

Bill Gillespie • Sawmilling • Boat Models • Bunner Ridge • One-Room School

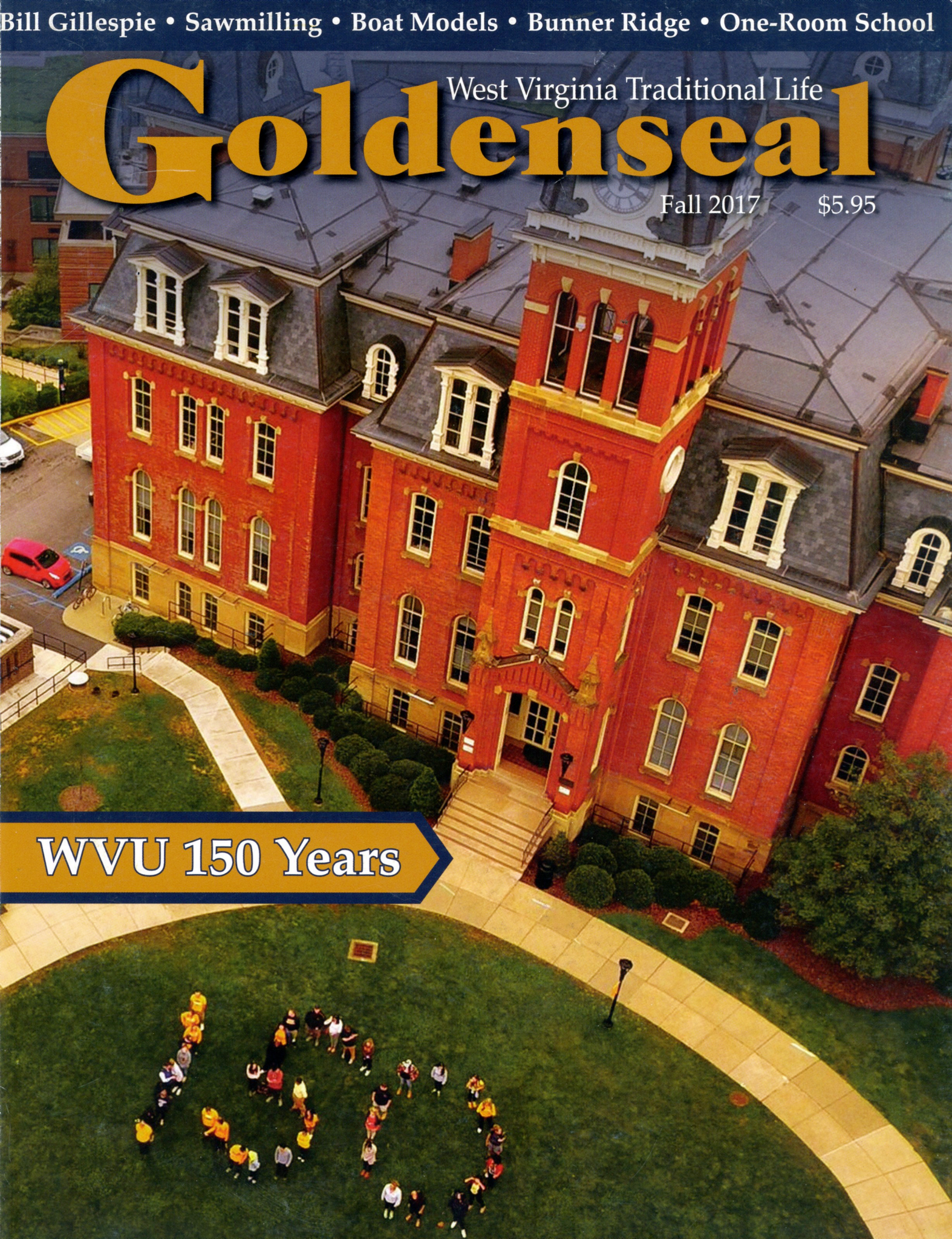
West Virginia Traditional Life

Goldenseal

Fall 2017

\$5.95

WVU 150 Years

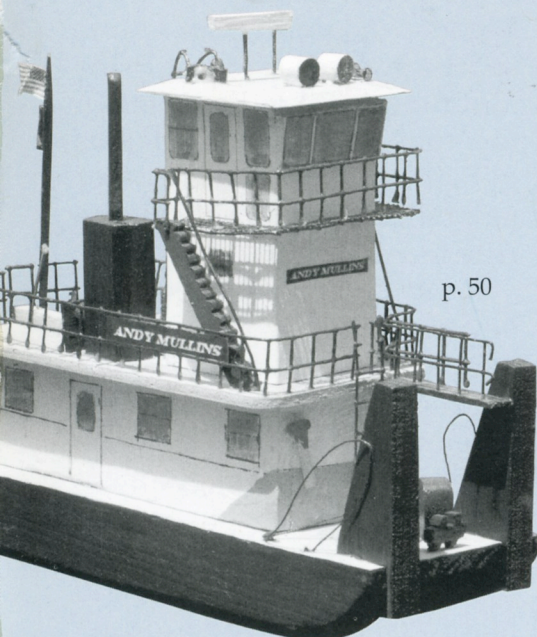


Governor Arch Moore dedicates *The Mountaineer* statue in front of the Mountainlair at WVU, October 1971. Courtesy of the West Virginia & Regional History Center.





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On the cover: Students celebrate 150 years of WVU in front of Woodburn Hall, Morgantown. Courtesy of Kelly Heasley, WVU University Relations and WVU Student Life.

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The WVU faculty, 1885-86. Courtesy of the West Virginia & Regional History Center.

From the Editor

Full disclosure, I went to Marshall University and West Virginia University—our state's largest schools. Stunningly, I made it through both, while having great and sad times, meeting lifelong friends, and listening to brilliant professors who changed my outlook on life. So, this issue's cover story wasn't influenced by my personal preference of one school over the other—yes, I'm one of those who roots for both. It's a tribute to West Virginia University on its 150th anniversary—the school first opened its doors on September 2, 1867.

If you live, or have lived, in the Mountain State, you likely have some connection to WVU. You don't have to be a WVU grad to pull for the Mountaineers in

a big game. Earlier this year, friends who don't even follow sports shouted beside me as the Mountaineers knocked off two top-ranked basketball teams in two weeks. And what other fans follow a school's champion rifle team?

But WVU's impact goes way beyond athletics. WVU established the state's first law and med schools. One-third of our governors graduated from the university. WVU's Experiment Station and Extension Service have trained countless farmers in science-based agricultural methods, improving production and nutrition. And WVU has some of the best libraries in the nation—our longtime friends at the West Virginia & Regional History Center



A snowy day on the WVU campus, 1895. Courtesy of the West Virginia & Regional History Center.

deserve a special shout-out here!

Some of our nation's most brilliant minds have attended WVU, including Charles Vest, former president of MIT, and John Chambers, former CEO of Cisco Systems. But it's not the famous graduates that make WVU so important; it's how the school has inspired generations of West Virginians to reach higher.

In the early 1920s, Maxwell Ott (page 28) of Greenbrier County bought, raised, and sold a prize-winning 4-H heifer to afford his tuition.

He then drove a Model T 10 hours to get to Morgantown. Originally planning to be a farmer, he learned about dairy manufacturing at WVU and forged a career in the milk and ice cream businesses.

Growing up in Webster County in the 1930s and 1940s, Bill Gillespie (page 30) thought he'd wind up in local coal mines like other boys. But his mother and high school principal had other plans for him. Bill attended and then taught at WVU. He was a mentor to innumerable forestry students and, along the way, discovered

the world's oldest fossilized seed.

Stories like these demonstrate what WVU has meant to so many West Virginians. Over the years, it's been a beacon of hope and inspiration, driving many of us in intriguing directions we otherwise wouldn't have imagined. Thousands of West Virginians today owe much of who we are to WVU, and, for that, we will be forever grateful. Hail, West Virginia!

Stan Bungardner

Letters, Additions, & Corrections

Richwood

August 4, 2017
Lebanon, Indiana
Editor:

Thank you so much for all the articles and pictures about Richwood published in your Summer 2017 edition. Well done indeed! As a child, growing up in the small village of Lost Creek (Harrison County), I used to wonder where Richwood was. We had two passenger and freight trains on the B&O daily: southbound to Richwood mornings and northbound from Richwood late afternoons. As an adult, I did visit Richwood multiple times, mostly to see it—to view the magnificent forest scenery around it. Trees, Trees, Trees! And to do research for the novel I was coauthoring with Alice McEwen: *Cherry Tree Blossoms*—based on the original name of the small village before the arrival of the railroad.

Sincerely,
Jim Stout

Cinder Bottom

July 20, 2017
Fairfax, Virginia
Editor:

I am a native of Mullens and a longtime reader of your excellent magazine. The article in the Summer 2017 issue on the vice spots of McDowell County (see “From the Bottom Up: Cinder Bottom’s Red-Light District” by Katherine R. Spindler) brought back the memory of a local golden oldie:



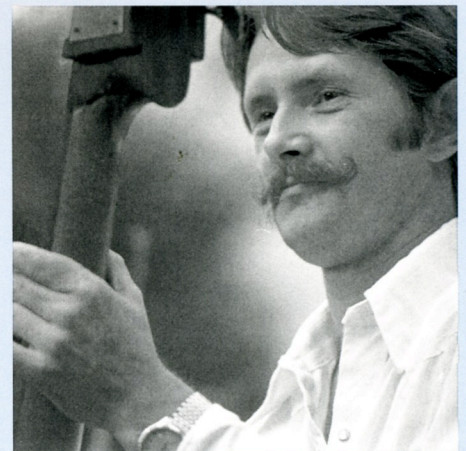
Millworkers unloading logs in Richwood in the early 1900s. Photo by Finley Taylor.

If you go to Cinder Bottom,
Put your money in your shoes,
‘Cause the women in Cinder Bottom
Have the money-making blues
Your Loyal, Humble, &
Obedient Servant,
Paul C. Farmer

The First Vandalia

Our Spring 2017 issue highlighted the first 40 years of the Vandalia Gathering. The staff—with considerable help from others—identified most of the featured performers, but a few left us stumped. Thanks to our readers, we can now fill in a few of the blanks.

The unidentified bass player in the photo on page 11 is **Paul Selan Jr.**, formerly of Hurricane (Putnam County), now of North Carolina. Paul was a regular in the early days of the Vandalia Gathering and



Paul Selan Jr., Photographer unknown.

played with numerous local bands, ranging from bluegrass to rock.

The unidentified fiddle player in the middle photo on page 13 is **Kelton Roten** (1905-1987). Kelton, who was blind nearly from birth, taught for many years at the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and Blind in Romney (Hampshire



Kelton and Joan Roten, 1984.
Photograph by Brad Nettles.



Richwood, June 23, 2016. Photo by Jeromy Rose.

County). He was featured in the Winter 1984 issue: "Kelton Roten: "The Word Handicap Never Bothered Me" by Michael Kline.

Mountain out of a Mole Hill

Perhaps a record number of observant readers caught a mistake we made in the Summer 2017 article "Where in the World Is Cat Heaven?" Mole Hill/Mountain is, in fact, in Ritchie County, not Roane County. Thank you to all the readers who wrote or called in about this.

Richwood Flood Photo

In the Summer 2017 issue, we incorrectly credited two photos on the inside front cover to Rick Barbero. While Rick did take the bottom photo, Jeromy Rose took the top one. Jeromy was in Richwood on June 23, 2016,

when the streets of Richwood were filling up with water. That day, he captured many of the first photos of the flood's damage.

Civil War Soldiers

Thanks again to our readers, we now know the identities of the two elderly Civil War veterans featured on page 35 of the Summer 2017 issue. According to Civil War historian Terry Lowry, the Confederate soldier on the left is George Alderson (1844-1936), who served in Company A of the 14th Virginia Cavalry. During the war, Alderson was an orderly to generals Henry Loring and John Echols. He moved from his native Fayette County to Nicholas County after the war and served as a justice of the peace and in the legislature. In 1901,



George Alderson (left) and Peter Hamilton Craig, ca. 1926. Photograph by Finley Taylor.



Lou Maiuri, age 88, of Nicholas County, doing a little flatfoot to top off his cooking class. Photo by Steve Brightwell.

George's daughter Emma founded Alderson Academy, which, in 1932, became part of the merger that created Alderson-Broaddus College (now University). Reader Steve Byington of Greenup, Kentucky, identified the Union soldier on the right as Peter Hamilton Craig (1844-1939). Craig was a corporal in the 2nd West Virginia Cavalry. He was born and died in the Nicholas County town of Hookersville. The photo—likely from 1926—was taken by Finley Taylor.

Susie Doughty

The young woman pictured with Dr. Emory Kemp on page 74 of the Spring 2017 issue was misidentified as the daughter of Dr. Kemp. Instead, Susie Doughty (now Nelson) is the daughter of Jeanne Finstein, the photographer.

The Division of Culture & History Celebrates 40 Years

The West Virginia Division of Culture and History celebrated its 40th anniversary on July 15, at the Culture Center in Charleston.

The special day included the sale of 40 limited edition Blenko glass pieces, followed by lectures and forums on the agency's various services, including Archives and History, the State Museum, historic sites, the State Historic Preservation Office, Arts, and GOLDEN-SEAL. The event highlighted the division's work across the Mountain State, such as community-development grants, educational programming, and preservation.

"We've given 40 years of service to tens of thousands of people," said the agency's com-

missioner, Randall Reid-Smith. "We look forward to many more years and many more programs that allow us to preserve, protect, and promote the past accomplishments of our state and to build confidence in our future."

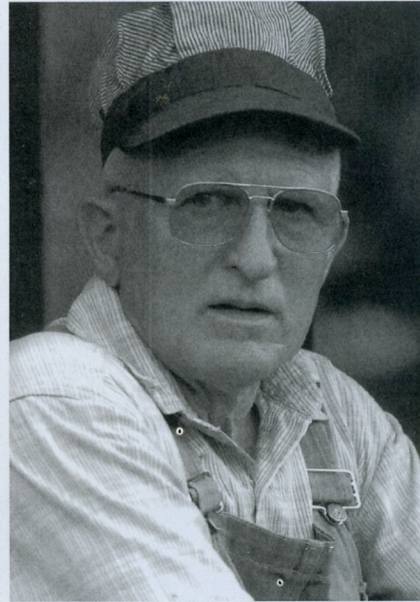
Cooking and Kicking Up Dust

In July, 88-year-old Vandalia Award recipient Lou Maiuri of Nicholas County taught a class of eager culinary students how to make his family's homemade pasta sauce with meatballs. Lou's parents were both Italian immigrants to West Virginia. And, as one of our great mountain dancers, he treated his audience to a little flatfooting at the end. The class is part of the West Virginia Division of Culture and History's Culinary Cultures program, developed in 2012 to highlight our state's agricultural and food cultures in contemporary ways.

GOLDENSEAL Good-Byes



James Bernardin passed away in Royal Oak, Michigan, on May 6, 2016. He was 86. James was born in Glen Dale (Marshall County) in 1929. In the Winter 2015 issue of GOLDENSEAL, he wrote touchingly and humorously about growing up in the Elm Grove section of Wheeling (see “West Virginia—Hooray!”). After graduating from Triadelphia High School in 1947, he moved to Michigan and developed some of Chevrolet’s most famous ads of the 1960s. He was preceded in death by his wife, Ruth Andre Bernardin—“a one of a kind from West Virginia,” as James said.



Alan “Keith” Mason of Harrison County passed away on October 12, 2016. He was 80. Keith, a Clarksburg native, was a charter member of the Mountain State Railroad & Logging Historical Association when it was founded in 1982. Carl E. Feather wrote about Keith’s efforts to restore a Climax locomotive, which the Masons have operated on a one-mile track on their property (see “LH&W Railroad: The Mason Family’s Backyard Train” in Winter 2007). Keith is survived by his wife of 57 years, Jean Harper Mason.

WANTED:

Master Traditional Artists & Apprentices

Text and Photo by Emily Hilliard

This fall, the West Virginia Folklife Program is proudly launching our inaugural West Virginia Folklife Apprenticeship Program. The program offers up to a \$3,000 stipend to West Virginia master traditional artists or tradition bearers working with qualified apprentices on a year-long in-depth apprenticeship in their cultural expression or traditional art form. Within that \$3,000 stipend, apprentices may receive up to \$300 for travel and expenses. These apprenticeships, offered to masters of traditional music, dance, craft, foodways, storytelling, and more—in any cultural community in the Mountain State—aim to facilitate the transmission of techniques and artistry of the forms as well as their histories and traditions.

The West Virginia Folklife Apprenticeship Program will support up to five pairs of master traditional artists and their apprentices, culminating in a final free public showcase in Charleston in September 2018. Master/apprentice pairs will also hold a public presentation in their home communities. The cultural expression or art form learned in the apprenticeship must be a part of the current life of residents of West Virginia. The master artist and apprentice must apply together and should be familiar with each other's work and skill level.

We are thrilled to launch this new program that will strengthen the transmission of cultural heritage traditions between generations in communities across the state, inspire new practitioners, and recognize existing masters. Many of

you may remember the similar program run by Gerry Milnes at the Augusta Heritage Center from 1989-2011; this new initiative aims to reinvigorate and expand that endeavor.

For 14 years, Virginia state folklorist Jon Lohman has directed a parallel program and speaks highly of the role apprenticeships play in sustaining traditional art forms and expressions in our neighboring state: "In my opinion, apprenticeships are the most effective means we have to help ensure that our living folkways not only survive but thrive into the future. . . . I have seen firsthand the transformative impact of these apprenticeships on its participants and their entire communities. [They] have served not only to provide direct support to artists to help pass a particular traditional skill or



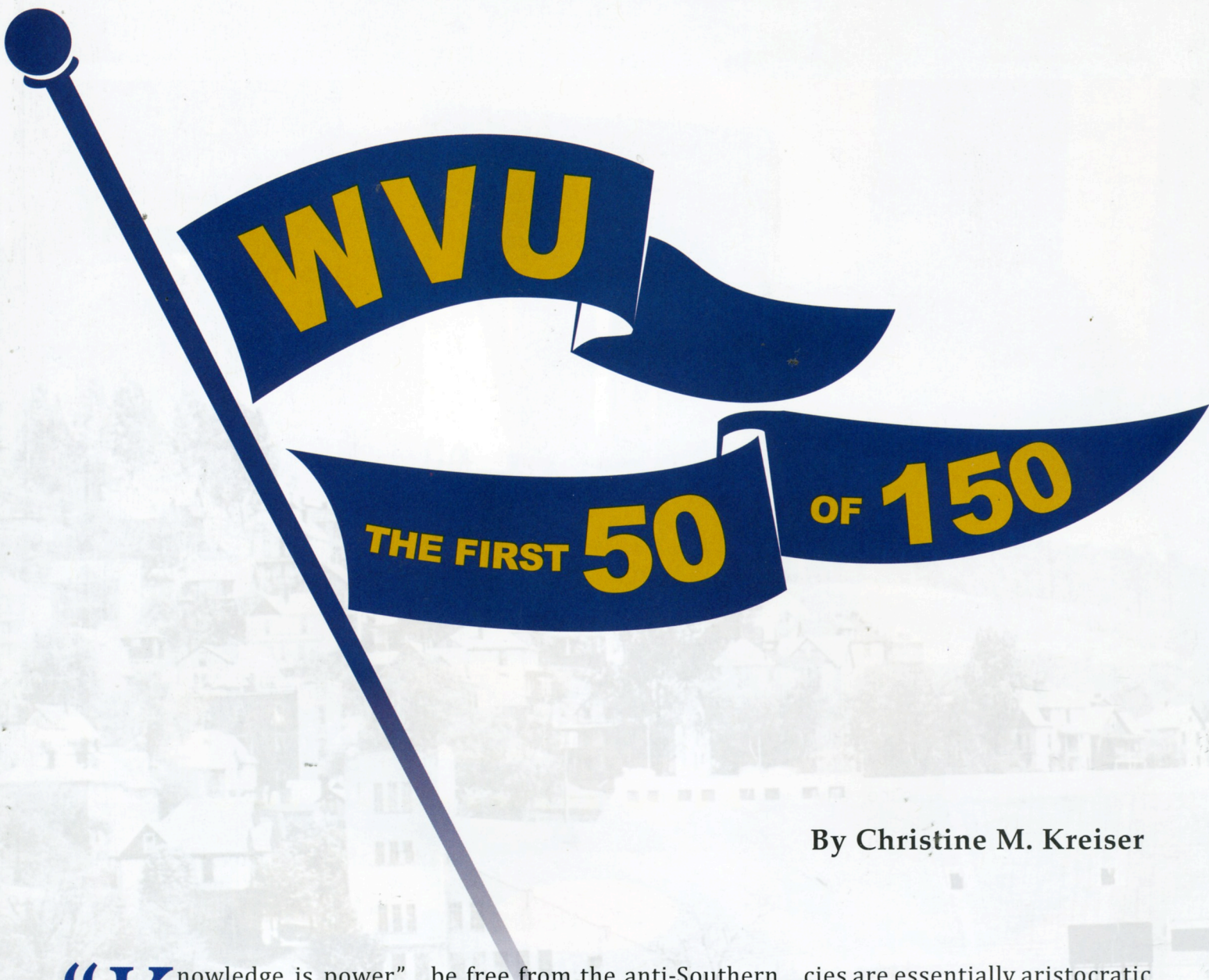
Ruby Abdulla (left) and Nariman Farah prepare traditional roti in Ruby's Charleston home.

art form along, but have also been a tremendously effective way to shed important light on these traditions themselves, and serve as a way to truly publicly honor and bestow important recognition upon these most deserving master practitioners."

The West Virginia Folklife Apprenticeship Program is sup-

ported in part by an Art Works grant from the National Endowment for the Arts Folk and Traditional Arts Program. Applications and more information can be found at wvhumanities.org/folklifeapprenticeships or by calling 304-346-8500. Applications are due by October 15, 2017. ✱

EMILY HILLIARD is West Virginia's first official state folklorist with the West Virginia Folklife Program at the West Virginia Humanities Council. She writes a regular column for *GOLDENSEAL*. Learn more about the West Virginia Folklife Program at wvfolklife.org.



By Christine M. Kreiser

“Knowledge is power,” wrote Thomas Jefferson in 1817. It is “safety,” and it is “happiness.”

OK, Jefferson *borrowed* the phrase from Francis Bacon. And the Virginia General Assembly roundly ignored his attempts to reform the state’s education system—reforms that (with the exception of free elementary education for girls) were meant almost solely for the young men who would one day run the Commonwealth. But you get the idea.

