

From the Executive Director

by Colton Overton

How fantastic the Viking riverboat season finale was! I am unable to express how grateful our board and I are to the staff and volunteers who so kindly gave their time to ensure that our Viking guests saw Des Moines County history in its fullest form. We are still figuring out how many people visited the Garrett-Phelps House and the Heritage Center. We anticipated fewer riverboats this year due to the American Cruise Line's absence, but we nevertheless made the most of each and every visitor to our historic locations.

Christmas at the Garrett-Phelps House will be a little different this year, in case you haven't heard. Traditionally, we have had a Christmas dinner in the house for the previous 20 years. Since the house requires particular attention, this year's Christmas dinner will be held at the Heritage Center in an effort to launch a new initiative to restore the house to its former splendor. The Heritage Trust's Tour of Homes, Snake Alley Art Fair, and Viking Mississippi River excursions all contribute to an increase in visitors at Garrett-Phelps. For the house to handle the influx of tourists, it must be updated and reexamined. This includes indexing, updating the signage, restaging, reimagining the Garrett-Phelps narrative, and our yearly thorough cleaning of all the home artifacts. All of this is a part of the Des Moines County Historical Society's strategy to raise awareness of Garrett-Phelps' significance in our community. The house also has to be improved in terms of both its structural soundness and appearance.

Owning a Victorian home is never a done project, as many people are aware. The house needs a new furnace, brick tuck pointing, new windows, a new roof, and many

carpentry projects, such as the back porch. Our goal is to have sufficient funding by Winter 2026 to restore the house by the end of its 175th anniversary. Your assistance and support are needed. I'm going to give a ten-minute talk regarding our future during the Christmas dinner at the Heritage Center on December 7th. Dinner will be served at 6 pm, with a cocktail hour from 5:30 to 6:30 pm.

In the Grand Gallery, there will be ten tables with eight people at each. A table can be reserved for \$500, or each chair can be reserved for \$75. We currently have 80 available seats, so book yours now! Three live, silent film presentations with me on the Martin Bruhl piano will be a special program during the meal. Our first film, "Melodrama Rides the Rails," which is around 13 minutes long, chronicles some of the earliest railroad accidents and drama of the Gilded Era of cinema from around 1904–1911. The next is Buster Keaton's exuberant 20-minute comedy, "Convict 13," released in 1920. This movie has amazing stunt work by a slapstick master who, while attempting to break out of a false incarceration, falls in love with a jail warden's daughter. Finally, we will screen a silent cinema classic from 1913 called "Barney Oldfield's Race for a Life." In this comedy, the archetypal villain ties his girl to the tracks, but her true love arrives at the last second to save her!

What an exciting evening! Come get your tickets before they sell out! You can contact us for tickets at (319) 752-7449 or at Coltonn@dmchs.org for more information. Or feel free to come into the Heritage Center and purchase them in person. We hope to see you that night!

Upcoming Events

Sounds of the Past Friday, November 15 10 am to 12 pm

In the Heritage Center's atrium, Colton Overton, Executive Director, will play ragtime pieces on the historic Martin Bruhl piano. In addition, he will do demonstrations of the Edison phonograph on special occasions. Please utilize the main entrance on the east side at the top of the ramp, Fourth Street. Doors open at 9:45 am.

Historic Newspaper Reading Wednesday, November 6, 13, 19, 27 10 - 12 pm

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.

SilverCord Walk-In Tuesday, November 5, 12, 19 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. Note: this does not include Thanksgiving Week.

A Very Heritage Christmas Saturday, December 7 5:30 - 9 pm

Reserve one table for 8 friends and family for \$500 or \$75.00 per chair. Comes with three silent film shows, a home style dinner, an exclusive nighttime look of our new renovations, and more! Contact Heritage Center at (319)752-7449 or Coltonn@dmchs.org to reserve your spot now!

Research & Collections Help Office Hours Fridays, 10 am to 12 pm

Do you need help with Research? Do you need to have an idea that is worth discussing? Come to the Heritage Center and we can assist you!

Executive Director Office Hours Fridays, 1 to 4 pm

Memorial Brick Garden

**We have 235 blank bricks that could have your name!
Engraving starts every 10 bricks!**

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.

Want to Volunteer?

There is still time to volunteer to help make 2025 the best year ever for the Heritage Center, Garrett-Phelps House and Crapo Park Log Cabin.

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
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 Overton
Museum AssistantKay Swanson
Collections AssistantCora Hermann-
Wickham
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

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

Out of the Collection

By Cora Wickham

Object ID: 2024.107

1859 Certificate of Naturalization

A recently accessioned document in the Des Moines County Historical Society's collection is this certificate of naturalization issued at the Court House in Burlington, dated October 11, 1859. Des Moines County Judge Oliver C. Wightman authenticated the record and the pink stamp in the bottom left corner is the Des Moines County seal.

