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MORGANTOWN HISTORY MUSEUM

useum News

Spring 2013

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WVU Students Present Exhibit Proposals

Last fall, four students who took Dr. Melissa Bingmann's Public History Methods class had the opportunity to gain experience in conducting client-based research for the Morgantown History Museum. Sarah Boppe, Abigail Cioffi, Mary Roll, and Denise Tackett consulted with museum staff and selected semester projects addressing the museum's specific exhibition needs. These included revising the content of the museum's Native American and Civil War exhibits and creating new exhibits about Ice's Ferry Bridge and the beginnings of Morgantown's industrialization.



Sarah Boppe, Denise Tackett, Abigail Cioffi, Mary Roll, and Dr. Melissa Bingmann after presenting exhibit proposals to the Morgantown Museum Commission.

In particular, the students were required to provide an overview of major themes and visual materials and to recommend the best visuals to convey their storylines. The four were also asked to develop their exhibits in such a way that they could be easily used as temporary exhibits in the museum's changing exhibits space.

The students' final task was to present their proposals to the Morgantown Museum Commission. The presentations took place during the commission's November meeting. The members of the commission were highly impressed with the students' exhibit proposals and were very pleased with this collaborative project.

**Morgantown Museum
Commission**

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Pamela A. Ball

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**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,

The Morgantown Museum Commission and Morgantown History Museum have been very busy since we published the last newsletter. Morgantown Museum Commission members made presentations to local organizations, including the D.A.R. and WVU's Osher Lifelong Learning Institute. Members also participated in Mainstreet Morgantown events, such as Arts Walk and Chocolate Lovers' Day, and they took part in the Mountaineer State History Expo, which was held in the Marion County Courthouse on April 6.

The Morgantown History Museum had the *Flatboat Project* exhibit opening this past December. The opening/reception was the second phase of this multi-phase project to build a replica of a mid-1700s flatboat on the Morgantown waterfront. A number of carpenters and construction enthusiasts who want to be involved in the actual building of the flatboat were in attendance.

Phase three of the *Flatboat Project* involves the start of the PR grassroots campaign to make area residents and others familiar with our flatboat project. The third phase started off when two commission members performed river-related tunes for the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America. We found great interest and support from members of this organization. The museum is taking the word about the *Flatboat Project* to the public to create interest and support by attending off-site festivals, giving presentations to organizations, and participating musically in local music events. The Morgantown Museum Commission and the Morgantown History Museum expect the *Flatboat Project* to take approximately two years to complete.

Recently, the museum has been asked to create a display at the Morgantown Airport. This is timely, since we are currently researching materials for an upcoming exhibit on the history of flight in Morgantown. This exhibit will start with Morgantown's early flight pioneers going back to the year 1910. The research findings have proven to be quite interesting, and we feel you will think so as well when you visit the exhibit in fall this year.

Thanks again to all of you who have joined our ranks by becoming members of the Friends of the Morgantown History Museum. We would also like to thank all who have donated artifacts and made financial contributions. Your assistance has been invaluable.

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

Flatboat Committee Does Research

Community members interested in building a flatboat replica similar to the ones built in the late 1700s at Michael Kerns' Morgantown boatyard are exploring historical records and details of other replicas that have been built.

A committee was formed to plan the project and to begin raising funds. The project began at the Morgantown History Museum in December 2012 with an exhibit about Kerns and the flatboats he built. He sold the boats to pioneers who took the Winchester Road to Morgantown and then traveled by boat further west on the Monongahela River.

The city's parks department, BOPARC, has designated a suitable location at the Ruby McQuain Riverfront Park at the mouth of Deckers Creek. The replica will not be in the river but on shore. People will be able to board the flatboat and learn about how early pioneers lived.

Already the project has gained momentum not only from BOPARC but also from WVU's Appalachian Hardwood Center. Shawn Grushecky, the center's assistant director, recently visited a flatboat replica that was built in Marietta, Ohio in the 1980s. He is also seeking local white oak to be used in the project, and volunteers are being enlisted to help build the boat. Tim Terman, the member of the Morgantown Museum Commission who originally proposed the effort, has contacted Capt. John Cooper of Tennessee. Cooper has built and piloted several flatboats, one of which is at the Mud Island River Park in Memphis.

As soon as suitable plans for the boat are obtained, fundraising goals will be set, and donations to finance the project will be sought. Carpenters in period dress will build the flatboat by using old-fashioned tools. "This boat will be a way to celebrate our city's early days," Terman said. "Additionally, we hope to make it a tourist attraction and an outreach center for the Morgantown History Museum."

