



# Montgomery Museum & Lewis Miller Regional Art Center

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## HISTORY RESTORED: LEWIS MILLER DAGUERREOTYPE



*A Lewis Miller Daguerreotype*

### THE DAGUERREOTYPE: AN IMPORTANT PHOTOGRAPHIC INNOVATION

Although not the first photographic process, the daguerreotype was the first that did not require hours of exposure time. This made the process commercially viable and appropriate for portraits. Portrait-making was an important facet of the daguerreotype's introduction since it provided affordable, true-to-life images that had never before been available to the middle class. The new method was so popular that by 1850, over seventy daguerreotype studios were located in New York City alone. The earliest known photograph of Abraham Lincoln was a daguerreotype taken in 1846 or 1847, which is housed in the large daguerreotype collection at the Library of Congress.

American daguerreotypes were most often the work of itinerant photographers, although studios were common in larger cities. By the late 1850s, faster and less expensive photographic processes had been introduced and overtook the daguerreotype in popularity. These included the ambrotype (patented by James Ambrose Cutting in 1854) and the tintype (patented by Hamilton Smith in 1856). Modern gelatin emulsion and roll film were invented in the 1880s. Enchanted by the beautiful character of daguerreotypes, however, some modern photographers still practice this art.

#### The Process

The daguerreotype process was perfected by French artist J. M. Daguerre in 1839. Made from copper plates coated with a thin layer of silver that had been polished to mirror brightness, the plate was sensitized to light with iodine in a closed box, then transferred to a camera and exposed for about a minute. After exposure, daguerreo-

types were developed over hot mercury where the vapor condensed on the exposed area and then fixed with a salt solution and toned with gold chloride. The image created by the daguerreotype process is very delicate and can be easily rubbed off or suffer from oxidation. Therefore, the plate was sealed behind glass for its protection. The completed photograph was framed or "boxed" in sometimes fancy cases. The image size was dependent upon the plate size as follows:

Whole plate	6-1/2" x 8-1/2"
Half plate	4-1/4" x 5-1/2"
Quarter plate	3-1/4" x 4-1/4"
Sixth plate	2-3/4" x 3-1/4"
Ninth plate	2" x 2-1/2"
Sixteenth plate	1-3/8" x 1-5/8"

Each daguerreotype image was unique, made without a negative, and thus, not reproducible.

#### The Lewis Miller Daguerreotype

Of the five daguerreotypes owned by the Montgomery Museum, only one is on an identified person: Lewis Miller. It was given to the museum by Colonel and Mrs. Archer E. Lackey in 1988. The Lackeys have given a number of important artifacts to the museum over the years; many of

(Continued on page 2)

# OLD STUFF MEETS MODERN TECHNOLOGY



## HERITAGE DAY

August 21, 2010 10:00-3:00

Mark your calendar so you won't miss Heritage Day 2010. Plans are being made to make this the best event yet and we need your help.

Could you please:

Be a sponsor or make a donation to cover expenses.

Let us know if you know someone who might be a sponsor or make a donation.

Find someone to demonstrate or display a heritage craft or collection.

Find a fine artist who would set up a booth to show (and sell) his/her work.

Volunteer to work either before or during the event.

Help publicize HD. Flyers and postcard are available at the museum.

Use the web to tell your contacts about the event. We have information on our website and Facebook page.

Old Stuff Meets Modern Technology:  
The Montgomery Museum is now on Facebook  
We are using our new Facebook presence as a blog to post items of interest. Look for event announcements, behind the scenes tidbits, fun historical facts, and even photos and information about art work and items owned by the museum.

To join in the fun, go to home page on our website ([www.montgomerymuseum.org](http://www.montgomerymuseum.org)) and click on the Facebook logo. It will take you directly to the Museum's Facebook page. Click on "become a fan," and you will be able to access the page and see all the posts. This is a good way to keep up with Museum happenings and see things that are not part of our normal exhibits. If you are not a Facebook member, you will need to set up an account and profile. . .don't worry, it's easy.

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## *Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon*

Mark your calendar. ....

On May 20 we will celebrate our wonderful museum volunteers! All volunteers are invited to a luncheon at Hans Meadow at 12:00 noon. After lunch Kathy Drummond will give a tour of the house and gardens. We hope to see you there. Please RSVP to Sue Farrar at 382 5644.

