



Grinnell Historical Museum

NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2011

The Grinnell Historical Museum, 1125 Broad St., is a 10-room, late-Victorian residence open to the public from 2 to 4 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday (Tuesday through Sunday in the summer). The house contains excellent examples of furniture and decor from the turn of the 20th century, arranged to create a feeling of family life at the time. Admission is always free. To contact the museum, call 236-7827 and leave a message.

MUSEUM BOARD

Frank Heath
Russell Schuchmann
Co-presidents

Michele Parslow
Secretary

Vera Cousins
Treasurer

Doug Cameron, Donald Doe,
Karen Groves, Dorrie Lalonde,
Barb Lease, Betty Moffett, Carol
Nielsen, Catherine Rod, Julie
Young; Howard McDonough (ex
officio)

NEWSLETTER

Contributors: Vera Cousins,
Dorrie Lalonde, Frank Heath,
Michele Parslow
Editor: Mary Schuchmann

INSIDE

Co-president's message 2
Thanks to our donors 3
Endowment fund set up 4
New officers 4

ANNUAL FUND DRIVE

Insert, envelope enclosed

Grinnell in the Civil War

On the 150th anniversary of the start of the war

When the first cannon shots were fired at Fort Sumter on April 12, 1861, igniting the American Civil War, Grinnell was a fledgling settlement on the treeless prairie.

J.B. Grinnell founded the town in 1854. Five years later, he brought Iowa College (now Grinnell College) to Grinnell from Davenport; the first college building was constructed in 1861.

According to census estimates, the population of Grinnell in 1860 was 378. Houses and a handful of businesses were clustered just south of the present downtown area. Farms dotted the rural landscape.

For a town founded on idealism and a strong abolitionist spirit, it should be no surprise that Grinnell responded eagerly to President Lincoln's call on April 15, 1861, for states to muster troops "to maintain the laws, integrity, national union, perpetuity of popular government, and redress wrongs already endured."

The 1880 "History of Poweshiek County" describes the county's response as "a credible one. By compar-

"...it will appear that this county was not one whit behind the others in its practical exhibition of patriotism."

ing the number of inhabitants and the number of volunteers in the county with the same number in other counties of the State, it will appear that this county was not one whit behind the others in its practical exhibition of patriotism," the authors wrote.

One estimate indicates that Poweshiek County was represented in 18 regiments with a total of 563 men — "or 290 more than her quota...a fine record for a county so recently organized with few towns or villages and much prairie."

The outbreak of war occurred just as the county was recovering from the financial crisis of 1857 and had entered "the full tide of prosperity."

"The men who had just passed through the struggle with poverty were just beginning to rejoice in approaching victory, when a literal struggle with a literal enemy, for the time being

(Continued on page 2)

From the Co-President

Every good historical museum, ours included, has been “on the web” long before the emergence of the Internet - a “web” that connects us to our heritage, with strands that lead in all directions.

J. B. Grinnell’s Wooten desk connects solidly to 19th century craftsmanship. A chair survived the Chicago fire and was carried to Grinnell on the wave of Western Expansion.

Upstairs waits a silent practice clavier, a piano with no strings. At the 40th repetition of “Chopsticks,” wouldn’t it be nice to have? That clavier is ringed, guarded perhaps, by Victorian hair wreaths and jewelry, literal strands of hair that some find fascinating, others gruesome. The past is like that sometimes.

Steropticons connect to 3D movies, the windup Victrola to iPods. The laundry room abounds with labor-saving devices that would now be terribly irksome. But that’s how we got where we are.

The museum web can lead to Fred Spaulding’s 19th century bicycle races and to F.W. Porter of the Grinnell brass band of 1859 that later went off to war.

That is one of the problems of a good museum; once you get started.....

Frank Heath
Co-president
Grinnell Historical Museum

(Continued from page 1)

dissipated their fond hopes of peace and plenty,” according to the history.

But volunteers stepped forward almost immediately. Many of the first from Grinnell and Poweshiek County were part of the 10th Infantry. The group assembled in Iowa City on September 6, 1861, departed September 24 for St. Louis to be clothed, armed and equipped, then, less than two weeks later, was sent to Cape Girardeau, Mo., to protect the river town from attack. (No mention was made of training!)

