

~ I O W A ~

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Youngers' History Preserved



Cover of employee newsletter: "Youngers Good Morning: Employees News of the Week," July 27, 1942 (re: WWII war bond and stamp drive)

GRAND REUNION CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

In June 1903 more than six thousand people assembled in the picturesque village of Clermont in northeastern Iowa. They gathered there for the Reunion of the 12th Iowa Veteran Volunteer Infantry and the dedication of the Lincoln monument and the David B. Henderson statue. Former Governor William Larrabee also hosted a luncheon for the assembled veterans at his home, Montauk, on a hill overlooking the town.



A centennial celebration of that first Grand Reunion will be held this summer at Montauk, one of the State Historical Society's historic sites. On June 20 – 22, the site will host an encampment of Civil War re-enactors, and the community will offer a variety of activities, including skits, impersonations, musical programs, speeches, food, and fun. There will be a parade and a

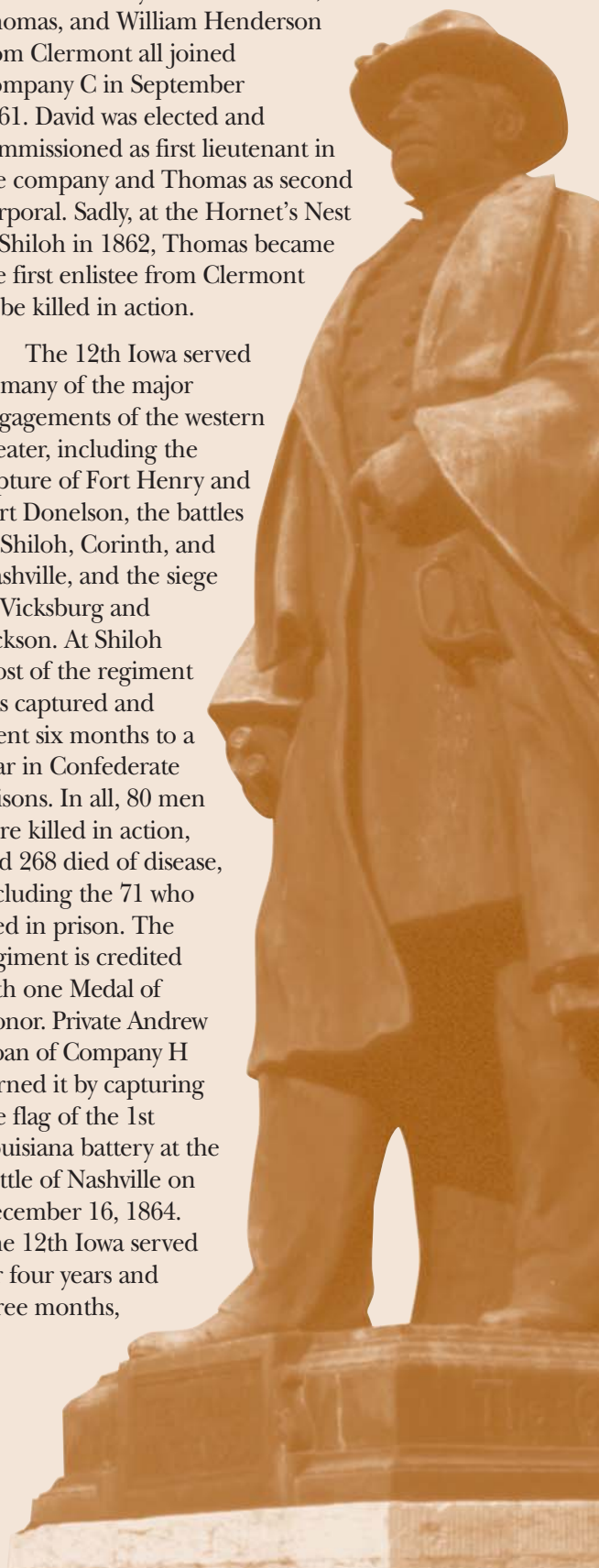
rededication of the David B. Henderson statue and the Lincoln monument. The two-day event will conclude as Union and Confederate re-enactors skirmish on the grounds of Montauk and the bordering Heritage Farm Park.

