

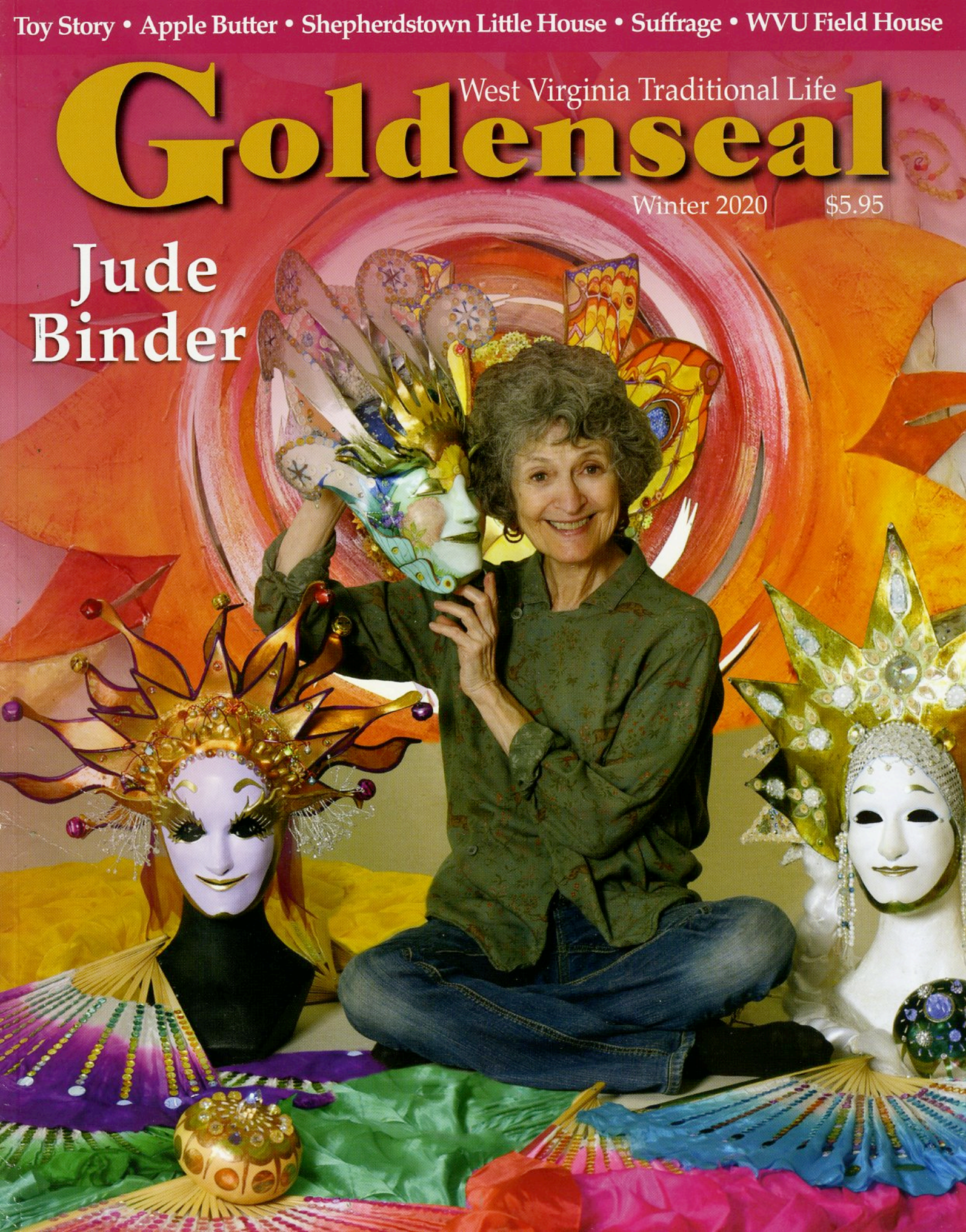
Toy Story • Apple Butter • Shepherdstown Little House • Suffrage • WVU Field House

Goldenseal

West Virginia Traditional Life

Winter 2020 \$5.95

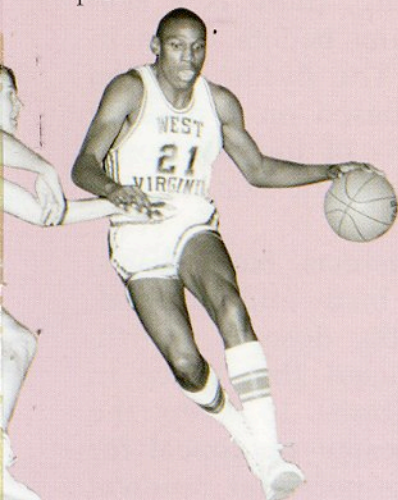
Jude
Binder



In 1996, Robin Hammer and Chris Dutch received the West Virginia Juried Exhibition's Gene Jordan Award for Best of Show for *Legend Table*. It's now on permanent display in the West Virginia State Museum. Sadly, Robin passed away earlier this year. Read more about his life on p. 5. Photo by Steve Brightwell.



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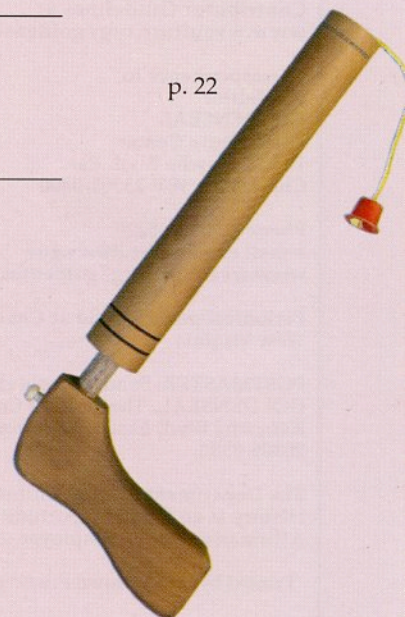


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From the Editor

The Bible tells us, "To every thing, there is a season." It's a common tenet in many beliefs. Even in songs. While many of us know The Byrds' version of Pete Seeger's "Turn, Turn, Turn" (based on a passage in Ecclesiastes), I like the wittier words of the late songwriter John Prine: "Just give me one extra season so I can figure out the other four."

The Winter Solstice, Hanukkah, Christmas, New Year's, and many others all mark a time of birth and renewal. After 2020, we're all ready for a healthy dose of rebirth.

In its early days, GOLDENSEAL used this space in our Winter issues to ask for donations to keep the magazine afloat. Later, this column became an appeal for subscriptions. Now, we send you less-personal renewal letters—I'm sorry about these, but we really don't want you to miss an issue. Many devoted readers often beat us to the renewal letters for fear of their subscriptions being interrupted, even by one issue.

This year, though, has brought me and many others new perspectives on life and priorities. I just want you to know how much Joey Aluise and I—our fulltime GOLDENSEAL staff—appreciate you. When you call in, we enjoy chatting with you and hearing a good story or joke. You make it very clear how important GOLDENSEAL is to you, which makes our work doubly important to us. While GOLDENSEAL always makes for a great holiday or birthday gift, this year, we just encourage you to buy from West Virginia businesses, artists, and musicians or donate to a Mountain State charity. Due to 2020, all are struggling to make ends meet.

In the seasonal spirit of rebirth, we're thankful for you, our loyal readers; thankful to be from the most beautiful state in the union; thankful for our friends—especially the ones who always have our backs; thankful for the good times we got to spend with loved ones who've now passed; and thankful every single day to be West Virginians.

—Stan Bumgardner

GOLDENSEAL Good-Byes

Remembering Labor Singer-Songwriter Elaine Purkey (1949 – 2020)

By Emily Hilliard

West Virginians deeply mourn the great loss of labor songwriter, musician, activist, radio host, teacher, and devoted mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother Elaine Purkey, who passed away on September 2. Elaine was a commanding advocate for our state's working people through her resonant original labor songs and interpretations of traditional and gospel tunes that enhanced her grassroots organizing. In addition, Elaine was a dynamic music educator of the next generation in her home community. Speaking of her role in Appalachian labor music, Pete Seeger said, "Elaine Purkey's songs carry on the great tradition of Ella May Wiggins of Gastonia, North Carolina, and Aunt Molly Jackson of Harlan County, Kentucky."

A native of Lincoln County, Elaine was raised in a family of musicians and flatfoot dancers. She attributed her powerful, electrifying voice to the a capella singing she learned as a member of the Church of Christ. She recalls that as early as age five, she would stand on a rock in her grandfather's yard and sing "Frankie and Johnny" for family and friends. As a teenager, she played in bands with her brother, and in early adulthood, she was the lead singer of a local country band. When her husband, Bethel, a third-generation coal miner, got involved in the United Mine Workers of America strike against the Pittston Coal Company in 1988, Elaine began writing songs for the cause. Commenting on the

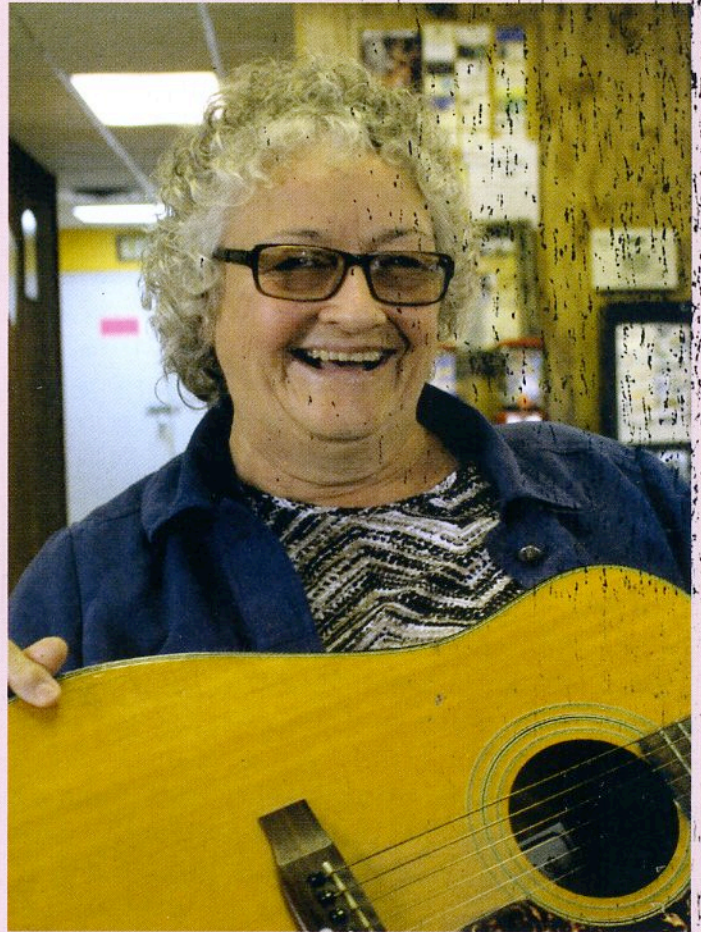


Photo by Emily Hilliard.

role of her labor songwriting in birthing a new identity, Elaine said, "My actual natural birthday was May 29, 1949, but I really wasn't born until the 1980s after I . . . got involved in all of this stuff because that's when my blood really started pumpin'. Before that, I mean I was just mundane, I did all this singing and went to church, did all the things I was supposed to do, had babies and raised 'em, and I cooked and I cleaned

You can read more about Elaine Purkey's life and career in our Summer 2006 issue.

and took care of everything, and that was it! I was known by the company I kept, you know, nobody knew who I was. But that changed everything."

When Ronnie Gilbert of The Weavers came to sing for the striking miners, she invited Elaine to play. It was there that Elaine first performed one of her original songs, "America, Our Union," which became, as she said, a "national anthem" for the movement. When union steelworkers were locked out of Ravenswood Aluminum in the infamous lockout of the early 1990s, Elaine once again wrote a rallying cry for the workers in "One Day More." It would become her most famous song. Organizer and director of the American Friends Service Committee's West Virginia Economic Justice Project, Rick Wilson, spoke of the song's resonance, "Nothing could have prepared me for the effect Elaine's song had on the union families of the Ravenswood Lockout, a huge labor struggle. The first time she sang it at the union hall, people sprang to their feet, clapped, cried, sang along. At a time when the odds of success seemed small and when morale mattered, this gave people a boost that lasted. And they won." That performance was filmed by director Barbara Kopple and used in her PBS special "Locked Out in America: Voices from Ravenswood" for her labor series *We Do the Work*.

"One Day More" appears on the 2006 Smithsonian Folkways Recordings compilation *Classic Labor Songs*, alongside songs by Woody Guthrie, fellow West Virginian Hazel Dickens, and Pete Seeger. In the liner notes, Elaine explains the title phrase, coined during the Pittston strike, "No matter how long the company or the corporations can stick around, we have enough strength, friendship, camaraderie

about us and enough belief in what we're doing, we can be there one day more; whatever they do, we'll be there the day after."

In 1996, Elaine released a solo album, *Mountain Music, Mountain Struggle*, which includes her original labor songs, traditional folk songs, gospel, and country. She performed at regional and national festivals, including the 1995 Ralph Rinzler Memorial Festival at the Highlander Center in New Market, Tennessee; the 1997 Festival of American Folklife in Washington, D.C.; and in the Appalachia Program at the 2003 Smithsonian Folklife Festival. She is also included in folklorist Mary Hufford's Coal River Folklife Collection at the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress in her role as an organizer in the grassroots West Virginia Organizing Project. For her work with that project, Elaine was portrayed in Penny Loeb's 2014 film *Moving Mountains*, based on the *Bragg v. Robertson* federal case, which restored clean water and temporarily halted mountaintop removal in a Mingo County community.

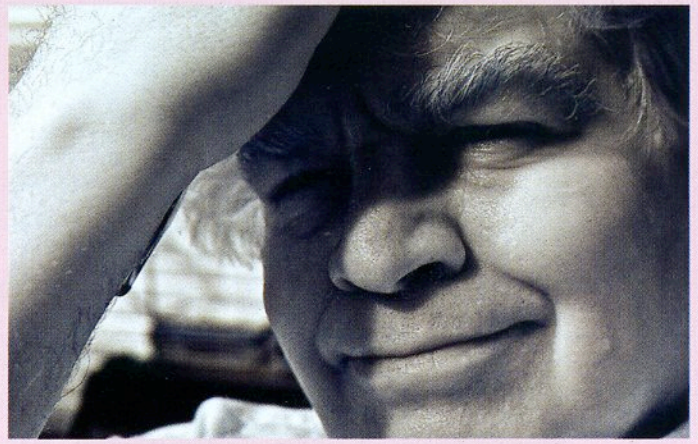
But nowhere is her impact felt more than in her home in southern West Virginia. Beginning in the 1980s, Elaine was a featured performer on the *Wallace Horn Friendly Neighbors Show*, a Logan County live radio program that has been on the air since 1967. After Horn died in 2013, Elaine took over as the show's host. When she was organizing with the West Virginia Organizing Project, her local radio celebrity was her calling card; while those in other communities may not have known her personally, they knew her name and voice. For the last 10 years, Elaine taught songwriting and traditional song after-school and summer programs to children at Lincoln County's Big Ugly Community Center, the site of the former elementary school that was consolidated in 1993. Elaine said, "They're trying to cut the performing arts out of schools?

That's a big mistake. The performing arts are a way for kids to see, 'You know, I may not be able to play ball, I may not be able to jump the highest of anybody else, and I may not make straight A's, but hey, I can write a song and I can sing it! I can let people know I've got a voice!'"

For Elaine, activism and music were not separate entities but part and parcel of the cultural heritage and sustainability of her community. That's the lesson she hoped to instill in the children of her home county.

For the last 40 years, Elaine Purkey was engaged in the hard work of labor organizing in West Virginia coalfield communities through her profound songs, committed teaching, and tireless community activism. While her national and international profile may not be as far-reaching as other folk singers of her generation, that's all the more a testament to her commitment to what was always her singular cause—making life better for working people. Ever that "little girl standing on the rock," Elaine believed that songwriting, storytelling, and creative work were powerful tools for both personal and collective liberation. She said, "I don't know who this is gonna go out to, but if there's anybody listening to this or reading this and you've got any idea that you can do anything—write a story about what you're going through, tell it, write it in a poem, just put it on paper and try to put music to it or put it on paper and try to get somebody else to put music to it. Just get it out there! Just get it out there and let people know what you're thinking. And you'll be surprised how much it will free you up and help you out. 'Cause it did me. It made a monster out of me."

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.



Robin Hammer, self-portrait.

Robin Hammer (1946 – 2020)

On January 23, we lost one of our most talented artists. Robin was a fine-arts painter, sculptor, photographer, and a graphic artist and website designer / administrator. His career as a Charleston-area artist totaled some 50 years. A member of the Allied Artists of West Virginia, he helped found our state's International Film Festival. He also was a founder and president of the Professional Artist Cooperative Trust, which operated Artspace, a gallery on Charleston's Capitol Street, for many years. He worked for West Virginia State College (now University) and the state Division of Rehabilitation Services, retiring in 2009. In 1991, he and artist Chris Dutch began an artistic collaboration, DutchHammer. Their sculptures and wall pieces received major awards. They had solo shows at Charleston's Sunrise Museum and the Clay Center for the Arts & Sciences and were shown on an ongoing basis at The Art Store in Charleston. A multi-award-winner, Robin's artwork is in the permanent collections of the West Virginia State Museum and the Clay Center, among others. He and Dutch had a long-running Best of West Virginia exhibit pod at Tamarack in Beckley, and both received Master Artist Fellowship Awards from the Tamarack Foundation. —ed.

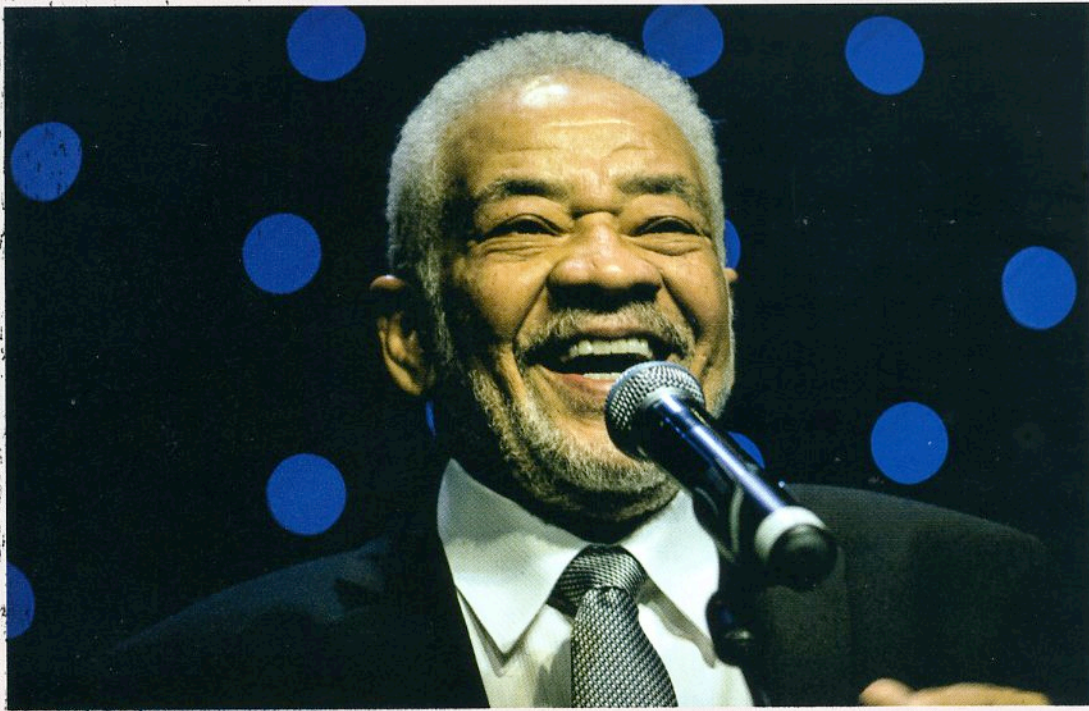


Photo by Rafael Barker.

Bill Withers

(1938 – 2020)

By Ciarra Johnston

Bill Withers was a singer-songwriter who died on March 30 at age 81. He was raised in Slab Fork (Raleigh County) and claimed that his background had a large impact on his music.

Bill was born with a stutter, making it a challenge for him to talk or sing. It also made him a target for bullying, so it was difficult for him to make friends as a kid. But a kind man in Beckley showed him a way to sing without stuttering, and the stutter soon went away, even when he talked. He always credited this man with changing his life.

Bill moved from the mining community of Slab Fork to Beckley when he was just three years old. He had a tough childhood, being the youngest of six and his dad dying when Bill was just 13. Bill was 17 when he enlisted in the Navy, where he developed his interest in songwriting. After his service was over, he

got a day job and performed his music in clubs at night.

In 1971, he partnered with Sussex Records and released his debut album: *Just As I Am*. One of the songs on that album, "Ain't No Sunshine," rose to No. 3 on the *Billboard* Hot 100 pop charts. His producer, Booker T. Jones, was proud when he and Bill received the Best Rhythm & Blues (R&B) Song Grammy for it. The next year, he released his second album, *Still Bill*, which included his classic "Lean on Me." Many consider *Still Bill* one of the best R&B albums ever. He later had another big hit, partnering with Grover Washington Jr., on "Just the Two of Us."

Bill was inducted into the Songwriters Hall of Fame (2001), West Virginia Music Hall of Fame (2007), and, at long last, the Rock 'n' Roll Hall of Fame (2015).

CIARRA JOHNSTON is a 9th-grade student at Hurricane High School. She originally wrote this as a class paper. This is her first contribution to GOLDENSEAL.



Photo by Tyler Evert.

Jack Fowler (1934 – 2020)

A lifelong resident of Point Pleasant, Jack passed away on August 10. A man of many talents and great intellect, he was a pipefitter for Marietta Manufacturing, an installer repairman for C&P Telephone, an employee at Celanese Chemical, and then a product marketing manager at Kaiser Aluminum in Ravenswood. In his second career(s), he served on Point Pleasant's city council and received that city's Community Service Award. His dream was to build a riverboat museum on the banks of the Ohio. In 2003, he opened the Point Pleasant River Museum [see our Summer 2014 and Winter 2017 issues], which was educational and fun for children and adults of all ages—something Jack made sure of. Sadly, it burned down on July 1, 2018. The *Point Pleasant Register* quoted Jack that day, "Nineteen years working on that building and then to have it all just disappear like that . . . it was difficult to watch." But even at 83 years old, Jack tried to save what remained and rebuild, but the building was essentially a total loss. —ed.

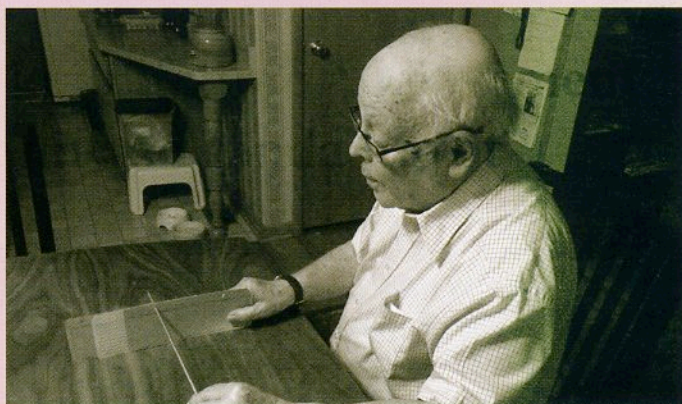


Photo by Barb Howe.

Dr. Emory Kemp (1931 – 2020)

Dr. Kemp passed away on January 20 at age 88. He was featured in an article by Dr. Barb Howe in our Spring 2017 issue. Before coming to West Virginia, he was already a noted structural engineer, having worked on the roof design of the famed Sydney Opera House in Australia. In 1962, he earned a Ph.D. in theoretical and applied mechanics. He soon moved to Morgantown, where he became a professor of civil engineering at West Virginia University and later chaired that department. He worked closely with Dr. Howe in building WVU's Public History Program. In 1989, he also formed the Institute for the History of Technology and Industrial Archaeology, which documented and helped preserve historic sites related to industry and structural engineering. He played key roles in the restoration of West Virginia Independence Hall and the Suspension Bridge in Wheeling and the Philippi Covered Bridge after a fire nearly destroyed it. In addition, he founded the Preservation Alliance of West Virginia. In all, some two generations of students learned from this brilliant professor, who patiently explained the most complicated engineering concepts to history students, including our editor. Thank you, Dr. Kemp, for everything. —ed.

