

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

NEWSLETTER

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President: Mary Jane Paez
Vice-Pres. & Programs: Judy Bogaard
Secretary: Marlys Seibert

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

July Meeting
July 25, 2004
4:00 p.m.

at the Simpson House
6161 Northglenn Drive
Guests are always welcome!!

Looking ahead:

Meetings of the JSHS:

August 25 (Wednesday.)
September 26 (Sunday)
October 27 (Wednesday)
November to be announced
No meeting in December

All meetings at 4:00 p.m. at the Simpson House, unless otherwise announced.

About our Website:

The address of the JSHS website as given in past newsletters is in error. Those of you who have tried in vain to access the site put together by Kathy Wallerstedt, please note that the correct address is:

www.johnstonhistoricalsociety.org

From the President.....

Each time I write this column, it is a pleasure. I get to review all the progress that we have made with our project.

On June 17th, during Green Days, the Simpson barn was put to use. A family movie was shown in the loft. Visitors were delighted with what they found and the loft was a perfect venue for the movie.

On June 19th, also during Green Days, we had an auction that was coordinated by the Johnston Lions Club. Many wonderful donations were given and a lot of people got wonderful bargains. There was also a display of students' artwork and a cookie contest at the same time. Tim Busby and his son donated their services to cry the auction. The historical society received a share of the proceeds and we got a little over \$2000.

The barn is finished on the inside as well as the inscribed brick patio. We installed 42 bricks in the completed patio and found that our design lends itself well for installing any future orders of inscribed bricks.

On June 26th, we dedicated the barn. We were treated to a concert by Harry Elder and Harry's Hawkeye Travelers. Vern and Shirley Simpson came to the event and

enjoyed the music and dancing. What a happy day!

From giving tours of the house and barn, we have landed a new volunteer! A local woman, Dawn Davison, told us that she loves to paint. Have we got a job for her. She has worked a couple of days and will come as her schedule permits to keep working toward our goal of completing the house.

We are also blessed with an increasing number of court appointed community service people who are doing work around the house. Bob Thomas and Garland Seibert have been invaluable with helping these individuals find just the right job to match their talents.

After we found out that the American Legion grant wouldn't be coming our way for the house kitchen, Ferne and Lloyd Michael donated the funding for the kitchen cabinets and countertop. Jim Thomas sent money to pay for the microwave and Irene Aulich sent money to help out with the refrigerator. Thanks to them, we will soon have a beautiful kitchen in the house.

We want to order the heating and air conditioning equipment for the house. We have found new leaks in the house roof and more in the barn. We are looking for any way that we can to repair (in the short term) and replace (in the long term) both roofs.

As you can see, we have made a lot of progress. We can see the end in sight; we're just not there quite yet.



New Members

Welcome to new member
Carolyn Christiansen
Johnston, IA

BRICKS:

Janice Winey GLADYS KUEFNER
Urbandale, IA WINEY FAMILY

Mary Brown Mehalovich JACK & MARY
Urbandale, IA MEHALOVICH

Vivian H. Zimmerman IN MEMORY OF
Johnston, IA ROBERT E. HUNSICKER

Ruth Biddle JAMES R. BIDDLE
Des Moines, IA

Staff of Johnston JOHNSTON PUBLIC
Public Library LIBRARY STAFF

Contributions:

With many thanks to the following:

Ruth Biddle
Des Moines, IA

Linda Zeiger
Des Moines, IA

Jon Duvick
Des Moines, IA

Irene Aulich
Northfield, MN
For house kitchen

Darrell Stuck
El Toro, CA

Robert & Margaret Thomas
Des Moines, IA
In Memory of Donald Zarley

Ferne & Lloyd Michael
Windsor Heights, IA
For Kitchen cabinets in the House

James Thomas
San Antonio, TX
Microwave in House



And how do we get there?

As Mary Jane has said, "we're not quite there yet". The Johnston City council must make a decision in the following month or two as to whether the Barn is in sufficiently good repair for the City to take over ownership and management. There have been questions about the necessity for a new roof (about \$20,000) before this can happen. We are looking for some substantial gifts and lots of small ones to accomplish our goal. You all have been most helpful over the past years. Let's try to wind this up, and make it happen!!

Send your gifts (tax-deductable) to:
Johnston Historical Society, Post Office Box 109, Johnston, IA 50131

Those who might have questioned the value of the Simpson Barn as a venue for local events would have been reassured see the beehive of activity in the loft and lower level as the cookie contest and art display brought families to the Barn during Green Days. Not to mention the movie during the same event. The Barn will be a wonderful asset to the community

DES MOINES RADIO AND TELEVISION

At their January 2004 meeting the Polk County Historical Society featured a program on the history of radio and television in the Des Moines area presented by Ray Dennis.

Dennis has created a website with information on the stations, personalities and history of radio and TV which should interest many of our members who

remember listening to Don Bell, Walt Reno, Smoky Smith, Dic Youngs, and others.

The website:

<http://desmoinesbroadcasting.com/>



Thirty Years ago in Johnston

Saturday, May 18th, 1974, was clean-up day in Johnston, following a storm with tornado-like winds on May 13.

Trees were up-rooted, power lines were down, and buildings were damaged, most notably the Johnston High School on NW 62nd Avenue. A chimney collapsed and fell through the roof of the school, bringing with it rafters and ceiling. There was extensive damage to rooms below, and to the library and other rooms from water. Fortunately there were no injuries, as students were just arriving as the storm hit.

That same month the contractors completed work on the new High School.

And in July the district was preparing to open a Middle School (grades 5, 6,7 and 8) – a new concept in Johnston – at the old, and repaired and refurbished, Johnston Consolidated School building.
(See story on page 4)



<h3>In memoriam</h3>

Donald White

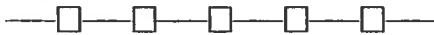
The Historical Society has received information that Don White died on January 14, 2004. A Johnston native, Don was in the sod business. He was a member of the JSHS, and contributed

to the Ridgedale Cemetery flagpole installations. We send sympathy to his friends and family.

Joni (JoAnne) Weatherspoon

Joni Weatherspoon died June 28 in Oregon. A native of Johnston, she attended school here, and after graduation from Michigan State U. she moved to Oregon. There she co-founded a vineyard in the Willamette Valley. She was a community leader, and active in wine vineyard organizations.

Joni was a member of the JSHS; the society sends sympathy to her children, mother, Margaret Weatherspoon, sister Jackie Reineke, both members, and to her sisters Martha Stevenson, and Mary Bowden, and the rest of her family and friends.



Seventy-six Years Ago: Johnston Consolidated School

The Class of 1928 at Johnston Consolidated School was the first graduating class to publish an annual. They called it the "Blue and Gold", and included photos and information about clubs, teams and other school activities. There were 21 students in the class. Following is a short essay (slightly edited) which they included in their annual, and it gives us a glimpse of the school at that time.

SOME FACTS YOU MIGHT LIKE TO KNOW

The Johnston Consolidated school site consists of five acres which was decided on when the four districts consisting of 19.5 sections were consolidated. The building was erected in 1915 and by 1919 it was necessary to make a new addition larger than the original building. By meeting specified requirements in our curriculum we receive state and federal aid of about \$1800.

It is estimated that the cost per pupil based on enrollment is \$9.64 which is not so high as many other schools or yet so low as many. The percent of enrollment in daily attendance is 81%. Two hundred ninety-five pupils are carried daily by the 6 busses. The average distance one-way-mile per pupil is 3.7 miles. Besides this number there are 35 tuition students who must furnish their own means of transportation.

The school ground has been made one of the bright spots in the community in the summertime. The grounds have been seeded down to blue grass. Trees, shrubbery, and flowers have been planted. A tennis court and volley ball court are now under construction which will be left open during the summer months for any in the community who wish to play.

The Johnston School colors are blue and gold.

We are fortunate in our good janitor – Mr. E.E. Turpin, who keeps the school clean and warm for us. It has been said by one who is through all the schools in Polk County that our janitor is the best in Polk County.

Our school is equipped with many modern conveniences such as a radio that was bought by the students which is used for educational purposes and amusement; and a moving picture machine. This year an electric clock has been installed which automatically rings when it is time for classes to pass.

Excellent courses are now offered in Home Economics, Agriculture and Business Training. Prizes were won by our Home Economics and Agricultural exhibits at the State Fair. This past year Johnston took first place in Consolidated Schools and first place in Agriculture. Many awards have been given by the typewriter companies to the

students of our typing classes for speed and accuracy.

The cafeteria furnishes the students hot lunches if they desire them. The gymnasium offers the students a place for recreation when the weather is bad in winter. The magazines subscribed for by the school gives the students a chance to read current events and good literature in their spare time during school hours.

The graduation class of 1925 went on a pilgrimage to Springfield, Illinois to the tomb of Abraham Lincoln. Other classes have thought they would like to take a similar trip since that class enjoyed it so much but none of them have ever gone.

Last year a group of boys went from here to represent Iowa in the International Dairy

Stock Shows at Detroit and brought Johnston's greatest honors. They won 7th place with 23 states competing. Walter Rittgers, a student at Johnston School won 3rd place in judging all breeds of dairy cattle. Last fall they decided to go to Waterloo and try their skill again. Here they won 5th place among 23 schools.

Our school has been fortunate in having three pupils receive trips to Chicago through their work in the 4-H Club. Those who have gone are: Dorothy Temple, Faye Cunningham and Chester Adamson.

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

Commemorative Brick Order Form:

Engraved Brick (\$85 each)

Please fill in the name (s) to be engraved (a maximum of 14 characters per line for 2 lines)

Your Name and address: _____

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- Check payable to Johnston (Station) Historical Society
 - Mail to the Johnston Historical Society, P.O Box 109, Johnston, IA 50131