



WEST VIRGINIA Archives and History NEWS

From the Editor:

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[http://www.wvculture.org/history/
ahnews/ahnews.html](http://www.wvculture.org/history/ahnews/ahnews.html)**

*This November 11 will be the ninety-second anniversary of the first observance of Armistice Day, declared by President Woodrow Wilson in 1919 as a day to remember those who died in the service of their country and to be grateful for the victory that had come exactly a year earlier with the armistice to end World War I. Originally a day to honor veterans of that war, in the 1950s it became Veterans Day, a day to honor all veterans. In recognition of Veterans Day, this issue of *Archives and History News* features an article by volunteer Pat McClure that looks at bridge naming in West Virginia. Her focus is bridges associated with those who died during one of the twentieth-century conflicts and are included on the West Virginia Veterans Memorial. This Veterans Day, remember that it is a day to honor those men and women who have given of themselves in the service of their country and sometimes paid the ultimate price for their service.*

The Bridges of West Virginia: Have You Ever Wondered?

By Patricia Richards McClure

Question: What do Omer J. Perdue, Clarence C. "Hotty" Herrick, Otmer F. Hodges Jr., Clyde W. "Bobby" Bennett, Oliver Ball Jr., Larry Steven Heater, John Michael Davis, and Roger Lee Byus have in common? Answer: All are United States military veterans whose names are inscribed on the West Virginia Veterans Memorial and who have had West Virginia bridges named in their honor.

For more than a decade, the West Virginia Legislature has made it a practice to show its gratitude to worthy individuals or groups by naming a bridge for them while citing their contributions to the state. Though there is no comprehensive list of all the honorees or bridges so named, a search of the West Virginia Legislature's Web site [[http://www.](http://www.legis.state.wv.us/)

[legis.state.wv.us/](http://www.legis.state.wv.us/)] for House and Senate Concurrent Resolutions by year yields a substantial number of "hits." Among the state's bridges are

those named for Mother's Day (an event for which West Virginia can take credit) and the American Legion. But

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November Tuesday Night Lecture To Explore Beginnings of West Virginia State Police

On November 1, 2011, Merle T. Cole will present "West Virginia State Police: The First Two Decades" at the Tuesday evening lecture in the Archives and History Library. The program will begin at 6:00 p.m. and is free and open to the public.

The West Virginia State Police is considered the fourth oldest state police agency in the United States. Created in 1919 in the wake of postwar fears about Bolshevism and other subversive elements, as well as coalfield lawlessness,

the Department of Public Safety became a reality after a hard-fought battle in the legislature. Its first superintendent was Jackson Arnold, a grandnephew of Stonewall Jackson. Cole will discuss these formative years and the department's history through 1939.

Born in Beaver, Raleigh County, Merle T. Cole graduated in 1969 from Marshall University where his interest in the state police began as a term paper for Dr. Paul D. Stewart's

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state government course in 1965. Cole recently retired after 42 years of federal civil service in the personnel management field. He held a variety of operational and staff positions with U.S. Army Materiel Command, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and U.S. Air Force Systems Command. In 1978, he joined the USDA Agricultural Research Service

in Beltsville, Maryland.

Merle Cole also served as a commissioned officer in the Maryland State Guard from 1985 to 1994, during which time he functioned as battalion public affairs officer, brigade special staff officer, Training Command executive officer, and command historian. He attained the grade of lieutenant colonel before leaving the Guard.

