

## It's Back!

**W**est Virginia: A Film History premiered more than a decade

ago as an acclaimed Public Television series narrated by Richard Thomas. It has been rebroadcast from time to time, was distributed to all West Virginia schools and libraries, and eventually sold 20,000 copies as a three-tape VHS set. The last of the VHS copies are now gone, and the Humanities Council will reissue the popular film as a two-DVD set on June 20, West Virginia Day.

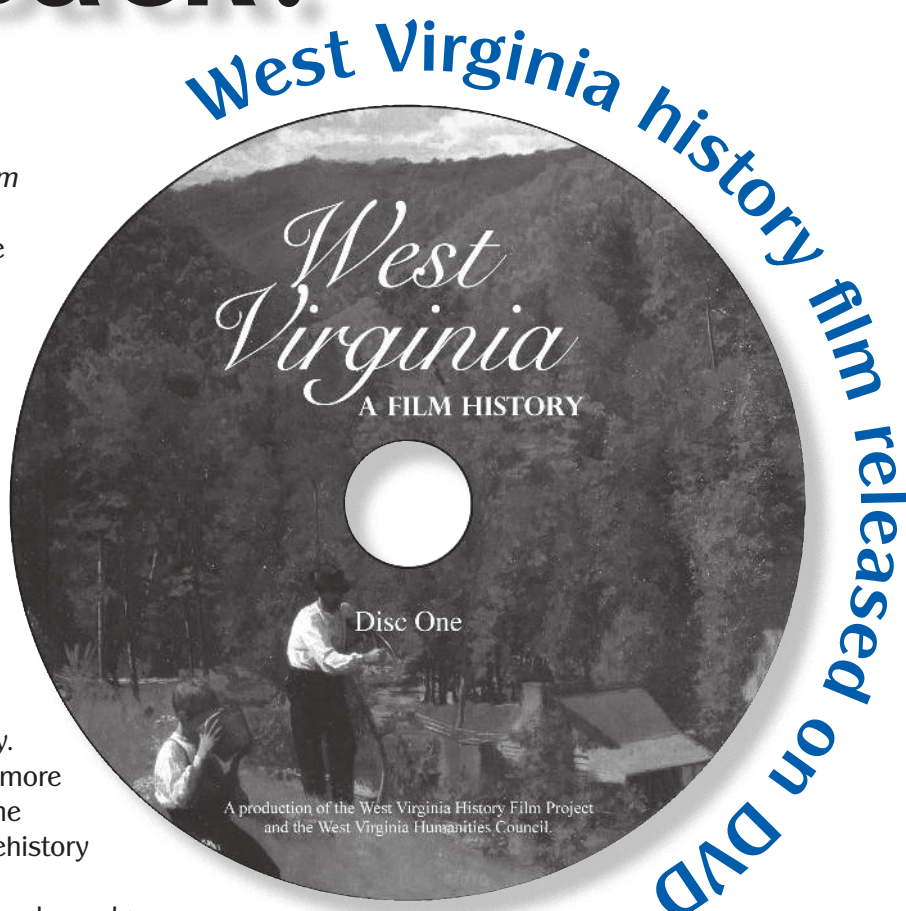
This is the big one, running more than six hours and detailing the story of West Virginia from prehistory to the recent past.

Beginning with the native people, early exploration and the struggle for the land, *West Virginia: A Film History* chronicles the frontier era, settlement, the Civil War and statehood, railroads, immigration and industrialization, then moves down through the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Special consideration is given to pivotal episodes such as the Mine Wars, the Hatfield-McCoy Feud, Buffalo Creek, and the 1960 presidential primary.

Countless individual West Virginians are featured, as well as national figures including George Washington, John Kennedy, and Eleanor Roosevelt. Historians offer commentary at key points.

The comprehensive treatment is broken down into four parts and 27 topical chapters. The big production was originally broadcast over several evenings, and home video fans are likely to watch *West Virginia: A Film History* in sections as well.

Filmmaker Ken Burns was an early advisor to the project, and those acquainted with his style will recognize its influence on the West Virginia



film. Lavish use is made of hundreds of historic images, lovingly photographed and interwoven with film footage and sound recordings when those are available. The dynamic effect is to bring static archival materials to life. Extensive scenic photography captures the beauty of all parts of the state, setting West Virginia's history against the striking backdrop of its natural landscape.

There's also a bit of history in the film's post-production saga, according to Ken Sullivan, Humanities Council executive director.

"The Council was a founding sponsor, along with WNPB-TV, the West Virginia Department of Education & the Arts, the Department of Education, and the Division of Culture & History, but the film was actually made by a nonprofit corporation set up specifically for that purpose. Once the job was done, West Virginia History Film, Inc., was dissolved, with the Humanities Council named as its corporate successor.

That means we received the assets, mainly the

*Continued on page 3*

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2009

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What's New

**The West Virginia  
Humanities Council**

is a nonprofit organization  
governed by its board of  
directors.

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# Panhandling

To me, the Eastern Panhandle has always been a special place, as I think it is to many southern West Virginians.

It's farm country, for one thing, much of it open, rolling terrain, and that's a little exotic to those of us brought up in the wooded hills of central Appalachia. And there is so much more history, at least insofar as history can be measured in years, as a former Jefferson County member of the Humanities Council board of directors once reminded me. The newest part of his Shepherdstown home was older than the historic house we use as our Charleston headquarters — and our place dates to 1836.

Plus, the eastern counties are far enough away that it seems like a real trip to go there.

I was reminded of that when I made the run a few weeks ago. I took U.S. 50 eastbound because I hadn't been that way for a while, and eventually it carried me across a scrap of Maryland to the headwaters of the Potomac River. I crossed the North Branch back into West Virginia at Gorman, then over the river and out again at Keyser, heading down to Cumberland.

Apart from lunch in Grafton, my first stop was Morgan County. I checked in with *Morgan Messenger* editor John Douglas in Berkeley Springs, as always, and we sauntered over to the Ice House to see the exhibit which the Council opened there in April. After too short a visit, it was back in the car and down the road. The narrow Panhandle is the kind of place one always seems to be busting through the sides of, and this time I traversed several miles of Virginia on my way to Hampshire County.

My ultimate goal — and yes, this is the roundabout way to get there — was Romney. That evening we partnered with the local Convention and Visitors Bureau for a well-attended history lecture at the Hampshire County Courthouse.

Next day, it was home again, via Moorefield, Petersburg, Seneca Rocks, Elkins and Buckhannon, just to name the places where I stopped. It all added up to more than 600 miles and two great days in the West Virginia countryside.

As I say, a real trip.

— Ken Sullivan

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through grants and direct programs in the  
humanities.

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**Board News:** Four new board members were elected at the spring meeting of the West Virginia Humanities Council, and another added as a governor appointee. We welcome Ken Fones-Wolf, Marie Gnage, Kristina Olson, Paul Papadopoulos, and Elisabeth Rose. We bid good-bye to board members Bob Bastress, Lucia James, John Ruddick, Robin Snyder, and Shawn Williams, and thank them for their exceptional work on behalf of the Council. The board meets July 24 at Elkins. The meeting is open to the public.

Continued from page 1

copyright to the film itself. We went to work to renew literally dozens of rights agreements covering materials used in the film, mostly music and images. We recently completed all that, and now we're good to go."

Sullivan noted that the Council is mindful of its role as steward of work created by others. "We haven't taken a thing from the film, edited it, or condensed it in any way," he said. "All of the original is there, and we pass through the original sponsorship and production credits

**This is the big one,  
running more than  
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the West Virginia story  
from prehistory to  
the recent past.**

as well. This is a reissue, not a remake. We'll take responsibility for the quality of the DVD edition, which is done to top standards, but our goal is to get a much-loved classic back into circulation, not to change it."

*West Virginia: A Film History* was directed by Mark Samels, who was at WNPB at the time, and produced by Mark Samels and Beth Hager. The film was written by Samels and historian John Alexander Williams.

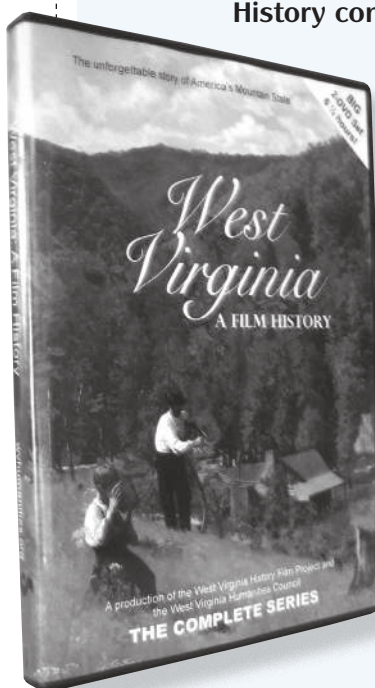
At \$29.95, the DVD edition of *West Virginia: A Film History* sells for much less than the earlier VHS set. "The original price was \$79.95, and thousands of VHS copies were sold for that amount," Sullivan said. "Fortunately the production costs — and the history film was a multi-million dollar project — were absorbed years ago, and DVDs are cheaper to make than VHS tapes. Adjusting for inflation, today's purchaser is paying maybe a fourth of the original price."