Re-enactors from the 3rd Iowa Light Artillery, 24th Iowa Volunteer Infantry, 32nd Iowa, 4th Iowa, 16th U.S. Medical, 25th Wisconsin, and Scott's Tennessee have already volunteered to make this event memorable. Visitors will enjoy musical entertainment by the Marengo Iowa Civil War Band, the Old Man River Band, Grant County Brass Band, and the Valley Community Adult Band. Former Montauk guides have been invited back to Clermont for the event; they will offer special tours of Montauk. Special programs are also planned to interpret the statues of General Grenville Dodge, General Ulysses Grant, and Admiral David Farragut on the Montauk grounds.

The 12th Iowa Infantry that gathered for the reunion in 1903 shared a special bond with the town of Clermont. Company C of the 12th Iowa was largely recruited from Fayette County, including 22 students from Upper Iowa University – most of

the student body. Brothers David, Thomas, and William Henderson from Clermont all joined Company C in September 1861. David was elected and commissioned as first lieutenant in the company and Thomas as second corporal. Sadly, at the Hornet's Nest at Shiloh in 1862, Thomas became the first enlistee from Clermont to be killed in action.

The 12th Iowa served in many of the major engagements of the western theater, including the capture of Fort Henry and Fort Donelson, the battles of Shiloh, Corinth, and Nashville, and the siege of Vicksburg and Jackson. At Shiloh most of the regiment was captured and spent six months to a year in Confederate prisons. In all, 80 men were killed in action, and 268 died of disease, including the 71 who died in prison. The regiment is credited with one Medal of Honor. Private Andrew Sloan of Company H earned it by capturing the flag of the 1st Louisiana battery at the Battle of Nashville on December 16, 1864. The 12th Iowa served for four years and three months,



REUNION AT MONTAUK

spent 113 days under fire, and traveled more than 13,000 miles by land and water.

David Henderson served with the 12th Iowa at Shiloh, Fort Donelson, and Corinth. His foot was amputated after he was wounded at Corinth, and he was discharged in 1863. In June 1864 he re-enlisted as colonel of the 46th Iowa Infantry and served until the close of the war. After the war he became an attorney. In 1883 he was elected to Congress and served until 1902. He was Speaker of the House of Representatives from 1899 through 1902, the only Iowan ever to hold that position. The town of Clermont and the veterans of the 12th Iowa honored Henderson's public service by commissioning a statue of him by the famous Scottish sculptor J. Massey Rhind and placing it on Clermont's main street.

The reunion may not be celebrated again for another century, so don't miss your chance to be a part of history this June. For a complete schedule of events, contact Steve Story, activities and information chair for the Grand Reunion, by phone at 563-427-5354 or by e-mail at dstory@netins.net. Or visit the Clermont web site: www.clermontia.org.

BATTLE FLAGS AND HISTORY DAY GET A BOOST

Senator Tom Harkin recently announced a list of Iowa projects that would receive assistance from the federal budget for 2003. They included the Battle Flag Preservation Project, which will receive \$75,000 to further the work of preserving the flags from the State Capitol. And National History Day will receive \$100,000 to support a year-long program to improve the teaching and learning of history in Iowa schools. State Historical Society staff in the History Day in Iowa program will work with previously underserved schools in the Des Moines district, focusing on teacher development and service.



UNDERGROUND RAILROAD STUDY IS UNDER WAY

A historic home in Cass County in western Iowa is being nominated as a National Historic Landmark thanks to the work of a State Historical Society of Iowa consultant and funding from the National Park Service.

