



West Virginia Association of Museums NEWSLETTER

Winter 2004



Monongalia Arts Center

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MAC.....the Magic of the Arts unites our Community

Opening the door to artistic expression is what the Monongalia Arts Center (MAC) has been doing for 25 years. MAC was chartered in 1976 and opened as the arts and culture center for Monongalia County in 1978. Its mission is *to provide a home for the arts in Morgantown and Monongalia County where the work of visual and performing artists is showcased and interest in the arts is nurtured through ongoing educational programs.*

MAC is home to the Benedum Gallery and Mabel DeVries Tanner Theatre, a black box style theatre with cabaret seating for 50. The Theatre provides a theatrical outlet for community members to perform and an assortment of productions for the enjoyment of area residents. MAC also offers three semesters of classes each year for all ages, and has an extensive art outreach program, ArtsReach, which provides arts education and cultural experiences to the children and their families throughout Monongalia County. MAC's primary goal is to make the arts available to the community it serves for a fee that is affordable to persons and families with a modest income. Monies necessary to cover administrative and operating expenses come from membership dues, class tuition and community theatre ticket sales, private and corporate donations, and City and County government. The Arts Center is housed in one of Morgantown's remaining historic buildings. This Neo-Classical building was erected in 1913 and is on the National Register of Historic Places.

As part of the MAC's 25th Anniversary, an endowment fund has been established with the Greater Morgantown Community Trust. To support the arts and culture center to ensure its survival for future generations, tax-deductible contributions may be sent directly to GMCT, P.O. Box 409, Morgantown, WV 26507

President's Notes

from Gerry Reilly



Welcome 2004! Personally, I'm glad 2003 is over. Attendance at my museum, West Virginia Independence Hall, has been down all year. Our motorcoach tours from the Festival of Lights in November and December were particularly hard hit. Everyone I have talked to in the tourism industry has noted that there was something strange about the economy in 2003. So let's hope things will get better this year.

One thing to look forward to is our 2004 Annual Meeting and Conference which will be held in Fairmont, WV on March 25 - 27, 2004. The theme of the meeting this year is "Getting Together: Community Partnerships = Success." I am a strong believer in the idea that collaboration among heritage tourism sites makes all the participants stronger. Most of us work in small institutions that have limited resources for marketing and programming. By combining resources with other related attractions we can increase both our attendance and the quality of the programs we offer. Tourist are more likely to visit an area they know has a wide variety of places to visit. Partnerships with recreational sites such as state parks or walking trails can also benefit museums. Additional Workshops at the conference will cover a variety of topics such as how to apply for IRS 501(c)3 status, museum boards, collections management and National Historic Register Nominations. As in the past we will take time to tour local heritage sites, dine at interesting locations, hold a silent auction and sell books from the American Association of Museums.

The WVAM board has decided that one of our main goals for 2004 is to provide the museums in the state with an "Emergency Response and Salvage Wheel." This preservation product was developed by the National Endowment for the Humanities to provide museums with a step-by-step guide to preserving structures and collections when disasters strike. The board is currently exploring funding sources to acquire the wheels.

Again, I wish all of you success in 2004 and I hope to see you in Fairmont in March.

West Virginia Association of Museums Board of Directors

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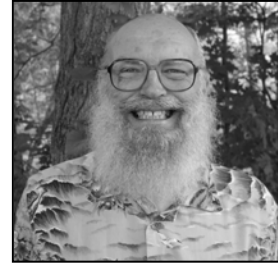
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Crawling Into a Cold Continuous Melting Glass Furnace

by Jim Mitchell



I learn a lot and enjoy the West Virginia Glass Gathering every October, sponsored by the W.V. Museum of American Glass in Weston. Since 1991, it has been held at various locations in West Virginia and surrounding states. The Friday feature of the Gathering is that we see hot glass being made. We talk to glass factory employees, ask questions and learn about glass making. On Saturday we hear more formal presentations from scholars and collectors on and about glass.

