



WEST VIRGINIA
DIVISION OF
CULTURE & HISTORY

From the Editor:

With construction work on the new State Museum and installation of a sprinkler system ongoing, we remind those of you who will be traveling any distance to visit the West Virginia Archives and History Library to call before coming to verify our hours. No closings are planned at this time, other than several state holidays, but with this much potentially disruptive activity in and around The Cultural Center, the unexpected may happen. If you are unable to visit us in person, don't forget that we can handle your reference questions by telephone and your research requests by mail.

MayDay—Saving Our Archives

Beginning in 2006, the Society of American Archivists (SAA) has designated May 1 as MayDay for saving our archives from the consequences of disaster, largely in response to the growing number of hurricanes, tornadoes, floods and fires in recent years that have damaged or threatened archival collections. SAA has issued a call to action on MayDay for everyone “to do something that will make a difference when and if an emergency occurs,” “something that can be accomplished in a day but that can have a significant impact on an individual’s or a repository’s ability to respond.” Ideas for MayDay activities as listed on the SAA Web site (<http://www.archivists.org/mayday/ideas.asp>) include:

- Create or update your emergency contact lists.
- Review or establish basic emergency procedures.
- Conduct a disaster drill.
- Conduct scenario exercises.
- Invite your local firefighters to visit your repository.
- Survey the building for risks.
- Make sure all collections are in boxes.

- Make sure boxes are off the floor.
- Identify the most critical, essential, important records.
- Inventory emergency supplies.
- Review your emergency preparedness plan.
- If your repository does not have an emergency preparedness plan,

MayDay 2008 is a great day to start one, with a timeline to finish it by MayDay 2009. Explore “Annotated MayDay Resources” on the SAA Web site at <http://www.archivists.org/mayday/texts.asp> to get started.

Institutions and other organizations, such as the Council of

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Records Management and Preservation Board 2008 Grants

The Records Management and Preservation Board (RMPB) has awarded \$317,858 in grant funds to 30 West Virginia county commissions for county records management and preservation projects through its County Records Management and Preservation Grants program. The board reviewed submissions and made its recommendations in January for projects to improve management, storage conditions, access and preservation of public records held in several county offices. Following official letters announcing the successful grants, RMPB staff began conducting courthouse site visits to

provide technical assistance in setting up the grant project, which officially begins with the new fiscal year, July 1, 2008. Individual grant award amounts range from \$3,477 to \$26,000. The list of 2008-2009 recipients is posted on the RMPB page on the Archives and History Web site at <http://www.wvculture.org/history/rmpb/rmpb.html>.

The RMPB, with its continuing interest in addressing records storage and management issues in the court houses, announced three grant criteria in its invitation to applicants last September. The three criteria were:

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State Archivists (CoSA) have picked up on the SAA MayDay call, and have developed plans and programs designed to urge archives and others responsible for records preservation and management to take active steps to prepare for potential disasters. With such preparedness initiatives in mind, CoSA has developed a Pocket Response Plan (PReP™) whereby an organization can create a disaster response plan, fill out the PReP™ form which folds to wallet size and fits in a protective envelope, then require designated staff members to carry the emergency plan with them at all times.

CoSA also provides a list of links and other information available from state archives around the country. A good example is the California Preservation Program, created by the California State Library to meet preservation training, education and assistance needs of libraries, archives, and other records repositories in that state. Their Web site, Cal-Preservation.org, offers emergency preparedness and response information, including a "Generic Disaster Plan Workbook." In that workbook, under the "Disaster Preparedness and Prevention" section, is a list of "General Housekeeping Guidelines" of policy rules and everyday practices that will help protect an archival or library collection from a disaster, and/or lessen the extent of damage if a disaster occurs. All libraries, no matter how small or underfunded, will find these guidelines both practical and valuable. Following is an edited version of that list:

- Keep internal fire doors closed.
- Ensure that emergency equipment such as fire hoses, fire extinguishers, and first-aid kits is always accessible and in good

working order. Do not, under any circumstances, place furniture, display cases, coat racks, etc., in front of a fire hose cabinet, fire extinguisher or manual fire alarm box. [Note that in the West Virginia Archives and History Library, we do not allow book carts to be placed even temporarily in front of the fire hose cabinet in our interior hallway.]

