

Historical Society of Iowa, State

Jerome Thompson, acting administrator, 600 E. Locust, Des Moines 50319; 515/281-8837

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The directors of the three State Historical Society bureaus are:

Patricia Ohlerking, who directs Community Programs, including historic preservation, historic sites, the Historical Resource Development Program (HRDP) of grants, Certified Local Government (CLG) programs and other outreach services.

Jerome Thompson, who heads the museum, library and archives in Des Moines.

Christie Dailey, who is in charge of the library in Iowa City and the publications and public relations programs.

The Society continues to maintain a unified library and archives program in Des Moines and Iowa City, with the administrative duties shared by the two facilities; the State Historical Building and the Centennial Building.

The State Historical Society of Iowa's mission is to assist its citizens in identifying themselves, individually and collectively, in place and time. The Society collects, preserves, interprets and shares Iowa's past, encourages scholarly research, serves as a reference source, and advocates the preservation and stewardship of Iowa's historical resources.

The State Historical Society was established in 1857 in Iowa City as a private organization. Today, it is a division of the Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs.

The Society's museum, located within the State of Iowa Historical Building in Des Moines, is guardian of some 85,000 artifacts, ranging from rare quilts to military armaments, from Native American beadwork to airplanes. Permanent and temporary exhibits offer visitors a personal, hands-on journey through time. Educational programs are offered for children, families and adults throughout the year. Guided discovery tours are conducted for thousands of school children annually.

The Society's library and archives have built extraordinary collections at facilities in Des Moines and Iowa City. You may uncover your roots through research on Iowa topics as varied as agriculture, labor, politics and women's suffrage. Collections include books, maps, manuscripts, newspapers, census records, oral history interviews and photographs. The State Archives in Des Moines is a central repository for preserving state records. The library and archives offer many public and technical services, from assisting genealogical and other researchers to advising on appropriate care of personal documents.

Another dimension of Iowa's history is preserved through the Society's seven historic sites: Montauk (Clermont), Matthew Edell Blacksmith Shop (Haverhill), Abbie Gardner Sharp Cabin (Arnolds Park), American Gothic House (Eldon), Plum Grove (Iowa City), Blood Run National Historical Landmark (Lyon County), and Tolesboro Indian Mounds National Historic Site (Wapello).

The State Historical Society of Iowa produces four award-winning publications, including *The Goldfinch*, a children's magazine; *The Palimpsest*, a popular history magazine; *The Annals of Iowa*, a scholarly history journal; and *The Historian*, a newsletter for Society members.

The Society works to preserve Iowa's architectural, historical and archeological character, which in turn promotes business, tourism and economic development. Among its services, the Society facilitates nominations of properties to the National Register of Historic Places, helps property owners qualify for federal and state tax and economic incentives to rehabilitate and reuse historic structures, and protects significant properties, districts and archeological sites.

Society staff are available to assist all Iowans in researching, preserving and interpreting the history of their communities. In addition, the Society offers grants that enable local communities and individuals to organize local preservation programs and to preserve the state's historical resources.