



# NEWS FROM THE GROVE HERITAGE ASSOCIATION

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## President's Message

As many of you may have heard, Steve Swanson is retiring after 38 years as Grove Director. Who can imagine The Grove without Steve? I will always remember him in shorts (even in cold weather), a Grove t-shirt, and work boots!

I have been involved with The Grove for almost 31 years. I can remember seeing Steve around the old Interpretive Center, when I would go to The Grove for camp or on field trips. Eventually, Steve and Kris offered me my first real job, working at the camps or conducting birthday parties. In time, Steve thought I could be an asset to the Grove Heritage Association Board and be able to serve the place that I so dearly love.

My roles may have changed over the years but my observations about Steve have not. He obviously cares for The Grove. When I would see him smile, hear him laugh or experience his excitement over some piece of Kennicott history, I feel the love for The Grove as much as he does. He

has a relaxed manner when problems arise and I can't imagine the huge amount of pressure taking care of the Kennicott homestead. I have always been impressed by Steve's knowledge of history and science.

He is well known to many in Glenview. I just don't know where The Grove would be today without Steve's vision and his amazing staff. He will be greatly missed by the community and the many friends of The Grove. I believe that he is leaving The Grove in a great place and the next Director will be able to begin where Steve leaves off. I know I have enjoyed working alongside him and I am very sad about his departure but am very grateful for his hard work.

Please join us at the annual meeting for a chance to say goodbye to Steve and offer him your best wishes.

**Megan Carroll, GHA President**

## Grove Arrival Day

Grove Arrival Day was celebrated at the Glenview Public Library on Sunday, March 12. An interesting lecture about The Grove and the Kennicott family was offered in both English and Korean. The local Korean community has a love of trees and celebrates Arbor Day in their country, and this day was planned to introduce Glenview's Korean population to our wonderful nature preserve and National Historic Landmark. GHA Conservation Chair, Judy Beck, also set a lovely table with cookies, candy, and green tea in their honor!

Judy Beck presented the history of The Grove, from the day the Kennicott family first arrived from New Orleans on March 10, 1836, through today. Joanna Park, an employee of the Glenview Park District, translated the same story in Korean.

The slide show described the numerous buildings on the property including the replica log cabin, the Gothic Revival Kennicott house built in 1856, the Native American longhouse, and the one-room schoolhouse, modeled after The Grove School. A local woman who attended the school as a child was moved to tears when she saw that the refurbished schoolhouse looked exactly the same.

The slides also showed the 180 year old oak trees on the property, the wetlands, and the prairie that sustain the natural habitat for many animals.

Grove Archivist, Elizabeth Kopp, author of three books about the Kennicott family and The Grove's history, told the audience of the wonderful support from the family over the years. They have donated important letters, documents, antiques, artwork and invaluable items to The Grove's Archives Building. Uncle "Tat" Kennicott, who lived to be 106 years old, knew all the Kennicotts in Dr. John's family, except Dr. John, Robert and Charlie; and lived to attend the dedication of the Kennicott House. Other family descendants visit The Grove often and continue to donate family artifacts.

Audience members also heard about opportunities to visit and volunteer at The Grove. The Village of Glenview is fortunate to have this wonderful and unique landmark. There are countless occasions for all ages to see and experience the wonder of this special place.

**Anne Feeney, GHA Board Member**

## Thank you, Steve.

After 38 years of accomplishments and acquisitions under his belt, Steve Swanson is saying goodbye as The Grove Director. He was hired by the Glenview Park District in 1979, just six years after the Save the Grove committee, the Grove Heritage Association's predecessor, successfully blocked the building of 274 high density residential units, and three years after The Grove became a National Historic Landmark.

The long list of activities, events, and endeavors Steve has accomplished over the years is vast and there are really too many to list here. However, it is worth mentioning a few highlights. The first major project Steve worked on was the restoration of the Kennicott House to its original 1856 design. The Glenview Park District and Grove Heritage Association, among others, funded the endeavor. The house had seen many changes over the years, and not all of them were good! The restoration was budgeted at \$50,000 but eventually cost approximately \$500,000. All the hard work was worth it! Family artifacts were found in the Kennicott cistern, some of which are on display in the Grove Archives Building in the Dr. John exhibit. As Steve's relationship with Kennicott descendants grew, original family pieces, such as furniture, were added to the house and they are now pointed out during history tours. The house has become a local history treasure for thousands of schoolchildren and visitors every year.

