



# Western Monroe Historical Society

## *Morgan-Manning House*

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## MARCH, 2018 NEWSLETTER

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### Greetings

Spring is on its way! Pockets of snowdrops are starting to come forth in the flowerbeds in front of the carriage house. Cardinals are also singing from the treetops and I believe that I even heard a robin, a traditional harbinger of spring, this morning in the distance. It really is impossible to remain insensitive to the beauty of nature, as it is waking up from its wintery slumber. As you know, winter months are quieter at the Morgan-Manning House. We have been able to catch up with other projects and get ready for the flurry of programs and activities, which we have in store for our members and the public for the next few months. In particular, the curatorial committee has been planning the re-upholstery of several of the chairs and sofa in the Library and Red Room. On my end, as the new historian, I have spent many hours going through the multiple filing cabinets, filled with the working files Eunice had built during her three decades as the historian of the society. I do have quite a lot of material to familiarize myself with, which I consider a real treat. Below, I will introduce you to some of the serendipitous discoveries I have made while browsing through these files. I hope to share the excitement that I feel every time I come upon these invaluable insights into the history of the Morgan family.

*Rozenn Bailleur-LeSuer, Historian*

### Upcoming Programs.

All programs are free and open to the general public. Refreshments will be served following each event.

### March 8<sup>th</sup>, 7pm. Flight of the Red Birds – The Story of Brockport's Namesakes

The house will offer once again a fascinating and enriching program. In addition to Mary Lynne Turner's presentation of the lives and history of Hiel and Phebe Brockway, Gordy Fox will talk about boat building along the Erie Canal. To showcase the building process of the packet boats that used to transport goods and people on the canal, Gordy will bring the construction model he assembled from plans he has discovered during his research.

### March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2pm. Sara Morgan Manning's 150<sup>th</sup> Birthday Party

On Sunday, March 18<sup>th</sup>, we will celebrate the 150<sup>th</sup> birthday of Sara Morgan Manning, born on March 21<sup>st</sup>, 1868. In her honor, we will have cake, tea, and coffee, which will be enjoyed with music entertainment. This party is open to members and their guests and is free of charge. It will take place from 2 to 4pm. **See attached invitation.**

### April 18<sup>th</sup> – Wednesday – 7pm. Two-part Program

- **Quarantined!** This intriguing evening will explore the diseases, flues, and epidemics of Brockport from 1850 to 1950. Some of the Morgan-Manning House collection of doctor's "tools of the trade" will be on display. The program will be presented by Dr. James Goetz.
- Rosa Davila will present the second half of the program: "**The birth of modern perfumery: An olfactory journey into Victorian times.**"

## English Tea on Sunday, April 22<sup>nd</sup> at 2 pm

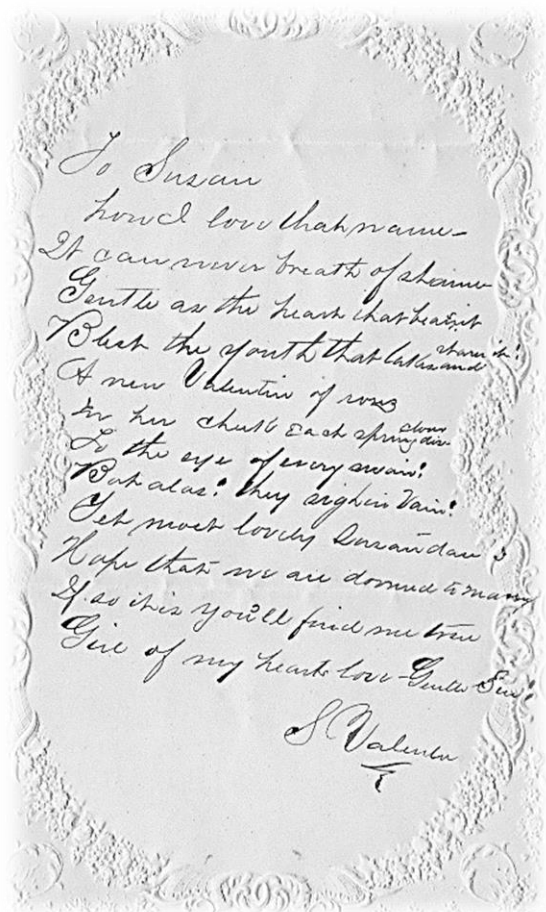
Come join us for an elegant afternoon of food and drink. Tea, finger sandwiches, and luscious desserts will be served in the beautiful Morgan-Manning House. Please note that we will begin taking reservations on **Monday, March 12<sup>th</sup>**, so call right away to reserve your seat. Cost is \$20 for members and \$25 for non-members.

## Sweet Valentine Message

As I (Rozen) was reviewing the Joslyn file on February 13<sup>th</sup>, I had the pleasure to find a few Victorian Valentines from the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. How perfect on the day before Valentine's Day! The Joslyn family is of special relevance to us, as Sara Morgan Manning's mother was Miss Susan Joslyn before tying the knot with D. S. Morgan. These notes had been addressed to Susan, when she was 16 years old, and to her sister Sarah. Here is the sweet message Susan received from a secret admirer (you can email me at [mmhhistorian@gmail.com](mailto:mmhhistorian@gmail.com) to receive a jpeg of this valentine).

I am very grateful to Mary Lynne Turner, her brother Gary Welch, and Fred Dean, our new volunteer, for their help in transcribing this document. When working with handwritten letters, I cannot help but realize how important it is to keep cursive writing as part of the school curriculum!

**Historical note:** Valentine's Day cards became extremely popular in 19<sup>th</sup> century US thanks to the enterprising and creative vision of Esther Howland (1828-1904), from Worcester, MA. Since it was originally a British tradition, Valentines with intricate designs of lace and cut out flowers had to be imported from Europe and remained out of reach of most American wallets. Esther saw a potential business venture and started designing and selling her own cards. At the peak of its success, her business saw gross profits of \$100,000 a year! Esther rightfully became known as "The Mother of the American Valentine."



To Susan

How I love that name

It can never breath (sic.) of shame

Gentle as the heart that bears it

Blest the youth that takes and shares it!

A new Valentine of roses

In her clutch each spring discloses

To the eye of every swain

But alas! They sigh in vain!

Yet, most lovely Susan dare I

Hope that we are doomed to marry

If so it is you'll find me true

Girl of my heart's love - Gentle Sue!

St Valentine

## Curatorial notes – re-upholstery project

The house takes pride in being open to welcome the community. Because of this, some of our furniture needs to be restored in order to safely be used and enjoyed once more. Two chairs and a sofa, in particular, are in need of some well-deserved TLC. Such a project is a perfect occasion for us to learn more about the holdings of our collection and also about the furniture that used to be part of a typical Victorian home. The sofa is of special interest, as it is upholstered with horsehair fabric. Not only was horse hair gathered from the animals' mane and used to stuff the back and seat of Victorian furniture, the longer hair from the horses' tails could also be woven with cotton or silk warps to manufacture horsehair fabric, a favored upholstery material during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Not surprisingly, horsehair fabric is no longer as readily available as it was during the last century and is now cost prohibitive. For practical purposes, we will use different types of fabrics, which would have also been encountered in Victorian sitting rooms. We will keep, however, examples of horsehair furniture in the Billiards Room.



*Horsehair furniture in the Billiards Room*

We are currently in the process of selecting the skillful artisan who will be responsible for this restoration project. We therefore invite you to come back in a few months to see the fabric and styles, which we selected for your enjoyment.

## An unexpected family reunion

On February 27<sup>th</sup>, we had the great privilege to witness an unexpected family reunion! Colleen Furness, from Lyndonville, came to the house with her friend Sheri Whiteside carrying a bag we were soon to discover was filled with treasures.

Colleen introduced herself as being a grandchild of Dayton S. Morgan. We knew this could not be the industrialist D.S. Morgan, who passed away in 1890. However, one of his grandchildren was named after him: Dayton S. Morgan II, Henry and May (Kingsbury) Morgan's only son. Colleen had in her possession the marriage certificate of D. S. Morgan II, who, on July 7<sup>th</sup> 1933, married Lila E. Pangborne in LeRoy. They had one daughter, Joan, Colleen's mother. Unfortunately, Colleen never got to know her mother, as she passed away a few months after her birth. She only recently became aware of this connection with the Morgan family, when she received from her sister a box full of family documents. We will remain in touch with Colleen as we help her build this side of her family tree, and we look forward to having her again in the house of her great-great-grandfather.



*A treasure trove of family papers. In this photo, a stock certificate of the D.S. Morgan & Company.*

**HELP NEEDED:**  
*Colleen found this photo in the midst of the family papers. Unfortunately, no name was written on the back. If you can provide us with any information regarding this person, Colleen will be extremely appreciative.*

## New Volunteers

We are very happy to have two new volunteers in the house, Fred Dean and Hunter Thomas, who have helped us with technological issues and with organizing some of our collection. Fred is currently an undergraduate student in the Public Health program at SUNY College at Brockport. He enjoys learning about the impact of history on

the community and how people are connected to one another in the past, present and into the future. Hunter Thomas is a Computer Science Major at GCC. Being originally from Brockport, he is eager to get to know the House better.

Thank you both for your time and your enthusiasm! We look forward to working with you.

### **MARCH CALENDAR**

March 7, 2018 – Wed – 10AM – Quilters

March 8, 2018 – Thursday – 7PM – Program - The Flight of the Red Birds - The Story of Brockport's Namesakes

March 13, 2018 – 7PM – Board Meeting

March 18, 2018 – 2-4PM – Sara’s birthday party - See attached flyer/invitation to members and their guests

March 21, 2018 – Wed – 10AM – Quilters

March 27, 2018 – Tues – 10AM – Spinners

### **SAVE THE DATE**

April 18, 2018: Wednesday – 7PM – Program - Quarantined and Perfumery.

April 22, 2018: English Tea at 2PM. We will begin taking reservations on Monday, March 12<sup>th</sup>. Please call 637-3645 to reserve your spot.

### **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.**

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Western Monroe Historical Society - Morgan Manning House

151 Main Street, Brockport, NY 14420-1909

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[www.morganmanninghouse.org](http://www.morganmanninghouse.org) E-mail: [morganmanninghouse@gmail.com](mailto:morganmanninghouse@gmail.com)

[www.facebook.com/pages/Western-Monroe-Historical-Society](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Western-Monroe-Historical-Society)

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