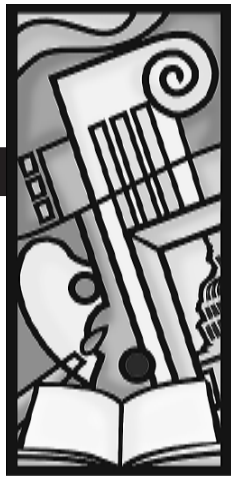


# West Virginia Archives & History NEWS

VOLUME IX, No. 2 APRIL 2008



WEST VIRGINIA  
DIVISION OF  
CULTURE & HISTORY

## From the Editor:

*The Archives and History Library receives many “drop-in” visitors during the spring and summer travel season.* In order to make best use of their often limited time, researchers are urged to visit our Web site at [www.wvculture.org/history](http://www.wvculture.org/history) or call the Library Reference Desk at (304) 558-0230, Ext. 168, to learn about available resources. Researchers should have in mind specific questions to be explored, and determine locations and dates (or reasonable guesses) on which to base searches. The more prepared the patrons are, the better able the staff will be to assist them in finding what they need to know quickly, while wife/husband/cousin waits in the car, anxious to get back on the interstate.

## Tips for Reading and Printing from Microfilm

Researchers either love microfilm or hate it, some going to the microfilm first thing and others using it only as a last resort. A few people simply refuse to use it, thereby eliminating the largest source of primary resource documents readily available to them. Here are a few tips to improve microfilm reading and printing experiences for those who use microfilm regularly, and to encourage non-users to give it a try. While written with users of the West Virginia Archives and History Library in mind, most tips offered here are general advice that should help you in using microfilm anywhere.

- Our staff is here to help you. If you have never used microfilm before, tell the staff and ask for assistance. If you haven't used microfilm for some time, or if the available machines are unfamiliar to you, ask the staff for a refresher course of instruction. You won't be interrupting us or taking us away from “more important” work—serving your needs is our priority.
- All microfilm readers and reader/printers are not created equal. If

you don't like the way one machine operates or the image it produces, try another machine.

- Some machines project the image down onto a flat or slightly slanted horizontal surface, and others use rear-projection onto a vertical screen. Depending on one's vision and the type of corrective lenses worn, you may decide that either horizontal or vertical works best for you. Wearers of graduated lenses or bifocals may find vertical screens easier to read. Currently in the Archives and History Library, all of the readers have horizontal reading surfaces and all of the reader/printers have vertical screens. Patrons will need to check with the library staff regarding availability of machines before setting up to read only at a reader/printer.

- Try different areas within a microfilm reading room or in a row of machines, since the ambient lighting of the room, light coming through windows or doors nearby, light from an adjacent reader, etc., may affect your ability to read the projected film images well.
- Most machines have two light settings, high and low. Don't automatically use high. Try each setting for a few frames on each roll of film you view, then choose the better setting.
- If you have problems focusing while reading microfilm, or if all the letters seem to run together on you, choose a machine with horizontal projection and place a piece of colored paper on the viewing surface. Usually pale to medium shades of blue or green paper work best, but experiment to find what suits you. Archives and History staff can usually provide a few sheets of colored paper.
- Believe it or not, magnifying glasses can be used in reading

The  
Archives and History Library  
will be closed on  
Primary Election Day,  
Tuesday, May 13, 2008.

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microfilm, even with horizontal screens with the image projected from above. Archives and History Library patrons can borrow magnifying glasses from the Reference Desk.

- If rolling microfilm causes motion sickness, look away from the viewing area while moving the film. Stop at intervals to see where you are on the reel, and continue until you are close to the image you need. This may take a little more time than watching the images roll past, but your head and stomach will appreciate it. If you do become ill, don't be embarrassed—you will be one of many!
- When printing an image, if the film has lots of scratches and smudges, if the image itself has dark spots and overly bright spots, or if the quality of the original item was poor but not faint, do not use a digitizing reader/printer if you have a choice of machines. The digitizing process will fill in between all the lines, dots and smudges, resulting in illegible dark areas on the prints. A non-digitizing reader/printer that simply copies the image as is tends to produce a more legible copy in this case.
- On the other hand, if printing an image that is fairly clean, but is faint, do use a digitizing reader/printer. Here is where the digitizing process comes in handy to fill in the white areas in faint handwriting, print or photograph to produce a more legible copy.
- If the image itself has dark spots and overly bright spots, recognize that you may have to make two copies of a page, one light and one dark, in order to be able to read the entire page.
- Most modern reader/printers have an automatic setting for

