

# NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 1974

NUMBER 74

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Sixteen IAS members returned the questionnaire that appeared in the last newsletter. The main results are as follows: 85% feel they have a voice in the Society; 100% agree with the IAS stand on artifact traffic; 100% support IAS efforts to cooperate with the Historic Preservation Officer in recording sites; 77% would not object to a raise in dues; 66% would like to have awards for amateurs and professionals; 100% would like to see the IAS cooperate with agencies in offering courses and certification, and 75% would like to see the IAS seek closer alignment with some state agency.

As far as IAS activities go, 50% would like to see more controlled excavation. A few called for spring and fall meetings, while others suggested more school involvement on primary and secondary levels, and still others called for such activities as slide talks on survey and excavation in different of the state. Over 80% like the annual meeting structure. Suggestions for improvement include shorter reports with more time devoted to the guest speaker(s), more workshops on artifact typology and a fuller Saturday schedule.

On how to involve more people in archaeology, most pointed to the need for improved publicity beyond the society. Most agreed that the Newsletter was adequate for inter-society communication. Ideas to involve more people include: educational television, more Register coverage (the fine article by Larry Stone of September 15 is a step in the right direction), traveling exhibits, public artifact displays, information booths at county fairs, etc.

How do we like our journal? Pretty well by all indications. Fifty percent flatly said they liked it. Others qualified a generally positive answer saying it was unattractive, too technical, too infrequent, too short and poorly illustrated. Answers overlapped with responses to the question on the need for more "popular" archaeological publication. Here we were in general agreement that more publications on the popular level are needed. Some comments are as follows: make one large publication by different professionals with a chapter on every culture, establish a question and answer column in the Newsletter, make a dictionary of archaeological terms, a guide to field methods, point types, etc. Also, run more Newsletter articles on "popular" topics, expose the "Norse myth," report on activities of other societies outside Iowa.



Professional-amateur relations were classed as "good" by 70% of the respondents. It is noteworthy that no one marked "excellent" but no one marked "horrible" either! As for comments, here are a few: amateurs are uncomfortable with professionals, more interaction is needed, professionals are friendly and encouraging, professionals should make more theses available and help to get artifacts out before the public. One added that A Anderson owed him a meal.

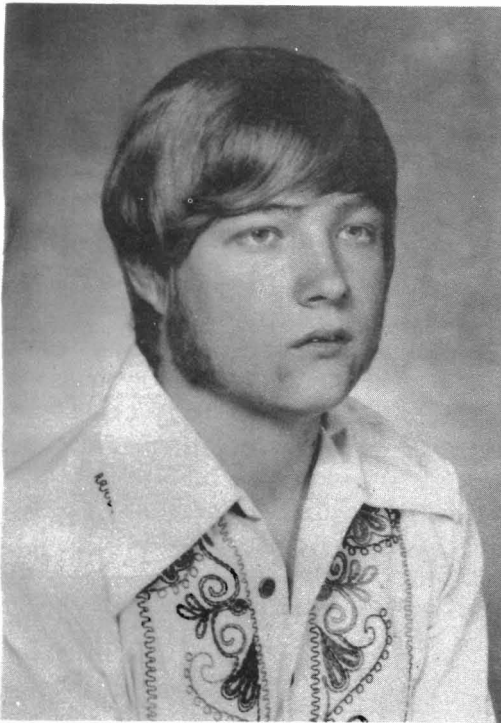
On IAS goals, 79% thought we were NOT creating and promulgating greater public interest in Iowa archaeology very well, while 14% thought we were doing OK, and 7% thought we were doing very well. Thirty-six percent thought we were NOT conducting research to discover, mark, preserve and record archaeological materials very well. An equal number thought we were doing OK, and 28% felt we were doing very well. One thought we should *add a goal* (discover and record sites), while others had some additional suggestions: closer cooperation with the State Archaeologist, IAS should lobby for better funding of archaeology in Iowa generally, IAS should promote site preservation, let the public know about Iowa's prehistory, set up permanent exhibits throughout the state and show our artifacts.

Now for a few of my opinions on some of these matters: It is true that we have fallen short in the publicity department. We are trying to correct this. It will require the help of everyone. Report your finds and activities to your local newspapers and radio stations. Look for opportunities of all kinds, if you find a possible "in," let your officers or Newsletter editors know about it so we can follow up. Some of us have gone on television to discuss prehistory. We need to do much more of this. Our efforts to date are only a drop in the bucket compared to what is needed.

It is interesting to note that Iowa has a fine state supported historical society with a membership of 8,000. Our membership has just barely broken 300 in recent years and this is our all time high. The discrepancy between the two organizations is due in part to the fact that amateur archaeology has been left largely on its own. This is why we asked if members of the IAS would like to seek closer alignment with other agencies. There is only so much we can do on our own with a volunteer staff. We may have to seek the backing of the state.

I noted on the questionnaire that a number of criticisms were leveled at the Society that are not really the fault of the IAS. They are the shortcomings of archaeology in Iowa generally. I am referring to protection of sites, establishment of archaeological museums, programs in the public interest and the like. These things take expertise to be effectively conducted. We can put our support behind these things, and actually do some on a limited scale. The IAS cannot assume the entire load on 300 memberships at \$4. each.

It is time we recognize that prehistory is as important as history. To say otherwise would be to discriminate against our prehistoric peoples. Yet prehistory has received but a small fraction of the attention that history has. It is a sad fact that Iowa doesn't have a decent museum dedicated to our prehistoric peoples. We need a showplace. I share the dissatisfaction of many that we should get the artifacts out of storage and into places where people can see them (at least in so far as it is possible and practical).



DENNIS JAMES

1955-1974

Dennis James was a charter member of the South Central Chapter. He showed keen interest in the chapter's activities and asked many questions.

Dennis was born at Modesto, California on October 9, 1955 and passed away on June 27, 1974 at Iowa Methodist Hospital in Des Moines after a three year battle with leukemia.

He is survived by his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Oral James, two brothers, Darrell and Kevin and a sister, Karen.

This is not the responsibility of the IAS, however, as it is presently organized. All we can do is aid and abet. We can set up displays at county fairs and give local talks, but I don't think this is what our members meant when they called for exhibits and increased availability of materials.

On dues, I don't think we can justify an increase without documenting the need. As long as our present dues cover expenses (publications, bulk mailing, postage, annual meetings, etc.) I am against raising dues. I find that we are near the point, however, where an increase will be necessary. The matter will be taken up by the Trustees and will be voted upon in Ames at the Annual Meeting in April.

The request for more opportunities to get field experience came as somewhat of a surprise in view of the poor turnout at Chan-ya-ta this summer. If it wasn't for the fact that Joe Tiffany had other resources, he wouldn't have had much of a project. Those IAS members who did attend can offer fine testimonials for other members who might contemplate attending a field school in the future.

I think we need to conduct more field projects like this. It isn't easy to organize, and there is a lot of responsibility for the person in charge. We are certainly grateful to Joe for his fine cooperation and we wish him the best of luck as he moves into the analysis.

There are many other matters to be discussed that were brought to light in the questionnaire, but we will not be able to deal with them here. Be assured that they will be given consideration by your officers and Trustees prior to the annual meeting. Finally, let me say that you do have a voice in IAS matters. Write to any of your officers or to our Newsletter editors. We think you will find that this really is YOUR society.

Duane Anderson  
President

## FOLLOW UP ON "THE MYSTERIOUS WHEEL"

Below is a letter received from Mr. Robert A. Taylor, Interpretive Specialist, formally with the Herbert Hoover National Historic Site. Mr. Taylor has done considerable research on the Medicine Wheel. This explanation is written in response to the article "The Mysterious Wheel" in the April 1974 issue of the Newsletter.

I read with interest the note on the "Mysterious Wheel" by Betsy M. Valen. I too was quite taken with this unusual structure and the obvious mystery of it. Fortunately, through rather unusual circumstances I was associated with a number of people, members of the Crow Tribe of Indians, dedicated to the practice of and the re-establishment of the "Crow Way of Life." As with any cultural research one must be careful of sources so I will name a few of the people who are responsible for my information: John Cummins (Chairman of the Crow Cultural Committee), Joe Medicine Crow (Tribal Historian), Chester Medicine Crow (Last Keeper of the Sacred Medicine Pipe Bundles), Dr. Barney Old Coyote (Member of the Cultural Committee), Mrs. May Child (Member of the Sacred Tobacco Society), Elsworth Little Light, Pious Real Bird, Lloyd Old Coyote, Henry Old Coyote (Vice President of the Native American Church, President of the Crow Tobacco Society, Member of the Crow Cultural Committee). Two years of intimate field work with these fine people cannot be described in these comments, but I can state their opinion of the "Mystery of the Medicine Wheel."