*The DVD edition of West Virginia: A Film History is available through bookstores and other retail outlets or may be ordered online at [wvhumanities.org](http://wvhumanities.org) or by calling (304)346-8500. Postal orders please use the coupon at right.*

## The unforgettable story of America's Mountain State . . .

The classic *West Virginia: A Film History*, first broadcast as a popular Public Television series and later sold as a VHS set, is now available on DVD at a fraction of its original cost.

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## Soldiers, Caesar, and Bread Among Fellowship Subjects

West Virginia Humanities Council Fellowships are unique in the Mountain State. Awarded annually, the \$2,500 grants go to both college faculty and independent scholars to support research and writing projects within the humanities.

*The 2009 Fellows and their subjects are:*

**Mark B. Tauger, Huntington**  
History, "The Struggle for Bread"

**Joseph M. Hodge, Morgantown**  
History, "British Colonial Expertise, Post-Colonial Career and the Early History of International Development"

**Jeff Rutherford, Wheeling**  
History, "Soldiers into Nazis? The German Infantry's War in Northwest Russia, 1941-1944"

**Patrick M. Albano, Fairmont**  
History, "An Army of Scholars: Years of Experience in the Concision of War"

**Thomas A. Bredehoft, Morgantown**  
History, "Wulfstan the Homilist and Anglo-Saxon History"

**Christina E. Franzen, Huntington**  
Classics, "Caesar and Erictho in Lucan's *Bellum Civile*"

**SilverMoon, Morgantown**  
History, "The Imperial College Tlatelolco"

**Robert F. Maslowski, Milton**  
Archaeology, "A Bibliography of West Virginia Archaeology"

February 1, 2010, is the next deadline for fellowships. Visit [wvhumanities.org](http://wvhumanities.org) or contact Amy Saunders at (304)346-8500 or [saunders@wvhumanities.org](mailto:saunders@wvhumanities.org) to apply.

## Exhibits Continue to Travel

Humanities Council traveling exhibits will crisscross the Mountain State this summer. Following its April opening in Berkeley Springs (right), *New Harmonies: Celebrating American Roots Music* traveled to Grafton in May. The Smithsonian exhibit is on display at the town's B&O Railroad Heritage Center through July 4 before moving to the Randolph County Community Arts Center in Elkins. The Elkins opening takes place on July 11 at 1:00 p.m. at the arts center and is followed by a free bluegrass music concert at 7:00 p.m. in Elkins City Park. *New Harmonies* then travels to the Brass Tree Community Room in Williamson for an August 28 to October 9 show.

*Born of Rebellion: West Virginia Statehood* may be seen at Princeton's Railroad Museum throughout the month of June, and the popular *John Henry: The Steel Drivin' Man* exhibit travels to the Museum in the Park in Logan (June 20 - August 15) and the Williamson Campus Library of Southern West Virginia Community and Technical College (August 19-September 24).

We thank Verizon for sponsoring *New Harmonies* and *John Henry*.



## Textbook Controversy Remembered

The Kanawha Valley Historical and Preservation Society will observe the 35th anniversary of the Kanawha County textbook controversy with major support from the Humanities Council. The society is producing a traveling exhibit and a radio documentary titled "Kanawha Textbook Wars" about the 1974 controversy over the selection of textbooks for students attending Kanawha County's public schools.

Alice Moore, then a member of the Kanawha County School Board and the wife of a local preacher, is generally credited with beginning the textbook debate when she voiced her concerns about the content and philosophy of proposed language arts books. In the weeks that followed, protesters demanded the books be banned. Violence ensued, starting with the throwing of stones and escalating to the shooting of guns at school buses and the tossing of fire bombs into school buildings.

The exhibit and documentary will offer a balanced account of the issues in conflict, according to project director and West Virginia native John "Trey" Kay. Many of the controversy's key players — Alice Moore, Reverend Jim Lewis, Reverend Henry Thaxton, former U.S. Attorney Wayne Rich, students, textbook committee members, and coal miners who left work in opposition to the textbooks — have been interviewed. The radio documentary will be released to West Virginia Public Broadcasting and National Public Radio on Labor Day. The exhibit will be launched this fall. *Our photo shows the Reverend Marvin Horan speaking against the textbooks.*

## New Committee Members

With the ballots in and the votes counted, the Humanities Council welcomes three new citizen members to its program committee. **Jean Dressler Beasley**, a founding board member of Mercer County Hospice; **Shirley Lycan**, an Appalachian Studies teacher at Charleston Catholic High School; and **David Millard**, assistant to the president of Glenville State College, were elected to three-year terms. They joined the committee earlier this month at a program meeting at historic Waldomore on the grounds of the Clarksburg-Harrison Public Library. The Council thanks departing citizen members Fran Simone, Julie Palas, and Gerald Sutphin for their service to the committee.

## Appalachian Food Featured

Regional foods specialist Mark Sohn of Pikeville College wraps up the Little Lecture Series at 2:00 p.m. on June 28 at Charleston's MacFarland-



Mark Sohn

Hubbard House with "The History and Culture of Appalachian Food." He will discuss such foods as stack cake (*above*), pinto beans, sweet potatoes, cracklings and cornbread, as well as cookware and regional food history from the prehistoric period to the modern era. The author of several books including *Appalachian Home Cooking*, Sohn has also written for the *Encyclopedia of Appalachia* and our own *West Virginia Encyclopedia*. Call (304)346-8500 for lecture reservations.



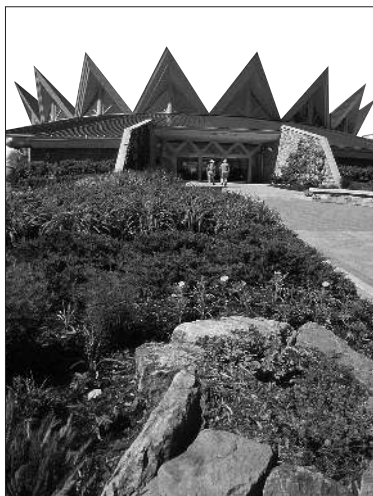
Michael Keller

as county clerks, judges and other local officials. Examples of at least ten of the most prominent courthouses will be highlighted in the production, which is scheduled for broadcast on West Virginia Public Television in 2010. *Our photo shows the McDowell County Courthouse in Welch.*

## Tamarack Welcomes Music Hall of Fame

A new West Virginia Music Hall of Fame exhibit, supported by a major grant

from the Humanities Council, opens at Tamarack in Beckley in September. The multimedia show includes stage costumes, memorabilia, photos, and recordings from Mountain State musicians of the last 50 years. Rhythm-and-blues singer Bill Withers, country music stars Kathy Mattea, Little Jimmy Dickens and Charlie McCoy, opera singer Phyllis Curtin, composer George Crumb, swing saxophonist Chu Berry, and traditional musicians Billy Edd Wheeler, Hazel Dickens, Clark Kessinger, and the Lilly Brothers and Don Stover are among the documented performers. A concert series and a variety of educational programs will accompany the exhibit. Contact the Music Hall of Fame at 1427 Lee Street, Charleston, WV 25301; (304)342-4412 for more information.



Steve Shaluta

## House Tours



The MacFarland-Hubbard House, the Humanities Council's Charleston headquarters, is paired with the Governor's Mansion as part of an upcoming tour of historic houses. KRT trolley buses with local historians Henry Battle and Billy Joe Peyton aboard will visit a total of four Kanawha Valley homes during two separately guided tours. The second tour includes Glenwood and the Craik-Patton House. The free tours, part of FestivALL, will depart from the east end of Charleston Town Center Mall on June 21 at 1:00 and 1:30 p.m. Visit [festivallcharleston.com](http://festivallcharleston.com) for further details.

**County courthouses** are the most important buildings in many West Virginia towns, symbolizing community pride and the dignity of local government. A recent Humanities Council grant to the West Virginia Association of Counties will help to document these historic structures. Planning and research began in May, and interviews will be done with architects and historians, as well

## Grant Categories & Guidelines

Major Grants support humanities events: symposiums, conferences, exhibits, lectures.

Maximum award: \$20,000.

Due: Feb. 1, \*Sept. 1

Minigrants have a budget of \$1,500 or less and support small projects, single events, or planning/consultation.

Due: Feb. 1, April 1, June 1,

\*Aug. 1, Oct. 1, Dec. 1

Fellowships of \$2,500 support research and writing projects for humanities faculty and independent scholars. Due: Feb. 1

Media Grants support the production of electronic or film materials, or a newspaper series. Maximum award: \$20,000.

Due: \*Sept. 1

Publication Grants are available to nonprofit presses and recognized academic presses, and support only the production phase of a completed manuscript. Maximum award: \$20,000.

Due: \*Sept. 1

Teacher Institute Grants are available to colleges and universities and support summer seminars for secondary teachers. Maximum award: \$25,000

Due: \*Sept. 1

### \*Approaching Deadlines!

Don't miss the once-a-year deadline for Media, Publication, and Teacher Institute grants.

### Want Grants? Grants

Administrator Amy Saunders does grants-writing workshops statewide, recently visiting McDowell and Wyoming counties. An upcoming session is planned for Lincoln County. Contact (304)346-8500, email [saunders@wvhumanities.org](mailto:saunders@wvhumanities.org), or visit [www.wvhumanities.org](http://www.wvhumanities.org) for details and grant applications and guidelines.

## A VERY GOOD YEAR

On June 25, 1974, West Virginia Secretary of State Edgar F. Heiskell III issued a certificate of incorporation for the Committee for Humanities and Public Policy in West Virginia, now the West Virginia Humanities Council. The nonprofit organization, founded at the urging of the National Endowment for the Humanities, initially focused on regranting federal funds for programs that applied the humanities to discussion of public policy.

A lot has happened in the 35 years that the Humanities Council has been the principal organization promoting the humanities in the Mountain State. We invite you to join us in this good work.

**35**  
**YEARS**

## Donations and Pledges

February 1 — April 30, 2009

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**Doing More:** “One of the reasons I enjoy meeting the people who make contributions to the West Virginia Humanities Council is to thank them for their generosity,” says Director of Development Michelle Walker. “Many times when I tell a donor that their support helps the Council’s work flourish statewide, they say that they wish they could do more.”

If you feel the same, here’s an idea: Many employers match charitable contributions their employees make. For example, GE, Norfolk Southern, Verizon, and Wachovia have all recently matched employee donations to the West Virginia Humanities Council. If your employer matches gifts, please take a few moments to submit a matching gift request. Contact Michelle Walker at [walker@wvhumanities.org](mailto:walker@wvhumanities.org) or (304)346-8500 for assistance.

## Changing places:

Kim Duff of Charleston has taken over as fiscal officer at the West Virginia Humanities Council. Sue Vasale (seated) retired in May after nearly ten years in the job. Kim is a veteran fiscal manager. She comes to the Council from the United Way of Central West Virginia where she worked as an accountant, and was previously at the Kanawha County Public Library as accounting supervisor. We welcome Kim to her new position and wish Sue a happy retirement.



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# Making the Case in Washington

While the West Virginia Humanities Council receives most of its income from public and private sources in West Virginia, the single largest chunk of funding comes from the National Endowment for the Humanities, an agency of the federal government. Most years, the NEH provides better than 40 percent of our budget, more than enough to justify the occasional journey to Washington.

Council President Dee Kapourales and Executive Director Ken Sullivan (*shown at right*) made the big trip in April this year, along with board member Ray Smock. Their visit was part of "Humanities on the Hill," a national advocacy effort organized by the Federation of State Humanities Councils and involving humanities councils from across the country.

"We take the occasion to impress upon our senators and representatives that NEH funds are essential for our work statewide in West Virginia," Sullivan said. "We usually see the majority of our delegation in person, this year including a long talk with Senator Byrd, always a treat. We bring detailed lists of our projects, literally hundreds of items broken out by congressional district, so that we can show just where the funding hits the ground in West Virginia."

Sullivan added that Humanities Council leaders are generally encouraged by the news from Washington this year. The federal budget for the 2009 fiscal year, approved this spring, included a modest increase for the National Endowment and for state humanities councils. West Virginia's share of this funding has arrived and is now being applied to Council projects

across the state.

There is an additional increase for the humanities in President Obama's budget proposal for 2010. "We have learned that it is a long way from proposal to approval," Sullivan cautioned, "but this is a promising place to start the process for next year. We appreciate the support of our good representatives and senators and hope they will do everything possible to help bring these funds to West Virginia."



Ray Smock