

Jefferson County Historical Society
Oskaloosa, Kansas
Newsletter October 2024

The Annual Meeting of the Jefferson County Historical Society will be held in the Edmonds Chapel on the grounds of Old Jefferson Town on Sunday, November 3 from 2-4 pm. Please join us there, keeping in mind that Daylight Savings time changes that weekend. A brief business meeting and election of officers will be held, followed by a presentation by Janet L. Jefferies of Crete, Nebraska, featuring the history and families of the Plum Grove neighborhood of Jefferson County. Janet is a descendant of one of the Plum Grove families. Plum Grove was located about halfway between Oskaloosa and Winchester, near 122nd and Saline Road.



Plum Grove School, 1889. This building is currently the library portion of the Plum Grove / Kilgour buildings which were moved first into Oskaloosa to be used as school buildings, and then in the winter of 1974-75 to Old Jefferson Town.

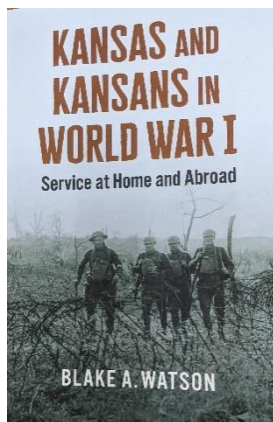
It has been a busy spring and summer season at Old Jefferson Town. The roofs on the Tibbot school building and the Curry boyhood home were replaced.

Perhaps the most visible changes have been the ongoing repairs and maintenance of buildings and grounds. Cliff Burk and Greg Noll have been working each week on long delayed routine maintenance projects. You will see their handiwork everywhere from the Winchester jail where they updated the interior walls, landscaped the exterior and created cohesive displays of artifacts; to the blacksmith shop where they organized and identified equipment stored therein, to replacement of rotted boards on the boardwalk, to beginning a tree removal project, to moving and placing the outhouse from the Woodstock school which was donated by Lloyd Ridgeway. A huge project contracted out this spring was the replacement of the water lines laid in the early 1970's which had been springing new leaks every few months. We are so very grateful to Cliff and Greg for their volunteer efforts in repairing and upgrading our buildings and grounds.

Mary Luse single handedly researched and organized author book programs and signings throughout the season. Jefferson County authors who shared about their books included Emily LaRette (pen name Elliott VanDruff) writing Young Adult fiction, Karl Ramberg, writing about his stone cutting experiences; Billy E. Hill, deceased, represented by his children, writing about his experiences as a game warden across the state and at Perry

Lake; Helen Dunlap Newton, a native of Nortonville, writing fiction, with 2 books published and a third in the works; Linda Williams Jungling, writing from a cancer survivor's perspective; Joy Lominska, writing about "The Old Home Place"; Mable Caldwell, writing "The Dangers of Chemistry"; Jennifer Bostock, author of "Bridleless" and "The Forgotten Road", and is now working on another project; and Fran Borin, who has written a trilogy of children's books. Other authors with Jefferson County roots include Margaret Smelser, writing "On the Other Side of the Dozer Blade" about her husband Lloyd's dirt moving business and June Hilbert, who wrote the book "From High Heels to Gumboots: One Cow Pie at a Time."

Another new book in the library is



Kansas and Kansans in World War I: Service at Home and Abroad by Blake E. Watson. Watson's great uncle was Ralph Nichols, one of the Jefferson County individuals included in the

book. The author consulted us, Jane Hoskinson and Liz Leech while doing research on his book. Liz has donated a copy of the book for the library, which will be available soon.

Leanne Chapman puts together exhibits of various collections and this year showed wedding dresses in July and quilts in September. The wedding dresses displayed cover a variety of styles and decades. It's fun to imagine those brides proudly wearing their

dresses on their wedding day. The quilt collection also is quite diverse, from memory or album quilts with many signatures to the well-known "Grandmother's Flower Garden" quilt. A recent acquisition to the quilt collection are coverlets that were woven about 1854 and carried with pioneers moving to Jefferson County about 1863. They are in amazing condition for their age. Donated by Teresa Morena, and woven by her ancestor, Mary Hannah (Howard) Lacy.



The coverlet pattern on the left is called "Whig Rose" and on the right is "Butternut,"

The Tractor Drive, our annual fundraiser was held Saturday, August 24 on the grounds. It was successful as usual, due to the efforts of Mary Luse in finding tractors and drivers as well as community sponsors. The noon meal was served to around 150 people, with the majority of food donated by members of JCHS. Funds were directed to the General Fund with some dollars designated towards the Barn Fund.

Ardie Grimes – newsletter editor