

Margaret Tobin Brown: The Heroine of the Titanic
Molly Brown House Museum
1340 Pennsylvania Street, Denver CO
www.mollybrown.org



Titanic and Molly Brown

Two names in history that are now virtually synonymous. The fateful sinking of the famous luxury liner propelled Margaret “Molly” Brown to international fame. As the 100th Anniversary of the April 1912 sinking approaches the Molly Brown House Museum will be hosting many Titanic-related events to commemorate the tragedy. These events will coincide with national and international Titanic happenings..

In 1912 Margaret, who was never known as Molly during her lifetime, departed on a trip to Egypt, Rome and Paris with her daughter Helen and friends John Jacob and Madeleine Astor. However, news of her ill grandson hastened Margaret’s return to Denver and she booked passage on the first available ship, the Titanic. The Titanic was the epitome of luxury for the upper classes and stories of its elegance were part of the ship’s advertising campaign. When Titanic set sail on April 10, 1912 it was the largest moveable object made by mankind at the time. It carried approximately 2,228 passengers and crew and had 10% more lifeboats than were required by maritime law. Aside from the many lives lost in the early hours of April 15, 1912; luxury and technology were also dealt a devastating blow.

Afterwards Margaret described her experience in the *Newport Herald*, "I stretched on the brass bed, at the side of which was a lamp. So completely absorbed in my reading I gave little thought to the crash that struck at my window overhead and threw me to the floor." After helping fellow passengers on the main deck Margaret was taken a hold of and with the words "you are going too" dropped four feet into the lowering lifeboat #6. The lifeboat was equipped to hold 65 passengers; however, it pushed off with 21 women, 2 men and a twelve-year-old boy. At 4:30 a.m. Margaret saw a flash of light. It was from the approaching Carpathia, which was the first and only ship to answer Titanic’s distress call. After some difficulty, lifeboat #6 pulled up along side the Carpathia, and the occupants were pulled aboard one at a time.



Margaret, though sore, tired and cold, began to take action. Her knowledge of foreign languages enabled her to console survivors who spoke little English. She realized that many women had lost everything; husbands, children, clothes, money and valuables, and needed to start a life in a new country. She rallied the first class passengers to donate money to help those less fortunate. Before the Carpathia reached New York \$10,000 had been raised. A crowd of 30,000 people met the ship when it docked at New York's Pier 54. Margaret was surrounded by reporters and,

according to legend, when asked to what she attributed her survival she replied, "Typical Brown luck, we're unsinkable."

100 years after the sinking of the Titanic, the compelling human story continues to engage people of all ages. Perhaps it is the sheer size and grandeur of the vessel or the many questions regarding the choices made in the ship's last hours that continue to intrigue us years later. While first-hand accounts from survivors help unravel the evening, neither they nor the eerie footage of the ship's wreckage lying on the floor can ever fully explain the magnitude of tragedy.

About Margaret "Molly" Brown

Born only two years after the end of the Civil War and succumbing to a brain tumor in 1932, Margaret Brown witnessed the profound changes caused by industrialization, technological innovations, social reform movements and the shifting role of women during the first decades of the 20th century. However, Margaret was not a mere witness, she was an active agent. Carrying with her a passion for action and strong convictions, Margaret helped progress countless social issues.

Margaret first achieved fame after her husband J.J. Brown, a self-taught mining engineer, struck gold in Colorado's mines in the 1890s. After the family moved to Denver in 1894, Margaret's egalitarian spirit led her to the most pressing issues of her day. She worked to create a juvenile court system, promoted cultural diversity, helped found the Denver Dumb Friends League and became a patron of the arts. She also became Denver's first historic preservationist when she saved poet Eugene Field's home from demolition.

As her skills as a leader, organizer and fundraiser grew, so did her scope. The national fame she gained after surviving the Titanic disaster led her into society's most powerful circles. She struggled against J.D. Rockefeller over the rights of coal miners in the aftermath of the Ludlow Massacre, joined forces with suffrage leaders Alva Belmont and Alice Paul and ran for the U.S. Senate in 1914, six years before women could vote at the federal level. Margaret died in 1932.

About the Molly Brown House Museum

The Molly Brown House Museum, long-time Denver home to the Unsinkable Margaret "Molly" Brown, is perfectly positioned to reflect on the 100th Anniversary of the sinking of the Titanic. In 2012 the Museum will offer exhibits, events and lectures that will inform and engage audiences with a historic event that still compels us to wonder at the capacity of human ingenuity, fortitude, and flaw. Visitors to the Museum will find themselves transported back to 1912 to share in Margaret Brown's life-changing Titanic experience and discover how her own spirit and conviction allowed her to become the *Heroine of the Titanic*.

The Molly Brown House Museum has been open to the public since 1970, when it was saved from the threat of demolition by a group of citizens. This dedicated group became local non-profit Historic Denver, Inc. and after lovingly restoring the home to its Brown era opulence, has continued to own and operate the museum for more than four decades.

Museum Hours:

Tuesday – Saturday: 10:00am – 4:30pm;

Sunday, 12:00pm – 4:30pm

The last tour of the day begins at 3:30pm

Guided tours begin on the hour and the half hour; each lasts approximately 45 minutes. The Museum is closed all major holidays. Reservations are recommended for groups of ten or more people. Please call 303-832-4092, ext. 10 to arrange a group tour.

Admission: (prices are subject to change):

Adults: \$8.00

Seniors (65 +): \$6.00

Children (6 – 12): \$4.00



HIGHLIGHT OF EVENTS FOR 2012

February 15

Heroine of the Titanic Exhibit Opening

Explore Margaret Brown's Titanic experience from bow to stern with accounts, artifacts and photographs from that fateful voyage. See replicas of the medal Mrs. Brown presented to Captain Rostron of the rescue ship, the Carpathia, and the Egyptian talisman she carried in her pocket for good luck.

March 21

Meet the Women of the Titanic

Our third annual event focusing on the biographies of Mrs. Brown's contemporaries, come meet Mrs. Brown's fellow Titanic passengers as our costumed interpreters each recount their fateful experiences.

April 2012

Titanic Memorial Cruise

Follow Molly Brown interpreter and Museum docent Janet Kalstrom as she embarks on her own Titanic voyage aboard the Titanic Memorial Cruise from Mile Morgan Travel and Fred Olson Cruises. With frequent "dispatches" from onboard, Ms. Kalstrom will share her experience with Museum visitors via blogs, posts and chats as the Balmoral makes its way across the Atlantic following the same path as the Titanic.

April 14

A Night to Remember Titanic Gala Dinner & Fundraiser

In honor of the 100th Anniversary, experience the excitement and opulence of a once-in-a-lifetime, 1st Class Titanic gala complete with a delicious six course meal served by costumed stewards. Waltz the night away to music played aboard the Titanic as it steamed across the Atlantic Ocean and into history. Patron level ticket holders will enjoy a special pre-dinner cocktail reception and meet Mrs. Brown's own descendants! The evening will set sail from Denver's historic Oxford Hotel, just a block from Union Station and will truly be a *Night to Remember!* As a gala fundraising event, all proceeds for the evening will go towards the continued restoration and upkeep of the *Unsinkable* Molly Brown's Denver home.

April 15

Sinking of the Titanic performance by the JACK Quartet

A musical event 100 years in the making! Be transformed by the sounds of that fateful night with *The Sinking of the Titanic*, composed by Gavin Bryars, arranged by Payton MacDonald and performed by the renowned JACK Quartet. Hear also MacDonald's own composition, *Lifeboat No. 6*, and learn about Denver's own heroine of the Titanic, Margaret "Molly" Brown. This amazing concert is the work of our friends at the University of Denver's Newman Center for Performing Arts and Friends of Chamber Music.

April 3, 12 and 17

Titanic Lecture Series

Learn more about the Titanic through special topic lectures as told by Brown family members, Titanic experts and Museum staff. Highlights include Muffet Laurie Brown, great-granddaughter to Mrs. Brown as well as Titanic author Steven Biel.

August 17

Steerage Class Shindig

Kick up your heels and have a memorable evening as we recreate the experience of a Third Class passenger aboard the Titanic. A hearty meal, a rollicking band and a fine pint await you as you step back with us to a time of simple pleasures and great expectations.

October 19, 20, 26, 27

Victorian Horrors: Tales from the Sea

A nautical take on our most popular event, 2012 Victorian Horrors will feature dramatic readings from Victorian authors' tales of terror and loss on the sea. Brought to life by costumed actors, these tales will evoke chills of terror and the smell of the sea.

Ongoing in 2012

Special Titanic Tours

For 2012, specially guided, Titanic-themed tours are available Monday – Friday with advanced reservation. \$10 Adults, \$8 Senior/Military, \$6 Children 6-12. Please call 303-832-4092 x10 for more information or to book your tour. Also available are Titanic presentations for your group function or classroom. Please call 303-832-4092 x17 for more information.

Special Titanic Events

During 2012, the Molly Brown House Museum will also offer other special teas, dinners and workshops in honor of the 100th Anniversary of the sinking of the Titanic. Please check our website www.mollybrown.org often as we get closer to the anniversary and we post more events.

Primary Museum Contact:

Andrea Malcomb
Molly Brown House Museum
1340 Pennsylvania Street
Denver, CO 80203
amalcomb@mollybrown.org
303-832-4092 x15