Mike Fahey (1942 – 2020)

Mike was featured in our Fall 2019 issue in Mark Swiger's article "Living the American Dream at Wheeling-Pitt." He was a native of Glen Dale and resident of Moundsville (Marshall County) at the time of his passing on February 26. He was a retired employee of Wheeling-Pittsburgh Steel in Beech Bottom and Bayer Corporation in New Martinsville. He also was a fast-pitch softball pitcher, coached girls' softball for years, and researched ways to reduce severe injuries in that sport. As Mark wrote in his article, "[Mike] sees himself as a steelworker who's lived through the ebbs and flows of life and work while raising a family." —*ed.*



Mike and Karen Fahey.
Courtesy of the family.

Phillip L. Crane (1948 – 2020)

Phillip was a public schoolteacher for 36 years. He wrote an article in our Winter 2019 issue about a school consolidation battle that erupted in Ritchie County in the 1950s and 1960s. He had an up-close view of the struggle, as both a student and the son of two teachers who fell on opposite sides of their principal, leading to conflict. Phillip realized he didn't have long to live when he was researching and writing the article. This seemed to drive him even harder to finish it because he felt this important story might die with him. Every story matters. —*ed.*



Courtesy of the family.

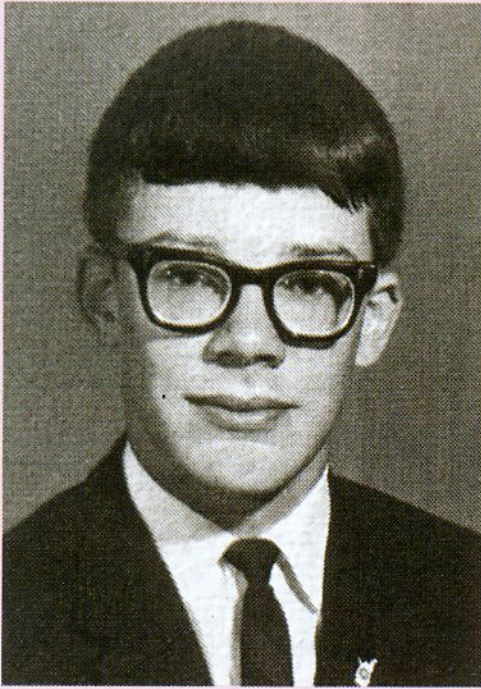
Ed Hicks (1948 – 2020) and David Husband (1950 - 2020)

By Stan Bumgardner

In our Spring 2020 issue, we paid tribute to two members of our work family we lost this year. Sadly, two more have passed: Ed Hicks and David Husband.

Ed was the *photo guy* for the West Virginia State Archives. These days, state government has generic titles that rarely explain what the employee does. So, to us, Ed was the "photo guy." We worked closely with him on the West Virginia State Museum renovation and in my first couple years at GOLDENSEAL before his retirement. When I say "photo guy," it wasn't just because he was in charge of the photos; he had a stellar eye for a good photo: the historic, the scenic, the abstract, and especially the humorous. With all the trillions of photos on smartphones out there, you'd think we'd have an unlimited number to choose from. But Ed cared more about the quality and composition of the picture. He also knew a lot about history. He could take what looked like a mundane street scene from the 1950s and pick out governors, legislators, and celebrities the sizes of gnats in the photo. On the museum project, it got to the point where we'd just say, "Ed, give us your five best oil or gas photos." They were always the best five—and we'd double-check just to make sure. Likewise, he could point out flaws in photos that we'd completely missed. He was also a font of tales about folks—history, gossip, and, quite often, really good jokes.

I first got to know David Husband through his son, Darren, one of the finest exhibit designers I've ever known. Both father and son—and a slew of others—helped us renovate the museum. Before it was completed in 2009, Darren literally



Despite being the *photo guy*, Ed Hicks (left) was notoriously elusive about having his own picture taken. The only photo of him we could find was in his St. Albans High School Yearbook (1966). Knowing his sense of humor, we think he'd be both slightly embarrassed by and doubled-over laughing at this. David Husband (right) was an artist, craftsman, exhibit fabricator, and all-around tremendous guy. Here, he's building a dragster for a car show. Photo courtesy of the family.

created mock-up elevations, including artifacts, of every wall in the museum—nearly 300 displays by our count. But when it came time to hang an 800-pound rock (with a petroglyph) on a gypsum-board wall, my first call went to David; as a side note, the rock is still firmly attached to the wall 11 years later. David was head of what we call the Tech Crew, which builds and sets up about everything the public sees at the Culture Center—from art exhibits to the Vandalia Gathering stages. The folks in the Tech Crew, now under another fine leader, Doug Litton, are the most unsung stars of everything we do. Every time you visit Vandalia or come to the Culture Center, please think about them. When everything goes right (99% of the time), they are the main reason.

During the museum project, engineers asked for the weight of a huge block of bituminous coal—an artifact near the start of the museum path. My question

(likely said less civilly): “How am I going to weigh a giant block of coal? My bathroom scales don’t go past 300?” David, standing nearby, measures the coal and, without a word, disappears for less than a minute, comes back with an index card, and says, “It weighs about 3,200 pounds. Approximately.” Asked how he came up with that so quickly, Dave replied, “It’s just algebra.” Until that moment, I never knew what purpose algebra served. David was also good at sizing people up—not in a condescending, judgmental way—but in knowing the best person to entrust with certain tasks.

Ed Hicks and David Husband consistently made my job easier and made me laugh—a tall order these days for a grouch like me. But most of all, I considered them good friends, and they always treated me as one of their own. As we say in West Virginia, “They were good souls.”



Photo by Douglas John Imbrogno.

The Hills Are Alive

Jude Binder's Lifelong Dance of Artistry and Instruction

By Douglas John Imbrogno

For a person modest in size, Jude Binder has had an oversized impact on untold numbers of people across West Virginia and beyond. She's perhaps best known as a dancer and as cofounder and artistic director of Heartwood in the Hills in Calhoun County.

That's where she's taught thousands of people how to move their bodies in tune with their hearts. A master mask maker, Jude also has taught generations of students how to hand-make masks and to reveal, once they don them, a world of their spirits inaccessible until that moment.

Her efforts have not gone unnoticed. She was chosen the 2017-2018 Master Artist Fellow of the Tamarack Foundation

for the Arts, celebrated for a lifetime of accomplishments.

Her life's story began outside our state's boundaries. She grew up in Washington, D.C., but—to borrow a familiar phrase about West Virginia—got here as soon as she could.

"Families looking for jobs would come from West Virginia to D.C. And their kids would go to school, and they'd come into my class," Jude recalls.

"I was a little Jewish girl, and these kids came in with their red hair and freckles. And somehow, to me, they carried the magic of the forest or something. I imbued them with some kind of specialness—they were from West Virginia!"



Students at Heartwood in the Hills dance and swirl rainbow fabric in Jude Binder's "Field of Dreams."
Photographer unknown.

Field of Dreams

Her only experience in West Virginia as a child would be on vacation, when her parents loaded the family into their car. They'd leave the broad avenues and marble monuments of the nation's capital in the rear-view mirror, heading west to West Virginia's green hills and curlicue roads.

As a young woman, she returned as part of a different caravan. She and her future partner, Frank Venezia, came to meet and live here as part of the Back to the Land Movement in the 1970s.

That migration brought an influx of starry-eyed young people, seeking to make a go of spirited rural life. The two met in 1973. In 1981, she and Frank moved to Grantsville, the Calhoun County seat, and found nearby property

that would become Heartwood in the Hills.

Frank built the house they live in to this day. He added what Jude—a former student at the Washington School of Ballet and a seasoned dancer—had long visualized as a key element of her field of dreams.

It was a dance floor, one built with a bounce and spring to it for all the dancers to come. "I needed a great big floor. And if I had a great big floor, I could do all the teaching I ever needed to do. And would you help me build a great big floor?!"

And so, in a field in the West Virginia hills, that dance floor appeared. She began teaching, opening Heartwood initially as a school for dance in 1982, on her 40th birthday. The students started coming. And coming. And dancing. And making masks.



Jude loves masks (quite an understatement). "They can be so rich with meaning," she says, "and mask making is a way for me to marry up all the parts of myself with what I've studied to do well, all my life. I conceive the mask. I make the mask. Then, I get to be the mask." Photos by Steve Brightwell.

An Education in Wood

Jude created her own syllabus for how to dance and move holistically, called "Movement for Health and Centering." The syllabus was inspired by her own career's devastating dance injuries.

Ever the artist—turning mishap into creative fodder—the injuries that laid her low gave her the downtime to pick up new skills. These included detailed wood carvings, which she anticipates she'll be doing until the day she dies, long after she's hung up her ballet flats.

She met a thin-as-a-rail Calhoun County woodworker, with piercing eyes and the shakes. His name was Roy Talmidge Geho. She tracked him down to have him cut a piece of black walnut she wished to carve into a wooden doll.

She and Frank began focusing more on their new home and the center they'd built. One day, they heard a knock at the door.

"Frank opens the door, and this voice says, 'Are you the man with the whittlin' woman?'" Jude recalls.

It was Geho.

"He walked in," Jude remembers, "sat down in a chair, and said, in so many words, that he he'd gotten a message I'd sent for him to teach me everything I

wanted to know about wood—if I would come to his shop and do the things he couldn't do anymore because of his shaking."

So commenced her "education in wood," as she calls it. Her award-winning wood carvings, which include wooden masks she brings out for social justice-themed work, remain a form of steady, spiritual pursuit for her.

For aspiring artists, dancers, mask makers, wood carvers, or anyone with a goal to ripen their creative desires and aims, Jude offers up a simple, albeit challenging, formula for success: "If you put in the time, you gain the skill. If you don't put in the time, your skill stays at the same level. Until you decide to put in the time."

"Do anything and be anyone"

Her students are legion. One hesitates to call them *former* students as so many speak not in the past of what they learned from Jude but how she still actively transforms their daily lives decades later.

Brendon Randall-Myers lived in Calhoun County from ages 5 to 13. He took classes in creative movement and mask making at Heartwood for nearly



that whole time. He later married a native of China, which is why the Brooklyn-based composer and guitarist often splits his time between New York and Beijing, where she's from. Whatever hemisphere he's in, he carries with him what he learned at Heartwood.

"It's hard to overstate how great Jude is as a teacher," Brendon says. "One of the things I remember most about her classes was the feeling that I could do anything and be anyone."

"Calhoun County has a lot going for it but is a very poor area that doesn't generally lend itself to big dreams," he adds. "So, this feeling of possibility was incredibly important to me growing up."

As a child, he learned how to make a mask and to move his body. But those were just doorways to deeper insights, he says. "I think the lesson I've learned from Jude as an adult is remarkably similar to what I intuited as a child—that the pursuit of better art and a better world are intertwined. And both are possible only through lifelong dedication, hard work, and love."

The Smell of Clay

Jacob Howley was raised in Calhoun County and is now an attorney and Irish musician near Washington, D.C. As a youngster, he studied a dozen years at Heartwood. He pursues his love of

dance to this day, taking classes near his home.

When asked what Jude taught him, he responds not in prose but with his poetic *Five Things Jude Taught Me* [see p. 14].

1,000 Cranes

Crystal Dawn Yoak hails from a farm in Calhoun County. She started early at Heartwood, at age seven. An eager student, she learned more than a few skills.

"I learned the foundations of theater, dance, production, mask making, costuming, film, and even guitar," she says.

Jude and Frank would also escort students on trips outside the county, broadening the young people's cultural horizons with visits to West Virginia's capital city, among other trips. They attended the Charleston Ballet's *Nutcracker* and touring artistic productions, such as the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, STOMP, and other troupes.

Their engagement with the arts leapt across oceans and continents, Crystal says. "[We aimed] to impact local and international social justice issues via fine-art platforms; our performances included producing a Peace Festival, exchanging 1,000 origami cranes with Hiroshima survivors."

Crystal's Heartwood education shaped her career. "It was Jude's development

Five Things Jude Taught Me

By Jacob Howley

1. How to transform a body:

The heavy smell of clay, coating the air;
The plaster warming on my still face as we make
a mold;

The uncanny sight of my own plaster-positive
(A death-mask awaiting new life);

The clay warming in my patient hands,
Readying itself to move, to be molded;
The fabric, soft with rice starch, taking shape;

Gloss, sequins, polish, paint,
Whatever will make the eyes sparkle.

"That's where we look to tell if something's alive":

I dreamed up this creature, and now here it is,
Looking back at me,
Waiting for me to try it on,
To free myself.

2. How to make laughter:

The plastic skeleton grinning—jauntily, haplessly
one-legged—from the mirrors;

A special guest, Goldie the Clown,
Sending up *The Nutcracker* in her tutu, red nose,
and combat boots.

(But not for years now: Jude said she went to
Siberia and never came back):

*"Move and stop, move and stop—that's the secret of
comedy"*

3. How to make balance within oneself:

The click-clack of the wooden beads we string
into spines—

"Balance your pelvis, ribs, and head over your feet"

"Your pelvis is a flower pot"

"Round your back and bounce like a ball . . ."

"The head is a heavy weight"

"Remember to breathe"—

Piece by piece, we mold ourselves,

Grounded, even, weight-bearing,

Like a keystone arch.

Then we can move.

4. How to make balance with others:

*"If we could consider each other / A sister, a friend, or
a brother . . ."*

Change lines so each dancer gets a turn at the
front of the room

(And a turn to hide in the back).

" . . . it would be a wonderful world / Oh yes!

It would be a wonderful world."

5. How to free a body:

And at the end of dance class, our favorite part:

Running and leaping over the circle!

(I heard it's there because they ran out of
the other color while making the dance floor,
But it wouldn't be Heartwood without a
heartwood:

The circle inside the ring,

Centering us)

Then our other favorite part, the one we kids
invented

(The one Jude wishes we wouldn't do):

Running and leaping down the hall to smack the
attic pull-cord!

Because flying was such fun, we couldn't
just stop.

And so we learned:

Wherever we found ourselves,

Dance floor or no,

We didn't have to stop

Running,

Leaping,

Flying.

JACOB HOWLEY, an attorney and Irish musician, was
raised in Calhoun County and now lives with his family
next to Washington, D.C. He studied with Jude Binder for
12 formative years and continues to attend dance classes
in his area. This is his first contribution to GOLDEN-
SEAL.



As you can tell, Jude adores her students, and they love her. Here, she teaches them part of a *boot dance*. Photo by Chuck Wyrstock.

of the class 'Movement for Health and Centering' that originally piqued my interest in anatomy," she says. "That eventually led to me becoming a certified licensed massage therapist for the past 25 years."

Crystal has come full circle. She's now served for more than a decade on the board of directors for Heartwood in the Hills. Her teacher's education and example still influence her life, she says. "I continue to be inspired by Jude's guidance and sculpting of my moral compass."

It's a French Thing

Like everyone else across the globe, the rhythms and routines of Jude's life in Calhoun County have been upended by the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Right now, Heartwood is closed. And we're not opening until 2021, when it's

clear that it's safe," she says. "This [was] the first fall in 38 years that I [wasn't] teaching five days a week and rehearsing."

And Jude's usual turn as the mask-wearing FestivALL Charleston "Princess," cavorting with festivalgoers at the summertime arts festival in Charleston, was called off because of the pandemic.

Yet Jude, who just turned 78 in September, is keeping creative. Sometime in 2021, when the *all clear* hopefully comes, Heartwood in the Hills will unveil a new series of offerings that will intrigue anyone interested in expanding the boundaries of their own creativity.

"We're going to start a whole new program at Heartwood, with me teaching daylong workshops for people who can



Photos of Jude's mask-reveal sequence by Steve Brightwell.

get here, from anywhere in the state and beyond," Jude says.

There will be sessions inspired by her "Movement for Health and Centering" syllabus, ballet dance techniques, movement for actors, the visual arts, creative arts for children, and more.

Word of the workshops will be sent to schools, art departments, ballet schools, and beyond. "So, that's brand new. We have given workshops like this, but we've never promoted them or publicized them," she says.

To stay abreast of the offerings, people can contact Heartwood: www.heartwoodinthehills.org. You can also write them the old-fashioned way, via snail mail, at their address on Heartwood Lane in Big Bend, WV. Jude notes there's some cool synergy about her mailing address. "The great thing about my address is *big*

bend in French is *grand pli  *, which is the beginning of any ballet class anywhere in the world."

Actually, you can write to her at 229 Heartwood Lane, Grand Pl  , WV 26136. "And it will get to me because of the zip code!" she adds, delightedly.

Dancing a Song

Meanwhile, her eager Muses have continued to find expression, even in times of quarantine. Jude has begun sketching out choreography to interpret the song "If You Love My West Virginia," by singer-songwriter, graphic artist, and writer Colleen Anderson of Charleston. They hope to share it online and perhaps create a filmed version.

And so, in her eighth decade of existence and creative endeavor, life goes on in her corner of the West Virginia



hills. She still offers a smattering of socially distant, CDC-safe offerings. And, as many a creative person has found in the stripped-down, upside-down world brought on by a plague, there is silver amid the dross.

"I teach one class out on the meadow in the morning," she says. "And so everybody is physically distanced at least six feet. And the music is piped out, and it's wonderful."

Given the current circumstances, her students aren't standing on the spring-loaded floor Frank built so many years ago. But Jude's still a come-to-West-Virginia kid from Washington, D.C., who adapted her teaching vocabulary.

"Instead of talking about 'feeling your roots go down through your feet into the floor,' I say, 'Your body is so alive, and the flow of life goes through you

and through your feet, into the ground. Right?"

You can hear the smile in her voice as she visualizes what her students are feeling and experiencing, in the middle of a meadow, in the middle of the hills, beneath a big sky.

Jude instructs them not just to tune into their feet grounded in the earth. But to sounds. To smells. To the feel of the wind on their skin. And to what they see when they look up.

"And so we can watch the hawks circling."✿

DOUGLAS JOHN IMBROGNO is a lifetime storyteller in words and image. Check out his recently launched multimedia web magazine, WestVirginiaVille.com. You can reach him at heythere@westvirginiaville.com. This is his second contribution to *GOLDENSEAL*, the first being in our Spring 2019 issue.

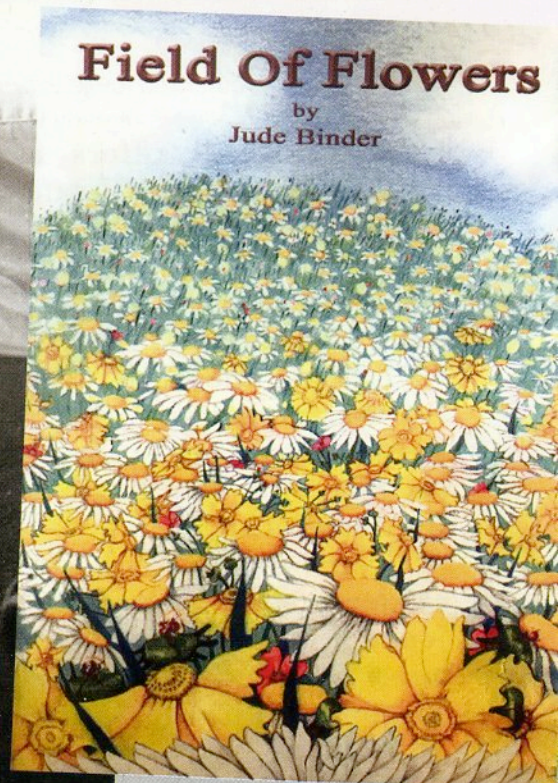
The Many Faces of Jude Binder

By Stan Bumgardner



Field of Flowers

Ever a crusader for social justice, Jude wrote and directed a play to highlight the evils of domestic violence. *Field of Flowers* was first performed at the Norman Fagan State Theater at the Culture Center in Charleston in 2006. In this work, she combined music, dance, drama, and a plethora of masks to stress the “human struggle for freedom from violence and shame.” She partnered on the project with her son, Gideon Kendall; singer/composer David Wall; Vandalia Award recipient Ethel Caffie-Austin; singer-storyteller Ilene Evans; and dancer extraordinaire Ira Bernstein.



Through song, drama, dance, animation, and various masks, Jude portrayed the dreadful impact of domestic violence on families. Photos by Neil Grahame.



Jude's Woodworking

Jude carves on a burl. She loves to work on pieces where motion is already in the wood organically, "like it's part of a body," Jude says. All photos on this page by Steve Brightwell.

Jude is truly a master woodworker. In 1981, she teamed up with Parkersburg artist Norm Sartorius to produce *Autumn Hare*, which received a Governor's Award at the West Virginia Juried Art Exhibition. Her art studio is filled with everything from small tools to leaves and pinecones, which she incorporates into her work.



Here's a small sampling of Jude's art, including a figurine of labor leader "Mother" Jones on the right.



Jude often collaborates with other artists. She paired with fellow Calhoun Countians Connie and Tom McColley to craft the intricate lid for their gorgeous basket.

FestivALL Princess

FestivALL is Charleston's premier arts event, with the slogan "A City Becomes a Work of Art." It features music, artwork, street fairs, and food aplenty. But the enchanting star of the celebration is Jude Binder, entertaining folks of all ages as the FestivALL Princess, a royal title she's held since the event's inception in 2007.

Photo by Greg Sava, courtesy of the West Virginia Gazette-Mail.



Photo by Kenny Kemp, courtesy of the West Virginia Gazette-Mail.



Jude Binder works with her students in the stunningly beautiful and serene meadows of Heartwood in the Hills. Photographer unknown.

Heartwood in the Hills

Based on the 2010 census, Calhoun County was the 10th poorest county per capita in West Virginia. A lot of factors play into that, namely being a sparsely populated, rural county, but there's no denying that Calhoun has seen more than its share of economic woes for decades.

That's why Heartwood in the Hills is so important to the children of Calhoun and surrounding counties. It's an artistic, educational, and social outlet for so many children who need a helping hand or who want to express their artistic sides.

In 2018, Heartwood's entire operating budget was \$37,000 for teaching students in various aspects of the arts. Of that \$37,000, all but

\$4,000 was brought in through donations and grants, with donations constituting more than ½. To say the least, Heartwood relies heavily on the generosity of donors, who recognize how the program has changed children's lives in central West Virginia for nearly 40 years.

If you'd like to make a donation, you can send it to Heartwood in the Hills, 229 Heartwood Lane, Big Bend, WV 26136. You can also sponsor individual students. To learn more, please e-mail heartwoodwv@frontiernet.net or call 304-354-7874. Jude tends not to sit still for very long, so if there's no answer, please leave a voicemail. —ed.



Mountain Craft Shop in Proctor—Wetzel County's "only amusement park." All photos by our author unless noted otherwise.

Toy Story WV

By Zack Harold

When I was a kid, the thing that intrigued me most about Santa Claus wasn't the beard or the flying reindeer, or even the repeated breaking-and-entering. No way. I was fascinated by his workshop. I loved to imagine the elves working tirelessly to make toys that would end up under Christmas trees around the world.

But I never once imagined the elves making the season's hottest toys—no

Barbie dream houses or remote-control hotrods. Instead, I pictured Santa's little helpers building toys from good old-fashioned wood and glue. I imagined a shop filled with the smell of sawdust and the sounds of popguns.

Turns out, these super plum visions looked a lot like what I found in Proctor (Wetzel County). That's the headquarters of Mountain Craft Shop Company, which has been turning out traditional handmade



Ellie and Steve Conlon, owners of Mountain Craft Shop.

Appalachian toys since the early 1960s. The tree-shaded workshop used to be an elementary school. Now, one side is filled with power saws and a wood lathe, bottles of Elmer's Glue, and slabs of locally sourced hardwood. The other side, the shop's showroom, is filled with toys your great-grandparents probably would've recognized.

