

# WHAT'S IN A NAME?

A Glimpse at the Names of Morgan's Buildings and Facilities



Developing Athletes and Character:

## The Edward P. Hurt Gymnasium Continues a Tradition

**“The arrival of the black athlete on the national sports scene in the 1940s and 50s goes directly back to Edward P. Hurt. There is not a single black sports figure in the world today who is not in some small way in the debt of Coach Hurt.”**

*“Run From There”  
A Biography of Edward P. Hurt  
By Herman L. Wade*

When you walk into the lobby of Hurt Gymnasium, a life-size photo of Edward P. Hurt greets you. He is the legendary coach, teacher and mentor after whom the building is named. Constructed in 1952, Hurt Gymnasium is one of the oldest but sturdiest facilities on campus. The two-story building is the principle facility for instruction in health, physical education and recreation. Hurt Gym has a stone exterior and brown-colored granite decorates its walls. After more than 50 years, the gym is still around, serving everyone from students and staff to faculty and national politicians.

Containing approximately 58,000 square feet and a hint of the art deco style, this eclectic building frames the pedestrian north to south campus. After major renovations in the early nineties, a wellness center, a fitness center, a human performance laboratory, gymnasiums, offices and classrooms are now housed there. In addition, a NCAA-sized swimming pool is still available to provide student instruction and recreation. The building protects the life and safety of users through the installation of various

alarm systems and improved exterior lighting. Windows that were installed through original construction have been replaced with modern energy-efficient panes.

Both floors of Hurt Gymnasium have shrines to the former coach, who was both loved and feared by his players. Photographs of him and his outstanding players are on display in rooms throughout the building. Trophies and plaques are encased in glass, indented wall shelves. The official cap and jacket he wore as the first Black man to coach a team in preparation for the Olympics, is on display. The collection is second-to none on the Historically Black campus. Coach Davis helped to develop the shrines, but he gives most of the credit to Dr. Joanne Rodenhauer, Chairperson of the Health and Physical Education Department.

Edward P. Hurt came to Morgan in 1929 to teach mathematics and coach athletic teams. He coached basketball, track and field and football. He was later named Director of Athletics, the top position in the sports department. When he came to Morgan, there was no

stadium, no track, no gymnasium and very little equipment. He often had to rent space in locations around the city just to hold practices. Roads and walkways served as a track for runners, and a makeshift football field was marked off on an unused part of the campus. Coach Hurt, with two part-time instructors, produced individual champions and championship teams in spite of these handicaps. To generations of Morgan athletes and students the soft-spoken, quiet man was noted for his ability to bring out the best in a student or athlete.

Dr. Josh Culbreath ('55), a national and Pan American 100-meter hurdling champion, was proud of the athletic achievements and the skills he honed under the watchful eye of Coach Hurt. But Dr. Culbreath was most impressed with the impact Coach Hurt had on developing the character of him and scores of other athletes. Culbreath's photo is displayed in the exercise room of Hurt Gym. Contacted recently at his home in Las Vegas, Nevada, he said, “He molded thousands of us. Remember, we were all so inexperienced. He turned us into men and gentlemen.”

▼ “He turned us into men....”  
— Dr. Josh Culbreath ('55)

▼ The Edward P. Hurt Gymnasium built in 1952, honors professor Edward P. Hurt, teacher, coach and Director of Athletics at Morgan from 1929-1970.





## WHAT'S IN A NAME The Edward P. Hurt Gymnasium



**The Morgan Bears football team, under the leadership of Coach Hurt, owned one of the longest winning streaks in collegiate history, from 1931 to 1938, playing 54 games without a single loss.**



Herman L. Wade wrote one of the most poignant statements about the coach in a published biography entitled *Run From There*. Wade captured the significance of the coach's decades of work and commitment to Morgan. "The arrival of the black athlete on the national sports scene in the 1940s and 50s goes directly back to Edward P. Hurt. There is not a single black sports figure in the world today who is not in some small way in the debt of Coach Hurt. And to the extent that Hurt helped to break down racial barriers, our entire country owes him a huge debt of gratitude. We are a better nation now because of him."

The Morgan Bears football team, under the leadership of Coach Hurt, owned one of the longest winning streaks in collegiate history, from 1931 to 1938, playing 54 games without a single loss. Morgan basketball teams,

which he coached from 1929 to 1947, won four CIAA championships. His record in track and field was no less inspiring. It was in track that Hurt gained most of his fame, producing national sprint champions and relay teams. Hurt trackmen established enviable records in national championship meets, including sprinters in the Pan American Games. In 1941 he was named to the Afro American honor roll for his coaching achievements. And in 1950, Eddy Hurt was named Track and Field Coach of the Year.

Coach Hurt received numerous honors during his lifetime. However, one that made him especially proud was presented on February 21, 1952, which marked his 52 birthday. Morgan State College named its new, \$1,000,000 gym, the Edward P. Hurt Gymnasium. □

▲ Coach Edward P. Hurt receives silver football from former president of the Morgan Alumni Association, Dr. Eugene D. Byrd, on the occasion of his twenty-fifth anniversary at the college, celebrated in 1953.



▶ Although it remains as one of the oldest structures on campus, the Hurt Gymnasium features a modern NCAA-size swimming pool, and a fully equipped Nautilus fitness center, among its many updated amenities.

# Morgan's "Mom" Leaves Rich Legacy

She Nurtured and Inspired Many for Whom Her Memory Will Never Fade

Coach Edward P. Hurt and Bea Hurt vacation during the 1950's. ▶



**M**organ State University's oldest living graduate – and the apron strings behind Morgan's sports program for many years passed away December 28, 2003.

Geraldine Beatrice Reid Hurt, 101, a graduate of the Class of 1931 who was trained as an educator and in home economics, was the widow of Morgan's legendary coach Eddie P. Hurt who died in 1989.

As the wife of the athletic director and football coach, Mrs. Hurt, who was known by scores of Morgan athletes as "Mom" or "Mother Hurt", she always had a hot meal ready for a homesick athlete, quarters for an occasional call home, a needle and thread to patch worn socks or sew on missing buttons. Years after they graduated from Morgan, former athletes still continued to visit her.

According to Nina Dobson Hopkins, ('78), who is director of the Counseling Center at Morgan and a long-time friend of Mrs. Hurt, her big heart extended to athletes of other schools as well.

During the time of segregation, a Virginia football team was in Baltimore to play Morgan right around Thanksgiving, but there was no restaurant that would serve them food on Thanksgiving Day. "She had her husband go get them and bring them all to her house for a home-cooked meal," Mrs. Hopkins said.

Mrs. Hurt told Mrs. Hopkins that she remembered the days when there was no running water at the Morgan campus and the only water came from a well. "I was shocked," said Mrs. Hopkins.

During World War II, Mrs. Hurt used to write 50 to 100 letters a week to Morgan students who were drafted or enlisted. "She did it by herself, not even with a committee," explained Mrs. Hop-

kins, "because she wanted to make sure they had mail from home."

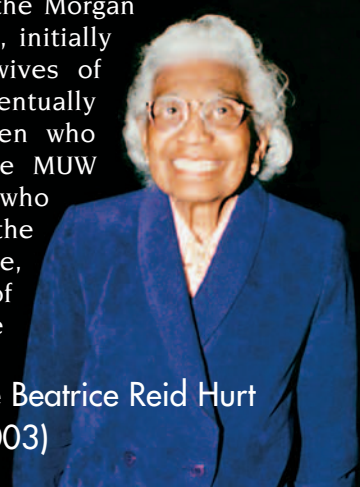
Those Morgan athletes she nurtured over the years include Clarence E. "Bighouse" Gaines, who was named an All-American football player and was elected to the College Basketball Hall of Fame for his long and successful career as coach and athletic director at Winston-Salem State University. Others included running back Otis Troupe, Roy Cragway; basketball legends such as "Rap" Wheatley, Powell Sheffy, "Sugar" Cain, and "Boo" Brown; runners like Josh Culbreath, who went on to become the athletic director at Morehouse College, in Atlanta, Bob Tyler, Art Bragg, Sam and Byron LaBeach, and 1952 Olympics 400-meter gold medallist George Rhoden.

Bea Hurt was a member of the Morgan Women, the Alpha Delta Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority. She was also was an avid bridge player and played every Saturday night with a group known as the Bridgettes.

Mrs. Hopkins said that Mrs. Hurt was very health conscious and mixed up various ingredients into concoctions to cure whatever was ailing her or her friends. "I was almost afraid to tell her if I didn't feel well, because she'd make up some concoction. She even attributed her incredible memory to some concoction she took which had garlic and herbs in it."

