



*Look Into the Past
To Discover the Future*

November 2026
Volume 19
Issue 4

The Historian -- Keeping the Public Informed

Omitted in Error

In the September issue of The Historian, the list of table sponsors for our fundraiser was incomplete. Many thanks to all table sponsors, including these omitted in error:

Becky Lamont in memory
of Judi Kavaney
Dave & Nan Paulson in memory
of Stuart & Bernita Menz
Dave & Nan Paulson in memory
of Wayne & Jane Paulson
Dave & Nan Paulson in memory
of Brad Rothermel
Cheryl Tindall in memory
of Marshall & Eleanor Tindall
June Yates in memory
of L. David Yates

Volunteers Needed

Workshop every Monday from 1:00
– 3:00 p.m. at the building, 309
South Fifth Street

Join us!

THIS PROGRAM IS SCHEDULED FOR **Saturday, November 7, 2026** **at 3:00 p.m.**

In honor of Veterans Day, we are pleased to welcome Nostalgia Entertainment and their World War II Radio Hour, a nostalgic musical and theatrical performance that recreates the golden age of 1940s broadcasting.



**This program is courtesy of
the Friends of the Kirkland Public Library
and the Kirkland Public Library**



Kirkland Historical Society, 309 South Fifth Street, Kirkland, IL 60146
kirklandhistoricalsociety.com
Also visit us on Facebook at Kirkland Historical Society

2026 Hiawatha Hall of Fame

CONGRATULATIONS Denny Rehn (former KHS trustee) and Connie Worden (current KHS trustee)

As a life-long resident of Kirkland, Dennis has immersed himself in this community.



Dennis transferred from Belvidere High School his sophomore year. He was active in FFA all four years of high school, serving as the chapter reporter his junior and senior years. He was co-Sports editor for the annual his senior year. As a 1966 graduate of Hiawatha, he went to ISU for his bachelor's. Dennis was on the Young Farmer's Committee during the late 70's. He received their award in District 1 Northern Illinois in 1979, which recognizes extraordinary leadership abilities, farm and financial management as well as involvement in Farm Bureau and community activities for young farmers ages 18-31. He went to Washington DC with the Young Farmers, sitting in on the committee meetings and seeing both Houses of Congress in action. He was a state discussion meet finalist and attended the state leadership conference for Young Farmers.

His farm museum is well-known for its extensive collection of "stuff" ranging from corn collectibles to wagons to signs to hog ringers. Dennis has been an active collector for 20 years, dating to the time his kids left home for college. As he became an active member of the Corn Items Collectors Assn., Dennis began hosting meetings in his shop-now-museum. "I even built a room designed to look like an old corn crib for all the corn items," he says. "I thought it would be the answer to all my space problems." As his collection expanded, Dennis sought advice from the local historical society. People there suggested that he arrange the collection by category, which he did: Automotive, dairy, poultry, seed bags, general store, cobbler, toys, pedal tractors, signs, primitives, seed corn, shellers, corn crib, planters, markers and graders.

Dennis is also known for expanding the Boosters' football offerings beyond drinks, candy and popcorn. When the boosters balked at spending money for meat, he told them, "You have to spend money to make money." and fronted the money to purchase hot dogs, brats and pork chops to start what we now think of as staples for fans. His grilling became famous not only in this community but others who declined to have pork chop grill-offs at games. He has a crew that grills for all kinds of events including the Fireman's fundraiser, July 4 celebration, reunions....

He's an active member of DeKalb County Farm Bureau, Kirkland Lion's Club for over 40 years and has served on the Kirkland Historical Society board. He received the Fred Manni award for community service. In 2012 he received the Tribute to Heroes award for giving above and beyond for his community. He was Kirkland's 2013 Citizen of the Year.

Dennis and his wife Debbie have two daughters, Sarah and Molly and one granddaughter, Vivian.



As a life-long resident of Kirkland, Connie has been immersed in its local history and school system. She graduated from Hiawatha in 1970 as valedictorian. She was in the Hawk yearbook staff, GAA, FTA, musicals, band, speech contests and co-editor of the Hallmark newspaper. She only regrets girls' sports hadn't hit the scene when she was in school. After graduating from Illinois State University, she returned to teach high school English, journalism and speech at Hiawatha for 38 years before retiring in 2012. During her tenure she was a cheerleading coach, JV girls' basketball coach for five years and varsity softball coach for 7 years.

She advised the *Hallmark* newspaper and *Hawk* yearbook. She sponsored the VFW and Voice of Democracy essay/speech contests. During her tenure, Connie ran the after-school tutoring program, and taught Kishwaukee GED courses at Hiawatha. Among her committee work were the Internal

Review Team, School Improvement Planning and Handbook committees. As a CRISS trainee she taught staff preferred teaching techniques.

She was the first DeKalb County recipient of the Excellence in Education Award and a nominee for Illinois Teacher of the year. Her philosophy in teaching was always to make everything applicable to life and to put the bar one notch above what students thought they could do.

