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# Badger-Iredell Foundation

Mark Thomas, President

Our May meeting at Mordecai Historic Park will showcase the Badger-Iredell Law Office and Historic Collection.

In a short article in last month's *Bar Flyer*, we told the story of the Badger-Iredell Foundation, Inc.'s organization in 1973 under the auspices of the Wake County Bar Association as a tax exempt organization to receive and restore the historic law office of the prominent nineteenth century Raleigh attorneys, George E. Badger and James A. Iredell, Jr. Also, we talked about the Foundation's successful efforts to acquire the Law Office itself, constructed around 1810, and move it to the grounds of Mordecai Historic Park, where it is today. We also spoke of the success of an initial fund drive, largely among the members of the Wake County Bar Association and among friends and family descended from the attorneys who'd owned the office, to raise the funds needed to pay for the Law Office's restoration and related architects' services.

That initial effort enabled us to restore the Law Office to its appearance in the 1840s. Further fundraising efforts were needed to acquire carefully selected furnishings for the office that were authentic to the nineteenth century. The Foundation conveyed the building itself to the City of Raleigh in 1983, and has loaned the furnishings to the City for interpretation of the Law Office. Some of the furnishings were owned by George E. Badger or James A. Iredell, Jr. themselves, enabling not only visiting lawyers but also school children and other visitors to Mordecai Historic Park to better appreciate those distinguished nineteenth century lawyers and the law practice of their times. The Law Office and its furnishings remain important reminders of the historic roots of the legal profession in Wake County and North Carolina.

Since those beginnings, the Foundation has enlarged the collection of historic furnishings now on display in the Law Office. However, the passage of time has inevitably threatened many parts of the collection, especially the litho-



graphs and law books, and increasing attention is needed to conserve and protect them. The advice of Troy Burton, Mordecai Historic Park's current site manager, has enabled the Foundation to create a plan this year to preserve those parts of the collection before they are lost.

As explained in last month's *Bar Flyer*, what is most needed now is some additional financial help. The Foundation has over \$2,500 but more is needed, based on the MHP site manager's estimates. Some parts of the collection, such as 18th and 19th century law books (several signed by James A. Iredell, Jr.) and a framed lithograph of George E. Badger, are very fragile and will require some unique professional attention.

When you visit the Badger-Iredell Law Office during the annual barbecue at Mordecai Historic Park, take a moment to appreciate that building and the historic treasures of the Badger-Iredell collection. We ask that you then make a contribution to the Foundation by sending a check to the Wake County Bar Association Foundation with the "memo" part of the check clearly designated for the Badger-Iredell Foundation, Inc. With your help, we will be able to preserve these treasures for other generations.