

DECEMBER 2020

The Towner Tattler

The official publication of the Boone County Historical Society

Dear Members,

In order to conserve time, paper, and mailing costs, we are pleased to now offer our newsletter online! If you would like to have the Towner Tattler emailed to you, please visit our website, www.bcmuseumofhistory.org, scroll to the bottom of the page, and type in your email address to be added to our newsletter mailing list. Otherwise, we will post every issue on our website which can be accessed by clicking on the 'Newsletters' tab at the top of the home page.

If you prefer to continue receiving a paper copy in the mail, please call 815.544.8391, and we will be glad to keep you on the paper copy mailing list!

Sincerely,

Anna Pivoras, Executive Director



Thank You!

We appreciate the materials from St. James School brought in by Barbara Majernik. Barb took the time to save memorabilia from the days of St. James which will now be a part of the museum's collection. When a part of Boone County's history closes or is no more, it is important to save treasures from that era. Thank you Barb!

Many thanks to Boone County Historical Society Board member Carol Rowe who took the time to update the history of the Boone County Historical Society and Museum through 2020! We had left off in 1983, and certainly many things have happened since then! Thank you, Carol, for bringing us up to date.

Another 'Thank You' goes out to Carol Rowe for decorating the Funderburg House's planter boxes with beautiful winter greenery for the holidays! The Historical Society takes pride in the beauty of the estate at 605 N State St., and we hope that the community enjoys the holiday decor!

Corsets in Belvidere

Submitted by Karen Neibarger

There is an interesting story about the Classic Corset Company in Belvidere and the big brick building that was built on Columbia Avenue in 1902. The building had two stories and a basement and was located on four city blocks. The deal was put together between the Commercial Club, individual business men and private subscription to pay for the land and construction.

It was a solid and substantial structure with an unusually elaborate system of plumbing, and its own electric power run by gas with power transmitted to various parts of the building by means of electric motors.

Opening day was June 30, 1903 and a concert by the National Band followed by a dance was held at the building. Cars on the interurban ran down Locust Street to Columbia to drop off party goers. A smart Italian orchestra furnished music for an anticipated 300 couples waltzing on the smooth maple floor. The gentlemen were required to pay 50 cents for badges for the dance. Ladies were free. Corset making machines were exhibited on the third floor where part of the space was devoted to card tables for those who did not care to dance. There was a gentlemen's smoking room available. H.C. June had charge of the ice cream and lemonade tables in the basement room with proceeds to be used for building sidewalks.

Unfortunately, within six months the Classic Corset Company was forced into involuntary bankruptcy by creditors in Chicago. (More to come)

