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## Troop 7: Culmination of the Highway Patrol Mission

By  
Merle Cole

For several years after its creation in 1919, the Department of Public Safety (DPS), more commonly known as the West Virginia State Police (WVSP), was engaged primarily in suppressing industrial violence. After the Second Miner's March and Battle of Blair Mountain in 1921, operations shifted from the smokeless coal fields to the somewhat less violent union-management conflicts in the northern counties. By 1926, the new agency was able to focus on the rural policing mission which underlay its creation.<sup>1</sup> Prohibition enforcement and the increasing demands of highway patrol and traffic safety became paramount missions, alongside general crime control.

Emergence of the highway patrol mission was directly related to development of the state's road network. In 1910, West Virginia had only 300-400 miles of surfaced highways, fewer than 20 miles of which were paved. There were also short stretches of brick or macadamized roads. A 1914 report by the state road bureau proclaimed that West Virginia had "the worst roads in the United States." Given such deplorable roads, the DPS naturally relied on horses for transportation. In fact, "able to ride horseback" was a statutory qualification requirement to be appointed a state trooper.

But a Good Roads Movement was empowered by passage of a constitutional amendment in

November 1920. In that year, the state reported only some 1,200 miles of paved roads available to the state's 89,664 registered motor vehicles. Enabling legislation and funding sources led to a major road building campaign. In its fiscal year 1927-1928 report, the State Road Commission (SRC) boasted that all of the state's major cities were connected by hard-surfaced roads, and "all of the fifty-five county seats had improved road outlets." Three years later, the state recorded 266,273 registered vehicles.<sup>2</sup>

In early biennial reports to the governor, DPS superintendents praised road improvements for opening the state to valuable tourism, noting "the large number of vehicles bearing foreign [*sic*] registration which are now using our highways." But they simultaneously lamented the attraction of assorted "modern criminals" ranging from unlicensed taxicabs to "automobile bandits," thugs, bank robbers, "men and women who mix liquor and gasoline," car thieves, "hobo tourist" vagrants and liquor runners. One superintendent even speculated that the state had "reaped wonderful benefits from the very fact that it was behind other states in good roads" in terms of thereby being less attractive to the criminal element.<sup>3</sup>

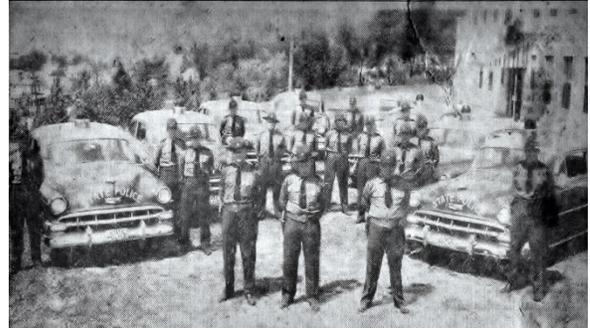
Use of improved roads to transport illicit liquor was a particularly ominous corollary. As early as 1922, Supt. Jackson Arnold noted that Raleigh County's highways provided "the chief gateway into West Virginia for the bootlegging fraternity." Intercepting this traffic frequently entailed DPS officers engaging in high-speed pursuits and gun battles while apprehending whisky runners.<sup>4</sup>

On 1 September 1929, responsibility for traffic regulation and road law enforcement was transferred to the DPS from the SRC Traffic Department. By 1930, about one-third of DPS manpower was devoted to road patrol, which was fast becoming the department's major function. The department was also assigned responsibility for several related tasks, such as enforcing laws requiring the prompt return of automobile dealer tags, stopping drivers to be sure they were carrying valid operator permits, collecting on bad checks submitted to the SRC for automobile licenses, serving various SRC orders, inspecting the operation of vehicle safety equipment and issuing warnings to violators. In January 1931, a new law tasked the DPS with responsibility for examining operator and chauffeur permit applicants. Later that year, the mission expanded to include testing school bus drivers and inspecting their vehicles.

Systematic road patrol started in April 1934, using 42 motorcycles and 16 roadsters, but was confined to major highways with the highest traffic volume counts, due to personnel shortages. The DPS initially relied on motorcycles for highway patrol work. This was a handy and flexible vehicle but its use came at a high cost in trooper injury, death and disability. In the agency's first twenty years, motorcycle accidents were the second greatest cause of line-of-duty deaths (33 percent), outpaced only by gunshots. By 1936 the proportion of patrol vehicles had altered markedly, with 112 cruisers being operated as opposed to only 26 motorcycles.<sup>5</sup>

In June 1936, the SRC's safety work was consolidated with the DPS Highway Safety Bureau (later renamed Accident Prevention Bureau). This office kept records on traffic accidents, injuries and deaths; coordinated accident prevention programs; conducted research and planning; and maintained a speaker's bureau staffed with safety education officers. A final major mission was added in 1955, when responsibility for the state's compulsory motor vehicle inspection (MVI) program was moved from the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to the DPS.<sup>6</sup>

Highway development in West Virginia included very few four-lane roads prior to 1954. Indeed, the state had "fewer than 20 miles of four-lane highway" before 1954, and most of that was in urban areas. In 1947, the legislature authorized construction of toll



Rare photo of the original complement of WVPT patrolmen. *Charleston Daily Mail*, 1 Sept. 1954:1, clipping in WVPA Archives. Unless otherwise noted, images used in this monograph are provided courtesy of the West Virginia State Police Academy Archives at Institute, or the West Virginia Parkways Authority (WVPA) archives at Reed.

roads in the state, and created the Turnpike Commission specifically to oversee funding and construction of the West Virginia Turnpike (WVTP). In 1989, the legislature dissolved the commission and replaced it with the West Virginia Parkways Economic Development and Tourism Authority, with added missions as indicated by the new title. Then in 2010, the legislature refocused the organization's mission on Turnpike operation and shortened its name to West Virginia Parkways Authority. The history of the WVTP and its administrative management body is *per se* beyond the scope of this paper, and is, in any event, adequately covered by the agency's web site. The following summary will serve to provide necessary context.

The commission held its initial meeting in 1949 and developed a plan for a four-lane superhighway between Bluefield and Wheeling, replete with bridges and tunnels to overcome myriad topographic and other obstacles. In the face of realistic cost estimates, length was shortened and the number of lanes reduced from four to two, "with short stretches of additional traffic lanes." Construction commenced near Camp Creek, Mercer County, in August 1952. The southern segment (Princeton-Beckley) opened on 2 September, and the final Beckley-Charleston segment on 8 September 1954.<sup>7</sup>

In 1961, West Virginia brokered a deal at the federal level to add I-79 (Charleston-Morgantown) to the state's Interstate allotment, with the provision that I-64 be rerouted from Lewisburg to Charleston

via Beckley, thereby linking up with the WVTP rather than running through Gauley Bridge (the Midland Trail) as originally programmed. Congressional approval of additional miles also gave the state I-77 from Parkersburg to Princeton, later extended to the Virginia line.<sup>8</sup> Upgrading (“dualization”) of the WVTP to Interstate standards began in May 1973, and was completed in September 1987. Just under a year later, I-64 joined the turnpike at Beckley.<sup>9</sup>

As for policing the new superhighway:

After considering the experience of Pennsylvania, New Jersey and other states operating toll roads, the W. Va. Turnpike Commission followed their example in arranging for the road to be patrolled by members of the state police department.

