



HERITAGE TOURISM

ESTABLISHING A STATE-FUNDED CULTURAL HERITAGE TOURISM PROGRAM IN WEST VIRGINIA

Since 1996, the Cultural Heritage Tourism market has been growing at twice the rate of other kinds of travel. It now represents 20% of the tourism market and a staggering 40% of tourist expenditures — Heritage Tourists typically spend more and stay longer than tourists of any other kind.

Competition for heritage tourism dollars is intense and growing. Over 30 states now have formal programs, including our neighboring states of Pennsylvania, Virginia and North Carolina (three of the top ten states for cultural heritage tourists).

Maryland alone invests about a million dollars each year in developing its heritage tourism efforts. Clearly, cultural heritage tourism IS economic development. Cultural tourism is thriving around us, and West Virginia urgently needs to invest in a comprehensive approach to capture its share of this lucrative and burgeoning market.

Preservation Alliance and Main Street West Virginia have been working for several years to develop an active Cultural Heritage Tourism Program in West Virginia. With substantial support from the Benedum Foundation and a broad coalition of state agencies, non-profits, and regional heritage partners, we've been developing heritage tourism products and providing training and technical assistance to sites, communities, businesses, and heritage regions across the state.

Within the last two years, WV's CHT effort has:

- Conducted 15 Workshops on Destination Retail, Agri-Tourism and Cultural Heritage Tourism.
- Developed a pilot Heritage Tourism Sites Locator that connects small heritage tourism businesses to vacant commercial space in historic buildings.
- Assisting 5 heritage development regions with their planning and interpretation projects.

- Working with Department of Agriculture and Division of Tourism on Agri-tourism inventory.
- Currently conducting research on and developing a profile of the cultural heritage shopper for training purposes for small and agri-businesses.

In coordination with Main Street West Virginia, we're now seeking state support to establish and staff this program. PAWV will remain active as a non-profit partner bringing additional resources to the effort. We will seek a budget of around \$400,000



Heritage Tourism Opportunity: The Sites Homestead in Pendleton County

to provide staff, technical assistance and direct services toward heritage tourism development. An advisory board including all interested state agencies and non-profits will continue to oversee the program. As a state agency program, the Cultural Heri-

itage Tourism program can provide services like:

- Becoming the point of contact for communities and regions interested in heritage tourism.
- Information, training and technical assistance to small and agri-businesses on capturing more cultural heritage tourist dollars.
- Establishing a program to encourage regional cooperation, including recognition of regional heritage areas and thematic trails.
- Providing technical assistance and planning expertise for communities and regions interested in implementing a comprehensive approach.
- Facilitating the development and interpretation of attractions.
- Promoting the development of businesses and visitor services to serve heritage tourists.
- Coordinating the delivery of services from all appropriate agencies.
- Evaluating the impact of heritage tourism on local and state economies.

2004 Annual Conference:

Preservation = Community Revitalization: Tools for Effectiveness

By Phyllis Baxter

Braving the remnants of Hurricane Ivan, more than 60 Preservation Alliance members enjoyed the 2004 Annual Conference, **Preservation = Community Revitalization: Tools for Effectiveness**. While the wet weather diminished field trip attendance on Friday Sept 17, Parkersburg provided us with wonderful hospitality at the elegant historic Blennerhassett Hotel, with a bounteous



Keynote Speaker Dwight Young

evening reception at the Harnett House in the nicely preserved Julia-Ann Square historic district. Saturday's sunshine gave us the opportunity to visit several spectacular historic homes: the James McNeil Stephenson House – Oakland, still owned by the original family; the Van Winkle - Wix House undergoing rehabilitation; and the beautifully preserved Henderson Hall.

Dwight Young, Senior Communications Associate for the National Trust for Historic Preservation, gave a most inspirational keynote address at the Saturday luncheon / PAWV Annual Meeting. "Preservation, Economics, Common Sense and Pancakes" combined outstanding photographs of historic buildings across the country to remind us of why preservation is important.

