

A Publication of the West Virginia Humanities Council



Saving the Shenandoah

This fall, WVU Press will issue a new edition of Julia Davis's 1945 classic, The Shenandoah. The book will be one of the first two volumes in the new West Virginia Classics series, jointly published by the Press and the West Virginia Humanities Council.

We have excerpted the Postscript of Davis's book, describing the successful resistance to dams proposed for the Shenandoah in Jefferson County and upstream in Rockingham County, Virginia. The "Senator Byrd" discussed here is not our own recently departed leader, but the other U.S. senator of that name, Harry F. Byrd of Virginia. Like Robert C. Byrd, Harry Byrd dominated the politics of his state for more than a generation, and ironically he was the only one of the two to be born in West Virginia.

In the spring of 1945 the Shenandoah Valley was threatened by a danger which would have made this book the story of a nonexistent river, and of a valley that had partly vanished. After the Civil War it seemed that men could do no more to ruin the Valley, but that was because no one reckoned with the powers of the Federal government.

In 1936 Congress authorized engineers from the War Department to make plans for flood control along the Potomac and the Shenandoah. After two years of study they drew up a project for fourteen immense dams, two of them on the Shenandoah, which were to cost an estimated \$235,000,000 and to inundate 172,000 acres of fertile and historic land.

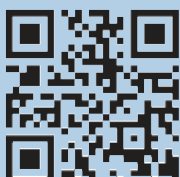
At Millville, a few miles above Harpers Ferry,

the dam would have a maximum elevation of 483 feet, and 36,000 acres in the lower Valley would be flooded. The rolling Shenandoah would be converted into a blank lake fifty-two miles long and four miles wide. One-eighth of Jefferson County and almost one-quarter of Clarke County would disappear forever under deep water. The Baltimore and Ohio would be under ninety feet of water, hundreds of old houses would be lost, others would perch on isolated islands. The plan referred to all this territory as "the lake bottom." Since the dam was to have a fluctuating level of fifty feet it would inevitably be surrounded at low water with miles of mud flats.

On the North Fork of the Shenandoah, a huge

Continued on page 3

The Humanities Council Holiday Open House is Friday, December 9, from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. at the MacFarland-Hubbard House in Charleston. Join us in celebrating our historic home's 175th birthday, and enjoy some holiday cheer. Refreshments will be served.



The West Virginia Humanities Council

is a nonprofit organization governed by its board of directors.

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The Board meets October 28 at the McFarland-Hubbard House in Charleston. Open to the public.

Losing Bonnie

To me, storytelling is central to the humanities. Stories are the way we organize our understanding of human experience, and the great fields of human knowledge — history, literature, folklore, even religion — ultimately come down to stories, often very simple ones.

Thus I was doubly saddened when West Virginia lost one of its top storytellers with the death of Bonnie Collins this summer, saddened personally and saddened for our collective loss of a wise voice among us. Marc Harshman, himself a storyteller, called from Wheeling with the news.

I had introduced Bonnie many times to audiences at the Vandalia Gathering and elsewhere, usually as the “Belle of Doddridge County,” which seemed to please her. The hills of home were important to Bonnie, and she was glad to serve her native area as a school cook, foster grandparent, 4-H leader and Sunday school teacher, among other things.

Bonnie co-authored a popular children’s book, *Rocks in My Pockets* (Cobblehill Books, 1991), with Marc Harshman, but it is safe to say that she wrote more songs and poems than books. She never considered herself a great lyricist, but she had fun with light-hearted verse.

I was pleased to see that the family had printed one of Bonnie’s poems, “Before Charlie Comes For Me,” in the funeral program. Each stanza describes some simple, important thing — visiting a friend, planting a flower, gossiping with the neighbors — that the narrator wants to do “before Charlie comes for me.” I’d heard Bonnie recite the poem many times, and reading it there in the Pennsboro funeral home brought unexpected delight to my last visit with her.

They carried Bonnie Collins home to Doddridge after the funeral, burying her at Center Point, West Virginia, where she lived most of her 96 years. A place called Center Point seems just right for a person embodying the qualities — hard work, common sense and good-heartedness — central to the best characteristics of West Virginians.

Bonnie’s poem was from 1970. “Charlie” was the local undertaker, if you haven’t guessed that already. And Charlie never came for Bonnie, after all. She outlived him.

— Ken Sullivan

People & Mountains is published three times a year by the West Virginia Humanities Council.

A state affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities, the West Virginia Humanities Council serves West Virginia through grants and direct programs in the humanities.

We welcome letters, comments, and financial contributions. Please address all correspondence to West Virginia Humanities Council, 1310 Kanawha Boulevard, East, Charleston, WV 25301 or sonis@wvhumanities.org.

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The Humanities Council’s *History Alive!* program is seeking proposals for historical figures related to West Virginia’s statehood movement or early statehood period. Characters such as Archibald Campbell, Waitman Willey, Francis Pierpont, John Carlile, Arthur Boreman and others are of particular interest. The deadline for submissions is January 1, 2012. Contact Mark Payne at payne@wvhumanities.org, or by calling (304)346-8500, for application materials.

Continued from page 1

reservoir was to be built at Brock's Gap behind a dam 216 feet high, which would cover 6,100 acres of Rockingham County farm land. The replacement of highways alone in that area would cost a million and a quarter.

The report of the engineers admitted that the dams would eliminate only twenty per cent of the estimated annual flood damage in the Potomac basin, and that ninety-two percent of the benefit would be the generation of power. But it also admitted that at the present time there is no lack of power in the area affected.

These facts were cautiously submitted at Winchester to a few selected citizens under pledge of secrecy, early in February. Within two weeks they were made more generally public. Then the people of the Valley rose again to defend their land.

With Senator Byrd as their leader, they held mass meetings in every town and planned their protest. They wrote to every official and organization which might have influence. Before long Governor Meadows of West Virginia instructed his attorney general to register an objection. The senators and congressmen from both Virginia and West Virginia came out against the plan. The West Virginia State Planning Board, Farm Bureau, and Public Service Commission opposed it. The National Capital Park and Planning Commission deplored the destruction of scenic beauty.

But the people of the Shenandoah were not satisfied that they had done enough. Not until their Valley was threatened did they know how much they loved it – the contour of the fields, the flowing reaches of living water, the history written on the land. This was the countryside their ancestors had farmed for over two hundred years in family rotation. The local newspapers were full of letters and editorials decrying man's destruction of God's handiwork.

"They propose to take our fields, the houses our fathers built."

"We are a part of the Shenandoah earth, when you kill that you kill us too."

"It is obligatory to fight the dam, for we have grandchildren."

On April 3rd a hearing was held in Washington at which any interested citizens had a right to appear before the Board of Engineers for Rivers and Harbors of the War Department. This is a routine procedure in such matters, after which the board makes its report to the chief of engineers, and the chief of engineers reports to Congress. The plan then goes to the committee on commerce in both houses, and if passed by both branches of Congress and signed by the President is returned to the committee on

appropriations to be passed again. All along the way interested citizens have opportunities to be heard.

But the Valley people are not the sort to give an enemy time to entrench himself. They had not been so moved since the Yankees marched across the Potomac in '61. "A defensive campaign can only be made successful by taking the offensive at the proper time," Stonewall once said. The Valley people have never been afraid to fight. On the day of the hearing in Washington a crowd of approximately two thousand attended it, with their arguments well prepared.

By noon of the next day, the Board of Engineers announced that it would make an adverse report in the matter of the dams. And so another cloud has rolled away from the Valley and the matter ends.

"I am gratified," wrote Senator Byrd, "that my confidence in the Board has been confirmed . . . by the fact that [they] carried out the democratic processes of government by giving full and proper consideration to the citizens."

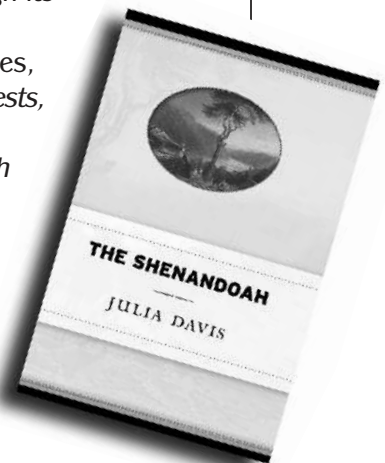
Author Julia Davis was born in Clarksburg in 1900. She died in Charles Town in 1993.



West Virginia Classics, a new collaborative venture of the Humanities Council and West Virginia University Press, has begun to republish our state's classic books in handsome new editions. The series reveals the culture and diversity of West Virginia through its rich literary heritage.

