President Neil S. Bucklew cuts the cake at the Birthday Reception in E. Moore Hall.

Educating All the People?

"Perseverance pays a dividend in education; motion spells two-thirds of promotion."

"...Today, black education (in West Virginia) is in a shambles."

What "self-respecting woman" would have attended WVU a century ago?

These are but a few of the maxims and issues that fueled the opening forum to the third annual West Virginia Day Celebration on 20 June 1989. Based on the theme of "Educating All the People" this year's meeting explored the trials and tribulations of educating West Virginia's populace from the pre-statehood era to the present.

Beginning at 9:00 a.m., and ably moderated by Visiting Committee member Vaughn Kiger, the forum offered the perspectives of five prominent West Virginia educators.

Curator George Parkinson began the program with an overview of the founding of public education in West Virginia. He noted that free education was basically a
"Yankee" notion with little support in the south before the Civil War.

Parkinson was followed by Berlin B. Chapman, WVU Class of '24, and Professor Emeritus at Oklahoma State University. In recounting an educational odyssey that took him from a log cabin in Webster County to Harvard University, Chapman stressed the overriding importance of perseverance and motivation to educational attainment.

Ancella Bickley, a prominent educator from Institute, WV next presented a stirring history of black education in West Virginia, a story which she described as a "self-help, push-and-pull effort" marked by outstanding achievements as well as great failures.

After a brief intermission, Lillian Waugh, Director of Centenary Research for the WVU Center for Women's Studies, told the story behind the admission of the first group of women to WVU one hundred years ago. She also spoke about the University's two-year Centenary Celebration in commemoration of that event.

The program concluded with an address by Diane Reinhard, Dean of WVU's School of Human Resources and Education, on the present state and prognosis of public education in West Virginia. Citing a variety of educational and demographic trends, Reinhard concluded that quality education is more important to West Virginia's future than ever.

Following a lively question and answer period, forum participants set to celebrating West Virginia Day in earnest with a birthday picnic held in the Mountainlair and a birthday reception in Elizabeth Moore Hall. President Neil S. Bucklew was on hand to cut the cake as the crowd viewed an exhibit which chronicled 126 years of public education in West Virginia.

Other activities of the day included open house receptions at the WVU Center for Women's Studies, the Public History Program, and the College of Mineral and Energy Resources.
We’ve come a long way at West Virginia University in 122 years. This past spring we celebrated our 22nd Rhodes scholar, our second in a row. And I might point out that we’ve had more Rhodes scholars than Pitt, Penn State, Maryland, Virginia Tech and Kentucky combined. We also celebrated our eleventh Truman scholar this past spring, our sixth in a row. And WVU had the distinction of being the only main campus university in the entire country to have three Rhodes scholars in the same year. So, it has been a very proud year of education at West Virginia University.

Dr. Bucklew, guided by the University’s planning council, has formulated five themes for WVU during the coming decade. One of them is the revitalization and reform of public education, helping to make West Virginia’s public schools better places to teach and learn. In part, this is why public education is a theme for today’s events. Another reason is that the birth of the 35th state in 1863 was a great leap forward for public education for western Virginians.

George Parkinson:
Curator
West Virginia and Regional History Collection

George Parkinson:

...In the decades immediately preceding the Civil War, the people of western Virginia believed that Virginia had neglected public education. Many of them, not all, wanted a comprehensive, tax-supported, public school system, one which included a public university. They wanted that system to provide opportunities for self-improvement and economic growth. At that time “educating all the people” was a controversial idea, one which many Virginians, particularly in the eastern part of the state, condemned as radical. Many of them spoke of it as a “Yankee” notion. The Yankee part, I think, is essentially true.

In the 1640’s the Massachusetts legislature passed the first laws in the English-speaking world to require communities to establish and maintain primary and secondary schools. This was the beginning of public education in the United States. When New Englanders moved west, they carried their beliefs and commitments to higher education. Not that public higher education went hand-in-glove with public higher education. Not that public higher education would be free or comprehensive, but rather that a college would educate teachers for the primary and secondary schools and nurture their well being in other ways. For example, talented students, regardless of their wealth or family backgrounds, would be discovered by their teachers and encouraged to attend the public university. The idea of educating all the people prospered...particularly in Ohio and in the old Northwest.
In 1833, New England congregationalists introduced coeducation at the college level to the United States by founding Oberlin College. Oberlin gave its first degrees to women in 1841, and as a stronghold of abolitionist sentiment, was the first college to admit blacks, doing so in 1835. By the eve of the Civil War, most Northern States operated some kind of public elementary school system. But only in New England had the tradition of comprehensive, tax-supported schools really caught on. In the middle and southern states, including Virginia, public charity schools were maintained for the poor, thereby attaching a stigma of poverty to free education. Proud families of modest incomes often kept their children at home. And increasingly in the 1840's and the 1850's labor unions objected to this arrangement.

