



# Newsletter

Vol. 6, No. 1  
Jan – Mar 2025

## Board Elections

The Jewell Historical Society, at its January meeting, held an annual election. Two Board positions were up for renewal, and incumbent Board members Karen Culpepper and Jackie Frederick were both elected to new three-year terms.



**Current JHS Board**

Seated, l – r: Dick Steffen, Jackie Frederick, Donna Busch, Karen Culpepper. Standing, l – r: Alan Spohnheimer, Bruce Johnson. Not pictured: Kenn Outzen

Following the Board election, officers were nominated and elected, with the current slate re-elected to new one-year terms. They are: Bruce Johnson, President; Dick Steffen, Vice-President; Jackie Frederick, Secretary, and; Donna Busch, Treasurer.

## Reorganization Underway

JHS Board members, under the direction of JHS Vice President and Museum curator Dick Steffen, have begun the task of

reorganizing the museum exhibits and artifacts – those on display as well as those in storage. The intent is to weed out unused items with no historic significance (e.g., display stands, storage binders, etc., etc.) and to organize displayed items so that they are more easily viewed by patrons. It is hoped that this process will continue apace!



**Main Floor Reorganization Begins**

## Visits With Other History Museum Organizations

We recently reported on a visit to another local area museum (see Newsletter Vol 5, #3, the story on the *Swedish Immigrant Museum* in Stratford). In keeping with our

interest in interfacing with such “sister institutions,” JHS Board members Dick Stefen and Jackie Fredereick recently attended a program hosted by the Story City Historical Society. Along with many other attendees, they heard a presentation on the history of medical care in our area.

And more recently, JHS President and newsletter editor Bruce Johnson participated in an online chat group hosted by the Iowa Museum Assocation (IMA),



**Iowa Museum Assn. Chat Group**

an organization that JHS joined some years ago. The group includes representatives from many museums in Iowa and it meets weekly online providing a forum for sharing ideas, issues, problems etc. for the benefit of all IMA members. The program, called Colleague Conversation, this time included 16 museum representatives spanning the state from Davenport to Council Bluffs.

### **JHS Discovers New Link Between Jewell and Norway**

JHS President Johnson recently received an interesting email from a man named Tore Svenning, who was writing from a small town in Norway. The letter read, in part:

*Dear Mr Johnson,  
I am writing to you without much purpose, except to congratulate you and your colleagues in the Jewell Historical Society on the splendid work you are doing, and on the interesting website you have created. Well done! from a small town - Sandefjord - in Norway.*

*I came across your website in my search for traces of one Miss Marie Hetlesæter who once was a music teacher - I have learned now - at Jewell Lutheran College.*



**Jewell Lutheran College, 1893 – 1925**

Mr. Svenning further praised JHS Board member and Webmaster, Alan Spohnheimer for our wonderfully helpful website, then related the story of Miss Hetlesæter, who emigrated from Norway to the USA with a friend, and served on the faculty of Jewell Lutheran College before moving on to Chicago and later, Oregon.

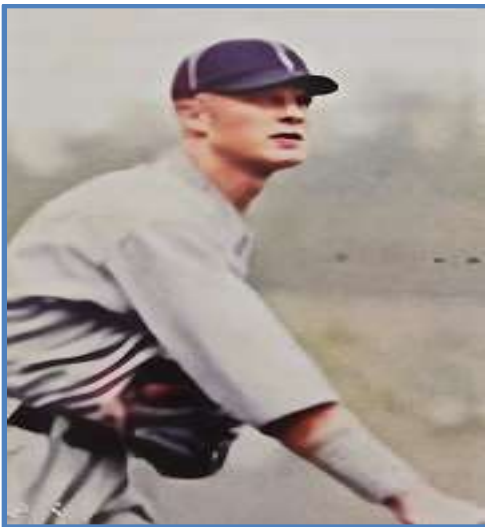
As a result of his letter, we contacted the archivist at the Norwegian-American Historical Association at St. Olaf College in Northfield MN, to which all Jewell Lutheran College records were forwarded when the College closed in 1925. Unfortunately, not much additional information was found there. But we are pleased to have made a new friend in “the Old Country!!”

## New Museum Acquisitions

Among many other items recently added to our collection, the Jewell History Museum recently came into possession of a book written about a former local resident who found fame. The book is titled:

*George Alton Stueland: Hometown Boy  
from Jewell Iowa Reaches the MLB Chicago  
Cubs*

by Gene E. Pitzer.



**George Alton Stueland**

Also received was a wonderful picture of members of the Jewell Volunteer Fire Department. Unfortunately, we did not have information on when the picture was taken, but we are assuming it is from sometime in the 1950s.



**Jewell Fire Dept, ca 1950s?**

**l – r: D.S. Kael, J. Reese, G. Walker, R. Hanson,  
W. Howan, G. Nelson, K. Headley, G. Westre, C.**

**Olson, S. Barkema, C. Rasmussen, L. Hanson, R.  
Ringstad, & L. Herman**

These and other items of historical interest are always available for viewing in the Museum.



## A Blast from the Past

The following is a brief excerpt from the Jewell Quasquicentennial Book (p. 56), published in 2006. This and the Centennial Book (published in 1981) 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.



*Borcherding's Photo Studio provided a number of images of early Jewell, including this group of seven young men of Jewell. Charles Glaman was front left. Who are the others? Without an effort to capture some of the history of Jewell, roots to the past are lost.*

## JHS Website News

In the early part of the last century, with the increasing availability and popularity of the automobile, efforts were made to improve the nation's system of highways. Most people are aware of the formation of the Lincoln Highway, which eventually crossed the country from east to west. Some might also be familiar with the Jefferson Highway, running from north to south. These two highways crossed each other just east of us in Colo IA, and were important parts of the national system of "named highways." More information on these can be obtained from the Iowa Department of Transportation, which publishes a map of these highways that were in Iowa.

What many probably are less aware of however is Jewell's role in the effort to name another north-south highway after President Woodrow Wilson, recognizing the fact that he initiated the Federal-aid highway program by signing the Federal Aid Road Act on July 11, 1916. The proposed Wilson Highway was to run through Jewell, and much of the route eventually became what is now known as U.S. Hwy 69.

The following is a very brief excerpt from a much more extensive narration which can be found in [www.JewellJunctionHistory.org](http://www.JewellJunctionHistory.org), the JHS website, which is maintained and frequently updated by the Society's Webmaster, JHS Board member Alan Spohnheimer.

## HISTORIC AUTO TRAILS WILSON HIGHWAY

*The Wilson Highway Association first filed its application for registration with the Iowa State Highway Commission (ISHC) on Aug.*

*18, 1918. The application stated the association's main place of business was Jewell (just north of Story City), and that the route began in Des Moines and ended in St. Paul Minn.*

*The application was signed and approved by the association's president, Parley Sheldon of Ames, and its secretary, Claude V. Campbell of Jewell.*

## Newsletter Note

Dear Readers,

Once again, we happily found ourselves with a bit too much news to include easily in this issue. We will try to share more of these items in the next issue or in our end-of-year recap issue. Many thanks for your continued interest and support.

Bruce Johnson,  
JHS President &  
Newsletter Editor.



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