



From the Executive Director

by Colton Overton

The month of March has been busy for us staff and volunteers. With the weather really warming up and the daffodils appearing on the front lawn of the Heritage Center, programming has really taken off.

As many of you heard, the American Duchess, American Countess, and especially the American Queen will not be returning this year. Attendance on the riverboats did not recover to pre-Covid levels, and has caused the riverboat company to go bankrupt. We were delighted to give these travelers the ultimate Des Moines County history experience through our two museums.

Thank you to all of our staff, volunteers, and board members for all the time and energy that went into engaging our boat travelers on these fine vessels. We hope that in 2025, through other means, they will be steaming again up the mighty Mississippi.

Due to the American boats not coming to the museums this year, many community members are concerned about how this affects the museum going forward. As the director of the museum, I can certainly say it will not be of any concern. With the Viking boat coming to Burlington, we can confidently say it's been a delightful replacement for all three American boats. We are waiting for the Greater Burlington Partnership to announce the upcoming Viking landing dates for this season. We ask those who want to be a part of the volunteer force for these riverboats to keep an eye on the

newsletter for a calendar.

Since spring is warming up, our staff has been working diligently to clean up all of our properties. This involves cataloging artifacts, inventorying our gift shop, cleaning our antiques, and much needed landscaping. As for exhibits, we applied for over \$67,500 in grants and foundation requests for Garrett-Phelps and Heritage Center rehabilitations. This involves re-electrification, painting, clock repairs, marble water fountain repair, and much more. If you are interested in donating to the restoration of the Heritage Center and Garrett-Phelps

House, set up an appointment with me to review options!

On May 4 from 3 - 5 pm, the Des Moines County Historical Society will be hosting a lecture on the rehabilitation of the historical society, Luci Creative, and its celebration party after paying off our roof loan debt.

Lastly, we are in the near completion of our new research room in the Grand Gallery. Thanks to Preservation Station for

installing lighting on our research desk. All that is needed is a new coat of wall paint and signage. The purpose of this room is to facilitate a comfortable, historic, and secure room for researchers wanting to review materials from our collection. If you have not seen the room, take a trip to the Heritage Center and see the progress!



Upcoming Events

Sounds of the Past

April 20, May 18, June 15

10 am to 12 pm

Executive Director, Colton Overton, will be performing ragtime music on the historic Martin Bruhl piano in the atrium of the Heritage Center. Additionally, he will be doing Edison phonograph demonstrations. Please use the Fourth Street door (main entrance at the top of the ramp on the west side). Doors open at 9:45 am.

Town Hall Lecture

Saturday, April 6

11 am

This lecture features local Burlington historian Rodney Botts who will be talking about the famous streamlined locomotive, the Burlington Zephyr. Rodney Botts will cover why the Zephyr train was created, who created the line, and how it was linked to the famous Aeolus. Come to the Heritage Center Bart Howard Lounge and enjoy this fascinating story. Doors open at 10 am.

Town Hall Lecture

Saturday, May 11

11 am

This lecture features DMCHS Docent and Historian Cora Wickham-Hermann's research in Stoney Hollow and Starr's Cave area. Doors open at 10 am.

Scones, Savories & Sweets

Tuesday, April 16, May 21, June 18, July 16, August 20, September 17

1 pm

Now accepting reservations for a three-course Tea Luncheon, a grand social gathering in the Garrett-Phelps House dining room. \$25 per person. Maximum capacity 12 participants. Call 319-752-7449 to reserve your seat.

SilverCord Walk-In

Thursday, April 4, 11, 18, 25

Thursday, May 2, 9, 16, 23, 30

4 - 6 pm

All Silver Cord students are welcome to come to the museum if they need hours and do volunteer work with staff and peers.

Miss Lilly's Story Time

Tuesday, April 2, 9, 16, 23, 30

Tuesday, May 7, 14, 21, 28

10 am

Kids story time for all ages upstairs at the Heritage Center Catfish Corner, elevator access is available.

Historic Newspaper Reading

Wednesday, April 3, 10, 17, 24

Wednesday, May 1, 8, 15, 22, 29

10 - 11 am

Historic Newspaper Discussion of current issues that can affect history, and pulling random themes/dates in Des Moines County History. Meet in Bart Howard Lounge.

Memorial Brick Garden

8 out 10 bricks ordered, 2 needed for the next round of engraving.

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 visit 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. We need 2 more to meet the minimum of 10 to start the additional engraving process. Sign up today to have your name added to the outdoor classroom and picnic space!

