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MORGANTOWN HISTORY MUSEUM

useum News

Spring 2012

Volume 4 / Number 1



INSIDE . . .

- ❖ Greetings from the Chair
- ❖ Tibbs Run Reservoir Centennial
- ❖ New Acquisitions
- ❖ Thank You

History Museum to Feature Titanic Memorabilia

On April 14, it will be one hundred years since the HMS Titanic hit an iceberg late in the evening and sank the next morning, taking with her 1,517 people.

That was the abrupt end of a honeymoon for Lucian Philip and Mary Eloise Smith of Huntington, WV, who had boarded the Titanic as first-class passengers at Southampton, England. As the ship sank and the lifeboats were lowered, Lucian told his pregnant bride to leave and assured her that he would soon follow. Mary was safely carried away in a boat and later rescued. However, her husband did not manage to leave the ship, and he perished with the other passengers remaining on the vessel.



Titanic leaving Southampton

Lucian had grown up in Morgantown, where he had lived in the house at 76 High Street today occupied by the Café Bacchus. In commemoration of the tragic event, Café Bacchus will hold a reception and special dinner on Friday, April 13. Reservations are required. The reception at the restaurant will take place at 5:00 p.m. Afterwards, participants will join in a ceremonial walk to the Morgantown History Museum, accompanied by musicians playing "Nearer My God to Thee."

The museum will host a reception for the opening of a special exhibit of various Titanic memorabilia entitled *Titanic - The Morgantown Story*. The Titanic memorabilia on display belong to Bobbie Hawkins, who started collecting them while in grade school. The exhibit opening and reception will start 6:00 p.m. and will be free and open to the public.

**Morgantown Museum
Commission**

Chair

Pamela A. Ball

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Charlie Byrer

Darryl DeGripp, Exhibit Coordinator

Pamela McClung Casto

Richard McEwuen, Secretary

Wesley Nugent, City Council
Representative

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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
175 Kirk Street
Morgantown, WV 26505
(304) 319-1800

morgantownmuseum@yahoo.com

Tuesday – Saturday
10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Greetings from the Chair

Dear Friends,

Things are really moving along at the museum. Our grand opening in the new facility was a smashing success with approximately 350 visitors. Folks loved the Smithsonian *The Way We Worked* exhibit. All of the museum commission members were very happy with our openings on December 16 and 17, 2011, especially after all of our hard work over the last six+ years. Seeing folks enjoying and admiring the fruits of our labor was very gratifying.

The collaborative programs we presented over the six-week run of the Smithsonian exhibit were heavily attended and successful. Folks in the community learned about the history of the Morgantown glass industry; life and work on the river as a riverboat man; child labor in the Morgantown area; work as a printer with printing demonstrations; work as a journalist, locally as well as nationally as it related to the U.S. space industry; and life and work in the Scott's Run coalfields.

The Smithsonian exhibit was taken down on January 28 and moved to the next West Virginia venue in the White Sulphur Springs area. Time for the Morgantown History Museum to move on!

Since that time we have had our core exhibits depicting Morgantown's history from prehistoric to current times on display. Special seasonal electronic displays of antique Valentine and St. Patrick's Day cards have been viewed by a number of people, both individually and in tour groups.

Recently, we have had a large display of Don Knotts items up for viewing. This special Don Knotts display was planned to coordinate with the Met Theatre show, *Tied Up In Knotts*, which was performed by Don Knotts' daughter Karen on March 23.

Coming up in April, we will be featuring an exhibit about the Titanic disaster, *Titanic - The Morgantown Story*. The exhibit will feature a large memorabilia collection owned by Bobbie Hawkins of Morgantown. Many folks are not aware that a native Morgantown resident, Lucian P. Smith, died in the disaster. Lucian and his bride Eloise were on their honeymoon. Eloise survived and gave birth to their son Lucian P. Smith, III the following winter. It is a fascinating and sad story. This year marks the 100th anniversary of the famous maritime disaster. The grand opening for the exhibit is Friday, April 13, from 6:00-8:00 p.m. It is free and open to the public, and refreshments will be served. Hope you can attend.

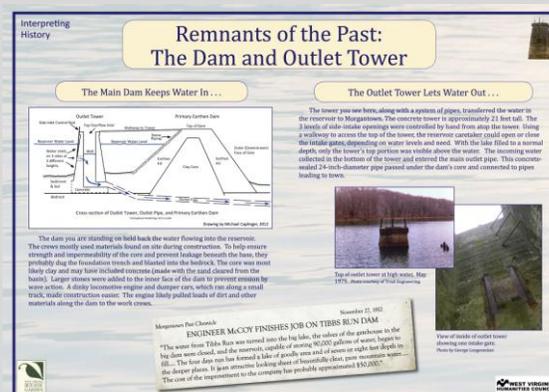
Thanks for all your continuing support—we really appreciate it!

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

Celebrate the Centennial of the Tibbs Run Reservoir on May 19!

Did you know Morgantown residents once got clean mountain water from the Tibbs Run Reservoir, which is now the site of the West Virginia Botanic Garden (WVBG) at 1061 Tyrone Road in Morgantown? The reservoir provided water to Morgantown residents from 1912 to 1969. Then, in 1999, the Morgantown City Council signed a lease with the West Virginia Botanic Garden, Inc., a not-for-profit organization, to develop a botanic garden on this 82-acre site. The WVBG is a separate organization, but the City of Morgantown still owns the property and provides important financial support, while the Morgantown Utility Board is a partner in decisions about the site.

To celebrate the centennial of the Tibbs Run Reservoir, the WVBG invites all members and friends of the Morgantown History Museum to join them on Saturday, May 19, from 1:00-3:00 p.m. at the botanic garden. This event is free and open to all. The highlight of the program will be the “unveiling” of eight new signs to interpret the history of bringing clean water to Morgantown and the development of the reservoir. These permanent signs will make the botanic garden an outdoor museum, in addition to a place where you can enjoy an old-growth forest and beautiful designed gardens. There will be a brief formal program at 1:30 p.m. Ralph Lemley was the long-time reservoir caretaker, and his family members will share stories about him during the program and when you visit the sign for the Lemley home at the site of the Eclectic Garden. After the program, visitors can enjoy refreshments and walk around the Reservoir Loop Trail to see the signs. This trail is .72 miles long and is accessible to those with disabilities. And, if you cannot attend on the 19th, the botanic garden is open every day, free of charge, from dawn to dusk. The WVBG will include more information about the history of the reservoir on its web site at www.wvbq.org in the future and will also publish a small pamphlet with information about the history of Morgantown’s water supply that will be available on the 19th.



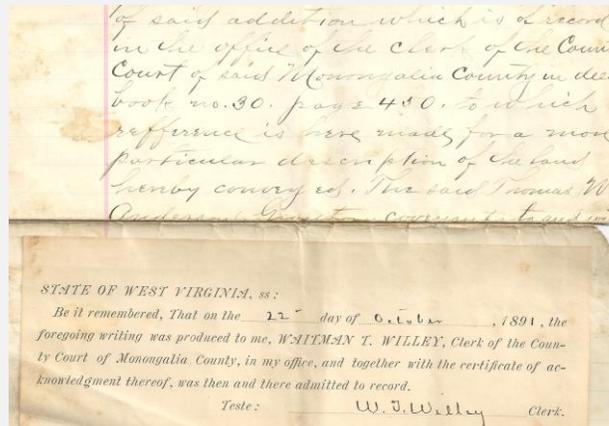
Many people have contributed to the success of this project, including Erin Smaldone, the WVBG volunteer coordinator and education director who designed the signs based on research by Michael Caplinger and Barb Howe; the Morgantown Utility Board, which gave permission to use illustrations from its files; and Joshua Coit, who is organizing the installation of the signs as his Eagle Scout project.

This project is being presented with financial assistance from the West Virginia Humanities Council, a state affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Any views, findings, conclusions or recommendations do not necessarily represent those of the West Virginia Humanities Council or the National Endowment for the Humanities.

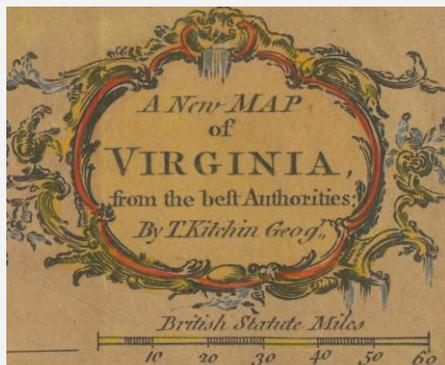
New Acquisitions

Deed of Property

This document details the transfer of a parcel of land from Thomas W. Anderson (Morgantown, WV) to Joseph W. Wolf (Monongahela, PA) on October 21, 1891. The property was located in Morgantown's Greenmont section and changed hands for \$100. On October 22, 1891, the deed was admitted to record by former U. S. senator Waitman T. Willey, who then served as the clerk of the Monongalia County Court. The admission form appended to the deed bears his signature.



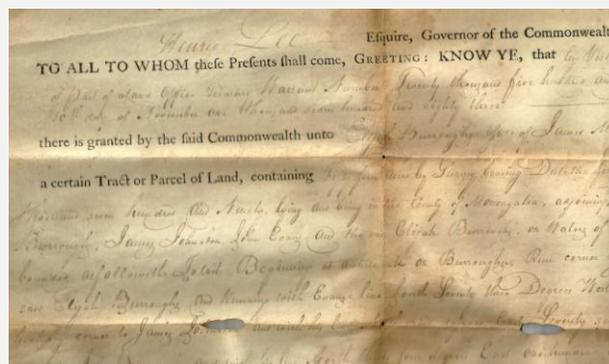
Map of Virginia



This original hand-colored map of the colony of Virginia was first published in the *London Magazine: Or, Gentleman's Monthly Intelligencer* in November 1761. The map, which measures 6½ by 8½ inches, was created by Thomas Kitchin (1719-1784), a well-known English engraver and mapmaker of the time. Kitchin used hill profiles to indicate the location and extent of Virginia's western mountain ranges. An enlarged reproduction of the map is on display in the museum's colonial section.

Virginia Land Grant

The 54-acre property in Monongalia County described in this document was granted to Elijah Burroughs on January 18, 1792. The property was "adjoining and between the lands of John Burroughs, James Johnston, John Evans and the said Elijah Burroughs, on waters of [the] Monongalia River." The grant was issued by the Virginia Land Office and was signed by then governor Henry Lee.



To stay informed about the latest events and exhibits at the Morgantown History Museum, visit our website at www.MorgantownHistoryMuseum.org or our page on 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:

Pamela A. Ball
Larry G. Bennett
BOPARC
Susan Braidi
Julie Bryan
Charlie Byrer
City of Morgantown
David Dial
Kenneth L. Fitzwater
David Fogarty
Troy and Katherine Forman
Friends of the Morgantown
History Museum
Larry Harris
Mark Knowlton
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Cindy O'Brien
David Ornick
Rodney Pyles
Clark Ridgeway
Cookie and Bernie Schultz
Harold Shaver
David Spencer
Herb Summers
Harry Swisher
Tim Terman
David and Judi Wildman
WVU School of Pharmacy
Your Community Foundation

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.

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
175 Kirk Street
Morgantown, WV 26505

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

Grand Opening, Exhibit, Draws Crowds

December 16 was an exciting day for many associated with the Morgantown History Museum and the Greater Morgantown community. That evening the museum moved into its new home at 175 Kirk Street with a gala grand opening. Simultaneous with the opening of the Smithsonian *The Way We Worked* exhibit, the gala was crowded with 350 visitors that evening.



The next day an additional 150 people visited the museum for the first day of its public opening. Since then, visits to the museum have been steady, by far outpacing visits to the old museum at the same time. More than 1,000 people have visited the museum since it opened.

Preserving Morgantown's Cultural Heritage