

Alleghany Historical-Genealogical Society, Inc.

Preserving Alleghany's Heritage Since 1979



President Roy Hunt
 Vice-President J.M. Sturgill
 Secretary-Treasurer Irene R. Wagner



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Harvest and Holidays

Museum Exhibit till Year End

The theme for the Alleghany Historical Museum's fourth quarter exhibit is *Harvest and Holidays*. We wanted to re-capture the atmosphere of a traditional, mountain autumn focusing on activities that were once common, here.

Our last exhibit featured agriculture, so it was only fitting that this one celebrates the harvest. Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas and the New Year have themes familiar to each of us. But how did our families celebrate these seasons, if they did at all?

In this modern age, we think we're rushed, but with hog killing, molasses making, corn-cutting, haying, canning, drying apples, drying beans for "leather britches", gathering walnuts and chestnuts- the list of traditional chores seems endless.

The exhibit will last through the end of the year. As always, if you have items or stories to share, contact us!



Left, Clockwise from the photo of late summer tobacco and corn at Eli Halsey's farm on the New River- Cans of pork tenderloin and sausage from Eloise Halsey; "Leather Britches" beans from Margaret Crouse; Twist tobacco

from Burton Osborne; Helme snuff can from Pauline Jolly and more Quality Helme Snuff still in the water glass in which it was packaged and sold, from Lucy Roe.



In May, AHGS lost a great friend and volunteer, Lou Reid Landreth. Read about Miss Landreth's family on page 3 and her story on page 4.

From the President

It's that time of year again - busy, busy, busy. September brought on the fall festivals. This October, the museum committee has done a great job on the exhibit for the fall season, *Harvest & Holidays*. I, myself, would like to thank each and every one for the hard work that has been done to help preserve the history of the county and its people.

That work is starting to pay off now, by the looks of things that people are coming forth with. Here in the mountains of Allegheny County, October is showing its true colors. The leaves on the trees have turned from green to about every other color you can think of. We are very thankful for all of the beautiful things the holiday season brings to us.

Roy Hunt
AHGS President



Sarnoff-Irving
"Holbrook Royal"
Straw Hat from
the Mabel
Richardson
family, on loan
from Dena
Alspaugh.

See this
and several
bonnets from
Dena in the
Museum, this
fall.



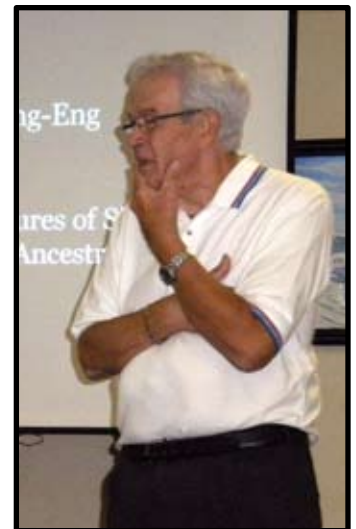
Society's Recent Programs

The Allegheny Historical - Genealogical Society meets the 4th Sunday of each month at the Allegheny Library at 2:30 pm, and we've hosted some wonderful presenters this summer.



In July, we watched the "pilot" episode of our own television program, *Allegheny Memories*, which featured 3 of our members: Pauline Jolly and Mildred Torney, interviewed by Margaret Crouse. The ladies did a fantastic job and shared a lot of information on their personal lives, as well as their work with the library and in the community. The interview with the two former librarians was sponsored by the Friends of the Allegheny County Library.

August's program was on Chang & Eng Bunker, the famous Siamese Twins, presented by Melvin Miles, an Allegheny native who now lives in Mount Airy. He shared a lot of information, including the story of their life in Siam and how they eventually came to live in Surry County.



Melvin Miles

At September's meeting, Hersey and Donna Shumate talked about their extensive experience in ham radio, the equipment used, and the way the users communicate. We learned that every communication over ham radio is required to be logged and it is customary to send a card to the folks you meet and chat with. The radio system is often used in emergency situations and users have to be licensed to broadcast. It was an informative presentation on an increasingly rare interest.

The Society's monthly meetings are open to the public and we try to list meetings in the Upcoming Community Events section of the Allegheny News. Plan to join us when you can.