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## *Membership Information Request*

As we continue to more effectively use our technology, we will be using email more often. In order to upgrade our communication with members, we need your assistance. Please send as soon as possible your email address to Susan Brown at [strudelcat@aol.com](mailto:strudelcat@aol.com). Thank you for your help with this request.

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## THE DAGUERREOTYPE

### Continued from page 1

which were passed down through the Craig family of Hans Meadow.

The date of the daguerreotype is not known, but Miller (1796-1882) is obviously a middle-aged man in the image placing the date in the 1840-1850 period; he would have been 50 years old in 1846. The daguerreotype of Lewis Miller is a "sixth plate" size image. Like many period portraits, Miller holds tools representing his work in his right hand. These include a compass and a case or book. The compass could have represented both his work as carpenter as well as that of artist.

Over time, the leatherette covering the wooden daguerreotype case had become worn and the hinge had broken. The image was virtually hidden under a deteriorated cover glass and was visible only under certain lights. The restoration of the Lewis Miller daguerreotype was undertaken by a professional conservator in 2009. The museum's Board of Directors felt so strongly about the need to restore this piece that they made personal donations to fund the work.

Once hidden, Miller's strong countenance is now clear. The exterior of the case has been repaired and now gleams. The embossed floral design is beautifully visible on the case front. This is complemented by the embossed floral design on the red velvet case interior. The brass mat surrounding Miller's image now shines. Critical to the long-term conservation of the Miller daguerreotype, the original tape binding the glass, mat, and image plate together has been replaced. This will protect the delicate image from wear and oxidation, keeping it in good condition for years to come.

### Grand Unveiling

Look for an announcement soon about a grand unveiling of the Lewis Miller daguerreotype when it will be placed, for the first time in several years, on exhibit.

### Sources and Additional Information:

Library of Congress

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/daghtml/>

Wikipedia

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daguerreotype>

# *Meadowbrook Branch News*

## *Fran & Don Poole*

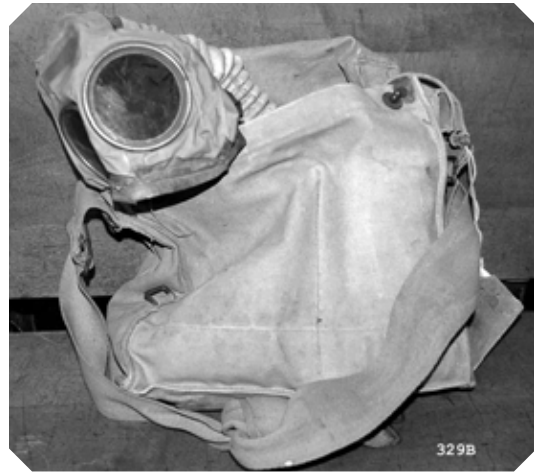
The writing project is moving right along. People who either live or grew up in the different areas of Eastern Montgomery County are writing or telling the history, legends, and interesting facts of their particular part of the county. The cooperation has been extraordinary. We have applied for a grant to cover the publication expenses. There will be a meeting/reception for the participants at Meadowbrook on Saturday, April 10, at 10 am, in the large room (Community Room former dining area) at the rear of the Meadowbrook complex. The Museum will be open before and after the meeting.

The beautiful new glass showcases have arrived, a gift from Betty Norwood and her son. The collection of Early American Dolls (courtesy of Diane Relf) is in one, and Herbert Harless is displaying his railroad memorabilia in the other case. The great collection of antique post cards from 1900-1930 era belonging to Tom Dunkenberger have been scanned and are a continuing power point slide show in the main room. Tom also has an antique glass collection he will be putting on display in the museum later this year. Ray Epperly came by with a interesting history and pictures of the source of the rolltop desk which is on loan/display to the Country store section of the Museum. Madison Marye has loaned for display a bear trap, branding irons, small animal trap and a gas mask from World

War I. These items came from the historic Madison farm. If you have not visited lately, you should drop by.

Beginning in April, the Museum hours will change. We will be open on Wednesdays and Saturdays from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon and other times by appointment by calling 268-5047 or contacting one of our board members - Herb and Anne Harless, Jim and Becky Smith, Dot King, Dale Mull, Betty Norwood and Linda Wilson.

