



2014: The Year in Review

A Look Back at One of Our Most Successful Years

Hope in Hard Times

January through March

Hope in Hard Times: Washington During the Great Depression, an exhibit curated by the Washington Historical Society, visited eight communities during 2013-14, appearing for 12 weeks at each location. We were very pleased to be one of the museums chosen to present this exploration of the adversity and triumph of everyday Americans during the 1930s. The exhibit was enhanced by presentations of Walla Walla during the Depression curated by Susan Monahan and Carolyn Priest.

A New Website

February

Our website received a major redesign and updating thanks to our vice-president Kent Settle and Sygnifi Networks. Rick Tuttle and Tim Copeland assisted in this project. The site is beautiful, well-organized and very informative.

Sweet Home Walla Walla

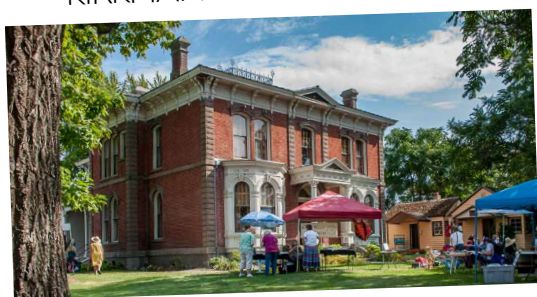
May 10

Over 160 guests joined the home tour this year and enjoyed six residences representing a variety of architectural styles between the 1880s and the early 1950s. The event's energetic promotion produced a 60% increase in attendance from last year. The tour was co-sponsored by the *Sustainable Living Center*.

A new feature this year was the production of a 26-page full-color hardcover book commemorating the homes of the tour.



KIRKMAN HOUSE MUSEUM



SPRING & SUMMER 2014



Tying the Knot

June through September

Tying the Knot: 120 Years of Walla Walla Weddings 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. Highlights included Fanny Ann Kirkman's French wedding gown now 121 years old, and Isabella Kirkman's engraved wedding band. It was curated by Carolyn Priest and Maejul Gannon.

Susan Monahan produced a very popular Walla Walla weddings video featuring some unusual local nuptials – one on a softball mound and another during a bike race.

Record Breaking Attendance

June through August

To promote both the exhibit and museum, we created a beautiful brochure and distributed thousands of copies to over 50 local venues. 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 last summer's.

Hands on History

June through August

Now in its seventh year, the museum's most popular educational program teaches children what Victorian life was like through games, crafts, music and even an archeological dig. This year, *Hands on History* spanned eight days during the summer. About 850 Campfire kids and children from Valle Lindo Homes joined the sessions.

In keeping with the event's "hands-on" theme, the activities included an archaeological dig, introduction to the historic games of hopscotch and marbles, weaving projects and the making of Victorian postage stamps, chalk, marbles, and keepsake scrapbooks.

A special feature of the event was a visit by the BurkeMobile, a special traveling program of the Burke Museum, the natural and cultural history museum of the University of Washington. It brought Native American objects, real fossils, mammal skulls, and museum-prepared birds to Kirkman House.

Kids First

Our Newest Initiative

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. We have ideas for many more.

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 also 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 interest in local history, art and architecture.

Kirkman House's Fortieth Anniversary

October 3

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. It was produced by Susan Monahan and presented by president Mona Geidl.

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

Sheep to Shawl

October 4

Our popular family festival explored how our ancestors made their clothing from wool. 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 kids' activities including wheat and paper weaving.

A highlight of the festival was a drawing for a hand-woven shawl of natural colored wool and alpaca produced by Susan Swayne. Local and regional vendors offered handmade items for sale including raw and ready-to-spin fiber, hand-spun and hand-dyed yarns, and spinning and weaving equipment.

Victorian Ball

October 25

This year's Victorian Ball was held 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 courtroom 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.

Civil war-era dances were called by dance masters Dan and Barbara Clark accompanied by the 12-piece Country Dance Orchestra from La Grande. 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.

Holiday Bazaar and Victorian Christmas

December 4, 5 and 6

The beauty of Christmas came to Kirkman House with a bazaar of gift items and crafts, available to the public on Thursday and Friday, December 4 and 5. Over a dozen vendors were on hand at the Holiday 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.

On Saturday, December 6, music and warmth spilled out of the museum as carolers, musicians and families enjoyed the museum's Christmas decor. It was a joyous way to begin the holiday season and get ready for an exciting new year.



Kirkman
HOUSE MUSEUM