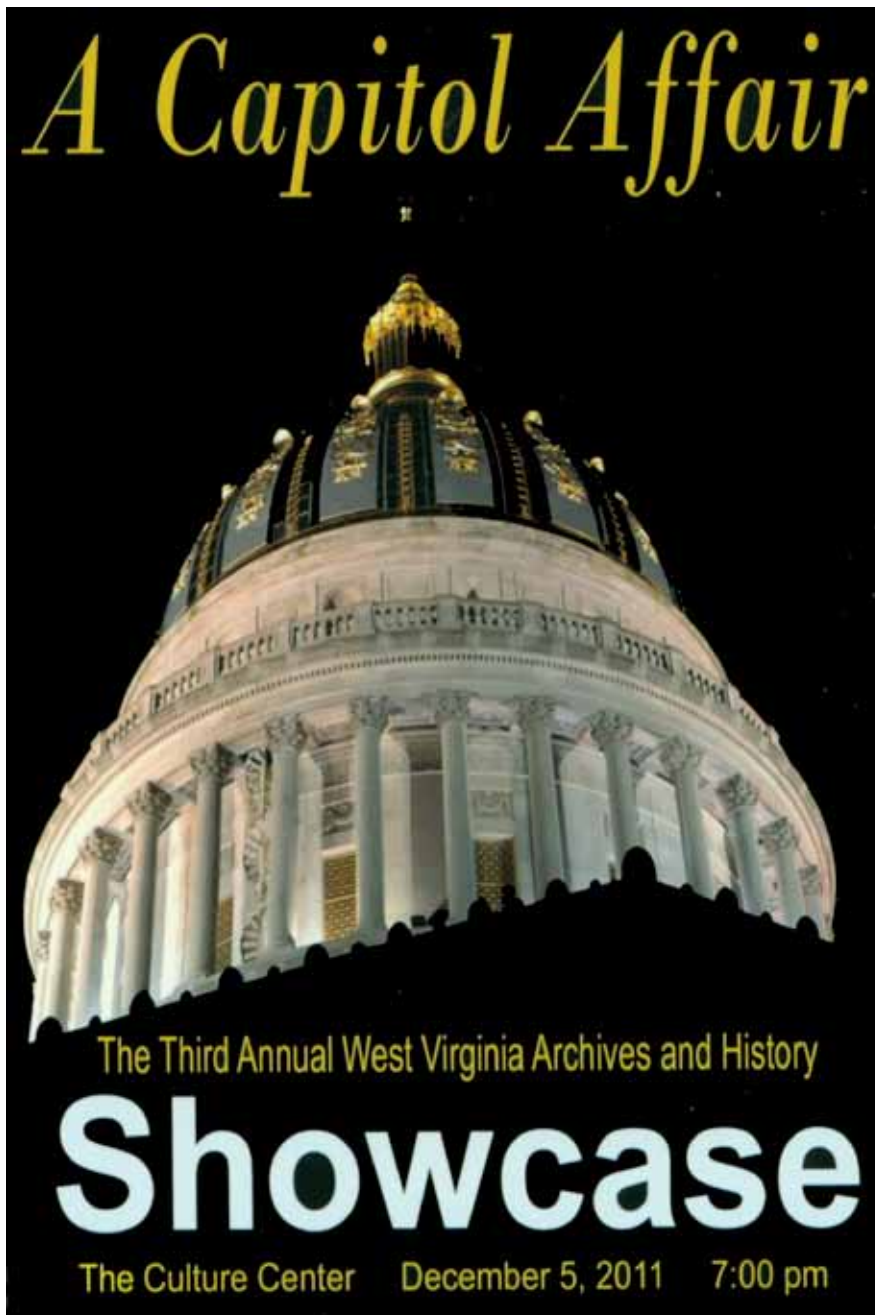
By avocation, Cole is a military, naval, and police historian. He has published 70 articles and monographs in refereed state, national, and international journals. He also created the official agency history Web site for the West Virginia State Police and is a research associate (Military History) with the Calvert Marine Museum in Solomons, Maryland.

On November 1, the library will close at 5:00 p.m. and reopen at 5:45 p.m. for participants only. To register in advance, contact Robert Taylor, library manager, by e-mail at bobby.l.taylor@wv.gov or at (304) 558-0230, ext. 163. Participants interested in registering by e-mail should send their name, telephone number and the name and date of the session. For additional information, contact the Archives and History Library at (304) 558-0230.

[This article originally was prepared by Mary Johnson for the Archives and History Web site based on information provided by Merle Cole.]

Mark Your Calendars: Archives and History Annual Showcase

Archives and History's Third Annual Showcase will be held on Monday, December 5, 2011, in the Great Hall and Archives and History Library at the Culture Center. Items from our manuscript, photographic, and moving images collections will be on display in the library, along with other unique materials. This year's theme is the state capitol, but that won't be the only focus. Once again, we will offer behind-the-scenes tours, refreshments in the Great Hall, and more. The event will begin at 7:00 p.m. on December 5 in the Great Hall. If you haven't attended the Showcase, or even if you have, the event is one not to be missed!



Continued from page 1

more often the structures will bear the name of a beloved community member, such as a football coach, doctor or dentist, law enforcement officer, or emergency service worker. Often the recognition comes after the death of the recipient, but in some cases bridges have been named for living honorees.

