



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

West Virginia State Museum **Heritage**

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THE SECRETARY'S C O R N E R

Fall is a great time to visit the West Virginia State Museum. As school begins, the museum education staff is busy scheduling group tours and continuously working to provide educational opportunities for students of all ages while they learn about the culture, history, and people of the Mountain State. If you didn't get a chance to visit us this summer, this newsletter takes a look back at the museum's most popular summer exhibit – the annual Juried Quilt and Wall hanging exhibition featuring some of the state's most talented quilters. The exhibit hangs in the Culture Center's Great Hall from May to September each year. The state museum's collection features over 60,000 artifacts, and most of them come with some interesting stories. Enjoy a few of their stories here, including how the museum acquired these pieces, their backgrounds and their uses and much more. This newsletter also spotlights the department's other sites/museums around the state, including Independence Hall in Wheeling, Camp Washington-Carver in Clifftop, and Grave Creek Mound in Moundsville. And as the holiday season approaches, get some great gift ideas from the State Museum Gift Shop run by Tamarack. We look forward to your visit soon!



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On the Cover:

Quilts of Celebration and Heritage

photo by Sidney Duncan

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STORIES from the COLLECTION

By Charles Morris

The West Virginia State Museum and the Department of Arts, Culture and History are gearing up to honor the Semiquincentennial of the United States of America and the 50th anniversary of the Culture Center, West Virginia's Ultimate Welcome Center. Over the next two years, we look forward to sharing the many celebrations, exhibits, and events commemorating these milestones with you.

America250 is a multi-year, nonpartisan initiative working to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the founding of our country and to create opportunities to pause and reflect on our nation's past, honor the contributions of all Americans, and look to the future. The West Virginia State Museum kicked off activities for America250 with the opening of the first installation of Inspired: A Series of West Virginia Juried Exhibitions in March. This four-part series on exhibit in the Commissioner's Gallery honors the upcoming 250th anniversary and showcases visual representations of West Virginia themes. The first installation of the series featured West Virginia landscapes and highlighted the natural beauty of the Mountain State. The second installation of the series opened in July and features West Virginia Historic Buildings and Structures. This installation of the series will be on display until mid-December.



The Inspired series opened in March 2024 with an installation featuring West Virginia Landscapes



A crowd enjoys the July 2024 opening of the West Virginia Historic Buildings and Structures exhibit featured as the second installation of the Inspired series

When all is complete for this four-part series in Fall of 2025, it will have showcased West Virginia Landscapes, Historic Buildings and Structures, Wildlife, and Historic Figures.

One of the missions of America250 is to look at the various ways states helped in building America. West Virginia has proudly served the country in many ways including the development and discoveries by individuals and companies throughout the state.

Groundbreaking ceremony for the new outdoor exhibition,
West Virginia: Nature Designs a State that Fuels a Nation



As a leader in many industries over the last several centuries, the museum is commemorating West Virginia's role through the exhibition, *West Virginia: Nature Designs a State that Fuels a Nation*. In July, ground was broken on this showcase that will feature eleven elements that made West Virginia a leader in the world. The exhibition will be an extension of the West Virginia State Museum on the south side of the Culture Center and will include the salt, coal, timber, agriculture, iron and steel, oil and gas, chemical, clay, glass, water, and railroad industries. A variety of artifacts will be featured, including a 1945 fireless steam locomotive, coal

shuttle car, steam engine, coil of steel, salt pot, South Penn half breed engine, farm plows, and related tools from the chemical industry. Contemporary West Virginia artists have added elements for clay, glass and river transportation. As water has been instrumental in many of the highlighted industries, the outdoor exhibition will feature a waterfall along the pathway.

Over the next two years, there is much to look forward to in celebration of milestone events. The West Virginia State Museum will feature various art exhibitions for students at all levels, special programs, and historical exhibitions to honor the Semiquincentennial of the United States of America. Staff will also be counting down to the celebration of 50 years of the Culture Center in July 2026 with special programs, celebrations and exhibitions. The Culture Center opened on July 11, 1976, one week after America celebrated its 200th anniversary. Staff members will be planning and working towards a showcase of events throughout 2025 and 2026 in honor of both America250 and the Culture Center Headin' to 50. Please visit us often and follow the museum's social media pages as we feature the arts, culture and history of West Virginia.



Various paperweights commemorating the celebration of the
United States Bicentennial in 1976

ON THE COVER

Piece By Piece — — *Quilts of Celebration and Heritage*

The Great Hall of the Culture Center is once again lined with the beautiful work of West Virginia's talented quilters in an exhibit titled, *Piece By Piece: Quilts of Celebration and Heritage*. This exhibit features 36 quilts from the West Virginia State Museum's permanent collection and honors the skill, creativity, and dedication of each talented artist. The diverse array of fabrics, techniques, and styles highlights celebratory moments in time from the United States Bicentennial Exhibition and opening of the Culture Center in 1976 to the Sesquicentennial of West Virginia to numerous quilts from the annual Quilts and Wall Hangings Juried Exhibitions of the past. We invite you to admire the intricate designs and heartfelt stories of each quilt that highlight the rich tradition and artistry woven into the Mountain State's legacy of quilting. This colorful display in celebration of West Virginia's cultural and historical tapestry will be on display until it's time to deck the halls for the holidays.