She was a co-founder of the Morgan University Women (MUW), initially formed as a group of wives of Morgan faculty, but eventually growing to include women who worked on campus. The MUW found coats for students who didn't have any, helped the faculty prepare for a lecture, and generally took care of matters around the campus. □

Contributions to the Edward and Beatrice Hurt Scholarship Fund can be sent to:  
Morgan State University Foundation  
P.O. Box 6426,  
Baltimore, MD 21264-4261



Geraldine Beatrice Reid Hurt (1902–2003)



# Morgan Holds First Legacy Track Meet

Event Honors School's Great Track Legends



◀ Legendary coach Edward P. Hurt with the MSU 1950 Championship Mile Relay Team: Bob Tyler, George Rhoden, Bill Brown and Sam LaBeach.



▶ Bob Barksdale clearing the cross bar during the high jump at the historic Millrose Games, New York.



*Go Bob*  
*to the top of the world*  
*to the top of the world*  
MORGAN MAGAZINE ARTICLE

**M**organ State University held its the First Annual Legacy Track Meet on Saturday, April 17, 2004 on its new 8-lane Mondo track at Hughes Stadium.

The Legacy Track Meet is held each year to honor all past great track legends, who have made Morgan famous both nationally and internationally.

Because Morgan State University has produced so many past outstanding runners, the university is honoring runners from each decade. For the First Legacy Track Meet, Morgan will honor outstanding runners from 1930 to 1959. After that, the university will honor runners during the following periods:

- Second Legacy Track Meet – April, 2005: 1960 – 1969
- Third Legacy Track Meet – April, 2006: 1970 – 1979
- Fourth Legacy Track Meet – April, 2007: 1980 – 1989
- Fifth Legacy Track Meet – April, 2008: 1990 – 2000

TRACK  
MEETS

The first runner from Morgan to bring glory to the school was Dr. George H. Spaulding, head of the Chemistry Department, who placed second in the decathlon at the Penn Relays in 1930. Dr. Spaulding also teamed up with another Morgan great, Russ “Dash Man” Sterling, who brought Morgan its first CIAA Championship in track.

Other great trackmen in the 30's and 40's were Alfonso Cottman, Ducky Ross and Elmore Pepper Harris.



◀ High Jumper, Bob Barksdale, front right, with members of the 1958 U.S. Olympic Team. 

▶ Herbert Washington, Bobby Gordon, Ed Waters, and Ken Kave, 1954 MSU Relay Team.



▶ The 1951 Morgan Relay Team, comprised of: George Rhoden, Sam LaBeach, Howard Morgan, and John Triplett.



In 1949 history was made when the foursome of Sam LaBeach, Bob Tyler, Bill Brown and George Rhoden broke the Penn Relay record but were disqualified on a trumped-up charge. The group came back in 1950 to break the Penn Relay record that had stood for 56 years. The team continued to win at the prestigious Melrose Games in New York and other track meets throughout the United States. Because of the popularity of this team during that era, many track runners were attracted, and came to Morgan. Art Bragg won the 100-yard dash at the Penn Relays in 1952 and 1953. Josh Culbreath won 400-meter hurdles at the Penn Relays in 1953, 1954, and 1955. Bob Barksdale won the High Jump in 1955 and 1956. George Dennis tied with Bob Barksdale in 1955 and won in 1957. Lance Thompson won the Long Jump in 1952.

The Flying Four that came after the Historic Four in the mile relay team comprised of Otis "Jet" Johnson, Herman Wade, Jimmy Rogers and Josh Culbreath. This group broke the C.I.A.A. record that was set by the Morgan Historic Four of LaBeach, Tyler, Brown, and Rhoden.

During the 1950's Coach Edward P. Hurt's freshman mile relay team also won at the Penn Relays. Coach Hurt also had a cadre of sprinters, all capable of running 9'6 seconds and below. Examples of some of these sprinters, in addition to Art Bragg and others mentioned before were: Ken Kane, Dickie Waters, Paul Winder, Herb Washington, Linwood Morton, Bobby Gordon, Byron LaBeach, and many others.



▶ Bill Brown, anchoring the Morgan Mile Relay Team, at the Penn Relays, 1948.