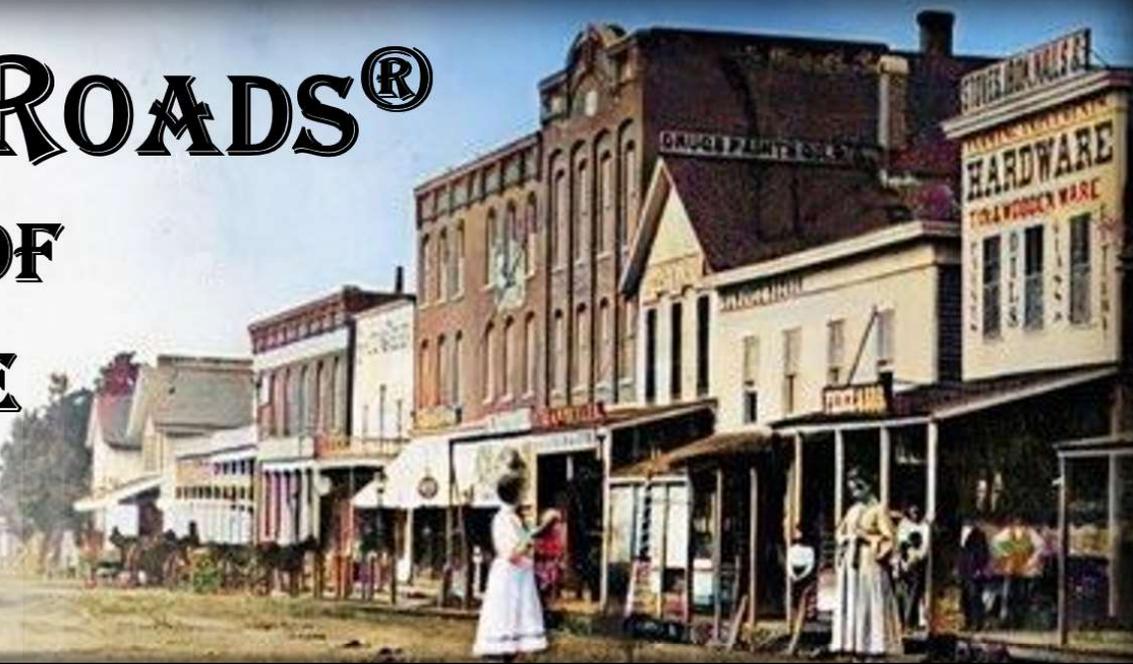


DUSTY ROADS®

STORIES OF

KEWANEE

PAST & PRESENT



Dean Karau

December 2021

The Book: KEWANEE 1954 - 2000 ***The First-Ever Complete Story of Our Hometown's History***

In the late 1990s, my sister Liane started researching our family's history and our ancestors. It was exciting to hear about the discoveries she made, and I envied her for her enjoyment and success.

When I retired over five years ago, I took up the mantle. I floundered for the first few months until I began understanding the resources available and how to access them, including FamilySearch.com (operated by the Church of the Latter-Day Saints), Ancestry.com, and other local, state, national, and international databases. Finally, I was able to reasonably navigate those and other resources, and eventually was able to trace my ancestors back over the centuries (one line took me back to the 1530s in Lyon, France).