The Civil War provided the chance which western Virginians were looking for. When Virginia and other southern states formed the Confederacy in response to Abraham Lincoln's election to the presidency, loyal Virginians, with the help of the Union, formed a new state, West Virginia, 126 years ago.

When a convention met to draft the first state constitution, Alexander Martin, a prominent educator and a Methodist minister, was asked to plan a public school system. He drafted an outline for a system of general education for the new state, which proclaimed that education "should be as free as the air ... and the light of heaven." He called for a first-class university... which would be to West Virginia... what Harvard was to Massachusetts, what Yale was to Connecticut, what Oxford was to England, and what the University of Virginia had been to eastern Virginia.

Martin's initiative was translated through the constitution to the first legislature, which established by statute law a public free school system in 1863. This law authorized a six-month school term for all youth in the state "in such fundamental branches of learning as are indispensable to the proper discharge of their social and civic duties." At the same time the legislature provided for a state levy for school purposes. The legislature required townships having more than 30 eligible black pupils to provide for their education, but, in separate buildings from those used by white pupils.

By 1870 to 1872 the average school term was not six months but four months. There were about 2,400 teachers, and the average monthly salary of those teachers was $31.79. Progress was slow but steady. In the 1869-1870 period alone, 495 new school buildings were erected, 260 of which were log structures, showing the extent to which free schools took hold in remote mountain regions.

The opportunity to found a new university came in 1862, when president Abraham Lincoln signed the Morrill Land-Grant College Act. Ironically, the secession of southern states from the Union, whose representatives in Congress had blocked passage of the law, made possible its passage. The fact that West Virginia's statehood and land-grant institutions share a common birthday is no coincidence. The Morrill Act provided states with an endowment, either in Federal land, or land script, to establish what came to be called, most appropriately, democracy's colleges. West Virginia received 150,000 acres of Minnesota and Iowa land, which proved to be worth $79,000.

The West Virginia legislature considered possible locations for the new institution. Morgantown residents hoped that the university would be founded in their back yard. And they had good reason to hope that this would happen, because of the tradition of excellence in higher education in this area. There was a lengthy discussion as to where the university would be located. Rather quickly the possibilities were narrowed down to Charleston and Morgantown. The residents of the Kanawha Valley understandably did not like the idea of having over a hundred miles of mountains between them and the state's center of learning, but, after lengthy negotiation, a compromise was agreed on. Morgantown interests promised to support a move of the state capital from Wheeling to Charleston, and Charleston interests pledged support for Morgantown as a location of the University.

In February, 1867, the legislature accepted the Morgantown proposal on behalf of the trustees of the academies, and the Agricultural College of West Virginia was established. In 1868, Martin asked that the institution's name be changed to West Virginia University and that was accomplished. In 1869, the state legislature designated Charleston as the new capital ...

What does this brief narrative mean in terms of the past aspect of educating all the people in West Virginia? The first conclusion I would draw is that West Virginia statehood, the founding of its public school system, and the creation of a land-grant university were co-terminus events. There is a common birthday here between all of them, over not a one-year period, but let's say approximately a four- or five-year one.

Birthdays are opportunities to look back, to consider the present, and to plan the future. As we consider the problems of today's public school system and the challenges facing the new structure in higher education — low salaries, poor morale, teacher exodus, insufficient funding — as we consider all these problems, let us remember that there is one problem our forbearers solved for us. They founded a public school system with the potential of educating all the people. Our job is to make it live up to its full potential.

Berlin Basil Chapman
WVU Class of '24
and Professor Emeritus
at Oklahoma State University

Dr. Berlin Basil Chapman:

On Point Mountain, above waters of the Elk, I first saw the light of day on July 23, 1900. Until the age of seven, I had a log cabin education. It was administered by my parents who had been rural school teachers. The one-room schools I attended were, and the names will sound familiar, Laurel Mountain, Grassy Creek and Kingfisher. In 1916 by written examination, I was qualified to enter Webster Springs High School... In 1919 I received a high
school diploma. At the school in 1920, I was in a class of 23 who completed the Short Course Normal, that name will sound familiar.

From 1920-22, I was the teacher in a one-room school in Marion County and I attended summer terms at Glenville State Normal School. From 1920-24 I was on this campus and received an A.B. degree. The state certified me to teach English, History and French in high school.

Because my boyhood home was far from school, I did not enroll until the age of seven. Accepting that fact, age seven, my educational experiences up to and including the university, paralleled that of many of my classmates. Most of us had somewhat similar educational experiences, and these similarities with my classmates give this paper its importance on the subject of education.

