Crinoid Collection Arrives in Burlington

The Crinoids are here! The Crinoids are here! Okay, so what’s the big deal you say? It truly is more than a big deal, not only for DMCHS, but for our community as a whole.

A crinoid, for those of you who may not know, is a marine animal. DMCHS was recently gifted with a world class collection of crinoids, marking the first time in 111 years that Des Moines County has a significant collection of these fossils.

Since the 19th century, Burlington has been known as the “Crinoid Capital”, largely because of the scientific work of Charles Wachsmuth and Frank Springer. The first crinoid species named west of the Mississippi River (in 1850) were collected in Burlington, and since that time over 250 unique species of these marine animals have been described from Des Moines County. In 1911, that collection was shipped from Burlington to Washington, D.C., leaving the Crinoid Capital without good examples of the fossils for which it is so famous. The newly received collection at the Heritage Museum represents the third largest research collection of crinoids from the Burlington Limestone. It includes more than 3,000 crinoids, blastoids, and other marine fossils collected by Kenneth Tibbits of Hannibal, Missouri. Ken and his late wife, Linda, recently donated this remarkable collection of fossils. Please stop down during Museum hours and see these amazing gems!

Hidden Treasure: Door Knob

With no accession number or provenance to tell us where it came from, it is thought to be at least 100 years old and quite heavy for its size. It does however, show signs of wear in places where the warm coppery colored patina has been worn away through repeated use.

What makes this object interesting is the design around the front of the knob. Known as “egg and dart”, or “egg and tongue” the design can be found throughout the Heritage Hill area of Burlington. The style dates back into antiquity, when it was commonly used by the ancient Greeks as an architectural detail. It experienced a resurgence in popularity in the late 19th/early 20th century, when all things from antiquity suddenly became fashionable. The egg and dart features were often accompanied by “dentils”, tooth like blocks of wood in rows, both of which can be found throughout the Heritage Museum building.

The Heritage Museum was started in 1896, and completed in 1898, and was a wonder of the ages for an up-and-coming town like Burlington. Known as the “Chicago of the West”. Indeed, there were high hopes for the cultural scene in Burlington. There were nights out at the opulent Opera House, as well as memberships in the various social clubs, and a thriving “society”, made up of up-and-comers, as well as more “established” families.

The Trustees spared no expense, including such wonders as hand-laid marble terrazzo floors, marble statues, and hand carved woodwork. And, more relevant to our subject, there are numerous examples of the cup and dart motif throughout, especially on the main level. The wood and metal work can be found throughout the building, including the utilitarian spaces like the overflow room, now the main archival space. Dentils too, abound. They can be seen all throughout the main level, especially in the crown molding in the Entryway area, Atrium, and Grand Gallery.

While we have no way of knowing where the door knob originally came from, it’s nice to think that it originated in the Heritage Museum. It certainly fits the overall theme of the space.

Special thanks to Don Weiss Photography
From the Director’s Desk

This week we hosted several representatives from the Viking Steamship Cruise Line. They were here on a logistics visit to prepare for the Viking dockings this summer. I am pleased to say how impressed they were with our museums and our staff. We may know how special our museums are, but it is our mission to share them, the buildings, the contents and the stories.

This summer, with both Viking and American Queen set to dock on our shoreline, we will have that opportunity as many as 19 times. That is the number of combined scheduled visits. It will be more important that ever to have you, our members on hand to help us provide the best experience to our visitors.

If you would like to help us share our history, please consider volunteering for one or more of these dates. It will take at least 6 or 8 people at each location (Heritage Museum & Garrett-Phelps House) each day to accomplish this. Volunteers are needed from late July through October. A full list of docking dates and other pertinent information is available if you call the office at 319.752.7449. Many thanks! Robin

Town Meeting: Burlington Streetcars with Rodney Botts

Our next Town Meeting will be held on Saturday, May 7th at 1pm in the lower level of the DMC Heritage Museum.

Rodney Botts, local historian, will present the colorful history of the electric cars and how they shaped land traffic in our community. Rodney is well known for his vibrant tours of North Hill, the Historic Districts and Downtown Burlington.

The Columbia Street door will be open at 12:30. This is a free event and everyone is welcome to attend, so grab a friend and join us for what will be a very interesting look into Burlington’s past.

2022-23
Board of Directors

LaVon Worley, President
Don Weiss, Treasurer
Paula Logan, Secretary
Terri Dowell
Andrew Mahoney
Joshua Schier
Alex Sekowski

Des Moines County Historical Society
Staff

Executive Director ..., Robin Schneiderman robins@dmchs.org
Collections Coordinator ..., Julie Martineau, juliem@dmchs.org
Event Coordinator .......... Kaela Reynolds, kaelar@dmchs.org
Office Assistant ................. Kay Swanson, kays@dmchs.org
Offices located at ....................... DMC Heritage Museum
501 N 4th Street Burlington, IA 52601
Voice: 319-752-7449 FAX: 319-753-2449

Our Mission: Provide Opportunities for education, research and the preservation of Des Moines County History
# Des Moines County Historical Society

**May 2022**

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May 2022 is the shortest month of the year because it has only 31 days.

**May Funnies**

Which month of the year is the shortest? *May. It only has 3 letters.*

What did the dirt say to the rain? *You better cut it out or my name will be mud!*

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*Our Mission: Provide Opportunities for education, research and the preservation of Des Moines County History*
For well over a year the Board of Directors has been searching for a contractor who could make needed repairs and changes to the concrete steps in the front of the Garrett-Phelps House. Safety was the greatest motivation.

After visiting with the Preservation Commission, city engineers and others, it was determined to create a temporary deck to accommodate the large number of visitors through the historic home this summer. Volunteers agreed to create this fix, which is both secure and much, much safer. It meets all of the criteria that the city required. While there are already concerns about the style, please know, that once we are able to fully repair the steps as well as the sidewalk out to the street, we will do our very best to mimic what was original to the majestic house.

All of you who have visited the GPH know that there has been a safety concern at this entrance. When we moved the entrance for visitors to the west porch last year, it was based on safety then as well. We will continue to have traffic flow in from the west walk and out through the front door using the new steps this season to best serve the story of the house and the safety of those who visit.
May 7th Show Cancelled 😞

Due to unforeseen circumstances the May 7th Sundae + Mr. Goessl performance has been cancelled. Kate Voss and Jason Goessl are such fantastic performers we hope to reschedule them in the future. For now, be sure to catch them on Youtube.com, on Facebook @sundaeandmrgoessl or thru their website, https://sundaeandmrgoessl.com/. You can contact them directly through email (booksundae@gmail.com) and purchase one of their CDs so you can enjoy their wonderful blend of song and humor.

Donations & Memberships
Received by April 15, 2022

Memberships
Rodney Reeves
Taylor Standard
Terry Laswell
Norma Johnson
Joyce Harvey
Deb Bessine
Ruth Ann Sandrock
Howard Rescott
Jerry & Lois Rigdon
Jerry & Pat Courtney
Kim & Jerry Krakaw
Al & Cyndy Fabel
Josh & Kathleen Schier
Dwight & Sue Mulch

Donations
Suzanne Brueck
Terry Lasswell
BNSF Railway

In Memory of Marge Bell
LaVon & Judy Worley
Todd & Cheryl Dirth
Marcia Lohman
Sverre Thomassen
Ernest & Linda Voigt
Suzanne & Dean Vickstrom
Wayne & Colleen Heibner

In Memory of
Edward Anderson
Judy Stevens

Memory Garden Bricks
JOHN & PEGGY McCORMALLY
GLORIA M JEWETT & SCOTT W WOOD
EVANGELINE RAY
KERI MENDENHALL
KYLA DEAN MIKE ELYN DEAN
All by Terry Strother

Donation Form/Membership Renewal

☐ Check (# ____________)  ☐ Cash  ☐ Credit Card (For credit card please go to our website www.dmchs.org)

Please send completed forms to DMC Historical Society, 501 N 4th Street, Burlington, IA 52601. Make checks payable to DMCHS.

Name _________________________________________________________________

Address __________________________________________________________________ City, St, Zip ______________________________

Phone ___________________________ Email Address __________________________

Membership Renewal (Select only one:) Individual $25  Family $50  Bronze $250

General Donation Amount $______________ (Select one) IN MEMORY OF  IN HONOR OF  ON THE OCCASION OF

Our Mission: Provide Opportunities for education, research and the preservation of Des Moines County History
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Museum Hours
Heritage Museum: Hours Tuesday thru Saturday 10 am to 3 pm
Garrett-Phelps House & Crapo Park Log Cabin: Will open on Sundays beginning May 8th from 1 to 4pm
We will continue to post updates through Facebook, email and our webpage: www.dmchs.org