

Scott County Historic Preservation Society, Inc.



Goldschmidt-Haak House



Haak Cigar Factory

June 10th, 2010--6:30 P.M.
SCHPS Gold Coast & Hamburg House Tour
Goldschmidt-Haak House, c. 1864
625 Scott Street
(Members Only Please)

Directions to 625 Scott Street.: Gaines to 7th Street
 East on 7th Street to Scott Street
 South on Scott Street--First house facing Scott St., Left side (Blue/Gold pillars)

Horace Greeley, Editor of the *NY Tribune*, triggered a virtual stampede to the western frontier in 1851 when he championed the theme "Go West young man, go west." His idealized vision of life on the frontier required only that his faithful followers go forth, multiply and diversify to claim the rightful fortunes awaiting them there. Peter Goldschmidt certainly epitomized Horace Greeley's entrepreneurial spirit when, in 1855, he arrived in frontier Davenport and opened "Goldschmidt Furniture Manufacturing *and* Undertaker Service" at 420 W. 2nd Street—meeting client's needs from the cradle to the grave. By 1864, Peter and Eliza Goldschmidt had amassed a tidy fortune from their most unusual business venture. Enough to build themselves an Italianate mansion high up on top of the Gold Coast bluff, overlooking the city from the top of the Scott Street steps leading to downtown.

In the 1880s, their mansion became the home of cigar king Richard Haak, who built his fortune on a business even more certain than death, or taxes—the wages of *SIN* from the gambling parlors in Davenport, which Rev. Cosgrove had nationally christened as the "Wickedest City In America." Although the Haak Cigar Co. had only forty "rollers," their Don Caesar De Bazam cigar (marketed to the *working class* man) and their equally sought after Speckled Trout cigars propelled them into one of Iowa's most successful cigar emporiums. Small wonder since Scott County had become home to over 290 raucous saloons and 42 brothels by the 1890s. It took a dozen breweries working round the clock just to keep the German populace supplied with a steady stream of grain alcohol---and 30 cigar factories to keep the back rooms filled with enough smoke to obscure even worse enterprises which were being hatched there. By the 1880s, the Nicholas Kuhnen Cigar Co., which opened its doors in 1854, had become the largest cigar manufacturer west of Chicago and north of St. Louis. By WWI, the Peter N. Jacobsen cigar factory, catty-corner from the front door of City Hall, was churning out a steady stream of 250,000 cigars a week.

In 1903, after a disastrous fire at the first Haak Cigar Company's factory site, Richard Haak built the crème de la crème of all cigar factories---a palatial brick landmark building gracing the corner of 4th St. and Western Avenue. (Photo above.) This vision of money in motion featured ornate banded brickwork, double entry columns flanking each side of the arching inset entryway, dentals and ornamental roof brackets and a massive pair of ornate scrolled wrought iron entry gates, with matching archway cornice. (This handsome building later became the home of the world famous Victor Animatograph Co., which produced the world's first movie projector in 1923. Today, it is the home of Tri-City Equipment Co.)

June 2010 Newsletter

Next SCHPS Meeting,
Thursday June 10th
6:30pm

625 Scott Street
 Davenport, Iowa
 Tour of
 Goldschmidt-Haak
 House

President

Judy Belfer, 324.7779

Vice President

Duane Timm, 323.4077

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 324.0257

Newsletter Editor

David Pai, 579.1996

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Mary Costello
 Fred Vogt, 570.0886
 David Cordes 786.9906

More than a century after the Goldschmidt's built their dream mansion on the Gold Coast's *Who's-Who-Hill*, Mike Ryan found it in far less than fashionable condition while on a house hunting trip in the early 1980s. It had unceremoniously been stripped down and carved into four non-descript apartments. As a fireman, Mike has spent the past 28 years stationed at the nearby historic Central Station Firehouse, 4th & Scott Street. Everyday, he looks out over the Gold Coast-Hamburg District hillside and had developed a soft spot over the years for the grand old houses looking back at him. He felt compelled to rescue the Goldschmidt-Haak house and steeled himself to a major Gold Coast renovation project. For almost three decades, Mike has tirelessly labored to restore the Goldstein-Haak house back into the lovely family home it once was. Today, his bluff top mansion not only features five spacious bedrooms once again—but four baths (!), its original formal parlors, dining room, kitchen---and that spectacular wrap around porch looking out over the bustling city far below.