**Special Request to the lady who is writing the history of Ironto:** Please call the Pooles at 268-5047)



*A World War I gas mask and a bear trap on loan to the Meadowbrook Branch from Madison Marye*



*A 1915 Betsy Ross postcard courtesy of the T. M. Dunkenberger Collection*

### ***Mark Your Calendar***

- |          |    |   |
|----------|----|---|
| April    | 17 | History Chat: 10-12:00  |
|          |    | The Beyer Print of Christiansburg   |
| May      | 7  | Opening reception for Marie Collier & Backyard Stonecarvers               |
| May-June |    | Art exhibit by Marie Collier and Backyard Stonecarvers                    |
| June 1   |    | New History Exhibit:<br>Patriotism in Conflict and Peace                  |
| June 5   |    | Patriot's Parade  |
| Aug. 21  |    | Heritage Day  |
|          |    | Museum Board of Directors meetings: April 8, May 13, June 10, and July 8. |

# Daniel Augustus Brown (1818 - 1900)

by Bob Shelton

From time to time, the Montgomery Museum receives requests for information about local history. Recently the museum was contacted by Dicksie Cribb inquiring about her great-great grandfather, Daniel Augustus Brown. She stated he moved to Cambria in 1852 and established a successful mercantile business. This is about the time the Virginia and Tennessee railroad came to Montgomery County resulting in a boom of business activities.

Mr. Brown seemed to have owned property on Depot Street at the railroad crossing of today's Cambria Street, then called Depot Street, the dirt road leading to Yellow Sulphur Spring Resort and to Blacksburg. A 1905 map of Cambria shown in Roy Kanode's history book, *Christiansburg, Virginia: Small Town America at Its Finest*, locates a small store building on the lot now occupied by The Emporium and earlier known as Lee's Store. Roy's book records Mr. Brown's heirs selling land behind The Emporium to developers of a furniture factory, later known as the Phoenix Furniture Company that operated from 1909-1935. My guess is that the small store shown on the 1905 map is the Brown Mercantile.

Dicksie Cribb sent a picture of Mr. Brown's brick home with her inquiry. She says it was located just below the Weller Baker School on Cambria Street, and the house was occupied by his two spinster daughters, Alice and Addie, until they moved to living quarters over his store. Some of the last to occupy the Brown house were: Sheltons, Rigbys, Moores, and Dangerfields. The house was razed in the 1980s to make way for the Montgomery County School bus garage. Today, the only physical remains of this once stately home are the steps leading from Cambria Street to the house that stood a good distance back from the street. Dicksie said that Mr. Brown was also a builder. Daniel Brown constructed the Alleghany Baptist Church building on a lot beside his house in 1872. The Baptist congregation moved to a new frame building closer to the train depot in 1891. When the Cambria Primary School was organized, the old Alleghany Church building was converted to a school building in 1924. This building burned in 1933. The Weller Baker School building was constructed on the church site in 1935. This school building served the town for forty years.

Daniel Brown seems to have owned large tracts of land in Cambria as indicated by the Brown Cemetery located on Rigby Street. Four members of the Brown family are buried in the cemetery: Daniel Augustus Brown (1818-1900), Daniel's wife Anne Elizabeth



*The Daniel Brown house on Cambria Street*

Harrison Brown (1823-1892); Alice V. Brown (1850-1937), and Mary Adeline Brown (1862-1920).

I am sorry that I do not remember the house, but I do recall my grandfather, Robert H. Shelton, telling me that his father, Robert Lea Shelton, once rented the Brown house. I have often wondered where the house was located. Many Cambria residents do remember the house being the Rigby home and the Dangerfield home; Georgia and Jannie Elliott remember the home as the Brown house. Surely others remember the Brown sisters and the Brown house and can add to the museum archives of local history. In an effort to be a valued asset to the county, the museum is pleased to receive requests about our county history. We have responded to Dicksie Cribb's inquiry.

## Interesting New Artifacts at the Museum

Thanks to generous donors, the following artifacts have also been donated to the museum:

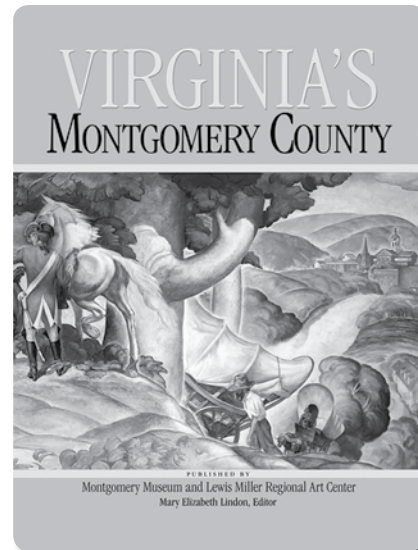
- “The Wave” original etching (mid-1980s) donated by W. Dale Huff, Jr.
- Clock gear mechanism from 1909 Montgomery County courthouse donated by Montgomery County Board of Supervisors
- Group of early twentieth century tools and agricultural implements including sheep shearers, bridle, hog ringer, hay hook, and other pieces donated by David Cunningham
- 1923 Poll Tax roster for Montgomery County donated by Montgomery County Sheriff’s Department
- Framed photograph of Walter White Bible Class at St. Paul United Methodist Church donated by Sara L. Brown

Many new artifacts have also been donated to the Museum’s Supporting Collection, which are used for hands-on educational purposes. These items are often found in our library and research vertical files. Though the pieces are too numerous to enumerate here, we do wish to thank the generous donors: Judith Blackwell, Sara L. Brown, John Jackson, and Bob Poff.

### *Harry Potter is Coming !!*

The exhibition, “Harry Potter’s World, Renaissance Science, Magic, and Medicine” will come to Montgomery County in July and visit the Montgomery- Floyd Regional Library System, the Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine and the Blacksburg Library over a six-week period.

In conjunction with this exhibit, the museums in the New River Heritage Coalition are planning exhibits on their sites. The Montgomery Museum will display artifacts dealing with medicinal practices in Colonial times with emphasis on the Civil War. Rick Ellison will our guest at the July 17th History Chat. We would greatly appreciate the loan of any items to add to our exhibit. If you have artifacts you would like to lend for this exhibit, please call Sue Farrar at 382-5644.



The newly published history book *Virginia's Montgomery County* will make a great gift for upcoming events such as Mother’s Day, Father’s Day and school graduations.

## PATRIOT’S PARADE

In conjunction with Flag Day, on June 5, 2010, the Montgomery-Floyd Regional Library System and Montgomery Museum are sponsoring Patriot’s Parade.

Decorate your bike, trike, wagon and self and come out and join the parade from the library to the museum. Prizes will be awarded to the youngest and oldest riders as well as the largest family group.

The schedule for the morning is as follows:

11:00 a.m. Flag Ceremony

(Boy Scouts retire old flags by burning)

11:30 a.m. Patriot’s Parade Library to Museum Gazebo

12:30 a.m. Bring a picnic lunch to enjoy on the museum grounds. Drinks and dessert will be provided.

1:00 p.m. Following lunch, visit the museum’s new history exhibit: Patriotism in Conflict and Peace.

### *Volunteers Needed*

Please contact Susan Brown know if you are interested in helping with refreshments for any of our artist receptions. We would so appreciate your contributions.

# PATRIOTISM IN CONFLICT AND PEACE

This new exhibit will explore the various aspects of patriotism and its expression by Montgomery County residents through history. The Revolutionary period and the beginning of patriotism in a newly founded country will be highlighted with artifacts related to William Preston and other Montgomery County founding fathers. Moving to the twentieth century, military service and the home front during a period of conflict will be explored. Military gear will be exhibited beside ration booklets and other home front artifacts as well as items related to the construction of the Radford Army Ammunitions Plant in 1940. Finally, patriotism during peace time will be explored with a look at the history of our local VFW chapters and the local National Guard. The exhibit will open on June 1, 2010, in observance of Memorial Day (May 31) and be open through November 13, 2010. A Bike Parade co-sponsored with the Montgomery-Floyd Regional Library will kick off the exhibit's opening.



*World War II Ration Book in the Montgomery Museum Collection*

## Minds Wide Open


Minds Wide Open, a tribute to female artists in Virginia, is the first statewide celebration of its kind. Sponsored by First Lady Anne Holton, the celebration will feature works by women in the arts in Virginia and will involve plays, choreography, exhibitions of paintings, photography and films created by women.

The Montgomery Museum and Lewis Miller Regional Art Center is proud to present an exhibition by regional artist Marie Collier as our featured artist for Minds Wide Open. Marie enjoys painting outdoor scenes mostly "rural landscapes, often with small houses 'nestled in nature' and ponds, small streams or meadows with soft sweeping grasses." She says, "To me, houses nestled in this abundance of nature give me a sense of comfort and security; and the ponds and small streams gave me a place to play for the pure joy of the outdoors, or to contemplate whatever seemed important to me at the time."