Within the past decade a certain type of man-made structure has become known to archeologists. This is the small circle of stone usually found on some promontary or high ground from which the rising sun or great panoramic vista is seen. These circles are called vision quest or fasting sites. While new to American archeology, the fasting site and the practice have not been forgotten by those people who place great importance on personal contact with the "Mysterious Power." Among the Crow the practice of fasting is part of their way of life. They use traditional sacred areas or any area that is believed by a given individual to be the particular place for a special fast. One might dream of a specific place to fast and that is where the fast will occur. To over-simplify a definition I might say in this context that a sacred area is any area in which one or more supplicants have received "medicine" as a result of a fast.

Vision quest sites are common on the east slope of the Rockies and isolated mountain ranges such as the Bighorns or Pryor Mountains. There is no hard and fast rule where they may be found or in what shape they are constructed. Who can say just where a fast must be attempted by a given individual? Among the Crow there are certain cultural formalities which dictate steps by which one "officially" fasts.

The Mysterious Power which might be found at a given site is not a permanent resource. The Power could, did, and will move. The Crow way of respect for these sites simply dictates that people can do whatever they wish at the site as long as their activities are not frivolous. The Crow believe, however, that too much activity on or around a given site or Sacred Area will result in the "Power" moving somewhere else thus destroying its usefulness. Crow traditions tell of a man named Scar-face who was told in a dream to go to a specific site in the Bighorns and fast. During his fast he constructed a circle of stones in which to lay or sit and from this central point he placed rock lines radiating outward. His fast was successful but he could not return to his people. He had to remain isolated so he

traveled north to Big Bull Elk Creek and constructed a rock shelter where he remained a long time. Eventually he left the canyon and undertook another fast at a place about two miles from the mouth of the canyon near Fort Smith. Scar-face picked river worn cobbles from the surface of a bench overlooking the Bighorn River and arranged them in a circle just large enough to lay or sit in. It was located right on the edge of the bench about  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile from the river and about 50 feet above it. He lay cobbles in lines radiating outward from the center circle. The tradition does not tell of his success in that fast on the bank of the Bighorn River.

Visual comparison of the two sites offer similarities and differences in environmental influences which are of prime importance during the fasting period. Where the Wyoming Wheel is quite large or elaborate, the Fort Smith Wheel is of simple construction.

Members of the Crow Tribe who have lived in the vicinity of the Fort Smith Wheel have periodically inspected to insure that the stone circle and lines radiating from it are not scattered by the hooves of grazing animals or vandalized. Henry Old Coyote told me the site looked the same in 1971 as it did in 1930. He had asked older tribesmen about it and they concurred that it had been customary for responsible Crow People to inspect the site and see that it was not disturbed. If we consider the probability of the tradition of Scar-Face being based on fact and the Medicine Wheels were made by the same man for use as fasting sites, then the mystery begins to fade. The Crow nor anyone else have stated they know the original layout of the Wyoming Wheel. It has definitely been altered in historic times. Henry Old Coyote told me of two old men whom he knew as a young man. They both had fasted at the Wyoming Site and had altered parts of it to meet the requirements of their own ordeal! Old Coyote estimated these vision-quests took place between 1900 and 1915.

One warm spring afternoon Old Coyote and I were carefully examining the small Fort Smith Wheel. I did not know at the time what it was. We were discussing a lot of possibilities. I did not know that Old Coyote was setting me up for a lesson in logic. He asked me to sit in the small circle of stone which I did. He told me to close my eyes and sit quietly. A few minutes later he asked me about what I knew was going on around me. I answered that I could hear the sound of the river (reminded me that I was thirsty). I could hear the sound of cottonwood leaves rustling in the wind (reminded me that it was hot sitting on that bench). The birds were singing and I could hear cattle across the river. Old Coyote then walked away from the center of the site and stood east of me. He then instructed me to point with my left arm in the direction of the south-east line. Then he asked me what they signified. Before I could answer he walked back to the center ring and raised his arms to the directions of the lines on the east. "The rising sun, the water, the leaves, the sounds of living things, all that is good in life is here. Here is where someone fasted, in the presence of these good things that for the duration of the fast were not obtainable, the sounds, odors would torment him. The lines say to the One Above 'Look, here I am right here in this little circle of stone, a little man that needs your help.'" Both of the wheels he continued were fasting places and nothing more. He knew of no attempt to fast at the Wyoming site in a long time. Because of the human activity he would be surprised "if any good would come from a fast there." As far as he knew, Scar-Face was the only one who fasted at the Fort Smith site.