The George B. Hitchcock home near Lewis became well known before the Civil War as a refuge for fugitive slaves escaping the South. Hitchcock, a Congregational minister of strong antislavery convictions, built his stone house about 1856, a time when western Iowa served as a passage to the North for escaping slaves.

Thanks to a new program from the National Park Service (NPS), the Hitchcock House will soon be nominated as a National Historic Landmark for its association with these events. John Zeller, a consultant hired by the State Historical Society, with funding from the NPS, is completing research to document the property and its significance in Underground Railroad history. The nomination will be submitted to the National Historic Landmarks program in Washington, D.C. The Hitchcock House, managed by the Cass County Conservation Board, is open for public tours 1 – 5 p.m., Tuesday – Sunday, May – September. Call 712-769-2323 or see www.hitchcockhouse.org

The NPS's Underground Railroad Network to Freedom program seeks to recognize other historic sites that have a verifiable association with Underground Railroad history, or facilities and programs that convey that history through commemorative or interpretive efforts. With that goal in mind, James Hill, the program's Midwest Regional Coordinator, joined John Zeller of the State Historical Society to tour three sites in southeastern Iowa with suggested Underground Railroad connections: the Armstrong property in Cincinnati, the Pearson house in Keosauqua, and the Lewellen house in Salem.

With the aid of the NPS, the State Historical Society will conduct research and field work over four years to designate Underground Railroad sites and to raise public awareness through such activities as tours, signs, and a traveling exhibit.

*State Historical
Society staff
toured three
sites in south-
eastern Iowa
with suggested
Underground
Railroad
connections:
the Armstrong
property in
Cincinnati, the
Pearson house
in Keosauqua,
and the
Lewellen house
in Salem.*

MUMMIFIED GIANTS “FOUND” IN KOSSUTH COUNTY

Iowa has a long tradition of historical hoaxes. One of the most infamous was the Cardiff Giant. “Discovered” by a New York farmer in 1869, the giant was actually a hoax carved from a block of Iowa gypsum and buried on the New York farm.

Iowa now has a new giant tale. Last fall, State Historical Society archeologist Dan Higginbottom opened an e-mail asking what he knew about the recently discovered Kossuth Giants. Dan, who has dealt with archeology in Iowa and the Midwest for 20 years, knew nothing of mummified giant remains being found in Kossuth County.

It turns out that two separate web sites (www.stevequayle.com/Giants/index2.html, which copies from what was clearly intended as a parody at yawp.com/3rd-i) carry a story that seems like something from the X-Files but with just enough balderdash to remind one of P. T. Barnum. Reflecting a subtle sense of humor and knowledge of Iowa history, the story goes like this: A Kossuth Center farmer who sports the name of 1950s rockabilly/country western singer Marvin Rainwater found the giants. Marvin knew that he needed the help of archeologists from Georg Von Podebrad College located in Zoar. The archeologists uncovered robes made from the same long red hair found on the mummified giants reportedly being stored at the Kossuth County Chapter of the State Historical Society.

The truth is that both Kossuth Center and Zoar are abandoned towns, and no college bears the name of Georg Von Podebrad, a fifteenth-century Bohemian king. Nor is there a Kossuth County Chapter of the State Historical Society. That didn't

stop an Ohio student from calling the State Historical Society to find out more about some robes in museum storage made of long red hair!

The internet opens up a new world of possibility for instigators of hoaxes. Staff at the State Historical Society stand willing to help web browsers separate fact from fiction.



The internet opens up a new world of possibility for instigators of hoaxes.



IOWA'S CHANGING IMAGE AND THE 1929 STOCK MARKET CRASH IN *IOWA HERITAGE ILLUSTRATED*

A variety of topics and time periods — from the mid-nineteenth century to World War II — fills the next *Iowa Heritage Illustrated*. The changing image of Iowa over several decades is explored in an article by historian Elizabeth Raymond. “Iowa’s prairies were not always America’s bountiful heartland,” Raymond writes. “Indeed, early settlers found them a challenge to clear, farm, and fence. Creation of Iowa’s modern image took time.”

