

The Towner Tattler

The official publication of the Boone County Historical Society

New Exhibit!

We have started work on moving our military room exhibit to the space our victorian era exhibit once occupied. This new military will feature new artifacts and show off ones that may have been overlooked in the old exhibit. The drop ceiling has been removed from the new military room and artifacts have been transferred to their new home. We are accepting military donations that have a significance to Boone County. If you are considering donating a military object, stop by the museum and let us take a look at it and possibly give it a new home in our collection!

Museum Updates:

- * New Victorian Room exhibit has been updated and moved to new location.
- * Military room has been cleared out for a new exhibit to take its place.
- * 95th Regiment Flag has been moved to the Grand Gallery for a better and easier viewing.
- * Barber shop exhibit has been cleaned out to make way for a doctor's office exhibit.
- * Curator Chris is working hard to transfer our entire collection to a digital software for easier use at the museum.
- * Various maps of Boone County have been reorganized and are ready to use for research purposes.

We are shining the spotlight on three new members of our museum staff! Troy Yunk has taken on the task of the museum's maintenance person. Natali Monaghan is our new museum assistant and Deena Vecchiollo is our new intern with the help of our friends at the Community Foundation of Northern Illinois who awarded the museum with a generous grant this year! We look forward to working with these three on our future

Featured Donation

Our featured donation in this edition of The Towner Tattler is a pair of German World War One Fernglas 08 Military field binoculars. The Manufacturer was Emil Busch A.G. Rathenow. These would have been from between the years 1915 and 1918. These were graciously donated by Carol Rowe, a long time friend of the museum, to be put on display in our new military exhibit.

**THANK YOU
CAROL ROWE!**



Funderburg House Update

The Funderburg House is progressing wonderfully! Painting is well underway in many rooms of the house as well as the third floor mural! Our own Troy Yunk has been working hard to restore the beautiful landscape mural in the third floor party room.



A huge thank you is in order to Shattuck & Buyers Construction for their hard work on the ADA accessible bathroom and lift that is being added to the house!

We are also very grateful to John Wolf for his donations of antique furnishings to decorate the house with victorian era beauty.

The Boone County Arts Council and Boone County Conservation District have teamed up to install a poetry box at both the museum and the Funderburg House! You will be able to find poetry by Annie B. Alguire at the house and Hairbreadth Harry at the museum.



Pieces of History With Karen Neibarger

We left you last month with the Classic Corset Company going into bankruptcy after building a state-of-the-art factory on Columbia Avenue. Fortunately, the Chicago based Gossard Corset company bought most of the equipment at the auction in Belvidere and was ready to open within a few months. While some workers stayed on with the new owners, additional employees were needed. Ads appeared in the local papers and recruiters were sent to Caledonia, Capron, Poplar Grove, and Garden Prairie to attract young women to sew the corsets that were now in demand throughout the fashion world. It was a rare opportunity for economic independence for young women and housewives in 1903.

We can imagine the conversations around the kitchen table as daughters, wives and mothers talked of going outside the family home to work in a factory – on machinery! The Gossard company emphasized short hours, liberal wages, specially constructed, light airy workrooms, a high-grade lunch room and hot coffee and fresh, sweet milk furnished free. In addition, the company offered the opportunity to be a “forelady” or even a “manager” of a department.

The attraction of extra money coming into the household was a determining force in many situations but the introduction of factory work in Belvidere for women along with the introduction of women’s rights and value in the market place would also have entered into the discussion. By 1905 Gossard’s working force had passed the 100 mark and by 1916 the company was advertising for “50 more workers offering six dollars per week while learning. And no dirt or grease to soil your hands or clothes. Girls working at Gossard’s can finish their day’s work as if dressed for a party.” (More to come.)

The museum would like any contributions to their collection of Gossard Factory memorabilia. Please contact the museum if you have anything to share.

Key Dates

6/16/21: Boone County Historical Museum District Meeting 4pm

7/20/21: Boone County Historical Society Meeting 5:30pm

7/21/21: Boone County Historical Museum District Meeting 4pm

8/18/21: Boone County Historical Museum District Meeting 4pm

9/15/21: Boone County Historical Museum District Meeting 4pm

9/21/21: Boone County Historical Society Meeting 5:30pm

***All museum meetings are open to the public!**