



Hello Again from the Historical Society! Thank you to all those who stopped in for a visit during Holiday in the Grove. The winner of our holiday gift basket was Kay Woulfe! Thank you for stopping by and congratulations!

This time of year it's nice to remember the good in people and to be thankful for what we have. Here is a story about Sugar Grove and the Underground Railroad.

It was around the 1840's that the Kane County Anti-Slavery Association was organized. Many of the members resided in the Sugar Grove and Aurora townships. There were two routes that converged in Sugar Grove, and it was a secret among a local Sugar Grove family that they had an "active participant" right in their own home. They say the slaves that passed through the area were primarily from Missouri, although it is possible they traveled from the southern states along the Mississippi before reaching Missouri. Once they hit the Sugar Grove area, they would travel east on Prairie road which ended at that time at the farm of John Wagner, on South Lake Street in Aurora. Some slaves were directed which trail to take to stay safe and would walk at night so they were undetected. Sometimes they were given rides in wagons that had hidden compartments. Back then, there would often be a bounty on a slave of \$1,000, making it a lucrative job to be a bounty hunter. It seemed to be that people who lived along the route here in the Sugar Grove area were aware of the slaves that were passing through during the night. Most Underground Railroad Station Masters felt the satisfaction of having helped slaves gain freedom far out-weighed the possibly of losing everything they possessed if they were caught.

We hope you all had a Merry Christmas and we wish you a Happy and Healthy New Year!