



JOHNSTON
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Johnston (Station) Historical Society

≈ *Discovering and Preserving Johnston History Today, for Tomorrow* ≈

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Summer 2020

From the President...

We have all had to adapt to the new COVID-19 world, and the Johnston Historical Society has also adapted. We promoted all the historical markers in our community with a Johnston Parks and Trails history facts scavenger hunt.

The Johnston Farmers Market moved to our parking lot this year due to the construction on 62nd St. Our volunteers opened the first floor of the 1902 Simpson House every Tuesday afternoon in July during the market hours. We are now open for private tours by appointment.



The irrigation system that Mike Knight and others installed, combined with the work of volunteers, has created a beautiful collection of plants and flowers around the Simpson House. I encourage you to visit the Simpson House when it is open or visit the gardens around the house and the historical markers that were installed in 2019, between the house and the Simpson Barn.



We have our future goals and challenges, but this summer has allowed us to benefit from all the hard work of 25 years of volunteers and donors and continue to preserve and present Johnston history.

John Brown, President

New Members

Al Tokheim, Johnston, Iowa
John & Anne Temple, Johnston, Iowa

Meet New Board of Directors Member Al Tokheim



Johnston Station Historical Society Treasurer

Although not a native of Iowa, I have been part of the state culture for more than 50 years. Life in the small eastern Iowa town of DeWitt was a foundation of values I carry with me today.

After graduating with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Accounting from St. Ambrose University, I began a 36-year career at John Deere. I first came to Johnston in June 1988. Other than a short return to eastern Iowa in 1993, I have been part of the Johnston community for almost 30 years. I was part of the Deere team that brought the John Deere Financial campus to Johnston in June 2000. My wife Leah, a Northwest IA native, has also enjoyed a John Deere career of more than 23 years.

Our oldest son Ben, age 15, will be a sophomore at Johnston High School and Davis, age 11, will be part of Summit Middle School life in the fall. Both boys are active in sports including cross country, football, basketball and track.

Leah is member of the Johnston Basketball Club administrative board and I serve as an Elder at the Bridge Campus of Meredith Drive Reformed Church. The entire family enjoys the many bike paths available within Johnston. We have tried our luck fishing in the various city ponds stocked by the Iowa DNR.

I was honored to accept the invitation to serve as part of the Johnston Station Historical Society board and look forward to helping highlight the rich history of the City of Johnston.

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Dodge House in Johnston

Written by Nancy Budrevich



Camp Dodge, developed as a World War I mobilization and training camp, contained many barrack houses built as temporary structures to house soldiers. The huts were front gabled board and batten sheathed huts and following the war were being “given away” to anyone who had a piece of property to put it on and could move the building to said piece of land. It is said several of these “Dodge” houses were added to Johnston Station community.

On June 16, 1920 an advertisement ran in Des Moines Register offering these houses to the people of Des Moines area. There was a picture of the building and the ad stated: “Have you got parking space for a house? If you have and are looking for a house your troubles are just as good as over—for Uncle Sam has got your house already built and he’s waiting for you to come and get it”.

Realtor F.F. Frost offered twenty-foot-square squad huts that he had removed from Camp Dodge and moved near the Iowa State Fairgrounds. Cost was a ‘stiff’ \$1,000 with payment option of \$3.00 down and \$3.00 weekly.

How many of these houses were set up in Johnston and how many are still here? Not known, but driving around the older neighborhoods it is possible some are still around. Some have been torn down or remodeled to where they are not recognizable as an old Camp Dodge barrack.

I was able to view one such “bungalow”. From the street, it’s easy to accept this was a Dodge house. Rectangular in shape and a door and a couple windows across the front, but pull in the driveway and you see it’s two Dodge houses joined in a “T”. When you walk in the door, nothing reminds you of an army barrack.

A previous owner looked at the house in the fifties—there was no siding on the place, no bathroom, and paint was falling off the ceiling. No basement, but there was a cellar with the heavy lift up doors outside. There were 3 windows, one in each end of building and NO closets—every young mother’s dream home, right??? There was running water—one leaky sink with a faucet. Major renovation was needed! With the help of family and friends, cupboards were added, electricity rewired, stove installed, and a bathroom was added. They moved in 1959. She had to sweep up the paint fallings daily until the painted-over-wallpaper ceiling and walls were repaired. And they kept remodeling, until it was the way they wanted and it was their home for almost 60 years.

The house has a new family and it’s getting another face lift. You will have to drive by one day and see if it still has a touch of the Dodge House left.

Social Distancing

Johnston History Scavenger Hunt

John Brown with the Johnston (Station) Historical Society has created a COVID-19 social distancing Johnston history fact scavenger hunt for the public to enjoy while keeping social distancing in mind. The scavenger hunt consists of a combination of on-line information and visits to historical locations in the City of Johnston. There are 26 Johnston history facts in the Johnston history facts scavenger hunt; 10 from the websites of the City and the Johnston Historical Society and 16 from actual locations around the city.

