

# THE HOMESTEAD FAMILY



## GAZETTE



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JAMES MILLIKIN HOMESTEAD, INC., DECATUR, ILLINOIS

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### Whodunit At The Homestead???

Like mysteries? Like to solve the puzzle before your favorite detective does? Are the names Perry Mason, Miss Marple, and Nero Wolf like familiar friends? If so, you won't want to miss the opportunity to solve a murder that is to be committed at the Homestead. The Millikin Homestead board is proud to announce "Whodunit At The Homestead", a fall fundraiser to be held Sept. 23 & 24. An evening of intrigue, murder, and mystery will be presented for you to unravel. Prizes will be awarded for the best detective work, and refreshments will be served. The evening begins at 7:30 and concludes with the solving of the crime at 10:00 each night. Reservations are limited to a maximum of 100 tickets per night, and tickets are \$20.00 per detective. Each night features a completely different mystery, and we invite you to join us to try to solve the mystery one or both nights! It's sure to be an evening of fascinating fun, and we look forward to having you there!

### A Note From Your President . . .

It is with great anticipation and a little trepidation that I have taken up the gavel (and the pen) of the JMH board. The excitement of starting the new year with fresh board members is always tempered with the regret of saying good-bye to those members who are retiring. We bid a fond farewell this spring to Marge Wollrab, who gave us an excellent year; Kathy Green, retiring after three fruitful years; Joan Cordes a six-year board member who has served JMH in almost every capacity; and Barb Hackel, who has given so much in her seven year tenure (three as president!) that we will surely miss her for a long time (and confer with her on a regular basis!). These four will be gone from our board, but still present in our hearts and on our list of volunteers, we hope!

Our new board members now have three monthly meetings and one rummage sale under their belts and are adjusting quite nicely,

I feel. Having been in their shoes just last spring, I know that getting oriented and acclimated can be a bit bewildering, but I think they're all doing a splendid job of jumping in and getting their feet wet (shoes and all)!

This spring we have entered into an exciting, mutually beneficial, joint project with the Decatur Garden Club. Realizing our need for a source of dried flowers for arrangements and accents in the homestead, and realizing that the Millikins would certainly have maintained such a garden on the premises, we contacted the Garden Club to see if they would be interested in designing and starting a small cutting garden with us. Thanks to John Jenkins of Millikin's physical plant and his skilled staff, plots were prepared as laid out by Ann Yackel of the Garden Club. (See its diagram on the back page.) Ann, along with Vivian Kurtz, Karen Madrig, and other Garden Club members then planted the garden, mulched

it, and are maintaining (watering!!) it regularly. Bill McGaughey of our board, serving as liaison with the Garden Club, has also helped get the plots under control. At this writing, he and Dave Robertson are still working on the Mountains of Mulch!

As I look forward to the rest of the year, I am excited by the prospects of the many planned projects and events. From the new Whodunit At The Homestead, to the tried-and-true Mr. and Mrs. Millikin Days to the traditional Christmas season, it looks like a great year at the Homestead. Hope to see you there — often!

Sid Shonkwiler, President



## Anna Millikin's Surprising Guest

They called him "Hell-and-Maria Dawes." His likes will not be found in the cast of *West Side Story* or as a refugee from a motorcycle gang. Charles Gates Dawes was, in fact, a Vice President of the United States and a cousin of Anna Millikin.

Dawes' term in office came after the time of the Millikins, but he visited them at the Homestead in 1901, while serving as U.S.

College and then Cincinnati Law School, Dawes worked his way through college as a civil engineer for a railway. He ventured to Lincoln, Neb., to start his law practice and soon entered also into association with a packing company and a bank. Moving to Evanston, Ill., in 1893, he became president of the firm that would become the People's Light & Gas Co. and held interests in several

the job he saved an estimated \$2,500,000, then a significant figure.

With the collapse of the German economy, Dawes was dispatched as chairman of a committee to find ways of stabilizing Germany. The emerging strategy was called the "Dawes Plan." It helped to provide a method for the Germans to pay the heavy reparations assessed earlier by the Allies. In recognition of his





Comptroller of the Currency. His visit caused some stir in Decatur.

The Vice Presidency was only one facet of Dawes' remarkable career and perhaps not even its apex. Like James Millikin, he became a banker by a combination of aptitude and chance. In his lifetime Dawes was also engineer, lawyer, politician, economist, government administrator, soldier, and diplomat. Despite his pugnacious-sounding sobriquet, he won the Nobel Peace Prize in the wake of World War I. In odd moments his energy spilled over into philosophy and music.

Such a man hardly seems to deserve the fate accorded to Vice Presidents: to be forgotten. In a long hot summer of political campaigns in 1988, it may be appropriate to follow the wide-ranging career of Charles Gates Dawes and even to wonder, are there any out there to match him?

Born in 1865, in Ohio, Dawes was a grandson of Betsey Shipman Gates, first cousin to Anna Millikin. Betsey's mother — Joanna Bartlett Shipman — and Anna's mother — Hettie Bartlett Aston — were sisters and descendants of the Revolutionary War patriot, Capt. William Bartlett, according to the Bartlett family history researched by Betsey Gates.

On the other side of the family, Dawes would be inspired to his country's service by the example of his father, Rufus R. Dawes, U.S. Congressman and member of the (Wisconsin) Iron Brigade in the Civil War, and of his great great grandfather, William Dawes, who kept company with Paul Revere in the legendary ride of 1775.

Whatever his field of endeavor, Dawes became a man who got things done. But the high point of his accomplishments came with World War I. Just short of age 52, Dawes left the safety of a bank presidency in Chicago for a war three thousand miles away in France. His kind of determination showed already in the early days of the war when his advice to Liberty bond salesmen was nothing short of direct: "If a man refuses to buy a Liberty bond from you, I say knock him down."

● an article, "Banker at War," in the *Illinois Historical Journal* (fall 1985), author Edward A. Goedeken called Dawes "an example of how one strong-willed individual can make a mark on a struggle between millions."

Starting modestly as a student at Marietta

Midwestern gas companies.

His Republican leanings led him to involvement in the successful Presidential campaign of William McKinley who appointed Dawes Comptroller of the Currency for his efforts. Still a young man, Dawes instituted banking reform and collected for the government more than \$25,000,000 from assets of banks that had failed in a recent panic. Campaigning briefly for a Senate seat from Illinois, he withdrew on the invitation of Chicago businessmen for him to organize a bank, the Central Trust Co. of Chicago. Various banking ventures would follow.

With the outbreak of World War I, the middle-aged Dawes determined to serve his country in the active tradition of his family. In Nebraska he has made friends with a young military instructor John Joseph Pershing, now general, to whom he looked to obtain a commission. He talked his way into a much-needed engineering unit which would get him quickly to France.

Pershing, however, soon found another job for him there — heading the new General Purchasing Board appointed to deal with the serious supply problem plaguing the American Army in France. Mobilization of the U.S. was not moving fast enough, and German U-boats were taking their toll of shipping. Supplies had to be found on the spot, not easy in a country ravaged by war.

Dawes' genius for organization and strategy crossed over all boundaries. He organized, coordinated, and scavanged across Europe to provide whatever was needed for the Army — coal, tin, printing, power plants, bookkeeping, manpower. He worked with the Allies, the Navy, civilians, and neutral governments. Exhilarated by his work, he wrote in a journal, "To negotiate single-handed with governments comes to but a few men." He was made a general, and finally, in 1918, put together a unified supply organization for all the Allied armies.

Without Dawes' work, it is said, the American forces would have been severely, if not fatally, restricted. For his service he was decorated by three countries; from the U.S. he received the Medal for Distinguished Service; from France, the Croix de Guerre; and Belgium, the Order of Leopold.

Returning to the U.S., he was appointed director in order to organize the first Bureau of the Budget in 1921. In this single year in

efforts for world peace in the plan's formation, Dawes received the Nobel Peace Prize, jointly with Austen Chamberlain of England.

Just after World War I, Congress began an investigation of military waste. General Dawes sprang up in defense, and according to the *National Cyclopaedia of American Biography*, said in blunt and unadorned terms that if Congress devoted a quarter of the time used in war investigations to trying to see the waste in front of its eyes, instead of finding flaws in the country's war record, it would be doing a much greater public service.

"Hell and Maria," Dawes exclaimed, pounding a table, "We were fighting a war. We did not have time for duplicate vouchers and double entry bookkeeping. It is a hell-fired shame for everybody to be trying to pick flyspecks on the greatest army the world ever saw. What do you suppose we went to war for? We went to France to win a war and we did it."

The public gave him: hearty approval and, thereafter, he became known as "Hell-and-Maria" Dawes. This title carried over into his campaign when he was nominated for the Vice Presidency under Calvin Coolidge. They were elected in a landslide. For the next four years a major effort of Dawes was to try to eliminate the filibuster in the Senate.

After the Vice Presidency he chaired finance committees, including that of the 1933 Century of Progress World's Fair in Chicago, and served as U.S. ambassador to Great Britain. He was to have been chairman of the American delegation to the World Disarmament Conference at Geneva when President Hoover switched him to the presidency of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation. From this he shortly resigned to devote his time to private financial interests.

He had acquired a recognized facility as a pianist and composer. In 1921 Fritz Kreisler played Dawes' "Melody in A Minor" for several weeks as an anonymous composition before it became known as the work of the general. He also served many years as a director of the National Broadcasting Company and the Radio Corporation of America.

Beyond this, Dawes wrote extensively of his experiences and financial outlook. He was the author of "The Banking System of the United States" (1892); "Essays and Speeches" (1915); "A Journal of the Great War" (1921); "the First Year of the Budget of the United



*Charles G. Dawes*

States" (1923); "Notes as Vice President" (1935); "How Long Prosperity?" (1937); "A Journal of Reparations" (1939); and "A Journal of the McKinley Years" (1950).

Dawes donated his share of the Nobel Prize to the endowment of the Walter Hines Page School of International Relations, John Hopkins University. In memory of his son who drowned in 1912, he founded the Rufus Fearing Dawes Hotel for Destitute Men in Chicago and Boston and the Rufus Dawes House, a dormitory at Lawrenceville (N.J.) School. He also established the Mary Dawes Hotel for Women, Chicago, in memory of his mother.

Such was the character of the man who came to dinner at the Homestead in 1901, as the guest of "Cousins" Anna and James. He was in Decatur to address the Republicans here, whom, a newspaper account said, he amazed with his "happy faculty of never forgetting a name or a face." He had risen rapidly in the ranks of the GOP in Illinois to earn the post of Comptroller of the Currency, but the Millikins would be gone when he stood before the country as "Hell-and-Maria Dawes."

In 1901, despite the differences in their ages, eras, and personalities; the pair of bankers, James Millikin and Charles Gates Dawes, had the potential for plenty of after-dinner conversation.

They shared a belief in sound business principals, an unusual capacity for financial foresight, and a willingness to put a significant portion of their time and talents to work for the good of society. A major achievement of James, his university, was just in the making; and Dawes' was yet to come. Who knows, perhaps the young banker found some inspiration in the character of the older one. And with Dawes living earlier in Illinois, this may not have been their only encounter.

Marilyn Loofbourrow, Historian



# Garden Club Joins Forces with Homestead

Despite unfavorable growing conditions this summer, two new gardens are flourishing at the Millikin Homestead — thanks to the Garden Club of Decatur.

Two rectangular plots are located north of the driveway circle, and contain varieties of herbs and flowers that can be dried and used for floral arrangements in the Homestead.

The gardens are the result of an agreement between the Board of the James Millikin Homestead and the Garden Club's civic committee to develop two 10x20 foot plots. The Garden Club made a proposal to the Board, which was accepted, and has agreed to care and maintain the garden for two years.

In addition, club members will help in the harvest and instruct members of the Homestead on how to dry flowers and arrange them for display in the Homestead.

The Homestead Board contributed money to purchase plants and the Garden Club donated plants and volunteered labor to establish the gardens. Among the plants selected were yellow yarrow, blue salvia, lavender, celosia, sage, lambsear, and seathrift or armeria. Most of these are perennials.

Vivian Kurtz is chairman of the Garden

Club's civic committee. She is working with Homestead Board members David Robertson and Bill McGaughey. Assistance has also been provided by physical plant staff from Millikin University.

The Garden Club had previously done plantings at the Rock Springs Environmental Center and at the North Fork Museum. There are approximately 165 members of the Garden Club, which dates back to the 1920's and is affiliated with the national council of state garden clubs. Mary Glatz is the current president.

Among the objectives of the Garden Club are "to stimulate knowledge and love of flower arranging and gardening among its members," and "to encourage civic planting."

The Board of Directors of the Millikin Homestead examined several proposals presented to it by the Garden Club before choosing the present plan. The plots are carefully mulched in wood chips and watered frequently by volunteers from the Garden Club.

Homestead members who have specimen plants or wish to support this project may contact either Dave or Bill with their donations.



Gardeners Ann Yackel, Karen Madrig, Vivian Kurtz

## Rummage Sale Results

That time-honored traditional fundraiser, the Homestead's annual rummage sale, has again made its contribution to our budget. Generous thanks go to the many board members and Homestead members who helped with the pricing, setting up and selling. Thanks, too, for the great donated "treasures" and eager patrons, and kudos to whomever was in charge of the weather!

Our net profit this year included \$554.44 and two very tired chairmen — obviously a very successful sale!

## Third Graders Plan To Visit The Millikins

Mr. and Mrs. Millikin Days will be held October 17, 18, 20, and 21. As you remember, this is when third graders tour the Homestead taking a step back in time. Volunteers dress up as Mr. and Mrs. Millikin and their maids. The students learn the history of the home, see the kitchen maid in action, listen and sing with a pump organ; and hear a description of the photographs, appliances and furnishings.

If you would be interested in volunteering a couple of hours toward this project, we would be delighted to hear from you. Please call co-chairmen Sonja Rathje, 428-7159 or Lois Wells, 428-0805.

## Who's What At The Homestead

Here are the positions you'll want to be aware of when you have compliments, complaints, questions, suggestions . . .

- President — Sid Shonkwiler
- Secretary — Jane Welch
- Treasurer — Betsy Empen
- Grounds — Dave Robertson
- Historian — Marilyn Loofbourrow
- Membership — Terrie Potter
- Newsletter, Restoration — Carolyn Travis
- Procurement, Millikin Days — Sonja Rathje
- Publicity — Gerald Redford
- Scheduling — Nancy Eichenauer
- Volunteers — Jane Lawson

Other Board members not aforementioned:

- Charlotte Dipper
- Lois Wells
- Shirley Kraft
- Bill McGaughey



Thank-you's are in order for several donations to the Homestead History Collection. To the following persons we express our sincere appreciation for their thoughtful generosity:

**Martha Montgomery**, for copies of assorted legal papers related to the estates of James Millikin and his father, Abel (dating from 1967-1928).

**Mrs. DeLloyd Keas**, for a 1906 check drawn on the Millikin National Bank, made payable to Millikin University, and bearing the signature of A.H. Mills of "Mills Bros., Attorneys."

**Sonja Rathje**, for a stereoptican slide showing James Millikin and U.S. President Theodore Roosevelt on foot to the dedication of Millikin University in 1903, a perfect complement to the Homestead's stereoptican.

**Gerald Redford**, for an over-size photographic print of the Homestead, probably in its latter days as the community's Art Center (prior to 1969).

