



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. 8

NEWSLETTER

August 2023

From the Executive Director

by Colton Neely

Summer is truly heating up for the months of July and August, and we are seeing record low river levels and precipitation. As many have heard, the American Countess, similar to its sister ship, the American Duchess, will no longer be docking in Burlington for a variety of reasons. However, we are ever more enthusiastic to receive visitors from the American Queen and Viking Mississippi. Even with low waters and heavy boat traffic, we are grateful these folks get a chance to see Burlington in its prime! I want to personally thank the volunteers who dedicate their time helping the museum sites by actively participating during a riverboat arrival.

Another exciting event we have been having is our July Kids Summer Camp at the Heritage Center and Garrett-Phelps House. These kids teamed up and identified over 26 different insect species in our front prairie garden. They also had a chance to use an antique hand crank corn shucker and use cobs and husks in corn dolls. Some of the kids took home leftover corn to feed squirrels and birds in their backyards. Our part-timer Cora and I taught the kids about archaeology and actually got to excavate for native American arrowheads. Kids toured Garrett-Phelps and played parlor games and a lawn game of croquet. We ended the week with a giant water sluice, and the kids got a chance to mine for crinoids and more to take home! We had a blast and look forward to seeing them next year.

Currently, we are looking for new speakers to present different historical aspects of Des Moines County for our monthly Town Hall Lectures. In the past, we have had presentations about Street Cars of Burlington, Crystal Lake Boat Club, and other fascinating topics. If you are knowledgeable about a specific topic and would like to

present, contact me to arrange a month in 2024 so we can start marketing the presentation. When school starts back up, our friend at the Burlington Public Library Children's Department will return from their summer programming for more Heritage Center Story Times in Catfish Corner. The September newsletter will confirm when those librarians will be back.

This month we had quite the crowd return to my Sounds of the Past piano concert, where I brought in authentic Scott Joplin Ragtime Manuscripts and other Stark Music Company publications.

Carolyn Dorting, one of our leading historians of the Garrett-Phelps house, asked me to mention Charitable Distributions given to DMCHS. Re-qualified Charitable Distributions is a lesser-known tax advantage that many seniors may not be aware of. IRA owners aged 70 and older, who are required to take distributions, may transfer funds directly from their traditional IRA to the Des Moines County Historical Society. This is known as a qualified Charitable Distribution and does not require the owner to itemize their taxes. A Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) reduces the owner's gross income and hence their tax obligation, and the Des Moines County Historical Society receives much-needed funds. It's a win-win, but be sure to consult your tax advisor.

We always look forward to working with our community in a variety of aspects, including programming and volunteer work! If you have any questions, please contact me at (319) 752-7449 or Coltonn@dmchs.org!

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.

Tea for Lunch Call for Available Dates

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

Taste of the Holidays December 2, 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.

Note that due to heavy demand, only a limited number of seats are available, and some dates are now full. Please call Kay at 319-752-7449 to make your reservation.



Digging for artifacts during the Heritage Center Kid's Camp



Hoops and Sticks during the Heritage Center Kid's Camp

Become a Volunteer

This summer will be one of the busiest and most exciting times for the Des Moines County Historical Society. There is still time to volunteer to assist with American Queen and Viking dockings 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.

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

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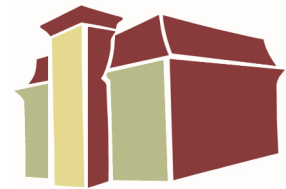
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Executive DirectorColton Neely
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Offices located at Heritage Museum
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Out of the Collection