The department entered into an agreement with the Commission, whereby the department will be reimbursed for the salaries, uniform expense, equipment, supplies and training expenses of replacement for the seventeen (17) members who will make up a special detail operating from the Turnpike Headquarters at Reed. Vehicles, vehicle operation costs, communications and other expenses will be paid directly by the Turnpike Commission.<sup>10</sup>

At the end of May 1954, Col. Raymond E. Boyles, WVSP superintendent, briefed the press on agency plans. The *Charleston Daily Mail* reported, “The most experienced state troopers in West Virginia will patrol . . . round-the-clock to keep it from becoming a death trap. It will be their job to prevent high fatality rates that have marred the records of both

the Pennsylvania and New Jersey turnpikes at some stage of their development.” In addition, Colonel Boyles expected that the troopers “will be billboards for West Virginia, a good advertisement for the state.” Their training would consist of familiarization with the new roadway and such details as construction statistics, places of scenic interest, and “directions and route numbers to guide travelers to other sections of this state and connecting routes to other states and principal cities.”

Boyles stated “there will be no special turnpike detachment, as such, and there will be no distinguishing uniform other than regular issue. At one time or another, all the experienced troopers at

the Chelyan, Beckley and Princeton headquarters will be called for duty on the pike.” The lack of a special uniform proved accurate, but routine rotation of officers from the three detachments never took place. However, it did work the other way around, to taxpayer benefit. In those days, all state troopers were “on call 24 hours a day and the turnpike troopers will be, too, after they have completed a shift on the road.” He explained that the troopers would be commanded by a lieutenant and two sergeants, one of whom would be on the road fulltime during each shift. Three troopers would be patrolling during low-volume hours, increased to six officers at peak times. Sgt. Marion C. Yoak,



Publicity still of turnpike patrol selectees at the Academy for pre-opening instruction. WVSP Archives



Publicity still of patrol vehicles—“painted blue with gold tops and carry[ing] state police license plates.” WVPA Archives



From left: Sgt. Stanley O. Perrine, Lt. Marion C. Yoak (commanding officer), and Tpr. Holroyd H. “Dutch” Meador; fourth officer not identified. WVSP Archives

designated to direct the patrol, was the only officer named at this time.<sup>11</sup>

Sergeant Yoak was reportedly Gov. Okey L. Patteson’s “personal choice to head the crack Turnpike [*sic*] unit.” Yoak had graduated from the famous 1935 recruit training school at Camp Conley, Point Pleasant, and been assigned to the East Rainelle detachment in 1936. He spent most of his career in the Company D area (the southeastern counties), serving at Hinton before enlisting in the U.S. Navy during World War II. He was re-instated in the WVSP as a corporal in the Princeton detachment. In 1950, he was promoted to sergeant and re-assigned to Lewisburg. From that post, he was selected to command the WVTP unit.<sup>12</sup>

The unit was initially designated West Virginia Turnpike Patrol (1954-1955), then Turnpike Division (1956-1977). It was thus the only WVSP field force unit not designated as a “company.”<sup>13</sup>

From 19 to 24 June 1954, Colonel Boyles and Sergeant Yoak visited the Pennsylvania State Police to see how their officers patrolled the granddaddy of America’s limited access toll roads, the Pennsylvania Turnpike. The West Virginia troopers “spent hours with Pennsylvania officers on actual turnpike patrol.” Boyles noted that the Pennsylvania Turnpike was 327 miles long (being extended to 360) and “patrolled by a force of 115 men.” In press interviews, Boyles rated turnpike patrol duty “far more hazardous and far more exacting than normal State Police work.” He also emphasized that assignment of state troopers to turnpike duty would not reduce other police services in the state, and “would not cost the people a dime” under the agreement with the commission.

The Keystone State troopers warned that they “had not made enough speeding arrests when the superhighway first opened more than 10 years ago.” The road’s 70-mph speed limit demanded rigid enforcement. By 1954, they were using radar and two-way radio equipped cruisers. With this technology, an officer “could single out a speeding car, determine its exact speed, and notify a trooper ahead” to make the arrest. Use of radar had “reduced turnpike deaths tremendously.”

Sergeant Yoak “visited other turnpikes and carefully studied their methods of operation, paying particular attention to safety devices and means of maintaining low accident rates.” He was assigned responsibility for training officers of the WVTP patrol.<sup>14</sup>

**Table 1: Original Turnpike Patrolmen, 1954**

Lt. Marion C. Yoak (Lewisburg)

Sgt. Stanley O. Perrine (Shinnston)  
Sgt. Cecil C. “C. C.” Stewart (Nitro)

Tpr. Charles D. Austin (Romney)  
Tpr. Robert L. Casey (Chelyan)  
Tpr. Robert E. Dalton (Morgantown)  
Tpr. Kenneth H. Ellis (Welch)  
Tpr. Donald W. Gregory (Welch)  
Tpr. Lawrence Griffith (Princeton)  
Tpr. Raymond R. Heflin (Sistersville)  
Tpr. John L. McSweeney (Thomas)  
Tpr. Holroyd H. “Dutch” Meador (Chelyan)  
Tpr. Garth A. Rodebaugh (South Charleston)  
Tpr. William F. Sankbeil (Martinsburg)  
Tpr. Charles N. Talbott (Logan)  
Tpr. Charles W. Tighe (Fairmont)  
Tpr. William A. Wood (Clarksburg)

Sources: “17 Turnpike Cops Chosen,” *Charleston Daily Mail*, 29 Aug. 1954:6; *Blue Book, 1954*, 80-81; “Current and Former Members Directory” (updated 04/23/2015).

On 29 August 1954, Colonel Boyles announced the names of selected personnel. **See Table 1.** He stated that the men would arrive in Charleston on the 30th and “begin special training the following day which will continue up to the turnpike’s opening [next Thursday].” After assisting with opening ceremonies, the men would “begin their duties as patrolmen.” Six were to be stationed in Beckley, four in Princeton and four at Reed. Also working out of Reed will be “two non-commissioned supervisors.” The unit headquarters and radio communication (comm) center were also



Publicity still of trooper using microphone of two-way radio. Radio communications proved a highly effective safety and enforcement tool. WVPA Archives



View of cruiser patrolling WVTP on grade leading up to Sullivan Road in Raleigh County. Note absence of lane dividers, which proved a serious safety fault. WVPA Archives

located at Reed. Employing two-way radios, there would always be a patrol car “within a maximum of 20 minutes from any point on the highway.” The cruisers used by the troopers would be painted blue with gold tops and carry state police license plates. By this point, on-patrol strengths had been raised to a minimum of four at all times, increasing to seven at the times of heaviest anticipated traffic—“between 3 and 8 p.m. according to a U.S. 21 traffic count.” Boyles also stated that he wanted to build a unit barracks near Beckley.<sup>15</sup>

Colonel Boyles described the assignees as “experienced men in the lower age groups. They were selected on the basis of their records in field work with an eye towards good appearance and relations with the public.” He also emphasized that the men “were taken primarily from the larger detachments so that smaller outposts would not be left with inexperienced personnel.”<sup>16</sup>

As planned, Yoak’s men helped with the elaborate opening ceremonies for the Beckley-Princeton segment, then implemented their demanding patrol schedule. By 7 September, WVTP officials were reporting that 11,172 vehicles had travelled the Beckley-Princeton section in its first four days of operation. There were no accidents, but Yoak’s troopers made several arrests for negligent or drunken

driving, and one for trespass (thumbing). There were also about 50 service calls for minor breakdowns. Yoak noted that some drivers had apparently been dissuaded from using the highway because they believed that 60-mph was the *minimum* speed limit!<sup>17</sup>

On 3 September, the day after the turnpike’s formal dedication, Boyles announced Yoak’s promotion to lieutenant, in line with the responsibilities of his new command. In mid-October, Lieutenant Yoak could report no major accidents “during its first 41 days of operation, and only seven minor, non-collision accidents.” During this same period troopers, made 35 arrests for traffic violations and rendered 394 assists to motorists.<sup>18</sup>

The first death on the WVTP was, ironically, not traffic related. Rather, a 68-year-old insurance agent died from a coronary attack while riding in the back seat of a vehicle. The incident occurred on 24 October, seven miles out of Princeton.<sup>19</sup>

### Sidebar: The Frozen Flagger

*In April 1955, a section of the turnpike between Beckley and Charleston was being repaired under contract by Toner Concrete Company. The company’s owner hired Shady Spring High School football coach Marvin LC. Wetzel and his neighbor, retired railroad worker John “Buster” Kauff, Jr., as flaggers. They would direct traffic flow around a newly-poured block of concrete to allow it to set-up (cure) properly. On one occasion, Wetzel was unable to get to the work site. He asked Jack C. Wills, an 18-year-old player on the Shady team, if he wanted the work.*

*One cold and damp morning, a patrolling state trooper saw Mr. Wills beside the road. Realizing how uncomfortable the young man must be, the trooper graciously volunteered to take over flagging while Mr. Wills warmed himself in the police cruiser. Mr. Wills gratefully agreed and sat in the vehicle for about 20 minutes listening to radio chatter, then resumed his post.*

*Wills does not recall the solicitous trooper’s name. Nor does he clearly remember whether the officer extended the same courtesy to Mr. Kauff, but he believes the trooper at least offered.*

Source: Dr. Jack C. Wills, retired professor of English literature, Fairmont State University, personal communication to author, 11 March 2014

On 1 November, Tprs. Lawrence Griffith, Charles N. Talbott and Donald W. Gregory demonstrated the value of the WVTP radio net. “In a one-day shoplifting spree,” five Beckley juveniles stole \$115 worth of merchandise (\$1,410 in 2015 “real value”) from several stores in Princeton. They then evaded city police before reaching the turnpike. The troopers intercepted and returned the captured thieves to city officers.<sup>20</sup>

Unusual balmy fall weather and the novelty attraction of the now fully opened road caused the first turnpike’s first major jam on 14 November. Reportedly 16,650 vehicles paid tolls over the Friday-Sunday period. One newspaper observed, “Traffic over most of its 88 miles resembled the daily congestion on Kanawha boulevard [sic] at its 5 p. m. daily traffic peak.” The WVTP staff was “overwhelmed” by the traffic flow, and Yoak’s men were similarly hard pressed. They rendered 109 assists, made 11 arrests and investigated seven wrecks (none fatal).<sup>21</sup>

The year ended with a near-miss for one patrolman. On 4 December, while helping to unsnarl traffic on an ice-coated bridge over Paint Creek, Trooper Charles D. Austin was almost struck by a skidding vehicle. He only escaped by leaping over the side of the bridge and hanging on to the rail. He hung there for several minutes before Trooper Talbott and others heard his cries for help. According to Lieutenant Yoak, Austin was “just about to lose his grip” when rescued. Yoak reportedly joked with the trooper that “a circus or two had openings for trapeze performers.”<sup>22</sup>

The long dreaded “first actual traffic fatality” occurred at 1715 on 5 March 1955, when a car “went out of control” due to a “steering defect” near Mossy and “overturned down a slight embankment.” A passenger, 39-year-old Vivian Virginia Stephens Johnson of Charleston, “died almost instantly,” after

apparently being thrown from the vehicle. The driver was taken to a Beckley hospital with back injuries. The WVTP Commission noted that the turnpike had seen almost 23,000,000 miles of traffic without a fatality up to that point.<sup>23</sup>

An editorial in a May 1955 edition of the *Charleston Gazette* lauded “this magnificent highway,” but called for replacing dividing strips with “raised safety islands” and expanding the road to four lanes over its entire length. The article detailed the nine fatalities since the WVTP opened, including one involving a head-on collision between a drunken driver and another vehicle carry ten people (six of them children). That crash occurred on one of the highway’s four-lane sections. The article carefully excluded one death by heart attack, “13 other accidents with bodily injury and 58 with considerable property damage.” Authorities should also deny access to overloaded vehicles, the editor opined.<sup>24</sup>

In its 1958-1960 report, the DPS boasted, “The Turnpike Division has been highly commended for its work, and certainly the traffic accident rate in comparison to the vehicle miles travelled has been low. Many commendations have been received for the assistance given to travelers on the turnpike by the members of the Division.” Data for the biennium showed:

Patrol Man Hours	72,346
Assists to Motorists	15,537
Accidents Investigated	354
Persons Injured	158
Persons Killed	25
Persons Arrested	2,398 <sup>25</sup>

The unit experienced its first command change when Lieutenant Yoak applied for and was granted partial disability retirement in late September 1958.

There have been twenty more command changes to date. See **Table 2**. On his departure Yoak said, “I feel that I am leaving one of the finest group of men, from the superintendent (Col. Hazen Fair) on down to the newest recruit, ever banded together as a law enforcement unit.” The turnpike commissioners announced that Cpl. Kenneth H. Ellis, an original member of the patrol, had assumed temporary command on 23

Result of a night time accident at Milburn on 5 November 1955. Driver lived but sustained a fractured skull, broken back, multiple broken bones and other serious injuries. *Charleston Daily Mail*, 2 Sept. 1957, clipping in WVPA Archives



**Table 2: WVSP Turnpike/Parkways Authority Unit Commanders**

**WV Turnpike Patrol**

1954-1958 Lt. Marion C. Yoak

**WV Turnpike Division**

1958-1961 Lt. Roy G. Coen  
 1961-1963 Lt. Carl F. Nutt  
 1963-1965 Lt. William R. Seal  
 1965-1967 Lt. George M. Scott  
 1967 Lt. William K. McMorrow (1st tour)  
 1967-1971 Lt. Kenneth H. Ellis  
 1971-1975 Lt. William K. McMorrow (2nd tour)  
 1976-1977 Lt. John T. "Jack" Gribben

**Company E**

1977-1982 Lt. John T. "Jack" Gribben  
 1982-1983 Capt. John T. "Jack" Gribben  
 1983-1987 Capt. James K. Gabbert  
 1987-1992 Capt. Fred W. Dickinson  
 1992 Capt. Jefferson L. Davis  
 1992-1993 Capt. David H. Bolyard  
 1993-1998 First Sgt./Capt. Carl R. "Jay" Smithers, Jr.

