Lewis and Clark: The Eastern Legacy

From the Editor:

If you are planning to visit any archives and history library, you should check with that library to confirm days and hours of operation, then check again immediately before you depart. States continue to chop the budgets of their state archives and libraries, as shown by the Ohio Historical Society article in this issue. The Ohio Historical Society, a non-governmental not-for-profit organization, receives funding from the state of Ohio to function as Ohio’s state archives and library, as well as to operate historical sites and programs. Many state libraries have reduced the number of days open per week, are now closed on holidays, and have changed opening and closing times. Some have reduced services to the public, such as staff no longer answering inquiries by telephone and limited availability of staff assistance in their libraries. We in West Virginia have been fortunate to date in avoiding reduction of both our service to the public and our ability to function as the state’s collector and protector of West Virginia’s history. We have a far smaller number of staff positions than any of the surrounding states, meaning that the loss of a single position hampers our ability to operate efficiently and effectively. We already operate on a shoestring budget, so any cuts will reduce even further our ability to acquire materials and make them publicly accessible. We do not know what the future holds. We encourage you to show your support for archives and history libraries in the United States in any way you can.

LEWIS AND CLARK JOURNEY
THE OHIO AGAIN!

Events commemorating the 200th anniversary of the Lewis and Clark Corps of Discovery (a contemporary name for the famous expeditionary force that explored the continent west of the Mississippi, better known as the Lewis and Clark Expedition) will occur along the 981-mile Ohio River this fall. Starting at Pittsburgh on August 31, at the confluence of the Monongahela and Allegheny Rivers, the re-enactment of Captain Meriwether Lewis’s 1803 journey westward down the Ohio will follow the river to Cairo, Illinois, to the confluence of the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers. Events along the Ohio are part of a commemoration of the Eastern Legacy of the Corps of Discovery, the first of the great Army expeditions. This portion of the celebration is termed the Eastern Legacy because Lewis began his journey in the east, at the direction of President Thomas Jefferson. He traveled down the Ohio River, joined Captain William Clark at the Falls of the Ohio, and in the process recruited men throughout the Ohio River Valley to serve in the Army for this historic expedition to discover a water passage across the continent. One of those recruited was Patrick Gass, who later settled in what is now Wellsburg, West Virginia.

The members of the re-enactment group, Discovery Expedition of St. Charles, Missouri, departed Elizabeth, Pennsylvania, on August 31 and began working their way down the
Monongahela to Pittsburgh and the Ohio River, duplicating the original expedition as closely as possible. The crewmen are utilizing their exact replica of the famous keelboat used by Lewis and Clark. Built by members of Discovery Expedition, the reproduction keelboat’s length is 55’ and her beam is 8’. The second replica boat, the red Pirogue, which weighs 6,500 pounds, is 42’ in length and is 9’ wide, will be joining the re-enactment in Wheeling, West Virginia. The two boats will continue the voyage together down the Ohio River to Louisville, Kentucky and Clarksville, Indiana, arriving in Cairo, Illinois at the confluence with the Mississippi River on November 15, 2003.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is providing an exhibit barge with educational and historical information. The exhibits will be open to the public at more than thirty dock sites along the Ohio River. Admission is free, and hours of operation will vary depending on arrival and departure times at each location. Exhibits will include a reproduction of a period military uniform, boats of the expedition, information about sites along the Ohio River, supplies carried on the expedition, and other information about this epic journey.

Many of the consumable products used by the 21st century crew will be similar to those which Captain Lewis carried on his voyage 200 years ago. Items such as coffee beans, sugar, dried meat, dried fruits, parched corn, Castille soap, beeswax, etc., are included. Interestingly, the Castille soap will be the only soap used on the river during the re-enactment, not only for the sake of authenticity, but for conservation of the river environment as well. Peter Geery, a coordinator for the expedition states, “We wanted a pure soap that could safely be used in our rivers, and not harm the river ecosystem.”

