

Newsletter

Volume VIII No. 5

Published Bi-Monthly

September 2001

President: Mary Jane Paez
Vice-Pres. & Programs: Judy Bogaard
Secretary: Madilyn Allender

Treasurer: Donald Zarley
Membership: Ferne Michael
Newsletter: Selma Duvick

September Meeting

Sunday, September 23, 2001

4:00 p.m.

At the Crown Point Meeting Room

Our speaker is **Shirley Miller**. Shirley is a Certified Researcher with the National Genealogical Society, and Past President of the Iowa Genealogical Society. She is a member of the Pioneer Sons and Daughters, and of the JSHS, has taught classes in Genealogy and has published a number of genealogy books.

Shirley is well qualified to speak to us on how to research your family history, sources of information, and the use of the Internet in family research.

**We will have a PotLuck meal
Bring your table service, and a
dish to share**

From the President.....

By now you should have received a letter, brochure and donor form relating to the Simpson house and barn project. I hope you give it your full attention and consideration.

In preparing for talking to people about this project, I have reviewed some of our accomplishments since we started as a society in 1994.

The cemeteries have received a great deal of our attention. The survey of the burials was done and put on-line, the Ridgedale gate and three flagpoles installed, the "praying hands" sculpture commissioned, the tombstones were steam-cleaned.

Working with the eighth grade students in successive years at the cemeteries has been wonderful. The initially reluctant students were delighted with their accomplishments and learned so much from Ferne Michael about the early families of Beaver Creek Settlement.

Because of our success with other projects, I know that we can succeed in the biggest project of all – the Simpson house and barn.

I wish that each of you could see the inside of this wonderful farmhouse. Actually, you will be able to. A new website is being developed at

www.johnstonhistoricalsociety.org

We will have pictures of the inside rooms of the house. As the project develops we plan to keep every posted with updates.

Since we started talking about the museum, we have received various offers of items of historic value. We want to be able to showcase the history of our schools, businesses, city, families and individuals who have been instrumental in our development. An inscribed brick would be a wonderful way to honor family members, special events, of groups.

A number of companies have contributions programs that match the donations of their employees to non-profit organizations. When you make your donation for our project, check first with your company about their policy on gift giving.

Preserving the history of Johnston and providing for its accessibility are the prime objectives of the Johnston (Station) Historical Society. Make it happen!

Mary Jane Paez



Looking Ahead

Our meeting on Wednesday, October 24 will feature **Jerry Miller, restoration painter** speaking on the restoration of Terrace Hill. Jerry has wonderful slide pictures of his work. We enjoyed those of the restoration of

the State Capitol, and we look forward to seeing similar work at Terrace Hill.

On November 25, Sunday: Program to be announced..



Meeting Reports.....

A video, courtesy of Myrtle Van Dyke, was featured at the July 22nd meeting. The IOWAVETS video told the story of Iowa women who served in the armed forces during WWII.

In August, the group watched a video made some years ago of a special interview with Johnston native and descendent of early Johnston pioneers. Herb Kuefner. Herb, who died in 1999, was the son of Dietrich Kuefner, who came to Des Moines in 1854 at the age of two, in a covered wagon.

Business: Our business meetings have focused on our acquiring the Simpson House, and raising the necessary funds.

Many of those at the August meeting adjourned to stuff envelopes for the mailing that all of you recently received.



Welcome to New Members!

The Johnston (Station) Historical Society welcomes the following new members:

Elnora Masters, Urbandale, IA
Michael and Jo (McPherson) Hoss,
Ankeny, IA

John Kerber & Elizabeth King-Kerber,
Johnston, IA
Dorothy (Hunt) Thompson, Sun City, AZ

We are now Online!



Thanks to the work of Kathy Wallerstedt, the JSHS has a website! This is a “work-in-progress”, and we invite you to log in now and then to see pictures of the Simpson House, and to keep up-to-date on news of your Historical Society and the progress of our fund drive!

Go to www.johnstonhistoricalsociety.com

And we are wondering if there are those members who would like to receive the newsletter online. Let us know, for now, by USPS, at P.O. Box 109, Johnston, IA 50131.

Kathy has done a great job, and we thank her for her efforts!!