- Close drawers of file and storage cabinets when not in use.
- Do not leave any exposed materials, especially original documents or other archival material, on desks or tables overnight.
- Maintain a stable temperature in the library. [This reduces risk of condensation, frozen pipes, heat expansion, etc.]
- Store valuable material in fire-proof and dust-proof cabinets, preferably made of steel and treated with a non-corrosive, non-staining and noncombustible paint.
- Do not shelve books too tightly. This prevents not only user damage to the bindings when books are pulled off the shelves, but also ensures that, if flooding occurs, the water will not cause the books to swell to the point where they burst from the shelving units [and therefore fall into the water, become completely saturated, and suffer irreparable damage from being tossed around

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(1) The reprint is not used for commercial purposes, and (2) the following notice appears at the end of the reprinted material: Previously published in *West Virginia Archives and History News*, [Volume and issue numbers], [Month, Year], a publication of the West Virginia Division of Culture and History.

in the water]. This applies to a lesser degree to other materials [such as files in file cabinets and maps in map drawers].

- Shelve materials so that they are set back a short distance from the edge. This precaution prevents user wear, the vertical spread of fire from one shelf to another, and books "walking off" shelves during minor earthquakes. [This also protects books from falling debris during a tornado or overhead structural problems such as falling ceiling tiles and broken pipes spraying down.]
- Ban smoking, eating and drinking, or confine such activities to a designated area within the building, certainly not in the stacks, and preferably not near them.
- Ensure that appropriate standards (such as dust control and supplies storage) are established and met by janitorial staff. Doors may be weather-stripped to minimize

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Updated Guides to Tracing Family Trees on RootsWeb

The free genealogy site RootsWeb has long offered a series of guides designed to introduce basic methods of genealogy research to beginners with tips on getting started, finding and using varying types of records, problem-solving, citation of sources, etc. Currently there are 31 lessons

in *RootsWeb's Guides to Tracing Family Trees*, and all have been updated. Find the guides by going directly to the list at <http://rwguide.rootsweb.ancestry.com/>, or by looking on the RootsWeb homepage under the "Getting Started" link.

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conduct a total records inventory and condition assessment, and develop a master records management plan for county records; remove non-records and accumulations of records having reached or exceeded required retention periods; and provide proper and improved storage of and access to permanent records or records with required retention periods in excess of 25 years. The latter will include physical storage to provide proper shelving and/or archival records boxes, and security/preservation microfilm, with a digital imaging combination for enhanced access.

Funding for the County Records Management and Preservation Program is from the filing fees collected by county clerks and deposited in the special Public Records and Preservation Revenue Account. The funds serve as an incentive to county officials to improve the management of their public records and conditions for their preservation. The RMPB was created by the West Virginia Legislature in 2000 to develop uniform county records management programs. Its primary focus is to establish guidelines and provide technical assistance to address the needs of the records of county governments through a uniform records management system, and to further encourage adoption of these goals through the county records grant program. In pursuit of these goals the RMPB authorized a statewide survey and report on the current state of county records, developed rules and a County Records Management Manual for county offices, and sponsored records management workshops for county officials and staffs. The next grant cycle and priorities will be announced September 1, for the fiscal year 2009–2010.

For more information about the RMPB's annual grant program or the work of the Board, contact Joseph N.

**West Virginia Archives and History
 Contact Information**

Library Reading Room Hours: Current hours: Monday through Thursday, 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. and Friday and Saturday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The Library currently is open selected state holidays throughout the year.

Regular office business hours: 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Closed on state holidays. If you are calling regarding status of a research request already in progress; appointments with staff members; the Records Management Preservation Board, the West Virginia Archives and History Commission, or the Capitol Building Commission; or any other non-library business, please call during office hours.

Reference calls: Library Reference Desk, (304) 558-0230, Ext. 168. Reference calls will be answered anytime the Archives and History Library is open. When you hear the "after hours" recording after 5:00 p.m. on weekdays or on Saturdays and state holidays, enter "168" when directed to enter an extension number in order to reach the Library Reference Desk. If your call is not answered, please do not leave a message at the Library extension.

