

MORGANS GROVE PARK

IN 1961 the Shepherdstown Men's Club, now renamed the Shepherdstown Community Club, bought 25 acres of the former Morgans Grove Fair property. Today Morgans Grove Park includes soccer fields, a hiking trail, playground, snack bar, and covered concrete pavilion for public and private occasions.

The Shepherdstown Community Club raises funds to support the park through member dues, donations, an annual garden tour with high tea, an annual two-week book sale, and most important, hundreds of volunteer hours.



The 20-acre Morgans Grove has athletic fields (top) and a pavilion (bottom) for community events and enjoyment. The Town Run, a year-round stream, bisects the district as it wends its way through Shepherdstown to the Potomac River.

Before Richard Morgan arrived in 1738, Catawba and Delaware natives camped, hunted, and fished along springs in the area. The name "Morgan" derives from several generations of the Morgan family who fought for American independence and who owned property in the District.

MORGAN SPRINGS AND THE BEELINE MARCH

IN APRIL, 1775, on hearing news of Lexington and Concord, men in Mecklenburg (Shepherdstown today) formed a militia to support the fight for American independence. General George Washington had called for state militias to join him in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Militias had to arm, equip, and train themselves. The Mecklenburg militia trained in town and awaited muskets made by the Sheetz family, prominent local gunsmiths.

On June 10, 1775, the company held a morale-building barbecue and promised to meet again, here, in 1825.



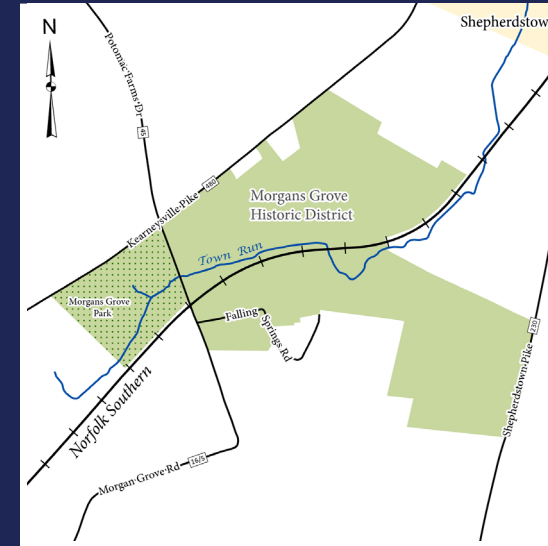
Reporting to General Washington, 1775
Woodcut by Alexander Boteler, 1860

BEELINE BARBECUE AT MORGAN SPRINGS

FIFTY YEARS LATER in 1825 the militia held its reunion at "Morgans Springs." Only two original members attended, but food, speeches, fireworks, and music highlighted the occasion. Ten-year-old Alexander Boteler was present in 1825 and in 1860 recalled events in *My Ride to the Barbecue*, a booklet he illustrated with 20 woodcuts.



More than 5,000 persons attended the barbecue.



Morgans Grove Historic District is located south of Shepherdstown, West Virginia, between State Road 480 (Kearneysville Pike) and State Road 230 (Flowing Springs Road).

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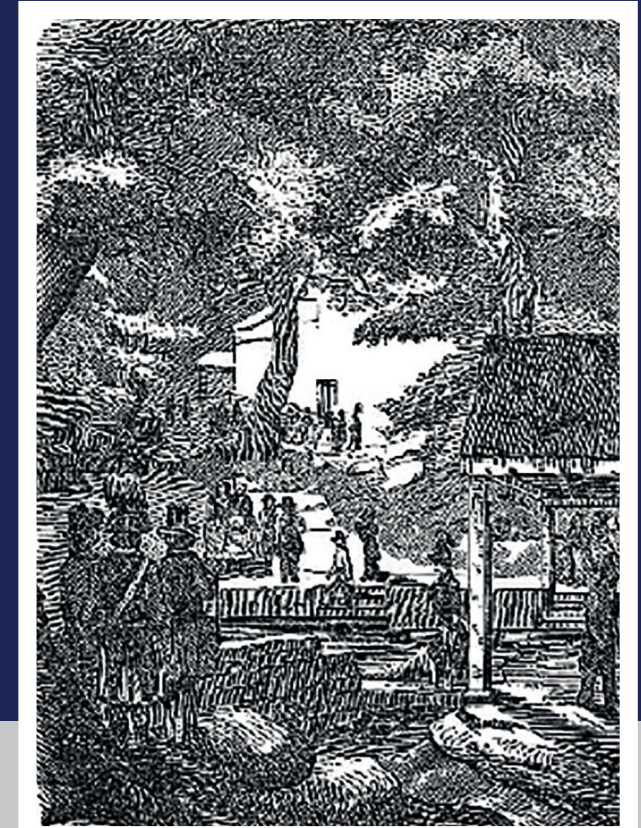
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CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU

Photos Courtesy of: JC Museum

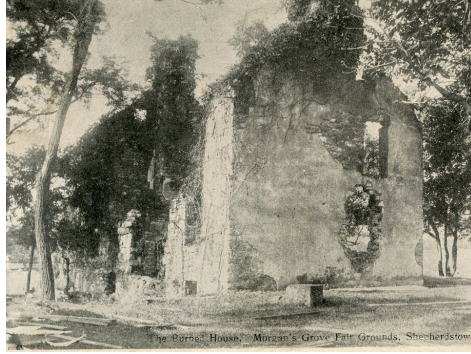
Morgans Grove HISTORIC DISTRICT



Morgan Springs, July, 1825, as seen by Alexander Boteler and drawn by him in 1860.



FOUNTAIN ROCK



"Fountain Rock" before it was taken down in early 1920s or 1930s.

AT THE ONSET of the Civil War, Alexander Boteler resigned his seat in Congress to accept a commission with the Confederate army. In 1864 Union forces burned his home "Fountain Rock." Boteler never rebuilt. After the war Boteler pressed for canals, railroads, public education, and helped found Shepherd College.

D. Lee Morgan, a Morgan descendant, and other volunteers, built the present-day pavilion at Morgans Grove Park where Fountain Rock stood.

MORGANS GROVE FAIR

In 1899 the Morgans Grove Fair Agricultural Association bought today's Morgans Grove Park – and continued annual fairs (begun in 1885 across the street) to the early 1930s. Attractions included a merry-go-round, dance hall, and exhibitor tents. Fairs ran four days. Families often pitched tents to enjoy the event.



Early 1900s image of Morgan Grove Fair.



Agricultural fairs featured prominent speakers including Postmaster General William Wilson Perhaps most prominent was William Jennings Bryan, Democratic candidate for president, who spoke in 1900. An estimated 15,000 persons heard him.

Democratic candidate for president William Jennings Bryan spoke at Morgans Grove Fair in 1900.

"THE MOST BEAUTIFUL PLACE..."

THE WRITER for the *Shepherdstown Register* described Fountain Rock Grove, former name of Morgans Grove, as "the most beautiful place that can be had, having one of the best and coolest springs in the county, and the best shade." Cool springs and shade were important qualities of a public park in 1879 and remain so today. These natural assets allowed enjoyable family gatherings and entertainment, then and now.

Whites and non-whites enjoyed Fountain Rock Grove, now Morgans Grove Park.

Grand Demonstration and Pro-cemion at Shepherdstown.

The colored Good Templars of Shepherdstown Lodge, No. 2, will hold a grand celebration on Friday, the 1st of August, 1879. By the voice of five thousand, and many other attractions, we cordially invite the lodges of Charlestown, Martinsburg, Kerneysville and Winchester, and the Good Templars and Temperance Fraternity, to join with us for the benefit of the temperance workers, good templars and temperance orphanage and mission work.

Historic

These four homes, in the historic district, are privately owned and cannot be seen from a public road.



Falling Springs, ca. 1837, as seen from the west looking east.

FALLING SPRINGS

BUILT IN 1837 by Jacob Morgan, this stone house with a raised English basement may have had stucco provided by the Shepherdstown Cement Mill owned by the neighboring Boteler family.



Springdale, ca. 1760.

SPRINGDALE

BUILT AS EARLY AS 1760 by William Morgan, oldest son of Richard Morgan, the two-story house has five fireplaces. It is a surviving symbol to the prominent Morgan family of settlers.



Rosebrake, the Morgan-Bedinger-Dandridge House.

ROSEBRAKE

THE MORGAN FAMILY built the first of three sections possibly as early as 1745. They named their home "Poplar Grove." In 1877 newlywed Danske Dandridge

renamed the property "Rosebrake." A local poet and historian, Dandridge also authored publications on botany, especially for *The Garden*, an English periodical.

OLD STONE HOUSE

THE OLD STONE HOUSE was built in about 1785. Not visible from a public road and probably postdating 1775, the site of the Old Stone House at Morgan Springs was the starting point for the Beeline March in 1775. The Old Stone House was the site of the barbecue 50 years later in 1825.



Old Stone House at Morgan Springs.

Homes