Mike has been kind enough to invite SCHPS members to tour his Goldschmidt-Haak mansion renovation effort next Thursday evening, where we can toast his many successes—and watch the sun set over the city from the top of the Scott Street hill steps. Hope to see YOU there!

Karen R. Anderson

SCHPS June 10th Election Slate:

President-Judy Belfer
Vice-President-Duane Timm
Secretary-Rex Grove
Treasurer-Ferenc Beiwel
Exec. Director-Karen Anderson
Editor-David Pai
Board-Fred Vogt
Mary Costello
David Cortes

(Election at 6:30 P.M., before tour begins)

RI Arsenal Woman's Club Bench Grant:

Many Thanks to the RI Arsenal Women's Club for their generous \$1,200.00 grant to purchase an iron park bench for the edge of the bluff in front of the Antoine LeClaire House Historical Interpretive Center!

Donation from First Presbyterian Church:

SCHPS' First Presbyterian Church trolley tours were a great success. Many thanks for First Presbyterian's generous donation of \$150.00 to the LeClaire House Fund.

Cathy Berta Memorial Fund—We're Almost There!:

Won't you join SCHPS' effort to purchase a lovely pair of prism candelabras and a center vase for a mantel at the LeClaire House, in honor of Cathy Berta? Send tax-deductible donations to "SCHPS," Treasurer- Ferenc Beiwel at P.O. 5017, Bettendorf, Ia. 52722. ("Berta Memorial"on bottom of check)

Join SCHPS Today:

10 monthly tours, informative programs, newsletters, City Hall updates and monthly calendar of events.
Only \$15.00 per year, for everyone in household, for e-mail/or \$20.00 for U.S. Mailed newsletter
Mail checks to Treasurer-Ferenc Beiwel, P.O. 5017, Bettendorf, Ia. 52722

SCHP JUNE CALENDAR OF EVENTS:

June 6-German American Heritage Center: Cranberries in the Pickle Barrel, by Bill Wundram
Jun 10-Schuetzen Park Historic Site: 140th Anniversary of Opening. Music by the Quad City Brass Quartet and the Hot Club of Davenport (the sounds of gypsy jazz).
Jun 12 & 13- Historic Barn Tour in Southwest Iowa. A "drive yourself" tour organized by the Iowa Barn Foundation, www.iowabarnfoundation.org.
June 15- Col. Davenport Historic Foundation "Lunch and Learn", Benny Wild-Preserve Arsenal Island History, \$17 non-members/\$15 members, For Reservations-Call Don O'Shea 309-762-8156 by June 10th
June 15-Arsenal Appreciation Day at Colonel Davenport House, 11 A.M.-4 P.M.
June 15 & 17-Channel Cat: Investigate Arsenal Island History, by Sam Heilig, CoE
Jun 19, 26, Jul 10, 17, 31, and Aug 7- Walking Tour: Downtown Davenport Architecture, www.figgeart.org
June 22 & 24-Channel Cat: Campbell's Island, by Sam Heilig, CoE
June 30 & July 3-Riverine Walk: Hennepin Canal Then and Now, by Roald Tweet
July 7 & 10-Riverine Walk:4 What did the River look like 200 years ago? By Dr. Reuben Heine
July 10- 10-4PM "Gold Coast Blooms, A Garden Tour"—Gardens, garden workshops, concert in the park, vendors.
(Rain date July 11.) For details, go to www.davenportgoldcoast.com
July 20 & 22- Channel Cat: Moline's Great Wall, by Roald Tweet
July 28 & 31-Riverine Walk: Pre-Civil War Village of East Davenport, by Karen Anderson
August 4 & 7-Riverine Walk: History of Centennial Bridge, by Dr. Curt Roseman
August 10 & 12-Channel Cat: Historic Bridges of the Quad Cities, by Dr. Curt Roseman
August 11 & 14-Riverine Walk: Credit Island & War of 1812, by Karen Anderson
August 24 & 26-Channel Cat: Rafting Logs to QC Mills, by Gayle Rein