

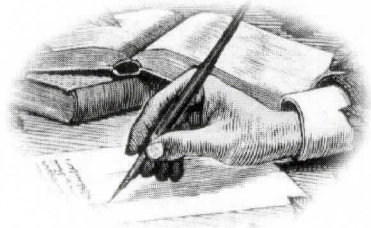
THE HOMESTEAD FAMILY

GAZETTE

Vol. XXXI, No. 3

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

October, 2007



A Note from Your President...

On October 16, 1975, the James Millikin Homestead corporation was formed. The first Homestead board of directors mapped out a detailed plan of restoration and preservation. That plan is still our guide. The 2007-08 JMH board continues to learn from the past, to plan for the future.

As for the present, the year has begun with enthusiasm. The annual business meeting on April 26, 2007, welcomed new officers and board members. Our retiring board members will be missed, but not forgotten: Ann Seidman, Ann McEvoy, Rosemary Idleman and Sabrina Hund.



Victorian Tea Huge Success

The Victorian Doll Tea, held June 16, 2007, was a huge success, thanks to the combined efforts of our Board members and many volunteers.

Wonderful exhibits were provided by:

Susan Phillips, Decatur, IL – doll display

Marny Elliott, Champaign, IL – doll house and miniature rooms

Anne Pondelick, Decatur, IL – antique dolls and dolls from around-the-world



Ann McEvoy, Rosemary Idleman and Sabrina Hund. The annual meeting ended with an entertaining mystery Whodunit – I'm still not convinced Mae West did it!

Tradition continued this spring with Mr. & Mrs. Millikin Days, an annual event since 1979. During the week of April 16th, the Millikins and their staff, even a newly hired butler, greeted 540 Macon County third grade students. On June 16th the ninth Victorian Doll Tea was held. Our guests, young and old, chatted over tea and pink lemonade at tables graced by floral centerpieces, thanks to the Garden Club of Decatur. Exhibitors displayed their dolls and doll houses throughout the upstairs rooms and hallways. If it weren't for the generous raffle donations of our members, tea time would not have been a success!

The JMH board is now looking forward to our plans for the future. The Biedlers, John and Gwen, have moved in as the new resident caretakers. Their enthusiasm for the architectural beauty and preservation of the Homestead is contagious. Join us as the JMH board moves forward to carry out the mission of the founders of the James Millikin Homestead corporation – to restore, to preserve and to educate.

Janet Beasley

the-world

Graham & Kay Curtis, Kilbourne, IL – antique tea sets, doll and children's dishes

Kathy & Amy Cantrall, Springfield, IL – antique doll house

Winners of Raffle:

Tea/coffee for 20 at the Homestead – Cheryl Bradley

Use of the Homestead for 4 hours – Suzanne Eastman

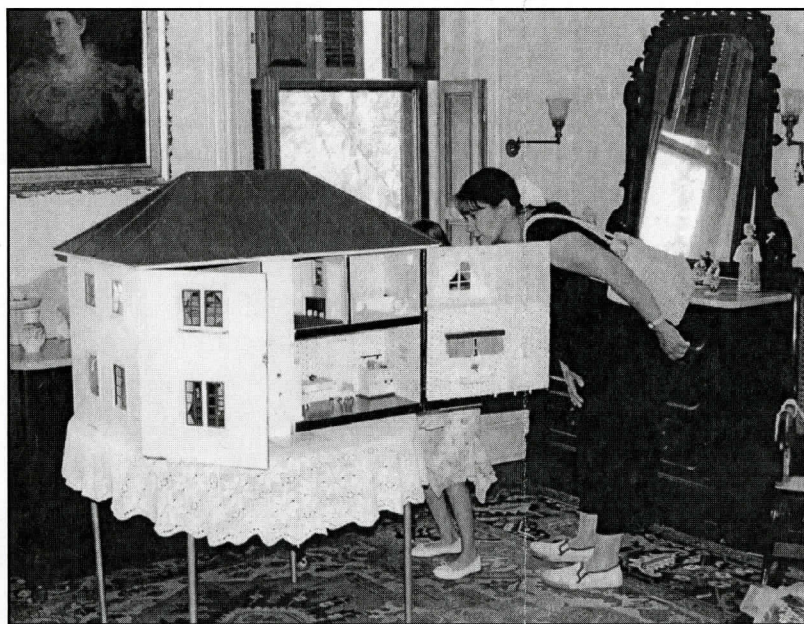
Tea Set – Blaine Baer & Chloe Warren

Dolls – Christina Long & Hannah Gadberry

This fundraising event netted us \$1,374.00.

A special thanks to the Decatur Garden Club for the beautiful floral arrangements on the tables, to Leo Pondelick and his violin and all of those who helped make this special day such a success!

