



From the Executive Director

by Colton Neely

Summer took a bite again this past August with a record-breaking heat wave through Iowa. This had me asking, What was the hottest recorded day in Burlington's history?

After some research, I found that between the years 1897 and 2023, one day stood out more than the rest. On August 8th, 1934, Burlington thermometers reached a temperature of 110 degrees Fahrenheit, or 43.3 degrees Celsius. This heat caused many health-related issues throughout the state of Iowa. Ottumwa, Iowa, neighboring Burlington, had the hottest temperature with a record-breaking 115 degrees Fahrenheit, or 46.1 degrees Celsius. This caused the untimely death of packing house manager Henry Miller. While watching baseball, he passed unexpectedly at age 62 from a heat-related heart attack.

During this day, the Burlington Fair was hosting a vaudeville act that included the performance of sailors on tightropes, a visiting Japanese troupe performing tricks with tubs and barrels, and Phil Clark, a tenor, singing a selection of Irish songs.

Even in Washington, DC, Franklin D. Roosevelt was conducting renovations to the White House facilities, such as upgrading bathrooms, electrical, and plumbing. Luckily, in today's age, we have access to air conditioning and cool drinking water. We were delighted to get a surplus of members visiting the museum to escape the heat waves and to let their kids play in our Catfish Corner before the start of school!

As a reminder, we would like to inform you about charitable distributions given to DMCHS. Re-qualified charitable distributions are 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.

As for our museum sites, we are currently working on a variety of projects to make our Heritage Center and Garrett-Phelps House look as sharp as possible. We started stripping the 100+ year-old terrazzo floors in the stacks, revealing their bright mother-of-pearl white flecks and lavender marble, once obscured by a thick coat of very old green-brown wax.

We refurbished our ceiling fixtures to the reproduction gas and electric combination gaso-electrolier with Edison bulbs and candle flicker bulb flames. We also repainted our "transitional spaces" from the old off-white to a nice creme white and finished the blue in our atrium at the Heritage Center.

We also have the sign on our native prairie garden information sign bolted back into place. Come check out our changes, and, as always, if you would like to help, please contact us for more information.

We are absolutely thrilled to have such enthusiastic people working in our collection, giving tours, and providing a sense of stewardship for our sites! Visit us at the Heritage Center, dine with us at Garrett-Phelps, and explore the outdoors at the Crapo Park Hawkeye Cabin!

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.

Memorial Brick Garden

Outside of the Heritage Museum, many of you remember our memorial brick garden. The bricks are the perfect way to show your support of the museums, memorialize or honor a family, or mark a special occasion.

Each donation of \$150 per 4" x 8" India red granite brick will include a maximum of two lines of 15 characters each. Spaces between words count as characters. The opportunity also exists for donors of \$1,000 or more to be recognized with a special, light gray granite brick.

Making a gift will last beyond a lifetime and will be a stepping stone towards the history and future of the Des Moines County Historical Society and our three historical locations.

For more information on adding your engraved brick, please our website at www.dmchs.org for a request form, or contact me at coltonn@dmchs.org or (319) 752-7449, and I will be happy to help. Currently, we have one in process and need a total of 10 to start the additional engraving process. Sign up today to have your name added to the outdoor classroom and picnic space!

Become a Volunteer

Even as summer winds down, this fall 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.

Board Members

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- Martha Clyde
- Terri Dowell
- Michael Herron
- Kara Houston
- Paula Logan
- Don Weiss

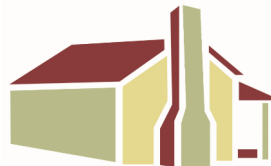
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DMCHS Staff

- Executive DirectorColton Neely
- Museum AssistantKay Swanson



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

Out of the Collection

By Colton Neely

The Steamboat “Clyde” River Steering Wheel

In August, we were contacted by Matt Eisenman of Interstate Bank with a massive object in their possession. At that time Interstate Bank, located on 1010 N Roosevelt Ave, was moving to West Burlington. In their main lobby was a massive ship wheel positioned on a large concrete base. The ship’s wheel stands about 8 feet tall and is made of wood coated in waterproofing wax and varnish. Initially, they were skeptical of its origin and how it came to the bank. We eventually found an article describing its history.