Advertisement in
The Pittsburgh Press - May 18, 1920

Grover Cleveland Landreth

Story and Photographs from Lou Reid Landreth's contributions to Alleghany County Heritage, 1983

Grover Cleveland Landreth was the fourth child of Martin and Lou Wagoner Landreth. He was born December 11, 1884 and died January 29, 1950. He followed his older brothers to Montana and worked there from 1903 through 1909 for the Northern Pacific Railway, working his way up from engine watchman to fireman, to switch engineer, to road engineer where he ran the passenger train from Missoula to Helena daily.

When he was back in Sparta, walking along the street by the dentist's office, he saw a beautiful red-head in the dentist's chair and decided then and there she was the girl for him. They were married November 1, 1911 by Rev. Tom J. Houck.



Grover Cleveland and Bettie Lou Rector Landreth, married Nov. 1, 1911.

The red-head was Bettie Lou Rector (nee Richardson) who was born December 10, 1892 to Mecie Rector and Joshua Richardson (divorced 1900). Mecie had died November 12, 1908 and Bettie was living with her aunt in Sparta, Alice Rector Gentry.

Their first child, Alton Gentry Landreth, was born in 1912, in the front bedroom of the R.C. Gentry house. The second baby, daughter Lou Reid, was born in 1914 at the old Lee Baker house which they had rented on main street, later the property of the dentist Dr. C.A. Reeves.

About 1917 Grover took his family to Montana again. He worked as brakeman on the logging train of the Baird and Harper Company, which was cutting timber over a large area near the Canadian border. The locomotive pulled flatbeds with three huge logs chained on each into a processing area where they were split into lumber. The family lived in a little company town called Warland which lay along the Kootenai River.

Bettie was not enchanted with the west. When some neighbors gave her some bear meat, she soaked it for days and tried to tame it but still could not stand the smell, so it was finally buried in the ground at night. Bettie was a very gregarious person and missed her town and her people and never wanted to stay away from it. This job ended in July of 1918 the family came back

to Sparta, on a hot and smoky, coal-burning train. It took four days and nights. Back at home Bettie helped her Aunt Alice some with keeping boarders. The Gentry house had always been a boarding house and teachers and school students during the summer, stayed there. Grover and Bettie tried to run the farm and look after his aging parents, though Grover was not a farmer but he was stuck with it. In April 1919 he went to the Rahe Auto and Tractor School in Kansas City to learn about engines, cars, and tractors. He wanted to open a garage in Sparta but his father argued that autos would never replace the horse and wagon.

On 17 February 1919 Grover C. Landreth, Jr. was born and, in June Mr. Gentry died. Alice Gentry died in 1925 so



Summer of 1919. Lou Reid, Grover Cleveland, Jr. and Alton Gentry Landreth.

Grover and Bettie moved to the Gentry house to keep boarders and look after the property, which had been left to their daughter Lou Reid. Martin Landreth had died in 1922 and daughter Ella had taken her mother to live with her in Montana, so the farm was rented out.

In October 1926 a new baby arrived, Nada Roberta. School children raced to the house at recess to play with

the baby. There was not much money in boarders, so about 1928 they rented the boarding house and moved back to the farm where another baby was born in June, 1929, Mary Alice. The two little girls grew up on the farm and loved it.

During World War II, Grover sold the farm and worked at wartime jobs in Maryland and Virginia. When they returned to Sparta, they bought the old A.S. Carson home on main street. Bettie was back in her glory, among her friends, and could again keep some boarders and be active at church and womens organizations.

Grover had a heart attack and died at home January 29, 1950. Bettie died in Maryland February 20, 1975. Both are buried in the Sparta Cemetery.



Lou Reid Landreth

Reprinted with permission from *The Allegheny News*.

Lou Reid Landreth, age 97, of Sparta, died at Allegheny Memorial Hospital in Sparta on Wednesday, May 25, 2011. She was born on Main Street in Sparta on March 17, 1914 to Grover C. and Bettie Lou Landreth.

Her great-grandfather, David Landreth, gave land for the establishment of the county seat of Sparta. She was a member of the Sparta United Methodist Church. She attended North Carolina College for Women (UNCG), graduated from Roanoke National Business College and from Hunter College of the City of New York.

During the Depression and World War II years she worked in various government departments in Washington and was secretary to the first Price and Rationing Administrator, Mr. Leon Henderson. She learned to fly and was a member of the Capital Squadron of the Civil Air Patrol. She spent a tour of duty in Europe where she joined the Office of War Information in Paris.