Co-chairmen JoAn Christerson & Margie Kirk



Kate Shields also had a display of memorable items from her childhood years at the Victorian Doll Tea (pictured at right). Some items included a Felicity doll in colonial costume with a writing desk, a collection of Beatrice Potter books with stuffed characters and story plates, a doll tea set and two miniature antique chairs. Also on display were two antique dolls, which had previously been used to decorate the interior of the family Christmas tree. The dolls were then passed down to Kate when all the kids in her family were grown.



Brigitta Kapp and her grandchildren attend the tea. Back, left to right, Loren, Sheldon, and Sabryn. Standing is Grayson.

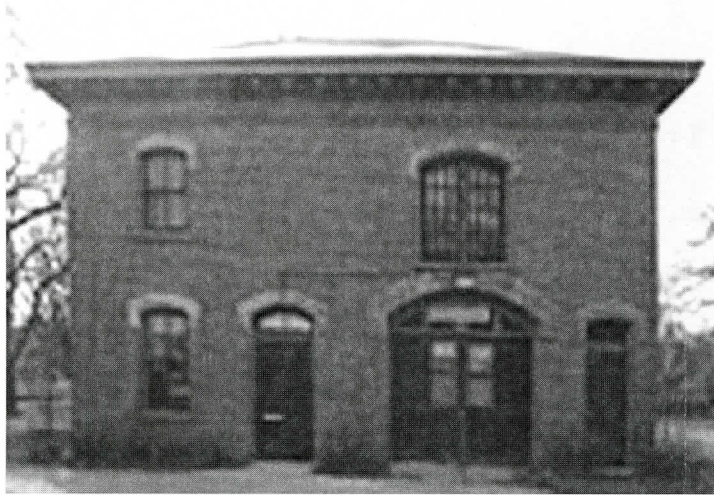


From Stable to Studio – Again

As the University once more requires the Carriage House for use by its Art Department attention is called to that sturdy brick building behind the Homestead.

When Paul Sprague in 1976 evaluated that part of the property he described it as “the Millikin barn” and that is probably the way it was referred to when it was built since at that time James Millikin’s land was considered to be out in the country. Given

James’ background as a member of a farm family, that title would no doubt be agreeable to him. Sprague described the barn as “contemporary” with the house – the same brick construction, arched front windows, under-eave brackets echoing modestly the main



building, making it “visually compatible.”

After years of sheltering the Millikin’s horses and carriages it sat empty as did the house until the University in 1959 converted it for use as an art studio. At the same time, the present day Homestead became the Art Center.

The two horse stalls were walled off to become rooms, plumbing and electricity were added as well as a new stairway to the loft. In deference to central Illinois winters, a “Weir-Meyer Model C-5 165,000 BTU gas furnace” was

installed. The total cost of the remodel was \$4000.

In his 1976 report, Sprague commented that if further changes were made in the interior, “elegant finishes” were to be avoided and he was particularly concerned that no storm windows or doors were to be used on the Carriage House. He also stated that it would be suitable for “rough” activities such as a nursery school or art studio

and both of these uses have been met to a degree.

There are several Carriage Houses (or barns) in the older parts of Decatur – some quite elaborate with gables, gingerbread trim, pillars and balconies! Many, like ours, have found alternate uses as apartments, homes,

offices, storage for car or boat – none being used for the named purpose – carriage coverage. It was interesting to find in reading current literature concerning such buildings, a plan for an “1860’s Carriage Barn” adapted for use as a garage.

The Carriage House Learning Center has moved to another site and though it will be missed, Millikin’s art students will add a new layer to the history of the Homestead and wouldn’t Anna be pleased.

Lou Snelson, Historian

Cucumber Sandwiches

Compliments of Ann Seidman

(These were served at the Doll Tea)

Pepperidge brand of very thin sliced bread. (Or thin sliced cocktail bread. Sold in 2” squares at the deli section.) For the Pepperidge bread, slice off crust. Spread with butter. Cut in rectangular shapes.

Mix equal parts Hellman’s Mayo and Cream Cheese. Mix with blender until creamy. Spread on bread. Place bread in container and cover with wax paper. Place in refrigerator till cream cheese mix is cool.

Cucumbers: get the deli kind in the plastic wrap. Slice as thin as you can. Sprinkle with salt to draw the liquid from the cucumbers. Wait for about 20 minutes. Rinse off the salt.

Lay out a double layer of paper towels: place cucumbers on paper towels. Place two sheets on top and pat to dry as thoroughly as possible.

Sprinkle with CALENDERS Greek Seasoning. Found at Krogers or Walmart.

Place 2 cucumbers on top of the bread slices. Arrange a sprig of fresh dill on the center of each cucumber.

Serve with a dash of delight.

Niki Foertsch