Corrections:.....

In the July Newsletter, on the bottom of page 4: a gravel pit (not grave.).

On page 7, paragraph 3 “About the Simpson House”. John Bauman’s daughter was Laura Bauman Garlock (not Norma).

Dedication of Flags

Representatives from local organizations and a detachment from the Iowa National Guard gathered at the new Johnston Horizon Elementary School on Wednesday, September 5th. to raise and dedicate flags presented to the school.

Funds for purchase of the flags were provided by the Johnston Historical Society, and the Johnston Lions Club, the Johnston American Legion, and the Urbandale-Johnston VFW.

The whole student body was present for the ceremony, and at its conclusion many students came forward and individually thanked the organization representatives for these gifts.

More Changes on Merle Hay

Probably no location in Johnston has seen more changes over the years than the NW corner of Merle Hay and NW 62nd Avenue.

From Rittgers grocery to houses, to Subway, to Walgreens. More of the history of this corner in the November Newsletter.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR OUR HOUSE AND BARN

Our treasurer, Donald Zarley, has begun to receive responses to the Society’s letter asking for your help in funding the move of the Simpson House and Barn.

**We thank the following, reported as of
September 7:**

Wagonmaster:

Mark and Mary Johnson,
Mesa, AZ

Scout:

Josephine McGonigal
Johnston, IA

Ada Diefenderfer
Johnston, IA

Laurayne Robinette
Urbandale, IA
In memory of Huston and Ethel
Robinette

Garland and Marlys Seibert
Ankeny, IA

Beverly Shelton
Johnston, IA
In memory of Howard Lee Shelton

Shirley and Charles Burkett
Johnston, IA

Walter Olmstead
Vista, CA

Jim and Fran Melas
Poway, CA

James and Jean Gilbert
Johnston, IA

Alix and Mary Jane Paez
Johnston, IA

Kenneth and Val Bilbry
Granger, IA

Ruth (Bilz) Dougherty
Santa Maria, CA
In memory of Roselyn Bilz
Voorhees

Dorothy (Hunt) Thompson
Sun City, AZ

Caretaker:

Alan and Deane McPherson
Urbandale, IA

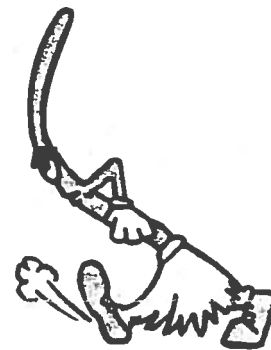
Amy Plymat
Johnston, IA

Several of these contributors have also
ordered inscribed commemorative bricks.

The society hopes that before the next
newsletter letter, most of the necessary
funds will be subscribed.

We have a way to go, but with your help the
moved and renovated Simpson House and
Barn will be a wonderful and exciting
addition to the city of Johnston.

And please note: the JSJS is an
IRS code 501 (c) (3) organization



**Clean-up at the Simpson House
and Barn.**

The house and barn have that “lived-in”
look! Before the move, we need to
clean up, throw out the carpeting, and other
remaining unwanted “junk”.

We have planned for removal containers to be on site, and need people to work at cleaning up. The house is in the 6800 block of NW 86th Street.

Dates are: Saturday, September 29, and Saturday, October 6th and 13th at 9 am. If you can help, please come with some small tools if possible: screwdrivers, utility knives, hammers, etc. Facemasks will be needed in some areas of the house and barn.

For more information, please call Bob Thomas, at 277-3882, or Mary Jane Paez at 278-1170.

In Memoriam

Dwight Stall, of Clearwater FL died on May 30, 2001. Dwight was a member of the JSHS. We send sympathy to his sister, Maxine Fjare, and to the rest of his family.

Mary Ferguson, of Johnston, died on August 25, 2001, in Des Moines. The JSHS sends sympathy to her family, sister Droga Vignovich, and brothers Barney, Radomir and Nicolas Vignovich, all members of the JSHS.

ABOUT OUR MISSION.....

During the past days, it has been difficult for your editor to concentrate on the affairs and concerns of the Historical Society, and to write a newsletter.

In view of the disasters our country is dealing with, and the resulting suffering of so many people, enthusiasm about moving a house and barn, and raising the funds to

carry this out, may seem inconsequential and unimportant.