From the site I looked up onto the north slope of the Bighorns and I knew of sites in use along its many ridges and peaks. In the solitude, the privacy of "The Mountain" the Crow People continue to pursue a religious conviction based on successful personal contact with the "One Above", the "First Maker", the "Mysterious Power" who knows what requirements may come to a person in a dream in the form of rocks, or holes or strange formations of wood and stone.

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STATE HISTORICAL DEPARTMENT OF IOWA  
DIVISION OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

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ADRIAN D. ANDERSON, DIRECTOR  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER

September 25, 1974

Mr. Gary Valen  
Office of the Newsletter Editors  
Iowa Archaeological Society  
R. R. #3  
Indianola, Iowa 50125

Re: Notes from Iowa's liaison with COPA, the Committee for the Public Understanding of Archaeology

Dear Gary:

Sorry for the delay in responding to your memo calling for information.

I just returned from an SAA seminar in Cultural Resource Management, held at Airlie, Virginia. Seven of us prepared a position paper on the subject which will be presented to the SAA membership later this year.

Our main course, and our conclusion, was that archaeologists (professional and amateur) must really begin to appreciate the fact that we are working with a finite, non-renewable resource. Every time a site is destroyed our resource base is diminished. We talk about this, but we have to go beyond talking and do some long range planning. Otherwise we will see the end of productive fieldwork in our lifetime.

The State Historic Preservation Division of the new State Historical Department is in the agency in Iowa which has the responsibility for developing long range resource management plans for historical and archaeological sites. The Division cannot, and should not, develop these plans without the participation of the amateurs and professional in the State. It would cease to be a public endeavor if the Division acted so arbitrarily. That is why I have always welcomed the participation of everyone in our survey and planning efforts.

If we are to produce proper long range plans to protect and preserve archaeological sites, we must first know where they are located. In the last two years we have added between 400 and 500 sites to our inventory. Much of the credit goes to the members of the IAS who helped the professional survey teams working in their areas. Credit is also due to collectors who have not yet joined the IAS but were willing to provide the field teams with site locations. We need more of this kind of support.

We can only determine that a construction project will have an adverse effect upon a site if we know where the site is located. Provide us with that information and we can do a more effective job of preserving them.

We should also begin thinking of the kinds of sites that the State should acquire both for preservation and interpretation. The right of the tax-paying public to have the prehistory of Iowa explained in museums and on-site interpretative centers must be given a much higher priority than in the past. If the professional fails in this, then we can expect to lose public support, and will not deserve better.

Enclosed is a reprint of an article by Bill Lipe. It presents the new position of archaeology pretty well.

Sincerely,



Adrian D. Anderson, Director  
State Historic Preservation Officer

#### MINUTES OF THE 24th ANNUAL MEETING

The 24th Annual Meeting of the Iowa Archeological Society was held at the Davenport Public Museum April 27 and 28, 1974.

The business meeting was called to order at 1:10 p.m. by President Duane Anderson. The 1973 Minutes were read. Richard Slattery moved and Nancy Osborne seconded that the minutes be approved. Motion carried. The Treasurer's Report was given showing a balance of \$723.60 in the checking account and \$1130.95 in the savings account. Eugene Newhouse moved and Herb Sovereign seconded that the Treasurer's Report be accepted. Motion carried. The Journal Editor's Report was read. The Journal is now up to date.

The dues structure of the Society was discussed. A decision was made by the President to study the matter with the Trustees for possible action at the 25th Annual Meeting.

There was a motion by Richard Slattery seconded by Mrs. LeRoy Pratt that the 1975 Annual Meeting be held in Ames. Motion Carried.

