

# *Kirkman House Celebrates Forty Years*

FINDING FANNY'S FURNITURE • SUMMER & FALL EVENTS • VICTORIAN BALL • WHISPERED MEMORIES

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**Photos**

1. Board members Susan Monahan, Carolyn Priest and Maejul Gannon enjoy the reception.

2. Dick Reynolds and Rick Tuttle prepare the shipping crates.

3. Fanny's bedroom bureau, safe and sound back home.

4. Rick and Patti Tuttle with Leslie Gilmore Kirkman.



## Kirkman House Celebrates 40 Years

### Reception honors former board members

Kirkman House celebrated the museum's 40th anniversary on Friday, October 3 honoring over 150 former board members. The highlight of the event was a slide show of the museum's history over the last four decades. The show was produced by board member Susan Monahan and presented by president Mona Geidl.

Historical Architecture Development was incorporated in 1974, three years before it bought Kirkman House.

"HAD was the brainchild of Erma Jo Bergevin," said Tim Copeland, an original board member. "Jo had promoted the historic preservation of local homes and downtown buildings for a number of years and, by the 70s, needed an organization to help her with this work."

The group's initial board members included Bergevin, Copeland, Peggy Hoyt, Helen King, Bernice Stevens, Whitney Ellis and W. L. Minnick.

In its first three years, HAD held a number of public forums promoting historic preservation and helped many owners add their properties to the National Register of Historic Places.

It also sought to save the Schwartz building, a longtime landmark of downtown

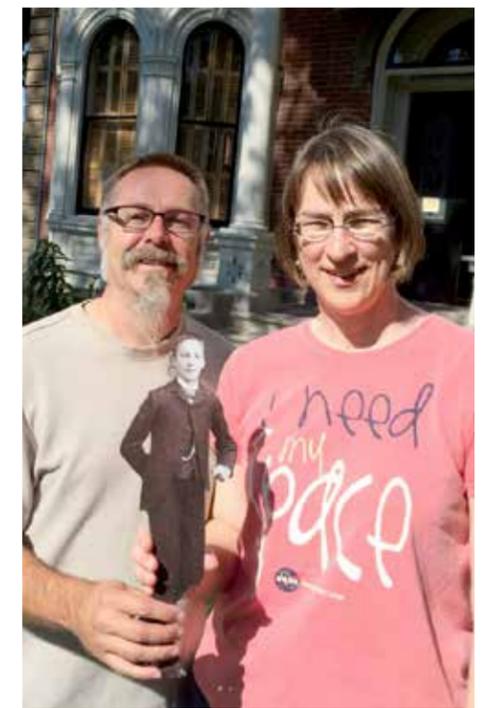
Walla Walla at First and Main. When restoring the building proved economically unfeasible, HAD persuaded the building's owner, Fidelity Mutual Savings Bank, to create a new building far more appropriate for the downtown than the bank had originally designed. That building is now the Land Title Company.

HAD purchased Kirkman House on May 7, 1977 for \$50,000. Until then, the structure had been owned and operated as an apartment house by Carolyn Retzer and previous owners for many years. Competing purchasers, had they been successful, would have demolished the house.

"While HAD's interest in community-wide preservation never wavered," said Copeland, "its focus had to concentrate on the restoration of Kirkman House. That was an enormous challenge for its small board and volunteers."

Since the acquisition of the house 37 years ago, HAD's board has been engaged in its ongoing restoration and maintenance.

"Without all these years of work from hundreds of volunteers, this house probably wouldn't be here," said Mona Geidl, the museum's president. "The house looks as good now as it did when Isabella and William Kirkman lived here. Maybe better."



## The Quest for Fanny's Furniture

### A two week odyssey with Gilmore

Since the museum's beginning, we've frequently received gifts of furniture and other artifacts once used in Kirkman House. This year, we were delighted to receive three items of bedroom furniture that were originally in Fanny Ann Kirkman's bedroom from General Richard Reynolds (Lt General US Air Force retired) - Fanny's great, great grandson, and his wife Joani. The Reynolds were delighted to make this gift to us provided that we pick it up. "Reasonable request," we said. And then we learned that they live in Beaver Creek, Ohio - about 2,000 miles from here. For furniture moving purposes, that's a really long way.

We determined that professional packing and moving of these pieces would be very expensive. That's when Rick and Patti Tuttle stepped forward. The Tuttles volunteered to bring Fanny's furniture home to us in their large van. Both Rick and Patti have been board members here for many years and Rick served as the museum's president in two separate terms.

The dynamic duo set off from Walla Walla on Saturday, September 6 and arrived in Beaver Creek seven days later. At the Reynolds' residence, Rick assembled a structure inside his van to securely hold each piece of furniture. It took four hours to complete the structure and load the items for their long return journey. Dick Reynolds, who holds two engineering degrees, asked Rick if he had an engineering degree too. Dick was impressed that the crating system Rick built was well-designed and "over engineered." It gave him confidence that Fanny's furniture would arrive in Walla Walla safely.

