

# Jewell Historical Society

## Newsletter

Vol. 2, No. 1  
Jan – Mar, 2021

### JHS Board and Officer Elections

Despite both the ongoing pandemic, and the recent extended cold snap, but thanks to the wonders of online videoconferencing, the Jewell Historical Society Board has continued to meet during the past several months. At the January meeting, Board members whose terms had expired were re-elected to new three-year terms. Current Board members are: Jackie Frederick, Bruce Johnson, Kenn Outzen, Alan Spohnheimer and Dick Steffen. Following the Board elections, JHS officers were elected. For 2021, these individuals are: Bruce Johnson, president and treasurer, and; Dick Steffen, vice-president and secretary. Dick also serves in the Board-appointed position of Museum Curator.

The Board continues to discuss the resumption of in-person meetings and especially of museum open hours, though it currently is difficult to plan a definite timeline for either. In order to help with such planning, the Board is trying to recruit community members to serve as volunteer docents. Such individuals would help to “staff” the museum during open hours (typically 3 – 4 hours, one day per week). A detailed knowledge of the Museum’s collection is NOT a requirement; only a willingness to greet and visit with guests touring the facility. Interested individuals can contact Dick Steffen at (515) 310-0413.

### Entryway Improvements

In other news, the JHS Board is pleased to announce that the Museum’s front stairway project is finally complete. The contractors installed the restored railings, and the main entryway is now totally refurbished. This project was made possible by the generous donation of a local benefactor.



The completed front entryway.

And thanks to previously-received grants from local granting agencies, as well as to a few generous private donations, the JHS Board has been able to start the next phase of improvements. However, due to the expense, the exterior handicap ramp project has been tabled for the time being. Instead, a chair lift mechanism, recently received as a gift, will be installed as a temporary substitute. It will be placed in an interior stairway which extends from ground level up to the main museum level. A local contractor has been hired to install this device and a Tourism grant has recently been received from Hamilton County Development to partially defray the installation costs. When more funds become available, the ramp project will be revisited.



Interior stairway where chairlift will be located.



Example of the type of lift to be installed.

## JHS Website News

Once again, in an effort to share some of Jewell's history with JHS members, we present an article excerpted from the Jewell Historical Society's website, and edited to make it flow well in the space available.



### *Lakin's Grove, Iowa - An early Hamilton County Settlement 1854*

*The road named Lakin's Grove Avenue in Iowa's Hamilton County does not help any driver find the location where the town of that name used to be. The sign does indicate, however, that the name is important in the history of Hamilton County. Lakin's Grove was the first community settled in Hamilton County's Lyon Township. It was common for the early settlers to locate along a river where they could find water and timber. This village started on the banks of the Skunk River at NW Sec. 24-87-24 in 1854. It was named for the first settler, Luther Lakin.*

*Although you can see the community of Lakin's Grove in [the] Hamilton County portion of... Colton's [1878] Map [of Iowa], the communities of Jewell Junction and Ellsworth had not been formed by 1878.*



*This portion of that 1878 Colton Map shows Webster City, Lakin's Grove, Rose Grove, Skunk Grove and the east side of the Skunk River Randall Post Office, does not indicate Jewell Junction, Ellsworth, Stanhope, or the actual town of Randall.*

This and other items are available for review at [www.JewellJunctionHistory.org](http://www.JewellJunctionHistory.org). And be sure to check out the many recent updates and additions to the website. The site was developed, is maintained and is frequently updated by the Society's Webmaster, JHS Board member Alan Spohnheimer.

### **A Blast from the Past**

Here is another brief excerpt from the books which were published during Jewell's Centennial and Quasquicentennial. This issue's submission is from an article in the Quasquicentennial Book (2006), p. 137.



*Jewell's last passenger train ran on Sunday, July 18, 1954, and was steam-powered, though steam had been rare on the Jewell line. Even before the last regular run, a steam excursion for enthusiasts was run on June 27, 1954, from Webster City to Alden through Jewell. The train pictured was crossing the Skunk River west of Ellsworth.*

Many such articles of interest can be found in this book and in the Centennial Book (published 1981). Both are available for review in the Jewell History Museum. In addition, copies can be found at the Montgomery Memorial Library, from where they can also be checked out by Library cardholders.

### **Artifact Donations Continue**

The Jewell Historical Society has continued to receive donations of items and artifacts during the past several months. Recent acquisitions have included several photos and books from private donors and from a local church. Also received recently was a nice file cabinet no longer needed in Jewell City Hall. The Society has also heard from an Air Force veteran who may be able to help find information related to a Jewell resident's military service during World War II. This is shaping up to be a very interesting story: more on this as it develops.



The museum project has been partially funded by grants and donations from:

*The Jewell Centennial Trust*

*The IMT Group*

*Jewell Lions*

*The Wal-Mart Community Grants Program*

*Hamilton County Development  
Tourism Grants*

*The Enhance Hamilton County Foundation  
And  
Private Donors*



The Jewell Historical Society is working to catalog, preserve and display items important to the history and heritage of Jewell Junction, Iowa. Please help the mission of your Society and of the Jewell History Museum by becoming a member at one of the levels indicated. Your membership helps to maintain the operation of the Jewell History Museum. (Note: The “Utility Membership” will support the Museum’s utility bills for a month.)

**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**