Sharing the gallery with Marie will be the Backyard Stonecutters. "Once a week the group meets under a tent in the open air to carve stone. Some chip away with hammer and chisels, while others make dust fly with power tools. Each is lost in a conversation with stone, exploring new possibilities. They encourage each other, whether it is helping the artist better see his/her intentions or getting the work photographed and ready for the next show. Each fall they host a carving workshop with their mentor, Bob Lockhart, who challenges them forward in this passion they share.

Don't miss this exciting opportunity to experience some of Montgomery County's most talented artists. The exhibition will be in place during the months of May and June.

An opening reception will take place at the museum on May 7 from 5-7 pm. Everyone is welcome.



## HISTORY CHAT

April 17, 2010  
Join us at 10:00 am for light breakfast foods and an interesting chat about the early history of Christiansburg as we look at the buildings depicted in the 1855 Edward Beyer painting of the town.

# New Volunteer Museum Coordinator

## SUSAN BROWN

Hello members. Sue Farrar has asked me to introduce myself because I am the new Volunteer Coordinator for the museum. I am Susan Brown and I know many of you from my mother Sara's 25+ years of service to the museum. I am pleased to help the museum with scheduling docents and recruiting new ones as well.

I am a 1981 graduate of Christiansburg High School and continued my education at Virginia Commonwealth University where I received my BS in Information Systems. After college, I resided in Richmond for numerous years and worked for various state agencies as a systems analyst. I have been back in Christiansburg for about 10 years and live at our farm in the Childress area of Montgomery County. My interests include travel, gardening, and genealogy.

I have been associated with the museum for many years, mainly as a docent and a worker in the museum's garden (visit it!), and I look forward to meeting as many of you as I can. We are currently recruiting any and all that will volunteer time as a docent or to help with any of the museum's varied activities. Also, we are trying to gather all of the members' email addresses so that future information from the museum can conveniently be delivered via email.



*Susan Brown*

Please let me know what I can do to serve you as a member or to answer any of your questions. You may contact me through email at [Strudelcat@aol.com](mailto:Strudelcat@aol.com) or by phone at 540-382-0188. Thank you.

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## Museum Student Docent

### JACOB MITCHELL

Jacob York Mitchell was born in Christiansburg on January 19, 1996. Jacob and his sister Asia have been homeschooled by their grandmother and former teacher, Jane Neel Mitchell. Jane has brought the children to the Montgomery Museum while she served as docent for about the past 4 years. Jacob has often done his homework at the Museum during Jane's shift.

Jacob likes volunteering with the Museum's new Outreach Program since one of his favorite subjects is history. The Outreach Program includes the Traveling Trunk of "mystery" historic objects and investigative curriculum that can be taken to schools and other locations. He also enjoys gardening and drawing house plans in his "free time" (time when he isn't studying.) He is thinking of becoming an architect. Jacob and his dad have a vegetable garden every year at the family's farmhouse on Radford Road. Most recently, the pair completed a greenhouse where they can start plants from seeds. They have grown tomatoes, hot peppers and pumpkins. They will try watermelon, carrots, beets, peas and squash.

Jacob's toughest subject is math, but he earns very good grades in all of his subjects. He has fun with "Classical



*Jacob Mitchell*

"Conversations," a program where around 60 home schoolers get together one day a week in various age groups to do memory work in Latin, math, English, history, and geography (his favorite subject). The student or students who demonstrate the best memory work are designated "Memory Masters", and receive (or split) a \$100 award. Recently, Jacob was one of three Memory Masters who earned the award. Jacob has now moved on to "Challenge A" where he must come to understand what he has previously just memorized. That means more work, including book reports. Summer break is just 6 weeks away, however!

This past December, Jacob received the first place VFW award for his essay on "When Is the Right Time to Honor Our Military Heroes?" After winning first place at the local level, Jacob's essay also earned first place at the regional level. Then his essay competed at the state level in February. His local and regional first place awards included dinner and a ceremony where he received \$100 for the local award, \$100 for the regional and \$75 from the ladies' auxiliary.

The Museum is proud to have such a talented and enthusiastic young person representing us in our Traveling Trunk educational program.