identifying negative (white images on black background) or positive microfilm (black images on white background) in use. When copying a page with a large area of contrast, such as a dark photograph in a page of newsprint on positive microfilm, or an extensive light area on negative microfilm, don't rely on the automatic setting. Select the type of film you are using before hitting the print button, since the machine often misinterprets this type of image and will print the opposite. If you mistakenly end up with a negative image from positive film, or vice versa, when using machines in the Archives and History Library, ask a staff member to replace the copy for you with a corrected image. We will do so at no extra charge. If you have already taken the film off the machine, we can put your negative copy on the regular photocopier and produce a reversed positive image.

- Another trick for making a legible image is to print in reverse on purpose. Sometimes a faint positive image may be more legible when printed as a negative.
- Be sure to place the reel of film on the machine properly. When using an unfamiliar model, look for diagrams on the machine, or request assistance from a staff member. All Archives and History Library microfilm readers are loaded with the film running from the bottom of the left reel onto the bottom of the right reel, like a "W", while all our reader/printers are loaded with the film running off the top of the left reel onto the top of the right reel, like an "M".
- When using 16mm film, be sure to adjust the machine to accommodate the narrow reel, if the reader has an adjustable "backstop" on the spindle or if the reader/printer has adjustable feeder rollers. On all readers and printers, be sure to put the film

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## **Civil War Trails Program Comes to West Virginia**

The West Virginia Division of Tourism is partnering with Civil War Trails Inc. ([www.civilwartrails.org](http://www.civilwartrails.org)) to implement a statewide Civil War signage and tourism marketing project using the same brand of interpretive signs commonly found along highways in Virginia, Maryland, North Carolina and Tennessee. The Division of Tourism is paying for the purchase and installation of the first 150 qualifying Civil War sites in the state. As we approach the sesquicentennial (150th) commemoration of the Civil War in 2011 and of West Virginia statehood in 2013, the new signs and accompanying promotion will benefit West Virginia tourism and history-related activities. For information on what types of sites

qualify and how to submit a Civil War site in or near your community for consideration, contact:

Justin Gaull  
Marketing Representative  
West Virginia Division of Tourism  
90 MacCorkle Avenue, SW  
South Charleston, WV 25303  
(304) 558-2200, Ext. 385  
[jgaull@wvtourism.com](mailto:jgaull@wvtourism.com)

**Editor's Note:** While we encourage local communities to boost their Civil War heritage, the Archives and History section of the West Virginia Division of Culture and History is not involved in this program; therefore, please direct all requests regarding the project to the Division of Tourism.

*Continued from the previous page*

all the way against the back of the take-up reel, and rewind at a slower pace. Keep an eye on the film as you fast forward or rewind, and stop immediately if you see a loop of film rise up from the roll. Don't put your hands up to try to stop a reel from spinning—your fingers are more important than the reel! The staff will cope with anything that happens to the film.

- When using 35mm film on an adjustable machine, be sure the machine's rollers and backstop are set for the wider film, since the previous user may have left the machine with 16mm settings in place.
- Please notify the staff immediately if you have any problems with the microfilm or the microfilm machine, especially if the film comes loose while being advanced or rewound. We won't fuss if the whole reel of film has piled on the floor, or even if the film has broken or torn. You won't be asked to pay any damages. The staff will untangle and rewind the film in a manner that will lessen any additional damage, and will take the microfilm for repair.
- Some reels in the Archives and History microfilm collection will not fit on the microfilm readers since all of our readers now have square spindles, and some of the reels still have round holes on one side (the side that needs to slide on the reader spindle). If you encounter a reel with a round hole, please take it to the staff to have the hole squared off to fit the spindle. If for any reason a staff member is unable to do so for you, you may use a reader/printer to view the film, since the film fits on those machines from the opposite

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side and the round hole will not present a problem.

