

# The Volunteer

The 1820 Col. Benjamin Stephenson House

## New Stephenson House

### T-Shirts

By RoxAnn Raisner

February  
2016

#### Inside this issue:

<i>New Stephenson House</i>	
<i>T-Shirts</i>	1
<i>The Other Family: Indentured</i>	
<i>Servants at the</i>	
<i>Stephenson House</i>	2
<i>January Photos</i>	3
<i>Calendar</i>	4
<i>Upcoming Dates</i>	5
<i>Thank You!</i>	5
<i>News &amp; Needs</i>	6

#### Contact:

RoxAnn Raisner, Director  
P.O. Box 754  
Edwardsville, IL, 62025  
618-692-1818  
stephensonhouse@sbcglobal.net  
www.stephensonhouse.org

Julie Mangoff, Editor  
jamangoff@gmail.com

The house has a new t-shirt for purchase. The design was created by graphic artist Dennis Bland of Bland Design. It looks awesome!

Currently, I am taking orders for them. They are available in the pictured colors. The pink shirt is ladies t-shirt and the green shirt is unisex. All three colors are available in unisex or ladies (your choice of style and color). You may also pick from a large center design (shown on the green) or the smaller medallion (shown on the pink). Cost for sizes is listed below. If you are interested please let me know by Sunday (January 31) since I will be putting in an order Monday morning. I need to know shirt type (ladies or unisex), color (pink, green, grey), logo placement (large center or small medallion) and size.

Please drop off your payment or mail it to me (Stephenson House, P.O. Box 754, Edwardsville, IL, 62025). They will be ready for pick up next week.



Photo by RoxAnn Raisner.

**Colors:** Pink, Green, Grey

**Style:** Ladies or Unisex

**Logo:** Large Center or Small Medallion

**Size (Adult sizes only):**  
Small, Medium, Large, X-Large, 2XL, 3XL

**Price:** Small-XL, \$15.07  
(includes tax)

2XL-3XL- \$19.28  
(includes tax)

## *The Other Family: Indentured Servants at Stephenson House*

In February, the staff and volunteers of the 1820 Col. Benjamin Stephenson House will tell the story of *The Other Family: Indentured Servants at Stephenson House*. A glimpse of what life was like for an indentured servant living on the 182-acre farm during the first half of the 19th century is the focus.

Few visitors to Stephenson House are aware of the real meaning of the term 'indentured servant' as it pertained to individuals living in bondage in the Illinois Territory or later the state. In reality, this term was just a legal 'loop-hole' used to get around the laws prohibiting slavery in the region. When the Stephenson family moved into the Illinois Territory in 1809 they brought with them three slaves; To-be age 23, Hark age 15, and Winn age 18. In order to keep these individuals, considered property at the time, the Stephenson's (like many of the peers) registered their slaves as indentured servants with the courts. This legal bondage enabled many settlers of the new territory to continue the practice of slavery while maintaining a facade of legality.

"There is more than one story to tell at Stephenson House. It's our intent to shed light on the fact there was slavery in Illinois." stated site director RoxAnn Raisner. "Many visitors are totally unaware that a form of slavery was practiced in a state that was supposedly 'free'." Over the past fifteen years, researchers have uncovered tantalizing pieces of information about the indentured servants but there is more to be discovered. "Slave history, or in our case 'indentured servant' history can be extremely difficult to research because it tends to be oral." commented Raisner. "We have copies of the indenture records for the servants working at the house, one emancipation record and found one of the servants listed as a free man in the 1830 census. The story of slavery at Stephenson House is one of the most interesting parts of our sites history but at the same time it's the story we know the least about."

The Stephenson family registered a total of 11 indentured servants throughout the 25 years they lived in Kaskaskia and Edwardsville (1809-1834). On average, they had

eight servants working at any given time, half of which were children. Records uncovered a few years ago found that two of the children born to servants at Stephenson house were indentured at the ages of 42 days and 9 months. It is also believed that the children are the individuals who made the 200,000 bricks used in the construction of the house.

During the "Other Family" exhibit, visitors will learn about slavery in Illinois and the servants living at Stephenson house, read copies of runaway ads placed in area newspapers from 1817-1822, and participate in hands-on activities. Tour hours for this event are 10-3 p.m. Saturdays and 12-3 p.m. on Sundays. Admission fees are \$6 for adults, \$3 for children ages 6-12 years and free for children under the age of five. For more information call 618-692-1818 or visit us on the web at [www.stephensonhouse.org](http://www.stephensonhouse.org). Stephenson House is located at 409 S. Buchanan, Edwardsville, Illinois.

## *January Photos*



Above: SIUE intern, Jackie Lampitt, restoring the antique 1820s clock. Photo taken from Stephenson House Facebook page.



Left: The 1820 clock in the midst of restoration. Photo by Julie Mangoff.

# February 2015

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6 Playing the Past 9:00 A. M. — 12:00 P. M.
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14 Sewing Circle 1:00 P. M.	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23 Board Meeting 7:00 P. M.	24	25	26	27
28 Sewing Circle 1:00 P. M.	29					

# Upcoming Dates

- February 6: Playing the Past,  
9:00 A. M. — 12:00 P. M.
- February 14: Sewing Circle,  
1:00 P. M.
- February 23: Board Meeting,  
7:00 P. M.
- February 28: Sewing Circle,  
1:00 P. M.

## Thank You!

- Everyone who donated items to help out our SIUE intern, Jackie Lampitt!

**During February  
the Stephenson House will  
be open only on  
Saturdays and Sundays**





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P.O. Box 754  
Edwardsville, IL, 62025

Phone: 618-692-1818

Fax: 618-692-6418

E-mail: [stephensonhouse@sbcglobal.net](mailto:stephensonhouse@sbcglobal.net)

If you have any articles or stories you would like to be added to next month's edition of *The Volunteer*, please contact the editor at: [jamangoff@gmail.com](mailto:jamangoff@gmail.com).

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[www.stephensonhouse.shutterfly.com](http://www.stephensonhouse.shutterfly.com)

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## *News & Needs*

### *Needs...*

- volunteers to help with school tours and girl scout troops
- new or gently used vacuum to clean the house
- unprocessed honey
- volunteers to help with house tours, gift shop, garden & grounds, grant writing
- & research, as well as special events
- cleaning supplies such as Windex, toilet bowl cleaner, hand soap, disinfecting wipes, bleach, and toilet paper
- seamstresses to sew clothing for the volunteer wardrobe
- bolt of 100% cotton batiste