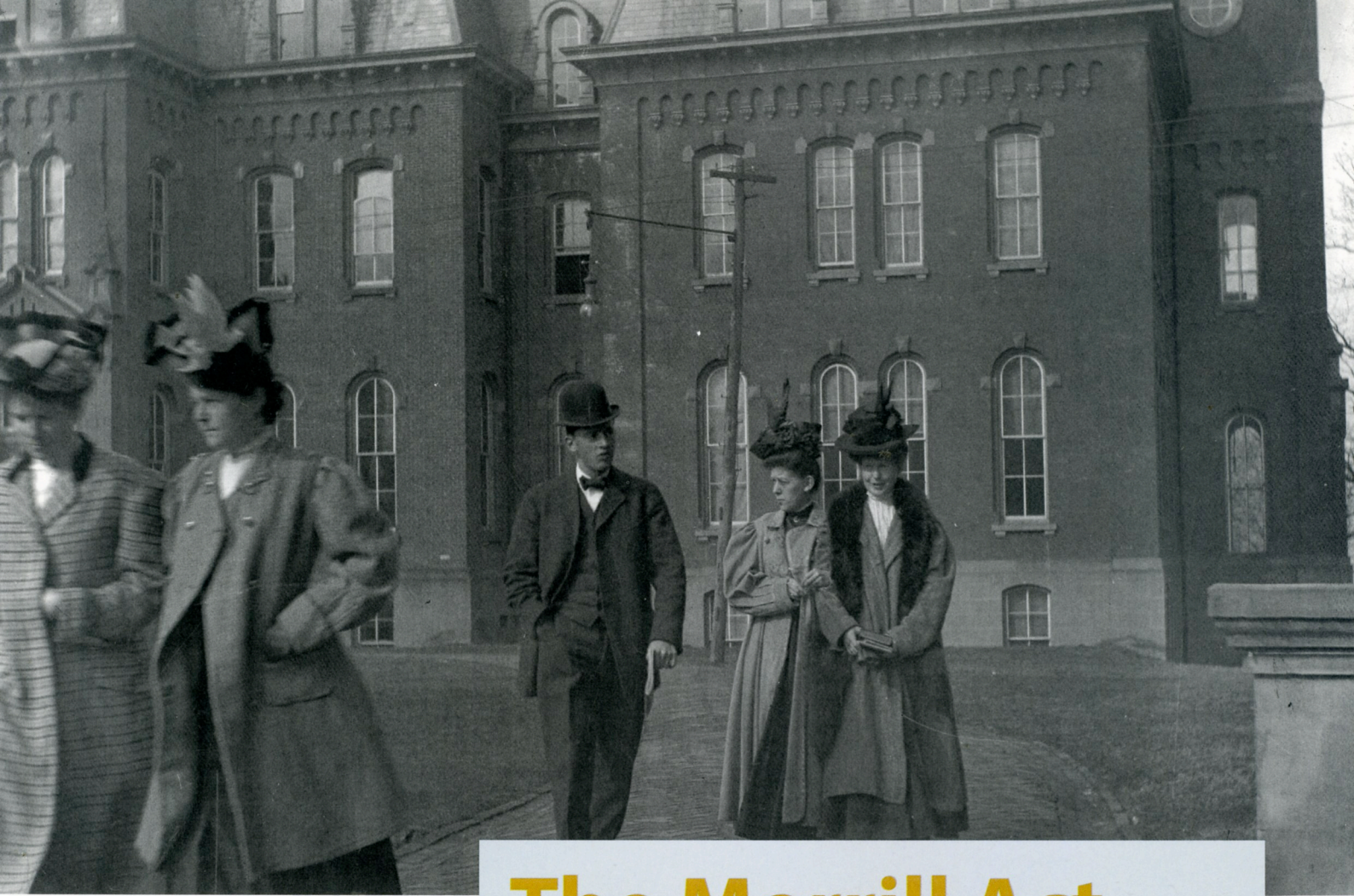
Jefferson’s crowning educational achievement, the University of Virginia, was intended to

be free from the anti-Southern prejudices of Northern colleges—a “canker,” Jefferson explained in 1821, that was “eating on the vitals of our existence.” His university, in the heart of Virginia’s Blue Ridge Mountains, would be fit for the sons of cavaliers.

West of the Blue Ridge, however, the sons of mountaineers showed little interest in Mr. Jefferson’s “academical village” in Charlottesville. Virginia’s parsimonious educational funding, in the words of a Harrison County judge in 1841, had been “frittered away in the endowment of an institution whose tenden-

cies are essentially aristocratic and beneficial only to the very rich.” Just before the Civil War, more western Virginians were enrolled in Northern colleges than in all the Virginia colleges east of the Blue Ridge.

But West Virginians moved quickly to rectify matters after achieving statehood on June 20, 1863. A year earlier, President Abraham Lincoln had signed into law the Morrill Act, which allowed states to fund public colleges from the sale of public lands. These land-grant colleges would focus on agriculture and the mechanic arts. After all, with



Woodburn Circle at WVU in the early 1900s. All photos in this section courtesy of the West Virginia & Regional History Center (WVRHC) unless noted otherwise.

large swaths of western land coming under the plow and the country in the midst of the Industrial Revolution, farms and factories were America's future.

But where to put this new institution? Two years after the Civil War, North-South divisions still ran deep in the Mountain State, which had not yet settled on a permanent capital. Wheeling, Clarksburg, Parkersburg, and Charleston had their sights set on hosting the seat of state government, so they took themselves out of the running for the college.

Small rural communities in every corner of West Virginia vied for the new school. In

The Morrill Act

In 1862, Congress passed and President Lincoln signed the Morrill Act. The legislation established land-grant colleges in every state to promote farming and the mechanic arts. Not that all students in land-grant schools would become farmers or mechanics. The colleges also offered traditional courses in the classics and sciences. As Vermont congressman Justin Morrill, the act's sponsor, explained, "The fundamental idea was to offer an opportunity in every state for a liberal and larger education to larger numbers, not merely to those destined to the sedentary professions, but . . . for the world's business, for the industrial pursuits and professions of life." In other words, it was time to educate the doers as well as the thinkers.

In 1890, Congress enacted a second Morrill Act to provide greater education opportunities for African-Americans. Most states established separate, segregated land-grant colleges for blacks. The next year, the West Virginia Legislature created the West Virginia Colored Institute at Institute in Kanawha County. In May 1892, the first students walked through its doors. Today, the college still operates as West Virginia State University. ♣



This is what Morgantown looked like in the late 1890s—lots of farmland, a smattering of houses, and a handful of WVU buildings (Woodburn Hall is left of center).

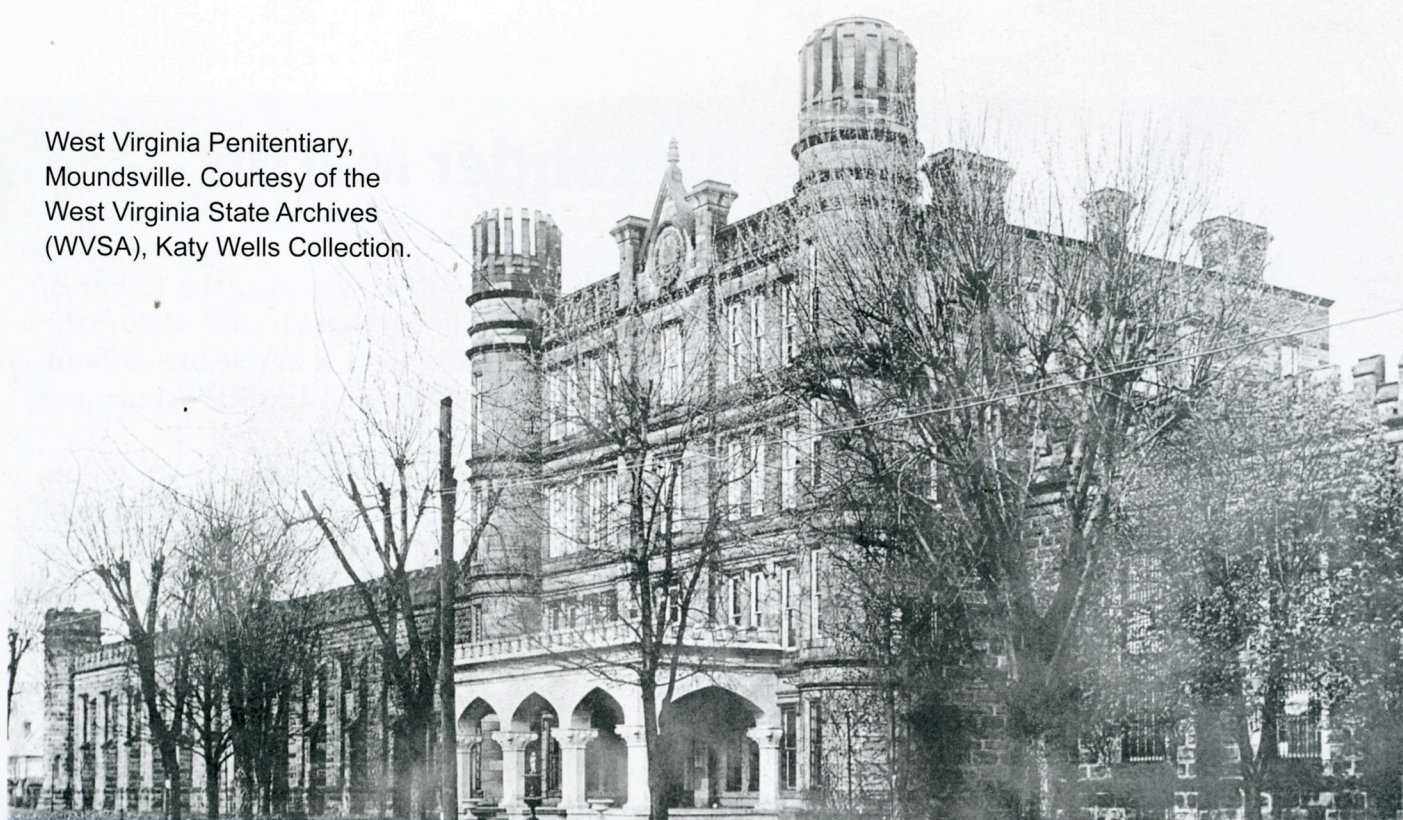
the end, the offer of \$51,000 worth of property in Monongalia County no doubt helped the state legislature reach its final decision. On February 7, 1867, the Agricultural College of West Virginia officially found its home in Morgantown, just miles from the Pennsylvania border. If that rankled southern

West Virginians, they got some vindication two years later when Charleston was named the capital city. (West Virginia's "floating capital" would return to Wheeling in 1875, before moving permanently to Charleston in 1885.)

Meanwhile, on the banks of the Monongahela River, the Rev.

Alexander Martin presided over the state's new land-grant college. Martin had grand ambitions for the school and lobbied early for a name change. In 1868, Martin told Governor Arthur Boreman to drop "the somewhat inconvenient word 'Agricultural' which makes some think it is only a Farmers School." Boreman and

West Virginia Penitentiary,
Moundsville. Courtesy of the
West Virginia State Archives
(WVSA), Katy Wells Collection.



Morgantown vs. Moundsville

One of the most long-standing, though unsubstantiated, bits of lore about WVU is that Moundsville, not Morgantown, had first dibs on the college. Here's what we can tell you.

When West Virginia became a state in 1863, there were no state prisons, only county jails. In 1864, the legislature authorized that all criminals convicted of felonies be imprisoned in the Ohio County Jail in Wheeling—presumably because it was the state's largest city, not necessarily because state capitals attract the worst elements.

In 1866, the legislature designated that Morgantown would get the new land-grant college, and that the pen would be located “near

Moundsville.” In those early years of statehood—and, to a great extent, today—political deals were typically made behind the scenes. It's hard to say whether a Moundsville-area politician might have picked the pen over the U in a backroom deal.

Here's some educated guessing, though. The final decision probably had more to do with Monongalia County Senator William Price offering the sites, buildings, and assets of the Monongalia Academy (including the Woodburn Female Seminary) for the use of the land-grant college.

It's not clear where the legend about Moundsville and the university got started; although, it's often been repeated in newspapers and

Morgantown bars. Most historians have either shot down the idea completely or prefaced the story with a disclaimer such as, “Legend has it.”

For the sake of fairness to both cities, GOLDENSEAL will not take a stand on this important debate. But, we will leave you with the stirring words of Mildred White, Civics 9B teacher at Moundsville High in 1934: “It is generally understood that at the time the pen was located here, it would have been possible to have had the state university in its place.” While we have no evidence to support Professor White's assertion, we would never be so presumptuous as to contradict a ninth-grade civics teacher. —ed. ✱



Courtesy of the WVRHC.

Alexander Martin (1822-1893)

WVU's first president was also the father of public education in West Virginia. Before the Civil War, Alexander Martin, a native of Scotland, taught at schools in Kingwood and Clarksburg and was a Methodist minister.

When West Virginia entered the union, fellow Methodist minister and statehood leader Gordon Battelle called upon Martin to draft a statewide education plan. Martin's "Outline of a System of General Education for the New State" became the blueprint for free education in West Virginia—a dramatic split from Virginia's "aristocratic" approach. Thanks to Martin's influence, all 50 counties (later to become 55) in the new state would offer a free, although segregated, public education. This was perhaps the most radical and lasting element of the split with Virginia.

As WVU's first president, Martin guided the school's important fledgling years and started construction on what would become Martin and Woodburn halls—now landmarks of the downtown campus. His tenure, though, was not particularly pleasant. He fought constantly with leaders of the state and school over funding and curriculum. In 1875, Martin resigned and moved on to Indiana Asbury University, which, under his direction, became DePauw University.

the legislature agreed, and the erstwhile Agricultural College of West Virginia became West Virginia University.

Martin might have been on to something, but he was obligated by the Morrill Act to include agriculture in WVU's curriculum. So, he asked for volunteers to till some soil. One of those volunteers, Marmaduke Dent, recalled the experiment in a 1901 article for the *Monticola* yearbook. To "keep faith with a generous Congress" by undertaking "something

purely agricultural," a group of young men went to work on 15-by-20-foot garden plots with varying degrees of expertise. "Some planted the seeds so deep that if they sprouted they could not reach the surface," Dent recalled, "others so shallow that they might get sunburn."

When a "regular gully washer" wiped out their initial efforts, the would-be farmers replanted their potatoes, corn, and beans. Dent recalled, "We kept our plots well hoed and the vegetables in

good trim until our June vacation, and having no Summer quarter to cause us to linger, we departed. . . . When we returned . . . a dreary waste of weeds ripening in the September sun hid from view the few surviving and decaying vegetables. As we looked upon our departed hopes we could not help but think that this is the seeming result of all man's labor."

Still, things worked out for Dent, who became WVU's first graduate in 1870 and went on to serve

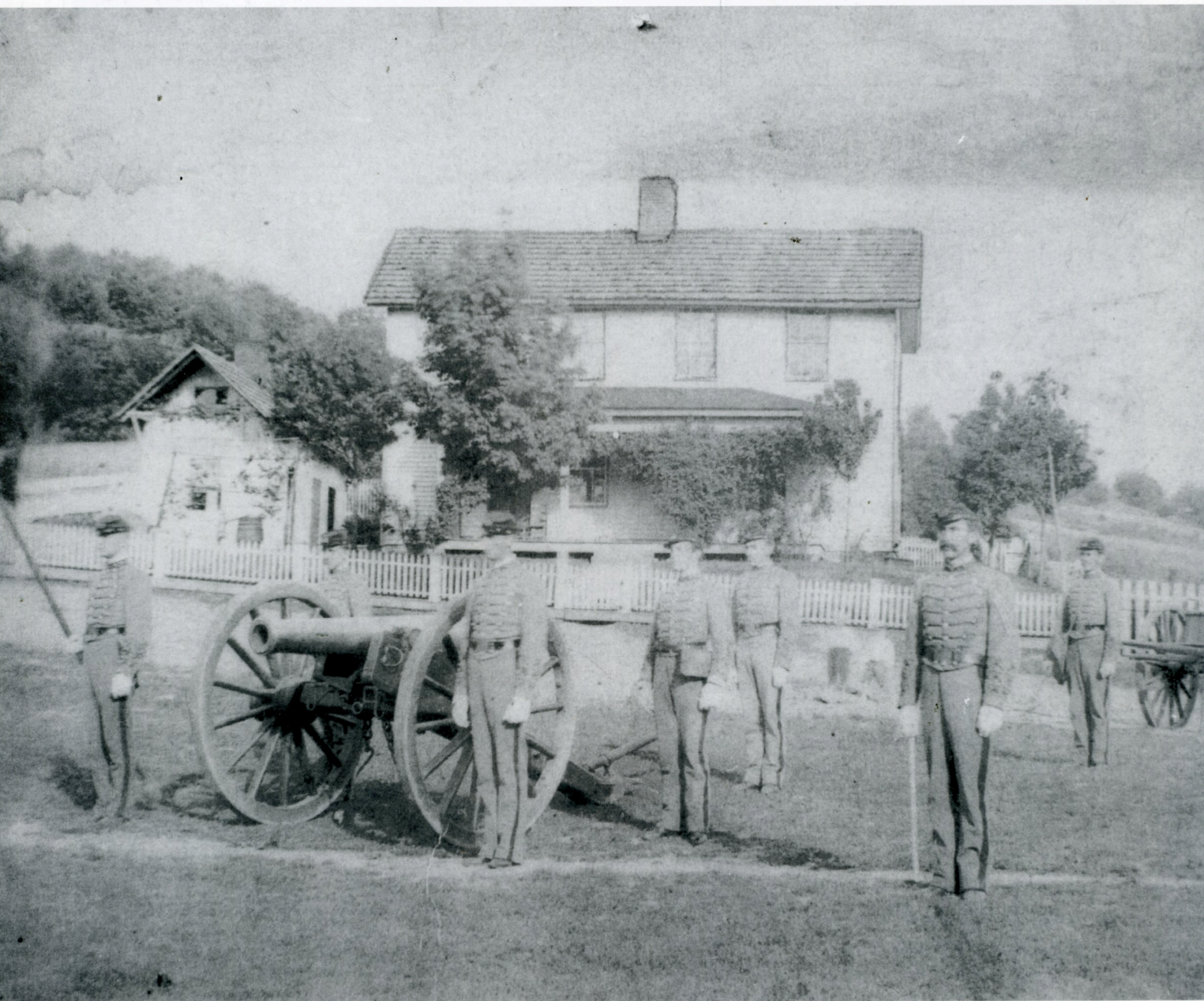


In its early years, WVU offered liberal arts courses but focused primarily on the mechanic arts and agriculture. Top, engineering students work in the electricity lab at the second Mechanical Hall (the first one burned down in 1899). Bottom, students pick and weigh tomatoes at the school's Experiment Station, which was organized in 1888 to study agriculture from a scientific standpoint. Both photos are ca. 1913.

as a judge on the West Virginia Supreme Court of Appeals.

In the Rev. Martin's eyes, universities were "nurseries of sound learning and of earnest, elevated piety." And WVU's low tolerance for drinking, gambling, smoking, carrying concealed weapons, and any other "species of immoral conduct" likely appealed to the parents of young men leaving home for the first time. But constant budget battles with the state and clashes with faculty members over low pay





In one of the oldest known photos from WVU (1870), the school's artillery cadets stand at attention in front of Fife Cottage. Fife Cottage was near the site of the future Woman's Hall. It was one of the earliest classroom facilities at WVU and was used frequently for science experiments.

and the curriculum spelled the end of Martin's tenure in 1875.

His departure opened a revolving door to the president's office. Between 1877 and 1901, five different men filled the post, including a former Confederate

from the Eastern Panhandle, William L. Wilson. In April 1863, Wilson had passed through Morgantown—as a private in the 12th Virginia Cavalry—and called it “the meanest Union hole we have yet been in.” His second stint in

the city was almost as fleeting. Wilson opened the university's fall term in September 1882, won election to the U.S. House of Representatives in October, and resigned the presidency in March 1883.



In this ca. 1878 photo, recently built Martin and Woodburn halls can be seen in the distance. The building with the spires is the old armory, which would become the Experiment Station. In front of it is Fife Cottage. Note the students in the foreground tending gardens.

Despite the administrative turmoil, WVU made significant advances, opening its law school in 1878, its College of Engineering and Mineral Resources in 1887, and its two-year medical program in 1903. Women were

officially admitted as students in 1889. Apart from the crushing defeat of the first football team in 1891—a 72-0 loss to Washington & Jefferson College—things were looking up for the university as the 20th century rolled in.

Except for that pesky sectionalism problem. Regional rivalries surfaced during the 1915 legislative session, when WVU sought a large appropriation for building and expansion. A resolution introduced by Senator R. A. Bless-



WVU expanded significantly beginning in the late 1910s. Sparked by a \$700,000 investment from the legislature, WVU added a number of new facilities, including Woman's Hall in 1918. It was later renamed for longtime psychology professor Elizabeth Mattingly Stalnaker.

ing of Mason County appointed a committee to study relocating the university. The *Charleston Mail* newspaper editorialized that the capital city was a far better base for the university than Morgantown, located “near the Pennsylvania line, in an almost inaccessible location.” The *Morgantown Post Chronicle* shot back that the “political chicanery of a state capital” would only corrupt impressionable college-aged youth. The *Mail* answered that Charleston was “a city of churches and church-going people,” not to mention the best preachers and lawyers and the “finest Y.M.C.A.” In addition,

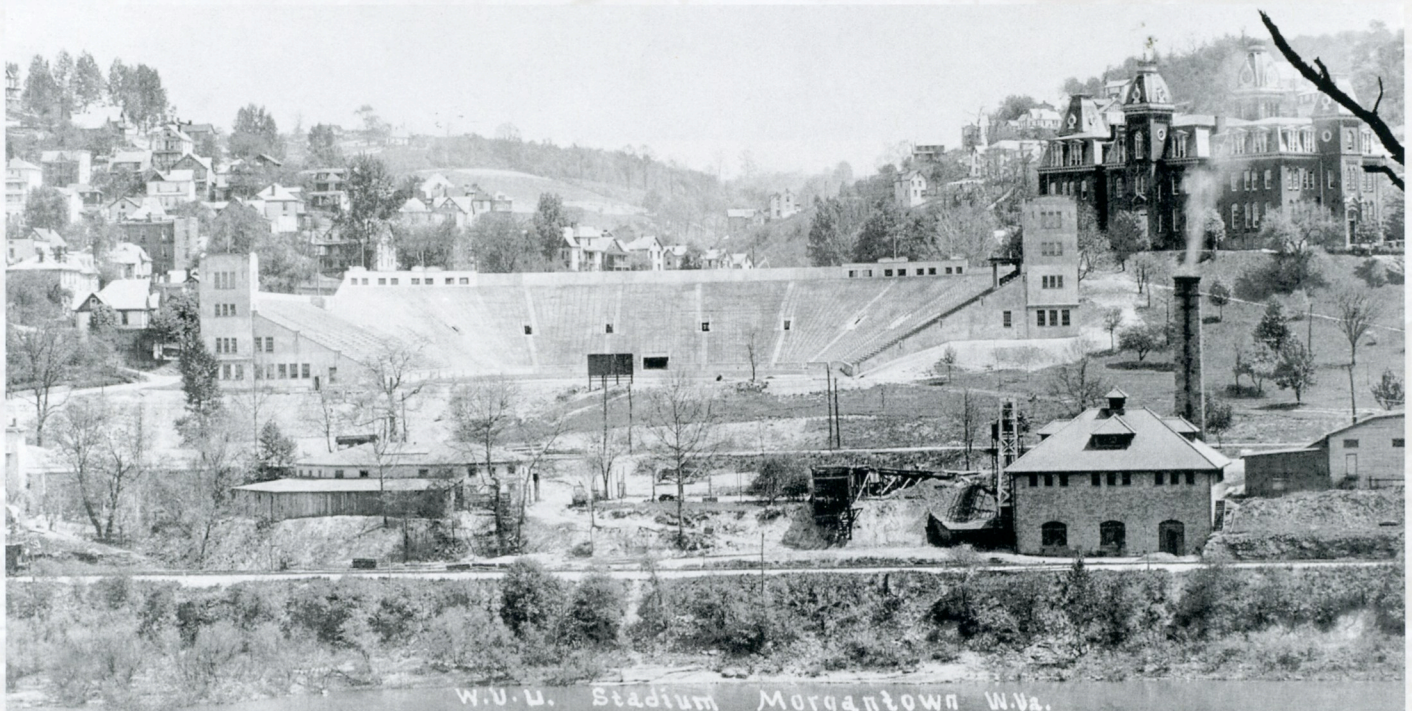
students would get a firsthand look at the legislative process and “a view of public life that they could otherwise not obtain.”

Northern West Virginians made a counterproposal. Delegate Charles Beard of Berkeley County suggested relocating the capital to Clarksburg. In the end, none of the proposals got much traction. WVU and the capital both stayed put, and the legislature appropriated more than \$700,000 for the university’s expansion—in Morgantown.

In the early years of WVU’s second half-century, the school embarked on a massive building campaign that included dorms,

classrooms, and a 34,000-seat football stadium. The football team had greatly improved since its debut in 1891. In 1919, Irret “Rat” Rodgers became WVU’s first consensus All-American. Three years later, Coach “Doc” Spears led the Mountaineers to an undefeated season of 9 wins, 0 losses, 1 tie, and a postseason victory over Gonzaga in the East-West Christmas Classic in San Diego.

With the new expansion effort, the university would be forever anchored to Morgantown by brick and stone. And if anyone still questioned whether WVU could meet the Morrill Act’s



WVU's expansion included the 34,000-seat Mountaineer Field, located between Woodburn Circle and the Sunnyside section of town. These photos show construction progress from the Sunnyside Bridge in 1924 (courtesy of the WVRHC) and the finished stadium from the opposite end (courtesy of the WVSA, Mrs. James Hamner Collection).



