

A Publication of the West Virginia Humanities Council

Kentucky poet Wendell Berry says that graves lose their sorrow when the last people who remember the people buried there are themselves gone. That seems like a reasonable assertion.

In any case, there was little sorrow on the day grants administrator Amy Saunders and I visited Pendleton County to check on a graveyard documentation project that the Fort Seybert Heritage Educational Foundation has undertaken with support from the Humanities Council.

We met project director Sandra Pope and husband Larry at the Hinkle-McDonald Cemetery near Riverton. Foundation volunteer Dora Harper was there as well, along with a team of AmeriCorps workers under the leadership of Jeff Smith. With the AmeriCorps guys busily photographing tombstones and taking down epitaphs, we had the Popes and Harper mostly to ourselves.

They told us that the goal of their project is the documentation of historic cemeteries throughout Pendleton County, historic meaning 50 years and older. Graves are plotted as to their location within the cemeteries, and the cemeteries themselves are plotted on topographic maps according to their GPS coordinates. Careful measurements are taken and grave markers and other features are photographed. A previous Humanities Council project directed by Sandra used ground-penetrating radar to locate unmarked graves. All information is deposited at the Pendleton County library in Franklin and filed with the State Historic Preservation Officer in Charleston.

Their project resonated with me in a personal way. Two family cemeteries were a big part of my growing up, representing both sides of the family and carrying our story back to the early 19th century. These quiet sanctuaries helped bring me to an understanding of my place in the world. They remain important to me today, though I have come to know that they are anything but unusual. There are thousands of such graveyards scattered through our mountains. Many are as beautifully kept as the one Amy and I visited in Pendleton County, while others are hopelessly lost in the woods. Family graveyards are the places where country people inscribe their history on the face of the earth. Each

*Continued on back cover*

## The documentation of Pendleton County cemeteries continues

# A GRAVE UNDERTAKING



Larry and Sandra Pope, Ken Sullivan and Dora Harper. Photo by Amy Saunders.

Winter  
2012-2013

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A Grave  
Undertaking

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What's New

Annual  
Report  
2012



The West Virginia Cemetery Survey, a program of the State Historic Preservation Office, records state cemeteries. It helps genealogists, archivists, and others with information about many types of graveyards — from small family plots to larger church and municipal burial grounds. To recommend a cemetery for inclusion, contact the West Virginia Division of Culture and History at (304)558-0220, ext. 719; or visit [www.wvculture.org](http://www.wvculture.org).

## Grant Categories

The Humanities Council welcomes applications in the following grant categories:

**Major Grants** (\$20,000 maximum) support humanities events: symposiums, conferences, exhibits, lectures.  
**Due:** Sept. 1, \*Feb. 1

**Minigrants** (\$1,500 maximum) support small projects, single events, or planning/consultation.  
**Due:** Oct. 1, Dec. 1, \*Feb. 1, April 1, June 1, Aug. 1

**Fellowships** (\$2,500) support research and writing projects for humanities faculty and independent scholars.  
**Due:** \*Feb. 1

**Media Grants** (\$20,000 maximum) support the production of electronic or film materials, or a newspaper series. **Due:** Sept. 1

**Publication Grants** (\$20,000 maximum) support the production phase of a completed manuscript by recognized nonprofit and academic presses.  
**Due:** Sept. 1

**Teacher Institute Grants** (\$25,000 maximum) are available to colleges and universities and support summer seminars for secondary and elementary teachers.  
**Due:** Sept. 1

### \* Approaching Deadlines!

Visit [www.wvhumanities.org](http://www.wvhumanities.org) for applications and guidelines, or call (304)346-8500.

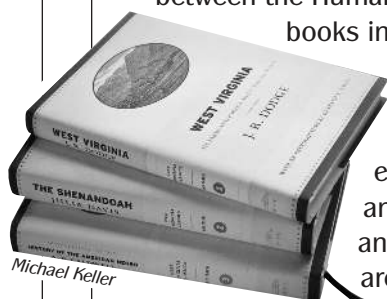


Go Dogs! Martinsburg High fans cheer as the Bulldogs win their third state championship, 2012.

Journal Newspaper Photo by Ryan Decker

**Smithsonian Sports Exhibit:** The Humanities Council is sponsoring a special West Virginia tour of the new Smithsonian Institution traveling exhibit *Hometown Teams* beginning February 2014. We invite applications from organizations interested in hosting the exhibit. There is no charge for selected venues to participate in the tour, and funds will be provided to each site to present programs about local sports. The postmark deadline for applications is March 1, 2013. Contact (304)346-8500 or [payne@wvhumanities.org](mailto:payne@wvhumanities.org) to request a *Hometown Teams* application. Six sites will be announced in the spring of 2013.

