

# Shepherdstown Men's Club

N E W S L E T T E R

## Greetings from the President

Greetings. The focus of this newsletter will be to prepare you for the annual general membership meeting which will be held, along with our Thanksgiving Program, on November 16. The social will begin at 6:30 p.m. and the dinner will be served at 7 p.m. The meeting will begin at 8 p.m. You may recall that we had a special preparatory session on September 28. There is a lot of ground to cover. This newsletter will provide a brief overview.

I am concluding my three-year term as President and Bonnie is wrapping up six years as hospitality chairman. While we will no longer serve as Club officers, we will remain fully active members. Our stewardship has coincided with tumultuous times for the club but we are at a point where new fresh leadership is needed.

The Men's Club has turned the corner and I believe we are on a solid footing to meet the many challenges that all non profit, volunteer organizations face today. We are far better off than most and in fact can reasonably share "great expectations" for the future of the Club.

First we have to look to our strengths. We have steadily gained membership which includes some who have rejoined after several years of absence. At present we are approaching 200 active members. We have no debts or encumbrances.



photo: Judy Olsen

Both of our real estate properties are fully paid for, and our cash flow remains positive with small but steady increases in investments. At the same time, we have not neglected maintenance or operational requirements.

The War Memorial Building is in a good state of preservation and we can now concentrate on improvements. Most important, the long-running Gene Henry law suit is finally concluded. He has aggressively pursued his complaints all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court and has been denied.

We have also begun to restore balance within the club by playing a more active role in managing Morgan's Grove Park.

Considerable effort has been made to explore all options for future management of the park and several new enhancements are now under active consideration. We have a solid working relationship with Jefferson County Parks and Recreation Commission and have engaged other organizations to help us make more effective use of the park including Shepherd University and the Harpers Ferry Job Corps.

Several specific needs of the park are being addressed. We made a significant investment in a professional assessment of the long-term capital investment needs of the Park and are addressing the long-deferred potable water constraints.

The challenge is to redefine ourselves to remain abreast of rapidly changing economic and social phenomenon in order to preserve our relevance and realize the full potential of the wonderful resources we have.

Being a member of the club has to mean something special -- special enough to motivate people to volunteer, to actively get involved and share in club and community activities.

The Men's Club has a bright future and it is in a position to continue making important contributions to the quality of life in our community for many years to come. Bonnie and I both want to thank you for your friendship and support.

Mike Austin, President

## Income Sources

The routine cost of operating and maintaining the War Memorial Building and Morgan's Grove is significant. We spend over \$9,000 each year just on insurance. When you add utilities, cleaning, and routine maintenance, the amounts add up quickly. Our income is derived from several sources:

- **Investments**

The Fraley Endowment and CDs

- **Annual dues**

Which remain very modest

- **Rental income**

Store front and the WMB itself

- **Fund Raisers**

Book Sale & Back Alley Tour & Tea

- **Donations**

- **Grants**

While investments provide a measure of security, they generate almost negligible income. Dues provide an important income base but cannot begin to meet operational requirements.

We have made significant improvements in managing rentals and in general increasing the utilization rate of the building. Much credit has to go to Judy Shepherd and Jenny Haynes, our rental managers who provide the interface with individuals and organizations that make use of the building. This includes our active support of other non-profit organizations in the community and long standing SMC stakeholders such as the Shepherdstown Library and Shepherdstown Music and Dance.

We consider our "community outreach efforts" an important aspect of the Club's role in the Eastern Panhandle. We are also delighted to have our neighbor Shepherdstown Paint and Art renting the storefront. Fund raisers are critical. Because as in many things, "how you do something" is as important as "what you do." Our two biggest efforts: the Used Book Sale and Back Alley Tour and Tea represent huge investments in time and volunteer efforts to generate funds while having an enjoyable time doing it. We think they are uniquely part of Shepherdstown's identity. Both efforts

have made strategic investments in advertising and promotional materials.

The Christmas Bazaar, now in its second year, has proven to be a huge success. On the one hand it generates 4 or 5 times the amount of money previously obtained from holiday activities and at the same time has helped us to more fully engage the community during a festive time of year. Developing a continuing working relationship with the arts and craft community is of great benefit. The Bazaar, although classified as a rental, is now on par with the two fund raisers.

Lastly, we have had dismal results on both donations and grants. There is significant room for improvement here. Both require people with special skills and instincts for effectively engaging the community.

## What's In A Name?

For years the Club's name has been a contentious issue that has often been a factor in our ability to gain new members or obtain more general community support. Of course many fully understand that it is a "misnomer" and even joke that it is actually run by women but still the problem remains. We have returned to this issue repeatedly and now firmly believe that it is time to deal with the issue and move on. There is no legal or significant cost implication with a name change.

The following options are being considered: The Shepherdstown Club, The Shepherdstown Metropolitan Club, The Shepherdstown Men and Women's Club, The Shepherdstown Community Club, The Shepherdstown Community Center, or simply The Club. Of course, no change always remains an option. The current board of directors has been dealing with this problem for several years and has been actively involved in assessing the various options. At our October Board meeting we unanimously agreed to propose that the name be changed to "The Shepherdstown Community Club" which we strongly believe most accurately reflects who and what we are.

## Nomination of New Board Members

Our current By-Laws provide for up to 15 board members who serve three year over-lapping terms that provide continuity. The board effectively oversees all aspects of managing and operating the Club. It is assisted by contractor support in handling the rental program and cleaning of the War Memorial Building. We have always prided ourselves on having a "working board" that actively pursues the Club's mission and reflects the desires of the membership. One of the most important outcomes of the general membership meeting on November 16 will be the election of new board members. At their first meeting in January the newly constituted board then elects its officers for the coming year. At the end of the year Bonnie Austin, Cris Kinsella, John Amos, and Mike Austin will be leaving the board. Those remaining are: Ruth McQuade, Tom Keyrouse, Vicky Thomas, Art Wineburg, Marit Davis, Don Davis, and Lindsay Guild. So in effect, there are eight vacancies. We earnestly hope that you will either place your name in consideration or urge others who you think are qualified to do so. We hesitate to use the word "qualified" since all that is required is a willingness to work with others for the good of the organization. It is an enjoyable and fulfilling endeavor. There is no better way to advance your interest in the club and our community.

## WHAT'S HAPPENING?

STAY INFORMED  
VISIT THESE **WWW** SITES

**smc25443.org**

**shepherdstown250.com**

**christmasinshepherdstown.com**

**shepherdstownvisitorscenter.com**

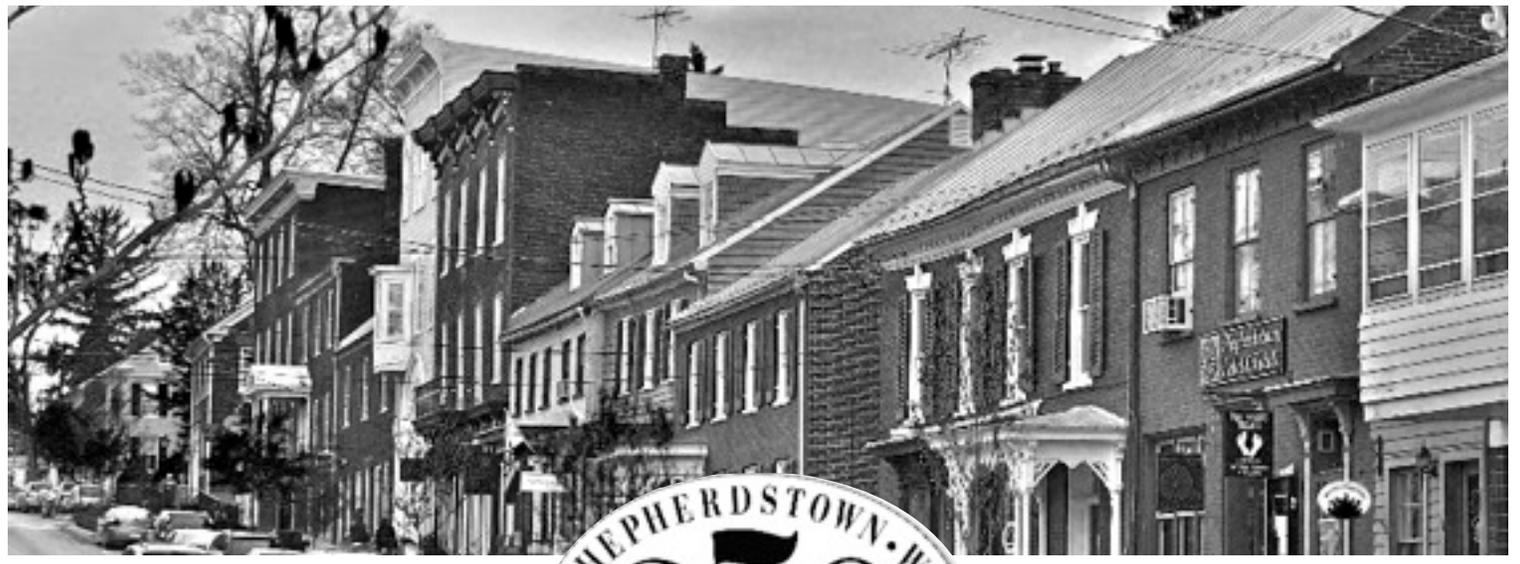


photo: Judy Olsen



## SHEPHERDSTOWN 250 SIGNATURE QUILT

The Tuesday Craft Group that meets at Trinity Episcopal Church will be collecting signatures on the quilt at the Christmas Bazaar.

Residents of zip code 25443 can provide a bit of personal legacy and sign the quilt for a \$5.00 donation.

The quilt will be presented to the town in November 2012 and encased for viewing by future generations. The photo above is the centerpiece. It must be seen in person to appreciate the craftsmanship.

Please come to the Christmas Bazaar,  
sign your name and

**“BE PART OF THE QUILT”**



## SMC's Events for 250th Anniversary

In planning for the SMC's role in this year-long effort, we have put two events on the calendar. One is the traditional Back Alley Tour and Tea which is already approved by the town council for May 19 and 20 next year. It will basically be an expanded version of the annual event. The other is to turn the annual Labor Day Picnic at Morgan's Grove into a three day event and make it a "Chautauqua." We would urge other organizations in our extended community to join us in turning it into a significant event with a wide variety of activities and forms of entertainment including: concerts, talent shows, lectures and debates, arts and crafts, and recreational activities. It would involve multiple tracks allowing people to select from several entertainment options at any given time. The Kiwanis Club, the Train Station, and a local Square Dance Group have already agreed to join us. In future years this might be developed into our significant annual Morgan's Grove Activity and fund raiser. We need to identify volunteers willing to take the lead in planning for and carrying out these two important events.



Support the year-long celebration  
with the purchase of  
**SHEPHERDSTOWN 250  
COMMEMORATIVE  
MERCHANDISE**

Baseball caps, stainless steel water bottles, T-shirts, sweatshirts, decals, stickers and stamps are available at Shepherd University bookstore or the university online shop. New items are added monthly! You can also order through the semiquincentennial website:

[www.shepherdstown250.com](http://www.shepherdstown250.com)

Commemorative merchandise makes great Christmas gifts. Items will also be sold at the Men's Club annual Christmas Bazaar at the War Memorial Building.

# Morgan's Grove Park

Over a decade ago when the Club began leasing Morgan's Grove to the Jefferson County Parks and Recreation Commission (JCPRC) we effectively became absentee landlords. It was simply too easy to let them deal with operations and maintenance. Our only role was ultimate liability and capital improvements (no problems since we didn't have any money to spend). The looming issue has been what to do about renewal of the lease which will expire in February of 2013. We created a Morgan's Grove Ad Hoc Committee to explore all options for the future of the park. After full consideration of all aspects of the issue, they have recommended that we enter into a new 5-year lease arrangement in order to keep our options open. Our intentions are to initiate the process by offering the first draft as soon as possible. We believe that several prior points of contention can be resolved by more positive interaction as we demonstrate proactive interest in the Park.

Positive collaboration at our last Community Work Day with JCPRC staff as well as Shepherd University and the Job Corps was very encouraging.

Just preserving the status quo won't work any longer because JCPR is in the process of developing a new park facility near Leetown which will significantly alter the need for Morgan's Grove. A significant portion of current soccer league activity will shift to the new park. JCPRC has repeatedly stated that Morgan's Grove is

the most heavily used park in it's system. We believe that a little imaginative effort to resurrect traditional uses of the park and a few enhancements will keep the County fully engaged as partners.

There are two important near-term developments: a swimming pool and a permanent bandshell. We anticipate that pursuit of these two initiatives might significantly help us provide adequate potable water at the Park. We are not committed to either initiative but they are under active consideration.

