing himself as a successful timber entrepreneur. Johnse was now flourishing with a new family. He'd married a levelheaded woman, Roxie Browning, his third wife. Johnse oversaw his growing lumber camp in Mingo County, near the Leatherwood Shoals region east of Gilbert. Although the property technically belonged to Roxie's family, Johnse profited from the camp. After spending most of his early life in violent confrontations and on the run, it seemed like Johnse's life had finally settled down.

Then, on an extremely hot day in early June 1898, Johnse and one of his dearest friends, Ock Damron, headed out a little early from the camp. Johnse's trip home, typically a leisurely stroll along the Norfolk and Western Railway tracks, forever changed his life.

Coleman A. Hatfield [see "The Scholar and the Legend: The Research of Coleman A. Hatfield" by Robert Y. Spence, Fall 1995] wrote that Johnse and Ock emerged from a heavy cut, where rock had been excavated from a hillside and leveled to make way for the railroad. Three men—led by the unrelenting Dan Cunningham—dressed in dark suits and carrying lever-action rifles, stepped from the shadows and stopped the two. Simultaneously, three more armed men climbed from a slightly hidden culvert on the opposite side and surrounded Johnse and Ock. The gunmen leveled their weapons within inches of Johnse's and Ock's foreheads.

No shots were fired, and few words were spoken. Ock, who happened to be carrying one of Devil Anse's old Winchesters, was trembling as he handed over his rifle. Being unarmed, Johnse stood motionless and quiet.

According to Coleman, Johnse was forced to his knees, hog-tied with a heavy cord, hurled across the saddle of a small mare, and tied down. Johnse watched helplessly as the men took turns slugging Ock repeatedly about his face and head. Pounded nearly unconscious, Ock yelled out and fell forward with a thud. The posse splashed water in his face to revive him and jerked him back to his feet. The men gagged him with a dirty rag, hit him again, tied his hands tightly behind his back, and secured his legs together with rough binder twine. Ock was eventually freed, with the twine still dangling from his wrists and legs. Johnse watched his friend stagger slowly back toward the logging camp.

The posse mounted in unison and ushered Johnse's horse into the fast-moving current of the Tug River. Johnse grimaced as muddy river water splashed in his face. Just as the men stepped onto Kentucky soil with their prize prisoner, Humphrey "Doc" Ellis, a timber business rival of Johnse's, stepped out from the shadowy edge of the woods on the West Virginia riverbank. Doc, who'd organized the posse, had eagerly awaited any chance to shut down Johnse's logging enterprise. Some historians suggest that in the heat of their business



Johnse Hatfield, about the time of his arrest in 1898. Courtesy of the Coleman C. Hatfield Collection.



Dan Cunningham was constantly on the lookout for Hatfields in the late 1800s, chasing Johnse as far as Washington state before finally capturing him back in Mingo County. Courtesy of the WVSA.

competition, Johnse had even threatened Doc's life. Amused at the spectacle of Johnse's capture, Doc repeatedly fired his rifle and cackled heartily.

Once in Pike County, Johnse was arrested, taken to jail, and arraigned for trial in September 1898. He obtained a change of venue to Floyd County on the grounds of prejudice but was still convicted of killing Randall McCoy's daughter Alifair.

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According to Robert Y. Spence, the Hatfields were infuriated at Doc Ellis. Devil Anse's son Elias, who'd been too young to participate in the main feud events, saw this as a chance to demonstrate his family pride. Soon after, Elias ran into Doc exiting a train at Gray Yards, a Norfolk and Western whistle stop near Williamson.

When Doc stepped from the passenger car, he spotted Elias standing on the boardwalk. Sensing trouble, Doc impulsively fired his rifle, but the bullet whizzed over Elias' head. While ducking, Elias drew his Colt single-action army revolver from his holster and squeezed the trigger. The slug hit a metal cufflink on Doc's wrist and ricocheted upward, striking him in the neck. Doc's eyes rolled back in his head, and he fell forward. Dead. Elias fled the scene and hastily left for Oklahoma Territory.

Johnse was sentenced to life in the Kentucky State Penitentiary for his involvement in the 1888 New Year's Massacre. The March 12, 1900, edition of the *New York Times* led with the headline, "Hatfield Must Go to Prison. Murderer of Woman in Feud to Serve Life Sentence."

Some say prison time sobered up the cockiest of the Hatfields, but it was actually another act of violence that secured his freedom. In a bizarre twist of fate, Johnse won his parole in 1904 by saving someone else's life. Like many events with the Hatfields and McCoys, the details change depending which version you read. According to accounts by Coleman C. Hatfield and former state Historian Laureate Otis Rice, Johnse saved the life of Kentucky's lieutenant governor, William Pryor Thorne, who happened to be visiting the penitentiary when another inmate jumped him. Author Dean King and others suggest Johnse saved the penitentiary warden's life instead. In either instance, the accounts are similar in one aspect—Johnse saved a man's life from a knife attack while killing his fellow inmate in the scuffle.

Every six months for the previous four years, Johnse's family had appealed to Kentucky's governor for a pardon. Each time, the governor had refused. However, when the governor was out of state one day, Lieutenant Governor Thorne stepped in and acted on behalf of the governor. Whether it was his own life Johnse had saved or that of his friend, the penitentiary warden, Thorne signed Johnse's pardon against the wishes of Kentucky's governor. Thorne wrote, "The McCoy and Hatfield people, parties to the feud, after twenty-six years, desire peace. Both sides of the feud are anxious to cross out all old scores and settle their differences."

It'd taken nearly two decades to track down Johnse Hatfield, and in the blink of an eye, after serving only a fraction of his prison stint, he was pardoned of the brutal 1888 murder of Alifair McCoy and all other outstanding feud-related indictments in Kentucky, including the 1882 execution of the McCoy boys.

In 1904, Johnse moved back home. While in jail, his third wife, Roxie, had died. So, he married again, for the final time. He eventually resumed his career as a timberman and later worked in the railroad industry.

Elias Hatfield returned to the Mountain State after a brief stay in Oklahoma and was convicted of murdering Doc Ellis in December 1899. He



Johnse Hatfield is seen here later in life, long after the feud guns had died down. Courtesy of the WVSA.

spent less than 16 months of his 13-year sentence in the West Virginia State Penitentiary and was pardoned in April 1901 by Governor A. B. White—less than two years after he'd gunned down Doc in broad daylight. In his official statement, Governor White made passing reference to a self-defense claim but based his pardon on the fact Elias had been diagnosed with tuberculosis and supposedly had only three months to live. The Hatfields' extensive political connections had paid off once again.

