



From the Board President

By LaVon Worley

Dear Members:

This has been quite a year for change, but our staff and volunteers worked hard to make the Des Moines County Historical Society a place for learning and entertainment. Operating out of three facilities, we have welcomed over 2,400 guests, many seeing Burlington for the first time as passengers on the American Cruise Line or the new Viking Cruises. It was a treat to personally meet many of them and learn a little bit of their life stories.

You're all aware by now that we have two new directors onboard. Colton Neely serves as executive director, and Tim Blackwell is our assistant director. Additionally, three new board members have joined us—Megan Kubatzke, Martha Clyde, and Lin Parks. We welcome the talents and perspectives all of these folks bring to our mission.

Speaking of change, the museum store has been moved to the main floor area previously occupied by the Martin Bruhl exhibit. The Bruhl display and piano were moved to the main floor rotunda area. Colton is planning to play that grand piano regularly to entertain local guests and out-of-towners when we open in the spring. When you visit, we invite you to linger and enjoy the tunes.

If you've driven by the Garrett-Phelps House recently, you may have noticed a huge change on the east lawn. Staff and volunteers did a massive cleanup effort over the past couple of weeks. The shaggy hedge bordering the alley has been cut down. We'll look for new growth in the spring. Additionally, numerous trees and brush have been removed from the lower garden, which was established in 1998-99 in memory of Dolores Leopold Collins, who passed in 1996. The entire area will be re-envisioned in the coming year.

Education has been a major focus again this year as we hosted numerous speakers. Dr. Juliet Morrow did a public presentation about Clovis points and helped us classify those in our own collection. Our other speakers covered the gamut: local railroads and street cars, the city of Danville and early maps of Iowa, duck decoys and eagles, the Masons, Aldo Leopold and wildflowers of Southeast Iowa. Nearly 250 folks attended these events and enthusiastically joined in discussion following the presentations.

Entertainment mixed with education as we welcomed hundreds of boat passengers who toured the Heritage Center and Garrett-Phelps House. Those who purchased a deluxe package were entertained in the Bart Howard Lounge by area musicians, and they could enjoy snacks and beverages with the show. The comments back from those 257 visitors about both venues were excellent.

Our future challenges are many, but three stand out: paying off the roof loan, which is now within reach; rebuilding the Garrett-Phelps House back porch; and creating a permanent display area for the crinoid collection donated to us by Ken and Linda Tibbits. That collection is the third largest taken from Burlington limestone, and it will be the only one in the nation open to the public to see and touch.

In this season of giving, we again humbly ask that you continue to support us financially, as you are able. We sincerely appreciate whatever you can give. We wish you peace, joy, and good health in the new year and look forward to seeing you soon.

From the Executive Director

By Colton Neely

I would like to thank all member, volunteers, and patrons for being of great support to our museums. Your continued support aids us in providing access to our collections through new exhibits and outreach programs. With the sudden drop in temperature and the falling of the leaves, we recognize that the holidays are upon us.

In the spirit of the winter holidays, DMCHS asks for your continued support through donations. In just the past year your generosity has amounted to over \$20,000! As we look towards next year, we look to grow that amount to support the renovation of the back porch on the Garrett-Phelps House, retirement of the Heritage Museum roof loan debt, and purchasing of archival materials to better preserve our collections. It is with your assistance and generosity that we will be able to meet and exceed our goals.

Prior to the blanketing of snow and frigid temperatures, our staff and volunteers have completed the strenuous task of cleaning up the landscape at the Garrett-Phelps House. Our wonderful crew consisted of myself, Tim Blackwell, Kay Swanson, Scott Swanson, Adam Swanson, LaVon & Judy Worley, Chandler Fors, Josh Bigger, Diane Sweeden, and Steve Rowland. In total this project took 54 hours of labor-intensive and demanding work. I cannot thank the individuals listed above enough for their dedication and assistance in beautifying the landscape at the Garrett-Phelps House and saving the Historical Society thousands of dollars in yard work. If you have not had the chance, I highly encourage you to stop by the home and take a look at the incredible transformation.

