



DES MOINES COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Heritage Museum • Bart Howard Lounge • Garrett-Phelps House • Crapo Park Log Cabin
501 N 4th Street • Burlington, IA 52601 • 319.752.7449 • www.dmchs.org

Volume 46 No. 4

NEWSLETTER

April 2023

From the Executive Director

by Colton Neely

Lately, I have been astonished by the mild winter and spring weather we have been having here in Burlington. I know we have had several snowstorms, but we are very fortunate Mother Nature has been playing nice with our various projects at the Des Moines County Historical Society. Our programming is gathering decent-sized crowds, and we have had much applause for Miss Lilly Story Time, Sounds of the Past, and Garrett-Phelps Teas.

In April, we will introduce two new exhibits outside of the Heritage Center. Our first one is a temporary exhibit held at the Burlington Public Library called "Titanic" as part of the library series "Vacation Thru Time". This exhibit is about the great ship Titanic and her untimely demise through the story of a Burlington Survivor. We will be hosting similar and related artifacts from our own collection. This will be an all-day event at the library through April 14th, 15th, and 17th. Another exhibit to be installed at the same time is "Hotel Burlington", featuring magnificent Hotel Burlington artifacts and a story wall from the beginning of the hotel's construction in 1910 to its closure in the 1980s. Many people may not know, but the first two main levels of the Hotel Burlington will be reopened as several entertainment, business, and venue spaces after a couple years of construction and restoration work. Similar to the cabin in Crapo Park, our exhibit will be seated in the lobby of the Hotel Burlington for members of the public to come in and visit.

For many who know our Museum Assistant, Kay Swanson, and Volunteers Diane Sweeden and Sue French, they have been working very hard on the near completion

of two exhibits and oddities from our collection that seem to bring enthusiasm: the "Hats Off" exhibit and "Dolls of Burlington". Our "Hats Off" exhibit features a select group of hats worn by women and men during the 1890s to the 1960s. This collection on view for the public is a quarter of what we have in storage in our archives. The "Dolls of Burlington" is an exhibit showing off our historic doll collection. This display in the general store exhibit contains some of our earliest dolls, various handmade doll furnishings, textiles, and doll variations.

Come to the Heritage Center in mid-April to see the completion of these fabulous exhibits and check out the new exhibits at the Library and Hotel Burlington.

Lately, we also turned our attention to our Garrett-Phelps House on 521 Columbia Street. If you are familiar with our popular Christmas Dinners, then you will enjoy our tea times in the dining room every month on the third Tuesday. Our previous tea time in March turned out to be a tremendous hit for our first time hosting this. April openings are now available for \$25.00 per person, with 12 seats available. Call the Heritage Center to buy your ticket before these seats fill up again. All ticket profits go to the rebuilding process of the south back porch of the house.

The old back porch was removed recently after years of weathering and decay. With a new porch, this will allow for more accessibility into the basement as part of new exhibit spaces, and outside balcony views over snake alley.

If you would like to donate to the various repairs to Garrett-Phelps House, please contact me at (319) 752-7449 at the Heritage Center for more information.

Upcoming Events

Town Hall Lectures

First Saturday of Every Month

12 to 3 pm

Every first Saturday of the month, the Heritage Center will host a speaker, historian, or lecturer to give a presentation to the community about a particular topic related to Burlington or Des Moines County. This program will typically be free for patrons; the only time admission is charged for this program is for *special* lectures. Each participating patron will get a sticker from our museum staff that allows free admission all day at the Heritage Center. Please use the Columbia Street door (with the blue awning). Doors open at 11:45.

Miss Lilly's Story Time for Toddlers

April 22

10:00 am

This program is hosted by the Burlington Public Library and is free to families who participate in story times, activities, and playtime in Catfish Corner. Each participating patron will get a sticker from our museum staff that allows them free admission all day at the Heritage Center.

Sister Susie's Sewing Club

Every Tuesday through May 16

9 to 11 am

This club gathers local sewing and quilting professionals, hobbyists, and amateurs in social collaboration by using donated thread and fabric to create materials by hand with antique sewing machines. You can register in person or by phone. Maximum capacity 14 participants.

Conservation Club

Every Wednesday through May 3

9 to 11 am

Designed for young adults who are interested in the archival side of museum work, this club offers hands-on engagement with our artifacts in cleaning, restoration, documentation, research, and digitization. Maximum capacity 14 participants.

Cost \$45 per person

Tea for Lunch

April 18, May 16, June 20, July 18, August 15, and September 19

1 pm

Tea for Lunch is a grand social gathering in the Garrett-Phelps House dining room. Scones, Savories & Sweets will be served. Maximum capacity 12 participants.

Cost \$25 per person

Teen Curators

April 8, May 13 & 27, June 10 & 24

Starting at 2 pm

This Saturday program is for teenagers (ages 15–19) who will work as a team with the Executive Director in building an exhibit for the museum. This program is for teens who aspire to work in the museum field and learn key research techniques, exhibit development, and exhibit fabrication. See the Heritage Center Calendar or website for fall dates and sign-ups. Maximum capacity 15 participants.

Cost \$45 per person

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

Heritage Center Kids Camp (Ages 7 - 12)

July 24 - 28

10 - 11:30 am

This summer program is full of STEM and STEAM-related activities with kids learning about fossils, flying machines, and more by playing games, creating art, and science experiments at the Heritage Center. Includes field trips to the Garrett-Phelps House and Crapo Park Log Cabin.

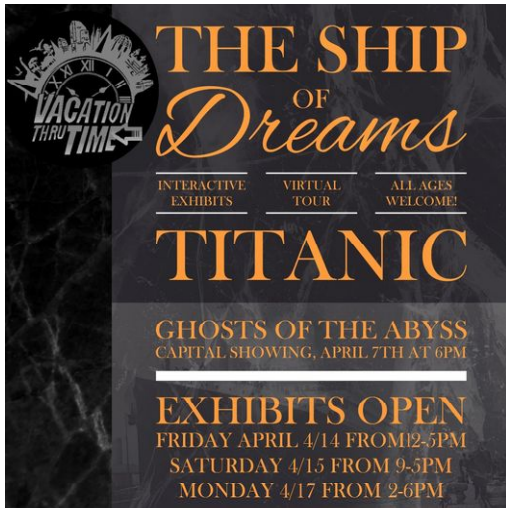
Maximum capacity 14 participants.

Cost \$75 each per person

Taste of the Holidays

December 5, 7, and 9

This holiday dinner at the Garrett-Phelps house hosts up to 12 people per night. The night will start off in the library, where our volunteers will serve wine and refreshments. Light hors d'oeuvres will be served while guests socialize in the back parlor. When dinner is ready to be served, our interpreters will guide guests to be seated in the dining rooms. As dinner is being served, our historians will give a presentation of the Garrett-Phelps house and family heritage. This holiday dinner experience is a beloved tradition in the community hosted by the Des Moines County Historical Society.



Become a Volunteer

This autumn proved to be one of the busiest and most exciting times for the Des Moines County Historical Society. It won't be long before a new season of American Queen and Viking dockings will be starting up, and volunteers are needed more than ever to help us provide the best experience to those coming to Burlington.

Volunteers are always needed to help catalog and preserve artifacts, prepare exhibits, and maintain our facilities. Please talk to any of our staff about all the opportunities.

Board Members

Megan Brincks
Martha Clyde
Terri Dowell
Michael Herron
Paula Logan
Don Weiss

Forest Gahn, Honorary Board Member

2023-24 Officers

PresidentDon Weiss
Vice President.....Paula Logan
TreasurerTerri Dowell
SecretaryMegan Brincks

DMCHS Staff

Executive DirectorColton Neely
Museum AssistantKay Swanson



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dmchs@dmchs.org

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Out of the Collection

By Colton Neely

Object No. 95.04

This odd machine was donated in 1995 by Ellen and Walter Peterson to the Des Moines County Historical Society. It has a wood base measuring 11 1/4" by 6 1/2" and a drawer filled with lead printing type. The machine itself is 8 1/2" high by 7" wide, with a 6 1/2" round wooden handle. The flywheel is labeled "*The Monarch Marking System Company, Dayton, Ohio, Junior Monarch*". This machine was patented in January of 1920 and serves an unusual purpose.

If you were working as an industrial engineer for a large warehouse or retailer, you would have spent a considerable amount of time thinking of how price tags are attached to objects. These marking machines have the sole purpose of printing large numbers of retail tickets for a business. A common ancestor of this device we see today comes from a retail worker using a ticket gun to print off sticky labels for items in a store. However, before the era of the computer, tickets still had to be printed, and some of the pre-computer ticket marking machines were nearly as complex as their modern-day equivalents.

Our Monarch machine is quite rare, as it was made before World War II. Due to the wartime metal shortage, Monarch was forced to take extreme measures and design a marking machine that was constructed almost entirely

out of Bakelite, an early brittle form of plastic, typically used for the construction of knobs and insulated terminals and is almost never used in a high-stress mechanical device. Fortunately, our machine is made of solid steel and wood and can resist the test of time.

One of our hardest duties as a museum is to document as much information as possible about machinery like this marking machine. Apparently marking machines, confined to the backrooms and warehouses of the world, had



previously been unworthy of documentation. From what we know, these machines were prone to pinching, jamming, tearing, and seizing mechanical parts. It did, however, fulfill a true necessity to the various businesses and warehouses in Burlington that were selling products.

Thankfully, the machine in our collection runs decently well and still contains a drawer filled with lead type for printing. This object will be going on display soon by our waffle iron printing press and lead type cabinets since it falls into the category of printing instruments.

Please stop in the Heritage Center to view this magnificent piece of American ingenuity and our other printing artifacts from a day gone by.

Donations & Memberships

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

In Memory of

Ilene Frank
Olive Sullivan

Donations

Russ Fry
Gwen Scholer
Olive Sullivan

Memberships

Fred Bechtel Jr.
Danny and Debbie Bessine
Janet John
John and Linda Phillips
Fred and Gwen Scholer
Lisa Krenek
Dorothy Swanson
Barbara McRoberts
Michael Herron
Duane and Bev Sherbondy
John and Sandra Miller
Gretchen Walls
John and Lindsay Fruehling
Ron and Karen Piper
Tom and Sally Parrott



Our guests for the first Garrett-Phelps Tea Time.

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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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.

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