The first two books in the series, *West Virginia: Its Farms and Forests, Mines and Oilwells* (1865) by J.R. Dodge and *The Shenandoah* (1945) by Julia Davis, are scheduled for release on October 1. Historian Kenneth R. Bailey wrote the introduction for the Dodge book, and author Christopher Camuto introduces *The Shenandoah*.

These West Virginia Classics will be available at the West Virginia Book Festival on October 22-23 at the Civic Center in Charleston and at bookstores statewide. Copies may also be ordered online at www.wvupress.com or by calling 1-800-621-2736.



Report from the field: Beer Jars and Bread Mould

Leslie A. Warden



With the help of a Humanities Council travel assistance grant, WVU Institute of Technology history professor Leslie Anne Warden recently traveled to Warsaw for a conference dealing with the pottery of ancient Egypt. While in Poland she delivered her paper titled “Beer Jars, Bread Moulds, and Economic Implications.” Here is what Professor Warden had to say about her trip:

“Mine was one of 27 papers. The presenters represent some of the biggest names in the field of Egyptian ceramics. Each talk built upon the others, framing a dialogue that crossed sites and dynasties – something often difficult to do in Egyptian archaeology. The quality of the papers was uniformly high; it was an honor to be part of this excellent schedule.

“This conference allowed a group of specialists to share an abundance of new information. And the benefits do not stop at information imparted. Most Egyptian ceramicists are European, and being recognized in this sphere is necessary to further my scholarly career. I plan to submit an abstract for a large pottery conference covering all periods of Egyptian history, to occur in Vienna in 2012. As the organizers were at Warsaw and were impressed with my paper, this should greatly increase my chances of being accepted.”



Book Mania!

Thousands of people will gather at the Charleston Civic Center again this fall for the West Virginia Book Festival. Presented annually by the Humanities Council, Kanawha County Public Library, the *Charleston Gazette* and the *Charleston Daily Mail*, the free event brings people and books together. This year’s festival, held October 22-23, features Jerry West, novelist Lee Child, and 2010 National Book Award winner Jaimy Gordon, among others. Gordon’s award-winning *Lord of Misrule* is set at a fictionalized Northern Panhandle horse track. For the complete schedule of authors and programs visit www.wvbookfestival.org. The scene above is from the 2010 Book Festival.

Music Hall of Fame. The 2011 West Virginia Music Hall of Fame induction ceremony takes place on Saturday, October 15, at the Culture Center in Charleston. Supported by the Humanities Council, the Hall of Fame honors unique Mountain State musicians who have made lasting contributions to American music. Country recording artist Kathy Mattea, country music star Connie Smith, former Jimi Hendrix bassist Billy Cox, and big band/jazz drummer Butch Miles (right) are among those to be honored this year. Other inductees, now deceased, are blues singer Diamond Teeth Mary; songwriter Walter E. “Jack” Rollins, known for his “Frosty the Snowman” and “Here Comes Peter Cottontail” lyrics; and world champion banjo player Tommy Thompson. For more information, visit www.wvmusichalloffame.com.



Klaus Muempfer



All public spaces at the MacFarland-Hubbard House are completely accessible.



John Marshall by William Henry Brown, from the Massachusetts Historical Society.

Constitution Lectures

This fall, Marshall University is presenting “Amicus Curiae,” a lecture series on Constitutional democracy supported by the Humanities

Council. The series began on September 1 with Jean Edward Smith — the former John Marshall Professor of Political Science at Marshall and now Senior Scholar at Columbia University — speaking on “John Marshall and the Legalization of the Constitution.” The lectures continue on October 11 with Johnathan O’Neill of Georgia Southern University discussing “Originalism and the Rule of Law Ideal” and on November 17, when John Friedl from the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga presents “Through the Looking Glass: The Constitution Means What Five Justices Choose it to Mean.” Both programs begin at 7:00 p.m. in the Don Morris Room of the Memorial Student Center on the Marshall campus in Huntington.

Smithsonian Premiere in Marlinton

West Virginia will participate in the national premiere of the Smithsonian Institution traveling exhibit *The Way We Worked*, which opens in Marlinton on September 10. Spanning 150 years, the exhibit explores work as a central element of American culture through photographs, large graphics, artifacts, audio and film.