- When the microfilm image is upside down or reversed, make sure you have the film on the machine properly. Most of the time a reel appears to be wound in reverse because the reel has been put on the machine backwards to accommodate a round hole in the reel. If the reel will not fit on the spindle correctly, take it to a staff member. If the image is sideways, adjust it using the handle on the reel carriage of the microfilm reader, or the knob on the front of the reader printer. Don't hesitate to ask for staff assistance.
- Only open one microfilm box at a time and replace the reel as soon as you rewind it. This not only protects the microfilm from incidental dust and damage, it lessens the chance that you will put the wrong reel in the box. Also, when closing the paper boxes, please be sure the box lid fits over the *outside* of the reel and is not resting on the inside of the reel against the microfilm. This helps prevent damage to both the film and the plastic reel. If you find a damaged or unlabeled box, a label falls off or a box lid separates while you are handling it, please give the box to a staff member for repair or replacement.
- The Archives and History Library staff reshelves all microfilm. We

only ask that you return microfilm to the top of the microfilm cabinet closest to the drawers from which the boxes were pulled.

- If you are new to microfilm, think of each microfilm cabinet drawer as a book shelf, and each roll of film as a book or series of books on that book shelf. Some of those microfilm rolls, or segments on those rolls, are indexes only. The book and page number in the actual record book may refer to a book recorded on the same microfilm roll, or to a book recorded on a separate microfilm roll, just as you will find index books on our bookshelves that index entries in

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## **Dr. Philander Chase to Speak on George Washington**

Dr. Philander Chase, editor of the *Colonial Series* of the *Papers of George Washington* and senior editor of the *Papers of George Washington* at the University of Virginia, will discuss George Washington's experiences as a Shenandoah Valley surveyor and landowner in what is now Jefferson County, West Virginia, and how Washington's experiences fostered his commitment to western development and American nationalism. Much of the lecture will be drawn from Dr. Chase's essay, "A Stake in the West: George Washington as Backcountry Surveyor and Landholder," published in *George Washington and the Virginia Backcountry* (Madison, WI: Madison House Publishers, 1998). A question and answer session with the audience regarding Washington's life will follow. The lecture will be hosted by the Byrd Center for Legislative Studies, Shepherd University, Shepherdstown, on April 19, 2008. For more information, call the Byrd Center at (304) 876-5670.

separate volumes. Scan the labels on the microfilm boxes to find the roll containing the book you need to view the actual record.

- The Archives and History Library, with the assistance of the Mining Your History Foundation, has obtained the best possible copies of county court record microfilm and has replaced worn rolls as needed. If you find a roll of film which appears to have become less legible due to use, with physical creases, tears and scratches in the microfilm, please inform the library staff so we can evaluate the microfilm for replacement or repair.

## Aurora Area Historical Society History Center

The Aurora Area Historical Society in Preston County maintains a History Center in the Aurora General Store, a reconstructed general store that also houses genealogy, local history and photograph collections. Genealogy resources concentrate on people who live in the area now or who lived there in the past. Church histories, always valuable to genealogists and historians, cover the Union District. Aurora High School yearbooks spanning 1930 through 1977 are housed here. For lists of available resources, see the "About Us" section of the Society's homepage at [www.auroraareahistoricalociety.com](http://www.auroraareahistoricalociety.com).

The Society does not offer research assistance on a formal basis, and hours of operation for onsite visits vary, but individual arrangements can be made easily by calling the Aurora General Store at (304) 735-3819, JoAnn Helton at (304) 735-5832, or John Adams at (304) 288-6850. The General Store is located on George Washington Highway (Route 50) in Aurora. Address correspondence to Aurora Area Historical Society, P. O. Box 100, Aurora, WV 26705, or [www.aahs@iceweb.net](http://www.aahs@iceweb.net).

