

Johnston (Station) Historical Society  
Post Office Box 109  
Johnston, Iowa 50131  
www.johnstonhistoricalsociety.com

# NEWSLETTER

Volume X No. 4

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July 2003

President: Mary Jane Paez  
Vice-Pres. & Programs: Judy Bogaard  
Secretaries: Marlys Seibert & Pat Wallerstedt

Treasurer: Robert Thomas  
Membership: Garland Seibert  
Newsletter: Selma Duvick

**July Meeting**  
Sunday, July 27<sup>th</sup>  
4:00 p.m. at the Simpson  
House  
Johnston Commons

Bring your own chair!

Program: Discussion of  
Current Financing, and  
Progress on House & Barn  
Renovation

May and June Meetings:

Recent meetings of the JSHS have been concerned primarily with progress on renovation of House and Barn.



## Looking Ahead:

Meetings for the rest of the year:

All meetings will be at the Simpson House at 4:00 p.m. unless otherwise noted.

Wednesday, August 27  
Sunday, September 28  
Wednesday, October 22  
Sunday, November 23 (if we have heat!)

## From the President .....

Each time I write this column, I review what I said the last time to see what progress we have made. Two months ago at this time we were anxiously awaiting the start of our concrete projects: the house basement floor, the barn floor, the house cellar steps, and the barn patio.

The spring rains stopped just long enough to allow trucks in with more fill material, a huge pumper truck that got the concrete where it needed to go, and 10 truck-loads of concrete.

The skillful concrete workers were a joy to watch. Both basement and barn were transformed into things of beauty. We really pushed the contractor to get the projects done before Green Days. There's nothing like planning a party to get some things done.

We did a lot of cleanup to make the place presentable for the big garage sale. Barb Zorn and her Master Gardners crew obtained donated plants from Piney Ridge Nursery and made colorful beds at all the entrances to the house and barn.

After we placed tables throughout the first floor of the house, helpers filled them with many donated items. As some things came

in we decided that a few of them would be suitable to keep for the museum or the gift shop, or office.

There was excellent publicity for our garage sale, and business was brisk during both the Friday and Saturday hours. It proved to be a good way to show the community what we are doing, and what we intend to do. We picked up a few memberships and brick orders as well.

On Saturday we had a children's craft opportunity in the barn. We worked with boys and girls and helped them create corncob dolls or necklaces; we made 30 or 40 dolls, and everyone had a good time!

Now that the party is behind us, we are back to work on the house and barn renovation. Drywall has been delivered and work will begin on installation. New windows and doors are now in the barn

We've been saving funds to have on hand for matching grants, and look forward to hearing results of our grant applications. If they come through, we will be able to move ahead even faster than we have done in the past months.

Mary Jane Paez

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## GARAGE SALE

Our garage/rummage sale at the Simpson House during the Green Days event was successful in more than one respect.

We did well financially:

\$720.76 sales of rummage

42.00 sale of pens and booklets

The sale also gave the JSHS the opportunity to show the House and Barn to the community; we heard many comments such

as, "This is wonderful! What a great place; so glad you are saving it!"

While the sale was in progress in the house, Mary Jane Paez and Marlys Seibert helped young visitors to the Barn make dolls & necklaces from corn cobs.

Thanks to all who donated time and items for sale.

Special thanks go to Mary Helen and Marvin Straker and their daughter and son-in-law Jackie and Bill Samuells. On May 17, they held a garage sale, and gave the \$400 proceeds to the JSHS. In addition, they donated their unsold items to the JSHS sale. Others who helped are: Bob & Sandy Straker, Agnes Walker, Colton & Courtney Straker, and Ferne & Lloyd Michael.

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## GREEN DAYS PARADE

Judy Bogaard arranged for the JSHS parade entry; Robert Betz provided a flatbed trailer pulled by his antique tractor. Herb Harmon contributed bales of hay, Judy Bogaard appeared in period costume, seated in an antique rocker.

Others on the float, who tossed candy to the crowd, were: Bob Thomas, Ferne and Lloyd Michael, Kerry Bowen, Monica and Andrew Johnson, and Mary Jane Paez.

