

JOHNSTON (STATION) HISTORICAL SOCIETY
P.O.Box 109 Johnston, Iowa 50131

Volume XII No. 6 Published bi-monthly November 2005
email: JSHS6161@aol.com phone: (515)331-0687 **A 501(c)(3) organization**
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Vice President/Programs: Judy Bogaard
Membership: Garland Seibert Secretary/Newsletter: Marlys Seibert

President's Column

Progress continues on the museum. In September, the Bauman family had a reunion in the house. They were all delighted to see the present state of the place. The family donated an oval picture showing the house and original barn before the barn burned down in the '30's.

For our October meeting, the Big Creek Historical Society Players came to the barn and presented a reenactment of the Beebe Family reminiscing about their time in Polk City from the time of their arrival to their departure for Utah. Tom Cox, the Society's President had written the script for the "play". Our members really enjoyed their visit and performance.

In early October, we hosted the State Board meeting of the Department of Corrections. We prepared a Power Point presentation to show the "before, "during" and "after" of all the projects that the Newton inmates helped us with. Gary Maynard, the Director of the Department said that we helped them far more than they helped us. They are ready to be called on whenever we need them.

Bob Thomas spends almost every day at the museum. He enjoys the visits of people stopping by. Sherry Simpson, the daughter-in-law of LaVern and Shirley, brought in a family album for us to scan pictures. We now have a number of pictures showing the family enjoying life in the house and barn. She also brought a quilting frame to donate. In addition, she pieced a 36" square "school house" quilt that has been mounted on the frame. Visitors to the museum can put in a few stitches when they stop by.

We have a Maytag mangle donated by Leroy Main and a Maytag square wringer washer donated by Ken Bilbrey now. We also have a Coolerator ice box from Jim Sandregren. These can be used in a display to show "woman's work".

Barton Schlenker has donated an unusual piece of "folk art". His grandmother and great-grandmother made a horse-shoe shaped wreath with flowers made of many colors of yarn. The wreath is mounted in a deep shadow box made of walnut. Barton said that it was made well over 100 years ago. One internet source says that "during the Victorian period (1837-1901), European and North American societies believed that a middle- or upper-class woman should function as manager of both the house and family. The interior of the home subsequently became a showcase for a woman's best handwork and decorative taste. The term "fancy work" came to describe both functional and purely aesthetic objects a Victorian woman made or embellished in her free time. From 1850 to 1875, one of the most popular forms of fancywork was the hair wreath.

Appealing to the tendency among Victorian women to incorporate the importance

The Story of My Grandfather Gladys Kuefner's story

My grandfather's father came to Des Moines and brought a half block on the river front; here he built a frame house and had everything ready for his family. In 1855, he went back to Cincinnati Ohio, for them and they arrived in Des Moines, July 4th, 1855. My grandfather was then one and one half years old. It took them six weeks to come from Ohio to Des Moines in a covered wagon. This trip was not without its thrills, for the horses ran away three times, turning the wagon over. There were about sixteen little huts all located on the riverfront when grandfather arrived in Des Moines.

My grandfather's father had the first bakery in Des Moines. It was located on Second and Walnut Streets. Here he baked bread for the Union soldiers. He had four cookie cutters that he used in his bakery, and my grandfather has them now, they are seventy years old. Many Indians came to the bakery to get things. They were friendly if left alone.

Mr. Spofird had the first livery barn and Des Moines House or hotel located on the river front. Mr. Hossick had a hide store on Walnut Street. There were no bridges so they had to go across the Des Moines and Coon (sic) rivers in ferry boats, paying a toll of ten or fifteen cents. The total livestock owned in was four cows and four pigs. The pigs were bought in the spring when small and fed garbage from the Des Moines House and by the next winter they were large enough to butcher.

The pasture lands were on the South Side and it was the duty of my grandfather and his sister to take the cattle back and forth. One night it got a little late and the children got lost; so they had to sleep in the timber all night. The next morning their parents found them, safe but much frightened.

My grandfather's mother made all the candles as they had no lamps or lanterns. At night she would get the tallow ready and pour it into the molds. She let these stand overnight and the next morning would take out long white candles.

The first school house in Des Moines was a German school, a very small building located when the Coliseum is now. My grandfather attended this school until fifteen years of age. The first church was German Lutheran, and was located beside the school. During his school days, grandfather seems to have been popular as a singer and speaker for he appeared by himself at picnics and on Fourth of July programs.

