

Morgantown Glass Company, White House Glass A&M 4251

Morgantown Glass Company, White House Glass
1966



Title Statement

Morgantown Glass Company, White House Glass A&M 4251

Publication Statement

Publisher: West Virginia and Regional History Center

1549 University Ave.
P.O. Box 6069
Morgantown, WV 26506-6069
Business Number: 304-293-3536
wvrhcref@westvirginia.libanswers.com
URL: <https://wvrhc.lib.wvu.edu>



Profile Description

Creation: This finding aid was produced using ArchivesSpace on 2026-06-18 13:58:30 -0400.

Language Usage: Description is written in: English, Latin script.

Descriptive Rules: Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Descriptive Summary

Unit ID

A&M 4251

Unit ID

[Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID

[Previous Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID

[Previous Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID

[Previous Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID

/repositories/2/resources/6302

Unit Date

1966

Language

English .

Creator

Morgantown Glass Company

Extent

2.1 Linear Feet 2 ft. 1 in. (3 artifact storage boxes, 7 in. each); (1 flat storage box, 4 in.)

Physical Location

West Virginia and Regional History Center / West Virginia University / 1549 University Avenue / P.O. Box 6069 / Morgantown, WV 26506-6069 / Phone: 304-293-3536 / URL: West Virginia & Regional History Center

Repository

West Virginia and Regional History Center

Administrative Information

Conditions Governing Access

No special access restriction applies.

Conditions Governing Use

Permission to publish or reproduce is required from the copyright holder. For more information, please see the Permissions and Copyright page on the West Virginia and Regional History Center website.

Preferred Citation

[Description and date of item], [Box/folder number], Morgantown Glass Company, White House Glass, A&M 4251, West Virginia and Regional History Center, West Virginia University Libraries, Morgantown, West Virginia.

Biographical / Historical

"In 1961 the Morgantown Glass Company gained national recognition when First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy chose a simple Morgantown glassware pattern as the official crystal service for the White House. After receiving this recognition, Morgantown marketed this pattern as The President's House stemware.

The 1960 presidential campaign pitted John F. Kennedy against Hubert Humphrey. While the vote in West Virginia was small, its influence in the Electoral College was significant, and both candidates spent a great deal of time campaigning in the Mountain State. West Virginia's vote in the Electoral College was deemed a significant factor in Kennedy's eventual victory in the race.

After winning the election, President and Mrs. Kennedy moved into the White House on January 20, 1961. Mrs. Kennedy, as is well known now, had a strong sense of style, and undertook to update the decor of the White House. The crystal used in the White House had long been either European or influenced by European design, but the First Lady championed "Buy American." When Mrs. Kennedy saw the crystal in use at their favorite hotel, the Carlton in New York City, she asked about its origins. She learned it was made in Morgantown, West Virginia, and had an inquiry sent to Morgantown Glass about pieces available. Morgantown immediately sent samples of its crystal pattern to Pennsylvania Avenue. The service met Mrs. Kennedy's approval and she personally chose this glassware line as the "Official Crystal Service" of the White House. An order was placed for fifty dozen of each item: white wine glasses, water goblets, red wine glasses, toasting or champagne glasses and finger bowls.

Previously marketed under another name, after the First Lady's order Morgantown Glass decided to re-christen the pattern as "The President's House." Each piece was identified with a paper label that read "The President's House Handmade Lead Crystal by Morgantown Glass."

With the unexpected death of President Kennedy the era of Camelot ended. When Mrs. Kennedy moved out of the White House, the Haden family (then owners of Morgantown Glass), gave her a personal service of the crystal she had helped make famous. In a letter to the Hadens dated February 12, 1964, Mrs. Kennedy wrote: "I do wish to thank you for the beautiful Morgantown Glass, 'The President's House', which you so graciously gave to me for our new house on N Street. I was happy to see you had put the label, 'The President's House' on the glassware. We were so proud when we first came to the White House to find Made in America, something so beautiful it could not be matched anywhere - and, coming from our beloved West Virginia, which really did make it possible for my husband to be President. It was a joy and a pride to use them in the White House, and it made me happy to think of all the people being able to buy the same fine things we used in The President's House. I am sure they will go on being used there forever; I know I shall always use mine. And, whenever I see them, I will think of the brief wonderful days, all the official dinners and brilliant toasts my husband made so well when, as President, he used them in The President's House."

Morgantown Glass closed in 1971."

(This information was provided by Lester and Rebecca Hess.)

Scope and Contents

A set of "The President's House" handmade lead crystal manufactured by the Morgantown Glass Company. The name of this glassware line derives from having been chosen by Jacqueline Kennedy to be the official crystal service of the White House. Mrs. Kennedy's choice was the first time that American-made glassware had been the official service of the White House. This particular set of crystal was given in 1966 as a wedding gift to Lester and Rebecca Hess, both of whom are alumni of West Virginia University.

Keywords

Glass industry.