After the war, she moved to New York and worked for Universal Films with Matthew Fox, executive vice president, who became deeply involved in the struggle of Indonesians to obtain their independence from the Dutch. She made several trips to Indonesia, the first being immediately after their independence, when she set up offices for the Fox group to begin trade in the new territory, which had been monopolized by the Dutch for generations.



Lou Reed Landreth.



Leon Henderson gets the first proof of war ration book no. 1 from a press at the Government Printing Office.
- Photo from US Library of Congress

Miss Landreth retired to Sparta in 1979 and became active in the newly formed Historical-Genealogical Society, helped to survey all the cemeteries in the county and edited a cemetery book, helped to compile and edit the Allegheny County Heritage book, was chairman of a museum committee and prepared an operating manual in contemplation of a museum becoming a part of the Carlisle Higgins Center.

She was cited for volunteerism by Governor James B. Hunt. She was a member of the New River Country Club, was an avid bridge player and was a member of the New River Pioneer Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution.

When Regent, her project was to raise funds and place a bronze plaque on the lawn of the 1908 Independence Courthouse listing the names of 246 Revolutionary militia and patriots. Miss Landreth is survived by four nieces, one nephew; two great-nieces; and four great-nephews. Graveside services were conducted Saturday, May 28 at Sparta cemetery.



AHGS Shares Honors With Several Local History Projects

Annual Awards Given by the North Carolina Society of Historians

The North Carolina Society of Historians has awarded AHGS another Joe M. McLauren newsletter award, this year. We also received two Paul Green Multimedia Awards- one for the first television episode of *Allegheny Memories* and one for the joint effort with the Sparta Revitalization Committee, the *Sparta Historical Walking Tour*.

Other Allegheny award recipients included, Clark Hunter for his TV series on the Blue Ridge Parkway; Kay Bodeen for her semi-fictionalized account of her Grandfather's life story, *Pat Crisp, Like a Moth to the Flame*; Thelma Davis for her archival collection of Methodist Church Minutes; Lorene Sturgill for her book, *Descendants of William Black and Nan-*

cy Allison; High Country Hospice for their memorial cookbook, *Meals and Memories* and Imaging Specialists for books and publishing.

Additionally, we were honored again this year with the donation of the *entire collection* of 2011 prize winning books and media from the Society of Historians. This large collection of the best of the year's North Carolina historical books will be a great addition to our growing historical - genealogical library. Thanks to the NCSH and all the winners for your hard work and interest in our region's history.

Get more info on the statewide awards at:
www.ncsocietyofhistorians.org



If you have items to loan or donate, stories to tell, photos to display or add to the database, or if you just want to volunteer, contact us at info@ahgs.org. The Museum Committee would love to hear from you. Got an idea for a display? Give us a call!

Contact Pauline Jolly at (336) 363-2282, leave a message at 336-372-2115 or email us at info@ahgs.org.

If you've been thinking about giving this year, please consider the Historical Society. The Alleghany Historical - Genealogical Society is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, so all contributions are tax deductible.

If you'd like to volunteer or contribute to the Alleghany Historical Museum, contact us at:

Alleghany Historical - Genealogical Society
336-372-2115, P.O. Box 817, Sparta, NC 28675.

Books For Sale

HISTORY OF ALLEGHANY COUNTY, NC 1859-1976 - 272-pages not indexed - \$45,
S&H \$3 NC residents \$3.04 tax.

ALLEGHANY COUNTY HERITAGE - 555-pages indexed - \$48, S&H \$3 NC residents \$3.24 tax.

ALLEGHANY COUNTY CEMETERIES THROUGH 1986 - 261-pages - \$15, S&H \$2.75
NC residents \$1.01 tax.

ALLEGHANY ARCHITECTURE: A PICTORIAL SURVEY - 101-pages not indexed -
\$30.00, S&H \$3.00 NC residents \$2.03 tax.

ALLEGHANY COUNTY, NC MARRIAGES: 1849-1900 - 354-pages indexed - \$32.00 plus \$4
S&H from Heritage Books Inc., 100 Railroad Ave., Ste 104, Westminster, MD 21157 1-800-876-6103
www.heritagebooks.com.

ALLEGHANY COUNTY COURTHOUSE ORNAMENT - Gold-colored metal ornament depicts
the county courthouse. \$11.21 NC residents \$0.76 tax; no shipping & handling.

MARY'S MEMORIES - 74-pages Published by Mary Lyon Harless in 2000 on the occasion of her 100th
birthday. \$8.00, S&H \$1.50 NC residents \$0.54 tax.

