

J.T. Morriss & Son

SERVING FAMILIES SINCE 1856

A History of a Virginia Legacy

James Tolleison Morriss II's family emigrated from Wales to America, settling in Charles City County, VA, where he was born in 1830. Upon his 18th birthday, the enterprising young man crossed the James River into the thriving city of Petersburg, where he began an eight-year apprenticeship with a successful furniture and undertaking business. In 1856, taking what he learned as an apprentice, Morriss launched J.T. Morriss & Co. on Bollingbrook Street in downtown Petersburg. Little did he know that his new furniture and undertaking establishment would become a Virginia legacy, and that his reputation for fairness and honesty would be handed down through four generations.

In no time at all, J.T. Morriss & Co. was thriving. And after just five years, at the onset of the Civil War, his casket and embalming services proved invaluable to the thousands of local families of Civil War casualties, as well as other families in their times of need. He was on call all day, every day and even purchased an ad in a Petersburg paper that listed his home address, so he could always be reached in this age before telephones.

Over the years Morriss' business thrived and grew, forcing him to relocate to a larger building on Sycamore Street. In April of 1871, a fire ravaged his workshop in the rear

of the building. Miraculously, the fire did not spread to Morriss' warehouse, which contained the majority of his inventory. After the smoke settled, his business continued to grow, once again necessitating him to relocate to a larger building a few blocks down Sycamore Street.

Due to public demand and his great success as an undertaker, he sold the furniture part of his business in 1880, allowing him to focus solely on funeral work. A few years later he moved his location

accomplished in the funeral industry. Morriss, though deeply rooted in tradition, kept up with the changes and offered families the most modern of conveniences available at the time, all the while upholding his family's reputation for honesty and fairness.

He moved and expanded the business again, this time to the corner of Sycamore and Washington streets. Under Charles Morriss' reign, the business was incorporated in 1924 as J.T. Morriss & Son, Inc. and

was staffed with a team of compassionate individuals that shared Morriss' goals and virtues.

Unfortunately, Charles Morriss passed away a few months before the J.T. Morriss & Son's current location was completed on the corner of Wythe and Adams streets in downtown Petersburg. His son, J.T. Morriss IV, took over the responsibility of running the nearly century-old family business.

Today, J.T. Morriss IV's son, "Jay" T. Morriss V and grandson J. "Tolleison" Morriss VI are the managers

of Petersburg's pioneer funeral home. They run the business in the tradition of fairness and respectability that J.T. Morriss II began 150 years ago. They continue to keep up with the latest advancements in the funeral industry while continuing their commitment to fairness and compassion.