The experience of one Grinnell area family was likely repeated around the county. In the diary of Daniel F. Hayes, transcribed in 1957 by his granddaughter, Lucille Hays Fritz, Daniel recounted:

“There were three boys in my father’s family. Tommy was too young to go to war, so if the Hays family was to heed the president’s ‘call for volunteers’, either my brother Joe or I must go; the other must stay home to help father

Music went along

Brass bands were an important part of the Civil War. The Fourth Iowa Infantry included a regimental brass band that included several musicians from Grinnell. The duties of band members were varied. In addition to providing music, they rendered first aid to the wounded on the battlefield and in the field hospitals.



According to an account by F.W. Porter, one of the Fourth Iowa Infantry band members, *“...if no fighting and everything going smoothly, furnish music on demand at quarters of general officers when near any such, and I assure you we had lots of that kind of work to do...”*

The band disbanded after a year, however, when the government decided to fund a band only for a brigade (4,000 men), not a regiment (1,000 men).

with the farm. I gave Joe the choice. After thinking it over, he said, “If it’s all right with you, I’ll stay home..” So it was that on September 22, 1862, I enlisted in Company F, 4th Iowa cavalry...”

‘But then the war came’

Iowa College - the early name of Grinnell College - felt the effects of the Civil War. During the early years of the school in Davenport, 10 graduates were recorded. There were no graduates from 1858 to 1865.

According to one account of the period: *“In 1861 there was a freshman class of twelve. But then the war came... Soon all but two were in the field. Other young men came, but their minds turned feebly to Latin and Greek, while their thoughts were following those who had enlisted in their country’s cause....The time came when all the men students of military age were bearing arms. They were found in fifteen different military regiments and in some of other states.”*

A large marble tablet on the rear wall inside Herrick Chapel lists the names of 11 college students who died in the war.

Many thanks to our donors in 2010

The Grinnell Historical Museum thanks the individuals and groups who contributed more than \$6,400 to the operation of the museum in the past year.

Arnold and Harriet Adelberg	Karen Groves	Morris and Michele Parslow
Dan and Nancy Agnew	Dennis and Tommy Haas	Doris Pearce
Jon Andelson	Gordon and Jackie Halverson	Don Pederson
Phyllis Armstrong	Elizabeth Hays	Roger and Mitzi Pederson
Roberta Atwell	Frank and Gail Heath	John and Emily Pfitsch
Joan Baker	Art Heiman	Phi Rho Lambda
Sig and Judi Barber	Arnie and Joan Heimsoth	Ed and Karen Phillips
Bob and Miriam Baumann	Brian and Nancy Heineman	A.J. and Dorothy Pinder
Phyllis Bellis	Historical and Literary Club	Richard and Marty Purcell
Rachel Bly	Leta Hollman	Maynard and Eloise Raffety
Peter and Diane Boeke	Clark and Annie Jensen	Rick and Sue Ramsey
Alicemary and Gordon Borthwick	Sally Johnson	Monte and Suzanne Redenius
Sue and Warren Bower	Elsie Johnston	Jim Sanders
Clara Bulens	Jean Jones	Kenneth and Phyllis Saunders
Charlotte Burnell	Dan and Jill Kaiser	John and Pat Saxton
Bob and Nancy Cadmus	Robert and Marjory Kaloupek	Don and Jeananne Schild
Doug and Ginny Cameron	Avis Kelm	Russ and Mary Schuchmann
Mike and Lynn Cavanagh	Bette Kersey	Craig and Emily Schultz
Ken and Phyllis Christiansen	Mrs. Wendell Kinnaird	Doug and Roberta See
Ted and Helen Clausen	Philip Kintner	Mary and Doug Shutts
Gloria Clay	Jewel Kinzinger	Bette Smith
Beryl and Mary Lou Clotfelter	Imogene Knowles	Don Smith
Lloyd and Vera Cousins	Gerald and Dorrie Lalonde	Cliff and Marilyn Strovers
William Crosby	Tom and Dianne Latimer	Tom and Kathy Szary
Jim and Joan Cunningham	Leo and Barb Lease	Russ and Barbara Tabbert
John and Edith Dawson	Russelle Jones Leggett	Lester and Kay Tharp
John. Catherine DeMeulenaere	H.R. and Rhea Light	Jeanette Tisdale
Sue Dimit	Ben and Emily Louden	Tuesday Club
Elizabeth Dobbs	Gordon and Dorothy Louden	Lucille Van Dyke
Sue and George Drake	Mabel Madill	Roger and Val Vetter
Natalie Dunn	Tom and Connie Marshall	John and Joyce Wagner
Donovan Evans	Kent and Katherine McClelland	Bill and Joy Weeks
Sandy Falck	Howard and Sue McDonough	Robert Wemer
Dan Ferro and Marci Sortor	Phyllis Meredith	Peter Wilch
Ed and Eula Fields	Orlan and Verlene Mitchell	Victor and Diane Wilson
Don and Val Gall	Betty and Sandy Moffett	Bill and Jean Wissmiller
Hugh and Janet German	Carol Molison	Bonnie and Gordon Wold
Everett and Verna Gerrish	Jack and Jan Mutti	Netia Worley
Susanne Graham	Carol Nielson	Larry and Jo Wray
Stan and Gail Greenwald	Russell and Paula Osgood	
Grinnell College	Phil and Dorothy Palmer	

