

Long Grove History

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Historical *Names*

Reader mail, answered. Why is Kildeer Countryside School named that, when it's in Long Grove, not in Kildeer? And what else in the area carries that odd, one-L spelling?

By Aaron Underwood · Long Grove Historical Society



PLATE I Reader-mail month is also thank-you month — the cast of the Society's 2013 Ghost Walk. Many of the names that follow surface on that tour every October.

Q. *Why is Kildeer Countryside School named that, when it's in Long Grove, not in Kildeer?*

The name *Kildeer* was being used in the area for various things well before the Village of Kildeer was formed in 1958. The name itself comes from an apparently creative spelling of a local type of bird — the Killdeer, so named because its call is said (with considerable imagination) to sound like "*Kill-deer, kill-deer.*" Note the spelling: the local name has one *L*, whereas the bird's name has two.

Somewhat ironic, I suppose, that a school would have an apparent misspelling in its name. The correct spelling might have caused confusion, since it contradicted the "historic" spelling already in use.

Here's a bit of context. The Kildeer Countryside School was built and named in 1946. Before that, area children attended one of four one-room schools — Long Grove, Gridley, Archer, or Schultz. Initial attempts to modernize and consolidate failed: residents had too much pride in "their" individual schools. To be acceptable to all four constituencies, the new site had to be reasonably central and carry a name unlike any of the existing schools. The Kildeer name was already associated with a few things nearby, so that is likely why it was chosen.



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Country clubs, creeks, *and the fate of four one-room schools*

Q. *What was the first place or thing in this area to have "Kildeer" in its name?*

My vote would be for **Kildeer Country Club**. In the roarin' 1920's, a private golf course was built on a large tract of land behind the present-day school and named the Kildeer Country Club. Naming a country club after a prevalent bird seems appropriate. The branch of Indian Creek running to the north of it is called Kildeer Creek — likely named after the Country Club.

Q. *Whatever happened to the Kildeer Country Club?*

When the Depression hit in the 1930's, the club fell on hard times and was expected to revert to farmland. However, radio-station entrepreneur Gene Dyer acquired the property, and in 1946 opened a new club. It was said the land was some of the highest ground between Chicago and Milwaukee — so the new club was christened *Sky Crest Country Club*. It even featured a small airstrip in what is now the Stonehaven subdivision.

When Chicago's Orchard Field became O'Hare Airport in 1951, the Orchard Golf Club was displaced and its ownership acquired Sky Crest, moved to Long Grove, and renamed the club **Twin Orchards Country Club**.

Q. *Whatever happened to those old one-room schools?*

Gridley School burnt in the 1960's. **Long Grove School**, at Route 83 and Arlington Heights Road, was recently torn down. **Schultz School** still stands as a private residence, but is slated for demolition by IDOT as part of the Route 22 widening. **Archer School** was relocated behind Kildeer Countryside School and restored by the Long Grove Historical Society — it's used as a field-trip destination for area school children through a Society program.

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