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Place

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Place



Blaney House, official residence for the WVU president

THIS LAND STILL FEELS THE CURRENT OF THE MONONGAHELA RIVER



Approximate location of the original Col. John Evans house. Photo taken behind the student health clinic, looking toward Evansdale Towers Residential Complex

This land still feels the current of the Monongahela River. The riverbanks vary in slope, exposing rock and shoreline that, prior to human presence, were habitat for plants and animals, and remain so. This land is a witness to changes brought about by people, events, politics, and systems that convert land to landscape, ultimately creating a place imbued with story and emotion. The current landscape includes residential neighborhoods, a university campus, and a commercial district, all having evolved because of the unique history and timing of interactions of different people living and working in this place. The story of the landscape begins with Native Americans who made their homes here; descendants of these First Peoples still live throughout the region, as citizens of tribal nations and as individuals making up the diverse overall population of the area. White settlers disrupted and commodified this landscape, creating multi-generational farms that brought them wealth and status. Enslaved Black people, disenfranchised from the social, political, and economic opportunities afforded to the majority White culture, toiled on the Evans farm. Here and elsewhere throughout the country, their unpaid labor enriched slaveholding landowners and generations of their descendants.

After the Civil War, Black citizens continued to face discrimination and segregation in the County, even though their labor, businesses, and schools contributed to the overall economic development of the area. In the 1940s, around the time WVU began to acquire parcels of the former Evans farm, several Black students enrolled in graduate school and completed WVU degrees, though they were not allowed to live on campus as students. Jack Hodge was the first Black student to earn a WVU undergraduate degree, in 1953. Today the University affirms its commitment to nondiscrimination and inclusivity. Students of diverse racial and ethnic identities study and live on the Evansdale Campus, along with students from all over the world.

The story of this place stretches across millennia - it will continue to evolve, **hidden no more**, as future generations live upon and further change this landscape.



While the Evans farm is no more, Popenoe Run still wends its way to the Monongahela River. It flows beneath WVU's stadium, past the Erickson Alumni Center, down Patteson drive, and beyond the Coliseum

Background Image: View from Blaney House, official residence for the WVU president, overlooking the Monongahela River



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