

Johnston (Station) Historical Society

Volume 25, Issue 2

Newsletter

Summer 2017

From the President

I hope everyone has gotten through the heat wave and is enjoying the summer.

We have experienced an increase in new ideas with our new board members. It has been a real pleasure working with Liz VanZomeran and John Brown.

Our new Facebook page has really taken off with a total of 85 members and counting.

I have been busy coordinating estimates for safety and security lighting and ways to address moisture issues in our basement. I will get back to you on our future decisions on these matters.

As members, we have a wonderful example of Johnston life with our farmhouse museum. With this comes a great responsibility to preserve it into the future.

Michael B. Knight
President of the Board



2017 Crop in the Barn Event

When we hear the word “crop,” we usually think of corn or soybeans. On June 9 and 10, a different kind of “crop” was held in the Simpson Barn as a fundraising event for the museum. Gatherings or “crops” are when scrapbook makers get together to work on creating albums. When a photo is cut down or trimmed to remove objects from the photo, it is called “cropping.” A favorite saying about those who enjoy creating scrapbooks is “Crop ‘Til You Drop.” Crops can become marathon events where attendees work on their scrapbooks for hours into the night enjoying camaraderie and refreshments with other like-minded “croppers.” Scrapbooking is about expressing your thoughts, feelings, and sentiments. It is also a process of preserving memories, special moments and recording family stories.

The Johnston Historical Society held this event not only as a fundraiser but to provide a unique venue for those in our community interested in preserving their own family history. The attendees paid a fee for a table to use during the two day event.

Several women from Johnston, Des Moines, Ankeny and Urbandale braved the hot and

Crop Story continued pg 2

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humid weather and gathered in the lower level (air conditioned) of the Barn to preserve their family history. Each attendee enjoyed food and beverage donated by various local businesses, and a gift bag with a photo of the Simpson barn quilt. Due to the generosity of our businesses, each attendee went home with a gift.

The Crop raised approximately \$400 for the Johnston Historical Society and was a wonderful opportunity for the participants to preserve their personal family history. We are deeply grateful for the businesses who helped make this first time Crop event a success. (See list under Donations).

Our appreciation goes to Liz VanZomeren who suggested, made all the necessary contacts and led this fund raiser for 3 days (Thurs night setup), Friday and Saturday. We know she devoted many hours to make this happen. The other board members helped with setup and tear down. A special thank you to Lois Waggoner, volunteer, who was there all those days helping in any way she was needed.

Fall Soup Lunch

Mark your calendars for Sunday, Nov. 12 and join us for a fall gathering in the lower level of the Barn at noon. We will be serving a fall lunch for members. Details to follow.

Johnston Museum Open Hours

Second Sunday of each month
1:00-3:00 p.m.

Please call the museum to schedule a personal tour at another time

Museum phone 515-331-0687
Alternate phone Nancy at 515-255-4030

Donations

Below are the individuals/foundations who have donated to the work of preserving the history of Johnston since the last newsletter. We would like to recognize these individuals:

Al Lathrum
Marty Martin
Lois Waggoner
Piney Ridge Greenhouse
Nick & Dorothy Orlich
John Brown

Donations to the Crop Event:

Adara Salon & Spa, Allie Marchant, Lilla Rose Stylist, Carey Stover, Casey's General Store, LaJames International College, Legends American Grill, Hy Vee Johnston, Jethro's BBQ & Pork Chop Grill, Memory Board, Piney Ridge Greenhouse, Taylored Expressions, Texas Roadhouse, Trostel's Greenbriar Restaurant, Victoria's Cleaners

The Board of Directors would like to thank each of you for your generous donation.

Flower Beds

We once again thank Piney Ridge Greenhouse for donating flowers to the Johnston Historical Society for planting at the museum. Carla Johns, Deb Krambeck and Bev Christofferson planted the flowers. Thank you, Carla, for your continued dedication in weeding and watering our flowers. We appreciate your faithfulness in volunteering to keep our grounds looking attractive.

Green Days Results

Saturday, June 17, we opened the museum while Green Days was underway. We had approximately 45 visitors from noon to 4:00. Thank you to Lois, Mike, Deb, John and Nancy for giving their time to provide tours. Nancy and Lois also volunteered time for the Green Days Committee, Lois taking pictures; Nancy working the wrist band tent.

The Crowell's

A Basketball Family

The parents, Roy and Nina Crowell moved to Johnston in 1945 after living a short time in Des Moines. However, their story began in southern Iowa where they were both born in Ringgold County. Roy was born in 1901 and raised in Shannon City; Nina was born in 1904 and raised in Mount Ayr, Iowa. They both played basketball in their respective schools, Nina in bloomers. The love of basketball would carry over to all eight of their children. Interestingly, Roy's brother was both superintendent and basketball coach at the school in Cromwell, Iowa.

The children of Roy and Nina in order of oldest to youngest: Joy, John, Russell (Gene) died in 1996, Ramona, Dorothy, Donella, Don, Nathan died in 1984 and Ronald who died at birth. Of those remaining, 4 still live in Johnston: Ramona, Dorothy, Donella and Don. John lives in Urbandale and Joy in the Saylorville area. There are 15 grandchildren, 12 of them graduated from Johnston, and many greatgrandchildren.

Roy and Nina married and raised their children during the Great Depression of the 1930's. Roy would work for 50 cents a day. He did anything he could to provide for his growing family. The couple lost everything they had in a foreclosure of their farm near Shannon City, about half way between Creston and Mount Ayr in Iowa. This occurred around 1929 and was common during the depression.

One of Roy's jobs during the depression was driving a "school bus" which was his 1925 Dodge. Another job involved truck driving. He drove to New York City seven times in 1935, hauling butter and to Arkansas numerous times hauling corn. Considering there was no interstate system, that was quite a feat to do just one time. During the Depression, many men could not find work, so survival was the name of the game.

The family would move to Des Moines in 1942 where they lived for 2 ½ years before calling Johnston their home in 1945. Ramona recalls that as a happy time and remembers loving the town of Johnston. It was rural and small but with more opportunity for them. Russell (Gene) was the first of the Crowell's to graduate from Johnston High School in 1945.

In 1942, Roy worked for Wood Brothers, located at East Aurora and East 17th Street in Des Moines, which repaired and sold thrashing machines, steam engines and farm equipment. Later, Roy worked at an auto garage tearing down motors and working with lathes, boring machines and drill presses. The war helped provide more jobs by then. That company was sold to Ford-Des Moines Implement in the 1950's where Roy received hands on experience learning many trades. He worked in quality control until his retirement in 1969. It is safe to say, Roy was not afraid of work as he strived over the years to provide for his family, a trait that would be handed to each of his children.

During that time, Roy and Nina took in a young man that worked with Roy at Wood Brothers. He lived with them for 3 years. Keith McMillen became like another brother to the other children. On the side, Roy coached a basketball team for Wood Brothers, and some of the players were none other than two of his sons, John and Gene, along with Keith who had become a part of this family.

In the mid 50's, Roy and Nina took in another couple young boys that had been at the Y Home for boys in Johnston. These two young men wanted to come live with the Crowell's because they were friends of Don and Nate. This welcoming family, once again opened their arms to more mouths to feed. By then the older siblings had left the nest.

Joy played basketball, graduating from Cromwell High School. She later attended AIB in Des Moines continuing to play basketball for them. Joy traveled all over the United States playing for the Amateur Athletic Union. She had three citations as an All American in National AAU women's competition, while playing basketball.

Ramona too, played basketball for the AAU traveling around the country after high school. She remembers working for Pioneer Hi Bred pollinating corn when she was young. Upon graduation from Johnston in 1947, the Johnston School Board hired her to be their secretary. She served as Board secretary and secretary to the superintendent, Charles Varner, for 16 years. In those days, she did everything from taking minutes of Board meetings to taking lunch money from the children. She interacted with all teachers and staff. She was the go-to-person for most things.

Dorothy played basketball also, and was known to average 35 points a game. She graduated from Johnston in 1951 and later married, moving to Oregon living there 11 years with her young family. They moved back to Johnston in 1969 where she worked in the insurance industry and other local jobs. All five of Dorothy's children graduated from Johnston. Her daughter, Donna Brooks also played basketball for Johnston High School.

Donella remembers working when she was young at Hyperion Field Club caddying, as did her other siblings: Don, Nate, Ramona and Dorothy. Hyperion would call to see if they wanted to work. Some of the golfers would, on occasion, pick them up at their house and take them to Hyperion. If not, they would walk from their house to Hyperion and back. She recalls they caddied for 50 cents for 9 holes and \$1.25 for 18 holes. She later worked for Pioneer and Allied Mutual until retiring in 1959. Oh yes, and she too played basketball after high school for Allied Mutual.

Four of the Crowell siblings currently live in Johnston. Romona lives in her own house; Dorothy and Donella have moved into the new Cornerstone Commons for seniors on Merle Hay Road not far from where their life in Johnston began. They each have their own apartment, and love their new homes and the amenities that come with it. They remain close, running errands together.

Don retired from the Iowa National Guard where he worked most of his life. He and wife, Esther, sold their home a few years ago and now live in a townhouse in the Rittgers Oaks development in Johnston at the southwest corner of Merle Hay and Beaver.

As Roy and Nina aged and their health declined, their children were there, helping to make life a little easier for them. passed in 1996. Family and helping others is what it is all about. The remaining siblings continue to stay close. They currently have a family breakfast together once a month at a restaurant in the Des Moines area.

Written by Deb Robinette Krambeck with input from Romona, Dorothy and Donella. It was my great pleasure to meet with you and listen to your family story. I hope others will enjoy reading; perhaps bringing back memories of times spent in Johnston.



Nina Crowell with all 8 children in order of age L to R handing basketball to her youngest, Nathan. Picture taken 1952



Back row: Nathan, John, Dorothy, Donella, Gene, Don
Front row: Joy, Nina, Roy, Ramona taken in October 1983

Memories Shared

By Helen Moss Tufts

In connection to Nancy Budrevich's story in the spring newsletter, a memory came to mind from my days at Johnston High School. In the years from 1942 through 1946, I played basketball. We would practice every night that we had no game and would alternate early practice one week while the boys had late practice and then would switch. Those were days during gas rationing so there was no such thing as calling home and asking someone to come and pick you up at school. We would walk 3 and a half miles from school, up Merle Hay Road to our home. When we got there the Horner sisters made a right turn and went on to their home. The rest of us went left to the road going around Hyperion where Ruth Grief left us to go on down that road. Then Marge Brown and I headed on up the road to Camp Dodge where I ran down into camp and left Marge to head on up to just the other side of the water tower. Now the story is this:

Especially on late night practices, we would be so hungry, we would pool our few pennies and stop at Mrs. Carter's store and buy a loaf of bread for a dime and get baloney with the money we had left. We would then walk up Merle Hay Road eating baloney sandwiches. Rarely did a car ever pass us, as gas rationing people weren't driving anywhere they didn't have to be.

On another subject, Nancy referred to a long building along the interurban tracks. As I recall, that was part of the interurban station. Those of us who worked at Pioneer Hybrid during the summer would get off at noon on Saturdays and catch a ride into the bus line in Des Moines to head downtown to shop, eat out and go roller skating, or bowling, or attend whatever might be going on. Then after dark, we would head down to the interurban station in Des Moines at 2nd and Grand, right next to the Trocadero beer joint to catch the last train back to Johnston and Camp Dodge. We never were bothered by anyone and so had no fear, as one would today. Those were some of the best years of our lives!

We thank Helen for sharing her memories of past times in Johnston. We welcome others to share theirs also. Please submit on line to jshs@q.com or mail to the museum at 6161 Northglenn Drive, Johnston, IA 50131.

Johnston Residents Gather in Arizona

A few Johnston snowbirds who travel to Arizona in the winter, had the opportunity to visit a Johnston classmate. Denny and Candy Elwell graciously hosted a group of eight in February at their home in Paradise Valley. We thank them both for their kind hospitality and delicious food and refreshments. The sharing of stories from our Johnston roots from the 1950's and 60's made it extra special. The town of Johnston was small enough then that we all knew each other's families in some capacity. It was an enjoyable afternoon.

Denny & Candy Elwell



L to R: Dave & Deb Krambeck, Al Lathrum,
Ron & Nancy Foshe, Denny Elwell, Dick & Mary Tingley
(missing from photo: Shirley Lathrum & Candy Elwell)



Current Historical Society Activities

Johnston History Presentation

Board member, John Brown, visited Timber Ridge Elementary in Johnston on May 19, 2017. The school had asked if someone could talk to the third graders on the history of Johnston. John put together a presentation and visited the class of 130 students. He reported all went well, and the children had lots of questions. Our goal is to put together a permanent presentation for future times to present to other classes.

Basement Leak

For a few years, there has been a leak in the basement of the museum. For the most part, it has flowed to the drain and been manageable. But we noticed last year, that it was becoming an issue when we received lots of rain. Again, this year, we monitored and sure enough if it rains, water pours in the south side of the museum. The water comes in at the foundation where the large beams once sat when the house was moved in from the Simpson property in 2002. Those areas were not properly sealed at the time of the house move, so 15 years later we have a basement leakage issue. Mike Knight is currently meeting with different businesses who repair basement leaks, obtaining bids and finding ways in which we can repair the problem. Through this process, we have learned that our sump pump and dehumidifier no longer work. Needless to say, it is not something we can ignore, and are looking for the most effective and economical way to stop the leakage. We will keep our members posted as we meet to determine which route to take.

Security Lighting

For three years we have been trying to get a security light installed at the back door, on the NE corner of the museum. Our first attempt was to find a JHS electrician member that could perhaps install it. We were unable to find someone, so are currently obtaining bids to have a motion light installed. When the days get shorter, it is quite dark entering and leaving the museum. This is a security issue and important to have done. We are also asking the electrical contractors to figure lighting for the front porch, and a light for the flag pole. Our number one priority will be the back door motion light.

