

Randolph County Historical Society Newsletter

Vol 1, Spring, 2026

Frontier Religion Program May 28

Continuing our theme of 250th Anniversary of America, Dr. J.L. Tomblin will present “Early American Religion and the American Revolution” for the spring RCHS program.

While the American Revolution is remembered as a secular event, emphasizing the importance of enlightenment ideas of self-government and natural equality, it was equally a religious movement. From Radical Ministers encouraging men to fight for their rights to popular views of Democracy and Protestant Christianity being synonymous, many Americans felt that the revolution against Britain was equally a crusade to create “godly government” for and among Americans.

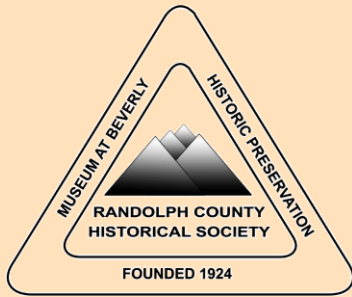
Dr. Tomlin will explain how religious ideas infused the Revolutionary movement and united Americans against the British Empire.

Our speaker, Dr. Tomblin, is a historian of Early America and the American Revolution at Fairmont State University. **See page 3** to learn more about him.

This spring program for Randolph County Historical Society will be Thursday, May 28, 2026 at 6:30 at the Beverly IOOF Community Room, Main Street (upstairs, next to Mi Fiesta), Beverly. Join us for this free program.

The Randolph County Museum next door will host an open house from 5 to 6:30 pm, prior to the program, to give you a first look at our summer exhibit about the Harts of Randolph.

We hope to see you there!



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UPCOMING EVENTS

May 28 Museum Open House
and Early American Religion
Program

Museum Hours 10 – 4
Fri, Sat - May, Sept, Oct;
Thurs, Fri, Sat - summer.

Beverly Heritage Day July 18.
Tours, schoolhouse openings
through the summer

Upcoming Book Reprint

The Harts of Randolph

The Harts of Randolph is a detailed genealogical account of the families and descendants of Edward and Daniel Hart. They were two sons of John Hart, a signer of the Declaration of Independence from New Jersey.

Edward and Daniel settled in what is now Randolph County, West Virginia. The book traces their roots from early colonial America into the rugged Appalachian frontier and provides detailed genealogy into the mid-twentieth century.

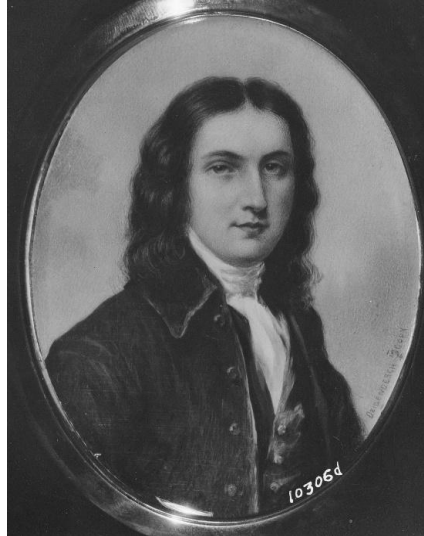
By combining historical context with personal narratives, this book goes beyond genealogy to explore how members of the Hart family participated in local affairs, endured the challenges of isolation and conflict, and contributed to the region's development.

The role of Hart descendants during the Civil War, on both sides of the conflict, is highlighted. Through historical documents, anecdotes, and lineage charts, it reconstructs the family's growth across generations, placing their story within the broader patterns of American westward expansion.

Preserving the heritage of a family and sharing a slice of Appalachian history, this book is valuable to descendants, historians, and anyone interested in early American settlement.

With permission from the family of the author Katherine Hart Frame, Randolph County Historical Society and McClain Printing are bringing this faithful reproduction of *The Harts of Randolph* back to print.

The reprint is expected to be available summer of 2026, and can be purchased from RCHS. Watch our website for details!



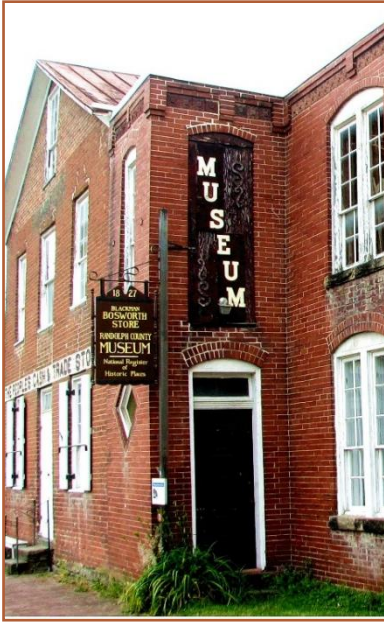
America at 250 in Randolph Co.

