



West Virginia Archives & History News



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HISTORICAL HIGHWAY MARKERS

From the Editor:

If you are planning a trip to the West Virginia Archives and History Library this summer to explore your genealogy or to learn more about the history of your home county, I suggest you review several past issues of *Archives and History News* in order to make the best use of your research time:

West Virginia's 55 Counties, August 2000.

Asking the Right Question, December 2000.

Searching Surnames in the Archives Library, January 2001.

Newspaper Research, March 2001.

Tips for Using the Archives and History Library, December 2001.

Archives and History News is available in many West Virginia historical/genealogical society libraries and some public libraries. Text of all issues are available on our Web site: <http://www.wvculture.org/history/news.html>. If you do not have personal access to the Internet, most public libraries provide computers with Internet hookup.

Be sure to call us and/or check our Web site for information on hours, parking and driving directions. We look forward to seeing you!

MARKING OUR PAST:

West Virginia's Historical Highway Markers

The long-awaited new book listing West Virginia historical highway markers is now available. *Marking Our Past: West Virginia's Historical Highway Markers*, has been published by the West Virginia Division of Culture and History. Proceeds from the sale of the book will benefit the **West Virginia State Historical Highway Marker Program** with funds to support the replacement, repair or revision of existing markers.

Markers are listed by county, with title, exact text and general location of each marker given. (Please note that the wording on several markers is obsolete and not acceptable by today's standards. An example is the use of the word "savages" in reference to Native Americans. Outmoded markers have been listed for replacement as funding allows.) Markers are indexed by title and by subject. For example, the marker honoring Mike Fink is listed by its actual title of "Grave of Mike Fink" and also under "Fink, Mike." Black-and-white photographs from the West Virginia State Archives Photograph Collection illustrate the book.

The first historical highway marker authorized by the state of West Virginia was installed in 1937. Earlier markers placed by county historical groups and patriotic societies are also included in the book. As of January 2002, fifty-four approved markers were pending manufacture and placement. Some of them are new markers, some are replacements for missing markers, and a few are revised markers to correct or replace outdated wording.

Marking Our Past: West Virginia's Historical Highway Markers can be purchased at the offices of **Archives and History** in The Cultural Center, Charleston, for \$13.73 (\$12.95 plus \$.78 sales tax), or by mail at our address for \$15.00 by check or money order (sales tax, postage and handling included, *no cash* please). Free copies of the book have been distributed to West Virginia school and public libraries.

FAQs about the West Virginia Historic & Scenic Highway Marker Program

When was the marker program established?

It was implemented in 1934, during the Great Depression, to encourage tourism. The West Virginia Commission on Historic and Scenic Markers worked with the State Road Commission, Works Progress Administration, and Federal Emergency Relief Administration to place 440 markers in 1937 and publish the first guide. After World War II, markers were placed at the sites of most state-run facilities and schools. The West Virginia Historic Commission took over the program in 1963. Since the late 1960s, the program has been managed by the West Virginia State Archives, which is today part of the West Virginia Division of Culture & History.

Does the West Virginia State Archives keep a list of markers?

The State Archives has maintained files on each of the markers. Unfortunately, many of these files were outdated because markers had been moved and road names have been changed. In 1996, the Division of Culture & History was awarded a federal Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) grant to survey the state's highway markers. The result is *Marking Our Past*.

Who pays for the markers?

Most were funded by the state until 1985. All markers placed since then have been funded by groups, or in some cases by private individuals. There are two styles of markers, both of which include the State Seal. The traditional cast aluminum marker is available for \$1,300 with the same inscription on both sides or \$1,400 with a different inscription on each side. An 80-gauge aluminum sign which gives the *appearance* of the traditional marker costs approximately \$350, but will not last as many years. Installation, standards and transportation costs for either type of sign are approximately \$100. All prices are subject to change.

What subjects or events will be considered?

The site, property, district, or community honored with a marker must possess some degree of significance in state or local prehistory (archaeology), history, natural history, architecture, or cultural life. A complete list of guidelines can be obtained from the State Archives

How many markers are there?

Approximately 1,000 markers have been placed in West Virginia. However, the recent survey indicates nearly 30% are no longer standing and a majority of the remaining markers are in need of refurbishing.

How are markers maintained?

There is no dedicated source of state funding to repair or replace markers. Some historical societies and civic groups assume the cost for refurbishing markers in their counties. (Presently the George Rogers Clark marker at Point Pleasant is being refurbished by interested citizens and students.) Missing or damaged markers should be reported to the State Archives

How can I find more information about the markers program?

Please contact Fredrick H. Armstrong, Director, West Virginia Archives and History.

NEW TITLES

Pioneer Families of Lewis County, Kentucky: Indexed: Lewis County Historical Society (KY), 2000.

The Giles, Alleghany (sic) and Jackson Artillery: Keith S. Bohannon, 1990.

Graham's Petersburg, Jackson's Kanawha and Lurty's Roanoke Horse Artillery: Robert H. Moore II, 1996.

The Face of Justice: Portraits of John Marshall: Huntington Museum of Art and Marshall University, 2001.

Wheeling's Finest: A History of Battery "D" First West Virginia Light Artillery: From the Wheeling Daily Intelligencer: Edward L. Phillips, 2002.

The 1930 Federal Population Census: Catalog of National Archives Microfilm: National Archives Trust Fund Board, 2002.

Wheeling West Virginia Districts Map: City of Wheeling, [no date].

The Millenium Library Edition of the Ringo Family History Series: David Leer Ringo, 2002.
One Kanawha Valley Bank: A History: Bill Drennen, [no date].

NOTE: Many recent New Title listings have gone to the bindery to receive hard covers. We expect them back on the shelves around mid-June.

SUMMER REUNION ALERT

Summer is the prime time for all types of reunions—family, school, company, community, church. If your family or organization is holding a reunion, please send a copy of any memory books or videotapes that you produce, whether done by amateurs or professionals. Your photos and memoirs are valuable resources for genealogists and state historians alike. In particular we have many requests for information and photographs of the company towns which once thrived in West Virginia, but we have little in our collection to describe a way of life no longer found in the mountains. Please share your pride in your own personal history with the many people who are unable to attend your gatherings. Making your heritage a part of the Archives collection means that it will be preserved for posterity and available to present and future historians.

TWO COLLECTIONS ADDED TO ARCHIVES PHOTOGRAPHS ON THE INTERNET

As we covered last month, Archives and History has launched a new portion of our Web site devoted to the Archives Photograph Collection. Two new collections will be added in May. The **Bollinger Collection** consists of photographs of the construction of the current West Virginia State Capitol designed by Cass Gilbert. The circa 1900 **Tuck Taylor Collection** includes family photographs, scenic views of the Fayette County area, and coal mining scenes.

This newsletter is a publication of :

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Nancy P. Herholdt, Commissioner

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.

“WE HOPE TO SEE YOU SOON”: A
Collection of West Virginia War Letters.
Exhibit in the Archives and History Library, The
Cultural Center, Charleston.

**JENKINS PLANTATION MUSEUM CLOSED
FOR REPAIRS, APRIL 6-MAY 10.**

**PRESERVATION WORKSHOP WITH
ARCHIVES AND HISTORY STAFF, MAY 11.**
Parkersburg Public Library. Sponsored by Wood
County Historical and Preservation Society.

ANNUAL CIVIL WAR CAMP, MAY 11.
Jenkins Plantation Museum, Green Bottom.

GENEALOGICAL FAIR, MAY 11. West
Virginia Genealogical Society, Elkview.

PRESERVATION WEEK, MAY 13-19.
“Taking a Walk Through History.” Events
throughout the state. For a list of activities see
<http://www.wvculture.org/shpo/presweek02.html>.

PRIMARY ELECTION DAY, MAY 14.
Archives Library will be *open*.*

**INDEPENDENCE HALL MUSEUM’S
FAMILY FUN DAY: CHILDREN’S CIVIL
WAR BOOT CAMP, MAY 15.** Conducted by
15th Ohio Re-enactors, Wheeling.

MEMORIAL DAY, MAY 27. Archives Library
will be *closed*.

**WEST VIRGINIA ARCHIVES AND
HISTORY COMMISSION, JUNE 14.** Regular
meeting. Thomas.

WEST VIRGINIA DAY, JUNE 20. Archives
Library will be *open*.*

**INDEPENDENCE HALL’S WEST VIRGINIA
DAY CELEBRATION, JUNE 20.** Wheeling.

**KENTUCKY RESEARCH WORKSHOP,
JUNE 29:** Eastern Kentucky Genealogy Society,
Ashland.

INDEPENDENCE DAY, JULY 4. Archives
Library will be *closed*.

**Only the Archives Library will be staffed--all
other Archives offices will be closed.* The State

Museum will be open any time the Archives
Library is open. The West Virginia Library
Commission Library in The Cultural Center is
closed weekends and all holidays.

ARCHIVES AND HISTORY STAFF

Fredrick Armstrong: Director

Debra Basham: Archivist (photographs, special
collections)

Constance Baston: Researcher (Veterans
Memorial Archive)

Greg Carroll: Historian (Civil War, Native
American history)

Dick Fauss: Archivist (microfilm and moving
images)

Elaine Gates: Library Assistant (microfilming
and microfilm repairs)

Joe Geiger: Historian (Web page)

Ed Hicks: Photographer (archival photography,
darkroom)

Mary Johnson: Historian (*West Virginia History*)

Terry Lowry: Library Assistant (Civil War)

Jaime Lynch: Library Assistant (records of the
1700's and early 1800's, Pennsylvania)

Cathy Miller: Library Assistant (WV State
documents, periodicals)

Sharon Newhouse: Secretary

Harold Newman: Library Assistant
(microfilming, Revolutionary War)

Pat Pleska: Manager (Veterans Memorial
Archive)

Susan Scouras: Librarian (cataloging, Kentucky,
library collection, newsletter editor)

Bobby Taylor: Library Manager

Nancy Waggoner: Office Assistant

Working on special projects: **Allen Fowler.**

Volunteers: **Carolyn Conner, Bill Kelley, Dale
Newhouse, Angela Tolbert, Bob and Lucile
Foster, and Barry Williams.**

*****WE NEED VOLUNTEERS*****

CALL US TODAY!