Fire Inspectors

The museum was inspected earlier this year and they found the fire extinguishers were not working, so we purchased new ones.

Information Technologies

Keith continues to make necessary updates to our new computer system. He will be installing Johnston History on our website. The library reports that people are seeking Johnston historical information, but they lack the information to provide. We are thinking of partnering with them to digitize the history of Johnston.

Chamber of Commerce

We have joined the Johnston Chamber of Commerce and Liz has agreed to be our representative. She will be attending meetings to network with Johnston businesses. This should give us more visibility.

Iowa Museum Association and StEPs Program (American Assoc for State & Local History)

With John's recommendation, we joined these two organizations in order to network with other museums in the state; the second is to eventually become a certified museum. John is associated with both organizations.

Johnston's Welcome Wagon

Liz met the new Welcome Wagon lady for Johnston, Missy Shephard, and has provided her with JHS brochures to include in her basket of handouts to new residents.

New Johnston High School

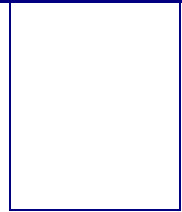
The Johnston High School is putting finishing touches on the new \$81 million high school that is nearing completion, expected to open this coming fall, 2017. It is the largest Iowa high school, boasting some 369,000 square feet. A ribbon cutting ceremony took place on June 12 with tours. This building will house three grades, 10-12. A new athletic complex is also underway near the new high school. Renovation to the old high school and junior high school are going on now. More information to follow in our fall newsletter.

Obituaries

Obituaries are compiled by Nancy Budrevich. If anyone knows of others, please let Nancy know. Nancy can be contacted by mail: 6161 Northglenn Dr., Johnston, IA, 50131; by email: jshs@q.com; or by phone: 515-331-0687. Over 1,000 Johnston related obituaries are now on file at the museum.

Name	Relationship to Johnston	Date of Death
Angelina Rastovac Marlowe	Class of 1936	1-1-2017
Leilani Kauzlarich White	Class of 1957	4-12-2017
Marcia Williams Biegger	Class of 1964	3-28-2017
Ray Rice, Sr.	Class of 1964	4-21-2017
Joel Rydberg	Class of 2007	4-10-2017
Matthew Sandblom	Class of 2007	4-12-2017
Matthew Torrence	Class of 2008	6-2-2017
Cole Bassell	Class of 2016	5-13-2017
Eric Aljets	Class of 2017	5-21-2017
Trevor Churchill	Class of 2019	5-8-2017
Don Heldenbrand	JSHS Member	4-26-2017
Rei Hwa Hsu	Johnston Resident	3-19-2017
Colleen Raschke	Johnston Resident	3-23-2017
Howard "Gene" Rude	Johnston Resident	3-26-2017
Merlyn "Bill" Blue	Johnston Resident	3-26-2017
Sister Mary Kevin Bissel	Johnston Resident	3-31-2017
Wanda Gilligan	Johnston Resident	4-1-2017
Lucy Hippee	Johnston Resident	4-5-2017
Neoma Wonderlich	Johnston Resident	4-8-2017
Frances Graham	Johnston Resident	4-11-2017
Agnes Yarlee	Johnston Resident	4-15-2017
Julia Carroll	Johnston Resident	4-21-2017
Donna Hibbs	Johnston Resident	4-21-2017
Wanda DeJongh	Johnston Resident	4-24-2017
Nancy Larson	Johnston Resident	5-4-2017
Lanny Laughman	Johnston Resident	5-8-2017
Sandra Richards	Johnston Resident	5-8-2017
Hazel Bockhaus	Johnston Resident	6-12-2017
Jane Ann Eaton	Johnston Resident	6-20-2017

Johnston (Station) Historical Society
6161 Northglenn Dr
Johnston, IA 50131



Mark Your Calendars

Sun., July 9, 1:00-3:00 p.m.	Museum Open
Sun., August 6, 6:00-8:00 p.m.	City holds Sundae in the Park (between the museum and library)
Sun., Sept. 10, 1:00-3:00 p.m.	Museum Open for Tours
Sun., Oct. 8, 1:00-3:00 p.m.	Museum Open
Sun., Nov. 12, noon-3:00 p.m.	Museum Open
	Member Fall Lunch in Barn

Johnston Historical Board Members

Michael Knight, President
Deb Krambeck, Secretary
Jan Jensen, Archivist
Alan Lathrum, Membership

Marilyn Coonley, Vice President
Nancy Budrevich, Treasurer
Elizabeth VanZomeran, Archivist
John Brown, Membership

Museum phone: 515-331-0687
Website: www.johnstoniowahistorical.org