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 Overton, Executive Director, by phone at 319-752-7449.

Notice to Volunteers

If you are a volunteer at the Garrett-Phelps House with key access, please return your key to the Heritage Center and update your contact information with one of our staff members. Due to security reasons, we will install new key locks for the house. This is required for our insurance liability. If you wish to stay current as a volunteer for the Garrett-Phelps House, please consult with us at (319) 752-7449 before May 1st, 2024.

Board Members

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

Forest Gahn, Honorary Board Member

2024-25 Officers

ChairDon Weiss
Vice Chair.....Paula Logan
TreasurerTerri Dowell
SecretaryMegan Brincks

DMCHS Staff

Executive DirectorColton Neely
Museum AssistantKay Swanson
Docent.....Cora Wickham-Hermann
Docent.....Jarod Shaffer
Docent.....Amy Power



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 Overton

The Flood of 1898

Flood damage is a natural weather-related occurrence more people witness in person or in media than most other natural disasters. Every generation remembers one flood making the biggest impact on their lives. Many people in Des Moines County have witnessed the Mississippi River wreaking havoc on farm fields, homesteads, riverhouses, parks, city streets, buildings, and bridges.

Earliest records of flooding on the Mississippi River go as far as 1543 when the party of Hernando de Soto (1497 - 1542), a Castilian Explorer and Conquistador, passed through a village at the confluence of the Mississippi River and Arkansas River on March 18, 1543. The flood inundated fields surrounding the town and only allowed passage by canoe.

Reportedly, the flood lasted at least 40 days.

Since then, there have been many major and minor floods on the Mississippi. What's unique about the *Flood of 1898* is that the Historical Society has a few photos of flood damage occurring in Des Moines County from August 16, 1898. Records show by January 1898, people were preparing for the annual flood by moving livestock, personal belongings, and sandbagging property to reduce potential damage. The City of Burlington collaborated with the Drainage Commission to develop a topographical map of all waterways across the eastern edge of the county. Their goal was to alleviate any potential risk factors to people by

evaluating every creekbed, ravine, lake, and pond that drains into the Mississippi River. According to the January 20, 1898 Burlington Hawkeye,

“Better still the extent to which each individual interest will be affected, through classification of the land, may be as easily determined, inasmuch as each small square represents a forty-acre tract, referring to the report with its corresponding letter, as “A,” “B,” or “C” indicating high, low, or wet. — the report and map were laid before the board yesterday morning and the forenoon was devoted to consideration of the same. No conclusion was reached. As the board desires to act slowly and deliberately.”



Evidently, interest in flood and other highwater management was not taken seriously at this time. Research from other accounts from Quincy, Davenport, and Dubuque showed flood management was still at its infancy and scientific research was still in its trial and error stage. The extent of what would happen

later in 1898 was something they could not predict. The *Flood of 1898* is considered relatively mild in comparison to the floods of 1973, 1993, and 2008. The photo below is a scene from Rand Lumber Co. getting washed away by Hawkeye Creek after a massive rainstorm.

*For more information visit Newspapers.com:
August 16, 1898, Page 6, “Sunday’s Storm”*

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

General – Building Projects Fund
Larry Ramer
Travis Meisgeier
Patrick Hazell
Keith Newland
Kaye Hanna

Black Hawk Rock
Archaeological Dig
Tom Tibbets
Diane Van Duzen
Ann Hass

Memberships
Keith Schulz
Beverly Fisher
Annette & Russ Kuhlemeier
Cheryl & Robert Nelson
Christine Walter
Larry Ramer
Jerry & Debbie Jochims
Patrick Hazell
Tim Hutchins
Carolyn Dorting
Anita Vantiger
Wayne Gerdes
Gwen & Fred Scholer
Gretchen Walls
Kaleb Nicholson
Carol Gerst

Meca Frey
Bradley Bourn
Kathy Geren
Sharon & Mark Vasicek
Kaye Hanna
Joyce Harvey
Kay Weiss
Hope Haven Development Center

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)

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



DES MOINES COUNTY
 HISTORICAL SOCIETY
 501 N 4th Street
 Burlington, IA 52601
 Return Service Requested

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Aftermath of the Flood of 1898

What's inside this issue

From the Executive Director 1
Upcoming Events 2
Notice to Volunteers..... 3
Memorial Brick Garden..... 3
A Gift in Your Will or Living Trust..... 3
Out of the Collection..... 4
Donations & Memberships 5

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: Please contact Heritage Center for private tours.
 Updates will be posted through Facebook, email and our webpage: www.dmchs.org.