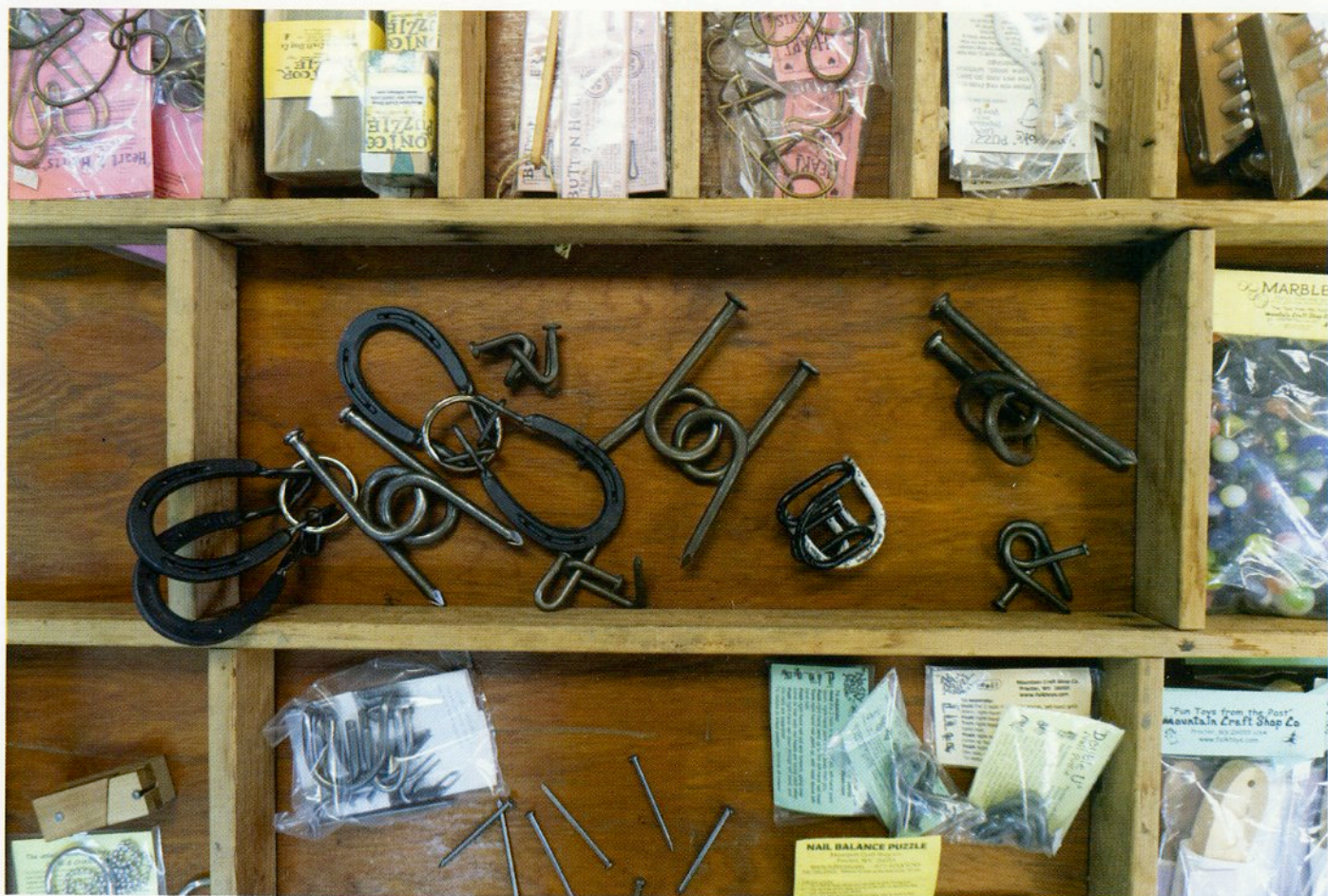
"I like to tell the kids, 'Can you remember before Walmart and plastics?' There wasn't necessarily a store to go to [just] to buy toys, so grandmom or granddad or dad or mom made the toys from what was readily available: sticks that they found out back, little pieces of wood, pieces of string, little bits of leather," says Steve Conlon, who runs the business with his wife, Ellie.

Steve gave GOLDENSEAL a tour of the property, which he calls "Wetzel County's Only Amusement Park." In the showroom, he picks up a toy shaped like a capital letter L. He holds it by the short end and whips it around in the air—creating an ear-splitting ratcheting sound.

"We call this a rattletrap. All this noise is generated from a tongue depressor and this little cogged wheel here. I tell'em, 'It sounds better in a van,'" Steve says.

Then, he picks up that old toy where you try to catch a ball in a cup on a string. Steve tries it once, twice, then lands the ball perfectly on his third attempt.

"This actually dates back to 1580 in England," Steve says. "Good for eye-hand coordination."



Brain-bending puzzles made from horseshoes and nails, in Mountain Craft Shop's showroom.

Next, he moves over to a low table and palms a handful of marbles—manufactured about 20 miles away by Marble King in Paden City.

"We make a variety of marble toys. This one is interesting. We call it a musical marble tree. It's about 30 inches tall, and it has pieces of wood—leaves—that stick out on either side. We drop [in] a marble, and [it] goes from one leaf to another," Steve says.

He drops in the marbles, and they begin bouncing down the wooden fronds, sounding like Animal from *The Muppet Show*, wailing away on a marimba.

"Makes a wonderful noise, don't you think?" Steve says.

The Conlons manufacture these toys—and dozens more models—in their tiny shop, which they open to visitors. They also sell their toys in gift shops around

West Virginia and surrounding states, and at Tamarack in Beckley. But the couple didn't come to West Virginia to be toymakers. They wanted to be farmers.

"We moved here in 1974 from Philadelphia, and we brought with us a couple beehives in the back of the U-Haul truck. I was just fascinated with bees. We tried chickens and cows and every other agricultural pursuit, and bees kept kind of rising to the top. So it evolved into us owning a lot of beehives and needing other locations to keep them," Steve says.

They placed some of their hives on the property of a neighbor named Dick Schnacke. He was a mechanical engineer by trade and worked at the aluminum plant in nearby New Martinsville. But he also taught himself to make traditional folk toys.

It was a hobby that required Schnacke to be equal parts engineer and researcher,



Some of the shop's pop guns, rubber-band guns, and tic-tac-toe games.

poring through historical records to find out where the toys came from and how they were manufactured. It wasn't easy research. "Very little was really recorded," Dick Schnacke told the West Virginia Division of Culture and History in 1978. "You see, toys were not considered to be anything but trifles, all through the ages, until just the last few years. So nothing was recorded."

Schnacke forged ahead and eventually compiled the book *American Folk Toys: How to Make Them*. He also spun his passion into a small business: Mountain Craft Shop Company. Schnacke handled all the research, development, marketing, and sales. But, kind of like Kris Kringle himself, Schnacke turned manufacturing over to a team of *elves*.

"He actually didn't make any of the toys himself," Steve says. "He had

This article is the result of a partnership between GOLDENSEAL and West Virginia Public Broadcasting.

probably 10 people who were making the different toys at home. People . . . were buying their farms by making toys to be sold."

Schnacke grew the company's inventory over the years to include some 200 traditional toys. But, by 2002, he was looking to retire from the toy business. He sold it to an enterprising couple who could keep his legacy alive: his friends, the Conlons.

Along with the business, the Conlons got Schnacke's expertise on building folk toys. Pick up just about any plaything in the Mountain Craft Shop showroom, and Conlon can tell you where it originated,

how it's made and, often, which laws of physics make it work. Then, he'll pick it up and show you exactly how it works.

"It was a manufacturing business. We had to learn how to manufacture those toys and had to accumulate a lot of power tools, which wasn't painful for a man to do," Steve chuckles.

The Conlons—who still raise bees and sell honey under the name Thistledew Farms—get the wood for their toys from trees they've harvested on their own property, or from logs neighbors have given them. They mill the logs themselves and air-dry the lumber in the shop.

"Some woods do a lot better at certain things. We pick out the woods for their adaptability of the product and also the beauty. If you use a piece of walnut, it really makes a toy stand out. If I'm turning things on the lathe, cherry is a very nice wood for turning," Steve says.

Many of the toys are incredibly labor intensive to produce. Take the Jacob's Ladder, for instance. This classic, deceptively simple-looking toy creates the illusion that pieces are click-clacking to the bottom of a string of wooden tiles.

"The Jacob's Ladder has eight different pieces of wood. So I make the pieces of wood in here, plane them down, [and] sand them," Steve says.

His wife, Ellie, then cuts 24 pieces of fabric and glues them to the wooden tiles to bring the Jacob's Ladder together.

"We make about a thousand a year. Not too many people want to work for pennies on the hour. If you own your own business, you do that," Ellie notes.

That level of commitment and sacrifice is one reason the Conlons are not yet sure who will take over Mountain Craft Shop Company when they decide to retire.

"How will it play out? We don't know yet. The reality of the situation is, we are manufacturing in America. Look around

you. Manufacturing in America. There's a lot of competition," Steve says.

One thing remains certain, though. These types of traditional toys haven't lost their ability to captivate children. The Conlons see it every time they set up a booth at a craft fair.

"Kids will just spend half-an-hour there, as long as parents are willing to stay. And then of course, there's crying and screaming when it's time to leave," Steve adds.

The effect isn't lost on big kids, either. When I visited the Conlons' shop, they'd just returned from Morgantown, where they set up a table during WVU's Mountaineer Week. Conlon said the college students were constantly stopping by to play with the toys—and would often call their friends to come down and play, too.

It reminds me of something that happened last year when my wife and I took our then-five-year-old girl to Babcock State Park in Fayette County. We told her she could pick out one thing from the gift shop. She perused the whole store but ultimately gravitated toward a shelf near the window, where she picked up a Jacob's Ladder made by the Conlons.

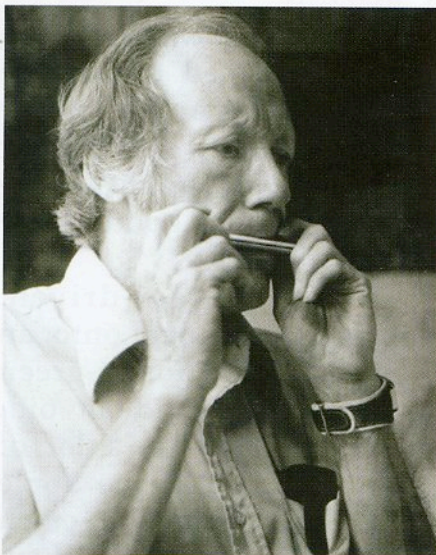
As we cruised down the highway headed for home, I noticed I couldn't hear any noise coming from her iPad. Instead, I heard the *click-clack-click-clack* of the Jacob's Ladder.

Even in the age of screens, toys made with wood and glue still possess magic. And Steve and Ellie Conlon are keeping that magic alive. 🍁

ZACK HAROLD is a son of West Virginia's southern coalfields. He worked as a reporter for the *Charleston Daily Mail* before becoming managing editor of *WV Focus*, *WV Living*, and *Wonderful West Virginia* magazines. He's now a contributor and guest host for West Virginia Public Broadcasting's *Inside Appalachia* and a multimedia specialist for the WVU Extension Service Family Nutrition Program. This is Zack's first contribution to GOLDENSEAL.



Steve Conlon demonstrates a dancing *limberjack* toy. Note the photo on the ground of Mountain Craft Shop founder Dick Schnacke playing with the same toy.



The toy company's founder, Dick Schnacke (1919 – 2011), was featured in our Winter 2004 issue. He was a fixture at festivals throughout the state, including the Vandalia Gathering and the Mountain State Art & Craft Fair at Cedar Lakes. Photo by Michael Keller.

Apple Butter Time

Text and photos by Tina Ladd

It's a crisp morning, and it looks like it's going to be a beautiful day. I roll out of bed; throw on a pair of old jeans, a T-shirt, and a hoodie; and head to the kitchen to grab a cup of coffee before hurrying out the door. It's apple butter time! Every October, we make apple butter at my Grandma's house. This is her deal. She runs the show. It's not a one-day event. It takes many hands several days to prepare. Grandma works her tail off. She always has, though.

My grandmother, Marian Loy Hott, learned how to make apple butter from her mom, Hazel Wilkins Loy. My grandfather's mother, Hilda Haines Hott, also made apple butter. I expect their mothers did, too. When I think back to my younger years, we made apple butter at my Great-Grandma Loy's house in the center of unincorporated Augusta (Hampshire County). I guess as long as she was alive, *she* ran the show, and her daughter, *my* Grandma Hott, came to her house to put in the time, as did my mother, Sharon. I don't think Grandma Hott made apple butter at her house when we made it at Grandma Loy's. I'm not sure when, or why, we stopped doing it at Grandma Loy's house, but once we did, the operation moved out to Slanesville (still Hampshire County).

The whole process starts by getting the apples: around 12 bushels of Golden Delicious. My grandfather, Lindberg Valentino Hott, worked on an orchard over the hill from their home his entire adult life. Grandad Hott was the youngest of 12 children. He never left his homeplace. Eventually, he owned the orchard, the Longview Tract of

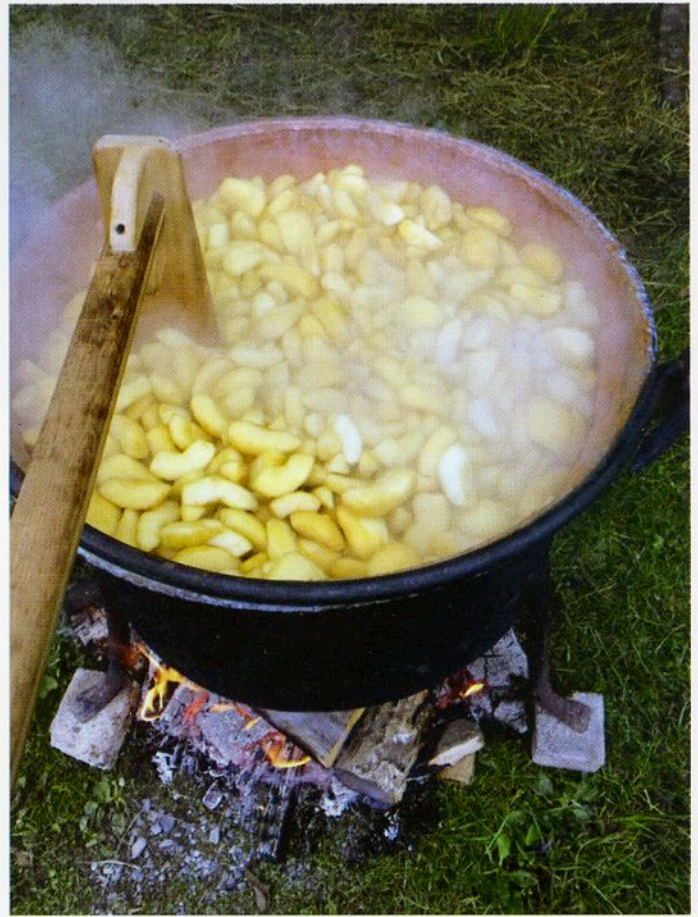


Consolidated Orchard, and it was renamed Longview Farm. Grandad used to provide the apples for Grandma's apple butter operation, but the orchard's no longer in the family. We buy our apples from another local orchard at a good price thanks to Mom.

Grandma has an old, gear-driven, hand-crank apple peeler clamped onto an old table with a well-used forest-green top and worn wooden legs, and an old, square, gray washtub that's seen a lot of use. The tub is right underneath the apple peeler, with a table leg inside to catch the ribbons of golden skin that fall down.



Grandma Marian Loy Hott removes some skin from the apples that the peeler missed. After the apples are washed and cut into snits, the cooking process begins.



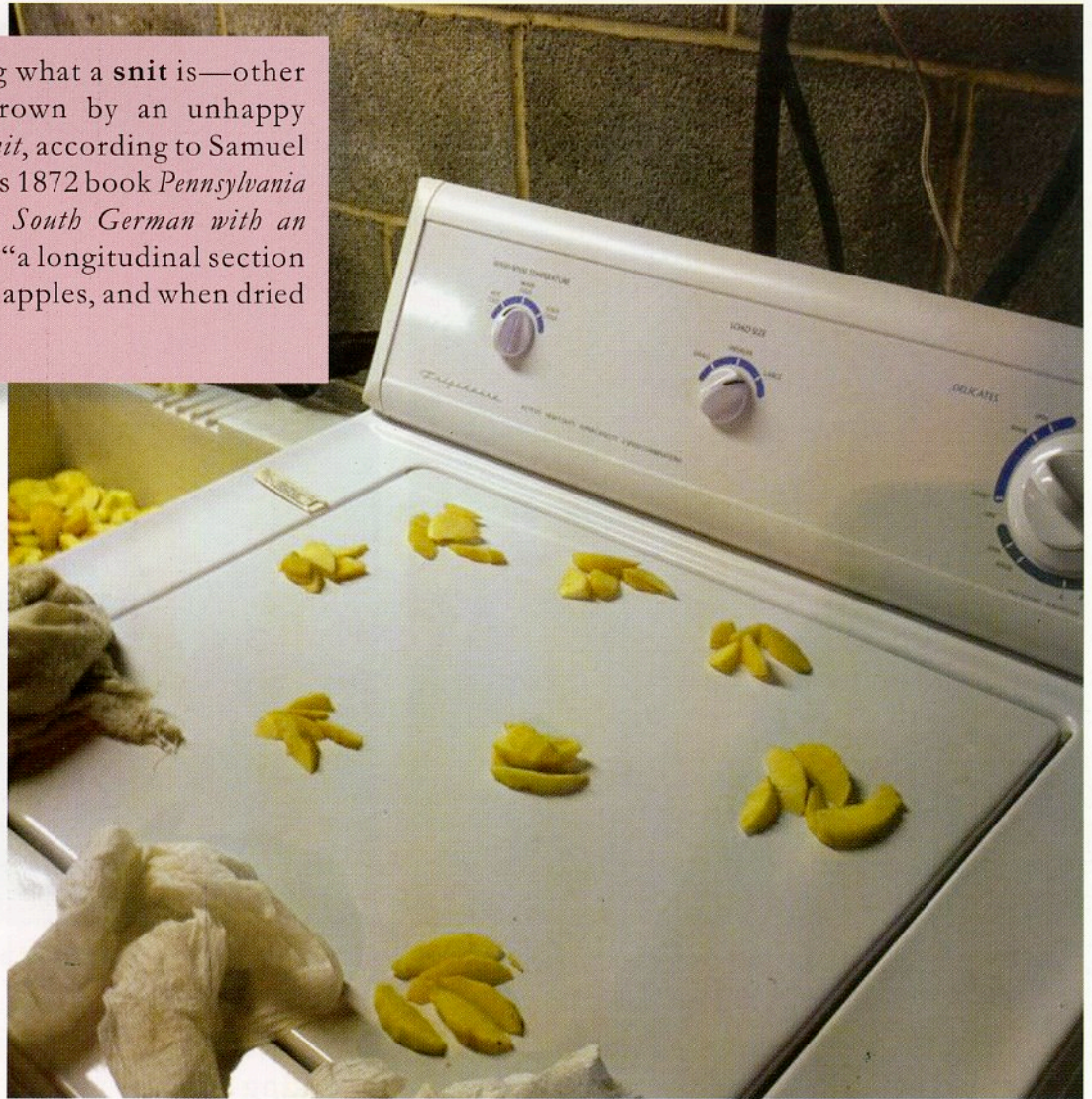
The tub keeps the sweet apple juice from spreading all over the old, worn linoleum in the basement, but it's going to be sticky before it's all over with, and the bottoms of our shoes will make that tacky, gummy noise against the floor.

The basement opens to the outside by way of cellar doors, the kind you have to pull up from the outside, and those doors stay open while we're cutting, letting in light and fresh air. The apples are stored in the garage after they're brought from the orchard, so every little bit, someone has to make the trip out and fill up a couple five-gallon buckets with fresh fruit.

Grandma pulls out her old gallon crocks and plastic gallon oyster buckets. We each grab a plastic dishpan—there's an array of colors to choose from—grab some apples that've been peeled by Uncle Eddie's

cranking of the apple peeler, sit down in a chair (an assortment of old ladder-back Shaker chairs with woven seats, old metal and wooden schoolhouse chairs, and tropical-colored lawn chairs) and start coring and quartering the apples. The peeler leaves a spiral pattern around the outside of the apple, and the apple starts to brown almost immediately. Not the entire flesh, just little parts, especially along the ridged lines. Your fingers turn black, too, from the tannin in the juice of the apples. At any given time, there'll be 5-10 people in the basement cutting, all sitting in a circle, talking, laughing, fussing, reminiscing about years past. There's plenty of time to talk, time to ease into it, to become comfortable with those around you and freer with your speech than if you were just meeting

So you're wondering what a **snit** is—other than a tantrum thrown by an unhappy child? Our type of *snit*, according to Samuel Stehman Halderman's 1872 book *Pennsylvania Dutch: A Dialect of South German with an Infusion of English*, is "a longitudinal section of fruit, particularly apples, and when dried for the kitchen."



up around the dinner table for an hour or two. It's almost meditative, cutting up the apples. You have to peel off any extra skin the peeler left behind, cut the apple in half down through the core, and carve out the seeds and any other imperfections. I especially enjoy taste-testing the fresh, juicy, delicious apples. You cut your peelings and core into your dishpan and drop your finished apple quarters into the gallon container sitting on the floor at your side. Every time that gallon container is full, you cut a *snit* and set it up on the washing machine to count how many gallons have been cut.

Once your gallon container is full, you dump it into a larger container, where the apples wait to be washed. The rule

of thumb is that you end up with half of what you cut, so if we wind up with 100 cut gallons of apples, we'll have about 50 gallons of apple butter in jars.

Sitting in the basement is a step back in time. The columns supporting the house above are wooden instead of steel. The water heater is the original one my grandparents installed when they built the house back in 1957. Grandma has a refrigerator down there that belonged to her Aunt Mandy and Uncle Hube. Aunt Mandy was her father's sister, and Uncle Hube was her mother's brother. They both died within a few days of each other in February 1977. Aunt Mandy was in a nursing home with dementia but seemed to know that her husband had

departed this world, so she joined him as soon as she could. Grandma has had their refrigerator since then and says her aunt and uncle had it for years and years before that. It seems that things truly were made to last back in the day. An old iron kettle rests on bricks under another small old table to keep it off the floor in case of flooding so it won't rust. There's a clothesline running across the basement where Grandma can hang wet clothes, although she mostly uses a dryer these days. Wooden shelves are full of canned, fresh goodness from the garden and trees. At one time or another, these shelves would've included Blue Lake green beans, Cranberry bird egg beans, Silver Queen corn, Detroit Dark Red beets, tomato juice made from Cosner tomatoes, canned pork tenderloin and sausage, sauerkraut, peaches, and pickles made from Straight Eight cucumbers. The freezer held cherries, corn, and meat from butchering hogs, beef, and chickens. It also had some Klondike bars. Grandma still makes her kraut like her mama taught her, in a large crock in the basement which rests underneath another table. She even uses the same rock and plate her mother used to weight down the cabbage in the brine. Her canning supplies are in an old white cupboard with glass-front doors that belonged to *her* Grandma Wilkins, Hazel's mother, my great-great-grandmother. Next to that is a Rubbermaid trashcan full of torn-up cotton sheets for washing the windows, using a traditional mix of vinegar and water. I don't know if this is everyone's traditional mix, but it is for my grandma and my mom. Grandma's windows are always sparkling. She has an old gas stove down there that she uses for canning or getting a head start on "cooking up" the apples we're cutting. She and Grandad installed a heat pump several years ago, while the old coal furnace sits in a corner of the basement.

It still works, but the heat pump is a lot more convenient. Country hams, wrapped in cloth, used to hang curing from the floor joists running across the basement ceiling, and I'd bump my head on them when I'd run down to get something out of the freezer for Grandma. There's a root cellar next to the cellar steps that lead outside. Potatoes and onions have been stored in there for as long as I can remember.

The basement, specifically the washer/dryer lids, was also the unofficial bar on Christmas Eve. The adults would go downstairs to a spread of Canadian Mist, Coca-Cola, rum, vodka, and orange juice, where they could mix a drink before supper. They usually stayed in the basement to drink it, and kids were not allowed downstairs during "Happy Quarter-of-an-Hour." Yes, cocktails lasted around 15 minutes because normally one drink was the limit, and it was consumed in the basement. I finally felt like an adult the day Grandad asked me if I wanted a drink and told me to head down and fix one if I wanted it. I was probably 28 at the time! The kitchen might be the heart of the home, but here, the basement comes in a close second.

Someone has to wash all of those apples, and I have to be honest, it usually isn't me! I do not like washing the apples. I try to sit and keep cutting. The water in the deep utility sink is cold. Backaches are born from leaning over the sink; shirtfronts end up soaked. It's not my favorite job. It has to be done, though, and once the apples have been cleaned, they're put back into different storage containers lined with big black trash bags. The bags of apples are tied up until they're needed. Usually there's a break between cutting day and cooking day. Grandma has learned a few shortcuts over the years, and one of those is to start cooking the apples down on the

stove. Grandma probably cooks a third to a half of the apples down so that the sauce is ready to be poured into the copper kettles on Saturday. Let me be clear: no applesauce from the store is used in our apple butter! Any sauce added is from the apples that we've prepared and that Grandma has cooked.

