

# Newsletter

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May 1999

President: Mary Jane Paez  
Vice-Pres. & Program: Patty Wallerstedt  
Secretary: Beulah Darling

Treasurer: Don Denman  
Newsletter: Selma Duvick  
Ray Schelths

## May Meeting

**Date: Sunday, May 23, 1999**  
**Time: 4:00 p.m.**

**Place: Crown Point  
Meeting Room**

### Program:

We will share a Potluck meal

And we will share our researches into  
family stories.

Bring your books of family genealogy,  
your photos, information about how you  
have researched and discovered your  
family histories and stories.

If you are not "into" family history, come  
and enjoy what others have done.

Paez has had inquiry concerning our cemetery data on the Tombstone Transcription Project. She had a call from a man whose wife is a descendent of Reuben Rittgers, an early Johnston settler. He is following up on information he received on our site on the Project.

For those who missed it last time, the Internet address for the USGenWeb Tombstone Transcription Project is:  
<http://www.rootsweb.com/~cemetery/registry.html>

Thanks to contributions by Mrs. Bunny Swanson, the Johnston Lions Club, and the Veterans of Foreign Wars, a flag pole has been purchased for the Valley View Cemetery.

A new gate for the cemetery will need to be made.

### March Meeting Report:

Sharon Mahoney was enthusiastic about continuing the work of her Service Learning Class students in cooperation with the JSHS. She wants to continue the relationship, with perhaps some more cemetery clean-up this spring. Mary Jane

## Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the JSHS was held on Tuesday, April 27, at the Crown Point Meeting Room.

Officers elected:

President: Mary Jane Paez

Vice-President: Patty Wallerstedt

Secretary: Beulah Darling  
Treasurer: Don Denman  
Board of Directors:  
Mary Ann Roberts (last year of term)  
Ferne Michael: ( three year term)  
Ray Schleih: (one year term)

**Committees:**

Membership: Ferne Michael  
By-laws: Ken Rittgers  
Projects: Bob Thomas  
Ways & Means: Louis & Gay Friestad  
Margaret Pennington

Finance: Louis Friestad  
Ray Schleih

Acquisitions: \_\_\_\_\_  
Program: Pat Wallerstedt  
Judy Bogaard

Archive: Bob & Shirley Johnson  
Judy Bogaard

Public Relations: Madilyn Allender  
Audit: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: Jean Mott  
Lillie Broadie  
Beulah Darling  
Margaret Pennington  
Bob Thomas  
Beulah Bettoney

Genealogy: Shirley Miller  
Phil Murray  
Ken & Pat Wallerstedt  
Myrtle VanDyke  
Dolores Summy

Museum/House: Ray Schleih  
Beulah Darling  
Lloyd Michael  
Bob Thomas  
Ken Wallerstedt  
Barbara Zorn

Agent: Beulah Darling  
Newsletter: Selma Duvick  
Ray Schleih

**DUES**

It was voted to increase dues beginning  
January 2000: Single membership: \$10  
Family membership: \$12  
Commercial membership: \$25

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**DEDICATION OF FLAG POLE**

The flagpole installed at Valley View  
Cemetery will be dedicated at a ceremony on  
Memorial Day, May 31, at 9 a.m.

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**HISTORIC PHOTOS**

Jim Sanders, city administrator, is requesting  
historic photos of old Johnston to be used to  
display on the walls at Crown Point.  
Photos will be enlarged, and originals  
returned. If you have any you think would  
be interesting , call City Hall. Look through  
those boxes and albums of old photos!!

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**BY-LAWS**

The Board of Directors will look at the By-  
Laws to determine whether there are  
inconsistencies, or revisions which need to  
be made.



The JSHS was represented at "OASIS",  
an educational event held at the Johnston  
Middle School presenting information about  
local services and sponsored by Johnston  
Community Education.

Ferne Michael and Margaret Pennington,  
Bob Thomas, Lloyd Michael, Dolores  
Summy, and Meyer Pennington helped to  
represent JSHS with an exhibit, and tell  
visitors about our organization.

JSHS plans to have similar representation at Johnston "Green Days" in June



**From the President.....**

On May 14, Johnston's future met Johnston's past. Students from Mrs. Mahoney's eight grade Community Service Learning class worked along side of Society members and Johnston Public Works employees in the three Johnston cemeteries: Ridgedale, Valley View and Kinsey/Lawson. Another group of students from the same class worked last fall at cleaning up and planting bulbs at Ridgedale cemetery.

Besides raking, trimming and pulling weeds, the students also learned about some of the ancestors of Society members buried in the old graveyards.

Ezekiel Hunt, the first white settler to come to Jefferson township in 1846, is buried n Ridgedale. Ezekiel is the great, great grandfather of Ferne Michael. Ridgedale cemetery was originally known as the Hunt family burial ground. It was dedicated in 1856.

Valley View cemetery, overlooking Camp Dodge, was the site for McClain family burials. The original McClain, J.D., came to Jefferson township in 1848 McClain was an assessor and also a justice of the peace for the area.

The Lawson and Kinsey families were early settlers in Webster township. John Lawson, for whom the Lawson Elementary School is named, donated the land for the first school in the area. The cemetery is adjacent to the Kinsey "homeplace".

The students could understand a little better the hardships of the pioneer families, after seeing some of the gravestones of the young children that didn't survive before antibiotics were discovered. It is hoped that this partnership will continue - a worthwhile experience for everyone.

Mary Jane Paez



**LOOKING AHEAD.....**

Put the date for our June meeting, Wednesday, June 23 on your calendar. We will meet at 4:00 p.m. at the Crown Point meeting room when Kenneth Rittgers, JSHS member and local attorney will speak to us on Wills, Probate, and Estate Planning.



**Welcome to New Members!**

Jerry Gorden, Johnston IA

Sharon Mahoney, Des Moines, IA

Donella Lint, Johnston, IA

Shirley & Charles Burkett, Johnston, IA

Charles B. Roberts, Johnston, IA

Glenn E. Buhr, Des Moines, IA



**Memorial Contributions:**

Ferne Michael in memory of her cousins  
John Gall and Orval Kinsey.

Ferne Michael : in memory of Melba  
Sorenson



**Other Historical Societies Report.....**

Ankeny Area Historical Society has a library of videos which members may check out. These videos feature interviews with long-time residents about Ankeny history.

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The Newsletter of the Polk County Historical Society reported on a talk given by Jan Fleming concerning the "grotesques", fanciful and caricatured carved faces, which appear on the exterior of the Polk County Court House.

Next time you visit the Court House, walk around, and look for them. They are visible from the ground.



**On The School Bus Route:  
Following up.....**

In the November 1998 and January 1999 Newsletters, we printed parts of a poem

written in 1916 about his horse-drawn school-bus route by driver Charlie Hammond. ( Charlie's route took him from just east of Merle Hay Road on Meredith Drive, down Meredith Drive to 86th Street, and thence north to 54th Avenue, and east to 72nd Street ). Charlie gave only the first name of children he took to school, and we wondered who they all were.

Gladys Kuefner was one of those children, and she remembers who most of them were, and where they lived.

First were George and Forest; they would have lived on Meredith, east of Merle Hay. We're not sure of these two. But Judy Bogaard thinks that the next, Helen, was her mother Virginia's cousin, Helen Keyte. Her brothers were Ben and Kenneth. Next on the route was Louise Pieckenbrock.

Moving west along Meredith Drive, we come to Sybel Michael., and further on, Anna Dunn.

We pass the churchyard-- now McDivitt Cemetery, and then pick up Hazel and Earl Stemler. There were a number of Stuart households-- four brothers (Mark, Ray, Rufus and Warren) along the way, and from these families, the bus picked up Harold and Earl Stuart, and Harvey and Harland Stuart.

Next on the route was Dorothy Parmetter, and another Stuart, Virginia, out near Meredith and 86th Street. The bus continued north on 86th Street and then east on 54th Avenue, and picked up Gladys Kuefner. The Wilson children were Evelyn, Alice, Leland and Gerald-- at this stop "we nearly always wait"!!

They continued east down "the timber road", 54th Avenue. and came to another Kuefner, where Herbert Kuefner and Agnes got on the bus. At this point, the horse-drawn bus turned north, and had to cross bridges and, in wet seasons, mud holes as it moved up 72nd Street to where it joined 62nd Avenue.. It then continued east down to the Johnston Consolidated School.

