

Where Am I?



Dear Member,

If you can, share this newsletter with a friend or relative.

Dear Friend or Relative,

If you would like to join the Kewanee Historical Society to support making the past available to the present and the future, a lifetime membership is only \$25 and for a \$100 donation your name would be placed on our Century Club plaque.

Answer:

You are standing in front of the museum at 211 N. Chestnut as it looked in the late 1800's when it was the Butterwick Brothers Hardware Store. Looking back at you, from the left, are Henry Clay Merritt, whose cold storage plant for game birds, including prairie chickens, was located behind Butterwick's, Samuel Butterwick, Henry Gold, Thomas Butterwick and Phillip Reuvell. Samuel's son, Garnet, continued the business until it closed in the 1960's.

Kewanee Historical Society

211 North Chestnut Street
Kewanee, Illinois 61443

309-854-9701

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Open Thurs. & Sat.

May 1 - Oct. 1

1:30pm - 4:00pm

or by Appointment call:
309-853-4572 • 309-853-8605

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Historical Happenings

Newsletter of the Kewanee Historical Society

Summer 2009



ANNUAL BAKE SALE FUNDRAISER SET FOR SATURDAY, JUNE 13

It's that time again—for our annual newsletter, bake sale and appeal for financial assistance. It is in this newsletter that we announce the date of our bake sale and make an appeal for financial assistance.

The Kewanee Historical Society will hold its annual **Bake Sale** at Wal-Mart on Saturday morning, **June 13**, from 8 to 11. This is the **main fundraiser for the society each year** and provides a considerable portion of the operating funds for the year.

Members are asked to donate baked items and bring them to Wal-Mart by 8 a.m. A table will be set up outside the north front entrance. If you cannot bring them out, call 853-4572 or 853-8605, to make arrangements to have your baked goods picked up.

If you don't feel like baking, we will gladly accept money donations. Again, feel free to drop money donations off at the Bake Sale table. Or you can mail them to the society at 211 N. Chestnut St., Kewanee, IL 61443. Please make out your check to Kewanee Historical Society.

Since the society once again qualifies for the matching grant from Wal-Mart's foundation, it is important to get a money donation to us prior to the June 13 Bake Sale. Needless to say, the more we raise from the Bake Sale and its related donations, the more money we will receive from Wal-Mart. The past several years Wal-Mart has been very generous by matching up to \$1,000. **(Last year's Bake Sale netted \$2,700--\$1,700 from our generous members and \$1,000 from Wal-Mart.)**

Officers of the Kewanee Historical Society ~

Larry Lock, Pres. Steve Moon, Vice Pres.
Joan Herrick, Sec. William McKee, Treas.

Directors of the Kewanee Historical Society ~

Jeff Arch, Lee Ann Bailleu, Clint Block, Marci Carlson, Bea Clark,
Greg Davis, Mark Hepner, Pat Lock, Alma McLennan, Bob Miller,
Kathy Miller, Dave Van Nieuwenhuysse

STREETCAR BOOK SUCCESS

"Streetcars in Kewanee and Galva," written by the late Fred Rozum and published last August by the Kewanee Historical Society, has been a great success. We are happy to report that the first printing of 250 sold out this spring and another 100 were recently printed by B&B Printing.

Virtually all of you know about the book since we mailed publication notices to out-of-town members last August and locals hopefully heard about it through Star-Courier and WKEI publicity. Special thanks to both of them and their Dave Clarke and Bob McKee, respectively.

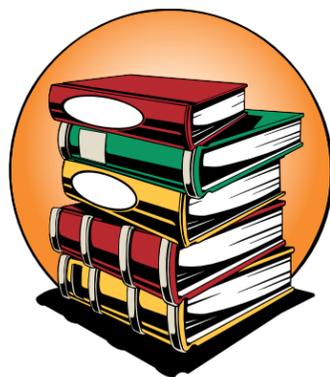
We also appreciate those who helped sell the book: Kewanee Public Library, B&B Printing, Heartfelt Gifts and Office Specialists in Kewanee, Galva Historical Society, Galva News and the Illinois Traction Society, whose newsletter and website produced about 25 sales.