WVU expanded its facilities statewide in the early 1900s by starting agricultural research facilities in the eastern panhandle. It began in 1917, when the family of brewery magnate Lawrence A. Reymann of Wheeling donated Lawrence's Hardy County farm to WVU. The Reymann Memorial Farm, still operated by WVU, is located about two miles west of Wardensville. Courtesy of the WVSA, Ben Frye Collection.

requirement to teach agriculture, the answer came in the form of a substantial gift from the Reymann family of Wheeling. Before Prohibition went into effect in West Virginia in 1914, the Reymanns owned the state's largest brewery. But scion Lawrence A. Reymann was more interested in milk than beer and assembled a highly prized herd of Ayrshire cattle. Reymann died in 1911, and in 1917, his family donated nearly 1,000 acres

of farmland in Hardy County's Cacapon Valley (and 94 head of purebred Ayrshires) to WVU's agricultural program. And with that, the university's reach—and expertise—extended to even more areas of the Mountain State.

As WVU closed the book on its first 50, the university was becoming what Justin Morrill, Alexander Martin, and thousands of West Virginians had hoped for: a college for everyday folks and an authority in its spheres of

influence. Over the next century, WVU would cement its standing as a school for all of West Virginia.

After all, as Thomas Jefferson (and Francis Bacon) once said, "Knowledge is power." 🍁

After graduating from WVU's Public History Program in 1990, CHRISTINE M. KREISER worked as a historian and editor for more than 25 years in the Mountain State. She now writes from Winchester, Virginia—west of the Blue Ridge. This is her first contribution to GOLDENSEAL.

The WVU Band marches on the old parade ground in 1913.
The Experiment Station (former armory) is in the background.



The WVU Band

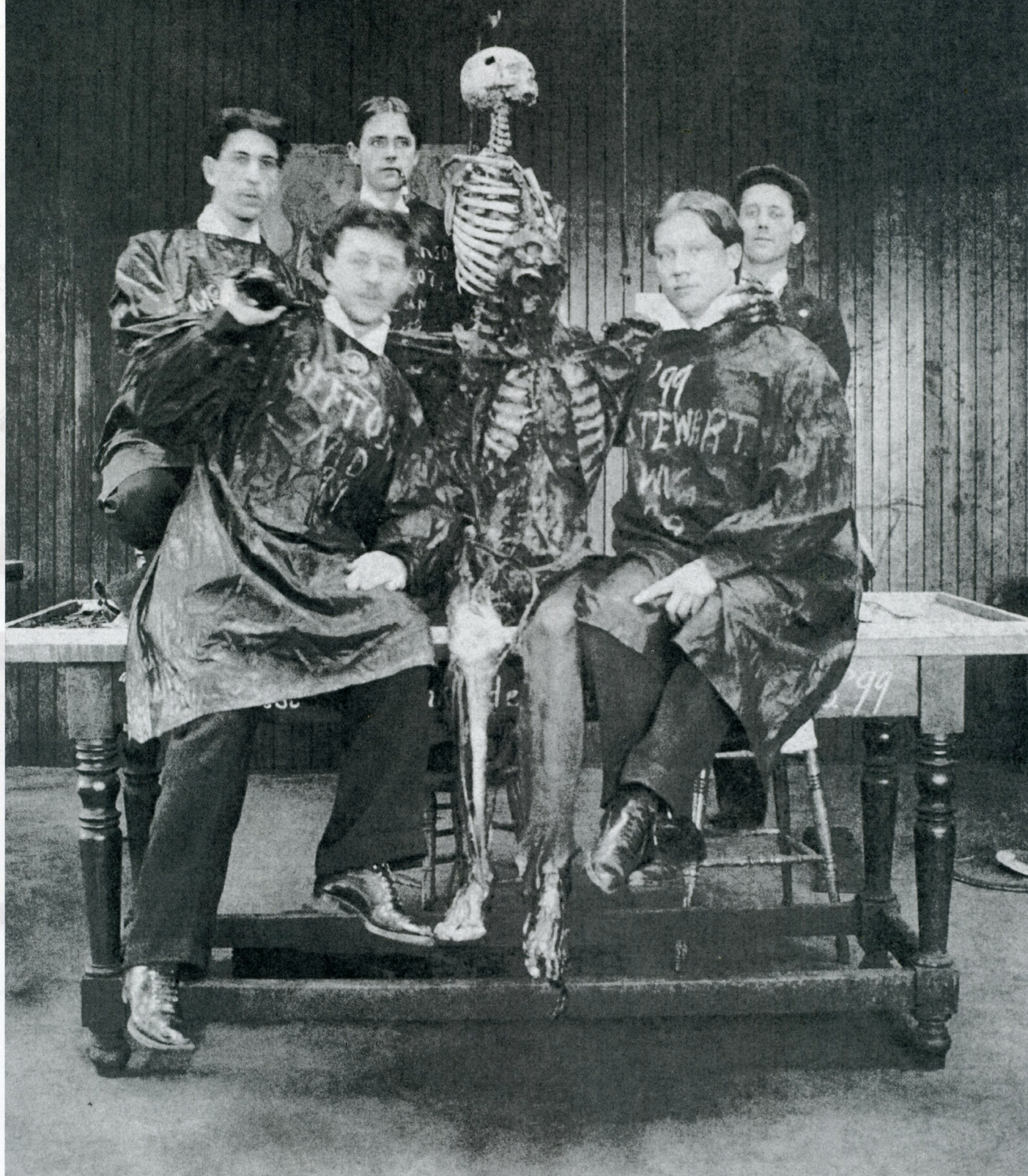
The WVU Band has a long and storied history. It all began in 1901, when eight ROTC members got together to play marching music under director Walter Mestrezat, who continued in that role for 37 years. Mostly, the band played for military revues and parades but also provided entertainment at halftime of football games and community celebrations.

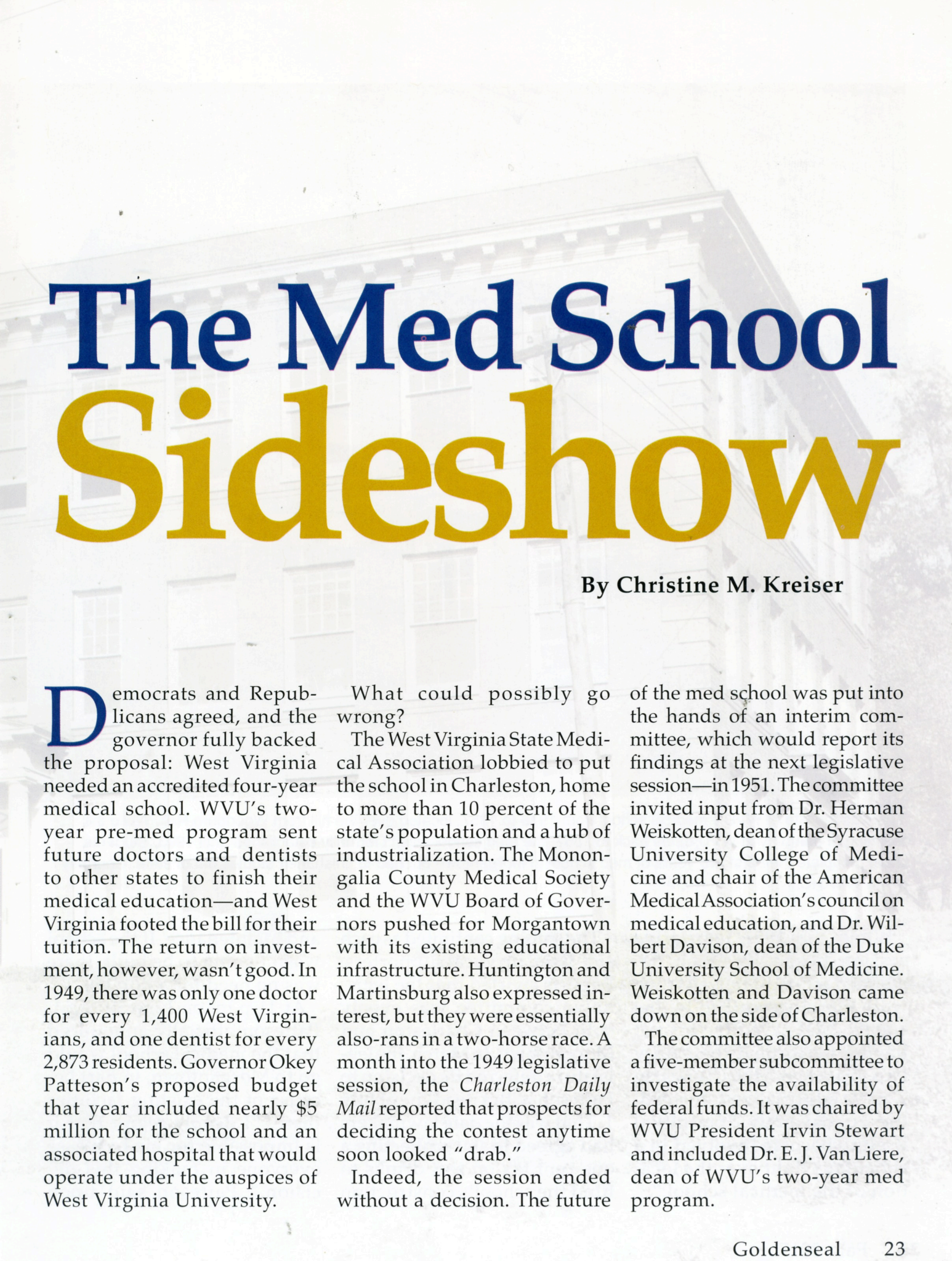
The genesis of today's modern marching band took shape in the 1950s and 1960s. Budd Udell served as director from 1963 to 1969 and arranged the versions of "Fight, Mountaineers" and "Hail, West Virginia" that are still in use. Don Wilcox led the band for most of the next three decades. In 1997, Wilcox's last year as director, WVU received the Sudler Trophy, awarded to the nation's best collegiate marching band.

The Pride of West Virginia (as the band has been known since 1975) continues to perform around the country at WVU and NFL games and for special events, such as an ABC-TV special that featured Glen Dale native Brad Paisley backed up by the Pride.

Trivia: Why is WVU's Band called *The Pride of West Virginia*? It goes back to the 1975 Peach Bowl in Atlanta. Public address announcer Marshall Mann introduced the band as "the pride of West Virginia," and thus began a new era. And yes, there's some irony in the fact the nickname was coined by a man named Marshall.

WVU anatomy students pose with skeletons in the late 1890s. Courtesy of the WVSA, Alkire/Jennings Collection.





The Med School Sideshow

By Christine M. Kreiser

Democrats and Republicans agreed, and the governor fully backed the proposal: West Virginia needed an accredited four-year medical school. WVU's two-year pre-med program sent future doctors and dentists to other states to finish their medical education—and West Virginia footed the bill for their tuition. The return on investment, however, wasn't good. In 1949, there was only one doctor for every 1,400 West Virginians, and one dentist for every 2,873 residents. Governor Okey Patteson's proposed budget that year included nearly \$5 million for the school and an associated hospital that would operate under the auspices of West Virginia University.

What could possibly go wrong?

The West Virginia State Medical Association lobbied to put the school in Charleston, home to more than 10 percent of the state's population and a hub of industrialization. The Monongalia County Medical Society and the WVU Board of Governors pushed for Morgantown with its existing educational infrastructure. Huntington and Martinsburg also expressed interest, but they were essentially also-rans in a two-horse race. A month into the 1949 legislative session, the *Charleston Daily Mail* reported that prospects for deciding the contest anytime soon looked "drab."

Indeed, the session ended without a decision. The future

of the med school was put into the hands of an interim committee, which would report its findings at the next legislative session—in 1951. The committee invited input from Dr. Herman Weiskotten, dean of the Syracuse University College of Medicine and chair of the American Medical Association's council on medical education, and Dr. Wilbert Davison, dean of the Duke University School of Medicine. Weiskotten and Davison came down on the side of Charleston.

The committee also appointed a five-member subcommittee to investigate the availability of federal funds. It was chaired by WVU President Irvin Stewart and included Dr. E. J. Van Liere, dean of WVU's two-year med program.



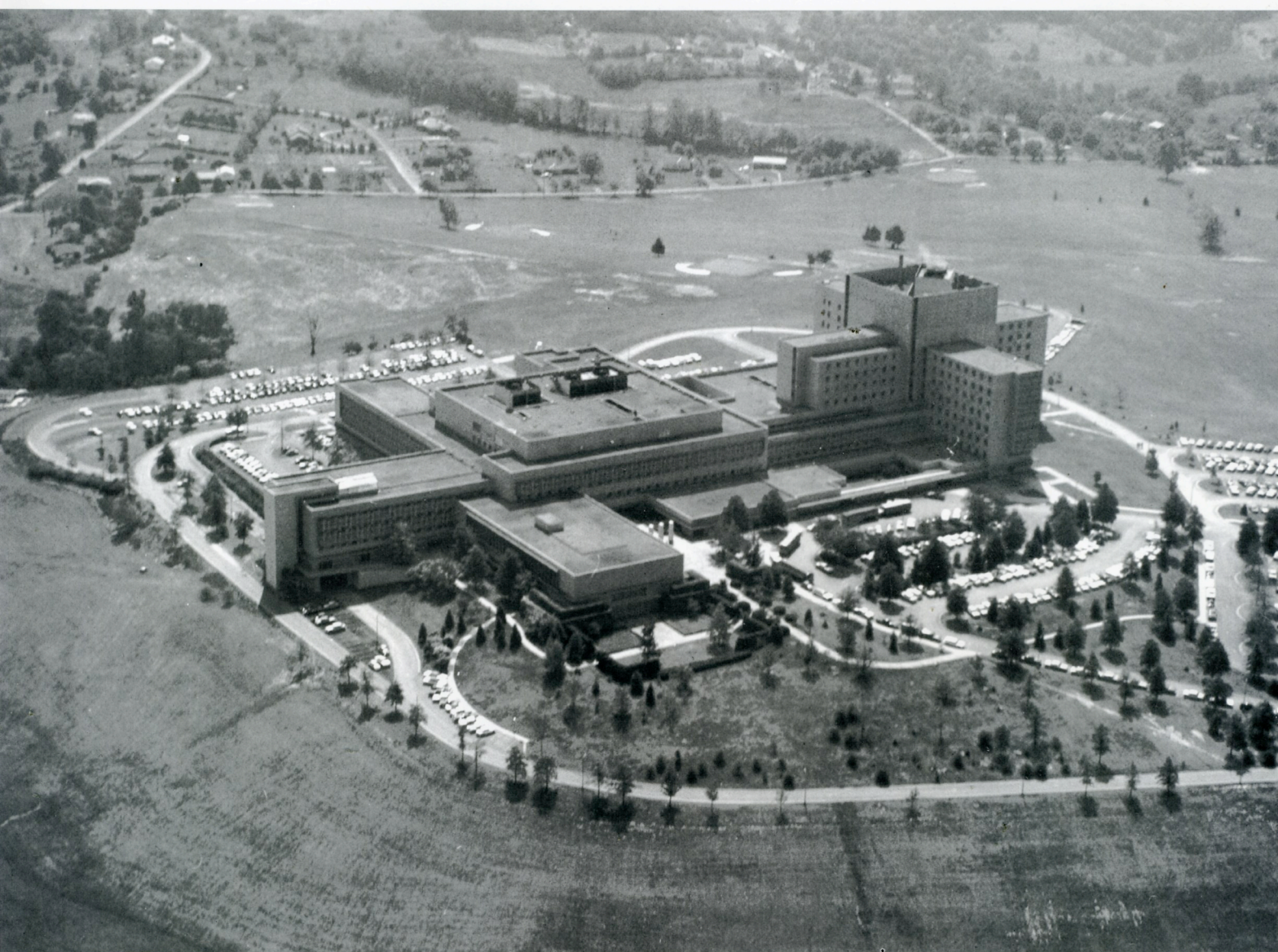
This was the site of WVU's medical school from 1916 to 1957, located over the hill from Woodburn Hall. While the teaching of anatomy at WVU dates back to 1887, the med school wasn't formally established until 1903. Students could complete their first two years of med school in Morgantown but had to finish their studies out of state. Courtesy of the WVRHC.

When the 1951 legislative session began, Patteson demanded action. "The legislators were literally spanked by the state's chief executive for not having performed their duty two years ago," the *Charleston Gazette* editorialized. Instead, the august body "permitted itself to become involved in a ridiculous fight over the location of the medical school."

The sniping continued as each side lined up vocal supporters. Reports swirled that the legislative committee was evenly split between Charleston and Morgantown. In March, the legislature deferred its decision to Patteson with a deadline of July 1. That was the date lawmakers had agreed to start collecting a one-cent tax on soft drinks to fund the school's construction

and maintenance. If the school wasn't going to be built, there was no need for a pop tax.

At 11 p.m. on June 30, 1951, Patteson officially announced that the medical school would go to Morgantown, in part because of the existing facilities there. "I deeply regret that it is impossible for me to please everyone in making this decision," Patteson said upon



In 1957, the med school moved into the new Health Sciences Hall on the Evansdale Campus. Three years later, University Hospital opened (it was replaced by Ruby Memorial Hospital in 1988), and WVU implemented a four-year med school curriculum. In 1962, the school awarded its first four-year medical degree, and Dr. Herbert Warden (1924-2002) of the School of Medicine oversaw the first open-heart surgery in West Virginia. More West Virginians probably remember Dr. Warden as the WVU football team physician from 1968 to 2001. Courtesy of the WVRHC.

releasing a 33-page statement on the process. "I know that Charleston, Huntington, and the other cities making a bid for this school will be disappointed, but by the very same token, I have their every assurance of full cooperation. . . . I earnestly call upon every citizen of my State to join in this project to the end that West Virginia may have a first-class Medical School."🍁

Charleston didn't lose out entirely. Charleston Memorial Hospital, the city's first community-owned hospital, opened in 1951 and, in 1972, merged with Charleston General to form the state's largest hospital—Charleston Area Medical Center (CAMC). In November 1972, the WVU Medical School launched its Charleston division in Memorial Hospital on the CAMC campus. Then, in 1977, Marshall University in Huntington started its own med school. Today, WVU Medicine and CAMC are the state's second- and third-largest employers, respectively.



The cast of *Richard III* raises money for the WVU football team. Fourth from the left is the play's director, Melville Davisson Post (1869-1930). The Harrison County native would become a popular writer of novels and detective stories. Courtesy of the WVRHC.

The First Football Team

WVU's football team could've gotten off to worse starts—but not much worse. On November 28, 1891, the school's first squad, nicknamed the "Snakes," dropped a 72-0 contest against Washington & Jefferson. The game was played in front of about 250 fans just south of Morgantown. Adding insult to injury, the university couldn't afford all the expenses for uniforms and for its opponent to travel the 55 miles from Washington, Pennsylvania. To raise funds, WVU staged a production of Shakespeare's *Richard III*. 🍁

Trivia: WVU's first quarterback was the colorfully named Gory Hogg (1873-1963). He went on to become a pioneering doctor in the southern coalfields and served in the West Virginia Legislature.

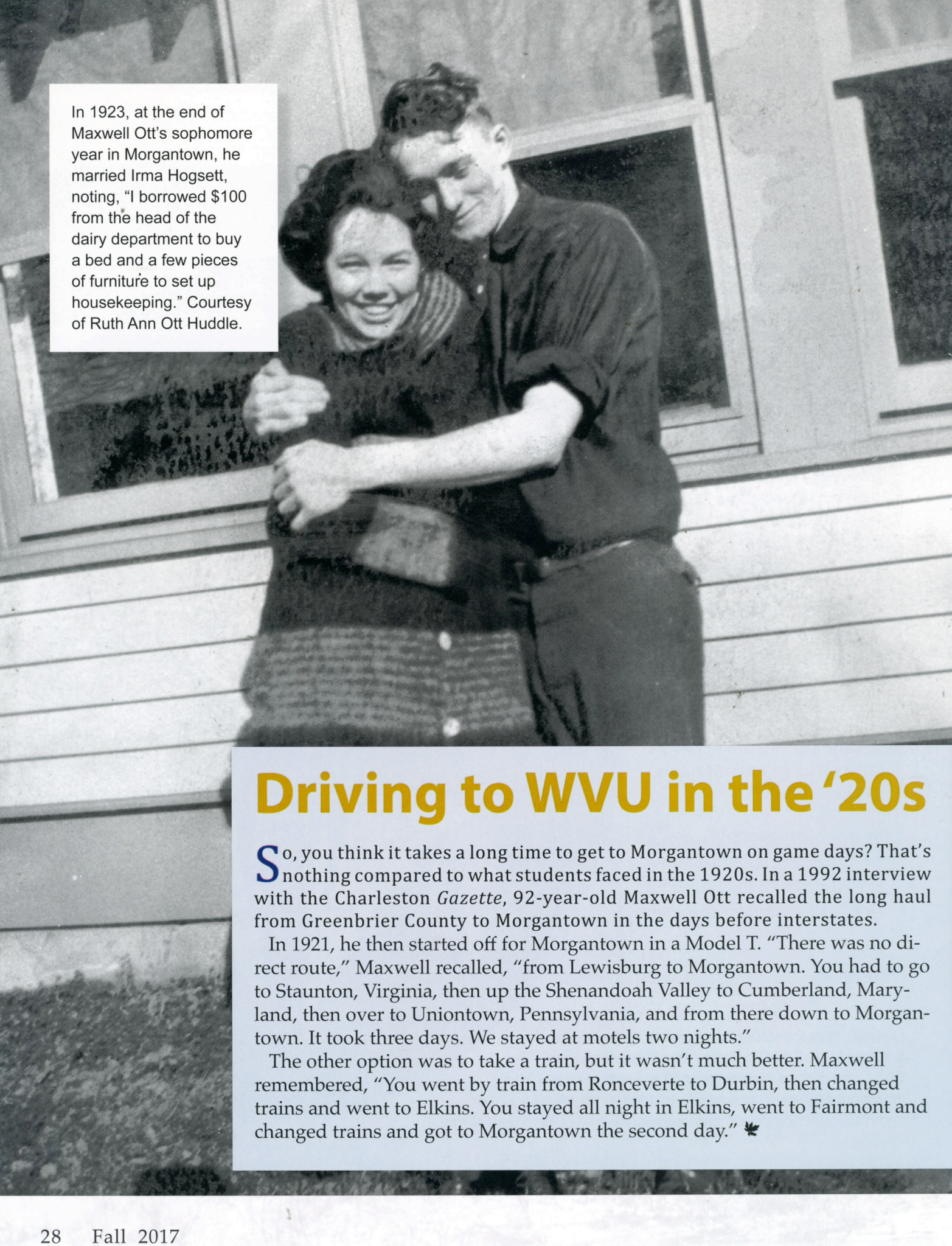
First Women Students

On April 2, 1869, WVU's faculty committee voted to prohibit women students from attending the university, considering it a "Northern notion." Educator Elizabeth Moore (1830-1930) opened the Morgantown Female Seminary 12 days later. In the 1880s, the West Virginia Legislature twice shot down the concept of coeducation at WVU. However, after the Morgantown Female Seminary burned in 1889, the legislature altered its policy. The first 10 women were admitted to WVU in September 1889. Two years later, Harriet Lyon (1863-1949), a transfer from Vassar College, finished at the top of her class and became the first woman to receive a degree from the university. In 1936, she recalled being made to feel "like an alien and intruder" at the school. 🌸

Trivia: In 1989—100 years after WVU first admitted women—Tower II in the Evansdale Residential Complex was named for Harriet Lyon.

WVU's first female graduate, Harriet Lyon (Jewett), was the daughter of one of the school's first teachers, Franklin Lyon. After graduating from WVU, she moved back to her native Fredonia, New York, married a professor, and had four children. She was a singer and musician, composer, and community leader. Courtesy of the WVRHC.





In 1923, at the end of Maxwell Ott's sophomore year in Morgantown, he married Irma Hogsett, noting, "I borrowed \$100 from the head of the dairy department to buy a bed and a few pieces of furniture to set up housekeeping." Courtesy of Ruth Ann Ott Huddle.

Driving to WVU in the '20s

So, you think it takes a long time to get to Morgantown on game days? That's nothing compared to what students faced in the 1920s. In a 1992 interview with the *Charleston Gazette*, 92-year-old Maxwell Ott recalled the long haul from Greenbrier County to Morgantown in the days before interstates.

In 1921, he then started off for Morgantown in a Model T. "There was no direct route," Maxwell recalled, "from Lewisburg to Morgantown. You had to go to Staunton, Virginia, then up the Shenandoah Valley to Cumberland, Maryland, then over to Uniontown, Pennsylvania, and from there down to Morgantown. It took three days. We stayed at motels two nights."

