The Hiawatha History Committee met on October 12, 2015, at the Hiawatha City Hall in Conference Room D with Edie Wheeler as Chair calling the meeting to order at 1:30 P.M. Members present: Pat Semelroth, Sandy Brewer, Dick Larson, Don Earll and Jerry Seifried. Bev Daws was absent. Guests: Don Gabel and Jim Wheeler.

Don Gabel stopped in to visit the History Committee.

The History Committee interviewed Jim Wheeler. Highlights of the interview include the following information:

* Jim Wheeler started working at a print shop while in high school; he worked on the printing press, setting all the prints for paper and melted the lead to make into type. This was a dangerous job back then.
* Jim joined the Marine Corps after graduating from high school and Jim and Edie got married while he was in the Marine Corps.
* Jim and Edie have been married for 58 years.
* Jim and Edie have three children, two grandkids and two great grandkids.
* Jim and Edie came to Hiawatha because both of their families were here.
* Jim worked at Hiawatha Lumber as a bookkeeper.
* Jim and Edie’s first house was located at 112 6th Avenue where they lived for nine and a half years until they built a house on 14th Avenue.
* Being a Hiawatha resident, automatically enlisted Jim into the fire department and this is where he met Dick Larson. They were the first ones on call all the time.
* Jim along with Dick Larson and others helped build the fire station on 10th Avenue, building the interior and even pouring the parking lot. The wives were a big help at the fire station assisting with fundraisers, events and answering phone calls.
* The main reason Hiawatha started the fire station was because at one time, Fay Clark’s barn burnt down because Cedar Rapids would not cross the line to help with fires.
* Jim said volunteer work back in these days was well worth the time because everyone pitched in to help.
* In 1962, Jim worked at Collins where he got back in the printing trade.
* When Collins sold one of their printing machines, Jim bought an old machine and began printing out of his garage.
* When Jim’s dad fell into bad health, Jim moved the printer to his dad’s on Clark Street. Jim worked on hand bills and he and his family often worked all night long putting books together for sales.
* Jim and his brother bought 113 Fisher Street, the old Gordon Emmons building. Jim ran the printing business out of the front and his brother ran the trailer sales were in the back.
* Jim worked on the Hiawatha Happenings newspaper where he did the printing and folding. Jim and Edie’s boys delivered the paper around town.
* Jim also did printing for companies like Iowa Iron, CR Steel and Parsons Technology.
* In 1964, Collins called Jim back to work after a layoff where he worked as the lead press operator. At this time, the economy was bad and printing cost more.
* Jim worked at Rockwell for 33 years and after he retired, he started working on lawnmower and chainsaw sharpening out of his garage.
* Jim helped with Hiawatha Little League, the girls and boys league.
* Jim told a story about doing some printing on paper that looked like money. One side looked like the ten-dollar bill and the other side was an advertisement for a bar. The IRS visited Jim and took all of the printing material and the negatives.
* Jim is an avid bowler and this all started after he took a job at Town and Country Bowl as a teenager setting wooden pins for $0.10 a line and $1.00 per game.
* Jim has been a member of the Cedar Rapids Bowling Association for years where he served as director, president and treasurer.
* Jim was elected into the Bowling Hall of Fame and also received the Frank Stanek Award.
* Jim is a certified lane inspector and he still reads tapes to check the oil on the lanes to make sure they meet specifications.

Business:

Pat Semelroth moved the approval of the agenda, seconded by Sandy Brewer. Motion carried. Dick Larson moved the approval of the September 14, 2015 meeting minutes, seconded by Pat Semelroth. Motion carried*.*

**Update on Interviews**

Upcoming interviews:

* November - Bob Jones from Hiawatha American Legion Post 735

Don Earll will contact Bob to see if he can do an interview before he leaves for the winter.

Future interviews:

* Buffalo Cemetery and Shiloh Cemetery

**Hiawatha Insight Articles**

* November newsletter – Hiawatha Legion Post 735 article and picture of original members submitted by Bob Jones

Future articles on file:

* Hope Church
* St. Elizabeth’s Church

**Other Business**

Don Earll announced a Boy Scout is working on a project to plot out all three cemeteries (Morrison, Buffalo and Shiloh) to mark the veteran burial locations. ***The History Committee mentioned asking this Boy Scout to do an interview sometime in the future.***

Edie Wheeler mentioned selecting a date to have a History Committee dinner in early December and possibly calling off the December meeting due to the holidays. The History Committee did this last year and everyone seemed to enjoy it.

Edie Wheeler talked about putting together a History Committee time capsule and deciding what to put in it. The History Committee talked about doing this in the past. Edie said she would talk to Tom Theis to determine the best location to put the capsule. Edie will also speak to Janel McGovern from the Nixon School PTA to get a recommendation on the materials to use to make the capsule.

The next History Committee meeting is November 9, 2015 at 1:30 p.m.

Don Earll moved to adjourn the meeting at 2:59 p.m., seconded by Dick Larson. Motion carried.

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Edie Wheeler, Chair