

JOHNSTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S GIFT TO THE COMMUNITY

April 18, 2001, the Johnston (Station) Historical Society embarked on a new project to create a museum for Johnston's history and to create a community events facility in an historic setting. The Simpson family donated a the 1902 six-bedroom farmhouse, a barn that was built in 1936 and a windmill. It took over a year to prepare the structures for the move; to do fundraising; to create architectural and structural plans; and to get all the approvals and paperwork needed to accomplish our goals.

June 25, 2002, the Society made history by moving the house and barn loft two miles from their original site on NW 86th Street. Work soon started on excavation, pouring walls for the house basement and barn ground level, backfilling and berming, installing supporting beams and columns, installing water and sewer systems, creating the wooden deck to the west of the loft, and creating the base for the brick patio to the east of the loft.

June 2003, the concrete floor of the barn was poured along with the house basement floor and cellar steps. Interior walls were created, and utilities were installed. With more fundraising, more grant writing, in-kind labor and cost reductions from contractors, Community Service support, volunteers from Pioneer Hi-Bred International, the Johnston community, Johnston High School seniors, the Johnston Park Board, the Mayor's Youth Council, inmate help from Newton and Mitchellville Prisons, and thousands of hours by Society members, we came to what we have today. The barn was finished with restrooms, kitchen, and heating and air conditioning on the ground level. The upper patio was completed incorporating inscribed bricks from donors who supported this effort. The bricks are 1902 bricks that were salvaged from the foundation of the house at the 86th Street site. A new steel roof was installed, and a cultured stone façade covered the poured concrete walls.

On January 3, 2005, the Johnston (Station) Historical Society presented the City of Johnston with this gift to the community. The Society paid \$249,350 for the moving and renovation of the barn. In exchange for this gift, the City pays for the electricity, gas, and water at the museum. Grass mowing and snow removal are taken care of by the City. Moving and renovation of the house to become a museum cost the Society \$222,120. The museum is located on prime park property overlooking a pond..

The house is now a museum with numerous rooms full of stories and artifacts pertaining to the history of Johnston. Anyone who has lived, labored, or learned in Johnston is a part of its history.

All of this has been made possible through the generosity of our donors - people and businesses that have given time, money, and resources to this project. The Johnston Historical Society had a vision to give this barn as a legacy to the community.