Six West Virginia communities will host *The Way We Worked*, and they will tell their own work stories as well — stories based on local traditions such as timbering, railroading, coal mining, and farming. The schedule: September 10 – October 22, Marlinton Municipal Building; October 29 – December 10, Mary H. Weir Public Library in Weirton; December 17 – January 28, Morgantown History Museum; February 4 – March 17, Carnegie Hall in Lewisburg; March 24 – May 5, Point Pleasant River Museum; and May 12 – July 7, Randolph County Community Arts Center in Elkins.

The West Virginia Humanities Council partners with the Smithsonian to present national traveling exhibits to West Virginians.



Workers at Meadow River Lumber Company, about 1940.

Courtesy West Virginia State Archives.

Briefs

Shepherd University will honor poet, novelist, and short-story writer Ron Rash with its Appalachian Heritage Writer’s Award and a week-long residency supported by the West Virginia Humanities Council. The residency, from September 26 through October 1, is built around public readings, book signings, lectures, and associated events. Call (304)876-5220 or visit www.shepherd.edu for a complete schedule.

Adaland Mansion at Philippi recently received support from the Humanities Council to publish *The Historic Restoration of Adaland: A Guide for Historians, Cultural Anthropologists, Architects, Educators and Nonprofit Organizations*. The soft-cover booklet details the restoration of the historic house that was built in 1870. Author Barbara Smith discusses the publication on October 30 at 2:00 p.m. at Adaland. For more information, visit www.adaland.org or call (304)457-1587.

The West Virginia GeoExplorer Project at www.wvgeohistory.org is dedicated to the history, culture, and architecture of Jefferson County. The website, created with support from the Humanities Council, presents information dating from 1700 to 1900 through photographs, maps, text, and other historic elements. The project is structured so that it may be expanded to include additional West Virginia counties. On October 29, Professor Anne Knowles of Middlebury College, a geohistory expert, will join other scholars at Shepherd University for a day-long symposium about Geographic Information Systems.

Preservation Alliance of West Virginia will host “Preservation Trades Road Show: Take One!” during the 2011 Sustainability Fair in Charleston, September 24, at the Columbia Gas building. With support from the Council, a panel of preservation trades experts will consult with homeowners on such matters as window sashes, woodwork, and ornamental features. Participants are invited to bring images of plasterwork, masonry or timber in need of repair. The sessions will be filmed for use on the Preservation Alliance website, www.pawv.org, and at upcoming conferences and panel discussions.



Visit the West Virginia Encyclopedia at wvencyclopedia.org.

Grant Categories

The Humanities Council welcomes applications in the following grant categories:

Major Grants (\$20,000 maximum) support humanities events: symposiums, conferences, exhibits, lectures. **Due:** Sept. 1, Feb. 1

Minigrants (\$1,500 maximum) support small projects, single events, or planning/consultation. **Due:** *Oct. 1, *Dec. 1, Feb. 1, April 1, June 1, Aug. 1

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

Media Grants (\$20,000 maximum) support the production of electronic or film materials, or a newspaper series. **Due:** Sept. 1

Publication Grants (\$20,000 maximum) are available to nonprofit presses and recognized academic presses, and support **only** the production phase of a completed manuscript. **Due:** Sept. 1

Teacher Institute Grants (\$25,000 maximum) are available to colleges and universities and support summer seminars for secondary and elementary teachers. **Due:** Sept. 1

* Approaching Deadlines!

Visit www.wvhumanities.org for applications and guidelines, or call (304)346-8500.

The Humanities Council invites grant proposals on the Sesquicentennial of the Civil War and West Virginia statehood. Nonprofit organizations may apply for a variety of grants to support educational programming related to these topics. Sesquicentennial grant proposals will be accepted from September 1, 2011, through April 1, 2015.

Ross Foundation Visit. Development Director Michelle Walker (left) recently welcomed Tres and Melissa Ross to Humanities Council headquarters.

Tres, executive director of the Ross Foundation in Parkersburg, stopped in to personally deliver a check for \$6,000 in support of *History Alive!*, our

popular living history program. The Ross Foundation focuses primarily on communities in Wood, Ritchie, Doddridge, Pleasants and Jackson counties. Its grant to *History Alive!* expands presentations in those counties at libraries, schools, museums, historical societies, and civic groups. The Humanities Council thanks the Ross Foundation for its generous support, and encourages contributions in any amount from individuals, corporations, foundations and other organizations.



