

West Virginia Archives & History NEWS

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WEST VIRGINIA
DIVISION OF
CULTURE & HISTORY

From the Editor:

Reduced budget for gifts this year? Consider giving inexpensively framed copies of treasured family photographs or copies of old photographs of memorable sites in your family's hometown. Compile a booklet with copies of newspaper articles relevant to your family's history: sporting events, engagement and wedding announcements, ads for family businesses, birth announcements, club events, graduations, etc. How about the front page of the local paper for each sibling's birth date? A one-page family tree chart to be framed or inserted into a baby book or wedding album is a thoughtful gift, too. Already given your family's tree? Research the in-laws for your grandchildren!

MYHF Annual Conference a Success

Mining Your History Foundation (MYHF) members and others who attended the annual conference on November 15, held in the Green Room of The Cultural Center in Charleston, enjoyed learning about West Virginia resources in the Philadelphia Branch of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) as presented by NARA archivist Jefferson Moak. Mr. Moak spoke about the federal records available for West Virginia counties both in original form and on microfilm, including naturalization records, river navigation and commerce, maps, bankruptcies and a wide range of court cases involving businesses, patents, and more. Ways in which these historical records are of benefit to genealogists as well as historians were explained, such as the fact that many of the bankruptcy records include lists of creditors that include personal names and occupations, and maritime records may include information on boat crews. Mr. Moak suggested that researchers visit the NARA Web site (<http://www.archives.gov/>

[midatlantic/](http://www.midatlantic/)) for additional information, search the online Archival Research Catalog (<http://www.archives.gov/research/arc/>), and file requests for documents ahead of time in preparation for visiting the Philadelphia branch. He also brought copies of two large maps in the Mid-

Atlantic NARA collection for donation to the West Virginia Archives and History Library: *Map of Kanawha, New River, Logan and Mingo Coal Fields of West Virginia*, by Clark & Krebs in 1913, and a survey map of Upshur County land plats involved in an 1882 court case.



Photograph courtesy of Diana Schwab

Family Tree Publishes West Virginia State Research Guide

Family Tree magazine has been publishing a series of state research guides featuring two states per month. The January 2009 issue features West Virginia and South Dakota. The West Virginia research guide was written by Emily Anne Croom, a well-known author of genealogy how-to books. We welcome the publicity for West Virginia genealogy resources and hope the article will kickstart the research efforts of anyone who has been unsure how to begin family history research in records for the Mountain State. The article's introduction briefly summarizes events leading to West Virginia statehood in 1863, and concludes with the question: "This contentious beginning often leads to [sic] genealogists to wonder: Where should I look for records?" The research guide answers this question, but with

some vagueness and a few errors. Although stating that the West Virginia counties retained their pre-statehood records, the *Family Tree* guide does not make it clear that genealogists seeking records for persons who lived within the borders of Virginia counties that in 1863 became part of West Virginia can do almost all of their research using West Virginia resources.

We hope that researchers will look first at the "Fast Facts and Key Resources" page of the article, since the very first line on that page states: *The best online source of data for genealogical searches is the West Virginia State Government Archives and History home page, located at <http://www.wvculture.org/history>.* In general, we humbly assert that the West Virginia Archives and History Library would be the best place to start any genealogical research of West Virginia families for most researchers, whether online, in person or by mail. The Archives Library is the *only* alternative source to the West Virginia Dept. of Health for uncertified state vital registration birth, death and delayed birth certificates (with some limitations). For explanatory information about locating and accessing vital records, see the *Quick Guides* to births, deaths and marriages linked on our Web site at <http://www.wvculture.org/history/wvsamenu.html>, as well as the complete articles about these records in *West Virginia Archives and History News* as cited at the bottom of each *Quick Guide*.

The list of organizations and archives included in "Fast Facts and Key Resources" mistakenly includes the West Virginia Historical Society (WVHS). WVHS does not maintain a research library or office, provides no research services, and forwards

all inquiry letters received to the West Virginia Archives and History Library for response. Two organizations not listed that offer multi-county resources and research are the Greenbrier Historical Society and Hacker's Creek Pioneer Descendants, both of which have libraries and offer research assistance. Contact information for these societies and many more can be found at <http://www.wvculture.org/history/histsocs.html>.

