



Margaret Ann “Peg” Brennan – *Education and Religion*

Born in 1943, Margaret Brennan grew up in South Wheeling and attended Wheeling Central Catholic High School. After graduation she joined the Congregation of St. Joseph and was a member of the Sisters of St. Joseph for 25 years. She earned a bachelor’s degree from Wheeling College (now Wheeling Jesuit University) in 1967 and a master’s degree in history from West Virginia University in 1977. Furthering her education, Margaret earned a Certificate of Public History from WVU in 1987 and has attended numerous national archival education workshops. After college she returned to her high school alma mater where she taught history from 1968-1979.

Margaret left her mark as a schoolteacher, but it has been outside the classroom where she has made – and continues to make – her most significant impact, educating the public about the history of our nation, state, and community and their institutions and organizations. She served as the first-ever archivist for the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston from 1979-1985, following which she worked on historical projects for the former Mount de Chantal Visitation Academy and Florence Crittenton Services. In 1981 Margaret was part of an ad hoc committee of the Wheeling City Council that erected four historic murals, one of which depicted Betty Zane’s “gunpowder run” during the 1782 second battle of Fort Henry. All four murals are displayed inside the WesBanco Arena. Margaret has been instrumental in producing multiple historical projects in Wheeling, involving among others East Ohio Regional Hospital, Wheeling Hospital, the Wheeling Symphony, First Presbyterian Church, and Browne Brothers Tailors.

Proud of her Irish parents and ancestry, Margaret played a key role in erecting the Celtic cross at Wheeling’s Heritage Port and participated in establishing the annual Wheeling Celtic Celebration. In 2013 during West

Virginia’s 150th birthday, Margaret played a pivotal role in the project to honor West Virginia’s founding father and first governor, Francis Pierpont, with a large bronze statue constructed and placed on the street corner outside West Virginia Independence Hall.

A published author, Margaret has had works printed in *Goldenseal* magazine and various scholarly publications along with “Remember When” articles in the Wheeling News-Register. She has served on numerous boards, groups and committees including: the Wheeling Area Genealogical Society, Martins Ferry Historical Society, Marshall County Historical Society, Ohio Valley Civil War Roundtable, West Virginia Historical Society, Wheeling Hall of Fame Board, Wheeling Historic Landmarks Commission, West Virginia Independence Hall Foundation Board, West Virginia Archives and History Commission, and the Friends of Wheeling. It’s no wonder that in 1998 Margaret was named a West Virginia History Hero by the West Virginia Division of Culture and History.

Always the consummate historian, with camera and steno pad in hand, Margaret can often be found researching and working to promote and preserve our local heritage, sharing her knowledge through her writing and public lectures, educating the people of today and inspiring us to value and learn from our yesterdays.

Perhaps this says it best: Margaret Brennan takes history out of the classroom and moves it to the streets of Wheeling – and beyond.