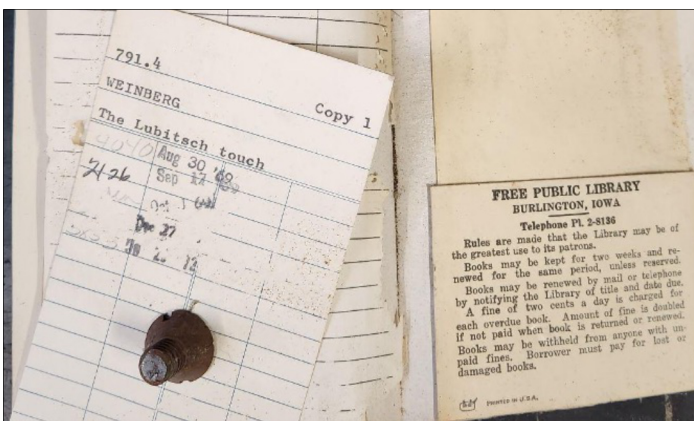
By Colton Neely

This month we have a special treat added to the collection by the Old Burlington Library itself. For the past year, we have been cleaning the stacks in preparation of a new exhibit on Burlington's Library History. This project has resulted in the ongoing overhaul of the collection in search of materials that were once used in the Old Library.

In the process of cleaning the stacks, we made an incredible lost and found discovery. On our North Wall, left of the staircase, is a section of our textile accessory collection. This collection included purses, handbags, socks, underwear, belts, parasols, and various other objects. We took all the objects off the shelf for examination and restoration to a more convenient and appropriate location within the Heritage Center.

Initially the shelving these objects were stored on stuck us as unusual since it didn't seem to fit with the rest of the stacks. We believe that during the mid-1970s and early 1980s, metal side shelving was bolted into place with decaying wood backboards to prevent books from falling behind the shelf. As part of the restoration process of the stacks, we decided to disassemble the homemade shelving due to safety concerns and historical accuracy.

Piece by piece, heavy metal plate by plate, we uncovered various things stored behind the shelf. One of the more incredible finds was a hidden room under the staircase containing tools and spare parts from the construction of the stacks when they installed the massive iron unit over 100 years ago. In that previously-hidden storage room, our part-timer, Cora Wickham, found a note taped to a decorative piece of metal that stated the following:



11/9/94

To Beloved Library Workers—

***I know you miss me terribly
and remember “the good ol’ days”
When I was a page here
(That is, if you are the same people
As when I was here)***

Just thought I'd leave a reminder of me for you to find.

-Jenny Remmers

P.S. I love the Wed. Night Gang!

If you or you know somebody who worked at or remembers a specific aspect of the Old Burlington Library, we encourage you to send in a letter about your experience here! Our volunteers, staff, and I worked diligently at uncovering lost books from the library, art pieces, and information. We will continue to catalog these objects and put them on display in our upcoming exhibit.



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

Donations & Memberships

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

In Memory of
William and Martha Pratt
Jeff Heland

Donations:
Mary Krohlow
Wayne Tolander

Memberships:
Julie Anderson
Arlys Cecconi
Mary Krohlow
Pat Unander
Marcia Lohmann
Gayle Elliot
Wayne & Nancy Tolander
Ann Hass
Connie Geiselhart
Mary Rubens
Tim & Tonja Binder
Steve & Trina Spencer
David & Amy Camp
Dr Roderick & Marlys Kellogg
Ray Delmege & Martha Clyde
Kenny & Joyce Johnson
Mark & Marquerite Fehseke
Paul Miller
Pat Mayle

A Gift in Your Will or Living Trust

A gift in your will or living trust is one of the most effective ways to provide for the future of DMCHS and allows you to retain your assets during your lifetime. In addition, your estate may benefit from a charitable estate tax deduction.

The gift may be easily included in your will when it is written, or it may be added through a simple codicil or amendment. You may wish to leave DMCHS a stated dollar amount; a percentage of your residual estate (what remains after debts, taxes and specific bequests have been made); or a specific asset, such as securities or other marketable property.

It can be as simple as adding the following language to your last will and testament: *"I give and bequeath to the Des Moines County Historical Society, presently of 501 N 4th Street, Burlington, IA 52601, the sum of \$___ to be used for its general support."*

For further information, contact Colton Neely, Executive Director, at 319-752-7449.

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: Open Sunday from 1 to 4 pm.

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