Finally, a misconception in the article offers *Archives and History News* the opportunity to spotlight an interesting phenomenon researchers have come to realize regarding birthplace as reported in the Federal censuses of 1870 through 1930. The guide incorrectly states "Remember, ancestors born before 1863 likely

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History Day Advisories

- If your organization has not received the recent Archives and History mailing of History Day information and forms, please visit the Archives and History Web site at <http://www.wvculture.org/history>, where full information is posted in a printable format, or call (304) 558-0230 to request a packet be mailed to you.
- Participants and visitors for History Day on March 5, 2009, who are traveling to Charleston and planning to spend one or more nights in town are advised to make room reservations soon. In addition to the Legislature, the West Virginia state boys' basketball tournament will be in town that week, so rooms will be in short supply and should be reserved well ahead of time.

Archives Library Has New TV Setup

With the assistance of a generous donation from the Friends of West Virginia Culture and History, the West Virginia Archives and History Library has acquired a new 32" screen high definition television. The Archives has also purchased a new DVD/videocassette player and headphones. The setup is to be used for viewing video resources in the Archives Collection. Commercially produced DVD and VHS videos by and about West Virginia and West Virginians are available, as well as cuts of newsreel film, television videotape, home movies, etc., prepared by moving images archivist Richard Fauss for easy public access in the Library's Reading Room. Currently we are running slide shows of photographs from our collections for your enjoyment when the set is not in use by a patron. If the slide shows prove of interest to library visitors, they may be continued.

named Virginia as their birthplace in those censuses.” It is true that in 1870 most West Virginia respondents born before 1863 were identified as born in Virginia, while children born 1863 to 1870 were listed as born in West Virginia. Some people who were born in Virginia counties that became West Virginia counties, but who had moved away before West Virginia statehood, continued to identify their birthplace as Virginia for their lifetimes. By the 1880

census and every census thereafter, however, *almost all native residents of Virginia counties that became West Virginia counties at statehood identified themselves as being born in West Virginia*, regardless of year of birth being before 1863. If someone living in West Virginia after 1870 identified himself or a parent as born in Virginia, with the exception of a very few die-hard Confederates and historical nitpickers, that person meant “Old” Virginia.



Courtesy of Diana Schwab

Cecil H. Underwood: West Virginia Governor and State Archives Benefactor Dies

By Mary E. Johnson

On November 24, 2008, the State of West Virginia lost its 25th and 32nd governor when Cecil Harland Underwood died at the age of 86. The Tyler County native was one of West Virginia’s most prominent Republican leaders for much of the last half of the 20th century. In addition to serving two terms as governor nearly forty years apart (1957–1961, 1997–2001), making him both the state’s youngest and oldest governor, Cecil Underwood was a member of the West Virginia House of Delegates from 1945 until he became governor and also served as minority leader from 1949 to 1956. In the last year of his first term as governor, he ran for the U.S. Senate but lost to Jennings Randolph in the November 1960 election. Underwood failed in gubernatorial bids in 1964, 1968, and 1976, then seemingly retired from politics for twenty years only to re-emerge in 1996 and re-take the governor’s office from a divided Democratic Party.

With Underwood’s passing, the West Virginia State Archives also lost a friend. Cecil Underwood was the first governor to give all his official papers to the State Archives. In ceremonies held at the Cultural

Center on January 26, 1979, he presented more than 80 cartons and 15 file drawers of material to the State Archives, with Gov. Jay Rockefeller accepting Underwood’s donation on behalf of the state.

Underwood placed no restrictions on use of his papers: “I ran an open administration when I was in the governor’s office and I see no point in putting a lock on it 20 years later.” Spanning a political career that began when Cecil Underwood was elected to the West Virginia House of Delegates in 1944 and, at the time, extended to his run for governor in 1976, Underwood’s donation included correspondence, speeches, photographs, scrapbooks, and clippings that document not only his legislative and first-term gubernatorial years but also the four political campaigns between 1960 and 1976. In addition, the collection contains much material on other civic and professional activities during the 1960s and early 1970s.

