History Snapshots

Peyton Anderson (1907-1988)

BREAKING NEWS
WHY MEDIA MATTERS
RAINA DELISLE
Illustrated by Julie McLaughlin

GEORGIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
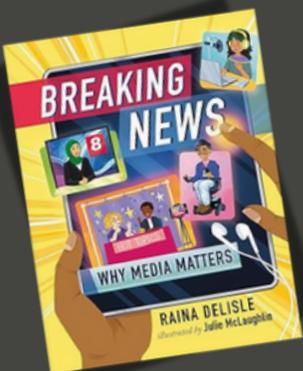
Peyton Anderson, WWII Journalist & Philanthropist

Peyton Anderson was born in Macon, Georgia, on April 9, 1907. From an early age, Anderson developed a strong publishing background as his family owned The *Macon Telegraph* Publishing Company. In 1941, he enlisted in the U.S. Navy as a public relations officer during World War II. Anderson documented major events of the Navy during this time. Some press releases include the aftermath of Pearl Harbor and the early campaign to liberate the Philippines from Japanese occupation. He also developed a program that would record interviews of servicemen stationed all over the Pacific. Those recordings would later be delivered to the soldiers' hometown where people were able to listen to the soldiers' stories. Anderson was promoted to Commander and later awarded a Bronze star for his service. Throughout his life, Anderson believed in giving back to the community and became an integral part of his hometown, Macon. This dedication ultimately led to the creation of the Peyton Anderson Foundation, which continues to support the good works of people in Central Georgia.

- **Peyton Anderson papers**
- **Today in Georgia History: Peyton Anderson video**

GHS Primary Sources

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GP
Georgia-Pacific

Lesson Introduction

Begin the lesson by showing the Today in Georgia History: Peyton Anderson video. Explain that today's lesson connects Georgia history to how information was shared during World War II and how the public learned about major events.

Review the following terms with the class to activate prior knowledge:

- **Colony**—a country or area under the full or partial political control of another country.
- **Territory**—a particular area of land that belongs to and is governed by a country.
- **Journalist** — a person who gathers, writes, and reports news and information to the public

Pose the following question to the class and record on a t-chart to reference throughout the lesson:

- How do we obtain information about Pearl Harbor and the Philippines campaign during World War II?
- Who documents those events?

Direct Instruction

Ask the class: What does a public relations officer do in the Navy?

Introduce Peyton Anderson using the Peyton Anderson Primary Source Set (Peyton Anderson papers). Highlight:

- Why Peyton Anderson documented the U.S. Navy
- Where Peyton Anderson traveled
- What stories Peyton Anderson reported

Explain that his work shaped how the public received information about World War II.

Guided Practice

Divide students into groups of five. Provide each group with:

- Peyton Anderson Primary Set.
- *Breaking News* by Raina Delisle

Have each group analyze the materials and complete a 3–2–1 written response:

- 3 interesting or important facts about Peyton Anderson
- 2 things that surprised you in the primary source set
- 1 major takeaway from the picture book.

Each group will present their findings to the class, referencing at least one primary source in their explanation.

Independent Practice

Students will complete the ticket out of door journal response:

1. Who was Peyton Anderson, and how did his work help the public understand World War II?
2. Why was journalism important during World War II?