Saturday morning comes early. Well, earlier for some than for others. Again, I'm feeling a tad guilty because I arrive later than some, but in my defense, the older I get, the earlier I arrive! My mom, stepdad, aunt, and uncle are at Grandma and Grandad's for breakfast, around 6 a.m. I think Grandma usually has pancakes, eggs, and gravy, but I can't swear to it! I arrive in time for coffee, donuts, and my Great-Aunt Betty's sausage casserole, which we eat down in the shed. I'm usually there by 8:00 a.m., so I get in a good day's work. The copper kettles have been taken down to the large pole shed and rinsed out with vinegar, salt, and water. The vinegar is heated, the salt is dissolved in the vinegar, and the insides of the kettle are wiped off with this solution. The insides of the kettles are a pretty shiny copper color, but the outsides are blackened from years of use over a fire. Actually, it doesn't even take years for them to blacken; one time over the fire will do it.

We use three kettles of various sizes. One was Great-Grandma Loy's, the other Great-Grandma Hott's, and a third belongs to Mom, who bought it from her cousin when he decided to stop making apple butter. The fires are built, the uncooked apples are poured in, and just enough water from the garden hose is added to cover the apples. The stirrers are wooden, unwieldy, and clumsy when you're trying to push them through a kettleful of raw apple quarters, but you have to stir to keep the apples from sticking to the kettle. Once the apples start to cook, or

once the water starts to boil, we throw in a stick of butter to keep it from foaming. I'm not sure if it keeps it from foaming over the sides of the kettle, or if we just dislike foam, but I'm never going to find out because it's too much work up to this point ever to take a chance of *not* throwing a stick of butter in just to see what happens.

Next, we stir, stir, stir, and then we stir some more. Seriously, we stir for the rest of the day. It's endless. No electric stirrers here, we do it the old-fashioned way. The women tend to stir more than the men. The men tend to sit, talk, and add wood to the fire every so often. Grandad always took a turn, even if it was a mere two minutes stirring the kettle. He could always say that he stirred some! It takes about six hours to cook down the apples, and then it's time to add the sauce that Grandma already cooked. Once you add that lukewarm sauce, it cools the whole thing down, and we keep on stirring until it all starts to cook again. By the way, never ever wear shorts to stir apple butter. I learned the hard way that standing next to a fire all day in shorts tends to cook your legs, and you end up with what looks like a sunburn. My elders told me; I didn't listen. You mustn't wear flip-flops, either, or you'll have burnt toes.

Dinner time, or lunch as it's referred to by urban people, is an important part of the day. I think some of the folks show up just to stir so they can eat some of Grandma's potato soup or vegetable soup. She also makes a tenderloin salad for sandwiches and serves hot dogs, or Mom brings kielbasa with onions and peppers, chips and dip, and some longhorn cheese that's been sitting out on the counter. And there are all kinds of desserts. I think we had six pies last year, in addition to cake, cookies, and typically a Jell-O salad. My personal favorites are the lime green salad with pineapple and the pink salad with



Nephew Bob Hott (green hat) and Grandma Marian Loy Hott count jars as Granddad Lindy Hott monitors the counting.

cottage cheese. Honestly, this is one of my favorite meals of the entire year, and one of the tastiest! It's not the fanciest fare, but a lot of work goes into it, and it's made with love. Hard work also makes food taste better. We eat in shifts because someone always has to stir the kettle.

Shortly after our midday meal, things really get cooking! The apples are mostly cooked down by this point, and the one or two strays floating around get some help with a spoon squishing it against the side of the kettle. The apple butter is my favorite color at this time. It's turned to a pumpkin hue, and I wish we could jar it up just like this. We are missing a major component, though, and that's sugar.

Year after year, several people, myself included, enjoy teasing Grandma a little

bit. We ask, "Is it time to add the sugar?" like a kid in a car asking, "Are we there yet?" It's the same thing. You're ready to get to your final destination. I don't know why, but it really riles my grandma up to be asked that question, and the rest of us find it really funny that she gets so riled up. It's hilarious. Grandma huffs and says, "Now you know it's not time." Or a polite but curt, "No!" with a look that tells us we'd better knock it off. That's what families do, though; they like to pick on one another and have fun. The sugar is added once the apples are all sauce and merrily bubbling along. You have to pay attention, though, that one of those merry bubbles doesn't pop right out onto your skin.

The amount of sugar used is staggering, although Grandma disagrees. She has her



* The *road* is clear—time to can the apple butter!

little sugar formula, based on how many gallons of apples are in each kettle, and we start pouring sugar into the chosen kettle. My grandmother has verified to me that her goal is to end up with four pounds of sugar per gallon of apple butter. I can't even do the math to figure out how much sugar to have on hand (50 gallons of apple butter would hold 200 pounds of sugar?), but the trick here is to add it to the kettles at various times—to stagger the adding of the sugar so that all three aren't ready to come off the fire at the same time. That would be hectic and exhausting. The apple butter cooks for two hours after the sugar's added, and the cinnamon is added a half-hour before the kettle is ready to come off the fire. Grandma gets a quart-size bowl and mixes sugar and cinnamon in hopes of preventing the cinnamon from clumping

together when it's added to the kettle.

Before the boiling apple butter is ready to pour into jars, there's one final step. Grandma checks for "the road." She takes a large spoonful of hot apple butter out of the kettle and puts it on a saucer. I'm not sure what happens during this magical time, but I know she stirs it around with her spoon a little bit and then draws the spoon down the center, creating a line, or *road*. If water from the apple butter runs into the road, we keep stirring. If the apple butter stays firm and doesn't spill any water into the road, it's time to take it off.

The next step is a blur. Not really, but things happen fast. We use a saucepan from Grandma's kitchen to dip out the steaming hot apple butter into two 16-quart granite-ware preserving kettles with handles. The kettles are carried to



Four generations of apple butter makers: (left-right) Sharon Hott, Marian Loy Hott, our author (Tina Ladd), and Tina's daughter, Sarah Ladd.

either end of a long table and set on an apple crate sitting on its end. A group of women gather around the table, waiting to do their job. It takes two men to dip the apple butter off; the rest of the men are standing around now instead of sitting, but still talking. The tools on the table include a pie pan, a ladle, a wide-mouth funnel, a dishpan with hot water, a dishcloth, jars, lids, and canning rings. The jar with a funnel is positioned in the middle of the pie pan, which catches any drips. The jar is passed off to the next person, who wipes around the rim, and it's passed off again to have the lid and ring screwed on. Someone grabs the two jars from the table and carries them over to the hay wagon. Almost immediately, you can hear the lids starting to seal, little *pings* coming from the wagon. This process continues until all three kettles are empty.

We rinse the kettles with a pressure washer—a faster process than it used to be. We wash the wooden stirrers in the utility sink in the basement; the pressure washer would splint the wood and ruin the stirrers. The final counts are tallied, and someone claims victory for guessing closest to the final amount of jarred

product. Mom has started a more recent tradition of frying bread, so we each have some fresh hot apple butter on fresh hot fried bread. We haul everything back to the house to be washed, while Grandma reheats the soup, and we have supper together. I must agree with one of the other cousins who's always said that the shower you take after a day of apple butter making is the best shower of the year. It's been a lot of hard work, but it's also been a time of laughter, love, family, fellowship, and reconnection with one another. I wouldn't trade it for anything.

Fall 2018 was very different because it was the first time we made apple butter without Grandad Hott. We lost him in February 2018, and all our hearts are still broken. We decorated the funeral home with crates full of apples, his pruners, and flower arrangements, containing apples and wheat, from his wife and children. Yes, we decorated the funeral home. We grandkids added a small, simple sheaf of wheat inside the lid of the casket.

Grandma has persevered since his passing. She's dealt with several stressful incidents, too, including a flooded basement (twice), getting stranded along the road due to a flat tire, and a snake coming into the house. The hardest part must be learning to live alone after 70 years of marriage to the same man. She's shown us all that life goes on. We *will* be making apple butter next fall, and the fall after that, and for as many falls as we can. Grandma loves it. This is her deal. She runs the show. ✿

TINA LADD lives on Brushy Ridge Farm (Hampshire County) with her husband, Greg, and daughter, Sarah. They share the farm with hogs, chickens, turkeys, ducks, guineas, dogs, and cats. You can follow their story on www.y2khillbilly.com for more old tales, old community recipes, and their many adventures on the farm! This is Tina's first contribution to GOLDENSEAL.



The Little House, or Florence Shaw Demonstration Cottage, is a popular Shepherdstown destination for tourists, locals, and students, who never grow tired of its charm. Photo by our author.

Little House of Shepherdstown

By Carl E. Feather

Imposing McMurran Hall, at the northeast corner of German and King streets, is arguably Shepherdstown's most iconic building, with its Greek Revival architecture and stunning clock tower. But for the majority of tourists and many locals, the real icon of this Jefferson County town is about $\frac{1}{10}$ the height of McMurran and was built for youngsters rather than county government and higher education.

The Little House, a sandstone Dutch Colonial Revival-style $1\frac{1}{2}$ -story home, has three gabled dormers that pierce the gambrel roof and provide a view of West Princess Street. It's the kind of home any working people would be proud to come home to at the end of a long day—if only they could stretch out in it and clear the

ceiling. The house is but 10 feet at its widest and tallest.

On the ground floor is a living room, 6 by 9 feet, the house's largest room. It includes a fireplace and accommodates a sofa, a chair, and bookcases. The dining room is 5 by $5\frac{1}{2}$ feet; the kitchen is 3 by 6 feet. The ceiling is $5\frac{1}{2}$ -feet high. Upstairs, after climbing the narrow staircase, there are three bedrooms and a bathroom with a $4\frac{1}{2}$ -foot ceiling. You get the downsized picture.

Also known as the Florence Shaw Demonstration Cottage, this beloved structure is tucked between the human resources building and White Hall on the campus of Shepherd University, which owns and maintains the homestead. It's



The living room measures 6 by 9 feet with a 5½-foot tall ceiling. The couch is comfy for a child and doll but too small for an adult. Photo by our author.

open, by schedule and appointment, to all who care to *stoop* and enter.

"It's the most popular place in Shepherdstown," says Jan C. Hafer, director of the city's visitor's center. "When it's open, we'll get 200 people going through there. It's magical. It's really special."

"It's a cute little house," says Jay Hurley, who grew up in Shepherdstown during the 1940s and has a few stories related to its construction. "Everybody loves it."

The Little House was the brainchild of Florence Shaw, professor of elementary education, and Edith Thompson, college supervisor of observation and teaching. Charged with developing a summer training program for future teachers, Florence and Edith decided to build a

miniature farm where education students could practice classroom theory on real students—a learning lab.

"It was projected as something which would attract children of 12 and 13 years in the Summertime, so that the students attending Summer School at Shepherd College might have some 'raw material' with which to accomplish their training," reported Shepherdstown's *Register* newspaper as the building neared completion.

On Princess Street, there was, behind the tennis courts, an unused parcel, "a brush patch and dumping grounds." Shaw set her sights on this lot for the laboratory; her project would both improve the teaching skills of summer students and remove an eyesore from the community.



The dining room is set for tea; a corner hutch holds the extra glassware. Photo by our author.

She approached Dr. W. H. S. White, the school's president at the time. He embraced the plan and pledged money from the college's Repair and Improvement fund to cover expenses. Indeed, he liked the plan so much he expanded on the professors' original plan to use only a 30-by-60-foot section and build a temporary structure. White insisted that the plans be expanded to the entire lot and that the cottage be a permanent structure. He felt the ambitious but noteworthy project would "solve the problem of adequate enrollment of pupils for Summer Demonstration School." The objectives of that school were

- "Create situations that will provide opportunity for the growth and development of every individual who will in any way be connected with the demonstration school." Specifically, students would feel the joy of work, "whether it be the

work of the mind or the hand," and increase their appreciation of the world's workers; and encourage the exercise of initiative and self-expression on the part of every individual while maintaining a cooperative atmosphere.

- Help teachers and students realize that "success in life depends on our adjustment to our environment."
- Grasp concepts of the *problem method* of teaching by providing teachers with a lab to test their skills at it.

Public school teachers at that point were being immersed in new techniques, such as the unit plan, contract teaching, the project-problem method, and direct experience. While professional literature was filled with these buzz words, the professors were uncertain of their suitability to schools in West Virginia. The laboratory experience would provide a chance to immerse teachers and

students in the "creative activity," "group processes," and "democratic procedures" touted in the literature.

"It was not easy to bridge the gap between the old traditional type of classroom procedure and the 'problem-project' method, but the group of student teachers who enrolled for Grades 4-6 was made up of mature, experienced teachers who were courageous," as Shaw described the project. "They had a fine attitude, too, and lost no time in getting started. The more mature teachers worked well with the younger ones and soon they were all getting enough joy out of achievement that they were ready to try things out with the Summer School pupils who were not to come until the second week."

At the heart of this process was using a real-life problem as a learning experience. The problem students would be asked to solve? "What adjustments did the pioneers of the Shenandoah Valley have to make to their natural environment in order to establish homes and make a living for their families?"

To Shaw, the neglected lot offered many of the challenges that existed in the Shenandoah Valley wilderness, albeit on a child-sized level. The lot was overgrown and represented wilderness on a child's scale. It'd been a dumping ground for construction debris; a limestone pile on the property represented yet another hurdle.

Town Run, a spring-fed brook that rambles through Shepherdstown in a stone-lined course, represented a challenge but also an opportunity. Just as pioneers had to build bridges across the Shenandoah River, the Little House would have to bridge Town Run to offer sufficient property for raising crops and building barns.

These real-world scenarios required a multidisciplinary approach, from English to math, from home economics

to agriculture. Students wrote letters to farm families in the valley and asked questions about their heritage—their customs, hardships, and even literature read by settlers.

Math came into play as the house's design took form on paper, and the gardens were plotted. Students also learned about government and committees to deal with each aspect of the project: grounds, house, garden, and barn construction.

Summer 1928 was the first session to use the Little House project. According to a document in the Shepherd University Archives, A. D. Kenamond directed the summer school that year, and I. O. Ash headed the education department. John H. Newcome, head of agriculture, was called upon to assist with the farm aspects. And Florence Shaw and Edith Thompson served as supervisors of directed observation and teaching.

The first demonstration class of education students (teachers) included Florence Grubbs, Edna Bauserman, Pauline Staubs, Mildred Rowe, Chester White, Delbert Arbogast, Ancile Gray, Laura Thompson, Mollie Trout, Pearl Hutton, Olive S. Cooper, Allison Rider, Alice Harlin, Mary Howell, Hazel Shrader, Lakey Swartz, Martha Warner, George Nolan, and Lane Moler.

The summer school got underway in early June. After a week of preparation, the youngsters were brought onto campus to work with the education students. The youngsters in grades five and six were Mary Catherine Rouze, Elizabeth Knode, Lawrence Burgan, Charles Owens, Billy Thatcher Jr., Jean Skinner, Louis Whittington, McKee Price, Thadeus Knode, Pershing Knode, Walter Whittington, and Eileen Jones.

Committees went to work on the property in the following weeks, drawing up plans for the house, garden, bridge,

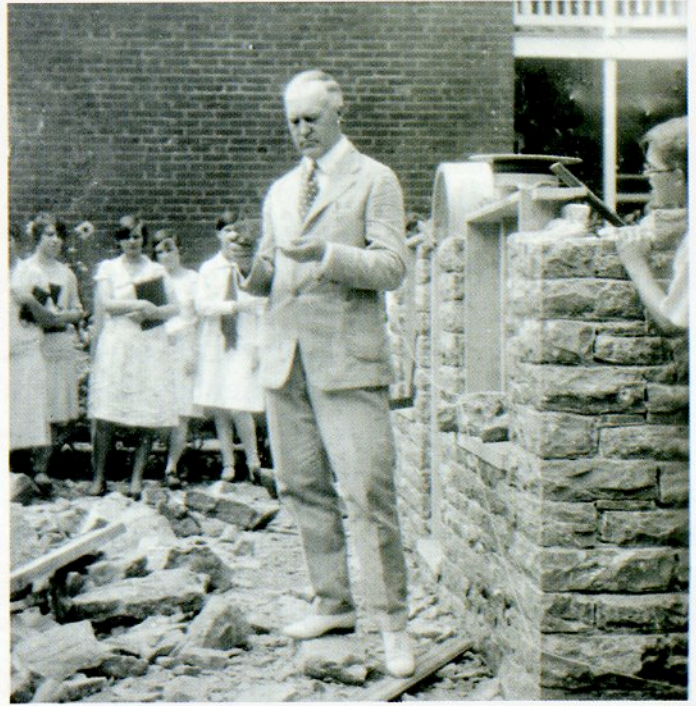
and barn. Students did as much as they could to prepare the land. A Mr. Martin, who lived near the Little Farm, noticed the youngsters were having a difficult time staking off the foundation. He went home, grabbed his surveying equipment, and helped them complete their task.

Elsewhere on the project, Laskie Stanley and A. J. Stanley worked as carpenters, and a Mr. Jenkins and Mr. Sanbower hauled material for the construction. Atlas Cement donated the cement, and Johns Mansfield of New York donated the roof shingles, which had to be cut down from standard shingles to maintain proper proportions. Parents of the demonstration school children provided refreshments and assistance, and Jim Washington, the college janitor, "helped us over the hard places when our work became too heavy for us."

Florence Shaw, in her narrative of the project, states that Charlie "Moustache" Jones, "one of the finest [stonemasons] in the Shenandoah Valley," was hired to build the house from native stone. Jones, who lived on Jones Alley (now Rocky Street) in Shepherdstown, had a reputation for more than fine stonework. Shaw wrote that she was "warned by Doubting Thomases that he was undependable and alcoholic." Nevertheless, the professors put their faith in Jones and hired him.

The project ran into trouble when Jones saw the plans for the 10-foot-wide cottage that called for an 8-inch wall. He told the committee that "there never was an 8-inch wall" and that the stone couldn't be cut that small. Undaunted, Shaw promised that the students would find a way to cut the stone that small if he would build the walls. Jones mumbled that he'd see what he could do about it, and the project moved forward . . . for a while.

According to Hurley, the story around Shepherdstown is that Jones got tired of being sober and working on the house.



In 1928, Dr. W. H. S. White, president of then-Shepherd College, dedicates a time capsule placed in the cornerstone of the Little House as education students look on. Courtesy of Shepherd University, Scarborough Library.

Shaw, a diminutive lady, struck a deal with the stonemason; she'd get him "a couple of bottles of the good stuff" from a bootlegger in Frog Hollow.

"So, she got in her horse and buggy, went across the bridge, and went about eight miles into Frog Hollow," Jay says. "She knocked on the door, and the man inside asked for a password. And she said 'You know,' and he let her in and sold her the hooch. And she took it back to Jones and, in front of the committee, gave it to him. He was shamed into getting back on the job."

Shaw made no note of this incident but did give Jones and his work a resounding endorsement. "The Little House stands today as a monument to his skill and dedication to a cause," Florence Shaw wrote in her story of the project. "He was so proud of his achievement that as long as he was able he'd walk by and stand and admire it."



Charlie "Moustache" Jones is hard at work on the Little House about 1928. Courtesy of Shepherd University, Scarborough Library.

Shaw noted that Jones received offers outside Shepherdstown to build fireplaces and other stone structures, but he refused to leave the community, even if just for a week or two, and even if they "named their price" for the work and paid for his transportation. Moustache Jones refused to leave Shepherdstown.

While Jones worked on the house, the professors, education students, and youngsters tackled the job of clearing the lot. During the process, a lone grapevine was discovered, and an arbor was built for it. Groups of students cleared garden plots, erected fences around them, and planted vegetables. A professor from the college's science department made a display of garden bug pests and shared it with the youngsters who'd be tending their gardens.

Shaw described the dirt as soft, black, and easy to work. "The soil was just right for everything we planted," she wrote. Rose and mock orange bushes were planted on the site, which was under a large weeping willow tree.

The barn evolved in its purpose and size. Initially, the concept was to construct a simple structure that would provide shelter and security for the garden tools. That was soon expanded to a workshop where the summer education students and their students would build objects needed for the home and garden. In its final incarnation, it was large enough for miniature livestock—in time, it became the "club house" for the team of students who worked on the miniature farm project.

Carpenters Laskie and Arch Stanley led the barn construction, which was aided by teachers and professors. "There was hardly a space (in the barn) to wield a hammer," Shaw wrote.

The barn was originally much closer to the house, but it was relocated in 1974. Also, there were originally two bridges across Town Run, but they've been replaced with a single concrete one. Many of the original furnishings in the Little House have gone by the wayside over the years, and the interior is (sadly) equipped with plastic kitchen appliances and dishes. A newspaper story from the construction period states that Potomac Edison had the house wired and even installed a small electric stove in it.

President White had a copper box made, in which he placed a 1928 Lincoln penny. A ceremony was held when it came time to lay the cornerstone and embed the box. A paper inside the box recognizes all who worked on the project: "We who have labored over the building of this little farm leave the results of our labor in the hands of those who follow us. The best wish that we can leave for all who will work on this little farm through all the years that are to come is that the same spirit that guided and strengthened them will reign over them."

What began as a project to build a "temporary" structure ended up taking two summers. The entire cost to the college was \$1,000 (barely \$15,000 in today's money); in the history of the institution, it was probably the best grand ever spent on public relations.

The Washington *Sunday Star* ran a lengthy article that was reprinted in the Jefferson County papers. The Baltimore *Sun*, *Washington Post*, *National Geographic*, and *Better Homes and Gardens* also reported on it. Children of the American Revolution devoted a page to it in its publication.

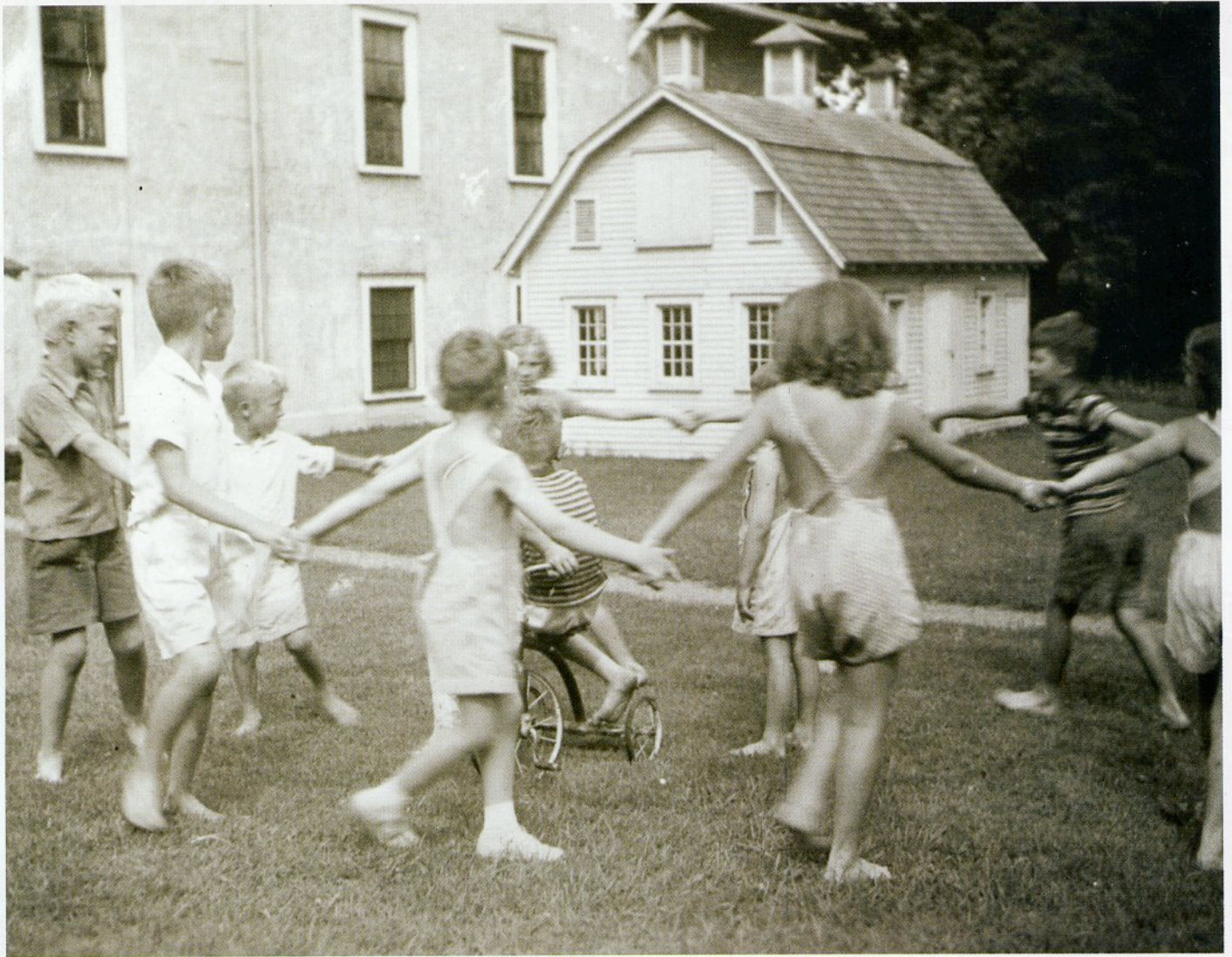
In the 1940s, famed national broadcaster Lowell Thomas delivered the commencement address at the college and saw the Little House. That led to a film crew from Universal Newsreel visiting Shepherdstown the following year and filming a segment for its series *Personoddities*. The film was made during World War II and was presented to the troops through the USO. Shepherd students who'd put their studies on hold to serve in the military were buoyed by the sight of their community and the Little House on the screen.