“We have to feel proud that Governor Underwood considered us to be worthy enough to be entrusted with the care of his life’s work,” Archives and History Director

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Wes Cochran Donates Family History Collection

Wes Cochran, a longtime supporter of the West Virginia Archives and History Library, has donated his large personal collection of books and manuscripts of family histories, the majority having West Virginia connections. Most of the material in manuscript form was suitable for binding as books, and has been sent to the bindery. Once returned sometime in December, the newly bound books will be cataloged and shelved in the Reading Room, alongside the already cataloged published family histories. Mr. Cochran also generously continues to donate a copy of each of his published genealogy resource books upon completion, including transcriptions and indexes of census, marriage, death and birth records, as well as obituaries. In addition to his books, he is known to many West Virginia genealogists as president of the Mining Your History Foundation.

Archives and History News
is available on the
Archives and History Web site
<http://www.wvculture.org/history/ahnews/ahnews.html>

Rodney A. Pyles noted at the time. "I hope that his action will encourage other governors and public officials to deposit their papers in the State Archives where they can be permanently preserved and made available to historical and political researchers."

In 2002, Cecil Underwood made an additional gift of 33 boxes of personal papers, and more than 200 boxes of gubernatorial papers from his second term were transferred to the West Virginia State Archives from the Governor's Office. (Starting with the Rockefeller Administration, governors' papers are required to be deposited in the State Archives as state government records; previously, they were considered the personal property of the governor, who could dispose of them as he wished.)

Those interested in learning more about former governor Cecil H. Underwood should check the Archives and History Web site at <http://www.wvculture.org/history/underwood.html>. In addition to the text of his 1957 and 1997 inaugural speeches, video clips from both terms are available for viewing. There also are links to finding aids for papers from Underwood's second term as governor (Ar1912), papers from his earlier career (Ar1803), and the latter collection's associated photographs (Ph87-124). Processing of photographs from Underwood's second term is nearly complete, and a finding aid to that collection will be added to the Web in the near future.

Randolph County Courthouse 200th Anniversary Celebration

Beverly, West Virginia, will be celebrating the holidays and the 200th anniversary of the Randolph County courthouse on December 6 with a grand opening of *The Beverly Courthouse* exhibit and other activities. Newsletter readers may

Delf Norona Museum Celebrates 30th Anniversary

Grave Creek Mound Archaeological Complex in Moundsville will celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Delf Norona Museum on Wednesday, December 3. Originally named the Delf Norona Museum and Cultural Center, the facility opened on December 3, 1978. The new museum was a much anticipated replacement for the small stone museum located at the southern foot of the Grave Creek Mound. The museum was named for a local amateur archaeologist, Delf Norona, who had been one of the founders of the West Virginia Archaeology Society and curator of the old Mound Museum until his death in 1974. Visitors are invited to view a special exhibit entitled *Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow: Celebrating the 30th Anniversary of the Delf Norona Museum 1978-2008*. The museum is open to the public free of charge. For more information, contact Andrea Keller, cultural program coordinator for Grave Creek Mound, at (304) 843-4138, ext. 202, or e-mail her at andrea.keller@wvculture.org.

be especially interested in a local history book sale at the Randolph County Museum, and a living history presentation of Christmas 1863 in the Chenoweth home with music and readings from the wartime letters of the family. Reservations for the presentation are required; call (304) 636-2650. For more information, call (304) 637-7424, or visit <http://www.historicbeverly.org>.

Riding the Rails Exhibit at Logan

The Museum in the Park at Chief Logan State Park has unveiled a new free exhibition entitled *Riding the Rails: Railroads Connecting West Virginia*. The *Riding the Rails* exhibition has text panels detailing railroad development in West Virginia. As early as 1830, western Virginia had several companies proposing the construction of various types of transportation including railroads, but the Virginia General Assembly opposed all the plans fearing that westward development would draw business from eastern Virginia cities such as Norfolk and Richmond. Once West Virginia became a state, all that changed and railroads and river transportation became the primary means to move large and heavy products.

The exhibit contains artifacts from the West Virginia State Museum collection, including tongs, side shears, nippers, claw hammers, a coal shovel, rail spike pullers, a C&O Adlake Kero Lantern, a C&O Yellow Dog Lamp, and a B&O Railroad compartment plate, cup, and saucer for use in the dining car. The display also has a photograph display courtesy of the museum collection, the Del. Lynwood "Woody" Ireland (R-

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Calendar of Events

Please check our web site (<http://www.wvculture.org/history>) for genealogical and historical society meeting announcements, and for more complete information on activities listed below.

