



The Volunteer

Roxanne Raiser, Director

Necessaries for the Necessary by Jill Cook

There really is not much available in archeological evidence to show what the Stephenson family did use when visiting the lou, but by considering their economic status and the environment they lived in, we could make a few educated guesses.

Historians say that many rural Americans used corncobs or cornhusks. Early settlers grew corn as a staple crop because of its high yields and many uses. Since the soil and weather were right in this region for that crop, the pioneers moving across continued planting the crops they knew best. So it could be reasonably assumed that corncobs and cornhusks were the common toilet paper for the time, even for the Stephensons.

Another item often used for toilet paper was the newspaper. *The Spectator* was the regular newspaper in Edwardsville. Considering Benjamin's position in the city and the advertisements he had in the newspaper, it could be assumed that he read the newspaper occasionally at least. Therefore, newspaper was available to serve a person's bathroom needs.

Although these two items were available year round and popularly used as toilet paper, it does not necessarily mean they were the only items used.

During the spring and summer, the Stephensons had a wealth of plants and leaves to use. Lamb's ear, with its fuzzy foliage, was sure to have been a popular substitute during the grow-



Corn was a stock crop grown in the early 1800s just as it is now. But it held one use then that we would not consider today, toilet paper.

ing seasons. Lamb's ear is also very easy to grow, making it readily available during the growing seasons. Lamb's ear would not have been the only plant used as toilet paper. Oak tree leaves and some grasses could also have been used, and all of these plants could have been accessed on the way to the outhouse.

But the problem with these plants is that it was difficult to store through the late fall and winter. The leaves would have wilted or dried, making them useless to serve the same purpose as toilet paper. *The Spectator* was printed year round and corncobs lasted much later in the year since the final harvest was in late fall.

It is interesting to consider all of the technological advancements our world has seen since 1820—the automobile, the television, the computer. But it is even more interesting to consider some of the most basic aspects of modern life, and how we probably would not survive today without them. But they did.

New Volunteer Training Session August 15 2 p.m.

If you have signed up to be a volunteer (or would like to) but weren't sure how to start, this session is for you. Designed to familiarize our newest volunteers with the site, house, program and allow them to see how the whole place works. Areas of interest will also be discussed.

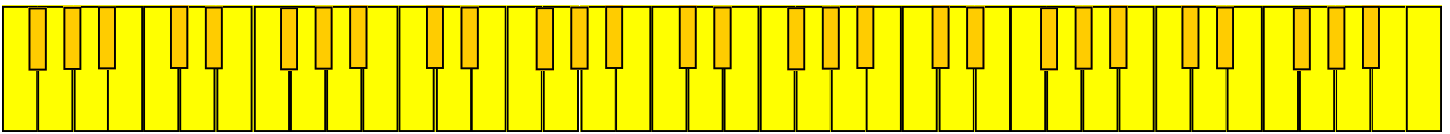


Welcome New Volunteers!

Julia Rheinecker

Deile Smith

A \$1000 is Raised for Restoration



As of July 27, all 68 piano forte keys have been sold. Restoration is underway and within a few months the piano forte will be playing again. Plans are being made to host a musical event at the house upon completion of the project.

Stephenson House board members and staff would like to thank everyone who donated to the project. Without your help this project may not have been completed.

Donors to date are:

Anonymous donors
Karen & Bill Mateyka
Anonymous donor
Steve Mudge
Maxine Callies
Virginia McDole
Don & Diane Schrader
Lucia Weber
Ed and Candy Wentz

Kathy Schmidt

Elizabeth and Bill Bowling

Dr. Robert Malench

Brenda Knox and Matt Crowe

Another thank you needs to be extended to Brenda Knox, south-east Iowa resident and seamstress. Brenda and her husband purchased the first keys sold and Brenda offered an added incentive to anyone purchasing 4-5 keys; a hand-sewn shirt or shift custom made to fit. Her offer was extremely generous and much appreciated. Thank you Brenda!

Keep reading the Volunteer for updates on the progress of the restoration. The next several months are going to be exciting.

Thank you everyone!



