

JEFFERSON COUNTY HISTORICAL AND GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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Annual Meeting in Oskaloosa

The Jefferson County Historical Society's annual meeting was held in Oskaloosa last November. The meeting showcased renovation work at the Reynolds Store, where food was served by women in period clothing. The store has been rearranged, new items are on the shelves, and the new wood floor gleams. Programs included a talk by funeral director Gus Barnett about 19th century funeral practices and the history of funeral homes in the area and a presentation



by Cindy Higgins of the Kansas Humanities Council reliving the glory days of the soda fountain.

The Edmonds Chapel

The Edmonds Chapel had another upgrade this spring with the refinishing of the woodstove displayed there. The stove gleams with its new finish, thanks to Hobby Monster Customs in Tonganoxie, owned and operated by Shawn Bristol of McLouth. Although the stove is not used, it adds to the character of the building.

The chapel was the setting for the annual “Son Rise” Service on April 5, following the Lions Club Easter egg hunt on the Old Jefferson Town grounds the previous day.

Summer Events at Old Jefferson Town

The Jefferson County Historical Society is looking forward to a wonderful season at Old Jefferson Town. Many events are planned this summer and we hope the public will come visit the buildings and experience the special events.

Opening weekend will be May 2nd and 3rd. The opening show is the annual high school art display. This is a great way for local students to show off their talents. Displays will be in the Curry building.



Chase Branson is the son of Chad and Carrie Branson. He is the grandson of Gary and Sharon Branson, Gale Rogers and Kenny and Patty Breithaupt. Chase started creating pottery at Jefferson West High School where he graduated in 2013. He received an art scholarship from Highland Community College for his beautiful pottery.

During Old Settlers weekend, we will be doing a Haying with Horses project (weather permitting) in the prairie field on the south side of the Old Jefferson Town grounds. Hay will be cut and raked on June 26th and 27th. Come see the horses and learn how your

ancestors farmed.

Starting Memorial Day weekend and continuing through the July 4th weekend, we are having a display to recognize female veterans from the Jefferson County area. All female veterans, regardless of what branch of service, will be recognized. If you know of anyone who would like to participate with pictures, artifacts, or other memorabilia, please let us know. Pictures will be scanned and returned. Other items will be tagged so they can be returned to the owner. We are also interested in artifacts related to the roles women held to support the war efforts. Please contact Mary J. Luse at 913-683-0539 / mjluse@gmail.com.

Later in the season we will be doing a Drive Your Favorite Ride to Church event. You can pick what mode of transportation you would like to show off! This will be a matching-fund event to benefit the Ninceheler House that is located on the grounds of Old Jefferson Town. Modern Woodmen of America Financial will match donations received for this event up to \$2500.00. During this event we will have dinner served, church services in the chapel and, of course, People's Choice awards for the Best Mode of Transportation and Best Costumes!

Other displays will be occurring during the summer, including Show Us Your Denim in May and Momma's Hands in August. Check Facebook: JeffersonCo Historical for more details.

Come join the fun at Old Jefferson Town.

The Battle of Hickory Point

The Battle of Hickory Point occurred near Oskaloosa on September 13th and 14th, 1856. Newly-appointed Governor John W. Geary had just ordered that all armed forces disband. James H. Lane, the fiery freestate leader, was not aware of the order when he heard of a large party of proslavery men, including 40 South Carolinians, at Hickory Point. He led a group of jayhawkers against the settlement but was unsuccessful in penetrating the thick log walls of the buildings. On Sunday the 14th, the cannon known as Old Sacramento arrived in Hickory Point and fired on the buildings. One proslavery man was killed and four wounded, and several freestaters were wounded. A ceasefire was declared and the proslavery forces withdrew. The freestaters were later arrested but were acquitted of a crime because it was determined they fought in self-defense.

It will soon be the 160th anniversary of the Battle of Hickory Point. In commemoration, the Historical Society would like to re-enact the battle. Stay tuned for more information.

Jefferson County Genealogical Society

The genealogical society operates out of the research library at Old Jefferson Town. We have extensive records that are difficult to find online, including small local newspapers on microfilm. The group is discussing switching to high-speed internet service and getting a new computer.

If you would like to help visitors research their family history, consider volunteering at the library one afternoon a month. Please contact Vice President Raymond Riley at raymond Riley54@yahoo.com or Secretary Marilyn Sharkey at mjshark@grasshoppernet.com.