With the approach of Veterans Day (November 11), it seems fitting to mention here just a few of the many veterans for whom West Virginia bridges have been named. It has often been said that World War II was fought by a “Band of Brothers,” and nowhere was that phrase more literally true than in the Perdue household. Of the eight sons of Edward Gerard and Grace Kisiah Akers Perdue, six would enlist in the military. (One was past the age of enlistment, and one could not serve because of poor eyesight.) In December 1943, at the height of World War II, five were on active duty—Navy Chief Commissary Steward Walter was stationed in the South Pacific; Riley (William R.) was an Army staff sergeant serving somewhere in France; Army Private James was with the Medical Corps at Camp Upton, New York; Seaman First Class Norman was in the Navy and stationed at Key West, Florida; and Army Sergeant Omer was serving under General Patton in Europe. Omer would lose his life in the Battle of the Bulge. Upon learning of his brother’s death, Seaman Earl, the sixth brother to enlist, joined the Navy during the last year of the war, when he was only sixteen, having persuaded his mother to sign papers stating that he was seventeen.

In 2010, Delegate Don Perdue and Speaker of the House Rick Thompson sponsored House Concurrent Resolution No. 43,

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Learn to Make the Most of Your Computer at the November Genealogy Program

On November 10, 2011, Kitty Baughan Cole will present “Making the Most of Your Computer as a Resource” at the Thursday evening lecture in the Archives and History Library in the Culture Center in Charleston. The program will begin at 6:00 p.m. and is free and open to the public. .

Cole will provide information to help those conducting genealogical research use their computers more effectively. Her talk will include discussion of free applications and resources that are available.

Kitty Baughan Cole is the Stake Family History director for the Charleston Stake of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. In addition to her work at the local Family History Center branch of the Family History Library in Salt Lake City, she serves on several committees in

the state concerned with genealogy. Cole holds a bachelor’s degree from the University of Michigan and a master’s degree from the West Virginia College of Graduate Studies. A wife, mother, and grandmother, Cole believes that “we must honor our dead [because] without them we would not be here and without us they would not be remembered.”

Advance registration for the program is not required but is encouraged to help plan seating arrangements. To register in advance, contact Robert Taylor, library manager, bobby.l.taylor@wv.gov or at (304) 558-0230, ext. 163. Participants interested in registering by e-mail should send their name, telephone number and the name and date of the session. For additional information, contact the Archives and History Library at (304) 558-0230.

[This article originally was prepared by Mary Johnson for the Archives and History Web site based on information provided by Kitty Baughan Cole.]

Sturm Lecture Draws Large Crowd

On October 11, 2011, Dr. Philip Sturm spoke to a crowd of sixty people who had come to learn more about slavery in the Ohio and Kanawha river valleys and using primary sources. Images from the program are available at <http://www.wvculture.org/history/workshops/wkshp101111.html>.



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- (1) the reprint is not used for commercial purposes, and
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requesting that the Division of Highways designate a new bridge near Lavalette in Wayne County (Bridge Number 50-152-40.39) as the “Perdue Brothers Memorial Bridge—World War II veterans Walter, Riley, James, Norman, Omer, Earl.”

How does such a bridge get its name? Delegate Perdue (not related to the brothers for whom the bridge was named) describes the process this way: In general, a group or family may seek out a representative in the House or Senate and request a bridge be named for a loved one, veteran, valued community member, or deserving group of citizens. The legislators then research the area to identify a potential location (often near the family home, as was the case of the Perdue brothers) and determine whether a memoriam might already exist. As luck would have it, a new bridge was under construction near Lavalette at the time of the request. The match having been made, writing the concurrent resolution was the obvious next step.

The Perdue Brothers Memorial Bridge came about because of the persistence of the only remaining family member of the eight brothers and five sisters, Ruby Perdue Steffen. And in Ruby’s mind, it stands as a memorial not only to her brothers but also to their mother, Grace Perdue, who worked hard to keep the family together and the farm functioning after the death of her husband during the Depression.