Wheel of Ghost?

By Marietta Zintak
Burlington Hawkeye

Mark Twain would have been proud to handle the steamboat pilot wheel now mounted on the wall in the Mississippi Valley Savings & Loan Assn. lobby at 321 N. Third St.

The wheel is an historic part of the river and one of the few to be found. I know because I searched up and down the Mississippi and Ohio rivers for over a year. It is one of the few larger wheels around and the only one with any amount of historical significance," says D. M. Kurtz, associate president. The eight-foot oak and mahogany wheel steered the steamer “Clyde” on the Mississippi, Ohio, and Tennessee rivers for 71 years, an unequalled record of service for an inland iron-hull boat. "There is an old steamboat pilot in Chattanooga who regularly piloted the "Clyde " when the Arrow Transportation Co. operated on the Tennessee. That old pilot thought it was the best boat he ever piloted, Kurtz says proudly. The “Clyde,” built by the Dubuque Boat and Boiler Works in 1870, was originally a 90-foot sidewheeler. In 1888, it was lengthened and changed to a 125-foot sternwheel packetboat, carrying passengers, mail, and small cargo. The boat was dismantled in 1941 at Paducah, Kentucky, where the wheel remained stored in a barn until 1966. Capt. Howard Tate, of Memphis, Tenn., acquired and restored the wheel. In 1972, he sold it to Kurtz, who had been advertising the "trademark" of his company in

“Waterways Journal”, a St. Louis river publication. The Schlitz Brewing Company of Memphis offered twice the amount of Kurtz’s bid, but the sale was on a first-come, first-served basis, says Kurtz. Declining to quote costs.

The “Clyde’s” wheel no longer rotates, but the ghost of the venerable steamer may still be plowing the Mississippi. The hull, being an iron plate, wouldn’t disintegrate, so it’s probably floating around somewhere. After 100 years of existence, someone is probably still using it for a barge, says Kurtz. The “Clyde” is an ancestor of the Julia Belle Swain, which will be in service during Burlington’s June Steamboat Days. The Julia Belle Swain was built by the same boatworks in 1970, exactly a hundred years after the “Clyde’s” construction.



Many questions still remain since this article was printed in the 1970s. We are looking into the boat works that deconstructed the “Clyde” and records of what happened to the hull. Since Kurtz says it’s possible the steel hull could possibly be floating long after the decommissioning, Might it be still around? If it survives, would it be possible to rebuild the boat?

Currently, the wheel stands temporarily in the atrium, waiting to be installed into a new exhibit. The wheel will be mounted to a base, and we will be installing various parts of steamboat mechanics around it, including steam gauges, whistles, rivets, and bells.

If you are interested in donating to the conservation of the wheel, please contact me at (319) 752-7449 to discuss how you can help!

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:
Mark Tabbert
Carol Kottenstette
Kathy Schneider

Memberships:
Kay Weiss
Helen Smith
Kathy Schneider
Carol Kottenstette
Colleen Goff
Phyllis Harwell
Chuck & Bev Siekman
Kevin & Diane Mueller
Ron & Sandy Stephens
Patricia Steiner
Bill Ell
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Russ & Mary Smith
Doyle Ruble Jr
Chris Carlson
Mike & Deb Bowen
Leroy & Sandi Bickel
Gary & Ruth Mansheim
Kristen Lampe
Amanda Van Valkenburgh
Mary Rubens
Bob & Vicki Gerdes

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)

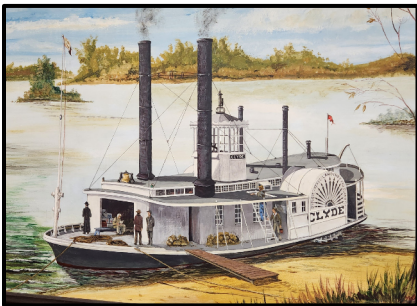
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Our Mission: Provide Opportunities for education, research and the preservation of Des Moines County History



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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.