



PRESS RELEASE

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HUMANITIES COUNCIL RELEASES FALL ISSUE OF *PEOPLE & MOUNTAINS*

Charleston—The West Virginia Humanities Council has released the Fall 2026 edition of its digital magazine, *People & Mountains*. It can be accessed from the Council's website: wvhumanities.org.

This issue profiles award-winning journalist and historian Rick Atkinson, who will present the 2026 Betsy K. McCreight Lecture in the Humanities at the Capitol Theater, October 15, at 7:30 p.m., in Charleston. For more than four decades, the Council's annual McCreight Lecture has connected West Virginia audiences to some of the nation's premier public intellectuals.

Atkinson, a three-time Pulitzer Prize winner and former *Washington Post* journalist, is the author of the *New York Times* best-selling *The British Are Coming*. The first volume of his widely hailed Revolution Trilogy has earned numerous honors. The second volume, *The Fate of the Day*, continues the sweeping narrative of the American Revolution, capturing the conflict's critical middle years with vivid storytelling and insights. Atkinson also served as a historical advisor for Ken Burns' PBS documentary series *The American Revolution*, which commemorates the Revolution's 250th anniversary. Several titles on more recent conflicts preceded these efforts, including the much-acclaimed Liberation Trilogy, which chronicles the American military's role in Europe during World War II—the first volume of which, *An Army at Dawn*, won the Pulitzer Prize for history in 2003.

For more information about the lecture, contact Council Program Officer Kyle Warmack, warmack@wvhumanities.org, 304-346-8500.

The Fall issue also highlights an often overlooked tool of weavers. Fiber artist Enrica McMillon of Elkins explains how box tape looms were used, what they produced and why they were essential to life on the frontier. This article is part of the nationwide *By the People: Conversations Beyond 250* initiative, developed by the Federation of State Humanities Councils and the Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage. West Virginia Folklife filmed demonstrations by traditional musicians and artists. The finished material will be deposited in the Smithsonian and featured in *e-WV: The West Virginia Encyclopedia*. Both West Virginia Folklife and *e-WV* are projects of the Council.

Additionally, *People & Mountains* looks at the fascinating hunting and writing career of Preston County's George Bird Evans, who championed a philosophy of conservation, ethics and personal restraint. This issue also includes photos from a celebration of folklorist Gerry Milnes held at the Council headquarters in May. The West Virginia Humanities Council successfully nominated Milnes to be a 2026 National Heritage Fellow and this year's sole recipient of the prestigious Bess Lomax Hawes National Heritage Fellowship.

People & Mountains is published by the West Virginia Humanities Council three times a year. It profiles the Council's work and developments in the humanities statewide. It is available for free on the Council's website: wvhumanities.org.

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The West Virginia Humanities Council, an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit institution, is the state affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). With the support of the NEH, the State of West Virginia, the West Virginia Department of Tourism and contributions from the private sector, the Council supports a vigorous program in the humanities statewide in West Virginia.