



St. CHARLES
HISTORY MUSEUM

215 E MAIN STREET • ST CHARLES, IL • 630-584-6967



St. CHARLES HISTORY MUSEUM

COLLECT • PRESERVE • PRESENT

The St. Charles History Museum, also known as the St. Charles Heritage Center, is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization, and as such all donations to the Museum are tax-deductible to the fullest extent of the law, and no goods or services were received in return for this gift. Our FEIN number is 51-0168405. Our Illinois sales tax exemption number is 9962-1622-05.

WWW.STCMUSEUM.ORG • INFO@STCMUSEUM.ORG



Scandal, Murder, and Communications from Beyond the Grave

The St. Charles History Museum in the Western Suburbs Unveils New Exhibit about Local Connections to the Spiritualist Movement

St. Charles, IL, Oct 5, 2022 -- In theme with the season, the St. Charles History Museum is pulling back the curtain on the town's overlooked Spiritualist past to bring you a new exhibit titled *Radical Souls: The Nineteenth Century Spiritualists of St. Charles*.

Running through March 1, 2023, this new exhibit explores three residents, Caroline Howard, Stevens S. Jones, and John C. Bundy and their roles within the Spiritualist Movement during the 19th century. Jones established what would become one of the largest Spiritualist Newspapers in the world out of Chicago. During the Great Fire he lost everything but never missed an issue, even publishing an edition while the flames still raged. He was strong headed, and often came to blows with famous figures on the national stage.

Collections and Exhibitions Manager Eric Krupa states that the inspiration for the topic originally came from a research request at the Museum and grew from there. "Once I started digging, I uncovered so much information that I knew that this topic necessitated its own exhibit. For years, much of this information has been brushed aside or left as footnotes in larger histories on Spiritualism."

After Jones' murder in 1877 the paper was taken over by his son-in-law John C. Bundy who publicly busted frauds in the community, often with dramatic outcomes. He helped create the field of psychical research, looking for evidence of supernatural phenomena. "You could call him a Gilded Age 'ghost hunter,'" Mr. Krupa said. As for Caroline Howard, she was a local medium who performed séances for Mary Todd Lincoln and allegedly 35,000 others in St. Charles. Mr. Krupa said that out of the three figures, only Caroline's Spiritualist history was well known, but even her story had some discrepancies. "Writing about history is all about trying to get as close to the truth as possible and sometimes that takes generations due to the limits of accessible or available records. With modern research techniques we were able to dig up a lot of information to show the deep impact these characters had on the national movement of the time."

This exhibit will be on display until March 1, 2023. The St. Charles History Museum is located at 215 E. Main Street in St. Charles, Illinois. Hours are Tuesday through Saturday from 11:00AM-4:00PM. They can be reached at <https://www.stcmuseum.org/> or by calling (630)-684-6967.