Beyond transporting Fanny's furniture, one of the trip's goals was to stop at many historic sites and house museums to share ideas and trade brochures. Rick and Patti very much enjoyed this part of the trip.

Rick wrote Facebook posts frequently along the way describing their journey. Leslie Gilmore Kirkman, one of Fanny's brothers, appeared in many of the photos that accompanied the posts. Gilmore - or at least a photo

cutout of him - was photographed at many points along the trip in the spirit of "Flat Stanley." Rick chose Gilmore as the photo subject because a good brother would certainly want to be involved in a quest to reclaim his sister's furniture.

After a week-long return trip to Walla Walla, with a few mechanical challenges along the way, the furniture arrived in excellent condition. It is now in place in Fanny's bedroom at Kirkman House and looks magnificent.

We deeply appreciate the gift that Dick and Joani Reynolds made to us. We are also very much indebted to Rick and Patti for the two weeks they invested in this transportation project. Acquiring this furniture would not have been possible without the Tuttle's hard work.

Other recent acquisitions include cut glass pieces from Fanny's house, a set of china that was used by Fanny, and Isabella's wedding ring.

If you haven't been in Kirkman House recently, these are great reasons to stop by soon.

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## Big Events Fill a Busy Summer and Fall

Here's a look at four of them

**Hands on History** brought the Victorian Era to life for over 300 Campfire kids and Ville Lindo Homes (formerly the Farm Labor Camp) children through seven days of non-stop fun. Activities included an archaeological dig, the historic games of hopscotch and marbles, readings from a Victorian author, and an examination of Victorian inventions. In keeping with the event's "hands-on" theme, the children made Victorian postage stamps, chalk, marbles, and keepsake scrapbooks.

A special feature of Hands on History this year was the BurkeMobile – a traveling program of the Burke Museum, of the University of Washington's natural and cultural history museum. On June 26 and 27, the BurkeMobile shared Native American objects, real fossils, mammal skulls, and museum-prepared birds and fossils with over 50 children. Burke educators AnnaMaria Paruk and Morrow Woods presented the artifacts and helped children participate in hands-on

investigations of their natural and cultural heritage.

"The Campfire kids enjoyed having the opportunity to learn about local history in an active and engaging way," said Casey Moller, associate director of Walla Walla Campfire. "Hands on History is a wonderful addition to our summer camp program. Campers learn fascinating historical information that is relevant to their current interests. Hands on History uses a multitude of strategies, games and materials to keep kids having fun and learning throughout the entire experience."

This is the seventh year that Kirkman House has presented Hands on History. Funding for this program was provided, in part, by the Stubblefield Estate, the Mary Garner Esary Trust, the Clara and Art Bald Trust and the Yancey P. Winans Trust.

**Tying the Knot: 120 Years of Walla Walla Weddings** came to a close on September 7. It proved to be one of our most successful and beloved exhibits.

The exhibit featured a fascinating variety of bridal gowns, wedding artifacts, and the stories that accompany them from over a century of local marriages. It was curated by Carolyn Priest and Maejul Gannon. Susan Monahan produced its very popular Walla Walla weddings video.

Highlights included Fanny Ann Kirkman's French wedding gown, now 121 years old, and Isabella Kirkman's engraved wedding band.

To publicize both the exhibit and museum, we created a beautiful brochure and distributed thousands of copies to about 50 local venues. This involved an investment of money and time, but the experiment was successful. Over twice as many people visited us this summer compared to last summer. Our admissions income this summer was nearly triple that of last summer. We are very pleased.

**Sheep to Shawl**, our popular family festival that explores how our ancestors made their clothing from wool, was in full swing Saturday, October 4 from 10 am to 3 pm.

Visitors enjoyed demonstrations of wool carding, dyeing, spinning and weaving of shorn wool. A vintage sock knitting machine was also demonstrated.

Hundreds of children were delighted with the sheep, alpacas and sheep dogs at the festival. They also enjoyed many children's activities including wheat and paper weaving.

A highlight of the festival was a drawing for a hand-woven shawl produced by Susan Swayne, a member of the museum's Textile Center. The shawl's yarn was hand-spun from natural color wool and alpaca.

Local and regional vendors offered handmade items for sale. Also available were raw and ready-to-spin fiber, hand-spun and hand-dyed yarns, and spinning and weaving equipment.

This year's **Victorian Ball** was held on Saturday, October 25 in a location not many people in town know about - the second floor of the US Post Office. The second floor contains a one-time federal court room and many small offices that were once occupied by various federal agencies.

The large open area in the middle of the second floor proved just right for the Ball. The dance floor was surrounded by vintage quilts from the Kirkman House collection and from board member Carolyn Priest.