250 years ago, when the Declaration of Independence for our nation was signed, colonial settlement in the Tygart Valley was only four years old.

Three Randolph County historical organizations are preparing programs and exhibits for 2026 connect local history to the America250 commemoration.

Funded in part by the Randolph County Bicentennial Trust, with additional grants from Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area, three organizations will showcase how America at 250 applies to Randolph County.

This includes the RCHS exhibits and programs this summer. Others to look out for are Beverly Heritage Center exhibits and programs, including Beverly Heritage Day July 18, and exhibits and programs at the Appalachian Forest Discovery Center, in the Darden Mill in Elkins.



Upcoming Hart Exhibit

The Randolph County Museum's new exhibit, *The Harts as Founders: From Revolution to Randolph County*, traces one family's story from the era of the American Revolution to the early development of our region. Through documents, artifacts, and personal items, the exhibit highlights how members of the Hart family contributed to both national events and local community building. Visitors will see connections to Revolutionary War service, early settlement, and the growth of Randolph County, along with stories of later generations, including their experiences during the Civil War. The exhibit also explores the Hart family's ties to other prominent local families, offering a broader look at how these relationships shaped the area's history. The exhibit will be open by May 28, 5 pm, for an open house prior to the spring program.

Randolph County Museum will be open MORE this summer. 2026 hours will be 10 to 4, Friday and Saturday during May, Sept, & Oct, and Thursday, Friday, Saturday through the summer. Come see us!

Subscription School Update

Work will start soon on repainting of the historic Subscription School, located behind the museum. This work will help protect the structure while maintaining its historic character.

This refresh project will also include new interpretation about early education in Randolph County, with exhibit inside the school about one-room schools and rural education. The Subscription School will be open June 6, July 18, Aug 8, and other selected events this summer, or by appointment.

About our Speaker (continued from page 1)

J.L. Tomlin is a historian of Early America and the American Revolution, and Assistant Professor of Early American History at Fairmont State University. His research focuses on the nexus of religion and colonial politics. He earned his Ph.D. from the University of Tennessee studying Anti-Catholic Conspiracies in Early America, and the influence these symbolic expressions had on the American Revolution. His current projects include, *Holy War in Early America: Crusading and Colonial Warfare*, which examines the extent to which colonial Americans viewed ongoing imperial warfare as a single, cataclysmic, conflict for the creation of God's Kingdom on Earth, and *Monsters and Strangers: A People's History of West Virginia Cryptids*. His research has been published in both academic and public journals including *The Age of Revolutions*, *Foreign Policy*, *The Washington Post*, *History News Network*, *Bunk History*, *Dame Magazine*, and *Religious Dispatches*.



Join NOW

Just a reminder to renew your membership in Randolph County Historical Society for 2026, if you've not yet done so. Members get mailed newsletters, a vote at Annual Meeting – and most importantly – knowing you are supporting the work of Randolph County Historical Society to preserve and share our local history. Join now, volunteer, or get involved with projects.

Historical Society Centennial Continues

Randolph County Historical Society was formed in 1924, with the initial meeting in May of that year at the YMCA. The first organizational banquet was held in January of 1925, at the Tygart Hotel. RCHS has commemorated its founding with a special exhibit on our “founders” at the Randolph County Museum, and with centennial programs at the YMCA in May 2024 and banquet at the Tygart Hotel in January 2025. We thank all of our members and supporters who attended and contributed to these events.

Randolph County Historical Society was formally incorporated in 1926. In continuing our Centennial activities, we will be focusing on preservation and interpretive projects related to some earlier efforts of the Society, such as site preservation, publications, and programs.

Randolph County Historical Society is also participating in America at 250 projects as connected to our own Centennial. As partners in the county-wide commemoration the Hart's exhibit and book reprint, education in Randolph County projects, and upcoming work to identify and share early historical monuments will all showcase the ongoing work of RCHS to preserve and share out county history. See you this summer!

Randolph County Historical Society

Randolph County Historical Society

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Join or Renew NOW for 2026!

Randolph County Historical Society Membership 2026 levels:

_____ \$20 member _____ \$10 hardship _____ \$50 supporting

\$_____ additional donation

\$_____ Don Rice or Randy Allan memorial donation

\$_____ building fund donation

_____ Contact me about volunteer opportunities

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email (or phone): _____

Return this form with your check to: RCHS, PO Box 342, Elkins WV 26241

To pay online go to: <http://www.randolphhistoricalwv.org/support/>

email: randolphcountymuseum@gmail.com