## Morgan's Grove Pool

We have been approached by a member of our community to donate a significant portion of the cost of building a family-oriented swimming pool at the park. It could be accomplished without significant loss of current playing fields but as yet we have not come up with a proposal or conducted necessary feasibility studies. As the concept is further developed you will have opportunities to make inputs and address relevant issues before any final "go" or "no go" decision is made. An important element is that a pool would require our hook up to the Town's water and sewer systems in order to deal with water chemistry requirements.

## Morgan's Grove Bandshell

Current facilities at the park for concerts or other musical performances are limited to use of the pavilion or erection of temporary stage and sound facilities. While we have made do for many years, this type of activity at the park offers significant room for improvement. Recently the Friends of Music

Organization has expressed a willingness to help us raise funds to build a suitable band shell at an appropriate location in the park. There is no doubt that a more readily accessible bandshell with necessary facilities to support concerts, dances and other performances would provide a whole new range of activities for the Park.

## Creation of New Organization "Friends of Morgan's Grove Park"

Within the SMC family there are two different sub-groups that focus on the War Memorial Building and Morgan's Grove respectively. While a portion of our members have active interest in both, more often than not they have a specific interest in one or the other. The concept of a "Friends" organization for the Park is not new. It simply has not been pursued to its logical conclusion. We believe that we are missing the boat by not providing a more facile way for families who identify with the Park or make frequent use of it to provide active support. Over a thousand children use the Park each year for soccer programs and it is almost impossible to drive by and not see people using the exercise trail. And, JCPRC manages a variety of programs that bring individuals and families into the Park including a very effective summer day camp program. We believe that establishing a "Friends of Morgan's Grove Park" organization under our existing charter and non-profit structure would help significantly to provide effective support for the Park.

### Irving Memorial Bench at Morgan's Grove Park

Brendan Scott Irving passed away on November 19, 2009. He was a freshman at WV University. He was active in 4-H, loved snowboarding, music, drama and laughter. He also loved soccer at Morgan's Grove Park. His family was given permission to placed a bench in the park to honor his memory.



## By-Law Update

It is important that the By-Laws accurately reflect how the Club is structured and how it operates. They are in effect the operational charter for the Club and legally govern everything that it does.

Our current By-Laws were updated three years ago but no longer accurately reflect what we are attempting to do.

A number of changes should be considered. They are straight forward and should be relatively simple to address.

1. If we change the name, that is the first order of business.
2. If we create a "Friends of Morgan's Grove Park" that should be reflected in the by-laws.
3. Our responsibility for Morgan's Grove needs to be more adequately reflected. At the moment, even though it is a significant portion of our resources and operations, it is hardly mentioned and specific duties concerning the park are not enumerated.
4. A finance committee should be established in order to provide support for the treasurer, provide for proper development of budgets and arrange for periodic informal audits.
5. Finally, there is a suggestion that provision should be made for an "SMC Advisory Board" which would meet once or twice a year, or upon request of the current Board in order to provide advice and support on difficult issues and when needed to generate additional support for SMC initiatives or problem resolution. It membership would be drawn from past SMC officers and acknowledged leaders within our community.

It would be helpful to create an Ad Hoc Committee to consider these and other items desired and report back mid-year at a special general membership meeting to gain approval and reissue the by-laws.

## *The Passing of Beth and Charlie Printz*

We were saddened in recent weeks to lose two much loved, long time members of the Club. Both Charlie and Beth Printz passed away in October. Their loss will leave a big hole in the lives of many of us and certainly the greater Shepherdstown Community. They made immeasurable contributions in so many ways that it will take some time to fully appreciate the impact. Charlie was always a strong voice in any discussion sharing years of experience and insight with conviction and emphasis. Beth was always the quiet, steady hand that calmed the waves and nurtured a sense of well being. Charlie so often called upon, always conveyed the impression in giving invocations, saying grace, and leading in the Pledge of Allegiance that he had a Red Phone connection with the Almighty. That voice – now silenced – will long be remembered.

# INVITATION

Who: **YOU**

What: General Membership Meeting

When: November 16, 2011

Where: War Memorial Building

Time: Social 6:30 - Dinner 7:00 - Meeting 8:00

Come share a pleasant social hour and delicious Thanksgiving Dinner with fellow Men's Club Members!

