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MORGANTOWN HISTORY MUSEUM

useum News

Spring 2014

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MHM Features Local Aviation History

A new exhibit, *Morgantown: 104 Years of Wild Blue Yondering*, recently opened at the Morgantown History Museum. The exhibit explores colorful landmarks and innovations in Morgantown's aviation history and is free and open to the public. It will be on display until September 20.

History was made in Monongalia County just north of Morgantown at Hoard in August of 1910, when the first biplane built in West Virginia took off and landed. Ben Garrison managed to make three successful short flights, rising 25 feet in the air. Garrison and his associate Ralph Kinderman made further test flights and eventually flew longer and further.



Garrison's Straightaway Hop – Pastel by Timothy Terman, 2013

Almost one year later, at the same spot, Kinderman also flew a monoplane he and Garrison had constructed in a building on Chestnut Street. Kinderman circled the field at about 75 feet up before a gust of wind caused him to crash. Fortunately, he escaped without any serious injuries.

The exhibit explores many other aeronautical developments, including nonstop airmail pickup, flying circuses, and commercial passenger flights. It also highlights local people who pursued aeronautics and the development of the Morgantown Municipal Airport.

For more information about the exhibit call (304) 319-1800 or visit www.MorgantownHistoryMuseum.org.

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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,

At the museum, we are grateful that spring finally seems to be in the air. Trees are budding; flowers are peeking from the earth; and the air is getting warmer. This has been a rough winter for all of us here in this part of the world. Now that folks feel comfortable getting out a little more, the museum will be hosting some new events.

Recently, the Morgantown History Museum collaborated with the Morgantown Historic Landmarks Commission in a history interest reception. The participants were representatives from many area organizations and individuals working on history projects. The group has now been given the name *Greater Morgantown Area History Roundtable*. We will be meeting twice a year to stay in touch and to keep up with history projects in the area.

On March 29, Commissioner Pam Casto and I participated in the Mountaineer History Expo '14 at the Marion County Courthouse. Many folks from various counties participated with displays for their organizations and projects. This year we again displayed materials from our Flatboat Project. Many folks offered to volunteer once the 'hands-on' part of the project gets started.

Commissioner Jim Slade will be giving a presentation about the early daredevils and pioneers of aviation. His talk is part of our current exhibit *Morgantown: 104 Years of Wild Blue Yondering*. The presentation, *Rascals and Their Flying Machines*, will be held at the museum on April 16th at 7:30 p.m. Jim is well known nationally for his flight history presentations.

While I am writing this, one theme keeps coming into my mind: the importance of volunteers. Over the last ten years, we have been very lucky to have special and dedicated volunteers working for the museum and on our increasing number of projects. We could not do these projects without volunteers - they make all the difference.

I would like to single out one volunteer, Commissioner Tim Terman, who will be leaving us soon to take up residence along the NC shore. He has been an invaluable part of this operation. We will miss him greatly. "Full steam ahead Tim –and may the wind always be at your back."

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

Flatboat Project Seeks Grants

The Morgantown History Museum's flatboat project is fund-raising. Three grant applications were submitted to help raise approximately \$39,000 needed to build, maintain, and open the boat to the public. The target for building the boat is spring 2015.

Steve Stathakis, who has taken the lead on moving the project forward, drafted the grant proposals. Stathakis has worked in cultural resource management as an archaeological consultant in West Virginia since 1993. He has maintained a lifelong love of water from the Great South Bay of Long Island to active duty aboard the USS John Rodgers (DD 983) to a home near the banks of the Monongahela River.

During recent meetings of the flatboat project committee, draft plans and drawings were reviewed. The group also discussed what wood types to use (yellow poplar, white oak, or both). Among other issues, the committee also talked about having a blacksmith on site to make some parts and about security at the site in Ruby McQuain Park.

Tim Terman spoke to the Morgantown River Town Action Team on March 13 to explain the flatboat project. The River Town Program began in Pennsylvania and has extended upriver to West Virginia this year with the aim of helping towns along rivers with economic development. He will also speak to the Morgantown Lions Club on April 1. Part of the flatboat project is educational outreach, and members of the committee are seeking additional clubs and organizations to speak to about the project and local history. Please contact the Morgantown History Museum at (304) 319-1800 or morgantownmuseum@yahoo.com if your organization is interested.

Upcoming Events at the MHM

Lecture

Morgantown native and renowned aviation speaker Jim Slade will give a lecture entitled "Rascals and Their Flying Machines" at the Morgantown History Museum on Wednesday, April 16 at 7:30 pm. The talk is free and open to the public and will be preceded by a reception at 7:00 pm. As seating is limited, please call the museum office at (304) 319-1800 to make reservations if you are planning to attend.

Antique License Plate to Come Home

Join us at the museum on Tuesday, June 17 at 6:30pm to celebrate the donation of a Morgantown license plate issued in 1907 and to learn about early automobiles in the area.

Hometown Teams Exhibit

The museum will host this latest Smithsonian traveling exhibit from October 5 to November 15. The exhibit examines the role of sports in American Culture in the past and present. Part of the exhibit will feature local sports stories, artifacts, and memorabilia. The exhibit will officially open with a reception held at the museum on Saturday, October 4 at 7:00 pm.

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

Col. Ralph Albertazzie Memorabilia

Ralph Albertazzie (1923-2011) was born in Cassville, WV. He served as the pilot of Air Force I during the presidency of Richard M. Nixon. The donated memorabilia include a model of a Lockheed Jet Star with the presidential seal; a portrait of Col. Albertazzie; photos of Air Force I in flight; and a photograph showing President Nixon, some of his staff, and Col. Albertazzie standing next to an Air Force I aircraft on August 9, 1974. The photographs are signed by Col. Albertazzie. Some of the memorabilia are now on display at the museum.



Kitchenaire Band Instruments



The Kitchenaire band was headquartered at the BOPARC senior center and entertained people in Monongalia County and throughout North Central West Virginia. The band's history spanned four decades beginning in 1972, when they first began performing with their unique and creative instruments made from kazoos and kitchen implements. Members of the band donated their instruments to the museum in fall last year.

Slant-Top Desk

This desk was the property of Morgantown Judge Frank Cox (1862-1940). It was built around 1850 and came out of the judge's house at 206 Spruce Street. Judge Cox received a law degree from West Virginia University in 1883. In 1904, he became a member of the Supreme Court of Appeals of West Virginia. He was president of the court when he resigned in 1907. The donation also included a framed black-and-white photograph showing the West Virginia Supreme Court building and portraits of the five judges who served on the court in 1906.



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:

Gary Albertazzie
Arts Monongahela
Pamela Ball
Susan Braid
Julie Bryan
Willis Burch
Charlie Byrer
Pamela Casto-McClung
Noel Clemmer
Chuck Coole
David DeVallance
Devin Doerr
Estol Gans
Greater Morgantown Convention
and Visitors Bureau
Alex Grey
Shawn Grushecky
Srikanth Gururajan
Matthew Held
Mary Honeycutt
Devin Jones
Glen Kelly

Meredith Kiger
Vaughn Kiger
John Loth
Jackie Marhefka
Rick McEwuen
Monongalia Arts Center
Jane Moore
Randy Moore
John Morgan
Joe Murphy
Wes Nugent
Charlie Reese
Caleb Rice
John Rowley
Harold Shaver
Jim Snyder
David Spencer
Steve Stathakis
Tim Terman
Thomas Tominack
Betty Wiley
Mark Wise

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>.

Service-Learning Students Help Museum Effort

Students from West Virginia University's Center for Service and Learning have been volunteering at the Morgantown History Museum during the spring semester. Mary Honeycutt, Devin Jones, John Morgan, and John Rowley have spent 20 hours each working at the museum. Their primary task was to move forward the museum's inventorying, accessioning, and cataloging work. Thank you for your service!



John Morgan is inventorying documents.



Mary Honeycutt is cataloging photographs.

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