Upcoming Events at the MHM

Book Talk

Author Robert Thompson will introduce his latest work, *A Woman of Courage on the West Virginia Frontier: Phebe Tucker Cunningham*, at the Morgantown History Museum on Saturday, May 11 at 2 pm.

Lecture

In honor of West Virginia Day, the Morgantown History Museum will host a lecture on the history of the creation of the state of West Virginia on June 20, 2013. The lecture, entitled "The Revolution That Forged a State," will be presented by Dr. Ronald L. Lewis, West Virginia Historian Laureate and professor emeritus of history at West Virginia University. The lecture will be held at the museum at 175 Kirk Street at 7:30 pm. It will be preceded by a reception at 7:00 pm. The lecture is made possible by the West Virginia Humanities Council's Sesquicentennial Speakers Bureau and is free and open to the public.

Exhibit

The Morgantown History Museum will host "Born of Rebellion – West Virginia Statehood," a traveling exhibit created by the West Virginia Humanities Council. The exhibit tells the unique story of the creation of the state of West Virginia through informational texts, photos, maps, and various images. After touring the exhibit, visitors will be able to cast their own vote on the constitutionality of the state. The results will be posted on the council's web site. The exhibit will open with a reception on Saturday, September 7 at 7:00 pm. The exhibit is free and open to the public and will be on display until September 28, 2013.

New Acquisitions

Civil War Era Artifacts

Among these items are a U. S. military belt buckle, photographs, and a fife. The belt buckle was found by a Granville resident while doing yard work. One of the photographs shows Morgantown native Private Charles E. Watts in uniform. He served as a private in the Third West Virginia Infantry's Company A. He was recruited at Morgantown and mustered into service for the United States at Clarksburg on June 25, 1861. The fife belonged to him.



Seneca Glass Co. Photographs



This acquisition includes 9 framed black-and-white photographs taken at Seneca Glass Co. during the late 1960s and 1970s. The photographs show company employees at work. Among them are Charles Burns ladling out molten glass from the pot, Catherine Savage marking a design on wine glasses, and Catherine Jordan and Arner Lindqvist cutting the design.

Morgantown Sports Memorabilia

This group of objects contains a 1970 Certificate of Recognition issued by the Morgantown Baseball Association, a trophy for third place in the 1978 First Ward Babe Ruth baseball tournament, and a trophy for first place in the 1948 local softball championship. Additional items came from Mooney's Pool and Recreation Hall formerly located at 335 High Street. They are a duckpin bowling ball and pin and a pair of bowling shoes with Mooney's logo.



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, and organizations for their volunteer work and/or their generous contributions to the Morgantown History Museum:

Andrea Argabright
Joseph Arnold
Pamela Ball
Diana Ball Freeland
Anthony Barill
Berkshire Athenaeum
John Brand
Julie Bryan
Maureen Busch-Terman
Katherine Forman
Helene Friedman
Friends of the MHM
Ed Hawkins
Norman Julian
Wayne King Family
John Kulseth
Ellen Leatherman
Joe Malone
Patricia Manning
Charlene Marshall
Richard McEwuen

Mary McGinnis
Michael Mills
Sarah Moore
Mountaineer Woman's Club
Gary Osterwyk
Kathy Powell
John and Charlotte Pyles
Ariel Robinson
E. F. Roleff
Sherry Rolford
Carol Rotruck
Harold Shaver
Linda Shaw
William Shiel
James Snyder
Donald Spencer
Lynn Stasick
Daniel L. Stickler
Tim Terman
Jack Thompson
R. Karl Yagle

Help Build the Boat! Are you, or do you know, a carpenter familiar with using tools of the past? We are looking for volunteers to help build the flatboat in the old-time fashion on location at Morgantown's riverfront. Funding is also needed for this project. Major sponsorships are available, and donations of any amount are welcomed. Call (304) 319-1800.

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.

Annual Memberships

\$25.00 Individual _____
\$30.00 Family _____
\$50.00 Corporate _____

Additional Contributions:

\$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Telephone (h) _____

(w) _____

E-mail: _____

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.

Morgantown High School History Classes at MHM

Dr. Angela Grabuloff recently brought several of her history classes to the Morgantown History Museum to explore local history. The students used a newly designed questionnaire that guided them through the museum's displays. They were also able to watch a live printing demonstration given by Harold Shaver, retired printer and president of the Friends of the Morgantown History Museum.



Preserving Morgantown's Cultural Heritage