A scrapbook in the Scarborough Library's Shepherd College Collection documents how the town's children and families adopted the house and grounds as their special place. It became a meeting place for the children's garden, reading, and dramatic clubs. The farm hosted picnics and birthday celebrations. A circus, of sorts, was even held there one summer—children dressed up as animals and paraded down the street to the delight of adults.

Youngsters who came under the house's spell developed affectionate names for the building, calling it "Peter Pan and Wendy's House." Florence Shaw, writing her narrative of the Little House many years after it was constructed, noted that "it still has that 'Strange Drawing Power' for all who love little homes and little children!"

"It's drawing power is equal to the song of the 'Pied Piper,' so it does stimulate interest to put the drive behind effort," Florence Shaw wrote. ✱

CARL E. FEATHER is a freelance writer and photographer. He has family roots in Tucker and Preston counties and is the author of the book *Mountain People in a Flat Land*. You can follow Carl's blog at thefeathercottage.com, where he often writes about West Virginia. Carl's been a longtime GOLDENSEAL contributor, dating back to his first article in our Summer 1987 issue.



The Little House became a meeting place for children's garden, reading, and dramatic clubs. It also was a popular location for birthday parties and just a fun place for children to play. In the background is the Little House's barn in its original location. Courtesy of Shepherd University, Scarborough Library.

TRUE DEMOCRACY

We Believe

That "governments derive their **just** powers from the consent of the governed."

We Believe

That a democracy is "a government **of** the people, **by** the people, and **for** the people."

We Believe

That **women are people** and are governed.

We Believe

That no state can be a true democracy in which **one-half** the people are denied the right to vote.

We Believe

That women **need** the vote **for the same reason** that men need it.

We Believe

That **because laws regulate a woman's life and the lives of her children**, and because they tax her property and may even sentence her to death, **she should have the right to share in the making of the laws.**

We Believe

That democracy bids **everyone** stand up and be counted, and that on Election Day **no one may be counted for more than one.**

IF YOU BELIEVE THIS

VOTE for the WOMAN SUFFRAGE AMENDMENT IN NOVEMBER

The Fight for Woman Suffrage in West Virginia

By Christine M. Kreiser

In 1867, four years after West Virginia statehood and two years after the Civil War ended, the Rev. Samuel Young of Pocahontas County introduced a resolution in the state Senate to give the vote to women "who could read the Declaration of Independence intelligibly and write a legible hand, and had actually paid tax the year previous to their proposing to vote." He found no takers among his fellow senators, but that didn't deter him from trying again in 1869. In March of that year, he gleefully reported in *The Revolution*, the official newspaper of the National Woman Suffrage Association, that this time, 8 of the state's 22 senators supported his bill, including four unwed legislators. "I find that bachelors and young married men are more liberal toward Female Suffrage than old foggy married men," Young said.

The Methodist minister's hopeful prediction that woman suffrage in West Virginia would come to fruition in a year's time was not to be. Nationally, the movement had split into two camps—the National Woman Suffrage Association (NWSA) and the American Woman Suffrage Association (AWSA). At issue was the new 15th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution granting the vote to Black men. The NWSA opposed the law on the grounds that it extended the vote to men only and vowed to fight for a federal constitutional amendment that included women. The AWSA, on the other hand, supported the amendment and focused on winning the vote for women state by state.

Even with the national movement deeply divided, there were glimmers

of hope. Wyoming Territory granted woman suffrage in 1869 followed by Utah Territory (1870), Washington Territory (1883), and Montana Territory (1887). When Wyoming became a state in 1890, women kept the vote. The first victory in a statewide referendum came in Colorado in 1893, followed by Idaho in 1896. That same year, Utah women maintained their right to vote when the territory became a state.

Amid this flurry of activity, the national suffragist movement reunited in 1890 with the formation of the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA). But the defeat of the first constitutional amendment on woman suffrage in the U.S. Senate in 1887 had overshadowed the gains made in the West.

Woman suffrage in West Virginia didn't gain traction again until 1895, when the West Virginia Equal Suffrage Association (WVESA) was formed in Grafton as a NAWSA chapter. President Jessie Manley of Fairmont assessed the situation in a plainspoken yet hopeful manner: "We have nothing at present in sight in our State to look forward to except the education of the minds of the people in this cause." She and the rest of West Virginia's suffragists had their work cut out for them.

Suffragists lobbied the legislature and hosted speaking engagements by recognized national leaders, such as Carrie Chapman Catt and Anna Howard Shaw. They were active in campaigns to reform the city charters of Wheeling and Fairmont—two of the most prominent cities in the state suffrage movement—

though both attempts failed. Many *Clarksburg Daily Telegram* readers no doubt agreed with the paper's February 1907 opinion that women had better things to do than pester lawmakers for the vote: "Now that the constitutional amendment bill providing for the extension of suffrage to women has been killed in the house of the state legislature, the women lobbyists who were on hand to do what they could in its behalf can now hike back home and look after the children."

West Virginia women were undaunted and worked to broaden their base of support. In 1906, WVESA leaders Fannie Wheat and M. Anna Hall addressed the West Virginia State Federation of Labor, which adopted a woman suffrage resolution. The local suffrage clubs of Wheeling and Fairmont allied with the West Virginia Federation of Women's Clubs, which endorsed woman suffrage in 1914. The Suffrage Movement, however, didn't reach out to Black women. Suffragists were primarily white, middle-class women, and though racist and anti-immigrant rhetoric was not widely adopted in West Virginia, little to no effort was made to include women of color or recent arrivals.

Meanwhile, the Suffrage Movement was again picking up steam in the West. Between 1910 and 1914, the states of Washington, California, Arizona, Kansas, Oregon, Montana, and Nevada enacted woman suffrage measures. Unsuccessful legislative appeals continued in West Virginia, but the margins of defeat were narrowing. Finally, in 1915, Governor Henry Hatfield, a Progressive Republican, called for a bill to submit the question to West Virginia voters. He'd endorsed suffrage in his 1913 inaugural address, saying, "[T]he time is near at hand when women will be accorded the same privileges at the ballot box in West Virginia that male voters have today."



Julia W. Ruhl (1861 – 1956) was president of the West Virginia Equal Suffrage Association, 1917 to 1920, and the first president of the West Virginia League of Women Voters, 1920 to 1922. She later served on the Clarksburg City Council. Courtesy of the WVSA, from *The Silver Gleam*.



Lenna Lowe Yost (1878 – 1972) led the effort for suffrage in West Virginia during the unsuccessful 1916 referendum campaign and successful ratification of the 19th Amendment in 1920. Courtesy of the West Virginia & Regional History Center (WVRHC).

The legislature put woman suffrage on the ballot in the 1916 general election by a vote of 77–6 in the House of Delegates and 28–1 in the Senate. These seemingly positive numbers, however, didn't translate into statewide support. Some legislators admitted as much by explaining that they supported a referendum but were actually against women voting.

The WVESA girded for battle under the leadership of Morgantown's Lenna Lowe Yost, who was also president of the West Virginia chapter of the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU). The WCTU was a highly influential organization, and Yost had earned her stripes during the 1912 campaign to turn the Mountain State dry. (Her husband, Delegate Ellis Yost, sponsored the 1913 "Yost Law," which made statewide prohibition possible.) She was also a suffragist, like WCTU founder Frances Willard, who'd made suffrage a WCTU cause in 1881. While her leadership and organizational skills were never in doubt, her ties to the WCTU caused some worry that suffrage

opponents would link votes for women to prohibition.

The WVESA also had plenty of prominent male backers. In January 1916, the *Clarksburg Daily Telegram* polled a number of the state's "leading citizens" and found that former governors A. B. White, George W. Atkinson, and W. M. O. Dawson; current governor Henry Hatfield; Congressmen Hunter Moss and Howard Sutherland; and an array of state officials, congressional candidates, and ministers all supported suffrage. The only naysayer was former governor A. B. Fleming, who said "the granting of the right to vote to women would have a bad effect on the South."

The in-state opposition organized late and disbanded shortly after the election. The West Virginia Association Opposed to Woman Suffrage distributed handbills, one of which warned voters that "every Socialist and every Feminist is a Woman Suffragist." Speakers from the National Association Opposed to Woman Suffrage made several visits to the state, and West Virginia men made their thoughts known.

A long letter published in the *Weston Free Press* in October 1916 by Weston lawyer W. W. Brannon laid out many of the standard anti-suffrage arguments espoused by opponents in and outside West Virginia. For instance, the interests of women were already well represented in government, said Brannon, so there was no need for them to vote. "She is represented and protected by those who would die for her, the husband, the father, the brother and her lover. Let any legislation, harmful to women, be undertaken in this state or elsewhere, and we will witness a prompt opposition by these natural representatives, and the overwhelming defeat of the measure. No danger can confront her, in which one of these natural representatives will not

WE OPPOSE Woman Suffrage

Realizing the importance of the question presented in the Woman Suffrage Amendment, we bespeak your attention.

Suffrage is not a right, but a privilege, which should not be granted for sentimental reasons, but only if it benefits the State. No change so radical and irrevocable as the admission of women to the suffrage should be adopted unless its advantages are clear.

The adoption of woman suffrage will double the expense of elections and add approximately two hundred and forty thousand voters to the electorate of West Virginia. The addition of a large number of voters inexperienced in business, and unused to judge of those problems on which they are called upon to vote, must tend toward inefficiency of government.

There is no convincing evidence that woman suffrage has proven beneficial in those States in which it has been tried, and the experiment is much more hazardous in a State whose population is composed of such divergent elements as West Virginia.

The number of women enrolled in suffrage organizations indicates that only a small minority of women wish the vote, and if the suffrage is forced upon an unwilling or indifferent majority, the governing capacity of the electorate will deteriorate.

Unless you are convinced of the desirability of woman suffrage, it is highly important for you to vote against it.

West Virginia Association Opposed to Woman Suffrage

**VOTE NO ON WOMAN SUFFRAGE
NOVEMBER 7th.**

West Virginia anti-suffrage flyer, 1916. Courtesy of the WVSA.

intervene." As proof, Brannon offered the story of a "strong advocate" of suffrage who was aboard the *Titanic* when it sank in 1912. After seeing men rush to put women and children in lifeboats at the sacrifice of their own lives, "this suffragette declared . . . that she was forever hereafter willing for men to do her voting."

Brannon also argued that suffrage states had higher divorce rates, and in Colorado,

where women had had the vote for more than a decade, suffrage hadn't had the "purifying effect which was promised." His example was that women voters had turned the tide in favor of permitting alcohol to be sold in Denver in 1910, when the rest of the state was on a definite dry trend.

"Bless the dear creatures!" Brannon concluded. "They are able and amply willing to talk for themselves, and do not need my assistance, and I am cheerful to allow them to do the talking, but claim that we men only should do the voting."

Still, West Virginia suffragists felt assured of victory as election day neared. They were utterly unprepared for the results—an overwhelming defeat, 162,158 to 63,540. Only two counties turned out a majority for suffrage: 53% in Brooke and 60% in Hancock. Some blamed liquor interests for the defeat; others praised the strength of the arguments made by the *antis*. In the end, it seems more likely that in a rural, socially conservative state like West Virginia, the time for woman suffrage was not yet right.

Then, in June 1919, Congress passed the 19th Amendment to the Constitution, which declared "The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex." The race to ratify the amendment, which required the approval of 36 states, had begun. By the end of the year, 22 states had signed on, bringing the magic number needed to make woman suffrage a national reality to 14.

West Virginia suffragists determined that their state would be one of the 14. By the end of February 1920, 11 more states had agreed to the amendment. Five—Georgia, Alabama, South Carolina, Virginia, and Maryland—had rejected it. The WVESA, led by Julia Ruhl, threw its support behind Governor John Cornwell's call for



The Women's Suffrage League of West Virginia University, 1920. Courtesy of the WVRHC, from the *Monticola*.

a special legislative session to consider suffrage and several other items. Cornwell, a Democrat, emphasized that suffrage was no partisan issue. The national Democratic and Republican parties both endorsed it. But the legislature had to act quickly if women were to participate in the general election coming up in November.

Despite objections from the *antis* that West Virginians—at least, West Virginia males—had clearly opposed suffrage in the 1916 referendum, the House of Delegates on March 3 voted to ratify, 47–40. The Senate, however, was deadlocked at 14–14, with two senators absent from the proceedings. Senator A. R. Montgomery, who opposed suffrage, had resigned his Logan County seat the previous summer and moved to Illinois. Senator Jesse Bloch of Ohio County, a suffrage supporter, was vacationing in California when the special session was called.

Bloch made a mad dash by train from Pasadena to Charleston. Legislative maneuvers kept the body in session until he arrived at the state capitol and cast his vote on March 10, 1920. A bid to reinstate Montgomery failed and, with the Senate's approval, 15–14, West Virginia

became the 34th state to ratify the 19th Amendment.

Carrie Chapman Catt wrote to Lenna Lowe Yost, the WVESA's ratification committee chair, that the NAWSA considered the victory in West Virginia a sign that "the nation is won, that the seventy year struggle is over, that the women are enfranchised American Woman." The struggle officially ended in August, when Tennessee became the 36th state to ratify, and the U.S. Secretary of State certified the results.

West Virginia women soon reaped the benefits of suffrage. Yost was tapped to chair the 1920 Republican National Convention, which nominated Warren G. Harding for president. Julia Ruhl served as the first president of the West Virginia League of Women Voters and was later elected to the city council of Clarksburg. Dr. Harriet B. Jones, the state's first licensed female physician, became the first woman elected to the West Virginia House of Delegates in 1924, representing Marshall County for two terms.

Elizabeth Kee became the first West Virginia woman elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1952. In 2014, Shelley Moore Capito became the first woman elected to the U.S. Senate from West Virginia. The state has not yet had a woman governor. In a century, only one woman, Democrat Charlotte Pritt (1996), has been nominated by one of the two major parties to be West Virginia's governor. She lost to Republican Cecil Underwood.*

After graduating from WVU's Public History Program in 1990, CHRISTINE M. KREISER worked as a historian and editor for more than 15 years in the Mountain State. She now writes from Winchester, Virginia. This is her fifth contribution to GOLDENSEAL. Her most recent article was in our Summer 2019 issue.



Courtesy of the Tu-Endie-Wei State Park Mansion House Museum.

Livia Simpson Poffenbarger

One of West Virginia's leading "suffragists" didn't think women should have the right to vote. Livia Simpson Poffenbarger (1862–1937) acquired Point Pleasant's *State Gazette* in the 1880s at age 26—making her one of the youngest women newspaper publishers in the nation. As a result of this influence, she was named state director of the suffrage campaign, even though she didn't really believe in the cause, saying, "I am against woman suffrage because the American women do not want it. Every argument points toward its being right, but if the woman doesn't want it, why discuss it?" In a more lighthearted take, she asserted that woman suffrage "would just mean more votes to buy." Her main passion was to have the 1774 Battle of Point Pleasant named the official first battle of the American Revolution, contrary to the views of most historians, including our first State Archivist Virgil Lewis. It's generally accepted that the Revolutionary War started at Lexington and Concord, Massachusetts, in 1775. —Christine M. Kreiser

The Mysterious Ferguson Rock

By Merle T. Cole and Tom Sopher

The Ferguson Rock is the oldest known landmark in Beckley. Traditional stories about the rock differ, but all focus on the activities of a mysterious "S. Ferguson."

In November 1939, *Raleigh Register* "Bug Dust" columnist Randolph Norton described Ferguson as an "old pioneer" who came to grief in 1814 while traveling from Virginia to the Kanawha Valley to "seek his fortune." After spending the previous night near Pack's Ferry on New River, Ferguson rode all day on the long-disappeared Old Bluestone Road. When he reached the Piney Creek ford near the current sewage treatment plant, he stopped to allow his horse to drink. A bear or panther ran from the bush and frightened the horse, which threw Ferguson into the stream, breaking his leg. The horse ran back up the trail and, several days later, arrived at Ferguson's home in Franklin County, Virginia.

His family eventually discovered his corpse on the stream bank. He'd died after carving his epitaph into a nearby rock: "S. Ferguson F. County 1814." As a notable detail, the figure 4 was carved backwards. The family buried his remains on the spot, without a coffin. The rock was left in the creek bed.

County historian Jim Wood put more stock in a less interesting but more probable story recorded by early county

historian Judge Winton A. Riffe. The judge contended, "S. Ferguson more likely was a member of the noted Ferguson fur-trapping family of Franklin County, Virginia, and that instead of being his death site, the carved rock represented his camp site."

Fast forward to 1899, when the Chesapeake & Ohio Railway was building its branch line from Prince to Raleigh. Anderson Warden, a member of the work party, remembered seeing the rock and the gravesite. Some 40 years later, in November 1939, Anderson was employed by the Northeastern Construction Company "to move some dirt and rock at the sewage plant." He came upon the rock again and learned that other workers had located a gravesite "earlier in the fall." Warden moved the rock to the foot of the grave on November 11, 1939. The foot of the grave was used because "the head . . . is under the highway that separates two units of the sewage system."

While the exact meaning of the inscription is disputed, there's one historically significant point. The date on the rock is nearly four decades before Raleigh County was formed from Fayette County, in 1850.

The rock was saved from destruction a second time in 1984, when the sewage plant was being expanded. Ray Sutphin



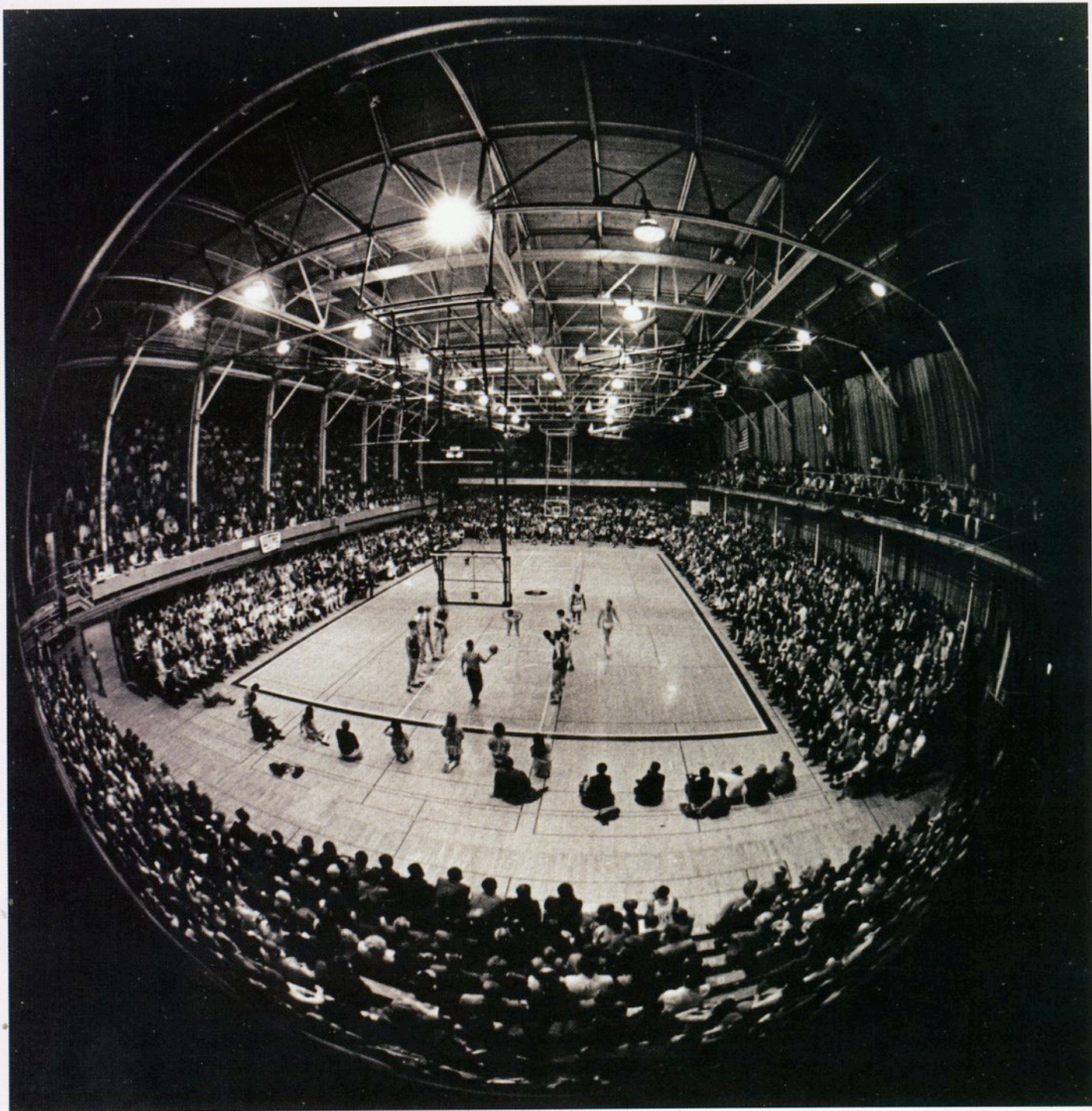
Photo of the Ferguson Rock, now located in Beckley, by David Sibray.

of Beckley heard from a friend that the construction crew was piling material on the rock. When he expressed concern to a sanitation department supervisor, he was asked if he wanted the rock. Sutphin said he did, and it was transported to his home. The Ferguson Rock remained there through changes in property ownership.

In November 2017, the Raleigh County Historical Society (RCHS) contacted the then-current property owners about donating the rock to the City of Beckley for historical purposes. James Bays and

Amy Kirk readily agreed, and shortly thereafter, city public works retrieved the rock. Following a brief period in storage, the rock was moved to its present home on the grounds of Wildwood House, the historic home of city Founder Alfred E. Beckley. It has become another RCHS preservation project. ✱

MERLE T. COLE and TOM SOPHER are very active members of the Raleigh County Historical Society. Merle has made numerous contributions to GOLDENSEAL, particularly on the topic of West Virginia State Police history. Tom is president of the historical society. This is his first contribution to GOLDENSEAL.



6,200 fans watch the final game in historic Mountaineer Field House, a 92-87 loss to rival Pitt, March 3, 1970. WVU's Bob Hummell, a Moundsville High grad, is at the foul line. All photos courtesy of the West Virginia & Regional History Center.

Mountaineer Field House

By Norman Julian

When the Old Field House at West Virginia University succumbed to wrecking machinery in summer 2019, its removal didn't dispel fond and poignant memories of many thousands of us West Virginians who'd bonded with it. For generations, the red-brick building with a patina of coal smoke and weather scars was a basketball mecca even as it served many other uses.

As children, when we tossed basketballs at garage-door baskets, or at homemade hoops and backboards attached to telephone poles, or chucked up balls in big and tiny gyms and outdoor courts, we imagined ourselves throwing in shots at the basketball palace in Morgantown.

Jerry West may have captured that best in his autobiography, *Mr. Clutch*, writing about attending his first game there: "We sat way high up and the court seemed very far away and the players seemed very small, but I was really thrilled. It was one of the highlights of my life. I can remember imagining myself playing down there on the court someday, though I was so small I don't think I really believed it could happen."

