

JOHNSTON (STATION) HISTORICAL SOCIETY
P.O.Box 109 Johnston, Iowa 50131
6161 Northglenn Drive - Johnston Commons Park

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Email address: JSHS6161@aol.com Telephone: (515)331-0687 **JSHS is a 501(c)(3) organization**
President: Mary Jane Paez Treasurer: Robert Thomas
Vice President/Programs: Judy Bogaard
Membership: Garland Seibert Secretary/Newsletter: Marlys Seibert

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President's Column Johnston Historical Society

We continue to have a busy time at the museum. There are more and more notebooks filling up with articles and pictures of historic interest. The city Planning Dept. and Mary Jones, at Camp Dodge, have furnished us with more photos along with aerial photos and maps.

Sam's Club has donated \$1,000 to the Society to help out with our video/interview project. We will soon order the equipment so that we can learn to set up and video interviews with people who can give their historical perspective of Johnston.

Shirley Schleih's Adams has been very busy with putting together pages and pages of information about Johnston houses built from the 1850's to the 1920's. She has been tenacious with her research. Now she is working on researching Johnston businesses. Old newspapers and school newsletters have been very helpful. She would appreciate any help that people could offer.

On August 31st, we were honored to have Governor Vilsack arrive at the site as part of his "Walk Across Iowa" program. He walked from Ankeny and planted a tree in the barnyard between the house and the barn. During a town meeting that was conducted at the barn, Bob Thomas presented the Governor with a computer disk that had a file showing all the work that the Dept. of Correction's inmates did for us on both the house and barn. We continue to be very grateful for that help that made our dream come true.

The final stage of widening of Merle Hay Road has offered us an opportunity that will never again be available. We had seven truckloads of Merle Hay Road bricks delivered to the site. Garland Seibert and Bob Thomas have

worked on cleaning, sorting and stacking the bricks. Our final project with these bricks will be to create a 200' pathway from the parking lot, through the apple orchard to the side door of the barn.

The wealth of historical information that we are accumulating is awesome. As visitors come to see the museum, they frequently remember that they have something that would be of interest to us. Of course, we are thrilled that they are willing to share their slice of Johnston history that will be shared with future generations.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS:

Robert and Carol Sue Henderson Johnston, IA
William J. and Julie A. Marlin, Jr. Pinellas Park, FL

BRICKS: Bill & Julie Marlin Pinellas Park, FL

GIFTS: \$100 from Mark Johnson of Queen Creek, AZ (formerly Johnston, IA)
\$100 William (JHS 46) & Georgye Neiderfer

MEMORIALS: Sigurd J. and Dianne E. Nelson \$50 in memory of Donald N. Duvick
In memory of Raymond Schlenker:

Robert & Jean Thomas	\$25
Dick Tarlton	25
Stephen and Norma Sutton	25
Barton & Virginia Schlenker	25
Mary Jane & Alix Paez	10

HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBER: Raymond Schlenker (JHS'35) died on August 10, 2006, at Iowa Methodist Hospital. Raymond had been living at Bickford Cottages, Urbandale, IA. Raymond was born November 5, 1914 and was a life-long resident of Johnston. He is survived by one brother, Barton (JHS'43) & his wife Virginia and a sister-in-law, Esther (Mrs Clarence) Schlenker, nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents, George & Mabel (Miller) Schlenker; his wife, Marie; his sisters: Margaret Schlenker Hockmuth Ford (JHS'34) & Veda Schlenker Ivers (JHS'31) & brothers: Clarence (JHS'29) & LeRoy (JHS'29).

We extend our Sympathy to Bob & Marilyn (Bauman) Finney and their family on the death of Bob's mother. Wilma Fay Finney (age 98) of Des Moines passed away on August 9, 2006.

A WORD FROM DICK TARLTON: "Just thought I would put out a fire before it really blazes. There are a few errors in July's nickname match. (Of course we did it on purpose to see if all the readers were paying attention!)

First: On "**Bud**"- it is Melvin instead of Philip Reese. Second: On "**Doc**" its Howard instead of Vernon. (Vernon is the son) and thirdly, all the answers are not necessarily Johnston High School graduates, but all are well known in the Johnston area.

