

**CASS COUNTY
GENEALOGICAL
SOCIETY**

Newsletter December '22 & January '23

Hello Genealogists and friends,

A big thank you to everyone who responded to the request for votes for officers. There were no write-ins. 😊

Officers for two years are:

President - LaVon Eblen

Vice-president - Doris Krogman

Secretary - Glenna Thompsen

Treasurer - Carolyn Key

A new year is just a few days away. That means dues are due. See the form included.

You will see that most of this newsletter is a result of research done by Beth Johnson.

Most of us said, "Wow! I didn't know anything about these Singers!" You likely have discovered interesting stories through your researching. Please share them by sending them for use in this newsletter.

Best wishes, LaVon

The following article is from the program given by Beth Johnson at CCGS meeting on November 17, 2022

"The Fisk Jubilee Singers" was formed in Nashville, Tennessee, by the American Missionary Association, to educate freedmen and woman. In 1871 the University was facing serious financial difficulty. To avert closure, Fisk's treasurer and music director George White, a

Northern missionary, dedicated to music and proving that African Americans were the intellectual equals of whites, gathered a nine-member student chorus. On October 6, 1871 the group, under Whites direction, started the first tour of the Fisk Jubilee Singers.

In the beginning the group sang mostly European composers to mixed reviews. As the tours progressed the singers added slave songs that had never been sung in public. "Songs that were sacred to our parents, who used them in their religious worship..." according to Ella Sheppard, soprano. In the next few years the group performed in Washington, D.C. for the members of the U.S. Congress, and in New York and Boston. In 1873 they toured Great Britain and Europe. The group of 11 members sang for Queen Victoria in April of that year. Due to the grueling touring schedule the original group disbanded and a new group was formed.

In May of 1887 the Fisk Jubilee Singers gave a performance at Rood's Hall in Anita, Iowa. Mr. Chas H. Whitmore had the pleasure to announce the engagement. In the advertisement for the musical evening "That music touches-- it takes hold", Unknown Prince of Germany. "Their songs open the fountain of tears"- Rev Theo L. Cuyler, D.D. Cost of admission was 50 cents.

On Tuesday, May 10, 1887 the Atlantic Opera House was the host to the world-famous Jubilee Singers, from Fisk University, Nashville, Tennessee. Cost of admission is 35, 50 and 75 cents. Seats were on sale at Rurson's.

The Atlantic Daily Telegraph said" Rev. J.M. Cummings, of Anita, was in the city

this morning. He states that the Fisk Jubilee Singers who appeared at Pennell's opera house tonight, are the only living representatives of the original company, and a number of those who were in the company when it was organized, are with it now. As he heard the famous singers years ago, his statement certainly has weight."

That was the beginning of a long line of Jubilee Singers that would perform in Atlantic. In 1897 the Slayton Jubilee Singers came to the Atlantic Opera House. This group came from the Slayton Lyceum Bureau of Chicago. In August of 1903 during the Chautauqua the Mason and Downs' Orpheus Jubilee Singers were headliners.

The Williams Jubilee Singers were at the Chautauqua in August of 1907. The Cass County Democrat said the group "arrived in the city and are at the Cornell restaurant and rooms." Also, in February of 1907 the Canadian Jubilee Singers appeared at the Christian church. "Their music is of the highest order, including the ever popular and never old plantation songs and melodies... all lovers of good music shall make it a point to appear" The Atlantic Daily Telegraph.

According to the Daily Telegraph in August of 1909 The Dixie Jubilee Singers were at the Chautauqua. On July of 1909 the famous Claflin Jubilee Singers, accompanied by President Dunton of Claflin University will give a free concert on Thursday evening at the Methodist church. A silver offering will be taken at the close. They come with highest testimonials and praise a great entertainment. The object of their vacation is to advertise the work of the Freedmen's Aid Society and Claflin University.

In 1910 the Chautauqua again had Jubilee singers. This time the Ferguson Jubilee Singer were to perform. The hotels of Atlantic would not take the jubilee singers, colored, who are appearing at the Chautauqua assembly. The answer was "full up", when the Chautauqua people applied for accommodations for the colored folks, and the management saw the point, so tried no further. The singers were taken by the Boormans and by J. A. McWaid and wife, are stopping at these two homes during their stay here.

Mr. Boorman of the Chautauqua said he had half a mind to close the hotels for refusing to take the singers. "I regard the refusal to take them as small in the extreme." According to the Atlantic Daily Telegraph the hotel owners said they had no grudge against colored folks but they had to look out for their business.

Messrs. H. M. Boorman and J.A. McWaid who entertained in the homes the colored Jubilee Singers say that they enjoyed the visits with the colored people. Mr. Boorman says there were some college graduates among the singers and they talked about things that made him wish he had gone through college himself. Mr. McWaid said this morning "The colored people are ladies and gentlemen. They roomed at our home and behaved very nicely. We are not in the least ashamed of having them stay with us. "

The concern about a place for the Jubilee singers to stay did not hurt the attendance at the Chautauqua according to the headlines of the July 7, *Atlantic Daily Telegraph*. **GREAT CROWDS HEAR CARRIE NATION AND THE COLORED JUBILEE SINGERS.** Entire City takes interest in meet.

Mail to Cass County Genealogical Society 507 Poplar, Atlantic, IA 50022

Cass County Membership Form: \$15 Annual Membership fee due January for the calendar year. New members who join in October of a given year will have membership for the next calendar year.

Date _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Email Address _____ Phone Number _____

Surnames Being Researched in Cass County _____
