

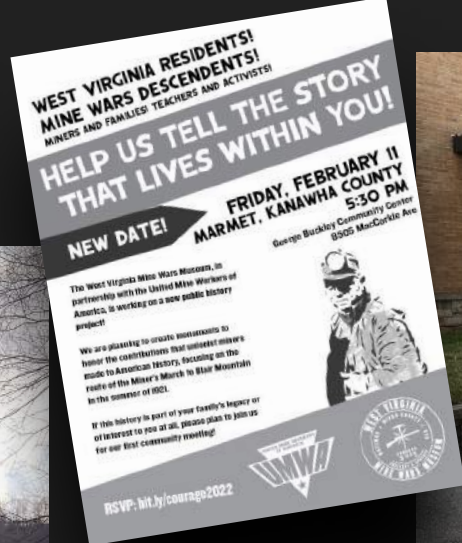
# COURAGE IN THE HOLLERS

MAPPING THE MINERS' STRUGGLE FOR A UNION

A PROJECT OF THE WEST VIRGINIA MINE WARS MUSEUM



Monument site: United Mine Workers (UMWA)  
Local 2935 union meeting hall, Clothier, West Virginia  
*photo: Shaun Slifer*



poster for first community planning meeting,  
*design: Shaun Slifer*

Monument site: George Buckley Community Center,  
Marmet, West Virginia, marquee outside our first  
community meeting, February 11, 2022  
*photo: Shaun Slifer*



“We’re developing a series of community-created public monuments within the rural Appalachian landscape that memorialize a history that was explicitly removed from educational curricula and that rarely appeared in history books. Why was this dramatic story suppressed? Because it was critical lived example of the power of cross-racial, multi-ethnic solidarity.”

— Shaun Slifer, Lead Designer, *Courage in the Hollers*



Wilma Steele, founding board member of West Virginia Mine Wars Museum, chats with Mark Totten, director of Chesapeake & Ohio Railway Historical Society at first community meeting in Marmet, WV  
*photo: Shaun Slifer*

WEST VIRGINIA RESIDENTS  
 MINE WARS INTERESTED PARTIES  
 MINERS AND FAMILIES TEACHERS AND ACTIVISTS

JOIN US AS WE DEVELOP THE NEW  
**MINERS' MARCH PUBLIC MONUMENT PROJECT!**

UPCOMING COMMUNITY MEETINGS

**MARMET**  
 KANAWHA COUNTY  
 GEORGE BUCKLEY COMMUNITY CENTER  
 1820 S. MACCORMICK AVE.  
 MARMET, WV 26105

FRIDAY  
**MARCH 11 @ 5:30PM**

FRIDAY  
**APRIL 8 @ 5:30PM**

FRIDAY  
**MAY 13 @ 5:30PM**

**SHARPLES/CLOTHIER**  
 LOGAN COUNTY  
 UMWIA LOCAL #441 2215  
 (SHARPLES BARBERS) (CLOTHIER)  
 2300 OF FOGEL VALLEY ROAD OFF HWY 17

SATURDAY  
**MARCH 12 @ 11am**

SATURDAY  
**APRIL 9 @ 11am**

SATURDAY  
**MAY 14 @ 11am**

The West Virginia Mine Wars Museum, in partnership with the United Mine Workers of America, is working on a new public history project.

We are seeking to attract communities to honor the contributions that coal miners made to the American history, focusing on the issue of the Miner's March to Blair Adventure in the summer of 1910.

It is the history to part of your family's legacy or of interest to you or all, please plan to join us for our community meeting!

[www.wvmuseum.org/coalage](http://www.wvmuseum.org/coalage)

Community meeting schedule poster for both communities. These were distributed to homes and businesses around both towns.  
*design: Shaun Slifer*



## First Community Meetings: Listening + Building Trust

February, 2022



Historian Chuck Keeney chats with team member Bobby Starnes and community members Lou Anne Bolyand + Mary Bolyand at their first community meeting in Clothier, WV  
*photo: Ric McDowell*

Barbara Ellen Smith, West Virginia Mine Wars Museum board member, helps with brainstorming activities at a community meeting in Clothier, WV

*photo: Ric McDowell*

Slideshow + discussion of global examples of monuments with team members at first community meeting in Marmet, WV  
*photo: Shaun Slifer*







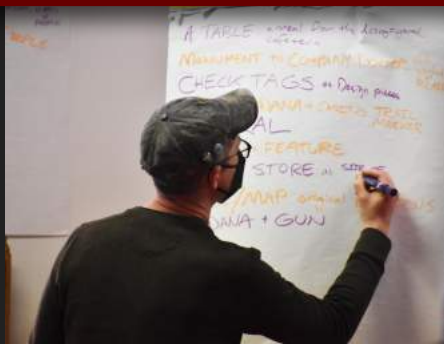
Mackenzie New-Walker, team leader + director of West Virginia Mine Wars Museum, leads a community brainstorming meeting on monument content in Marmet, WV  
*photo: Ric McDowell*

Community members contribute + review results of brainstorming activity in Marmet, WV  
*photos: Ric McDowell*

