



The Friends of Mountwood Park, Inc.

P. O. Box 2094, Parkersburg, WV 26102

Winter 2023 Issue Vol. 14, No. 1

Friends of Mountwood Park Officers:

Peggy Squires, President
Rose Russell, Vice President
Carolyn Naylor, Secretary
Mike Naylor, Treasurer

Friends meet the 2nd Thursday of each month at 6:30 pm.

All snowmen come from heaven unassembled!



Letter From Our President

We are ready to start the new year. Several exciting things are planned, starting with the registering of the “Crazy Quilt “ donated to the museum. This is a truly beautiful handmade Quilt with colorful and rich fabrics, brocades and velvets to mention just a few and many different fancy stitches. Stop by the museum and see it. Also check out the new additions to the Wheel House and outdoor displays.

The weekend of January 12-15, our Miss Woof Fest Queen Kayla Holbrook attended the West Virginia Association of Fairs and Festival Pageant in Charleston. She was in competition with 82 other queens from the Fairs and Festivals in West Virginia. Although she didn't

win, she did a good job representing us. Thank you, Kayla! (Kayla is in the left photo below.)



Another participant (right) was my grand-daughter Mia Williams, Parkersburg Winterfest Queen.



The winner was the Miss WV Cupcake Festival Queen, Bridgette Altizer. (See photo on below.)



Also, thank you Wendy Williams for directing and chaperoning the girls for the weekend.

We need to get started on the Easter Egg Hunt. It takes several months to get the eggs filled and baskets made. Please start bringing candy and basket filling items to the Park. This year Easter is April 9. We will need to work on it at the March meeting. If you wish

to volunteer to help, please contact us on our Facebook page.

We had our January meeting at Cheryl's Country Diner where we enjoyed visiting with each other over dinner. Later we discussed our plans for the quilt.

Hope to see you at the meeting in February.
Peggy Squires

*Life is really simple, but we insist
on making it complicated.
Confucius*

New to the Museum

By Carolyn Naylor

Thanks to Mrs. Mary (Perrin) Jonas of Parkersburg, the Volcano Museum has a "crazy quilt" for you to admire the next time you visit. Everyone who has seen it has expressed their amazement of how beautiful it is and commented on the skill and artistic ability of the quilter. See picture below.



We think the quilt was made approximately 150 years ago. The materials used were velvet, satin, and silk and it's embellished with embroidery.

I never heard of crazy quilting and didn't have a clue of what crazy quilting referred to so I went

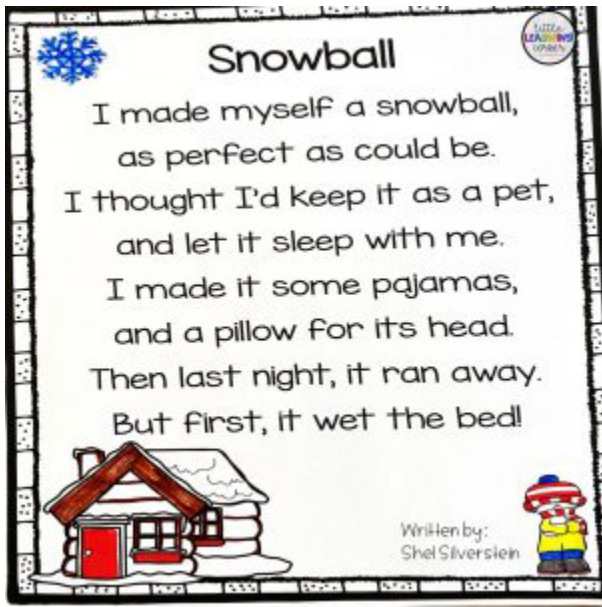
to my computer to ask Wikipedia.org. This is what I learned. Cray quilting does not actually refer to a specific kind of quilting (the needlework which binds two or more layers of fabric together), but a specific kind of patchwork lacking repeating motifs and with the seams and patches heavily embellished.

Crazy quilts are a labor of love. How long does it take to make a crazy quilt? A *Harper's Bazaar* article from 1884 estimated a full-size crazy quilt could take 1500 hours to complete. We believe our quilt is very special. Therefore, we decided to have it become part of the West Virginia Quilt Documentation Project which carries out the mission of West Virginia Quilters, Inc. Their mission is to record the tradition, culture, and history of quilt making in West Virginia. This will encourage the care and preservation of quilts, both old and new.

