Once upon a time, the area now known as Weirton was dotted with sheep farms and apple orchards. Its sparsely populated, yet rural in any traditional sense of the word, community is, in 2022, again at a crossroads. For this new century. From 2000 to 2019, Hancock County was still Weirton, but now it was something new. It straddled. Change, and Identity are incredibly relevant to the old community and lifestyle, Weirton now. It became a quintessential American melting sparkling infrastructure projects burnished the new town. It was a quintessential American melting sprawling infrastructure projects and to forge a new postindustrial identity. For the five weeks of Crossroads’ stay in our community, well, tell Weirton’s story through a companion three-poster exhibition that will appear in area libraries, we’ll commemorate a family business that has achieved a century serving the community, yet closed due to changing market forces, and we’ll be celebrating our creative culture, definitive historical figures, and the ingenuity of Hancock and Brooke County residents.

On January 31, WAMCC will open Crossroads with a reception and ribbon-cutting, featuring “History in the Hills” columnist Paul J. Zuros. Top of West Virginia Arts Council members will share the genesis of their project and projections for the future. On February 5, we’ll host a panel discussion with three Brooke County historians whose books, plans, and collaborative projects are collectively advancing local tourism. On February 12, historical reenactor Molly Mossor will portray locally famous historian and painter Mary Shakley Ferguson during our “Tea with Mary” event. Singer and guitarist R. J. Gaudio will provide a date-night experience with our “Music at the Museum” program on February 16, while February 19 will see esteemed scholar and Chatham University professor Lou Martin explore Hancock County’s pre-industrial past and postindustrial present.

February 28 will be action-packed, as we welcome respected Heinz History curator and lecturer Samuel W. Black in the morning and enjoy exhibition-themed entertainment by the Ohio Valley Clock & Dagger Company in the evening. On March 5, we’ll celebrate the city of Weirton’s 75th anniversary with cake and a kid-friendly museum scavenger hunt. The entire five-week span provides us with an opportunity to deliberate, educate, and inspire. Crossroads offers Weirton—and, more importantly, our state—the chance to recognize how we approach and understand ourselves so that we can more consciously create our future, both as Weirtonians and as West Virginians.

We are no longer a region reliant upon or defined by a single industry. Instead, we are expanding our definition to incorporate new approaches to changing fiscal and societal demands. While WAMCC as a museum will always function as a memory-keeper, we are also a force for bigger issues and broader perspectives. Crossroads provides us with the perfect opportunity to talk about who we are as a community—and what we can become.

(See photo on back)

The Crossroads: Change in Rural America exhibition tour will open at WAMCC on January 31, 2022 and run through March 5, 2023.

To see the rest of the tour’s West Virginia itinerary, visit www.wvhumanities.org/programs/crossroads.
THE NEEDLE POINTS THE WAY

(Continued from front)

John has other roots in Appalachia, too. His father “was the son of a Kentucky sharecropper who, when my grandmother died, was given with his three sisters to an aunt to raise.” He was only about four years old. “He spent his youth behind mules in the tobacco fields, until he left to ‘seek his fortune’,” John says. That background was the inspiration one of John’s recent needle felt sculptures of a mule and a farmer, pictured below. The sculpture won an award at the Gala exhibit at the Randolph County Community Arts Center in Elkins.

John’s other passion is railroads, dating from a childhood filled with Marx model locomotives. This has carried through into his photography, painting and, of course, needle-felting— including two recent sculptures of a railroad conductor and an engineer (pictured on front page).

Today John splits his time between his home in New Jersey and his farm in West Virginia. When here in the Mountain State, he’s likely to be working on a needle felt sculpture in his studio or displaying his work in a community-based exhibit or show. Like so many West Virginians and the art they produce, John Terry’s work combines elements both old and new, traditional and 21st century. Like all of them, we’re glad he’s here.

Learn more about John Terry’s artistry at www.johnterry.com.

Ed John Terry’s quotations have been lightly edited for length and clarity. Photos by John Terry

WEST VIRGINIA HUMANITIES COUNCIL

EVENTS  FEBRUARY - MARCH 2022

Always check with the venue or hosting organization of an event before attending, especially in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, as schedules may change without the knowledge of the Council.

Feb 5 crafting* - Crossroads Museum, Weirton, 12pm
Feb 8 Presentation by Samuel L. Black* - Director of WAMCC Weirton, 10am
Feb 10 Crossroads ribbon cutting and reception in Weirton* - Smithsonian exhibit opening at WAMCC Weirton, 11am
Feb 11 Cumberland Museum of Arts and History* - Event at Staunton, VA, 12pm
Feb 15 Burning Springs* - Civil War documentary screening and filmmaker Q&A, The Movie House, New Martinsville, 7pm
Feb 21 Crossroads opening reception in New Martinsville* - Smithsonian exhibit opening at Wetzel County Museum, 7pm
Feb 26 Black History in Randolph County - Living history presentation by Nina Razafimahatratra and Terence Archibald, 1pm
Feb 27 West Virginia’s Election Integrity and Processes - Little Lecture by Dr. Erik Herzon and Paige Vaught, WVU Downtown Campus Library, Morgantown, 7pm
Mar 3 Interpreting West Virginia’s LGBTQ+ History - Presentation by Susan Ferentinos, WVU Downtown Campus Library, Morgantown, 7pm
Mar 27 West Virginia’s History Month reading by Melissa Febos, Virginia Tech, 7pm
Mar 28 Women’s History Month - Tea with Mary* - Cultural Center (WAMCC), 1pm
Mar 30Women’s History Month - Panel discussion, WAMCC Weirton.

www.wvhumanities.org/programs/crossroads

*Events marked with an asterisk are part of the Council-sponsored Crossroads Smithsonian tour. For general tour information, visit www.wvhumanities.org/programs/crossroads

For local contact information on events and exhibit hours in Wetzel, visit www.wetzelwv.com

For local contact information on events and exhibit hours in New Martinsville, visit www.newmartinsvillewv.com

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For more information on Weirton’s Smithsonian programming, visit www.weirtonareamuseum.com

The needle points the way. (Continued from front)

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