

Scott County Historic Preservation Society, Inc.



SCHPS CHRISTMAS DINNER PARTY

and Private Tour of "Christmas Villages of Germany, Austria & Slovenia" Display



Thursday, December 10th at 6:30 P.M.

*German American Heritage Center
712 West 2nd Street*

*Free to SCHPS Members.
Memberships available at door*

Dinner Menu

**Rosemary Encrusted Beef tenderloin with a
wild mushroom dipping sauce**

**Seared Julian Vegetable Bundles
Roasted Red Potatoes with Seasonal Herbs
Cranberry-Apple-Raspberry salad
Crescent dinner rolls
Chocolate-Raspberry Yule Log
Cream Puff Éclairs**

Additional Dessert or Wine Donations Welcomed

Dinner Prepared by Chef David Pai

"VILLAGES OF GERMANY, AUSTRIA AND SLOVENIA"

The magic of an old fashioned Christmas will greet SCHPS members as they are treated to a before dinner tour of the German American Heritage Center's vintage Christmas display. The hundreds of hand-carved wooden figures, from the 1700-1800s, were collected over many years from the antique shops of Austria, Germany and Slovenia by Arlene Rose Considine, of Clinton, Iowa. The charming display depicts an alpine village winter scene, where over 100 houses, people and farm animals are frozen in time, as well as a recreation of the city of Bethlehem. The crowning glory of the GAHC Christmas display is the seven foot feather Christmas tree, decorated with hand blown glass ornaments dating from the 1850s to the 1930s.

Sharing The Simple Pleasures Of A Frontier Christmas-

The first settlers to tar the cracks in their wagon bottoms just to float them across the Mississippi River and into the newly opened Blackhawk Purchase didn't fret over whether they would make it in time for any "Black Friday" or "Cyber Monday" door-buster holiday bargain sales. The immigrant guide books they carried under their wagon seat had already forewarned them that they had better pack at least two year's supply of leather for shoes, wool yarn for underwear and enough sugar, coffee and tea to keep them going until civilization, much less stores, could catch up with them. Any illusions of finding porcelain headed dolls, a velvet muff or a silk gentlemen's vest under the Christmas tree were soon replaced with reality---that fish hooks, shovels and enough whiskey to make them forget where they were constituted the only real luxury items in a remote wilderness that was still frequented by roving bands of displaced Indians.

**December 2009
Newsletter**

**Next SCHPS meeting
December 10, 2009**

**SCHPS Christmas Dinner
6:30pm
712 West 2nd Street
Davenport, IA**

No January Meeting

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What the newly transplanted sod busters lacked in material goods, however, they soon learned to make up for by courting the simple pleasures of just being together. In 1839, Mary Christie, a young bride isolated in a small cabin far out on the high prairies above Pleasant Valley, excitedly wrote a letter home, all the way to Ohio, just to tell Cousin Elizabeth that she *FINALLY* had neighbors—“within three miles.” In a day when men vastly outnumbered women, the prospect of another woman to sew with, help birth babies and hold a china tea cup with was far more treasured than any gold watch or store bought babble that could be placed under a Christmas tree.

Comradery being ALL that there was to celebrate, Antoine and Marguerite LeClaire decided to gather what few neighbors they had together and host a “Grand Ball” in their tiny Treaty House Cabin on January 8, 1836. (5th & Farnam St.) Invitations had to be printed in St. Louis. Twenty couples attended. (Forty people in a four room cabin!) A fiddler from Fort Armstrong was summoned to play for guests. Gentlemen farmers danced with their ladies all night, despite the disadvantage of the loud stomping of their big heavy “stogy boots.” When the first pink light of dawn broke over the horizon, the attending officers from the Fort suddenly realized that they were about to miss their own morning reveille. They rushed out the cabin door, en masse, across a vast stretch of winter ice which covered a half mile of Mississippi River. Unfortunately, after drinking all night, they could not walk a straight line and ended up staggering a quarter mile up river from their original destination, providing much amusement to all those left behind to watch.

As Christmas 2009 approaches, SCHPS hopes that you will find the time to forego one night of Midnight Madness Sales at the mall, or hunching over the computer to make just one last frantic Christmas e-bay bid. Join your old friends at SCHPS as they gather round to feast and raise a toast to the simple pleasure of life--- JUST BEING TOGETHER—and to celebrate 173 years of Christmases on the beautiful prairies of Iowa.

Karen Anderson

Sincere Sympathies:

Heart felt sympathies are extended to Ward Olson and family upon the recent death of Ward’s lovely wife Beverly. (Nov. 8th) Ward and Bev have been active SCHPS members for decades. Ward’s generous donation of art work for use on SCHPS historic note cards, water color prints and t-shirts has been an invaluable source of funding for the Antoine LeClaire House. Bev will be sorely missed by all!

Sympathies are also in order for Isabelle Boyler and family upon the recent death of her husband, Richard Boyler. (Nov. 27th.) The Boyler family has operated the Boyler Blacksmith Shop in the Village of East Davenport for over 107 years, garnering several SCHPS Preservation Awards. This landmark building was originally built in 1850 (149 years ago) as the Frey Brothers Blacksmith Shop & Eddy House hotel. Frank Boyler purchased the building in 1902. His son, Richard, took over the business in 1949. Richard’s sons stepped in to run the family business in 1983.

New book: Frontier Forts of Iowa. Wm. Whittaker compiled and edited essays on 52 forts in Iowa. An extra essay is by Davenport historian Regena Schantz on Fort Armstrong. It contains information on the blockhouse replica, the Col. Davenport House, the Arsenal and Hauberg Indian Museums. The 288 page paperback retails for \$29.95 and is available at bookstores.

Jan 10th~ 2 pm QC Civil War Round Table Wilder’s Lightening Brigade by Bill Bailey at Butterworth Centre

Jan 16~Opening of Dr. David Pitz’s, Davenport Civil Rights exhibit at the Putnam

Jan 20th~“Analyzing Your Handwriting” luncheon seminar sponsored by the SCC at The Outing Club. This course could turn out to be a fun way to know more about yourself, and to analyze letters from current or deceased relatives, friends acquaintances, and correspondence pertaining to your historic house.

Need Xmas Stocking Stuffers???

(Give a personalized gift, at bargain price—and it is a 100% donation to the LeClaire House restoration)

10 Davenport Historic Building Note Cards- \$10.00 (By artist Ward Olson)

LeClaire House History/Coloring Books- \$6.00

Crystal Paper Weights, etched with image of City Hall- \$3.00

To order, call---Karen Anderson
563.324.0257

Riverboat watercolor prints- \$20.00 (By artist Ward Olson)

LeClaire House watercolor print- \$20.00 (By artist Ward Olson)

J.S Steamboat tote bags- \$10.00 (By artist Ward Olson)

War Eagle Steamboat/Trinity Cathedral Post Cards- \$.50

SCHPS Membership- \$15.00 e-mail newsletter or \$20.00 mailed

Join SCHPS Today-

--10 Newsletters & calendars of upcoming events each year

--SCHPS private house tours and one-of-a-kind special events

--Share your interest in historic preservation

--\$15.00 per year for e-mailed newsletter

--\$20.00 per year for mailed copy

Send to-SCHPS

P.O. Box 5017

Bettendorf, Iowa 52722