We will take our quilt for documentation on March 17 at Jackson's Mill, West Virginia. The information will be stored in the West Virginia Division of Culture and History Culture Center Archives.

Dues 2023: I want to thank all members who have sent dues in for 2023. For those who haven't yet paid, you will receive a dues letter soon.

If you wish, you can pay now by sending a check for \$20 (self) or \$25 (family) to the address shown above. Make your check payable to The Friends of Mountwood Park. If you include a donation, please let us know how you wish your donation to be spent. For example, Adventure Camp, Woof Fest, Museum/History, Easter Egg Hunt, or Dog Park, etc.



New Outside Displays

By Mike Naylor

The Park has added two outside displays from the Volcano neighborhood and both have been mounted on concrete bases.

The first item is a wooden oil storage tank and is in very good condition. Wooden storage tanks were replaced by steel riveted tanks in the early 20th century. We learned from Johnny Boston that some wooden storage tanks in this region were constructed with redwood lumber from California. Redwood is resistant to moisture, durable and not prone to decaying. The early 20th century was marked by the indiscriminate use of natural resources.



The second display is a pump jack eccentric, otherwise known as a central power unit. A single engine sends energy to a horizontal band wheel and offset wheels. The offset wheels transmitted power to well sites by rods and cables.



The endless cable system was vertically oriented and the pump jack eccentric was horizontal.

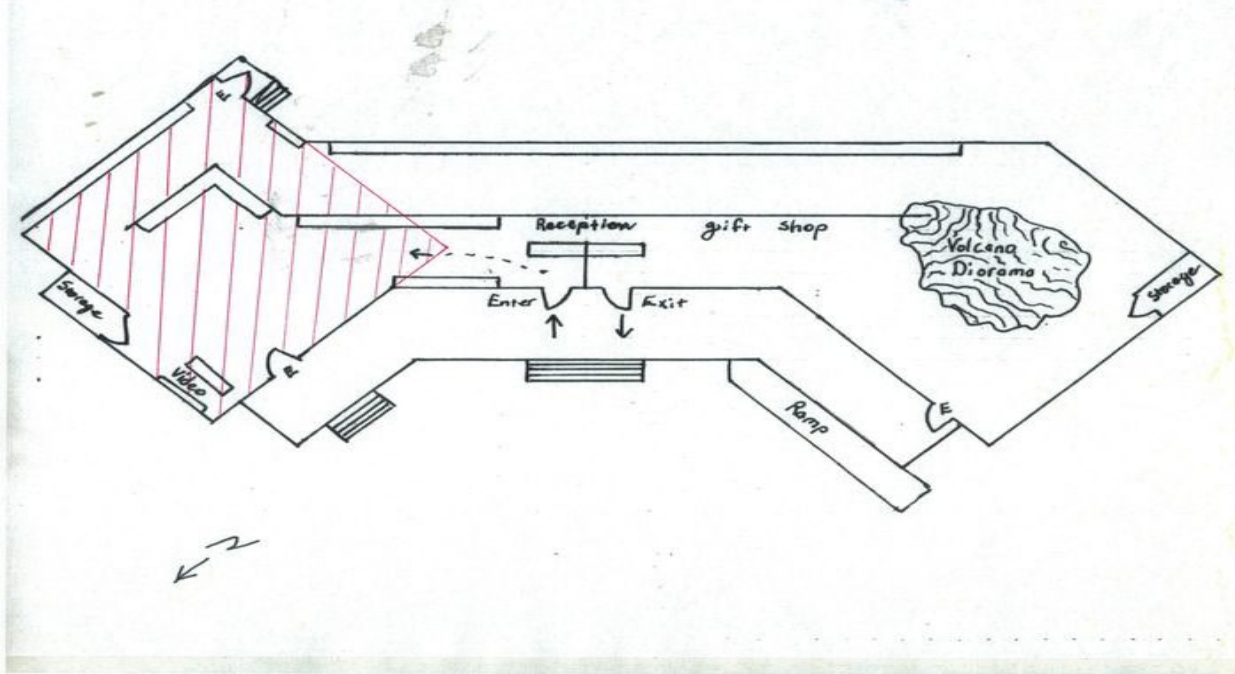
New signs are being made for the displays.

