

Johnston (Station) Historical Society

Volume 20, Issue 4

Newsletter

Quarter 4 2012

President's Column:

This quarter there have been two classes from the Johnston School visit the Museum. They showed an interest in not only the old items but in the evolution of Johnston from a small farming community from 1883-1950's into a city of 20,000 residents. This is the first time that any class from the school has toured the Museum and we hope that this is just the beginning of a relationship with the school system.

In September a 7 to 8 year old cub scout pack toured the Museum to learn about the history of Johnston and the antique items. The adults that were present had not been through the Museum and were impressed with the history and artifacts on hand. All

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Membership Fund Drive

The Johnston Historical Board is seeking new members and donations for the Museum. We currently rely on membership dues, but that no longer is sufficient to keep up with the rising costs of insurance and monthly expense. If you know of anyone that might be interested in becoming a member, please contact the Johnston Historical Museum at 331-0687 or send \$20.00 with name, address and email address to the museum 6161 Northglenn Dr. Johnston, IA 50131.

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showed a keen interest.

The Society has received a grant for presentation equipment and to upgrade our displays. This grant will help us to bring the displays, artifacts, and Johnston's history to organizations and groups within the community. Many residents are unaware of the articles available at the museum which tell the story of Johnston from the beginning. Hopefully the new equipment, once implemented will help change that.

The low voltage lighting for the flag and flower gardens and the irrigation system have been completed thanks to Skyler Hyde.

Membership Dues

The Board voted to increase the membership dues beginning January 1, 2013 to \$20.00. If you are currently a member, you can renew your membership by sending your dues to the Museum by January 1, 2013. Your dues are due if there is a 12 after your name on the newsletter

We are asking for all members to submit their email address, if applicable, so we can begin reducing the cost of postage in mailing the newsletters to you. Thank you for submitting your dues.

Johnston History Quiz

1. Tiny's Food House reopened as the Jewel Cafe
 - a. January 1957
 - b. July 2000
 - c. March 1958

2. Where was Johnston's first reported fire
 - a. Hy-Vee Foods Store
 - b. Scholes Flower & Feed Store
 - c. A.F. Rittgers Grocery Store

Answers are on the bottom of page 6

Museum Winter Hours

The Board voted to close the museum from Dec. through March. During this time we will be doing some maintenance and display update. If anyone wants to tour the museum during these months, you can do so by appointment. Contact Dick Hyde at 515 331-0687 and leave a message.

Website

Now find us on the web at Johnstoniowahistorical.org

The Five Robinette Brothers

I remember so vividly the business, Robinette Chevrolet, as my dad, Bee Robinette worked there for his brother, Huston. It was the place to go and buy your new Chevrolet or get your car repaired. I suppose it could be likened to a large Chevrolet dealership of today, but on a smaller scale. I recall the DX gas station that was in the front with a couple service bays to get your oil changed, you could even get your car washed in those days. The gas selections were regular or ethel, the premium gasoline.

There was a parts department, offices and a showroom floor to display the newest Chevrolet. The showroom floor would also become the place to buy Norge Home Appliances for the kitchen. Also, when TV was invented, he would begin selling television sets. It also had a paint room where my dad was the one that could paint your car or truck if that was needed. But I recall the entire back portion of this building is where the mechanics worked. Those were primarily the Robinette brothers, my dad being the head of the operations.

It all began back sometime prior to 1925, when the oldest of the five brothers, James H. Robinette (Huston), migrated north from Church Hill, Tennessee to work for a neighboring friend that had come earlier and opened a service garage. This man's name was Paul Alley. The depression was hard on the business and in 1934 Huston and partner Ray Hunt bought the garage from Paul Alley. They changed the name to Robinette-Hunt Garage. It was located in the 5800 block of Merle Hay Road on the west side. This location is where the Village Square Mall is located today. When Hunt left the partnership, the garage became a Chevrolet dealership known as Robinette Chevrolet Sales and Service.

Eventually all of Huston's four younger brothers came to Johnston to work in his business. The oldest to youngest were Arch, Perry, I. B. (Bee), and Wade M. Huston owned the business and loved selling new cars; all of the brothers were the mechanics.

One advertisement for the business read:
Chevrolet Sales New Cars and Trucks
Used Cars and Trucks; Parts and
Accessories; Service All Makes
Norge Home Appliances Refrigerators
Gas and Electric; Home Furnaces; Hot Water Heaters

In the late 1940's Arch moved to the Kansas City, KS area with his family where they continue to reside today. Perry found other employment after the closing of the Chevrolet business, Wade M, the only one of the brothers that served in World War II, joined his brothers after living and working for some years in Joliet, IL.

In 1957 Huston retired from business and the building was purchased by Pioneer Hi-Bred. His brother Bee who had managed the business for his brother opened his own business, Bee's Auto Service. Bee hired his brother Wade M to work for him in his new business. Bee retired in 1979 and the building was bought by the city of Johnston and remodeled for city offices and police. The offices were later located where they are today and that building was torn down for the senior apartments that currently sit on the corner across from the Johnston Fire station on NW 62nd Ave.

Information Provided by Deborah Robinette Krambeck
Johnston High School Class of 1963

Barn Patio Bricks

Below is a picture of Dick Hyde assisting Deb (Robinette) Krambeck placing a brick with her parents name on it. Her parents, Bee and Margaret Robinette, lived in Johnston all their adult lives, Bee being the owner of Bee's Auto Service before passing away in 1979.

Bricks are still available to be placed at the entrance of the Simpson Barn for \$85. If interested in purchasing one to honor someone you know, contact the Historical Museum at 515 331-0687.



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	Class	Date of Death
Evelyn Herrold Bachman	1934	6-25-12
Grandville Wheeler	1956	9-10-12
Virginia Jean Theisen Bacon	1967	8-11-12
Jeffrey Christian Otto	1975	8-28-12
Lisa Daniels Wilson	1983	6-8-12
Michael P. Wynn	1984	8-11-12
Renaë Christine Tichenor Rinhart	1987	10-1-04
Kimberlee Joann Patterson Ward-Lynn	1987	3-31-99
Ryan Charles August Hargens	1999	1-30-05

Public Safety Makes Leap Forward

Below is a picture of the new Fire station in the framing stage located on 62nd St., west of 100th St. This will be the second station to serve the western part of the city. A new Fire station and police station are currently under construction on Merle Hay Rd and 64th St.



Answers to history quiz

- 1). A
- 2). B

Election Coverage

It is time to elect Johnston Historical Society board members. This year there are two positions open. Both members are seeking re-election. You may vote for up to two positions, counting a write in vote. Write-in names are welcome. One completed ballot per membership. Completed Ballots may be mailed 6161 Northglenn Dr Johnston, Iowa 50131 or Emailed to JSHS@q.com

Those people running are:

2012 Board Election Official Ballot

Carla Johns	<input type="radio"/>
Jan Jensen	<input type="radio"/>
Write In _____	<input type="radio"/>

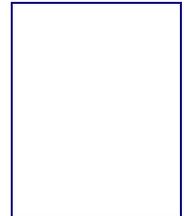
Johnston (Station) Historical Society Board Members

President: Dick Hyde
Vice President: Dick Tarlton
Secretary: Deb Krambeck
Treasurer: Carla Johns
Archivist: Jan Jensen
Member: Chris Kinsey
Member: Sharon Hyde

Mark Your Calendars

November 14 Member's Thanksgiving Dinner at the Simpson Barn Beginning 5:00 p.m. with social hour and dinner to be served at 6:00 p.m. Come and enjoy turkey and trimmings with the board members. Open to all members and guests. Free will donations will be accepted.

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



ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED