

FROM PAINTINGS TO APPAREL: The Museum of Hounds & Hunting Gift Shop Expands

Written by Lia Hobel | Photos by Sherri Holdridge

Step through the doors of Middleburg's Museum of Hounds & Hunting North America and discover a unique fusion of history, culture, and holiday delight. Housed within the storied Duffy House — a landmark predating 1820 — the museum's mission is to promote public understanding of mounted hunting with hounds and advocate for the conservation of rural land. The main branch, at Leesburg's Morven Park, was first established in 1985. But this museum offers more than just a charming glimpse into the region's foxhunting heritage. In addition to marvelous exhibits, the museum furnishes a gift shop, which has undergone an expansion since opening nearly two years ago and now brims with countless treasures and carefully curated gifts.

Katrina Ryan, the director of operations for the museum, is the driving force behind the ex-

pansion of the shop. "We have over 100 gift items for sale," she shares, highlighting that there's something for everyone. "We have a lot of gifts for children and adults, as well as for the foxhunting crowds. Even for those who just love foxes and hounds, or simply just want something from Middleburg," she explains.

For December, the inventory will feature holiday-themed items and timeless, one-of-a-kind gifts. "We have Christmas ornaments and a lot of Christmas-related gifts with the same Hunt Country theme," Ryan says, adding, "We are a bronze mecca. If anybody's looking for a bronze of a horse, a hound, or a fox, we have all different sizes of them for sale."

There is also a large number of paintings available for sale, including renderings of the iconic Middleburg Christmas Parade featuring the Mid-

dleburg Hunt. The famous scene is also available on coasters and as an ornament. For younger visitors, the shop offers a delightful selection of toys and books, while gentlemen shoppers will appreciate the elegant neckties and history buffs will love the beautifully illustrated volumes on foxhunting. Those hosting this holiday season are sure to find something special among the equestrian-themed tableware, which includes platters, bottle stoppers, picture frames, tea towels, letter openers, and more.

"People love Hunt Country-related gifts," says Ryan. She recalls the days of The Fun Shop, a beloved local store that offered everything Hunt Country enthusiasts could wish for. "When The Fun Shop retired in 2023, I wanted to bring many of those unique items back to the community,"

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Bottom left: The Museum of Hounds & Hunting North America in Middleburg. Bottom right: A wall of gifts with something for everyone.



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she explains, noting that the inspiration for the museum store’s expanded selection came directly from the legacy of The Fun Shop.

The museum will launch an online store in

January to complement its physical location, featuring a mix of items available both online and in-store. Looking ahead, Ryan says, “the plan for the future is to have more branded items that are only available at the museum store and nowhere

else.” ML

The Museum of Hounds & Hunting is located at 11 W. Washington Street and open Friday to Sunday from 12 to 4 p.m., or by appointment.

Left: Elegant equestrian scarves. Middle: Katrina Ryan with a bronze. Right: Note cards, a wristlet, and more.



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