By following the original journey according to information Lewis recorded in his journal, the re-enactors and barge exhibits will enhance commemoration events planned by communities along the Ohio River. This is truly an American grassroots commemoration and is possible through the united efforts of communities, federal, state, and local agencies, the navigation industry and community volunteers. For their efforts the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will be awarded a Certificate of Commendation by the American Association for State and Local History. See the Calendar of Events in this issue for a listing of West Virginia area stops for the re-enactment group and related programs.

(For additional information about community activities along the Ohio River, visit http://www.lrd.usace.army.mil/PA/lc.html. For more information regarding the Discovery Expedition re-enactment group, including background history and photographs, visit http://www.lewisandclark.net. A full schedule of events is also available through the West Virginia Division of Tourism Web site at http://callwva.com/lewis-clark/index.cfm.)

PATRICK GASS,
WEST VIRGINIA’S CONNECTION TO THE LEWIS AND CLARK EXPEDITION

West Virginia’s connection to the Lewis and Clark Expedition did not end when the group moved on down the Ohio River away from our shores. One of the scouts, Patrick Gass, spent much of his life in Wellsburg, [West] Virginia. Although born in Pennsylvania in 1771 and raised there and in Maryland, he lived in Wellsburg off and on as an adult, finally settling there permanently around age 60. He married, raised a family, died and was buried there in 1870 at age 99, the last survivor of the expedition. At the time the expedition was being organized, Gass was a sergeant in the Army, appreciated for his skills as both soldier and carpenter. He was eager to join in the exploration, and was one of the first to volunteer, but was denied permission since his captain did not want to lose the highly valued Gass. Meriwether Lewis
himself interceded on Gass’s behalf, and enlisted him in January 1804, but as a private since the three sergeant positions had already been filled. When one of the original sergeants died in August of that year, Gass was elevated again to the rank of sergeant by a vote of the men.

Gass’s carpentry has been called invaluable in the construction of the three winter camps occupied by the expeditionary force, as well as in the creation of dugout canoes and wagons to portage those canoes. Gass was one of those chosen by Lewis to assemble Lewis’s prized experiment, an iron boat frame covered with hide. Unfortunately, not even Gass’s skill could compensate for the lack of an adequate adhesive or sealing material to make the boat functional. The fact that William Clark and Meriwether Lewis held Patrick Gass in high esteem is demonstrated by the fact that when the leaders divided their Corps into three groups on the return trip for separate explorations, Clark and Lewis each took command of a detachment, and gave command of the third to Gass.

While there is no doubt that the considerable talents of Patrick Gass contributed to the success of the journey of Lewis and Clark, his most remarkable contribution to history has been the journal he began on May 14, 1804, as the expedition departed from its winter camp at the confluence of the Missouri and Mississippi Rivers. Published in 1807, the journal was the first of those kept during the trip to reach print and widely considered to be the most interesting account of the expedition. The title page of Gass’s work has the lengthy descriptive subtitles typical of the era: “A Journal of the Voyages and Travels of a Corps of Discovery, under the Command of Capt. Lewis and Capt. Clarke of the Army of the United States, from the mouth of the river Missouri through the interior parts of North America to the Pacific Ocean, during the years 1804, 1805 & 1806, containing an authentic relation of the most interesting transactions during the expedition, a description of the country, and an account of its inhabitants, soil, climate, curiosities and vegetable and animal productions, by Patrick Gass, one of the persons employed in the expedition, with geographical and explanatory notes by the publisher.” Gass, who did not learn to read and write until adulthood, hired a schoolteacher named David McKeen to edit his diary into a publishable version. Although the final language of the book is undoubtedly more polished than Gass’s original notes, the journal as published by Zadok Cramer of Pittsburgh is believed to be authentic in fact and spirit. Gass is credited with popularizing the term “Corps of Discovery,” Thomas Jefferson’s name for the expedition.