In the community she's taught Sunday School and Bible School at the Lutheran and Methodist churches. She is the Lutheran's archivist. She leads lessons for the Lutheran Ladies' Aid and is secretary/treasurer for the Methodist Circle. She enjoys making quilts for the homeless which the Lutherans distribute and hats and scarfs which the Methodists distribute. She and her husband Larry ran the community youth softball program for 13 years and spearheaded building the initial east backstop. In 2021 she and her husband were named Citizen of the Year by the Chamber of Commerce.

Love for local history permeates her life from teaching "Our Town" in school coupled with local tours to writing a book for our centennial in 1982. She just finished writing and publishing a history of the Kirkland Methodist church for their 140th anniversary. She worked with Peggy Stuntz on the *Then and Now* play for Kirkland's 125th anniversary, and has written numerous historical articles for newspapers and *Corn Silk*.

As a member of the Hiawatha Education Foundation, she oversees the teachers' grants. Even her work on Hiawatha's Hall of Fame allows her to gather local history for the nominees.

We the People of DeKalb County

The DeKalb County History Center opened a new exhibit earlier this year to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the United States. It was based on the premise that history is not only shaped by famous names and national events, but also by everyday people in villages and cities living their normal lives and supporting their families. The exhibit celebrates a small sampling of those stories and directs the viewer to visit their local history museum for more stories as we reflect on our pursuit of a more perfect union. What follows are two of those stories.

John MacQueen (1865-1945)



Born in Scotland in 1865 to a family in the sheep trade, John MacQueen worked for five years with Scotland's largest stock commission firm before immigrating to the United States in 1888 to pursue the sheep business.

After working in Wisconsin and California, he founded a sheep-feeding operation in West Chicago, Illinois in 1891.

Encouraged by Kirkland founder William Kiark, MacQueen relocated his business to Kirkland. Because livestock shipped by rail to Chicago had to be unloaded, fed, and watered en route, he built extensive sheep sheds

capable of handling 1.5 million sheep annually, one of the largest such operations in the country. His success brought him considerable wealth and extensive landholdings throughout the Midwest.

MacQueen married Hortense Erickson in 1898. They adopted a son and raised a niece. A World War I colonel and civic leader, MacQueen helped shape the community through generous land donations. He died in 1945; Hortense in 1958.

Peggy Stuntz



Peggy Stuntz wrote a play, Kirkland: Then and Now that was presented on the 4th of July for Kirkland's quasiquintennial (125th year) in 2007. It was a community success.

The left over funds were used to start the "Kirkland Historical Society". A board was formed with Allan Aves being the first president.

In 2009 Scott Olson of Olson Funeral and Cremation Service offered space at their Kirkland Chapel. The Historical Society had meetings, purchased display cases and helped care for the facility. As items of Kirkland's history were received, more room was required for displays.

Peggy's leadership was instrumental in setting up displays, and starting books to catalog paper articles, obituaries, family files, etc. Today, there are 30 display cases, over 100 notebooks, and 1,000s of accessions all related to the history of Kirkland.

In 2020 during the pandemic, funds were raised to purchase the building from Olson. Olson continues to have funeral services at the location. Four general meetings are held each year for members and the general public to attend.

Because of Peggy Stuntz and others the history of Kirkland will continue to be preserved for future generations.



**Mark Your
Calendar**

2027

Jan 13	Board of Trustees Meeting
Feb 10	Board of Trustees Meeting
Mar 10	Board of Trustees Meeting
Apr 14	Board of Trustees Meeting
May 16 2pm	General Meeting
June 9	Board of Trustees Meeting
July 14	Board of Trustees Meeting
July 24	Fundraiser
Aug 11	Board of Trustees Meeting
Sept 8 2pm	General Meeting
Oct 13	Board of Trustees Meeting
Nov 7 3pm	Annual Meeting
Dec 8	Board of Trustees Meeting
Dec 11 4:30-6:30pm	Christmas in Kirkland Franklin Township Park

Many thanks to Chief Chad Connell and the Kirkland Fire Department for appearing at our September presentation on fires in Kirkland put together by our trustees, Linda Fett and Connie Worden.



Also thanks to Lindakay Ebel and Carol Stiegman for the wonderful treats!



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2027 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP

Dues help pay for events and supplies
needed to preserve the past

Individual	\$20
Family	\$25
Life (husband and wife)	\$300
Organizations	\$30
Business	\$30

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

KIRKLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

PO Box 337

309 South Fifth Street

Kirkland, Illinois 60146

Help preserve Kirkland's past by donating your
time and/or sharing: Kirkland historic items,
photos, stories, articles, family trees, maps,
abstracts, newspapers, etc.

Fill this form out and bring it
with your check or cash to the
November 7th meeting or mail it
in to renew your membership
for 2027.