The historical society is the recipient of an extensive collection of school memorabilia donated by **Clyde W. "Bill" Winters (HS '62)**. Bill's scrapbooks are 'chock ful' of interesting information and one can spend considerable time reading through them. Thank you so much, Bill, for sharing them with everyone.

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Even if you are on the right track, you will get run over if you just sit there.

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A Member Responds:

Jim Sandegren comments on "Dig Into The Past" from the July Newsletter. He writes: "I guessed all of the stations. With respect to Walt Dunn's Phillip 66, he built that station when Dave Miller came back from the war, WWII. During his absence Walt ran the Texaco Station and I gathered that he was not happy to see Dave Miller take back the station. But with his own station he had to compete against some long-time operators. When Dave Miller and George Witt both came back and re-opened, things got tough. When my family lived in the house where the Crowell family lived, we rented it from "Old Man Johnson".-----

A "special "Thank-You" to member/volunteer **Vince Tully** of Honesville, PA for his help in the 'brickyard' this past week. The cleaned bricks are stacked on the pallets and awaiting the beginning of placing them for the walkways.

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#### THE Mc CLAINS IN JOHNSTON

The original McClain ancestors arrived in Philadelphia in 1720, moving to Virginia. Some went to Illinois while others came to Henry County, Iowa and then to Polk County. Valley View Cemetery is located on N.W.Beaver and was also known as McClain cemetery. An 1880 History of Polk County, Jefferson Township, lists J.D. (John) McClain and his wife Olive with their nine children. John was born in 1810 in Virginia. Also listed is Thomas A. McClain and his wife Mary who also had nine children. Thomas was a Private who entered the Mexican War in June, 1847 at Alton, Ill. He died 8 August 1888 at the age of 63yrs, 8 months, 4 days. The majority of the graves in this cemetery are members of this clan. A walk past the old, old markers mixed in with the newer ones provides a walk back in history. It also is a perfect place to view Camp Dodge. Any information regarding the McClain family members would be appreciated.

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Does anyone have comments regarding the Underground Railroad in Iowa?

When Iowa became a state in 1846, it was known as a Free State. Slavery was not allowed here. Some lowans were opposed to slavery and wanted it abolished. Some helped runaway slaves travel secretly across the state until they reached the Mississippi River and could get to Canada where they would be free and their masters could not reclaim them. This system of helping slaves escape was called "the underground railroad" although it was neither underground nor a railroad. Many who worked this project were the result of religious groups who hated slavery. The Reverend John Todd was one of these people. He lived in Tabor, close to the Missouri River in southwestern Iowa. One time he dressed a black woman in his wife's clothing to look like his wife, placing a heavy veil across her face. They traveled by buggy across the state at night and on back roads. Many times escaping slaves would sleep in barns during the daytime and travel by dark-of-night. It is hard to know how many worked on the underground railroad since people who did so were breaking the law. Written messages were quickly destroyed. Records usually were not kept.

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**Could this be one reason genealogy is challenging??** From a message seeking census takers:

" OCUPSYSHUN - CENSUS TAKER: I an a cencus takers for the city of Bufflow. Our City has groan very fast in resent years and now in 1865 it has become a hard & time consuming job to count all the peephill. There are not many that can do this werk, as it is neccessarie to have an ejucashun, wich a lot of pursons still do not have. Another atributeart needed for this job is god spelling, for meny of the pephill to be counted can hardle speak inglish, let alon spel there names!"

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**A recent visitor to the House, Museum & Barn was Carol Garlock Carr, the daughter of William Garlock. Carol Carr is with The University of Georgia Academics Honors Program, Athens, GA. Also, Mark Johnson of Queen Creek, AZ donated some of the Johnston Garden Club memorabilia that had belonged to his late wife, Mary, when they lived in Johnston. And the 'Three Sweeney Kids' visited and vowed to return**

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Our August meeting's program was by Linda Webster Playle presenting her husband's story of "The Iowa State Fair in Vintage Postcards". Ron Playle has an extensive collection of post cards and it was most interesting to see the variety of cards, the first ones being advertising 'trade' cards from the late 1800's. These progressed to picture postcards with printed-on postage. Today most are postcards of the State Fair made of photographs developed onto photographic paper with a postcard back.