A colorful close-up of quilts featured in the exhibit
photo by Sidney Duncan

ARTIFACT SPOTLIGHT

By Keen Owen

The Battle of Point Pleasant was a pivotal conflict between colonial Virginia militia led by Colonel Andrew Lewis and Native American forces led by Shawnee Chief Cornstalk (*Keigh-tugh-qua*). The conflict occurred on October 10, 1774, where the Kanawha and Ohio rivers meet in present-day West Virginia. Historians have long debated whether or not it should be considered the first engagement of the American Revolutionary War. Regardless, the battle was the culmination of Lord Dunmore's War and an impactful event in both West Virginia's and the United States' history.



**Battle of Point Pleasant
Commemorative Plate
circa 1974**

As part of the bicentennial celebration of the conflict, a replica of the original fort was constructed in 1973-74 and dedicated on October 10, 1974, exactly 200 years after the battle in addition to various ceremonies. The commemorative plate pictured here is a part of the Lewis Family collection donated by John Seidel, Ph.D., a descendent of the Lewis Family. Artifacts such as this one highlight the enduring significance of the Battle of Point Pleasant and honor the legacy of those who fought there. October 10, 2024, marks the 250th anniversary of the Battle of Point Pleasant and serves as a milestone that invites reflection on the significant events that unfolded two and a half centuries ago.

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT: _____

By Sidney Duncan

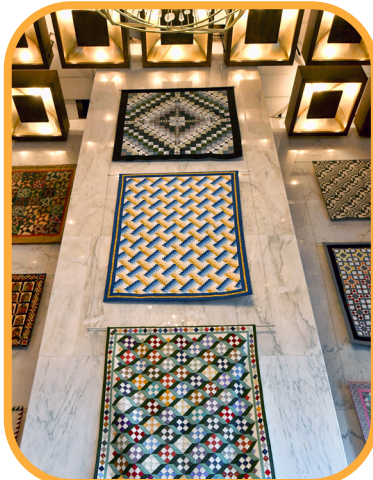
—2024 Quilts and Wall Hangings Juried Exhibition



The 43rd annual Quilts and Wall Hangings Juried Exhibition coincided with the opening of the Vandalia Gathering on Memorial Day weekend. Visitors were awestruck by the 43 quilts and 11 wall hangings carefully crafted by artists throughout the state. This year, winners were selected by Kathryn Zimmerman, a quilter with over twenty years of experience and a certified judge for the National Association of Certified Quilt Judges (NACQJ) since 2022. Zimmerman joined us all the way from Mars Hill, North Carolina, and also instructed this year's quilting workshop on the *Swoon* quilt pattern and production of the 'perfect' 24-inch block.

One quilter in particular, Cheryl Morgan, placed several times. Morgan received awards for third place in Wall Hangings, Best of Show, and first place in the pieced division. The West Virginia State Museum has purchased her quilt, *Marquiss*, for our ever-growing permanent collection. We were also honored this year with the ability to present Elwanda Dennison with the NACQJ Award of Merit for her quilt, *3-D Nine Patch*. Details regarding the winners of each category are available in our yearly quilt book, available at the Culture Center or by request. To request your copy or for additional information about the exhibit, please contact Sidney Duncan, Exhibits Coordinator for the department at (304) 558-0220 or Sidney.L.Duncan@wv.gov.

We want to express our gratitude to our extraordinary quilters that make this exhibit possible each year—without your experience and hours of tireless dedication, this stunning exhibit would not be possible. We are truly honored to display some of the finest examples of textile craftsmanship in the state and look forward to seeing your entries flood our mail again next year.



Additional photos of this year's quilts and wall hangings can be viewed online at:
wvculture.zenfolio.com/p95678038



UPCOMING EXHIBITS

2024 West Virginia Emerging Artists Juried Exhibition
opening November 2024

Inspired: A West Virginia Series of Juried Exhibitions
West Virginia Wildlife
opening January 2025