E-mail: Staff e-mail addresses are posted online at <http://www.wvculture.org/agency/stafflist2.html>. You can reach this page by highlighting "The Agency" link on the lefthand side of the Archives and History homepage, then clicking on "Staff Directory." We currently do not have a general e-mail account for the Archives and History section. Since most of our staff have areas of specialization (unfortunately, in a few cases not properly described on the Culture and History staff list), call us and describe your needs. You will be referred to the most appropriate staff member to handle your request. You may also check the staff list at the end of *West Virginia Archives and History News* for areas of specialization.

Research requests: Requests for genealogical or historic research or copies of documents can not be handled by telephone or e-mail. Please write your research request in a letter, enclosing the required fee, and mail it to us. More information about research requests and fees is available at <http://www.wvculture.org/history/services.html>, or by calling (304) 558-0230. Feel free to call us or e-mail a staff member to discuss your research questions, determine resources available, and to decide how to best word your request.

Geiger, Jr., acting director of the West Virginia State Archives, by phone at (304) 558-0230, by e-mail at joe.geiger@wvculture.org, or by mail to RMPB, West Virginia Division of Culture and History, The Cultural Center, 1900 Kanawha Blvd. East,

Charleston, WV 25305-0300. Full information is available on the Web at <http://www.wvculture.org/history/rmpb/rmbp.html>.

Commemoration of 250th Anniversary of the French and Indian War Continues in West Virginia State Parks

Doug Wood is Key Player in the Re-enactments

West Virginia State Parks and Forests is sponsoring educational events in three state parks in 2008 to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the French and Indian War. Activities will include historical re-enactors, living history demonstrations, warrior hikes, and more, focusing on the raids led by Cherokee Commanders Ostenaco and Oconostota along the Ohio River in 1758. The first event was held successfully in Tu-Endie-Wei State Park in March. The next event will be at Blennerhassett Island State Park on June 29, followed by the third and final event in Tomlinson Run State Park on August 30. A key player in the re-enactments is Doug Wood,

who performed much of the research for his and his colleagues' highly accurate and detailed portrayals of 18th century Native Americans as a patron of the West Virginia Archives and History Library. Anyone who heard his presentation, *Researching*

18th Century American Indian History, in the Archives Library Evening Workshop series in April 2007, will certainly enjoy this presentation. For more information on these activities, visit http://www.wvstateparks.com/French_Indian_War.html.

Rich Mountain Battlefield Foundation Sponsors Civil War Lecture Series

The Rich Mountain Battlefield Foundation is sponsoring a Civil War Lecture Series featuring controversial topics designed to inform and entertain, but also to stir debate. On May 9, Dr. Mathew Lively will talk about the life and death of General Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson in his lecture entitled *The Death of Stonewall*. Key-note speaker for the West Virginia Birthday dinner on June 20 will be Dr. Forest Bowman, presenting *The*

35th Star—The Creation of West Virginia. Dr. John M. Coski will lecture and lead a discussion regarding *The Controversial Confederate Flag* on September 19. For more information about these events, or to learn more about the Rich Mountain Battlefield Foundation, visit <http://www.richmountain.org/>, call (304) 637-7424, or e-mail richmt@richmountain.org.

Archives and History News is available on the Archives and History Web site
<http://www.wvculture.org/history/ah-news/ahnews.html>

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entry of dust and insects.

- Identify and store cellulose nitrate-based film safely apart from the rest of the collection and have it copied at the earliest opportunity. In addition to its high combustibility, cellulose nitrate slowly decomposes under normal storage conditions, releasing gases harmful to collection materials, especially paper and film.

[Source: <http://calpreservation.org/disasters/generic/unit1.html>.]

Calendar of Events

Please check our web site (<http://www.wvculture.org/history>) for genealogical and historical society meeting announcements, and for more complete information on activities listed below.

VAUGHAN PRESERVATION AWARDS

9TH ANNUAL RECEPTION AND DINNER, May 5:

Fredrick H. Armstrong, speaker. Wood County Historical and Preservation Society, Parkersburg.

