

Winter 2008

# Kirkman

HOUSE MUSEUM News

## New year brings a flurry of activity

On Friday, January 4, 2008, the windstorm that rushed through the Walla Walla Valley blew down three of the large trees on the museum's grounds. Fortunately, the trees missed the house, but they did cause damage to the front lawn irrigation system and another large tree. Cleanup is nearly complete, save for the root balls, which remain for the time as testament to the force of the winds. While the museum is grateful for its near miss, our thoughts are with those who suffered extensive damage.

In addition to taking care of the mess left by the storm museum board, staff, and volunteers worked hard throughout January and into February on much needed renovations to the office and collection processing rooms. Old carpet was removed, the walls and floors were washed and painted, and the rooms redesigned to accommodate the influx of important artifacts gifted by community members.



**Delta Delta Delta Sorority**

museum and remove the old carpet from one of the museum's cottages.

With the help of Whitman College Students we were also able to wax floors in the



**Students clean house on Whitman Service Day**

**2008 Board of Directors**

Linda Kastning, Board President  
 Jennifer Rickard, Past President  
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**Executive Director**

Kirsten R. Schober

**Assistant Director**

Mikaelyn Cottier Swayne



**Textile Center Volunteers**

Mary Jane Fehrenbacher  
 Peggy Hoyt  
 Tam Lennox  
 Sharon Newbrey  
 Susan Swayne

**Museum Volunteers**

Rick & Patti Tuttle  
 Ken & Judy Jurgensen  
 Kristen Wilson

**Kirkman House thanks Susan Swayne**



Susan Swayne completed her final term on the Board of Directors in December 2007. As liaison for the Textile Center, she has been an important asset to the board. Swayne served three terms for a total of six years. "It has been exciting to see the growth of the museum,"

she says of her tenure.

Swayne will continue to volunteer for the museum at the Textile Center. In addition to her weekly visit to the Textile Center, she plans to help with Spin-ins on the second Sunday of each month. The Kirkman House Museum Textile Center, in the museum's front cottage welcomes anyone who is interested in fiber arts to stop by between 1 - 4 pm on Thursdays.

**KIRKMAN NEWS BRIEFS**

**Museum Rebuilds Retaining Wall**

With funding from the Art and Clara Bald Trust, the Museum rebuilt the retaining wall along Cherry Street. The grant enabled the museum to move forward on a significant part of its plans for the exterior of the house. Completed by Narum Construction in November, the wall replaces an older brick wall that was encased in mortar, and is a simple structure, not meant to obscure from the beauty of the Kirkman House.



With the help of **Boy Scout Troop 312**, the Facilities Committee dug out a trench for the wall and back filled it later.

In addition to the wall, three trees were removed. New trees are scheduled to be put in the parking strip in early spring, thanks to a donation by Walla Walla Rotary Club.

**Meet Our New Assistant Director**

On November 1st, Mikaelyn Cottier Swayne began working at the Kirkman House Museum. Her position was made possible by a generous grant from the Donald and Virginia Sherwood Trust. With the addition of this new position, the grant will allow for more focus on new programming in 2008.



In 2003, Swayne moved to Walla Walla, WA to be closer to her husband's family and attend college. Together, Swayne and her husband purchased a home built in 1918 with the intention of restoring it. Raised in Western Washington, her family cultivated Swayne's love of historical artifacts by passing down family heirlooms, folk lore, and history.

Swayne is a recent graduate from the Master in Social Work program at Walla Walla University. Her social work studies interests include policy and non-profit administration. She attended undergraduate school at The Evergreen State College, where her studies focused on mythology and media studies in film and animation. She has worked for non-profit organizations in public relations and administration.

While completing her MSW, Swayne also attended art courses at WWCC. Under the tutelage of Dawn Forbes and Lisa Rasmussen, she learned drawing, painting, and sculpture techniques. Swayne enjoys working with acrylic paint and conté crayons to create abstracted images of her preferred subjects, such as her daughter. In addition, her favored materials to work with are natural objects, such as fiber and cloth, in a sculptural form. Swayne looks forward to exploring the Kirkman House Museum's Textile Center and introductory fiber arts classes, such as spinning and weaving.

**Textile Center Offers Spring Weaving Class**

The Kirkman House Museum Textile Center is offering an introductory Inkle Loom Weaving class beginning March 21st. The Inkle loom is a simple, two-shed arrangement that produces an over and under tabby weave. The word 'inkle' is Old English for a narrow strip, often used as a drawstring or belt. This method of weaving has been around for centuries, though the modern inkle loom was developed in the last century and imported to the United States in the 1930s from England. Today inkle weavers use the strips to decorate clothing or sewn together to create bags.

The class will meet on March 21st, March 22nd, March 29th and May 6th from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Students will learn how to set up an inkle loom for a plain weave structure using a variety of colored cottons that will be supplied. Cost for the class is \$75 and includes all materials. Museum members receive a discount on class registration fees. Inkle looms are available for students and may be reserved when registering for class.

## W.G. Kirkman's English Roots: New Views and a Deepened Perspective

Charles Harley

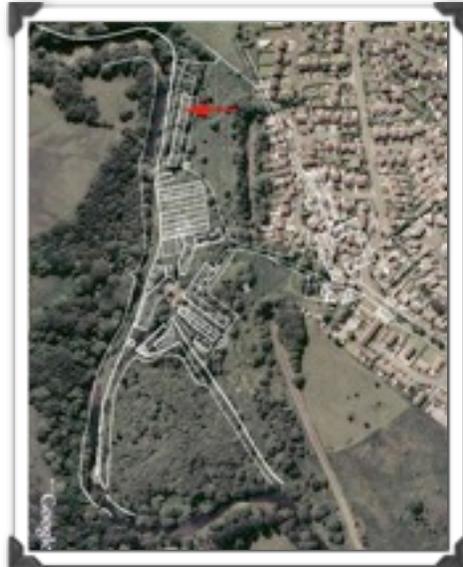
"After a late breakfast took train for Ramsbottom...This was the place of father's birth and boyhood days and day was pleasantly spent with relatives and friends and in visiting old & familiar places of interest to father," W.H. Kirkman wrote in his *Journal of Summer Travel*, Thursday 7 July 1892.

Correspondence over the past two years between Kirkman House Museum and Ramsbottom Heritage Society local historians, Barry and Isobel Aldous, has yielded a trove of new information about those old and familiar places that Kirkman Sr., on his one and only trip to England after emigration to America in 1853, visited just months before he died.

Using names from a copy of the Penrose Library Northwest Archives collection of William G. Kirkman letters sent to England by Kirkman House Museum, the Aldous' found the entry in England's 1841 census for the eleven-strong-household - including William's grandmother, Betty Grimes Kirkman, 65, described in the census as indigent - of James Kirkman, William's father. Though the census records the Kirkmans as resident in Tottington Lower End - then a flourishing community in the Ramsbottom vicinity, now, save a single home, vanished beneath tree roots and moss - it lacks a street address for their cottage because, as was then generally true of country houses large and small, there wasn't one.

So the Aldous' consulted the 1842 tithe map covering Tottington Lower End - a tithe map shows the real property on which a proprietor paid a rent-charge for the support of local clergy - plus a schedule that, if the property tithed is a dwelling, identifies its occupants. From map and schedule Aldous could deduce the row of cottages, if not the particular cottage, that the Kirkmans lived in. (Map and schedule also reveal that the Kirkmans' home, as much as the property in the Ramsbottom area, belonged to the Grant Brothers, calico mill owners and employers of James Kirkman as a loom supervisor and, in youth

and young manhood, son William as loom hand.)



*Red arrow shows approximate location of Kirkman Home on the tithe map overlay.*

*Photo provided by Barry Aldous*

Next, by overlaying the appropriate section of the tithe map on Google Earth satellite photograph, Aldous ascertained where the site of those old cottages lay. He took his own camera to the spot thus identified and photographed for our museum the lane the cottages stood on and a doorstep that could well have been that at the entrance to William Kirkman's crowded boyhood home.

The tithe schedule additionally reveals that the cottage adjoining the Kirkmans' accommodated the family of William's Uncle Righteous Brooks and Aunt Fanny Kirkman Brooks, both mentioned in letters Kirkman-the-emigrant wrote to his parents. Hard by lived the Thomas Haslam family, one of whom was quite likely Kirkman's "Friend Haslam."

Continued in next issue-

*Our new web site will have the complete article and more photos.*

### 2008 Schedule

#### Exhibits

##### *Permanent Exhibit*

The Kirkman House Museum offers year-round interpretive tours of William & Isabella Kirkman's home, focusing on the elements that influenced home life in late 19<sup>th</sup> century Walla Walla.

##### *Sweet Home Walla Walla*

April 30-June 29, 2008

The evolution of domestic architecture over 130 years and the role of the American home in both containing and shaping social interaction.

##### *Cover to Coverlet*

August 27-October 26, 2008

A look at historical coverlets, examining the technical and artistic aspects of these American heirlooms.

#### Programs

##### *Children's Hands on History*

##### *Summer Program*

Providing elementary school age children with the opportunity to explore Kirkman House collections and Victorian era activities throughout the summer vacation.

##### *Salon Series*

February-April, 2008

A monthly program featuring artistic and intellectual explorations in the Kirkman House Museum formal parlor.

#### Events

##### *Sheep to Shawl*

October 4, 2008

A day long look at the sheep industry with shearing, spinning and weaving demonstrations.

##### *Victorian Christmas Jubilee*

December 6, 2008

The Kirkman House Museum annual holiday open house.

*See our web site for more information on these programs*

Historic Architecture Development, Inc.  
DBA Kirkman House Museum  
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Walla Walla, WA 99362

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The Kirkman House Museum is committed to preserving our past and providing a setting for understanding our local history. There are many ways you can help; your support is what makes great things happen at the Kirkman House!

**Become a Museum Member**

Members' benefits include a subscription to the museum's newsletter, discounts on program on class fees, and invitations to "Members Only" events. Your membership dues help pay for special exhibits and programs at the museum that enhance the cultural spirit of our community.

**Join the Bricks and Mortar Society**

These generous members commit to donating \$200 a year for three years to ensure the preservation work at the museum continues.

**Include the Kirkman House Museum in your planned giving**

From its origin as a museum 1978, the Kirkman House has preserved an important piece of Walla Walla's architectural and cultural heritage. Today, the museum continues to provide education about daily family life in Victorian-era Walla Walla. A gift to the Kirkman House Museum's endowment fund is an investment in the cultural heritage of our valley for future generations.

**Support the annual fund**

Contributions to the museum's annual fund provide important support for the care and maintenance of the museum, the conservation of our collections and our ability to continue providing dynamic programming.

**Donate in-kind items or services**

Contributions of material goods or professional services help reduce the operating costs of the museum.

**Volunteer**

Whether leading tours, assisting with collection management and exhibits, or helping at our special events our volunteers are invaluable to the museum's successful operations.



**Kirkman House Mission**

*To enrich the cultural heritage of Walla Walla by preserving the Kirkman Family home, sharing its history, and educating our community and visitors about domestic life in Victorian-era Walla Walla.*

**Membership Benefits**

- Free admission to the Museum
- Kirkman House Museum Newsletter
- Advance notice for Kirkman House programs
- Invitation to "Members Only" events
- Recognition in the Kirkman House News
- Tax deduction on dues
- Knowledge that you are helping to save the Kirkman House for future generations

**2008 KIRKMAN HOUSE MUSEUM MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

- Please contact me about volunteer opportunities.
- I would prefer not to have my name listed in museum publications.

**ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES**

- Students/ Seniors (\$15)       Individual (\$25)       Family (\$50)
- Friend (\$250)       Donor (\$500)       Patron (\$1,000+)

In addition to my membership, I am enclosing a gift of \$\_\_\_\_\_ to help:

Credit Card #: \_\_\_\_\_

Visa,  MC, Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Total amount enclosed: \$\_\_\_\_\_

Please return this form with your check payable to: **Kirkman House Museum**  
Mail to: Kirkman House Museum 214 N. Colville Walla Walla, WA 99362