FOOT PRINTS ON THE SANDS OF TIME - 75-pages Subtitled "A History of Southwestern
Virginia and Northwestern North Carolina," first published in Sparta, NC in 1900 by Dr. Aras B. Cox. Indexed.
\$15.00, S&H \$2.00 NC residents \$1.01 tax.

1938 VIDEO OF SPARTA, NORTH CAROLINA - 20-minute video, by Ben Reeves - Trip to the
1939 Worlds Fair in New York, with 1938 Sparta. VHS tape or DVD \$11.00, S&H \$1.50 NC residents \$0.68
tax.

RECIPES THAT RAISED US - 230 pages Memorial cookbook \$20, S&H \$3.00 NC residents \$1.35
tax or (3) books for \$45.00, S&H \$7.00 NC residents \$3.04 tax.

Find all our items online at: www.spartastore.com

Or to order directly from the Society, send your check, payable to Alleghany Historical-Genealogical Society, to:

Alleghany Historical-Genealogical Society, P.O. Box 817, Sparta, NC 28675.

info@ahgs.org

336-372-2115

www.ahgs.org



Membership Form

Please enroll me as a member of the Alleghany Historical-Genealogical Society, Inc. in the classification below:

New Renewal

Individual \$10.00 annually

Business, Institutional or professional \$20.00 annually

Sustaining \$ 50.00 annually

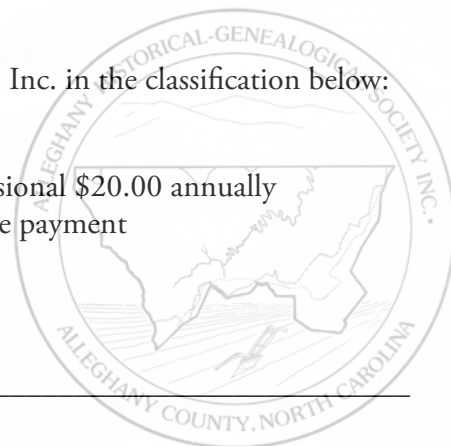
LIFE MEMBER \$100.00 in one payment

Enclosed is a check or money order for membership.

Please send membership card to:

Name- _____

Address- _____



Inquiries

Inquiries are printed here and posted online at ahgs.org. If you are looking for information, you can mail your question to P.O. Box 817 or email info@ahgs.org. Also, if you have answers or information for these people, contact them!



Information re/Grandfather Wm. Green Sheppard who owned the old Stratford store around 1900. **Lorell Thompson**, 5505 E. McLellan Rd., Unit #36, Mesa, AZ 85205, 480-981-2332, Best Time to Call: 8a - 12n, lorallan@cox.net



Do you know of anyone from the Alice Spicer, b.Oct 4, 1864 who married Joseph Montana Spicer, who knows their family history. Years ago we were communication with Kenneth B Spicer but he passed away. **Patty Conroy**, 20171 Leroy Drive, Castro Valley, CA 94546, 510-828-1082, Best Time to Call: 8a - 12n, yornoctap@yahoo.com



I am researching the family of Eliza Craft & Felix Monroe Ham. I would like to know where they are buried. In 1920 they lived in Cherry Lane, NC. Thank you! **Beth Manchester**, 22 Dryden Road, New Castle, DE 19720-2315, 302-322-1143, Best Time to Call: 5p - 9p, Beth_Manchester@comcast.net



I located your email on the website. I have been searching for a Vienna Cochran (Dialogue Vienarice Cochran) Ms. Cochran married my father Joseph Dewey Williams aka JD Williams. The marriage was annulled by her family and my father was run out of Sparta he got back on the military ship. My father stated that she was pregnant with his child a "Daughter". She would have been born around 1948, 1949 or somewhere in this range. She would be older than 60 years old. Her mother if around the age of my father would be in her 80's. My father was born 03/17/1930. I was told the daughter worked in DC as a teacher years ago. I do not have a name for her just that my father and her mother were in Sparta Carolina. They had to be very young. Thanks for your time and consideration, **Terry A Williams-Edden**, MPA., M.L.Ed, 754-368-4485, t_edden@hotmail.com