If you have not heard about the book or overlooked acquiring a copy, the 100-page thoroughly researched account of Kewanee streetcars (1903-1935) and the interurban to Galva (1906-1932) with some 50 illustrations is available for \$16 including tax plus \$3 for mailing. **Books are available locally at the museum, B&B Printing and the library (reference desk downstairs). To read more about the book see our website: kewaneehistory.com.**



Four of the trolley company's finest are shown with the streetcar that travelled between downtown Kewanee and three blocks east of Tenney on East McClure. Author Fred Rozum would have loved to be able to identify each and every engineer or conductor but could not. If you can identify any of these gentlemen or any others in Fred's book, let us know.

MORE BOOKS FOR SALE



• **Duane Lempke**, native Kewaneean, retired military officer and now professional photographer, continued last year to honor those Americans who have served their country in uniform, especially those who gave their lives, with the publication of a magnificent, coffee-table size book entitled “**Tribute**”—a pictorial account of the recently-completed World War II Memorial in Washington D.C.

Duane continued to remember his hometown, giving copies of the book to the museum, the library and veterans’ organizations in Kewanee, as he has done with plaques honoring those who made the supreme sacrifice in World War II, Korean War and Vietnam War.

For information on “Tribute” and how to purchase a copy see Duane’s website: tribute4foundation.com or write to Tribute4foundation, 7424 Salford Court, Alexandria, VA 22315.

• Another World War II book was recently donated to the museum by **Steven Whaley**. Entitled “**A Blessed Ship—the USS LST 562 in the Southwest Pacific, 1944-1946,**” the book is about the ship and its crew, including his uncle Stewart Glenn Whaley of Galva. Steve interviewed 30 crew members for the book, which is available from the author.

Also, Steve is interested in talking with and interviewing any World War II or Korean War veterans or family members who would like to share “their stories.” He can be contacted at 608 Manchester Dr., Kewanee, IL 61443, or 309-219-4515 by phone, or email at whaley_steven@cat.com

• Two other books are available at the museum. “**The History of the Kewanee Fire Department, 1905-2005**” written by society vice president **Steve Moon**, a Kewanee firefighter, is available for \$5.

• “**The Rock Island Trail,**” the story of that railroad in Stark County and the towns it served, is available for \$12.70. The author is society member **Jim David** of Dunlap. His interest in railroads originated from boyhood visits with his grandparents in Kewanee, who lived near the CB&Q line.

WHAT’S HAPPENING...

It has been a busy year since last spring and already April has seen a good deal of activity even though our official opening for the season was May 1. **As in past years the museum’s regular hours are Thursday and Saturday afternoons from 1:30 to 4:00. If we had more volunteers, we could be open more. If interested just let us know or come to a meeting on the 3rd Saturday of the month at 8:30 at the museum.** Here is a sampling of the past year:

• As in recent years we have a featured display. This year it is in recognition of the 200th anniversary of the birth of **Abraham Lincoln** featuring the “Lincoln lantern,” information about Honest Abe’s 1858 visit to Kewanee and items pertaining to Kewanee’s part in the Civil War.

• On Thursday afternoons **Merry Ann Malcolm and Bea Clarke** assisted Larry and Pat Lock with various projects to **continue improvements** to the museum. All four will continue working on Thursday afternoons and a new volunteer, 6th grader **Will Kelly**, has become interested and has been coming to the museum after school.

• Groups that **visited the museum** last year included 5th and 6th grade classes, summer school classes, boy scouts, girl scouts, cub scouts and church groups.

• Larry has given talks with a power-point presentation on the **streetcar book** to Kiwanis, Rotary, Henry County Genealogical Society, two ladies’ groups at the First Baptist Church and the St. Mary Altar Society. He also gave a similar program on **Walworth** and its predecessors at the new Black Hawk Community Education Center, located on the old Walworth site. He is available to do programs on either topic and is already scheduled to do Walworth at the September 28 meeting of the Genealogical Society at the library.

• Two major building improvements were accomplished. Last November a **new furnace** was installed upstairs to maintain at least some heat during the winter. During the winter our lone **bathroom was remodeled** (new fixtures and wall and floor coverings). It was badly needed and even the most refined among us will now find the facility acceptable.