German immigrant 'Martin Ohlschlager' is the subject of the document. After some research, the individual's name has been identified in this document to be misspelled, as there are no records of an Ohlschlager, but rather Oelschlager.

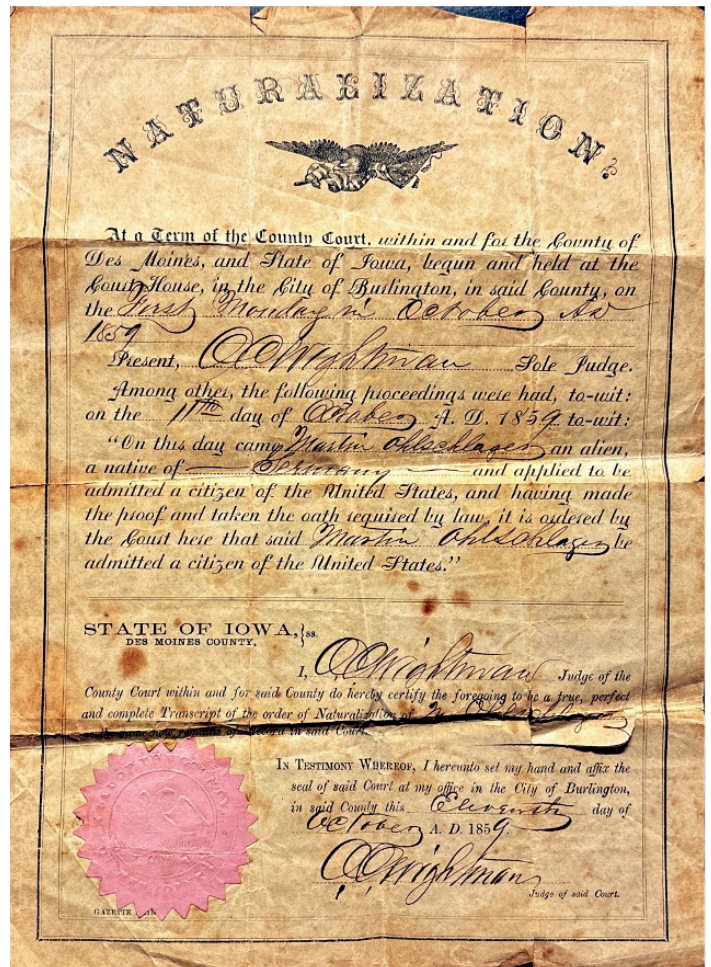
In early American law history, namely during the "Old Law" Period (March 26, 1790 - September 26, 1906), certificates of citizenship were commonly called certificates of naturalization. During this time, any "court of record," in this case, the county court, was allowed to grant United States citizenship. Due to the absence of statutory instruction or administrative oversight, early certificates were not uniformly made, leading these documents to look different depending on where they were issued and often did not include important biographical information. Many times, the only details contained in the document were the applicant's name, the names of witnesses, the country to which they were renouncing allegiance, and the court that was issuing citizenship.

From the certificate:

On this day came Martin Ohlschlager an alien, a native of Germany and applied to be admitted a citizen of the United States, and having made the proof and taken the oath required by law, it is ordered by the Court here that said Martin Ohlschlager be admitted a citizen of the United States.

State of Iowa, Des Moines County

I, O.C. Wightman Judge of the County Court within and for said County do hereby certify the foregoing to be a true, perfect and complete Transcript of the order



of Naturalization of M. Ohlschlager as the same now remains of Record in said Court.

In Testimony Whereof, I hereunto set my hand and affix the seal of said Court at my office in the City of Burlington, in said County this eleventh day of October A.D. 1859.

O. C. Wightman

Donations & Memberships

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

In Memory of
William & Martha Pratt
Jeff Heland

In Honor of Vera Anderson
Pat Mayle

Black Hawk Rock
In Honor of Russ Fry
Kathleen Brower

Donations
Kathy Mundt-Shriver
Sandra Allgood

Memberships
Jan & Donna Logan
John & Donna Carlson
John & Mary Disselhorst
Pat Mayle
Dee Stigge
Robin & Kathy Thomas
Diane Van Duzen
Nancy Halls
Kathy Mundt-Shriver
Suzanne Brueck
Marilyn Demijan
Russ & Mary Smith
Lyn Stinson
Terry Reis & Martha Colgan-Reis
Connie Geiselhart
Doyle Ruble Jr
Jim & Ann Hofmann
Cynthia & Daryl Brown

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

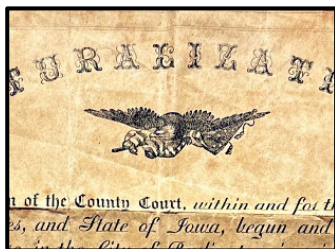
Our Mission: Provide Opportunities for education, research and the preservation of Des Moines County History



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



What's inside this issue



It's Official!

From the Executive Director	1
Upcoming Events	2
Want to Volunteer?	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.