

The Museum Times

A publication of the Stephenson County Historical Society

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Saturday, October 1, 2015
5PM-9PM at the Museum

“Spirits and Stories; The Ghosts of the Taylor Mansion”

LOCAL HISTORY SERIES
7PM Freeport Public Library
Free Admission

Thursday, September 24
“The Bakwin Textiles”

Freeport Art Museum Director Jessica Modica will present a selection of rare textiles from the E.M. Bakwin collection and talk about how they were acquired and who helped bring this important collection to Freeport.

Tuesday, September 29
“Identification & Preservation of Historic Photographs”

Sharon Welton, Director of the Stephenson Co Historical Museum, explores historic photography and how understanding the subject can help in identifying and preserving family photographs.

Monday, October 5
“Toys from the Pretzel City 1885-1973”

Harvey Wilhelms will talk on the history of Freeport’s toy producing companies, including Arcade, Structo and other less-known.

Fri-Sat, November 20-21
Consignment Arts and Crafts Sale at the Museum-
Watch for more information coming soon!

SPIRITS AND STORIES: THE GHOSTS OF THE TAYLOR MANSION

On Saturday, October 3rd, from 5-9PM the Historical Society will be hosting this new fall event!

Join us for an evening of scary fun. Enjoy food, scary campfire stories, and **ghost-hunting tours** of the Taylor Mansion conducted by a local paranormal group. You will be able to see our historic Henney hearse up close, and visits from the headless horseman are also anticipated!

20 minute ghost-hunting tours of the Taylor Mansion leave every half-hour. Your ticket will indicate the time your tour is scheduled, so you won’t have to wait in line for your turn. **Ghost-hunting tours are only open for those ages 12 and up.** All ages are invited to come and enjoy the many other activities that will be offered.

Ticket prices:

Age 12 and up with ghost tour included- \$10.00
 Under 12, or any age without ghost tour- \$5.00

Food will be available at an additional cost. BBQ, walking tacos, hot dogs, chips, and more will be available.

Tickets are available in advance by calling the museum office- 815-232-8419, or stopping by Wednesday-Sunday Noon-4PM. Let us know if you would like to volunteer to help at the event!

AUTUMN UPDATE

As autumn approaches, come and see how the leaves are changing in the Taylor Gardens! It is a beautiful time of year to stroll the grounds.

We will be switching out some of the décor in the Taylor house to exemplify how people in the Victorian era decorated as the seasons changed. Fall and winter clothing will also be on display to welcome the colder weather.

We are also planning to re-vamp the Jane Addams exhibit, expanding and altering the current exhibit to include unique items from Jane’s life. This project is set to be completed at the end of the year.

We have also been updating the Arcade Toy Museum. New pieces have come in, and we have done some repainting and rearranging to make our exhibits more interesting.

Don’t forget-we are still looking for donations of Arcade Toys, Banks, Coffee Grinders, and anything else made by Arcade. Let us know if you can help!

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- Dale Bryant, Docent

The Stephenson County Museum's buildings and grounds are owned and maintained by Freeport Park District, while the Historical Society is responsible for day-to-day operations. The Historical Society is grateful for the Park District's support. The Historical Society is financially responsible for the Museum's operation, some of the staff payroll, exhibits, educational programs, special events and collections preservation. We receive income for our expenses through membership fees, donations, Gift Shop sales, admission fees and special events and fund raisers. Thank you for your support!

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Museum Hours

Wednesday to Sunday: Noon to 4 PM
Closed Mondays, Tuesdays & Holidays

Admission Fees

- Members — Free
- Non-Member Adults — \$8.00
- Non-Member Children — \$4.00

Phone: 815-232-8419
www.stephcoh.org
"Like" us on Facebook

WELCOME TO OUR NEW EMPLOYEES

This summer, we said goodbye to our docent, Brigitte Rayhorn. Brigitte has moved on to further her career with a position at Highland College. We wish her well and will miss her!

Since then, we have hired two new employees at the museum- Tiffany Arnold and Dale Bryant. Tiffany recently graduated from NIU with a Master's Degree in Anthropology and a Certificate in Museum Studies. She is working three days a week at the museum, giving tours, cataloging collections, and helping to plan and set up new museum exhibits.

Dale is working three afternoons a week, but can also be found here other times, working away as a volunteer. When he's not giving a tour, he's taking care of the Taylor Home, decorating and keeping things tidy. He is also involved in planning and setting up new exhibits.

THANKS TO ALL WHO HELPED AT THIS YEAR'S ICE CREAM SOCIAL

This year's Ice Cream Social was a big success. The weather cooperated, and it turned out to be a lovely evening this year.

The Social is one of our biggest events, and it requires a huge amount of help. We want to thank EVERYONE who volunteered to help this year. The list is too long to recognize everyone by name, but our gratitude to you all is great! It is because of volunteers like this and we can continue to host these fun events.

