

Newsletter

Randolph County Historical Society

President's Letter

Celebrating a Century

by Don Teter

The Randolph County Historical Society is preparing for a historic celebration. May 1, 2024, will mark the 100th anniversary of the first meeting of our organization, which was officially incorporated in 1926. The Board of Directors is planning a series of events spanning the centennial of that two-year period, with 2026 also coinciding with the 250th anniversary of American independence – the Semiquincentennial or Sestercentennial as some prefer. I personally lean more toward the Quarter Millennial, but my feelings on that question are not strong enough to support a heated semantic debate.

It is serendipitous that our centennial coincides with the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, and we are planning activities honoring the memory of both events, and will likely partner with other organizations for some of those.

Rather than serendipity, the correlation of those anniversaries may be due to the founders of our organization being at least partially spurred to action by the impending Sesquicentennial of Independence (the 150th anniversary). We should certainly remember and honor those charter members of the Randolph County Historical Society: Cyrus H. Scott, William H. Cobb, Ed. D. Koontz, Dr. S.A. Bosworth, Dr. James E. Allen, Mrs. Boyd Wees, Mrs. B.M. Hoover, Howard Collett, Slidell Brown, Claude Maxwell, Charles M. Marsteller, Blaine Taylor, E.C. Wyatt, James Bent, Mrs. C.H. Cobb, J.H. Elder, J.W. Trembly, Dwight Teter and Dr. Charles E. Albert.

Celebration plans are not finalized, but we are enthusiastic about seizing this opportunity. As always, membership will play an important part. I encourage our members to stay involved, but also to recruit others to join us. Having active members locally and elsewhere is critical to our success, but many could do their part simply by joining – quite affordably at just \$20 a year – which helps support our projects but also allows us to spread the word about our endeavors.

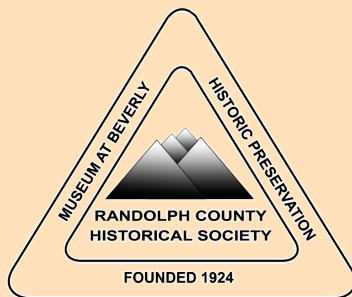
Subscription Schoolhouse

by Lynne Rice Petrosky

Behind the Blackman-Bosworth building which houses the Randolph County Museum sits a small subscription schoolhouse, also owned by the Randolph County Historical Society. In 1993, my father, Donald Rice, who for many years served as president of the society, saw the opportunity to preserve this small schoolhouse by having it moved from the John Bell farm on Becca's Creek to its current location, which is the site of the first free school in Randolph County.

This project was made possible with the aid of the Randolph County Association of Retired School Personnel. Workers from the Huttonsville Correctional Center dismantled the structure and moved it to its current location. It was then reassembled, through the work of volunteers, using much of the original post and beam superstructure. For many years when it was located on the Bell farm, it was used as a storage shed and corn crib by the Bell family.

Continued page 2



FALL 2023

President's Letter	1
Subscription Schoolhouse	1
Subscription Schoolhouse	2
Artifact Corner	3
RCHS Fall Program	4

Upcoming

RCHS Annual Meeting

Nov 16, 2023 6:45PM
Beverly Heritage Center

RCHS Fall Program –

Early Newspapers of
Randolph County and the
Role of the Printer and
Publisher
Nov 16, 2023 6:00PM
Beverly Heritage Center

Subscription Schoolhouse

by Lynne Rice Petrosky

The school was built in the 1870s and was originally called the Haddan Mill Run School. This subscription school is the last of its kind in Randolph County, and possibly the last one in West Virginia. Before there was a universal public education system in place, subscription schoolhouses were created to fill the void in education in the relatively isolated and sparsely populated areas of the county and state, especially after the Civil War. Parents living in the same area would work together to hire a teacher to run a small schoolhouse. The parents would “subscribe” to the arrangement of finding a teacher and location for the education of their children, bearing the cost of the teacher and supplies. Itinerant teachers were secured to serve the schools. These teachers were usually not certified. Often the teachers were local farmers and preachers who needed to supplement their meager incomes.



Top Left: Lynne standing outside Subscription Schoolhouse. Top Right: Subscription Schoolhouse interior.

Bottom Center: Lynne sits at the Subscription Schoolhouse teacher's desk.

As a tribute to my dad and because of my love for education (I am retired after 35 years as a primary teacher in Upshur County), I have recently spent some time as a volunteer at the subscription school, welcoming visitors who might stop by to view the school and the collection of one-room schoolhouse artifacts that are on display. If you are in Beverly, stop in and see this piece of Randolph County history!



RCHS Updates

The Randolph County Historical Society has received a grant from AFNHA to support upcoming centennial projects and celebrations of the organization. These celebrations will take place in 2024 to 2026, commemorating the RCHS's organization history and contributions to preserving Randolph County's history.

