

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

## One of Bettendorf's most distinctive buildings.

Joseph W. Bettendorf, head of the Bettendorf Company, built his English manor style home on a bluff overlooking the Mississippi River in 1915. He hired noted architect Arthur H. Ebeling to design and build his dream home for his family and to entertain railroad magnates from the east. Mr. Bettendorf maintained a close eye on all aspects of design and construction. Hasselgren Studios of Chicago was hired as the overall decorator. The foyer and breakfast room ceilings were painted in their studios and shipped by rail to the mansion. Some rugs were specially ordered by Mr. Bettendorf and took over two years to complete in the Orient. Construction of the exterior was done by plant employees with all bricks on the mansion measured to be exactly the same size with uniform grout lines. Italian and German craftsmen were brought to the mansion to carve the woodwork and inlays on-site.

The 28-room mansion is 150 feet in length and has three floors and a full basement, for a total of 21,000 square feet of finished space. In addition to the mansion, the original estate, which covered 24 acres, consisted of a large greenhouse, a carriage house, a bath house and pool, a large guesthouse, and numerous formal gardens. The building was ahead of its time in many ways: base electrical outlets, metal lathe when wood was standard, slate roof with copper gutters, steel I-beams throughout the house for extra support, heating and plumbing enclosed in the walls, and a central vacuum system. The mansion remained a residence of the Bettendorf family until it was sold to Marist Society in 1959 when it was used as a seminary. In 1973, St. Katharine's-St. Mark's School purchased the mansion and carriage house and moved the school from Davenport. The school built a gymnasium in 1975 and Becherer Hall in 2001. In 1981, the school purchased the former guest house to house the Upper School. In 2002, the school was renamed Rivermont Collegiate since the school was no longer affiliated with any religious organization. Today only the mansion, carriage house and guest house remain on 8.57 acres of the original estate. In 1984 the Bettendorf mansion was recognized for its historical significance to the people of Iowa and was entered in the National Register of Historic Places.



Bottom Row: BERNARDO CEILING Painting in Library

## April 2007 Newsletter

Next SCHPS meeting  
**April 12, 2007 • 6:30pm**  
Rivermont Collegiate-Mansion  
1821 Sunset Dr, Bettendorf

### *President*

Judy Belfer, 324-7779

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### *Board Members*

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## Great March Program on Butterworth Center.

Gretchen Frick-Small is an outstanding researcher and an accomplished story-teller. So what a treat we had at our March 8 meeting!

She told us about the history this masterpiece and its installation in the library of the Butterworth Center. We had the pleasure of meeting and sharing refreshments with other preservation groups. We are indeed fortunate to have opportunities to learn more about local treasures.

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## Tourism Consultant Bill Geist Finds Many Unique Attractions In The Quad-Cities

However, except for the East Village and LeClaire, our assets are almost invisible! We need to contact the Quad-Cities Convention and Visitors Bureau and let them know our thoughts! Go online to [www.qctimes.com/opinion](http://www.qctimes.com/opinion).

The Bucktown Arts Center was an awardee at our last awards ceremony. Mention the Blackhawk Hotel and whatever else you think is great downtown! Let us know what you hear!

## Dear SCHPS Members,

RE: INVITATION FROM THE GOLD COAST &  
HAMBURG HISTORIC DISTRICT ASSOC.

The Gold Coast is Davenport's first neighborhood and was settled by German immigrants in the 1850's. Renovation is continuing today to bring all the homes back to their former glory. A fundraiser to further restoration and education about the district will be held Sunday, May 6. Deadline for reservations is April 28. Price for the event is \$30., \$20. of which is tax deductible. Event features will be a brunch or high tea, music, jazz in the morning and strings in the afternoon, guided vehicle tours of the area and its historic homes after the brunch or tea, a self-guiding brochure of the Hamburg area listing 50 neighborhood houses and an opportunity to buy local Gold Coast merchandise.

At 10:30 a.m. and again at 3:15 p.m. our executive director, Karen Anderson will present information about the district. Don't miss this!

For an order form, call P.J. Slobojan, Box 4904, Davenport, Iowa 52808, or call 326-2894

FROM KORY DARNALL  
SchuetzenParkeGilde

**SEND YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS TO  
[sarah@graham-graphics.com](mailto:sarah@graham-graphics.com) if you would  
like to get your SCHPS newsletter early!**

## Education Committee Update

A hearty thanks to all members who took the time to call their aldermen and attend numerous Davenport City Council meetings to help lobby aldermen to retain all four of the city's standing committees. It worked! The aldermen agreed and removed the proposal from the agenda. GOOD WORK!!!

## Lone Star Steamer Preservation Moves Forward!

On March 4 a groundbreaking ceremony was held in LeClaire to start a shelter for the 138 year old steamer, the last of its kind to work on the Mississippi. It's been in LeClaire for 40 years. The shelter will be 35 feet high. The Buffalo Bill Museum, in charge of the project, received a check from the Riverboat Development Authority for \$20,000. and another check for \$30,000. from the V.O. & Elizabeth Kahl Figge Foundation. Having the cash in hand helps the Museum match a \$250,000. Visiion Iowa grant. Work will proceed on the project throughout the summer.

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## Make a Difference!

Iowa Senate Study Bill 1082 for an Iowa historic rehabilitation tax credit program was introduced to the Economic Growth Committee on January 23. The bill has now passed in the Senate (March 29) and will be sent to the Iowa House. The bill proposed to raise the cap on funding for the program from \$6.4 million to \$20 million per year and includes a provision to dedicate \$2 million for "small" projects under \$500,000. Contact your legislators and ask them for their support. They can be contacted at [ww.legis.state.ia.us](http://ww.legis.state.ia.us). DO IT NOW!

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## NEWS from SchuetzenParke

Saturday May 26th at 10 A.M. is the annual "Founders' Day" Memorial celebration sponsored by German-American Clubs of the Quad-Cities. It will be held at the Fairmount Cemetery, Rockingham Road. Live music, short program and military honor guard.

SchuetzenParke is sponsoring a summer concert series at the park, 700 Waverly Road, Davenport. The first one will be May 27: *Olde Town Circus Band*. More information in May & June newsletters.

## FURNISHED APT FOR RENT!

Want single gentleman. No smoking, no pets.  
Approx 1100 sq ft \$500. Judy Belfer 324-7779

## MAKE THAT ITEM HISTORY!

Members only may submit a 18 word ad in the SCHPS newsletter (including member's name & phone number), for spaces to rent or things to sell. Limited to historic items only. Cost is \$5 for one month, \$10 for three months. 2"x2" photos will cost an additional \$15 per month. Contact Judy Belfer at 324-7779.