A deserted School House , the Friar School, was located where 72nd Street intersected 62nd Avenue (Johnston Road). Gladys Kuefner remembers that she began her schooling in the Friar school. It closed when the district consolidated in 1915. Other schools in this area were the Ryder school at

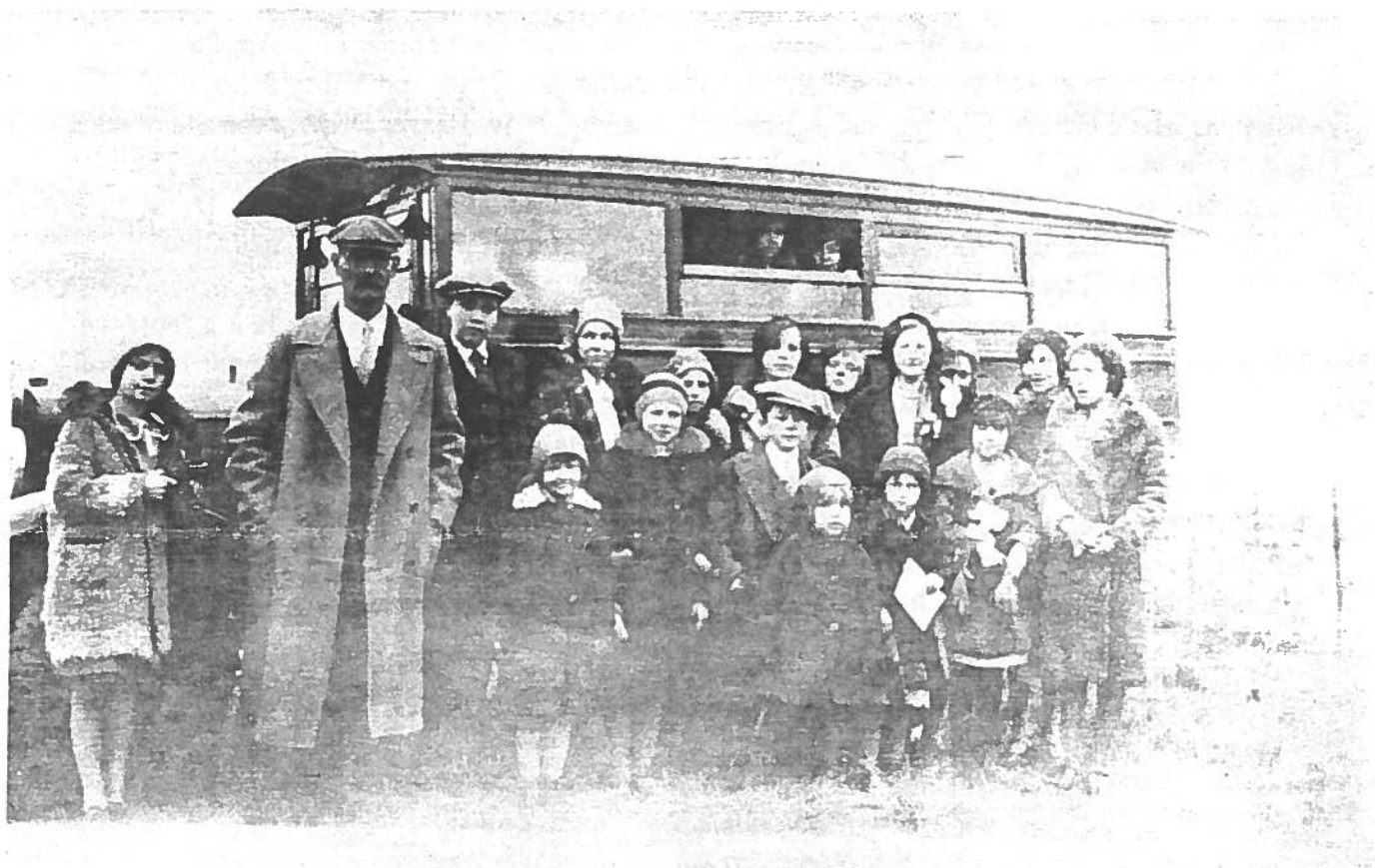
the south-west corner of 100th Street and Meredith Drive, and Valley School, located along N.W. Beaver Drive at the site of what is now the Lloyd Busby residence. The Ridgedale school was on Beaver Drive, across from the Hyperion Field Club.

Charlie Hammond's bus route is a route we can follow today, save for the north part of 72nd Street, which no longer continues across Beaver Creek through to 62nd Ave.

(Many thanks to Gladys Kuefner for her time and information, and to Judy Bogaard for her contributions.)



Mr. Towers, the driver, and a horse-drawn Johnston School Bus, about 1920



Driver Jim Hunt with a Johnston School Bus, prior to 1924.  
This is a motorized bus ( note engine & wheel to the left), but the bus itself is identical to the horse-drawn model

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