

# Glenview's The Grove highlights the overlooked impact of women settlers



The Grove in Glenview celebrated the role of early pioneer women at their annual Arrival Day event.

By [Gina Grillo](#) Pioneer Press

MARCH 13, 2018, 4:13 PM

**T**he Grove in Glenview turned back the clock to 1836 on Sunday to celebrate the anniversary of the Kennicott family's settlement.

The event, hosted by The Grove Heritage Foundation, invited guests to gather at the Kennicott House to explore the role the Kennicott family played in the westward expansion of Illinois. The event featured costumed interpreters and tours.

"The pioneering history of Glenview can only begin with The Grove Arrival Day because that's where it all started," said Judy Beck, the Grove Heritage Association's vice president and conservation chair.

The Kennicotts were from New Orleans. John, his wife Mary and their children moved to an area along the Des Plaines River in 1836 and named it "The Grove" because of its abundance of trees, according to the group.

The Arrival Day celebration aims to remind Glenview residents of this community treasure, Beck said.

Lorin Ottlinger, director of The Grove National Historic Landmark, said many know the name of Robert Kennicott, the son of John and Mary. However, this year's event featured the Kennicott daughters, Alice and Cora, whose role has never before been highlighted.

"It's very inspiring to learn about the lives of women and girls over 150 years ago," Ottlinger said. "Alice for example was an excellent markswomen and the girls both loved horseback riding."

Maryana Rayeva of Glenview attended the event and said it provided children with a chance to view how people lived in a different time.

"It gets them out and away from the computer to learn about a time when there was no electricity, when people had another way of life," Rayeva said.

Sunday's event offered a glimpse into the lives of the two sisters including what they learned, how they dressed and what they did for fun. The event is a precursor to the new Kennicott Girls Club, a STEM-based program for girls and boys that will debut at The Grove this spring.

"We want to empower girls to explore these scientific programs," Ottlinger said.

As it turns out, Alice and Cora had their own STEM-based pursuits.

"They spent childhood years working closely with brother Robert, collecting and cataloging specimens of flora, fauna and taxidermy, and sending these to the Smithsonian Institute for documentation," said Diane Michalski, The Grove's recreation program supervisor and director of the Kennicott Girls Club.

Michalski said they wanted to shift the focus and show that women were just as crucial to progress as men.

"And that women like the Kennicott daughters were involved in activities that went beyond household chores," she said.

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