After the pardon, Elias and his brother Troy got jobs with the Baldwin-Felts Detective Agency but eventually turned back to a life of crime. On October 17, 1911, Elias, Troy, and Octavio Jerome, an Italian immigrant, were killed in a three-way shootout over a liquor dispute at Harwood, near Boomer, in Fayette County.

In 1904, the year Johnse was freed from prison, the Chesapeake and Ohio Railway arrived in the city of Logan and vastly transformed the region. The feud guns and memories of the Hatfields and McCoys slowly faded away. Johnse Hatfield died in April 1922, just over a year after the death of his father, Devil Anse. Their lives had been entangled with violence, while in death, they rest peacefully, side by side, in the serene Hatfield Family Cemetery at Sarah Ann in Logan County.

F. KEITH DAVIS, the CEO of Woodland Press in Chapmanville, appeared on the History Channel's 2012 companion documentary to the award-winning miniseries *Hatfields & McCoys*. He is the author of several books, including *Images of America: Logan County, West Virginia Tough Boys*, and *The Feuding Hatfields & McCoys*, coauthored with Dr. Coleman C. Hatfield. His most recent contribution to GOLDENSEAL—about Cap Hatfield—appeared in the Spring 2016 issue.



The Quinn family celebrates Christmas 1952 at their home in Wheeling. The front row includes (left-right) Melissa, baby Patti, Suzanne, Amy, Louise, and our author, Kathleen (Kate). The back row includes (left-right) Colin, Tom, and Michael. All photos courtesy of Kate Quinn.

City Kids on the

I grew up in Wheeling with eight siblings [see "Woodsdale Kids: Memories of a Wheeling Neighborhood," by Kate Quinn; Spring 2013]. My father, Thomas W. Quinn, was a traveling salesman. He decided that the best way to make more time for his kids was to take them along. So, on many holidays and all summer, we'd pack up our camping gear and head off on an adventure. My mother's idea of roughing it was black-and-white TV. The joys of nature didn't thrill her, so she stayed home.

We explored campgrounds from Ohio to Maryland, every state park in West Virginia, and a few spots in Pennsylvania. Beginning with a World War I pup tent, we graduated to a waterproofed parachute that, when held up by a tree or pole, could shelter at least eight. Eventually, my dad started selling camping trailers along with encyclopedias and other items. So, we purchased a

fine canvas-covered slide-out trailer with two ¾ beds. It was the height of luxury. Even when it was parked in our garage in Wheeling, we begged to sleep in it. He marketed it at a local gas station and had us girls demonstrate how easy it was to open. We drew crowds and sold enough trailers to pay off our own. We were so seasoned at putting up the trailer that one night, we pulled into a campground in a downpour, had everything set up, and were in bed asleep in less than 20 minutes.

My dad really wanted us to appreciate farm life and hard work. When I was 11, he bought about 100 acres of farmland in Ritchie County from Lutrell Davis. Lutrell, who was our closest neighbor, served as the local postmaster, pumped gas, and ran a general store in the nearest town (10 people lived there!). We were fascinated with him, and, over the years, he and his wife, Delta Nile Davis, became like family. At his store, you could buy a "pig in a poke," get a Nehi from the deep cooler, find a new pair of overalls, and listen to Lutrell's stories on the porch. He and Delta Nile were a font of information about country living. At 85, he still wore overalls, baled hay, and worked his small farm. He prided himself on how fast he could hand-roll a cigarette and once out-rolled my brother-in-law, who was using a rolling machine. He also guarded our farm when we weren't there, and since you had to drive through his property to get to ours, he was vigilant about who went down that road. When Lutrell was in his eighties, he hit it rich when oil was found on his land.



The author's father, Thomas W. Quinn, instilled in his children a love of camping and farm life.

Our farm was several miles off a gravel road over a river—which often flooded—and down a one-lane dirt road that had seen better days. We kids named the place and put up a sign saying, "Welcome to Booneyville." No one had lived

Farm

By Kate Quinn



The Quinn family cabin and farm in Ritchie County, showing the bridge built by the girls—or as our author remembers it, the one that "is still standing."



The farm required hard work, including repairing equipment. Here, the author's father sits on the tractor while her brother-in-law Ned Greeneltch makes repairs.

on the farm for years, so the weeds had grown up to the windowsills of the old one-story farmhouse. There were two barns, a chicken coop, and a toolshed. My brothers loved the four-seater outhouse, but it was flimsy, so we replaced it with a solo version with a Dutch door and a skylight. My dad cautioned us to make it inconspicuous. We ignored him and painted it purple with big yellow polka dots.

For our first task, the girls challenged the boys to see who could construct a better bridge across the creek. With some good fatherly advice, we built two bridges, and it gives me great pleasure to brag that the girls' bridge is still standing. Next, we tackled the weeds. It took days and days with a sickle and scythe—leaving countless blisters on our hands—but we tamed the weeds. To this day, I've never worked so hard in my life.

There was no electricity or running water, so we made a makeshift bathtub on the porch from an old Wheeling Steel tub and filled it from a well. We spent more days scraping off wallpaper, which was actually old newspapers, and then painted the walls. Dad bought some secondhand furniture; family and friends donated other pieces. Part of the front room was filled with beds, and the other room became the parlor and library—a few comfortable chairs and a bookshelf on the wall. We put an eight-burner cooking stove and a gas refrigerator in the kitchen. There were gas wells on the farm, so we always had free gas. We even convinced our city friends we had a gas TV.

Being from the city, we weren't used to how dark it got in the country. The whippoorwills called, the sun dropped, and it was so dark you couldn't see your hand in front of your face. My father gave us astronomy lessons as we gazed at the beautiful stars. Kerosene lamps provided most of our indoor light until my dad got the gas fixtures working. The dreaded task of washing off the lampblack was just another daily chore. My dad installed two necessities: a phone and big gas heaters in every room. Our neighbors thought we were pretty highfalutin to run a gas line two miles from the main line.

Eventually, we put in our first garden. It was just an acre but seemed to go on forever. After building the bridge, digging potatoes was the second hard-



The author's brother Colin standing along the small dirt road leading to the farm.

est work I'd ever done. Since we weren't there full time, we couldn't keep animals; however, at different times, we had a horse, a sheep, and chickens. Mostly, it was a tree farm thanks to the 4,000 pine trees we planted—the third hardest work in the world. The chicken coop was a playhouse for my five-year-old sister Patti, who called herself Mrs. Elderberry and had a rooster named Nickle-Rubble-Rubbagrub. The fowl was a delightful distraction.