I would also like to take the opportunity this month to recognize, Barb Bonnett, a volunteer who has been present in the organization since the transition from the Apple Trees Museum. Barb's ambitions and goals have supported and assisted our mission keeping the museum moving forward. She assists at the Heritage Museum and as a docent for the Garrett-Phelps House. As of late, she has been instrumental in the planning and execution of the "Taste of the Holidays" gathering. Barb has also supported the efforts of re-landscaping the front prairie of the Heritage Museum, as we look to utilize the space for outdoor activities, exhibits, and receptions next year. We thank you for all your hard work!

We encourage you to visit us here at the Heritage Museum. With 2022 coming to a close, DMCHS will shutdown the Heritage Museum for the month of January 2023 for staff to complete major projects in preparation for the new year. We look to you for help in reorganizing our collections, cleaning exhibits, and more to enable DMCHS to grow during 2023. As the holidays approach, we encourage you to financially support DMCHS so that we can continue to be a resource to our community.

DMCHS Holiday Wish List

As we move towards 2023 we ask for your financial support in the highlighted areas:

Retire Roof Loan Debt

Renovate South Porch of GPH

Heritage Museum HVAC System update

Restore William M. Salter Bust

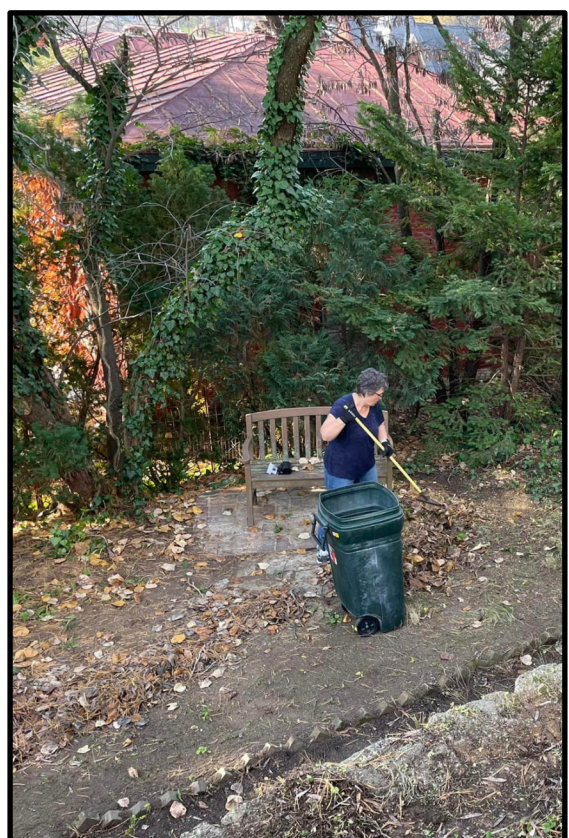
Archival Materials

Exhibit Fabrication

Educational Programming Materials

High Quality Image Scanner

Garrett-Phelps House Landscaping



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

Upcoming Events at the Heritage Museum

December 10

Steve Brower: Aldo Leopold and the Roots of the Land Ethic

1 to 3 pm

Biographers, conservationists, and philosophers are interested in identifying the sources of Leopold's Land Ethic. Through family history research and interviews with the Leopolds, new information has surfaced, explaining how Aldo started on the path to the Land Ethic at a very early age, even before starting school. This program covers some of the high points of Leopold's career in Wisconsin and the Southwest, before focusing in on some of the newly found sources in Burlington. This way, people who are new to Leopold's ideas can first learn of his significance before going into the details of how his Burlington roots influenced his career. This program uses photos and quotes from Aldo's childhood and early career to study the influences from his youthful discoveries. We take a look at some of Aldo's favorite places to learn more about his reflections used in later writings and development of the Land Ethic. Doors will open at 12:45 pm.