The other option was to take a train, but it wasn't much better. Maxwell remembered, "You went by train from Ronceverte to Durbin, then changed trains and went to Elkins. You stayed all night in Elkins, went to Fairmont and changed trains and got to Morgantown the second day." 🍁

The PRT

Most WVU students over the last four-plus decades have some type of PRT story—often about it being broken down on game days or when they were running late for a test. The Personal Rapid Transportation was the first “people mover” of its kind when it opened in 1975. The streets of Morgantown are perhaps best known for interminable parking problems and traffic jams that would make Mr. Ott long for his 10-hour drive from Greenbrier County. The PRT was intended to eliminate, or at least avoid, these problems. And, to a great extent, it’s still considered a transportation marvel, ahead of its time. Today, the PRT carries an average of 15,000 students per day, connecting WVU’s campuses. 🍁

Trivia: Each year, there’s a competition to see how many WVU students can cram themselves into a modified PRT car, which typically seats eight. The record? 97, set in 2000.

The PRT cruises along the Evansdale tracks shortly after opening. Two other more recent landmarks are in the background: the WVU Coliseum (left) (1970) and Creative Arts Center (1964). Courtesy of the WVSA.



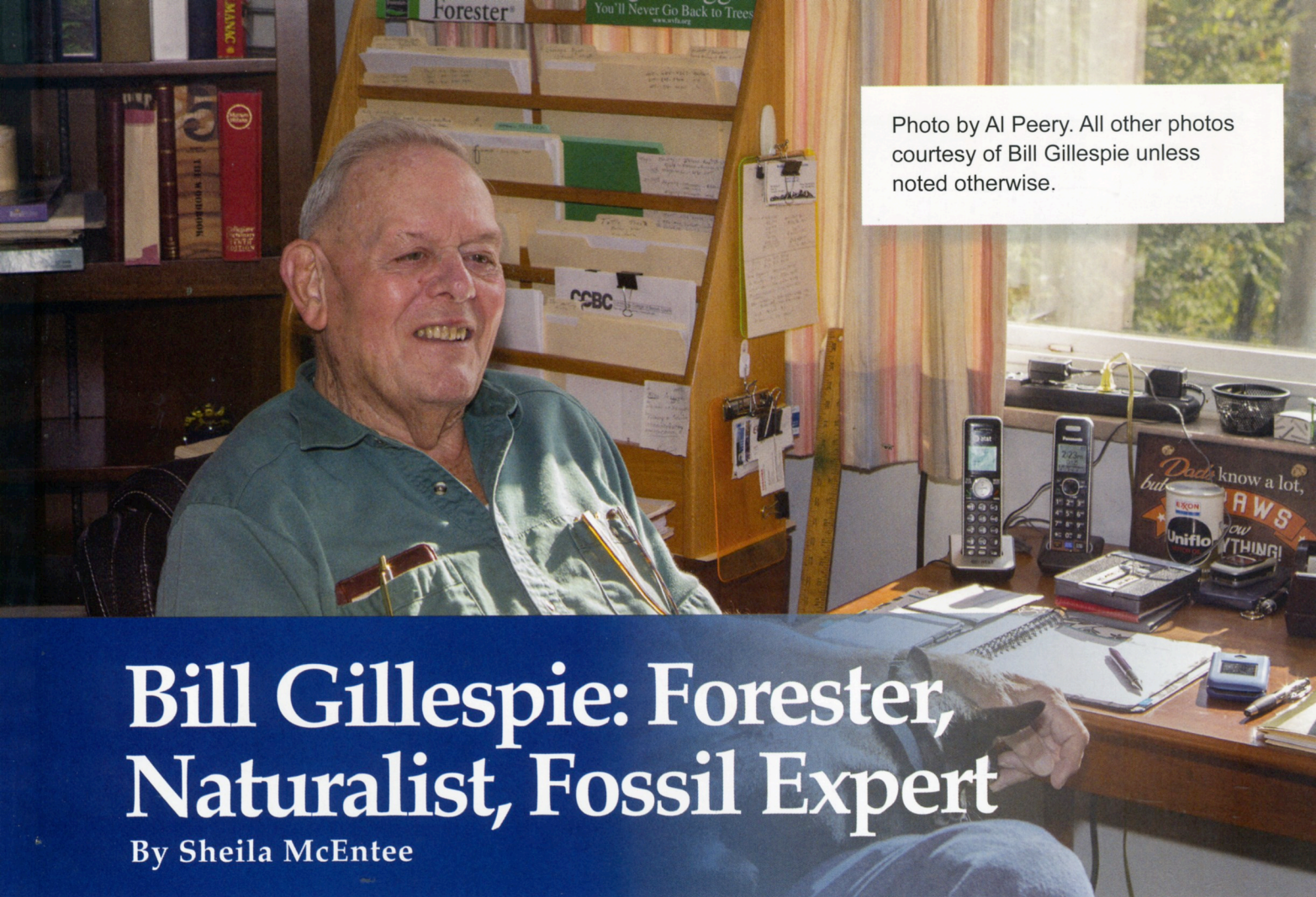


Photo by Al Peery. All other photos courtesy of Bill Gillespie unless noted otherwise.

Bill Gillespie: Forester, Naturalist, Fossil Expert

By Sheila McEntee

In a spacious office in his Charleston home, Bill Gillespie lowers his imposing frame into the swivel chair behind his desk. Then, with a bemused smile, he looks down at the floor and pats his lap, inviting Wilbur, his black Chihuahua, to join him.

Thus settled in, he leans back and surveys certificate-covered walls that proclaim him, among other distinctions, a certified forester and a member of the West Virginia Lumberjack Hall of Fame. Finally, he points toward a large color portrait of West Virginia University's Woodburn Hall. "If not for this one," he says, "I'd be in that one." His index finger travels to a large photo of coal miners exit-

ing a mine. Beneath the photo, there's a typewritten note: "Life undoubtedly would not have been as rosy." Below the note are two more pencil-scrawled words: "Thanks, Mom."

Indeed, as a boy growing up in the shadow of the Number 4 Mine at Byers in Webster County, Bill Gillespie thought he'd one day become a miner like other local boys. Instead, his love of nature—and more than a small bit of prodding from his mother—would eventually make him one of our state's top authorities on trees and an internationally acclaimed expert on geology and fossil plants.

William Harry Gillespie was born in Webster Springs to William Marston "Mart" Gillespie

and Rosalie Geneva Frazee Gillespie. Mart was born in Webster County and Rosalie in Pocahontas County; both were graduates of Webster County High School and the first ones in their families to attend high school. Mart and Rosalie appreciated the value of a good education and instilled in their three children the importance of school. Bill still has his parents' high school diplomas. "They were real proud of them," he says.

Yet, Bill's family education ethic reaches back even further. His grandfather, Elijah H. Gillespie, taught school at Gillespie in Braxton County. In those days, teachers had to sign yearly contracts. One year,



A young spiffy Bill Gillespie poses with his dog in Webster County about 1935.



In 1937, the Gillespies moved to Number 4 Mine at Byers. The tipple was within throwing distance of their house on "Bosses Row."

Elk River was so high the agent for the school system couldn't get Elijah's contract to him. So, he bundled it up and threw it across the river. Elijah caught it, signed it, and threw it back.

Sometime after that, Elijah became a teacher in Bergoo and then opened a store in Webster Springs. His business prospered, and, by 1912, he'd opened a new, larger store in what became known as the "Gillespie Building." Elijah's business thrived un-

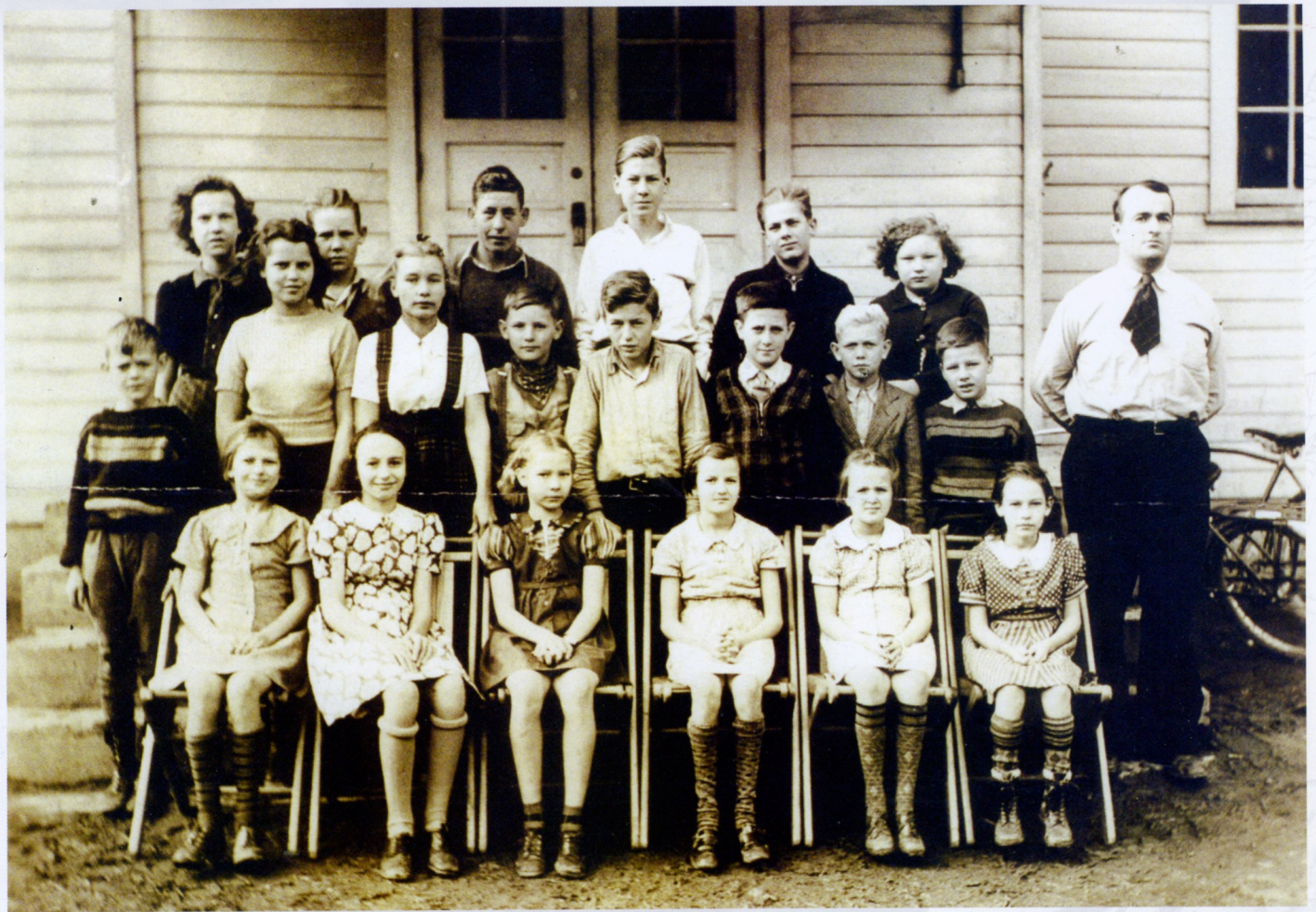
til the 1920s, when the local economy began to weaken.

Unfortunately, "the Depression of '29 wiped him out," Bill says. "He was a disillusioned man after that."

In 1937, when Bill was six, the family moved six miles up Elk River to Number 4 Mine, where Mart became the company bookkeeper. In those first days, there was only the coal tipple, an office, and a store. The company built the Gillespies a six-room house on

"Bosses Row," literally a stone's throw from the tipple. (Homes for the miners were built in nearby river bottoms.) A year later, a school opened, and Bill, having attended first grade in Webster Springs, began second grade at Byers.

"When I went into second grade, I was the only boy who could fit in a standard-size desk," Bill recalls. "Everyone else was much bigger. There had never been a school there, and the children were 15 and



Bill (second row, far left) attended grade school at Byers. This photo of his fourth-grade class was taken about 1940. The teacher (far right) is Bert Sommerville.

16 years old, going to first and second grade. People don't realize that that was the way it was in those days."

The school had two rooms, one for the first through fourth grades and one for fifth through eighth. There were two teachers, who traveled long distances by car and log train every day. The children traveled a shorter route and were expected to be independent from a young age.

"We walked under the tippie, along the railroad tracks, and down over the hill to the school," Bill explains. "You wouldn't allow six and seven year olds to do that today for anything.

But we never thought a thing of it."

Bill attended school at Byers until eighth grade. From age 10 on, he worked during the summer. "People laugh, and they don't believe me, but my mother was very firm in her ways, and she had ideas about what I should and shouldn't do," he says. "She was always on hand to see that I had a summer job."

As a boy, Bill largely did household chores for people, like carrying water from the well (for a nickel a tub) and splitting firewood. He was allowed to keep the money he earned but not to spend it.

The day after he completed eighth grade, he took a job making hay on a farm three miles upriver from Byers. At the end of that summer, not having seen his family for two-and-a-half months, he returned home to find the house at Number 4 Mine empty. His uncle told him that the family had moved to Webster Springs and that they were living in his grandfather's former store building.

Bill walked the six miles to Bergoo and then paid a 50-cent taxi fare to Webster Springs. When he walked into the old store, his mother looked up and said, "We were expecting you."

Bill Gillespie married Betty Jean Rasnick in Webster County in December 1950. This photo was taken the summer before their wedding.

During summer breaks from Webster County High School, Bill worked for the Soil Conservation Service, building farm ponds and clearing fields. His grandfather, Harry Frazee, who worked in a sawmill, taught him about trees. Over the years, his knowledge of West Virginia plant life grew.

"I collected things, and we ate quite a few native plants," Bill says. "When spring came, Mom said it was ramp time or dandelion time. And we had a garden. Once I was old enough, it was my garden."

Bill liked to read and was a good student, especially in chemistry. At the end of the

year, his chemistry teacher would give a silver dollar to the student with the highest final-exam grade.

"That was me. I saw that coming," Bill recalls, grinning. "I'd already spent the money."

As it turned out, Bill scored a 94, but another bright student, Betty Jean Rasnick, scored a 99. That caught Bill's attention. The next year, at Betty's urging, a teacher cast Bill as a wise man in the school Christmas pageant. The teacher passed on a

compliment from Betty: "She said you'd make a wonderful old man." With that, Bill worked up the nerve to start a conversation.

Bill and Betty lived too far apart to do much dating, though they did go to senior prom together. Bill was busy with his schoolwork, friends, and other activities when one day, his mother asked him which college he was going to. "She didn't ask if I was going, she just asked which one," Bill says. "I





The 1948-49 WVU School of Forestry class, with Bill (third row, fourth from left, with an open jacket).

never forgot that. I said, 'Well, I haven't made up my mind yet, Mom, but I'm thinking about West Virginia University.' She said, 'OK.'"

After that, his mother asked him a couple of times if he'd applied to WVU. Bill said he hadn't gotten around to it. "I was busy," he explains, "being a young man with a lot of interests."

Then, as graduation approached, Bill was surprised to receive a letter from WVU announcing his acceptance to the School of Forestry. His mother and the high school principal had applied for him.

"I thought I'd better go, and I did," he says.

Bill arrived in Morgantown in fall 1948 with some clean clothes and one semester's tuition: \$47. Though more than 100 miles away from Webster County, he continually felt his mother's support. There was no laundromat on campus, so, every Thursday, he'd send a box of dirty clothes home. A 25-pound box cost 61 cents to mail from Morgantown to Webster Springs. He'd get the box back every Tuesday, filled with clean clothes.

With his family back home rooting for him, Bill worked

hard to stay in school. "I had the corner on part-time jobs," he says. "I mowed lawns and cut timber on the university's woodlots. They took care of me."

Bill also kept busy cataloging West Virginia's edible wild plants, one of his boyhood passions. In 1951, the university's botany honor society, Phi Epsilon Phi, published a booklet written by Bill featuring some 600 edible wild plants and recipes.

As a forestry undergrad, Bill met Dr. Earl Lemley Core—a renowned botanist and researcher—who coauthored with P. D. Strasbaugh *The Flora*



In his sophomore year, Bill was part of WVU's Junior Forestry School, 1950.

of West Virginia, the definitive four-volume series on state plants. Core took Bill under his wing and taught him a great deal.

"Earl Core was not only a mentor but a second father," Bill says. "He's the one who kept me in school. He was a taskmaster and a tremendous man."

Indeed, more than one professor took an interest in Bill. He'd rise before dawn to assist professor and plant biologist R. C. Spangler on golf outings, during which Spangler also collected mushrooms. One day, Bill remarked casually to Spangler that he'd seen plant fossils on the roofs of coal mines.

"Dr. Cross teaches a class in that, and you should take it,"

Spangler told Bill. That advice changed Bill's life.

Aureal T. Cross had taught at Notre Dame and studied with noted paleobotanist John Hobart Hoskins. Bill took Cross' paleobotany class and learned not only about plant fossils in West Virginia that were hundreds of millions of years old but also about *palynology*, the study of fossil pollen grains. Cross was among the nation's first palynologists.

In the mid-1950s, palynology was a budding science. It would soon become useful to landowners, petroleum companies, and the coal industry, which could identify specific coal seams based on fossilized pollen grains. "For example, 90 percent of Pittsburgh coal

is composed of one spore," Bill notes. "That separates it from the Red Stone seam, which is the one above it."

Cross and Core encouraged Bill, with his aptitude for learning and keen interest in fossil plants, to seek a graduate degree. Meanwhile, though, Bill and Betty had rekindled their romance, gotten married, and started a family. Money was tight. Reluctantly, Bill told his mentors he couldn't continue with school. The two professors had already arranged a \$1,200 scholarship—in exchange for Bill teaching labs in biology and *dendrology* (the study of trees) and leading geology field trips.

When his professors asked how much more he needed, Bill turned to Betty. She deter-



Bill (second from left) leads a crew of foresters on a field trip in the 1950s.

mined they'd need \$250 more to cover his books and family necessities for a year. Core and student affairs administrator Joe Gluck arranged for a \$250 loan through a Clarksburg foundation. Core also found Bill a job as a janitor at his church. That \$10-per-week job was just enough to cover Bill and Betty's apartment rent with a dollar to spare each week.

Bill stayed in school, taught the labs, and, every Saturday morning, took students on geology field trips to a fossil-rich surface mine near the Fairfax Stone in Tucker County. Betty cooked breakfast for the stu-

dents before they headed out.

When Cross later left WVU to develop Pan America's palynology laboratory in Houston, Bill taught his classes for the rest of that semester and the following one. Then, the university made paleobotany a required course for geology majors. Bill was asked to teach it, along with palynology.

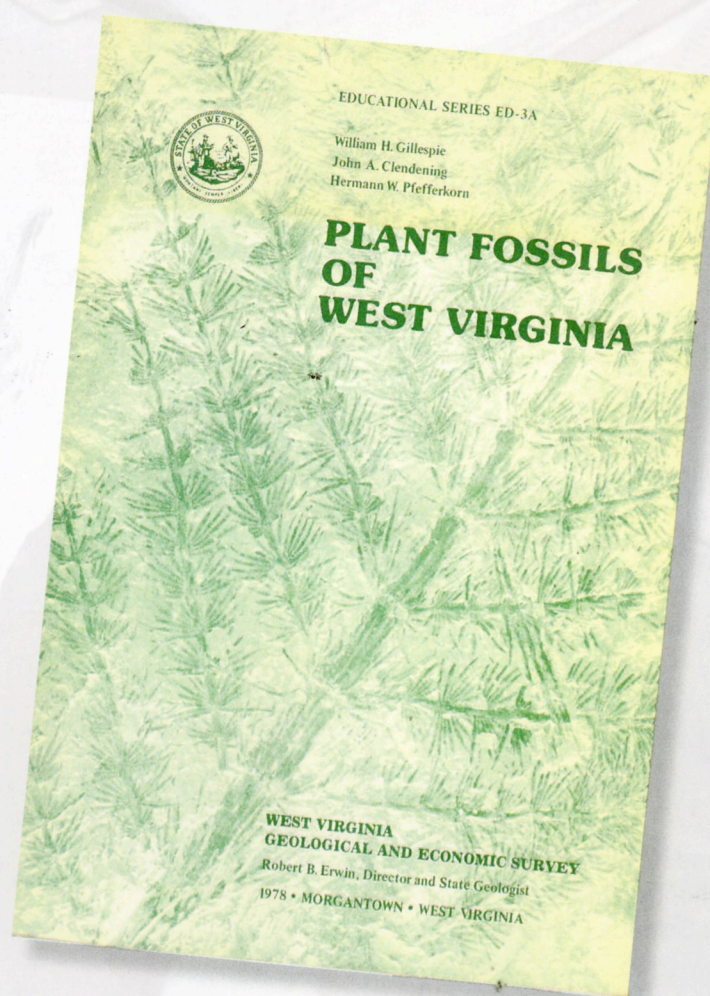
"That kept me living," he says. "That was the profs taking care of me and making sure I got out of school eventually."

Though he never attended graduation (the \$10 fee wasn't in the budget), Bill earned his undergrad forestry degree (along with the distinguished

Forester's Ax Award) and a combined master's degree in plant taxonomy and geology. He kept teaching in the Department of Geology and Geography and later became an adjunct professor, supervising many master's and Ph.D. candidates. He is very proud of their ensuing successes.

"One student became state geologist for Ohio, and another became head of the worldwide palynology association," Bill notes. "Another joined the Kentucky Geological Survey and is probably the best coal-measures palynologist in the U.S. Still another is West Virginia's state coal geologist."

In 1978, the West Virginia Geological and Economic Survey published *Plant Fossils of West Virginia* by Bill Gillespie, John A. Clendening, and Hermann W. Pfefferkorn. It's been called "the Bible of fossil plant identification."



While teaching, Bill also worked for the state as a forest biologist, did private consulting in palynology, and began compiling an expansive bibliography of scientific articles, abstracts, books, and other materials. His best-known books include *The Edible Wild Plants of West Virginia*, *Forest Trees of West Virginia*, and *Trees of West Virginia Farms and Woodlots*, all co-authored with Earl Core; and *Plant Fossils of West Virginia*, coauthored with John A. Clendening and Hermann W. Pfefferkorn.

"*Plant Fossils of West Virginia* is the Bible of fossil plant identification in West Virginia,"

says E. Ray Garton, a former student of Bill's and curator of the state Geological and Economic Survey Museum. "It's been updated and reprinted three times. It's the most popular book ever published by the West Virginia Geological and Economic Survey."

In 1967, Bill, Betty, and their family moved from Morgantown to Charleston, where he became assistant director of plant and pest control at the Department of Agriculture. Soon after that, director F. Waldo Craig retired, and Bill became director of that section. His career in state government ultimately spanned 37 years,

including 18 years as deputy commissioner of the Department of Agriculture and eight years as director of the Division of Forestry and State Forester.

During this period, Bill traveled worldwide in his quest to learn more about fossil plants. He studied with other paleobotanists and presented papers in Canada, England, Scotland, Wales, and Spain. He also visited WVU's forestry school in Kenya.

In 1980, almost by happenstance, Bill became as close to a celebrity as it gets in the paleobotany world. "You always find fossil plants in association with a coal seam," Bill explains. "Betty and I were in Elkins. We noticed

Bill leads a plant fossil expedition in Pocahontas County for the National Youth Science Camp in the 1980s.

this coal seam, and we stopped to look at it. I picked up a rock and didn't realize what I had. I put it in the truck and went on."

A few months later, Bill got a call from Gar Rothwell, a highly acclaimed paleobotanist at Ohio University, asking if he'd ever thought about looking for the oldest seed in Devonian-age rocks (up to 450 million years old) in West Virginia. Bill invited Rothwell and Steve Scheckler, a paleobotanist at Virginia Tech, to come to West Virginia. At a local restaurant, Rothwell drew a picture on a napkin of what he thought the oldest seed might look like. Bill took one look and



started thinking about the rock he'd collected.

The trio drove to Elkins and began pounding a four-foot bank of sandstone with a sledgehammer. Several hours later, they'd broken through the sandstone and down to the plant bed, where they discovered a fossil seed that matched Rothwell's description. They estimated its age as 360 million years.

The discovery became an international sensation because it broke new ground on the evolution of seed-bearing plants. Bill, Rothwell, and Scheckler wrote about their find in a cover article for *Nature* magazine in 1981. The trio named the seed *Elkinsia polymorpha*.

"Every paleobotanist in the world was hoping to find the earliest seed someday," Bill



Bill Gillespie, surrounded by his life's work and hobby.

says. "When that happened, those that were in the science recognized it. The seed was petrified and had all the internal structure. We were able to section it and show the complete organization of the seed."

To date, no older seed has been found anywhere in the world. Bill is understandably proud. He's also honored that two associates named fossil plant genera after him. John Clendening, his coauthor and the first Ph.D. student he supervised, named a spore discovery *Gillespia*, and Rothwell named a fossil plant the two found together *Gillespisporites*.

Concurrent careers in state government, graduate teaching, and research/writing would keep most people busy enough. Yet, Bill and Betty also raised three sons and two daughters, instilling a strong education ethic in each one. Their son Bill is a pediatrician and medical consultant, and their son Cliff is a computer specialist. Their daughter Linda, who passed away in 2000, was a math teacher. Their daughter Laura is a physical therapist. Tragically, their son Jimmy died in a bicycle accident at age 14.

In between working and raising a family, Bill still found time

to pursue a passion for woodworking. When he was about 10 years old, his father gave him a jigsaw. With a few more tools and an intimate knowledge of wood, he's crafted many pieces of Queen Anne furniture that now grace his Charleston home and the homes of his children.

These days, Bill doesn't do much woodworking, and he leads a bit quieter life. Sadly, Betty passed away in October 2014. Wilbur had been Betty's dog, but he's taken to Bill. It's not unusual to see a tall man and a very small dog walking together in the Forest Hills section of Charleston.



Bill Gillespie (back right) with his wife and children: (clockwise) Betty, Laura Lee, Linda Marlene, Clifton Paul, and William Allen "Bill." Another son, Jimmy, was killed in a bicycle accident.

Although his schedule isn't quite as packed as it once was, Bill still manages Gillespie Forestry Services. Attorneys will call on him to be an expert witness on forestry and geology issues—work he finds "intellectually stimulating." He also officiates woodchopping contests in Elkins and Webster Springs and visits his children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren.

A singular focus on the task at hand has been a hallmark of Bill's long and diverse career, though he can recall one

instance from childhood when this strength backfired on him. He once got an embarrassing whipping at school for asking to get a drink of water just after the teacher had said no more drinks would be allowed. Bill had been so immersed in a project—making a paper cup—that he'd missed the teacher's announcement.

"I've been fortunate to be able to do several things," he says. "I've been interested in them all, and I don't know that any have been more important than the others, except at the time I

am doing them. I just shut the world out and get it done." ❁

Writer, editor, and musician SHEILA McENTEE grew up in Maryland and Massachusetts. She moved to Charleston in 1989. Her writing has been featured in *Wonderful West Virginia* and the *Charleston Gazette-Mail*, and on West Virginia Public Radio. From 2006 to 2014, Sheila was editor of *Wonderful West Virginia*. In 2016, she founded Drum n Fun, a Charleston-based company that offers creative music-making programs for people of all ages. This is Sheila's third contribution to *GOLDENSEAL*, the most recent being in the Spring 2000 issue.

THE WORLD'S OLDEST SEED



You are looking at *Elkinsia polymorpha*—the world's oldest seed. It comes from a tropical plant that existed more than 360 million years ago. How did it get here from the tropics? Millions of years ago, the landmass now known as West Virginia was located 20 degrees south of the equator.

Many of West Virginia's fossils began forming when plants fell into peat swamps. These tropical swamps eventually became the state's vast coal beds. Millions of fossils are visible today in West Virginia coal mines.

This fossilized seed was found near Elkins in Randolph County in 1978 by professors William Gillespie, S. E. Scheckler, and G. W. Rothrock. Fossils provide our clearest glimpse into geologic history. Other fossils found in West Virginia include angiosperms, eudicotyledons, and pterosaurs.

Elkinsia Polymorpha

Bill Gillespie played a key role in finding and identifying *Elkinsia polymorpha*. The seed, the oldest ever discovered, is from a tropical plant that grew some 360 million years ago. At that time, the landmass encompassing Appalachia—including West Virginia—was located south of the equator. *Elkinsia polymorpha*

is now on display in the West Virginia State Museum at the Culture Center in Charleston.

Bill was the leading geology adviser for both the original museum at the Culture Center (1976) and the renovated museum (2009). 🌱

40 Years of Sawmilling

By Steve Dye

It was late 1945 or early 1946 when U.S. Grant “Lyss” Dye, my grandfather, bought our first sawmill. It was in Wood County near Parkersburg. My dad was in the army in the Philippines. Granddad had just retired from the oil-rig business and was hoping his two head-block mill would supplement his farming income. (See “Building Rigs the Old Way: Oilman U.S. Dye” by Steve Dye in Winter 2009.)

Granddad couldn’t get everything he needed to set up the mill properly. The best power source he could come up with was an old Buick straight-eight engine from his junked eight-seat passenger car. The Buick engine had too many RPMs and not enough lugging power, but Granddad made do with what he could get. He built a wooden flywheel—about six feet across and maybe 10 inches thick—to even out the power flow between the engine and the saw. It didn’t work too well, so he left it on the ground to rot. Part of it was still lying in the pasture in the 1970s.

With so many men overseas,

help was hard to come by. Grandma Dye’s sister, Mary Devol, often served as off-bearer, carrying the boards and slabs away from the saw. Wearing some of her brother Charley’s old clothes and one of Granddad’s old hats, she looked like a male worker from a distance. I don’t know what Aunt Mary got for her efforts, but she enjoyed it. In her later years, she’d climb up the hill to watch us saw at the mill.

To skid logs to the mill, Granddad first used a ’35 Fordson farm tractor; however, the steel cleats on the rear tires caught in tree roots too easily, making the process dangerous. As an alternative, they used Duke, their strawberry-roan workhorse. They’d bought Duke as a trained seven-year-old gelding for \$200. While plowing, he’d stop at the least sign of resistance, like hitting a large rock or root, to avoid breaking the plow. Sometimes, Duke could be aggravating since he’d stop whenever the plow clipped anything as little as some hardpan. Pulling logs, though, Duke took the opposite

approach. When a log got held up by a root, stump, or rock, he’d get into a near crouch and then straighten his powerful rear legs until something gave.

When Dad returned from overseas, Granddad became an off-bearer and turned over the sawyer’s job to him. Although Dad was named “U.S.” like his father, he was known variously as John, Junior, or June. Being a sawyer was the most strenuous job in the mill since it involved heavy-lifting tasks, like rolling and adjusting logs on the carriage. Most neighbors living today remember Dad, not Granddad, as the “sawmill guy.”

In 1947, Dad used \$1,200 of his G.I. Bill money to buy an International U-9 Gasoline Power Unit, which replaced the old straight-eight engine. It was mounted on steel skids, started with a hand crank, and had no gas tank. Dad connected a piece of rubber hose to the fuel pump with a length of copper tubing connected to the hose. This turned the gas can also into a gas tank. He laid an old rag over the spout to keep dirt and sawdust from getting into the



A logging and milling operation run by Wayne Fox in Wood County about 1900. All photos courtesy of our author.

gas. No one could steal the gas at night since there was none left at the mill. To save on fuel, Dad rigged the throttle control to a lever by the sawyer's position so he could let the engine idle except when the saw was in a cut. He and his crew could saw at a comfortable pace all day and burn only about a gallon of gas an hour.

Winter or summer, the U-9 typically required only two cranks to start—one with the choke closed, and the second with it open. If it needed more, the spark plugs likely needed to be cleaned or changed. Of course, the points and dis-

tributor got replaced a few times over the years—and the magneto once—but the faithful U-9 ran 40 years without an overhaul.

The next order of business was to replace the cotton belt, which Granddad had scrounged from some used oil field equipment. It'd worked fine with the old Buick engine, but when the governor of the U-9 opened up, it was more strain than the age-weakened belt could take. They bought a new belt and laced together the ends with a leather thong; eventually, they switched to a lightweight metal alligator clamp.

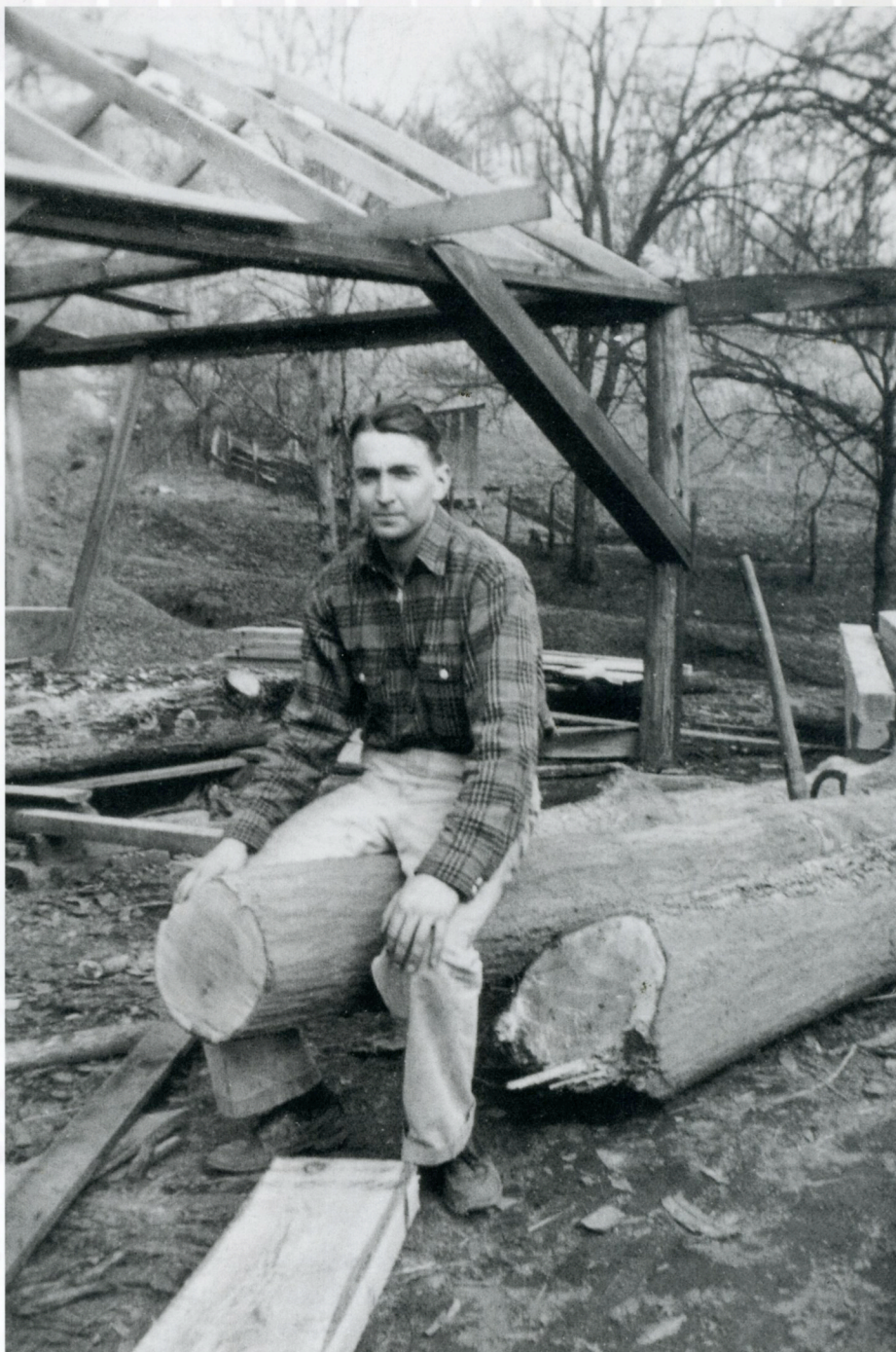
When Dad was in school in the late 1930s or early 1940s, Granddad bought 180 acres of timberland that straddled Spider Ridge Road. Roughly 80 acres were on the east side of the road (where the Stone Creek housing development is now in Parkersburg); about 100 acres lay on the west side. The 80-acre side is the site of Woodyard Cave, a once popular destination for neighborhood picnickers and hikers. This area was mostly covered with Virginia Pine, suggesting it'd been cleared for farmland until about 1900.

Since it was all "hill and holler," the 100-acre side had never

been plowed nor timbered—except for a small section where a neighbor trespassed—leaving a lot of virgin hardwoods. The rest was mostly second-growth hardwoods—a good size for tie logs.

My folks were married in June 1948. My mom remembers Dad and Granddad spending as much time running the mill as their farm work would allow. By then, ol' Duke had been relegated back to farming, and the logging was done with a 1947 Ford Ferguson tractor. They mounted chains on the Ferguson's rear tires for better traction in the soft wood's dirt and for when the trails got muddy. Three older cousins—Mike Dawkins, Jimmy Smith, and Ed Canary—helped out at different times. Jimmy would sit on the hood to hold down the front end. He'd straddle the tractor and, with his gloved hands glued to the oversized radiator cap, ride the bucking front end like he was in a rodeo. Granddad steered with the brakes, and his muddy five-buckle arctic boots sometimes slipped off the pedals, making the experience even more thrilling. This practice likely wouldn't be approved by OSHA today. Jimmy says it's a wonder he survived since Granddad had a bad habit of running into trees. That problem was compounded by Granddad's tendency to pull back on the steering wheel and yell, "Whoa!" just before impact.

Jimmy will never forget one ordeal from 1951, when he was seven. Granddad, Dad, and



Our author's father, Junior Dye, takes a breather from cutting logs, ca. 1948.

Jimmy had just loaded a big jag of lumber. Just as they were finishing, a quick gully washer hit, followed by a steady rain. With the load chained down tightly, Dad steered his new 2½-ton 1950 GMC truck up the winding trail and then flipped

on the switch for the Eaton locking differential. On the steepest section, he hit a fairly straight stretch of red clay. The truck clawed for all it was worth, but the slippery clay was just too much. When Dad let off the gas, the front end was still on



Seated (left-right): Our author's cousin Mike Dawkins; grandfather, Lyss Dye; and father, Junior Dye. Standing: Mary Devol, in the late 1940s.

the trail, but the back end was over the bank.

Dad put a set of chains on the vehicle, while Granddad and Jimmy fetched the Ferguson from the mill. For the next few hours, they strung rope and pulled the truck forward in

short hitches. They sometimes dragged it 10 feet forward before spinning 20 feet backward, creating multiple roads where none had been before. All the while, Dad was flipping the differential in and out and double-clutching as he went

from high to low range and then back again. At the top section, where it turned much flatter, Granddad rigged up a fix that would release at a certain point during the pull. With the tractor and truck both slinging red clay, the truck finally got onto the more level upper trail, and Dad kept it moving for all it was worth. The rope released as it was supposed to, and he didn't stop until he was ready to pull onto the graveled county road. Scared to face Jimmy's mother, Dad and Granddad dropped my cold, tired, hungry, mud-soaked cousin off at the end of his long driveway. Jimmy was so uneasy in the darkness that he ran all the way to his house.

Jimmy also remembers a little shanty at the mill with a front-loading stove. The stovetop had a couple removable lids for warming up pots or brewing coffee. Jimmy burned up a few gloves on that stove trying to dry them out. Granddad, in his 70s, put a cot in the shanty so he could take a nap after lunch.

By 1955, they'd removed as much timber from the cave side as was practical, so they moved the mill to the 100 acres across the road. That location was much better in a business sense because it was within sight of, and level with, the county road. To get to the mill, all the logs had to be either snaked (skidded) or hauled uphill.

With the more conspicuous location, they started selling more lumber locally and becoming less dependent on the wholesale market. Local



In this photo from the 1950s, U.S. "Lyss" Dye works as the off-bearer, while his son, Junior, serves as the sawyer at their mill.

farmers mostly bought the green (unseasoned) lumber for fencing, pens, sheds, and barns because it's less likely to split when nailed. Dad sorted out the rest of the lumber, sold some to local woodworkers, and hauled the better grades to Marietta. The better lumber brought in more than farmers wanted to pay for barn boards.

My cousin Ed remembers seeing Granddad put the old two-man McCullough chain saw over his shoulder, climb on his Ford Jubilee tractor, and head over the hill. A few minutes later, Granddad returned with the big bicycle-handled saw across his shoulder, a huge log dragging behind the tractor,

and the front end of the tractor off the ground. Granddad was at least 75.

By 1961, Granddad's health was getting frail. Dad started depending on neighbors who were temporarily out of work or underemployed. Several fellows filled in over the years; the ones I remember best are "Shep" and Frank Stephens (father and son) and Bill Amos. Granddad died in 1963. By that time, I was helping out at the mill during summers or on Saturdays, although I was probably more bother than assistance. By age 10, I'd convinced Dad to pay me the luxurious wage of a dollar a day, and with a mercenary

incentive, I started spending more time at the mill.

Dad always considered himself a farmer first, but there was more money to be made in timber. Firewood became his main business from September through March, with lumber and farming secondary. He mounted a cordwood saw on the back of the tractor, sawed slabs and limbs from treetops to firewood length, mixed them in with split wood from low-grade parts of the trunks, and sold a *face-cord* (he called it a *cord-rick*) at a lower price than the same amount of all-split wood. Since most people just burned it for ambiance, he sold more of the mixed than the all-split.



Junior gives a tour of the sawmill to a visitor in 1963.

Dad did a lot of custom-sawing, which is where other people bring their own logs and tell you what they want. He made about as much money with custom-sawing as he did selling his own lumber.

Two custom-sawing incidents stand out, and both involve the same customer. Dad normally didn't saw any log he knew had come from around a house, barn, fence, or so on because he didn't want to damage his blades on an old nail, spike, or bolt. He made an exception, though, for his neighbor Paul Johnson.

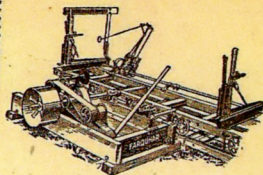
Paul had gotten a big oak log from the grounds of Five Mile Church on Old St. Marys Pike.

Dad agreed to saw it because Paul's ancestors had helped found the church in 1876. After a couple cuts, a blue spot appeared on the face of the log, a sign that there's metal in it. Half an hour and a lot of chiseling later, he pulled a hand-forged iron ring with an eyed spike from the log; it'd originally been driven into the tree to tie up horses. The next cut would've hit right at the joint of the ring and the eye of the spike, likely ruining the saw. He carefully finished sawing the log but found no more metal.

Dad also sawed a 27-foot-long oak timber for Paul to use as a lintel for a garage or carport door. That may not sound like

a big deal, but due to the size of the mill, there would've been more than 10 feet of log hanging off each end when it was centered. Since the log was unsupported at the ends, it could've started *hopping*, potentially damaging the saw or even killing the sawyer. Dad made a slow cautious first cut from end to end, turned the log 180 degrees and slid it toward the back of the carriage, sawed as far past the back end as he dared, backed the log away from the saw and scooted it as far forward as possible, and then finished the cut. He repeated the careful process one cut after another. In the end, all the cuts stayed accurate. I think half the

Invoice to Junior Dye for a 62-inch mill saw and guide, 1949.



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ADDRESS Parkebury, W. Va. R. 2

DATE 3-4-49

QUAN.	PART NO.	ARTICLE	AMOUNT SALES
		1-62 in. Lumber Saw R. 24	
		1-62 in. Lumber Saw Guide	
			9.15 ⁰⁰
		Paid Cash	

(6) This invoice is subject to the criminal penalties provided in section 33.14 of the Ohio Code of Laws, and the items covered by this order are not to be used for resale or operating supplies, and the purchase with C.M.F. Regulation No. 5, as amended, requested will not result in a violation of the quantity limitations in paragraph (F) of said regulation.

KEEP THIS AS NO OTHER ITEMIZED INVOICE WILL BE GIVEN

reason he did things like this was for the challenge.

Dad used that mill until 1972, when he set up a four-block Corley sawmill on a concrete foundation on the farm on Old St. Marys Pike. Dad sold the old mill for \$200—the same price Granddad paid for it three decades earlier. He sold some stumpage (standing timber) to help pay for my sister’s college. Except for firewood, that was the only timbering done on our place that year; however, that December, he did sell his first bunch of Christmas trees—a business that would eventually replace the decreasing income from his beloved Polled Herefords. Dad started sawing seriously again in 1973, my senior year of high school. I stopped by the old mill on Spider Ridge that summer. I felt very melancholy seeing that icon of my youth so abandoned and

forlorn there amongst the oaks and the horseweeds.

We never sold ties or wholesaled lumber to companies again. We had enough business selling to farmers and woodworkers since Dad had a reputation for trustworthiness and dependability. We sawed a lot of shed and barn patterns, including a big hayshed for Harry Kesterson and a barn for Ralph Turner. Both neighbors are now deceased, but their outbuildings still stand. We also sawed out the pattern for Laborers for Christ Apostolic Church, founded by Victor Carsey and his wife, Lou. Vic’s 16-year-old son, Danny, helped us saw lumber for the church that summer. He enjoyed the experience so much he soon bought a mill of his own. He’s been in the business ever since and has a home and sawmill at the junction of Routes 31 and 2 near Waverly.

Once I was married, the mill and farm didn’t bring in enough income to keep us in the style we wanted, so I started working off the farm more and more. When I couldn’t be there, two younger cousins—John Canary and Gary Eichhorn—kept helping Dad.

In late 1983, Dad was diagnosed with heart trouble. He followed his doctor’s advice and lost weight but never went to a specialist. A few months later, his doctor cleared him to go back to sawmilling, under the conditions that he take it slowly and do as little heavy lifting as possible. His first day back was a Saturday in July 1984. Dad cranked up the U-9 and, by himself, sawed a few small logs that’d been lying on the skids awaiting his return. The next day, he and Mom went with my wife, Barbara, and me to Camp Cowen near Webster Springs to pick up my stepson, Robert Goff.

How a Sawmill Works

By Steve Dye

Old-fashioned sawmills are usually composed of five main parts: the power source, the saw and mandrel (shaft), the saw-box (on which the mandrel sits), the tracks, and the carriage. The power is transferred to the **mandrel** by multiple rubber belts. A clutch allows the saw to be taken in and out of gear.

Additional belts go from the mandrel to a smaller shaft in the **saw-box**. Belts from the second shaft go to two systems of **sheaves** (pulleys), which power a type of two-directional winch. That **winch** is connected to the sawmill carriage. Pushing a tall lever forward loosens one belt and tightens the other, moving the carriage forward and into the saw. Pulling the lever back loosens the first belt and tightens a second, reversing the carriage.

Think of the carriage as a small flatcar from a scaled-down train, running on tracks



Junior and Lyss Dye at their sawmill in the 1950s.

fastened to the saw opposite the mandrel. On that car are cross-wise head-blocks (racks) on which the log rests. Movable uprights on those racks adjust how thick of a piece is removed from the log by the saw. After each cut, the log is either turned to a fresh side,

or moved toward the saw to cut another board.

For those who've never seen a real sawmill, the West Virginia Division of Forestry usually has a miniature version set up at the West Virginia Art & Craft Fair, held each September at Cedar Lakes. 🍁

I'll always remember the glow on Dad's face as he told me about running the mill the day before. As he gazed up at the beautiful poplar trees at Camp Cowen, I could see the wheels in his head turning as he estimated the board footage of each. Shortly after we left

the camp, he passed away in the car. We didn't want to lose him at age 59, but he'd finally returned to a job he loved, and he was surrounded by people who loved him and beautiful timber.

