

Jewell Historical Society

HOLIDAY NEWSLETTER

December 2019

Hello and a Happy Holiday Season to all!!

As an update for the members and friends of the Jewell Historical Society / the Jewell History Museum, we offer the following. We hope you will enjoy catching up on our activities during the Past year.

Jewell Jubilee

In early June, the Society celebrated Iowa Museum Week (June 10 – 16) by sponsoring an entry in the Jewell Jubilee Parade. Bruce and Dick rode the route tossing candy to the kids along the way. Unfortunately the candy supply was depleted just past the halfway point! We'll plan better next year!



Open Hours

The Jewell Historical Society completed a successful season of open hours during 2019, having hosted some 233 visitors to the Jewell History Museum. The Museum was open to the public every Sunday afternoon from 2:00 – 4:00 PM from May 5 through September 29. It

was also open periodically for special group visits. Despite the heavy rain, the largest single day was on Saturday, September 14th when 31 alumni of Jewell High School held a Class Reunion there.

Museum Recognized

In October, the Jewell Historical Society was recognized by the Iowa Museum Association for establishing a new History Museum in our state. A recognition plaque, which is displayed in the Museum, was presented to Board Members Bruce Johnson and Dick Steffen by the Association at its annual conference in Fort Dodge.



Group Visits

Also in October, the Museum hosted a visit by members of Cluster F of the *Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America* (WELCA). The group had spent the day in Jewell, visiting the various downtown shops. After lunch, they attended a program on the history of Jewell and of the Museum itself presented by curator Dick Steffen.



New Flagpole Installed

Thanks to donations of time and materials, the Museum now is proud to display "Old Glory" on its own flagpole, situated on the corner of Deckor St. and Johnson St., adjacent to the Museum building. Subsequent donations included the acquisition and installation of a solar-powered LED light which shines on the flag at night, obviating the need to lower the flag every evening.



Accessibility Project Update

The Society has begun a project intended to improve accessibility for all patrons, including those with mobility challenges. This accessibility issue has prevented (and continues to prevent) some individuals from easily visiting the Museum. The full project is intended to include multiple phases:

- Renovation and restoration of the entryway, and replacement of the original door with one which can be more easily used by individuals in wheelchairs and with other disabilities.
- Replacement of the front stairs with ones which can accommodate a handicap ramp.
- Construction of a ramp which meets the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (i.e., an ADA-compliant ramp). And finally,
- Construction of a handicap-accessible rest room on the main floor of the Museum.

Thanks to previously-received grants from several organizations, as well as to a few generous private donations, the first phase (entryway) has been completed (See below), and the contractor hopes to finish the second phase (stairway) soon.



Old and New Entry

A quote has been received for the third (ramp) phase, and funds are being sought to help with this. It is possible that, if funding is available and sufficient, the ramp phase of the project could be completed in the spring or summer of 2019.



Proposed Entry Ramp

(Bathroom construction will occur after that as further funds become available.)

Board Updates

Bruce Johnson, President / Treasurer of the Jewell Historical Society, helps to research grants to help fund major projects. Grants received during 2019 included those from Walmart and the Jewell Centennial Trust. A grant has also been awarded by Hamilton County Tourism, though the check has not yet been received. These awards are helping with the ongoing accessibility project. Other grants are being investigated to help with future projects.

Dick Steffen, Vice-President / Secretary of the Society and Museum Curator/Town Historian, cares for the building and grounds, including organizing the many displays. He also serves as primary contact for groups

wishing to tour the Museum, and for potential donors of objects, artifacts, etc. Much progress has been made during the year with more inventory and display arrangements moving closer to completion. During the off season, more identification cards, DVDs, display and research will continue in preparation for year 2020.

Board member Alan Spohnheimer is the Webmaster for the Society. His efforts in building, maintaining and continually updating the Society's website, allow people to access information about the Museum and its contents from the comfort of their own homes. By going to www.jewelljunctionhistory.org, folks from 'anywhere' can view our town's history from "the junction of yesterday and tomorrow."

Board members Jackie Frederick and Kenn Outzen provide additional input to the dynamics of "Jewell history in the future." In addition to helping to provide docent services, Kenn has handcrafted models of buildings from Jewell's past, while Jackie serves as resident genealogist, having helped former Jewell residents to find links to the past.

The Board continues to meet on the third Thursday of every month at 3:00 PM at the Museum (501 Johnson St.). All interested individuals are always welcome to attend these meetings.

Membership

All are invited to join the Jewell Historical Society as a member in any of the categories listed below. Note that any membership labeled "Family" or above can include all members of the family. The Jewell Historical Society is a 501 (c) (3) tax exempt charitable organization, so donations can be deducted from taxes to the extent allowed by law.

The museum project has been partially funded by grants and donations from:
The Jewell Centennial Trust
The IMT Group
The Walmart Company
Jewell Lions
Hamilton County Tourism:
and
The Enhance Hamilton County Foundation

Annual Memberships

| | |
|----------------|-----------|
| ___ Individual | \$ 25.00 |
| ___ Family | \$ 45.00 |
| ___ Patron | \$ 100.00 |
| ___ Utility | \$ 250.00 |

Lifetime Membership

___ Lifetime \$1,000.00

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Please return to:
Jewell Historical Society
PO Box 2
Jewell IA 50130

And anyone interested in helping by a donation of time is encouraged to contact the Society as well. Write to the above address, or contact Dick Steffen at (515) 310-0413.