

Morgantown History Museum Receives Conservation Bookshelf

Morgantown – June 19, 2009 – Treasured objects and artifacts held by the Morgantown History Museum will be preserved for future generations with help from the *IMLS Connecting to Collections Bookshelf*, a core set of conservation books and online resources donated by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). IMLS has now awarded almost 3,000 free sets of the IMLS Bookshelf, in cooperation with the American Association for State and Local History (AASLH).

“We are honored to have been awarded the IMLS Conservation Bookshelf,” says Pamela Ball, chairperson of the Morgantown Museum Commission and coordinator at the Morgantown History Museum. “The materials included in the bookshelf will help us in our effort to conserve local artifacts, to create a digital record of all objects in our collections, and to develop an appropriate emergency response plan to disasters for our new venue in the Wharf District.” Among the museum’s collections that need care are the Seneca Glass Collection, which includes documents, glassmaking tools, and 5,000 items of locally manufactured glassware and the Sterling Faucet Photograph Collection, which contains over 1,700 color and black-and-white photographs, depicting various aspects of social life and work at the Sterling Faucet Company’s Morgantown plant.

“When IMLS launched this initiative to improve the dire state of our nation’s collections, we understood that the materials gathered for the Bookshelf would serve as important tools for museums, libraries, and archives nationwide,” said Anne-Imelda Radice, director of IMLS. “We were both pleased and encouraged by the overwhelming interest of institutions prepared to answer the call to action, and we know that with their dedication, artifacts from our shared history will be preserved for future generations.”

The Morgantown History Museum received this essential set of resources based on an application describing the needs and plans for the care of its collections. The IMLS Bookshelf focuses on collections typically found in art or history museums and in libraries' special collections, with an added selection of texts for zoos, aquaria, public gardens, and nature centers. It addresses such topics as the philosophy and ethics of collecting, collections management and planning, emergency preparedness, and culturally specific conservation issues.

The IMLS Bookshelf is a crucial component of *Connecting to Collections: A Call to Action*, a conservation initiative that the Institute launched in 2006. IMLS began the initiative in response to a 2005 study it released in partnership with Heritage Preservation, *A Public Trust at Risk: The Heritage Health Index Report on the State of America’s Collections*. The multi-faceted, multi-year initiative shines a nationwide spotlight on the needs of America’s collections, especially those held by smaller institutions, which often lack the human and financial resources necessary to care for their collections adequately.

About the Institute of Museum and Library Services

The Institute of Museum and Library Services is the primary source of federal support for the nation’s 123,000 libraries and 17,500 museums. The Institute's mission is to create strong libraries and museums that connect people to information and ideas. The Institute works at the

national level and in coordination with state and local organizations to sustain heritage, culture, and knowledge; enhance learning and innovation; and support professional development. To learn more about the Institute, please visit www.ims.gov.