He became the greatest of WVU's many All-Americans, and we at home listened to the exploits on the radio of him and others: Leland Byrd, Eddie Beach, Scotty Hamilton, Rodney "Hot Rod" Hundley, Lee Patrone, Wil Robinson, Fred Schaus, Lloyd Sharrar, Rod Thorn, Jimmy Walthal, Ron "Fritz" Williams, and Mark Workman, to name just a few. Just take a look at this short list from the WVU Sports Hall of Fame, and you've got one heck of a team (in different sports): Willie Akers, Rudy Baric, Eddie Becker, Marvin "Bucky" Bolyard, Marshall "Little Sleepy" Glenn,

John "Jack" Gocke, Roy Lester, Tom Lowry, Harry "Moo" Moore, Paul Popovich, Charles Seabright, Bob Smith, Joe Stydahar, Jim Sottile, Don Vincent, Pete White.

Visiting All-Americans included Dave Bing of Syracuse, Sonny Dove of St. John's, Dick Groat of Duke, Don Hennen of Pitt, and Fred Hetzel and Mike Maloy of Davidson. Though boxing and wrestling dominated fan interest during the first half of the Field House's sports use, West said by the time he came along, "Basketball was king at WVU." In addition, the state scholastic basketball tournament was held there from 1939 until 1954, when it began to alternate yearly with Huntington's Memorial Field House (the Charleston Civic Center was added to the rotation in 1965). Two NBA exhibition games were played at the Mountaineer Field House.

One day, you might see the baseball team using nets to corral errant flyballs. The next day, it might be badminton, handball, track, or volleyball. I remember WVU dance students practicing in the loft while football players ran drills on the lower level because of inclement weather at Old Mountaineer Field, across Beechhurst Avenue and up the hill.

Prime campus events like graduations, social dances, registrations, and exhibitions of many kinds took place there. All this prompted the late Pat Tork, supervisor of athletic facilities at WVU, to say when I interviewed him in the 1960s, "This is the best building the university has because it is used so much and so efficiently."

I was to find that out when, as a student "gym rat," I explored its nooks and crannies. Every square foot seemed to have a dedicated use, and usually

more than one. The rectangular structure included a few classrooms and offices. I interviewed WVU Coach Bucky Waters in his office in a small cubicle with institutional tan-glazed block walls on the second floor. So many fine coaches inhabited those environs, so minimal and bleak compared to today's quarters. Bucky was used to better because he'd been an assistant coach at Duke before coaching at WVU from 1966 to 1969, and he didn't like his office. He was a key leader in lobbying for the new WVU Coliseum, an effort spearheaded by Athletic Director Nathan "Red" Brown. When The Big Mushroom came on line in 1970, it may have negated the old Field House as the most utilitarian building on campus.

Looking back, by the 1940s, basketball had emerged as the main attraction at the Field House, prompting West to write that his interest in matriculating to "mecca" began in 1948, when he began listening to Jack Fleming's broadcasts, as did I about the same time. I didn't see a game in person in that coveted arena until February 8, 1960, when I first saw West perform. I was living in Clarksburg and not long out of high school. My most prized possession was a press pass, eventually worn and frayed from overuse. It was issued to me by the late Don McCulty, then the sports editor of *The Clarksburg Exponent* and *The Sunday Clarksburg Exponent-Telegram*. That plasticized card enabled a *stringer* like me to talk my way into about any venue where sporting events were being held. One cold February day, I said to my friend Gary Gould, "Let's go to Morgantown and see Jerry West play."

"How are we going to get there?" he asked. Neither of us owned a car.

"Hitchhike," I replied. And we did. It took five rides to cover the nearly 50 miles over pre-interstate, circuitous, two-lane highways, mostly State Route

The Old Field House was home to sports legends for 42 years until it was converted to other uses in 1970. It was torn down in summer 2019. Replacing the revered building will be a new business school complex—with \$10 million in start-up money donated by Bob and Laura Reynolds. It's expected to spin-off businesses, too, along that section of the Monongahela River.

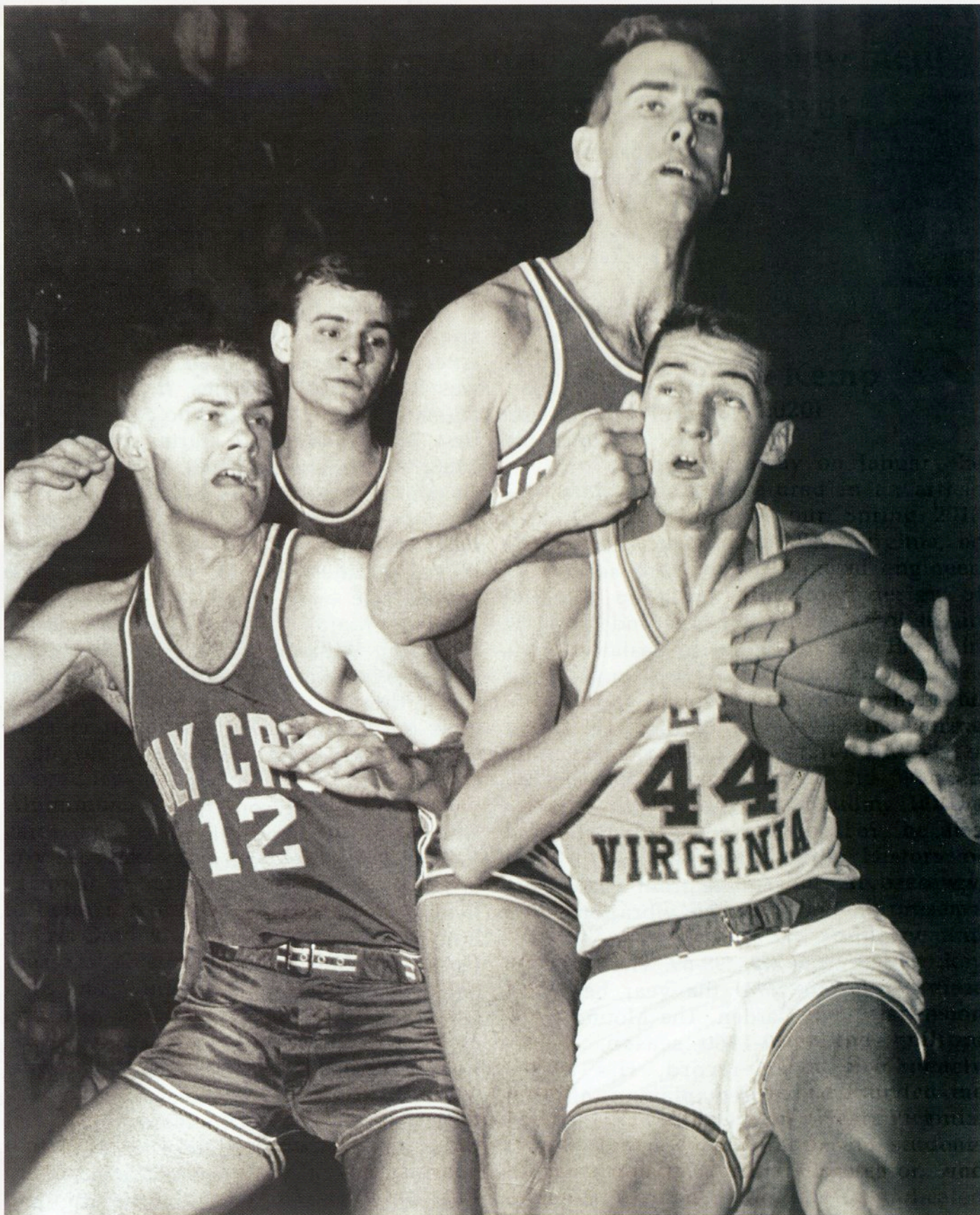
73. Our last ride was in a hay truck. When we got to south Morgantown, the farmer-driver's destination, he let us out but not before giving us directions to the Field House. Once we walked the mile to get there, the problem was how to gain entrance.

Twice, I flashed that press pass on which Don had typed in parentheses, "Admit Two." I did my best to explain to guards at the first two doors the importance of our mission, but admission was denied. On the third try at another door, a guard pointed and said, "Eddie Barrett (the sports information director) is right over there. If he says it's okay, it's fine by me for you guys to come in."

He hailed Barrett, who, too, had started his career at sports as a stringer covering high school games for *The Fairmont Times*. He took pity on us and let us in. He didn't, though, deposit us on press row, where all the seats were taken. He put us up on the catwalk against the wall on the other side of the building, in the very last seats available. Never mind. We were in.

We had to crane our necks to see the players, but it was worth it because that night, we saw the 6'3" West get the best of 6'7" All-American Tom Sanders of New York University (NYU)—top ranked nationally, until that night.

I'd never seen West in person. During warmups, I had to ask a spectator which Mountaineer he was. Suddenly, I was looking at this painfully thin kid from Cabin Creek and wondering, "How could he be one of the greatest in college



Holy Cross' Ralph Brandt tries one of the few ways to stop a Jerry West (#44) layup. In case Brandt couldn't stop him with his ear-twisting foul, George Blaney (#12) was ready to take his own shot at West.

basketball?" When West was identified, I remarked to Gary that he looked like he had the flu. He did nothing spectacular in warmups, but any impression of mediocrity or infirmity vanished as soon as the action started. It was like someone had pressed a button, and a dynamo sprang into action. It was a Clark Kent-to-Superman change.

I once interviewed Head Coach Fred Schaus for my book *Legends: Profiles in WVU Basketball*. Schaus said of Jerry: "West always had himself ready to play. Before a game you couldn't talk to him because he was so uptight. But once the game started, he was ready."

In one sequence, NYU's Sanders was about to take a jump shot about 10 feet from the basket on the right side. At the pinnacle of his attempt, West seemed to come from nowhere and slap the ball away. It hit the backboard and caromed back toward the opposite basket. Jerry's momentum had taken him under the basket, but he recovered rapidly and finished a fast break by scoring at the other end. The noise! Fans yelled and stomped on the rattling old bleacher seats. It was deafening. At one point, a train passed by only a few yards beyond the wall against which we sat. I later learned the guys on the train could hear the rumble and feel the vibrations from the building.

The final score was 98-69. That avenged a 72-70 loss to NYU the year before in Madison Square Garden. The Mountaineers finished the 1959-1960 season, Jerry's last, with a 26-5 record. His legacy of great and inspired playing allowed West Virginia to poll No. 1 going into the 1960 NCAA Tournament. Later, as a sportswriter, I sat for years on press row alongside Homer Shaffer, WVU's longtime scoreboard operator for both football and basketball. Homer once commented, "I always felt that seeing Jerry play so many

games, I had observed perfection near as you are ever going to see it in sport."

The Field House saw some of the greats ever. Even when the Coliseum opened in 1970, it'd be known as "the house that West built." Statues of him and "Hot Rod" Hundley, sculptured by Jamie Lester, are now perched outside the Coliseum.

Before the days of extreme secrecy at practices, basketball coaches allowed spectators to watch. The greatest entertainer for me when I was student was Ron "Fritz" Williams, the multisports all-stater from Weirton who'd become the first Black basketball starter at WVU in 1966. As the homegrown symbol of the transition to integrated basketball in West Virginia, Ron felt most of the pressure to make it work. To us at WVU and indeed to the Southern Conference in which he played, he was what Jackie Robinson was to Major League Baseball. Like Robinson, Williams was a man of courage and unexcelled deportment who handled racist threats and taunts without undue pain or incidents. In 1968, the Southern Conference named Williams its "Athlete of the Year."

Ron was taking some journalism courses when I got to know him at the (then) P. I. Reed School of Journalism, which now is known as the Reed College of Media. Every one of the hundreds of times I saw him in practice or games at the Field House, he showed off moves that neither I nor probably his teammates had ever seen before. Fundamentally sound in all phases of the game, he may have had no peer in passing and running a fast break. We got to see it in the games and at every practice day at the Old Field House.

As a student, the Field House became my refuge. When I needed some relief from the mental kinks of studying and attending classes, which was often, I'd head down there to work them out. As you approached the multifaceted structure



Ron "Fritz" Williams (1944 – 2004), a 6'3" guard, became WVU's first Black basketball player, in 1966. One of WVU's greatest, he was later drafted by the NBA, ABA, and NFL (despite not playing football in college). He played eight seasons in the NBA. A street near his childhood home in Weirton is named in his honor.

in winter, you could smell the acrid sulfur scent of smoke from the nearby coal-fired power plant through a series of ducts and tunnels that heated most buildings on the downtown campus.

I boasted I spent more time in Pat Tork's beloved building than in all the other campus buildings combined. There were 14 baskets, including four in the lofts. Still, the place was often so crowded that scores of students sat on the perimeters of the courts awaiting their turn. When you got into a pickup game, you gave it your all because if your team lost, you might have to sit out a game or two or three before you got a chance again.

Noon hours were especially busy because faculty members often joined students on their lunch breaks. Omnipresent for years was Dr. Ruel Foster, who was for a while chairman of the English Department and in whose classrooms I was privileged to sit. For years, he also coached the WVU tennis team that played on four outdoor courts adjoining the Field House. He excelled at badminton at noon, and in the late afternoon, you would often spot him competing against students half his age in one-wall handball. That was played against a rough gray wall of boards arrayed against the bleachers. The handball courts shared space with the front entrance. It was a prime example of how they used every inch of space in the old building. Part of the culture of the Field House was "the man in the cage," who kept and dispersed the athletic equipment. No matter your sport, the tools for it were under the man in the cage's control, and sometimes his whim. If he decreed "no basketball," the games halted immediately. It paid to be on good terms with this powerful conveyor of equipment.

My favorite was Carl Roberts, who was also the equipment manager for varsity basketball and football. He could

be cranky and tough, and sometimes needed to be, but he was pliable. He loved sports, the players, and the students. When I later profiled him for *The Dominion Post*, he looked back on his career and declared, "The Mountaineers never had a greater fan than me." When sometimes he manned doorways or entrances at the Field House or Old Mountaineer Field, he was famous for being a soft touch who allowed kids to "sneak in" free. He opened the Field House doors at opportune times, like when a roar followed a great or controversial play. Lifetime friendships were forged within the Field House walls, and Carl and I became longtime friends.

Much has been made of the intimacy fans felt being seated so close to the action in that vaunted arena. You frequently hear fans from that day say they almost felt like they were part of the action. On at least one occasion, some were. Press row, where I'd finally earned a seat, was arrayed above the player benches, so I had a close-up view of a brawl against rival Syracuse. The pushing and shoving that marked that game (February 17, 1969) went on until fisticuffs eventually broke out among the players. A few Mountaineer fans (and I) felt that Syracuse had started the melee. While I remained objectively (as much as possible) seated, fans rushed from the stands and joined in. I recall one local grabbing a Syracuse player by the lower legs and holding on despite being pummeled from above by an Orangeman's fists. WVU won the game 80-76. No winner of the brawl was ever declared. I've never seen anything like it, before or since.

If you're one of those who perused the Old Field House and visited near and before its appointment with destruction, you wouldn't have found much to remind you of those halcyon days. Jerry West said as much when he visited in 2007 to



The Field House hosted various events, including this concert on May 8, 1958, with (left-right) Louis Armstrong, Velma Middleton, Trummy Young, Edmond Hall, and Arvell Shaw. It's possible the great Earl Hines is on piano.

dedicate his statue. He told *The Dominion Post* that not much remained of his old haunts there. "Time marches on," he said. "No one should stand in the way of progress."

Some of the old bones of the structure, including that playing surface, remained, but the clattering bleachers, the charged game-time atmosphere, and many great legends and personalities of WVU history no longer dwelt there. But if you had kept your critical sense at abeyance, suspended disbelief, and let your imagination reign, you might still have sensed the scent of coal smoke, or heard the clamor of the crowd as the Mountaineers mounted a run, or seen a

great player or two or three making a spot-on pass, sinking a soft jump shot from far out, or slapping a ball away to start a fast break. Then, the ghosts still seemed to inhabit the ancient mecca of Mountain State basketball. 🍁

NORMAN JULIAN was a longtime columnist for Morgantown's *The Dominion Post*. Since retiring, he's pursued his passion of being an amateur artist. A graduate of Clarksburg's Victory High and WVU, Norman is the owner of Trillium Publishing and author of five books about West Virginia. He's a past winner of the West Virginia Sports Writers' Gene Morehouse Award for career achievement and a past member of the WVU Sports Hall of Fame Selection Committee. This is his 22nd contribution to *GOLDENSEAL*. His first was in our January-March 1980 issue and most recent was in our Summer 2018 issue.

The Old Field House

By Norman Julian

Harry Stansbury was one of the great visionaries in WVU sports history, serving 22 years as athletic director before retiring in 1938. He pushed for the new basketball arena and hired the architects Davis, Dunlap and Barney. It was completed in 1928. In the dedicatory basketball game on January 3, 1929, WVU defeated Salem College (now University) 26-23. Stansbury died in 1966, and in 1970, the building was renamed Stansbury Hall.

The facility was considered one of the best of its kind in the country until after World War II, when bigger, more luxurious arenas began to outrank it. Basketball practice originally was held at the Arc, an old frame building put up at the start of World War I. It was used for athletics and student military training, but WVU played most of its games at the larger Morgantown High gym. The Arc was razed to build the Old Field House on roughly the same site. The seating capacity was enlarged in increments to a maximum of 6,600. In its early phase, the main floor was a cinder track, with only the basketball court inlaid with wood. Cinders were easy to get because of the coal-fired power plant adjacent to the building.

In a letter to my former colleague the late Mickey Furfari, longtime sports editor of *The Dominion Post*, Stansbury wrote, "About 1927 the Legislature appropriated \$85,000 to start the Field House, specifying that the money would not be available until July 1, 1928. By agreement with Jim Lakin, my friend on the State Board of Control, however, we borrowed the \$85,000 from the banks and started to work."

The 1929 legislature appropriated \$170,000 more, and Stansbury kept on borrowing and kept on building. Student

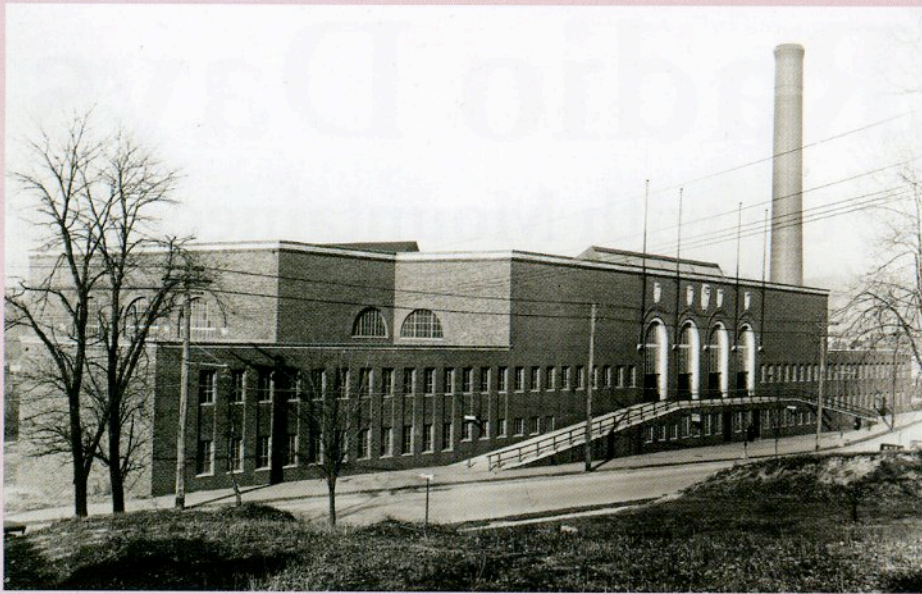
athletic activity fees were tapped to help pay for \$60,000 in equipment.

Stansbury, with some pride, noted that "despite all this whacky financing, all the notes, all the bonds . . . all the athletic debts were finally paid (by 1934) without any loss to any individual."

Best estimates place the total construction cost at \$307,000 in Great Depression-era dollars, which would be nearly \$6 million today. In subsequent years, some of the best college basketball games ever took place there. Kentucky, Cincinnati, North Carolina State, New York University, Duke, and Villanova played at the Field House when they were rated near or atop the polls. A decided home-court advantage helped the Mountaineers, who went 374-76 at the Field House, while making a national name for themselves. The 1942 team under Coach Dyke Raese won the National Invitational Tournament (the national championship back then) at Madison Square Garden behind its first All-American, Scotty Hamilton.

From then on, Mountaineer basketball was known for its fast-paced offenses. Hamilton was the first of many WVU masters of the fast break. The high-scoring style was a fan favorite and attracted out-of-state players. Over six years under three coaches—Harry Lothes, John Brickels, and Lee Patton—the Mountaineers won 57 straight home games, mostly under Patton. Pitt snapped the streak on March 5, 1949, with a 34-32 overtime win.

The 1954 Southern Conference Tournament was held there, as was one game of the 1951 tourney. The pinnacle of fast-break ball might have been during the tenure of Coach Nathan "Red" Brown, when his 1952 team averaged 80.4 points per game, second highest in the country. Fans flocked to the Field House to watch



The old Field House, renamed Stansbury Hall in 1970. Photo by Scott Gibson.

the “run and gun.” Brown recruited the most exciting Mountaineer of them all, All-American Rodney “Hot Rod” Hundley from Charleston, but didn’t coach him because Brown became athletic director in 1954. In that latter capacity, he oversaw construction of the new WVU Coliseum, which replaced the Field House in 1970.

Hundley’s amazing skills and zany antics—after his team was way ahead—earned him the reputation as The Clown Prince of College Basketball and attracted unprecedented attention to the Field House. He was the first player taken in the 1957 NBA draft.

The 1960 U.S. Olympic basketball team held a tryout game there. Members included co-captains WVU’s Jerry West and Cincinnati’s Oscar Robertson and big names such as Terry Dischinger, Jerry Lucas, and Walt Bellamy.

In the early days of the Field House, fans could look forward to a tripleheader of basketball, boxing, and wrestling on Saturdays. The annual WVU Indoor Invitational Track Meet attracted greats like Olympians Jesse Owens, Eddie Toland, and Ralph Metcalfe. When more campus activities, including formal dances, vied for time in the facility, the cindered

track was removed, and the floor was completely boarded over. According to former WVU track coach Stan Romanoski, that crimped the university’s aspirations to be a national track power. The Reserve Officers Training Corps for students still trained there, too.

After the Coliseum opened in 1970 (at a cost of \$11.5-million), the cavernous Field House was renovated. Its ceiling was lowered, and although the main playing floor was maintained as a recreational area, the upper part was converted into a warren of classrooms and offices. Many professors complained about the air circulation since the structure wasn’t designed for its eventual use.

For people who enjoyed the facility in its prime, the hallowed hall that was the Old Field House will always be a unique entity in the history of Mountain State sports.



Harry Stansbury, WVU athletic director (1916 – 1938).

Radio Days

Growing Up with Mountaineer Basketball

By John A. Hunter Jr.

It was a pretty simple time, when I think back on it. It was far before the age of the Internet and online gaming, a long way before cable television and a constant plethora of sporting events from which one can choose, and even before interstate travel in West Virginia. In short, the world was considerably smaller back when I and other kids were growing up in rural southern West Virginia in the 1950s and 1960s. By necessity, we created our own entertainment. For many of us boys, entertainment centered around sports, and the sport we loved most was basketball. And for purposes of this story, the team we loved most—in fact, pretty much the only team we truly cared about—was the West Virginia University Mountaineers.

My introduction to WVU basketball was through my father when I was seven years old. He invited me and my buddy Bill White—who happened to be sleeping over that night—to watch the 1959 NCAA Tournament championship game on my parents' small black-and-white TV. The game featured the Jerry West-led Mountaineers against the Pete Newell-coached University of California Golden Bears. Although the outcome of the game broke all our hearts (a one-point loss—I fell asleep with tears in my eyes), that foggy spring night forever whetted my appetite for WVU basketball. As the old saying goes, I “swallowed it hook, line, and sinker.” Trouble was, in those days, the Mountaineers were rarely on TV, and Morgantown was a long day's drive north on two-lane country roads from



Jerry West shoots a jumper against George Washington University at a packed Field House. All photos courtesy of the West Virginia & Regional History Center.

the little Boone County seat of Madison, where I lived.

However, my friends and I weren't deterred by these technological and geographical obstacles because we had something even better: portable AM radios—our lifelines to the Mountaineers. To me, my AM radio was a front-row seat to the games. The radio Voice of the Mountaineers during that era (and since 1947) was Jack Fleming, and his color commentator/sidekick (beginning

in 1970) was Woody O'Hara. As Jerry West once said, Jack was "an artist with words." Although I'd never been in the old Field House, I could vividly picture it in my mind by virtue of Jack's skillfully painted portrait of the arena and the slow, steady background chant of "Let's Go-o Mountaineers!" reverberating through my little blue-and-white radio.

