

# Randolph County Historical Society

Fall Newsletter

Issue 2, 2018

## Museum Update

Through the generous donations of members and museum patrons, and grants from the DAR and the Randolph County Commission we are pleased to announce a completed climate control system.

## Upcoming Events!

**Annual Meeting** after Valley River Railroad presentation

**“Riding the Short and Narrow”**

**The Brief Life of the Valley River Railroad**

**7 pm November 1st @ Darden Mill, Railroad Ave and 1<sup>st</sup> street**

*presented by Don Teter, with a program length of approx. one hour*

The West Virginia Rail Road Museum, Darden Mill 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, will be open at 6:30 for the last showing of their 2018 exhibition *The Baltimore and Ohio Railroad: West Virginia's First Railway*

With construction beginning in 1907 and the railroad operating into the 1930's, the Valley River Railroad operated a narrow-gauge line stretching from Mill Creek to Mingo. Its story is typical of the boom and bust railroading of the era. Don will talk about early hopes for a railroad, seeing the dream come true (with a few bumps in the road, including opposition from some local landowners), and the closure of the line. His presentation will include maps, several photos, and stories about the railroad.

Don Teter is a member of the Mingo District Historical Society and president of the Randolph County Historical Society. He has been a self-employed land surveyor for over 35 years, has been a professional continuing education instructor for over 15 years, and became an Assistant Professor of Surveying at Fairmont State University in January 2018. In 1977, he published *Goin' Up Gandy! A History of the Dry Fork Region of Randolph and Tucker Counties, West Virginia*.

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## Contact Info

*Email us*  
randolphcountymuseum  
@gmail.com

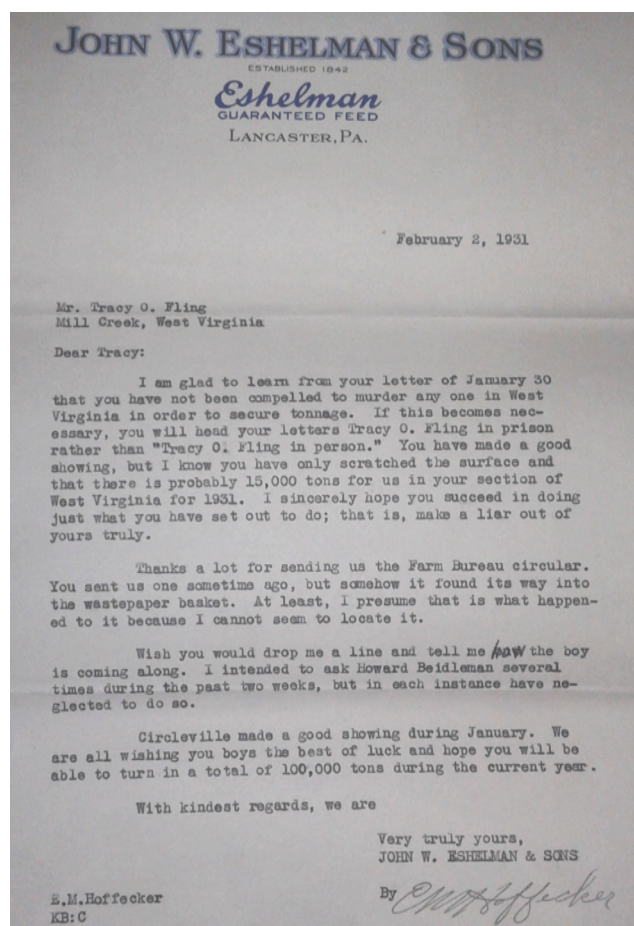
*Or call*  
(304) 637 – 7424  
Beverly Heritage Center

The Museum is located  
on the corner of Main and  
Court St. in Beverly WV

Free admission.  
Donations appreciated!