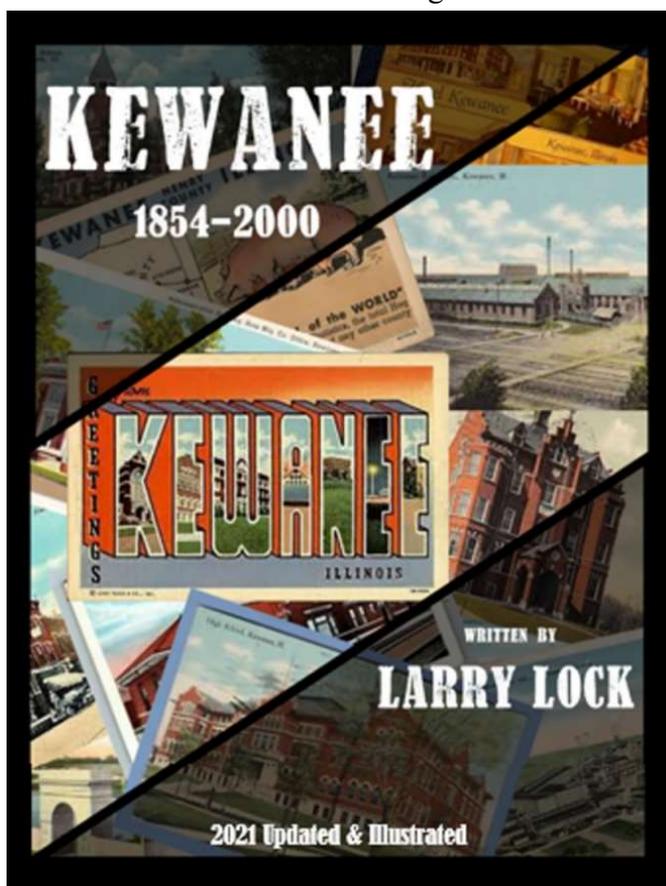
But then I decided that going back in time as far as possible was only part of the story of my family. I needed

to put "meat" on my ancestors' bones.

That's when I met Larry Lock. At the time, Larry was the president of the Kewanee Historical Society, living in Kewanee while I lived in Minnesota. The

distance, however, did not impede his graciously answering my many, many questions about Kewanee. He kindly searched for and sent to me relevant documents that could shed light on my family's life in Kewanee. When I first traveled to Kewanee for on-the-ground research, he guided me through the Historical Society's Museum. For me, Larry was "Mr. Kewanee History."

While Larry would modestly dispute my characterization (and likely point to Bob Richards as the proper bearer of that honorific), I soon found that many others shared my awe of his knowledge



of our hometown.

I have now known Larry for five years, and my opinion of his comprehensive understanding of Kewanee history has only grown. That's why I'm excited that Larry has finally published his written history of Kewanee, a story of the arc of its life from conception to today.

Larry starts with Kewanee's establishment in 1854 by individuals from the Wethersfield Colony, founded 17 years earlier. After those entrepreneurs learned that the Central Military Tract Railroad would bypass their colony by a mile-and-a-half, they laid out a new village to the north along the railroad's path. Soon, many Wethersfield businesses and citizens relocated there, along with others who saw opportunities for success.

Larry traces how Kewanee and the railroad quickly grew together, and it did not take long for the village to grow into a city and become the economic engine of Henry County. Over the last decades of the 19th century and early decades of the 20th century, Kewanee continued to add people and industries with regional, national, and international reputations.

Larry explains how Kewanee reached its peak popu-



lation in 1921 when it annexed Wethersfield. Changing times eventually led to a decline in the second half of the century, but the city today still retains relevance as it seeks to reinvent itself again.

The text of Larry's book was written in 2000, but it has been updated, and illustrations have been added to provide more context. While primarily a chronological overview, Larry provides the reader with the salient mile markers and other guidance for further exploration and inquiry.

Larry's book is truly the first comprehensive overview of Kewanee. For anyone interested in Kewanee history, this is a "must read" book.

Thank you, Larry, for sharing with all of us your vast knowledge of our hometown.

(Larry will be at the Kewanee Historical Society's Museum this Saturday starting at 10:00 a.m. to sign copies of his book. The book is only \$15.00 and will be available Saturday at the museum. The book is also available locally at B & B Printing, Heartfelt Gifts, and Country Morning Coffee. It also available at Amazon.com.)

	<i>BOOK SIGNING</i>	
	LARRY LOCK KEWANEE HISTORICAL SOCIETY 125 N. TREMONT ST. KEWANEE, IL SATURDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2021 10:00 A.M. TO NOON	
	Copies available for purchase for \$15.00 at KEWANEE HISTORICAL SOCIETY B & B PRINTING HEARTFELT GIFTS COUNTRY MORNING COFFEE AMAZON.COM	
<i>The first-ever complete story of the history of Kewanee. 75+ pages featuring the highlights of its history, in a chronological format with illustrations. A "must-read" book for anyone interested in Kewanee history.</i>		