A look at 2015
Restoration
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Health of the museum
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Membership and Donor Lists

Winter Hours: Saturdays 10am -2pm, January 9-March 6.

A look at 2016
Restoration
Exhibits
Events
A look at 2015

Restoration work on the house continued albeit at a slower pace than in 2014 but headway was made. Three windows on the west side of the main floor were painted, and a closet on the second floor got a complete makeover with efficient shelving. The most interesting discovery was made while removing paint on the decorative pieces at the top of the columns in the front of the house. They were discovered to be individual elements made of some type of metal. Many layers of paint have dulled the detail of the pieces. The process of removing the paint on such an intricate feature will be tedious, but it will be rewarding in the end.

Donations of original family items from Kirkman descendants were generous in 2015. The latest is a traveling trunk belonging to oldest son William Henry Kirkman. In 1892, 61 year old William Kirkman proposed a trip to his wife, Isabella. They would voyage to England and Ireland to visit family members they had left behind when each emigrated. For William, it had been 39 years. His parents had died but he had brothers and sisters still living in Lancashire with whom he had communicated over the years. Isabella had left Ireland 30 years before and miraculously--her parents were still living, though both in their nineties. The plan was to take the Kirkman’s two older children, William Henry and Fanny. William Henry was studying law at Boston University and Fanny was planning to be married the following year. She needed wedding clothes and the Continent was just the place to buy the latest fashions.

Just recently, Fanny’s descendants, the Reynolds family, gave our museum a traveling trunk that made that trip with the Kirkmans. Small and utilitarian, it has always been referred to as “William Henry's trunk.” It is in remarkably good shape and bears colorful stickers that tell a story about their route. But it also makes us question what we had previously believed about the trip. The family story has always been that William was in poor health during the journey and that he and William Henry stayed in Great Britain while Isabella and Fanny toured the Continent. One of the trunk’s stickers says Bury, the region of Lancashire where the family visited Kirkman relatives. However, other stickers on the trunk indicate it also traveled to Venice, Paris, and Frankfurt even if William Henry did not. It is likely that Fanny needed the extra trunk for all the souvenirs and pretty frocks she bought for her upcoming wedding!

It is also likely that William Kirkman knew his days were numbered when he first planned the trip. He died on the train trip home, in Stevens Point, Wisconsin. We are grateful to have this trunk at the Kirkman House Museum that represents William’s last voyage.

2015 Events and Exhibits were well received. Our Kirkman House Live series hosted two delightful chamber music performances. Both concerts were organized by professional cellist Sally Singer-Tuttle and featured her and visiting musicians. Also part of our Kirkman House Live series was a lecture by Bob Bartlett who gave an engaging talk on the the heroic 555th Black paratroopers who were part of local World War II history.

This year the Victorian Ball was moved to the Milton-Freewater Community Center as the space was a perfect size and the price was reasonable. Attendance was affected by the change in venue but everyone had a great time and we got some wonderful portraits of attendees.
Financial Notes:

The income shown for Donations and Grants are mostly restricted to out-of-town advertising, restoration, and our Kids First program. Much of this income came in during the 4th quarter and will be spent in 2016. This is also reflected in the Year End Cash graph. The 2015 Marketing expenses were higher than normal because we received grants to publicize events and exhibits in out-of-town markets. The 2016 Marketing budget will be significantly smaller.

Kids First

We had a fun and busy year with our “Kids First” program. The summer program included a history lesson on the “Battle of Bunker Hill” with a mock battle fought with water balloons to a visit from the Seattle Pacific Science Center bringing a hands on history of geology. We are continuing monthly visits to Campfire’s after school program with fun short history lessons and hands on learning. We had the pleasure of working with 1026 children in 2015.
The Survey Says
This year the Kirkman House and Fort Walla Walla Museums received two grants totaling $7,000 to promote the World Wars exhibit in out of town areas. Part of the requirement was to gather data on our visitors. Although we have been doing this for several years we had to change our set of questions a bit. The graph to the right shows the answers to the question “What is your primary reason for visiting Walla Walla?” This question was asked only to those who came for a tour or exhibit, not those who came for other reasons. Because we are able to interact with all of these visitors on a personal level we were able to collect data from about 99% of them.

We also kept track of why they came to the Kirkman House and how far they had traveled. These results are shown in the second graph.

