

SCHPS  
P.O. BOX 5017  
BETTENDORF, IA 52722

# Scott County Historic Preservation Society, Inc.



"Let your heritage not be lost, but bequeath it as a memory,  
treasure, and blessing, and preserve it for your children."

— Christian Metz, 1846

## See A Unique House in the Quad Cities!

April's meeting will be member's only and held at the Bechtel House, 9 Roberts Avenue, on the east edge of McClellan Heights in Davenport. This French Revival house resembles the castles found in Normandy and Brittany in northwestern France. With its massive entry, narrow windows, round towers, and tall chimneys, it is definitely an unique house in the Quad Cities. The interior features decorative ironwork, art tile, and custom light fixtures. Some of the original furniture even remains on the lower level!

The Bechtel House was built by Harold Bechtel in 1930-1931. The design was completed by Clausen, Kruse, & Klein in fall of 1929. Harold was part of the Bechtel banking family, a business began by his father George. The Bechtels lived in the house until 1939 when they swapped houses with Leo J. Capen. The house has remained in this family since this time, and Gaynell Foster, the current owner, is the granddaughter of Leo Capen. We are very grateful to Gaynell for sharing this unique treasure with us! There will be assistance with parking.



LEFT: The Bechtel House at 9 Roberts Avenue, on the east edge of McClellan Heights in Davenport.  
RIGHT: Interior shot of spiraling staircase from the Bechtel House.

## April 2004 Newsletter

Next SCHPS meeting  
April 8, 2004 • 7pm  
The Bechtel House  
9 Roberts Ave, Davenport

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## Buffalo, Gateway to the BlackHawk Purchase

We're continuing our look at Scott County's communities with a look at Buffalo, the first town platted in what became Scott County. It was laid out in the spring of 1836 by Capt. Benjamin Clark, E.. Mix, and Dr. E. Pillsbury Clark crossed the Mississippi in 1833 to the Buffalo town site to establish the only ferry between Burlington and Dubuque. The settlement became the gateway to the west. In 1835 Clark built a hotel. The Post Office was established in 1836 and the first criminal trial was held in 1836.

The town of Buffalo pre-dated the creation of counties and hoped to become the county seat. However, Davenport became the county seat and the little village came close to oblivion until the arrival of German immigrants in the early 1850's.

The first school was taught in the winter of 1836-37. Coal was discovered on Captain Clark's land and sold for 15 cents a bushel. Four churches were consecrated between 1868 and 1918. By 1870 there were 20 coal mines. In 1866 the crossroad school house which had been built over an abandoned mine collapsed. In 1903 The Buffalo train station was wrecked by a derailed freight killing the station master's daughter.

The town had more than its share of drunkenness and violence. Many businesses were started and most failed. There were many truck gardens.

Today Buffalo is a peaceful town overlooking the Mississippi River with over 80 houses built before 1900. The town now boasts a museum dedicated to preserving the history of Scott County's first town.

## Cedar Rapids Fun!

Travel to Cedar Rapids with the Volunteer Guild of the Davenport Museum of Art, you are sure to have fun! The trip will include a visit to Brucemore Mansion, lunch at Lindricks Czech Restaurant, and visits to the National Czech & Slovak Museum and Library and the Cedar Rapids Art Museum. We'll travel on an air conditioned bus. The cost is \$82 for members of the DMA Volunteers and \$115 for non-members. Contact Ella, 441-0698 if interested.

Would you like to receive the newsletter and/or special SCHPS news via email? If so, send your email address to Ella Hartmann, [gramhart@qconline.com](mailto:gramhart@qconline.com).

## March 11<sup>th</sup> Overview

Our March 11 joint meeting with the Davenport Art Gallery Friends of Art was held in the Wiese Auditorium. The topic was "Little Houses on the Prairie" and explored the artistic background of Grant Wood and Frank Lloyd Wright.

The program, presented by Prof. Roy Behrens of UNI and sponsored by the Iowa Humanities, was excellent. Thanks to Janet Corcoran for arranging and publicizing this program.

## Grand Excursion in June

The Grand Excursion 2004 will start Friday June 25th and will run through Sunday June 27th. Events will be held in both Illinois and Iowa and will be quite varied with something for everyone. Events on the 25th include a Railroad Exhibit at the Putnam Museum, River Music, 120 W. 2nd St., Davenport, Arsenal Island History, a welcoming of the train, Show Boat at Circa 21 and fireworks. On the 26th a garden walk, Quad City Air Show, a Civil War Muster, a Chippianock Cemetery Tour and other events will be held. On the 27th boats and bike riders will head upstream to reach the Twin Cities on July 5. Events from previous days will continue.

The LeClaire House will be open and will be a major part of Grand Excursion. Karen has spent much time and effort at meetings of the group planning Grand Excursion and also in selecting postcards, photographs and memorabilia to display at the House. We will need the help of SCHPS members to show visitors around the house and to help sell our notecards and other merchandise.

Let us know when you can help. We're going to have fun!

## You've Got to See the Antique Pedestal Table at the LeClaire House!

The pedestal table is a recent purchase and is in mint condition.

It's the type of table that would have been used by Antoine LeClaire and his guests when the home was the center of social activity in Davenport. If you haven't been to the house for a while, why not help out when we're open during Grand Excursion and enjoy!