Ray Mittelstadt, Chairman of the Resolutions Committee read the following:

1. The IAS wishes to express its deep and sincere thanks to the Davenport Public Museum and the Quad Cities Area Archeological Society for hosting the 24th Annual Meeting. The excellent facilities and superb planning made this one of the best meetings in the Society's history.
2. The IAS wishes to express its gratitude to Dr. R. Bruce McMillan, Assistant Director of the Illinois State Museum, for his excellent talk delivered at the Annual Banquet. We are very pleased that he was able to take time from his busy schedule to be with us. In appreciation, he is being given a five-year membership in the Society.
3. The IAS wishes to extend a vote of confidence to the Valens for their efforts in producing the Society's Newsletter; to Dr. Dale

Henning, Journal Editor, for bringing the Journal up to date; to Mrs. Thornton and Don Spears for keeping track of the Society's money, records and mailings. Special thanks are extended to our outgoing trustees--James Reysack, Dr. David Gradwohl and Dr. H.P. Field for their three years of service to the Society.

4. The IAS also wishes to extend a vote of confidence to Adrian Anderson, State Historic Preservation Officer, for the fine job his office is doing, and to Joe Tiffany who will be directing the Society's Field School this summer.
5. The IAS wishes to express its deep and sincere thanks to Duane Anderson for the fine job he has done as president during the past year.
6. Get well wishes are extended to Lenore Vaughn, Dayton Iowa.
7. The various chapters of the IAS would like to express their thanks to the professional archaeologists throughout the area who have been so willing to work with the chapters.

Jim Pilgrim moved and Loren Horton seconded that the resolutions be adopted. Motion carried.

Names of deceased members of the Society were read in memorium: John Fray, C.D. Kirkpatrick of Keota and Dr. Carruthers of Ackley.

John Tandarich recommended the establishment of two awards as follows: The Charles R. Keyes Award to be given to a professional member of the society who has made the greatest contribution to Iowa archeology; and the Ellison Orr Award to be presented to an amateur member of the Society who has made the greatest contribution to Iowa archeology. A committee of Clark Mallum and John Tandarich was appointed to set up the criteria for the awards.

Nominations Committee Chairman Robert Guevera read the recommendations of the committee. They were:

President:	Duane Anderson, Cherokee
Vice	
President:	Pat Williams, Cherokee
Sec.-Trea.:	Ruth Thornton, Storm Lake
Trustees	George Horton, Vining
1976-77	Nancy Osborne, Ames
	James Reysack, Ackley
Journal Ed.	Dale Henning, Lincoln, Neb.
Journal Ed	
Designaté:	R. Clark Mallum, Decorah
Newsletter	
Editors:	Gary and Betsy Valen, Indianola
	Don Spears, Ottumwa

There were no nominations from the floor. Eugene Newhouse moved and John Tandarich seconded that this slate be elected. Motion carried.

A motion for adjournment was made by Nancy Osborne and seconded by Robert Guevera. Motion carried. Fifty-six members attended the business meeting.

Respectfully submitted: Pat Williams, Secretary pro tempore





Above--Trustees and Officers meet to discuss the agenda at the 24th Annual Meeting in Davenport  
 Left---David Carlson gives the chapter report for the Central Chapter

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CHAPTER REPORTS

Quad-City Chapter submitted by Janice Hall

The Quad-City Area group had its first meeting of the season on September 24th at the Putnam Museum, formerly the Davenport Museum. Ferrel Anderson presented a program about the Pine Creek Mound group, a Hopewell site excavated in 1939. He also discussed the correct procedures for artifact cataloging.

Slides of the July field trip to the Koster Site were shown.

Dates for future meetings in 1974 and 1975 are: Oct. 29, Nov. 26, Dec. 10, Jan. 28, Feb. 25, Mr. 25, Apr. 29, and May 27

Southcentral Chapter submitted by Herb Sovereign

I attended the Chan-ya-ta dig for 3½ days while Chris Lintz was taking archaeomagnetic samples. He is from the University of Oklahoma at Norman.

Elbert Pichcock, Bill Doran of the Union County Soil Conservation Office, and I made a survey of the 12 mile creek watershed project. We located 4 sites, three of which will be under water when the project is completed. A report about this has been sent to Adrian Anderson.

Northwest Chapter from the NWIAS Newsletter

July 21, 1974 - The Northwest Chapter met at the Chan-ya-ta Site for a day of excavation with Joe Tiffany's crew from the University of Wisconsin. About two dozen people participated. Work accomplished included clearing the overburden from a house structure, screening, and some artifact washing. Quite a bit of work was done in spite of the 106° temperature.

August 18. 1974 - A planetarium program was held at the Sanford

Museum entitled American Indian Star Myths. About 35 people attended, many of whom were not members of the society. Meetings such as this help to acquaint the public with the activities of the Northwest Chapter and thus further its objectives. One new member was signed up, that being Mr. Dale Gifford of Cherokee.