Endowment started

A Grinnell Historical Museum Endowment Fund was established in July 2010 to provide long-term support for the museum's operations. The fund, started with a \$10,000 donation, is part of the Greater Poweshiek Community Foundation. You can add to the endowment fund through the community foundation, P.O. Box 344, Grinnell, IA 50112. To learn more, contact the foundation at 641-236-5518 or visit the website, www.greaterpcf.org.

New officers

Frank Heath and Russ Schuchmann were elected co-presidents of the museum at the annual meeting in March, succeeding Howard McDonough. Donald Doe was named to the museum board.

In tribute

Lois Meacham, a longtime volunteer at the Grinnell Historical Museum, died February 6, 2011. For many years, she and Betty Ernst coordinated the exhibits and activities at the museum.

Grave marker now in place

Thanks to the efforts of the museum and Smith Funeral Home, the grave of Mumpford Holland, one of two former slaves known to be buried at Hazelwood Cemetery, is marked now with a permanent gravestone. Little was known about Holland until museum board members Julie Young, Carol Nielsen and Barb Lease researched his life. They discovered that Holland was born in Kentucky, served in the Civil War, and came to Grinnell in 1871 to work as a hotel porter. When he died in 1916 (at the estimated age of 108), he was buried at Hazelwood but with a temporary funeral home marker that disappeared long ago.

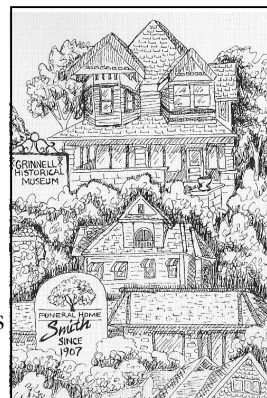
Montage will be gift this year to donors

A keepsake montage of Grinnell's heritage is offered this year to anyone who donates \$15 or more to the Grinnell Historical Museum.

The montage, which measures 18 inches by 25 inches, is a composite of intricate drawings of some current businesses as well as historic buildings and historical figures. Created by Community Creations Inc., it is printed on quality linen paper and suitable for framing. The artist is Billie Zell-Breier.

The Grinnell Historical Museum is featured at the top of the print.

Donors of \$15 or more in



Images of Grinnell past and present are assembled in a montage offered this year to museum donors of \$15 or more. At left is a section of the montage that shows the museum.

2011 will be invited to pick up a montage at the museum during open hours—2 to 4 on Saturdays and Sundays in spring, fall and winter and 2 to 4 every day except Monday in summer. Montages can be delivered to anyone in Grinnell who is unable to get to the museum.



Grinnell Historical Museum
1125 Broad Street
Grinnell, Iowa 50112
SPRING 2011

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED