



SPECIAL PROGRAMS

Throughout the year, a wide variety of fun and educational activities are scheduled at the house. Annual events include the *Ice Cream Social of 1858* in June, *Archeological Awareness* in September, and the *Harvest Gathering of 1858* in November. These events allow visitors to gain a better understanding of the early settlers' connection to the land. In addition, the Powers-Walker House hosts a variety of birding walks from April through September. Visitors can hike and enjoy the surrounding 3,200 acres that make up Glacial Park.



Enjoy this house and site overlooking the Lost Valley Marsh as we have through the past several years.

Let yourself begin a journey to a simpler place in time, a journey to early settlement McHenry County.

We came to this place for the history it holds and have stayed even longer for its heritage.

~The Powers-Walker House Volunteers

Bob Williams



**Powers-Walker House at
Glacial Park Conservation Area**
6316 Harts Road, Ringwood, Illinois



McHenry County
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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**THE HISTORIC
POWERS-WALKER
HOUSE**

GLACIAL PARK, RINGWOOD



**McHenry County
Conservation District**

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HISTORY

In 1845, Elon and Mary Powers brought their family of five children from out east to settle in this new land. With no roads into the property, they chose to site their house near the spring (located to the east) in order to be near a water source. As their family grew to eight children (Esther, George, Mary, Jane, Nancy, Roena, Isabelle and Francis), the Powers needed an addition on their home. Presumably they started out in a log cabin until 1854 when they built their first frame house, a proud Greek Revival-styled home.

The Powers' nearest neighbor was Samuel Walker, a very wealthy and influential man who settled in the valley in 1836. Walker owned much of what is now Glacial Park, including the valley to the north and west of the Powers-Walker House. Archival research revealed that Walker eventually owned over two dozen farms in the area, including the Powers farm after the family moved in 1863.

PRESERVATION

The Greek Revival farmhouse was slated for demolition in 1996. However, Conservation District staff began an evaluation of the structure which prompted further investigation by the McHenry County Historic Preservation Commission. It was determined that the structure still contained a significant portion of its architectural integrity, unaltered by over 140 years of use. In addition to its age and condition, the home was also a significant example of rural Greek Revival architecture. The combination of these findings and the fact that it was once owned by a prominent local citizen, led to the formation of a District sponsored volunteer group that began restoring the Powers-Walker house to its original condition.



RESTORATION

Physical restoration work began in 1998 after a year of demolition work which removed any modern features. Since that time, dedicated volunteers have completed the restoration of the house's outer facade, while continuing to enhance the interior's historic appearance. The restoration work is completed in phases, allowing particular care to be given to historic accuracy and craftsmanship.



Before restoration



Rebuilding the summer kitchen

Renovated interior of the summer kitchen



(Left) This photo, circa 1940, helped confirm that the summer kitchen was a historical part of the homestead.



Restoring the plaster walls.



Many cultural and historical items are on display and interpreted during special events.

A RICH RESOURCE

Today, the Powers-Walker House hosts numerous unique public programs and events, while also serving as a rich resource for research. Organizations such as the Sauk Trail



Archaeology Group have unearthed a wealth of artifacts during their excavations of the house's surrounding grounds.



An old well "garbage dump" offers clues to previous occupants lifestyle.