

THE HOMESTEAD FAMILY

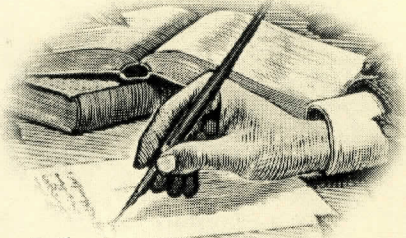
∞ GAZETTE ∞

Vol. XXX, No. 3

JAMES MILLIKIN HOMESTEAD, INC., 125 N. PINE, DECATUR, ILLINOIS

March, 2006

A Note from Your



President...

It hardly seems possible that we are preparing for the 2006 spring James Millikin Homestead's activities.

Before I tell you about them, I want to thank Sherri Arnold and Jodi Powell, co-chairmen, and their committee of the Christmas Tea for the very successful event on December 11, 2005. We also want to express our appreciation to Four E's trees, Inc. for beautifully decorating the Homestead for the occasion.

We are now planning for Mr. and Mrs. Millikin days, April 24th - April 27th, 2006. All third graders of the Decatur and Macon County schools are invited to visit the Millikins in their home located on West Main Street in Decatur. This annual event under the direction of Marty Grohne and her assistants offer the students a chance to observe the every day life of James and Anna Millikin, influential members of the 19th and early 20th century in Decatur.

We are proud to announce that local self-taught painter, sculptor, cartoonist and author Larry Wetherholt will present the program at our Annual Meeting on April 27th at 6:30 p.m. at the



Larry Wetherholt, local artist



Larry Wetherholt will give the program at the Annual Meeting on April 27, 2006 at 6:30 p.m. at the Homestead.

Mr. Wetherholt's presentation continues Anna Millikin's interest in art. With six other Decatur women, she helped form the first cultural group in Decatur on January 13, 1880. The group was called the Decatur Art Class and its objective was to study painting, sculpture and



The Homestead is open for rentals for receptions, showers, luncheons and/or dinners and meetings.

Call now to reserve your date.

Discounts are available to Homestead members.

Jodi Powell - 875-8395
Sabrina Hund - 424-0931
Brigitta Kapp - 428-9527

Mr. & Mrs. Millikin Days



It seemed like:

"I clicked the remote to long ago time."

"It was a lot of yesterdays ago."

"The house was so big."

"Maids did all the work.."

Larry Wetherholt will present the program at our Annual Meeting on April 27th at 6:30 p.m. at the Homestead. We hope you'll attend this special presentation and will invite your friends to come with you to hear Mr. Wetherholt.

I hope all goes well with each of you.
Ann Seidman, President

The Sky is falling...

Okay, not the sky, but part of a ceiling! This winter the decorative plaster medallion on the dining room ceiling partially broke loose and fell, landing in pieces on the table and floor hitting and damaging the large chandelier on the way down! In the caretaker's apartment (right above the dining room) a new wall-to-wall carpet was being laid and the vibrations from installing it most likely loosened the medallion.

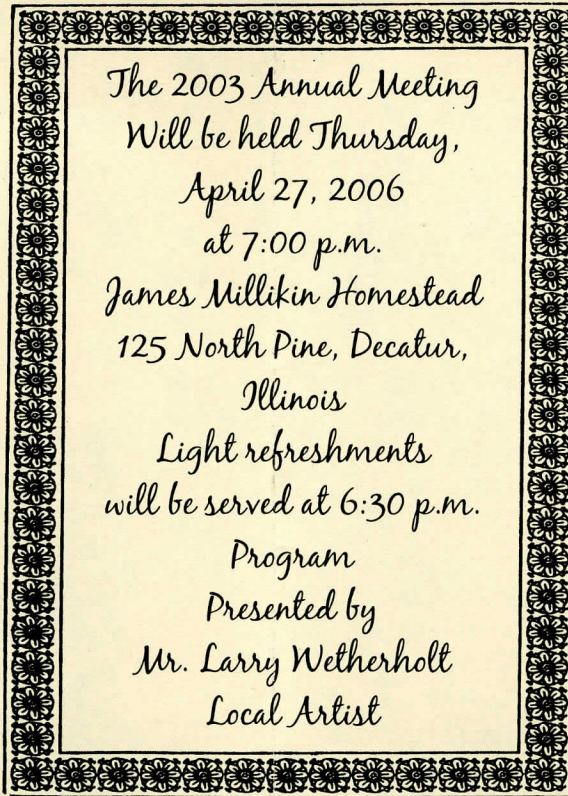
Upon receiving the news, we envisioned a whole lot more damage to the room than actually had occurred. The chandelier was needing two shades and some soldering, but that was the extent. Now, recreating the original medallion is another story.

