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MORGANTOWN HISTORY MUSEUM

useum News

Fall 2013

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MHM Awarded Smithsonian Traveling Exhibit

The Morgantown History Museum will host a new Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibit, entitled *Hometown Teams*, from October 5 to November 15, 2014. The museum is one of six West Virginia venues that were awarded the exhibit. *Hometown Teams* is sponsored by the West Virginia Humanities Council.

The exhibit examines the role of sports in American Culture in the past and present. "Sports are a big part of what we do and who we are. Our love of sports begins in our hometowns. Hometown sports can be more than just games. They can become cultural touchstones with the ability to unite us and shape our values," says Robbie Davis, project director with the Smithsonian Institution.



Mohawk Bowl 2012

Hometown Teams will present visitors with perspectives on sports in popular culture, views of famous stadiums and arenas, audio of athletes discussing their sports traditions, information about mascots, sports memorabilia, and other artifacts. To complement the exhibit, the museum will develop companion displays and supplemental programs focusing on local teams and local sports traditions.

The Hometown Teams tour is made possible through the Museum on Main Street program, an alliance of the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibit Service, the Federation of State Humanities Councils, state humanities councils, and cultural organizations in small, rural communities.

**Morgantown Museum
Commission**

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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,

My, time has moved quickly since I wrote to all of you last spring. It seems that old adage is true: the older you get, the faster time moves. In that vein, it seems like time has been moving doubly fast at the Morgantown History Museum. Why? We have so many irons in the fire.

Our Flatboat Committee finished the final steps in order to start the construction of the Kerns flatboat in spring 2014. The museum commission celebrated this year's West Virginia Sesquicentennial with a state-inspired reception and a lecture by West Virginia's Historian Laureate Dr. Ronald Lewis. We participated in the Monongalia County July 4th celebration, Kids' Day, the Morgantown Chef Challenge fund raiser, and Arts Walk. In addition, the museum hosted *Born of Rebellion: West Virginia Statehood*, a traveling exhibit designed and funded by the West Virginia Humanities Council. The museum was also one of the participating sponsors of the recent two-day Morgantown Water Festival, which was geared towards fifth graders and the community at large.

Recently, the museum teamed up with the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) to host an exhibit entitled *Black Lung Research in Morgantown, WV: Impact on a Nation of Miners*. The exhibit illustrates the progress made in the fight against coal workers' pneumoconiosis during the past forty years. The exhibit will run from now until December 14, 2013. Please come to the museum to view this interesting display. A public opening and reception will be held on November 9 from noon to 2:00 p.m.

The Museum Commission was thrilled to learn that we were again chosen to host a Smithsonian traveling exhibit, entitled *Hometown Teams*, in fall 2014. We worked hard to become one of the six West Virginia venues for this exhibit. Hoorah! There will be a Morgantown companion exhibit on display, and a number of special events will be organized. We already attended a Smithsonian/West Virginia Humanities Council training session to prepare for the exhibit.

Lastly, I would like to congratulate Dr. Barbara Howe, who received an American Association for State and Local History Award of Merit at the association's annual meeting in September. Dr. Howe was the chair of the WVU Public History Program I graduated from many years ago. Yes, time does move by quickly!

Thanks for all your help – we greatly appreciate it!

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

West Virginia Botanic Garden, Inc. Wins 2013 AASLH Award of Merit

Dr. Barbara Howe received an American Association for State and Local History (AASLH) Award of Merit at the association's annual meeting in Birmingham, AL on September 20, 2013. Howe accepted the award, which is one of the AASLH Leadership in History Awards, on behalf of a team of collaborators who had created eight interpretive signs for the botanic garden telling the story of Morgantown's early water supply. The AASLH's award series is the most prestigious recognition for achievement in the preservation and interpretation of state and local history.

Howe and historian Michael Caplinger researched the physical remains of the now drained reservoir at the botanic garden that supplied water to Morgantown from 1912 to 1969. Using Howe's and Caplinger's findings, Botanic Garden Education Director Erin Smaldone and WVU Associate Professor of Recreation, Parks and Tourism Dave Smaldone developed content for the interpretive signs. Howe, who directed the project, said, "We designed the signs to help visitors understand how the extant features related to the natural environment as shaped by successive water companies; by 'benign neglect' after 1969; and, since 2000, by the West Virginia Botanic Garden, Inc." The project received funding through a grant from the West Virginia Humanities Council.

More information on the garden is available at www.wvbg.org and www.wvencyclopedia.org.

Flatboat Update

Pam Ball, chair of the Morgantown History Museum Commission, and Commissioner Tim Terman met this summer with Rick Colebank, CEO of Alpha Associates. He agreed to assign a person to work with the Flatboat Project Steering Committee to develop measured drawings for the flatboat. As soon as the person is assigned, the drawings for the project will be discussed. The drawings will help to determine how much wood will be needed. The target is to have building begin next spring.

This summer, the Best Chef Cook-Off at the Lakeview Resort, which was organized by Brenda Shinkovich, raised over \$2000 dollars for the Zackquill Morgan Statute Project and the Morgantown Flatboat Project. Each project received half of the money raised.

In October, the museum participated in the Morgantown Water Festival at the Hazel Ruby McQuain Park, along with BOPARC, the Friends of Deckers Creek, Consol Energy's River Division, and the River Towns Program. The museum exhibited information about the history of transportation on the Monongahela River, including the role of flatboats, and provided learning activities for visiting fifth graders. Consol Energy's River Division displayed a present-day towboat for the students.

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.

New Acquisitions

Aviation Memorabilia

The items in this donation are luggage labels, a postcard, and a ticket from passenger airlines that successively served the Morgantown airport from the 1940s to the 1960s. Also included is a 1940 copy of *Popular Aviation* magazine that contains an article about non-stop airmail pickup written by then West Virginia Congressman Jennings Randolph. One photograph in the article shows a sign in the window of Comuntzis Restaurant on Morgantown's High Street advertising fresh fish brought to the city via air.



Images of 1929 Tornado Damage



This donation includes seven black-and-white photographs showing the damage caused by a tornado that struck Evansdale, Seneca, Walnut Hills, and Willowdale Road on May 2, 1929. The devastated area was one and a half miles long and half a mile wide. In its path, the tornado destroyed thirty-one homes and caused \$500,000 of damages. Over fifty people were injured.

Walking Spinning Wheel

Morgantown resident William Hall built this spinning device in the 1800s. It consists of a large wheel and an accelerating head mounted on a bench. The wheel is connected to a smaller pulley on the accelerating head with a driving chord. A second chord connects this pulley to a smaller pulley on a horizontal spindle. The fiber to be spun is attached to a leader yarn coming off the spindle. One operates the device by turning the large wheel clockwise with one hand and by pulling the fiber away from the spindle with the other while walking backward. The spun thread is then stored on the spindle by turning the wheel in the opposite direction.



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:

James H. Benson	Wesley Nugent
Donna Biess	David Ornick
Robert Bod	Kathy Powell
Susan Braid	Thomas Pue
Alana Clements	Joe Pyle
Stewart E. Cok	Clarke Ridgway
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Bonnie Johnson	Susan Sullivan
Kitchenaire Band	Rita D. Tanner
Jane Larke	John Vidovich
Richard McEwuen	West Virginia State Archives
Mountaineer Country Tours	Betty Wiley
NIOSH	Marjorie Wolfe
	Karl Yagle

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.

To make a monetary donation, go to <https://npo.justgive.org/nonprofits/donate.jsp?ein=26-0859732>.

First Annual Water Festival, October 4-5, 2013



Coming Soon

This winter, a new exhibit entitled *Morgantown: 104 Years of Wild Blue Yondering* will be on display at the Morgantown History Museum. The exhibit will document the history of aviation in Morgantown from 1910 up to the present. Announcements with more details about the exhibit will be released soon.

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 our flatboat in the old-time fashion on location at the Morgantown riverfront. Funding is also needed for this project. Major sponsorships are available, and donations of any amount are welcomed. Call (304) 319-1800.

Preserving Morgantown's Cultural Heritage