

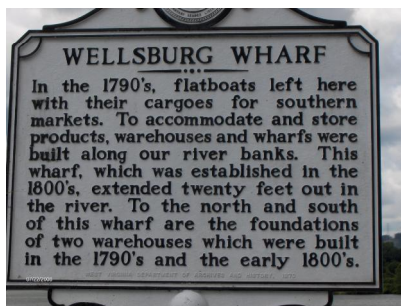
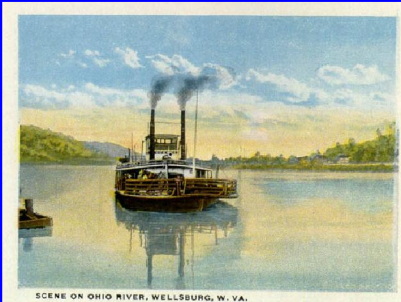
Community profile - Wellsburg, WV

Although every community in the tri-county area is rich in history and has an interesting story to tell, there may not be a more historical community in the Ohio Valley than Wellsburg, WV. It was, in fact, designated as an "Historic District" and placed on the Department of Interior's list of historical places in 1982.

Originally known as Charlestown, it was first settled in 1772 by three brothers - Jonathan, Friend and Israel Cox. Using the "Tomahawk Right" which was simply notching trees with their initials, they laid claim to 1,200 acres of land. And that was just the beginning. By 1778, a small community was in existence.

The town was originally named in honor of one of those earliest settlers named Charles Prather, who owned the land on which the town was built. In 1816, the town was renamed Wellsburg to avoid confusion with two other towns in the state that were also called Charlestown. The town was named in honor Alexander Wells who was married to Charles Prather's daughter and is credited as the builder of the first large flour warehouse in the east.

During the first twenty years, the town was a bustling center of activity. There were glass factories and paper mills. There were potteries and cotton mills. And being located on the Ohio River just enhanced its importance in being an industrial giant of its time. Meat packing, using a pickling and salting process was just one industry that relied on flat boats to transport products down the river. The wharf is still in use today with some original stones remaining. Also taking advantage of its river-front location, the city was famous for its boat building.

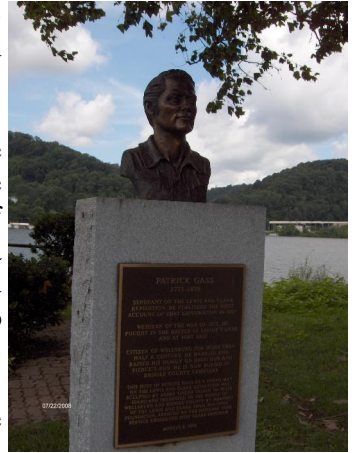


In its early years, Wellsburg was also famous for its "Gin Weddings" and "Marrying Parsons" who reportedly would marry couples on a moments notice.

Apples play a distinct role in the history of Wellsburg. The Grimes Golden Delicious apple was discovered on the farm of Thomas Grimes in 1775. It is believed the tree developed from

a seed planted by Johnny Appleseed. In 1995, it was designated West Virginia's official state fruit.

Appleseed wasn't the only notable character in US history to trample through the woods and streets of the small town. Patrick Gass, a member of the famous Lewis and Clark Expedition liked the area so well that he returned after the expedition and settled in Wellsburg. He was the last survivor of the Lewis and Clark Expedition and is buried in Brooke Cemetery.



Patrick Gass

In September 2000 members of the Lewis and Clark Discovery Expedition of St Charles, Mo. stopped in Wellsburg as part of a retracing of the expedition. Arriving in in two pirogues which were replicas of the boats used by Lewis and Clark, they also visited Brooke Cemetery to pay tribute to Gass.

Take a leisurely walk along the streets of Wellsburg today, and you see history everywhere. Many homes built in the early 1800s remain today. You will see the Miller's Tavern which was built in 1795, the Parker House from the Federal period and Sarah Miller Barnes Home built at a cost of \$2,886.80 and is entered in the Historic Register. There are churches and bank buildings.



Example of early architecture. Built in 1891

There are many more aspects to Wellsburg. People like the Olympic hurdler, Glen Ashby Davis born in 1934 or Joe Pettini who graduated from Brooke High School in 1973. He went on to play major league baseball and coached for the St. Louis Cardinals.

There's the Apple Festival, Brooke Hills Park and Drovers Inn. Do yourself a favor and make the trip to Wellsburg to enjoy a big taste of area history.