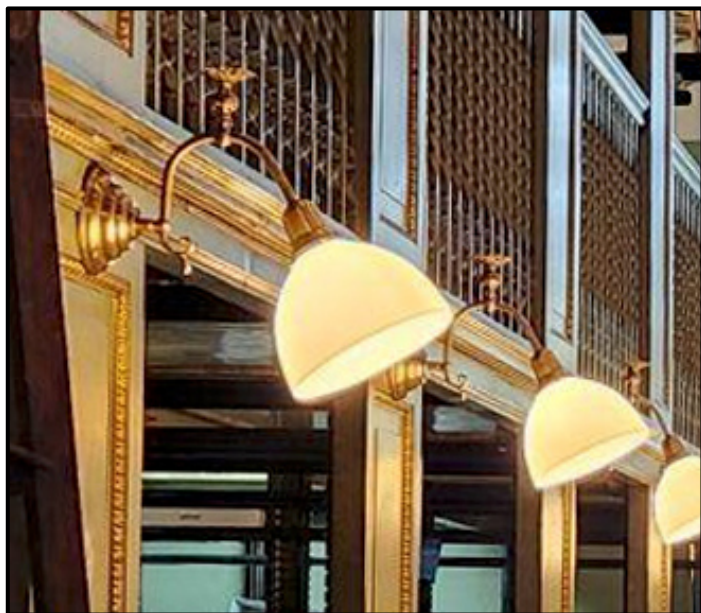


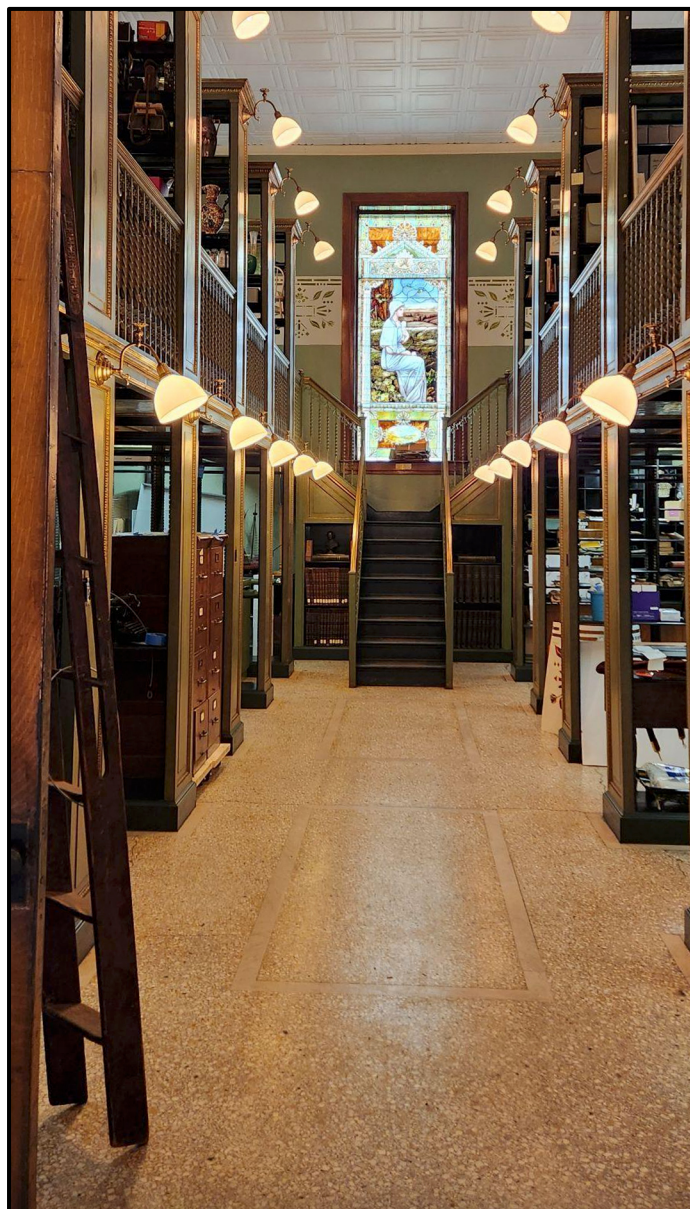
From the Executive Director

by Colton Overton

Finally, May is here, and the “Stacks” room is almost finished! The room is now completely restored to its 1901 state, complete with birdcage lights and replica sconces. What a magnificent sight! Here are some pictures to spark interest about what's behind the vault door. Attend Snake Alley Days on May 30 and 31 to show your support for us as we tackle the Garrett-Phelps Restoration Project.



The exhibit, “My Dear Vinnie,” which tells the tale of Senator James Wilson Grimes (1816–1872) of Burlington and his adopted daughter Lavinia “Vinnie” Noble Grimes Nichols Buck (1844–1931), is also coming to an end. Please see the photos on the following page. Numerous authentic objects, such as manuscripts, oil paintings, pictures, fabrics, furniture, and personal possessions of the



From the Executive Director



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

From the Executive Director

prominent founders’ family, are on display in this exhibit, which is housed in the upstairs rotunda opposite my office. The board and I would like to express our gratitude to Joyce Harvey and her family for their great cooperation on this initiative. The anticipated completion date is May 30, 2025.