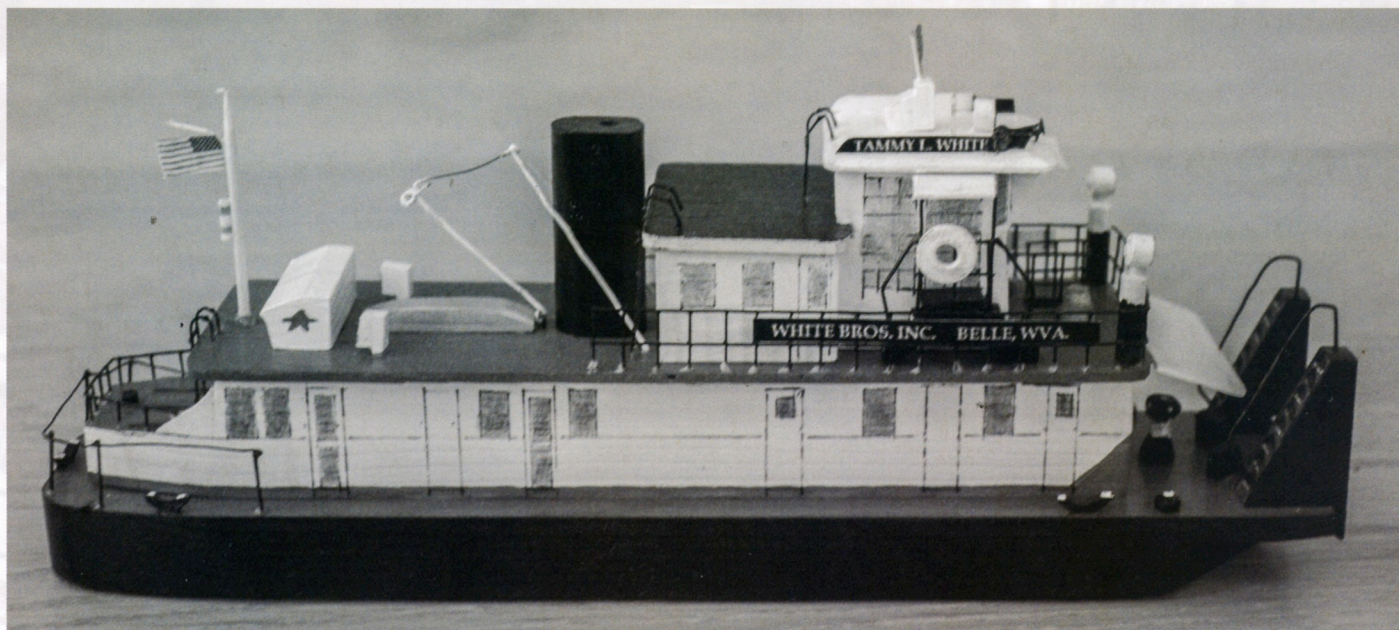
I'll always believe he died a contented man. 🍁

STEVE DYE is a native of Parkersburg. He is descended from farmers, going back six generations. A former farmer, tree grower, sawmill operator, and factory worker, Steve is a graduate of Mountain State College and is now retired from driving trucks. This is his second contribution to GOLDENSEAL.



Artist, craftsman, and riverboat enthusiast Bob O'Neill of South Charleston, holding one example of his excellent handiwork. Since 2011, he has recreated more than 200 miniature towboats familiar to the Kanawha River. Shown here is a replica model of Amherst/Madison's M/V O. NELSON JONES.

All photos by our author unless noted otherwise.



Bob O'Neill recreated this *TAMMY L. WHITE* miniature for the Point Pleasant River Museum & Learning Center. It represents the vessel built by the Marietta Manufacturing Company of Point Pleasant in 1923 as the *TROJAN*. Originally a sternwheeler, her paddlewheel was removed in 1942 when she was converted to a single propeller.

Monumental Miniatures: Kanawha Riverboat Replicas

By Todd A. Hanson

For decades, Bob O'Neill of South Charleston has honed his skills as a woodworker. His mastery of the bandsaw and sander, accompanied with skillful carving and fabrication techniques, makes him unique. He's truly an artist of miniatures. Over the years, his resume has included miniature racecars, trucks, boats, cranes, birds, football helmets, countless cowboy figurines, and even fish—all from wood, and many with working parts.

His love of the river has dominated his recent work. He's completed more than 200

replica towboats. His work can be seen in the Ohio Valley River Museum in Clarington, Ohio, and the Point Pleasant River Museum & Learning Center in Mason County. Several corporate towing offices have multiple examples of his work. Other than Bob himself, 99-year-old Charles T. Jones, president of Amherst/Madison, claims the largest collection with more than 30 replicas.

Bob recalls, "I built my first towboat, the *TAMMY L. WHITE*, around 1963. It was a model of a boat operated by the White Brothers of Belle in

Kanawha County." The actual *TAMMY L. WHITE* was built about 1923 in Point Pleasant as the *TROJAN*.

Most of his models represent riverboats he's watched on the Kanawha River from the early 1960s to the present. His one-of-a-kind collection includes many replicas of local towing and construction vessels, including ones belonging to Amherst/Madison, T. G. Keeney & Sons, John Scott (ABC), and the O. F. Shearer & Sons, just to name a few.

"It's all about the history," he adds while gazing at the

Towboats on the Great Kanawha

The Great Kanawha River begins at the confluence of the New and Gauley rivers at Gauley Bridge. It stretches some 97 miles through Fayette, Kanawha, Putnam, and Mason counties before emptying into the Ohio River at Point Pleasant.

From the earliest times, the river has played a key role in our state's settlement and economic development. Vast natural resource industries, such as salt, coal, petroleum, and chemical, have depended upon the river to transfer bulk material. Until the advent of railroads in the late 1800s, the rivers were our primary connections with the outside world.

Today, a typical 15-barge tow can move 26,000 tons of cargo, which is equal to 216 railcars, plus six locomotives, and 1,050 large semi-tractor trailers. And boats consistently have less impact on the environment and public safety than any other form of surface transportation. 🍁



Amherst/Madison's *CHARLESTON* pushes nine coal barges through the heart of the city whose name she has borne since 1971. This beautiful vessel was originally the *ONWARD*, owned by O. F. Shearer & Sons. It was built by Hillman Barge & Construction of Brownsville, Pennsylvania, in 1947.

models of past and present towboats. "They bring back fond memories," he says with a smile. After a slight pause, he continues, "The companies that used to be on the (Kanawha) River are getting fewer and fewer. It's sad to see all the older boats with their unique designs being scrapped or sent to other countries."

Bob was born in 1946 and spent his early years in Dunbar. Some of his oldest recollections are of the Kanawha: "I can remember when the showboats would come up the river with their calliope playing

and people gathering along the riverbanks."

His family moved to Fairplain in Jackson County in 1953. Bob remembers, "We would sometimes go for a Sunday drive and cross the Ohio River using the old Ravenswood Ferry."

When the family moved back to the Kanawha Valley in 1960, they settled in South Charleston, only a couple blocks from the river's edge. "I saw the old towboats," Bob fondly recalls. "And watching the water roll off their sternwheels and seeing the steam dredges and cranes, I was fascinated with all the

barge traffic and absolutely fell in love with the river."

Bob's dad, B. C. O'Neill, was a crane operator, unloading coal from barges at the FMC chemical plant in South Charleston. The White Brothers had the barge contract. "Dad was acquainted with the rivermen who worked for Harry White," says Bob, "and he got me a ride on the *KATHRYN*. We departed from Dunbar—the old Lock 6 dock—and went upstream above Witcher Creek to get a barge load of coal. Ed Carte was the pilot, and Gary Carte was the deckhand. Standing in



The sternwheeler *KATHRYN* was built by Ward Engineering Works of Charleston in 1930. She is seen here from the FMC dock in South Charleston while operated by the White Brothers. Bob O'Neill took his first-ever trip aboard a commercial towboat on this vessel. In the background is the T. G. Keeney & Sons' sternwheeler *EDNA*. Photo courtesy of Bob O'Neill, early 1960s.

the pilothouse, I watched Ed reach up and grab the cord to blow the air horn. Boy, was it loud! I would jump every time, but it sure sounded good. And the smell of diesel fuel was a great aroma to me."

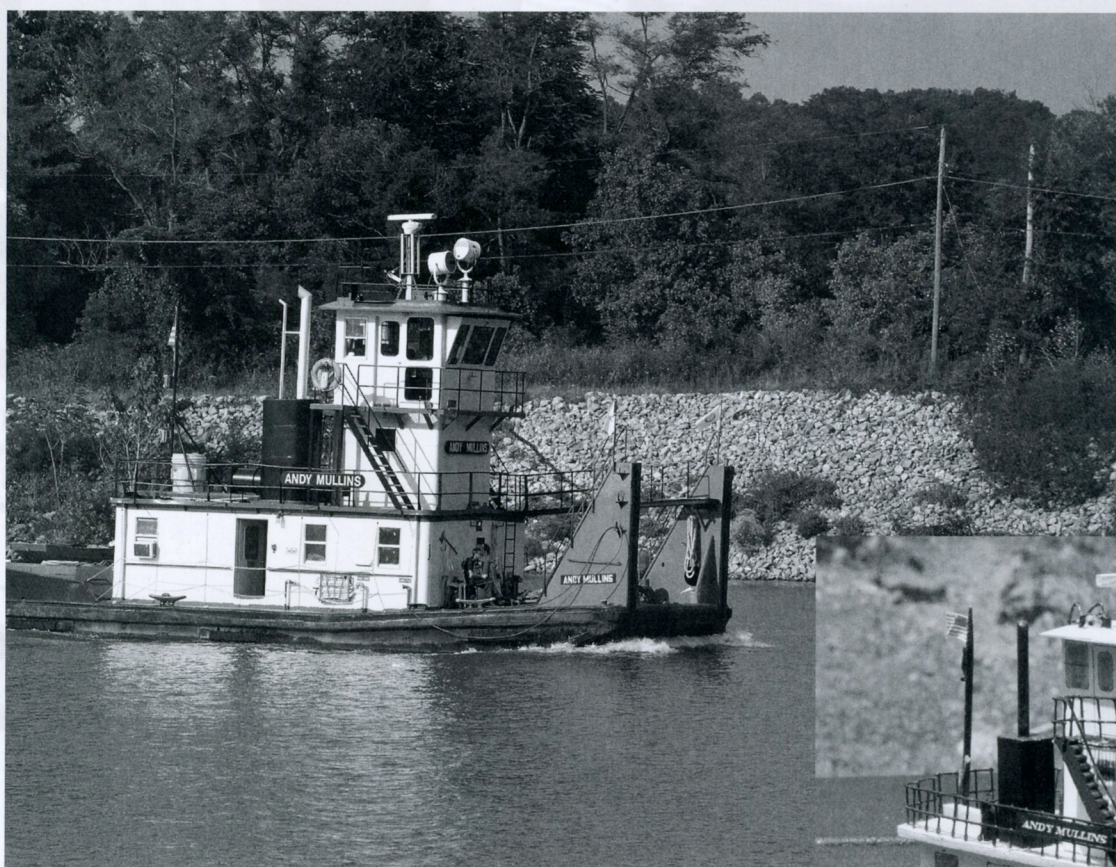
As Bob's friendship with the White Brothers grew, he got to ride on the *TAMMY L. WHITE*, *MAJOR*, *W. C. WHITE*, and *KATHRYN*—after they raised her pilothouse and renamed her the *TINA M. WHITE*. "I got away from the river in the mid-1960s," Bob says, "but still loved seeing the towboats. I loved all the boats operated by

the Ohio River Company, Pure Oil Company, O. F. Shearer & Sons, Point Towing Company, T. G. Keeney & Sons, White Brothers, and Amherst/Madison's Coal & Supply Company. I made some models of the *TAMMY L. WHITE*, *MAJOR*, *TINA M. WHITE*, and a little boat named the *CINDY KAY*. In the early 1970s, Mom and Dad's house burned. No one was hurt, but I lost all my models."

Following double hernia surgery in 2011, Bob was laid up for a long time. Bob's wife, Cheryl, got concerned over

his bottled-up energy and suggested a hobby. "I told her I didn't have time for a hobby!" Bob recalls with a smile. "But she suggested that I make some models of the towboats like I did when I was younger."

Bob tells of one particular night lying restlessly in bed "thinking about everything, and remembering when I was a teen riding on the boats and walking the barges like it was nothing, even though I wasn't wearing a life vest and couldn't swim! I woke up in a cold sweat and realized how good and precious God has been to



Above: Amherst/Madison's Point Pleasant harbor boat the *M/V ANDY MULLINS* was built by St. Louis Shipbuilding in 1963. She was acquired by Madison Coal & Supply in 1994 and renamed in honor of longtime employee and lifelong riverman Andy Mullins of Witcher Creek.



Right: The *M/V ANDY MULLINS* replica created by Bob O'Neill.

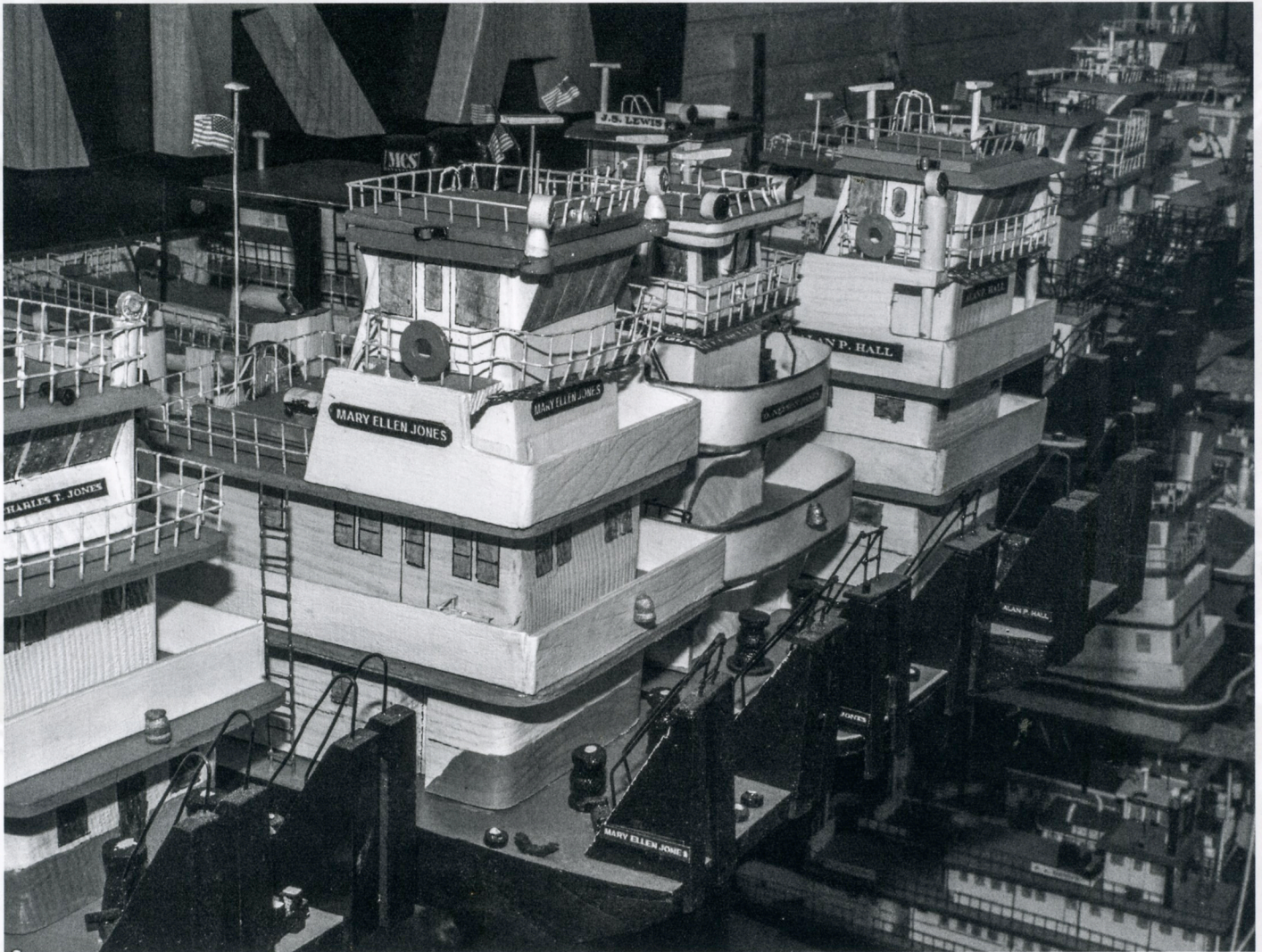
me and how blessed I am." He humbly explains, "That's how it started. I decided right then I was going to try and make a model out of a 2x4 board."

Bob tries to downplay his talents, saying, "My models are not necessarily to scale." Most would agree they are remarkably close. Many replicas bear two or three different names depending which side you look at. "These were either built by the same manufacturer and are

identical sister ships or they once had a different name," Bob says.

He also points out that some of his designs are built with interchangeable pilothouses and stacks to showcase multiple eras in the boat's history. Every little detail—horns, whistles, bells, lights, capstans, keels, timberheads, bitts, cranes, lifeboats, preservers, toolboxes, drums, rotating radar, and working paddle-

wheels with moving Pitman rods—is something to marvel at. Even more amazingly, all these creations are assembled from simple 2x4 pine lumber that's been ripped down and shaped into hulls, decks, and pilothouses. Bob has carefully cut each individual stair step with a bandsaw while crafting the handrails and ladders from tiny galvanized wire. Bob hand-draws and paints the tiniest details. His most



At Bob's residence, shelves are filled with his models. Big, small, steam, diesel, and screw-propulsion, they all pay tribute to Kanawha River history and the builders, operators, and crews who worked on them.

versatile material would be dowel rods, which he turns on a drill press to replicate bells, lights, and deck equipment. He makes the horns and whistles from common everyday items like small nails, wire, or hand-shaped wood. Company logos, signboards, and "Old Glory" adorn each and every vessel.

These mini-monuments are more than just works of art. Bob

spends a vast amount of time researching and studying everything he can about the boats before making his models. He acknowledges photographers Fred McCade of Hannibal, Ohio, and Captain Jeff Yates of Paducah, Kentucky, for sharing their knowledge. Bob's also acquired an impressive collection of books, newspaper clippings, photographs, and

drawings, to satisfy his keen sense of minute details. His vessels help tell the history of the Kanawha River, honor the crews that labored aboard, pay tribute to the 20th-century boat builders that constantly broke new technological barriers—businesses like Charles Ward Engineering Works (Charleston), Marietta Manufacturing (Point Pleasant), Hillman Barge



M/V O. NELSON JONES (built 1964) and *M/V DR. EDWIN H. WELCH* (built 1959) docked at the Amherst/Madison marine maintenance facility along the Kanawha River at Henderson in Mason County. When Amherst/Madison christened the *M/V O. NELSON JONES* on April 29, 2011, it was a fitting tribute to the company's late president whose untimely passing at age 52 had occurred less than a year earlier. Nelson was a river industry icon and founder of the Charleston Sternwheel Regatta, the capital city's grand annual festival that continued for more than 30 years.

& Construction (Brownsville, Pennsylvania), Yates Marine Construction (South Charleston), Dravo (Neville Island, Pennsylvania), and countless others. Many of their boats still ply the waters today.

Those original boats—celebrated through Bob's models—carry on an important river heritage in West Virginia. They drove our industrial development while sparking the imaginations of young and old. Each towboat has been unique with a personality of its own.

Some have enjoyed long fruitful careers, while others are long gone—the victims of age, tragedy, or simple economics. Many of us get attached to these beautiful vessels, almost forgetting for a moment that they are merely man-made machines.

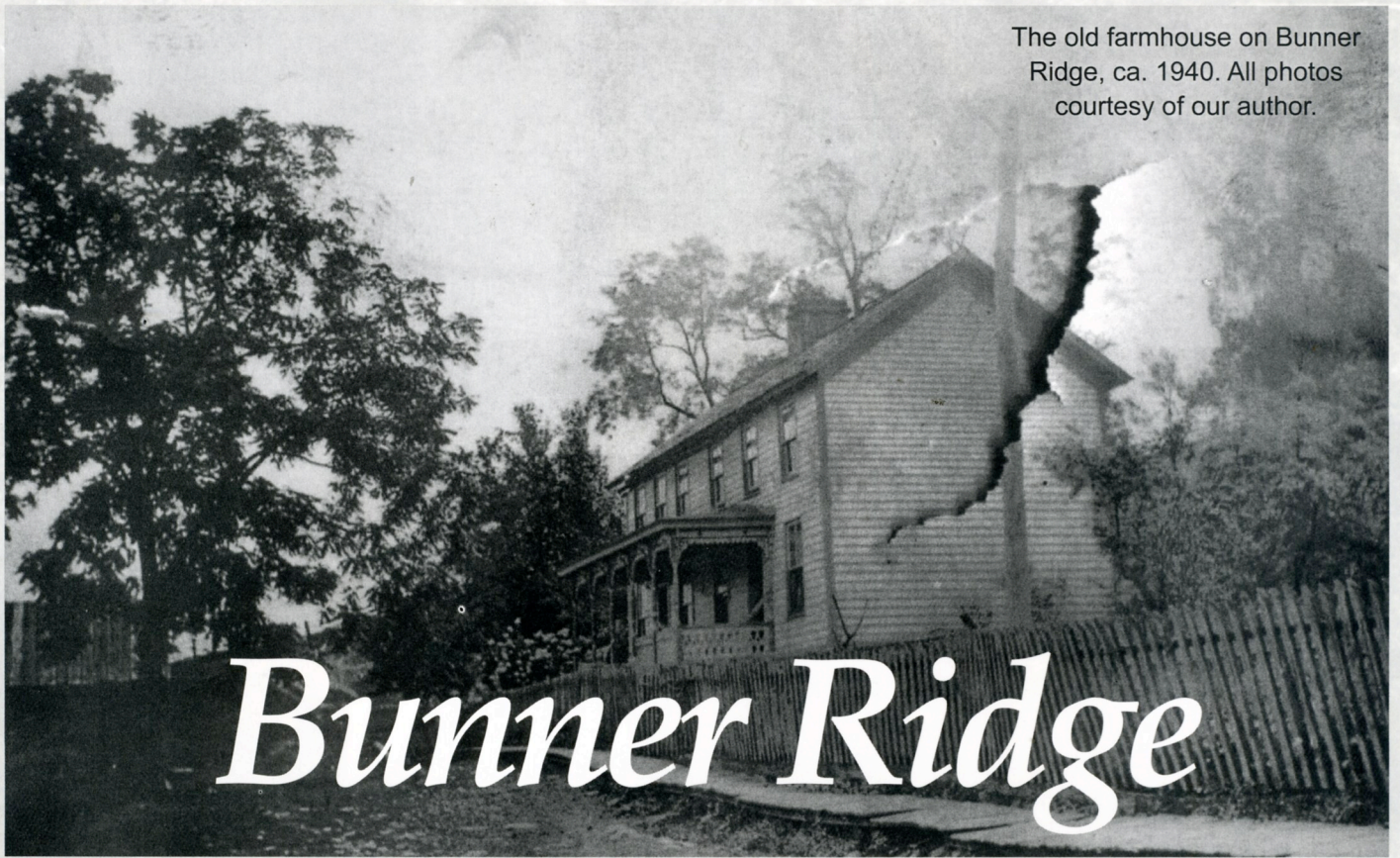
Riverboats have always represented the adventure of the American spirit—a romantic bond between people and nature. Through Bob's generosity and creativity, the legacy of the Great Kanawha River shipping era lives on. ❁

TODD A. HANSON is a sixth-generation native of Campbell's Creek, the home port of Amherst/Madison's Kanawha River towboat fleet. He's the author of *Campbell's Creek—A Portrait of a Coal Mining Community*, and his articles and photographs have appeared in *Wonderful West Virginia*, *West Virginia Hillbilly*, *Blue Ridge Country*, and elsewhere. This is his third contribution to GOLDENSEAL. His most recent article appeared in our Summer 2014 issue.

A photograph of an elderly man, Captain Charles T. Jones, smiling and holding a detailed model of a sternwheel towboat. The man has white hair and is wearing a blue and white plaid button-down shirt. The model is a white hull with a black stripe along the bottom and a large red and white sternwheel. It has two black smokestacks and a small cabin. The name "HERBERT E. JONES" is printed in black on the side of the hull. The background is slightly out of focus, showing green grass and a white fence.

Captain Charles T. Jones is holding a replica of the *STR. HERBERT E. JONES*, named in honor of his father in 1951 and decommissioned 10 years later. It was presented to him at his 97th birthday luncheon at Port Amherst. Built in 1940 at Point Pleasant by the Marietta Manufacturing Company, she had the unusual distinction of being the last steam-powered sternwheel towboat built for the inland waterways. Her mighty sternwheel is on display at Station Square in Pittsburgh.

The old farmhouse on Bunner Ridge, ca. 1940. All photos courtesy of our author.



Bunner Ridge

Life beyond the Paved Road

By William Kent Hudgins

As I look back on my childhood, one year, in particular, brings back fond memories. It was the short period my family lived on Bunner Ridge in Marion County. This hilly 177-acre farm was about 10 miles from the Fairmont city limits, just beyond the paved road and modern conveniences. The thoughts presented here are a combination of my personal recollections and oral histories of family members.

My story begins with my father, William Ellsworth Hudgins, who entered the

service of our country during World War II while working at the Fairmont post office. After completing basic training at Great Lakes Naval Training Center near Chicago, he served at the Fleet Post Office in San Francisco. During this time, my parents received a letter from my great-aunt Stella Summers, asking if they would move to and help out with her farm on Bunner Ridge after Dad was discharged. My parents accepted—in part because they knew good housing would be hard to find after the war.

My father lacked much knowledge or skills about farm work. While still in the Navy, though, he enrolled in off-duty agricultural training, with focuses on poultry, livestock, and land conservation. The period between summer 1946 and fall 1947 was challenging for my father. He had to apply the principles he'd learned vicariously through his training and readings. It was also about this time that my first memories began to blossom.

Dad was born and raised in Fairmont and was employed full-time as a mailman. He

adapted to farm life with guidance from Aunt Stella and other family members. He harnessed a pair of Belgian horses, Queen and Dory, to plow and seed the fields; many times, I rode on the horses' backs while holding the hames. In addition, he milked the cows, fed the hogs, tended the livestock, and made certain that all structures and equipment were in good condition. In summer and fall 1946, he harvested the crops, stacked the hay, dressed the pigs, and performed all the necessary chores in preparation for winter.

My mother, Kathryn Agatha Freeman Hudgins, didn't adjust as well to the rural way of living. The domestic amenities she'd enjoyed, expected, and deserved during her young married life were not available on Bunner Ridge. Making things even more challenging, my sister Kathryn Ann was born in July 1946.

Our house was heated in the winter by a wood stove, which also served as our cook stove, except for when we used the three-burner kerosene stove on the back porch. Water was supplied by a pitcher pump near the sink. I remember taking baths in tubs near the stove. For refrigeration, we placed our milk, butter, vegetables, and most other food in a springhouse a few feet from the kitchen door.

As was common in those days, no indoor facilities were available. There was a privy on the hill behind the house. Inside the house, in a very conspicuous location, there was an ornate lidded jar for



Our author's father, William Ellsworth Hudgins, delivers mail in Fairmont.



Outside the barn on Bunner Ridge, our author (far left) gazes at his new baby sister, Kathryn Ann, being held by their mother, Kathryn Agatha Freeman Hudgins, about 1946. His oldest sister, Connie Jean, is on the far right.

nighttime usage. The task of emptying the *slop jar* fell to the adults—a policy never contested by younger family members.

If I remember correctly, Aunt Stella's bedroom was off the living room. All other bedrooms were upstairs and accessible only by a narrow stairway. These rooms were unheated except for a small floor register

that permitted the warmth from the kitchen stove to ascend and keep the frost from forming. In winter, we wrapped our entire bodies, including our heads, in heavy comforters and knotted quilts.

Electricity wasn't available because public utilities ended at the end of the paved road—about a quarter mile from the house. As a result, we used

Aladdin lanterns and candles. In addition, all domestic and farm chores were performed manually or with the assistance of animals.

Down a dirt road, you'd pass the Liberty Travis homestead. In a hayfield on the left, a scale house and a pen were filled with swine. I learned to ride a bike on a nearby stony road as I dodged its ruts.



Our author's great-aunt Stella Summers (left), mother, Kathryn Hudgins, and baby sister, Kathryn Ann, pose in front of the "green hornet"—the family's 1937 Studebaker—on Bunner Ridge about 1946.

Straight ahead on the dirt road was a modified post-and-beam barn, which housed farm wagons and other machinery. The hayloft was above the central area of the barn. A unique feature was a trap door that led downstairs to the milking stalls on the lower level. We spent many hours playing hide-and-seek in that barn.

A small herd of cows was pastured in the area below the barn. They were milked every morning and evening. Some of the milk was run through a hand-cranked milk separator in a cellar room under the kitchen.

Turning right from the barn, you entered a lane that led to

the two-story farmhouse with an open front porch. A large, fenced yard and garden to the right of the house contained a large cut-off trunk from an oak tree. Aunt Stella and my father used the stump as part of the first stage of harvesting chickens. I spent hours in that yard, playing with my older sister, Connie Jean, and helping gather vegetables.

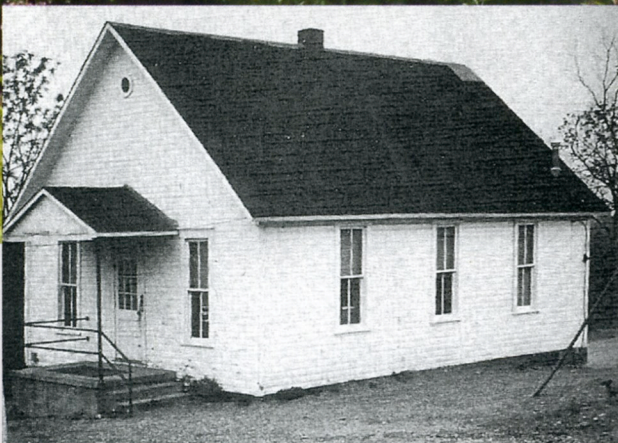
Many times during the school year, my sister and I traversed the muddy, rutted, dirt road to Mt. Nebo School. This small one-room schoolhouse was at the end of the paved road and served students in grades 1–8. Stella Moran was an excellent and understanding teacher but

also very strict. If a child misbehaved, he or she got to be in the hot seat—actually a chair in the front near the potbelly stove (I know from personal experience). I started second grade when my family moved to the farm in 1946 and transferred to St. Peters Elementary School in Fairmont in fall 1947.

Dad used a dilapidated corncrib and shed with slatted storage bins to shelter corn for the hogs along with his car, which was purchased in California and driven to West Virginia. It must have been one of the early customized cars. Known in the family as the *green hornet* due to its two-tone green paint finish, the car's chassis and body were



The Mt. Nebo School was the last one-room schoolhouse in Marion County when it closed in 1972. Above is the same building, photographed by our author in 2012.



primarily a boxy 1937 Studebaker; however, it was equipped with a Cadillac bumper on the front, a Buick bumper on the rear, and GMC truck headlights on the front fenders. During winter, my father would hang a small cylinder-shaped kerosene heater under the hood to keep the engine warm, making it easier to start.

One warm day, Dad rode his bike to work at the post office in Fairmont. He really enjoyed the mostly downhill trip but wasn't quite up for the 10-mile uphill ride home; so, he employed a friend to haul him and the bike home.

In fall 1947, my mother accompanied my father as he drove to work in Fairmont. I'm

sure they had a long, vigorous discussion before he dropped her off at her uncle's house on Potomac Avenue. She had consented to living on Bunner Ridge and adapted somewhat to the demands of rural life—all the while, raising two young children and a newborn baby. Concerned about the future well-being of her family, she



During his 2012 visit to Bunner Ridge with his granddaughter, our author took this serene view of the old barn.

asked my father if they could relocate to Fairmont before winter. He found veteran housing at 33 City View Terrace off Stoney Road, and we all moved to the city.

Aunt Stella sold the farm in April 1950 and moved to an apartment on Morgantown Avenue in Fairmont. She passed away the following year. In April 1948, my parents purchased a house at 608 Potomac Avenue on Fairmont's East Side. That year, my mother gave birth to a fourth child, Mary Christine. My father and mother remained in this house until their deaths

in 1973 and 1992, respectively.

In May 2012, my granddaughter and I visited the old farm as part of a family history tour. Only two of the old farm structures still seemed to be standing. The house had been remodeled over the years and stood vacant. The barn had been modified and was still usable. The old Mt. Nebo School had been remodeled into a private residence, with dormers added to the upper story. That visit with my granddaughter brought back a rush of pleasant memories, even though I'd lived on Bunner Ridge for

only a year more than a half-century earlier. ❁

Note: The author would like to acknowledge Camden and Carolyn Bunner for their contributions to this article.

WILLIAM KENT HUDGINS, a retired educator, was the former assistant superintendent for Grant County Public Schools. His articles have been published in *Science and Children Magazine* and *The Carriage Journal*. He owns South Branch Valley Sales and operates the Carriage & Heritage Museum of the South Branch Valley, both in Petersburg. This is Kent's first contribution to GOLDENSEAL.



Donna Brown, second grade, Pipestem District, Summers County. All photos courtesy of our author unless noted otherwise.

One-Room School Days

By Donna Brown Brewster

Once a year, the Brewster grandchildren come together for Brewster Camp in Pipestem District, Summers County. Our goal? To learn about life in West Virginia. A couple years ago, Maddie, my oldest granddaughter, asked, "Grandma, what was it like when you went to school?"

I replied, "Back when I was growing up, there were one-room schools throughout the county, and I went to one of them. Do you know what a one-room school is?"

"It must be a school with just one room," she said. "But how is that possible?"

"Well, my schoolhouse actually had two rooms, but only one was used as a classroom. There weren't enough students for two classrooms and two teachers; there were only seven students

in my grade and around 30 in the entire school.

"I was six years old on my first day, and, unlike all of you, I couldn't read or write my name when I started school. Back then, there were no pre-school or kindergarten programs.

"My teacher was my dad—your great-granddad, Frank Brown (1909-1980). He taught all grades from first to eighth in the same room at the same time! Your great-granddad wasn't like most teachers. He had a master's degree in education."

Bridget, a cousin, asked, "What was the name of the school?"

"I went to Lick Creek School. Isn't that a funny name? Many years ago, buffalo and deer lived in this area, and they'd lick the salt near the creek. Both the settlers and American Indians

named it Lick Creek for this reason. At one time, there was a store, post office, and school, but those are gone, just like the buffalo. The only thing that remains is the creek itself."

Little Tyler, the youngest cousin, was most interested in whether we had bathrooms.

I explained, "No, we didn't have bathrooms inside but did have two bathrooms outside. They were called outhouses, earth closets, or privies. There was one outhouse for the boys and one for the girls. If you needed to go, you'd raise one finger for one thing or two fingers for the other. In the outhouses, there was no toilet paper, just a catalog or old newspapers. Sometimes, we used a corn cob. Ouch! That would hurt!"

Asked about what we wore, I told them that we didn't wear



A path led from the old swinging bridge (left) to the Lick Creek School.

uniforms but that the “girls wore skirts and blouses or dresses with stockings. The girls weren’t allowed to wear pants or snow pants, and our little legs would get so cold in the winter. The boys wore denim overalls with a collared shirt underneath. Most of our clothes were homemade, but our parents also ordered some from the Sears, Roebuck & Co. or Montgomery Ward catalogs. All of you know how Grandma doesn’t like to wear shoes. On certain days in the spring, we didn’t have to wear them. Those were my favorite!

“As for getting to school, my dad, my best friend, Tootsie, and I walked about half a mile to the bus stop together. No matter what the weather was like, we had school. No snow days for us! Even when it was dark, some of my classmates

had to walk over a mile to the bus stop. Luckily, there was a small shelter called a *bus house* where we waited.

“Our school bus was not like the ones you ride. We had a yellow panel truck with two benches that ran lengthwise along each side. Tootsie and I always tried to sit together. It was around two to three miles to the schoolhouse on our *homemade bus*. When we got there, we had to cross a swinging bridge to get to the schoolhouse. That bridge is gone now, but the piers remain. The boys liked to get ahead of us girls so they could bounce up and down on the bridge and make it swing. Even though we girls screamed, it was a fun way to start off the day.

“The schoolhouse had two rooms. A few years later, they

made the extra room into a lunchroom so we could have hot lunches. Our room had a teacher’s desk with a blackboard on the wall. It had chalk and erasers—no fancy technology—and it was always an honor to be picked to go outside and clean the erasers.

“A potbelly stove stood in the middle of the room to keep us warm in the winter. One day, a boy put the poker stick in the stove. He took it out and said to me, ‘If you’re jealous, you’ll move.’ I wasn’t jealous, so I stood still. He burned my nose!

“All the students sat in rows. The oldest ones sat in the back, and the younger ones in the front. Tootsie sat in front of me the first year, and we liked to talk and pass notes. I guess we talked too much because the



LICK CREEK SCHOOL

Grades 1-8
1954-1955



This class photo shows the 30 students and one teacher—Frank Brown, our author's father—at Lick Creek School in 1954-55.

next year, she didn't get to sit in front of me.

"To start the day, we'd say the Pledge of Allegiance and a prayer. Each grade took turns going to work with the teacher. We all learned from one another, and the older students helped the younger ones."

As the young folks listened to my stories, their questions started drifting toward the necessities of school life, like games, food, and parties.

"Yes, we had recess, and that was one of my favorite times of the day. A large open field was our playground. We didn't have physical education as an actual class, but exercise was a big part of our learning. Your great-granddad Brown believed all students should

actively play outside. Looking back, I think he enjoyed recess as much as the students did, and he'd usually participate. Sometimes, he'd lose track of time when we were playing ball, so we'd get extra time for recess. In the spring, he and some boys would go fishing in the creek. In the winter, he'd let the boys ice skate on the creek. We played jump rope, marbles, Annie Over, Red Rover, jacks, dodge ball, London Bridge, hot potato, and baseball."

Young Emory asked, "I've never heard of Annie Over. How do you play it?"

"I'm glad you asked. There'd be two teams on opposite sides of a small building. One player would cry, 'Annie An-nie Over!' and then throw the

ball over the roof. The players on the other side would try to catch the ball before it hit the ground. If someone caught it, he or she would run to the other side and try to hit an opposing player with the ball. You were safe if you could run around the building without getting hit. If you were hit, you'd join the opposing team. If nobody caught the ball on that first toss, they had to yell, 'Annie Over,' and then throw it back.

"Sometimes, we made up our own games. One was called *stick houses*. One local plant had tall green sticks. We'd break the sticks and stand them up side by side. They would lean together until the whole thing became a sort of tent. Then, we'd chase one another, running in and out.

"As for other pastimes, I loved to read. My first book was *Dick and Jane*; they had a dog named Spot. There was no library at school, but we had a small bookcase with a few books. My favorite was *Rebecca*."

My oldest grandson, Matthew, loves to eat. He wanted to know what we'd have for lunch.

"Before we ate our lunch, a student would say a prayer. If the weather was nice, we could eat outside. Usually, we brought our lunches in brown paper bags, but one year, I got a Mickey Mouse lunch box! Your Great-Granny Brown made my dad and me our lunches, which was usually cornbread or biscuits with jam and peanut butter. On special occasions, we had sausage biscuits. Since there was no running water in the schoolhouse, we'd get our drinks from cool, deep, well water, which we hand-pumped from the ground. We didn't have regular cups, so we made our own from a sheet of notebook paper. Later, when the lunchroom opened, Mary Hopkins became our cook, and we had delicious hot lunches."

"Did you have music?" inquired Maddie, who sings for the Loyola University Choir.

"Once a week, we'd stand in front of the classroom and sing songs like 'Home on the Range,' 'My Old Kentucky Home,' and 'Oh Susanna.' On the last day of school, we'd go on a field trip. Your great-granddad would collect a nickel or quarter from each student to buy lunch supplies.



Boys take a break from school to catch some fish in Lick Creek in the 1950s. Courtesy of Denny Reed.

We'd cross the road and climb the hill. When we got to a community called Hill Top, we'd have a wienie roast—and before you ask, a wienie is a hot dog. As we walked, we'd find a small tree branch and use it to spear our hot dog. Then, we'd roast it over an open flame. Nothing like a hot dog cooked over a fire!

"Probably my favorite type of party was a pie supper. Us girls would make delicious pies, sometimes in boxes decorated with ruffles or bows. The pies were auctioned off. The highest bidder won not only the pie but the privilege of sharing it with the girl who made it. Her identity was supposed to be a secret until after the auction, but some girls told their boyfriends ahead of time which pie they'd made. It was a fun event and

a way to raise money for the school.

"Going to school in southern West Virginia in the mid-20th century was so very different than it is today. Not necessarily better or worse, but very different. I have many happy memories from those years of learning in a one-room schoolhouse!" 🍁

DONNA BROWN BREWSTER attended one-room school at Lick Creek through sixth grade. In 2011, she and her military husband moved back to her beloved childhood farm after traveling all over the world. Donna attended Big Creek High School, Concord College (now University), and George Mason University. She coauthored *One-Room Schools of Summers County, WV*. Donna and her four sons own Inter Technologies, an audiovisual company. This is Donna's first contribution to GOLDENSEAL.

Ralph Lemley: Resourceful Caretaker and “Best Pap Pap”

By Barb Howe



Ralph Lemley poses with a prize deer in 1953. His grandchildren remember that three mounted deer heads with large antlers hung on the walls in the living room of his house. All photos courtesy of the Lemley family unless noted otherwise.

“He was absolutely the best Pap Pap!” Many people think that way about their grandfather, but Ralph Cale and Barbara Cale Boggs were sure of it when I first met them. I was writing the history of the West Virginia Botanic Garden, the 82-acre site of Morgantown’s former reservoir on Tyrone Road near Cheat Lake. The two grandchildren describe Ralph Lemley, the reservoir’s only resident caretaker and all-round tinkerer extraordinaire, as “a rugged, resourceful, wise, and handsome man’s man with a strong work ethic and old-fashioned values; a gentle man with a comforting presence; and a very loyal and devoted family man. He loved his daughters and grandchildren and enjoyed spending time with them. He would teach us life’s lessons, how to grow things, and how to hunt and fish.”

Ralph was born on March 10, 1906, in Columbus, Ohio, the son of Winfield Scott Lemley

and Ada E. Rose Lemley. Ada died in 1912, and, for the next few years, Ralph and his father moved frequently. When Ralph was 12, he left school and worked odd jobs, including carpentry, coal mining, and "anything he could find to do to make money," according to his family. In 1916, Winfield married Myrtle Michael and probably then moved his family to Monongalia County.

A decade later, Ralph and Grace Virginia Mundell, the daughter of William and Bessie Mundell, eloped to Oakland, Maryland, and married on May 17, 1926. They moved in with the Mundells on Stewartstown Road, just outside Morgantown. Ada June was born in 1927 and Mary Madeline in 1929.

Ralph became an electrician at the power house, with help from his father-in-law, a foreman for the waterworks. Both utilities were then owned by the West Penn Public Service Company and Morgantown Water Company. Sometime after 1937, Ralph became caretaker of the Tibbs Run Reservoir. While the reservoir was completed in 1912, there likely was no need for a full-time caretaker until the chemical feed house was built in 1935. When Ralph started at the reservoir, "he was driving a Ford Model A pickup," note his grandchildren. "He spent most of his time trying to keep it running, sometimes with June's help, because he didn't trade cars very often. He commuted out to Tyrone Road in

that truck until he moved out to Tyrone Road."

Starting in 1939, Ralph helped build the caretaker's house up the hill from the reservoir basin. Ralph's family recalls that the house "was brought in in pieces in boxes on a train."

Although the house no longer stands, photographs and family memories depict a small home identical to a Sears & Roebuck Crafton model. Ralph lived there during construction, while the rest of the family stayed with the Mundells. Sometimes, he came home on weekends; other times, Grace, June, and Madeline took a big tent and camped down near the reservoir, fishing and spending time together. The house was completed by April 1940. Madeline and June continued to live with their grandparents to be closer to school but visited their parents on weekends. This would be the Lemleys' home for more than 40 years and their third daughter, Anna Louise, was born there in 1942.

"There were two large trees in the front of the house that had a large swing where people could sit and wave at passing neighbors. Everyone that passed would wave" remembers June's daughter, Linda Ball Bentley, and "there was a large tree to the west of the house that all of grandchildren used to climb."

Although Ralph operated the reservoir that supplied Morgantown's purest water, the caretaker's house was a bit less advanced. Initially, only the



Ralph and Grace Virginia Lemley were married from 1926 until her death in 1985. This photo was taken about 1960.

kitchen sink had hot-and-cold running water. The Lemleys' water came from a well behind the garage—until Ralph dug a 200-foot-deep well through the floor of the enclosed back porch. The room designated as a bathroom by Sears was home to a potty bucket—until Ralph installed an indoor bathroom in the late 1950s. "When they finally had a bathroom put in," says Linda, "it was heaven to everyone."

The Lemleys loved to garden. "The garden was beautiful and large," Linda remembers. "I



The Lemley house is seen here during a snowstorm, probably in the winter of 1959-60. Today, the entrance to the West Virginia Botanic Garden and the upper parking lot for the garden are to the right of where the house stood.

got to work in it some, but my mother would talk about working in it when she was a young girl."

In the summer, Ralph Cale and Barbara Boggs said it was "like a buffet" with so many vegetables, fruit trees, and a strawberry patch. Pap Pap was very particular, very compulsive, and "strong-headed." The grandchildren grew up next door and waited until he left the house before

picking strawberries because their grandfather would know they'd been in the berry patch.

North of the garage were apple trees. "How I loved the apples when they were still green!" remembers Linda. "Pap Pap would always tell us to get the ones off the ground to eat before we pulled any. Mamu [the grandchildren's name for Ralph's wife, Grace] used to make blackberry, blueberry, and apple cobblers for

us, and they were fantastic!"

Ralph also was a beekeeper who kept at least six hives. The family used the honey on Grace's homemade bread.

Grace planted flowers all around the house, including pink, purple, and off-white hydrangeas, morning glories, and daffodils. Outside stairs led down to a cellar where Linda says, "Mamu would can strawberries, blackberries, and things grown from

the garden. We kids weren't usually allowed to go down there because the steps were steep, and they didn't want us to fall. I did, however, get to go a couple of times, and it was full of canned goods."

Wearing green Dickies work clothes, matching cap, boots, "and about five pounds worth of keys hanging on a clip from his belt, Ralph jingled when he walked," remember Ralph and Barbara.

His day began about 6:00 a.m., when he rode to the chemical feed house to test the water, add lime and chemicals, and then test it again to make sure the levels were correct. He'd walk to several stations along the walkway atop the pilings that extended into the reservoir basin. He'd fill his bottles, take them to the chemical feed house, test them, and record everything in a log book. Around 5:00 or 6:00 p.m., he'd repeat the process. When the chlorine tanks were empty, June remembers that he "would haul them far into the woods . . . and clean the tanks out. Of course, when he cleaned the tanks out, he had to use a very special mask. When he cleaned the tanks, then dumped the contents out, all vegetation and trees would die." There was no Environmental Protection Agency or Occupational Safety and Health Administration then!

He also would go to the outlet tower in the basin to regulate the water flow into the pipe through the dam, down Tibbs Run, and



Ralph and Grace Lemley's youngest daughter, eight-year-old Anna Louise, lounges by the reservoir in June 1951. She lived near the reservoir until she and her family moved to Morgantown in 1982.

