



# Kirkwood Historical Society

*"The history of Kirkwood is too valuable to lose." – Nancy Reeves*

## NEWSLETTER FOR FEBRUARY 2019

### SIGNIFICANT DATES FOR FEBRUARY 2019



- 2<sup>nd</sup> - Ground Hog Day. (Editor's note: I should travel to Philadelphia with an umbrella to make sure he does not see his shadow!)
- 5<sup>th</sup> - Chinese New Year.
- 7<sup>th</sup> - Public Tours of Mudd's Grove resume at 1:00 p.m.
- 14<sup>th</sup> - St. Valentine's Day.
- 15<sup>TH</sup> National Flag Day (Canada.)
- 18<sup>th</sup> - Presidents' Day.

### TREASURES OF MUDD'S GROVE

#### Dana Room:

This room is named for the Dana Family who lived here at the turn of the century. Mr. Dana was the founder and president of the Charter Oak Stove Company. Mrs. Dana had the front porch extended to wrap around the corners of the house and she was also responsible for the gatehouse on the Harrison Avenue side of the house.

This room was originally two rooms. The south side was the family dining room and the north side was the family parlor.

### DECEMBER BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S ELECTION RESULTS

The election results posted here were received too late for inclusion in the January issue of the Kirkwood Historical Society newsletter.

#### Officer's, Board of Director's and Chairs for 2019

- Douglas Coombs, President
- Deb Hill-Jablonski, Vice President; Social Media
  - Nancy Reeves, Secretary
  - Laurie Heitz, Treasurer
  - Sue Burkett, Curator
- Gretchen Curry, President Friends of the Kirkwood Historical Society

#### Current Board of Director's

- Cindi Bambini
- Carla Baum
- Jim Biekert

- Roy Brown
- Mary Ellen Dick – (Greentree; Corresponding Secretary)
  - Liz Gibbons - (Membership)
- Betty Hudgins – (Historical Societies Liaison)
  - Ron Krieger – (Review Editor)
  - Hunter Martiniere – (Events)
    - Phyllis Ravensberg
    - Linda Ross
- Tom Whittaker – (Mission & Branding)

### Chairs

- John F. Crowley – (Docents; Newsletter)
- Kate Ives – (House & Maintenance)
  - Joe Godi – (Grounds)

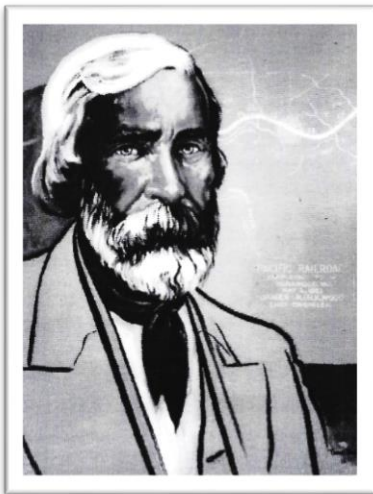


### TODAY'S HUMOR: NOAH'S ARK & COMMON SENSE

Everything I need to know I learned from Noah's Ark:

1. – Don't miss the boat.
2. – Remember that we are all in the same boat.
3. - Plan ahead. It wasn't raining when Noah built the Ark.
4. - Stay fit. When you are 60 years old someone may ask you to do something really big.

### A NEW DISPLAY COMING TO MUDD'S GROVE



### **JAMES PUGH KIRKWOOD**

Opening Thursday, February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2019 at  
 Mudd's grove – 2<sup>ND</sup> floor display room  
 302 w Argonne drive  
 Kirkwood, Mo 63122  
 314-965-5151

Open: 1:00 pm until 4:00 pm Thursday's & Sunday's

#### **JAMES PUGH KIRKWOOD.....THE MAN:**

James P. Kirkwood was born in Edinburgh, Scotland, in 1807. After training as a civil engineer, he moved to New York in 1832. He was named chief engineer of the Pacific Railroad in 1850 and surveyed routes for the western expansion of the line from 1850 to 1852, recommending the route through what grew up to be

the town named after him. James Pugh Kirkwood died in 1877.

#### **JAMES PUGH KIRKWOOD.....THE CIVIL ENGINEER:**

Projects include: Building of the Pacific Railroad; the building of Barrett's Tunnels; Water Works Division City of St. Louis Pumping and Filtration plant at Chain-of-Rocks; the Starrucca Viaduct and various other projects in the United States.

“Be sure to visit Mudd’s Grove and this exciting exhibit all about the man for whom the City of Kirkwood is named for.”

