

Johnston (Station) Historical Society

Volume 20, Issue 3

Newsletter

July 2012

President's Column:

In the last two months we have worked on several projects to improve the museum and the Ridgedale cemetery. The head stones at Ridgedale were in bad shape, some were bent over, some were laying down, and others needed to be reset on their bases. We had ten volunteers and spent about six hours completing the job. Dick Tarlton acquired and placed flags at all of the veteran's head stones for Memorial Day. Dick and I think that this should be an annual project for the Historical Society as it made a dramatic difference in the looks of the cemetery.

Jan has added a woman army mannequin in the military room and



POLO in Johnston

Friday, September 14, 1934

Dedication Ceremonies for the new lighted athletic field

Big opening night features, Polo game, Tumbling acts, and other novelty acts. Citizens of Johnston are anticipating a grand get together when they dedicate the new lighted field Friday night.

The Activity Association of Johnston Consolidated School takes pleasure in announcing the first game of polo ever to be played under artificial light outdoors, in the history of the athletic world. The polo game will be between the Officers of the 14th Calvary of Fort Des Moines and the Des Moines Club.

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she continues to upgrade and add displays. In spite of the weather Carla has been able to maintain the flower gardens in excellent condition. Our business member Hyde Mowing & Snow Removal has installed a low voltage light system that includes a spotlight on the front and back doors, landscape lights in the south flower garden, and a spotlight on the flag. We had 35 visitors on Saturday June 16th during Johnston's Green Days Celebration.

I thank all of the volunteers that worked on the Ridgedale project for all of their work everyone did a good job thanks again.

To raise money for the field, some of the men in the community went around to the business people in Johnston and surrounding area and borrowed ten dollars from each person of which they expect to keep \$2.50 in the association for dues and pay the \$7.50 back as soon as the money is available. Through the loyalty of the business men the money was borrowed. Some of the men in the community who were not so fortunate as to have the money are doing their part by working on the field putting up poles and reflectors etc. These poles are the best in the country. They were unable to find suitable poles in Des Moines so Le Roy Schlenker hauled them from Minneapolis. Each pole weighed approximately 1,416 lbs.

Johnston History Quiz

1. In what year did Russia's Kruschev come through Johnston?
 - A. September 1959
 - B. November 1988
 - C. July 1955

2. When was ground broken on Merle Hay Mall?
 - A. February 1959
 - B. February 1958
 - C. June 1950

Answers are on the bottom of page 5

Memorial Day in Johnston

The Veteran's Memorial at the Johnston Library was dedicated on Memorial Day at 10AM. The American Legion was on hand to help with the unveiling. A special thanks to Jacob Mentele. He was the one responsible for this project coming together as part of his Eagle Scout project along with the Johnston American Legion post 274. Speakers at the dedication were Mayor Paula Dierenfeld and Congressman Leonard Boswell.

On Wednesday May 30th an open house was held at the Johnston Library to show case an exhibit on Iowans who have died from wounds suffered in a war zone since September 11, 2001. The Iowa Patriot Guard was on hand displaying flags outside the library and Mike Vogt, historian at Camp Dodge, discussed Iowa Veterans with a focus on the Civil War.

Membership Events

There will be a membership meeting on the second Sunday of August, September and October. The purpose of these meetings are for members to come together and talk about their experiences of growing up in the Johnston area.

Come and share what you remember about the people and events you encountered during this period in the history of Johnston. We know that everybody has some stories to tell that would be of interest to others. It will be an open discussion where everyone will have the chance to speak of his or her experiences. So come join us and have some fun.

Johnston Schools

Both the Boys and Girls soccer teams earned a trip to the state tournament. The Girls team was beat in the Quarter finals but the boys advanced to the championship game and lost to Iowa City West 1-0. Both teams had a great season and should be proud of the way they represented the community.

Obituaries

Obituaries are compiled by Dick Tarlton. This is a known list of deaths that Dick could obtain. If anyone knows of others please let Dick know. Our address is 6161 Northglenn Dr. Johnston, IA 50131 or by email: JSHS@Q.COM or phone 515-331-0687. Over 700 Johnston School related obituaries are now on file at the museum.

Name	Date of Death	Class
Howard Franklin Wallace	12-2-2011	1928
Francis (Frank) E. Byers	9-20-2008	1938
Lois Lorraine Temple Rhode	1-10-2012	1943
Barbara Horner Kinkaid	4-27-2012	1946
Howard E. Stifel	4-19-2012	1951
William Moon	4-23-2012	1956
Kenneth Wayne Rittgers	5-23-2012	1960
Donna J. Thompson Snetseloor	6-17-2012	1962

A Johnston Icon

Ben Dewey

Ben Dewey was born in Pierre, South Dakota on January 12, 1886. He moved with his family in a covered wagon to Lead, South Dakota when he was only seven years old. Because his father had been an attorney for Sitting Bull and had represented the Sioux tribe in Washington, the family was given special permission to travel through the Sioux reservation on their way to Lead. He remembers seeing bands of Indians riding to the right and left of their wagon and watching their progress through the reservation . It took them six days to travel the 180 mile trip which would have taken weeks if they had been forced to circle the reservation.

Ben had some interesting experiences in his early years. He knew Sitting Bull and also delivered the morning paper to Calamity Jane. After completing high school in Lead he wanted to go to college but lacked the funds. He decided to earn his way through college by working as a reporter for the Omaha Daily News. He also worked for the Chicago Tribune, the Des Moines Daily and the Des Moines Capital. He later became a reporter and photographer for the Register and Tribune.

In 1910 he moved to Johnston. The only house in Johnston at that time was the house that is currently known as the Stillwell house. It was difficult to work for the newspaper and live in Johnston so he gave up the newspaper job. About that time the County Supervisors needed someone to serve as secretary. He served in that position for 18 years. He later ran for the Board of Supervisors and was elected to three, six year terms. In 1946 he left the court house and went into the insurance business.

Ben was one of the founders of the Johnston Consolidated Schools and served on the school board for 20 years. Ben Dewey did so many things for the benefit of Johnston that to list them would take up more space than we have in this newsletter. Ben made many contributions to the Johnston Community. As a tribute to him there is park in Johnston named Dewey Park. It is located on land he once owned.

Answers to History Quiz

- 1). A
- 2). B

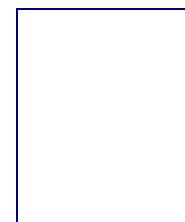
Mark Your Calendars

Sweet Corn Feed

Sunday August 19th there will be a membership meeting from 2:00 until 5:00PM in the Simpson Barn.

This meeting will feature the Johnston Station Jazz Band (the band features the big band sound) and a sweet corn feed if the drought does not get the corn. There will be sweet corn, hot dogs, chips and a drink. There will be a free will donation to cover the cost of the food. All members and guests are urged to come socialize and enjoy the band sound.

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED