

JOHNSTON (STATION) HISTORICAL SOCIETY
P.O.Box 109 Johnston, Iowa 50131
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JSHS is a 501(C)(3) organization	Web Site: www.johnstonhistoricalsociety.org	Treasurer: Robert Thomas
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President's Column

January 2008

Since the beginning of our "project", the Society has been supported with contributions from our members. This reflects a vested interest by people who have pride in our past and a vision for our future. It has never failed to amaze me that when we are beginning to wonder how we will ever complete our next phase, that financial and in-kind support comes to the rescue. We have been blessed repeatedly by our dedicated members.

What is truly amazing is the support that we have received over the years in the form of grants. This represents an approbation by an entity that has understood our dream. We have been given this nod of approval by many sources over the years. Some of them are: Pioneer Hi-Bred International, John Deere Credit, Prairie Meadows Racetrack and Casino, Polk County Community Betterment Grants through Polk County Supervisor, E. J. Giovannetti, Greater Des Moines Convention and Visitor's Bureau, Johnston Chamber of Commerce, Sam's Club, Mid-American Energy, Iowa Dept. of Natural Resources, Iowa Dept. of Corrections, and Elwell Foundation.

Two new grants have been submitted. One is for a Polk County Community Betterment Grant that would help to pay for the materials to construct the permanent wooden storm windows for the museum. Dick Tarlton and his son are hand crafting the windows and we are paying for the materials. We hope to hear by April that some financial support will be coming.

Another grant has been submitted to the State for microfilming the complete sets of six newspapers that have served the community since 1970. The Johnston Library has these newspapers. The microfilmed product would then be scanned and used to create a website that could be accessed through the Library's website and also through ours. On this website, a person could search a name, date, or event to find every instance that the name, date or event occurred in the 37 years of newspapers. The microfilm reels would be available at the State Historical Library. This project is exciting because it matches our mission so well.

Mission of our Society

The Johnston Historical Society is dedicated to collecting any material to illustrate the history of the area, to preserve such material and to provide for its accessibility.

CONTRIBUTIONS:

*Lee R. and Marjorie L. Baker \$1000.00 gift (Thank you so much!)
Receipt of BRAVO grant \$750*

Condolences :

To Jeff Simpson and Joe Simpson on the death of their mother, Shirley A. Simpson, widow of LaVerne Simpson, the donors of the House/Museum, Barn, windmill) who died on December 6, 2007

To Emma Jean Stillwell, whose son, Dennis Stillwell, passed away in Cottage Grove, MN on November 22, 2007. Emma Jean and her late husband, Max, were long-time Johnston residents.



December 1988, this informative and interesting article written by Dave Rave appeared in a publication of the Genealogical Society of Iowa:

“ Iowa was owned at different times by Spain and France. France last took possession of it from Spain in 1800. It was later purchased in 1803 from Napoleon by President Jefferson as a part of The Louisiana Purchase and it became a part of the USA. France and Spain never occupied Iowa. It was actually in the possession of a number of Indian tribes who were eventually driven off the land. Some early Indian tribes were The Ioways, The Dakotas (Sioux), The Souks, and The Foxes (Mesquakies). The Mesquakie of Tama County, though driven out, bought the land and returned. All other tribes moved elsewhere or were driven out.

While under Spanish ownership there were at least three early white settlements in Iowa. The first was by Julien Dubuque who received permission from the Fox Indians to mine lead. He and his Canadian assistants, with the help of the Indians worked the lead mines until his death in 1810. The second known settlement was by Basil Girard in 1795. He settled with the limits of the present Clayton County where he cut timber. The third white settlement was in 1799 by Louis Honore Tesson who operated a trading post at the head of the rapids of the Des Moines River.

Iowa was a part of the Missouri Territory from 1812 until 1821 when Missouri became a state. For 13 years it was ‘an orphan’ until it was attached to The Michigan Territory in 1834. In 1836 it became a part of the Wisconsin Territory. Iowa became a Territory of its own right on July 4, 1838, with Burlington, (formerly known as Flint Hills) as its first capital.

A dispute erupted between Iowa and Missouri in 1839 over the boundary line between them. Both militias were called up, but no shots were fired and the dispute was settled by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1848 with Iowa as the winner. It is often referred to as “The Honey War: because the Missourians cut down some hollow trees in which the bees stored their honey, and these were what the Iowans relied upon for their sweetener. What is important about this event is that in searching the 1840 census you might find your ancestor on the Missouri census rather than on the Iowa census, even though they never moved.

In 1840 the capital was moved to Iowa City and in 1846, Iowa became the 19th state of The Union.

There were only 44 counties in 1846. This number escalated to 101 but in the year 1851 was reduced to the present 99 counties. Risley and Yell counties became Webster County and Bancroft was combined with Kossuth County.

In 1846, 15,000 Mormons drove across the southern part of The Iowa Territory where they established fourteen "Camps of Israel" on their trek West. Some remained behind and became a part of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints in Lamoni, Iowa.

The first of the large number and amount of immigrant groups to settle came from Holland. Dominie Henry Peter Scholte brought 800 Dutch settlers to Pella about 1849. Another Dutch settlement was established in Sioux County by Henry Hospers.

The largest number of immigrants came from Germany. The first German settlement was Guttenberg in Clayton County. There were 127, 000 Germans in Iowa by 1890 and in 1920 half of the Iowa farmers were of German descent. The Scandinavians would be next. The Norwegians settled in the Decorah area, and the largest number of Swedes settled in Montgomery and Page counties. The largest group of Danes were in Audubon county with smaller settlements in the northwest part of the state. Other significant settlements include the British who settled in northwest Iowa, and the Czech or Bohemians who settled in Johnson, Linn and Winneshiek counties.

There were early efforts by the ethnic groups to experiment with communal living. The first were the Inspiralists who came from Germany and settled in Buffalo, New York, before moving to Iowa in 1854 and establishing The Amana Colonies. For more information on the Amish, read E & D. Schwieder's book

A Peculiar People. Another group to experiment with communal living was a group of Hungarian exiles who settled in Decatur county in 1850. This project met with failure by 1875. Icaria was the third communal enterprise in Iowa. In 1860, 236 Icarians of French origin settled in Adams County near Corning. It was disbanded by 1881. As settlements moved westward, it became necessary to move the capital from Iowa City to Des Moines in 1855, where it is today."

Old-time remedies –

**Homemade cough syrup made of equal parts lemon juice, honey and bourbon. Even if it didn't stop the cough, you would feel better and the cough would not bother you as much!

** For a sore throat one could roll up a piece of paper with a pencil to form a straw, then dip one end into a box of sulfur and blow that sulfur down the mouth and into the throat. It was horrible-tasting but a cure!

**A milk-and-bread poultice used for splinters, hangnails and most other foot and hand and other non-life-threatening infection. Milk in a saucepan with enough white bread added to make a thick paste, stir in a little salt, and when the mixture was extremely hot, it was placed in a cloth and applied to the 'area' in question where it stayed until cool.

**VICK'S VAPO-rub slathered on one's chest & neck, covered with a piece of wool, topped with flannel. Then sent to bed to "sweat it out"! It was comforting and effective, wasn't it?



Opal's Diner- 1960-1968
Johnston, Iowa



Opal Turpin, owner of
Opal's Diner- 1960-1968
Johnston, Iowa

Opal at Opal's Diner

Thank-you to John Turpin for these two photos for our Museum collection.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES:

**** Encourage your scout troop, church group, club, or family to make a visit to the Open House the second Sunday of each month from 2-4:00 p.m. or call for 'special arrangements'. There is always someone ready to make accommodations for your visit.**

**** Help in arranging and cleaning displays.**

**** Collect photos, clippings of local interest, obituaries you might have for us to copy, or providing for an interview for the Museum collection.**

****Information in the form of photos, newsprint, or any information regarding former and current businesses in Johnston – past and present.**

****Stories of your families connection with Johnston. Just sharing your family members' names, place of your residence, work place or business owned – all is appreciated.**

INTERVIEWS:

This is an area we are currently working to develop. Everyone has a story to tell and if you are willing to have your story video-taped or recorded or simply written down for others to know, please let us know. A phone call to an email to the proper 'address' on the newsletter's front page will get the job done. We certainly would hope to hear from **YOU!**

Current membership renewals are not due until June 1, 2008

NEW MEMBER APPLICATION: Name _____

Address _____

Single Membership \$10 _____ Family Membership \$12 _____

ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTION: _____

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)

Name & Address _____

Check payable to Johnston (Station) Historical Society

Mail to the Johnston Historical Society, P.O Box 109, Johnston, IA 50131