Also at the luncheon, PAWV presented the Rodney Collins Award for life-long preservation achievement to David L. McKain of Parkersburg for his out-

standing work in preserving and presenting the oil and gas heritage of the region. (*next page*)

The educational sessions provided introductory and in-depth information for a variety of interests. Leading off on Friday were "Strengthening your non-profit organization" presented by Robert Nieweg of the National Trust, and "Observations on New Construction within a Historical Context" by James T. Kienle, FAIA, Institute for Preservation and Contemporary Design.

Friday workshop sessions concentrated on Preservation Projects from Start to Finish, Certified Local Government training, and the West Virginia Byways program. Saturday offered three sessions each on Community Planning, Sustainable Communities, and Preservation Toolkit. Highlighting the roster of distinguished presenters for Saturday's sessions were Richard Ostergaard, Forest Landscape Architect - San Juan National Forest; Scott Gerloff, Potomac Heritage Partnership; Jim Wood -- Director of Planning for the City of Morgantown; Judy Reckart, Reckart & Associates; Mark Sadd, Lewis Glasser Casey & Rollins PLLC; and Ron Eck, Director of the West Virginia Transportation Technology Transfer Center.

The conference was co-sponsored by West Virginia Historic Preservation Office, West Virginia Byways and Backways Program, National Trust for Historic Preservation, & Wood County Historical and Preservation Society. Success was assured by



Touring Parkersburg's Van Winkle-Wix House: "The Castle"

the assistance of many additional sponsors, donors, and volunteers. (*see page 3*)



Conference Attendees Socializing in the Promenade of the Blennerhassett Hotel

(Continued from page 1)

HERITAGE TOURISM PROGRAM

Anticipated Outcomes of the Program:

- Improved quality and quantity of sites.
- Increased attendance at sites and communities, length of stay and expenditures.
- Increased revenues for communities and small and agri-businesses.
- Improved image of West Virginia communities.
- Organizational collaboration at the state and local levels between development, tourism and cultural preservation.
- Innovative strategies for financing business and site development.
- Stronger understanding and appreciation for our state's heritage.

A West Virginia Cultural Heritage Tourism Development Program will use the state's historic, cultural and natural resources to establish sustainable heritage tourism programs for regions and communities. The purpose of such programs will be stimulating economic opportunities for these communities, businesses, organizations and individuals and preserving and conserving these resources. We urge all PAWV members to let your state representatives know how important this program could be for West Virginia's economy and preservation efforts.

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Working to save our past... for our future.

OLD AWARDS

History Heroes -- individuals working at the grassroots level who have displayed exceptional service in the preservation of their community's history -- will be honored in a ceremony in the Cultural Center during History Day. If your organization would like to nominate a History Hero, please watch for the mailing coming soon.

NEW AWARDS

In conjunction with the History Hero awards, the SHPO is initiating a new competitive recognition award program. Two categories - *Award of Excellence in Historic Preservation* and *Award of Excellence in Education and Awareness of Historic Preservation* -- will be chosen. Nomination deadline is January 15. For more information or application form, contact WVSHPO, 304-558-0240.

**Come Celebrate!
WEST VIRGINIA
HISTORY DAY
March 17, 2005**



This year's event will be held at the West Virginia State Capitol during the West Virginia Legislative Session. History Day is officially designated by the West Virginia Archives and History Commission as a special day to recognize the state's rich and varied history. Historical organizations of all kinds are invited to tell the story of their locality or organization in a manned exhibit in the Capitol Rotunda between 9 am and 3 pm. Space reservations are required. Watch the PAWV web site this winter (www.pawv.org) for information and discussions of issues of preservation interest before the legislature. Groups are encouraged to take this opportunity to discuss historical issues with your legislators and show that we care about preserving our state's heritage.

The event is co-sponsored by the *Friends of WV Culture and History*, *Preservation Alliance of WV*, *WV Historical Society*, the *WV Historical Association*, *WV Association of Museums, Archives and History Commission*, *West Virginia Humanities Council*, and *Mining Your History Foundation*.

For more information or application forms for History Hero or History Day display space, contact: Fred Armstrong, WV Archives & History, 304-558-0230

West Virginia History Day 2005 Is Thursday, March 7th!

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