West Virginia Historic and Prominent People
opening June 2025

LOOK UP! LOOK UP! —History from High-Hanging Hooks

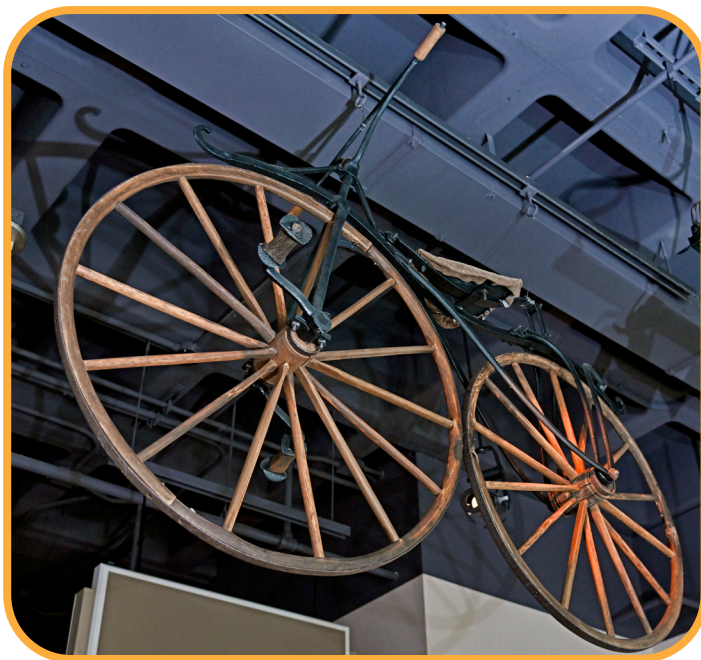
By Jim Mitchell

EDITOR'S NOTE: We are sad to announce that Jim Mitchell, author of this article, passed away in September during production of this newsletter. Jim served as the State Museum's curator for the past 34 years. An immense loss to us all, Jim was as knowledgeable and dedicated to his work as anyone could strive to be. He will be greatly missed by our staff and visitors to the museum that were continuously seeking his knowledge. His shoes will be difficult to fill.

As I sat here trying to think up an article from the past, I realized that the past just rolled through Charleston in May. The city hosted the 2024 USA Cycling Pro Road National Championships. The event attracted top cyclists from all over the nation and the winners of the Elite Men's and Women's Time Trial races, automatically qualified for the U.S. Olympic Cycling Team in both the Paris 2024 and the Los Angeles 2028 Olympics. In fact, Kristen Faulkner, the Paris Olympics gold medalist of the women's road race had won the Elite Women's race in Charleston back in May.

Our devotion to cycling reaches far back in time to the past when there was no "West" in front of Virginia and the Mountain State was simply the western edge of the Old Dominion. Joseph Nathan Kane's book of *Famous First Facts* states that the first bicycle came to New York City in 1816. Fifty years later in about 1867, a bicycle was made by a blacksmith in Roane County, West Virginia. W.H. Bennett of Wellsburg purchased the bicycle from the blacksmith and later, Walton Venable of Charleston purchased the bicycle from him and donated it to the museum.

Our museum technician, Mary McFarland, worked on restoring what we now fondly refer to as our "Boneshaker" bicycle. As she worked, she depended on advice from the Amish woodworking community in Ohio. She only had half as many wooden spokes that she needed, so she had to make the rest. The Amish woodworkers helped her a lot, but there was a problem. Mary's bike only had one hub for the center of one wheel.



She needed another hub, but the Amish did not know where to find another woodturner and lathe who could produce the needed hub. Luckily, Mary happened to know a guy who lived in Charleston's South Hills neighborhood who owned a modern wood lathe made by Montgomery Ward circa 1958. With the existing hub as a model, the turner copied its every detail to make a second hub. Mary pierced the hub for the necessary square spokes knowing that if her work went awry, she could always get another hub since that guy in Charleston with the lathe was me! The finished bicycle was added to the 2009 rendition of the State Museum exhibits.

Today, just one small problem remains, though no woodturner is needed for the fix this time. Several objects, including this Boneshaker bicycle, a giant iron saw blade, Soap Box Derby racecar, and the pilot wheel of the *USS West Virginia* are hung from the ceiling. Many visitors miss these high-hanging pieces of history, simply because they forget to look up. Perhaps we should put some encouraging labels on the floor reminding guests, "Look up! Look up!"

Tracing Fiestaware's Colorful History

NOTE: This is a multi-part series that will be featured in the next several editions of the West Virginia State Museum Heritage newsletter.

On April 29, 2024, Homer Laughlin China Company in Newell, West Virginia, introduced its newest Fiestaware color: “Sky,” a serene and airy hue that captures the essence of a clear, blue day. Its release continues Fiestaware’s tradition of quality and commitment to providing customers with a wide range of expressive, colorful options for their dining experiences. Fiestaware’s story begins in 1936 amidst the Great Depression, when Homer Laughlin China Company sought to introduce a line of affordable, brightly colored dinnerware. English pottery designer Frederick Hurten Rhead was the creative force behind the line who envisioned the line of boldly colored mix-and-match dinnerware, that broke away from the traditional, subdued palettes of the time. Over time, Fiestaware’s palette has endured numerous changes driven by shifts in consumer preferences, advancements in glazing technology, and the economy. Today, we take a closer look at the original Fiestaware colors.



1936-1944: The Original Colors

Red, yellow, cobalt blue, green, and ivory were selected to stand out in any setting. Turquoise was also added during the first year of the line. Vibrant hues coupled with an Art Deco design featuring concentric rings, and smooth, rounded edges established Fiestaware as a beloved brand in American homes. Arguably, the most notable color from the original palette is “Original Red” also known as “Fiesta Red” or “Radioactive Red” with its unique role in the history of American dinnerware. The recognizable red quickly became one of the most popular and iconic colors in the Fiestaware line.

A striking appearance wasn’t the only thing that set it apart; its composition included uranium oxide, the radioactive, crystalline powder that provided its distinctive, luminous quality and imparted the deep, rich red color unlike any other at the time. The use of this compound was not uncommon in the early twentieth century, as it was valued for its ability to produce durable, brilliant colors that were difficult to achieve with other materials. However, production faced significant challenges during World War II when the U.S. government restricted non-military use of uranium due to its critical role in nuclear weapons development and other wartime technologies in 1943. As a result, Fiestaware discontinued its iconic red. The wartime hiatus lasted until the early 1950s when the company resumed production, this time using depleted uranium—a less radioactive substance still capable of producing the same vivid red.

Despite its name and composition, the level of radioactivity in Radioactive Red Fiestaware is broadly considered low and innocuous. Over time, safety concerns regarding the use of Radioactive Red Fiestaware have persisted, despite general agreement amongst experts that health risks are minimal if the dinnerware is used as intended and not damaged. However, as uranium is present, these pieces are still slightly radioactive and detectable on a Geiger counter. Today, we welcome guests to catch a glimpse of this colorful piece’s history on display in Discovery Room 25 of the West Virginia State Museum.

UNCOVERING THE PAST:

By Autumn Martino

—An Interview with Dr. Olivia Jones



It can be easy to overlook the connection between West Virginia and national cultural heritage celebrations like Indigenous People's Day and Native American Heritage Month. Many people unknowingly erase a core component of our state's history by treating myths about the absence of Indigenous people in present-day West Virginia as fact. Thankfully, Grave Creek Mound Archaeological Complex (GCMAC)—one of our Museum Sites, works diligently to preserve the history of Indigenous people in the state while simultaneously providing programming to better inform the public. Recently, I was able to chat with Dr. Olivia Jones, Lead Curator of the site about the work being done at GCMAC.

Tell us about your work as Lead Curator.

Dr. Jones explained that the majority of her work focuses on processing archaeological collections. As the only state archaeological repository, artifact collections are taken into the facility where they are washed, cataloged, and labeled. An on-site lab also allows the public to observe their work from the museum through a glass barrier.



How do you preserve the history and culture of Indigenous people in the state?

In addition to caring for artifacts, GCMAC works to preserve and celebrate Indigenous culture through their museum's interpretation. Interpretation refers to how a museum presents information to the public. This often includes narratives, critical questioning, and objects on display. For Grave Creek, their interpretation centers on Indigenous people and their cultures. Dr. Jones explained, "*Interpretation is always fluid,*" and therefore should not rely solely on one component like archaeology. Collaboration with tribal partners allows Grave Creek to help ensure the inclusion of Indigenous voices and perspectives. Currently, Grave Creek's tribal partners include the Seneca Nation, Delaware Nation, United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee, and the Osage Nation.

What public programs does GCMAC offer to educate people about Indigenous people in West Virginia?

Each year in early November, Grave Creek hosts Native American Heritage Day. The event, taking place on November 2nd this year, features guest speakers presenting lectures about Native American history and cultures in West Virginia, crafts for children, and Native American artisans showcasing their work. Last year, a lecturer spoke on Indigenous food sovereignty and six Seneca Nation artists spoke about their traditional crafts and detailed their work process.

Why is it important for West Virginia to celebrate Indigenous Peoples' Day?

Dr. Jones asserted, "*Indigenous history is West Virginia history,*" and it impacts and intersects other parts of our state's history. If we leave out Indigenous history, we miss critical pieces of West Virginia history. She explained further that for far too long the myth that West Virginia was only used as hunting grounds for Indigenous people has been treated as fact. In reality, Indigenous



people played a major role in shaping the physical landscape including the domestication of plants for farming. If we ignore the presence of Indigenous people in our history, we ignore their contributions that still impact us today.

A TALE OF TWO FLAGS

The West Virginia State Museum is home to numerous flags from a wide assortment of meanings, purposes, and backgrounds and from various moments in history. This edition, we highlight two flags that offer a glimpse into the Civil War Era, a pivotal time in both West Virginia's and our nation's history.

By Amy Welch

Four Score and Seven Years Ago...

On July 4, 1853, just two weeks after West Virginia had been granted statehood, the 35-star flag was authorized as the official United States of America flag. As the thirty-fifth state, it makes sense that a large hand-stitched 35-star American flag is hanging in the West Virginia State Museum. The flag on display was hand-stitched shortly after West Virginia had been granted statehood and it happens to be one of the American flags that hung over the National Soldiers' Cemetery during President Lincoln's famous Gettysburg Address on November 19, 1863.

President Abraham Lincoln stood on the grounds of what was recently a battlefield where countless lives were lost during the Battle of Gettysburg. During his speech, Lincoln commemorated the fallen soldiers while dedicating the field to become the National Soldiers' Cemetery. Despite the nation being torn apart, Lincoln spoke with a semblance to patriotism and the spirit of America. The American flags that were hanging around as a backdrop to the ceremony spoke to his words that reminded the people of "a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal."

Today, the flag is located in the Civil War collection in the South Connections Room where it hangs in almost pristine condition and serves as a reminder of a time in our nation's history when things were less than pristine. It hangs behind several smaller Civil War artifacts and allows you to peer into a smaller picture of life during the pivotal moments in West Virginia's history. The backdrop of the iconic flag serves as a reminder of



this time in history and as a point of speculation of the youth of America with its thirty-five stars for thirty-five states, the thirty-fifth state being West Virginia itself.

Boys, I Want That Flag!

As Lieutenant Charles A. Griffin of Company AB, First (West) Virginia Infantry looked over the sleepy town of Philippi, Barbour County, on the morning of June 3, 1861, he spotted the large Confederate flag and proclaimed, “Boys, I want that flag!” The soldiers near him replied, “Charlie, we are with you!”

