



Jefferson County Historical Society Newsletter

OLD JEFFERSON TOWN

OCTOBER 2026

Annual Meeting—Join us!

CHECK IT OUT:

- Annual Meeting—Join Us!
- Introducing the Kilgour Room
- Sharing History, Learning & Looking Ahead

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Come enjoy an afternoon of local history, music, and community at Old Jefferson Town! The Jefferson County Historical Society invites members and the public to join us on Sunday, November 1st, from 2:00–4:00 p.m. in the Edmonds Chapel at Old Jefferson Town.

Following a brief business meeting and election of officers, Derrick Doty will present “Kansas Music History,” an engaging program made possible by Humanities Kansas.

Your attendance is a wonderful way to show your support

for the preservation of Jefferson County’s history and the future of Old Jefferson Town. Whether you’re a longtime

member or simply curious about local history, we welcome you to join us for an enjoyable afternoon!

60th Annual Meeting & Presentation

2:00 pm Short Business Meeting with Presentation Following

Derrick Doty will present and discuss “Kansas Music History,” on Sunday, November 1st at Old Jefferson Town. Members of the community are invited to attend this free program! The program is made possible by Humanities Kansas.

Jefferson County KS Historical Society
Old Jefferson Town
703 Walnut | Oskaloosa, KS 66066
OldJeffersontown.com



Sunday, November 1, 2026

A Season Full of History, Fun & Community

Spring through fall brought a wonderful variety of activities and visitors to Old Jefferson Town! April began with the Lions Club’s annual Easter Egg Hunt on the grounds and a community Easter sunrise service in Edmonds Chapel. JCHS

also joined McLouth’s Patriot’s Day celebration with a parade float and a display of military uniforms. In May, we welcomed a Bonner Spring tractor drive group for a pulled-pork lunch and *continued on page 3*



Introducing the Kilgour Room

Many members may remember the building along the boardwalk that we call “the Library.” Originally, the building consisted of two one-room schoolhouses (and portions of a third) that were moved to Oskaloosa, where they served as Oskaloosa Elementary before being relocated to Old Jefferson Town. The

this season, earning many compliments for its fresh appearance and interesting displays. Improvements included new paint, trim, and window



KILGOUR ROOM
Living Sovereignty
Exhibit

front half was the original Kilgour one-room school. Following its recent renovation, the Board and volunteers gave this updated display area a new name: the Kilgour Room, honoring its history. The newly renovated Kilgour Room was a highlight at Old Jefferson Town

blinds, creating a welcoming space for a variety of historical exhibits. We were honored to host Declaration 1776: The Big Bang of Modern Democracy, a traveling exhibition presented by Humanities Kansas and enhanced by volunteer-created displays connecting our nation's founding to local and regional history. Other exhibits included Remembering the Ladies, an impressive collection of military uniforms and veterans' memorabilia spanning World War I through the Korean War, and community displays featuring Ozawkie, Winchester,

and storytelling traditions during the Old Settlers' Reunion. From mid-August through September, the room featured Living Sovereignty: Sustaining Indigenous Autonomy in “Indian Territory” Kansas Exhibit, curated by Freedoms Frontier, along with additional displays exploring the history of Indigenous peoples in Jefferson County. Together, these exhibits offered visitors a wonderful opportunity to discover the people, events, and stories that have shaped our nation and Jefferson County.

Celebrating 60 Years!

In addition to celebrating America's 250 years, we also celebrated Old Jefferson Town/Jefferson County Historical Society's 60 years. Thank you to our donors, members, visitors and volunteers.

THANK YOU!

Celebrating
60 years of Jefferson County Historical Society



A Season Full of History continued

enjoyed the Oskaloosa fourth graders' Famous Kansans Wax Museum presentations. Mary Luse led our annual Memorial Day Service in Edmonds Chapel, honoring those who served our country.

June brought the excitement of a day camp for approximately 30 children from A Child's World in Oskaloosa. The children explored our historic buildings and experienced hands-on activities, including making applesauce, attending a one-room schoolhouse, planting flowers, and sewing. Later in the month, Edmonds Chapel took on a romantic touch with a display of vintage bridal gowns and bridesmaid dresses, offering a glimpse into wedding fashions of years past.

July was a busy month as JCHS participated in the Old Settlers Parade, with Denise and Eileen proudly carrying our banner. We also served a successful fundraising breakfast of biscuits and gravy, juice, and fruit during the Old Settlers' Reunion. Visitors enjoyed our Patriotic Quilt Display in Edmonds Chapel, and our annual Ice Cream Social drew a great crowd for ice cream, live music, and a car show. Old Jefferson Town also participated in the Sunflower Summer Program, helping introduce our historic site to more Kansas families.



PATRIOT'S DAY
Parade Suffragists

Quilts continued to be a popular attraction into late summer and fall. In August, Edmonds Chapel's pews were adorned with signature quilts from churches and organizations throughout Jefferson County. September brought the return of our Turning Quilts event, where visitors shared the stories and memories behind their treasured quilts. October wrapped up the season with our Family Fall Harvest Festival, featuring hayrack rides, music, food trucks, games, and a scavenger hunt through the historic buildings. We were delighted by the turnout! We welcomed nearly 100 people of all ages, including young families with children, couples, and others from the community. It was wonderful to see Old Jefferson Town bustling with activity and enjoyed by so many.

Our commitment to honoring veterans extends beyond our grounds as well. Each November, Leanne Chapman represents JCHS at several Veterans Day celebrations, bringing military uniforms for display, including at the Valley Falls observance.

From educational experiences for children to community celebrations, historic displays, and opportunities to share personal stories, this season has been filled with meaningful ways to bring people together. We are grateful to our volunteers, community partners, and visitors who help make Old Jefferson Town a lively place to experience and preserve our local history.

Keeping OJT in Good Shape

A great deal of work goes on behind the scenes to keep Old Jefferson Town safe, attractive, and ready for visitors. Our maintenance crew, primarily Clifford Burk and Greg Noll, along with help from other dedicated volunteers, has accomplished a long list of projects this year. Routine maintenance included ongoing weed and insect control, cleaning air-conditioning coils, and changing filters. They also created and completed inspections and tagging for a fire extinguisher inventory and prepared a building information list for Emergency Management.

Other improvements included restoring theater seats for the Tibbott building display, installing exterior lighting at the Ninceheler House, Wellman School, Blacksmith Shop, and Jail, and repairing the light post near the Curry Stone. Landscaping around the Curry House and Edmonds Church was improved, and the door at the Wellman School was refurbished. Another important milestone was completing Phase I of handicap accessibility improvements to the buildings.

These projects may not always be the most visible part of our work, but they make a real difference in preserving our historic buildings and improving the experience for everyone who visits Old Jefferson Town. We are grateful to Clifford, Greg, Tim and all the volunteers who give their time and talents to keep our grounds and buildings in good condition.



Sharing History, Learning & Looking Ahead

JCHS continues to find new ways to share and preserve our local history. Leanne Chapman has been busy presenting historical programs throughout the county, including visits to Oskaloosa High School, A Child's World Daycare, the Valley Falls Historical Society, and various community organizations.

Jenny Coss also offered a successful three-part genealogy class, *Genealogy, Life in the Past Lane*, with participants able to attend in person or online. Each module was followed by a workshop day, giving participants additional opportunities to explore their family histories.



Visitors to Old Jefferson Town can also watch history take shape! Garret Tufte is making progress on an impressive eight-foot marble sculpture depicting a prairie couple and westward expansion on the west side of the grounds. Visitors are welcome to stop by and see his work in progress.

A big **THANK YOU** to **Freedom's Frontier** for awarding JCHS a mini-grant! These funds allowed us to purchase an iPad and touchscreen monitor to enhance our America 250 museum displays, providing new ways for visitors to explore and engage with history.

Help Us Preserve Our History

Old Jefferson Town and our Genealogy Library are the heart of Jefferson County's history. Keeping our story alive requires ongoing care, hard work, and vital financial support. From safeguarding historical artifacts and maintaining historic buildings to building new educational exhibits, there is always more to do.

The Jefferson County, Kansas, Historical Society (JCHS) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. While our dedicated volunteers and Board of Directors give countless hours, community donations are essential to cover operational costs and keep our history moving forward.

Every contribution, large or small, helps ensure that future generations can continue to discover, experience, and appreciate local history.

Ways to Give

Choose the method that works best for you to support our mission:

- **Donate Online:** Make a fast, secure one-time or recurring gift by visiting www.jchsk.com/donations
- **Planned Giving:** Leave a lasting legacy by including JCHS in your estate plan.
- **IRA Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD):** If you are age 70½ or older, you may be able to make a di-

rect charitable gift from your IRA. This can satisfy your required minimum distribution while offering tax advantages.

Note: For IRA distributions or estate planning, please consult with your financial advisor or tax professional to explore what is right for you.

- **Mail a Check:** Contributions can be mailed directly to our office:

Jefferson County KS
Historical Society
P.O. Box 146
Oskaloosa, KS 66066

- **In Person:** Visit us at Old Jefferson Town, where a volunteer can assist you with your donation.

Thank you for partnering with us to preserve the past and inspire the future!

THANK YOU to those who have given donations.





Jefferson County KS Historical Society
Old Jefferson Town

703 Walnut Street
Oskaloosa, KS 66066

CONTACTS



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Oskaloosa, KS 66066



OldJeffersonTown.com



[Facebook.com/OldJeffersonTownKS](https://www.facebook.com/OldJeffersonTownKS)



<https://www.youtube.com/@OldJeffersonTown>



(785) 218-4482



Tidbits

Newspapers.com can be accessed during open hours or by appointment at the library of Old Jefferson Town through the Historical Society's subscription.

Our **library** is open year round for research on

- Saturday mornings from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm and
- Wednesday afternoons from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm.
- You may call us at (785) 218-4482 or email info@ichsks.com to make an appointment during other hours.

Volunteers are happy to provide tours of the grounds dur-

ing open hours or by appointment.

Edmonds Chapel continues to be available for weddings. Information available by calling (785) 218-4482 or email info@ichsks.com.

Volunteers continue data entry of many new treasures from OJT collections into Past Perfect. Do a search (i.e. your last name, an object, a place, etc.) on our public access page.

<https://oldjeffersontown.catalogaccess.com/search>

If you are interested in becoming a **volunteer** contact us! We need volunteers for **all** sorts of things. Share your talent or interest with us!



BE A VOLUNTEER:

BECAUSE

SUPERHEROES

DON'T ALWAYS

WEAR CAPES!

OldJeffersonTown.com