

The Ames Intelligencer

Issue 3 of 4 ■ Ames Heritage Association Newsletter ■ June 2001

■ The Ames Intelligencer was the first newspaper in the city of Ames ■

Two-Year Report Card: AHA's Story Center Museum

Report by Kathy Svec, AHA President at Annual Meeting

Museum closing announced

In April, the Ames Heritage Board announced the June 20 closing of the Story Center Museum at 417 Douglas. The closing will occur shortly after its second anniversary.

Why is the museum closing? The simple answer is lack of adequate funding. Being in downtown Ames is the best location for visibility and attendance, but expenses have drained AHA cash reserves. Despite increased support from members and donors, AHA simply did not have the funding on hand to sign another year's lease.

The additional challenge is the need for human resources. Last year AHA used grant funding to pay a part-time administrator and a part-time curator – a grant that was not awarded for a second year. A relatively small group of volunteers and Board members have staffed the open hours at the museum, prepared and paid for the exhibits, worked to increase memberships, written and administered grants and taken care of all the other tasks that are required to operate a museum.

What AHA set out to do in establishing a “demonstration” museum

- ❖ illustrate what a museum could do for the community
- ❖ borrow known collections and artifacts to present interpretive exhibits
- ❖ build awareness for the uniqueness of Ames stories
- ❖ test the idea of changing exhibits vs. static collections
- ❖ keep regular hours, present programs, make connections in Ames schools and at ISU
- ❖ have a visible location, address, phone number

- ❖ build a case for collecting Ames artifacts
- ❖ increase memberships and donations
- ❖ build a case for a permanent facility

Learning & accomplishments

- ❖ presented professional, quality interpretive exhibits
- ❖ attracted requests for programs
- ❖ earned positive encouragement from visitors
- ❖ managed a facility
- ❖ found volunteers and ISU students interns
- ❖ established good relationships with the Octagon & Wheatsfield Grocery, our streetside neighbors

PRO: Open 16 hrs. over 4 days each week with the dedicated effort of volunteers

CON: Open *only* 16 hrs – feedback indicated a need for more open days

PRO: Maintained the goal for changing exhibits

CON: High cost in human energy to produce

PRO: Downtown location was advantageous

CON: Side street location made it easy to overlook

PRO: Rent was below the going rate for downtown

CON: Was still challenging to cover rent – and limited open hours meant paying rent for days closed

PRO: Manageable sized facility at 1400 sq.ft.

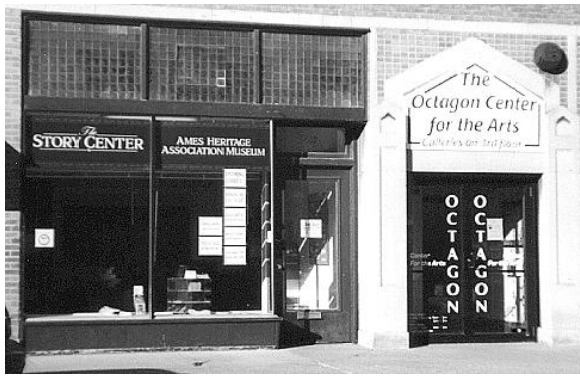
CON: Not enough room to house all our needs (storage)

PRO: Attracted 3500 people in 19 months

CON: Attracted *only* 3500 people; 2nd year is down

PRO: Gained members, and at higher levels

CON: Lost members to non-renewals



PRO: Had phone & address – a visible location!

CON: Additional expenses to maintain

PRO: Volunteers brought excellent skills to the many required tasks of running a museum

CON: Too small a group to sustain over the long term

PRO: Won state ICCG grant for part-time wages

CON: Grant not renewed 2nd year

PRO: Excellent cooperation from all media for publicity

CON: Many people still didn't know museum existed

PRO: Special events attracted audiences

CON: Non-event days sparsely attended

PRO: Found interested volunteers to host open hours

CON: Not all days could be regularly covered



Museum options and ideas

AHA has received

- ❖ present exhibits several times a year in other locations (possibly public library, Octagon)
- ❖ “take show on the road” – present history-based programs to groups on regular basis
- ❖ find other cultural organizations with which to share space, staff and expenses
- ❖ continue to build memberships and donations and hire staff to manage programs and historic sites

What is next?

Closing the museum does not mean that AHA will stop working to preserve and interpret Ames history as it has done since 1981, nor stop seeking a way to operate a permanent home for Ames area history.

AHA is committed to maintaining the artifact storage areas we currently have, and to completing the grant-funded acquisition of several local collections.