The flag spotted by Lt. Griffin was the original national flag for the Confederacy known as the “Stars and Bars” that was adopted on March 4, 1861, at Montgomery, Alabama, the Congress of the Provisional Government of the Confederate States and in use until May 1863. During the first two years of the Civil War, the similarity between this flag and the U.S. flag caused much confusion. This confusion is still prevalent today, as many visitors who spot this flag on display along the Show Path between Discovery Rooms 5 and 6 of the museum believe this flag is an early U.S. flag—and they are not entirely wrong.

The Confederate flag captured during the Battle of Philippi is a repurposed American flag. During restoration efforts in 1959-1960, it was discovered that the flag originally had 34 stars representing the 34 states in the years prior to the dawning of the Civil War. So, why are there

fifteen stars? When the Southern states initially seceded from the Union, only seven answered the rebellious call. Four more split with the Union following Abraham Lincoln’s election and a renewed call for volunteers, bringing the Confederacy to a total of ten states on the morning of the Battle of Philippi. The number would not reach eleven until June 8, 1861, when Tennessee voters approved their secession from the Union.

So, why does this flag have fifteen stars on the canton? There was a popular belief among those siding with the Confederacy that all slave holding states would adopt an ordinance to dissolve the Union. Although never formally recognized by the U.S. government, the addition of Missouri and Kentucky late in 1861 brought the total number of Confederate States to thirteen. The two remaining stars represent the pro-slavery, yet loyal states of Maryland and Delaware. There were numerous flags used by the Confederate States during the four years of the American Civil War. Fortunately, James Emery, Thomas Wilson, William Travis, Robert Kelly and D. F. McKinley was “...with Charlie” and able to capture this rare example on their way to preserving the Union.



RECENT GIFTS

to the West Virginia State Museum Collection



Charleston's McMillan Hospital Nurses School Cape worn by Vivian Carter Newbrough circa 1951, donated by Michelle John of Wheeling, West Virginia



"Little Wizard" blue tin-plated kerosene lantern circa 1950, donated by Judy C. Simmons (Pierce) of Simpsonville, Kentucky



James H. "Tiger" Morton Juvenile Detention Center groundbreaking shovel circa 2002, transferred by the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources

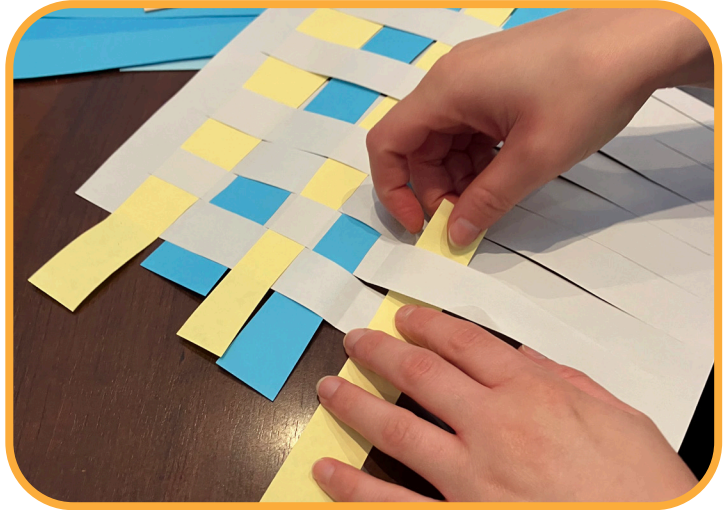


United States Air Force Class A Uniform circa 1948 and two framed photographs belonging to Van Helmick of Nicholas County, West Virginia, a war photographer during the Korean War, transferred from the Tennessee State Library and Archives

Hands - On History

This past summer, during my internship at the Culture Center, I had the opportunity to take a step in an unfamiliar direction that taught me to be resilient and I learned so many new lessons. So, let me tell you a story!

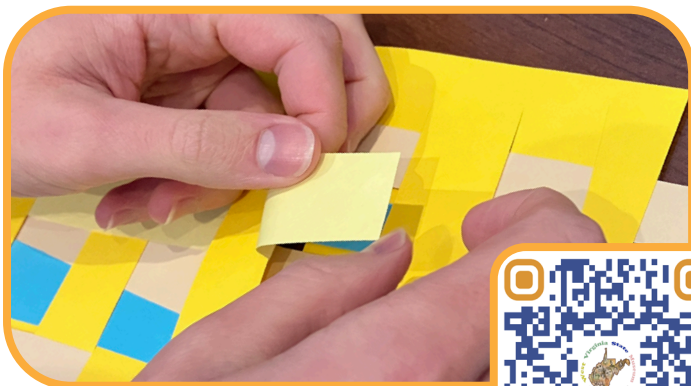
I visited Fort McHenry in Baltimore, Maryland, a place not too far from the Mountain State's borders and also rich in history. While reading the information at the historical site, I came across a portion about the nurses of Fort McHenry and it just so happens that I have a background in Health and Well-Being. The nurses realized that the wounded soldiers struggled with small tasks like writing, typing, and packing ammunition into weapons. To help solve the problem, the nurses created a fun and resourceful way to heal these soldiers. Paper weaving! Nurses provided the soldiers with directions and assistance to create designs by weaving pieces of paper in between other pieces of paper. Although these nurses did not have our modern medical knowledge of how to best repair their soldiers, they learned to be resilient and resourceful, and how to think on the spot. The nurses helped the soldiers rehabilitate their fine motor skills (small minutiae movements usually made by the hands and involve reaching, grasping, and the manipulation of objects) that we usually dismiss despite their important role in how our bodies work with their creative technique.



