



Interior entrance to the Wetzel County Museum.  
All photos by Wetzel County Museum.

## Spotlight on **HCAP** History Center Affiliates Program

### Wetzel County Museum

- Wetzel County is located in northwestern West Virginia, considered part of the northern panhandle that separates Ohio from Pennsylvania, about 100 miles southwest of Pittsburgh. It is divided by the Mason-Dixon Line. Wetzel County was carved out of adjacent Tyler County on January 10, 1846, and is named in honor of Lewis Wetzel, distinguished frontiersman and Indian scout.
- The mission of the Wetzel County Museum is to preserve, educate, and promote the history and culture of Wetzel County. The Wetzel County Museum started in 2002 when local resident Jim Fitzsimmons began collecting and exhibiting items from the area. With friends, he formed the Wetzel County Historical Society and displayed his collection in the former Wells Hardware building located in historic downtown New Martinsville. Upon his death in 2009, he left the museum and its contents to the historical society.
- In 2010, the newly organized Wetzel County Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) formed a non-profit organization for the purpose of attracting tourism to the county. The goal was to turn Fitzsimmons' collection into a professional museum for the enjoyment and education of residents and tourists. In 2010, the historical society legally transferred title of the museum building and its artifacts to the CVB. By restoring the original floors and ceilings of the building, the Wetzel County Museum maintains great integrity and historic interest.
- Among the museum's artifacts are an original B&O Railroad caboose, local glassware from companies like the New Martinsville Glass Company and Viking Glass, and numerous Native American artifacts from the Adena culture.
- Displays also depict the lives of the earliest settlers, the county's antebellum roots, its role in the Civil War, and its history as a river town and transportation hub. The Wetzel County Museum holds monthly events such as lectures, day festivals, workshops, living history days, and tours.
- The museum is open on Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays from 12:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., and by appointment. Admission is free and parking is available in the adjacent parking lot.
- The museum's address is 136 Main Street, New Martinsville, West Virginia, 26155. Visit them at [www.facebook.com/WetzelCountyMuseum](http://www.facebook.com/WetzelCountyMuseum) or call (304) 398-4910.

The History Center Affiliates Program (HCAP) is a network that allows local and regional historical societies and museums access to museum professionals and best practice standards through the Senator John Heinz History Center.

To find out more about HCAP or to apply for membership for your organization, please contact Robert O. Stakeley, Educator, at [rostakeley@heinzhistorycenter.org](mailto:rostakeley@heinzhistorycenter.org) or (412) 454-6359.

Garden and seating outside the Wetzel County Museum's B&O Railroad caboose.