This year the Gathering was held at Jackson's Mill, just as it is about every three years. We visited Cliff Rock's Willow Creek Glass, outside Alum Bridge, west of Weston and Masterpiece Crystal in Jane Lew. These two operations are different. Cliff Rock and Claudia Rexroad make glass novelties in two very small furnaces under two tents. They recycle bottles and other cullet as their source of glass. Masterpiece Crystal makes bar ware and flower arranging vases from a large industrial tank. They were running two five man shops when we were there. Since Glassworks West Virginia (formerly Princess House which was formerly Louie Glass) has closed its doors forever, Dean Six and Dave Bush gave us the final farewell tour of the virtually empty building. No one is working there. The furnace is cold and quiet. The place would be a completely deserted facility if the electricity was not on because they are trying to sell everything.

As we were looking around, Mr. Dan Lynch, the plant manager, came by and talked with us. He described how they had operated and what was going to happen to the furnishings of the building. All of the sudden he asked, "How would you like to crawl inside the furnace?" We were very surprised and Dean Six's eyes were as big as saucers. Such a thing would be impossible

under normal circumstances because the furnace would be extremely hot, 2670 degrees Fahrenheit, and humans cannot live at such temperatures. Of course we all wanted to do this. We walked to the back of the furnace where they charged it. Mr. Lynch had an electric lantern and in two shifts, we crawled over a three foot high wall, ducked down and waddled under a four foot high arch. Inside the tank I could stand up in the middle with an inch to spare. It is probably a foot higher because the floor was solid glass, which remained when the furnace was emptied. The furnace is built of refractory brick and is pink, tan and white in color. The ceiling is curved and reminded me of an old time pottery ground hog kiln, except that this ceiling was twice as high. This continuous tank furnace was really two square chambers. The first chamber was slightly larger than the second. In the first chamber, the melter, raw glass batch ingredients were melted and churned into glass. When the glass was completely melted, it flowed into the second square chamber using thermodynamic techniques of monitoring and controlling the heat in the chambers. Five rectangular ports were located at the floor of the second chamber where the glass flowed into the working tanks and annexes of the furnace. I thought that one could see where glass melted in the furnace, but that was not true with this continuous furnace. The glass melting chambers were inside and the available glass for making objects was outside. As the glass was used, the level in the furnace dropped a centimeter and heat sensors detected it. They signaled automatic machinery which dumped a charge of 800 pounds of material into the furnace.

It was a unique and beneficial experience.

Last year at SEMC (South-Eastern Museum Conference) in Richmond, I attended the Curators' Committee Luncheon and we all complained that there was very little at SEMC for Curators. The Committee chairman challenged us to put up or shut up (but not in as many words). So I wrote a proposal for a workshop like ones that I give at WVAM. In this case it was "Identifying European and American Pottery and Porcelain" and the committee accepted it.

Monday October 20th saw Johanna and I with a rented car, 62 objects, 12 books and stacks of working catalogue sheets and handouts driving for two days to Mobile, Alabama. (We stayed overnight in Chattanooga.) It was the first time that I had been south of Huntsville. It was chilly here at home and we took out winter coats with us as well as umbrellas. All of which we did not need. Imagine our surprise to discover that Mobile's temperature was in the 80s with a relative humidity in the 40s! I neglected to take my shorts.

On the way we stopped at the Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts to buy a book on Alabama pottery which no one would lend me because it was considered to be a reference book. I wanted to do something with Alabama/Southern pottery in my workshop.

The Conference began on Wednesday and I attended part of a session on material culture which was very good and reflected a lot of what I do all the time. In the afternoon, I walked to the Public Library looking for a second book on the Pottery of the Mobile Bay. They did not have it! In the evening, we visited Oakleigh Mansion and I bought the book there, which I perused until bedtime. We had dinner at the beautiful Mobile Museum of Art and saw their exhibitions.

The Keynote address was on Thursday morning. At noon Johanna and I attended the Curators' Committee Luncheon and learned that many members of our committee did workshops just as I did. In the afternoon I took my newly acquired knowledge of Alabama pottery and went antiquing. In the evening we visited the submarine USS Drum and the Battleship USS Alabama.

I enjoyed the dance presentation by the Alabama Contemporary Dance Company before the business meeting on Friday morning. After the closing reception in the Exhibit Hall, we had our workshop which was well received. On Friday evening, we saw the IMAX Theater in the Science Center and had dinner in the Alabama History Center.