When the museum planning process started in 1994, group members thought that the most effective use of our resources would be a shared facility - and we remain committed to that idea. The demonstration museum was an important developmental step. AHA Board members will continue to seek collaborators and the community support necessary to create a permanent facility. Members who would like to help, call Kathy Svec, 232-4877.

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Museum Open Through June 20

The museum at 417 Douglas will be open regular hours through Wednesday, June 20. Hours are Wednesday and Friday afternoon, 1-4pm, Saturday 10am-5pm, and Sunday 2-5pm. The phone is 515-232-2148.

June 24 Bauge Home Open House To Showcase Restoration Progress

AHA's Bauge log home at McFarland Park will be open Sun., June 24 from 2-5pm during the Park's anniversary celebration. Visitors can view the nearly completed restoration and enjoy ISU intern, Colleen White's stories about Norwegian immigrants in Iowa (see next story).

Norway Grant Project Begun

Work has begun on the Bauge Log Home interpretive project funded by a grant from the Sons of Norway Foundation. ISU anthropology student, Colleen White, was selected to undertake the research and development of a number of interpretive themes to be used by tour guides at the Bauge Log Home. Colleen will present the first of her log home stories during the June 24 open house at McFarland Park.

HRDP Project Under Way

The Historic Resource Development Program grant received from the state of Iowa is allowing AHA to acquire and catalogue several local collections. Retired ISU library staff member, Dennis Wendell, is serving as team leader to three ISU interns: Jennifer Harris, Julie Bohlman and Rachel Studer. They have begun inventorying items donated by Farwell Brown. Work on the project will continue through the end of the year.

Hoggatt School Open to the Public June, July & August

Hoggatt School will be open to the public from 2pm to 4:30pm on Saturdays and Sundays in June, July and August. The one-room log school is located at 18th and Burnett on the grounds of Meeker School.



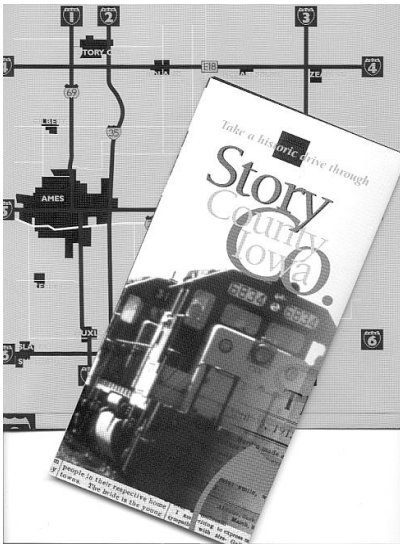
New HRDP Grant Awarded

AHA was awarded an HRDP grant in the 2001-03 grant cycle. The award of \$1000 was made in their collections category, and will be used to acquire shelving for artifact storage in AHA's storage areas.

Not Too Late To Renew!

Check the newsletter's mailing label to see if you still need to send in your annual dues. If it says "01", you're current; if not, please take a moment to renew!

Memberships ensure continuation of AHA's many ongoing projects.



Pick Up a Driving Tour Guide

Expecting guests this summer? Pick up a driving tour brochure of Story County historic sites. The brochures are available at The Story Center museum, and at the Ames Convention and Visitors Bureau, 1601 Golden Aspen Drive (near K-Mart off South 16th Street).

Six short drives are described in the brochure, each one following one of the major east-west or north-south routes through the county.

Here is a sample:

Interstate 35

- ❖ Start at the south county line, drive north. Homesteaders first appeared in this area in 1848. Now imagine it is 1855. A group of 25 wagons is moving toward you, carrying an immigrant group of 100 from Norway. They seek good farm land and a chance to prosper. Pleased by the quality of land, they settle in southern Story County from Cambridge to Sheldahl. Exit on Hwy 210 to go east to Cambridge, Maxwell, Iowa Center, Collins, or west to Huxley, Slater and Sheldahl.
- ❖ Five miles north of Hwy 210 is the So. Skunk, the largest river in the county. Native Americans from the Mesquakie Settlement near Tama hunted and fished here as late as 1890. Continuing north, think about smooth travel on part of a 41,000 mile system of interstate and defense highways established by President Eisenhower after W.W.II.
- ❖ When the Cedar Rapids & Missouri River Railroad built its way west, it came through Story County in 1863 & 64 establishing towns for water and fuel stops for steam locomotives. Colo, Nevada and Ames were CR&M towns. The CR&M became the Chicago & Northwestern in 1865, and continued west to become part of the first transcontinental railroad. The railroad provided settlers with easy entry to central Iowa after the Civil War.
- ❖ The next exit to Highway 30, will take you east to Nevada and Colo, or west to Ames and Iowa State University.
- ❖ Wagon trails provided the only other transportation routes until planned Iowa road building began in 1904. A highway commission was funded in the Engineering Dept. at Iowa State College in Ames. Iowa's highway plans were aided by similar national interests at that time. Hwy 30 parallels Lincoln Highway, one of the earliest US transcontinental highways. Like interest in Route 66, Lincoln Highway enthusiasts have a national association with an active chapter in Story County
- ❖ Interstate 35 opened in 1964. The Ames High School band presided over a ribbon cutting at the Ames exit ramp.
- ❖ Continuing north, the Ames 13th Street exit is within view of the high-rise Barilla pasta plant built in 1998. Barilla is an Italian company that sought a central location, and good access to grain and a railroad line, not at all different from what businesses sought 100 years ago.