Additionally, Steve helped develop and implement many special events, which continue to fund The Grove's many projects. The first event was the Grove Folk Fest in October of 1979. Grove Folk Fest is still held the first Sunday of October every year. It is a wonderful community event for the whole family. Another special event, I am sure our readers are familiar with, is the annual Arts and Craft Faire the first two weeks of

November, which started in 1985. This is GHA's largest, and most profitable, event and has continued to grow every year under the leadership of Steve. Several other events have been added over the years, including the upcoming Vintage Market, and they are a great way for patrons to enjoy The Grove.

Between 1989-2005, several new educational and recreational buildings were added to The Grove property. Steve oversaw the construction of the 10,000 square foot Interpretive Center, filled with native Illinois animals, history exhibits about Robert Kennicott and his family, Native American artifacts, and specimens collected by Robert. A Potawatomi Long House was added in 1997 and a Blacksmith Shop in 2001. The Kennicott Archives Building was constructed in 2005 to house over 28,000 pages of letters and artifacts that are used for ongoing research about the Kennicott family and local history. In 2013, Steve successfully applied for a museum grant to fund the current exhibit about the life of Dr. John Kennicott and in 2016, an addition was added to the Archives Building.

Steve also saw The Grove expand greatly from the 94 acres that were designated a National Historic Landmark. He continually applied for grants, solicited donations, and lobbied the park district for funds whenever original Kennicott land was for sale. In 1995, Steve, along with Glenview Park District and the MacArthur Foundation, facilitated the acquisition of land along Lake Avenue and in 2012, another 12.5 acres of wetland and upland forest were acquired from the Redemptorist Fathers. Grove staff works hard to restore this land to its native ecosystem and the extensive trails ensure visitors will be able to enjoy the tranquility of The Grove for years to come. Thanks to Steve, The Grove is now 145 acres, with more land on the horizon.

While it is hard to imagine The Grove without Steve, it is clear that his work will continue to shape the future of this site!

**Ashley DeAngelis, Assistant Editor**

## Membership

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome the following new members to The Grove Heritage Association:

**Stephan Hanrahan, Walter Lang, Lauren McTigue-Nerad  
Jean Tom, Carol Tyner, Kathy Zicher**

Thank you so much for joining us! Your commitment to GHA is both appreciated and very important. We are grateful that our members support our important mission of *Restoring the Past... Preserving the Future*.

A few words about renewals: Thank you to those members who renewed their membership to a higher level this year. I am also appreciative to those members who added a donation with their renewals. Your generosity ensures that the Grove Heritage Association can continue to support many important projects. Finally, please remember, renewals are sent out one year after your renewal month.

Please email me with any membership questions or concerns. The address is: [ghamembers@gmail.com](mailto:ghamembers@gmail.com).

**Jeff Beckman, Membership Chair**



Above: photo courtesy of Judy Ksiazek.

## Steve Swanson by the Numbers *by Beryl Bills, GHA Treasurer*

**1979**

... Steve began his career  
at The Grove

**38**

...years as The Grove  
Director, which under  
his tutelage saw...

**137**

...acres added to  
The Grove property

**13**

...Structures restored or  
constructed for visitors  
and staff to enjoy

(Kennicott House, Redfield Estate,  
Interpretive Center, Log Cabin, Native  
American Long House, Greenhouse,  
Blacksmith Shop, School House,  
Archives, Program Barn, Maintenance  
Facility, The Grove Store, Staff Shelter,  
Carriage House, and Pavilion)



**38**

...Grove Fests with the  
infamous Grove Stew

**120+**

...acres of prairie, wet-  
lands and oak woodlands  
restored resulting in a  
Grove similar to the one  
documented by John  
and Robert Kennicott  
(1850s)

**4**

...Archives Exhibits curated  
featuring the 17-year  
Cicada, Robert Kennicott,  
Dr. John A. Kennicott, and  
a photographic history of  
The Grove

**1,000s**

...of reports,  
studies, presentations, and  
interactions with visitors,  
school children, volunteers,  
community groups,  
contractors, government  
officials, conservation  
organizations, etc. in  
forwarding The Grove's  
mission and vision

