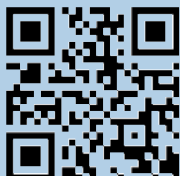


Spring
2015

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Rockefeller
Documentary



A Publication of the West Virginia Humanities Council

Marking Trail

Interpreting history along a Clay County rail line

The Clay County woods are quieter today than a century ago, when steam locomotives of the Buffalo Creek & Gauley Railroad hustled trainloads of coal and lumber from the county's remote eastern corner to a connection with the outside world. The tracks followed Buffalo Creek, from the coal company town of Widen down to Dundon on the banks of Elk River. There they connected with the main line Coal & Coke Railroad, which later became part of the B&O Railway system.

From Dundon to Widen, the Buffalo Creek & Gauley threaded its way through once-thriving communities that are now mainly just names on the map: Adair, Cressmont, Swandale and Eakle.

The most important of these places from a commercial standpoint were Swandale and Widen. Swandale was the location of a big sawmill which processed whole forests of hardwood timber into marketable lumber products, while Widen had the principal coal mine on the BC&G line. Both were classic Appalachian company towns, providing houses, schools, stores and churches to hundreds of families. A company-run dairy at Cressmont supplied dairy products to the residents of Swandale, Widen and the

surrounding area. Single-car rail buses ferried passengers up and down the line.

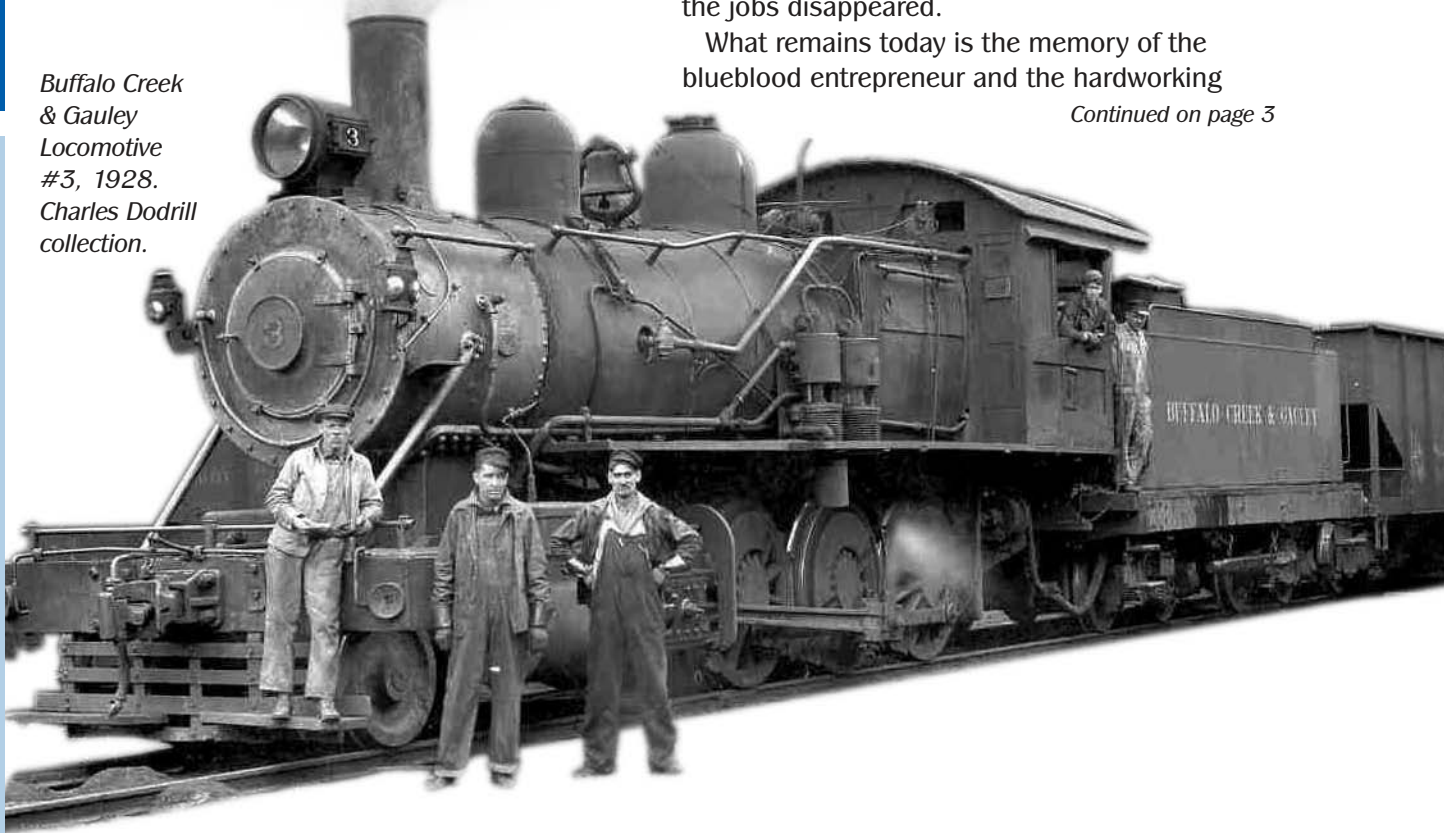
It was all the doing of J. G. Bradley, a Harvard-educated lawyer who moved to Clay County as a young man and lived for a half-century at an elegant estate he created for himself at Dundon. The grandson of President Lincoln's secretary of war and of a justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, Bradley parlayed inherited money and family connections into an industrial organization once controlling more than a third of the land of Clay County. His principal operating companies were Elk River Coal & Lumber, which extracted the region's rich natural resources, and the Buffalo Creek & Gauley Railroad, which hauled them away.

J. G. Bradley's empire lasted essentially as long as he did. After resisting the United Mine Workers for decades, Bradley sold out to a union operator late in life, following a series of bitter and increasingly violent strikes. The new company ceased local mining operations a few years later. The Buffalo Creek & Gauley Railroad closed with the coal mine. The railroad tracks have been used intermittently since that time, but are no longer active. People moved away as the jobs disappeared.

What remains today is the memory of the blueblood entrepreneur and the hardworking

Continued on page 3

*Buffalo Creek
& Gauley
Locomotive
#3, 1928.
Charles Dodrill
collection.*



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July 24, 2015, Elkins.
Open to the public.

Just a little thing

One of the most enjoyable things we do are the monthly Little Lectures at Humanities Council headquarters, the historic MacFarland-Hubbard House in Charleston. The Sunday afternoon parlor talks run from March through June each year and are just now in full swing.

The most recent Little Lecturer was Marc Harshman of Wheeling, West Virginia’s poet laureate. Harshman, who is a product of Yale Divinity School among other institutions, delivered what amounted to a rousing secular sermon on the value of the humanities, particularly literature. It was a bravura performance, full of his own poetry and that of others, superbly delivered. One attendee later wrote to say “you all outdid yourselves with the Harshman presentation,” and next morning’s *Charleston Gazette* called it entrancing.

Harshman’s April 26 talk followed a fine series opener by historian Michael Woods in March, and there are two lectures yet to come: Susan Shumaker will speak later this month, discussing her work as a producer and researcher with filmmaker Ken Burns. Shumaker’s talk promises insider views of the award-winning Burns media operation, plus reflections on how she manages a job of national scope from her home in Morgantown. Archeologist Stephen McBride will conclude this year’s lectures with a June talk on West Virginia frontier forts. You will find further details on page 4.

The Little Lectures are small by design — we can only accommodate a little crowd here, hence the name. Three dozen people pretty much pack the house, or at least the room we use for the talks, though we frequently squeeze in more than that and sometimes go to two seatings. Intimacy is part of the attraction. Attendees are sure of a chance to talk with the speaker, and with each other. Weather permitting, the group spills out onto the patio following the lecture, with some people lingering for an hour or more.

For us, it’s a chance to show off the house and grounds at an attractive time of year and to showcase a wide array of humanities topics. The continuing financial support of the Robinson & McElwee law firm allows us to recruit top speakers statewide, while a cover charge buys wine for the reception. Former board member Jennifer Soule is our volunteer caterer, and her hors d’oeuvres have a following of their own.

Food for the mind and a little something for the belly, with warm good fellowship for those who may not have made it to church that morning: It adds up to time well spent, and perhaps you’ll want to join us next time.

– Ken Sullivan

| | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
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Continued from page 1

West Virginians who animated his dreams. A recent grant from the West Virginia Humanities Council to the Clay County Business Development Authority will help keep the story alive. The grant will fund interpretive panels along the Buffalo Creek Recreational Trail, which follows the Buffalo Creek & Gauley right-of-way from Elk River to the town of Widen.



Volunteers at work on the Clay County trail.

Cutting a 22-mile swath through this rich local history, the new trail begins at Pisgah, across Elk River from the town of Clay and a mile downstream from Dundon. Panels installed here and at other points along the trail will include historical information, photos and maps. The idea is for visitors to be able to visualize the bustling communities that once existed along the old railroad, according to project planners.

