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## MORGANTOWN HISTORY MUSEUM



# useum News

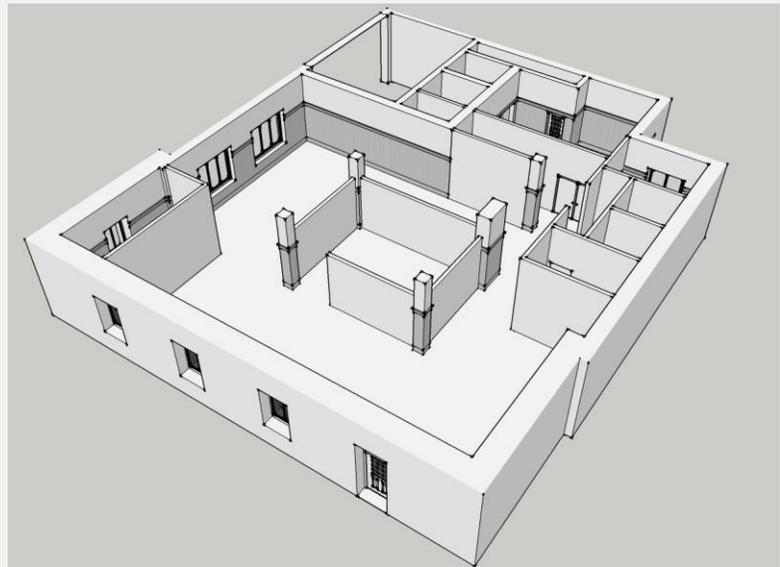
Fall 2010

Volume 2 / Number 2

### Preparations for New Site Well Under Way

During the past few months, members of the Morgantown Museum Commission, the Friends of the Morgantown History Museum, and the Mills Group, a local architectural firm, have been hard at work designing the layout of the Morgantown History Museum's future home. The new 3,500-square-foot museum will be located in the basement of the 1931 addition to the old Morgantown Post Office and will have its main entrance on Kirk Street.

The new premises will include a 2,250-square-foot exhibition area and additional spaces reserved for storage and cleaning rooms, a library, and an office. At the center of the exhibition



View of the new museum facility

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area will be a small auditorium in which visitors will be able to enjoy lectures and video presentations. Two of the walls enclosing the auditorium will be moveable. This feature will allow museum staff to open up additional room for special exhibits and events.

The museum's new permanent exhibits, which will trace the history of Morgantown and Monongalia County along a timeline, will be grouped around the auditorium. The renovation of the facility has already begun and will be completed next spring. The new venue is scheduled to open by late summer.

**Morgantown Museum  
Commission**

**Chair**

Pamela A. Ball

**Members**

Charlie Byrer, City Council  
Representative

Darryl DeGripp, Exhibit Coordinator

Scott Mathews

Pamela McClung Casto

Richard McEwuen, Secretary

James Snyder

Tim Terman

Jack Thompson

Christy Venham, Co-chair

**Assistant Coordinator/  
Museum News Editor**

Michael Mackert

The Morgantown History Museum is the first city-sponsored museum in the Greater Morgantown area. Its mission is to preserve the history of the region for the public by collecting and displaying local cultural artifacts.

Morgantown History Museum  
111 High Street  
Morgantown, WV 26505  
(304) 319-1800

[morgantownmuseum@yahoo.com](mailto:morgantownmuseum@yahoo.com)

Tuesday – Saturday  
10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

## Greetings from the Chair

Dear Friends,

The Morgantown Museum Commission was founded in 2005. At the first meeting in August of that year, we sat around a conference table at the city of Morgantown Safety Building and talked about our shared dream of a city museum that would preserve the history of the Monongalia County area for future generations.

We talked about the types of objects and information that could tell the story of the city of Morgantown and Monongalia County. At that time, we owned very little, and we did not have an operating space. But that changed quickly.

We rented a very small non-profit (incubator) space from the Greater Morgantown Community Trust in the fall of 2005 and prepared the 300 square feet of display space. We had no display cases and no real money to buy them. Out of nowhere, a friend who was shutting down his bicycle shop on the Morgantown riverfront called me. He had some cases – would we like to have them? We were thrilled! The cases needed a lot of work, but they were cases. A commission member kindly spent seventy after-work hours refinishing the cases. What a job!

Donations of artifacts came also rather quickly from the public and from the city of Morgantown. Additional needs were met with generous donations as well, and it has been that way during the last five years. For example, the museum needed a design for our sign. A local designer donated her talents, and we had a very eye-appealing sign to display. Finally, we were in business! Our incubator space opened on West Virginia Day weekend in June of 2006. A big day for us!

Now we are looking forward to next summer and the opening of a new and much larger operating space. I am excited that we have come to this place so very quickly: a new museum facility that is well into the design phase. We, the Morgantown Museum Commission, along with our Assistant Coordinator, Michael Mackert, have worked very hard to bring this new facility into being.

But, we could not have done this without YOU – the friends of the Morgantown History Museum. Thanks for all you have donated, both in time, money, and artifacts.

Pamela A. Ball  
Chairperson, Morgantown Museum Commission  
Coordinator, Morgantown History Museum

## Featured Permanent Exhibit: Printing Display

The museum's largest permanent exhibit documents the history of printing and commemorates some of the many print shops formerly operating in Morgantown. All of the artifacts in this display were used by local printing establishments during the last century.

