



Western Monroe Historical Society

Morgan-Manning House

JANUARY 2019 NEWSLETTER



GREETINGS – We are about to remove all the garlands, wreaths, and ornaments that adorned the Gold Parlors, the staircase, and the Red Room for the

Holiday Season. What a joyful time at the House, with holiday shopping, parties, and even singing! Candlelight Christmas was quite a success with more than a 1000 people walking through our doors during the two-day sale. Mrs. Morgan also came back from the hereafter to share her stories of Christmases long ago with 4th grade students and their teachers. Finally, a fantastic group of Brockport students charmed us all during our latest program featuring Mary Jane Holmes's *Christmas Font*.

As some of you are getting ready to travel southwards for the winter months, we wish you a safe journey and we look forward to having you back at the House in the Spring.

I will close this message by wishing you and your family a new year filled with success, happiness, and prosperity! Thank you for your support and participation in 2018 and we certainly look forward to a productive 2019.

Rozenn Bailleul-LeSuer, Historian

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK – When you read this message we will be at the tail end of our annual fund raising campaign. What a tremendous response! As I write this (the day before New Year's Eve) we have realized a 44% increase in giving over the previous year. If you have forgotten to send in a donation it is not too late. Remember, no donation is too small. One hundred percent of your donation will

be used to continue the operation of the Morgan-Manning House. Thank you to the donors.

As you recall, a survey was enclosed in the fundraising letter sent to you. We received a substantial number of completed surveys. Programs, communication to members and the public, the hiring of our new historian, buildings and grounds maintenance, tours and the newsletter received unanimously high grades. Attracting younger members, broadening our educational experiences for younger people, insufficient social media presence and removing the perception of a "clique" in the House operations were some of the voiced concerns. If you haven't sent this survey in, please return it as soon as possible. This valuable information will help the "Five Year Planning" Committee move forward.

Have a very Happy New Year and, please, become involved.

Gordon Fox, President

IN DECEMBER AT THE MMH:

Candlelight Christmas (M. L. Turner, Chair):

Candlelight Christmas (Nov. 29-Dec. 1) went very well this year. The Volunteer/Vendor/Board Preview sale on Thursday evening was lightly attended, but all the same worthwhile. Friday morning started with a nice line of people anxious to get in when we opened the doors at 10am and the positive trend continued on Saturday.

Thanks to all who provided baked goods and to those who volunteered to work, in whatever capacity. The hours of set-up, the rushes and the quiet times of the show rooms, the stress at the cash registers are all part of this major undertaking. A couple of volunteers were ill and could not come in, but we had some other people show up, unscheduled, ready to do whatever needed to be done.

Again, thanks to all who participated. We are working to create the best community event possible, and it takes so many people to make it happen.



Pictures with Santa (G. Fox):

On **December 2**, Christopher Albrecht, John & Donna Izzo, Amy Stoker, Peggy and I supervised the visit to the Morgan-Manning House by Mr. & Mrs. Claus. At least 100 children accompanied by parents and relatives stood patiently in line for a chance to talk with Santa about their Christmas dreams.

Cameras of every description snapped picture after picture of loved ones resting on Santa’s lap in front of the fireplace in the Library. The volunteers enjoyed the event and I’m sure many memories are stored in cell phones, computers, and single lens reflex cameras. We want to thank the participants who left us with generous donations to help fund the Morgan-Manning House.

A Victorian Christmas (December 11-13) for Brockport’s 4th graders:

Our thanks go to all the volunteers who helped with the events: the organizers, especially Sandy Wright and Margie Robb, who planned the tours and made sure we had all we needed for the children; our musicians, Jean Brooks, Sally Martin, Amy Harris, and Sandy, who played her guitar and led the music; Mrs. Morgan’s “helpers” (Eileen Ryerse, Mary Ann Thorpe, Marilyn Brown, Lin Shaffer; Merrill Melnick, Gordy & Peggy Fox, and Rozenn Bailleul-LeSuer), who prepared the treats and handed them to the children; and last but certainly not least, **Barbara (Barb) Kerns**, who is fantastic in her role of Mrs. Morgan.

Children are entranced when Barb tells her stories of Christmas at the House in 1875 and how different it was when compared to our current traditions. They love all the toys she brings, all the books she shows, and all the decorations children used to make—they are especially fond of the fragrant oranges pinned with cloves. The Society is very fortunate to benefit from Barb’s talents as a storyteller. However, she has shared with us that she will only do this for a couple more years. If you are interested in being trained as our future “Mrs. Morgan”, or if you know anyone who would love this part, please contact us at

morganmanninghouse@gmail.com or call us at 637-3645.