Speaking of funds for the restoration of the Garrett-Phelps House, President Donald Trump has suspended funding for all US museums and libraries as part of his extensive budget-cutting measures. The Institute for Museums and Library Services, which distributes funds to the most underserved communities, was particularly impacted. Fortunately, the Des Moines County Historical Society has been funded by a number of kind benefactors to assist with staffing and operating costs. The Garrett-Phelps House repair is quite expensive, though, and we are working hard to avoid taking out another repair loan like we did for the Heritage Center Roof Restoration project. Although not denied, the government awards I requested were put on hold until further notice. Even yet, in order to accomplish our objective, we will need to search for grant financing from private foundations elsewhere. A little over \$2 million will be needed to fix the roof, windows, porches, paint abatement, and other mechanical work. It may seem like a lot of money, but with the right networking groups, most museums our size can complete \$10 million campaigns in 5 years. In 2026, Garrett-Phelps will celebrate its 175th birthday. Are you willing to help us today?

As a reminder, as early as June 30, 2025, the Viking Mississippi River Excursions will be in town, and I want to inform our hardworking volunteers of this. I’ve included the dates and timings below, but please be aware that they could still vary based on river levels. If any Silver Cord students or volunteers would like to help steward our riverboat tourists, please call the Heritage Center at (319) 752-7449 or email Kay Swanson at kswanson@dmchs.org to schedule your availability.

Viking Mississippi River Cruise Dates and Times
(May Change Depending on River-Levels)

Date	Day	Time
6/30/2025	Mon	9 :30– 4:30 pm
7/10/2025	Thu	8 – 5 pm
8/4/2025	Mon	9:30 – 4:30 pm
8/14/2025	Thu	8 – 5 pm
8/18/2025	Mon	9:30 – 4:30 pm
8/28/2025	Thu	8 – 5 pm
9/1/2025	Mon	9:30 – 4:30 pm
9/11/2025	Thu	8 – 5 pm
10/6/202	Mon	9:30 – 4:30 pm
10/16/2025	Thu	8 – 5 pm

As we open the locations for the season, we will also be releasing key access and scheduling for the Garrett-Phelps House and Crapo Park Log Cabin in May. If you are a frequent key holder and would like to pick up your key from me, please get in touch with us so we can arrange a time that works for you!

Upcoming Events

Sounds of the Past - Historic Riverboat Melodies

Saturday, May 17

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 - Female Composers of America

Saturday, June 21

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, May 7, 14, 21, 28

Wednesdays, June 4, 11, 18, 25

10 am to 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.

Burlington History Club

Wednesdays, May 7, 14, 21, 28

Wednesdays, June 4, 11, 18, 25

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, May 6, 13, 20, 27

Tuesday, June 3, 10, 17, 24

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.

Snake Alley Days

"Over the Stacks" and Gift Shop Unveiling

Friday, May 30

4 to 6 pm

Southeastern Iowa Symphony Orchestra, cash bar, heavy hors d'oeuvres. \$75 per person at the door. Note: admission is waived with mailed invitation.

Snake Alley Days

Kickoff

Saturday, May 31

10 am to 4 pm

Regular admission charged to enter the Heritage Center. Live museums, historic interpretations, vendors, activities. Admission go towards Garrett-Phelps House restoration.

Executive Director Office Hours

Fridays, 1 to 4 pm

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.

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

2025-26 Officers

ChairDon Weiss
Vice Chair.....Paula Logan
TreasurerTerri Dowell
SecretaryKara Houston

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 Hermann-Wickham

Object Number: 2012.203

Booklet: "The Iowa Ordnance Plant....A Reader's Tour"

By Mason & Hanger - Silas Mason Co., Inc.

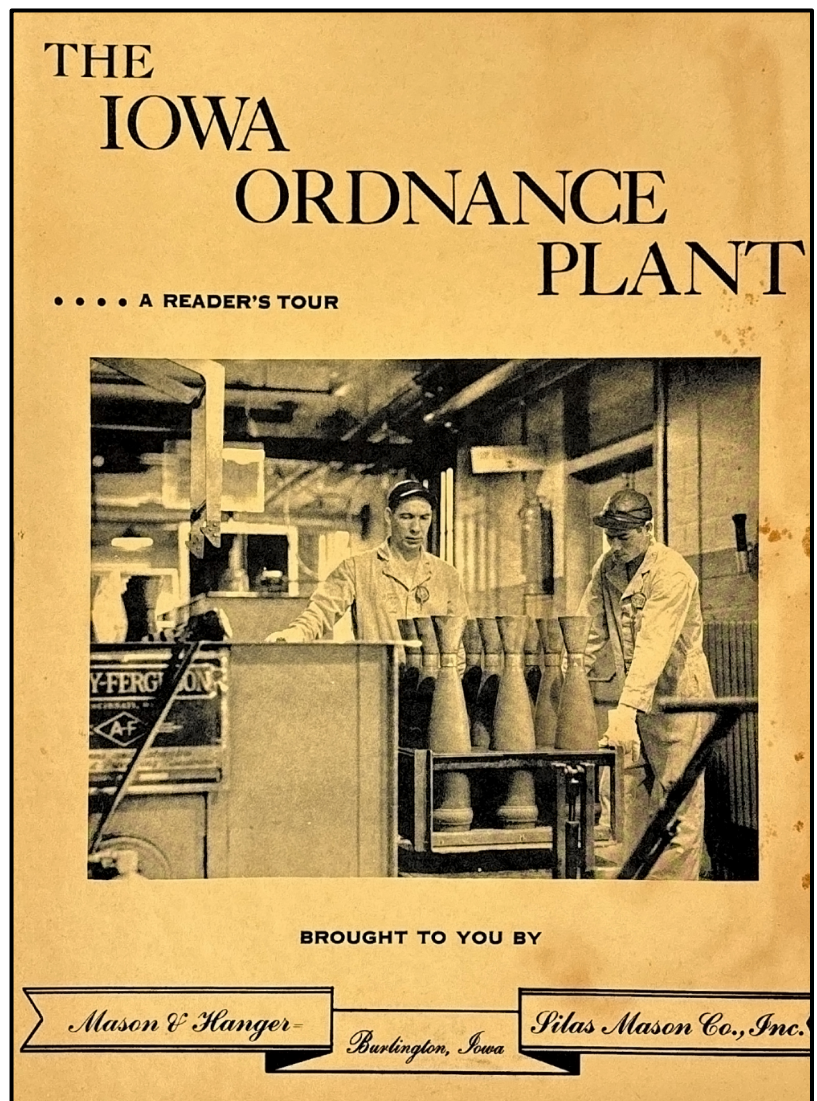
In July 1958, the Mason & Hanger—Silas Mason Co., Inc., the contractor of the Iowa Ordnance Plant, welcomed the Rotary Club of Burlington to tour the facility located in Middletown, Iowa. Rotary Club members were issued this 'Reader's Tour' booklet, which includes 14 pages encompassing the mission, history, employment details, photos, illustrations, and general information regarding the 19,000-acre site which is now known as the Iowa Army Ammunition Plant (IAAAP).

Page one of the booklet explains that the facility "is a 'Class II industrial activity essentially engaged in the loading, assembling, and packaging of high explosive items for the United States Army and the Atomic Energy Commission, under the direction of the Ordnance Ammunition Command.'" The need for a large munitions production and storage facility was due to the United States' involvement in World War II and the location in Middletown, Iowa provided the necessary resources (a large supply of water and access to a major rail line) for success.

Construction of the facility began in January 1940 and production commenced in September 1941. Until 1945, thousands of tons of ammunition were sent to the war fronts, and in Middletown, nearly 10,000 plant employees worked around the clock to exceed production quotas assigned to the facility. After the war, however, the plant was virtually shut down for operations until the outbreak of the Korean War, with the reactivation of production lines and employment numbers climbing to 7,000 in 1952. During this time, the facility was "manufacturing a variety of types of ammunition and component parts," and "set new production records. In one month alone, a quarter-million 4.2 inch mortar rounds were produced here." However, in early 1958, peacetime production schedules required the employment of about 1,700 people.

Subsequently, the booklet describes production operations, ammunition loading lines, the Safety Department, and a plant facility known as the Pilot Plant where company engineers design and develop new and improved ammunition production processes. It states that "many of their developments have been hailed as revolutionary and have been recommended for use in the entire ammunition industry."

Today, the United States Army is responsible for the IAAAP and contract oversight. American Ordnance LLC is the operating contractor at the facility and maintains and manages multiple munitions programs.



Donations & Memberships

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

In Memory of

William & Martha Pratt
Jeff Heland

Mary Krohlow
Barb Bonnett
LaVon Worley

Rudy and Hazel Lindholm
Don Lindholm

Donations

Wayne and Colleen Heibner

Black Hawk Rock
Lois Close

Memberships

Kelsey Clark
Justin Hoyt
Gail Sullivan
Hope Haven Development
Bonnie Downes
Dwight and Sue Mulch
Alan and Cyndy Fabel
Kimberly Kracaw
Kent and Gretchen Lewis
Rosemary Witte
Carolyn Dorting
Don Lindholm
Scott and Joanie Power
Howard Rescot
Jane Tadelksi

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

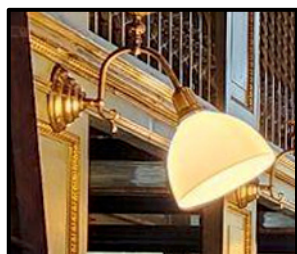
I am making this donation (Select one)

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



What's inside this issue



Let there be Light

From the Executive Director	1
Upcoming Events	4
Want to Volunteer?	5
Memorial Brick Garden.....	5
A Gift in Your Will or Living Trust.....	5
Out of the Collection.....	6
Donations & Memberships	7

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.