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THE ARCHIVES

Official Newsletter of the West Virginia State Archives



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“I have always felt that architecture, painting and sculpture were so closely akin that the highest form of art would be the combination of them all.

-CASS GILBERT

Then & Now: Work on the Capitol Building

BY MEREDITH BARBERY

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the groundbreaking for the West Wing of the West Virginia State Capitol Building. Planning for the Capitol Building began almost immediately after the fire which destroyed the Victorian Capitol in Downtown Charleston. Within months, the building commission and architect, Cass Gilbert, had been selected and then thoughts turned to the site.

The preferred site of Gilbert was in what is now Kanawha City and very close to the current site of Charleston Area Medical Center-Memorial. However, the Capitol was ultimately built between Duffy and California St, now Greenbrier and California St on Charleston’s East End.

Some homes from the chosen site were lifted from their foundations and moved by barge to various locations. By January 1924, the site was cleared and they were ready to break ground. May 1925 saw the completion of the West Wing, which was under budget at the cost of \$1.2 million (~\$21.5 million today).

That summer, the offices of the Superintendent of Free Schools; the Board of Control; the Auditor; the Bank Commissioner and the Tax Commissioner; offices of the Game and Fish Commission; and the Departments of Mines, Health, and Workmen's Compensation moved into the completed building.

In honor of the groundbreaking’s anniversary, Archives & History will be displaying materials related to the construction of the West Wing of the State Capitol. Letters written by former Governor MacCorkle, photographs of the ground breaking, blueprints from Cass Gilbert, and commission meeting minutes will be displayed in the Archives and History Library until September 20, 2024.



Laying the Cornerstone, May 1, 1924.
Charleston, WV.
Ph89-19, negative #065303



So...You Want to Find Your Ancestors

BY MEREDITH BARBERY

Where did my family come from? When did they move to a certain area? Who married whom? What was the name of my 6th great-grandfather?

Why Great-Aunt Doris has the best Black Walnut Pound Cake recipe that regularly auctions off for over \$100 per cake? How did my family start holding family reunions at a certain state park on a certain weekend? Or maybe that fun story about the year the corn grew nearly 12 feet high? It could be the story of how your papaw got his name (in my family's case, his mom's cousin really loved The Iliad).

Both sets of questions take you into your family's past but they do it through a different lens. The first set focuses on genealogy. That's the who, what, when, and where. It's the raw data of all the humans who came together to make your existence possible.

The second set is focused around family history, the why and how. It's the stories, lore, and traditions that help you get to know your ancestors. It's that newspaper article about your great-uncle who whittled a walking stick for the President or the aunt who was the first in the family to go to college or that court case that happened over 100 years ago. Family history is that family cookbook with little notes in the margin or letters that show your great-grandmother's quick wit. It takes the raw data and makes it come alive.

Here at West Virginia Archives and History, we can help with both. We have a wealth of resources that can help you on your genealogic journey and some of your family history. We have county records, vital statistics, census records, newspapers, and much more that can aid you as you wade through the years.

We can assist you both in person or by mailed request. So please come in or drop us a letter!

Resources

[Vital Records \(Interactive\)](#)

[County Records on Microfilm](#)

- [Birth](#)
- [Death](#)
- [Marriage](#)
- [Naturalization](#)
- [Deeds](#)

[County Court Records \(physical\)](#)

[Vertical Clippings \(Surnames\)](#)

[Census on Microfilm \(1810-1930\)](#)

[Veterans' Memorial Database](#)

[AncestryLibrary Subscription](#)

[Family history and genealogy books](#)

[Reference books for genealogy](#)

[County History books](#)

[Civil War Muster Rolls](#)

[Submitting a Research Request](#)



Lake Farley stands with the extra tall corn, 1970s.
Cool Ridge, WV



“The hardest-working candidate who has ever sought the office of governor”

-HARRY HOFFMAN

The William Casey & Valerie Allen Marland Papers

BY BETHANY ARBAUGH

The Marland family left an indelible mark on West Virginia in the mid-20th century, as evidenced by this revealing collection of their personal papers. William Casey Marland, born in 1918, in Illinois before moving to Wyoming County as a child, ascended to the state's highest office when he was elected governor as a Democrat in 1952. His wife, Valerie Allen Marland, a native of Illinois herself, dutifully played the role of First Lady from 1953-1957.

This collection of materials provides a glimpse into the Marlands' lives during those significant political years and beyond. It contains the letters the couple exchanged, laying bare their private thoughts and emotions. Scrapbooks painstakingly compiled by Valerie preserve precious memories through photographs, clippings, and ephemera. Official materials like guest lists and invitations offer a taste of the ceremonial duties that came with the governor's mansion.

Financial records, records of organizations they belonged to, and campaign materials for William's successful 1952 run round out the collection. Tragically, William passed away from cancer in 1965 at just 47 years old. Valerie passed away after spending many years at Barrington High School in Illinois until her death in 1977. Through this collection, the Marland legacy endures as a fascinating window into West Virginia's political and cultural history.



Governor Marland seated at desk, n.d., Governor's Portrait Files



A Word from the Director

As the director of West Virginia Archives and History, a section of the West Virginia Department of Arts, Culture and History, I am honored to welcome you to the second issue of [The Archives](#).

There are many things to do when you visit the Archives Library, such as viewing the current exhibit highlighting the construction of the West Wing and the many undiscovered stories that are contained within the countless state history and family history books, newspapers, photographs, maps, video and audio recordings, and various other documents that are in our collections, just waiting to be uncovered by you. So, please, pay us a visit and see what new stories are waiting to be shared with the world by you!