Amy Saunders

MacCorkle Punch Bowl Comes Home to Charleston



Michael Keller

be displayed and used at the historic MacFarland-Hubbard House. "I am so glad that the punch bowl is at the West Virginia Humanities Council," Betsy MacCorkle wrote from her Virginia home. The Council welcomes

suitable gifts of furnishings to the MacFarland-Hubbard House and financial contributions to the stewardship fund. Contact Michelle Walker at walker@wvhumanities.org or (304) 346-8500 for information.

Governor William A. MacCorkle's punch bowl was recently donated to the Humanities Council through the thoughtful suggestion of Council members Ike and Stuart Smith. MacCorkle's Sunrise mansion, still a Charleston landmark, was built in 1905. An appraiser placed the bowl squarely in that era, dating it to the "brilliant period" of American cut glass at the turn of the 20th century. MacCorkle family descendants gave the sparkling bowl to

The Humanities Council is planning a Civil War Sesquicentennial bus tour for 2012. Contact Michelle Walker at walker@wvhumanities.org or (304)346-8500 to stay up-to-date on the details.



Bus With Us !

Please include the Council in your year-end giving!

Where There's a Will . . . The West Virginia Humanities Council invites its friends to take part in national Wills Week, October 16-22, sponsored by Leave a Legacy of Central Appalachia. Council Development Director Michelle Walker is an active member of Leave a Legacy, which works to raise awareness about planned giving and encourages people to prepare an appropriate will and other end-of-life documents. For information call (304)346-8500 or email walker@wvhumanities.org.

Donations and Pledges April 1 – July 31, 2011

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The Pergola Society

The Humanities Council has organized a Pergola Society to recognize special friends of the historic 1836 MacFarland-Hubbard House. This fall, these individuals, corporations, organizations and foundations will be honored at a Council event recognizing their contributions to the stewardship of the house. For information about the Pergola Society, contact Michelle Walker at walker@wvhumanities.org or (304)346-8500.

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Gordon Wood Explains the Civil War ~

Why the North Cared

Historians often locate the causes of the Civil War in weaknesses in the U.S. Constitution as originally drafted, particularly in the compromises accepted by the framers to paper over the divisive issue of slavery. But Gordon Wood, who will deliver the 2011 McCreight Lecture in the Humanities, turns the matter on its head.

Wood, a preeminent authority on the founding of the United States, takes a keen interest in the later Civil War crisis as the greatest threat to the nation's survival. He agrees that slavery, and the South's insistence on saving it, were essential causes of the bloody conflict. "Explaining the secession of the Southern states is not a major historical problem," he says. "What is more difficult to explain is why the Northern states cared."

The answer to that question, Wood feels, lies not in the failings of the Revolutionary generation but in the very strength of the values they left us. "To understand why the North cared enough to resist the secession of the Southern states, we have to go back to the Revolution and the ideas and ideals that came out of it," he says. Giving "all honor to Thomas Jefferson," Abraham Lincoln made that backward journey in his greatest speeches. Ultimately a majority of Americans came to agree that their nation had in fact been "conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal," and it was around these bedrock founding principles that Lincoln was able to save the Union and abolish slavery in doing so.

Gordon Wood is emeritus professor at Brown University and a winner of the Pulitzer Prize. His latest book, *The Idea of America: Reflections on the Birth of the United States*, was published in May 2011. Other recent works include *Empire of Liberty* (2009), *The Purpose of the Past* (2008), and *The Americanization of Benjamin Franklin* (2004). He is a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the American Philosophical Society.

The McCreight Lecture is named for Humanities Council founder Betsy K. McCreight. Past speakers have included Elaine Pagels, Henry Louis Gates, Joyce Carol Oates, Ken Burns and others. Gordon Wood will deliver the 30th annual McCreight Lecture at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, October 27, at the Culture Center in Charleston. The lecture is free and open to the public, with a reception and book signing to follow.



Image courtesy of the West Virginia and Regional History Collection, WVU Libraries.

Give the Gift of West Virginia! The *West Virginia Encyclopedia*, a regional bestseller, and *West Virginia: A Film History*, the acclaimed public television series now available in a two-DVD set, are perfect holiday gifts for West Virginians everywhere. The Humanities Council is ready to take gift orders at (304)346-8500 or at www.wvhumanities.org and www.wvencyclopedia.org. The 927-page hardbound encyclopedia sells for \$44.95, and the film history for \$29.95.