We hope all of you who join in have some fun, while learning some Johnston history.

New Historical Markers



These historical markers will soon be installed by the City Public Works department along Beaver Dr. across from Hyperion Field Club, in front of the Ridgedale Cemetery and at 66th & Beaver Dr.

1902 Simpson House Window Cladding



Haggerty Windows and Siding has installed vinyl cladding on all of the 1902 Simpson House windows, with the exception of those windows protected by the porch. This will help protect the house and further minimize the need for priming and painting. This improvement will help us continue to preserve and protect this key part of Johnston's history.

HS Student Advisory Board Member Matthew Ding

Matthew Ding served in this role since 2018. He was active in many of the activities with the society from working on painting the house to creating a banner to represent the history of Johnston High School, for Johnston's 50th Anniversary.



Matthew was named one of the top 10 academic seniors in Iowa and will be attending Stanford University this fall. We congratulate Matthew on his accomplishments and wish him the best as he moves on in his academic journey.

We are seeking a high school student with an interest in local history to replace Matthew, as the high school advisory board member, to give us a student's perspective. If you are interested in applying for the position, please contact us by emailing Johnston Historical Society at jshs@q.com

Flower Beds at Simpson House

This spring Carla Johns and Deb Krambeck were kept busy by planting the flowers that were once again donated by the Piney Ridge Greenhouse. A special thanks to Piney Ridge, our good neighbor, and bigger thanks to Carla and Deb who help to maintain our flower beds in the summer months for all to enjoy.



Johnston is Geologically Very Interesting

The topography of Johnston was formed 10 to 20,000 years ago with the advancement and receding of the last glacier. Twelve thousand years ago, the Beaver Creek valley was the original riverbed. The Des Moines River was a tributary.

As the Wisconsin Glacier retreated, it deposited debris that blocked the Beaver Creek water supply and the Des Moines River became dominant.

The ridge that remained after the glacier receded is presently NW Beaver Drive.

2020 Board of Directors

President: John Brown
 Vice President Lois Waggoner
 Secretary: A.J. Simpson
 Treasurer: Al Tokheim
 Archivist: John Brown
 Assistant Archivist: Lois Waggoner
 Information Technology: Al Tokheim
 Board Member Tom Leffler
 Board Member Dave Lindeman

Farmers Market May 26th-Oct 13th

The weekly Farmers Market is now open in the parking lot near the Johnston Historical Museum, 6161 Northglenn Drive and Johnston Public Library on Tuesdays from 3:30 to 6:30 p.m. until Oct. 13th. It has moved this year due to the Johnston Town Center construction.



Area vendors offer fresh baked goods, homegrown produce and more.

Contact Judy Anderson at 515.278.0939 for more information.

Museum New Phone Number

The Johnston Historical Society has a new phone number. Please use 515-608-5730. All other information will remain the same.

Johnston Station Historical Society

6161 Northglenn Drive
Johnston IA 50131
Phone: 515-608-5730
Email: jshs@q.com
Website: johnstoniowahistorical.org



Visit our website for new developments and Johnston history information.

Thank You to Our Donors!

We would like to thank all of our supporters who share in our passion for local history. We appreciate the support from the following, that helps us with our mission.

Al Tokheim	John & Anne Temple	City of Johnston
Community Choice Credit Union	Piney Ridge Greenhouse	Steve Straw - Hallmark Store

Obituaries

Obituaries are compiled by Nancy Budrevich. If anyone knows of others, please let her know.

Nancy can be contacted by:

- **Mail:** 6161 Northglenn Dr., Johnston, IA, 50131
- **Email:** jshs@q.com
- **Phone:** 515-608-5730

Over 1,000 Johnston related obituaries are now on file at the museum.

Name	Date	Class of
Lowell Lamp	Died 4-26-2020	1945
Gloria Phipps Coser	Died 5-15-2020	1969
Nina Still McGraw	Died 6-16-2016	1951
Troy Langos.....	Died 6-19-2020	1990
Edward G. Carr.....	Died 6-24-2020	1962
Dick Hyde	Died 7-8-2020	1950

Past President Richard Hyde

Dick Hyde, 88 of Johnston passed away July 8th, 2020. Dick was a member of the Johnston Historical Society for many years and retired as president of the society in 2013.



Dick graduated from Johnston High School in 1950. He was united in marriage in 1954 to Linda Danielson, Johnston Class of 1953 and together had 6 children. He served in the Iowa Army National Guard for 43 years, retiring as a CW4.

Richard is survived by his children Stan (Vicki) Hyde, Brenda (Dick) Marshall, Steve Hyde, Sharon Hyde, Janet (Rick) Bianchi, 5 grandchildren and 10 great grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his wife Linda, daughter Julie, his parents and siblings. Our condolences to the family.