My youngest brothers, Michael and Colin, were about six and eight years old. They filled the deep potholes in the road with stones. Goodness knows how many buckets of stone disappeared after a few days of rain, but it still helped a bit. My sisters Suzie and Amy (10 and 15) were good farmworkers, while sister Louise (13) preferred the city and rarely came with us. My mother visited once, moved a barrier on the porch, fell through, and broke her leg. She never returned. My oldest sister, Melissa, was in college, and my oldest brother, Tom, was a Marine, so they didn't see the farm until many years later—when it'd already been tamed by our hard labor.

When we weren't working our tails off, we explored the area. There was a place we called Four Corners, where four dirt roads intersected. Rambling roses covered a fallen-down house. I wondered who'd lived there before and what their story was. Amy and I sometimes rode our horse bareback in shorts to a tiny country store, where we picked up flour and sugar to bake a cake. I can still recall the odor of the horse's sweat mixed with the smell of summer. As we galloped back to Booneyville, the cake nearly mixed itself in the pillow sack before we got home.

My dad encouraged us to invite friends, who he viewed as more free labor. Dad was nobody's fool. My little brothers often had neighbor kids from Wheeling join us for a week or so.

We used a gas line in the yard to burn trash and sometimes start a campfire. A valve in the woods behind the house regulated the gas flow. One night, my dad was telling stories around the campfire. He pulled out a transistor radio and pointed it at the fire. The flames leapt up and died back down depending on the radio volume. Dad had conspired with my brother Michael, who hid in the woods and turned the gas valve up and down on cue. We played the same hoax on our visiting city friends. Our friend Marty was stumped by the "magic." The next day, during a rainfall, he was out by the campfire, getting more and more frustrated as he frantically turned the radio's volume up and down with no effect on the fire. How we teased him about that one!

My father soon became friends with and made a deal with the men who maintained the gas wells. In exchange for selling his share in a well, they bulldozed two ponds for us: a swimming hole near the farmhouse and a water reservoir for the house. My little brothers built a high diving board on the edge of the swimming pond before it was completed. There was only one problem. The stream that was supposed to divert water into the pond didn't cooperate, so our pool was just a big empty bowl. It was the only grass lawn in West Virginia with its own diving board. Pipes from the reservoir eventually made their way to the house. When we first turned on the water, the pressure was so great it flooded the house. We decided

we could live without running water. Years later, we took a poll on whether to install electricity, but it was voted down too. We liked how our country lifestyle contrasted with our city life.

Frequently, my dad and I visited country families in hopes of selling encyclopedias. My favorite memory was when he gave one poor family some free book samples. The looks on the children's faces as they paged through the "wonder book" made me realize just how lucky we were to have three sets of encyclopedias at home.

Dad eventually gave up sales and became a land man, acquiring mineral rights for coal, oil, and gas companies. He invested in the booming oil and gas industries and several times was rewarded with a gusher. Before that, though, we always lived by his hopeful words "if the well comes in" whenever we asked for a new dress or other fripperies.

At an early age, each of us learned how to shoot a gun and often went hunting with Dad and his invited guests. Game was so plentiful back then. We usually hunted on Thanksgiving. Quite often, you could pick off a bear, deer, rabbit, squirrel, or wild turkey from the porch.

One day, my sister Amy drove our old pickup down to the Davis farm. We never traveled anywhere without a rifle, so we were always "packin'." We came across a man lying in the road. He was incoherent and unable to walk well, but Amy wasn't taking any chances. She pointed her rifle at him and told him to get in the back of the truck. She drove straight to the sheriff's office in Harrisville and delivered her prisoner. As I recall, the sheriff had one arm, and his deputy had only one leg. Days later, the sheriff drove to our farm to tell us that the man had taken too many NoDoz and gotten lost with no idea where he was. The sheriff might have raised an eyebrow at these city kids with firearms, but he never raised a fuss. My father was proud of us.

As teenagers, we were encouraged to bring boyfriends to the farm. Dad put up signs in the dining room that read "Eat Like You Work" and "Work Is Fun, Let's Play!" The boyfriends did their share—from marking trees for removal to driving the tractor. This system also allowed Dad to assess whether the boys were worthy of his daughters. There may have been some noodling around, but no hanky-panky was allowed. One local boy used to come "courtin'," but he was too shy to say which one of us he was interested in. He'd walk miles on dirt roads to come visit. At the last minute, he'd switch to his red dancing shoes, sit on the porch, and talk to my dad while drinking beer and eyeing us. Eventually, he called our home in Wheeling and asked Dad for my sister Amy's hand in marriage. We had four phones, and all the siblings listened in on that call. We knew he didn't have a phone at his house, so Amy asked how he was making the call. He said he was at the "pie shop" in Harrisville. When he finally said that all the pies had tomatoes and cheese on them, we figured out it was a pizza parlor. Amy turned down his marriage offer, but he still visited now and then.

My boyfriend Larry, who was Catholic, visited the farm as well. One Sunday, he wanted to attend mass, so Dad picked up the phone and asked the ladies on the party line where he could find a Catholic service. They explained that there wasn't an actual church; rather, mass was conducted from the back of a pickup truck that traveled from town to town. Larry and I tracked down the pickup and took part in the most unusual mass I've ever attended. On our way home, we got caught in a massive hailstorm. I was sure it was a sign from God that He was everywhere, including our farm.

Another friendly neighbor was Mr. Byrd. My dad paid Mr. Byrd to bring over his two old horses and plow our garden. One day, as my sisters and I watched from the porch, Mr. Byrd yelled, "You stout fellers come over cheer, set on the plow, and help furry it out." We looked to my dad for a translation. He explained that Mr. Byrd wanted us to sit on the plow to make the furrows deeper. He could've been speaking Martian as far as we understood!

As the years went by, we all still went to the farm as often as possible. One year, my brother Colin and I, both in our 20s, were alone on the



Five of the Quinn siblings in the late 1950s: (left-right) Suzanne, Kate, Louise, Amy, and Colin.

farm. We were always on the lookout for poisonous copperheads and rattlesnakes, which were abundant, but there were lots of other wild snakes too. As I was reading on the porch swing, a blacksnake crawled through a hole in the porch. I screamed for Colin to get rid of it—I hate snakes of any kind, even nonpoisonous ones. Colin grabbed it by its neck, twirled it over his head, and threw it as far as he could. That night, Colin got up to get a drink from the well on the porch. I listened to the floorboards and screen door creaking and then heard a blood-curdling scream. Imagining that aliens had landed or something worse, I ran to his aid with a flashlight. There, in the beam of light, stood my brother, white as a sheet, with his curly brown hair standing on end. A blacksnake was curled around the pump handle. I can't say for certain, but I've always thought it was that same snake seeking revenge.

When our father died, Amy and I scattered his ashes around the farm—the place he loved more than any other. Today, the farm is owned by my favorite nephew, Kevin, who uses it mostly as a hunting lodge. It's no longer the place for a family holiday because it takes several people an entire day just to mow the lawn. I haven't been there for a while because I now need electricity for my breathing machine, but I have such wonderful memories of growing up with my family on that farm. In my mind, the woods are still full of mushrooms in the early fall, the black of night is unbroken except by moon and starlight, and the whippoorwills still sing.

KATE QUINN is a Wheeling native who lived in New Zealand for 15 years, where she attended Auckland University. Since returning to West Virginia in 1994, Kate has had articles published in the *Upper Ohio Valley Historical Review*, served as a tour guide at the Anna Jarvis Birthplace Museum in Webster, and received a 2009 History Hero award. Her most recent contribution to GOLDENSEAL appeared in our Spring 2013 edition.

Rentals, Radios,

The State Police in the 1930s

While a picture can say a thousand words, some leave you grasping for a single word of explanation. A few years ago, the deputy director of the West Virginia State Police Academy gave me a CD with thousands of scanned images. One folder was labeled "Range, Old Headquarters" and contained two images of a rather grand building—a mansion, in fact. Clearly, the images were not of a shooting range. So, what was this mystery building?

It had me stumped until I came across a photo in a 1930s biennial report for what was then known as the Department of Public Safety. The image, captioned "Company 'A' Headquarters, Fairmont," was described as "formerly a private estate, located on the Country Club road."

This discovery raised more questions than it answered. What was this magnificent structure? How did it get into the hands of the state police? Before tackling these questions, I reviewed the early history of the West Virginia State Police, originally called the Department of Public Safety.

The department was created in 1919 and had two field units: Companies A and B. Both were actively involved in suppressing the Mine Wars—a violent period in which the United Mine Workers of America tried to organize southern West Virginia and were rebuffed at every turn by coal operators and local government officials. As the violence peaked in 1921, the legislature authorized two additional companies (C and D) to increase police presence in southern West Virginia. The locations of company headquarters and their subordinate detachments, originally designated as sub-patrol stations, changed frequently during the 1920s as they moved to "where the action was." [For more information about the early history of the state police, see the GOLDENSEAL articles "'To Keep the Peace': Captain Charles W. Ray, State Policeman" by Ken Sullivan, October-December 1980, and "Second to None: Eighty Years of the West Virginia State Police" by Ben Crookshanks, Spring 1999.]

By the 1930s, the Mine Wars had ended, so the Department

The author's "mystery mansion," labeled "Range, Old Headquarters." Courtesy of the West Virginia State Police (hereafter, WVSP).



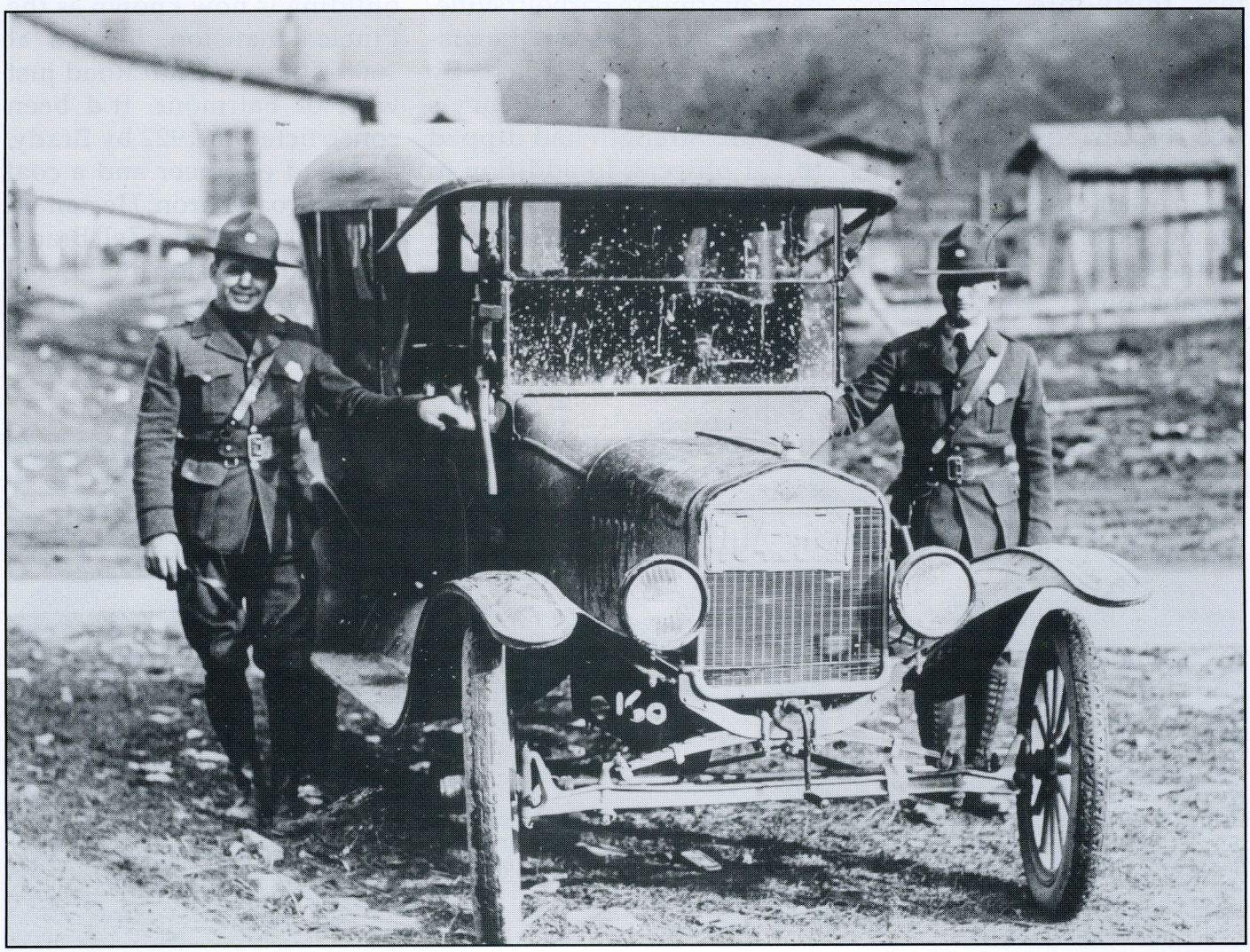
and Resurgence

By Merle T. Cole

of Public Safety refocused its efforts on general crime prevention, criminal investigation, and highway patrol/safety. With the conclusion of the Mine Wars and the onset of the Great Depression, the legislature slashed the state police's budget. For the fiscal year ending June 30, 1932, the legislature cut the agency's funding nearly 26 percent. The department tightened its belt by reducing its force (35 officers separated) and other costs. Although the department was authorized to employ between 188 and 288 personnel, its field force in 1932 consisted of only 125 officers. In his 1930-1932 biennial report to the governor, department Superintendent Robert L. Osborn emphasized the challenge of addressing an increasing workload with less funding. He requested at least enough money to maintain the agency's current workforce and to install teletype and radio networks. The legislature, however, appropriated far less than he'd requested.

In March 1933, Presley D. Shingleton succeeded Osborn. Due to additional budget cuts, Shingleton drastically restruc-

Some of the first assignments given to state troopers were during the Mine Wars. In this 1922 photo, note the machine gun mounted to the passenger side of the Ford patrol car. Courtesy of the West Virginia State Archives (hereafter, WVSA).



tured the organization and consolidated the four companies into two, effective July 1. While no officers were separated, several were reduced by one rank to fit the new structure, and the number of sub-patrol stations was cut from 48 to 31. This action hindered response time and services but netted significant short-term savings because all Department of Public Safety facilities were rented in those days. Superintendent Shingleton described how the department relied on rental property or facilities shared with other government entities: "Of the fifty-seven detachment headquarters, thirty-three are located in a courthouse or municipal building, the most satisfactory location for a detachment office for various reasons. The twenty-four other detachments are in other office buildings or remodeled private homes. Most of these are in towns which are not county seats, or where space in the courthouse is not available."

Following the consolidation, the department announced, "Company A headquarters will be in the vicinity of Shinnston and Capt. James B. Brockus, now located in Parkersburg, will move to that station." The company would be "held responsible for proper policing of the thirty-one (31) counties in the northern part of the state" through district headquarters at Elkins, Elm Grove, Fairmont, Parkersburg, Romney, and Weston. The state's 24 southern counties would be policed by Company B, headquartered at Charleston, with district headquarters in Barboursville, Beckley, Charleston, Lewisburg, Logan, and Welch. By June 30, 1934, the agency's onboard strength had dipped to 121 officers. In addition to grouping officers more closely together, the reorganization changed the agency's mission to "consist mainly of highway patrol and work on major crimes. The old system whereby they did general police work in the towns where they were stationed is to be abandoned."

The strategy of renting properties brings us to the subject of my mystery photo. My research led me to an interesting piece of information. On December 13, 1933, Captain Brockus announced that Zellmont, formerly the suburban Fairmont mansion of the late Samuel D. Brady, had been leased for use as Company A's headquarters. After researching newspaper archives and asking some knowledgeable colleagues, I learned that this building is now known as the Pinelea mansion, located at 1605 Country Club Road just west of Fairmont. It'd been constructed in 1922 by Brady, a skilled engineer and a coal and railroad baron. He named it for his wife, Anna Zell Brady. When a depression hit the coal industry in the 1920s, Brady

Company A of the state police assembles on the front porch of Zellmont, 1930s. Courtesy of the Marion County Historical Society and the WVSP.



went bankrupt and was forced to sell Zellmont in 1929. He died under somewhat mysterious circumstances in 1931 [see the accompanying sidebar, "Another Mystery: How Did Samuel D. Brady Die?"].

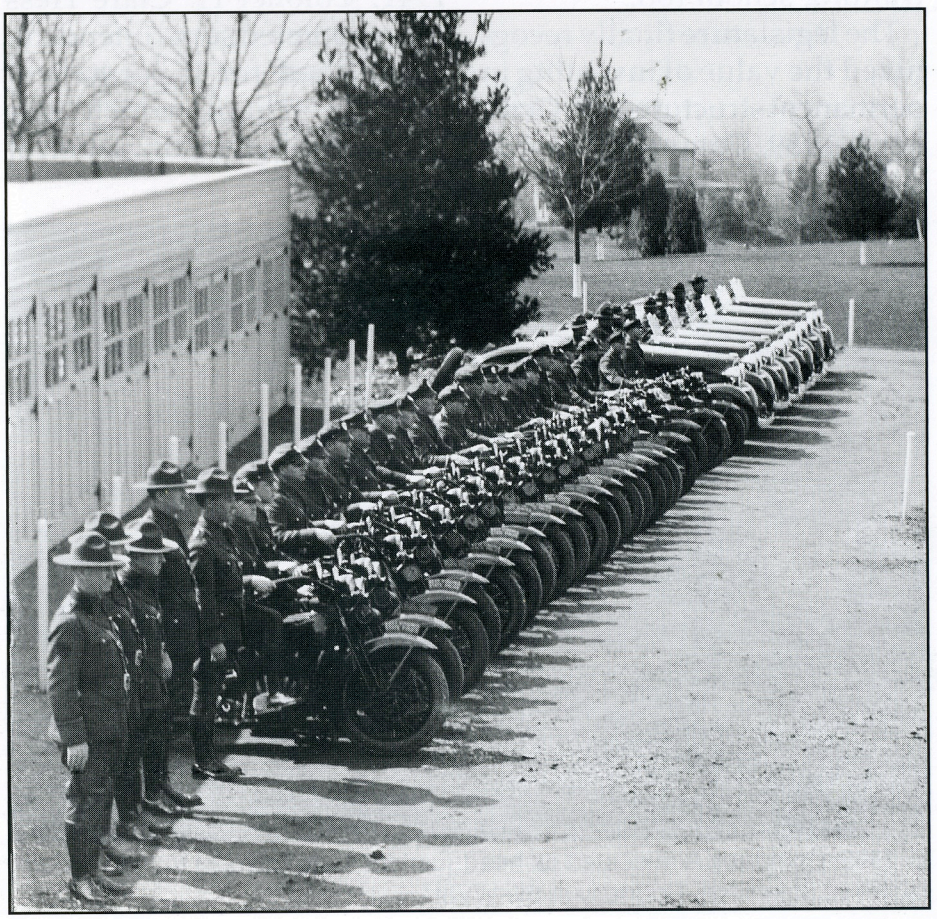
After the Department of Public Safety leased Zellmont in 1933, eight troopers were initially stationed at the mansion, which, without question, was one of the most luxurious police barracks in the country, replete with a "modern repair shop . . . and a five room apartment over the shop . . . occupied by the civilian mechanic and his family. Additional storage garages were constructed for the cars assigned to company headquarters. The revolver range [was] equipped with stationary and disappearing targets." From Zellmont, the Department of Public Safety directed 15 detachments covering 31 counties.