RECORDS MANAGEMENT AND PRESERVATION BOARD MEETING,
December 3: Kingwood.

DEL NORONA MUSEUM 30TH ANNIVERSARY, December 3:
 Grave Creek Mound Archaeological Complex, Moundsville.

INDEPENDENCE HALL HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE, December 6: Wheeling.

“THE BEVERLY COURTHOUSE” EXHIBIT, December 6: Beverly Heritage Center, Beverly.
 For more information, call (304) 637-7424 or visit <http://www.historicbeverly.org>.

CHRISTMAS EVE, December 24: Archives Library is scheduled to *close at 1:00 p.m.*
 Call before coming.

CHRISTMAS DAY, December 25: Archives Library will be *closed*.

HISTORY HERO NOMINATION DEADLINE, December 31: Postmarked or hand-delivered.
 Regarding hand-delivery, please note that The Cultural Center will be closing at 1:00 p.m. on December 31.

NEW YEAR’S EVE, December 31: Archives Library is scheduled to *close at 1:00 p.m.*
 Call before coming.

NEW YEAR’S DAY, January 1, 2009: Archives Library will be *closed*.

MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY, January 19, 2009: Archives Library will be open*.

HISTORY DAY EXHIBIT/TABLE REGISTRATION DEADLINE,
February 13, 2009: Postmarked or hand-delivered.

PRESIDENTS DAY, February 16, 2009: Archives Library will be open*.

HISTORY DAY, March 5, 2009: The West Virginia State Capitol and The Cultural Center, Charleston.

**Only the Archives Library will be staffed—all other Archives offices will be closed.*

The West Virginia Library Commission Library in the Cultural Center is closed weekends and all holidays.

Ritchie) Collection, and the West Virginia State Archives Photograph Collection.

For more information about the *Riding the Rails* exhibit or Museum in the Park, contact Elizabeth Williams, site manager at the Museum in the Park, at (304) 792-7229. The museum is open Tuesday through Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and Sunday from 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

WVH Museum Parking Lot Closed in December

West Virginia Independence Hall Museum in downtown Wheeling will close the parking lot on 16th Street during the month of December while the American Electric Power Company installs a new underground utility vault beneath the brick pavement. The facility will maintain

its normal operating hours. There will be limited metered parking available. The parking lot is scheduled to reopen sometime in January 2009. For more information, call Melissa Brown, WVH site manager, at (304) 238-1300.

West Virginia Division of Culture and History
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West Virginia
Archives & History
NEWS



We would love to hear from you.

Let us know what you find helpful in the newsletter, and what new topics you would like covered. Contact *West Virginia Archives and History News* Editor Susan Scouras, (304) 558-0230, Ext. 742, or by e-mail: susan.scouras@wvculture.org.

Archives and History Staff

Joe Geiger	Acting Director (Historian, Web page)
Debra Basham	Archivist (photographs, special collections)
Constance Baston	Researcher (Veterans Memorial Archives)
Greg Carroll	Historian (Civil War, Native American history)
Dick Fauss	Archivist (microfilm and moving images collection)
Denise Ferguson	County Records Archivist
Allen Fowler	Special projects
Elaine Gates	Library Assistant (microfilming and microfilm repairs)
Ed Hicks	Photo Archivist (archival photography, darkroom)
Mary Johnson	Historian
Terry Lowry	Library Assistant (Veterans records)
Cathy Miller	Library Assistant (WV State documents)
Harold Newman	Library Assistant (microfilming, Revolutionary War)
Susan Scouras	Librarian (cataloging, Kentucky, library collection, newsletter editor)
Jaime Simmons	Library Assistant (records of the 1700's and early 1800's, Pennsylvania)
Bobby Taylor	Library Manager
Nancy Waggoner	Secretary
Bryan Ward	Acting Assistant Director
Part time	Matt McGrew
Volunteers	Carolyn Conner, Bill Kelley, James Wilburn, Sue Shank, Charlotte Thurston, Ken Bailey, and Mary Alice Johnson

This newsletter is a publication of : The West Virginia Division of Culture and History
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