Years later at military hospitals like the one at Grafton, West Virginia, during the Civil War, nurses would continue to showcase their resiliency, resourcefulness, and ability to problem solve on the go. I mean, who better to know about resiliency, resourcefulness, and on-the-spot thinking than the mountaineers of West Virginia?

Besides that, weaving became “woven into” our heritage with its importance in rural households of early West Virginians. Today, weaving is just one example of the beautiful artistry produced in our state and it has the added bonus of being a great way to utilize fine motor skills!

No matter the path we choose, being resilient and willing to learn helps to create a foundation for success. Resiliency, resourcefulness, and flexibility are qualities that have guided some of our best leaders and qualities that our educators continue to help instill in their students. The West Virginia State Museum Education office continues to offer programs and resources rooted in our history and dedicated to preparing all students for success. We've even crafted a new lesson plan based on paper weaving to get your hands on history! Be sure to check it out and give us a call to bring the whole class for a visit this school year.



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for Lesson Plans, Resources, and more!

Music in the Mountain State

NOTE: This is a two-part series featuring musical instruments within the West Virginia State Museum's collection. Part 1 can be read in the Spring/Summer 2024 edition of the West Virginia State Museum Heritage newsletter.

West Virginia's cultural roots are steeped in rich history. The Mountain State's unique Appalachian heritage is woven together with pieces of cultures from near and far around the world. Music is just one of the treasured components of West Virginia's folk life. At the West Virginia State Museum, we honor our state's musical heritage through our collection. As we close this two-part series, we continue to highlight music in West Virginia as told by three more musical stories of the collection.



The West Virginia State Museum is home to numerous artifacts that once belonged to various prominent West Virginians, including pioneers of industry, politicians, radical reformers, war heroes, and many others. The preservation of personal items belonging to such people, cements their legacy and service to the state. By displaying these artifacts, the public is offered the opportunity to engage with the personal possessions that connect us to the past. One such example is on the criterion music box that is on display in Discovery Room 26: Traditions of Music. The music box dates to circa 1898 and once belonged to the former West Virginia Governor Jacob Beeson Jackson along with a number of records, including titles such as *Virginia Reel*, *Marching Through Georgia*, *Polonaise from Mignon*, and *Intermezzo* from Pietro Mascagni's *Cavalleria Rusticana*.

Governor Jackson was born in Parkersburg in 1829. Before entering the field of politics, Jackson had established a career for himself as a prosecutor after he was admitted to the bar in 1852. He moved on from law into politics with his service as a member of the House of Delegates during the 1875-1876 legislative session. Then in 1879, Jackson was elected Mayor of Parkersburg. From 1881 to 1885, Jackson served as Governor

of West Virginia. As Governor, Jackson favored advancing the state's industries and encouraged immigration.

The music box was the first home device capable of playing recorded music. The revolutionary technology was developed in about 1770 by Swiss watch maker Antoine Favre. Originally, the music box was a small jewelry or snuff box. It later evolved into the large versions like Governor Jacob's Criterion model music box. A clock-like mechanism with continuously revolving cylinders cause small pins to pluck at metal prongs which then vibrate. The vibration of the metal prongs creates the music. Soon, the innovative music box spread across the world and was popular in America from 1810 until the turn of the century. The fascination with music boxes came to a halt with the invention of the phonograph, though its existence demonstrates a crucial and personal relationship people have had to music throughout time. The Criterion model once owned by Governor Jacob Jackson inspires us to learn more about it while simultaneously offering a look into his personal life and taste in music.

Peering into the display case between Discovery Rooms 25 and 26, on the bottom shelf are two types of different dulcimers that both hold a prominent place in Appalachian music and can be heard throughout the hills of West Virginia. The word dulcimer is derived from the Latin and Greek words *dulce* and *melos*, meaning sweet tune. Both instruments belong to the zither family, although each type has its own distinctive sweet sound.



The hammered dulcimer, pictured in the top right corner of the page and on display in the aforementioned display case, is an instrument that was first heard some time around 900 A.D. in the Middle East before it eventually spread to North Africa and Europe. Players strike its strings to create a wide range of tones from soft and delicate to lilting rhythms and strong, percussive accents. The earliest mention of the instrument in America was in 1717 by Judge Samuel Sewall in Salem, Massachusetts, who had written that he had seen one being played. The hammered dulcimer pictured here was made by Raymond Epler of South Charleston, West Virginia, in early Autumn of 1989 for Barbara Leonard. Epler began making instruments in 1972 after retiring from American Electric where he worked as a salesman. This hammered dulcimer, made with a black walnut fir, oak, and chestnut, was the last dulcimer made by Epler.