This time period was an important turning point for the department. After seeing its budget slashed year after year, the agency gradually began receiving more funding—enough to reactivate Company C at Elkins in 1935 and Company D at Beckley the following year. To staff the reactivated commands, the department conducted a recruit training school during May-June 1935 at Camp Conley, a National Guard facility near Point Pleasant. The school graduated 100 qualified appointees. By June 30, 1936, the department's strength had increased to an even 200 officers.

Further, the 1937 legislature approved the agency's long-standing request to build an adequate radio communications network. The initial broadcast stations were located at Charleston, Shinnston, Beckley, Romney, and Moundsville. This allowed officers to communicate directly with other companies, districts, and detachment headquarters and with individual radio-equipped patrol cruisers (radio motor patrol). State appropriations were supplemented by funding from the Works Progress Administration (WPA), a key program of President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal. The WPA grants totaled $69,237 [$902,000 in current dollars] for Companies A and D and $72,194 [$940,000 in current dollars] for Company B. The WPA grants helped fund the construction of new barracks and garages beside the transmitter stations along with new driveways, sidewalks, and landscaping.

The increased funding also marked a major change in the legislature's attitude toward renting property. In March 1929, the *Bluefield Daily Telegraph* reported that both houses of the legislature had scrapped proposals to buy property near Huntington for use as a state police post. Senator A. B. White of Wood County led the opposition, "declaring that it

Roadsters and motorcycles of Company A gather at Zellmont for inspection, 1930s. The mansion is visible at the right rear. Courtesy of the Marion County Historical Society.



would establish a precedent that would bring a trail of enormous expenditures in real estate to house the state police." By the mid-1930s, however, the legislature's thinking was beginning to shift.

Shingleton's successor, Charles C. Tallman, pointed out the long-term drain of renting property: "Approximately $10,764 [$140,000 in current dollars] is spent annually on rent. If that amount were applied to a building program, the state would eventually own a sufficient number of detachment headquarters to meet the department's needs, thereby eliminating this drain on the appropriation from which no permanent benefit is derived." Tallman later expanded his requests to include a permanent training school too.

The legislature finally recognized the value of investing in permanent structures. On October 3, 1939, Company A headquarters were relocated from the rented Zellmont property to the new state-owned police radio station at Shinnston. In 1941, Colonel H. Clare Hess was appointed superintendent. He pushed for a permanent training school, which was realized with the completion of the West Virginia State Police Academy at Institute in 1949.



In 1937, the legislature approved funding for a modern radio communications network for the state police. Courtesy of the WVSP.

As for Zellmont, it's remained in private hands since 1939. It still stands as a landmark of grand 1920s architecture and a fascinating footnote of what was once possibly the finest state police barracks in the United States.



In 1939, Company A relocated its headquarters from Zellmont to this modern facility at Shinnston. Courtesy of the WVSP.

The author wishes to thank Carol A. LaFollette, Christa Lynn Greco, First Sergeant Geoffrey S. Petsko, Sergeant James P. Branham III, Becky Bunner, Dr. M. Raymond Alvarez, and Dr. Jack C. Wills for providing information or suggestions for this article.

MERLE T. COLE was born and raised in Beaver, Raleigh County. His interest in the West Virginia State Police began when he wrote a term paper for Dr. Paul D. Stewart's state and local government course at Marshall University in 1965. Since that time, Merle has authored 13 publications relating to the state police's history. This is his first contribution to GOLDENSEAL.

Another Mystery: How Did Samuel D. Brady Die?

By Merle T. Cole



There's no doubt that Samuel D. Brady, the coal and railroad baron who built Zellmont in 1922, died in Morgantown on May 8, 1931, but the manner of his death is in dispute.

Contemporary news accounts consistently reported that Brady broke his ankle on April 20, 1931, when a coal car rolled over him at one of his mines near Morgantown. His death weeks later was attributed to "complications" arising from the fracture. In Brady's official death record, Dr. G. W. Phillips reported the cause of death as "pulmonary embolism," i.e., a blood clot.

But some have suggested a darker cause. A 1995 Marion County history book authored by Thomas J. Koon and Oce Smith stated that Brady committed suicide. Then, in her 2013 book *Daddy's Ledger*, Marion County historian Diane Hutchinson Parker wrote that Brady "committed suicide by a fatal gunshot."

Brady's financial troubles are well documented. He lost virtually all of his fortune due to a severe decline in coal prices in the 1920s. In a 1993 article in *West Virginia History*, Phil Ross wrote about the boom-and-bust cycles of the coal industry during that period, notably in the Morgantown region. During World War I, coal operators made unprecedented profits; however, by the early 1920s, overproduction and shrinking market demand had caused an economic depression in the coal industry, devastating much of West Virginia before the Great Depression swept the rest of the world. To offset his losses, Brady slashed worker wages several times, leading to clashes with union miners.

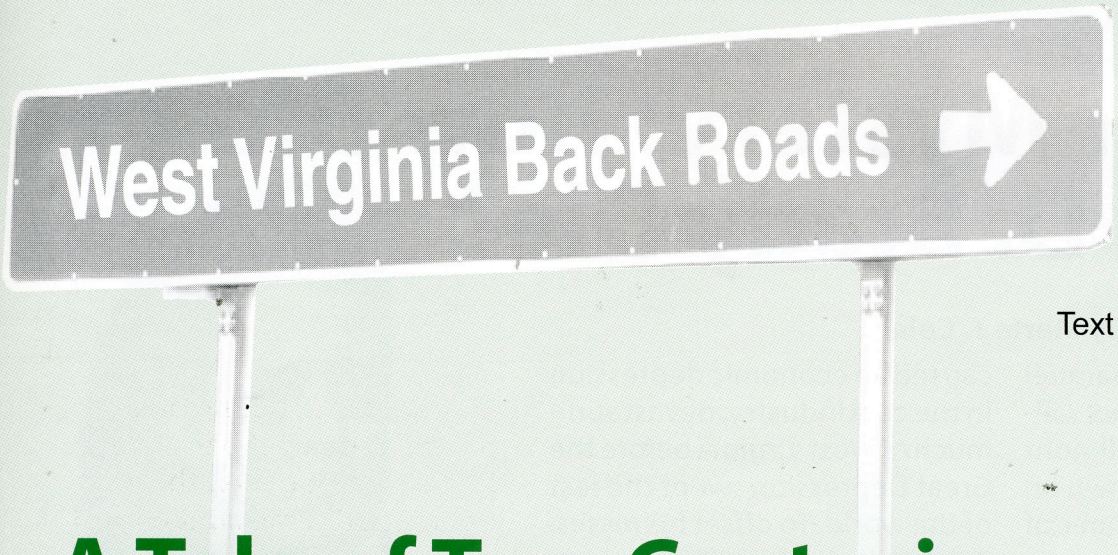
Brady's holdings in his Brady-Warner Company were placed into receivership in 1927 and sold in June 1929 to a Cleveland-based coal company for $70,000, which covered only five percent of the company's mortgage—not to mention its other debts, which were never paid off. Brady was forced into bankruptcy, which cost him Zellmont in 1929. The property was sold to a life insurance company, which apparently still owned the building in 1933, when it was leased to the state police.