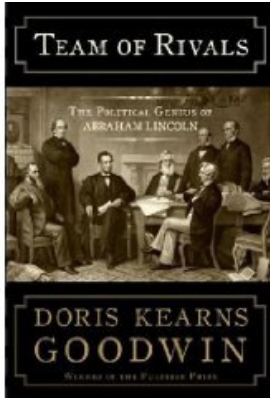
She Sews Shirts for Soldiers!

Custom sewing of shirts, chemises, dresses, etc. for the reenactor. Hand-sewing option available. Medieval to 19th century.

Brenda Knox
319/835-3372
brenknox@iowatelecom.net



BOOK CLUB



Bring a friend to the Stephen-
son House Book Club to
discuss *Team of Rivals* by
Doris Kearns Goodwin.

Everyone is welcome!

August 5

7-9 p.m.

If weather permits, we will meet on the brick patio.
Refreshments will be served after the group discussion.

Volunteer Recognition

The following is a list of the top ten volunteers of the month. This list is based on the number of hours each volunteer worked and recorded in the volunteer hours log book. We appreciate all the time our volunteers give each month, regardless of total hours worked. Thanks to each and every one of our volunteers!

July 2009

- | | |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Bob Jurgena | 6. Genie Manterfield |
| 2. Pat Peverly | 7. Amy Mullane |
| 3. Barb Stamer | 8. Karen Mateyka |
| 4. Maxine Callies | 9. Walt Raisner |
| 5. Diane Schrader | 10. Gloria Zupanci |

News & Needful Things

FOUND:

- aluminum cookie sheet
- green windbreaker, child's size medium
- green insulated jacket, adult size (may belong to one of the master gardeners)

THANK YOU:

- Thank you, Volunteers, for helping to make Ben's Birthday a success!
- Thank you, Ralph and Caron Quick, for the donation of the Father Christmas outfit. RoxAnn was very grateful since it saved her from sewing a new one.
- Thank you, Gloria Mullen, for the donation of the ladies dress to the house wardrobe.
- Thank you, Maxine Callies, for donating the hand sewn linen shirt to the wardrobe and thank you, Brenda Knox, for stitching it.
- Thank you, Jane and Sid Denny, for the donation of muslin fabric and misc. items for the sewing supply.

WANTED:

- flour (all purpose or whole wheat)
- yeast
- medium-weight linen for ladies' mitts

- seamstresses to sew men's aprons and trousers and ladies' shifts for the wardrobe
- seamstresses to work on summer bed linens and draperies
- monetary donations to buy two period men's coats.
- cutting knives with wooden handles (no serrated edges)
- period silverware for the dining room
- old wool clothing with a 95% or greater wool content for use in a rug-hooking class
- child's and male dress forms (torsos)
- period forks and knives
- tin plates
- straw brooms (historical construction)

NOTICE:

- Interpretive training booklets are available for volunteers to sign out and study the basic history of the house. The booklets contain the basic house tour and various information from the interpretive tour conducted at the house on a daily basis. Anyone interested in becoming a historical interpreter or in reviewing the tour information, may contact RoxAnn to check out a booklet.

Gardens at Stephenson House by Carol Fruit

August is the peak month for our Teaching Garden. Flowers are in full bloom and vegetables are being harvested. The Italian Rose Bush Beans are ripe and are being pulled to dry before being shelled for dried beans. Break open a pod to see the beautiful pink and white beans. The Fingerling Potatoes are ready to be dug and soon after, the sweet potatoes will be ready. The Scarlet Runner Green Beans on the teepee trellis are best picked when they are small and tender.

A plant that has been noticed in the garden all summer is the Walking Onion. If they are neglected, we will understand the term 'walking onion', as the stalks will bend down to the ground and take root by themselves. Also known as Egyptian Onions, these fascinating onions form several small bulblets underground plus they produce clusters of small bulblets on the top of the stalks. The underground bulbs have a strong onion flavor useful in a wide variety of recipes. The bulblets are somewhat spicy and are delicious pickled. We will save some of the bulblets to plant in September for next year's crop.