Also appearing in the parade were Richard Betz and Raymond Betz driving their 1949 and 1950 John Deere tractors.

Thanks to all who contributed !!

(The Johnston Historical Society is an IRS code 501(c) (3) organization)

## New Members

The JSHS welcomes the following new members:

Richard and Bettie Franklin  
Urbandale, Iowa

Clifford and Pat Walsh  
Johnston, Iowa

### CONTRIBUTIONS

Caretakers: (\$1-\$100)

Jean Jennings  
Johnston, Iowa

Duane & Jan Thran  
Johnston, Iowa

Clifford & Pat Walsh  
Johnston, Iowa

Mike & Pam Wilson  
Johnston, Iowa

Scout: (\$100-\$999)

Mary Helen & Marvin Straker  
Dawson, Iowa

### MEMORIAL GIFTS

Ferne Michael  
Windsor Heights, Iowa

In memory of Gloria Lancaster  
Thomas

In Memory of Clarence Schlenker

### BRICKS

Brick orders have been received from:

Clifford and Pat Walsh    CLIFFORD & PAT  
Johnston, Iowa            WALSH

Jeanne Jennings  
Johnston, Iowa

RALPH JENNINGS  
FAMILY

Duane and Jan Thran  
Johnston, Iowa

JAN & DUANE  
THRAN

Mike and Pam Wilson  
Johnston, Iowa

THE WILSON  
FAMILY

Ruth B. Stone  
Seattle, WA

RUTH HUNT

Virginia Petersen  
Johnston, Iowa

THE PETERSEN  
FAMILY

Richard P. Franklin  
Urbandale, Iowa

R.P. FRANKLIN  
MAYOR 1973-1979

Wesley D. Jordan  
Johnston, Iowa

FRANK AND SARAH  
MCGOVERN

WES AND EMMA  
JORDAN

WES JORDAN

Eulah Shearer  
Johnston, Iowa

IN MEMORY OF T. ANN JONES  
6-30-02

Commercial Federal  
Johnston, Iowa

COMMERCIAL FEDERAL  
BANK

Steven and Susan Krantz  
Johnston, Iowa

ED AND KAY  
KRANTZ

Gloria Seibert Clark  
Richland, WA

LELAND SEIBERT  
GLORIA SEIBERT

HAYDEN & MAMIE  
SEIBERT

### BRICKS ARE STILL AVAILABLE!

Brick orders can be taken at any time; we continue to send them and the century-old bricks to the engravers. They will be placed in the Barn patio.

Cost: \$85

Inscription: Two lines, 14 characters each.  
Send to the Johnston Historical Society  
P.O. Box 109, Johnston, Iowa 50131

**In Memoriam**

Gloria Lancaster Thomas

Gloria Lancaster Thomas, of San Antonio, Texas, died there on May 3, 2003. Born in Davenport, she grew up in Des Moines, married James Thomas, and , to quote from the Memorial Service order, "they traveled the world as an Air Force family in twelve locations, three of them outside the US"

In addition to her husband Jim, Gloria is survived by three children, 13 grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. She was a woman of service to her church and community, and will be greatly missed. The JSHS sends sympathy to husband Jim, her sister, and all of her family and friends.

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Clarence Schlenker

Clarence Schlenker, who was born in Johnston, and grew up on his father's farm and orchard in Johnston on NW 62<sup>nd</sup> Ave., died at the age of 93 on June 2, 2003. He was a farmer himself, a school bus driver, and active in his church, Farm Bureau, and various county organizations.

Clarence was a member of the JSHS, and is survived by his wife Esther, a daughter and son, a sister, Veda Ivers, and brothers Barton Schlenker and Ray Schlenker of Johnston. The Johnston Historical Society sends its sympathy to Esther, and to his family and friends

*Thank you.....*

**M**adilyn and Harry Allender have given the Society a large oak table, in

excellent condition. It was put to good use during our garage sale, and no doubt will be again. Thank you, Madilyn and Harry!

**In the news:**

Subscribers to the Des Moines Tribune may have seen a photo of Garland Seibert in the Around Town section on July 2<sup>nd</sup>. Garland was pictured scraping paint from the side of the Barn, one of the many jobs he and other volunteers have been doing during the past months.

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**Twenty-five Years Ago  
In Johnston**

Just a few of the events noted in the local paper in 1978 .

Construction began, in June, on the first house to be built in the new Green Meadows development. Owners were Dean and Ruth Schuler.

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On July 1 the Saylorville Dam was dedicated in a ceremony attended by Congressman Neal Smith, Iowa Governor Robert Ray, and Johnston Mayor Richard Franklin, among other dignitaries. Rain put a bit of a damper on the ceremonies.

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The first Casey's General Store in Johnston opened for business in September on Merle Hay Road, just south of the Dairy Sweet and across from the Bishop Drumm complex. (Note: It has since been demolished, and a new Casey's is located up the street a block.)

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Merle Hall, 1972 JHS graduate, won second place in a banjo-picking contest in Council Bluffs in September. (Note: Merle is still "picking" with, among other groups, the Barn Owl Band which plays for dances locally, and which appeared on the national Prairie Home Companion radio program in February of 2002).

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## RENEWALS:

A few of you have not renewed your membership for the current year!

Please check your address label, and if it reads "02" or "01" you need to renew your membership.

Send \$10 for single, \$12 for a family membership to:  
Johnston Historical Society  
P.O. Box 109 Johnston, IA 50131

And check out our website:

[www.johnstonhistoricalsociety.com](http://www.johnstonhistoricalsociety.com)



### From Our Construction Chief:

Bob Thomas and his crew have made great progress in renovation of house and barn. As Bob says "For many weeks we were taking things out; now we are putting things in..." such as dry wall.

The installation of the dry wall in the Simpson House is nearly complete. Windows in the Barn have been replaced, as have the damaged floors in the house.

We've had good help, but could use more at this time, especially for sanding the house woodwork.

Though the progress we have made is pretty amazing, our treasurer, Bob, is very aware that we need more financial support to pay for work which cannot be done with volunteers, as well as for supplies..

It will be encouraging to receive more checks from those of you out there who are interested in seeing the project completed in good time. Remember, as we are a charitable organization, contributions are tax-deductible.

Bob Thomas has been sending frequent progress reports, via e-mail, to those members for whom he has an e-mail address. If you would like to receive these, send along your address to <RLT50310@aol.com> or to <snd227@aol.com> We'll remove your name from the list should you change your mind at any time.



## THE MAIL BOX

We receive newsletters from a number of other Historical Societies in Iowa. It is always interesting to read what their current projects are.

The Ankeny Area Historical Society is planning a new facility to house their extensive collection of artifacts.

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The Big Creek Historical Society (Polk City) is in the process of nominating their schoolhouse/city hall built in 1863 for the national register of historical places. They have signed a lease with Polk City to use "the old council chambers" and the entire

second floor, and they are now entering the phase of planning for restoration. This will be a real asset to Polk City, and to their attractive town square.

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A story in a recent issue of the Iowa Historian, the newsletter of the State Historical Society of Iowa, highlights the value of careful examination before you decide to throw out old records and papers.

According to the Historian, after Younkers closed its Des Moines headquarters last winter, and as the Human Resources Vice President, Mark Barkley emptied files and drawers, he found "irreplaceable pictures

and papers of a company born and raised in Iowa, a company that became part of the everyday life of Iowans."

The documents were offered to the State Historical Society, and they are now being examined and documented. It is to be hoped that one day they will be a part of a display at the museum, and will be available for researchers, thanks to Mr. Barkley's appreciation of their possible value to history.

(From the Iowa Historian, vol 17 No.2  
Editorial by Anita Walker)



Marlys Seibert helps young visitors with their mother to make corn cob dolls at the Barn during the Green Days event. The children could choose long or short, fat or skinny, red or white cobs. Then they could choose the color of the chenille arms to use, the type of head,

whether to use paper or cloth for the clothes; ribbons and lace were available to trim the final product. Little boys created corn cob dolls with capes and "superman" initials on the cob "chest". It was a lot of fun for everyone!