But in view of our mission, to preserve the history of this small part of the USA, perhaps it is something that we should be paying attention to. It is a project demonstrating to ourselves and to our fellow citizens what this country, its freedoms, its people, and its values and its history mean to all of us.

The editor

Thirty Years Ago in Johnston.....

Mrs. Katherine Keeton, librarian at Johnston High School discovered a 1906 City Directory in which John F. Johnston was listed as general freight agent for this station on the Inter-Urban railroad.

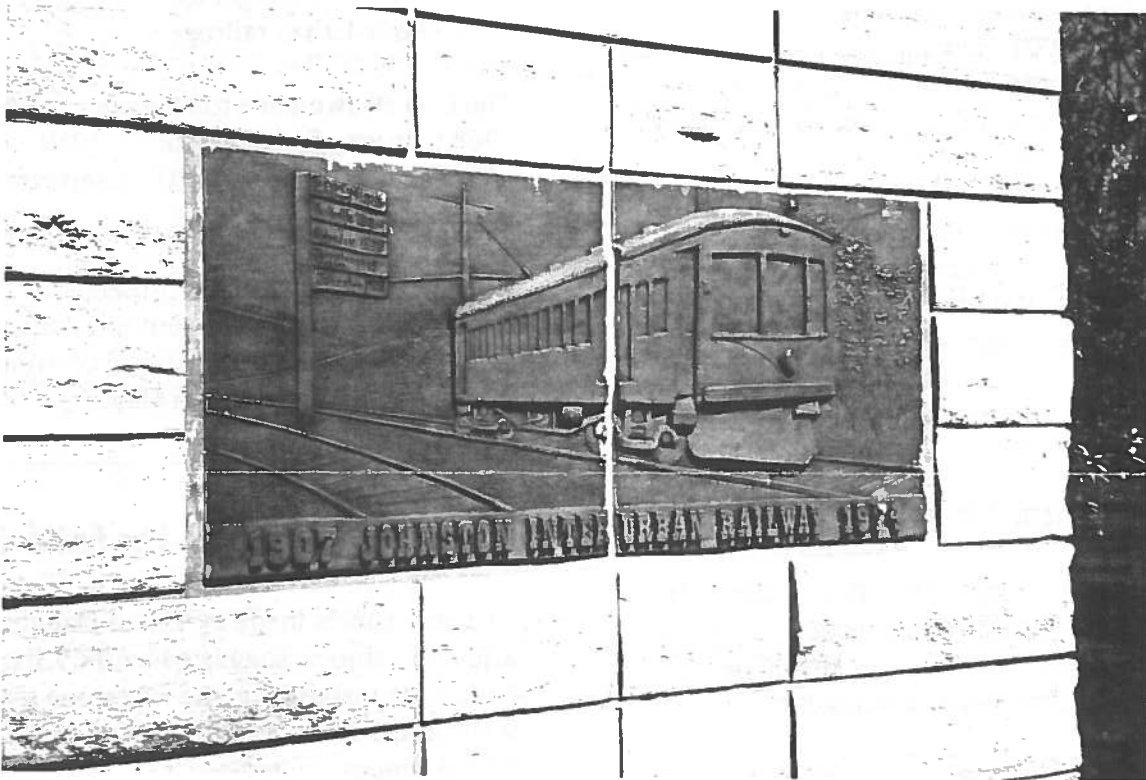
The Bob Brown Chevrolet agency offered a 1968 Corvette for \$2795, and a 1969 Mercedes for \$3095 in a 10th Anniversary Sale

Mrs. Richard (Pat) Nixon presented a Landscaping Award of Merit to William Heard, of Heard Gardens, for exceptional landscaping at Bob Brown Chevrolet.

Clay Panels are Installed

The clay panels made by David Dahlquist after the subjects suggested by the JSHS, have been installed on the limestone sign walls at the corners of 86th Street and NW 62nd Avenues.

On the following page are photos of one of the signs featuring the Inter-Urban.



Limestone Sign Wall at the South-west Corner of 86th Street and 62nd Avenue
With the Clay Panel featuring the Inter-Urban Railway