Barbara Kerns in the guise of Susan Morgan (Photo by Sandy Wright)

The Christmas Font: On **December 18**, the programming committee got the House ready for the reading of the *Christmas Font* written by Mary Jane Holmes 150 years ago, in 1868. Candles were flickering on the mantles—I reassure you: we only used flameless candles, as we would not want to be responsible for another fire!—and Christmas cookies filled trays in the Dining Room. In front of a full room, a group of five students delighted us by reading Mary Jane Holmes’ novelette. Between chapters, Bell Viola amazed us all as she sang a selection of Christmas carols. It certainly was a perfect occasion to get into the Holiday Spirit. Our thanks go to Christopher Albrecht, Quinn Christy, Chloe Coon, Mary Galbreth, Max Heckman, Julia Hunsinger, and Bell Viola for their hard work and for giving us such an enchanting evening. We also want to thank the Emily Knapp Museum for loaning us the 1867 photo collage of the children mentioned in the *Christmas Font*, as well as a photograph of the font in St Luke’s Episcopal Church.

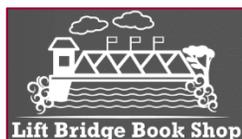


Back row: B. Viola, J. Hunsinger, and C. Albrecht. Front row: C. Coon, M. Heckman, holding the photo collage from the Emily Knapp Museum, Q. Christy, and M. Galbreth.

UPCOMING PROGRAM: January 17, 2019 – “Fannie Barrier Williams, A Woman of Courage”.

Frances Barrier Williams began and ended her life as a resident of Brockport. She was part of the suffrage movement and was a founding member of the NAACP. Upon Susan B. Anthony’s death, she delivered a eulogy at her funeral. Come join us to

celebrate the impact one Brockport citizen had on equal rights. Under the guidance of Christopher Albrecht, four Middle School 6th graders will share with us what they learned from this woman of strong belief and courage. Jeffery Xue will also play the piano. This program, which will start at **7pm**, is free and open to the public. Refreshments will be served in the Dining Room after the presentation.



FUNDRAISING:

We are happy to announce that we started a new partnership with Sarah and John Bonczyk, owners of **Lift Bridge Book Shop**. As you may already know, we offered Lift Bridge gift certificates at Candlelight Christmas and during the month of December. These gift certificates will continue to be available at the House through the month of January. For every \$25 certificate purchased through the Society, Lift Bridge Book Shop will donate \$5. We always look for opportunities to collaborate with the businesses of our community and we want to thank Sarah & John for reaching out to us. So make sure to stop by the House to get as many certificates as you may need for the upcoming year, as they are valid until **December 1, 2019**. By buying your books and toys with these certificates, you will help support two important landmarks in the village: the Lift Bridge Book Shop and the Morgan-Manning House!

A SAD NOTE: in the last newsletter, I wrote about the visit of **Arthur "Art" Harrington, D.S. Morgan**

JANUARY CALENDAR

Jan 1 – Tues – Office closed: **HAPPY NEW YEAR!!**

Jan 2 – Wed – 10am – Quilters

Jan 8 – Tues – 7pm – Board Meeting

Jan 17 – Thurs – 7pm – Program: *Fannie Barrier Williams, Woman of Courage* presented by Christopher Albrecht and Brockport Central Schools Teachers & Students.

Jan 22 – Tues – 10am – Spinners

SAVE THE DATE

Feb 13 – Wed – 7pm – Program: *The Fire of 1882* presented by Gordon & Peggy Fox

MISSION STATEMENT:

The Western Monroe Historical Society is committed to educating the community and future generations on the history of the Morgan-Manning House, celebrating our heritage, and preserving this local landmark that is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

great-great grandson, to the House. Art had shared with us his knowledge of the Morgan family. It is with great sadness that I have to announce that Art passed away on December 19, 2018, at Strong Memorial Hospital. You can see his obituary at www.thebatavian.com/obituaries/526364/arthur-j-harrington-jr. Gordy, Peggy, and I will certainly remember fondly the few hours we spent in his company, as we looked at his photo albums and listened to his family stories. We also want to thank his family for their generous intention, since, in lieu of flowers, contributions in Art's memory are to be made to the Society.

THANK YOU to:

- Janice Van Ess for her donation **in memory of Mary Ann Pietrzykowski**.
- Margaret Blackman, Don Voorheis & Donna Ainsworth for their donations in honor of **Alicia & Herb Fink's 50th wedding anniversary**.
- Fred Altrieth, Elaine & Ricky Bezon, The Broadwell Family, Joe & Josie Corcimiglia, Nellie Coughlin, William & Kristine Genagon, Daniel & Patricia LaPoint, Denise & Ed Marsceill, Kenneth & Nancy Miller, Mary & Zepher Raymond, Carol Rowcliffe, Shirley & David Salerno, John & Nora Sands, and Loraine & Annie Yungfleisch for their donations **in memory of Arthur Harrington, Jr.**

Western Monroe Historical Society - Morgan Manning House

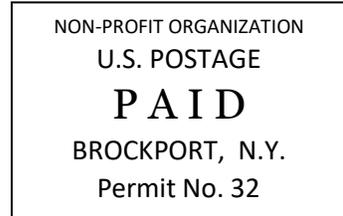
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www.facebook.com/pages/Western-Monroe-Historical-Society

Western Monroe Historical Society
Morgan- Manning House
151 Main Street
Brockport, NY 14420-1909



These fine businesses in the Brockport area are supporters of the Western Monroe Historical Society. We encourage you to patronize them.

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Brockport Custom Carpet
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Fowler Funeral Home, Inc.
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