If you would like to learn more about Patrick Gass, most West Virginia histories at least mention his accomplishments, plus Jim Comstock’s West Virginia Heritage Encyclopedia includes entries on Gass and his journal. The journal itself has been reprinted several times in the nearly two centuries since it was written, can be found in print or microform in several West Virginia libraries, and is currently available in an inexpensive paperback edition. Excerpts from the journals of Gass and other expedition members are included in the wealth of information on the Corps of Discovery on the Public Broadcasting System’s Lewis and Clark, The Journey of the Corps of Discovery Web site at http://www.pbs.org/lewisandclark/, with the journal entries of Gass and others accessible at http://www.pbs.org/lewisandclark/archive/idx_jou.htm.

Just as Gass was the first to publish his journals, he was the first of the expedition to be the subject of a biography, The Life and Times of Patrick Gass, by J[ohn] G. Jacob, published in Wellsburg in 1859, when Gass was already the only surviving member of the Corps of Discovery. While a few copies of the rare first edition are available in West Virginia libraries, sadly no copies of the facsimile edition published in 2000 by Lone Wolf Press were purchased by the many libraries who participate in the West Virginia Union Catalog (including the failure of our own Archives and History Library to do so, a situation being remedied.) Used copies are available on several Internet book sites, such as www.bookfinder.com, for an average price of
$45.00. Wouldn’t it be a fitting tribute to Patrick Gass in the midst of the Corps of Discovery Bicentennial celebration, if donors purchased copies of his journal and his biography for their local public and school libraries?

New West Virginia Highway Historical Markers to Honor Lewis and Clark and Patrick Gass

PATRICK GASS

Born 12 June 1771, Gass served as carpenter for Lewis and Clark. The expedition explored and studied the land, waterways, animal life, natural features and resources of the West. Gass’s journal of trip was published in 1807. Soldier in the War of 1812. Settled in Wellsburg and purchased land on Pierce’s Run. Last survivor of expedition, he died 2 April 1870. Buried in nearby Brooke Cemetery.

(Marker location: Wellsburg, W. Va.)

LEWIS AND CLARK

Meriwether Lewis arrived March 16, 1803. Oversaw building of collapsible iron framed, skin-clad boat and acquired supplies, tomahawks, and rifles. Left for Pennsylvania on April 18; returned July 7 to gather materials and left next day for Pittsburgh. Followed Ohio to Falls; met William Clark for trip to explore and study land, waterways, animal life, natural features and resources of West.

(Marker location: Harpers Ferry, W. Va.)

Civil War Historian Edwin C. Bearss To Speak in Wheeling

Well-known history guide and Civil War scholar Edwin C. Bearss will present a talk entitled “Western Virginia: McClellan’s Springboard to Command of the Army of the Potomac” at the West Virginia Independence Hall Museum in Wheeling on Monday, September 15, at 7:00 p.m. Bearss’ lecture will explain how the early Union victories in western Virginia at Philippi and Rich Mountain made General George B. McClellan famous, even though most of the credit for those successful battles belongs to his subordinates. The lecture is sponsored by the West Virginia Division of Culture and History, the Ohio Valley Civil War Roundtable and the Ohio Valley Medical Center. A donation of $10.00 per person will be accepted at the door, with all proceeds going to the Civil War Preservation Trust, a national organization working to save America’s Civil War battlefields. For more information, call Gerry Reilly, director of Independence Hall, at (304) 238-1300.

INTERESTING BOOKS ABOUT THE LEWIS AND CLARK EXPEDITION IN THE WEST VIRGINIA ARCHIVES AND HISTORY LIBRARY

The Lewis and Clark Expedition has fascinated students of history, exploration and adventure from the time the first boats were put into the waters of the Ohio in 1803 through the current bicentennial of the famous journey in 2003. Many editions of the journals, field notes, correspondence, sketches and maps produced by the participants in the expeditionary corps have been printed and reprinted over the years. The West Virginia Archives and History Library has a variety of these titles both in the public collection and in Rare Books, some of which are not available elsewhere.
in the state in a publicly accessible library. Here are just a few examples:

• *Gass’s Journal of the Lewis and Clark Expedition*, reprinted from the 1811 edition by A. C. McClurg & Co. in 1904.

• *Three Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, 1804-1806*, facsimile reproductions of the originals from the collection of the American Philosophical Society, in three volumes (one by Clark and two by Lewis), by the Society in 2000.

• *Original Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, 1804-1806*, by Meriwether Lewis, edited by Reuben Gold Thwaites, and published in eight volumes by Dodd, Mead in 1904-05. This set is a gem, with maroon cloth covers, stylish gilt decoration, and quality paper. The eighth volume is an atlas of foldout maps.

• Another great edition is *The History of the Lewis and Clark Expedition*, by Meriwether Lewis, with much added material by Elliott Coues. This four-volume set was published by Francis P. Harper in 1893.

• *History of the Expedition of Captains Lewis and Clark, 1804-5-6*, by Meriwether Lewis, published by A.C. McClurg & Co. in two volumes in 1924.

*West Virginia History*

**Volume 59 (2001-2003)**

Now Available

Volume 59 of *West Virginia History* highlights military service. Civil War historians will be interested in Eddie Woodward’s study of the December 13, 1861, battle of Allegheny Mountain in Pocahontas County. This battle pitted forces under Union Gen. Robert H. Milroy against Col. Edward Johnson’s Confederate troops garrisoned at Camp Allegheny, both sides including soldiers recruited in western Virginia. For a different perspective on the Mountain State in time of war, Volume 59 also offers a look at one West Virginia family during World War I. Arthur Greenlee served in the United States Marine Corps during that war and was wounded in combat, and the West Virginia State Archives is fortunate to have a collection of contemporary letters that he exchanged with members of his family in Mason County or sent to his girlfriend in Raleigh County. These letters provide not only a glimpse of one soldier’s experiences in service but also a view of life on the home front.

The Meadow River Lumber Company of Rainelle, Greenbrier County, is the focus of a report written in 1916 by forestry student Andrew H. Larson. Larson’s report details the logging and milling operations of Meadow River and is an invaluable source in documenting not only the early history of this company but also logging and lumbering operations in the twentieth century.

*West Virginia History* also looks at the Archives’ online database of John Brown materials from the Boyd B. Stutler Collection. This brief article includes information on Stutler and his collection, as well as use of the database as a research aid to Brown and the Civil War.

*West Virginia History*, Volume 59, is available for the subscription fee of $15 per copy in the U.S. and $18 per copy outside the U.S. This softbound journal also contains book reviews and notes on state and regional topics. To order, send check or money order payable to “West Virginia History” to:

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

We also have back issues of *West Virginia History* for sale. For additional information on available volumes and prices, please visit [http://www.wvculture.org/history/journal_wvh/journal_toc.html](http://www.wvculture.org/history/journal_wvh/journal_toc.html) or call (304) 558-0230.

**OHIO HISTORICAL SOCIETY REDUCES LIBRARY STAFF AND HOURS**
The Ohio Historical Society is a private non-profit organization that receives state and federal funding to operate Ohio’s state archives and library, as well as over 60 historic sites and museums throughout the state. Although the Society received an increase in state funding for the majority of its historic sites and museum education programs, funding levels in several areas, including archives/library, historic preservation and services to local historical organizations, were not sufficient to maintain current levels of service. Coupled with previous staff reductions in January 2002, the Society begins its new fiscal year with overall staffing levels approximately 25 percent lower than two years ago.

Overall public access hours of the archives/library at the Ohio Historical Center will be reduced from 40 hours per week to 24 hours per week, effective August 1, 2003. The new archives/library hours will be as follows:

- Wednesday 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
- Thursday 1:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
- Saturday 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

The museum at the Ohio Historical Center will increase its Thursday hours to match the 9:00 p.m. closing time of the archives/library. The historic sites, museums and related programs will all remain in full operation. Staff members in archives/library and in collections management will continue to collect and preserve the state’s heritage and assist the public in gaining access to that heritage online, by telephone, mail and on site in Columbus, although the capacity to do this work will be significantly diminished by the announced cuts in positions.

