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WEST VIRGINIA
DIVISION OF
CULTURE & HISTORY

From the Editor:

Archives and History welcomes our new Commissioner of Culture and History, Troy O. Body. We look forward to his leadership in our mission of preserving and disseminating West Virginia culture and history. We hope you enjoy our new logo and the new format of the newsletter. We will continue to offer the articles and news of interest to researchers of West Virginia history and genealogy that our readers expect, albeit in a more stylish package. Renovation of the West Virginia State Museum is proceeding. We ask our visitors to please pardon the noise and the dust. While the museum is being recreated, visit the Culture and History Web site to view online exhibits: http://www.wvculture.org/museum/index.html.

"Old Man's Draft" for World War II

by Susan Scouras

The West Virginia Veterans Memorial Archives has purchased a set of West Virginia World War II Fourth Draft Registration cards on microfilm and has made them available to the public by placing the microfilm in the collection of the West Virginia Archives and History Library, alongside the World War I West Virginia draft cards made available earlier this year. While purchased to assist the Veterans Memorial Archives documentation needs, their availability to library patrons will be an asset to many other researchers.

The Fourth Draft Registration in the United States for World War II was conducted in April 1942 and required all men born on or after April 18, 1877, and on or before February 16, 1897, to register. These men would have been 45 to 65 years old at the time of registration, resulting in the nickname of the "Old Man's Draft" or the "Old Men's Draft" for this registration. These cards are available to the public, unlike the draft cards of men who were younger at the time of registration and may still be living.

Unlike the World War I draft cards, these cards are organized in alphabetical order by surname for the entire state. The researcher does not have to know the registrant's home draft board to search for a card. The rolls of microfilm for these records are in publicly accessible cabinets in the West Virginia Archives and History Library. The staff will be happy to assist you in using them. If you are unable to visit the library, you may request a search by research letter (instructions available in our brochure or at http://www.wvculture.org/history/services.html).

An article on World War II draft cards by Michael John Neill is posted in *Ancestry Daily News*, March 27, 2003: http://www. ancestry.com/library/view/news/articles/5474.asp and an article with examples of cards may be seen on Mr. Neill's Web site at: http://www. rootdig.com/draft/worldwartwo.html.

On the front of the card:

- Place of residence
- Mailing address
- Telephone number
- Age in years
- Date of birth
- Place of birth (town/county and state/country)
- Name and address of person who will always know registrant's address
- Name and address of employer
- Place of employment or business
- Signature of the registrant

On the back of the card:

- Race (White, Negro, Oriental)
- Height
- Weight
- Complexion (choices range from sallow to black, and include "freckled")
- Eyes
- Hair (includes "bald")
- Other physical characteristics that aid in identification