
NEWS

Butler County Historical Society

Preserving and Interpreting Butler County's Rich Heritage

For Immediate Release

Date 2/5/2010

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BENNINGHOFEN HOUSE WILL BENEFIT FROM CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

Installation of new carpet in dining room and repair of weather-worn eaves

(Hamilton, OH) – The Benninghofen House, named for 19th century industrialist John W. Benninghofen, is a Hamilton landmark. The Italianate-style house remained in the Benninghofen family from 1874 until 1947 when it was donated to the Butler County Historical Society. From this time, the Historical Society has cared for and interpreted the home as though the family were still living in the house. Visitors to the Benninghofen House view collections of antique furniture, opulent decor, and local history.

Over the years, the volume of traffic through the house deteriorated the condition of the carpet. This is especially true for the dining room. Past Historical Society president Jim Schwartz often described the dining room carpet as “threadbare.” The poor condition of the dining room carpet contrasts with the elegant furniture, china collection, and hand-painted ceiling.

Replacement of the worn carpet will be financed from a trust fund established by the Skyllingstad family, who are descended from John W. Benninghofen. The fund is administered by the Hamilton Community Foundation. In 2009, the Historical Society lost a valued friend and member of the family, Eleanor Benninghofen Skyllingstad. Maintaining the historic character of the house would be difficult without the generosity of the Skyllingstad family.

Improvements to the Benninghofen House are also planned for the exterior. The Historical Society was recently awarded an \$8,500 Community Development Block Grant from the City of Hamilton. A recent inspection revealed the roof of the house to be in good condition. However, the inspection also found peeling paint and loose materials around gutters and eaves. The money will be used to fund repairs of the deteriorating eaves and gutters.

These improvements, initiated in 2009, come on the heels of the Butler County Historical Society's 75th Anniversary. The Historical Society remains dedicated to maintaining the Benninghofen House and interpreting local history through programs and exhibits.

In 2009, the Butler County Historical Society (BCHS) celebrated 75 years of dedication to the preservation and interpretation of Butler County's rich heritage. The BCHS, a non-profit organization, operates the historic Benninghofen House – a showcase of Victorian Era lifestyle that includes all the furnishings and décor appropriate for a late 19th century home. Additionally, the BCHS manages an archive that consists of many original and secondary materials relating to regional history. To help us prepare for your visit (tour or research), please call ahead (513) 896-9930. The BCHS is also affiliated with Heritage Hall, a space for the display of rotating exhibits and the permanent location of the Robert McCloskey Collection. To learn more about Heritage Hall, please call (513) 737-5958.