In another article, historian Lisa Ossian describes how news of the stock market crash of October 1929 reverberated in Iowa. News coverage, political cartoons, and editorials expressed a range of responses.

A shorter article introduces the State Historical Society’s newest book, a history of African Americans in Iowa. The gripping story of how Albert Hirsch fled Nazi Germany wraps up the issue. Hirsch immigrated to Iowa, where he became a respected and popular professor at Buena Vista College.

Iowa Heritage Illustrated and *The Annals of Iowa* are each published quarterly by the State Historical Society of Iowa. To order a single copy of either publication, or to subscribe, call Deb Pedersen at 319-335-3916.

IOWA'S IMAGE IN FILM AND TEACHERS OF FREED SLAVES IN *THE ANNALS OF IOWA*

After the Civil War more than 100 Iowans went south to teach freed slaves. In the upcoming issue of the *Annals of Iowa* historian Ronald Butchart identifies those teachers and compares them to teachers from other states.

Also in this issue film scholars Marty Knepper and John Shelton Lawrence identify about 200 feature-length films with Iowa settings or significant Iowa references.

ASK AN EXPERT: *Online Genealogical Research*

Experienced genealogical researchers know that many of the research materials they need for their research — records, newspapers, photographs, and manuscripts — are available only at libraries and historical societies and will be available only in microfilm or paper format for the foreseeable future. Nonetheless, more and more resources are becoming available over the internet.

In that vast virtual universe (over two billion separate web sites and counting) there are a number of sites that are helpful to genealogical researchers. How do you find them, and where do you start?

SHSI librarian Shari Stelling recommends the following free sites as useful ones to explore as you pursue your family history research on line.

Cyndi's List of Genealogy Sites www.cyndislist.com

Cyndi's List is an index (or catalog) to genealogical resources on the internet. Produced by Cyndi Howell (yes, Cyndi is a real person, although judging by her web site she never sleeps), Cyndi's List contains more than 150 categories and almost 175,000 links, making it the most comprehensive genealogical portal to all things related to family history on the internet.

The USGenWebProject www.usgenweb.org

This is the gateway to sites for each of the states and all 3,125 counties in the United States. The Iowa site (IAGenWeb at www.iagenweb.org) provides links to Iowa's 99 counties. The amount of information varies from county to county since the sites are maintained by volunteers in each area. Still, the site

contains a cornucopia of useful information, including farm directories, GAR post records, census transcriptions, cemetery lists, maps, county histories, vital records, Bible records, photographs, and postcard images.

FamilySearch www.familysearch.org

This site, produced by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, contains easy access to the Social Security Death Index and the 1880 U.S. Census and 1881 Canadian Census. Also useful is its "How to Start Your Family History" research guide and guides on how to organize your family history research. A multitude of "Reference Documents" include background information on states and countries as well as documents such as "How Canadian National Censuses Are Organized" and "Genealogical Word Lists" for foreign languages. "Research Outlines" offer guidance on how to approach research in specific states, countries, and regions.

RootsWeb www.rootsweb.com

RootsWeb touts itself as the oldest and largest free genealogical web site. It contains millions of names and genealogies. It's also another place to access the Social Security Death Index. Note its useful "Guide to Tracing Family Trees" tutorial.

If you would like information about other genealogy web sites, or have questions, contact Shari Stelling at 515-281-5070 or Shari.Stelling@dca.state.ia.us.

*In the vast
online universe
there are a
number of sites
that are helpful
to genealogical
researchers.
How do you
find them,
and where
do you start?*

HAL HOLBROOK JOINS DES MOINES CHORAL SOCIETY IN A WORLD PREMIERE TO MARK CIVIL WAR

In a living example of an arts organization stretching to enliven the cultural scene in Iowa, the Des Moines Choral Society will launch a world premiere concert on May 10 that pays homage to Iowa's role in the Civil War. The concert, supported by the Department of Cultural Affairs, will also celebrate the State Historical Society's Battle Flag Preservation Project.

