



Johnston (Station) Historical Society

Discovering and Preserving Johnston History, for Tomorrow

JOHNSTON
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Spring 2023

From the President...

As we begin daylight saving time and to “spring” ahead it is also a great time to stop and reflect on the past. At the Johnston Station Historical Society we strive to preserve the rich history of Johnston and find ways to share it with the community. I am very excited about the progress we have made in creating opportunities to share our community’s great history. Whether providing artifacts to display at the Johnston Library, taking visitors on tours of the museum during city events like “Kites on the Green” and “Sundaes in the Park”, or hosting class reunions at the museum we are constantly looking for new ways to share our rich history. So as you spring forward this year, please take a moment to reflect back on your own history and look for opportunities to visit the museum or one of our various events to learn more about the rich history right here in Johnston.



A.J. Simpson,
President

Annual Membership Meeting Sunday, April 9 at 2:00 PM.

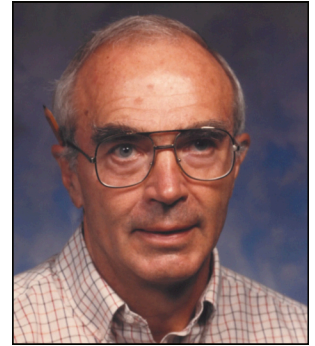
One of the last remnants of our old bylaws is the requirement that a Bylaws change be read at an annual membership meeting at 2:00 PM on the second Sunday in April.

This year, that falls on Easter Sunday. The new bylaws will allow the Board to schedule future annual meetings. If this fits into your Easter holiday plans, please consider attending the April 9, 2:00 annual member meeting, which will include Simpson House exhibits tours.



In Memoriam Garland Seibert

By Mary Jane Paez



Garland grew up on his family’s farm on NW 86th St. He graduated from Johnston High School in 1954. With 2 degrees from Drake University, he taught secondary level of education for 23 years at numerous schools. He was athletic director, teacher, coach of football, track and field, and started the wrestling program at Johnston High School. After retiring, he started to look at volunteer opportunities. He and his wife, Marlys, joined the Johnston Historical Society. This was about the time that the Society was receiving the Simpson house and barn from the Simpsons. He and the other Society members worked for over a year, preparing the structures to be moved from their NW 86th St. site to Johnston Commons. That was just the beginning. It took years of hard work by volunteers of all ages and capabilities to prepare the barn to be turned over to the City; and for the house to be turned into a museum.

Garland was steadfast in his devotion and loyalty to the cause. In the winter of 2003, our volunteers’ enthusiasm had waned. Garland, Bob Thomas, and I were working on the ground level interior of the barn. We took a break from insulating and paneling. I asked Garland, facetiously, “What will you do when this project is all done?” Without a second thought, he responded, “I’ll celebrate my 80th birthday!” (He was 68!) Soon after, we had the idea to ask for help from the Iowa Dept. of Corrections for minimum security inmates to come work side by side with us. Garland said that was the best thing that ever happened. We were able to turn the barn over to the City on Jan. 3, 2005.

Garland had time to enjoy his family, hiking, jogging, and volunteering at the Sunny View Care Center in Ankeny, IPTV, and Festival of Trees. The Johnston Historical Society can’t begin to comprehend all the hard work that Garland put into what we have today!

History of Johnston Scout Troop 44

by Matthew Mikles

The Boy Scout movement started in Great Britain when Sir Baden Powell founded the scouting program. Brought over to America in 1910, the Boy Scouts of America rapidly spread to become one of the largest youth organizations in the U.S. Here in Johnston, Troop 44 has resided for around 50 years. The mission of the troop has been to encourage youth to become the best they can be as well as help them develop into better citizens and leaders.



Troop 44 has graduated numerous Eagle Scouts since its inception in 1924. Some documentation on the history of Troop 44 was lost in the floods of 1993, however it is known that the troop first originated on the east side of Des Moines and moved to Johnston around 1944. The troop met for many years at Johnston schools until they found their permanent home with their current sponsor, St. Paul Presbyterian Church in 1978.

In recent years, Troop 44 has executed numerous service projects that have benefited the community such as a historic walking path by the Johnston Public Library, a number of landscaping projects for the school district, soccer and baseball field improvements, and several projects for Jester Park. They have also traveled to the World Jamboree in West Virginia (2019) and to London England (2007) where they were able to experience different cultures and converse with scouts from around the globe, Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico (2021) where they hiked for 2 weeks in the vast landscape of New Mexico, and Northern Minnesota (2022) to canoe in the beautiful crystal-clear boundary waters. Troop 44 is also responsible for the flag disposal box located behind the Johnston Fire Station number 39 where community members are invited to drop off old weathered American flags to be properly retired by the troop annually.

Matthew Mikles is a member of Troop 44, a Johnston High School Junior and the student advisory board member of Johnston (Station) Historical Society.

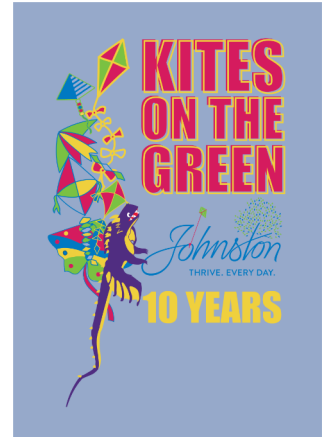
1902 Simpson House Video

A short video tour of the house can be viewed on the State Local History network site at:

<https://www.facebook.com/iowaHistory/videos/925822240920506/>

May 6 Kites on the Green and 1902 Simpson House Museum Open House

Join us for the tenth annual Kites on the Green festival at Johnston Commons on May 6, 2023. This family-fun event will be held in the green space near the Johnston Public Library from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Visitors can enjoy giant show kite displays, kite fighting, free kite building, kite racing, live music, an inflatable obstacle course, learn about stormwater best management practices, sidewalk chalk and more.



Schedule of Events

- 10:00 a.m. Opening Ceremonies
- 10:30 a.m. No-Knots Stunt Team Performance
- 11:00 a.m. Live music by Glady's Lite Band
- 11:30 a.m. Running of the Bol's/Kite Battles
- 12:30 p.m. Live music by Glady's Lite Band
- 1:00 p.m. Stunt Kite Demonstrations
- 1:00 p.m. Running of the Bol's/Kite Battles
- 3:00 p.m. Stunt Kite Demonstrations
- 3:30 p.m. No-Knots Stunt Team Performance
- 5:00 p.m. Closing Ceremonies

All Day Events include Tours of the 1902 Simpson House, Giant Show Kite Demonstrations, Free Make-n-Fly Kite Kits, Inflatable Obstacle Course, an Iowa National Guard Climbing Wall, Meet with Police and Fire Dept., Sidewalk, Food Trucks and a Candy Drop.

Volunteers Needed:

April 29: 1:00-3:00 - Use your home improvement skills to assist in our volunteer workday. This will include painting and priming a few ground level parts of the Simpson House, clean up of the gardens and sweeping and dusting some of the interior exhibit rooms.

May 6: Any time between 10 and 5: Please consider being a volunteer tour guide for an hour or two during the May 6 Kites of the Green open house. You will be given a tour guide sheet and will be assisted by at least one other volunteer.

Revised 1902 Simpson House Museum Exhibits



Updating the JSHS archives inventory, creative ideas from our summer interns and the need to refocus on the JSHS local history mission has triggered a revision of most of the 1902 Simpson house museum exhibits. Lawson school interior redesign also caused them to donate to JSHS all the local history murals created for that school in 2005. Some of those murals have been shortened and incorporated into Simpson House exhibit rooms. Also, the 2 office rooms were combined, the largely unused 2nd floor research room was moved to the first floor, the old 2nd floor research room is now exhibits on old Johnston businesses, churches and organizations, and one room is dedicated solely to Pioneer Hi Bred history. Some artifacts that had been moved to the basement or the attic have been restored to public exhibits.

Please come see the revised exhibits on May 6 or call to make an appointment for another time.

Johnston History on the City of Johnston and JSHS Websites

The City has added short descriptions of the 4 pioneer Johnston cemeteries at:
www.cityofjohnston.com/1078/Cemeteries

This expands the Johnston on-line historical summaries at: www.cityofjohnston.com/972/History-of-Johnston-Businesses

and on the JSHS website at:
www.johnstoniowahistorical.org/history/johnston-history.htm

Our Mission Statement:

The purpose of the Johnston (Station) Historical Society is to bring people together who are interested in the history and preservation of the Johnston area, which includes the early settlements of Johnston Station, Beaver Creek Settlement, Ridgedale, Huntsville, Herrold and Dodge City. To this goal, we work to get the community engaged and involved in Johnston's rich history by providing a museum and events to the public.

Tell Us Your Johnston Story

The Johnston area history that needs to be documented and preserved is not limited to what happened 100 or more years ago. It includes much more recent events and life experiences. It even includes how we and our families have endured the COVID-19 pandemic.

Please send us your Johnston stories to:

JohnstonHistoricalSociety@gmail.com
or mail them to us at:

6161 Northglenn, Johnston, Iowa 50131.

We now have PayPal

For the convenience of member and donors, JSHS now accepts PayPal when paying annual membership dues or making gifts to help preserve Johnston History. When using PayPal, it is as simple as using our email address as a payment destination.

JohnstonHistoricalSociety@gmail.com
or scan the following QR code

Enter the desired payment amount, add a note telling us what it is for and you are done. It is that simple.



Scan. Pay. Go.

Obituaries

Obituaries are compiled by Nancy Budrevich. If you know of others, please contact JSHS. Contact information on this page.

| <u>Name</u> | <u>Death date</u> | <u>Class of</u> |
|-----------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Janet White Hale | 9-13-2022 | 1954 |
| William Turpin | 12-4-2022 | 1954 |
| Mary Theisen Arnold | 1-6-2023 | 1962 |
| Frank Jackson | 12-8-2022 | 1963 |
| Sarah Bebensee Severs | 12-14-2022 | 1973 |
| Mark Hilding | 1-30-2023 | 1978 |
| Olivia White | 1-24-2023 | 2017 |
| Janet Frazier House | 1-5-2023 | 1961 |
| Garland Seibert | 1-15-2023 | 1954 |



Johnston Historical Society
6161 Northglenn Drive
Johnston, IA 50131 515-608-5730
Email: JohnstonHistoricalSociety@gmail.com
Website: JohnstonIowaHistorical.org
Visit our website for new developments

Also see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jzEi2UBPRog> for a presentation on the relocation and the restoration of the Simpson House and barn in 2001-2008.

Support JSHS

In addition to member dues, Johnston Station Historical Society's mission is supported by additional contributions from members, special project grants, and donations of artifacts, documents and photos that relate to our mission. As a Internal Revenue Code 501(c)(3) organization, monetary gifts, along with the value of donated artifacts, documents and photos, can be deductible from income taxable by the state and federal governments.

Your donation to the Johnston Historical Society goes directly to support its mission. As an all-volunteer organization, we have no paid staff. Unlike some charities with staff expenses, your contributions go entirely toward the 1902 Simpson House museum and our local history preservation and presentation initiatives, like our recently installed historical markers at Ridgedale Cemetery, Stage Coach Stop at NW Beaver Drive and 66th and Ray Schleih's Park on NW 55th Ave.

A benefit of membership is occasional free use of the 1902 Simpson House for meetings and special small events. The first floor meeting space can accommodate up to 20 people. Contact us for details. JohnstonHistoricalSociety@gmail.com

Membership Dues Reminder

Individual and family JSHS member dues are only \$20 a year. All members get the quarterly newsletter, invitations to JSHS events and can use the 1902 Simpson House for small meetings and events. Members also get the satisfaction of helping to preserve and present Johnston history.

Amounts in excess of the annual membership fee will be treated as a donation to JSHS.

Board Members and Officers

Board Members and Officers

Board members: Tom Leffler, Al Tokheim. A.J. Simpson, Mary Jane Paez and John Temple.

Student Advisory member: Matthew Mickles

Officers:

A.J. Simpson President
Tom Leffler Vice President
John Brown Secretary & Archivist
Al Tokheim... Treasurer & Information Technology

Please contact us if you are interested in serving as a Board member or officer or want to nominate a Board member.