Another World War II veteran, Clarence C. (“Hotty”) Herrick was born on July 4, 1923, in Clarksburg, Harrison County, and graduated from Roosevelt High School in 1942, where he excelled in sports. Despite being rejected by the Marines because of poor vision, he persevered and joined the Army, becoming a private first class in Company F of the 1st Ranger Battalion. Volunteering to

take the place of a married man with children during the Allies’ advance from Naples to Rome in 1943, Hotty lost his life. As is the case with many of the vets mentioned in this article, Private First Class Herrick was awarded the Purple Heart—not once, but twice. During the 2008 legislative session, Senator Joseph M. Minard introduced Senate Concurrent Resolution No.22, which requested the Division of Highways to name the bridge commonly known as the “Industrial Bridge” (Bridge Number 17-NO310-0.09 [2930]) as the “PFC Hotty Herrick Bridge.”

2011 Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 21, introduced by Senators Erik Wells, Jack Yost, Orphy Klempa, and Brooks McCabe, requested the designation of the bridge on I-79, commonly called the “Big Chimney Interchange Bridge,” as the “Hodges Brothers Bridge.” Six members of the Otmer Franklin and Gertie Hodges family would admirably serve their county in the mid-twentieth century. Army Private First Class Eugene (“Gene”) Hodges participated as a truck driver in the D-Day landing in Normandy during World War II. E4 Carl F. Hodges served at Fort Lewis, Washington, and became a military policeman with the Air Force. E4 Gerald (“Dicky”) Hodges served as a cook with the

5th Naval District off North Korea. E4 Bobby Hodges was a member of the 82nd Airborne Division at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, in the 1950s. E5 Larry Hodges trained at Fort Hood, Texas, and was stationed in Germany during his Army service with the 4th Armored Division. And Private First Class Otmer F. Hodges Jr., born in Big Chimney on July 31, 1930, was killed in Korea on his twentieth birthday in 1950.

Younger brother Gary has worked hard to keep the memory of the Hodges brothers alive, pointing with pride to his laminated copy of the senate resolution and donating much memorabilia to the West Virginia State Archives and the State Museum, so he sees the naming of the bridge for his family members as a fitting tribute to their sacrifices.

While the Hodges Bridge and the Perdue Bridge were named for families of brothers, sometimes a bridge will be named jointly for two individuals, as is the case of the Boone County bridge honoring two Korean veterans. The Korean Conflict, sandwiched between World War II and Vietnam, tends to be our “forgotten war,” but a glance through history shows, as always, West Virginians’ heavy involvement. 2011 Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 27 and House Concurrent Resolution

October Genealogy Lecture Looks at DNA

On October 13, 2011, Nancy Sparks Morrison gave an interesting talk on DNA, inherited diseases, and genealogy at the monthly Thursday evening genealogy program. Images from the program are available at <http://www.wvculture.org/history/workshops/2011october/genclub.html>.



No. 55 sought to name a Boone County bridge at Greenview (Bridge No. 3-119/10-0.04 on County Route 119/10) the "PVT Clyde Whitman ("Bobby") Bennett and PFC Oliver Ball, Jr., Memorial Bridge." Both of these honored soldiers were born and raised in Boone County, and both were killed in Korea. Private Bobby Bennett was the son of Oattie and Chloe Bennett. He entered the U.S. Army in 1951, served as an advanced scout, and was killed in action on October 3, 1951. He left a widow, Mary Lou, and a son, Bobbie Ray.

Also hailing from Greenview, Private First Class Oliver Ball Jr. was the son of Oliver and Myrtle Ball. He and Bobbie Bennett each received a Purple Heart, a Good Conduct Medal, and a Rifleman's Medal, reflecting their outstanding service.

Like Otmer Hodges, Lance Corporal Larry Steven Heater was just twenty years old when he was killed in Vietnam in December 1968. A native of Weston, the son of Arnold and Geraldine Riffle Heater, Larry was one of a large family that included nine brothers and five sisters. He graduated from Weston High School, where he was an outstanding athlete and "Minuteman of the Month" in January 1965. Enlisting in the Marine Corps in June 1968, Larry had plans to enroll in college after his service. He received numerous medals, including the Good Conduct Medal, the American Purple Heart (twice), and the Vietnam Purple Heart.

To honor Larry, Delegate Margaret Smith in 2010 introduced House Concurrent Resolution No. 8, which requested that the Division of Highways name the bridge in Bendale on State Route 19, 0.34 miles south of the junction of County Route 10/3 and crossing the West Fork River (Bridge Number 21-19-22.03), as "Lance Corporal Larry Steven Heater Memorial Bridge."

Private First Class John Michael Davis and his siblings typify the West Virginia military tradition of family enlistment. John Michael and brothers Buford and Edward

served during the Vietnam era, two in the Army and one in the Marine Corps. Graduating from Trap Hill High School in the summer of 1968,

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History Day Forms Being Mailed First of November

By Mary Johnson

History Hero nomination and display space reservation forms for the Sixteenth Annual West Virginia History Day at the Legislature, February 23, 2012, are being mailed the first of November.

West Virginia History Day is officially designated by the West Virginia Archives and History Commission as a special day to recognize the state's rich and varied history. Other co-sponsors of the event are Friends of Culture and History, Mining Your History Foundation, Preservation Alliance of West Virginia, Inc., West Virginia Association of Museums, West Virginia Historical Society, West Virginia Humanities Council, and West Virginia Division of Culture and History.

Our list for the initial History Day mailing consists of groups that are on our list of West Virginia historical, preservation, and genealogical societies; other organizations that have participated in History Day in the past; and groups that we think might have an interest in History Day. If your group does not receive forms in the mail but would like to participate in History Day, please contact me (Mary Johnson) by e-mail at mary.e.johnson2@wv.gov or at Archives and History at (304) 558-0230. Or, check our Web site at <http://www.wvculture.org/history> for PDF versions, which will be available online by November 1.

As always, the deadline for submitting History Hero nominations

is *December 31*. Nominations may be mailed or hand delivered to Archives and History. Please note that the Archives and History Library will be closed on Saturday, December 31, so hand deliveries will need to be made by 5:00 p.m. on December 30. Nominations submitted by mail must have a postmark of no later date than December 31.

This year, the deadline for reserving display space at the capitol will be Tuesday, January 31, 2012. Reservation forms may be mailed, e-mailed as directed on the form, or hand delivered.

150 Years Ago in November 1861

Nov. 1-3: Union and Confederate forces skirmished near Gauley Bridge, or Cotton Hill

Nov. 10: Confederate troops raided Guyandotte

Nov. 18: Union troops of the 41st Ohio Infantry raided the farm of Confederate Gen. Albert Gallatin Jenkins

Nov. 20: Confederate Gen. Thomas J. Jackson unveiled his plan for capturing Romney

Nov. 26: The Constitutional Convention assembled in Wheeling

To learn more about these and other events from November 1861, visit the Archives and History Web site at <http://www.wvculture.org/history/sesquicentennial/186111.html>.

John Michael immediately attempted to enlist in the Army. Legend has it that on his first attempt, he did not make the weight requirement, so he consumed several pounds of bananas and went back the next day and achieved his goal. He was sent into battle in June 1969 and received massive combat injuries on August 9, dying one week later. For his meritorious service, he received the Bronze Star, and, posthumously, the Purple Heart.

House Concurrent Resolution No. 12 was introduced by House Speaker Robert Kiss and Delegates Rick Thompson, Virginia Mahan, and Sally Susman in January 2004, requesting the Division of Highways to name the newly constructed bridge on County Road 13 in Saxon, Raleigh County—just a mile and a half from his final resting place—the “PFC John Michael Davis Memorial Bridge.”

Sadly, wars cost us not only our best and brightest, but also our youngest and most promising citizens. Another twenty-year-old who gave his life in Vietnam was Roger Lee Byus, the son of Alma Ruth Ball Byus and Mervin C. Byus Jr. of Winfield, Putnam County. After playing football at and graduating from Hurricane High School, Roger worked at Union Carbide until he and two of his best friends enlisted

in the U.S. Army. Private First Class Byus became a member of the elite 11th Armored Cavalry (Blackhorse Regiment), 2nd Squadron, E Troop. On November 24, 1969, while on a volunteer mission in Phuoc Long, South Vietnam, his troop met enemy forces, and in the encounter, his tank suffered a hit of friendly fire. Roger Byus was pronounced dead upon arrival at a base hospital. Private First Class Byus was posthumously awarded a Bronze Star and a Purple Heart. Roger left behind a wife, Carolyn Sue Allison Byus.