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

## Little Lecture Series Features Davitt McAteer on April 27

The West Virginia Humanities Council Little Lecture on April 27 features Davitt McAteer, a West Virginia native and an internationally recognized expert on mine and workplace safety. McAteer will speak about the *Monongah Mine Disaster of 1907* at Hubbard House in Charleston. McAteer is the author of *Monongah: The Tragic Story of the 1907 Monongah Mine Disaster, the Worst Industrial Accident in U.S. History* (WVU Press, 2007).

*Is your West Virginia historical or genealogical organization offering programs or classes about family history or local history?*

*Does your society have a reference library that is open to the public?*

*Does your local public library have a sizeable genealogy and local history collection?*

*West Virginia Archives and History News  
Wants to Know!*

Send information on your activities and services (particularly research services) regarding history and genealogy to:

Susan Scouras, Editor,  
*West Virginia Archives and History News*

[susan.scouras@wvculture.org](mailto:susan.scouras@wvculture.org)  
Archives and History Library,  
The Cultural Center, 1900 Kanawha Blvd., East,  
Charleston, WV 25305-0300

Please include contact information.

## 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.

### **9TH ANNUAL "HOOT OWL" RESEARCH IN THE ARCHIVES,**

**April 4–5:** Sponsored by Mining Your History Foundation,  
West Virginia Archives and History Library, The Cultural Center, Charleston.

### **RELIGIOUS ARCHIVISTS OF THE GREATER KANAWHA VALLEY,**

**April 5:** St. Marks United Methodist Church, Charleston.

### **BLUE AND GRAY RECONCILIATION DINNER, "FROM LINCOLN'S DESK: SECESSION, SLAVERY, AND THE BIRTH OF WEST VIRGINIA, 1861–63,"**

**April 19:** Reception and dinner with talk by Dr. Kevin Barksdale.  
West Virginia Independence Hall, Wheeling. For more information, call (304) 238-1300  
or visit <http://www.wvculture.org/eventdetail.aspx?Id=656>.

### **GEORGE WASHINGTON AS SURVEYOR AND PLANTER LECTURE,**

**April 19:** Dr. Philander Chase, speaker. Sponsored by the Jefferson County Historical Society,  
Friends of Happy Retreat, and the George Washington Institute of Living Ethics,  
Byrd Center for Legislative Studies, Shepherd University, Shepherdstown.

**"ABRAHAM LINCOLN," April 20:** Lincoln portrayer Jim Rubin will read  
Lincoln's April 20, 1863, proclamation of West Virginia statehood effective June 20, 1863.  
West Virginia Independence Hall, Wheeling. For more information call (304) 238-1300.

### **WEST VIRGINIA HUMANITIES COUNCIL LITTLE LECTURE "THE MONONGAH MINE DISASTER OF 1907," April 27:**

Davitt McAteer, speaker. Hubbard House, Charleston.

### **VAUGHAN PRESERVATION AWARDS 9TH ANNUAL RECEPTION AND DINNER, May 5:** Fredrick H. Armstrong, speaker. Wood County Historical and Preservation Society, Parkersburg.

**WVGS GENEALOGY FAIR, May 10:** West Virginia Genealogical Society Library,  
Elkview (Blue Creek). For more information call (304) 965-1179.

**PRIMARY ELECTION DAY, May 13:** Archives Library will be *closed*.

### **WEST VIRGINIA ARCHIVES AND HISTORY COMMISSION MEETING, May 16:** Shepherdstown.

**SPRING CIVIL WAR ENCAMPMENT, May 17:** Jenkins Plantation Museum, Lesage.  
For more information call (304) 762-1059 or visit <http://www.wvculture.org/sites/jenkins.html>.

**VANDALIA GATHERING, May 23–25:** Capitol Complex, Charleston.

**MEMORIAL DAY, May 26:** Archives Library will be *closed*.

*\*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.

West Virginia Division of Culture and History  
 The Cultural Center  
 1900 Kanawha Boulevard East  
 Charleston, WV 25305-0300

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](mailto: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, periodicals)
- Sharon Newhouse ..... Secretary
- 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
- Volunteers ..... Carolyn Conner, Bill Kelley, James Wilburn, Sue Shank, Ken Bailey, Maggie Powers, and Carol Vandevender

This newsletter is a publication of : The West Virginia Division of Culture and History  
 Randall Reid-Smith, Commissioner