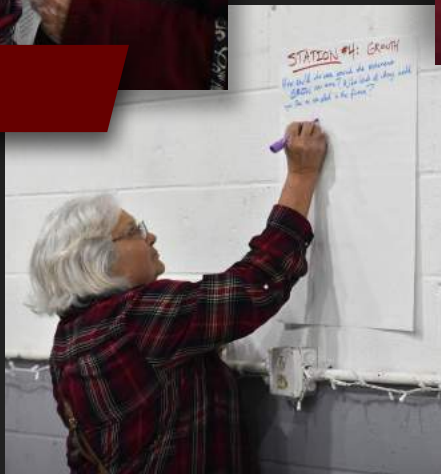


## Community Process: Content

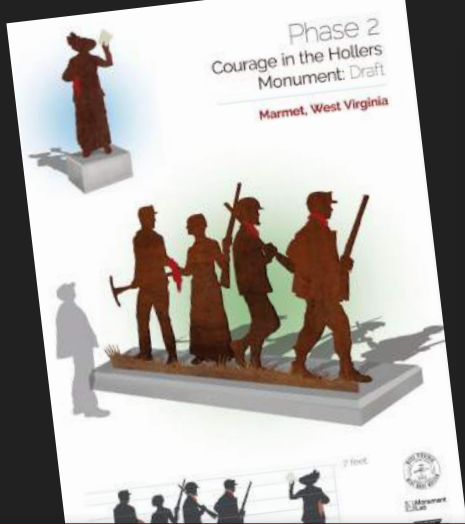
February - April, 2022



Lead designer Shaun Slifer, creative director at West Virginia Mine Wars Museum, logs group "shout-outs" during monument content brainstorming meeting in Clothier, WV  
*photo: Ric McDowell*



Historian Paul Rakes (above) and other community members review a historical educational handout prepared by team member Kyle Warmack at community meeting in Marmet, WV  
*photo: Ric McDowell*



April - June, 2022

## Community Process: Design



Mackenzie New-Walker, team leader + director of West Virginia Mine Wars Museum, walks through potential monument sites with community members in Marmet, WV  
 photos: Ric McDowell + Shaun Slifer

Lead designer Shaun Slifer, creative director at West Virginia Mine Wars Museum, presents phase two monument designs at community meeting in Marmet, WV  
 photo: Ric McDowell

Phase 2 design proposals for Marmet + Clothier, WV. These were distributed at each meeting and produced as large posters on which feedback was documented.  
 design: Shaun Slifer





Several community members volunteered to take part in a costumed photo shoot, using actual artifacts from the era + other elements, as the first step in creating silhouettes of characters that would eventually be cut from COR-TEN weathering steel for the final monuments.

Photo shoots were organized for both towns in mid-June, 2022. photos: Mackenzie New-Walker + Shaun Slifer



Marmet actors: Jackie Berry, Rob Berry, Patti Long McGrew, Tom Long, Faye Long.



Clothier actors: Greg Butcher, Kate Butcher, Dwayne Marcam, Myla Davis, Lon Anne Bolyand, Marry Bolyand.

## The Photo Shoot

June, 2022



## Monuments: Steel Fabrication

July - August, 2022

Laser-cutting of steel silhouettes and other elements was contracted to a union steel shop in Pittsburgh, with joinery and structural fabrication work done by public artist Ben Grubb.

*photos: Shaun Slifer*

Clothier community members Greg & Kate Butcher in design process from costumed photo, to vector outline, to laser-cut COR-TEN weathering steel.  
*photos + designs: Shaun Slifer*





# Public Unveiling Events

## Labor Day Weekend, September, 2022

Hundreds attended the unveiling events on September 3 in Clothier, WV and September 5 in Marmet, WV. Speakers at the events included UMWA President Cecil Roberts, and (middle column, top to bottom) team members Mackenzie New Walker + Shaun Slifer of the West Virginia Mine Wars Museum, community member and teacher Myla Davis, and team member Brian Lacy, Vice President of UMWA District 17.

*photos: Dylan Vidovich*



Cake baked by community member Myla Davis for Clothier unveiling event. *photo: Dylan Vidovich*





The Monuments:

# Marmet, West Virginia



Community members and installed monument in Marmet, WV  
photos: Stef Bernal-Martinez +Dylan Vidovich





Community members and installed monument in Clothier, WV  
photos: Dylan Vidossich + Ben Grubb



The Monuments:

**Clothier, West Virginia**





Before *Courage in the Hollers*, only one historical marker existed in the landscape, at a remote location on the side of the highway at the base of Blair Mountain.

It has gone missing many times over the years.



Public artist Ben Grubb regards the only state-sanctioned public historical marker for the Battle of Blair Mountain.

photo: Shaun Slifer



Roadside wayfinding signs were installed in both locations.  
photo: Stef Bernal-Martinez

*Courage in the Hollers* brings three new interpretive panels each to two locations, telling the story of the 1921 Battle of Blair Mountain and the struggles that led to it within the landscape in which it happened. This work happened in collaboration with historians, artists, organizers, and, critically, the people who live there *now*.

Community members and installed interpretive signage in Clothier + Marmet, WV  
photo: Dylan Vidovich + Shaun Slifer