"THE DEATH OF STONEWALL," May 9: Lecture by Dr. Mathew Lively, Beverly Heritage Center, Beverly. For more information call (304) 637-7424, or e-mail richmt@richmountain.org.

WVGS GENEALOGY FAIR, May 10: West Virginia Genealogical Society Library, Elkview (Blue Creek).

For more information call (304) 965-1179.

PRIMARY ELECTION DAY, May 13:

Archives Library will be *closed*.

Calendar of Events

WEST VIRGINIA ARCHIVES AND HISTORY COMMISSION MEETING,
May 16: Shepherdstown.

SPRING CIVIL WAR ENCAMPMENT, May 17: Jenkins Plantation Museum, Lesage.
For more information call (304) 762-1059 or visit <http://www.wvculture.org/sites/jenkins.html>.

VANDALIA GATHERING, May 23–25: Capitol Complex, Charleston.

MEMORIAL DAY, May 26: Archives Library will be *closed*.

“WRITING YOUR FAMILY HISTORY” WORKSHOP, June 3:
Kanawha Valley Family History Center, Rand Community Center, Rand.
For more information call Linda Hoskins at (304) 925-2438 or the Center at (304) 542-3817.

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

**WEST VIRGINIA BIRTHDAY DINNER AND LECTURE “THE 35TH STAR—THE
CREATION OF WEST VIRGINIA,” June 20:** Dr. Forest Bowman, keynote speaker.
Sponsored by Rich Mountain Battlefield Foundation, Beverly.
For reservations, call (304) 637-7424, or e-mail richmt@richmountain.org.

LEMUEL CHENOWETH DAY,” June 21: Community-wide celebration in Beverly of the
building of the Philippi and Beverly covered bridges.
For more information visit <http://www.historicbeverly.org> or call (304) 637-7424.

“TRAVEL A TURNPIKE THROUGH TIME,” June 21: Exhibit grand opening.
Exhibit showcases the history and development of the Staunton-Parkersburg Turnpike National
Scenic Byway. Beverly Heritage Center, Beverly.
For more information visit <http://www.historicbeverly.org> or call (304) 637-7424.

**WARRIORS CAMP LIVING HISTORY DEMONSTRATIONS AND
WEST VIRGINIA HUMANITIES COUNCIL HISTORY ALIVE! PRESENTATION OF
CHEROKEE COMMANDER OUTACITE OSTENACO,**
June 29: Blennerhassett Island State Park, Parkersburg.

BEVERLY HERITAGE DAYS, July 19–20: Community-wide celebration in Beverly,
including primitive and Civil War encampments, heritage living and craft demonstrations.
For more information visit <http://www.historicbeverly.org> or call (304) 637-7424.

250TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FRENCH AND INDIAN WAR PROGRAM, August 30:
Doug Wood and members of Trails, Inc., re-enactors. Tomlinson Run State Park, New Manchester.
For more information visit http://www.wvstateparks.com/French_Indian_War.html.

“THE CONTROVERSIAL CONFEDERATE FLAG,” September 19:
Lecture by Dr. John M. Coski. Sponsored by Rich Mountain Battlefield Foundation, Beverly.
For reservations, call (304) 637-7424, or e-mail richmt@richmountain.org.

**Only the Archives Library will be staffed—all other Archives offices will be closed.*
The West Virginia Library Commission Library in the Cultural Center is closed weekends and all holidays.

West Virginia Division of Culture and History
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West Virginia
Archives & History
NEWS



We would love to hear from you.

Let us know what you find helpful in the newsletter, and what new topics you would like covered.

Contact *West Virginia Archives and History News* Editor Susan Scouras, (304) 558-0230, Ext. 742, or by e-mail: susan.scouras@wvculture.org.

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Mary Johnson..... Historian
Terry Lowry Library Assistant (Veterans records)
Cathy Miller Library Assistant (WV State documents, periodicals)
Sharon Newhouse Secretary
Harold Newman Library Assistant (microfilming, Revolutionary War)
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 Secretary
Volunteers..... Carolyn Conner, Bill Kelley, James Wilburn, Sue Shank, Ken Bailey, Maggie Powers, and Carol Vandevender

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Randall Reid-Smith, Commissioner