**Troop 7**

1998-1999 Capt. Chester E. Starcher  
 1999-2000 Capt. Donald R. Searles, Jr.  
 2000-2001 Capt. Mark L. Smith  
 2001-2002 Capt. William E. McGraw II  
 2002-2005 Capt. Annette M. Sovastion  
 2005-2009 Capt. Tina L. Phillips  
 2010 Capt. Larry A. Bailes, Capt. Randall W. Hyre  
 2011-2012 Capt. Randall W. Hyre  
 2012-2015 Capt. Barry C. Marcum  
 2015-2016 Capt. Michael R. Crowder  
 2016- Capt. Vincent S. Deeds

Sources: *West Virginia Blue Books, 1954, 80-81, 1959, 111, 1961, 103, 1964, 91, 1965, 124, 1967, 144, 1971, 197, 1976, 160, 1983, 210, 1987, 218, 1992, 178, 1993, 193, 1994, 119, 1998, 117, 1999, 133, 2000, 136, 2001, 161, 2002, 154, 2006, 205, 2011, 219; WVSP Annual Reports, 2010, 9, 16, 2011, 16, 2012, 22, 2015, 60; McMorrow to author, 30 May 2016.*

September. Colonel Fair subsequently announced the appointment of Lt. Roy G. Coen, officer-in-charge of the Communications Division, as new patrol commanding officer effective 7 October. Coen's assignment had been specifically requested by the WVTP Commission.<sup>26</sup>

In his end-of-year summary to the WVTP

commission, Coen reported 8 died in traffic accidents in 1958 versus 14 in 1957, with injuries rising from 83 to 100. Property damaged jumped from \$102,130 to \$312,355, but arrests dropped from 1,308 to 1,269.<sup>27</sup>

Coen retired in 1960. He was succeeded as patrol commander in turn by Carl F. Nutt, William R. Seal, and George M. Scott. Scott was the fourth and last Camp Conley graduate to command the patrol.<sup>28</sup>

When Scott retired in 1967, he was replaced by William K. McMorrow, promoted from first sergeant of Company A in Shinnston. McMorrow, the first academy graduate to hold the position, served until the fall of that year, when he



William K. McMorrow (commander, 1967 and 1971-1976), stands in first row, fourth from left, as part of the original State Police Academy graduating class, 10 December 1949. Courtesy William K. McMorrow

was offered transfer as executive officer of Company B in South Charleston. He was succeeded by First Sgt. Kenneth H. Ellis. Ellis had joined the DPS in 1948, and was one of the troopers originally assigned to turnpike duty in 1954. As noted above, he had served as acting patrol commander for several weeks in 1958. Lieutenant Ellis left the patrol in late March 1971, when he exchanged positions with Lieutenant McMorrow. The latter's second tour as commander was part of "a list of 14 promotions and transfers that brought down accusations of political

maneuvering.” One trooper suggested that the large number of changes were a reaction to a request that state policemen “be allowed to join the Fraternal Order of Police.” Other department officials alleged that the changes were a ripple effect flowing from the Company A commander being “given a key post in the headquarters at Charleston.”<sup>29</sup>

On 1 August 1975, McMorrow retired from the WVSP, and shortly thereafter the patrol received a new commander through another apparent political shuffle. Lt. John T. “Jack” Gribben, who had served as commandant of the academy since July 1974, was suddenly transferred to the vacant post. He was accompanied by Sgt. Carl Legursky, “looked upon as the department’s most experienced training officer.” Supposedly several city police chiefs had decided not to send their officers to the academy to complete the Basic Police Training Program, because the curriculum was “too much oriented toward highway policing.” The program was therefore “not turning out people trained to solve the problems we have,” such as family crises. Supt. Robert L. Bonar asserted the transfers were “routine.” One newspaper averred that “the West Virginia Turnpike [is] considered by most troopers to be the state police graveyard.”<sup>30</sup>

During the first six months of 1975, the WVTP attained a higher death-per-mile rate than any other road in the state. Other routes had the same or higher death tolls, but were also much longer than the turnpike. By comparison there were only two deaths on the 400+ miles of Interstate highways within the state, both of them on I-64 in Cabell County. Troopers toughened enforcement between December 1975 and June 1976, and there were no deaths on the turnpike—compared with 15 fatalities in the preceding six months. During the first half of 1976, turnpike police made 7,466 arrests, mostly for speeding and illegal passing, compared with 5,355 for the same period in 1975. The tough enforcement was credited with reducing accidents by 42 percent and injuries by 68 percent.

A small part of the arrest increase has been attributed “to a recent flurry of drunk driving arrests near the Glass House at Beckley,” where “drunks congregate . . . after Beckley bars close.” The restaurant manager reported that “some late-night customers have been surly to waitresses and that he ordered the juke-box turned off to discourage their

presence.” As Gribben observed, “The city cops drove them out onto the turnpike, and now we’re driving them back into Beckley.”

During this period, arrests were roughly evenly distributed between cars and trucks, provoking much trucker anger. Lieutenant Gribben noted that truckers are “pretty much left alone on interstates and when they hit this turnpike we’ve been nailing them.” One manifestation of trucker anger was a “dwindling flow of information” via citizen band (CB) radios. In pre-cellphone days, CB reports from truckers proved very useful “for spotting disabled vehicles, road hazards and drunk or reckless drivers.” But the crackdown produced a flurry of abusive radio chatter directed at patrol troopers, so Gribben ordered his men to monitor only channel 9, the official emergency channel.

Later that year, a more dangerous pattern developed of CB users making calls about nonexistent automobile accidents, disbursing patrol manpower and diverting emergency equipment such as ambulances. Since most accidents generate more than one call, troopers became leery about responding to a single call. Lieutenant Gribben said, “Between the false calls and getting cussed out, it’s no wonder the troopers don’t want to listen” to CB chatter.<sup>31</sup>

One year later, a humorist was explaining his “boycott” of the turnpike because of the “pure fear I have of driving on that piece of road. . . that bloody stretch of nonsense.” He reported Lieutenant Gribben’s *faux pas* during an interview of stating that “because of a super job of patrolling the turnpike during the past six months, there was not one death. During the six months prior to the super job of patrolling, 15 persons were killed.” One interpretation of the statement could be “that during the six months before the crackdown there was super *laxity* [emphasis added] by the state police and that this was directly responsible for 15 deaths”! But he concluded, “Personally, I don’t think Lt. Gribben meant all of that at all. I also think that there’s a combination of a lot of things that make the turnpike the most dangerous road in the country.”<sup>32</sup>

One of the more bizarre behaviors associated with the turnpike received prominence during Gribben’s tenure. In March 1977, three 13-year-old boys were apprehended and put in juvenile detention for breaking a dozen truck windshields by dropping rocks from bridges crossing the highway. Damages

were estimated at over \$1,000 (\$4,170 in 2015 “real value”). Lieutenant Gribben observed, “This is a favorite pastime on Cabin Creek. About three or four times a year it breaks out.” Both adults and juveniles engaged in the activity which, oddly, was restricted to “18-wheelers.” The incidents took place near milepost 73 in the Dry Branch Hollow area of Cabin Creek. That locale and “overhead bridges near the Beckley interchange” were the most frequent sites. The lieutenant philosophized to reporters, “I don’t know what it is about that Cabin Creek area. I guess they’re getting warmed up for baseball season.”<sup>33</sup>

In 1977, as part of a general departmental reorganization and modernization recommended by a professional management consulting firm, the Turnpike Division was officially redesignated Company E. Although this redesignation administratively made the unit the WVSP’s *de facto* fifth company, the commander’s rank was not upgraded to captain until 1982.<sup>34</sup>

In 1978, the Federal Highway and Safety Act mandated that all states comply with the 55-mile-per-hour National Maximum Speed Limit (NMSL) by 30 September 1983, and that they attain a compliance level of at least 70 percent. NMSL compliance was a condition of receiving federal highway maintenance funds, and additional funds were made available to support expanded patrol operations. WVSP responded by establishing a Special Patrol under Company E, primarily to

enforce compliance on I-64, I-77 and I-79, in addition to the turnpike. The conduct of Operation SPIRIT (State Police Incident Response Interstate Team) also focused on expected heavy increases in traffic volume on I-77 in conjunction with the May-October 1982 opening and closing dates of the World’s Fair in Knoxville, Tennessee.

