

Johnston (Station) Historical Society
P.O.Box 109 Johnston, Iowa, 50131

NEWSLETTER

Volume XII, No. 5

Published Bi-Monthly

September - 2005

President: Mary Jane Paez

Treasurer: Robert Thomas

Vice-President & Programs: Judy Bogaard

Membership: Garland Seibert

Secretary: Marlys Seibert

Email address: JSHS6161@aol.com

Phone: (515)331-0687

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

MEETINGS 2005:

Sunday Sept 25

Wednesday Oct 26

Sunday Nov 20

No December meeting

Welcome to New Members:

Vincent J. Tully of

Honesdale, PA

Sandy Benson Johnson of

Des Moines, IA

We extend sincere sympathy to:

-----The family of Mike Orlich, 85, who died on September 3, 2005. Mike served in the Coast Guard during WWII. He was a graduate of Drake University and is survived by brothers Steve, Nick and Gary and sisters Mildred, Violet and Helen. He is preceded in death by his parents (Nick & Kata), Wife Louise, sister Mary and brothers Dushan, Raymond, and Eli.

-----to Howard J. Hunt on the death of his wife, Carol. The Hunt's are JSHS members and made their home in Anchorage, Alaska. Howard is the great grandson of Ezekiel & Mary Hunt - (pioneer family in the Johnston area).

-----to Howard Bauman & family (great nephew of John Bauman) whose wife, Agnes, died Aug.30, 2005

Brick in the name of Bill Heard by Kathryn G. Heard

GIFTS Judy Bogaard \$100 for carpet runner on stairway of house

& Memorials : for Mike Orlich from Ferne & Lloyd Michael \$10

Robert & Jean Thomas \$25

The Tarlton Family \$50

For CAROL HUNT from Virginia & Ralph Silver \$30

Ferne & Lloyd Michael \$25

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Once again I am amazed with all the things that have happened since the last newsletter.

Our main event was the raising of the windmill. Jimmy Boll, of Dallas Center, is a windmill aficionado. When we first moved the windmill, he noticed the activity and offered his expertise. The windmill was totally dismantled and stored in many pieces in the basement of the house. Surprisingly enough, the pieces all went back together with Jim's help. During the reassembling, Jim pointed out the stamped date on the mechanism – Sept, 1922. In the last week of August, Jimmy came with his assistant, Brian Bensley, and his truck with a crane. Bob Thomas and Garland Seibert worked with the other men putting the final bolts and nuts into the frame and setting the legs in 4 feet of concrete. The thrilling part came as the brake was released the next day and the windmill tail turned to catch the wind and the fins whirled around. Jimmy was delighted to have a part in the resurrecting of a relic of bygone times. Eventually, we would like to use the old pump that we salvaged with the windmill and use it with a recirculating pump to give a semblance of a functioning pump.

After the city used the barn as the main office for the special census enumerators for July and part of August, the barn has been used for a wedding and a family reunion.

We have received a number of old pictures and artifacts that will be used in the museum. A group of members went to the State Historical Museum and received a tour from Jerome Thompson, the Museum Director, of the storage and preparation areas for the museum. We learned the proper way to handle and store artifacts.

The other event that came to the "farmstead" in August was the Johnston Bluegrass Festival. Bands played all day, just down the hill from the barn patio. Other bands jammed in the loft and inside the Simpson house during the day. The crowd was estimated at 1350. This event was an excellent way to expose our project to the public. Visitors were enthusiastic with what they saw. The festival sponsors are looking forward to having an annual event at the site.

Summer is a time when visitors come to visit their families in Johnston. One such visitor, Vincent Tully from Pennsylvania, came to see his daughter who lives in the apartments across the pond. His curiosity led him to come to the house. To make a long story short, he offered to recreate the damaged finial from the staircase. We are so very blessed with talented people who have offered to help.

The final piece



Photo by Ginger Ireland Schunicht

Volunteers Jimmy Boll (left) and Brian Bensley, both of Dallas Center, work to put up the old windmill at the Simpson House last week.

The windmill is the final addition to the Simpson historical farm near the Johnston Public Library. The project, started by the Johnston (Station) Historical Society in 2001, includes a turn of the century farm house and historic barn.

The house, barn and windmill were donated to the historical society by longtime Johnston residents Laverne and Shirley Simpson. They were moved from their original home on N.W. 86th Street to Johnston Commons Park in 2002.

The barn has been renovated as a gathering place for community events. It was donated to the city of Johnston earlier this year.

The historical society continues renovation of the Simpson House, which will serve as a meeting place and museum for the group.

The windmill, which was erected last week between the house and barn, was built in 1922.

The Historical Society is pleased to have been given a painting of the Simpson Barn done in oil by Helen Stice Favre, a graduate of Johnston High School in 1935. It was framed and presented to the Society by Ray Schleih and has a prominent place of display in the "piano room". Also in this room are curtains that came by way of Verdie Nelson of Rolfe & Bradgate, Ia., to her daughter Gwendolyn Lee, then to us. Because we were a "new venture", the family determined it was a good place for the vintage curtains and were most pleased to see the curtains hanging in the windows when they visited on Green Days.

We all like to reminisce and there are a variety of topics that keep coming to mind. It would be fun to have some response from Society members. Each of you has a story to share, perhaps a question to be answered or an answer to our questions....Such as:

Do you recall the special names some of the streets had such as "Otto Avenue", or Harlan Drive, Hunt Road and Allen Road to name a few?

Which of you recall the picture of George Washington that hung on the study hall wall near the fire escape? And what happened to it?

Did any of you pick out a trophy from the school's case when the old building was torn down prior to the opening of the then-new high school? Does it have its "story"?

*We are getting a start on our files of stories of families from Johnston and **each** family story is important. Please consider sharing these 'histories' with us, and with the generations to come.*

Also appreciated would be memories of what your first relationship with Johnston was. The main interest is to preserve the history of the area, town, school, businesses, and community - in word, pictures, or any other media you would like to share with us.

There have been three weddings in the Barn to date, and one more is soon to be held there. It is a beautiful setting and sometimes the local geese add their "two cents' worth" to the occasion! Whether it is sitting on the east patio or reading the names on the engraved bricks there, enjoying the view from the deck on the west end of the barn or watching the sunset from the porch swing, a visit to the House and Barn is a refreshing stop in our busy lives. Very frequently people stop by to "see what is going on!" and just as frequently there is someone to happily give them a tour. PLEASE STOP BY IF YOU ARE IN THE VICINITY.

*Thank you for the support you give to us by your memberships, gifts, memorials, and contributions. **It is greatly appreciated.***