January 12

DMCHS Annual Meeting

2:15 pm

The Annual Meeting provides an opportunity for the director to update attending members about what has been accomplished in the previous year. This will include changes in personnel and programming, updates on physical changes to our three facilities, a report focused on new and long-standing exhibits, and a look to future goals and challenges. Doors open at 2:00 pm.

January 14

Craig Smith: The Beauty and History of the New Crystal Lake Club

8 to 10 am

The presentation will share from the recorded history of one of the most unique hunting and social clubs located along the Mississippi River. The New Crystal Lake Club has a rich tradition of conservation, preservation and documentation of the natural resources that were originally created even before the levee system and the drainage ditch era were developed in west central Illinois. With strong ties to Burlington, early members with names like Leopold, Schramm, Perkins and Young dedicated themselves to preserving a natural wetland for recreation and enjoyment for outdoorsman and their families. The club history goes back to 1885 and the stories that are documented are a tribute to the vision and the passion that has kept Crystal Lake as active and vital and beautiful as ever despite all the modernizations and changes that surround the property today. Please join us as we share about this hidden gem just miles away from the Burlington riverfront. Doors will open at 7:45 am.

All events are held at the Heritage Museum, 501 N 4 Street.
Please use the Columbia Street entrance. Look for the blue awning!

For more information, please check our web page, newsletter, social media, and the Heritage Museum staff.

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Volunteer Help Needed!

Calling any current and new volunteers to assist with cleaning at the Heritage Museum. As a thanks for your hard work snacks and drinks will be provided! Below are the dates and times your help is needed:

December 6, 13, 20
10 am - 1 pm

If you are interested or have any questions don't hesitate to reach out to Kay at (319) 752-7449.

Des Moines County Historical Society Board Members

LaVon Worley
 Paula Logan
 Don Weiss
 Terri Dowell
 Lin Parks
 Martha Clyde
 Megan Kubatzke

2021-22 Officers

President LaVon Worley
 Vice President Don Weiss
 Treasurer Terri Dowell
 Secretary Paula Logan



Offices located at Heritage Museum
 501 N 4th Street Burlington, IA 52601
 Voice: 319-752-7449 FAX: 319-753-2449
dmchs@dmchs.org

Featured Finds: David Rorer Letters

By Tim Blackwell

With the turning of the leaves and snow beginning to fall, the holiday season is upon us. It is during the holiday season that we often find warmth through gatherings between family and friends. A chance to recap, enjoy good food, and make memories that will last a lifetime.

Our *Featured Find* this month was uncovered as we continued reorganizing the archives situated in the lower level of the Heritage Museum. We located a collection of letters spanning from 1845-1848, written by David Rorer to his wife, Delia Viele. Rorer's letters expressed his desire to return back home to Delia while he was away working cases as a lawyer.

David Rorer arrived in Burlington in 1836, where he would continue his practice as a lawyer. In need of a home large enough for himself, his first wife, Martha Martin, and their four children, Rorer had a brick house constructed on what is today Fourth and Columbia streets. The first brick home to be built in the state of Iowa. Unfortunately, in 1838, Rorer would lose his wife to an unspecified illness. A year later, David Rorer married Delia Viele of Scott County, Iowa and the two would go on to have three daughters of their own, Virginia, Delia, and Mary.

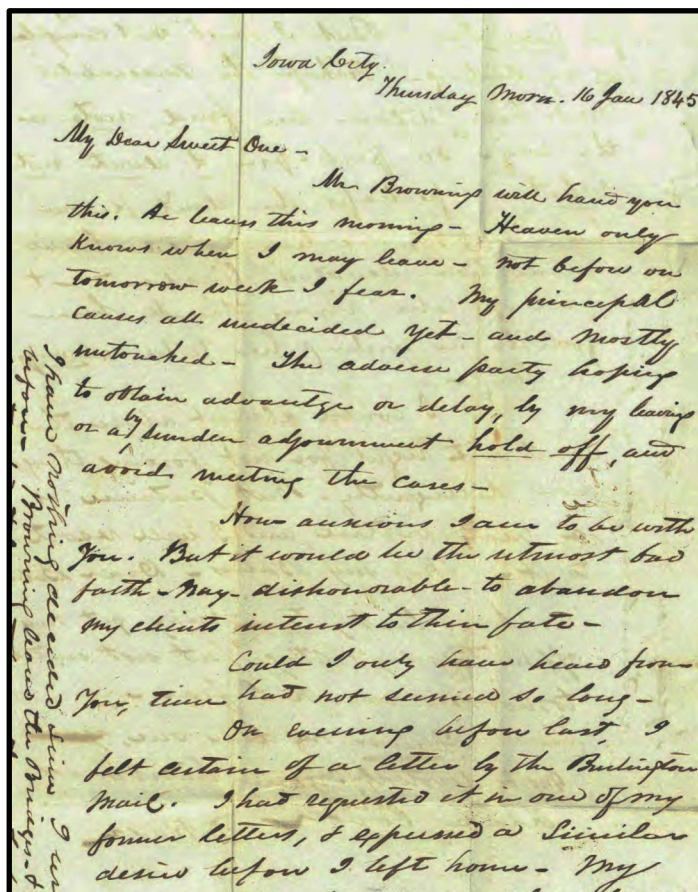
As a lawyer, Rorer remained extremely busy appearing in front of the Territorial/Iowa Supreme Court for a combined 163 cases. His work often left him away from home for weeks at a time, with the only mode of

communication available being mail. In our pictured letter, Rorer writes, "How anxious I am to be with you." We often take for granted the access we have at our fingertips to reach the ones we love, yet David Rorer is fortunate to find time to write to his "Dear Sweet One."

The desire of Rorer to reconnect with his beloved wife echoes the spirit of the holiday season as many make journeys back to their own families. DMCHS would like to

wish each of its members and their families a Happy Holidays!

For those interested in viewing the collection of letters written by David Rorer to his wife, scan the QR code to see full-image scans. We again would appreciate your help in transcribing these letters and sending us your results.



Donations & Memberships

Names are for receipts dated from the 15th through the 15th of each month.

In Memory of

Joan Foley

Sherry Humphreys
Teddie Rhinehart
Amy & BJ Taylor
Ruth Wagner
Donna Acord
Letha Reif
Teresa Salino-Hugg
Michelle Peebler
Richard Benne
Kathy Murphy
Carol Brotherson
Anne Hall
Sylvia Cripple
Kathy Ford

Memberships

Sue & Dean Vickstrom
Judy & Jim Smithson
Marianna Brinck
Dusty Hass
Dr. Roderick & Marlys Kellogg
Diane & Bob Mansheim
Linda Coats
Ted & Barb Horn
Linda Clark
Bill Stewart
Chuck & Ellen Fuller
Bob Patton

Donations

Barb Bonnett
Terry Strother

In Memory of

Joanne Oetken &

Dr. George J. Kozacik

Judy Stevens

Donation Form/Membership Renewal

Check (# _____) **Cash** **Credit Card** (For credit card please call the Heritage Museum@ 319.752.7449)

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 _____

This donation is to renew my membership (Select only one:) Individual \$25 Family \$50 Bronze \$250

I am making this donation (Select one)

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



DES MOINES COUNTY
 HISTORICAL SOCIETY
 Heritage Museum • Bart Howard Lounge
 Garrett-Phelps House • Crapo Park Log Cabin
 501 N 4th Steet • Burlington, IA 52601

Non-Profit Org
 U.S. Postage
 PAID
 Burlington, IA 52601
 Permit No. 568



David Rorer

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Museum Hours

Heritage Museum: Open Tuesday through Friday from 10 to 4 pm and Saturday from 10 to 3 pm.

Garrett-Phelps House & Crapo Park Log Cabin: Closed for the season, will reopen May 2023.

Updates will be posted through Facebook, email, and our webpage: www.dmchs.org.