The 23 troopers of Special Patrol operating in specially marked vehicles increased the number of patrols along the state’s 388 miles of rural and urban interstate highways “three-fold.” Initial U.S. Department of Transportation data showed that West Virginia had a statewide compliance rate of 75.6 percent—but this dropped to 25.6 percent on rural interstates. A follow-up study showed that by early September 1982, “motorists in West Virginia were the nation’s most law-abiding;” with an average recorded speed of 47.4 mph, “and just 23.8 percent of all motorists” exceeding 55 mph. Comparative data for neighboring states showed that only 23.8 percent of Pennsylvanians also exceeded the NMSL, but their average speed was 51.0. The rate of compliance for Virginia was 42.4 percent; Ohio, 55 percent; and Maryland, 63.2 percent. The special patrol activity ceased when federal funding was withdrawn in 1996, and Troop 7 returned to its turnpike-only mission.<sup>35</sup>

A complete restructuring and realignment of WVSP field and headquarters organizations was implemented effective 1 July 1998. The old



Capt. Carl R. “Jay” Smithers, Jr. (commander, 1993-1998). Smithers retired in 1999, became deputy director of the Division of Protective Services, and was appointed WVSP superintendent in March 2001. WVSP Archives

Capt. Tina L. Phillips (commander, 2005-2009). Phillips has the distinction of being longest-serving commander of the WVTP patrol. *WVSP Annual Report, 2009*



Capt. Barry C. Marcum (commander, 2012-2015). *WVSP Annual Report, 2009*



Capt. Vincent S. Deeds (commander, 2016-present). WVPA web site

“company” designations were replaced by “troop,” and the number of geographic (multi-county)-based field commands expanded from five to six. As of 30 June 2015, there were “644 uniformed members assigned to Field Services,” distributed among seven troops divided into “20 districts consisting of 59 detachments.” Company E was designated Troop 7, and retained responsibility solely for operations on the WVTP.<sup>36</sup>

Arguably, the three most important recent occurrences are provision for emergency response, criminal patrol activity and facilities upgrade. During a blizzard on 18-19 December 2009, about 40 inches of snow fell in ten hours. Hundreds of motorists were trapped in their cars for up to 24 hours. Traffic was backed up for miles by tractor-trailers jack-knifing on ice and multiple rear-end collisions. As one industry journal summarized, “Rescue efforts were hampered by failure of a key mobile (cell) phone tower, an outage of other emergency comms, plus the inability of police, tow trucks and other rescue services to get through the continuous central concrete median barrier. They were unable to efficiently get to stranded motorists, remove damaged vehicles or turn traffic around. Despite the many hundreds of motorists stranded by the blizzard crashes, some running out of fuel to keep their cars warm, and great and protracted discomfort from being stuck in backups overnight and much of the next day, there was not a single fatality and not even one serious injury. (From the fuss the local press made you’d have thought it was a local Katrina or Haiti.)”

In April 2012, a final WVPA Incident Management Plan had been approved to address identified issues. The plan provided for multiple clearly marked detours should the turnpike have to be closed for any reason. Detours will provide food,

gas and lodging, and can accommodate tractor-trailers. Technology enhancements included installation of new radio towers, median wall gates, overhead message boards, and cameras, and integrating the Division of Highways (DOH) and WVPA Traffic Management Centers.<sup>37</sup>

The Emergency Traffic Control Plan specified that in the event of an emergency closure, the “State Trooper Supervisor (Sergeant or higher), along with the Section Foreman, will assess the closure duration and if it is warranted, make the decision to abate the stopped traffic. The Trooper will also assist in traffic directing measures during the closure and detour, and keep the shoulders open to allow emergency crews, towing services and turnpike maintenance crews to access the scene of the incident.”<sup>38</sup>

Criminal transport of illegal material, particularly drugs, to West Virginia destinations or through the state to customers in neighboring states, prompted initiation of a four-member criminal patrol unit in 2012. Troopers in this unit patrol the WVTP on a daily basis looking for drivers violating state laws. Patrol members are “trained to look beyond the traffic violation for more indications of criminal activity within the vehicle.” Selectees attend specialized training such as Desert Snow roadside drug interdiction courses. The criminal patrol unit works closely with officers from Troop 8, the Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI), which provides personnel statewide for undercover and criminal investigations.

Noteworthy recent Troop 7 cases include apprehending a University of Pittsburgh neuropsychologist wanted for the murder of his wife (July 2013); arrest of heroin dealers, and retrieval of 56 stamps of heroin and \$2,537 in U.S. currency (2014); arrest of a driver on second degree murder charges

**Table 3: Troop 7 Activity, FY 2015**

Calls for Service	Felony Arrests	Misd. Arrests	HMV Citations	HMV Warning Citations	DUI	Motorist Assists	Crash Reports	Criminal Investigations	
								Incidents	Offenses
4,025	60	287	9,711	22,002	45	2,492	594	455	686
Misd. = Misdemeanor; HMV = Hazardous Moving Violation; DUI = Driving Under the Influence									
Source: WVSP Annual Report, 2015, 61.									



Col. C. R. "Jay" Smithers, WVSP superintendent (left) and Gov. Earl Ray Tomblin unveil a plaque commemorating the new Charleston South detachment building to the memory of former WVPA board member C. Cameron Lewis II, 8 August 2013. *WVPA Annual Report, 2013*



Dedication ceremony for the new Charleston South detachment building, 8 August 2013. *WVPA Annual Report, 2013*

for striking a vehicle head-on, killing the driver and injuring three passengers (2015); a parallel and even worse tragedy in 2016, when four died and four more were seriously injured by an impaired wrong-way driver; and cooperating with Troop 6 (Beckley) officers to intercept a vehicle reportedly transporting ten pounds of marijuana from Charlotte, North Carolina, to Beckley, and arrest the driver for possession with intent to deliver (2015). On a note of personal valor, Troop 7 Sr. Tpr. Leslie T. Goldie, Jr., was awarded a WVSP Meritorious Service Award for his July 2013 actions in saving the life of a child trapped in an overturned vehicle.<sup>39</sup>

The officer assigned as company/troop commander has always had office space and facilities at the commission/authority headquarters on 3310 Piedmont Road, in an eastern suburb of Charleston. On 26 September 1995, a new building was dedicated at 201 Pikeview Drive in Beckley. It has served as the official turnpike patrol headquarters since that time. Three detachments (Charleston South, Beckley and Princeton) now serve the four counties the WVTP passes through over its 88-mile length. Charleston South has primary responsibility for patrolling the turnpike from Charleston to Mahan (Exit 66), in Fayette County. From that point to Ghent, in Raleigh County, is Beckley detachment's territory. The southernmost segment is the Princeton detachment's bailiwick. This

division permits an average ten-minute response to accidents and other calls for assistance.<sup>40</sup>

According to the patrol commander, Troop 7 officers are among the more senior WVSP personnel. The minimum rank is corporal, which requires at least nine years' experience to attain. No recent academy graduates are assigned to turnpike patrol work. The officers are self-starters with high personal accountability—perhaps to a degree higher than the average trooper. Candidates are given a 60-day TDY (temporary duty) detail to allow them and the commander to assess their compatibility with the demands of the work.<sup>41</sup>

In March 2012, the WVPA board approved funds to design a project for a new 2,200 square foot Troop 7 detachment at Charleston South, located near MacCorkle Avenue Exit 95 in Kanawha City. The existing building, constructed in the 1950s, was demolished in August 2012. The contractor began construction the following month, and the new building was opened in a ceremony on 8 August 2013. The building was dedicated to the memory of former WVPA board member C. Cameron "Cam" Lewis II, "a staunch supporter of...Troop 7."