After his bankruptcy, Brady borrowed large sums of money to get back into the coal business, primarily at Osage along Scott's Run outside Morgantown. By 1931, he was struggling to survive financially as coal prices plummeted precipitously. And, in the weeks leading up to his death, Brady was again facing another serious scrap with the United Mine Workers of America—all of which is revealed in contemporary newspapers and in his brother A. Spates Brady's papers, located in the West Virginia State Archives.

So, it's possible that the bankruptcy, continuing financial struggles, and ongoing labor strife could have pushed Brady to take his own life. It's also conceivable that a man of Brady's power could have influenced the coverage of his death, even in official records—not only for the sake of personal appearances but for life insurance purposes.

If Brady did take his own life, it could explain why the mansion was renamed Pinelea—to erase sad recollections of the former coal baron's death. In her book, Hutchinson Parker implies that the circumstances of Brady's death were well known in the community, noting that whenever her father drove past Zellmont, he'd often comment on "poor old Sam Brady."

Robert L. and Carol A. LaFollette have owned Pinelea since 1995. Hutchinson Parker writes that Mrs. LaFollette, a personal friend, "swears she has inherited [Brady's] ghost"—yet one more mystery associated with the nearly century-old mansion.



Text and photographs by
Carl E. Feather

A Tale of Two Centuries

The highway sign proclaims "Century No. 2" on a stretch of Route 119 in northern Barbour County, raising a series of questions: "Where is Century No. 1?" "Why not just give it another name and avoid the confusion?" "Why name a town 'Century' in the first place?"

Aside from the ubiquitous evidence of coal mining, including what were clearly once company houses, there are few remnants of industry or commerce in Century No. 2. A closed shop, "J&S Grocery and Flea Market," stands at the intersection of Big Run Road and Route 119. A stone's throw away is Century's watering hole, Den Lin's Bar and Restaurant, marked by the town's singular LED sign. Next to it is the Good 2 Go Convenience Store, where friends Pete Winters, Amanda Delauter, and Albert "Almost a Rose" Thorn refresh themselves at the lunch counter.

They are quick to answer questions about a town that none of them calls home, but nevertheless, they all find it a good place to gather.

"Everybody gets together here," Amanda says while waiting for her sandwich to come off the grill. Pete urges me to order a Philly steak sandwich. I dance around the suggestion, not wanting to disclose I'm a vegetarian. I quickly turn the conversation to the town's odd name, which sparks a discussion.

"I just heard that story the other day," Pete says. "It goes back to when they discovered coal up in Century No. 1. They said they had discovered enough coal to last a century. And when they found out there was more coal here, they said there was enough for Century No. 2."

Pete and Amanda know locals who can shed more light on the story, and they go to work looking up phone numbers. But the sources are out and about. It is, after all, a rather fine October day.

Railroad tracks parallel the highway, and I ask the diners if they ever see any trains. Amanda says the nearest rail traffic is at the sand plant. "You can hear them from here," she says. But it's been years, perhaps decades, since a train hauled a load of Century coal on these tracks.

"They tried to open the deep mines four miles up the road," Amanda says. "There are plenty of seams left back up in there."

They share stories they've heard over the years about miners suffering injuries, about picking coal from the gob pile for the family's stove, and about the region's hard times. Amid all these stories, the mystery of Century's name hangs unanswered, like the collective smoke from their cigarettes.

I ask directions to Century No. 1. It turns out I'd passed it on the way in. I needed to turn where a sign points to a community center that hosts jam sessions every Sunday afternoon. A mile or so down this byway, I come upon Century No. 1, a lonely leftover of the mining industry. The most prominent building is the white United Mine Workers of America hall, a former elementary school that became available when a new school

opened in Volga, north of Century No. 2.

A woman who lives in a former company house on the hill overlooking the hall says that the union still owns the building and rents it out for parties. She and her husband have lived here 36 years, but she has no idea how the towns got their names. She knows the towns' legacies are tied to coal and thinks that if the mines reopened, coal would be their economic salvation, although not for her family. Her husband used to work on the strip mine, but he's on disability now.

"There used to be a coal tipple, where they cleaned the coal," she says. "The trains used to come up in here, but they took the tracks out back in the 1980s."

I stop at a couple of other houses in Century No. 1 and Century No. 2, but no one is home. When I get back to my motel room, I get on the Internet to shed some light on this mystery.

An article on the West Virginia Division of Culture and History Web site attributes the towns' names to the Century Coal Company of Pittsburgh. Century began producing coal from a shaft mine at Century No. 1 in 1901. Century No. 2



A highway sign for Century No. 2 raises questions: "Where's Century No. 1, and why are there two towns with the same name so close together?"



Amanda Delauter fishes in the pond next to the Good 2 Go Convenience Store at Century No. 2. According to Amanda, the Good 2 Go is where "everybody gets together."

was a slope mine that came later.

The most tragic moment in the history of Century No. 1 occurred at 4:30 p.m. on March 22, 1906. According to a state report, 11 miners were killed instantly by an explosion; 12 others died from after gases and other causes. One of those 12 was rescued but died from "fright or acute insanity," most likely from carbon monoxide, the report states. "This subject had the delusion that the roof was about to fall upon him and constantly pleaded to be removed from this imaginary danger," the report notes.

Another man, also brought out of the mine, died from the shock of having his legs amputated. The motorman, unaware of the explosion, ran the man-



A former school at Century No. 1 has been converted into a community center that is owned by the United Mine Workers local.

trip of 16 loaded cars into the affected section, plowing into miners trying to escape the inferno.

As I thought about this heartbreaking disaster, I imagined the wailing that must have echoed through Century No. 1 that night 110 years ago. I thought of the wives who would be forced to move out of their company houses because more miners and their families would be moving in to replace their husbands in the mines. Those echoes are long gone, and Century No. 1 and No. 2 are now just tombstones resting on a rich seam of coal where 23 men perished more than a century ago.