The historic overview of printing traces the evolution of different techniques and presses from traditional woodblock printing to modern letterpress printing. In particular, it focuses on the development of different types of letterpresses in the United States, and it provides a detailed explanation of the workings of platen letterpresses.



Wooden printing blocks

The largest artifact in this collection is a massive platen letterpress manufactured by Chandler & Price Co. of Cleveland, Ohio. The press was probably originally steam-powered but was later refitted with an electric motor. It was operated by Summers Printing at their last location on Wharf Street.

Also on display are printing blocks from Westover Printing and Shaver's Printing that were used in hot-metal and woodblock printing. The images on the blocks show advertisements from Morgantown businesses no longer in existence.

Another section of the display focuses on typesetting. Here visitors learn about the composition of lines of type, print proofing, the layout principles of different type cases, and linotype machines.



Chandler & Price platen letterpress

The printing display is currently being redesigned for the museum's new facility on Kirk Street by retired printer Harold "Swifty" Shaver and Clifford A. Harvey, professor of graphic design at WVU's



Type case display

College of Creative Arts. In addition to many new artifacts, the improved exhibit will include a working printing press and live printing demonstrations.

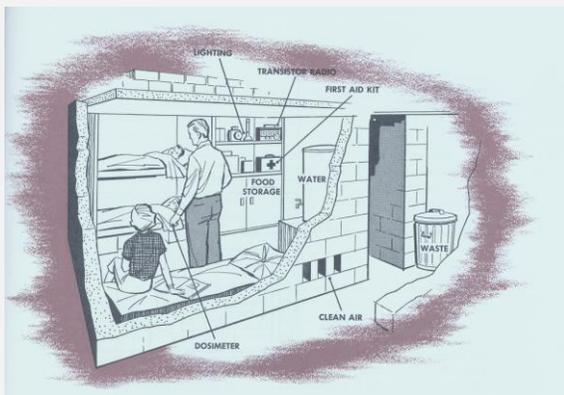
## New Acquisitions

### Grain Cradle

This handy farm implement is basically a scythe with a wooden rack attached to it. On pioneer homesteads, grain cradles were widely used for harvesting different cereals. After being cut with the scythe, bunches of the plants would fall onto the rack and then be deposited behind the person using the cradle. This enabled other workers following the cradler to assemble the sheaves of grain easily and quickly.



### Civil Defense Documents



The museum has recently added twenty-three documents to its civil defense collection. The documents were issued during the Cold War era to prepare the public for a nuclear attack. The materials include a community shelter plan for Monongalia County and brochures providing information about CONELRAD, warning signals, radioactive fallout, survival supplies, first aid, and different types of fallout shelters.

### Brass Medallions

These 3-inch medallions commemorate two important events in the history of the Sterling Faucet Company, a major industrial player operating in Morgantown between 1940 and 1996. One medal was crafted on the occasion of the company's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration. The other one was created as a reminder of the "last pour" on March 29, 1996.



To stay informed about the latest events and exhibits at the Morgantown History Museum, visit our website at [www.MorgantownHistoryMuseum.org](http://www.MorgantownHistoryMuseum.org) or our page on [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com).

## Thank You for Your Support!

We would like to thank the following individuals, families, organizations, and local government bodies for their volunteer work and/or their generous contributions to the Morgantown History Museum:

Appalachian Education Initiative  
Dr. Gene Ball  
Pamela Ball  
Donna Biess  
BOPARC  
Susan Braidi  
Carol Brock  
Julie Bryan  
Charlie Byrer  
City of Morgantown  
Darryl DeGripp  
Glenda Facemire  
Friends of the Morgantown  
History Museum  
Evan Frye  
Greater Morgantown Community Trust  
Greater Morgantown Convention  
& Visitors Bureau

Katherine Hanko  
Chris Kidwell  
Paul Kinkus  
Daniel F. Mansberger  
Pamela McClung Casto  
Richard McEwuen  
Monongalia County Commission  
Morgantown Utility Board  
Harold Shaver  
Michael Squires  
Dolores Starkey  
Judith Stitzel  
Tim Terman  
Jack Thompson  
Christy Venham  
WAJR  
WCLG  
Pamela and Karl Yagle

### In Memoriam

Kenneth J. Vance (May 26, 1916 – June 30, 2010), lawyer, musician, and member of the Morgantown Museum Commission. He will be missed.

### Membership Application

The Morgantown Museum Commission invites you to join the Friends of Morgantown History Museum to help promote and preserve the rich history of Morgantown and the surrounding area.

\$25.00 Individual \_\_\_\_\_

\$30.00 Family \_\_\_\_\_

\$50.00 Corporate \_\_\_\_\_

Additional Contributions:  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (h) \_\_\_\_\_

(w) \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to:  
Friends of the Morgantown History Museum  
111 High Street  
Morgantown, WV 26505-5412

To donate objects or to volunteer some time, please contact the Morgantown Museum Commission at (304) 319-1800 or at [morgantownmuseum@yahoo.com](mailto:morgantownmuseum@yahoo.com).

### What Is It?



This wooden artifact was found on the bank of the Cheat River below Coopers Rock several years ago. The ornamental carvings are worn but still recognizable. The artifact measures 1-1/2" by 17-3/4". If you have any information on this object, please let us know!

#### **WANTED: Sterling Faucet Artifacts**

We are still looking for artifacts from the Sterling Faucet Company. If you own any products or memorabilia from this company, please consider donating them to the Morgantown History Museum.

Preserving Morgantown's Cultural Heritage