**Statehood Speakers:** In honor of West Virginia's 150th birthday, the Humanities Council has added more statehood topics to its Sesquicentennial Speakers Bureau roster for 2013. Five outstanding scholars, including West Virginia Historian Laureate Ronald L. Lewis (right), are available to talk on the circumstances and processes surrounding the creation of West Virginia. The Council pays honorarium and travel expenses for the speakers. For bookings contact Mark Payne at (304)346-8500 or [payne@wvhumanities.org](mailto:payne@wvhumanities.org). Visit [www.wvhumanities.org](http://www.wvhumanities.org) for a complete list of speakers.



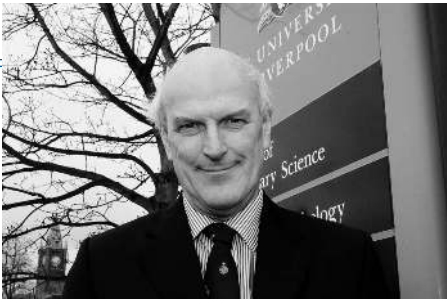
Michael Keller

The West Virginia Classics series, a publishing collaboration between the Humanities Council and WVU Press, has three books in print and several more in the works.

Folklorist John Harrington Cox's 1925 *Folk-Songs of the South* will be published later this year. The book consists almost entirely of West Virginia material, including an interesting conflation of the "John Hardy" and "John Henry" songs. Other upcoming titles are *Francis H. Pierpont: Union War Governor of Virginia and Father of West Virginia* (1937) by Charles H. Ambler and the "Uncle Abner" mystery stories of Melville Davisson Post (1869-1930). The handsome hardbound books are affordably priced at \$24.99. For more details visit [www.wvupressonline.com](http://www.wvupressonline.com) or call 1-866-WVU-PRES.

The National Endowment for the Humanities offers many summer programs with generous stipends for educators, librarians, and school administrators. The deadline for the 2013 summer seminars, workshops, and institutes is (postmark) March 4, 2013. Visit [www.neh.gov](http://www.neh.gov) for eligibility requirements and a complete list of programs.





## Top Preservationist to Speak

The Humanities Council will bring one of the world's most respected authorities on industrial heritage and

historic preservation to West Virginia this May for National Historic Preservation Month. Sir Neil Cossons has a lifetime of experience in historic environment conservation and heritage. He is the former Chairman of English Heritage, the group responsible for hundreds of historical and archeological sites in England from Stonehenge to the Battle of Hastings. Sir Neil will speak at three locations – in Jefferson County, at WVU in Morgantown, and at West Virginia Independence Hall in Wheeling. Visit [www.wvhumanities.org](http://www.wvhumanities.org) for details.

**150 for 150.** The West Virginia Library Commission challenges West Virginians to read 150 books during West Virginia's 150th year. Books may be on any topic, fiction or nonfiction, in any format and from any source, and must be read between January 1 and December 31, 2013. All ages and groups may participate, and libraries across West Virginia are encouraged to form teams. For details visit [www.librarycommission.wv.gov](http://www.librarycommission.wv.gov) or contact Megan Tarbett at [megan.h.tarbett@wv.gov](mailto:megan.h.tarbett@wv.gov).

## Ike Lecture Opens Series

"Eisenhower in War and Peace" by Jean Edward Smith is the first program of the 2013 Little Lecture Series at Humanities Council headquarters, the historic MacFarland-Hubbard House in Charleston. Smith's lecture from his 2012 biography of the same name begins at 2:00 p.m. on Sunday, March 17. Other speakers include Betty Rivard, author of *New Deal Photographs of West Virginia*, on April 28, crafts industry pioneer Donald Page on May 19, and historian John Alexander Williams on June 23 with a West Virginia Sesquicentennial presentation. The Sunday afternoon lectures include a reception, and admission is \$10. Seating is limited. Call (304)346-8500 for reservations or email [payne@wvhumanities.org](mailto:payne@wvhumanities.org).



*General Dwight D. Eisenhower, Supreme Allied Commander, at the wheel of his jeep somewhere in France, December 28, 1944.*

◀ The *Born of Rebellion* traveling exhibit is on the road again and available at no cost to interested groups. Contact program officer Mark Payne at (304)346-8500 or [payne@wvhumanities.org](mailto:payne@wvhumanities.org). The popular sesquicentennial display about the creation of West Virginia is now booked from February through October.

**The Humanities Council board of directors welcomes two new members:** Dan Foster of Charleston, a medical doctor and former state senator who was named the 2012 West Virginian of the Year by the *Sunday Gazette-Mail*, and Cheryl Hartley, general manager of Tamarack, who lives in Beckley and has more than 30 years' experience in nonprofit administration.