CARL E. FEATHER is a freelance writer and photographer who lives in Ashtabula County, Ohio. He has family roots in Tucker and Preston counties and is the author of the book *Mountain People in a Flat Land*. Carl has been a longtime GOLDENSEAL contributor, dating back to his first article in our Summer 1987 issue. His "Back Roads" articles are regular features in GOLDENSEAL.



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Mystery Wood Hick Identified 32 Years Later

Our Winter 1984 issue included an article by Norman Julian on "Logging and Loggers." It featured some great timbering photos from the West Virginia and Regional History Center at West Virginia University, including the one shown here of a wood hick (as lumberjacks were often known in the Mountain State). The original caption read in part, "Unknown wood hick shows off his work. Note the company brand stamped into the wood to identify the log after it left the forest." We were recently contacted by this gentleman's great-great-granddaughter, Lisa Burns of Morgantown. After 32 years, she's identified our mystery wood hick! We shared in Lisa's excitement and wanted to pass along her notes to our readers. –ed.



Courtesy of the West Virginia and Regional History Center, West Virginia University.

This is what I was able to obtain from my mother, Rosalie Mollohan Gallagher, and research. Great-Great-Grandpa John Hinkle was born on August 23, 1856, in Braxton County. On August 19, 1876, he married Eliza Ann Anderson in Webster County. John and his wife built their home on Holly River at what would later be known as Wheeler. He took great pride in his home and kept it in good repair. John was quite a versatile man, displaying much skill as a businessman, farmer, jeweler, and photographer. He started a general store—A. J. Hinkle and Son—at Wheeler and served as the town's postmaster from 1905 until 1913, when his son Perry succeeded him. Elsie Arbogast Mollohan, my mother's mother, always used to say that her Grandfather Hinkle was a very kind man with a good sense of humor. He was always doing something funny to amuse them.

John Hinkle died on October 8, 1930, in Webster County at age 74 and is buried at the Alexander Anderson Cemetery in Wheeler.

—Lisa Burns, Morgantown (who also noted, "He is a dashing fellow if I do say so myself!")



In 1969, Billy Edd Wheeler produced this album of "Aunt Jennie" Wilson playing music, singing songs, and telling stories. Billy Edd described her as a "mountain woman like none I've ever met."

Goldenseal
The Culture Center
1900 Kanawha Blvd. East
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PERIODICALS

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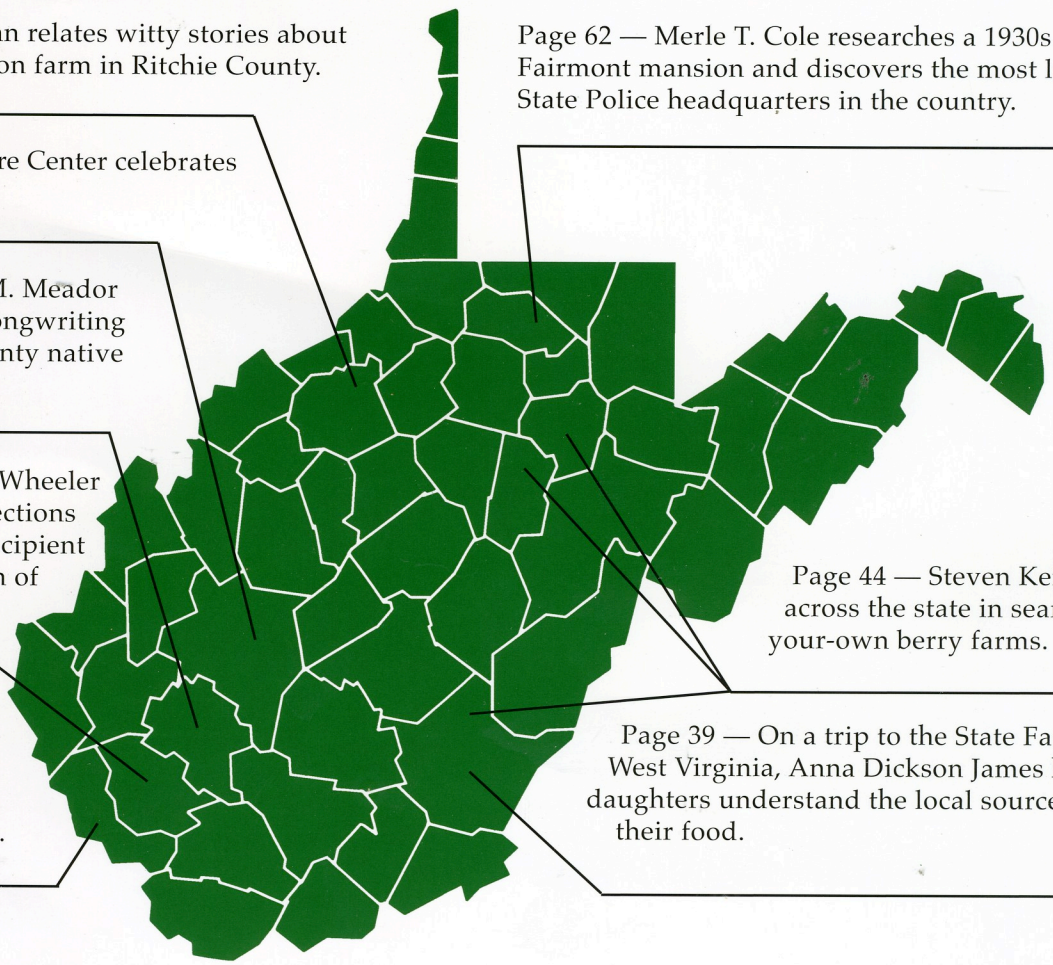
Page 26 — The Culture Center celebrates its 40th anniversary.

Page 12 — Michael M. Meador explores the life of songwriting great and Boone County native Billy Edd Wheeler.

Page 24 — Billy Edd Wheeler offers his own recollections of Vandalia Award recipient "Aunt Jennie" Wilson of Logan County.

Page 50 — F. Keith Davis writes of Johnse Hatfield's escape from the law and eventual capture.



Page 62 — Merle T. Cole researches a 1930s photo of a Fairmont mansion and discovers the most luxurious State Police headquarters in the country.

Page 44 — Steven Keith travels across the state in search of pick-your-own berry farms.

Page 39 — On a trip to the State Fair of West Virginia, Anna Dickson James helps her daughters understand the local sources of their food.

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