More information to come!

Artifact Corner – The Jiffy Kodak Six-16 Camera

by Maddy Fleming



1934 Kodak Jiffy Six-16 given by Trevor Pack to the Randolph County Museum.

Photography has the power to capture history in a way writing cannot. Monumental moments in contemporary history have been recorded by a single snapshot. If not for the development of cameras, however, photography's unique significance would be lost to history. Both photography and cameras have come a long way from their beginnings, certainly in accessibility. With the press of a button, anyone can become an agent of history in a mere second.

A prominent marker of this accessibility lies within a display case in the Randolph County Museum's main exhibit room. A small, rectangular object, this camera is not too unrecognizable as such, though it might appear giant to the camera we keep on our person, the one attached to our modern mobile phones. The Jiffy Kodak Six-16 was manufactured and sold by the Eastman Kodak Company between 1933 and 1937.

The Eastman Kodak Company is better known simply as Kodak. Its first camera sold in 1888, revolutionary in its portability. The 20th century, due in large part to Kodak's cameras, heralded the rise of vernacular photography and opened the market to a wider consumer base. Kodak's slogan, "You press the button, we do the rest" puts it best. Everyday people and amateur photographers alike would only have to take the pictures and then send the camera and film back to Kodak to be processed. The film would be developed and prints of the photos would be made and sent back to the customer, in addition to the negatives, their camera, and new film.

The Jiffy Kodak Six-16 is a folding type camera. The lens adheres to a board that connects to the body of the camera through the bellows. The bellows unfold out to focus and fold back in to make the camera a compact, portable package. This type of camera is a notable design of the 1890s through to the 1940s when it began to decline in use. The Jiffy Six-16 features a push button bellow mechanic, noteworthy since this didn't require the photographer to manually pull out the bellows for use. This design truly is a press of the button! It also featured two viewfinders for horizontal and vertical photos. The geometric design on the camera's front cover is reminiscent of art deco, a visual arts style that adorned designs of the 1920s and 30s. The Jiffy Kodak Six-20 that sold alongside the Six-16 is an identical camera, save for the film type which was 620 versus 616.

For about \$9, around \$200 today, the Jiffy Kodak Six-16 could be yours. It was followed by the Jiffy Kodak Six-16 Series II from 1937 to 1948. Although Kodak remained revolutionary in the photography and film industry for a time, its reign as a champion of amateur photography has come to an end. Upon filing for bankruptcy, Kodak no longer produces cameras and related products, though the company has shifted focus to a more digital future. Even so, Kodak's legacy is a great one for professional and enthusiast photographers. Whether the Kodak camera captured renowned history, great artistic endeavors, or the everyday experiences of family, it remains a respected symbol of technological advancement.

RCHS Fall Program

Early Newspapers of Randolph County and the Role of the Printer and Publisher

Presented by Don Teter and Karl Mulac

In the past, local newspapers filled a vital role in the life of the community by carrying important legal notices, informative advertising, and reports from colorful correspondents. Historian Don Teter will give an overview of the numerous early newspapers in Randolph County, many of which were published for only brief periods while others lasted many years. He will also share some stories of the editorial give and take between the competing journals.

Historian Karl Mulac is the proprietor of the *Randolph Enterprise Project*, which shows how the local newspaper operated during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. He will demonstrate the operation of the printing press and talk about the work of the printers and publishers of small-town newspapers.

This program will be presented at the Beverly Heritage Center on November 16, 2023, at 7:00pm. A reception and tour of the Beverly Heritage Center will be held at 6:00pm before the program presentation begins for any guests who would like to arrive early. The Randolph County Historical Society will also hold its annual meeting at the Beverly Heritage Center at 6:45pm before beginning the program.



Karl Mulac at the printing press.

Support Randolph County History!

Please join or renew your membership in the Randolph County Historical Society. Your tax deductible dues and donations support the Randolph County Museum, and the preservation of our county's history.

Randolph County Historical Society
PO Box 342
Elkins, WV 26241

Randolph County Museum
728 Main Street
Beverly, WV 26253

www.randolphhistoricalwv.org
randolphcountymuseum@gmail.com

MUSEUM AT BEVERLY
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
RANDOLPH COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
FOUNDED 1924

Membership 2024 Pay your dues now for 2024!

Annual Dues:

___ \$20 Regular ___ \$50 Supporting ___ \$10 Hardship

Donation: \$ _____ Amount

Donation Purpose:

- ___ Don Rice Memorial Fund for Museum Improvements
___ Randy Allan Memorial Fund for Museum Improvements
___ Capital Improvement Fund
___ Where Needed Most

Other: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip _____

Email: _____

Make Checks to Randolph County Historical Society
PO Box 342, Elkins WV 26241

To pay online go to www.randolphhistoricalwv.org