



William (Bill) D. Clark was born in 1915 at Chatham, IL on a farm that his great grandfather (John Lockridge) purchased from the government in the early 1830's. He, and his brother and three sisters were all raised on that same farm. His father was Walter Clark, well known in the area as Land Surveyor, and long time farmer. His mother was Gertrude O'Keefe from the Divernon area. After completing High School at Ball Township High, Bill farmed with his Father and brother until retiring in 1985. Bill married Mary Gilpin in 1938 and that union were born four children, Davis, Judith, Danny and J.D. When their oldest was 14 years old both Bill and Mary became active 4-H leaders and continued for 10 years. Bill has been an active community leader ever since. In 1954 he was election Township Clerk of Ball Township, and continues to serve as Supervisor of Ball Township, having been newly elected in 1997.

Bill served on the Ball Chatham School Board from 1956 to 1972. During this 16 year time he spent 7 years as Chairman of the Board. Beginning in 1970 he has served as Representative District on the Sangamon County Board, and presently is Chairman of the Finance Committee, and member of the Road and Bridge Committee. Bill has also served on various church committee's, most recently as the Chairman of the Building Committee of the newly formed Sugar Creek Methodist Church. Bill has also been a member of the Kiwanis Club since 1954.

In the area of types of farming, the Clarks (led by Don's ideas) were experimenting in soil conservation as early as 1945. Finally progressing to Ridge Till in 1978, some of the ideas were far in advance of what came out of the U of I. Many newer pieces of farm equipment were put together in the farm shop. The conventional equipment just would not do the job that was needed with more residue on top of the soil.

After turning the farming operation over to son J.D., Bill and Mary moved to Chatham in the Fall of 1985. By climbing to the rooftop of the house, he can see what goes on at the farm. He may be removed from the farm, however the farm is not removed from him.

**1997 Recipient**  
**William (Bill) Clark**  
**Chatham, Illinois**