Lone Ranger Chapter submitted by George Horton

The Lone Ranger Chapter wishes to thank all I.A.S. members who showed up at the first annual I.A.S. Pow Wow Picnic. It was great to see a group of people together because of concern and friendship. More and more such gatherings are needed to strengthen the society and promote growth. General interest in Iowa prehistory is growing. I hope the people will not be left in the dark, but kept informed and most of all told how they can best serve.

MUSEUM NOTES

The Putnam Museum in Davenport, Iowa

CORN and MAN is an exhibit which will be shown at the Putnam Museum July 17 through October. This multi-media exhibit tells the story of corn from its place in pre-history through its development and uses in present day living.

Corn is the only major grain native to the New World. Fifty-six hundred years ago corn grew on ears less than one inch long with each kernel partly enclosed in husks. If the Pilgrims had not had corn, they could not have sustained their Plymouth Colony. Today, our very existence depends on corn in its many forms. The exhibit introduces the city resident to hybridization and modern corn growing and shows the farm dweller how corn is utilized by our present technology.

The exhibit is supported by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities and many middlewestern corporations and institutions. A continuous slide and tape presentation and Sunday film showing at 2:15 p.m. supplement the exhibit. Special film showings can be arranged for groups over twenty who contact the museum in advance.

Sanford Museum in Cherokee, Iowa

The Sanford Museum is holding a special exhibit entitled "The Prehistoric Mill Creek People" in the West Gallery through December. The exhibit features a scale model of a Mill Creek village and displays of artifacts recovered from excavations conducted in northwest Iowa in recent years.

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT REPORTS

The Historic Preservation Program, headed by Adrian D. Anderson, has contracted with David Cook to prepare a series of archaeological resource management reports. These reports will cover the following areas: 1) Twelve-Mile Creek Watershed (Union County) 2) Chariton River Basin 3) The Iowa-Cedar River Basins

The purpose of these reports is to provide the State with information which will facilitate proper long-range resource management. Each report will include known archaeological site distribution, a description of the character of the resources present, and to the extent possible, identify problems and areas of critical concern

which should receive high priority in future investigations. The reports will also, where possible, identify areas where construction projects might have an adverse effect upon the archaeological resource base.

Dave Cook would like to be in touch with collectors in the above areas, so that he can fill out confidential reports on sites that are presently unknown in the State. These sites are part of our cultural heritage and should be known and, if possible, preserved from damage. If anyone knows the location of mounds, areas where projectile points are found, and even where chips and flakes are present, please write to him at:

Historic Preservation Program  
B-13 MacLean Hall  
Iowa City, Iowa 52242

If you also know of any site that is of historic or architectural interest, please contact the Preservation office. If any historic and/or archaeological site is to be destroyed anywhere in the state, please do not hesitate to call us at 319-353-6949 or 319-353-4186. We hope to hear from you soon!

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PLEASE NOTE: David Gradwohl of Iowa State University has announced that the annual meeting will be held April 26-27, 1975 on the campus in Ames.

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STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF IOWA

Membership is open to all. Schools and other institutions may take Institutional Membership. Membership includes The Palimpsest, News for Members, and other publications of the Society.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Annual Membership..... \$ 5.00  
Gift Membership..... \$ 5.00  
Life Membership..... \$150.00  
Husband and Wife Joint Life Membership..... \$200.00

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N E W M E M B E R S

ACTIVE

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Gussie James	Mt. Ayr	John Palmquist	Stanton
Zola M. James	Mt. Ayr	Joe Plesek	Vining
Dale F. Linden	Stanton	Rebecca A. Snetselaar	Polk City
Dr. W. J. Mack	Garner	Terry Still	Mt. Ayr
Luis S. Moscoso	Iowa City	Helen Stull	Mt. Ayr

Edgar S. Oerichbauer    Madison, WI  
 Brian W. Sitterley    Chicago, IL  
 J.C. Powers II        Hampton  
 LIFE MEMBER

Patricia J. O'Brien    Manhattan, KS

I A S M E M B E R S H I P S

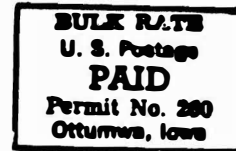
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Iowa Archeological Society  
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