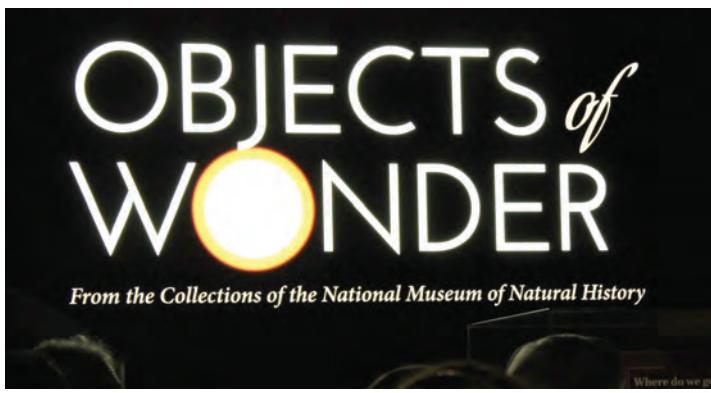
**2017**

...retirement

And...

**1**

and only Steve Swanson ...thank you for your vision.



## From The Grove Archives

### ROBERT KENNICOTT

*“A young person enthralled with natural history”<sup>1</sup>*

On March 10, 2017, the Smithsonian Institution opened a new exhibit called “Objects of Wonder: From the Collections of the National Museum of Natural History.” The museum says the exhibit gives visitors the sense they are on a behind-the-scenes tour of the Smithsonian’s collections. The exhibit showcases rarely displayed artifacts and specimens that are part of the museum’s archives and are resources for scientists to better understand the world. Some of the objects on display include: Martha, the last known passenger pigeon; the “Blue Flame,” one of the world’s largest pieces of gem-quality lapis lazuli; preserved meat and hair from a woolly mammoth; earwax from a whale and a fossil of a Pinniped, one of the earliest members of the group of animals that includes seals, sea lions and walruses. However, only one human is on display in this exhibit, Robert Kennicott, “a Renaissance Naturalist.”<sup>2</sup>

A group of us from The Grove were lucky to be invited to the exhibit’s preview night. Steve Swanson and his family, Michael McCarty, the Glenview Park District’s Executive Director, Red and Katie Kennicott, Kathleen Atlass-Redfield and I travelled to Washington, D.C. to attend. During cocktails and appetizers, Dr. Kirk Johnson, Director of Smithsonian’s National Museum of Natural History greeted the group and spoke of Robert Kennicott and how he started it all. There was great pride among our group. Dr. Johnson was thoughtful enough to introduce Kennicott and Redfield family members to the gathering. Then the evening’s guests were taken to the climate controlled gallery to view the new exhibit.

Near the start of the exhibit lay Robert Kennicott’s skeleton which was beautifully arranged on glass. Smithsonian anthropologist, Kari Bruwelheide, describes Robert as a “special person and somewhat emblematic of curators at the Smithsonian even today.” She believes that he was dedicated to his work, which was not a job but a way of life, and she found his case “the most complicated and interesting mystery we have ever encountered.”

Guests were advised that “[t]he artifacts and specimens Robert Kennicott collected...can be found in every department

of the Museum from anthropology to vertebrate zoology. Even today scientists continue to study these objects to learn new things about our world.” Then the exhibit went on to describe Robert as “[a]n enthusiastic naturalist, Robert Kennicott collected many specimens and artifacts for the Smithsonian Institution from 1852 to 1866. Kennicott’s descendants donated his remains to the Museum, where they are now part of the research collections he helped create.”

In conjunction with the opening of this exhibit, Smithsonian.com published a wonderful article about Robert Kennicott entitled, *Two Smithsonian Scientists Retrace the Mysterious Circumstances of an 1866 Death and Change History*, by Allison Keyes, March 8, 2017. In it, Robert’s life story is unraveled from his years as a teenage collector for the Smithsonian until his death on the bank of the Nulato River in Alaska. The article states “Kennicott contributed hundreds of pieces [to the Smithsonian] during his short life and the exhibition examines how scientists use the museum’s collection to illuminate understanding of nature and human culture.”

It was a wonderful evening and I would urge all of our readers to stop at the Museum of Natural History, if you are in Washington, D.C. and visit the exhibit. It will be there until 2019. The Smithsonian.com article puts it best when they wrote that “Kennicott will be there, in bones, if not in spirit, too.”

#### **Elizabeth Kopp, Grove Archivist**

<sup>1</sup> Two Smithsonian Scientists Retrace the Mysterious Circumstances of an 1866 Death and Change History, by Allison Keyes, March 8, 2017.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.