At the age of three, my father purchased a hundred acres of fertile wilderness in Barn-She-Holler. This was a mile from the nearest neighbor, more than two miles from school and more than four miles from the nearest town, Webster Springs. There, in the forest primeval, my father built a log house — two rooms. The family, in ten years, we cleared a farm, we built fences, and we planted an orchard. There we built a mile or more of road so that a wagon could reach our home. In Barn-She-Holler — that name sound familiar to you folks? — I had my first and, get this, best teacher, my mother, who taught me to count, spell simple words and read a McGuffey's First Reader. Busy, busy day and far into the night, mother taught my brother and me. While we practiced she patched garments, prepared a meal, or stood over a washtub. Such was log cabin education in central West Virginia. And sometimes under that pressure there were smiles and sometimes in that log cabin education a few tears stained the page.

. . . A teacher — you folks know something about this — a teacher might have 25 pupils, some in the first grade and a few repeating the eighth-grade work for the second or third time. High schools were not available. For compensation teachers were in three brackets, depending on performance on a three-day written examination supervised by the state. At Kingfisher in 1914-15 I had a thirty-dollar-a-month teacher. The next year I had a fifty-dollar-a-month teacher. That year, Forklick District paid me ten cents a day for keeping fire in the stove and sweeping the building. That sounds familiar.

. . . We are now ready, folks, to consider the perennial question. What factors determine successful education in Webster County, on this campus, and elsewhere? What are those factors? We explore the question because from time immemorial people have been debating these ques-

tions: What shall we teach? How shall we teach it? How shall we measure results? What education is the most worth? What factors characterize a good teacher, a successful student?

Environment may influence education, but environment does not determine success in education. The Great Teacher told us that affluence and opportunity heaped on a prodigal son is useless, is futile, unless and until that prodigal son says, "I will arise," then there is hope. . . . In education, the kingdom of God is within you the individual. Tremendous potential characterizes the student. Good health and fair intelligence, that's the key of success, good health and fair intelligence. . . . And it doesn't matter . . . whether it's in Barn-She-Holler in 1909 or over there in the shadow of Woodburn Hall in 1989. A student must do much for himself before a teacher can begin to help him. . . . A good teacher gives encouragement, inspiration, and cultivates not only learning, but the spirit of learning. About 90 percent . . . depends on the individual student. Moore Dodrill, first principal of Webster Springs High School, was right: "qualities a student brings to a school is more important than facilities he finds there." Let that soak in. In one-room schools of Webster County, my classmates were told this: "You are the architects of your own fortune." Teachers taught it, preachers preached it.

McGuffey's Readers echoed it and our parents told us that it is true. In a variety of ways you have seen great success of people fully convinced that they are the architects of their own fortune. Perseverance pays a dividend in education. Motion spells two-thirds of promotion.

In Webster's County in my youth, no profession . . . commanded more respect than that of teaching. I heeded the warning of my parents and other early teachers, so that to this day not a cigarette or a drop of liquor has touched my lips. You look upon society and tell me what that education is worth. Think of what that's worth in cash and in human comfort. Adam Smith was right. Smith said . . . "I teach my people principles and they govern themselves." What education is better . . . ?

Ancella Bickley, Educator
from Institute, WV

Dr. Ancella Bickley:

The story of black education in West Virginia is one of determination, hard work, and dedication . . . a self-help, push-and-pull effort sparked by some outstanding citizens determined to secure the best that they could for black youth. By the time that the black schools were dismantled in the wake of the Brown vs. Board of Education decision, a functioning educational system had been established with a well-developed sense of community among its participants and a growing record for producing some fine scholars and contributing citizens.

Actually, black education in West Virginia is older than
the state itself, having begun in Parkersburg in 1862 when a group of black citizens came together and established a school for their children. They selected a board of directors, drew up a constitution, and set tuition at one dollar a month, although they made provisions to accept children who could not pay. The school operated as a private institution until absorbed by the state after it took the responsibility for education.

When West Virginia's first legislature met, a provision was accepted that schools for "free colored children" would be established. No public support for schools for black children is known, however, until 1866, when responsibility for the Parkersburg school was assumed (by the State) and Lincoln School in Wheeling was established.

Regarding black education during this period, F.S. Williams, superintendent of the school district in Wheeling, in his 1866 report said, "much anxiety has been expressed by the colored population of our state in regard to education. Measures have been taken to provide instruction for them. An excellent school has been started in Wheeling and a few are reported in other places. The school house in Wheeling is conducted by a teacher of their own color and the behavior and scholarship of the pupils are worthy of imitation."

...Many of the 18,000 black people in this state after the Civil War were located in the Eastern Panhandle. So it is no surprise that there was a good deal of activity in that area. In Jefferson County the American Mission Association and the Freedman's Aid Society provided funds to set up schools, many of which were held in homes and churches. One of the first of these, established in 1867, was held in the home of a blacksmith whose name was Achilles Dixon.