- ❖ North of the 13th St. exit, I-35 veers to the east, paralleling the Skunk River Green Belt. In the Green Belt is access to hiking, off-road biking, equestrian trails, hunting, fishing, primitive camping and canoe landings.
- ❖ The Hwy 221 exit takes you west to Story City and the Skunk River Green Belt or east to E18 and Roland, McCallsburg and Zearing. Imagine again that it is 1855, and you can spot 12 families and 3 single men in 18 covered wagons pulled by oxen. It is an immigrant group from Bergen, Norway, seeking good land which they find east of Roland for \$1.25 an acre. Hwy 221 parallels the Praeri Rail Trail, the former railbed of the Iowa Central Railroad.

The other routes featured are:

- ❖ Highway 210
- ❖ Highway 30
- ❖ County Road E18
- ❖ Highway 65
- ❖ Highway 69

Quick E-Notice of AHA Programs

An AHA e-mail list has been developed from info on membership renewal forms. The list has been used to notify members of programs and special events. If you have not received an AHA notice via e-mail in recent months, and would like to be added to our list, please send a note to AHA President, Kathy Svec, at ksvec@qwest.net. Also, former True Communications customers may wish to give us a new address.

Members who would like to get monthly minutes of Board meetings via e-mail may also send a request to Kathy at the above address.

Elden Bauge Honored

Elden & Marguerite Bauge were honored by AHA with a Life Membership. Elden grew up in the Bauge Log Home as the youngest member of Anna and Lars Bauge's large family. Elden has been very helpful to AHA throughout the restoration process.



AHA Board member, Rollie Struss, left, presents a certificate to Elden (center) and Marguerite Bauge.

New AHA Board of Directors

Board members appointed at the annual meeting are:

2001-2004: Carole Jensen, Letitia Hansen, Dennis Wendell, Leo Lawlor, [vacancy]

2000-2003: Peggy Baer, Nick Howell, Jon Harvey, Liz Manion, [vacancy]

1999-2002: Bill LaGrange, Kathy Svec, Suann Evans, Rollie Struss, Willie Struss

Sincere thanks are extended to those members retiring from the Board: Jean Jonas, Donna Cipolloni and Mark Hamin.

Additional members will be sought to fill vacancies.

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Ames Heritage Association

PO Box 821

Ames, Iowa 50010

Clip & Return Renewal Form

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Individual	\$25	Sustaining	\$100
Family	\$40	Benefactor	\$500
Friend	\$50	Patron	\$1,000

Send to: Ames Heritage Assn., PO Box 821, Ames, IA 50010



Ames Heritage Association Board: President - Kathy Svec; Vice-President - Carole Jensen; Secretary - Willie Struss; Treasurer - Peggy Baer; Suann Evans, Mark Hamin, Letitia Hansen, Jon Harvey, Bill LaGrange, Leo Lawler, Liz Manion, Nick Howell. Rollie Struss, Dennis Wendell. The Board meets monthly.

Ames Heritage Association is a legally incorporated, not-for-profit organization dedicated to promoting interest in state and local history through the operation of three historic sites as well as publications, programs and exhibitions.

The Intelligencer newsletter is named after an early Ames newspaper. It is published three to four times a year for Association members. Direct comments & questions to: Editor, PO Box 821, Ames, IA 50010.

The Story Center museum is located at 417 Douglas, Ames, Iowa 50010. 515-232-2148. Hours are Wed, and Fri 1-4pm, Sat. 10a.-5pm, Sun. 2-5pm.

Hoggatt School is located on the grounds of Meeker School, near 18th and Burnett, Ames, IA. Open April through October.

The Bauge Log Home is east and north of the lake at McFarland Park, which is ½ mile east of Dayton Road at 56461 180th Street. Open by appointment during good weather months.

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