*Top Left: photo courtesy of Steve Swanson.*

*Above: Robert Kennicott's skeleton, photo courtesy of Elizabeth Kopp.*

## Native Plants

Native plants and wildflowers were growing when the Kennicott family moved to The Grove in 1836. These plants supported a diversity of butterflies, insects, and birds. Now 180 years later, gardens are being planted with the same natives that help pollinators, like the butterflies and bees, whose numbers have recently been impacted by pesticides and invasive, non-native plants. Gardeners are choosing to plant these long lived natives that are drought resistant, do not require fertilizers, and return year after year. The initial investment really pays off, not only for the budget but also for the environment.

As with any garden, the plants need to be matched with the correct amount of sun, moisture, and soil type and the season in which they bloom. On May 13, 2017, native plants will be part of The Grove's annual Plant Sale. Every customer will get a free seed packet and a helpful fact sheet.

As always, thank you in advance, for your support of the Grove Heritage Association.

**Judy Beck, Conversation Chair**



## Spring at The Grove

The Grove's 20th Annual Plant Sale will be Saturday, May 13 (one day only) from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. There will be wonderful flowering plants from Zeldenrust Farms and native plants and grasses from Midwest Groundcovers.

Advance sales are available. Additional order forms and plant lists are available on The Grove website: [www.thegroveglenview.org](http://www.thegroveglenview.org) or at The Grove Interpretative Center.

The Plant Sale will be held in conjunction with Vintage Market. Those who pre-order plants will be able to:

- Pick up their order on Friday, May 12 from 1:00 to 8:00 p.m. or on Saturday in the specially marked "pre-order" location at the plant tent.
- Those placing a pre-order of \$75 or greater will be given two free passes to Vintage Market.
- Please return your order and check by May 1, 2017, to GHA, P.O. Box 484, Glenview, IL 60025.

Thank you for your support. For questions and additional information, please call The Grove at (847) 299-6096.

**Cheri McNish, GHA Vice President**



## Calling All Vintage Lovers

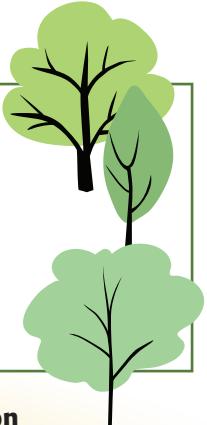
I love everything vintage! I was thrilled when I heard that The Grove was cosponsoring a new event, with Vintage Nest, a small business in the Glen, called Vintage Market. I enthusiastically spread the word to Grove visitors, families, and friends, knowing it would be a wonderful event. The historic grounds and buildings, including the Redfield Estate and Kennicott House of The Grove property, is the absolute perfect venue to host this event.

On the day of the event, I invited one of my sisters to share the experience and it was better than I expected. Over 50 quality vendors, from around the area, sold unique, upcycled, and vintage pieces of all kinds. We found so many treasures along the way; painted furniture, tableware, handmade upcycled jewelry, home accessories, garden pieces, clothes, and so much more! After a very successful day shopping, we enjoyed snacks from the food trucks and the live music, in spite of the cold weather.

Now, it is time for the second annual Vintage Market on May 13 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and the word is out about what a fun and successful event this was last year. Buy your ticket in advance (\$5 or \$8 at the door) either online at [www.thegroveglenview.org](http://www.thegroveglenview.org) or at The Grove Store. Bring your friends and have a fantastic time spending the day at The Grove's Vintage Market!

**Sue Stevens, Grove Staff**

As Arbor Day approaches, we would like our readers to know that trees have been planted and dedicated, at The Grove, in memory of the following individuals: Tom Amirante, Charles W. Bobinette, Mary Beth Willy, Omer Hadziselimovic, John A. Hennesey, and Bridget Kennicott. This is a wonderful way to honor the memory of loved ones and friends.



## Grove Heritage Association Board Members



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***Save the Date!***  
**Sunday, September 10**

On Sunday, September 10, 2017,  
The Grove Heritage Association will host a  
**Farm-to-Table Charity Dinner**  
at The Grove National Historic Landmark.

**5:00 p.m. Registration & Reception**  
**6:00 p.m. Dinner & Program**



Please join us for a celebration of fine foods and spirits with entertainment on the grounds of the Redfield Estate and Pavilion. This will be an event not to be missed. There will be an elegant Farm-to-Table menu selected and prepared by celebrity Chef Dave Esau. Tickets go on sale in late spring. Mark your calendar now and plan to bring your friends and family to this fun event.