Recent programs have included a home-made ice cream demonstration with those present doing the "quality control testing" of the ice cream as well as enjoying cookies and cake with it. Once again in August we were treated to homemade peach sherbet and cookies by "The Betz Girls". They keep us well fed!

### A 'Shocking' Story Out of Johnston

It was a spring day in the year 1950. The Senior Physics class, comprised of all boys, was preparing an experiment. So let's set the scene-----

**Scene 1:** Teacher/Coach Harold Schuler and two or three students were standing out on the football field around the 50 yard line with a World War II field telephone set and the north end of around 100 yards of telephone wire.

**Scene 2:** The rest of the students were up on third floor in the classroom looking down below. Their unit is all hooked up with the south end of the wire and, oh yes, a pair of binoculars.

Now to explain how this telephone works. Just like the old style wooden phones on the wall, a crank sends a charge of electricity through the wire to ring the other parties phone. Teacher/Coach Schuler is ready to hook that phone up with the bare wires in his hand.

The rest of the class, including the observer with the binoculars, in the third floor classroom, was giving the command to "crank it!"

Meanwhile, on the football field stands track man Schuler, who just broke the worlds' record for a vertical leap from a standing start. He also set a new record for the football-field-to-classroom-dash.

Back to scene 2 where a classroom of 'ha-ha-ha's' quickly changed to a series of 'uh-oh's' followed by a mad scramble toward their desks. Too late! For there in the doorway was a cut-down version of the "Incredible Hulk". How did he get there that fast? Well, did you ever see that guy run? He could pick 'em up and lay them down. Well, sir, he was hot and looking for scalps and evidently found three, for Dick Hyde, Russ Slauson and yours truly have not had a decent hair line since.

Well, that's basically the story except that we can thank our lucky stars that it was "Our Coach", a man that didn't hold a grudge and was one of the fairest men I have ever known, was the only coach the class of 1950 ever had in all sports . He called us by our last name and we all called him Coach with a capital C. Dick Tarlton

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#### REMINDER:

**\*Meetings for the remainder of 2006: Sunday September 24; Wednesday October 25; and November 26. All meetings are at 4:00 p.m. at the Barn.**

\*Open House each month at the Simpson House from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.

#### HOW TO COMPUTE AGE OR BIRTHDATE OF AN ANCESTOR:

**The 8870 formula:** Using a calculator, enter 18890506 which represents the death date 1889 May 06, then subtract 710709 representing the age of the person, (71 yrs, 7 mos, 9 days). From the result of 181709797 you must subtract 8890, to correct the months and days. You have 18170927, or 1817 Sept 27, the correct birthday.

Believe it or not!!-----from *Genealogical Helper*, March 1976

AND FINALLY (and you are probably saying "Thank Goodness!")

A SHORT HISTORY OF MEDICINE:

500 BC "Here, eat this root."

300 BC "That root is heathen. Say this prayer."

1750 AD "That prayer is superstition. Drink this potion."

1900 AD "That potion is snake oil. Swallow this pill."

1945 AD "That pill is ineffective. Take this antibiotic."

2000 AD "That antibiotic is artificial. Eat this root."

.....  
The Lord gave us two ends - one for sitting, one for thinking.  
Your success depends on which end you use: Heads you win -  
Tails you lose!  
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Thank you to those who contribute little bits of information and anecdotes about Johnston and the surrounding area. Eventually it paints a more complete picture. Besides, the more who give us their stories, the more interesting it becomes. Join in on the fun.

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NEVER BE AFRAID TO TRY SOMETHING NEW. REMEMBER, AMATEURS BUILT THE ARK.  
PROFESSIONALS BUILT THE TITANIC

**\*\*REMEMBER**

Single memberships: \$10

Family memberships 12

Bricks 85

**\*NEW MEMBERS ALWAYS WANTED! THE SAME GOES FOR VOLUNTEERS! NO HARD LABOR. OR, STOP BY FOR A VISIT, CONVERSATION IS FREE.**