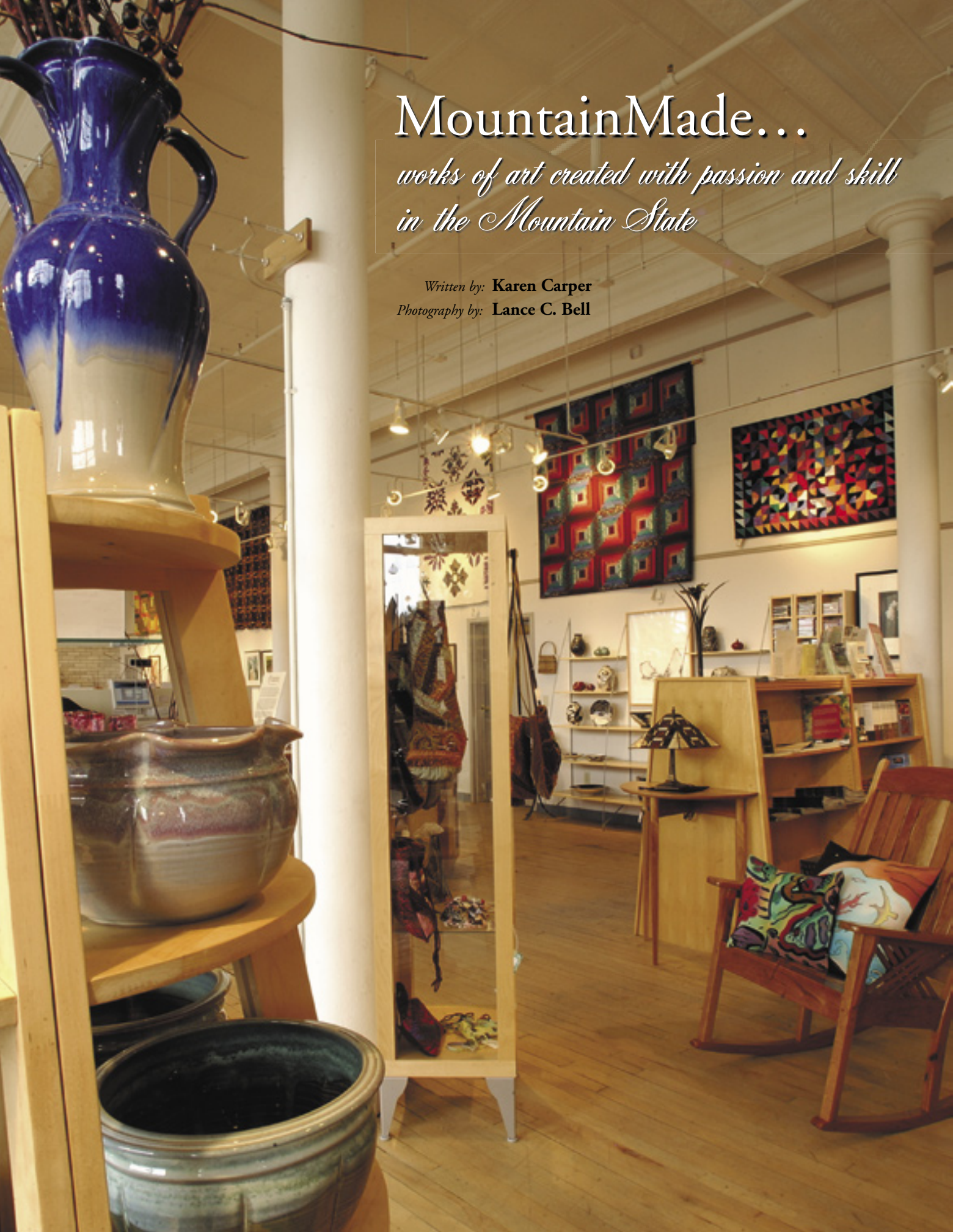


# MountainMade...

*works of art created with passion and skill  
in the Mountain State*

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West Virginia's Tucker County is a well-known destination for outdoor recreation enthusiasts. The county's ski resorts, state parks, national forest and wildlife refuge welcome nearly a million annual visitors to golf, ski, hike, bike, boat, hunt and fish.

But recreation is not all this area has to offer. In the midst of all its natural beauty, another attraction has emerged.

MountainMade invites visitors to experience the rich culture and heritage of the Mountain State. Located just 30 minutes from Oakland, Maryland, in the tiny town of Thomas, the MountainMade Artisan Gallery and

Country Store feature the work of 600 West Virginia artists and craftspersons, musicians and authors.