## Program Committee

**Election:** Please help us choose citizen members for the Humanities Council program committee. Your vote gives the public a voice in our grants and program decisions. Vote for three of the candidates below:

\_\_\_ Charlie Delauder, Tyler County, is a retired teacher. He served on the Foundation for the Improvement of Public Education for many years, and as president of the West Virginia Education Association.

\_\_\_ Sally Haynes, Nicholas County, has volunteered with the Ivy & Stone Council for the Arts in Summersville for 18 years. She has 20 years' experience as an administrative assistant for federal grant programs in Monongalia County Schools.

\_\_\_ Jacob Nichols, Kanawha County, is a senior legislative analyst for the West Virginia Senate. He holds a B.A. in political science from Bob Jones University. Jacob was raised in Clay County where he published the *Clay County Free Press*.

\_\_\_ William A. O'Brien, Raleigh County, retired as director of Concord University's Beckley center. He earned a Ph.D. in American history and political science from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He now serves on the program committee and is eligible for re-election.

\_\_\_ Larry Springer, Morgan County, is director of the Morgan County Public Library. He earned a Bachelor of Music and a Master of Music from the Peabody Conservatory. He now serves on the program committee and is eligible for re-election.

*Return your ballot by mail to the West Virginia Humanities Council or email your choices to [saunders@wvhumanities.org](mailto:saunders@wvhumanities.org) by March 15th.*

West Virginia Humanities Council  
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Charleston, WV 25301

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The West Virginia Humanities Council gratefully acknowledges support from the National Endowment for the Humanities; the Office of the West Virginia Secretary of Education and the Arts; and foundations, corporations, and individuals throughout the Mountain State and beyond.

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tells a story, and collectively they tell a big story. These are special places, and they need to be better understood.

That's why documentation projects such as the Fort Seybert volunteers are undertaking in Pendleton County are so important. Ideally, the combined efforts of such groups will contribute to a master database accounting for all rural burying places in West Virginia. Such information will be valuable to those of us trying to come to a fuller knowledge of our cultural heritage, and of practical use to anyone in the earth-moving business. I hope the Humanities Council can do more to facilitate the work.

With humanities projects throughout the state, we try to make the most of our road trips. Earlier in the day Amy and I had visited the site of Fort Hinkle in nearby Germany Valley. A previous Council project had funded the excavation of this frontier outpost by archeologists Stephen and Kim McBride, who have done so much to unearth West Virginia history. At Fort Hinkle they did their usual thorough job of covering things back over once the digging was done. What remains is the grassy site, with appropriate signage.

Riverton is the jumping-off point for the area we had come to visit. It's just up the North Fork from Seneca Rocks in what is, for my money, some

of the most beautiful country in the United States. It was a gorgeous October day. We had just lunched on lamb and yogurt on pita at the little restaurant above Harper's Store at Seneca. I was sorry to learn that the lamb came from somewhere far off — Idaho, I believe — when there were sheep grazing within earshot. No doubt some Ag Department regulation kept me from my rightful taste of North Fork lamb, but I wasn't about to complain about a savory meal served in full glorious view of Seneca Rocks.

This is where Seneca Creek comes down to the North Fork, a significant place since Indian times. Today it's the location of a great West Virginia crossroads, where State Route 55 and U.S. 33 diverge. Motorists coming from the west, as we did, may turn left, as most do, and travel on to Grant and Hardy counties and the busy South Branch Valley. Turn right and you're heading for higher elevations, up the North Fork. That will carry you to Pocahontas County, or to Highland County (Virginia) if you stick with the ever-dwindling stream. This is the North Fork of the South Branch of the Potomac River, to use its full proper name, at the very top of the Potomac watershed and a long, long way from the District of Columbia.

That's the direction we took as we left Riverton, up the watershed and away from the saga carved into the stones of Hinkles, McDonalds, and others at the little graveyard. No doubt the poet was right. Old cemeteries mellow as the years settle around them, sorrow fading with the passing generations. Then a well-kept family graveyard exchanges sharp, fresh anguish for tranquility, becoming a place for quiet reflection and respectful curiosity. The Hinkle-McDonald Cemetery was every bit of that, and we felt privileged to have been there.

— Ken Sullivan



A Pendleton County gravestone.

Photo by Gerald Milnes

People & Mountains is published three times a year by the West Virginia Humanities Council. We welcome reader letters, freelance manuscripts, and financial contributions. Please address correspondence to West Virginia Humanities Council, 1310 Kanawha Boulevard, E., Charleston, WV 25301 or email [sonis@wvhumanities.org](mailto:sonis@wvhumanities.org).