On Saturday Johanna and I participated in the after-conference tour of Bellingrath Gardens, which are well known nationally. We enjoyed a boat ride on the river as well. I learned a lot about the south and we had a great time.

We loaded up on Sunday and drove north. We stopped in Birmingham and saw the Museum of Art. It was fun to see that they considered Hobbs Brockunier's Wheeling Peachblow art glass to be suitable works of art in their American exhibits. We drove on to Chattanooga for the night. The next day we saw the best fall foliage in eastern Tennessee as we drove back to Charleston.

Common Acronyms & Abbreviations

These organizations provide important resources for the museum community. Here's a list to keep track of the numerous acronyms and abbreviations.

AAM – American Association of Museums
www.aam-us.org

AASLH – American Association of State and Local History
www.aaslh.org

AIC – American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works
aic.stanford.edu

ALHFAM – Association of Living History Farms and Agricultural Museums
www.alhfam.org

IMLS – Institute of Museum and Library Services
www.ims.gov

MAP – Museum Assessment Program
http://www.ims.gov/grants/museum/mus_map.asp

NTHP – National Trust for Historic Preservation
www.nationaltrust.org

PAWV – Preservation Alliance of West Virginia
www.pawv.org

SEMC – South-Eastern Museum Conference
www.semcdirect.net

SHPO – State Historic Preservation Office
www.wvculture.org/shpo

Be Sure To Join Us...

Mark your calendars!

WVAM 2004 Annual Meeting

March 25, 26, & 27, 2004

Holiday Inn Fairmont, West Virginia

This year's theme -

Getting Together: Community Partnerships = Success

Don't Miss -

Workshops, Tours, Dining, Silent Auction,
AAM Bookstore and more!

Detailed Conference Brochure and Registration Form will be mailed shortly.

Editor's Pick

www.common-place.org

For a fun and unique online journal, check out *common-place.org*. The latest issue features curiosities, with articles on somnambulism, anatomical museums, mammoth skeletons, curiosity shops, and more. The journal describes itself as "a bit friendlier than a scholarly journal, a bit more scholarly than a popular magazine" with a mission that "speaks--and listens--to scholars, museum curators, teachers, hobbyists, and just about anyone interested in American history before 1900." Highly recommended!

Slate of Officers

WVAM 2004 Annual Meeting

President:	Dean Hardman
1 st Vice President:	Gerry Reilly
Secretary:	Joan Weiskircher
Board Members:	Melissa Dobbins
	Jeff Schlosser
	Charlene Wideman

WVAM Welcome

Melissa May Dobbins joined the WVAM Board of Directors in March 2003. She serves the Pricketts Fort Memorial Foundation as Executive Director and has undergraduate degrees in art and art history and a graduate degree in anthropology with an emphasis in Museum Studies. Melissa brings experience to the position from the Museum of Natural History and Cincinnati Art Museum in Ohio, as well as the Roosevelt County Historical Museum and the Blackwater Draw Museum in Portales, New Mexico. In addition, Melissa has worked in higher education at three different institutions, in a variety of roles, including public relations and alumni director at her alma mater, adjunct faculty at Eastern New Mexico University's art department, and, most recently, Assistant Director of the GEAR-UP grant at Fairmont State. Melissa and her husband are the parents of a teenage daughter and live with horses on a small farm in Barrackville, West Virginia.

WVAM MEMBERSHIP

Join Today! Membership in WVAM provides a unique opportunity to be involved with sites and museums across the state. Dues are for the calendar year from January to December.

Individual Member:

Institutional Member with a budget of:

Active	15.00	\$ 0 – 29,000	30.00
Staff*	15.00	\$ 30,000 – 99,000	50.00
Retired/Student**	15.00	\$100,000 – 249,000	85.00
*staff of institutional member		\$250,000 – 749,000	175.00
**with copy of student ID		\$750,000 and up	200.00

If you don't want to be a member, but would still like to donate, enter amount here: \$ _____

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Please send this form and check payment to:
WVAM Treasurer
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Charleston, WV 25339



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