When the family first settled, there was brush and timber on Walnut Street out to University Avenue. Any of this government land could be bought for a dollar and a quarter an acre. One man had forty acres of land which he traded for a team of horses. The team that brought my grandfather's family to Des Moines was traded for forty acres of ground near Winterset. My grandfather said that the first bridge built across the Des Moines river was not strong enough to hold the weight of a swiftly moving team. The fine for trotting horses across this bridge was fifteen dollars. Only a limited number of

hogs or cattle could be driven across at one time. The first bridge across the Raccoon River was a covered bridge. The stage coach, which came into use after the covered wagon, was drawn by four horses and had room for four passengers. The passengers were often seasick from riding backwards. Later, the horse streetcar came into use; it was drawn by three horses and had room for twelve passengers. The streetcars had a roof but no covering for the side. This last mode of transportation was invented by a man named Turner.

The little frame house in which grandfather lived in Des Moines stood there until they tore it down to build the Post Office, which stands there now. When grandfather was fifteen years of age, his father put him on a farm nine miles northwest of Des Moines where he lived in a little log cabin. Later this cabin burned and a better house was built.

Grandfather took his wheat to the mill, which stood where the dam is now. It was a grist mill run by water power, and it ground bran, shorts and flour. It cost the pioneers nothing except a toll taken out in wheat. When six or eight bushels of wheat were taken to be ground, he received two hundred pounds of flour plus shorts and bran.

When my grandfather came out into the country, farming methods were very crude. Grain was sown by hand, walking plows and walking cultivators were used, grain was bound by hand and horses were used on the threshing machine. They had to measure the grain by half bushels as that was the largest measure. A lot of hard work was involved in the threshing of the grain. Sometimes the straw from the stock carrier was so dirty that my grandfather, who stacked the straw, couldn't see for two or three days. Corn was planted by hand; they had an implement like a four runner sled which they pulled across the field length wise and cross wise, making a checker board marking. At every corner of a square, three or four kernels were dropped and covered with the hoe. This method of marking was called 'four-marked'.

Gladys Kuefner (Johnston High School, Johnston Station, Iowa)

Johan Kuefner had two sons: Julius Kuefner and Diedrich Kuefner and one daughter, Barbara, who married a man with the last name of Neumann.

Julius and wife raised a family of four daughters: Twins Lottie (m. Walter Kern) and Lenora (m Arlie Otto), Lucy, and Maurine (JHS '38).

Deidrich and wife, Johanna E. raised a family of 12 children:

John (Ida) lived on 86th Street – daughter, Gladys (JHS '26)

Chrissie - married Fred Kern and they farmed on N.W. 54th Street

Herbert Kuefner – first wife was Grace Rittgers

Agnes (JHS'20) married Clyde Coulthard

Laura – married to Sellner and their family raised in Johnston

Nettie – married name of Carl – lived in Mason City, IA

Gertrude; Caroline (1882-1939); and Josephine as well as three we have no names for.



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EMAIL US AT CRHAMES@CI.JOHNSTON.IA.US FOR RESERVATIONS OR

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

This & That-----

Dick Tarlton is doing research on obituaries of Johnston High School graduates and plans to have a copy of the results at the Historical Society museum. Our volume of printed information is growing by leaps and bounds.

The Johnston Lions' Club has made their scrapbooks available to the Historical Society. This includes the story regarding the building of the Clubhouse.

Johnston High School's library is in need of school annuals for the years of 1982 and 2003. If anyone has a copy they would like to donate to their collection, or copies of annuals from other years as well, get them to the Historical Society and we will see to it that those copies get to the proper place. They would also appreciate composite class photos.

****The last meeting for the year 2005 is Sunday, November 20. A potluck at 4:00 p.m. in the Barn. Please bring your covered dish(es) and your own table service. Regular meeting to follow the meal.**

Meetings for 2006: Sunday, Jan 22	Wednesday Feb 22
Sunday, March 26	Wednesday April 26
Sunday July 23	Wednesday May 24
Sunday September 24	Wednesday June 28
Sunday November 26	Wednesday August 23
	Wednesday October 25

Please check the number following your name on the address label. An "05" indicates that your membership payment is due. We will soon include a renewal form for ease in rejoining the JSHS for the year 2006. If no payment is sent to us, you will no longer receive a newsletter. And, to paraphrase our local newspaper, "You miss an issue, you miss a lot!"

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Gift shop coupon Good now until the end of December for a 10% discount on items in the Gift Shop at the Simpson House.

Any day the flag is flying at the Johnston Historical Society site, the Gift Shop is open!



The holidays are soon upon us. Come see what we have!