In the fall of 2015, construction began on a new 19,200 square office building to house Troop 7 headquarters and its Beckley detachment, and the Beckley turnpike maintenance activities. Completion of the \$3.9 million structure is scheduled in 2016. The Princeton detachment is collocated with the DOH District 10 office.<sup>42</sup>

Today, 96,000 vehicles transit the WVTP on an average day. A total of 29 sworn officers are assigned to Troop 7. Enforcement of commercial motor vehicle (CMV) laws remains a troop priority. During Fiscal Year 2015, troopers conducted 468 CMV inspections, placed 158 vehicles out of service and issued 732 CMV violations or citations. Current priorities include slowing down tractor-trailers using E-Z Pass lanes, which are narrower than on most other E-Z Pass toll roads, and reducing the number of serious traffic crashes by heightening patrol vehicle visibility "during peak traffic hours, inclement weather and high travel holiday weekends."<sup>43</sup> Troop 7's fiscal year 2015 activity and workload are indicated by data in the **Table 3**.

Merle T. Cole (B.A., Political Science, 1969, Marshall U.) is a retired Federal civil servant. He has authored eighty publications dealing with military, naval and police history, mostly in state, national and international refereed journals. His 60-year anniversary history of the WVSP is posted on the agency web site. Mr. Cole was invited to write the WVSP entry for *The West Virginia Encyclopedia* in 2006, to present a lecture on the topic at the West Virginia State Archives in Charleston in 2011, and to teach at the West Virginia State Police Academy. He is a member of the West Virginia Historical Society, Raleigh County Historical Society, Company of Military Historians, and a research associate (military history) with the Calvert Marine Museum in Solomons, Maryland. Mr. Cole served as a commissioned officer in the Maryland State Guard, Maryland Military Department, from 1985-1994. He gratefully acknowledges the assistance provided by Col. C. R. "Jay" Smithers, WVSP superintendent and former Troop 7 commander; First Lt. (Ret.) William K. McMorrow, former WVTP Division commander; and Donald R. Davis. Special recognition is due to Teresa G. Nissel, WVPA administrative assistant, and Capt. Vincent S. Deeds, Troop 7 commander.

1. For creation and early operations of the DPS, see Merle T. Cole, "Birth of the West Virginia State Police, 1919-1921," *West Virginia History* 43 (Fall 1981):1-20; "Martial Law in West Virginia and Major Davis as 'Emperor of Tug River,'" *West Virginia History* 43 (Winter 1982):118-144; "'Mere Military Color:' The State Police and Martial Law," *West Virginia Historical Society Quarterly* 17 (July 2003):1-13 ; and "'The Meanest Old Son-of-a-Bitch:' J. R. Brockus of the West Virginia State Police," *West Virginia Historical Society Quarterly* 23 (July 2009):1-14. For shift from "industrial disturbances... to violations... confined to individuals and personal in character," see W. Va., Dept. of Public Safety, *Biennial Report to the Governor, June 30, 1926 [1924-1926]* (Charleston, 1926):18 (hereafter, *DPS Report* by years).
2. W. Va., Dept. of Highways, Advanced Planning Div., *Yesterday and Today . . . A Highway History of West Virginia from Colonial Time to the Present* (Charleston, December 1973):17-18, 21, 26-27, 34, 85, 86. For additional background, see W.Va., Department of Highways, *A History of West Virginia Highways* (Charleston: n.d.[1978?]):2-4, and Tom Cummings, "West Virginia Roads (A Continuing Story of Change)," in W.Va. Legislature, *West Virginia Blue Book, 1974* (Charleston, 1974):245-260 (hereafter *Blue Book* by year). For horse riding qualification, see DPS Creative Act, § 7, W. Va., *Acts of the Legislature, 1919. Extra Sess.* (Charleston, 1919):33. Available data suggest that horse-mounted transportation ceased to be significant after 1926. Horses and forage as a share of expenditures shrank from 10.2% in 1920 to 0.1% in 1927, while motor vehicles and R&E rose from 7.8% to 14.9% in the same timeframe. In terms of DPS inventory, "horses and equipment" declined from 5.3% in 1924 to 1.8% in 1926, to not warranting mention in 1928. By contrast, "motor transportation" rose steadily from 22.5% in 1924 to 28.6% in 1926, to 33.7% in 1928. *DPS Reports, 1920, 6, 1922-1924, 6, 1924-1926, 14, and 1926-1928, 4, 14.*
3. *DPS Reports, 1920, 7, 1921-1922, 8, 1922-1924, 5, 7-8, and 1924-1926, 18.* Observation about "relatively safer" conditions with poor roads is from *DPS Report, 1922-1924, 8.* "Foreign" quote is from *DPS Report, 1936-1938, 121.*
4. "Some of State's Best Homes Infected, Says Head of State Police," *Charleston Daily Mail* (hereafter *CMD*), 3 Dec. 1922:4.
5. For transfer of traffic regulation and road law enforcement from SRC, see "Wilson is Chosen Traffic Director," *CDM*, 25 Aug. 1929:5. Reduced reliance on motorcycles is from *DPS Report, 1934-1936, 55.* Of the 15 DPS line-of-duty fatalities during 1919-1939, seven (46.7%) were caused by gunfire; five (33.3%) by motorcycle accident; two (13.3%) by automobile accident; and one (6.7%) by vehicular assault. WVSP Hall of Honor web site, [www.wvsp.gov/pages/hallofhonor.aspx](http://www.wvsp.gov/pages/hallofhonor.aspx); Officer Down Memorial Page web site [www.odmp.org](http://www.odmp.org). The Pennsylvania State Police similarly experienced motorcycle patrol accident and death rates which established the machines' reputation as "killers." They also gradually replaced motorcycles with the safer patrol cruisers. Lt. Col. Philip M. Conti, *The Pennsylvania State Police: A History of Service to the Commonwealth, 1905 to the Present* (Harrisburg, 1977):256. In conjunction with the highway patrol mission, the DPS established a statewide, mobile first aid unit in the fall of 1936. This was the first such unit in the United States. Wilma Dodson, "In the Name of the Law," *West Virginia Review* (April 1937):227. See also *DPS Report, 1936-1938, 21-22.* Early on, state troopers had to deal with West Virginia residents fraudulently registering their vehicles in Ohio "because of the lower rate in the Buckeye state." "West Virginians use Ohio Plates," *Charleston Gazette* (hereafter *CG*), 12 Jan. 1930:7, "Use of Ohio Tags to be Studied by Police," *CG*, 18 Jan. 1930:2.
6. *DPS Reports, 1934-1936, 15, 1936-1938, 23, 1938-1940, 29, 1954-1956, 17; Blue Book, 1956, 83, 1957, 103, and 1958, 86.* The MVI function was entrusted to a corporal's supervision in the years immediately following the transfer.
7. Cummings, 258.
8. *Ibid.*, 259.
9. West Virginia Parkways Authority Facts and Information Web Site, [www.transportation.wv.gov/turnpike/Pages/FactsandInformation.aspx](http://www.transportation.wv.gov/turnpike/Pages/FactsandInformation.aspx).
10. *DPS Report, 1952-1954, 20.* The original agreement has essentially remained unchanged since 1954. To fill