For those who may not remember the great radio era of sports, the key was a good imagination, like a young child picturing scenes written by a good author. When it came to WVU, my imagination got a big assist from knowing all the players' names, nicknames, heights, hometowns, and shooting percentages. And I could visualize their faces thanks to the Kahn's team photo, which I wrote off for each season and had taped to the wall over my bed.

The first team I knew by heart—and I never missed a single broadcast—was the 1961-1962 Mountaineer team led by Rod Thorn. Rod was from Princeton and was heir apparent to Jerry West, who had since gone, along with Coach Fred Schaus, to the Los Angeles Lakers. For fear of losing Thorn to a more nationally dominant team, the West Virginia Legislature officially (with more than a little tongue-in-cheek) named Rod a valuable "natural resource" to our state. It must have worked because Rod Thorn went to WVU.

The Mountaineers were coached that year by George King, who'd previously starred at Morris Harvey College (now University of Charleston). Rod's backcourt running mate was Jim McCormick. Tom Lowery, at 6'8", played center (pretty tall for that day), and Paul Miller and Kenny Ward were the first-team forwards. I remember Paul, 6'6", was plagued by foot problems, and Kenny was from Shady Grove. That team finished with an impressive record of 24 wins and 6 losses



(Right-left) The Voice of the Mountaineers, Jack Fleming, and color commentator Jack Tennant, about 1968. Photo by Richard P. Rogers.

and won the Southern Conference. While it's now a I-AA conference, the Southern was nationally competitive in that era and included Davidson and Virginia Tech.

Playing for that Mountaineer team, and the following two seasons, was 6'5" forward Mike Wolfe. My friends and I loved him because he was an excellent long-range shooter. I remember my Madison Junior Woman's Club Little League teammates Gary Walker and Gary "Shotgun" Brown calling me "Mike Wolfe" after I scored 12 points in the first quarter of a scrimmage one evening in the old wood-frame Madison Community Building, where we played our games. It was the supreme compliment and, as you can readily discern, I still covet that game to this day.

Another favorite player on the following year's 1962-1963 WVU team was Bill Maphis. Jack Fleming called him the "Golden Delicious from Romney" because he was from Hampshire County, the heart of West Virginia apple country. Jack used to say that Maphis hardly ever missed a

shot in practice and quipped that one day he was going to make one in a game, too.

Since most games were played on school nights, we'd put our radios under our pillows and listen to the muffled broadcast, trying not to awaken other family members. The next morning, all of the talk at first recess was whether the Mountaineers had won and how many points each player had scored. After school, we'd relive the previous night's game on an outdoor one-hoop cement court in my neighborhood. My older cousin, Nicky, who was one of the top players on our grade-school team, always got to choose which WVU player he wanted to be that day. It was typically Rod Thorn. However, none of us ever complained too much because we liked everyone on the team, and even reserve players, like Donnie Weir, were held in high-esteem and enthusiastically emulated.

I became so enthralled with Jack Fleming's radio broadcasts that even when the Mountaineers were on TV, or when I'd take in their annual game at the Charleston Civic Center, I'd still take along my radio and listen to his audio depiction of what I was watching on the court. Jack deftly described every nuance of the game. At every moment, you knew who had the ball, exactly where the given player was on the court, and whether he was dribbling, passing, or shooting. Jack would also set the defense for you and tell you what the coaches were yelling to their players. Best, though, was listening to him excitedly describe 20-25-foot jump shots that swished through the basket. Those moments always got us on our feet and in a shouting frenzy of "Go-o Mountaineers!"

We lived and died with the ups and downs of the Mountaineers, but our affection for them never waned. They were our sports idols in a different way than the more famous pro athletes who

we regularly read about or saw on TV. These were regular West Virginia guys from small towns, just like mine. In that sense, they seemed more real and relatable to. I guess, in retrospect, we not only took pride in their accomplishments but were encouraged by them, too. If they could take it to and beat teams from big cities across the country, maybe there really was something special about being a country boy from West Virginia and having humble small-town roots. At least, that's how my friends and I saw it, and I suspect how boys across the entire state saw it, too.

I'm much older now, but I guess there are some things you never outgrow no matter how old you get. For me, one of those things is following the Mountaineers. I don't listen to them on the radio anymore, but I do catch most of their games on TV. During those games, I often text my old childhood friends Bill White and Bobby Atkins, and, in the back of my mind, I can still hear Jack Fleming's sonorous voice describing the fast-and-furious play-by-play action. And if I'm being entirely truthful, which I think a writer should be, I must confess that I still jump to my feet and scream, "Let's Go-o Mountaineers!" when a 20-25-foot jumper swishes through the net without touching the rim. That typically earns me a reprimand from my wife, who tells me I'm acting like a 12-year-old boy. Like I said, there are some things you never outgrow, nor, for that matter, would you ever want to.*

JOHN A. HUNTER JR. graduated from Scott High School in 1969 and Morris Harvey College (now University of Charleston) in 1973. He earned his doctoral and post-doctoral degrees from the University of Southern Mississippi and the California School of Professional Psychology. He's a prescribing psychologist in New Orleans, where he lives with his wife and two youngest children. This is his second contribution to GOLDENSEAL; his first was in our Summer 2018 issue about growing up in Madison.



Jack Fleming (center) promotes "Perfect Bowling Week with Ed Sullivan" about 1966. On the left is Terry Thomas; the woman is unidentified.

A PERFECT GAME
WHEN YOU BOWL DURING
PERFECT BOWLING WEEK

WITH
ED SULLIVAN
FOR DETAILS SEE YOUR LEAGUE SECRETARY
OR THE HEART VOLUNTEER
BOWL - STRIKE OUT HEART DISEASE



Charleston, January 3, 1921, about 3:00 p.m. All photos courtesy of the West Virginia State Archives.

The Day the Capitol Burned

By Stan Bumgardner

It was a moment no Charlestonian alive at the time would ever forget. A little after 3 p.m., on January 3, 1921, our state capitol burst into flames. The old Victorian capitol was located on Capitol Street in downtown Charleston.

The \$375,000 structure (about \$5.5 million today) was completed ostensibly in 1885 but not really finished for another two years. An 1877 public referendum had determined Charleston to be the permanent capital city, ending a "floating capital" embarrassment in which state officials and records had been transported by steamboat from

Wheeling to Charleston (1870), Charleston to Wheeling (1875), and finally back to Charleston (1885).

But the stately capitol in Charleston (the second on the spot, after the 1870-1875 statehouse) lasted only 36 years. The fire erupted just as children were walking home from school. One of them was future educator, radio pioneer, and historian Harry Brawley (1909 – 1992), just 11 years old at the time. He wrote about January 3, 1921, in our Spring 1986 issue: "Suddenly, the fire bell at City Hall rang out loud and clear. . . . I looked across the side yard of the old Governor's



The West Virginia Victorian Capitol (1885 – 1921).

Mansion and saw smoke pouring from the Capitol roof."

A crowd gathered quickly to watch the spectacle but rapidly dispersed when cases of ammunition, stored in the building's attic—seized during the Mine Wars—began exploding. Brawley described the scene with words like "fireworks," which scared away much of the crowd for a while but not an 11-year-old future historian. As others ran away, Brawley rushed toward the fire. In moments like this, it's always a bit odd the things you

remember. For Brawley, it was someone playing "Dardanella," an instrumental novelty hit of the day, on a phonograph over and over.

The building's exterior was made of stone and brick, while the inside had wooden floors and fixtures. In other words, it was built like a stove with built-in kindling. The most likely cause of the fire was bad/early electrical wiring. A more interesting, but less plausible, theory is that it was started by security guards who were throwing dice by candlelight.



The Capitol Annex, early home to the West Virginia State Museum and Archives.



The temporary "Pasteboard" Capitol (1921 – 1927), shortly before it also burned.

Since it was daylight in a building with electric lights, the "dice theory" is suspect.

As with many disasters, death is inevitable. Miraculously, everybody in the building escaped to safety. One legislator even carried out his desk during the conflagration. As firefighters fought the blaze valiantly with mostly outdated engines and tools, one of the capitol's walls collapsed, killing a fireman. At that point, fire crews were pulled back and ordered to water down the smoke and flames from a safe distance.

The debris smoldered for three more days. Many early treasures of our state—including the original governors' painted portraits—were destroyed. Artists later re-created the portraits of the pre-1921 governors; these paintings are the ones that hang in our current capitol. Fortunately, a Capitol Annex had been built in the first years of the 20th century, and many of our most important artifacts and documents—such as the first records of our legislature in 1863, Civil War battle flags, and other contents of the West Virginia State Archives and Museum—had been relocated to the

annex, sparing them from the fire across the street.

A building commission selected Cass Gilbert to plan a new capitol. Gilbert had already designed state capitols in Minnesota and Arkansas as well as New York's Woolworth Building. He chose a site for the new West Virginia capitol on Charleston's East End (the current site). Unbeknownst to Gilbert, his father had led Ohio troops into an 1862 Civil War battle on that very site (thanks to historian Terry Lowry for that tidbit).

Meanwhile, a temporary "pasteboard" capitol was erected across the street from the destroyed capitol. In essence, pasteboard is thick cardboard, so it shouldn't have been a great shock when it too burned down in 1927. But we were fortunate with this fire. No deaths, for one, and many documents had already been relocated to the completed West Wing of the new capitol or were still in the Annex. Our current capitol was completed in phases until being dedicated on June 20, 1932.

So, what happened to the artifacts and debris from the burnt capitol? The few artifacts salvaged from inside the building (including the legislative desk) are now

Helaine Rotgin's Memories

On occasion, I've given some history tours of Charleston from one of our city's trolley-styled buses. Helaine Rotgin (1915–2010) was a regular on every tour. Helaine was a magical character with vim, vigor, and a steel-trap memory. On my first tour, we stopped at the site where the capitol burned, and I began doing my typical historian spiel. Helaine—well into her 80s—politely interrupted and said, “I was there.” She then recounted how her father had perched a five-year-old Helaine on his shoulders to see over the crowd. She recalled how quickly the building was gone—“minutes,” in her words. Every tour from then on, Helaine was my guest tour guide for that part of the trip. We even worked up something like a Burns & Allen radio comedy routine as a lead-in. I'd say, “Now I could tell you about the fire myself, but I think we'd all rather hear it from someone who was there on January 3, 1921.” I miss Helaine and wish she was here to write this article because she could really tell the story. —Stan Bumgardner

on display in the West Virginia State Museum. The stones and bricks, which were fire-tinged but intact, were sold to general contractors around Charleston and built into various structures in the early 1920s. Some of the outdoor items, such as lights and fencing, can still be seen, too, if you're wandering around Charleston and know what to look for. There's no definitive list, but if you read Stan Cohen and Richard Andre's *Kanawha County Images, Vol. 1*, you'll find a few examples. It's likely, though, that many Charlestonians live in houses made from stones and bricks from our former state capitol without even knowing it. History might be about the past, but there's a certain continuity to it. 🍁

STAN BUMGARDNER is the editor of GOLDENSEAL.

Harry Brawley

More than anyone outside my family, Harry Brawley inspired me to be a historian. A retired educator, he'd take a filmstrip presentation (for young folks, picture an old-fashioned PowerPoint but with better-quality images and more interesting) around to schools and tell stories of West Virginia history. He had a way of making every story come alive in vivid detail. I remember thinking then, “Why does he do this on his own time?” To me, he was a rock star who should've been filling arenas. I could feel his enthusiasm for history. I know most of my classmates were bored to tears, but I was hooked. At age 11, I wanted to be a historian, even if it meant giving free talks forever. Harry Brawley knew something I didn't then. It doesn't matter how many people you're talking to or how bored your audience might appear. If you can get just one kid excited about history, it can change that person's life while preserving a story that otherwise might be lost to the ages. From that time on, I couldn't imagine a more fun and fulfilling life. And, for once, I was right. He also taught me another valuable lesson: if you want to be a historian, don't expect to get rich at it. To Mr. Brawley, thank you! —Stan Bumgardner



Harry Brawley (right) announces election returns, 1956. Other man unidentified. Harry Brawley Collection.











The Many Mamaw Melitas Who Raised Us

By Andréa Fekete

In the coal camps, neighbor women watched over us little girls.

We were their children too, unofficially.

Everyone had at least 3 “Mamaw Melitas.”

Melitas offered seats at kitchen tables, plates of seasoned salted chicken lazing in puddles of butter, a slice of white bread, maybe green beans from the yard cooked for hours with potatoes and a hambone in a pot.

When they were all in the kitchen at the same time, they sang.

Danced with us girls after dark, flung us in circles, saying

Here, little girl, let me show you how to dance!

Our high unmelodic laughter awkward and true as us,

all knees, elbows, and missing front teeth.

We didn't learn dancing. We learned we were worth dancing with.

When Mamaw Melitas told us how to be women, we hushed, still as the dishrag by her hand on the counter, quiet as the dog sleeping on the rug by her ankles.

Here, these are women's ways of knowing, she could've said.

This is how you withstand cold breath of death.

This is how you expect to be spoken to.

Walk this way.

Don't use language like that!

This is how a man is supposed to love you and don't you let him any other way.

I carry myself like a million bucks because they loved me like I was.

They loved me like I would always be worth at least that. They did. ✱



ANDRÉA FEKETE is an author, editor, and freelance writer. Her literary novel about the West Virginia Mine Wars, *Waters Run Wild* (2010), explores women's and immigrant life in the coal camps of West Virginia. She has two poetry chapbooks. *Dear Lovely* was released this year. Her poetry and fiction appear in many journals and anthologies, such as *Chiron Review*, *Borderlands: Texas Poetry Review*, *Kentucky Review*, *Change Seven Magazine*, and *Pine Mountain Sand & Gravel*. She earned a master's in fine arts from West Virginia Wesleyan College and a master's in arts from Marshall University. She's taught writing at colleges in West Virginia, Kentucky, and Ohio. This is her first contribution to GOLDENSEAL.

Mamaw Melita Adkins and Papaw Clifford Adkins of Buffalo Creek, Logan County. Courtesy of our author.



Dirt mound, or trap, of a *doodlebug*, or *antlion*. Photo by Vaz Viren.

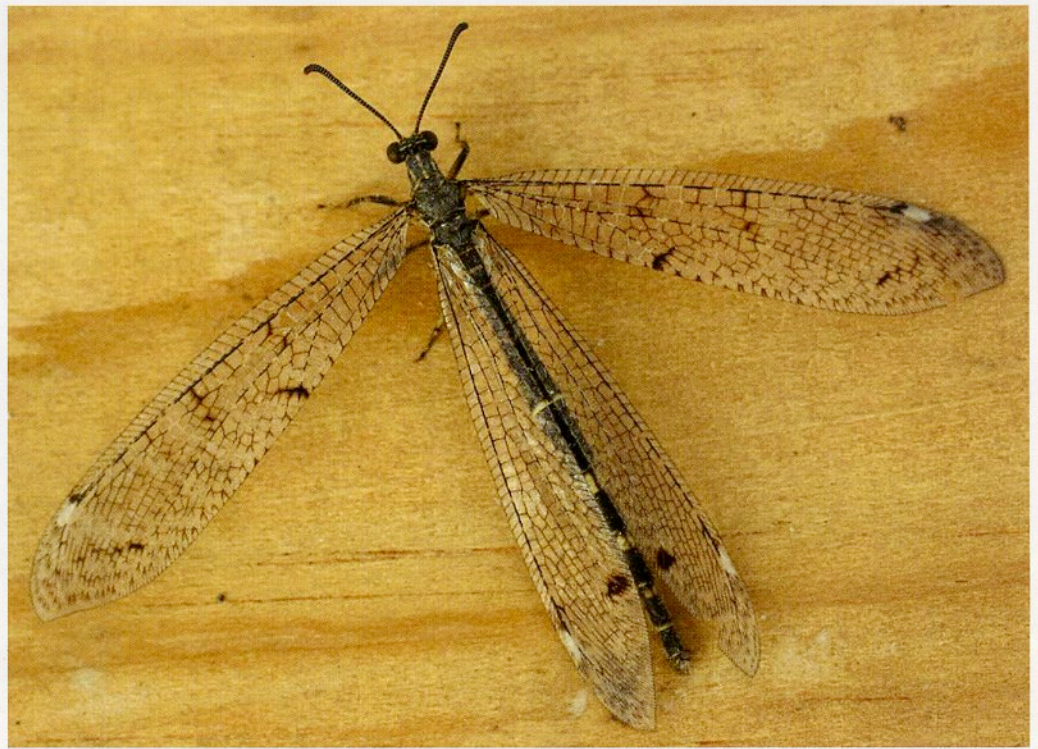
Doodle Up, Doodle Down

By David Ball

If you grew up in rural West Virginia during the days of one-room schools, you're sure to know about *doodlebugs* and how to get them to respond to your voice command. It was a tradition and favorite pastime for many young students in country schools during recess and lunchtime. I suppose harassing the little insects was handed down from generation to generation. It was a fascinating time for young minds to watch the doodlebug larvae emerge from little pocks in the dirt.

Little doodlebug mounds were common in our rural area. The small pits resembled miniature volcanoes complete with the blow hole in the center, except there was no eruption of lava or tectonic shift of the earth's plates. To my knowledge, there was only one occupant per mound, and it stayed in the mound tunnel until it was enticed to come to the surface.

With our knees on the ground and heads bent over the selected little pile



An *antlion* in the larva stage (left) and as an adult (right). Courtesy of *Hechtonicus* and *entomartln*.

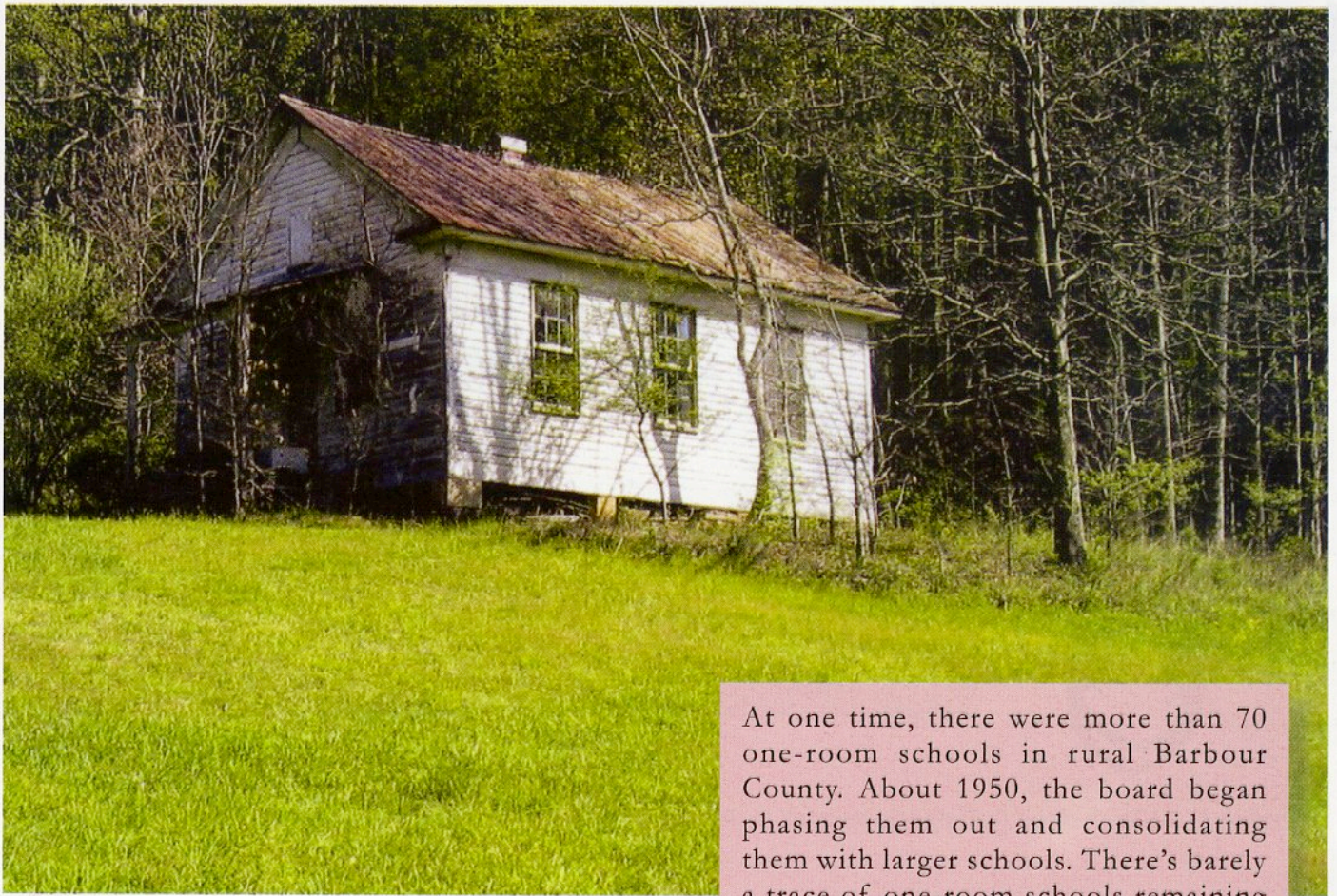
of dirt, we'd hear, "Doodle up – Doodle up – Doodle up," and in a short time, we'd usually see a little movement in the grains of sand, and then this prehistoric-looking creature would appear. Once another student saw it, our mission was accomplished. We'd call the retreat command for the bug: "Doodle down – Doodle down – Doodle down." It's always been a mystery how that process worked. Perhaps it was a combination of voice vibration and the warm moist breath of the speaker.

Folks around Moatsville, Clemtown, and Kasson and other rural communities in Barbour County may not have talked much about the scientific nomenclature and behavioral characteristics of the mysterious creatures that lived in little sand pits, but they were experts in getting doodlebugs to heed their commands.

At Huffman Grade School, we weren't that interested in the other biological creatures we were supposed

to be studying. But when it came to *doodlebugging*, we were regular Mickey Mantles. I don't recall being taught that *antlions* (doodlebugs) belong to the insect family *myrmeleontidae*, and as larvae, they dig a little pit in the soil to trap their prey. We didn't know they were masters at deception in ambushing ants and other insects. We thought the little bugs just died of old age because we didn't know that when the larva reached adult stage, it became a flying insect that buzzed around at night, looking much like a dragonfly. It didn't matter to us that these creatures were found throughout the world because we had plenty of them right outside the schoolhouse door.

We may not have had access to the latest science information or secret mysteries of the world, but the lessons we learned served us well when we joined the workforce in different careers. Can you imagine how the public would react today if they saw a group of school kids



A former one-room schoolhouse at Garner Valley on Route 92, near Taylor City. Photo by our author.

At one time, there were more than 70 one-room schools in rural Barbour County. About 1950, the board began phasing them out and consolidating them with larger schools. There's barely a trace of one-room schools remaining in the county, and the few that remain are deteriorating rapidly.

with their bottoms pointed to the heavens, huddled together on their knees, bending over a little mound of sand, and chanting, "Doodle up – Doodle up – Doodle up" and then "Doodle down – Doodle down – Doodle down?"

