



NEWSLETTER

September-December 2017

SMYTH COUNTY HISTORICAL AND MUSEUM SOCIETY

PRESERVING AND PROTECTING
LOCAL HISTORY

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Information & Updates



We hope everyone had a very happy holiday season. Although the museum is closed for the winter, we are still very thankful for the support last year and hope to further advance our mission this year with your continued support.

Because of your support we have been able to make some major improvements to our facility. The project aimed to upgrade the lighting throughout the exhibit space and storage areas on the first floor has been completed. We have also made the decision to address the water damage issues in the back of the building. This project will involve installing an interior drainage system that will prevent water from entering the building. It expected to be completed in February of 2018.

We will reopen full time beginning in April of 2018 with updated exhibits and new monthly programs! See you soon!

Newspaper Digitization Project

Society members Jim and Mary Peterson visited this past fall to begin conducting a project designed to digitize many of the old newspapers in the museum's collection. The collection contains issues from the Marion News, Marion Democrat, Patriot and Herald, and others dating as far back as the 1820s. The goal of the project is to make these incredibly fragile papers easier to access by the Museum and anyone wishing to review them for research or other purposes. Many of the papers are in very poor condition, making it almost impossible to search through them by hand. After the project is completed, interested parties will be able to review the issues in a digital format, allowing them to search each issue for specific keywords or phrases.

The digitization process is as follows: News Issues are delicately placed on a vertical easel where photographs are taken of each issue using a digital camera. These photographs are then imported into several computer programs to enhance them and switch them to a format that can be easily reviewed on a computer. The newly created files will then be able to be accessed at the museum by interested parties in an entirely user-friendly format.

As Jim and Mary only visit the area a couple times a year, the project in its entirety is expected to take a while to complete. They plan to return this Spring to continue the project. Newly digitized issues are expected to be made available as they are completed.



The Marion Visitor - February 15, 1861

We are currently seeking suggestions for our 2018 guest speaker lineup. If you have ideas for guest speakers or suggestions of interesting topics related to our area's history for one of these programs, please let us know! Suggestions may be submitted via the contact outlets below:

Email: smythcountymuseum@gmail.com
Phone: 276-783-7286
Facebook: Smyth County Historical and Museum Society

Christmas Market and Tree Displays

We had a great turnout for our Christmas tree displays during this past Marion Christmas Market weekend! Thanks so much to the volunteers who dedicated their time to help out, who decorated a tree for the contest, and who contributed to our fundraising sale!

There were a total of 7 trees decorated for the people’s choice contest. In first place was the Gospel Armory Christian Academy tree titled, “Anchored in Christ,” featuring a nautical theme with ornaments crafted from recycled materials. In second place was the Daughters of the American Revolution tree titled, “D.A.R. Patriotic,” featuring ornaments with the names of Revolutionary War era soldiers from Smyth County. In Third place was the Past Time Antique Emporium tree titled, “Vintage Christmas,” featuring vintage Christmas ornaments. Other Trees included the Marion Kiwanis tree titled, “One Child at a Time,” Carol Sacknoff’s tree titled, “A Wishbone Christmas,” the Trout Unlimited Tree titled, “Trout in the Classroom,” and the Smyth County Chamber of Commerce tree titled, “Trains - The Imagination Library.”



First Place: Gospel Armory Christian Academy “Anchored in Christ”

Membership

**INTERESTED
IN
MEMBERSHIP?**

Membership annual dues remain at \$5 for student, \$20 for individual, \$25 for family, and \$100 for business. Support via membership is used to finance this newsletter, events, and other endeavors. Those interested should fill out the attached membership form and return it in person to the museum or via mail to Smyth County Historical and Museum Society, Inc. at P.O. Box 710, Marion, VA 24354

**Getting to Know the Collection
(Display Model Majestic Cook Stove)**



W. C. Seaver & Sons Advertisement
found in The Marion Democrat
October 18, 1921
“Furniture, Undertakers, Stoves,
Majestic Ranges”

This miniature cast iron cook stove, used as a salesman’s sample in furniture stores, is a working model with all the moving parts of a full-size cook stove. This particular model is around 2.5 feet tall and was made by the Majestic Manufacturing Company in St. Louis, Missouri around 1900. The model was donated to the museum’s collections by Mrs. Virginia Kirk Stoelzel, whose great grandfather, W. C. Seaver, founded the hardware and furniture store W.C. Seaver & Sons in Marion during the 1840s.

According to the donor, her mother, Grace Seaver Kirk (born 1894), “remembered the stove as being on display in her father’s (M.M Seaver, son of W.C. Seaver) store when she was a child. It was given to [Virginia] as a child for [her] play house. As a child, with adult supervision, [she] actually built fires in it and cooked and baked using it.”



It is with heavy hearts that we bid “Farewell” to our friend, Brenda Gwyn. The Historical Society was very dear to her. Her love of Smyth County history showed as she carefully handled and helped store its precious artifacts. Her vast knowledge of the area was mind-boggling. She could recite the names of important families, those who served in the military – along with which branch, and special, often little-known facts and events. She was always excited to share this information as well as to learn new facts.

She will be missed!

Item Donations September 2017---- December 2017

Various U.S. Navy Uniform Articles (Dress Jacket, Winter Coat, Khaki and White Short Sleeved Uniform Shirts, Black Long Sleeved Uniform Shirt) – Belonged to husband.	Jewell Light, Marion, Virginia
Painting: View of Peebles Scotland (1979-1980) Painting: View of Lake District in England (1979-1980) (painted by Myers Mink for Jack McCarty)	Rosie McCarty, Marion, Virginia
Oil Painting of B. F. Buchanan Framed Photograph of “Senate of Virginia: Session 1924” Framed Group Photograph of “The Senate of Virginia Extra Session: April 6 th , 1927” Framed Photograph of B. F. Buchanan	Emory and Henry College, Emory, Virginia
WWII Window Banner for Families with members in service	Carol Barnes, Atkins, Virginia
AnSCO Cadett II Camera (c. mid-1960s) Philco Model 49-603 Radio (c. 1949) Copper Lock Box Framed Photographs of Museum Building and Greer’s Restaurant & Tea Room Bates Bedspread (c. 1800s) of Carrie Ames Beattie Gwyn & Hugh Gwyn	C.B. Gwyn, Marion, Virginia
Wooden Toy Barn & Accessories	Louise R. Clark, Marion Virginia
Marion Bat MFG Company Baseball Bat Surveying Transit and Tripod made by Warren-Knight Co.	Bill Callan & Elizabeth Callan Sells, Marion Virginia
12 Vintage Women’s Hats and Knox New York Hat Box	June Comer, Marion, Virginia
2 “Snurfers”	Vince and Suzy Suckle, Marion, Virginia
Various Pamphlets/Catalogs/Books on Machining, Tools, and Crafting	Pat Hall, Marion, Virginia
6 Wooden Easels 5 Room Dividers Wood Display Case Metal Sign Frame	The Art Place, Chilhowie, Virginia
Framed Photos of Train Engines (Engine #9 and Engine #101)	Lois Robinson, Marion, Virginia
U.S Army Uniform (Jacket, Hat, Pants) – Vietnam Era	J. S. Staley, Marion, Virginia
Battlefield Dressing Bag and Dressing Supplies	Carl Schaefer, Marion, Virginia
Child’s Suit (Jacket, Vest, Trousers) – c. 1812 Women’s Hat & Petticoat	Sara Staley, Marion, Virginia



**Smyth County
Historical and Museum Society, Inc.
P.O. Box 710
Marion, Virginia 24354**



VISIT OUR WEBSITE!
smythcountymuseum.org