Another bulb planted in the Teaching Garden is garlic. Look for onion-like shoots near the corners of each box. They are planted with marigolds for the purpose of repelling many pests, whether they crawl, fly, or walk on four legs – perhaps even two-legged werewolves. Of course they are also good for eating and we hope this new (for us) crop will produce some good bulbs for the kitchen.



Correcting Misinformation: Final Installment

Why did the U.S. Economy turn bad after 1818?

(Ellen Nordhauser) It depended on cotton sales. The price of cotton rose during the Napoleonic Wars and stayed up for a bit after 1815, but then, as Europe recovered from the wars, Indian cotton was competing with U.S. cotton. Cotton prices fell.

The optimism after the War of 1812 fueled a huge land rush. Illinois was "the west" in this period. Native peoples were being driven off their lands, the surveyors were busy in Illinois, and there was a brisk trade in land warrants used to pay veterans of 1812. The "Panic of 1819" represented the bursting of the bubble.

Do we know how many domesticated animals the S. family had?

According to the 1822 auction inventory the following livestock was sold:

- 2 cows
- 2 calves (one 2 year old and one yearling)
- 25 stock hogs – breeding sows mostly
- 19 fattening hogs – castrated boars
- 1 horse



Washing Will (one of the indenture servants) was named for the job he performed in the wash house.

(R. Raisner) Absolutely not true. 'Washing Will', more than likely, was his nickname. Historical evidence points to his full name being Washington William. It was very common to shorten Washington to 'Wash' or

'Washing' and William to 'Will'. Lucy refers to Wash in her 1831 letter to Patty Canal,

"Mary, her father and Wash, have gone to Ohio."

Washing Will was the son of Jess Price; another servant own by the Stephenson's and sold by Lucy in 1827 to James Mason. Jess indentured Wash to Benjamin Stephenson on July 1, 1821 at the age of 10 months. At such a young age, he would not have been able to work in any capacity at the house, especially not in a laundry.

The wash house that has been constructed on the north section of the yard does not represent an original building associated with the Stephenson House. There is no evidence that a wash house existed here during the 1820s or any other period. Our wash house represents a stereotypical laundry of the early 1800s belonging to a larger home.



AUGUST 2009

Calendar Activities

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						1
2	3	4	5 Book Club	6	7	8
School House Camp →						
9 Sewing Circle	10	11	12	13	14	15 Volunteer Training
16	17	18	19	20 TOUR	21	22
23 Sewing Circle	24	25	26	27	28	29 Story Time
30	31					

- August 3-7, **One Room School House Camp**, Experience daily school life of early residents of Illinois'. Camp activities include slate board lessons, a spelling bee, quill writing, book binding, stenciling art, creating marbles and other early toys, and much more. Open to children grades 2 -5. A morning session (9 a.m. – 12 p.m.) is offered. Limited registration. To register, call 618-468-2222. \$75 per student.
- August 5, **Book Club**, 7 p.m.-9p.m.
- August 9, **Sewing Circle**, 1-3 p.m.
- August 15, **New Volunteer Training**, 2 p.m.
- August 20, **St. Paul United Church of Christ Tour**, 10-11:30 a.m., 20+/- adults
- August 23, **Sewing Circle**, 1-3 p.m.
- August 29, **Story Time**, 1-2 p.m., Gather under the old shade tree to listen to stories of adventure and fun. During the months of June through October guest storytellers will entertain visiting children with stories of the past, fantastical worlds and distant cultures. *Children must be accompanied by an adult. FREE.*



Ben's Birthday Celebration. (Left) Wheat weaver, Sharon Duncan, shows two young visitors a small ornament she wove from shafts of wheat. (Top) Interpreter, Carol Wetzol shows guests how to "sleep tight" on an 1820 bed.

Children's Activities in July



Story Time. (*Left*) Diane Schrader sang songs and read books to area children during Story Time, July 25. (*Bottom Left*) Children even got a chance to dance a historical version of the "Hokey Pokey".

Pioneer Camp. (*Bottom Right*) Bob Jurgena talks to participants about herbs, gardens and botanical drawings as part of a journaling session of camp. (*Right*) Students learned how to weave on a simple loom. Instructor Barb Stamer helped students weave simple mats.



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