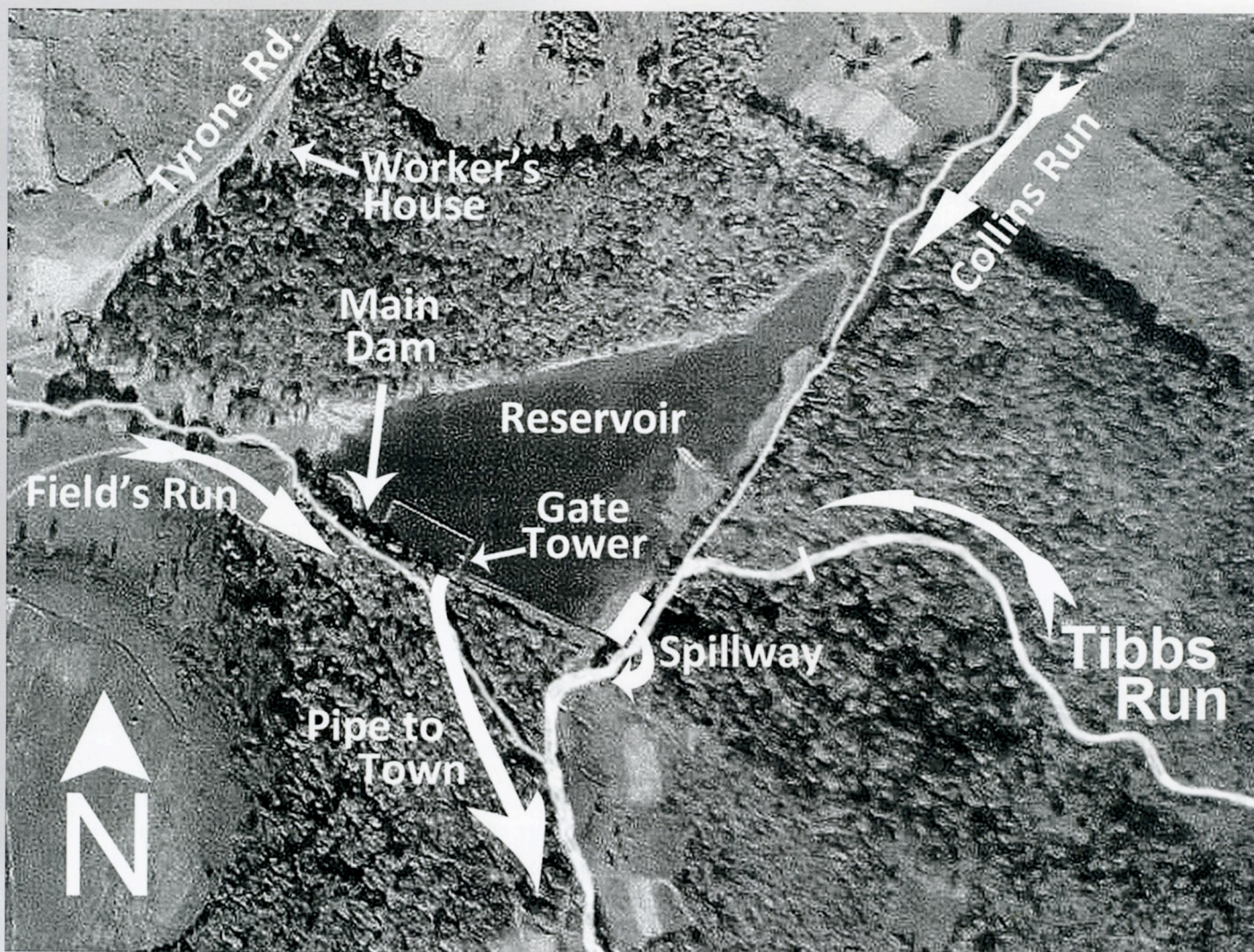
then Deckers Creek and finally to Morgantown—about seven miles. He could reach the tower by rowing out in a little johnboat or via a walkway from the embankment. That walkway is now gone, as is the walkway over the spillway.

When the grandchildren were older, they were allowed to walk down to the basin with Ralph, but it was forbidden territory when they were young—probably a good decision since the 28-acre body of water wasn't enclosed with a fence. Eventually, Ralph took Linda into the chemical feed house and explained what he was doing. "Of course, at the time," Linda recalls, "I didn't understand any of what he was saying, but I thought he had to be really smart to do what he was doing. Usually, he would make me stay

seated on the tractor while he did his work because he didn't want me getting into anything. . . . We all knew that when Pap Pap said to do something, then it was law, and we obeyed. That time spent with Pap Pap was wonderful.

"If he could not afford or find something he needed, he would just build it himself. Any other gadget he thought might make his life easier would be crafted from scrap pieces."

His biggest accomplishment may have been working with his father to build the tractor, which he called his "bug." The two men stripped a Model A pickup and converted it into a tractor that "was a hodgepodge of parts." It was loud, it was dangerous, and he could pull trees out of the ground with it," Barbara and Ralph remember.



This 1938 U.S. Department of Agriculture aerial shows how the property was laid out about the time Ralph Lemley started working at the Tibbs Run Reservoir. Courtesy of George Longenecker.

Ralph would drive down to the reservoir via two steep muddy trails, which got so rutted that the tractor would tilt. According to grandson Ralph, my grandfather "was fearless on his tractor." All the grandchildren remember that their biggest thrill was climbing up on the seat next to him on the tractor. Part of the thrill was the potential danger because the path was so steep. Sometimes, he pulled at least two extra mowers behind his riding mower as he mowed around the

basin, around his house, and the adjoining yards. In good weather, he kept the grounds neat and clean. In the winter, he hauled out dead trees.

Over the years, the Lemley family stayed close to their roots. Even after June and her family moved to Texas in 1955, they returned every year for reunions filled with wienie roasts, marshmallows roasted over open fires, fish fries and big cookouts, outdoor games of hide-and-seek that lasted into the night, and evenings

chatting in lawn chairs. "There was always so much love in our family!" exclaims Linda.

Barbara Boggs and Ralph Cale remember those visits from Aunt June and her family as "always a celebration. Those days, those moments in time for our family were a rare mix of beautiful surroundings, love for one another, and an appreciation for life's simple pleasures."

For recreation, the family fished in the reservoir, catching large-mouth bass, bluegills, and



Ralph raised a little bit of everything, including bees, on the reservoir property.

catfish. There was a little pond separated from the reservoir property by a shoddy barbed-wire fence. Ralph Lemley took his grandson Ralph fishing there all the time, but Linda was allowed to go only once: "He didn't like girls going because we made too much noise and would scare the fish away. That one time he took me, though, I felt so very special."

Linda adds, "Pap Pap was always helping other people and doing things for others that they needed to have done." Sometimes, he helped at the

nearby Good Counsel Friary or assisted the game warden. Mrs. Hudak, "who lived close by, was a good friend of theirs. She was Catholic, and after her husband passed away, Pap Pap would always pick her up every Sunday and take her to church. Then, he and Mamu would go to Sabraton Baptist Church; after church, he would go back and pick her up and take her home."

The City of Morgantown, which purchased the reservoir property in 1950 from the Morgantown Water Company,

Hunting was a popular pastime. Joe Alvarez, another grandchild, remembers his Pap Pap shooting "some monster deer down around the reservoir. He had a 16-point deer head in his garage he took down there. That's back when there were Michigan deer [larger and darker in color than most deer] still around here. He kept us all fed with deer, rabbit, squirrel, fish, and, once in a while, rattlesnake."

stopped using it as a water supply in 1969, but Ralph Lemley kept watch over the property until the reservoir was drained in 1980.

Meanwhile, the 82-acre site evolved into an informal recreation area, with no one really caring for it anymore. During my research, several Morgantown residents admitted they used to swim there illegally because the area around the spillway made for a great swimming hole that was too tempting to pass up. The basin was particularly popular in the 1970s as a camping place for hippies, who could get in through a gated-off old road that's about as far away from the Tyrone Road entrance as possible. They pitched tents by the spillway, smoked marijuana, drank, played loud music, and rode dirt bikes. The Cales and Lemleys could hear them from their houses at the opposite end of the property.



Barbara Cale Boggs and Ralph Cale pose on their Pap Pap's "bug"—a converted Model A pickup frame and a "hodge podge of parts." In all the conversations with family members, no one thought that Ralph Lemley's legenday tractor still existed. But in October 2013, Barbara, Ralph, Ralph's daughter Sarah, George Longenecker (then executive director of the West Virginia Botanic Garden), and our author were thrilled to discover it "hidden in plain sight" off a major road. Photo by our author.

Sometimes, the campers came up the road toward the house, which "set off Grandpa."

Unfortunately, for reasons that are unclear, Ralph lost his potential retirement income about 18 months before he was to retire. Linda remembers him being "very, very upset because he worked so long and so hard. . . . He was cut off without anything."

Grace died in January 1985. During his wife's long illness, Ralph took complete care of Grace, allowing his daughters to provide minimal assistance. The

Cales moved to Morgantown in 1982. After Grace died, Ralph moved into the Cales' house, which he'd inherited from his father, and the caretaker's house was demolished. Ralph died on April 2, 1989.

Ten years later, the City of Morgantown and Morgantown Utility Board, which supplies water to the Morgantown area, signed a lease with the West Virginia Botanic Garden Inc., a 501(c)(3) organization. Today, the Eclectic Garden and a parking lot are on the site of the Lemley home and gardens.

Part of the cellar remains, and, thanks to funding from the West Virginia Humanities Council, there is now a sign that honors "Ralph Lemley: Resourceful Caretaker." 🍁

BARB HOWE was the first director of the West Virginia University Public History Program and the first president of the Preservation Alliance of West Virginia. She and Emory Kemp coedited *Public History: An Introduction* and coauthored *Houses and Homes: Exploring Their History* with Dolores A. Fleming and Ruth Ann Overbeck. This is Barb's second contribution to GOLDENSEAL.

The West Virginia Botanic Garden at Tibbs Run Preserve

The West Virginia Botanic Garden at Tibbs Run Preserve is open year-round from dawn to dusk, free of charge. As you walk down the gravel road to the reservoir basin, you can almost picture Ralph Lemley careening downhill on his tractor. The accessible .72-mile reservoir loop trail crosses the embankment. When the water levels are low, you can see traces of the pilings where Ralph walked to collect samples. You can also see the outlet tower, spillway, and foundations of the chemical feed house with signs explaining the history of the reservoir. The small adjoining pond still exists, and deer still roam the area, but the only sound of gunfire comes from the Mason-Dixon Rifle Club adjoining the botanic garden. Follow other trails to explore the gardens, wetland, and deciduous and hemlock forests and learn more about the garden at www.wvbg.org. 🍁

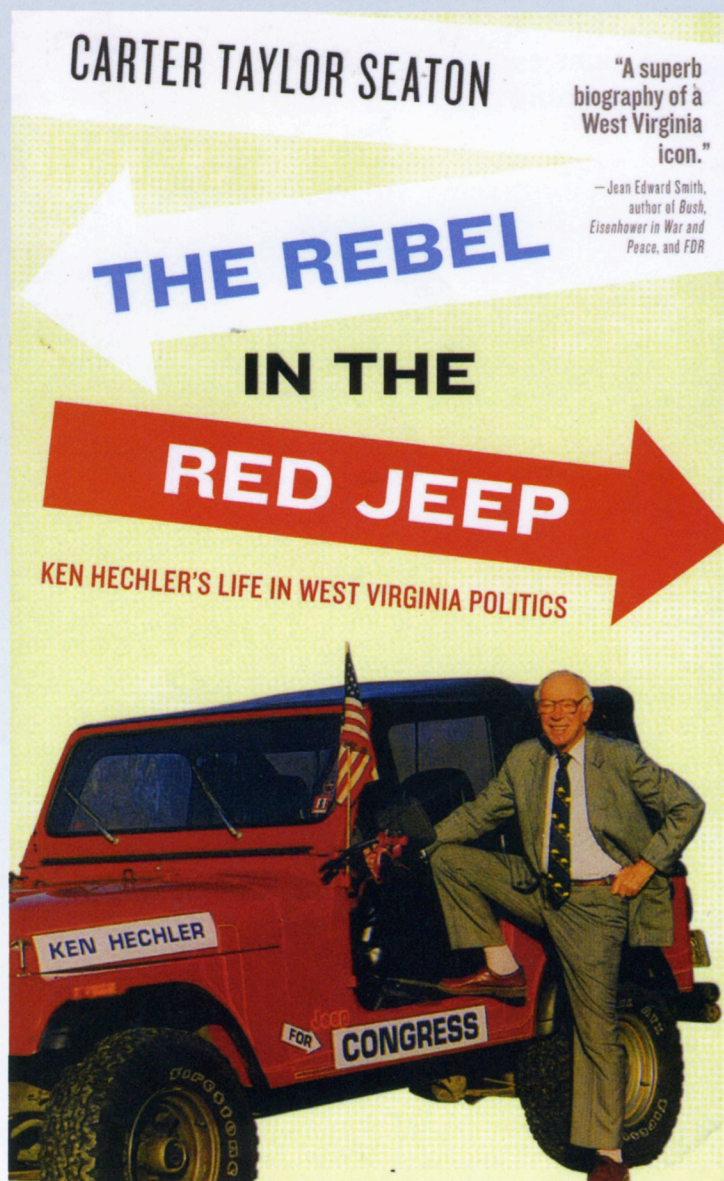
Note: The author, a former board member of the West Virginia Botanic Garden, thanks Ada June Lemley Ball, Raymond Richard Ball (now deceased), Linda Ball Bentley, Madeline Lemley Alvarez, Joe Alvarez, Ralph Cale, and Barbara Cale Boggs for their memories of Ralph and Grace Lemley, and Michael Caplinger for his knowledge of the reservoir's history.



Photo by Erin Smaldone.

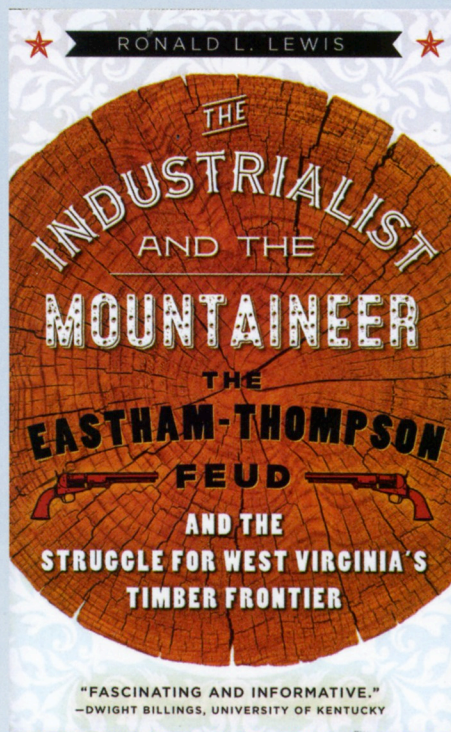
2017 Books on Appalachia

By Stan Bumgardner



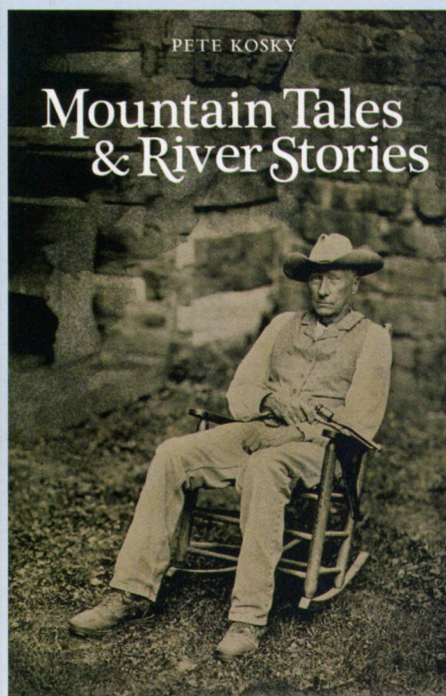
Legendary West Virginia statesman Ken Hechler (1914-2016) is the subject of a new biography by author and sculptor Carter Taylor Seaton. *The Rebel in the Red Jeep* traces Hechler's life from Roslyn, New York, to the Bridge at Remagen, to the Truman White House, to West Virginia. In the Mountain State, Hechler forged a storied path as one of the state's last unabashed liberal congressmen. His legacy includes the Federal Coal Mine Health and Safety Act of 1969, which provided the most sweeping changes in miner health and safety in history. Seaton's 427-page paperback biography is based on newspaper articles, research collections, and her own correspondence with many of the people who knew and worked with Hechler.

The Rebel in the Red Jeep is available for \$32.99 from West Virginia University Press online or at WVU Press, P.O. Box 6295, Morgantown, WV 26506, 866-988-7737.



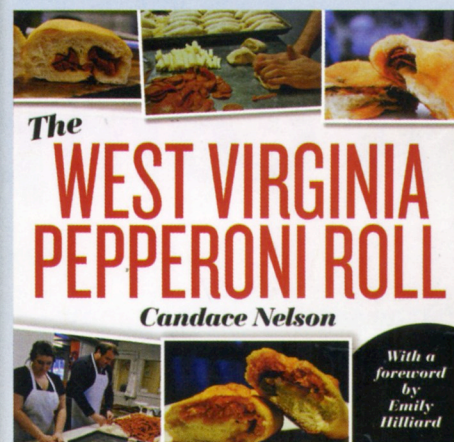
Also from WVU Press is a new work from Ronald L. Lewis, a professor of history emeritus at the school. In 1897, small landowner Robert Eastham killed timber magnate Frank Thompson in Tucker County, leading to a sensational trial. Lewis' book, *The Industrialist and the Mountaineer*, uses this largely forgotten episode as a window into contests over political, environmental, and legal change in turn-of-the-century Appalachia. In particular, he shows how local communities guarded traditional relationships to natural resources.

The Industrialist and the Mountaineer is available from WVU Press for \$26.99 in paperback. An eBook is also available.



Mountain Tales & River Stories features 19 short stories—all but one set in West Virginia—that cover a wide gamut of genres: historical, dark, supernatural, and humor. Storyteller and songwriter Pete Kosky weaves his tales with everything from rural traditions, such as wood hicks and fiddle tunes, to speakeasies and roller derby girls.

The 200-page paperback *Mountain Tales & River Stories* is available for \$15.00 from Mountain State Press, P.O. Box 1281, Scott Depot, WV 25560.



Candace Nelson has written the first comprehensive history of our state's unofficial food. *The West Virginia Pepperoni Roll*, with a foreword by state folklorist Emily Hilliard, traces the history of this Appalachian delicacy from Fairmont's Country Club Bakery to modern adaptations, which please some palates but push the envelope too far for others. Nelson, who interviewed chefs and other foodies about their pepperoni memories, delves into the science of what makes a pepperoni roll a pepperoni roll.

Beautifully illustrated, this 146-page paperback is available from WVU Press and online for \$29.99.



West Virginia Back Roads →

Highland Springs: A Compassionate Farm

Text and photos by Carl E. Feather

The six dogs in the canine condominium sound the alarm as they hear my car trace the curving drive to Highland Springs Farm in Brooke County. The cat, tail held high and fur alert, brushes against my legs as soon as I step onto this compassionate soil. On the hill above the farm, what looks like a black cast iron smoker with a face and short legs ambles through the wet grass.

A black potbellied pig named Cooper is coming back from his morning walk. A pig having the freedom to take a walk is commonplace here, where animals have the space and resources just to be themselves. Cooper, who got too big for his urban owners, is as friendly as a dog and prefers the company of other species to that of his own.

Like the dogs and cats here, Cooper shares the farm with its owners, Harry Sanford and

Chatman Neely. The population also includes free-range chickens, goats, miniature horses, sheep, burros, and a standard donkey named Martha.

"Martha Stewart was in prison in West Virginia when we got her, so we named her Martha," says Chatman as he takes me on a tour of Barn With Inn, a bed and breakfast set on the grounds of a working farm.

A dairy farmer is likely to bristle at Highland Springs being called a farm—animals fortunate enough to land a spot here are nurtured for their wisdom and company, not meat. They even enjoy on-site veterinary care. Harry, a vet, first saw many of the animals on this farm as hard-luck cases at his clinic.

"Most of the cats that we have were abandoned at Harry's office," Chatman says.

For example, there's the three-legged Maine Coon cat hit by a car as a kitten. Harry and his staff doted on the abandoned animal, named Jane Doe, for six months after Harry amputated her mangled rear leg. A testament to the power of compassion, Jane now suns herself lazily on the black solar cover on the farm's swimming pool.

The saltwater in-ground pool is available to B&B guests (but not the animals); so are a hot tub and outdoor showers. Walking paths open the farm and its 34 acres to exploration and lead to the "secret garden," set amid a copse of bamboo and overlooking the farm from the hillside.

"It's probably my favorite place on the farm," Chatman says as he points out the amenities.

About half the farm is devoted to hay. A neighbor grows



One of the many cats that call Highland Springs Farm home ambles down the sidewalk toward the house. Although built in the colonial style, the house is deceptively modern, albeit made from reclaimed wood and an old barn. It was built by Steve Paull in the 1980s.

and harvests it for his use and, as compensation, gives Chatman and Harry enough for their animals. Chatman, a retired social work professor, and Harry farm on their knees—they grow vegetables in raised beds using sustainable practices. The gardens supply the needs of their kitchen, guests, family, and neighbors. Likewise, a small flock of hens produces the farm's eggs.

Chatman, who grew up in rural Mercer County, had no plans of living on a farm in his adult years. But his career in academia took him to nearby Bethany College for what he thought would be a short stint. It turned out to be 10 life-changing years as he met Harry, and they acquired the

farm from Harry's sister and brother-in-law, Ann and Steve Paull, who'd bought it in the 1960s.

It was essentially vacant land at that time. Over the years, Steve, who now owns a dairy farm across the ridge from Highland Springs, built the colonial-style house and barn from salvaged materials and structures. Thanks to Steve's dedication to using original materials and authentic construction styles, the buildings look like they've been there for at least a century. He started with a milking barn that was moved to the farm from Wellsburg in the 1980s to house sheep.

Sections of this barn, which is used by the "livestock," have

been allocated to B&B guests. A former hayloft is now a guest room with a window that looks into the animals' stalls. A horse stall in that barn also has been converted to a guest room. The third guest room is in the farmhouse.

The heart of the farm is a 180-year-old log barn salvaged from another site. Its timbers are a framework for the dining room. With its exposed hand-hewn rafters, cathedral ceiling lined with wood planks, and huge colonial fireplace, the room is exceptionally inviting. An adjoining room provides a view of the barn and pasture; in the evening, it's stocked with appetizers, beverages, and spirits sourced from the region. And in the morning,

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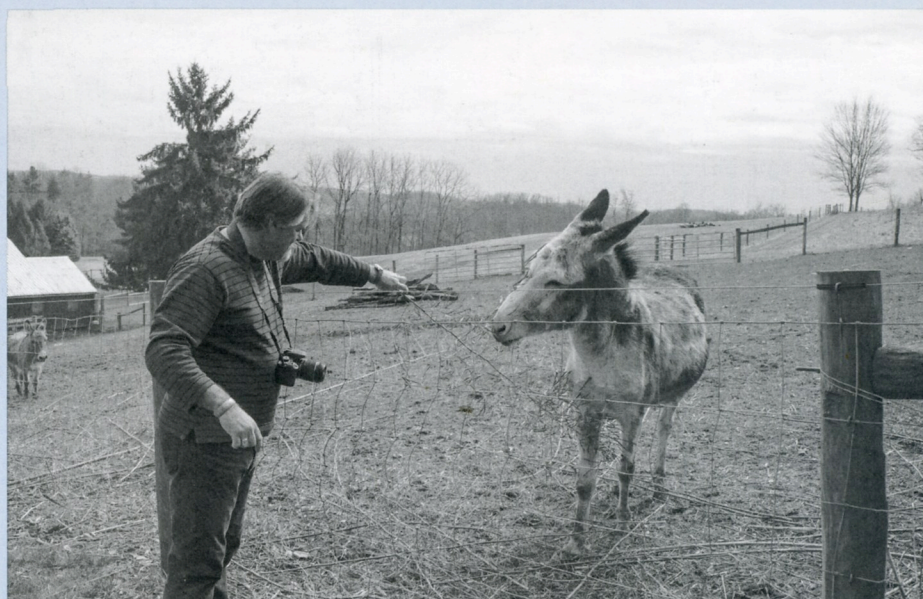
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Highland Springs Farm co-owner Chatman Neely feeds bamboo to a burro.

guests dine on selections prepared by Chatman, who has a passion for cooking with local foods.

"Everything is local except the coffee, sugar, and flour," he says of the inn's summer breakfast fare.

Chatman says the bed and breakfast financially supports the farm. Chatman and Harry are committed to preserving farmland in a traditionally rural area that's being threatened by housing developments. The farm also hosts fundraisers for animal welfare groups.

In its first year, the B&B received guests from all over the tri-state area as well as from Germany and Australia. The concept of an outdoor shower (the rooms also have indoor ones) was hardly foreign to the German visitors. What they didn't expect was that the outdoor shower also had hot water—they discovered that amenity on their last day at the farm!

Guests who come to the farm typically spend their entire stay on the grounds because there's so much to do and see. The owners don't even provide TVs in the rooms, although there is Internet service.

Numerous gardens, including one for butterflies, make the grounds a pleasure to stroll upon. But the animals are the farm's best ambassadors, reminding guests that behind every strip of bacon or pork chop is a Cooper, and that farm animals and people like a peaceful place they can call home, if only for a night.

To learn more about Highland Springs Farm, please call 304-737-0647 or visit them online at www.barnwithinn.com. 🍁

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.

OFFICIAL FOOTBALL PROGRAM

DAD'S DAY GAME

LAFAYETTE COLLEGE

VERSUS

WEST VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY

MOUNTAINEER FIELD

Saturday, Oct. 15---2:30 P. M.



Football program,
Lafayette vs. WVU,
October 15, 1927.
Courtesy of the West
Virginia State Archives,
Leon Murphy Collection.

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Page 64—Donna Brown Brewster tells her family about going to a one-room school in Summers County.

Page 30—Webster County native and forester Bill Gillespie discovers the world's oldest seed.