Civil war-era dances were called by dance masters Dan and Barbara Clark accompanied by the 12-piece Country Dance Orchestra from La Grande. Most of the dancers were decked out in their Victorian finery but those that weren't had just as much fun.

If you enjoy this type of dance, see the Union Bulletin's *Marquee* for dates and times of local Contra dances that are open to the public.

During the evening, Ball guests were treated to a view of the court room. Its design and décor are vintage 1950s – one can imagine watching Perry Mason cross-examining a witness. The suite also has the judge's chambers and jury room. Being able to see all of that was a fascinating look at local history.

Many thanks to Joe DeLeon III, the owner of Jet Recording Studios, for helping us with the sound system. Thanks, too, to the Walla Walla Quilt Guild for the use of their quilt racks.

Proceeds of the Ball were shared between Kirkman House and the Post Office Restoration Fund. Postmaster Kerry Schwartz has devoted much energy to the historic restoration of the Post Office, and we are delighted to support her in that effort. Her work has already resulted in a new color scheme to the Post Office's first floor. We can't wait to see what will happen there next.



## Whispered Memories

### Seven readers to lead at the Psychic Fair

Psychics were a prominent part of Victorian life. Spiritualism, a popular movement in the late 1800s, promoted the use of mediums to contact deceased relatives. The movement had many famous supporters including Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, author of the Sherlock Holmes stories, and W.E. Gladstone, the Prime Minister of England who, in 1884, said that psychical research was “the most important work being done in the world today.”

It is in recognition of this Victorian movement that Kirkman House invites the public to its **Whispered Memories** psychic fair on Saturday, November 8.

The group session will be lead by Shirley Scott at 2 pm. Scott is an internationally-known psychic and animal communicator as well as a medium and energy healer. She reads humans, animals, crosses the veil to talk to loved ones and is a medical intuitive with empathic abilities. The group session cost is \$20.

Six other readers specializing in various psychic disciplines will be at

the museum from 10 am to 4 pm for private consultations. The readers include Kristina Browning (medium and psychometry), Cinnamon Girodengo (psychic, medical intuit, animal communication and Egyptian oracle), James Smith, (tarot card reading, psychic development and inner peace), Shannon Mobley (tarot card reading and palmistry), Lynn Spicer (reading with shaman stones and pendulums), and Marla Fitzsimmons (energy healing - physical, mental and emotional). Shirley Scott will also be doing private readings.

Each 20-minute session costs \$25. These private sessions require no reservation but will be on a first-come, first-served basis. Please register for the group session online at [kirkmanhousemuseum.org](http://kirkmanhousemuseum.org). Individual session tickets can be obtained at the door.

## Designing Women

If you’ve noticed a fresh new look in the museum’s print materials lately, it’s largely due to the help we received from Andralynn Iwasa, a senior graphics design major at Walla Walla University. Andrie served as our graphic design assistant for one year. The materials she helped us produce - newsletters, posters, postcards, advertising and brochures – became her senior project portfolio.

Taylor Olson, also a graphic design major, took over the position from Andrie last month and dove into it with great energy. She designed this newsletter’s striking cover using a painting produced by Jim Baumgartner. Taylor will help us with our design projects through next June.

“It was a great experience to work with Andrie,” said Tim Copeland, marketing committee chair, “and we deeply appreciate her contributions. We’re also delighted that Taylor has come to us with such enthusiasm.”

Dr. Linda Felipiz, chair of technology at Walla Walla University, assisted us in selecting Andrie and Taylor as our design interns.

## Join our Corps of Volunteers

Kirkman House is an all-volunteer organization – no paid staff here – so we need lots of help from people who love our museum. All kinds of opportunities are available: education outreach, docents, building restoration, grounds maintenance, exhibit development and membership on many interesting committees. The time commitment is up to you.

If you would like more information about joining our corps of volunteers, please email Rick Tuttle at [rt@kirkmanhousemuseum.org](mailto:rt@kirkmanhousemuseum.org) or see [kirkmanhousemuseum.org/belong/volunteering](http://kirkmanhousemuseum.org/belong/volunteering)



## Kids First

### Beyond the velvet ropes

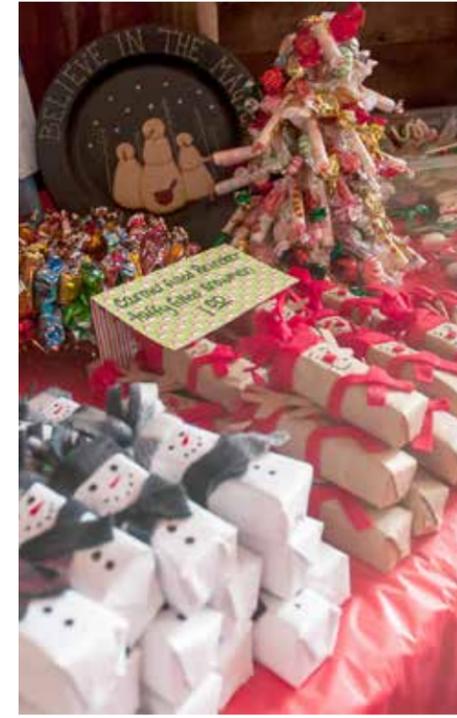
All museums face the challenge of how to make its resources more accessible to young people while protecting and preserving their valuable collections. Glass cases and velvet ropes are not inviting to children.