Happiness is found when you quit comparing yourself to other people. Unknown

Proposed Museum Addition

By Mike Naylor

This is a proposed museum addition drafted by John Hyde, Maintenance Supervisor. The area marked with red lines is the current floor plan.



Notable highlights are twice as much floor space, a video display and a Volcano diorama. This will allow us to spread out our displays because we are just about out of available area for new displays.

Two things keep us from happiness; living in the past and observing others. Unknown

The Church at Mountwood Park

By Carolyn Naylor

Every time we are headed north on Route 50, when we get near Volcano Road, I find myself looking for the old church sitting on a hill in Mountwood Park. In my mind, it appears sad and forlorn, wondering where did everybody go. My imagination always begins thinking about the former members. I can see them walking up the hill to attend church services, dressed in their Sunday best. I see a few horses, tied to a buggy, standing patiently, waiting for the service to end so they could pick up their human family and head home. I see children playing on the hill side and chasing each other among the head stones in the cemetery. I think of all the church picnics, wedding and funerals that would have taken place at the church. I can't help but wonder what happened.

Finally, the day came when I decided it was time for me to make the effort to find out why this once wonderful structure was left to the elements. At one time, it must have been important to a lot of people.

Below is a picture I took of the church as it appeared in November 2022.



The church was built in 1888 and was the German Lutheran Church. Today, many just refer to it as the old German church.

Several visitors to the museum have inquired why the Park board members and employees have neglected the church. The answer to this is very simple--the Park does not own the structure or the cemetery although it is sitting on Park land. If you walk up to the church, it is evident that somebody is taking care of the cemetery but I don't know who that is. To me, that means somebody does still care. Now, I just needed to find out why it was abandoned.

Over the years I've heard that the demise of Volcano was the result of a fire that started on August 4, 1879, and that the fire left the town in ruins. According to the book *Volcano, West Virginia*, every building near the railroad, from the Volcano engine house to Mr. Stiles' store had been destroyed. Since John Schaffer's store building was still intact, most of the businessmen rented a small space from him. The people still had hope of rebuilding and couldn't imagine the end of the oil boom or the community they loved. After all, they had gone through several disastrous events but always seemed to be able to get up and dust themselves off and move on. Unfortunately, they didn't realize there were forces at play that they had no control over.

As the 1870's ended, it became clear to most that Volcano would never again be as productive as it had been. The supply of oil near the surface was exhausted. Other oil fields were being explored and by the end of the decade, many of the citizens came to the conclusion that they would have to move to these other locations to find work. Many moved to Colorado, to Kansas. Some finally ended up settling in California, Texas, Oklahoma and even Hawaii. Some even decided to make a change in their choice of careers.

I wonder if they ran into difficulties fitting in with their new neighbors. Were their neighbors' prejudice toward these West Virginians looking for work in their state? According to the book *Where it all Began*, for those who stayed behind there were three developments that complicated their lives. First, they were hit with a devastating windstorm in April 1880. It destroyed a number of derricks. Next, the West Virginia Oil and Oil Land Company at Petroleum went bankrupt in August 1881, prompting a set of legal encounters involving J. N. Camden and Charles Shattuck. Next, there was another coal strike. Eventually, in 1898 the Laurel Fork & Sand Hill Railroad was dismantled and sold for junk.

I think I found the answer as to why this church was abandoned. Once the population moved, businesses closed and members of the churches disappeared. For a church to remain open, it needs members who will show up regularly, members who bring others consistently, and members who give generously and are willing to volunteer.



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*“When you arise in the morning
give thanks for the food and for
the joy of living. If you see no
reason for giving thanks, the
fault lies only in yourself.”*
Tecumseh

Schedule of Events

Museum Opens for Season – May 6
Hours: 1 pm to 4 pm
Saturday and Sunday

Volcano Days – September 22, 23 & 24

Easter Egg Hunt
Mountwood Fishing Derby
Children's Adventure Camp-
Woof Fest Festival

WE NEED VOLUNTEERS

Like us on Face Book!

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