“We worry about the long-term consequences of making these cuts to our core programs and services that reach into every corner of the state,” said Rachel M. Tooker, the Society’s deputy executive director and chief operating officer. “We fear that what will be diminished is our ability to document and preserve an enduring record of our state’s past.” (This information courtesy of a press release posted at http://www.ohiohistory.org.)

JENKINS PLANTATION MUSEUM TO PARTICIPATE IN LEWIS AND CLARK CELEBRATION SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 20

The Jenkins Plantation Museum will be participating in the Lewis and Clark celebration while the Eastern Legacy re-enactment group is docked in Huntington, on Saturday, September 20, from 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Frontier food like that prepared and eaten on the original expedition will be served, including buffalo, elk and venison. A re-enactment group called The Fort New Salem Traveling Road Show will be present to discuss various aspects of early 19th century history and to demonstrate skills and arts contemporary with the period of the Lewis and Clark odyssey. Among the selected topics and activities will be civil engineering, surveying, natural philosophy (plants and their uses), trades such as blacksmithing and chandlery, and the domestic arts of spinning and weaving. For more information on Jenkins Plantation Museum and driving directions, visit http://www.wvculture.org/sites/jenkins.html.

NEW TITLES

From Appalachia to Africa: and other footsteps: Mary Sue Kessell Rosen, 2002.
M. de C.: [yearbook of Mount de Chantal Academy, Wheeling, WV], 1934.
One Soldier’s Story, and A Strange Encounter with Dangerous Bushwhackers: A Webster County Civil War Episode: Ronald V. Hardway, no date.
A History of the Milton Presbyterian Church: Joseph A. Byrne, 1983.
Milton Presbyterian Church, 1893-1982: United Church Directories, [1982].
Historic Sketch of the Western Virginia Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church: Thomas Smith Wade, no date.
Names: Ronald V. Hardway, no date. [Subject is African American names and how freed slaves may have chosen surnames.]
Our thanks to Donald Clifford for donating the following publications of the National Scrip Collectors Association:
Videotape titles now available for viewing in the Library Reading Room:
CALENDAR OF EVENTS

NOTE: CALENDAR BASED ON KNOWLEDGE AS OF September 1, 2003. BUDGET CONSTRAINTS MAY LEAD TO CHANGES AFTER PUBLICATION. 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.


LEWIS AND CLARK DISCOVERY EXPEDITION STOPS ON THE OHIO RIVER ALONG THE WV BORDER:
- STEUBENVILLE, OH, SEPTEMBER 4-6: Fort Steuben.
- WELLSBURG, SEPTEMBER 6.
- WHEELING, SEPTEMBER 6-9: Heritage Port.
- SISTERSVILLE, SEPTEMBER 9-10.
- MARIETTA, OH, SEPTEMBER 10-13.
- RAVENSWOOD, SEPTEMBER 16-17: George Washington Riverfront Park.
- GALLIPOLIS, OH, SEPTEMBER 17-19.
- HUNTINGTON, SEPTEMBER 19-21.


COLUMBUS DAY, OCTOBER 13: The Library will be open.*

VETERANS DAY, NOVEMBER 11: The Library will be open.*

*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 collection)
Elaine Gates: Library Assistant (microfilming and microfilm repairs)
Joe Geiger: Assistant Director (Historian, Web page)
Ed Hicks: Photographer (archival photography, darkroom)
Mary Johnson: Historian (West Virginia History)
Terry Lowry: Library Assistant (Civil War)
Cathy Miller: Library Assistant (WV State documents, periodicals)

Sharon Newhouse: Secretary
Harold Newman: Library Assistant (microfilming, Revolutionary War)
Pat Pleska: Manager of the Veterans Memorial Archive
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: Office Assistant

Working on special projects: Allen Fowler.
Volunteers: Carolyn Conner, Bill Kelley, Angela Tolbert, Bob and Lucile Foster, John McClure, and Carol de la Riva.

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Nancy P. Herholdt, Commissioner

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