**Hands on History** is one way we bring the museum to life for young people.

In the last two years, we produced five original videos and presented them in three exhibits. Next year, we plan to produce another video on Walla Walla during World War II.

Children and young adults especially enjoy these videos so our next step will be creating kid-friendly video kiosks. Much of the materials used in the kiosks will be used in e-books that will be available for free to everyone on tablet devices. By making our museum more accessible and interesting to young people, we hope to increase their level of interest in local history, art and architecture.

These projects are our **Kids First** initiative. We’ll keep you posted on our progress.



## Holiday Bazaar & Victorian Christmas

Mark your calendar now to visit our Holiday Bazaar on Thursday and Friday, December 4 and 5 and then enjoy our 37th annual Victorian Christmas celebration on Saturday, December 6.

Over a dozen vendors will be on hand at the Bazaar offering their hand-crafted jewelry, knitted and crocheted items, homemade holiday ornaments, candies, note cards, gourmet foods, photo albums, apparel for children and adults, glass works and many other beautiful gift items. The Bazaar will be open on Thursday and Friday from noon to 6 pm.

A variety of community groups will entertain at the Victorian Christmas celebration, and Saint Nick will be greeting children of all ages. The merriment will run from 10 am to 4 pm on Saturday. Entertainment will begin at noon.

Both events are free and open to the public. The house will be beautifully decorated for the holiday season. So, please join us at these festivities and bring your friends.



## Makeovers Abound

### Improvements inside and out

Over 500 hours later, KT Sharkey, (pictured above), Rick Tuttle and Alan Jones look back with deserved pride as they review the restoration work they performed this summer.

The trio repainted nearly all the wood surfaces up to the soffits on the museum’s front exterior and the east windows on the first floor.

With help from several Whitman College students, they removed the partition walls and plumbing in the Collections room, restoring it to an open and efficient storage room. Improved lighting and heating were also installed. Carolyn Priest, Don Priest, Rick Tuttle and Kent Settle provided much labor in the renovation of this room.

The deteriorated bricks beside the front door were replaced by MacRoberts Construction.

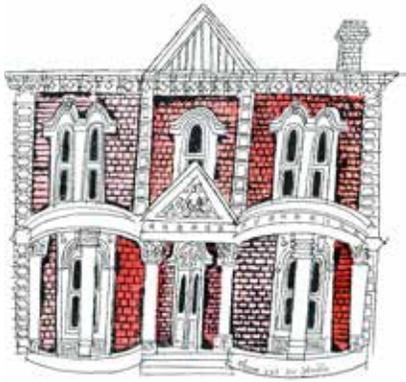
Next year, we plan to strip and repaint the details at the top of the museum’s exterior columns and the triangle detail piece above the portico. This will require a man-lift for the summer. If you know of one we can use, please let us know.

# Kirkman

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1974 -2014

Kirkman House Museum's  
40th anniversary



## Coming Next Spring . . .

Next year marks the 70th anniversary of the end of the Second World War, the largest armed conflict in world history. Men and women from Walla Walla, military and civilians, played an important part in that struggle.

Walla Walla was a major Army Air Corps training base for B-17 and B-24 bomber crews. It also had a large military hospital and a prisoner of war camp. Walla Walla native Jonathan Wainwright was one of the war's most heroic generals. Hundreds of Walla Wallans were deployed around the world in various military and naval units. Thousands of others remained in Walla Walla and supported the war effort in other important ways.

We want to tell many of these stories in our first exhibit next year. The exhibit will open in mid-March, 2015 and run through Labor Day.

We're in the early planning stages but are very excited about the possibilities.

Susan Monahan is the curator of this exhibit. She is being assisted in its research by two Whitman College students, Tommy Breeze and Kyle Seasly, who are serving as curator interns this fall.

After the exhibit opens, we'll produce an e-book on this topic using many of the photos, videos and writings developed for the exhibit. This publication will be readable on tablets and available for free.

If you have World War II memories, stories, memorabilia or artifacts, we'd love to make them part of our exhibit. Please contact Susan Monahan at 509-529-4373 or at [susan.monahan@kirkmanhousemuseum.org](mailto:susan.monahan@kirkmanhousemuseum.org) if you'd like to help.