**WHY: YOUR INPUT IS VERY IMPORTANT!**

There are significant items on the agenda central to the continuance of the club.

Changing the Club Name

Creation of a "Friends of Morgan's Grove Park" Organization

Community swimming pool at Morgan's Grove Park

Permanent multi-function bandshell at the Park

Creation of an SMC Advisory Board

Election of new board members.

And, as always, ideas & suggestions from **YOU!**

RSVP no later than Sunday, Nov. 13th - 304.876.3323

GO FOR THE  
**GOAL!**



**250**

**As we approach the  
250th Anniversary of  
Shepherdstown, help us  
make our goal of**

**250**

**members in 2012**

Help keep your club vital and your  
community thriving by inviting your  
friends and neighbors to join.

Membership forms are available at:

**[www.smc25443.org](http://www.smc25443.org)**

# Membership Challenge

Membership in any organization is much more than simply paying dues. It is contributing to the organization through your active participation and full engagement in efforts to achieve the stated objectives. In our case it is to enhance the quality of life in the Shepherdstown community and Eastern Panhandle. Let us engage individuals and organizations that you would like to work with and find common cause. Look for opportunities to combine resources and pursue mutual objectives of both short and long term goals and visions. Extend a hand of friendship to new arrivals and reach out to embrace others who may be in need of encouragement and support. Former SMC President Charles Freeland noted recently that at one point in time the Club was down to no more than 12 active members but it still managed to maintain Morgan Grove Park and survive. Imagine what we could do when our membership grows to numbers that equal the 250 candles on Shepherdstown's Birthday Cake!

## Event Calendar

**November & December 2011**

November 16: Dinner & General Membership Meeting

- 6:30 Social Hour
- 7:00 Thanksgiving Dinner & All the Trimmings
- 8:00 Meeting & Board Election

November 25 – 27: Opening Weekend - Christmas Bazaar

December 3 - 4: Christmas Bazaar

December 6: Decoration of the SMC's Christmas Tree

December 10 – 11: Christmas Bazaar

December 14: Traditional Christmas Dinner Program

- 6:30: Social Hour
- 7:00: Christmas Dinner
- 8:00: Jefferson High School Chorale Concert

December 17 – 18: Christmas Bazaar

December 18: Special FREE puppet show 4:30  
Our gift to community children.

Annual Book Sale  
& Soup Kitchen  
A **HUGE SUCCESS!!!**

Initial profit from books over \$7,000. And, from the Soup Kitchen, \$480. Sincere thanks to all the donors and volunteers that helped make this annual fundraiser a **WINNER!**



Judy Olsen



Judy Olsen

Book Sale Co-Chairs Art Wineburg & Susan Brown with Mike Austin, SMC President (left to right above)

Photo at left, Willa Pentony (3 yrs.) & her sister, Molly (2 yrs.). They found books to take home too!

Appreciating Morgan's Grove

If you want a pleasant experience some balmy afternoon, stop by Morgan's Grove, sit on a bench or other pleasant perch and soak up the atmosphere. Listen to the gurgle of the water emerging from the spring house as it winds its way to join other nearby sources to form Town Run and begins rushing to cascade over the cliffs to the Potomac. Hear the excited laughter of children as they play on the swings and climb on the playground equipment. There might be the thud of a soccer ball being kicked, the panting of an overweight dog getting a little exercise chasing a ball or stick. If you have a little imagination, after living in this historic area, you might hear the faint rattle of Civil War musketry or even the clatter of Revolutionary War militia members shouldering their rifles to begin

the "Bee Line March." It's one of the treasures we hope you will help us preserve for future generations. It is a wonderful piece of historic real estate that previous SMC members had the wisdom to buy and the diligence to keep.



Judy Olsen

Shepherdstown Men's Club

# Christmas Bazaar

Nov. 25, 26, 27 & Dec. 3, 4, 10, 11, 17, 18

**Holiday shopping at it's best!**

Beautiful handmade crafts, jewelry, clothing, pottery, artwork.

## FREE Puppet Show

## Dec. 18 @ 4:30

Newsletter Design: Judy Olsen/olsen images - Printed by Progressive Printing, Martinsburg, WV

**SHEPHERDSTOWN MEN'S CLUB**

P.O. Box 463

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