• Building maintenance continues to provide challenges. The **roof** received somewhat more than the usual repairs and Oldeen Roofing apprised that a complete coat of roof tar would be a good idea next year. The **south wall** needs some major repair near the roof on the east end. Hopefully we can get the work done this summer.

• We continue to get in-kind donations from **B&B**

Printing (some printing and our website), **Ed’s Heating** (furnace check-up), **Doug Irwin** (reduced tax return preparation) and **Kewanee.com** (internet access). Thanks to them and anyone else who would like to help.

• Major monetary donations were received from **Henry County Independent Insurance Agents (\$500)** and **Kewanee Woman’s Club (\$200)**. We mentioned the very large bequest from the estate of **Laila Henry**, longtime member and supporter of the society, in last year’s newsletter; but it bears repeating.

• As usual **Hog Days** at Labor Day weekend was busy at the museum. About 200 visitors toured the museum on the three days we were open. **Again this year we will be open Saturday through Monday from 10 to 5 p.m.**

• We will begin the new season with a **new treasurer—William McKee**. He has been active on the board of directors for the past five years. William is farm loan officer in the USDA/Farm Service Agency office in Cambridge. **Kathy Miller** resigned the position because of family obligations. We appreciate her service for the past two years.

• One of our special attractions is the **National Cornhuskers Hall of Fame**. On April 29 a video production company took advantage by inviting several cornhuskers to be interviewed at the museum for a video they are doing on the immensely popular cornhusking contests of the 1930’s. Those interviewed included Hank and David Endress of Stark County, cornhuskers from the late 1930’s; Frank Hennenfent of Smithshire, 7-time national champion in recent years; and sitting in for the late William Rose of Kewanee, a 1930’s champion, two daughters, Mary Lepianka of Kewanee and Carolyn Hilderbrand of Princeton, and longtime friend John Oliver of Kewanee. A description of the project can be found at the company’s website: heritagedocumentaries.org.



New Old Stuff

Donations of artifacts continue to be considerable with just over 50 different people making gifts. Of course, we cannot mention all of them but will include what we have space for.

• At least four donations were prompted by the **program on the Walworth**. Leroy Mallery, longtime Walworth employee, donated numerous copies of the “Craftsman,” an employee-produced monthly newspaper, ranging from 1923 to 1941. Others were a blueprint from 1910 given by Adam Kelly, a photo security badge from 1942 worn by Bob Ainley before he entered the service and an id tag from Frances Verscha that was worn by her father in the early 1900’s.

• Lisa Sturtevant of Walnut presented an impressively done scrapbook of news clippings, pictures and genealogy on her husband Skip’s grandfather, **Fred “Cookie” Cook, a Kewanee wrestler from 1915 to 1918.**

• **Two magnificent quilts** executed in the 1890’s by sisters Hattie (Harriet) and Mattie (Martha) Golden were donated by great-niece Helen Claire Calcutt Carlson of Orion. The Golden girls grew up and worked in Kewanee before moving to Rock Island.

• Letters from the 1860’s written by and to **Hiram Lay** were donated by his great-grandson Nelson Lay. One letter is from Julius Pratt written in 1862 before he was killed in the Civil War’s Battle of Vicksburg.

• One more item from the 1800’s is the ledger book (minutes and treasurer’s reports) of **Cosner School** dated from 1888 to 1947. The rural school was located several miles west of Kewanee. Dean Seefeld of Normal made the donation.

• Other gifts included Kewanee High School yearbooks, pictures and several other items pertaining to Kewanee Boiler, early 1900’s Kewanee beer bottles, Kewanee postcards and other pictures, many other items and even a KuKluxKlan white hood found in a Kewanee home and probably worn by its owner. Yes, Kewanee had a klan back in the 1920’s.

Cornhuskers “young and young-at-heart” are Frank Hennenfent, right, and Hank Endress, who were two champions interviewed recently at the museum for a video on the popular 1930’s contests. Frank, of Smithshire, Illinois, is a 7-time national champion of the “revival” contests of recent years, winning most recently in 2008 at Roseville, Illinois. Hank, 95 years “young,” of Wyoming, Illinois, competed in the 1930’s and in 1938 became one of only five huskers to pick over 50 bushels in an 80-minute contest. For more on cornhusking, check out www.cornhusking.com