

From the Executive Director

by Colton Overton

We had a great time celebrating our *Very Heritage Christmas party* at the Heritage Center on December 7th! It's been a few years since I've performed silent films and I haven't seen such a passionate audience. People were "awing" at the young woman, "hooraying" for the hero, and "hissing" at the villain. During one of my performances, I happened to glance up at the audience and noticed that a number of people were almost rising out of their seats in excitement as the freight train sped down the tracks toward the young woman who was bound to them. Almost everyone continued to socialize for a few hours following the performance and a round of applause.

Individuals complimented the new improvements' aesthetic appeal and the numerous opportunities for similar engagements as 2025 approaches. We held a silent auction called "Adopt-an-Artifact" during the event, when our staff chose from among the numerous items in the collection that could benefit from your donations. Among the things covered are archival materials, professional clock regulation, and reviving the historic Jewel Water Fountain. We are incredibly grateful to have such a welcoming community that wants to participate in everything we do!

The annual meeting of the Iowa Museum Association is just around the bend in 2025. In addition to the conference's business component, they announce a theme or goal for the upcoming year. As many people remember, the theme for 2024 was "Power of Place," which led to the

numerous grants that are now being utilized for the stack restoration project. One of the best examples of how influential a place can be in a community is the Stack room. I hear a lot of happy stories from our frequent visitors every day. "THRIVE: Building Value in our Communities" will be the topic for 2025. This will assist us to segue into our most recent campaign for the Garrett-Phelps House, which aims to restore, modernize, and reinterpret the house's numerous exhibitions. The "demisemiseptcentennial (pronounced: demi-semi-sept-cen-ten-nial)," or 175th anniversary, of Garrett-Phelps will be celebrated in 2025. Our endeavor will cost \$2 million because of the expense of secured staffing and properly polishing the property back to its original beauty. Consider the possibility of establishing a permanent museum in Des Moines County that would not only document the extensive history of the two families and the hospital, but also serve as a welcoming center for visitors to Snake Alley and a monument to the historic district that was destroyed by Derby's Ditch or the 1966 Highway 34 Project, which resulted in the loss of over 80 residences and businesses. We need your help to begin our next adventure, and don't forget to watch for your letter of annual appeal from us!

You can contact us for any questions or comments at (319) 752-7449 or at Coltonn@dmchs.org for more information. Or feel free to come into the Heritage Center.

Upcoming Events

Sounds of the Past - Drinking Songs Saturday, January 18

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.

Sounds of the Past - Valentine Music Saturday, January 18

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

Wednesdays, January 8, 15, 22, 29

Wednesdays, February 5, 12, 19, 26

10 - 11 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.

New Program

Burlington History Club

Wednesdays, January 8, 15, 22, 29

Wednesdays, February 5, 12, 19, 26

11:30 am to 12:30 pm

Immediately follows the Historic Newspaper Reading. Are you looking for a research idea? Are you just enthusiastic about Des Moines County History and want to share your knowledge with a group? This club is open to all who are interested in anything history related and with a staff member allow in person digs for information within our collections!

SilverCord Walk-In

Tuesday, January 7, 14, 21, 28

Tuesday, February 5, 12, 19, 26

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.

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

Closed Christmas Eve and Christmas Day December 24 and 25, 2024

Closed New Years Holiday

January 1, 2025

Memorial Brick Garden

**We have 235 blank bricks that could have your name!
Hey! 1 - 10 bricks, let's start the trend again!**

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



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dmchs@dmchs.org

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

Out of the Collection

By Cora Hermann-Wickham

Onyx-Face Fireplace Clock

One of the original pieces from the Old Library Building is this onyx-face clock that sits above the Grand Gallery fireplace. This extraordinary piece is embedded in a wood-carved scene commissioned by Philip Crapo, one of the main contributors to Burlington's first Free Public Library.

Dated to the latter half of the 1800s, this onyx clock is a statement piece. During this time, onyx was a popular choice of material in clock cases because it was expensive and looked attractive. French clocks with onyx cases became admired in the United States and American companies began producing similar pieces.

This particular piece, made by E. Howard & Co. of Boston, Massachusetts, is very rare, as this company mainly produced wall clocks out of granite material rather than onyx. The clock and watch company was formed in 1842 and was known for making expensive clocks of very good quality. As a result of this, the E. Howard name is still recognized as a clock of high caliber and clocks with this name are highly collectible. The contrasting bronze clock hands and numbers make this piece very fine and unique as well.

The novelty of this clock is only one of many contributing factors that make Burlington's Free Public Library building a first-class building.



Adopt an Artifact

Unfortunately, the unique onyx and bronze clock requires full servicing which will see it running smoothly again. In order to raise money for this effort, this clock is included in our 'Adopt an Artifact' program. This allows DMCHS supporters to "adopt" various objects from the museum's collection. The revenue generated from this program directly supports the preservation and conservation of items important to the history of Des Moines County. Visit the Heritage Center today to view other items from the

collection that are up for adoption, including a 1930s Film Projector, the Jewell water fountain in the atrium, and many more!

Donations & Memberships

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

In Memory of
William & Martha Pratt
Jeff Heland

Donations
Lillian Rubin
Ann Menke
Annette Kuhlemeier
Bonnie Downes
Richard Howard
Daniel Moehn

Memberships
Hannah Wuethrich
Ann Menke
Dan & Kathy Cahill
Dave Sheridan
Richard Lind
Mary Eipert & Steve Rowland
Ted & Barb Horn
Chris Heyd
Christine Walter
Paula Logan
Bill & Pam Daws
EvaAnn Elmer
Herbert Price
Bernard Perry

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: Please contact Heritage Center for private tours.

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