- the slots vacated by transfer of selected troopers and existing vacancies, the newly opened State Police Academy at Institute presented a cadet training class for 25 recruits, 1 June-15 August 1954. *Ibid.*, 19.
11. "Best State Troopers to Patrol Turnpike to Keep It from Becoming a Death Trap," *CDM*, 30 May 1954:1. Both sergeants, Stanley O. Perrine and Cecil C. Stewart, were graduates of the 1935 Camp Conley recruit school. "78 Recruits Appointed as New State Troopers," *CG*, 30 June 1935:1, F13. To meet the need for additional manpower as the DPS weathered Great Depression-driven appropriation cuts, the agency conducted a recruit training school at National Guard Camp Conley, near Point Pleasant during May-July 1936. There were over 5,000 applicants for the 80 announced cadet slots. This school graduated the largest number of cadets prior to the opening of the academy at Institute in October 1949. Merle T. Cole and Donald R. Davis, "Training the Troopers: Part 1, Before the Academy, 1919-1949," *West Virginia Historical Society Quarterly* 27 (Fall 2013):7.
  12. "78 Recruits Appointed As New State Troopers"; "Two Who Did Not Yell," *CDM*, 3 Oct. 1958:10; *Blue Book*, 1936, 26, 1940, 36, 1945, 70, 1946, 49, 1950, 78, and 1954, 80; "Yoak Granted Partial Disability," *Beckley Raleigh Register* (hereafter *RR*), 24 Sept. 1958:3; Cole and Davis, 7. At one point in 1936, Yoak was apparently transferred from Company D to Company A. "State Officers Are Reenlisted," *RR*, 2 July 1936:6, and "State Police Total Reaches 200 in State," *CG*, 1 July 1936:12.
  13. *Blue Book*, 1954, 80, 1955, 104, 1956, 85 and 1976, 160; WVSP Creative Act, §5, 1919 as amended 1921. After the 1921 expansion, the field force consisted of four companies lettered "A"- "D," each policing a multi-county geographic area subdivided into districts and detachments. Company headquarters relocated frequently until the 1930s. The WVTP cut through counties policed by Companies B (South Charleston) and D (Beckley).
  14. "School Is Planned for Pike Patrol Men," *CG*, 25 June 1954:28; "Training Set for Officers on the Turnpike," *CDM*, 25 June 1954:2. *CG* stated that the visit had lasted "from Sunday through last night [Wednesday];" *CDM* reported the visit as lasting 4 days. Interesting comparisons with other states' turnpike patrols can be found in Conti, 306-307, 436, 492, 495 and 499; Leo J. Coakley, *Jersey Troopers: A Fifty Year History of the New Jersey State Police* (New Brunswick, 1971):182-183; and the NJSP Division Organization Page at [www.njsp.divorg/operations/troopd.html](http://www.njsp.divorg/operations/troopd.html). NJSP Troop D patrols both the turnpike and the state's other "superhighway," the Garden State Parkway. The PSP special turnpike patrol unit, Troop B-2, was created in October 1940. It was redesignated Troop T as part of a general troop redesignation scheme in 1965. In January 1971, Troop T was combined with Troop S, a special unit established in June 1970 to patrol the interstate highways, under Area VII. Troop S has been abolished and Troop T retains responsibility for the turnpike. See Troop Directory at [www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/psp/4451](http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/psp/4451).
  15. "17 Turnpike Cops Chosen," *CDM*, 29 Aug. 1954:6; "Pike Police in Training at Academy," *CDM*, 30 Aug. 1954:10. The training aimed to prepare the troopers "for the particular problems involved in patrolling a high-speed, limited access toll road." *DPS Report, 1954-1956*, 17 and *1958-1960*, 55. One newspaper highlighted the positive example arising from employment of two handicapped veterans as WVSP civilian radio operators at Reed headquarters. "Two Handicapped Vets Operate Police Radio on State's New Pike," *CDM*, 3 Oct. 1954:19.
  16. "Policing the Turnpike," *CG Magazine Section*, 5 Sept. 1954:27m.
  17. "11,172 Vehicles, Pike's 4-Day Load," *CG*, 8 Sept. 1954:8; "Turnpike Traffic Indicates Enterprise 'Great Success,'" *CDM*, 8 Sept. 1954:20. Apparently the timidity of certain drivers proved a persistent problem. In 1965 the turnpike unit commander recommended that commissioners establish a minimum speed limit because "police are having as much trouble with 'pokey drivers'" as with speeders. "Rest Stops on Pike? Commissioners to Study Proposal," *CDM*, 27 Aug. 1965:19.
  18. "Yoak Heads Pike Cops," *CDM*, 3 Sept. 1954:1; "Final Section of Pike Paving To Be Laid Today," *RR*, 19 Oct. 1954:10.
  19. "Heart Victim First To Die On W. Va. 'Pike,'" *CDM* 25 Oct. 1954:2.
  20. "Bug Dust," *RR*, 3 Nov. 1954:4. Historic commodity "real value" is computed from Samuel H. Williamson, "Seven Ways to Compute the Relative Value of a U.S. Dollar Amount, 1774 to Present" (hereafter "Measuring Worth") at [www.measuringworth.com/uscompare](http://www.measuringworth.com/uscompare).
  21. "Lovely Day, New Pike—16,650 Cars Cause Snarl," *CDM*, 15 Nov. 1954:1, 2. Three arrests were for reckless driving, two for drunk driving, three for illegal parking, two for being drunk and one for driving without an operator's license.
  22. "Pike Cop Dangles From Span," *CG*, 5 Dec. 1954:1, 10.
  23. "Littlepage Resident First 'Pike' Victim," *CDM*, 6 March 1955: 1, 2; "City Woman First Fatality on Turnpike," *CG*, 6 March 1955:1. This story was almost pushed off the front page by stories of heavy rains and resultant widespread flooding in the region. The turnpike itself "got a mud bath between Reed and Chelyan" and was closed to traffic. "Turnpike, U.S. 60 Closed; Rains Spur Evacuations," *CG*, 6 March 1955:1; "Slides Choke Pike, U.S. 60; City Area Hit," *CDM*, 6 March 1955:1.
  24. "Is Our 88-Mile Turnpike Death Trap? Seven Deaths in Two Months Bad Sign," *CG*, 8 May 1955:6.
  25. *DPS Report, 1958-1960*, 55.
  26. "Lt. Yoak to Ask For Retirement," *CDM*, 26 Aug.

- 1958:1; "Turnpike Police Boss to Seek Retirement," *RR*, 26 Aug. 1958:1; "Delay Yoak Application," *RR*, 29 Aug. 1958:14; "Yoak Granted Partial Disability," *RR*, 24 Sept. 1958:3; "Pike Commissioners Confirm Resignation of Police Lt. Yoak," *CDM*, 24 Sept. 1958:2; "Two Who Did Not Yell; "Lt. Coen New Head of Turnpike Police," *CDM*, 7 Oct. 1958:17; "The News ... In Brief," *Beckley Post-Herald* (hereafter *BPH*), 8 Oct. 1958:1; "Turnpike Accident Kills Two," *RR*, 13 Oct. 1958:1.
27. "Deaths Down, Injuries Up On Turnpike," *CG*, 31 Jan. 1959:5.
28. Nutt was later appointed deputy superintendent (lieutenant colonel) of the department and retired in August 1971. *Blue Book, 1960*, 87 and 1964, 89; "Craft, Price Get Positions No. 2, 3," *CDM*, 3 Sept. 1971:1; "Key State Police Vacancies Filled," *CDM*, 4 Sept. 1971:2; "Promotions Cited By State Police," *CG*, 4 Sept. 1971:22; "Lt. Scott Heads Police on Turnpike," *CDM*, 5 Feb. 1965:8; "78 Recruits Appointed As New State Troopers."
29. McMorrow to author, 30 May 2016. For mass reassignments, see "State Police Transferred," *BPH*, 20 March 1971:1, 8; "State Police Transfers Involve Beckley," *RR*, 22 March 1971:12. See also "State Trooper Job Transfers Hit by Senator," *CG*, 20 March 1971:1, 2; "Officers, Troopers Transferred," *Morgantown Dominion-News*, 20 March 1971:1, 8A; "14 Troopers Transferred in West Va. Department," *Weirton Daily Times*, 20 March 1971:1, 2. For first academy class, see "20 Troopers Get Academy Diplomas," *CG*, 7 Dec. 1949:26; and "Graduation Adds 20 New Troopers to State Police Force," *CDM*, 11 Dec. 1949:26. The *RR* article erroneously said that Ellis had commanded the turnpike patrol "for the past 17 Years." "Three State Policemen Are Retiring," *CG*, 3 Sept. 1975:12D.
30. "Academy Shakeup Not Chiefs' Move," *CG*, 25 Sept. 1975:18A; "Academy Shakeup Reveals Criticism," *CG*, 26 Sept. 1975:12A; "Some Chiefs Critical of Training Program," *CDM*, 26 Sept. 1975:5A; "Transferred Lieutenant Unhappy with Reports," *CG*, 27 Sept. 1975:8A; McMorrow to author, 30 May 2016. "Graveyard" quote is from "Academy Shakeup Reveals Criticism."
31. "Statistics Reveal 'Pike Most Dangerous State Road,'" *Bluefield Daily Telegraph*, 18 Sept. 1975:2; "Get-Tough Policy Halts Turnpike Deaths," *CDM*, 10 June 1976:1A; "CB Harmony Ends," *CDM*, 28 July 1976:1A; "Wild Goose Calls from CB Owners Angering Police," *CG*, 26 Nov. 1976:8C.
32. "Hi, It's the Great WOG," *Charleston Sunday Gazette-Mail*, 13 June 1976:1B.
33. "Boys Arrested On Turnpike," *BPH*, 9 March 1977:13; "Measuring Worth."
34. Cresap, McCormick and Paget, Inc., *West Virginia Department of Public Safety—A Plan of Action for Modernization and Improvement* (Washington, D.C., 1976):IV-15; *Blue Book, 1977*, 200-206; *WVSP Annual Report, 1977*, 3.
35. *WVSP Annual Reports, 1977-1978*, 68, and 1995-1996, 90; *West Virginia State Police Seventieth Anniversary [Yearbook] Edition, 1919-1989* (Walsworth Pub. Co: Merceline, MO):77, courtesy of Teresa G. Nissel, WVPA, 9 May 2016; "SPIRIT Patrols Aim to Reduce Accidents," *Bluefield Daily Telegraph* (hereafter *BDT*), 6 May 1982:3; "Operation SPIRIT Termed a Success," *BDT*, 16 June 1982:3; "State Motorists Obeying 55 MPH Limit," *BDT*, 4 Sept. 1982:5. The *Bluefield Daily Telegraph* made West Virginia's No. 1 compliance rating the occasion for an editorial slam at poor highway maintenance. "Our own theory is that West Virginians, aside from the intimidating effect of all those highway patrol cars, are inexperienced at driving faster than 55 mph because they don't get much chance to do it on our non-interstate roads. There are precious few highways in this state on which you can safely drive that rapidly." "Small Wonder," *BDT*, 9 Sept. 1982:4.
36. West Virginia State Police News Releases, "Reorganization Taking Shape," 31 May 1998; *Blue Book, 1998*, 117-124. Field Services is currently structured as follows:
- Troop 1, HQ Shinnston
  - Troop 2, HQ Kearneysville
  - Troop 3, HQ Elkins
  - Troop 4, HQ South Charleston
  - Troop 5, HQ Logan
  - Troop 6, HQ Beckley
  - Troop 7 (WVTP), HQ Beckley
  - Troop 8 (BCI), HQ Institute
  - Troop 0 (special operations, crimes against children, training academy and public affairs)
- WVSP Annual Report, 2015*, 10. See also Detachment Contact Information on the WVSP web page [www.wvsp.gov/contactus/detachmentContactInfo/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.wvsp.gov/contactus/detachmentContactInfo/Pages/default.aspx).
37. Peter Samuel, "WV Turnpike Gets Median Gates for Next Blizzard," *TOLLROADS news*, 28 Jan. 2010 [tollroadsnews.com/news/wv-turnpike-gets-median-gates-for-next-blizzard](http://tollroadsnews.com/news/wv-turnpike-gets-median-gates-for-next-blizzard); W. Va. Parkways Authority, *West Virginia Turnpike, West Virginia Parkways Authority, Annual Report 2012* (hereafter *WVPA Annual Report* by year):2.
38. HNTB Corporation, *West Virginia Turnpike Incident Management: Emergency Traffic Control Plan*, December 21, 2011:35.
39. *WVSP Annual Reports, 2012*, 22, *2013*, 59, *2014*, 49, and *2015*, 60; interview, Capt. Vincent S. Deeds, commanding officer, Troop 7, 18 April 2016.
40. Nissel to author, 19 April 2016; Deeds interview.
41. Deeds interview.
42. *WVPA Annual Reports 2013*, 4 and *2015*, 9; Deeds interview.
43. *WVSP Annual Report, 2015*, 60; Deeds interview.

### Correction

In the article “‘With Each a Cross to Mark His Bed’: West Virginia Goes to ‘The Great War’,” which appeared in the last issue, service records of the West Virginia Adjutant General’s Office regarding World War I soldiers were mistakenly identified as DD 214s. The forms in the West Virginia Veterans Memorial files for these soldiers are, in actuality, 724-6 or 724-7. Database records in the West Virginia Veterans Memorial Database at West Virginia Archives and History had incorrectly identified the form for approximately six dozen World War I soldiers as DD 214. That error has been corrected.

rick@greathouse.us or Esther Warner,  
ebw104@suddenlink.net.

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### Coming in the Next Issue

The Spring 2017 issue will feature the first of a two-part article on Dr. Daniel Ross, who first came to West Virginia during the Civil War and returned postwar to Berkeley County, where he taught school and later practiced medicine.

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### Upcoming Events

Mining Your History Foundation will hold its annual conference in the Archives and History Library on October 22, 2016.

#### Schedule:

9:00-9:50	<i>Registration</i>
10:00-12:00	<i>Beginning Genealogy: Birth, Marriage, Death Records Probate &amp; Chancery Records Online Resources State Archives Resources</i>
12:00- 1:00	<i>Lunch – Little Caesar’s Pizza</i>
1:00-2:00	<i>MYHF Board meeting</i>
2:00-4:00	<i>When the Paper Trail Ends, DNA May Provide the Answer Speaker: James Owston</i>

For more information, contact Rick Greathouse,

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History Day at the Legislature will be Thursday, March 9, 2017, from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Capitol Complex. Forms for display space and History Hero nominations will be posted on the West Virginia Archives and History Web site, <http://www.wvculture.org/history>, in October. Only West Virginia historical, museum, preservation, and similar organizations may nominate individuals for the History Hero award. Other rules are available with the forms.

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### Submissions

The West Virginia Historical Society magazine welcomes manuscript submissions for publication consideration that deal with state or local history-related topics. Submissions, which should be of a length suitable for publication in the magazine and include footnote/ endnote citations of referenced materials, should be sent to the editor, West Virginia Historical Society, P.O. Box 5220, Charleston, WV 25361.

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Membership is available at the cost of \$10 per year for individuals and \$15 for institutions. Members receive the society magazine, which is published two times a year. Dues should be sent to West Virginia Historical Society, P.O. Box 5220, Charleston, WV 25361.

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