## STARRUCCA VIADUCT



### THE STARRUCCA VIADUCT

The viaduct was designed by Julius W. Adams and James P. Kirkwood and was built in 1847-1848 by the New York and Erie Railroad, of locally quarried random ashlar bluestone, except for three brick interior longitudinal spandrel walls and the concrete base of the piers. This may have been the first structural use of concrete in American bridge construction. It was built to solve an engineering problem posed by the wide valley of Starrucca Creek. The railroad considered building an embankment, but abandoned the idea because it was impractical. The Erie Railroad was well financed by British investors, but even with money available, most American contractors at the time were incapable of the task. Julius W. Adams, the superintending engineer of construction in the area, hired James P. Kirkwood, a civil engineer who had worked on the Long Island Railroad.

Accounts differ as to whether Kirkwood worked on the bridge himself, or whether Adams was responsible for the plans working with Kirkwood working as a subordinate. The lead stonemason, Thomas Heavey, an Irish immigrant from County Offaly, had worked on other projects for Kirkwood, primarily in New England. It took 800 workers each paid about \$1.00 a day, equal to \$28.96 today, to complete the bridge in a year.

The falsework for the bridge required more than half a million feet of cored and hewn timbers.

The original single broad gauge track was replaced by two standard gauge tracks in 1886. The roadbed deck under the tracks was reinforced with a layer of concrete in 1958.

The viaduct is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is a Historic Civil Engineering Landmark.

*Source: Wikipedia. Content has been edited for publication.*



### REMEMBER WHEN?.....KIRKWOOD HIGH SCHOOL 1905

Kirkwood High School 1905. The Adams Avenue School (on W. Adams between Clay and Harrison) housed the second high school in the Kirkwood School District. The first was destroyed by fire in 1900. Kirkwood was the first district in St. Louis County to establish a four-year secondary public school curriculum. Students were admitted from

outside the district for tuition if space was available. A new high school was built in 1922 on Kirkwood Road (it is now Nipher Middle School), and the Adams Avenue building was then used for elementary classrooms. The school building later sold to the Archdiocese of St. Louis, and Coyle High School was built in its place. The first Eugene Coyle High School class graduated in 1942. The Kirkwood School Board had looked to sell property with the outlived Adams School, next to St. Peter Catholic Church, to the city of Kirkwood. With no other direction for the bulging parish to expand, the Rev. Alphonse Westhoff, pastor of St. Peter Parish for 44 years, led a committee to acquire the property. The high school, with doors open to 90 students in September 1939, was named for a former pastor who left a bequest of \$20,000 to the parish - the same amount of the original sale contract for the property. Brothers of Mary taught the boys, while Ursuline Sisters of the Roman Union expanded their parish school role to teach the girls. When the same Marianist order built Vianney High School nearby, the parish high school closed in 1960. Based on a Catholic religious philosophy, the school attracted students from Brentwood to Kirkwood and far beyond.

Source: Facebook post.

## DOCENT'S & VOLUNTEER'S



Do you have a love of community? History? Do you enjoy meeting and interacting with wonderful people? If so, then we have an opportunity for you. Become a docent or volunteer for the Kirkwood Historical Society. Our docents are at Mudd's Grove on Thursday's and Sunday's from 1:00 p.m. until 4:00 p.m. to welcome visitors to the home of the Kirkwood

Historical Society. They offer guided tours to our visitors and give a brief history of the home and some of the artifacts contained therein. Our volunteers help out at events like our annual Strawberry Festival, Kirkwood's Greentree Festival in September and they also help to decorate Mudd's Grove for the holiday season. One day a month on a Thursday or Sunday or both if you want to from 1 to 4 is all we ask. And you do not have to be a Kirkwood resident. The City of Kirkwood is blessed with a rich heritage from its early days as a railroad town including the present day and has a bright future. Won't you please consider becoming a part of it?

Ok, now that you have a little background information how do I sign up? Simple. Send an email to me John F. Crowley at [kxn896@hotmail.com](mailto:kxn896@hotmail.com) and be sure to include your contact information and best times to contact you. I am looking forward to hearing from you soon. Please pass along to family members, friends, neighbors and anyone whom you think may be interested. I am looking forward to hearing from you.

## KIRKWOOD HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP LEVELS

1<sup>st</sup> - Choose the level of membership desired: Historian \$35.00; Family \$75.00  
Kirkwood \$125; Henry T. Mudd \$250; George Dana \$500; William Bodley Lane \$1,000;  
Lifetime \$2,500.

2<sup>nd</sup> - Complete a membership application (you can do this online at: <https://www.kirkwoodhistoricalsociety.com>) or complete and mail in a paper copy. Membership year begins on June 1<sup>st</sup> and ends on May 31<sup>st</sup> of each year. Member benefits include the quarterly publication "The Kirkwood Review" and the Kirkwood Historical Society Newsletter published monthly is delivered by email and quarterly if delivered by Postal Mail.