Thanks also to everyone who donated pies and desserts, or gave money to help us purchase them. Everything was delicious, as usual!

MUSEUM HOLIDAY ARTS AND CRAFT SALE SCHEDULED

Another new event is coming this fall. The museum is planning to host a consignment Arts and Crafts sale in the Taylor Mansion on November 20-21, 2015. The sale will feature high quality, handmade items. It should be a lot of fun to browse for lovely handmade items while enjoying the ambiance of the mansion. A portion of your purchases will also help support the museum. The final plan is not yet complete but will be posted on our website as soon as possible.

FINAL PLEA FOR MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Our annual membership drive began back in April, and we still have many members who have not renewed their membership. We have enclosed a new membership form in this letter. We ask you to please consider supporting the museum by renewing your membership, which helps fund the operation of the museum, preservation of important historical artifacts, development of new exhibits and programs, and much more.

Thanks to all everyone who has already renewed this year!

The Art and Ritual of the Victorian Calling Card

By Tiffany Arnold



Early Hand-Drawn Card Card

In our modern era of technology, it's easy to forget how people communicated before the advent of the telephone. These days we can easily call, text, or email our friends and relatives to tell them that we would like to get together. Back in the Victorian era (1837-1901), little pieces of decorated paper, known as calling cards, were used to establish friendships and social status alike.

This custom of exchanging calling cards was establishing in France around the early 1800s. This etiquette spread quickly to England and later to America. Calling cards were essential for introductions, invitations, visits, and gaining entry into elite social circles.

Early calling cards were created one at a time by a trained penman, who artistically wrote the card owner's name in calligraphy and might even add fanciful decoration. As the era progressed, so did the elaborateness of the calling cards. They became even more beautiful with the invention of chromolithography. Along with the calligraphy of the person's name, images of hearts, birds, flowers, and hands (clasping or alone) were dominant themes during this time. Some cards were more intricate than other. 'Hidden name' cards had extra pieces attached that opened to reveal the sender's name.



Fancy Chromolithographed Card with "Hidden" Name



Left Corner Turned Indicated that it was Delivered by the Owner

The design, style, and border color each signified something to the receiver of the card. For example, a black border around a card meant the sender was in mourning. Folding the corners of the card held a meaning as well. If the card was folded at the top left corner, it meant that the person had left the card themselves, rather than handing it off to a servant. If the bottom left corner was folded, it meant farewell. Folding of the top right corner meant congratulations, while folding the bottom right meant condolence.

Rules of calling cards were extensive, but essentially these cards were given to the lady of the house and she decided whether she would receive the 'caller' or not. If the lady of the house was 'not at home', this was a rejection of the visitor. A reciprocal card was given to the visitor if the 'call' was successful, but if not delivered formally it meant that there was no desire to further the acquaintance. Unmarried women gave their cards to their husbands to deliver for them, but married women were able to deliver their cards themselves as well as their husband's cards. Cards from visitors were left on a silver tray in the entry hall with the more notable names displayed on the top of the pile.



This Unusual Card features a Tiny Albumen Photograph of the Owner



This Card Features a Masculine Design. The Lion Image is Unusual

Rules for returning formal calls were just as extensive. An overriding rule was that calls should only be made on 'at home days'. Times were allocated for each type of call, with 'morning calls' being made in the afternoon, 'ceremonial calls' between three and four o'clock, 'semi-ceremonial' calls between four and five, and intimate calls between five and six. Calls were never made on Sunday, as this day was specifically for close family and friends. If a visit was in progress when another visitor showed up, the current visitor would often leave soon after. Etiquette required that a card should be returned with a card, within a week's time, or at the most ten days.



This Card features a Tiny Envelope that Reveals the Owner's Names



This Card Highlights the Owners Affiliation with the International Order of Oddfellows, a popular Victorian Fraternity

Calling on someone during the Victorian era was a lengthy process, filled with rules and pitfalls. Not unlike today, there were social niceties to be adhered to in order for people to be accepted into a group or to maintain their social status. With the development of the penny postcard in 1873, and then the telephone, the use of calling cards as a social tool declined and was eventually outdated.

All calling card images featured in this article are from the SCHS collection

THANKS TO ALL OUR NEW AND RENEWING 2015-2016 MEMBERS!

Individual

Penna Barker
Marsha Block
Charlotte Borchers
Marilyn Brooks
Laurie Broughton
Woody Burt
Anna Cheeseman
Lois Clancy
Sandy Connors
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C.J. Ulrich

If you don't see your name on this list, you either requested to remain anonymous or have forgotten to renew. If you have been left off the list by mistake, give us a call or send us a note and we will correct our records.

Thank you for your continuing support!

**The Stephenson County
Historical Society
would also like to
recognize these recent
donors:**

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