Nor is it surprising that what was to become the first college for blacks took root in that area, on a location that had once been a Union campground. In 1867, John Storer of Sanford, Maine, gave a $10,000 challenge grant to the Freewill Baptists to establish an educational institution for the newly freed slaves. ... He also wanted the institution to be co-educational, and to receive people regardless of race or color. ... Storer's plans... became moot when West Virginia's constitution was revised, for it included a provision that white and colored persons should not be taught in the same school. And that provision was challenged, I think last year, or in this last session of the legislature. I don't think it was removed, however, but it's still there. ...

As the black population of the state increased, particularly as the railroads and mines drew blacks, the need for schools increased also. Elementary schools sprang up in various parts of the state. By 1902, there were 207 schools and 278 teachers serving 7,886 students. In 1924 there were 453 elementary and junior high schools in operation. By 1934 this number had increased to 424. At that time 76% of the black children in the state were attending school. Here in Morgantown, the first school, begun in 1917, was held on Beechurst Avenue in a room furnished by Mr. John Hunt on the second floor of the ice-cream factory. And I was talking with somebody who had attended that school and she told me that part of their problem was that the whirring of the ice-cream machinery was so noisy that there were times that they had to stop the teaching until the ice cream was made and the noise ceased.

Secondary schools for black children in West Virginia were more difficult to establish than elementary schools had been, probably because of the small numbers of students, different organizational patterns for high schools, and the reluctance to fund them. A self-contained elementary school classroom could be established with ten students and a teacher. This was not so easy for high schools where the multiple instructional needs were difficult to vest in a single person. In many cases beginning a high school seems to have come through a partnership with the Board of Education and local people. For example, regarding the establishment of Washington High School at London, a school historian wrote, "In 1924, Mr. J.H. Oliver, a superintendent of Cabin Creek District, and Mr. Edward Smith, Secretary of the Board, suggested to Mr. Bernard Brown that the parents try to get a school in the district. As a result of this suggestion, students wrote letters to parents in other schools asking them to unite in an effort to secure a junior-senior high school. On September 7th, 1925, the High School for Colored Boys and Girls of Cabin Creek District opened with 35 students and 3 teachers."

...Because of the paucity of black students in some areas, special arrangements had to be made to provide high school education for them. In some instances they boarded with families where there was a school. Some were sent to attend high schools associated with black colleges. In other cases, arrangements were made to allow students to cross county lines to attend high school. For example in 1926 before the establishment of Dunbar High School in their city, black students in Weirton took the train or streetcar to Wheeling to attend Lincoln High School. And black students from Preston County were bussed to this (Monongalia) county to attend Monongalia High School in Westover. The growth of black high schools continued, however, and by 1951-52 there were 33 of them, with 335 teachers serving 7,773 students.

In the early years the only teacher education available for black students in the state was that of normal preparation, handled on a contract basis by Storer College. As the black college population of the state began to grow and shift to various parts of the state, agitation for a state school which could provide training in the trades of normal education began. With the passage of the second Morrill Act in 1890, the state was forced to develop an agricultural and mechanical school for its black youth if it were to succeed to secure advantages of a land-grant education for the white youth of the state. Storer College was nominated as the land-grant institution for black youth. But on the third reading of the bill, its name was stricken and an institution to be established somewhere in Kanawha County was defined in its stead. Thus in 1891, by legislative act, the West Virginia Colored Institute, later West Virginia State College, was born, at first providing secondary and normal education, and then achieving collegiate status. West Virginia State College became a strong force in black education both within the state and outside of it, a fact that has not been well enough recognized by West Virginians. ...
In response to the needs of the developing black population in the southern coal-producing counties, Bluefield State Teachers College was established in 1895, and opened its doors on December 1st, 1896 with two teachers and 18 pupils.

Attention was also given to educate students who were outside of the mainstream. In 1926 a school for the black deaf and blind was opened adjacent to West Virginia State College in space now occupied by the West Virginia Rehabilitation Center.

Lincoln, in Mason County, was the site of the Industrial School for Boys, which was opened in 1924. Housing an average of 70 boys, Lincoln employed six teachers to fulfill requirements in secondary education for its residents. Lincoln's counterpart, the West Virginia Industrial Home for Colored Girls, provided only elementary education for its residents, but special arrangements were made to permit some students to attend high school in Huntington.

To facilitate the administration of the black schools, WW. Sanders was appointed the Supervisor of Negro Schools in 1919, and a black advisory council to the State Board of Education was created. In 1932, a Negro Board of Education was appointed with responsibility for the two colleges, secondary and primary education, and institutional education. After the shift to the county system in 1933, a system of assistant superintendency for black schools was developed for counties having 50 or more black teachers. This resulted in appointments in Raleigh, Kanawha, Mercer, McDowell and Fayette counties.

Although black education in West Virginia got its start through private means, these schools were for the most part eventually absorbed by county systems or phased out. However, there were several efforts in private education which, in addition to Storer College, persisted for a time. All were based in religious denominations. In Huntington the Catholic Church operated St. Peter Clabers Church and School providing education for the first through the eighth grades. And in Charleston, St. Peter Philips Episcopal Church operated St. Philips Academy.

