

Johnston (Station) Historical Society
P.O. Box 109, Johnston Iowa

Newsletter

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It's About Time..... for most of you to **RENEW**

Before you throw away the envelope , check to see if there is a "98" following your name on the mailing label..

If there is, you need to RENEW your membership in the JSHS for the 1999 year!

Fill in the form at the end of this newsletter, and send it , with your check to the address listed.

The Johnston (Station) Historical Society
Thanks You

November Meeting

Sunday, November 22, 4:00 p.m.
Crown Point Meeting Room

We'll have another POT-LUCK,
Bring your dish to share and utensils.

And we'll be welcoming, as our speaker
R. Wayne Skidmore, Past President of
Pioneer Hi-Bred Intern'l, who will speak to
us on the History of Pioneer.

("Skid" is a very entertaining as well as an
informative speaker . Come and enjoy!!)

September Meeting: Report

Dick Peterson, of the Des Moines Men's Garden Club gave a history of that group, which under the leadership of J.N. "Ding" Darling, formed as an off-shoot of the Des Moines Garden Club.

Eventually the "Gardeners of America, Inc. Men's Garden Clubs of America" evolved from and included this and other gardening organizations, and has established its national headquarters on Merle Hay Road in Johnston.

Reports: The Flag pole has been installed at the Kinsey/Lawson Cemetery. It will be dedicated in a ceremony conducted by the National Guard on November 11.

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October Meeting: Report

Members at the business meeting voted to allocate \$400 for a wood carving at Ridgedale Cemetery. The carving, of "Praying Hands" will be on the trunk of a cedar tree which was damaged during the June 29th storm.

An artist has been selected for this work, which will be done next spring after the wood in the trunk has had time to dry out.

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

I recently traveled to eastern Wisconsin to visit my last surviving Uncle. He wanted to show my brother and me the grave sites of our ancestors. My great, great, great grandfather came from Ireland in 1847 and settled in Cedarburg, WI. We went to four different cemeteries in the area.

At one of the cemeteries, there was a big, beautiful office with books of records and impressive computers. We couldn't believe it when they told us that they didn't have any records of burials before 1910 (The oldest part of the cemetery was about 500 feet from where we were standing.) We were told that we would have to look at headstones to find the information.

All I could think of was the tremendous job that members of the Johnston Historical Society had done by censusing the cemeteries in Johnston. Not only had they helped the City of Johnston immensely, but they also had helped future generations.

The data, collected from the headstones at Ridgedale, Valley View and Kinsey cemeteries, were entered into the computer system at City Hall. That information was taken a step further. There is a nationwide tombstone transcription project going on. McDivitt cemetery in Urbandale is posted along with Johnston's cemeteries. I sent the data to the

national project leader. It will be viewable on the Internet at HYPERLINK <http://www.rootsweb.com>.

This accomplishment will not go unnoticed. I hope that in the future other Polk County cemeteries will be added to the list.

Mary Jane Paez

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## And speaking of cemeteries.....

"Dear Diary, An Older friend, recently returned from her home town in North Carolina, says they've spruced up the churchyard cemetery since her last visit several years back. "Lots of new greenery," she said. "And families are together now."

"Together?" I asked, puzzled.

"Well, years ago they never much worried about where they buried someone because everyone was a neighbor anyhow. They'd just dig a grave wherever it seemed to balance things. But they've redone it so people are with their children and grandchildren, instead of scattered."

"You mean they exhumed all those people and buried them?"

"Oh no," she said. "They just shifted the headstones. Everyone agrees it looks ever so much nicer." "

(from the New York Times, Nov. 2, 1997, Metropolitan Diary by Ron Alexander)

## PLANT YOUR FAMILY TREE

THE City of Johnston has initiated a fund in order to replace the many, many trees on public property that were lost during the mesocyclone that hit on June 29th. Donations in any amount will be received in the name of a family, a pet, an individual or an organization.

All monies collected will be used to replant trees that were damaged or destroyed in parks,

open spaces and as street trees. The City will recognize contributors to the fund by including their names on a list displayed at City Hall.



Good Kids  
doing  
Great Things

On Monday, October 5 and Tuesday, October 6, forty-five students from the Johnston eighth grade Service Learning Class under the instruction of Sharon Mahoney came to Ridgedale Cemetery to help with the clean-up of the cemetery from the damage left by the June 29, 1998 storm..

They helped beautify it by planting daffodils along the front fence, trim and clean around the grave stones and in general cleaning of the cemetery.

This was a three-way project of the Johnston Schools, Johnston City Hall and the Johnston (Station) Historical Society.

Students participating were: (Oct, 5) Ryan Bruce, Hailey Cahill, Katelyn Fleming, Amanda Freese, David Gibbs, Aaron Hobbs, Stacey Johnson, Tiffany Kite, Stephanie Lamb, Rachele Larson,

Also, Adrian Loffler, Rachel Mullen, Kyle Nielsen, Brittany Parker, Ben Parry, Derek Partridge, Matt Putney, James Rhoads, Audry Tucker, Kelsey Van Essen, Kendra Vestal and Ausitn Watrous.

Those participating on Oct. 6 were: Taylor Bryant, Nick Cochran, Jeff Crispin, Justin Finimore, Katie Gannon, Blake Hainline, Shelbi Haller, Marshall Henry, Alexis Kicera and Kelsey Kuebler.

Also, Matt May, Chris Meade, Nicole Romanella, Clint Saf-Robbins, Brian Schafer, Jessica Stern, Laura Sullivan, Gwen Thomas, Anna Van Oort, Jo Ann Van Vleet, Jason Ward, Eric White and Lacey Young

Johnston City Hall employees participating were: Lori Mentzel, Steve Buckalew, and Bryan Wilson.

JSHS members participating were: Carroll Broadie, Bill Herrold, Ferne and Lloyd Michael, Raymond Schlehs, Bob Thomas and Pat and Ken Wallerstedt.

We greatly appreciate all who helped with this project; we hope to work together for two days again next spring.

Ferne Michael



Looking Ahead

The officers of the JSHS have looked ahead at our meeting dates, and considered what might be a practical schedule which will take into consideration (1) our by-laws, (2) our need for time to transact business, (3) our wish to be informed and entertained by programs, and last-- but not least, (4) the convenience of the members.

We have tried meeting alternate months on the 4th Wednesday and the 4th Sunday-- (NO December meeting) and this has seemed satisfactory, so the plan is to continue this schedule into 1999.

So----Our next meeting-- after November-- will be on January 24 (Sun)., and following that, February 24, (Wed.) March 28 (Sun) and so on. This is a tentative arrangement, and may be changed; we will keep membership informed.

(Our by-laws state that the Annual Meeting is to take place on the last Tuesday of April, which this year is April 27th.)



Get Set for an  
All School Reunion!!

The Johnston Schools will be among the many organizations to celebrate the completion of of the second millenium and the arrival of the year "2000".

The Community Education office of the schools, under Nancy Buryanek, is planning an "All School Reunion", and she and her committee are looking for input and help from any who attended Johnston Schools from 1920 to the present.

A steering committee is still in the preliminary planning stage, attempting to determine whether getting together such a reunion is feasible. and they invite any interested alums to meet with them. They will have a planning session on Wednesday, January 27th, 1999, at 7:00 pm., in the Lawson School Library.

They are also working to up-date class lists--especially those of more recent classes, and parents, family and friends may be of help in locating these alumni and former students.

If you think you have information to give, or would like to participate in planning this celebration, call Nancy Buryanek at the Community Education office, 278-0552, at the Johnston Middle School, 6207 N.W. 62nd Ave, Johnston 50131.

The "Reunion 2000" will be a great way to celebrate, to get together with classmates and friends, and to recognize those who have been a part of the growth of the Johnston School district, to acknowledge what it, as an institution, has contributed to the community.

Plan ahead to be a part of this!!!

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On the School Bus Route - 1916

In 1916, Mr. Charlie Hammond, who drove a school "bus" in Johnston, wrote a bit of verse about the children he took to school each day. He titled his verse "A Poem about our Wagon Route", for the school bus was a horse drawn wagon.

Mr. Hammond's wagon route would have taken him from the corner of Merle Hay and Meredith Drive, where Perkin's is now located, and near where he lived, perhaps east

a few houses on Meredith, but then west, all the way to 86th Sreet, then north to 54th Ave., and to 72nd Sreet, where the Kuefner farm house was located.

He would have gone north then, across Beaver Creek, to what is now N.W. 62nd, and then headed east to the Johnston Consolidated School building.

No doubt Mr. Hammond enjoyed children; he characterizes them in his "Poem"-- and we got to wondering who they were. He calls them by first name only (the only surname he mentions is "Kuefner"), and although the whole "Poem" is too long for this newsletter, we thought it might be interesting to offer a line or two in hopes that one of our readers would be able to tell us just who each child was-- or is!

"Now then there is George and Forest, the first ones that get on
But sometimes they wake up too late and find that I am gone.
Then next comes little Helen, she's always on the job
She brings along her brother, although they have to sob.
And as for mischief and for fun, there's never any tell'en
If it ever will let up with that there little Helen.
And then we drive along some more until we get to Louise
That girl is sure a torment, that girl is sure a tease."

Does anyone know who these children were, and where they lived? (to be continued)

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**In Memoriam**

Edith Kuefner, of Des Moines, died on October 16, 1998. Mrs. Kuefner was born in Dyersville, and was a resident of Johnston for many years.

She was a charter member of the Johnston (Station) Historical Society.

The JSHS extends its sympathy to her husband Herbert and to her family.