

IRVINGTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

November 2011

Volume I, Issue 11

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Oliver Kile, a Pennsylvania native, was in his mid-20s when he joined the Union Army during the Civil War. Kile participated in a number of notable campaigns, including the pursuit of Confederate Captain John Hunt Morgan, who was responsible for Indiana's only Civil War battle, as well as General William Tecumseh Sherman's slash-and-burn campaign through Georgia, a major turning point in the war.

In 1901, by then an ordained minister, Oliver Kile came to Irvington with his family, taking up residence at 5939 Beechwood Avenue. When Oliver died in 1924 his funeral service was held in the shade of a magnificent bur oak tree located on his property. In attendance were many aging members of the Grand Army of the Republic, a fraternal organization of Union veterans of the Civil War.

That bur oak, still thriving at 400 years old, is known today as the Kile Oak, in memory of Civil War veteran Oliver Kile.

Americans continue to honor military veterans by celebrating Veterans' Day every November 11. In this November issue of the IHS newsletter we feature articles and images of Irvington's veterans. To read more about Oliver Kile, as well as a number of other early Irvingtonians who served in the Civil War, stop by the Bona Thompson Center and check out our "Irvington and the Civil War" exhibit. The exhibit also features a map of the location of Camp McClellan, Irvington's own Civil War training camp, which was located north of Washington Street roughly between Ritter and Arlington Avenues.

Over the years Irvington has continued to be the home of men and women serving our country in the military, and the Irvington Historical Society will continue to document their contributions as part of our on-going mission to tell the story of our historic community.

Don Flick
IHS President

BUTLER IN THE WAR: RECOLLECTIONS OF WORLD WAR I

The following is a letter originally published in a Butler alumni magazine¹, written by William E. Hacker² (transcribed by Steve Barnett):

We've been over the top. We were relieved yesterday after several days' action, and on one of these days, or rather nights, we led off an attack in cooperation with the tanks and went "over the top." We helped start the Huns on the run, and they're still running. French cavalry started after them after the units with which we were working were given relief, so it's said, rode at a gallop for twelve kilometers before they found the dirty Huns. I can't begin to describe it all; it's too big a story – too cruel, too full of pathos, suffering, wonder, thrills, bravery, sacrifice, horror. Yet it's a nightly experience, one that calls for every fibre of manhood that's in a man, and shows up every atom of cowardice. We came out of that attack with fewer men than we went in with, who, though tired, hungry, torn, and dirty, were unbroken in spirit. One would hardly imagine a man could be calm under such circumstances, but he is – at least that was my experience. Fears of death are dispelled and, somehow or other, dogged determination to see it through or die in the attempt takes the place of everything.

I've lived a thousand years in the last few days. I've seen enough already to repay me for my several months of training and all. One can't realize what a vast machine this military business is. The roads, which by the way are all wonderfully good, except for occasional holes, are busy with continuous streams, one moving each way, every minute of the day and night – ammunition trains, ambulances, troops, supply wagons. The villages through this sector are mostly ruins, the fields blotched with shell holes, every hill with a series of dugouts or trenches, the ground yellow in many places where the dreaded mustard or yellow cross gas shells have struck. But we don't call it "No-Man's Land" any more. It's France, and France it will be, for the Germans are meeting their Waterloo now. They hate the Americans worst of all. They call us "hell dogs," and it's the Americans, more than any, they're scared of. I think the Yanks have put some pep in the

Continued on page 2

BUTLER IN THE WAR (*continued from page 1*)

“Blue Devils,” the French, for they are fighting as they never fought before. Their most common greeting for the American is “Boche Finis” – the Germans are being finished – and we believe they are. You might believe this as strongly as we do if you would see some of the prisoners, how starved and poorly dressed they look, how glad they are to be prisoners and get good meals and rest. They are crying “Kamerad” by the hundreds, their hands thrown up as the Americans advance on them. Then, if you had seen German women among these prisoners who had been chained to machine guns and forced to fight, or boys thirteen or fourteen years old, and old men, you might think, too, it’s “Boche Finis.”

But the Boches are still in the game and they’re still putting up a deuce of a lot of fighting. The Americans don’t mind the beggars in a hand-to-hand clash – they’re easy pickin’ then, but they do dread their big artillery barrages and their gas. I had the pleasure of wading through several of these barrages, jumping from shell hole to shell hole, and I got a taste of their gas, but not enough to affect me. I got mustard gas on my clothes, and had to cut most of my pants away to keep it from soaking through and burning my skin, I thought of every mean thing I ever did in my life during these few days, and repeated over, time and again, “The sins ye have committed two by two ye shall pay for one by one.” Well, I’ve written more than the censor will ever let by now, although I don’t feel as if I have said a thing. Give my regards to all my friends.

¹*Butler Alumna Quarterly, October, 1918, Vol. VII, No. 1, “From Our Soldier Boys,” pp. 215-16.*

²*William Eldridge Hacker (27 June 1893 – 21 December 1971) was born in Columbus, Indiana. A 1916 Butler University graduate, Hacker enlisted in the United States Marine Corps in March 1918 and was assigned to Company B, 12th Machine Gun Battalion, 4th Division. He served in France and was wounded in the Aisne-Marne Offensive. Hacker was a member of the Army of Occupation prior to being discharged with the rank of sergeant in August 1919. After his return to the United States, Hacker began a career in journalism with newspapers in Indiana and Kentucky.*

BUTLER UNIVERSITY DURING WORLD WAR I

Throughout the years, many Irvington residents have served in the military. Community members in Irvington have also played an active role in the support of American troops at war. Below is an excerpt from the personal memories of Dr. Allegra Stewart as they were originally presented in the Irvington Historical Society Collected Papers 1967-1968. Mrs. Stewart was a student at Butler University on the Irvington campus at the beginning of World War I. She later served as Professor of English at Butler University.

“My time as a student at Butler began in the war years. There was no Drift [Butler yearbook] between 1917 and 1921; many other activities had to be curtailed. Athletics suffered. After the war broke out, there was widespread volunteering for service and the men who did not go held evening military drills on Irwin athletic field. To save the colleges of the country, jeopardized by the mobilization, the national government instituted the Student Army Training Corps (S.A.T.C.). The Butler Unit was inducted – about 264 men in all—on October 1, 1918. To house them, barracks (later the gymnasium) were erected on the southwest corner of Butler and University. The mess hall (later a classroom and a cafeteria) was erected on the north. The armistice came so soon that the S.A.T.C. came to nothing. That was the winter of the terrible “flu” epidemic. We all wore “flu” masks to classes. Many of the boys came down with it and a temporary hospital was set up on Ritter, back of Wilson’s Drugstore. At the end of November when the unit was disbanded some two hundred men dropped out of college. I suppose everyone remembers the false Armistice Day. We broke classes at the news and trooped downtown to join the celebration on Monument Circle. All during the war the girls had knitted for the soldiers, to the annoyance of some of the professors. It was finally agreed that the girls would not knit during classes but could do so in chapel.”



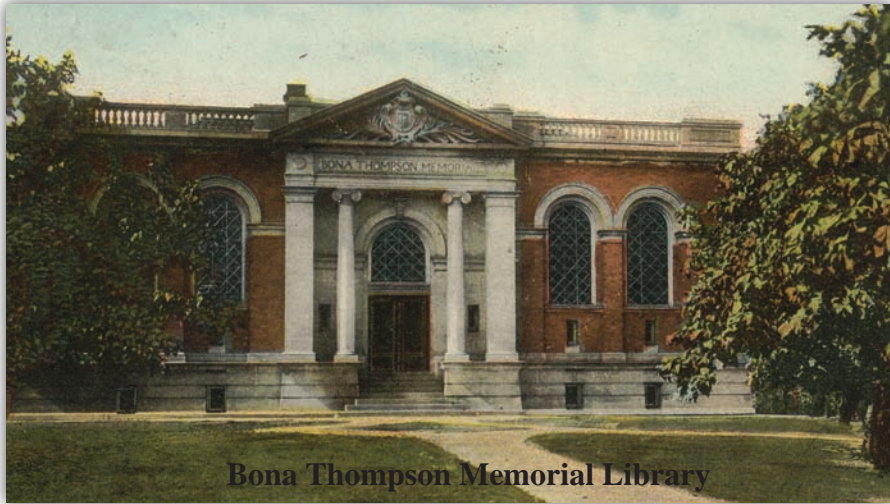
Recent Acquisition: 1918 Butler Student Army Training Corp Photo. Donated by Charlotte Ottinger

THREE LIBRARIES IN ONE SMALL TOWN

By Paul Diebold

As Irvington Branch Public Library celebrates its 10th anniversary, it's a good time to reflect on the long history of libraries in Irvington. The fact that Irvington has three existing buildings that either currently serve as a library, or did serve as a library, shows how much our community has valued education. Irvington has three surviving libraries: the current Bona Thompson Memorial Center (1903); the former Brown Branch of Indianapolis - Marion County Public Library (1956), and current Irvington Branch (2001).

Northwestern Christian University (later known as Butler University) moved to Irvington in 1875. At first, the 1875 Main Building housed the library as well as many other functions. Burgess Hall, completed in 1890, housed the library for a time. In 1903, Butler completed its new library, Bona Thompson Memorial Library. Thanks to an agreement with the Indianapolis Public Library Board, Bona Thompson Memorial Library doubled as a public branch library for a time, in addition to serving Butler students and faculty. The building was Irvington's first true library building, and at first it housed 12,000 volumes. By the time Butler left Irvington, the library had about 25,000 books filling its stacks. While the other Butler University buildings are gone, today, the library survives and is known as Bona Thompson Memorial Center.



Bona Thompson Memorial Library

The Irvington Branch Library moved to rented space in a storefront at the northeast corner of Ritter and East Washington streets in 1914. The arrangement must not have been a good one, because only seven years later, library officials decided to purchase the old Carvin House, a wood frame house built in about 1900 that stood at 5427 E. Washington.

The Carvin House served the community until 1956, when the Indianapolis Public Library Board built a new facility directly in front of the old house, and then later, demolished the house. The new building was named for prominent Irvingtonian Hilton U. Brown, civic leader, vice-

president of Indianapolis Newspapers, Inc. and long-time board member of Butler University. The sleek, new library was Modern in style. It housed about 40,000 volumes and a few computer stations at its greatest capacity in the late 1990s. Former Brown Branch Library still stands today, with it currently being used by the Indianapolis Public Schools as the Hilton U. Brown Early Childhood Education Center.

In 1998, planning began for a new public library. To avoid demolishing historic houses next to the old site, the library bought land at the southwest corner of Audubon and E. Washington. Designed by architect J.W. McQuiston and completed in November, the new Irvington Branch Library houses 62,650 items and 21 computers and has a average monthly circulation of 35,000 checkouts. It is clear that nearly 111 years after it opened its first public library, Irvington remains a well-read community.

DID YOU KNOW?

Irvington resident Emma P. Bruner (Mrs. Henry Lane Bruner) was born in Germany and married in 1897. She was an instructor in knitting for the Indianapolis Red Cross and invented the "Bruner Kneelet" which was accepted by the National Red Cross and worn by thousands of American boys during the first winter in France during World War I. Mrs. Bruner lived at 324 S. Ritter Avenue.

IRVINGTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY INTERN

The Irvington Historical Society is pleased to introduce our new intern, Sophia (Tial) Par. Sophia is earning credits in Informatics from IUPUI by creating and publishing the new IHS newsletter. Sophia was born in Myanmar (Burma) and moved to Indianapolis in 2004. She is currently working as a medical interpreter at IU Health. Please feel free to send Sophia an email of thanks for her hard work and to make any suggestions for future newsletter articles. She is excited to learn about our rich Irvington heritage. Sophia can be reached at tpar@iuhealth.org.



IRVINGTON GETS AIR TIME

By Paul Diebold

The band Rush once sang that radio programming is “A gift beyond price.” If this is true, then Irvington is a pretty valuable place these days. Steve Barnett, Executive Director at Bona Thompson Memorial Center, and Paul Diebold, board member, have appeared on two radio programs lately and a third is due shortly.

On Saturday, September 17th, Paul Diebold was interviewed by Sharon Gamble of WFYI’s “Art of the Matter” on 90.1 FM. The interview concerned an event by Indiana Landmarks called “Some Assembly Required,” a day-long workshop about kit and catalog housing. The workshop was held in Irvington, at Our Lady of Lourdes, on September 24th. Gamble, a former Irvington resident, questioned Diebold and Indiana Landmarks Education Director Suzanne Stanis. The three discussed the history of catalog housing, Irvington examples, and highlights to be presented at the workshop.

The workshop itself featured Irvington kit housing, including the Recker House, a one-of-a-kind Craftsman house, designed by the Craftsman Home Builder’s Club, a group led by famed Arts and Crafts visionary Gustav Stickley. The Society re-discovered and researched the house in the early 1990s; current owners Brian and Emily Mack have restored the exterior of the house. Diebold presented at the workshop, as did Emerson Heights property owner Carol Street (Director of the Drawings & Documents Archive, Ball State University), and noted Arts & Crafts expert John Crosby Freeman.

Also on September 17th, Nelson Price interviewed Steve Barnett, Amandula Anderson and Paul Diebold for “Hoosier History Live,” on WICR 88.7 FM radio. Amandula Anderson is the East Washington Street Corridor Director for our partner group, Irvington Development Organization. Amandula presented updates on activities on Washington Street, including recruitment of new businesses such as Black Acres microbrewery. Steve and Paul answered questions about Irvington history and upcoming events at Bona Thompson Memorial Center.

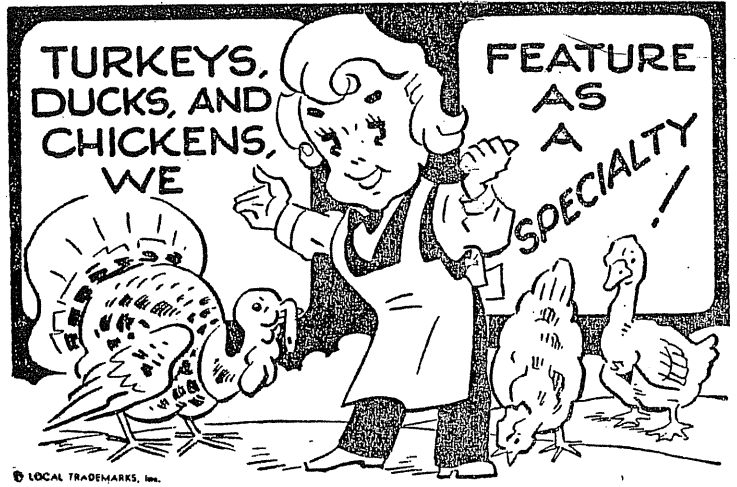
You can retrieve some of the Irvington information presented during the Hoosier History Live program at <http://www.hoosierhistorylive.info/archives.html>. Be sure to tune in to WFYI 90.1 FM on November 11, 2011 at 8:00 pm. This episode of “Art of the Matter” will feature the Irvington Historical Society. Board member Char Ottinger will discuss the upcoming Gathering of Artists, and Diebold and Barnett will field questions about Irvington history and Bona Thompson Center from host Sharon Gamble. The program will air again on Saturday, November 12th; at 4:00 pm.

The Irvington Historical Society presents
A Gathering of Artists
In Memory of Wayne Kimmell
Bona Thompson Memorial Center
5350 University Avenue
At the Corner of Downey & University Ave.
Friday, November 18, 2011
6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
Hors d'oeuvres - Compliments of Alan's Catered Events
\$5.00 at the door
Saturday, November 19, 2011
10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m - Free Admission



**ORDER YOUR
HOLIDAY
POULTRY EARLY!**

We will have fine full dressed
fowl at current market prices.



© LOCAL TRADEMARKS, INC.

FIRST COURSE ITEMS

Fruit Cocktail
tall can 30c



Tomato Juice
46 oz. can 32c

BOULLION SOUP

2 cans 35c



Sweet Potatoes

18 oz. can 27c

Golden Cream

Corn, can 20c

Y. C. Spanish

OLIVES

2 jars 41c

**SUGGESTED
DINNER MENU**

Tomato Juice, Ritz Crackers
Turkey, Sweet Potatoes,
Cauliflower, Rolls, Cran-
berry Jelly, Salad Bowl
Relish Dish,
Mince or Pumpkin Pie,
Coffee, Nuts, Mints



FROZEN PEAS, 2 pkg. 49c

FROZEN SQUASH, 2 pkg. 45c

HEINZ SWEET PICKLE STICKS
pint jar 39c

OCEAN SPRAY

CRANBERRY
SAUCE, 2 cans 35c

SMUCKERS STRAWBERRY

PRESERVES
12 oz. jar 38c

BROWN & SERVE

ROLLS
pkg. of 8, 17c

PILLSBURY

PIE CRUST MIX
pkg. 19c

Pepperidge Farm Herb Seasoned Stuffing
pkg. 26c

*We Feature A Complete Line of
Fresh McCormick Spices*

McCormick TEA BAGS
16 ct. 21c

Plum, Date, Fig Puddings, ea 53c—Ko-We-Ba Pumpkin, lg. can 24c

Ko-We-Ba Brandied Mince Meat 28 oz. jar 65c

*Our Produce Line Will Be Complete To Add To Your Thanksgiving
Treat — Cranberries, Dates, Figs, Grapes, Melons, Bananas, Lettuce,
Broccoli, Cauliflower, Parsley, Oranges, Grapefruit, etc. at Current
Market Prices.*

**Special
VALUE**

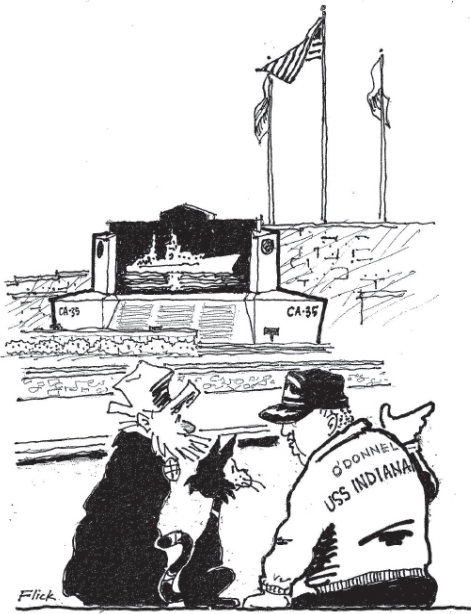
Maxwell House
Coffee
lb. 79c
WITH COUPON
IN CAN



DIRK'S MARKET



5524 E. WASHINGTON ST. • Phone 1R-1134



It was November 11 and I remembered it had been a while since I had taken my cat to see a vet.

Current Exhibits

- “Tim Engelland: 25 years of Painting”, through December 31, 2011
- “Classic Women Artists of Irvington” (from the IHS and Portfolio Club collections, featuring Constance Forsyth, Dorothy Morland, Hilah Wheeler, et al) through December 31, 2011
- “Butler University: Memorabilia from the Irvington Campus” through November 14, 2011
- “The Civil War and its Influence on Irvington” (featuring exhibits on Camp McClellan, historic lithographs of notable battles, etc.) through November 14, 2011

Permanent Exhibits & Attractions

- International Harvester Memorabilia
- Eastside Fire Museum
- Irvington Garden Club Conservator
- IHS Bookstore and Gift Shop (new and vintage)
- “Influence of the Railroad on the Development of Irvington” (including scale model of Pennsylvania Railroad and the original Irvington commercial district)

Upcoming Events at IHS

November

- 4th First Friday Art Walk 6:00 - 9:00 pm
- 18th & 19 Gathering of Artists

December

- 2nd First Friday Art Walk 6:00 - 9:00 pm

January

- 6th First Friday Art Walk 6:00 - 9:00 pm

IHS MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Immediate Benefits for New Members:

- * Discounts from Irvington Merchants – All members, new and renewed, will receive a card for discounts at the following merchants: Annie’s Apparel, Bona Thompson Conservatory, Bookmamas, Black Sheep Gifts, George Thomas Florist, Lazy Daze Coffee House and Wee-Play.
- * Gift – All new members may pick-up a gift on their first visit to the Bona Thompson Memorial Center.

Annual Member Benefits:

- * Special invitation for all events at the Bona Thompson Memorial Center.
- * Newsletter
- * 10% discount on Irvington Historical Society items at the Bona Thompson Memorial Society Gift Shop.
- * Holiday gift.

To Join:

Please complete the following application and mail it along with your annual membership dues for \$25.00 to the

Irvington Historical Society
5350 East University Avenue
Indianapolis, IN 46219-7009

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Phone _____ Email Address _____

For more information about the Irvington Historical Society visit www.irvingtonhistorical.org.