“We’re excited about the Buffalo Creek trail project,” said Amy Postalwait, grants coordinator for the Humanities Council.

“We find that nothing brings history to life like providing information on-site, right on the ground where events actually happened,” Postalwait added. “The Humanities Council has funded similar signage projects for sites along Kanawha River and at the town of Grafton. We look forward to the completion of this new Clay County venture.”

The Buffalo Creek Recreational Trail may be used by bicyclists, hikers and horseback riders. A collaboration of the Development Authority and the Buffalo Creek Watershed Improvement Association, the trail is set to open during the Elk River Festival, June 5-6.

Check e-WV: The West Virginia Encyclopedia for the rest of the story. You will find numerous articles on Clay County and Elk River subjects, including the Buffalo Creek & Gauley Railroad, industrialist J. G. Bradley, and the town of Widen, and other articles on railroading, mining and logging. There are maps of Clay County and of the West Virginia railroad network at different periods of time. Visit www.wvencyclopedia.org.

Fellowships Awarded

Humanities Council Fellowships are awarded annually to college faculty and independent scholars for research and writing projects in the humanities. The \$2,500 grants are unique in the Mountain State. The 2015 Humanities Fellows and their subjects are:

Joshua Arthurs, *Morgantown*, Forty-Five Days: Experience, Emotion and Memory during the Fall of Mussolini

Rosemary Hathaway, *Morgantown*, Mountaineer Mascot Oral History Project

Kristen Lillvis, *Huntington*, Posthuman Blackness: Temporality and Subjectivity in African American Women’s Fiction

Evan A. McCarthy, *Morgantown*, Reviving the Science of Renaissance Music

Jeff Rutherford, *Wheeling*, Scorched Earth: The German Army Retreats, 1943 - 1944

Katy Ryan, *Morgantown*, Maria Parker, “Work & Hope” and the West Virginia State Penitentiary

John Whitehead, *Wheeling*, Alfred Hitchcock’s *Shadow of a Doubt*

The next Fellowships application deadline is February 1, 2016.

Rivers to Ridges Trail. Another West Virginia historic trail has been under development since 2006.

The Rivers to Ridges Heritage Trail, a scenic byway running through the Kanawha Valley from Nitro to Point Pleasant, includes wayside exhibits and a mural — all at significant locations along the way. Rivers to Ridges is a driving trail, primarily following State Route 62 from Nitro to Point Pleasant but with local excursion loops.

With the support of a Humanities Council grant, interpretive signs have already been installed at the Winfield Locks and Dam, the town of Buffalo, and the Hometown Roadside Park. An additional Council grant will support signage at Virgil A. Lewis Memorial Park in Mason, the town of Leon, Fort Randolph at Point Pleasant, the John Amos Power Plant, the historic Hoge House in Winfield, and the town of Eleanor. The Raymond City boat launch area, which already has one mural dedicated to coal mining history, will install a second mural commemorating Kanawha River transportation history.

Grant Categories

The Humanities Council welcomes applications in the following grant categories.

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

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

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

Media Grants (\$20,000 maximum) support projects intended to produce audio or video products, websites, 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, RESAs, and the state Department of Education, and support summer seminars for secondary and elementary teachers. **Due:** Sept. 1

*** Approaching Deadline!**

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

West Virginia & Regional History Center, WVU



Melville Davisson Post.

featuring Uncle Abner, a Bible-toting cattleman who solves mysteries throughout what would become north-central West Virginia. The book includes a new introduction by Huntington native Craig Johnson, bestselling author of the Walt Longmire novels and creator of the *Longmire* television series. The previous Classics volume, *Folk-Songs of the South*, was a top-seller and will be released as a paperback in spring 2016. West Virginia Classics may be ordered at www.wvupressonline.com or (304)293-8400 or 1-866-WVU-PRES.

Mystery Classic Reprinted

The fifth volume in the West Virginia Classics book series – a partnership of West Virginia University Press and the Humanities Council – is now available. *Uncle Abner: Master of Mysteries* was written by Melville Davisson Post (1869-1930) of Harrison County and first published in 1918. Post, an immensely popular writer in his time, is sometimes credited as the inventor of the American mystery story, and his Uncle Abner work was serialized in the *Saturday Evening Post* among other magazines.

Master of Mysteries includes 18 short stories

Program Committee Members Elected: The Humanities Council program committee, which oversees Council program activities and recommends grants for approval by the board of directors, welcomes three new citizen members: Leslie Gray Baker of Raleigh County, Bob Bonar of Calhoun County, and Chuck Keeney of Kanawha County. Two members, Patricia Dillon of Mingo County and Amy Nicholas of Calhoun County, were reelected. Our thanks to departing members Ken Fones-Wolf, Shirley Lycan, David Millard, and Kristina Olson for their service.

Little Lectures Continue

The Humanities Council's popular Little Lectures continue on May 31 with "America Through the Lens of Ken Burns" by Florentine Films producer Susan Shumaker (right) of Morgantown, and on June 28 when archeologist Stephen McBride presents "Archeology of West Virginia's Frontier Forts." Both talks begin at 2:00 p.m. and admission is \$10. Call (304)346-8500 to confirm seats. Little Lectures are sponsored by Robinson & McElwee, attorneys at law.

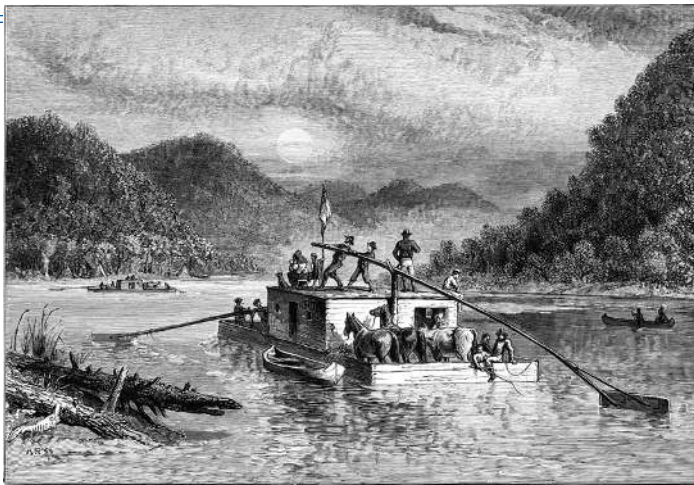


Celebrate West Virginia Day a day early at the 1836 MacFarland-Hubbard House in Charleston, Humanities Council headquarters. The Council is again joining the Craik-Patton House and Historic Glenwood Foundation to host the open houses as part of West Virginia Day observances, and the public is invited to tour the National Historic Register properties. The MacFarland-Hubbard House will be open from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. and the Craik-Patton House from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Friday, June 19. On June 20, Glenwood is open from 10:00 a.m. to 12 noon and Craik-Patton from 12 noon to 5:00 p.m. Call Mark Payne at (304)346-8500 for more information.

The Humanities Council recently awarded spring grants in the amount of \$188,000.

Flatboat Exhibit

With the support of a Humanities Council grant, the Morgantown History Museum flatboat exhibit opens May 23 on the banks of the Monongahela River at Hazel Ruby McQuain Riverfront Park. The program includes a living history reenactment of early commerce in Morgantown, including the building of a full-size replica of a flatboat, circa 1820. The exhibit will show firsthand the significant role of flat-bottom boats from the late 18th century into the 20th century, when they were an important vehicle for transporting goods and people down the Mississippi River and its tributaries. The boats were roughly built, rectangular in shape, with square ends, 20 feet wide and 20 to 100 feet long, and steered by long heavy paddles and a rudder. Traveling only downstream, flatboats were dismantled and sold for their lumber when they reached their destination. For more information visit www.MorgantownHistoryMuseum.org.



"Flatboat on the Ohio" by Alfred Rudolph Waud.



Michael Keller

The public is invited to visit the grounds of Charleston's historic MacFarland-Hubbard House, Humanities Council headquarters, during the East End Garden Showcase, from June 27 through July 11. The house's landscape includes many heritage plants and historic garden beds featured along an educational pathway complete with botanical labels.

"New Deal Photographs of the Tygart Valley Homestead," an exhibit supported by a Humanities Council grant, displays June 27 and 28 at the historic homestead community located at Dailey, 10 miles south of Elkins. The exhibit marks the 75th anniversary of the Homestead Elementary School, which is the only remaining active school out of 99 originally serving New Deal homestead communities. The photographs were taken by four photographers, including Marion Post Walcott and Arthur Rothstein, who visited Tygart Valley in the late 1930's and early '40's as part of the Farm Security Administration's photography project. Following its two-day premiere, the exhibit will move to the Beverly Heritage Center for the remainder of the summer. For more information contact Darryl DeGripp at info@beverlyheritage-center.org or (304)637-7424.



Children at play at Tygart Valley Homestead School. Photo by Arthur Rothstein, December 1941; Library of Congress.

Briefs

e-WV: The West Virginia Encyclopedia was recently cited in testimony before the U.S. House of Representatives. The educational web-site, operated by the Humanities Council, was recognized for its support to teachers — particularly for its lesson plans on statehood, Native American culture, mountain state music, and the history of coal mining. You may visit e-WV at wvencyclopedia.org.

As of May 1, **"Us and Them,"** a podcast series sponsored by West Virginia Public Broadcasting and supported by a Humanities Council grant, is available on www.wvpubcast.org. By Charleston native and Peabody Award-winning producer Trey Kay, "Us and Them" explores issues that create cultural divisions.

The Humanities Council is again supporting **"Japanese in June — A Summer Immersion Camp"** for Cabell County elementary students. Coordinated by the West Virginia Department of Education, the program offers two one-week camps for students to learn about Japanese language and culture. For more information contact Mami Itamochi at mitamochi@k12.wv.us.

The 25th season of the **Contemporary American Theater Festival** kicks off July 10 in Shepherdstown. Events including discussions on issues raised by CATF performances and stage readings of new plays are supported by a Humanities Council grant. For a complete schedule visit www.catf.org.

Welcome Victoria Paul

Victoria Paul has joined the West Virginia Humanities Council as Director of Development. She previously worked as senior development manager for the National Multiple Sclerosis Society serving all of West Virginia. While with the MS Society, Victoria was responsible for fundraising events and other development activities statewide.

Born and raised in West Virginia, Victoria earned an MBA from the Marshall University Graduate College and a B.A. from West Virginia State University. As development director, Victoria will be responsible for all fundraising at the Council. "There couldn't be a better state in which to work for the humanities. I am very much looking forward to it," notes Victoria.



Michael Keller

Donations November 1, 2014 – March 31, 2015

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Raymond Smock

Julia Child, aka Karen Vuranch of the Humanities Council's History Alive program, entertains the crowd at the Sunday, April 19, Humanities Council fundraiser. Held at the home of Council board member Tia McMillan and husband Bob in Shepherdstown, the event was co-hosted by new contributing member Susan Mills and board member Lisa Welch.

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The West Virginia Humanities Council gratefully acknowledges support from the National Endowment for the Humanities; the Office of the West Virginia Secretary of Education and the Arts; and foundations, corporations, and individuals throughout the Mountain State and beyond.

Rockefeller Documentary Premieres

The documentary film *Jay: A Rockefeller’s Journey*, produced by West Virginia Public Broadcasting and supported by a Humanities Council grant, will premiere on Public Television June 22 at 9:00 p.m. The two-hour film explores the half-century career of John D. Rockefeller IV, including the decisions that led him to the Mountain State where he would become governor and ultimately U.S. Senator.

Jay Rockefeller came to West Virginia in 1964 as a poverty volunteer and social worker in Emmons, Kanawha County. He served as West Virginia’s secretary of state from 1969 to 1973, and in 1977 became our 29th governor. He was elected to the U.S. Senate in 1984.

Jay: A Rockefeller’s Journey features vintage news footage from the West Virginia State Archives and Marshall University’s Special Collections, material from the Rockefeller Archive Center, and extensive new interviews with the senator. West Virginia Public Broadcasting also donated photographs, film, and video to the project. The film, which was shown to an appreciative live audience at WVU’s Erickson Alumni Center on April 22, is the work of award-winning producers Suzanne Higgins and Russ Barbour. Visit wvpublic.org/jay-rockefellers-journey to learn more.

Senator Rockefeller retired after 30 years in Congress. In announcing his retirement in 2014, Rockefeller said, “West Virginia has become my life and my cause. I never, ever doubt what it is I’m trying to do.”



Governor Jay Rockefeller at the opening of Camp Washington-Carver, June 21, 1980.

Rick Lee

The Board of Directors welcomes three new members elected at the Council’s recent meeting in Morgantown: Elliot Hicks, a Charleston lawyer and past president of the West Virginia State Bar; Billy Joe Peyton of Charleston, associate professor of history and chair of the Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences at West Virginia State University; and Morgantown’s Timothy Sweet, West Virginia University’s Eberly Family Distinguished Professor of American Literature. We thank departing board members Ken Fones-Wolf and Kristina Olson, both of Morgantown, and Marie Gnage, formerly of Vienna, for their years of service.

The new Humanities Council website will launch this summer — a collaboration of Council staff and Mesh Design and Development of Charleston. Watch for it at www.wvhumanities.org.