"Battle Cry of Freedom: Iowa in the Civil War," will be presented Saturday, May 10, at 7:30 p.m.

at the Civic Center of Greater Des Moines. The performance will weave together material drawn from Civil War soldiers' diaries with choral music arranged especially for this moving experience. Emmy Award-winning actor Hal Holbrook will narrate the concert, using a script written for his voice by Iowa playwright Cynthia Mercati.

Tickets are available through the Civic Center box office or Ticketmaster (515-243-1888 or online at www.ticketmaster.com). A reception will precede the concert at the State Historical Building. For more information, call 515-246-2300.





IT'S ABOUT TIME! *Calendar of Events*

**These events are at the State Historical Building, 600 E. Locust, Des Moines. Unless otherwise noted, all events are free and open to the public. For more information, call 515-281-4011.*

Curator's Corner*

Exhibit Opening April 21

On display will be fossils, Southwestern pottery, beads and other materials collected from the estate of Mary Musgrove, wife of Jack Musgrove, a long-time director of the former Historical Department who died in 1981. Together, Mary and her husband carved prize-winning duck decoys and built the foundation of the State Historical Society's museum collections. Mary Musgrove died in October 2002.

History Day Time!*

Junior History Day, Monday, April 28

Senior History Day, Monday, May 5

Across the U.S., nearly 700,000 students participate in National History Day each year. NHD requires rigorous research, analysis, and creative presentation of historical conclusions. NHD in Iowa is sponsored by the State Historical Society of Iowa with major funding from the State Historical Society, Inc., and the American Legion of Iowa Foundation.

Jam 'n' Bread

Thursdays 2 – 4:30 p.m.

Western Historic Trails Center

3434 Richard Downing Ave., Council Bluffs

Sample homebaked bread and enjoy the sounds of local musicians as they "jam" the afternoon away.

Spring & Summer Events at Montauk

April 27: Organ recital, 2:30 p.m., Union Sunday School, Clermont

May 24: Mauntauk opens to the public. Noon – 4 p.m. daily

May 24: Grand opening of Clermont Museum, noon – 4 p.m. New exhibits and updates made during the winter will be on display.

June 20–22: Grand Reunion Centennial 2003

June 29: Organ recital, 2:30 p.m., Union Sunday School

For more information on events at Montauk, call 563-423-7173 or e-mail, montauk@acegroup.cc.

Blues Before Sunset*

Begins June 6, 5–7 p.m. Kick off the summer with hot blues music on Friday nights through June and July. A different local blues band performs each week.

National Register of Historic Places Workshop

June 27, 9 a.m.–1 p.m.

Kerndt Bros. Savings Bank Community Center
395 Main Street, Lansing

The workshop will help participants understand what it means to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places, guide them in researching a historic property, explain the procedures for nominating a property to the National Register, and explain each question on the nomination form. Registration costs \$30 and must be made by June 16. Call 515-281-4137 for information.

White Catfish Encampment Living History Weekend

July 25–27

Western Historic Trails Center

3434 Richard Downing Avenue, Council Bluffs

Weekend commemorates the Lewis & Clark rest and repair stop the explorers used in the Council Bluffs area. Music, art, speakers, Indian dancing, Lewis & Clark re-enactors, and a replica pirogue.

Members enjoy great publications, Museum Store discounts, special events and more!

Yes! I'm interested in membership in the State Historical Society of Iowa.



Complete the form below and mail with your payment to: Membership Program, 600 E. Locust, Des Moines, IA 50319

- Individual \$40
- Heritage \$100
- Family add \$20
- Advocate \$250
- Conservator \$500
- Patron \$1,000
- Benefactor \$5,000
- Supporter \$10,000

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Payment: Check enclosed

Credit Card: Visa MCard

Card #: _____

Exp. Date: _____

Signature: _____

YOUNKERS' HISTORY PRESERVED

This winter, a chapter of Iowa history quietly ended when Younkers closed its Des Moines headquarters. As Younkers Human Resources Vice President Mark Barkley emptied desks and files and cleaned out corporate offices, he found more than the remnants of his own years of work. He found irreplaceable pictures and papers of a company born and raised in Iowa, a company that became part of the everyday life of Iowans.

