

WHBC has political past

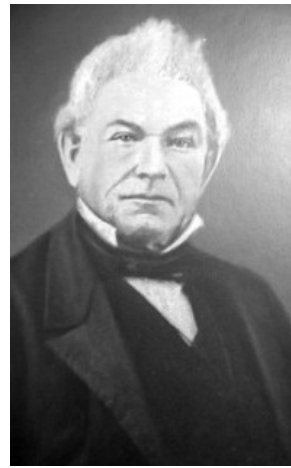
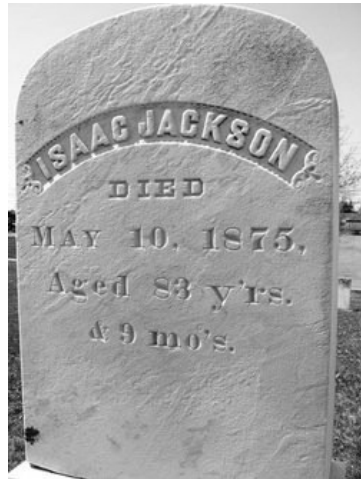
This article is one in a bicentennial year series for The Link by WHBC Historian Bonnie Healy.

The year has cycled around to Election Day with Henrietta once again seeing a heated race for Town Supervisor. Although it's been some years since the name of a West Henrietta Baptist Church member appeared on the town ballot, it was not always so.

Of the 40 men named as supervisor between 1818 and 1976 in historian Eleanor C. Kalsbeck's book, *Henrietta Heritage*, 10 had strong ties to West Henrietta Baptist Church. Those 10 occupied the town's top administrative office for 62 of the 158 years recorded in Kalsbeck's book.

The earliest supervisor with a WHBC connection was **Isaac Jackson**, elected in 1828. A decade earlier, Jackson had served as the town's first clerk. He farmed on the east side of West Henrietta Road, just north of Calkins.

Isaac Jackson was the grandfather of Coralin Jackson Rice, whose Christmas Eve death on her honeymoon later led to



Early Henrietta Supervisor Isaac Jackson, buried in Maplewood Cemetery, was the grandfather of the woman whose death started the Memorial Endowment Fund. Supervisor Alexander Williams, center, built the church in 1838. Mrs. C.J. Kramer, pictured as a member of the Elizabeth McFarlane Memorial Class, was the mother of Supervisor Almon Kramer.

the founding of the church's Memorial Endowment Fund. Young Cora's funeral was held in the church, and her mother Julia Crittenden Jackson, is pictured among the Elizabeth McFarlane Memorial Class.

Alexander Williams, the blacksmith and cobblestone home builder who built WHBC in the summer of 1838 began three years as supervisor in 1850. His oldest son, **Marvin Williams**, followed his father's footsteps in 1877. Marvin's baptism is found in the church record on March 13, 1869.

Almon Nich-

ols, supervisor for five years beginning in 1885, was the brother of Marion Nichols, whose young wife, Effie, is memorialized in a sanctuary stained glass window. The brothers were the sons of Elijah Nichols, a longtime church Clerk, grandsons of Isaac Nichols, in whose home the 1838 congregation reorganized, and great grandsons of Josiah Nichols, in whose home the congregation organized in 1815.

Democrat **Marshall Todd**, served five years beginning in 1896. His son **Frank Todd**, followed him in 1908 for five years. Both of their wives are pictured among the members of the

McFarlane Class. **Daniel Harrington**, a Republican, immediately succeeded Frank Todd in 1912. He served until his death in 1922. His wife, Minnie, was the president of the McFarlane Class in 1911.

Supervisor **Homer Benedict**, a Republican, held office for 12 years, the longest service among the 10 church-affiliated supervisors. Both his wife and mother were members of the Elizabeth McFarlane Class.

Supervisor **Earl Chase**, uncle to current member Dave Chase, served eight years beginning in 1944, Supervisor Almon **Kramer**, the son of a McFarlane Class member, served four years beginning in 1952.