---Aaron Parsons

A Word from the Cabinet Secretary

Summer is here at last, and there are many exciting things happening at the Culture Center and at West Virginia Archives and History! The archives staff are hard at work processing newly acquired donations of historical materials, such as collections of law and chancery files from Tyler and Wayne counties, as well as developing exhibits that feature items from the Archives collections. The current exhibit on display in the Archives Library, "[Then & Now: Work on the Capitol Building](#)," features items relating to groundbreaking for construction of the West Wing of the Capitol Building, which celebrates its 100th anniversary this year.

We hope you enjoy this edition of The Archives newsletter, and it encourages you to visit us more often. Your history is waiting here to be uncovered, so come pay us a visit soon!

--Randall Reid-Smith

Contact Us:

West Virginia Archives and History is open to the public Tuesday through Saturday from 9-5. Located next to the gift shop on the first floor of the Culture Center.

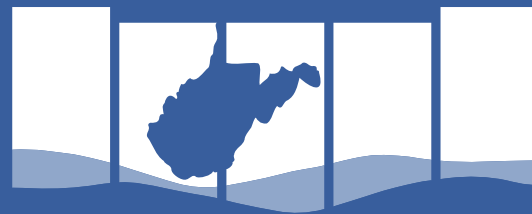
Parking: Bring quarters for metered parking in the visitor lot or park on Virginia St or Quarrier St and walk over.

Phone: (304) 558-0230

Mail: Archives and History
The Culture Center,
1900 Kanawha Blvd. E.
Charleston, WV 25305

“Public Documents are the materials for the historian. Without such a collection he, however much inclined, can never do justice to a State. Nor without them, can its people ever have an accurate knowledge of the founding and growth of their institutions; nor of their own development in governmental affairs, educational and other interests. Not only this, but posterity can not have the means of judging, as it might, of the deeds, and principles of action, and of the legislation of ancestors. Thus the State that neglects to preserve its Public Documents, loses much to future generations — to the whole world indeed.”

VIRGIL A. LEWIS, FIRST
STATE ARCHIVIST AND
HISTORIAN



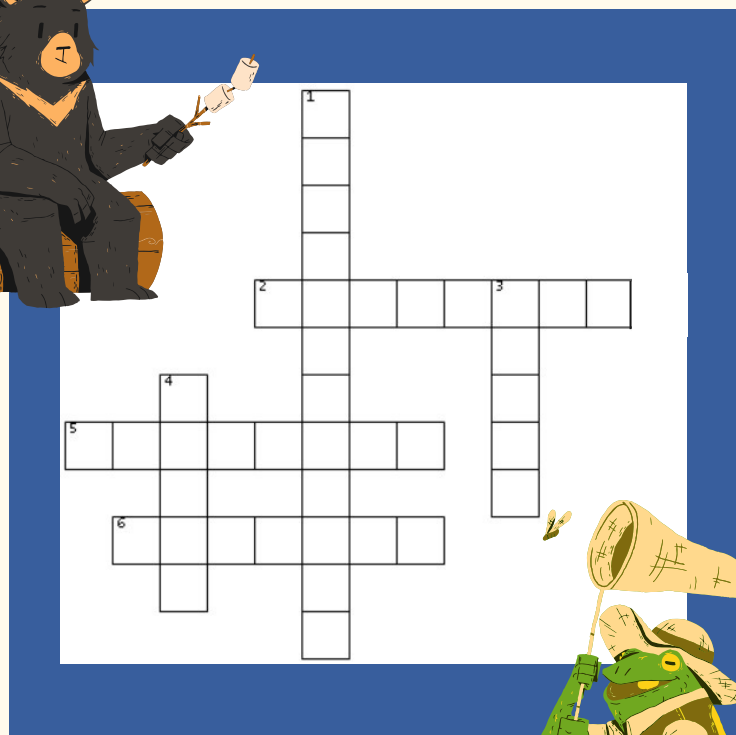
West Virginia Department of
**ARTS, CULTURE
AND HISTORY**



Upcoming Events

| | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|
| Independence Day | July 4, 2024 |
| RMPB Grant Application Posted | September 1, 2024 |
| Labor Day | September 2, 2024 |
| RMPB Grant Deadline | November 1, 2024 |

Children's Corner



Clues

Across:

- 2- State insect
- 5- State bird
- 6- State butterfly

Down:

- 1- State flower
- 3- ___ bear
- 4- ___ trout



Current Staff

Director:
Aaron Parsons

Library Manager/Assistant Director:
Debra Basham

Secretary:
Lucy Hill

Documents Archivist:
Bethany Arbaugh

Audiovisual Archivist:
Richard Fauss

Photo Archivist:
Matthew Miller

Cultural Program Coordinator (History Bowl,
Highway Historic Marker Program):
Ella Preece

Microfilm Specialist:
Harold Newman

Historian/Digital Archivist (Digital Preservation,
Archives and History Website, History Day):
Mary Johnson

Historian (Map Collection, Civil War Medals):
Randy Marcum

Archives Library

Librarian:
Matt Dailey

Librarian:
Michael Shock

State Documents Specialist:

Newspaper and Periodicals/Research Specialist:

Programming/Research Specialist:
Meredith Barbery

County Records

County Records Archivist (Records Management
and Preservation Board):
Kyle Campbell

Cultural Program Specialist (County Records):
Ryan Belmont