Younkers Department Store was born in Keokuk in 1856, when the state was just ten years old. In 1874, the business found its way to Des Moines, a burgeoning city of 16,000 people, and eventually into communities across the state.

From proms to weddings, soup to nuts, shopping at Younkers became part of the fabric of Iowa life. It was

the State Historical Society and asked for help.

Subsequently, the Society accepted a pallet of documents and photographs that tell the story of Younkers. They will be painstakingly examined, preserved, cataloged, and made ready for historians to research and the public to enjoy.

Why are they worth saving? Why does the state have a responsibility to preserve them? Because the history worth saving belongs

Group at dedication of new electric escalator in Younkers department store in Des Moines, the first of its kind in Iowa, October 20, 1939.



particularly proud of its contribution to the war effort during World War II. After the attack on Pearl Harbor, the company dedicated Liberty Hall, where what it touted as the largest map in Iowa kept shoppers up to date on the latest war developments. It sold war bonds and published a handy booklet on Des Moines for the 10,000 WACs stationed at Ft. Des Moines.

Staff at work in Younkers tailoring department, ca. 1940.



Training session for Younkers sales staff, 1943.

not just to the great and famous. Iowa's history is written in the way we live and work. And for anyone who has ever shopped at Younkers, what Barkley found is not just a company's story. It is our story.



EDITORIAL

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of Cultural

Affairs

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DES MOINES, IA



To help Iowans
comprehend who
they are and what
they can become,
the State Historical
Society of Iowa
serves as a trustee
of Iowa's historical
legacy and an
advocate for
understanding
Iowa's past.

HISTORIC SITES OPEN FOR THE SEASON

Take a
look at
what Iowa
has to
offer!

Make plans to visit SHSI's historic sites this summer. Ancient American Indian mounds, the former home of Iowa's first territorial governor, the backdrop of a world-famous painting, and other great sites are all within a day's drive from any point in Iowa. Most sites are scheduled to open Memorial Day weekend. All are free of charge. Take a look at what Iowa has to offer!

Abbie Gardner Cabin in Arnolds Park

Marks the site of an 1857 Indian uprising. Open noon – 4 p.m., Monday – Friday, 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. on weekends, Memorial Day weekend through September. For more information, call 712-332-7248.

American Gothic House in Eldon

Used as the backdrop for one of the world's most recognized images, the Grant Wood painting *American Gothic*. Not open to the public, but visitors are welcome to view the home from the outside. For more information, call 515-281-5111.

Montauk Governor's Home in Clermont

Home of Iowa's 12th governor, William Larrabee, and his wife, Anna Larrabee. Open noon – 4 p.m. daily,

Memorial Day weekend through October 31. Tours for school groups can be arranged by calling 563-423-7173.

Plum Grove in Iowa City

Home of Iowa's first territorial governor, Robert Lucas, and his wife, Friendly Lucas. Open 1 p.m. – 5 p.m., Wednesday – Sunday, Memorial Day weekend through October 31. For more information, call 319-351-5738.

Toolesboro Mounds in Toolesboro

Hopewellian mounds that are remnants of a native culture that flourished from around 200 B.C.E. to 300 C.E. The education center is open noon – 4 p.m. daily from the third weekend in May through Labor Day, and noon – 4 p.m. weekends from Labor Day through October 31. For more information, call 319-523-8381.

Western Historic Trails Center in Council Bluffs

Houses exhibits and programs on the history of the four major western trails. Open 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. daily except New Year's Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas Day. For more information, call 712-325-4900.