Perhaps the most ambitious of these efforts, and the only one known to be totally controlled by black people, was the West Virginia Industrial School Seminary and College, established by the Baptist State Convention at Hilltop, West Virginia in 1902. Lasting until 1926, this institution provided elementary, high school, and normal education.

Black education in West Virginia certainly had its larger-than-life figures. One such person to be remembered is Carey Williams, who in 1898 was directed by the Tucker County Board of Education to cease teaching the black children at the end of five months, rather than continue their school for the full eight months that was accorded to white children in the county. Ms. Williams defied the Board of Education, continued to teach for the full eight months, and at the end of the term, sued the Board of Education for her pay. The case went to the Supreme Court, which reversed the Circuit Court and decided in her favor, awarding her her pay, $120 for three months, plus one dollar that had been taken from her salary because of her failure to turn in a report — all of $121.

The court averred that the law of West Virginia did not authorize Boards of Education to discriminate between white and black children in the same school district.

The West Virginia State Teachers Association also forced the admission of black students to West Virginia graduate programs through the application of the Gaines vs. Missouri decision to the state. When black teachers were turned away from a Marshall College graduate extension course in Logan, the WVSTA, through attorney D.W. Ambrose, appealed to the Attorney General of West Virginia. The resulting application of the Gaines decision to West Virginia programs made graduate education available to West Virginia blacks within the state, although many continued to accept state aid to enter graduate programs in other places.

There is a great question in my mind about graduate education for black people in West Virginia. If there was any great failing on the part of West Virginia educators, I think it was in the graduate area. The Gaines vs. Missouri decision was in 1938, which means that black people could have come to West Virginia University to benefit from legal education, from all graduate programs, either here or at Marshall, in the state. Those of my generation were never counseled to do that. It was kept as one of the great secrets from those of us who did not come from educated families, and who did not know the value of graduate education, and did not know that this was available... to us.

We came today to talk about education, past, present and future. I have talked about the past, I think that at the present, black education is in a shambles. And part of the future question is what an institution such as West Virginia University can do to help us develop quality education for black youth in the state. As I look back on the past, I don't think that West Virginia University was of much help. It has been only in the last 20 years that we even knew that this institution was here, and that it has had any relationship to us at all. So what is the impact that West Virginia University has had on black education in West Virginia? I think it has been little, very little.

The story of black education in our state is one which is well worth our attention, and I'm pleased to have been invited today to talk with you about it.
Lillian Waugh:

...Since January 1987, I and my research assistants have been working on a daily basis to exercise the generational prerogative to rewrite history. In fact, it has become our consuming mission. We have been focusing our attentions on education in West Virginia in general, and on women at WVU in particular. Our investigations are laying the informational base for the celebration of the WVU Women's Centenary, which will be officially launched here on campus at a September 20th academic convocation this fall.

...The WVU Women's Centenary marks two anniversaries. First, the entrance of WVU in 1889 of what one pioneer referred to as "ten brave women" who wished to stand for degrees, and secondly, the first graduation of one of their number, Harriet Eliza Lyons from WVU as a top-ranking member of the Class of 1891. Women's Centenary research takes place in the context of another historical event, the launching of the University's social justice initiative in the fall of 1986.

West Virginia's history is integrally tied to the Civil War, which held promise of lowering barriers at least of race in the United States. The state's educational history is equally tied to that watershed event... Before the war, education was largely a private matter. Families and communities which could afford to do so underwrote occasional instruction...with private tutors or with the parents themselves, or in private seminaries or academies. The seminaries or academies flourished, in the mid-decades of the century, roughly from the 1830's to the 1860's. They were frequently sex-segregated. They offered primary schooling...equivalent at times to upper-grade-level instruction...

Schools need teachers, preferably trained teachers. In 1867, the same year WVU was founded, the normal school system was instituted, with Marshall College as its linchpin. It began to provide a trained corps of men and women to service the white schools. The normals provided first junior high, then senior high level course work for trainees, who entered at age 15 for boys and 13 for girls. Institution of state-sponsored training for black teachers working in a segregated system lagged by over a decade. To attract teachers, the normals boasted a policy of equal enrollment for the sexes. Male graduates, however, outnumbered females until the turn of the century, and predominated in the track that produced principals.

But, if increasing numbers of girls and boys gained access to graded schools, it cannot be said that they entered as equals. Educators at the influential Clarksburg Convention concerned themselves at length with the question of female education, and defined the goals of elementary education differently, depending on the child's sex... The legislation which set up the University in 1867 was severely prejudiced by racism and sexism. Race was not even mentioned. Passage of the Federal Manhood Suffrage Amendment, not withstanding, the state constitution forbade mingling of the races, and the law presumed white males only as WVU students....