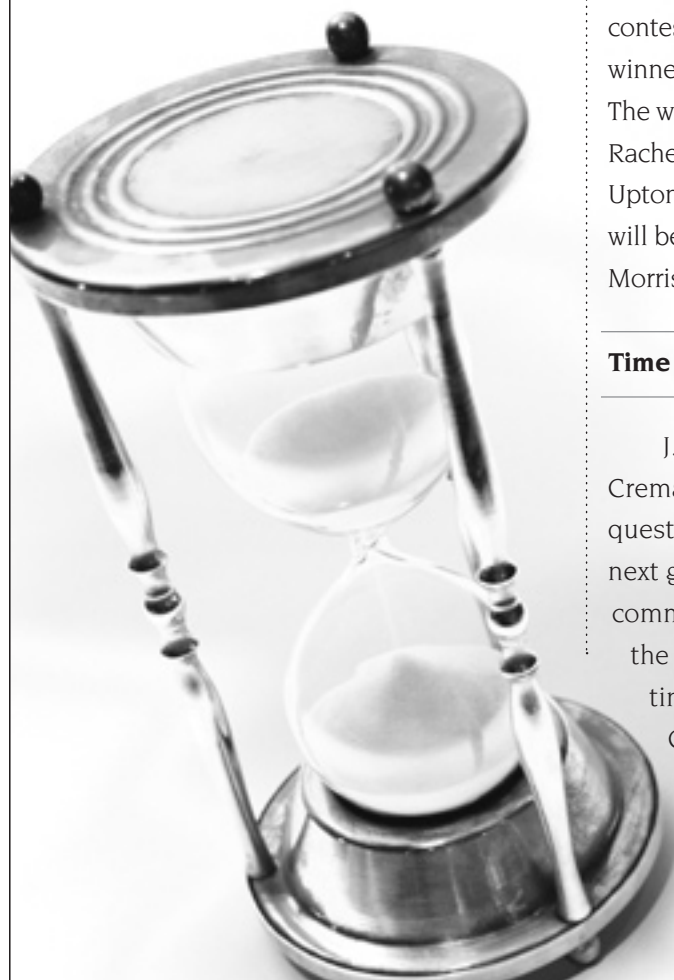
J. T. MORRISS II (CENTER) ON BOLLINGBROOK STREET

yet again to a new, larger location at 69 Sycamore Street.

In 1890, after 42 years of dedicated service, James Tolleison Morriss II passed away. His youngest son, Charles L. Morriss, took over the family business. Over the next two decades many advancements were

Community Is Invited To J.T. Morriss & Son Anniversary Events

For those of us around 50 years ago, it's hard to remember exactly what life was like in the Tri-Cities in 1956. For those of us yet born, it's impossible. What was the latest fad? Which baseball teams made it to the World Series? What was everyone wearing? And what was the latest must-see movie?



Essay Contest

J.T. Morriss & Son sponsored an essay contest in February of 2006. Local area high school students were encouraged to write a two-page essay. The subject of the essay was: *How do you want to be remembered?* The goal of the essay was to provide students with an opportunity to think about and formalize on paper what they want to do with their lives, on a personal, moral, religious or professional level. It is our hope that the subject of this essay will create goals for students to aspire to and for a dialogue to occur between them and their parents about ways to reach these goals.

High schools around the Tri-City area were contacted and informed their students of the contest and of the \$150 prize awarded to the winner. One winner was selected per chapel. The winners are Rae Roche from Hopewell, Rachel Soper from Chesterfield and Lindsey Upton from Petersburg. The winning essays will be included in the time capsule that J.T. Morriss will is also sponsoring.

Time Capsule

J.T. Morriss and Son Funeral Home & Cremation Service is trying to make those questions a little easier to answer for the next generations, fifty years from now. In commemoration of their 150th anniversary, the venerable funeral home is creating a time capsule to be buried at Blandford Cemetery. . . The goal of the time capsule is to preserve a slice of Tri-Cities history, pop culture and special memories to help provide a "snapshot" of life today, in 2006,

for our children and grandchildren in 2056. It will declare to those who open it half a century from now, "This is who we are and where you come from."

On April 15 at 2 p.m., J.T. Morriss & Son will host a time capsule sealing ceremony. The time capsule will contain contemporary items donated by community members. Donated items will represent life and culture in the Tri-Cities in 2006. The time capsule will be buried in historic Blandford Cemetery and unearthed in 2056, fifty years from now.

Del. Rosalyn Dance, D-63, and Petersburg historian, Dulaney Ward, will speak briefly on the history of our community, how it has evolved and where it plans to be in 50 years, when the time capsule is unearthed. A member of the Morriss family will speak about J.T. Morriss' involvement in the our community and the winners of the essay contest will receive their awards at this ceremony.

Reenactment

J.T. Morriss II, founder of the funeral home, lived a full life helping the people in his community right until the very end. While embalming the body of an acquaintance that lived down the street from his funeral home, Morriss himself died of heart failure.

To celebrate his life and the 150th anniversary of the company he founded, J.T. Morriss & Son Funeral Home & Cremation Service is hosting a reenactment their founder's 1890 funeral. The ceremony will take place in Petersburg's historic Blandford Cemetery. The Masons from Petersburg Lodge #15 A.F. & A.M., of which Morriss was a member, will perform the ceremony that would have taken place at his actual funeral. Joined by the Appomattox Commandry #6,

Knights Templar, in full attire and costumed reenactors, the Morriss family will pay tribute to their patriarch.

The ceremony will conclude with a reenactment of a horse-drawn hearse taking a replica of J.T. Morriss II's casket to his actual burial plot in Blandford Cemetery where his final rites will be given once again.