We took the remains of the plaster medallion to a J.A. Berkey & Associates in Bloomington, Illinois. These craftsmen have recast numerous plaster reliefs for St. Patrick Church in Decatur. They do excellent work. We also knew it would be costly since the casting process involves numerous preparatory steps and is time consuming. The estimate for an identical medallion, installed in place, is \$4,600. The replacement will be cast of lighter material than the original, therefore not likely to break loose.

Millikin University will foot the bill, but the restoration has to wait until after July 1st when Millikin starts its new fiscal year and can budget in the cost. We look forward to the installation of the recast medallion!

Brigitta & Lucien Kapp, Restoration

The group was called the Decatur Art Class and its objective was to study painting, sculpture and music. The Art Class existed almost a century.



Join the Fun

The most amazing people come in to visit the Millikin Homestead! They come in with stories and questions and interest. And there are so many people who love to spend a Sunday afternoon "coming to call" at the Millikin's home. In April through October, the Homestead will once again be open to visitors on the last Sunday of the month. It is fun. And you want to be part of this unique experience. The docents have the greatest time showing the Homestead to these visitors. All you need to do to be part of this exciting team is give a call to Marty Grohne at 428-7858 or contact her by e-mail at margrohne@msn.com. That is all it takes to be a part of one of the most rewarding experiences ever!

Marty Grohne, Chairman

The house was so big.
"Maids did all the work.."

Last year they were third graders on an awesome "living history" trip back in time to visit Mr. and Mrs. Millikin's home. This year they are fourth graders re-living that special day in their memory bank. These were their comments a whole year later. They remembered every detail about that event from a year ago!

Every year we at the Millikin Homestead have helped hundreds of Macon County boys and girls make these special memories. And we are ready to do it again! On April 24-27, yellow school busses will open their doors as Macon County third graders embark on their own adventure back in time. Every year our homestead friends volunteer their talent to make this happen. We at the Homestead are fortunate because we can experience the awe and wonder that is special to a third grader as they experience this magic. It is requested that you volunteer for the times and places you prefer in this annual saga. You can do this by calling Marty Grohne at 428-7858.



BE IT EVER SO HUMBLE...

...there's no place like" the Anna B. Millikin Home and "humble" is an apt word to describe its inception over a hundred years ago as The Anna B. Millikin Home for Aged Women and Dependent Girls.

Always a step ahead of the times in her understanding of society's needs, Anna became aware of the lack of such a facility through her work as a member of the Women's Industrial and Charitable Union, an organization formed to establish an industrial school for girls. As luck would have it, her husband owned an 18 room house at the corner of Jasper and Lowber Streets, the old Lake Hotel, which he donated for the cause in 1891.