Established in 2001, the MountainMade Artisan Gallery is not only a showcase of fine art and craft products. Housed in the beautifully restored Buxton & Landstreet Building, the gallery is also a monument to local history. Handmade furniture, glass, pottery, sculpture, jewelry, quilts and candles are displayed under the high, pressed tin ceiling of the former coal company store. Art is at home in the building, once considered the finest in the entire county with its white tile bricks, ornamental ceilings, graceful columns and many electric lights.

Approaching from Thomas on the Douglas Road, the B&L Building looms large in the distance where its high, arched windows show the dazzling display within. Inside,

colorful quilts line the walls and glassware, including stained glass and blown glass pieces, catch the light. An array of wearable art, from painted silk and felted pieces to gemstones set in silver and gold, drapes handmade rockers, tables and display cases. Hand sculpted metal



*The MountainMade Artisan Gallery features the juried work of 600 West Virginia artists and craftspersons. Housed in the historic Buxton & Landstreet Building on Douglas Road, the gallery is open from 10 am - 5 pm Monday through Saturday; noon - 5 pm on Sundays. A showcase of handmade products, from pottery and glassware to woodworking, metal sculptures and textiles, the gallery welcomes visitors to relax and browse.*

flowers pop up among pottery pieces set off by the warmth of woodwork. Visitors are invited to take their time experiencing these authentic works of art, all made with passion and skill by West Virginia artists.

The MountainMade Artisan Gallery is just 3/4 mile from downtown Thomas in what was once known as Coketon. During the coal boom, the three communities of Thomas, Coketon and Douglas boasted nearly 3,000 inhabitants including immigrants from 18 different European

nations. In 1892, Davis Coal and Coke, one of the largest and best-known coal companies in the world, employed some 1,600 people. The one and one-half mile stretch between Thomas and Douglas glowed with the fires of nearly a thousand coke ovens. At the peak of operations in 1915, there were nine producing mines within a mile of the company's Thomas office.

Present-day Thomas, which includes Coketon and Douglas, numbers less than 450 residents who take great pride in the history of their community. The downtown historic district, where many old buildings have been refurbished for new uses, is alive with activity. A walk along East Avenue, also known as Front Street, reveals dining, entertainment and plenty of shopping opportunities in a quaint, friendly atmosphere. Those who venture out along the railroad grade toward Coketon and Douglas can also see the remnants of hundreds of coke ovens.

Located in the historic Peacock Building on Front Street, the MountainMade Country Store opened in 2003. The Country Store features candles, soaps, food and other popular gift items in an old-time general store setting. Homemade jams and jellies, hot pepper butter, honey and maple syrup are among the most popular selections. Made locally by Five Forks Market, smoked trout paté and smoked trout artichoke dip are also favorites. Buckets of collectible cateye marbles by Marble King, one of the last marble factories in the country, tempt children of all ages. Guests are invited to browse the colorful array or just relax by the hearth in beautifully handcrafted rocking chairs.

In the back of the Country Store, the MountainMade Candle Company produces handmade beeswax taper or pillar candles in a variety of colors, sizes and natural scents. Stones from the nearby Dry Fork River were used to create the molds for MountainMade's River Rock candles. Only the wick distinguishes these "rocks" from the real thing! A viewing window allows visitors to watch the candle-making process, and questions from curious onlookers are always welcome.

Art education is also part of the MountainMade program. While vacationing, visitors can participate in workshops, usually held on Saturdays July through October. Beginners can learn new crafts or those with experience can improve their skills. The workshop schedule includes classes in chair seat weaving, doll making, knitting, quilting, felting, papermaking, bookbinding, jewelry making, photography, stained glass and others.

The B&L Building and the Peacock Building are both owned by the Vandalia Heritage Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to economic revitalization through historic preservation in north-central West Virginia.

The MountainMade Foundation is a non-profit organization funded by a grant from the U.S. Small Business Administration. MountainMade promotes the work of juried West Virginia artists and craftspersons and provides professional development opportunities for artisans as well as workshops and demonstrations for the general public throughout the year. Visit the MountainMade Web site at [www.mountainmade.com](http://www.mountainmade.com) or call 877-686-6233 toll-free for more information.



*Visitors enjoy the old-time general store atmosphere of the MountainMade Country Store in downtown Thomas. Popular gift items include candles, soaps, homemade jams and jellies, honey and maple syrup. Open 10 am - 5 pm Mon. through Sat.; noon - 5 pm Sun., the*



*Country Store is also home of the MountainMade Candle Company. The MountainMade Candle Company produces handmade beeswax taper and pillar candles. Visitors can watch the candle-making process through a viewing window at the back of the Country Store.*





*MountainMade Artisan Gallery exterior in Thomas, WV.*



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