In the early 1870's a handful of Morgantown girls defied the law and managed to sit in on classes on the sufferance of individual professors. But this experiment was short-lived. At the same time, backed by an increasingly conservative government, opponents of co-education became a faculty majority...
In 1936 in the Alumni Magazine an account was published, written by Harriet Lyons (married Harriet Lyons Jewett), which recalled her trauma... at being brought back from the security of Vassar College, which was a young women's college at the time, to be... as Harriet Lyons said, "an alien and an intruder in a hostile environment...."

We are beginning to see how the early women functioned in a hostile environment and to understand that support groups, like the turn of the century Women's League at the West Virginia University would not have been possible but for the prior experience in organizing gained by women in area missionary and youth groups....

We're beginning to see the leadership core of graduates and students... tied directly into the university graduate network: people who go into other areas and organize the first women's clubs, the first associations of collegiate alumni which became the AAUW, people whose groups then go on to lay the basis for many, many health and education developments within their own communities.

There are worrisome signs as well. After initial granting of law degrees to three married women... and the enrollment of several women who were in pre-med courses... women virtually disappear from the West Virginia University professional scene for several decades, and reappear only sporadically from the 1920's to the 1970's, excluding of course the traditionally female occupations of domestic scientist and teacher, and high school and primary school teacher. This would seem to suggest that WVU practiced exclusionary policies which kept women from professional schools in the very same way that has been documented at other major American universities, these exclusions gelling in formal quota systems in the period right before World War I, and then being cast in iron by the end of the 1920's....

Today, women who graduate from West Virginia University as from other institutions of higher education face for the first time a prospect of really true equity with their brothers. My daughter, who is ten, hopefully will benefit from this trend. She will not, as did I who graduated in 1963, experience very few female role models in the classroom. I had fewer female role models than did my parents who were born in 1902. They benefited from that first wave of women who came through in the 1890's and before World War I. They had those women in their classrooms in both private schools and in another case in state normal schools. Those women had retired not to be replaced from the 1930's on. And we are just beginning to replace them. The doors of opportunity had essentially slammed shut in the newer professions associated with land-grant institutions — the professions of science — and the older professions associated with the private colleges — law and medicine — to women who graduated after 1900.

Harriet Lyons is the symbolic heart of the Centenary celebration. On October 20, a month after the initial convocation, she will have a Towers residence named after her. I'd like to emphasize the importance of naming and renaming, because that is what history is about as each generation rewrites its history....

Diane Reinhard
Dean, School of Education and Human Resources, WVU

Dr. Reinhard:

... Quality public education in this state is more crucial to the state's future than at any other time in its history. Today I have the opportunity of using as a platform the kind of historical comments that have preceded me to talk about the present and maybe make some comments about the future.... First of all, some trends and conditions that are educational in nature, demographic in nature, and economic in nature.

Nationally there is a continuing emphasis on reform of education and reform of teacher education.... I like to think of those reform efforts as really coming in waves. The first wave began with the report about six years ago entitled, "A Nation at Risk"...(which) told us that our teachers were mediocre, and our text books inadequate....

A second wave... illustrated... by two major reports,... "A Nation Prepared - Teachers for the 21st Century"....(and) "Tomorrow's Teachers".... instead of condemning the existing system of schooling.... talked about the need for a new generation of young people who are smarter, more skilled, sophisticated, and more competitive....

With this shift came the recognition that educational reform is not simple but extremely difficult....(and) that you can't change schools without talking about changing teacher education, and you can't change teacher education without talking about changing the quality of public schooling. The preamble of the Carnegie Report (A Nation Prepared) states.... "If our standard of living is to be maintained, if the growth of a permanent under class is to be averted, if democracy is to function effectively into the next century, our schools must graduate the majority of their students with achievement levels long thought possible for only the privileged few....

All of these sort of national trends and conditions are mirrored in what's happening in West Virginia. In West Virginia we also have some special wrinkles.... The Recht decision was a decision that was handed down... about a month after or before the "Nation at Risk" report came out. And in the Recht decision we were told that our schools are unconstitutional and that many youth in this state, were denied a thorough and efficient education. We have still to implement the property tax reappraisal. And if you look at the achievement levels of students in this state, county by county, you will see that there is just extreme variability of achievement. I believe that one of the biggest problems and issues facing this state is the fact that the quality of education and the access to curricular offerings is largely dependent upon where you are born and where you are raised....
Some demographic trends. . . . Nationally we’re talking about a dramatic increase in the number of children at risk in our nation. The term “at risk” is a relatively new term. It is used to identify those children who we predict will have more difficulty in learning. . . . children who live in poverty. . . . Nationally, one out of four children live in poverty. . . . In West Virginia it is even in some ways bleaker, and I would site some of the information that is in this report . . . entitled, “Children in Crisis - A State at Risk”. . . by the West Virginia Human Resources Association. . . about the statistics here in West Virginia. One in two of us is born in poverty. One in six of us is born to a teenage mother. . . . We’ve now reached the highest percent of white teenage pregnancies in this nation. One in three of us doesn’t see the doctor or a dentist because we have no form of insurance. One in ten of us is growing up in a broken home. 13,000 of us are reported as abused or neglected each year. 14,000 of us have a drug or alcohol abuse problem. One in four of us will drop out of school and be unemployable in the 21st century. . . . Approximately only 58% of the adults in this state have high school educations. So we are talking about a number of statistics that would seem to indicate that, not only do we need to do a better job of what we are doing in teaching and learning, but we are going to be expected to be working with students that we know will have more difficulties in learning in our schools.