2011 House Concurrent Resolution No. 24, introduced by Delegates Troy Andes and Brian Savilla, requested that the Division of Highways name the bridge on the new Route 35, crossing Route 34 at Poplar Fork, Putnam County

(Bridge Number 40-35-2.40), the “PFC Roger Lee Byus Memorial Bridge.” Ruth Ann Maynard, sister of the fallen soldier, says she could talk forever about him. According to Maynard, she goes by the bridge nearly every day, so it is a constant reminder of her brother, but she would go out of her way just to see his name on the sign.

With all the pressing issues of the state they must consider, why do the legislators make a concerted effort each year to commemorate our veterans? Delegate Perdue puts it this way:

When you see a sign at a bridge, you may well not note it in any profound way. You may not actually even read it fully. Like our returning veterans, it may escape your notice. But *someone* will note it and will note its meaning, and for that moment, that person draws his or her *freedom* a little closer. There aren't enough moments like that, and *any* are pure gold.

Profiles of all veterans listed on the West Virginia Veterans Memorial [<http://www.wvculture.org/history/wvmemory/vets/vetbios.html>] continue to be posted. If you have information about a veteran not yet commemorated in a biography, contact Constance Baston at (304) 558-0230.

Genealogy Club

**Archives and History
Library**

**Every Thursday Evening
6:00-7:00 p.m.**

**Once a month,
on the second Thursday,
there will be a special
program with a speaker.
6:00-7:30 p.m.**

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.

ON INLAND WATERS: STEAMBOATS AND THE OHIO RIVER, 1811–2011 EXHIBIT,
 through November 6: Huntington Museum of Art, Huntington.

AN AMERICAN TURNING POINT: THE CIVIL WAR IN VIRGINIA EXHIBIT,
 through December 30: Virginia Historical Society, Richmond. Exhibit includes West Virginia.

“THE WAY WE WORKED,” SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION EXHIBITION TOUR,
 through December 10: Mary H. Weir Public Library, Weirton.

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.

GUYANDOTTE CIVIL WAR DAYS, November 4–6: Huntington.

VETERANS DAY, November 11: Archives Library will be open.*

23RD ANNUAL RAILFEST, November 12–13: Bluefield Youth Center, Bluefield. Sponsored by Pocahontas Chapter, National Railway Historical Society.

“AN ASTRONOMER’S LOOK AT THE GRAVE CREEK MOUND AND ITS ENVIRONS,”
November 17: Dr. Francis Graham, speaker, Grave Creek Mound Archaeological Complex, Moundsville.

“MORE MARSHALL COUNTY PATRIOTS AND HEROES,” November 22: Gary Rider, speaker, Ohio County Public Library Lunch with Books, Wheeling.

THANKSGIVING DAY, November 24: Archives Library will be *closed*.

THANKSGIVING FRIDAY AND SATURDAY, November 25–26: Archives Library will be *closed*.

19TH ANNUAL HOLIDAY HISTORIC HOMES TOUR, November 26: Fairmont.

“ON THE EDGE OF THE EMPIRE: THE MAKING OF MECKLENBURG,” December 1:
Dr. Warren Hofstra, speaker, Robert C. Byrd Legislative Center, Shepherdstown.

ST. ALBANS CHRISTMAS HISTORIC HOMES TOUR,
December 3: St. Albans. Sponsored by the St. Albans Historical Society.

“THE WAY WE WORKED,” SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION EXHIBITION TOUR,
December 17–January 28, 2012: Morgantown History Museum, Morgantown.

“THE WHEELING FAMILY VOLUME 2: MORE IMMIGRANTS, MIGRANTS,
AND NEIGHBORHOODS,” December 20: Sean Duffy, speaker,
Ohio County Public Library Lunch with Books, Wheeling.

CHRISTMAS EVE, December 24: Archives Library will be *closed*.

CHRISTMAS DAY HOLIDAY, December 26 (Monday): Archives Library will be *closed*.

“OUR FATHER WHO AREN’T IN HEAVEN,” December 27: Tracy Mercier and Debbie Frye,
speakers, Ohio County Public Library Lunch with Books, Wheeling.

NEW YEAR’S EVE, December 31: Archives Library will be *closed*.

NEW YEAR’S DAY HOLIDAY, January 2, 2012 (Monday): 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 Culture Center is closed weekends and all holidays.

WEST VIRGINIA
Archives
and **History NEWS**

West Virginia Division of Culture and History
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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.c.scouras@wv.gov.

www.wvculture.org/history

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