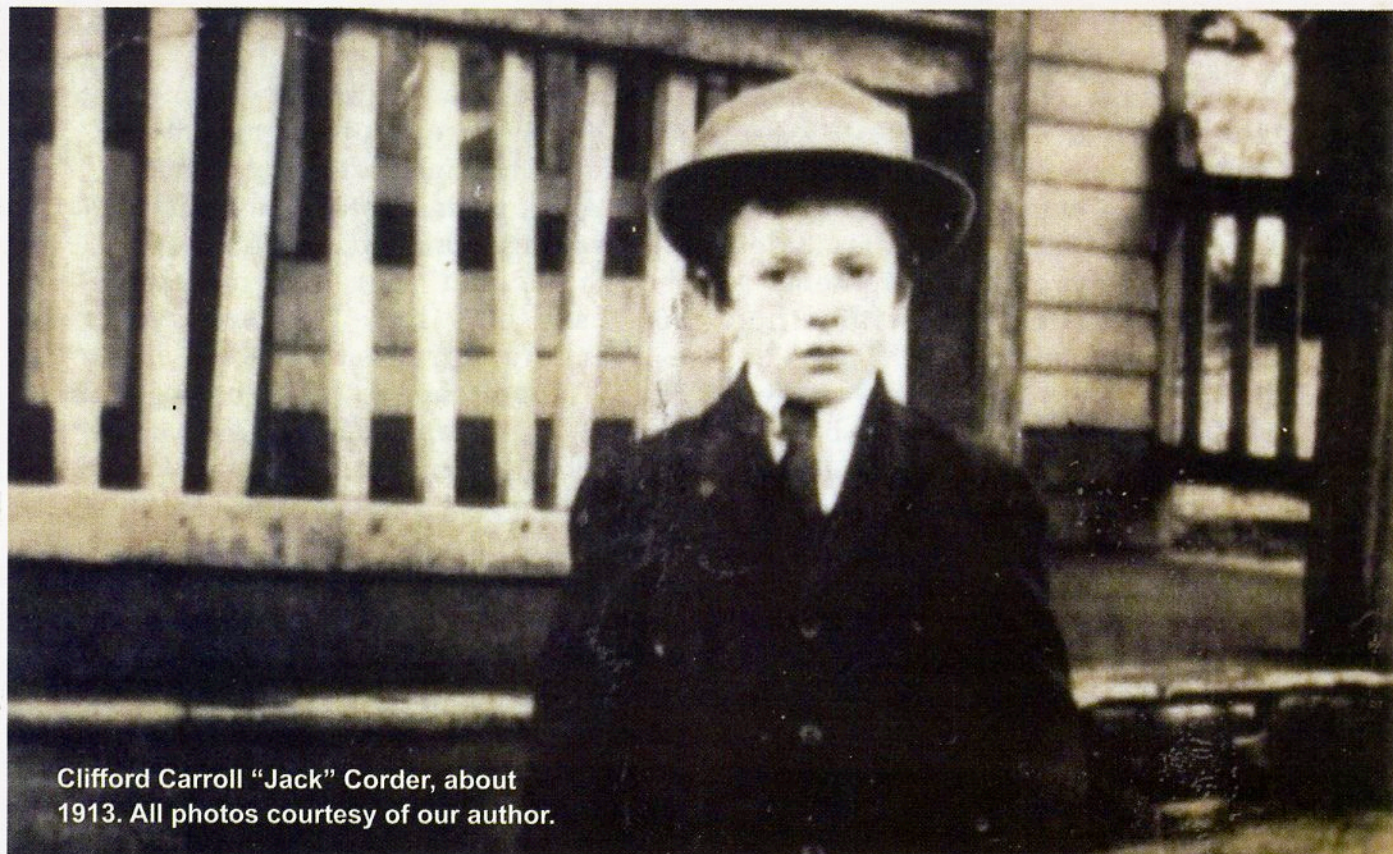
A few years ago, my wife tried to explain and demonstrate her doodlebug expertise to our grandchildren, but there were two problems. First, her knees don't work like they did in her prime *doodlebugging* years, and second, the grandkids' body language clearly showed concern for their grandmother's mental faculties.

In essence, we could all learn a great lesson from the "Days of Doodlebugging" on those rugged little school yards of yesteryear, when kids knew how to find entertainment in nature and marvel at

talking to little bugs in the ground. Yes, life was simpler then, and young minds knew they weren't the only creatures on the planet. Those were wonderful experiences, and we were blessed to be surrounded by truly great people in the beautiful mountains of West Virginia.

"Doodle up – Doodle up, Doodle down – Doodle down!" You're never too old to be a kid again! 🍁

DAVID BALL grew up in Moatsville. He's authored two books of short stories about growing up there: *Ground Hog Dinner* and *Moatsville Stories—An Appalachian Up-bringing*. David and his wife, Henrietta, met in the eighth grade at Kasson High School. After his retirement from the U.S. government in 2002, they returned to the mountains near Moatsville, where they enjoy many hobbies and an abundance of beauty. This is his second contribution to GOLDENSEAL, the first being in our Summer 2017 issue.



Clifford Carroll "Jack" Corder, about 1913. All photos courtesy of our author.

Farmer, Soldier, Teacher, Patriot

By C. Lee Corder

On the frosty, cool, clear, crisp morning of October 29, 1907, in Big Isaac (Doddridge County), Clifford Carroll "Jack" Corder was born at home. Dr. Paul Hugkins, who delivered the new baby boy, was heard to say, "Now that looks like a 'Jack!'" Thus in life, he became known as Jack Corder, the youngest child of Adelbert Thomas and Mary Elizabeth Brown Corder, completing their family of Voy, Charles, Cora, and Clete.

The first eight years of his formal education began in the one-room Hinkle School. In the first grade, not really being interested in education, he ran off from school. An older student, Joe Wilcox, was sent to bring him back, but the story goes that the closer Joe got to Jack, he'd yell, "Run, Jack, run!" It so happened that Joe never caught Jack,

and neither boy returned to school that day.

After completing eighth grade at Hinkle, Jack enrolled in Salem High School. He'd walk from Big Isaac to Salem on Sunday evenings, stay in a boarding house in Salem during the week, and walk back on Friday evenings, regardless of weather. It was a roundtrip of nearly 16 miles per week on foot.

At Salem High, he played in the first football game he'd ever seen. He said that the principal and coach—the one-and-the-same Bud Tish—and Ravenswood High's coach were friends, having attended Salem College (now University) together. In Jack's first game, the Salem team drove to Ravenswood (Jackson County), tying their equipment to the running boards of their Model A Fords. The boys in one

car were sneaking a smoke. When Tish's car caught up with them, they tossed their cigarettes out the windows. One of the errant cigs burned a hole in the rear-end of Burl Cottrill's pants. Salem wasn't carrying any extra equipment, so Burl played the entire game with a hole in the seat of his pants.

In fall 1928, Jack began his college career at Salem College. He again boarded in Salem during the week and walked to and from home at Big Isaac. Back then, he recalled, boarding houses served their suppers "home style," which was all you could eat for a quarter.

After a year in college, Jack began teaching in a one-room school in the Doddridge County community of Greenbrier. He again walked back and forth from his home in Big Isaac every day. He cut off some time by darting across short hills rather than following the main dirt roads. Later, he acquired a horse and said it was the best ride he'd ever had.

He told of living during the Great Depression and said there simply wasn't any money; however, thanks to raising their own food on the farm, he never remembered going hungry. He especially recalled that his mother fixed pumpkins a lot and that they were really good.

In 1930, while attending the spring term at Salem College, he met Gladys Elma Boyce from Greenwood (Doddridge County). They were married on September 30, 1934. It was during the Depression, and two people from the same household couldn't be employed and collect money from the government. So, they lived apart and kept their marriage a secret for many years.

While teaching during the Depression, the county board of education didn't have any money, so its checks were no good. Jack initially put his teaching checks behind the mantel clock, hoping

they'd eventually have value. However, his checks were never honored.

After financial matters got better, they purchased their first farm. World War II was raging, and Jack volunteered, even though he had four deferments: he was 36 years old, had two sons, operated a working farm, and was employed as a schoolteacher. His basic training started at Camp Walter, Texas, and was completed at San Luis Obispo, California. After shipping across the Atlantic, he disembarked at Le Havre with the 97th Division. He never said much about the war but always attended religious services and, like many vets, was very proud of his service but didn't particularly care to talk about it. When the war ended, his outfit was the farthest east of any American forces. He could hear the Soviet guns shelling and the German people running to the west.

After returning from the war and with the help of the *GI Bill*, he completed his bachelor's degree in elementary education from Salem College in 1946. He followed that five years later with a master's in elementary education from West Virginia University. In his career, he was a teacher and/or principal at schools in the Doddridge County towns of Greenbrier, Sperry, Lowther, Double Camp, and Big Isaac and in the Harrison County towns of Liberty and Harden. In total, Jack Corder spent 42½ years working in schools.

Jack and Gladys had two sons: Lynn married Loretta Norman and parented Brad; Lee, another son, and his wife, Sue Ann McDaniel, raised sons Joe and Jeff. After retiring in 1971, Jack continued enjoying his farm, being active in the Big Isaac United Methodist Church, and serving as the community patriarch. Among his favorite retirement activities were playing with his grandkids and putting up hay in the field. With the help

of boys in the community—most of whom he'd taught in school—he'd put his hay in stacks. Then, he'd feed his cattle from the stacks during the winter.

He always kept a flock of sheep and, one time, decided he needed a new ram. I remember it well. Not having a truck wasn't a problem for Dad. He removed the backseat from our old four-door '57 Ford, and, on this day, replaced it with a prize Dorset ram. Dad was as proud as he could be!

Once, he sold a calf to his neighbor and later realized he'd overcharged the fellow by \$1.50. Dad and I got in his 1948 Plymouth Coupe and drove to the friend's farm. Dad then presented his friend with \$1.50.

The family farm, purchased in 1892, has been in our family for three generations. Dad was very adamant that we should never sell it. He always said to keep your land, and if hard times come, you can always raise your own food. He learned that from the Depression.

Like most young chaps, I was sure I needed a car. Dad quietly reminded me you don't need a car until you have a job, and that was the end of the conversation. Graduating from Salem College in May 1965 with my best girl and wife-to-be, Sue Ann, we interviewed with the Ravenswood Education Foundation and were told we'd have jobs in September. Excited, I told Dad we got teaching jobs in Ravenswood and needed a car. Dad, being Dad, reminded me the board still had to approve the recommendations. Finally, we received our official letters of employment. So, Dad and I took off looking for a new ride. When we returned home, I asked him what he thought. Quietly, he said, "It's the closest thing to a Model A Ford I've been in since 1932." Dad didn't know what cool was, but he had it!



Jack Corder (1907 – 1996).

As a true patriot, he always flew the U.S. flag in his front yard and held reveille every morning and retreat each evening. Another highlight of retirement was when his former students would stop, visit, and renew old memories with "Mr. Corder."

Jack Corder passed away in July 1996. He's interred with his beloved wife, Gladys, in Grafton's National Cemetery. They were married 62 years. Thus concludes a blessed life of old school. 🍁

C. LEE CORDER, a lifelong resident of West Virginia, graduated from Doddridge County High School (1960) and Salem College (1965), and resides now in Ravenswood with his wife, Sue Ann. This is his first contribution to GOLDENSEAL.



The Union District History Center and General Store in Aurora. All photos by our author.

Welcome to Aurora, WV 26705!

By Donetta Sisler

We're located on the Northwestern Pike, Route 50, which extends from Ocean City, Maryland, to Sacramento, California. Elevation 2,644. Population 201, although many surrounding communities have the same zip: Amboy, Brookside, Stemple Ridge, and Lantz Ridge. Other nearby towns are Eglon, Horse Shoe Run, Kempton, Hog Back Ridge, and Silver Lake. As you travel down the twisting curves of Cheat Mountain, you'll see Cheat River, known for its gorgeous scenery and frequent floods. Many companies offer kayaking and rafting along the

Cheat, which include Class III, IV, and V whitewater rapids.

Aurora was founded in 1787 by the Rev. John Stough, who helped establish the first Lutheran Church west of the Allegheny Mountains. Our name started as Salem, then Mount Carmel, the German Settlement, West Union, and finally Aurora. The town grew rapidly, although it was still rather secluded because of the rugged terrain.

One of the more unusual stories is from 1833, when a traveling zoo came through town. Their wagon broke down, so they

spent several days doing circus shows with an elephant, lions, tigers, panthers, leopards, monkeys, ostriches, and cranes, while waiting on their wagon to get fixed.

The smallest church in the 48 contiguous states, Lady of the Pines, is located on 219 just a little beyond Eglon and Horse Shoe Run. This structure is fascinating. It was built in 1957-1958 and was christened as "Our Lady of the Pines" by Mr. and Mrs. P. L. Milkint. The building stands only 24 by 12 feet on the outside and 16 by 11 feet on the inside. All contents inside are handmade. It's been used for weddings and various kinds of services. The church is surrounded by pines, walkways, lawn chairs, and flowers. Its beautiful stone work, stained-glass windows, and historic bell have attracted as many as 500-600 visitors on Sundays and, in 1972, was visited by people from 17 foreign countries. It's a popular attraction for tour buses and is open daily.

Next door to the church is the nation's smallest post office where you can deposit mail. At "Timpinog's Wishing Well," you can make a wish and drop in a penny. The proceeds are used for children in need and the poor. *Timpinog's* is an Indian name from Utah. As the legend goes, she'd lost her lover and couldn't find him anywhere. After she dropped pennies in the well, she saw his reflection beside her face but never saw him again. When you look in the well, you will see the heart of *Timpinog's*.

Just a little bit beyond the church is the Fairfax Stone, where the Potomac River begins, eventually winding its way to the Chesapeake Bay. This is the seventh version of the stone because the previous six were damaged by weather and/or vandalized. The land was first acquired by England's King Charles II in 1649. In 1746, Peter Jefferson, Thomas Jefferson's father, helped survey the

boundaries of Maryland and now-West Virginia, establishing the dividing line—at the Fairfax Stone.

The Brookside Community is in the National Register of Historic Places. This district classification includes the Brookside Inn/Gaymont, Brookside Cottages, Cathedral State Park, Brookside Farm, and the Red Horse Tavern. People traveled here on the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad from Washington, D.C., Baltimore, Cleveland, and other cities to gain a nearby summer respite in one of the naturally coolest places in our nation.

Across from Cathedral State Park are cottages owned by the Aurora Project, established in 2001. This organization focuses on artistic and creative projects. In the summer, it hosts events at the Hardesty Store, across from the ambulance hall. Other activities include concerts, photography workshops, the Aurora Barn Dance in October, a car show in September, art exhibitions, and craft workshops. The project's goals are to provide artist residencies, education programs, and workshops in a collaborative manner. For the latest activities, go to www.auroraproject.org. Most of the cottages have been maintained throughout the years, serving as restaurants and lodging.

Though weathered, one of the original Mail Pouch barns is still here. One of the early mass-advertising campaigns by Wheeling's Bloch Brothers Tobacco, most Mail Pouch barns that haven't been restored are quickly fading away.

Also lodged in several of the cottages is Jacob's Ladder, a long-term addiction recovery center. This successful program is portrayed as *Recovery Boys* on Netflix. The boys live and congregate in the cottages during their stay. They can work out, play music, meditate, and meet with trained professionals in treating addiction. In addition, the Brookside Farm is part



Standing only 24 by 12 feet, Lady of the Pines is the smallest church in the 48 contiguous states. It's located near Eglon and Horse Shoe Run.

of the program. The young men walk across the road and help with all aspects of keeping a farm alive. They feed the animals, clean the barns, grow vegetables, and help harvest hay and other crops in the summer. Before the program started, many people in the community protested because they were afraid of its effects. To this day, no crimes or other illegal activities have been reported.

Cathedral State Park is a "natural area of woodland trails." It's noted for its large virgin hemlock trees. The park has a pavilion, which is used for wedding events, receptions, old-time family reunions, and other meetings. It also has a section that includes picnic tables and a fantastic playground. My grandkids love to do the walking trails, trying not to get lost along creeks or among natural rhododendrons. The park has one geocache, and others are nearby.

Red Horse Tavern is also known as Brookside Inn and The Old Stone House. It was built between 1825 and 1827 and

has been used as a tavern, an inn, and currently a home. It's built of rubble stone and was used as an inn for travelers on the Northwestern Turnpike (approximating today's Route 50). This building is also listed in the National Register of Historic Places. It's rumored that George Washington slept here on one of his road trips. The tavern is located adjacent to the Cathedral State Park border.

The Aurora Community Association was formed in 1939 when residents got together to build a structure that could be used for numerous events. Movies were shown weekly before people started getting their own black-and-white TVs. Each movie cost 35 cents and included a drink and popcorn. People traveling Route 50 would stop by to do their performances. All groups could use the kitchen and dining area in the basement to have dinners or raise money. They had penny suppers, where each spoon of food cost a penny. The Rebekah

Lodge #14 and Odd Fellows Lodge held their meetings here. A library was born with extra books given away for free. Handmade quilt shows were also very popular in the summer. "Friendship quilts," where each lady makes a square and embroiders her name, were made. Quilt shows in the summer were a popular event. The building has been refurbished and is free to be used by groups in the community.

The Union District History Center and General Store with Genealogy and Archives of the Aurora Community was established in 2005 by the Aurora Area Historical Society at the Hardesty Store. The former store owner, Oakareta Hardesty, always allowed consumers to charge their purchases until payday, or when the farmers sold their livestock. In the middle was a wood/coal stove. Some men would come by and cut meat to be sold. I saw them eating the meat raw. Eventually, one man got worms, which led to other illnesses. They sold all kinds of penny candy, some of which are still in the showcase of the archives building.

As time went by, the need for a facility to preserve all the history collections became apparent. The new building has a concrete floor, steel construction, R-38 roof insulation, and R-19 wall insulation. In addition, underground electrical service, a heating system, metal studs with drywall petitions for maintenance, rooms/bathrooms, and the archival room have been completed. Hopefully, this new building will protect the archives as they are moved from the community building and general store. This new building was built and constructed by many area residents who provided their time and equipment to make it possible. The new facility is a museum of our area, filled with historical items from all over the district. Residents are constantly donating items.

Today's Lutheran Church was built in 1890. This structure has high ceiling beams, handmade pews, gorgeous stained-glass windows, and a bell tower. The church building is always open.

The counters and numerous products from when the store was in operation are inside the entrance.

The historical society holds numerous fund-raising events during summer. In the past, it produced *Through His Eyes: The Photographs of Vokmar Wentzel* and *With Our Hands: Quilts 1850-1950*. Wentzel attended school in Aurora and was a celebrated photographer for *National Geographic*. Although he lived in Washington, D.C., he came to Aurora many times and helped with community events. His wife now lives up here and is one of the founders of the Aurora Project. This structure, located beside the Community Building, is open on Sundays.

When you come to Aurora, you can dine at Melanie's, our famous restaurant. It's located across from Cathedral State Park and has been reviewed by Trip Advisor as having the best homemade meals you'll ever eat. Do you like liver and onions? A popular entrée is a Preston County mainstay, buckwheat cakes, with sausage, topped with maple syrup.

We're about a half-hour drive from Blackwater Falls State Park, which offers many activities such as trails, sled riding, skiing, rafting, and numerous picnic sites. Canaan Valley is just a few miles beyond as well. And if you're a geocacher, you'll find several in all these locations. 🍁

DONETTA SISLER is a lifelong resident of Aurora. She holds a master's degree in education from WVU and taught business subjects in a high school in Accident, Maryland, for decades. This is her third contribution to GOLDENSEAL—fourth, counting the invaluable assistance she provided with Clarence "Junior" Knotts' "Going in the Hole with Hogs" in our Spring 2018 issue.

Scrap Sculpture

Hancock County's Front-Yard Gallery

Text and photo by Carl E. Feather

Hancock County Artist Ken Sinsel finds great joy in piles of scrap metal, even those left in his driveway while he's at work.

Chances are, the discards were left there by someone who appreciates Ken's pastime of creating art from scrap metal. Ken almost always finds inspiration in these gifts that managed to bypass the scrapyards, Ken's other outlet for art supplies.

"I can use just about any piece of metal that has a shape to it," Ken says.

Ken and his daughter Joy Sinsel are metal artists who work with ferrous scrap and a stick welder in an open-air studio in front of the garage. They create traffic-stopping pieces, some of which have been purchased by the cities of New Cumberland and Weirton as public art.

In just four years, his front yard, in a New Cumberland residential neighborhood along Route 2, went from a prosaic lawn to an art gallery of medieval and science-fiction characters. His *pièce de résistance* is a life-size horse and 15-foot-tall dragon whose throat spews smoke and whose humps and tail undulate above and below the yard.

The outdoor gallery stops traffic and encourages visitation; tire tracks on the tree lawn suggest that at least one gawker almost lost control of his or her vehicle while trying to take in the sights (without slowing down). Across the road, on a precipitous and narrow strip of land overlooking the Ohio River, more creations beckon, including an angular fish priced at \$495.

"Somebody will buy it. It just takes the right person to come along," Ken says.

From the street, these pieces look like well-executed metal sculptures, but their true composition comes into focus once the eyes are close enough to discern the thousands of bolts, springs, hinges, chains, car parts, and tools that comprise each statue. An astute observer will notice that curved surfaces on the sculptures are often common shovels, sans the handle, or in the case of the horse, the base of a log carrier pressed into service as a saddle.

"Somebody gave [it to] me, and that's how I got started on the horse," Ken says as he gives a tour of the gallery. "I just started laying out pieces and seeing how they would go together."

When Ken found several engine pistons in a scrapyard, the horse got his hooves. Between the pistons and ribbons of scrap-metal mane are flywheels, a garden-rake head, tin snips, dozens of wrenches, and a spoon his wife had discarded.

Joy says a frame of sheet metal and bolts undergirds the creation, which was Ken's first after his father-in-law taught him how to use an electric welder.

"Carl Quinn of New Manchester," Ken says. "He had been a certified welder for 35 years, but he was getting sick and talked me into buying (the welder). I'd been a woodworker for as long as I can remember, and he taught me how to weld."

Ken practiced on scrap-metal pieces and soon found himself creating shapes and figures from various found materials. A short time after beginning his hobby,

he asked Joy to assist him by holding a piece while he welded; afterward, she too became interested in creating scrapyard art.

"Now she welds by herself," Ken says of his daughter, 30.

Her works include a scorpion, a pig, flowers, and a catfish. Like her father, she rarely refers to a photo, drawing, or plan. All it takes to get a project going is an unusually shaped piece of scrap that inspires the artists' imagination.

"You look at a piece, a wrench, or a sawblade—or like on the horse, a hubcap—and you think of animals that might have an anatomy like that. And then you start looking for other shapes that would (express) that anatomy," Ken says of the creative process.

Depending on what scrap they have on hand, a small sculpture can come together in a matter of days once the creativity is flowing. Joy says her father will work from early morning until dark once he gets moving on a sculpture. Other pieces, such as the dragon, have required a year or more of scrounging for the right scrap.

Once a week, Ken and Joy cross the river to Steubenville, Ohio, and rummage through the scrapyard. Material from defunct steel mills in the region ends up at the yard, and Ken finds all manner of hand tools and large hardware pieces mixed in with less-inspiring scrap.

"A lot of people will say 'How come you are using all those good tools in these things?'" Ken says. "But I got my own tools, so I don't need these." Among the unusual tools Ken and Joy have used are a Model T Ford wrench and various gauges and precision-machining tools.

Ken says they rarely cut a custom shape or modify an existing piece to make it fit. They prefer to work with the natural curves and angles of the scrap as they find it: everything from a gas-pump nozzle to kitchen-knife blades, from car springs to an engine's oil pan.

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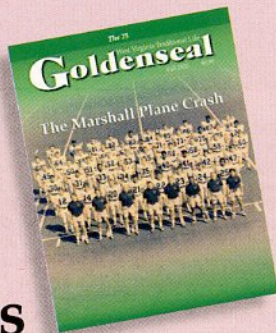
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Stan Bumgardner, Editor

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Ken and Joy Sinsel in their Scrap Sculpture Gallery.

The gallery is organic and evolving. At one point, he had an alien and a flying saucer, but medieval themes have dominated ever since he made the dragon, knight, horse, and castle wall sculptures. He trimmed the top of the hedge at an angle to reinforce the sculptures' theme.

It's an eclectic mixed exhibit. Standing next to the knight is a science-fiction alien with a smaller alien emerging from his chest and peering through some rusty binoculars. The alien holds a laser gun, made of a motorcycle muffler and engine crankshaft.

Ken and Joy accept commissions, and many of the pieces are for sale, at the right price. Any income goes for welding supplies and scrapyards purchases. Although the yard pays eight cents a pound for scrap metal, Ken's buying price is nearly double that. That's why he always welcomes random buckets, scrap, or other raw material left in his driveway.

Some of the scrap comes from folks who stop to admire the work and later return to donate their own scrap heaps. In addition to passersby on the busy street, Ken gets geocaching traffic. Coordinates (*spoiler alert*) lead digital treasure hunters to his yard, where a padlocked ammunition case contains the cache. The padlock's combination is revealed through a series of riddles found in the yard.

"It's amazing," said Steubenville's Tom Emery, who crossed the Ohio with his daughter Kayla Frantis to poke around the sculptures and look for clues. With a little assistance from Ken, he cracked the code and found, among other things, a flint arrowhead in the box.

Ken's interest in geocaching, however, is in the treasure of people who stop to admire the sculptures. "A lot of people tell me they like it," Ken says. "And that's what keeps me going." ❁



Jude Binder. Photo
by Chuck Conner.

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