(An) economic trend that is really related to the demographics is the severe reduction of the 16- to 20-year-old population. This is one of the reasons why the business and corporate leader is saying, “We can’t afford to have any portion of our labor force not well educated.” . . . This limit in the number of 16- to 24-year-olds also has serious consequences for education because we are facing a severe shortage of teachers. . . .

Those are some of the trends. It is very much a challenge. . . . to educators and the business and corporate leadership, and everybody in our society to improve what we know as public education.

I’d like to talk a little bit about some things that are happening at the university level, to help provide and define a vision of public education in the state. First, I think that there are a series of projects and activities that are designed to encourage more West Virginians to attend West Virginia University, and we’ve attempted to do it through programs like the Scholars Program. . . .

One of the strategic objectives of the University specifically talks about the reform of schools and teacher education, and there are many exciting efforts that are going on throughout the University. . . . The two efforts I would like to talk about are the Holmes Consortium. . . . and the “Tomorrow’s Teacher” report. The Holmes Consortium is a group of about a hundred research universities that have made a commitment to work together. . . . on five goals to improve teacher education. . . .

The Benedum Project is a project that we’ve just begun, and the purpose of the Benedum Project is to essentially concentrate attention on two of the Holmes goals. The first is to reconceptualize the teacher education programs to make the programs intellectually sound and congruent with each other. We have 100 faculty and public school personnel working on program development teams, at this very moment, in which we are really going to redesign teacher education. Teacher education really hasn’t changed much over the last 50 years and it really needs to be redesigned from the bottom up. . . .

The other thing that we’re about in the Benedum Project is to establish three to six professional development schools. Professional development schools are really the schools that we hope will bridge the gap between research and practice in public schools. They are sort of analogous to the teaching hospitals in medical education. We will be selecting three to six schools in this local area come fall in which faculty and administrators at those schools will agree to engage in a partnership with us. . . . (Unlike) the old lab schools. . . . (which) the sons and daughters of the professors at the universities attended. . . . these schools really will be schools that we will be working with. . . . to see if we can come up with collaborative research and development projects to improve the teaching and learning in those schools. The reforms are calling for restructuring of schools. And what we would hope to do through this collaborative effort is to essentially restructure schools so that the type of education that we want will be occurring in those schools. In our teacher education program, we can use those sites as the sites where our student teachers and other personnel would be observing. . . .

I have been told that the Chinese use a symbol for the word “crisis” that is really two symbols, one meaning danger, and the other meaning opportunity. If education in the 21st century is to meet the challenges that I’ve just outlined, and if we are to move toward an information society, I believe that education needs the attention of all of us in this room, of all of the major institutions of our society, business and corporate leadership, government leadership, as well as educators. And if we are going to educate all the people at the level at which we will need to, if we are going to survive, we are going to need everybody’s help. . . .
Selected Accessions List


Papers, photographs and maps of a prominent Morgantown family with interests in real estate and coal mining. Most of the business papers are those of J.M.G. Brown, a West Virginia University Law School alumnus, who was president of Scotts Run Fuel Corporation. Brown was also a housing developer whose company, Suburban Real Estate of Morgantown, was a competitive concern throughout north-central West Virginia and southwestern Pennsylvania. Some papers relate to interest in providing Morgantown with air service.

His sister, Mary Virginia Brown, was a genealogist and local historian who wrote A History of the Negroes of Monongalia County. Among her papers are genealogies of the Bannister, Brown, Bushey, Dorsey, Suter and Williams families, as well as original documents of Col. William McCleary, a relative who settled in Monongalia County in 1783.


Letters to home from a pair of Ohio brothers serving in the Civil War. James M. Hartley served in the Ohio 116th Volunteer Infantry, Company B, stationed at Romney, West Virginia; Winchester, Virginia; Sharpsburg, Maryland; Martinsburg, West Virginia; and Richmond, Virginia. Thomas J. Hartley was mustered into an unidentified Ohio regiment at Camp Riley, Ohio, and served in Stanford and Nicholasville, Kentucky. The letters, mostly from James M. Hartley, reflect conditions in the U.S. Army in the field during the Civil War. Topics covered include late payroll payments, occasional shortages of food rations, the battles of Antietam and Chancellorsville, and the siege of Richmond. The letters often note that the Confederates surrender due to inadequate food provisions.