Exhibition

J.T. Morriss & Son will be hosting an exhibition to explore the history and tradition behind many of the mourning and burial customs we are familiar with today. Why do some people hold wakes? How did black become the color of mourning? Where did the modern funeral home originate?

The Evolution of Death will examine these and other customs from the mid 19th century to the present. The exhibition will consist of artifacts on loan from the Tri-Cities community relating to death, dieing and mourning. These will be joined by artifacts from J.T. Morriss & Son's private collection. Highlights of the exhibition include antique caskets, Civil War era embalming tools, a wide array of mourning jewelry, hair wreaths, mourning clothes, numerous old photos and more.



SIEGE MUSEUM, 15 WEST BANK STREET, PETERSBURG

The Evolution of Death will open June 9 at the Siege Museum in Petersburg and will run through August 18. The exhibition will then travel to Hopewell's Weston Manor starting August 25 and running through October 15. From Hopewell it will travel to Chesterfield County Museum in Chester from October 20 until December 1.

For more information visit
www.jtmorriss.com

Folding Old Glory



Have you ever noticed that the honor guard pays meticulous attention to correctly fold the American flag 13 times? You probably thought it was to symbolize the original 13 colonies, but in fact it represents 13 separate thoughts regarding our nation and our faith.

The 1st fold of our flag is a symbol of life.

The 2nd fold is a symbol of our belief in eternal life.

The 3rd fold is made in honor and remembrance of the veterans departing our ranks who gave a portion of their lives for the defense of our country to attain peace throughout the world.

The 4th fold represents our weaker nature, for as American citizens trusting in God, it is to Him we turn in times of peace as well as in time of war for His divine guidance.

The 5th fold is a tribute to our country, for in the words of Stephen Decatur, "Our Country, in dealing with other countries, may she always be right; but it is still our country, right or wrong.

The 6th fold is for where our hearts lie. It is with our hearts that we, "Pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with Liberty and Justice for all."

The 7th fold is a tribute to our Armed Forces, for it is through the Armed Forces that we protect our country and our flag against all her enemies, whether they be found within or without the boundaries of our republic.

The 8th fold is a tribute to the one who entered into the valley of the shadow of

death, that we might see the light of day.

The 9th fold is a tribute to womanhood, and Mothers. For it has been through their faith, their love, their loyalty and their devotion that the character of the men and women who have made this country great has been molded.

The 10th fold is a tribute to the father, for he, too, has given his sons and daughters for the defense of our country since they were first born.

The 11th fold represents the lower portion of the seal of King David and King Solomon and glorifies in the Hebrews' eyes, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

The 12th fold represents an emblem of eternity and glorifies, in the Christians' eyes, God the Father, the Son and Holy Spirit.

The 13th fold, made when the flag is completely folded, the stars are uppermost reminding us of our nations motto, "In God We Trust."

After the flag is completely folded and tucked in, it takes on the appearance of a cocked hat, ever reminding us of the soldiers who served under General George Washington, and the Sailors and Marines who served under Captain John Paul Jones, who were followed by their comrades and shipmates in the Armed Forces of the United States, preserving for us the rights, privileges and freedoms we enjoy today.

There are some traditions and ways of doing things that have important deep meanings. In the future, when you see an American flag folded in a ceremony, you will know why.

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From The Beginning

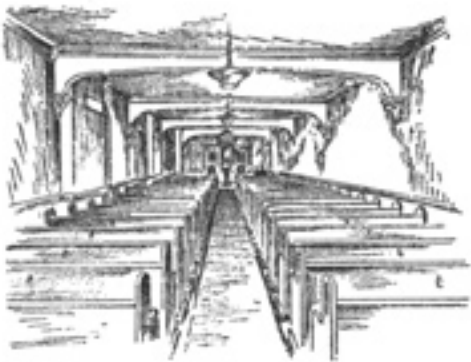
1856 { J.T. Morriss & Co. founded

1861 { American Civil War

1871 { Fire ravaged
J.T. Morriss' workshop

1876 { Alexander Graham Bell
patented the telephone

1880 { J.T. Morriss sold furniture
portion of business



1890 { Founder J.T. Morriss died June 8th

1903 { Wright Brothers invented first airplane



1914 { World War I began

1920 { 18th Amendment
prohibited alcohol



1924 { Funeral home incorporated as J.T. Morriss & Son, Inc.