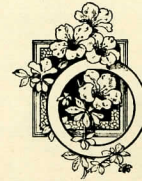
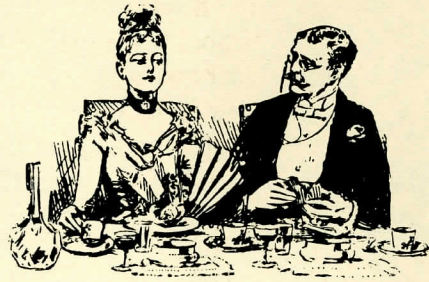
In 1893 the name was changed to the Anna B. Millikin Home and Macon County Industrial School for Girls and operation continued at the Lake Hotel site until 1901 when James - who happened to own property on Oakland Avenue across from Oakland Park, better suited to the growing needs of the home - again donated the site for a new building. O.T. Banton in his History of Macon County reports that Millikin also donated \$15,000 toward construction of the new home with the community providing matching funds. Later James Millikin is reported to have contributed another \$5,000 toward building the large brick structure. At that time there were more children living in the home than elderly women. Girls between the ages of four and sixteen and boys up to eight years old were provided care and shelter.

According to the booklet "City of Decatur" published by Decatur Public Schools in the early 20's, the home was supported in several ways: money from Macon County funds for dependent children; money paid by a parent for "independent" children; interest on a \$9,000 endowment and by donations. It has also been reported that fees of eighty cents a day or 410 a month were paid by those who were able.

After 1940 the home provided living quarters only for elderly women and in 1967, Millikin University acquired the building and the land from the Board of the Anna B. Millikin Home, which in turn purchased lots and built the much smaller facility at 302 South Union Street, functioning as a comfortable and attractive "retirement" home for older women not in need of nursing care.

Though the Anna B. Millikin Home has changed with the times, it underlines another of the benefits the Millikins provided the City of Decatur.

Lou Snelson, Historian



Old friends, new friends, & neighbors gathered to celebrate the holidays at the annual Victorian Christmas Tree. Although the guests always enjoy the cookies and warm cider and buying last-minute gifts in the Boutique, the real draw is the beautifully decorated Homestead.

Once again, the Elves at 4Es trees were responsible for the lovely backdrop. They provided a beautiful, festive tree and decorated both parlors, the hall mantle, and the dining room. They also decorated the exterior of the Homestead with wreaths and roping. The Homestead Board sincerely appreciates both their talents and their generosity.

Sherri Arnold & Jodi Powell, Co-Chairmen



December Appeals Letter



Our most sincere thanks to all who responded so generously to our appeal for funds! We feel fortunate to have so much support from friends of the Homestead!



As of now we have raised nearly \$4,600 dollars.

We have to prioritize our list of urgent repairs.

- Millikin University will work on the south porch this summer and possibly do some work on the kitchen entrance. We want to coordinate our efforts with them.
- New storm windows are another major project; we have to get estimates and see if we can tackle the project in steps. Rising energy bills really make this project urgent.
- Work on the gutters is necessary so there is no further damage to walls and window casings. Spring is around the corner and we are ready to tackle some renovation tasks.

We will keep you updated on the progress!

Thank YOU, Thank You, Thank You!!!

Donors to this special drive as of March 1, 2006:

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If you have paid your membership dues and find that your name is missing or in the incorrect category, please notify a Board Member.

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2005-2006
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- GroundsBill McGaughey



LEAVE A LEGACY™
Decatur, Illinois

*Please consider the Millikin Homestead
in your estate plannings.*

Mission Statement

The Mission of the James Millikin Homestead, Inc. is to restore and preserve the interior of this irreplaceable Decatur landmark, thereby raising community awareness of our historical heritage, and promoting preservation for future generations.

James Millikin Homestead, Inc.

- Regular Member – \$25.00
- Friend – \$50.00
- Patron – \$100.00
- Life – \$1,000.00
(May be paid in four annual installments)

*Please make checks payable to
James Millikin Homestead, Inc.
and mail to:*

**James Millikin Homestead, Inc.
P.O. Box 1501
Decatur, Illinois 62525**

(Membership is tax deductible)

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Check Our Website for Upcoming Events: <http://www.millikin.edu/millikinhomestead>