Diaries, scrapbooks and articles by Thomas M. Leeper, a local historian of Marion County from its pioneer settlement to mid-twentieth century. Subjects included are the Leeper Family, Marion County schools, the history of Monongah, accounts of trips to Canada and Washington, D.C., and rafting on the West Fork and Monongahela rivers. Also included is information regarding the Jones Raid during the Civil War, and information pertaining to Nathaniel Cochran. Cochran, whose family is allied to the Leepers, was a pioneer settler and Revolutionary War scout who survived the hazards of capture by the Shawnee Indians. Included is a description of his captivity in Ohio and forcible march to Quebec where, with other captives, he was sold to the British who kept him a prisoner until the end of the war.


Genealogical charts, correspondence and notes regarding the Morgan and Linger families of Upshur County, compiled by a descendant, Marthafern Bacon. Included are tales about Morgan Family pioneers and Revolutionary War veterans several of whom reached remarkable age. Significant mention is made of a family heirloom, a pierced tin lantern, that belonged originally to Revolutionary War veteran Zedekiah Morgan.


A microfilm of an autographed copy of The Night of the Hunter by Davis Grubb, which includes sketches and comments by the author. Grubb states that he was influenced in writing the novel by memories of his youth spent in Marshall and Harrison counties, West Virginia, and by the Harry Powers murders which occurred at Quiet Dell during the early 1930s. The author admits to basing the character of Rachel on a person he knew when young who "was more beautiful than my poor powers can portray."


Papers and photographs of the Nuce family of Rock Forge, Monongalia County, West Virginia. Included are land papers, a marriage bond of Susannah Nuce and William Friend of Friendsville, Maryland, and photographs of family reunions, one exclusively of Union Civil War veterans. Also included are the Civil War discharge papers of George Nuce with the payment of his enlistment bounty noted.


Genealogical data regarding the Patton family of Harrison County as well as a letter from Ebenezer Wilson Patton to M.L. Paullus, Greenfield, Indiana. Sent from Clarksburg, West Virginia (1872 February 10), Patton's letter offers comments on local business, politics, taxation and religion from the perspective of a conservative Democrat. In
particular he discusses Methodist churches, Northern and Southern, black and white, and notes that Clarksburg is a mecca for blacks in the state because of its churches and free schools.


Photocopies of the Pleasant County Home Guard regimental book (191st Regiment, 23rd Brigade, 3rd Division, Virginia Militia). The book is a record of the unit's membership and routine business minutes. Included are descriptions of the jurisdictional boundaries of each company and oaths of office for commissioned and non-commissioned officers.


A company enrollment book kept by Sergeant Ephraim Franklin Morgan who was later a governor of West Virginia. Sgt. Morgan was in charge of the company's clerical affairs as a quartermaster. The book records name, rank, date of discharge, any fines imposed, and leaves of absence. Another prominent member of the company was Davis Elkins, later a U.S. senator of West Virginia.


Correspondence, photographs, post cards, newspapers, pamphlets and memorabilia regarding the prominent Davenport-Gibson-Packette-Todd Family of Charles Town and Jefferson County. The bulk of the correspondence is that of Mrs. Frances Packette Todd, Braxton Davenport (Port) Gibson, Susan G. (Zan) Gibson, and Mrs. Anne Gibson Packette. Mrs. Todd was an heiress who travelled much in her youth. She was married to a distant cousin, Augustine J. Todd, who, like her, claimed descent from George Washington's family. Her aunt, Zan Gibson, was an active local historian and genealogist. Her uncle, B.D. (Port) Gibson, was a lawyer and a state legislator at the turn of the century.

A successful businessman, Mrs. Todd's grandfather, John Thomas Gibson, served as a non-commissioned officer in an engineering unit of the Confederate Army stationed around Richmond near the end of the Civil War. Included are letters of his concerning the hiring out of slaves before and during the war. After the war he returned to business and built a mansion in Charles Town upon the sight where abolitionist John Brown was executed in 1859.

Another prominent family member was Capt. James Gibson who served in a Virginia infantry regiment stationed at Norfolk during the War of 1812.

Subjects covered include family matters, politics, land, slavery, education and warfare.


Notes, articles, books and pamphlets of historian and former West Virginia University professor John A. Williams. Williams' works include West Virginia: A Bicentennial History and West Virginia and the Captains of Industry. Included are class, research, and seminar notes and copies of articles he used and authored about Appalachia and West Virginia history, particularly about local and regional labor and social history. Also included are files regarding committees and organizations he belonged to while at West Virginia University on the faculty of the History Department, 1972-80.

West Virginia and Regional History Collection Newsletter
Colson Hall, Morgantown, WV 26506