1929 } Stock Market crashed



1941 } Pearl Harbor attacked



1954 { J.T. Morriss & Son moved to its current building



1957 { Soviets launched Sputnik



1959 } J.T. Morriss opened Hopewell Chapel

1963 { John F. Kennedy assassinated



1973 { Nixon resigned over Watergate



1978 } First personal computer invented



1979 } J.T. Morriss opened Chester Chapel

1989 { Cold War ended

1993 } World Wide Web connected the world



2001 { Terrorists attacked U.S. on 9/11



2006 { J.T. Morriss celebrates 150 years

J.T. Morriss & Son Today

Although J.T. Morriss & Son is deeply rooted in tradition we realize the importance of progress and innovation. We make it a priority to keep up with the most advanced improvements in funeral services, technology and growing trends.

Cremation

Due to the overcrowding of cemeteries and the growing desire for individualized ceremonies, cremation is now being chosen more frequently. J.T. Morriss & Son now has an on-site crematorium so all the details of your loved one's cremation can be handled in-house.

Video Memorial

Some funeral homes can now provide a timely celebration of life into usually somber funeral visitations. J.T. Morriss & Son Funeral Home is one of the first in Virginia to offer commemorative video memorial tribute at each of its three chapels. This video memorial allows families to create a visual tribute to the deceased and share it with friends and family.

PreNeed

Advanced planning and paying for your own funeral is the best way to make your final wishes known and ensure they will be carried out. It also spares your loved ones from having to make these important emotional and financial decisions for you. J.T. Morriss and Son's full-time advanced planning director is available to help you plan your own funeral or transfer an existing pre-planned funeral arrangement.

AfterCare

AfterCare programs like J.T. Morriss & Son's help your family with the financial, practical and emotional issues that arise after you're gone. Shortly after each funeral, our specially trained After-Care Director visits with the family to help them tie up every loose end, from collecting Social Security benefits and transferring vehicle titles to processing life insurance claims. Our Extended AfterCare

Coordinator keeps in contact with families for up to a year through newsletters and educational programs and, is available to answer any questions that might arise. At J.T. Morriss, we try to help you before, during and after your times of need.

Precious Memories Pet Cremation

Pet cremation is a growing trend in America. As pets are increasingly becoming more a part of the family, pet owners are looking to treat their pets at their time of death more the

way we would treat a family member—with dignity, respect and a way to memorialize them. Central Virginia's newest pet crematory has just opened in the heart of Petersburg. J.T. Morriss and Son Funeral Home & Cremation Service has recently spun off a new pet cremation business called Precious Memories. Precious Memories was created to fulfill the growing need for efficient, cost-effective pet cremation, while providing respectful, reliable service.



JAY T. MORRISS V & J. TOLLEISON MORRISS



Something To Think About



LEFT: GRAVESIDE (FROM THE PHOTOGRAPH COLLECTION OF RUSSELL WAYNE DAVIS. RIGHT: EMBALMING ROOM FROM FORMER LOCATION ON _____

Why do we send flowers to the funeral home when people die?

Why are people buried six feet under?

Traditionally, how long is mourning supposed to last?

Where did the undertaker originate?

What is mourning jewelry?

Why is mourning jewelry worn?

Why do we embalm bodies?

When did embalming begin?

Why do we have family burial plots?

Where did funerals originally take place?

Why were some burial plots equipped with bells?

Why do we have wakes?

Why are there different color hearses?

What is the difference between a hearse and a hack?

Where did the modern funeral home originate?

To find out the answers to all of these questions and learn how the traditions we practice today evolved and see what customs are no longer in practice, visit *The Evolution of Death: An exhibition for the brave and the curious.*

Exhibition Locations

Siege Museum • Petersburg
June 9 through August 18, 2006

Weston Manor Plantation • Hopewell
August 25 through October 13, 2006

Chesterfield Co. Museum • Chester
October 20 through December 1, 2006



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SPONSORED BY J.T. MORRISS & SON FUNERAL HOME & CREMATION SERVICE IN CELEBRATION OF THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY.