



Johnston (Station) Historical Society

Discovering and Preserving Johnston History, for Tomorrow

JOHNSTON
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Winter 2023

From the President...

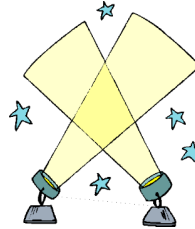
A.J. Simpson,

Happy Holidays from the Johnston Station Historical Society!

As I write this President's message, my last as the President of JSHS, I look back with great fondness on the last six years I have been involved with the board of directors. It has been a true honor to serve on the board and help preserve, promote, and present aspects of our rich history in Johnston. Whether it is giving tours of the museum, helping out with the maintenance of the museum, attending board meetings, or making presentations, this has been a great experience for me. I have a unique tie to the JSHS museum as it was my childhood home, I can't help but think of how happy my grandparents would be knowing that their gift to the community is serving such an important purpose preserving the history of Johnston. I am also very excited for the future of the JSHS as we have seen a definite increase in the engagement of the Johnston Community. We have given more museum tours in the last year than any other year in my 6 years on the board.

Our recent Johnston History presentations at the library also had great attendance. I know this momentum will continue and that the leadership of the JSHS will continue to work diligently to preserve the rich history of Johnston and continue to look for unique opportunities to engage with the residents of Johnston. I wish everyone Happy Holidays and a Happy New Year, most of all thank you for your support of local history!

Thanks
AJ



Spotlight on Larry Madole JSHS Board Member

Larry is a life long resident of the Johnston area. He has joined the JSHS Board and has presented at our recent local history events. The following is his recollection of a childhood local threshing experience:



When I was about 5 years old, my mother took me to my great grandfather's farm. My uncle took me to the oat field on a hayrack to pick up bundles of oats. We threw them on the hayrack which I was barely able to reach the top of. When the rack was full, we took them back to the farm. There I saw this huge steam engine hooked to a threshing machine. The men would put the bundles of oats in the threshing machine to separate the oats from the straw. This is a sight that I have never forgotten. This was about 1945, the last time that the big steam engine came to my great grandfather's farm.

Lions Club Trunk or Treat

Approximately 200 people visited the Lions Club parking lot where local community groups decorated their car trunk and handed out treats. Batman helped the Johnston Historical Society participate. Next year may have a volunteer more suited to its local history mission.



2024 Annual Membership Meeting

The next annual meeting of Johnston (Station) Historical Society members will be held on Wednesday, April 25 at 6:30 PM at the 1902 Simpson House Museum. Please plan to attend.

Johnston History Preservation Projects

The Johnston (Station) Historical Society has 7 significant local history preservation projects that need additional funding.

1. Johnston Schools history: Improvements to the popular Johnston schools exhibit to make that information more accessible and better preserve class pictures and yearbooks. \$500 has already been donated.
2. Heard Nursery: Converting the extensive Heard Nursery picture collection, which includes about 1000 slides, to digital files, before that film media deteriorates and becomes unusable.
3. Fruitland Brennan Neighborhood Improvement league: Converting the 1915-2023 Fruitland Brennan Neighborhood Improvement league meeting minutes and records, comprising about 1500 pages, to digital files.
4. Johnston Lions Club: Converting the 1945-2007 Lions club meeting minutes and records, comprising about 1500 pages, to digital files.
5. Early Johnston residents' oral histories: Converting the thirty-five 2008 early Johnston residents' oral history recordings into a readily accessible digital format.
6. Men's Garden Club: Converting the records and photos to digital files.
7. USA and Pioneer 2026 Anniversaries: Creating displays and holding events, with the city of Johnston and Corteva, on the 2026 100-year anniversary of Pioneer Hi-Brid and the 250-year anniversary of the United States.

Each of these projects will serve our mission of preserving and presenting local history. The resulting digital files will be accessible by anyone at any time.

The cost of each of those projects is about \$1000. Any donor giving \$500 or more toward one of these projects will be identified in a Simpson House Museum display and the JSHS collection records. Contributions of \$1000 or more will also be identified in our John Johnston Club donor plaque at the museum.

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/>

JSHS Holiday Open House



On Saturday, Dec. 9th, JSHS hosted our annual holiday open house. The event was a success, with many attendees taking tours of the house decorated for the holidays. Cookies, cocoa and coffee were enjoyed by our visitors.

2024 Dues Reminder

2024 annual dues are now due. Dues are only \$20 per family. Membership includes receiving this newsletter, use of the Simpson House museum for small meetings and the satisfaction of supporting the preservation and presentation of local history. Your dues can be paid by check, which can be sent in with your ballot in the enclosed addressed envelope, or by using PayPal.

In addition to annual dues, donations were recently received from:

NCMIC Group
Tom Leffeler
Deb Krambeck
Bravo Greater Des Moines
John & Michele Brown

History of the Men's Garden Club - Gardeners of America

By Judy Anderson

The idea of a garden club, made up of all male members, is credited to Leo Nack, a Chicago engineer. He had many visitors to his garden and conceived the idea of forming a garden club. Word of this group spread throughout the Midwest, and in 1930 3 more clubs were organized; one of which was in Des Moines, Iowa. Harold Parnham of Des Moines was one of the forces behind creating a national organization. So, in September, 1932 they founded the Men's Garden Clubs of America.

For many years the organization operated out of the homes of the national secretaries. A permanent building was erected in 1970 in Johnston, Iowa, a gift from the Men's Garden Club of Des Moines and Pioneer Seed Company, which provided the land. A National Executive Director and Staff were employed to direct the organization's work.

The Men's Garden Club of America was active over the years championing truth in horticulture. They worked in the area of conservation, becoming involved in campaigns such as Save The Dunes in the Great Lakes region. The National organization grew to having clubs all over the U.S. and its members numbered in the 10,000s. The MGCA published a magazine, *The Gardener*, conducted trials which evaluated new flower and vegetable varieties, gave major awards for work in horticulture and for outstanding horticulture writing. They made available educational gardening programs for use worldwide and encouraged youth, including the disadvantaged, to learn gardening skills at an early age. They assisted its members with: publishing gardening bulletins, with photography, with special projects such as growing under artificial light and in training flower and vegetable show judges. Using wildflowers and native plants also became a focus. Over the years, most of the National Clubs included women as members. The name was changed to The Gardeners of America; many clubs kept the name Men's Garden Club, including the Des Moines Club.

In 2000, the National Headquarters was moved to Ohio, and the land and building were returned to Pioneer/Corteva. The land was sold in 2023, the building razed and now will house commercial development.

Johnston Men's Garden Club

The headquarters site of the Men's Garden Club on Merle Hay Road has been deeded back to Pioneer/Corteva and has been sold. A coffee shop and a bank facility will soon be located there. Thanks to the efforts of City officials and concerned citizens, many of the trees on that site and many of the club's artifacts and documents, and the gazebo have been saved.



New location for the Mens Garden Club Gazebo

As preparations are being made to take down the Mens Garden Club building, the city has moved the gazebo down the road to Merle Hay Rd. at 61st St. Special thanks to the City of Johnston and Judy Anderson.

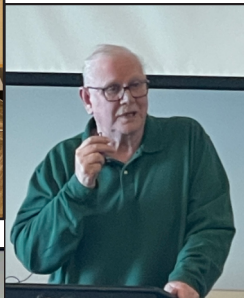
Johnston Businesses Artifacts

We are building up the collection artifacts on Johnston businesses and organizations of today and yesterday. Please consider donating any of those items.



Recent Events

The 1902 Simpson House Museum continues to be open during Johnston Commons Park events. These included the Johnston History Presentation: Part 3 of the series was on Sunday, November 12th at 1:30 at the Johnston Library. Speakers include two former city managers, Don Coates and Jim Sanders, and Mayor Dierenfeld and featured accomplishments and growth of our city and community.



Board Members and Officers

Board Members and Officers

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

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.

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>
Cheryl Ann Lathrop	4-16-2023	1972
Wesley "Jim" Hall, Jr	7-21-2023	1947
Brian L. Brown	12-20-2022	1988
Timothy Reams	9-19-2021	1972
James Reichenbach	7-18-2022	1962
Gene Tasler	6-19-2023	1951
Dellamae Tasler	3-14-2023	
Steven Smith	7-13-2023	1980
Brad Kennard	6-11-2023	1980
Jack Braby	2-6-2022	
<i>Former Teacher & Coach</i>		
Bill Kibby	6-22-2023	
<i>Former Teacher & Coach</i>		
Richard L McCarl	7-31-202	
Johnston Resident		
Donella Crowell Lint	11-12-2023	1952
Jim Magonegil	6-1-2023	1973

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.



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.

Election of Board Members

This ballot for the annual election of Board members should be returned in enclosed addressed return envelope.

Any member's name can be written in on this ballot.

Larry Madole, Mary Jane Paez and Al Tokheim are willing to serve a 3 year term as a director.

A.J. Simpson has served two 3-year terms and will be required by our Bylaws to leave the board for at least one year. John Brown has asked to rejoin the Board, as one year will have elapsed since he completed his second 3-year term.

Board meetings are held monthly on the 4th Wednesday at 6:30 PM. The meetings are almost always completed in an hour or less and members can attend in person, by using Zoom or by phone. Please contact the Johnston Historical Society if you want to nominate yourself or any other member for our board.

Johnston (Station) Historical Society (JSHS) December 2023 - Ballot and Checklist

Ballot: For Board of Directors

Mary Jane Paez

Larry Madole

Al Tokheim

John Brown

Other(s):

Return your completed ballot to:

Johnston Station Historical Society
6161 Northglenn Drive
Johnston, Iowa 50131

Please return by January 15, 2024.
An addressed return envelope is enclosed

Print name:

Checklist:

1. 2024 annual dues (\$20.00) paid using PayPal or by a check in the return envelope?

2. Can you volunteer? YES NO

Volunteer opportunities include:

museum tour host

museum maintenance

cleaning

document scanning

secretarial help

website improvements

maintaining collection records

Other: _____

3. Additional donation?

Thank you for your support of the preservation and presentation of Johnston history.