The museum tours were down about 100 from 2014, but still reflect higher numbers than we have traditionally seen. Our admission price has been $5 per person for many years and because of rising costs, we are raising the 2016 admission to $7. We don't think this will discourage visits because we hear many compliments on our fun and informative tours and often get a $10 or $20 donation and some visitors have said the admission should be $10.
2016 Events

February 15, Annual General Meeting, 5pm
TBD in May - Garage Sale
June 8 - Chamber Music Festival Rehearsal, 10 am-12pm
October 1 - Sheep to Shawl
October 22 - Victorian Ball
November 5 - Whispered Memories Psychic Fair
December 1, 2 - Holiday Bazaar
December 3, 4 - Kirkman House Live, Christmas Concert
December 3 - Victorian Christmas Open House
December 11 - Winter Maintenance Closing

You are cordially invited to our Annual General Meeting to hear more about our activities, meet our board members, ask questions, and see the progress on our new permanent exhibit “Windows to the Past”
February 15 at 5pm

Restoration projects in 2016 will address two major issues. The first is the restoration of the internal gutter system so it will properly direct rain water away from the building. The original gutters and roof failed in 1999 and were covered over by a new roof installed at that time. The other major project is restoration of the two chimneys on the back of the house. Both are in very poor condition and are becoming a potential safety hazard. Once the chimney servicing the dining room is repaired we should be able to use that recently restored fireplace at events. Both projects should be completed by the end of the summer. Restoration of woodwork around windows and columns will continue but probably at a slower pace than the last two years. If you would like to help out with maintenance or yard work, we are always looking for volunteers.

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Brenda Ramirez
Arden Robinette - Intern
Skylar Rude
Bari Scott
Kt Sharkey
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Special Thanks
Walla Walla Food Tours
Fort Walla Walla Museum
Ace Hardware
Gary's Paint & Decorating
Baskin Robbins
Four Feathered Sparrow LLC
Elks Lodge
Whitman College
Walla Walla University
With Sincere Appreciation-

We thank the members, donors, volunteers, and friends of the Kirkman House Museum who have helped make 2015 such a successful year. We can’t do it without your support.

Members
Bricks and Mortar: $200 annually for three years.
Roger and Cheryl Cockerline
Sally and Fred Kearsley
Laura and Stephen Mulcahy

Friends: $250 and up
Donna Cook Gardner and Tim Copeland
Sue and Mike Gillespie
Susan and Jim Swayne
Richard and Carolyn Tuttle
Jill and Robert Zagelow
Matt and Christy West

Supporters: $100 to $249
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Grants
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Port of Walla Walla
George T. Welch Community Grant
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Visit Walla Walla
Clara and Art Bald Trust
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Donors
$5,000
Sue and Mike Gillespie

$1,000
Jane Rizer
Anonymous

$500
Matt and Christy West

Up to $500
Thomas and Anita Baker
Julie Dandrea
James and Lucy Chubb
Marian Plucker
Tim Copeland
Sally and Fred Kearsley
Judy and Lewis Palmer
Roy and Lianne Schellenberg
Donna Cook Gardner
Arlene ‘Suzie’ Keenan
Sue LaRue
Laura and Stephen Mulcahy
Robertta Hunt
Kathleen Ruggeri
Robertta Hunt

In Memory of
Betty Jacobs
Carol White Kirkman
Susan Monahan and Mark Brucks
Jim and Janet Steffens
Pam and Stan Myers
Don and Carolyn Priest

In Kind
John and Terry Thunell
Diana and Chris Schmidt
Carol White Kirkman
Allison Bren Ferris
Dan and Barbara Clark
Sara Partisan
Ann Reynolds
Jim and Janet Steffens
Sally Singer Tuttle
Kim Nemeth Woodley
Mark Blanc
The Little Black Dress
On exhibit throughout 2016

Kirkman House’s exhibit features every woman’s secret weapon, the classic black dress. Although a plain black dress was usually worn for periods of mourning in the Victorian/Edwardian era, it became fashionable in the 1920’s with Coco Chanel and Jean Patou’s designs featured in Vogue magazine. The Little Black Dress has been the staple of women’s wardrobes through the depression, the flu epidemics in the early 1900s, and World Wars I and II.

Our exhibit will feature not only a variety of historic black frocks, but also charming jackets and capes. We will feature black clothing styles from every era: severe, fancy and whimsical. Come and see the Little Black Dress from the 1800s and through the years until the present!

Windows to the Past is a new permanent exhibit opening in the spring. The exhibit will put the Kirkmans in context within Walla Walla and feature topics such as the Penitentiary, historic buildings, and businesses.

Get a sneak peek at our Annual General Meeting at 5pm on February 15.
The Kirkman House Live series presents a pair of Valentine's concerts titled ‘Dueling Cellos,’ featuring Ed Dixon, principal cellist of the Walla Walla Symphony and Sally Singer Tuttle, cello faculty at Whitman College, who comes to us from the UK. The music will include favorite duos from the Baroque, Classical and Romantic eras and something more unexpected. The Kirkman House warmly invites you to take the very special pleasure of hearing beautiful cellos played by two highly acclaimed cellists in the intimate and acoustically delightful setting of our 19th-century drawing room.

The first performance is at 7:30pm on Saturday, February 13 and is $45 per person. Doors open at 6:45pm for socializing and locally sourced hors d’oeuvres. Blue Mountain Cider, and wine from Tranche Winery will be served. The second performance will be on Sunday, February 14 at 2pm and is $20.

Tickets are available at the Kirkman House Museum web site: kirkmanhouse.org.