## Item from the Archives

In this edition of the Randolph County Historical Society Newsletter we are presenting an item from the archives. As we work to organize the collection we sometimes come across an item of interest that appeals to our emotions. In other cases the item causes a chuckle and we feel we have to share it with the public. This letter to Mr. Tracy O Fling of Mill Creek WV was from a manager of the feed company he worked for. We are pleased to announce that Mr. Fling did indeed surpass the company's estimation to become the top salesman of feed in his area for most of 1931.



First paragraph as follows:

“Dear Tracy:

I am glad to learn from your letter of January that you have not been compelled to murder any one in West Virginia in order to secure your tonnage. If this becomes necessary, you will head your letters Tracy O. Fling in prison rather than “Tracy O. Fling in person.” You have made a good showing but I know you have only scratched the surface and that there is probably 15,000 tons for you in your section of West Virginia for 1931. I sincerely hope you succeed in doing just what you set out to do; that is, make a liar out of yours truly. “

**This letter is part of the John “Jack” Bosworth Fling collection.**

The Randolph County Museum is embarking on an initiative to archive its collection. Our goal is to archive all the paper, book, and fabric items in the museum by this time the next year. The process of archiving and conserving objects in a museum requires specialized skills, materials, and tools. If you would like to help with the purchase of museum supplies through a donation or want to know a bit more about the archiving process please email us at [randolphcountymuseum@gmail.com](mailto:randolphcountymuseum@gmail.com)

## **President's Letter**

*by Don Teter*

Congratulations! That's right, I want to congratulate our membership on what we have accomplished in the last few years. We are moving into the future with the Randolph County Historical Society, carrying on the long-standing tradition of preserving and interpreting our local history, while tackling exciting new projects like the climate control system in our Museum building. I would like to invite everybody who is interested in our local history to get involved and share in the congratulations. Doing your part can mean helping out with small or large jobs, because strength comes from numbers and accomplishments flow from the combined efforts of all.

We plan to continue presenting interesting and informative programs about our history, and participating in events with other organizations who share similar goals.

We must not neglect efforts to build our membership base. I thank all whose dues are current and urge those who have not renewed to do so. We all need to be encouraging others to join. Even those who do not wish to be actively involved should consider joining, and I believe they could find satisfaction in becoming members to "do their part" in our preservation and outreach efforts.

## **Visit our new website!**

Join our public Facebook group "Randolph County Historical Society". The picture is of the Blackman-Bosworth Store. Be sure you are joining the Randolph County, West Virginia page as there are several around this country. We currently have 1.3k members who discuss history, genealogy, and other topics of interest.

Our website is up and running!

Visit it at [www.randolpghistoricalwv.org](http://www.randolpghistoricalwv.org) to see more of the museum building and collections. You can also find more information about the Randolph County Historical Society and our history!

## **Introducing our new AFHA AmeriCorps member**

As another year passes by we welcome Ashley M Smith as our new AFHA AmeriCorps member serving with the Randolph County Museum. She a trained museum professional with focus in decorative arts and architectural history and has worked at Tudor Place Historic House and Gardens in Washington D.C. and the Montgomery County Historical Society in Rockville, Maryland.

## **Volunteer with us!**

We'd love to have you! Here are a few ways you can help out—

- \* Docent/Front Desk
- \* Event Logistics
- \* Collections Management
- \* Property Maintenance

*Email us with your interest*

## **Consider becoming an RCHS member!**

*With membership you —*

- \* Receive newsletters
- \* Have access to RCHS publications
- \* Attend meetings and programs

...and enjoy the satisfaction that you are helping preserve Randolph County's history!

*Simply return the enclosed membership form to join!*

**Memberships today will be applied to the rest of 2018 and 2019  
2019 membership fees are due for continuing members**

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Yes, I want to join / renew membership in the Randolph County Historical Society for 2019.

\_\_\_ \$10 Hardship \_\_\_ \$20 Membership \_\_\_ \$50 Supporting

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email (if used) or phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Return by mail with enclosed check to the RCHS at: P.O. Box 342 Elkins WV 26241

If you would like to join or renew your membership online, please  
use the PayPal button at the bottom of the website.