The mountain dulcimer, sometimes referred to as the plucked or Appalachian dulcimer, is pictured to the left. This instrument was born in Appalachia some time in the early 1800s along with the establishment of Scotch-Irish immigrant communities. Much like the

hammered dulcimer, the mountain dulcimer's strings are stretched over its elongated soundbox, though there are noticeably less strings on mountain dulcimers compared to hammered dulcimers. To play this uniquely American instrument, musicians pluck rather than strike the strings in a way similar to how one would pluck the strings of a guitar, banjo, or fiddle. The four-stringed, hourglass shaped mountain dulcimer pictured here had been made by Isaac Drake in Granny Creek, Braxton County, circa 1850. It was noted that the family had often found entertainment through country music and square dancing, letting us know that this instrument once helped to fill the West Virginia hills with music.

We end our series with one last music-making personal possession, though at first glance, they may not look like they have anything to do with music. This pair of wooden spoons were donated as part of 43-piece collection of musical instruments and accessories. The spoons were made circa 1950 and carefully crafted with notches so that they could be tied together and played as a rhythm instrument. Spoons were popularized in American folk music beginning some time in the eighteenth century and especially during the rise of African-American jug bands, though historians have traced the beginnings of musical spoons all the way back to ancient civilizations. The accessibility of spoons has long allowed musicians to enter a world of music-making with materials they already have at home. Our musical spoons are one last reminder of the prominence of music-making throughout Appalachian culture.



CELEBRATING CRAFTSMANSHIP: _____

The Story of Maggie

Over the years, the collection of the West Virginia State Museum has largely been built by the generous donations of citizens. This summer, a hand built .45 long rifle and accoutrements were donated to our collection by John Nelson of Mercer County, West Virginia. The craftsmanship and dedication ingrained within West Virginia's culture and history are remarkably evident in the rifle carefully crafted by the donor's father, Donald Nelson.



Donald Bruce Nelson was born in January of 1948 in Bluefield, West Virginia. He was a longtime member of the Whitten Fort Long Rifle Association located in the bordering county of Tazewell, Virginia. Along with a team of shooters, Nelson also often participated in state championship shooting matches held at Sam Black Church, West Virginia. Don spent the mid to late 1980s hand building the .45 caliber long rifle from tiger stripe maple and German silver. Countless hours

were spent carving, sanding, and applying oil to the stock. The stock itself was so fine that Don had crafted a special dowel to support the neck of the rifle after removing the barrel for cleaning or bluing. The barrel and trigger mechanism were filed and fit to the stock by Don and are the only parts of the rifle that he did not make himself. The rifle, lovingly named "Maggie" after Nelson's grandmother, signifies a work of love and art while also serving as a tool to provide food for the Nelson family. Many deer were brought home to stock the fridge and freezer throughout the winters thanks to Maggie.

A champion marksman, boxes of ribbons and medals accompanied the rifle when Don's wife, Carroll Nelson, presented the beloved Maggie to their son John, who donated Maggie and the accoutrements to the West Virginia State Museum for safekeeping and to allow future generations to admire and honor his father's craftsmanship and dedication to historical preservation of West Virginia. Generous donations such as these fuel the stories of our collection as we continually seek to preserve and present the rich history of the state of West Virginia.



John Nelson with Maggie on the day of his generous donation to the State Museum

TAMARACK AT THE CULTURE CENTER: By Samantha Cox

Handmade Gifts for the Holidays

For nearly thirty years, Tamarack has offered exceptional handmade goods by West Virginia artisans. Precious keepsakes that support our neighbors and friends throughout the state bring joy into our homes all year round. There's a special something for every West Virginia native and visitor both near and far, and this spares no exception when it comes to holidays. This holiday season, the Tamarack Gift Shop at the Culture Center shines a light on three different West Virginia brands of handmade candles. With a variety of scents to choose from, there's a candle for everyone!



Golden Hour Candles, offers the largest collection of holiday scents. The Kanawha County-based and female-owned company was established in 2021 and features hand-poured soy candles among other aesthetically pleasing home fragrance and decoration products. With unique scents like the peppermint and vanilla scented *Pink Peppermint Snow* and *Snowberry Icicles* with sweet notes of bubblegum, cinnamon, and berries, we think they'd make the perfect wintry and wonderful West Virginia gift.



Since the success of their first year in 2001, Hancock County-based **Chestnut Hill Candle Company** and owners Dave and Missy have been dedicated to the craft of candle making. They have even distributed their candles as far as the Czech Republic, Poland, and Germany! Chestnut Hill Candle Company is noted for giving back to their community through fundraising and even offer custom candle blends through their website. Currently in stock for the holidays at Tamarack at the Culture Center, choose from three of their seasonal

scents like *Christmas in the Country* with warm notes of crisp apples, country spices, and bayberry to fill the air this holiday season.

Or if nostalgia is what you are looking for, consider a candle from the Nitro-based **A Primitive Glow Candle Company**. Shop owner Jacki Griffith has been hand-crafting candles for nearly twenty years! Each one of her candles is hand-dipped and individually wrapped. From pillars to sweet-smelling snowflakes and whimsical snowmen, Jacki has recreated scents full of nostalgia. *Vanilla Latte* with its sweet notes of coffee, vanilla, and cream and *Hot Maple Totty*, a sentimental blend of maple, honey, and warm spirits both reflect flavors recreated from Jacki's childhood memories of baking with her grandmother. When making your list and checking it twice, be sure to include a visit at Tamarack at the Culture Center for all of your handmade holiday gifts!



RECENT EVENTS AT MUSEUM SITES

West Virginia Independence Hall



Celebrations honoring West Virginia's 161st birthday on June 20th this year included the dedication of an 8-foot-tall statue of Arthur I. Boreman during his inauguration speech on June 20, 1863.

Boreman was West Virginia's first governor.

Camp Washington-Carver



String band music lovers and musicians enjoyed another year of festivities at the Appalachian String Band Music Festival.

Grave Creek Mound



The annual art exhibit by members of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) was on display in the museum's Activity Room in August.

The Three Branches of Government

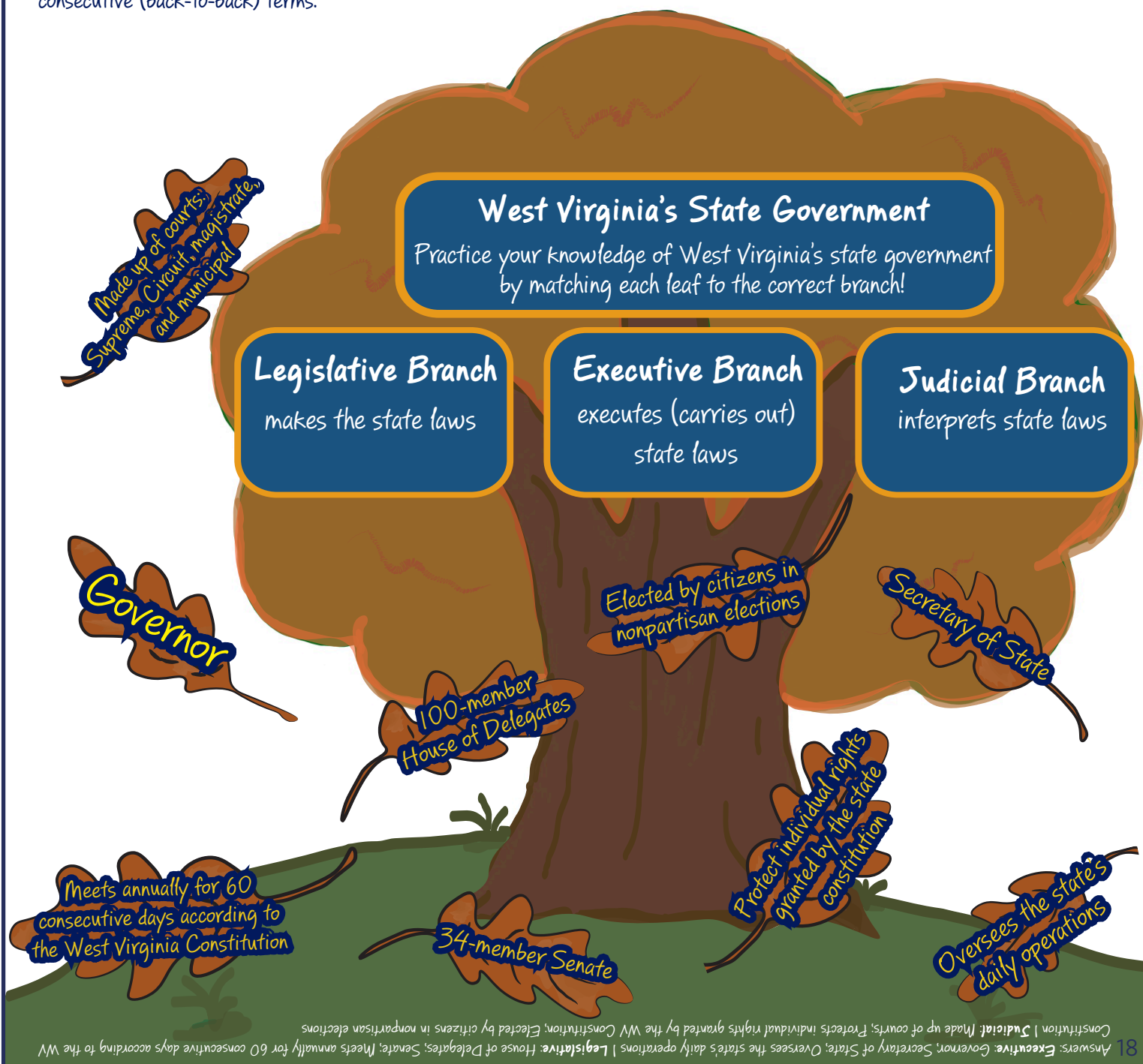
Much like the federal government of the United States of America, the state of West Virginia's government is divided into three different branches that work together to govern the state. These three branches are the **executive**, **legislative**, and **judicial** branches. Together, they create the **checks and balances** system that makes sure that no one branch of the government has too much power or control over the others.

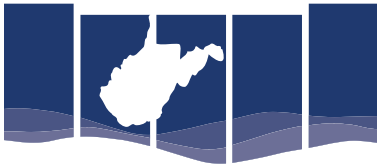
Did You Know?

The governor is a member of the executive branch. They are elected for a 4-year term and can serve a maximum of two consecutive (back-to-back) terms.

West Virginia's legislature is a bicameral legislature. That means there are 2 houses of the Legislature.

State judges are elected by citizens through nonpartisan elections. In a nonpartisan election, political party affiliations are not listed.





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

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CULTURE CENTER HOURS

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and Mondays
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