I am a descendant of Norman Shaw, born about 1810, don't know where he was born - supposed to have married a Senthia Riggs. [The story goes that 3 brothers came to America from Scotland - don't know their names or when they came or if Norman was one of them or a son of one]. Norman and Senthia had 4 children that I know of: Sarah Jane Shaw married Jesse Draper, Susan Maria Shaw, married William P. Harman, John Alexander Shaw, married Nancy Jane Waggoner and Lewis Shaw, married Mary Victoria Chappel. John Alexander and Nancy Jane Shaw had a son named Richard Franklin Shaw who married Mary Louise Craft. Richard Franklin Shaw and Mary Louise Craft were my grandparents and they lived in Alleghany County, North Carolina all of their married life. If there is anyone that knows anything about Norman Shaw I would appreciate any information that you can give me. Thanks so much, **Wynnogene Shaw Day**, 110 Reece Way, Savannah, GA 31419, 912-659-0727 - E-mail: mdpsl1@yahoo.com



I am looking for information on David Shelton Hall and his family. I am in the direct lineage and enjoy this family very much. **Mrs. Kirkpatrick**, Oregon, 503-662-4292, Best Time to Call: 8a - 12n, E-mail: thenewspiceroute@gmail.com



I'm looking for information on James (or Jim) Collins. He graduated in Sparta around 1958 - 1960. **Larry D. Woolard**, larry.woolard@illinois.gov

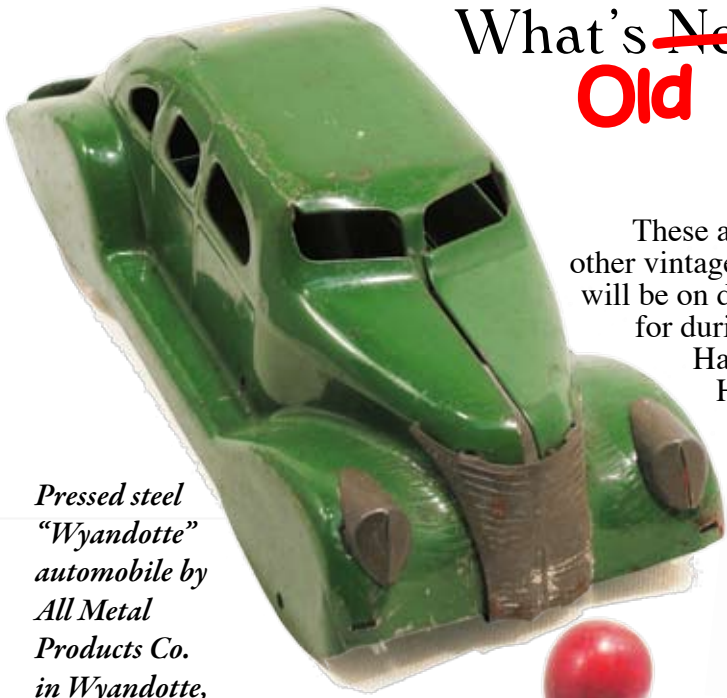


Husband was given a copy of a book about the Miller family tree some years ago. The book got damaged during a flood about 10 years ago and he would love to have another copy. Where do I find one? He is a direct descendant from John Jackson Miller. Please let me know. It would be a nice Christmas gift for him this year. **Myrtle Miller**, Box 61884, N Charleston, SC 29419, 843-744-8173, Best Time to Call: 5p - 9p, myrmil56@gmail.com

If you have information, photos or donations for our upcoming exhibit on Harvest and Holidays, contact the Museum at (336) 372-2115 (If unanswered, leave a message) or email us at info@ahgs.org



What's ~~New?~~ Old



*Pressed steel
"Wyandotte"
automobile by
All Metal
Products Co.
in Wyandotte,
Michigan.*



*Vintage Sharps Shooter
"Bagatelle Game" by
Mortimer Glass
Company in
Pittsburgh,
PA*

These and other vintage toys will be on display for during the Harvest & Holidays exhibit through December at the Allegheny Historical Museum.

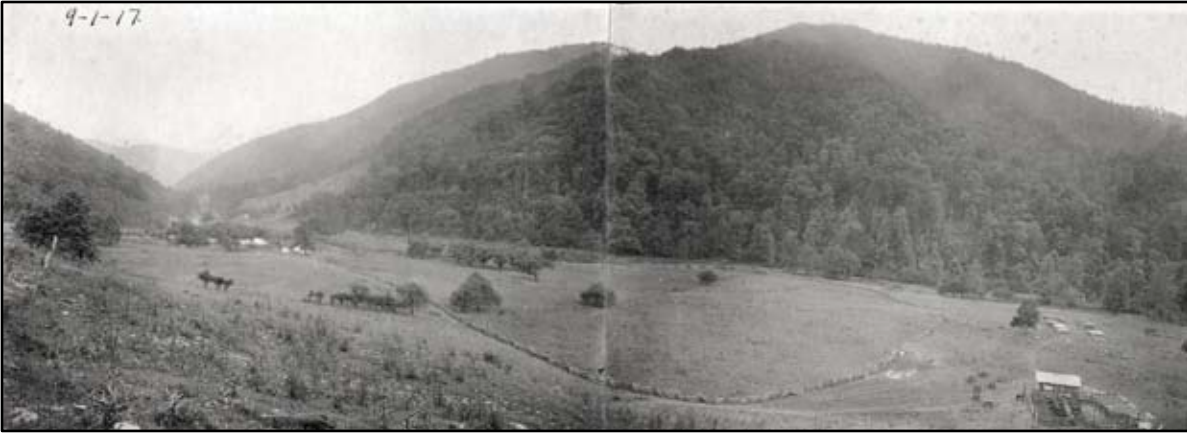


Well-loved toy top.

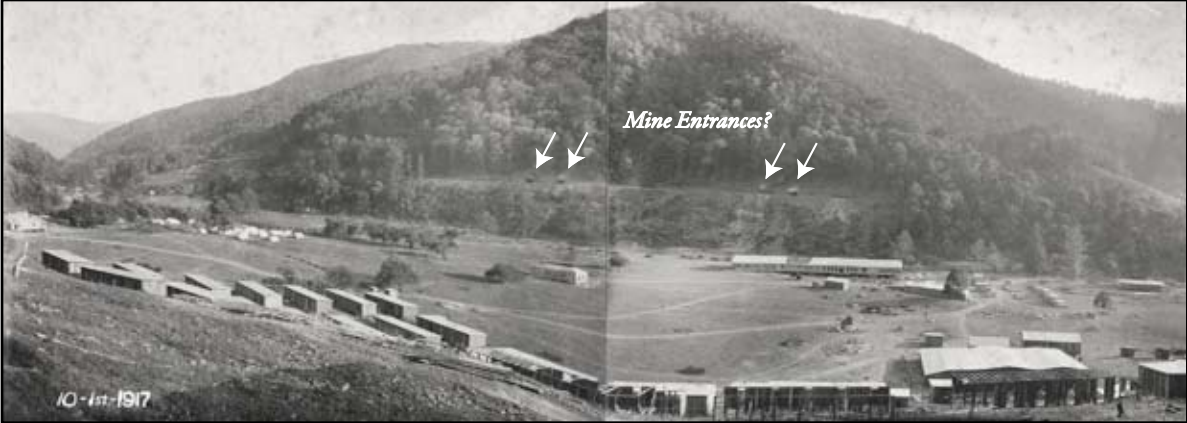
This mechanical Drum Major originally drummed and moved his head from side-to-side. In original box but not exactly like the image. Made in Japan, with celluloid head and arms. Toys featured on this page unless otherwise noted are from Alex Woodruff's toy collection.



*International
(front-end) loader
- 1954
39 Farmall 400 Big
Rim - 1955
on loan from Hugh
Halsey.*



There are several tents in the orchard to the left side of the scene and some logging wagons and horses in new pens at the barn at lower right. An advance work crew perhaps? Note the extensive rail fence and pre-fab wall sections in the field behind the horse lot.



In just 4 weeks, they've built a road with a small trestle, with what appear to be 4 mine openings. The horses now have a roof and barracks (?) are well under construction. At left, more tents have been added and houses with chimneys are being built.

Katie Finigan brought us these photographic pans, recently found in Piney Creek. They both show the same scene and were shot in 1917 just a month apart.

Katie asked if they could be of a road crew at Twin Oaks, but Bill Irwin, who grew up there, said, "It's definitely not Twin Oaks." He thought it looked more like a railroad grade than a roadbed cut into the mountainside, "and Alleghany has never had a railroad."

After examining high-res scans on the computer, we think it's a mining operation.

At any rate it's a lot of progress in 30 day's time! Is this some wartime mining effort by the Corps of Engineers? Could it be local- around the Ore Knob area?

If you know what or where this is, contact us at info@ahgs.org. We will post high-res scans of these and other images at AHGS.org

www.imagingspecialists.net - To see back issues of this newsletter, go online to www.ahgs.org.

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Remembering Alleghany for Over Thirty Years