

THE HOMESTEAD FAMILY



GAZETTE



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JAMES MILLIKIN HOMESTEAD, INC., DECATUR, ILLINOIS

March 1980

LEIBY FURNITURE'S HISTORY SIMILAR TO MILLIKIN'S

The Leiby furniture recently installed in the Homestead originally belonged to a family with several parallels to James and Anna Millikin. The furniture has come down through four generations of Leibys and then Halls.

The Decatur segment of their history began in 1852 when Jacob and Mary Leiby and their children moved to Decatur from Ohio. It was at about the same time that James Millikin was making Illinois his home. Originally from Pennsylvania, Millikin chose to settle in Illinois while several of his sisters and his brother moved near other Millikin relatives in Ohio.

In 1852 Jacob Leiby opened the Leiby Bakery. In 1853 he built the first three story brick building in Decatur. Located at 129 E. Main Street, it housed the bakery on the first floor and the Decatur Review on the second floor. This building was within a block of the bank established by James Millikin in 1860. It was later used as a city hall. In 1912 George Leiby, son of Jacob and Mary Leiby, sold the building for \$20,000.

George Leiby married Cora Alice Reeme in Decatur in 1871. Her parents, Jonas and Catherine Reeme, originally lived in Pennsylvania and then Ohio. They came to Decatur in 1862. By 1862 James Millikin had permanently settled in Decatur and had recently married Anna Aston.

George and Cora Reeme Leiby lived for many years in a "low brick house. . . on the corner of North and Franklin Streets" (now the

EXCITING NEWS AS RESTORATION PROCEEDS

The Breakfast Room

Restoration of the breakfast room is beginning this month. Originally a part of the first kitchen and its sleeping porch, this room came into being as a result of Mrs. Millikin's 1883 remodeling. The remodeling moved the staircase from the south side of the hall to run perpendicular to the north side of the hall as we know it today.

The breakfast room was used informally by the Millikins and as an eating area for their servants. Probably its most notable feature is the stained glass at the top of the bay window.

The breakfast room restoration is being underwritten by James Millikin Homestead, Inc. through the generous donation of Mr. and Mrs. Robert C. Schaub, Jr. When complete, it will be used as a small meeting and research room.

The Second Floor

Bids have been received for restoration of the ENTIRE second floor and at their March meeting the membership of Junior Welfare Association voted to accept the bids, which will complete the restoration of the Homestead!

All second floor walls and ceilings will be repaired and hung with canvas and painted. Plaster ceiling moldings and medallions will also be repaired. Woodwork will be refinished and shutters for the second floor windows are already under construction. The bathroom will be renovated to be functional yet fit into the style of the home.

The second floor restoration is

SPECIAL PROGRAM FOR MEMBERS OFFERED

Ann Seidman, program chairman for the James Millikin Homestead, has arranged a special program at 2 P.M. on April 30, 1980, at the Homestead. Shirley Fanjoy (Mrs. David) will speak on antique jewelry. The program is open to all Homestead members and their guests

There is no charge for this program; however, reservations are requested by April 18, 1980. Please call Ruth Prust (422-2967) during the day or Ann Seidman (428-0644) after 5 P.M.

Mrs. Fanjoy and her husband have lived in Decatur for 1½ years. She is the fourth generation of a Wyoming pioneer family and lived for 35 years on one of the oldest ranches in Wyoming. Mrs. Fanjoy's interest in antique jewelry began when she inherited a stetson hat filled with antique jewelry.

Mrs. Fanjoy was the first woman elected to the Wyoming legislature, where she served for 14 years. She also served as president of the Wyoming Women's club and is a member of the International Bridge Team. In addition, she is the only member of the Illinois Association of Parliamentarians living in Decatur. She has traveled worldwide where she has collected lovely objects, both antique and representative of various cultures.

Mrs. Fanjoy is obviously a woman of many interests and talents, and her program promises to be a real treat for Homestead members.

ANNUAL MEETING SET



The above picture is a reproduction of a picture of Anna B. Millikin that presently hangs in the Anna B. Millikin Home. It is one of the "younger" pictures we have of Mrs. Millikin, but it is not identified by date. We are hoping that one of you who knows something about Decatur history and nineteenth century dress can help us to date it—

MR. AND MRS. MILLIKIN AT HOME SCHEDULED FOR MAY 5-9

A repeat of last year's highly successful program for local third graders, "Mr. and Mrs. Millikin at

MEMBERSHIP DRIVE BEGINS

The fifth annual Homestead membership drive is now in progress, according to Roberta Pilcher, membership chairman.

Each consecutive membership

social center of town and the Leibys enjoyed entertaining in their home.

When Decatur's prominent families moved to the west part of town (as James and Anna Millikin already had), the Leibys built a home on South McClellan Avenue. To their new home they took the lovely Victorian pieces that had furnished their parlor as well as some Empire pieces that had no doubt come overland from Pennsylvania and Ohio in a covered wagon.

(continued on next page)

PLAQUES NOW INSTALLED

Plaques designating the north parlor as the Zonta Room and the south parlor as the Bicentennial Room are now permanently installed in their respective rooms, according to Ruth Prust, chairman of the Homestead board.

These designations have been made in grateful recognition of the funds from the Zonta Club of Decatur and the Illinois Bicentennial Commission which helped to make the restoration of the parlors possible.

TEA SERVICE PRESENTED

The patroness group of Junior Welfare Association has recently presented the James Millikin Homestead with a beautiful silver plate tea service.

This gift was made possible through several fund raising projects of the patroness group over the last three years. Several of you may remember the handmade calico wreaths and hostess aprons sold by the patronesses at a fall festival.

The tea service will be very useful as well as decorative at the teas and receptions held at the Homestead. The Homestead Board, on behalf of all members is most appreciative of this lovely gift.

NEW LIFE MEMBER

The Homestead board is pleased to announce that Mrs. James T. Whitley has subscribed to a life membership. Mrs. Whitley's name is inscribed on the life members' plaque in the hall by The Bell Pull.

Faxon and Brigitta Kapp. This restoration will be possible through funds generated by Junior Welfare Association's spring show, Music Machine II.

HOMESTEAD RECEIVES "NEW" FURNITURE

The James Millikin Homestead is looking more complete, more "lived in," as lovely antiques of another prominent Decatur family take their places among those of Anna and James Millikin.

The furniture is part of the estate of the late Isaac Shellabarger Hall and Cora Irene Leiby Hall, now owned by their son Leiby Shellabarger Hall. Most of the pieces may be traced through the Leiby side of the family, which first came to Decatur in 1852.

Included in the Leiby furniture now in the Homestead's Bicentennial Room are two settes, one of which is of the balloon-back style very similar to Mrs. Millikin's horsehair piece. There are also two companion (or "Mr. and Mrs.") chairs and four matching side chairs. All are upholstered in blue with floral needlepoint accents.

Three Victorian open-back side chairs and an occasional chair compliment the Millikin furniture already in the Zonta Room. The Leiby furniture is quite compatible with the Millikins' period and their own furniture, and other pieces will be utilized as restoration progresses.

The Homestead is most grateful to Mr. Hall for sharing his family's very beautiful antiques and enabling so many to see and enjoy them. In recognition of his generosity, the Homestead board has unanimously voted to extend to Mr. Hall a life membership in the Homestead.

(See related article: "Leiby Furniture's History Similar to Millikin's")

MILLIKIN PORTRAITS TO BE AT HOMESTEAD

Individual portraits of James and Anna Millikin will soon be on display in the Zonta Room on either side of the fireplace. The portraits are the property of Millikin University and will come to the Homestead on loan. They are currently being refurbished and should be in the Homestead in time for the annual meeting.

The annual meeting of James Millikin Homestead, Inc. will be held at 7:00 P.M. on April 24, 1980, at the Homestead. New members of the Homestead board of directors will be elected at this meeting.

The speaker at the annual meeting will be Maribeth King (Mrs. Robert). Mrs. King owns The Gingerbread House, which specializes in herbs and seasonings and dried flower and herb arrangements. Her topic is "Victorians and Their Use of Herbs."

Refreshments will feature some of the delicious items prepared using herbs from Mrs. King's herb garden.

Please call Mary Helen Kikolla at 423-5929 to make reservations before April 21, 1980. This will aid the committee in making arrangements for the meeting. However, if you find out at the last minute that you can attend, please feel welcome to come without a reservation.

MYSTERY PICTURE IDENTIFIED

Most of you have probably seen the large picture of a nineteenth century woman that rests on an easel in the Zonta Room. The picture was found stored with several pieces of the Millikin collection. Since it was unidentified, there was speculation that it might be Anna Millikin. The woman did in fact, resemble some other pictures of Mrs. Millikin.

However, this fall the picture was identified by Izzie Brown as her great grandmother, Mary Elizabeth Morrizon Bering (Mrs. James), Mary Elizabeth and James Bering arrived in Decatur in the 1850's and became a very prominent family. Like James Millikin, they were originally from Pennsylvania.

They had three children, and both were very active in community affairs. James Bering discovered coal in the Decatur area. Mary Elizabeth Bering was a contemporary of Anna Millikin and both belonged to the Decatur Art Class. Like many members of the Art Class, she traveled widely. The picture became mixed with the Millikin pieces because it had been given to the Decatur Art Institute, which was formerly housed in the Millikin Homestead.

This program is sponsored by James Millikin Homestead, Inc.

All Decatur third grades are invited to visit "Mr. and Mrs. Millikin" at the Homestead. A format similar to that followed last year will be used, according to Adele Glenn, project chairman.

Under this format, the children are greeted at the front door by the "downstairs maid," who tells them a brief history of the Homestead. In the Zonta Room, the Millikins' "company parlor," they meet "Mr. Millikin." He tells them about his life and the bank and university he established. He also shows them coins and newspapers of his time. The children are then ushered to the Bicentennial Room, or south parlor, where they sing songs accompanied by a period pump organ.

As they pass through the main hall, the children see antique clothing. In the dining room the children find "Mrs. Millikin" preparing for a dinner party. She shows them her personalized crystal and then talks about their friends and well known Decatur citizens of her time.

The kitchen holds a display of numerous household utensils of the latter nineteenth century. The children also see a "laundry maid" at work in the kitchen.

The program is concluded outside where the children see the carriage house and talk about transportation during the Millikins' time.

Third graders study the history of Decatur and Macon County and this program, like the Historical Society's Mini-Fair, is offered as a coordinated part of their study unit. According to Mrs. Glenn, such programs help history to become "alive" for the children. She is being assisted with "Mr. and Mrs. Millikin at Home" by Anne Faxon and Brigitta Kapp.

STORM WINDOWS UP

A three year project of installing storm windows throughout the Homestead is now complete. The last series of windows were completed and put in place this winter. It is hoped that they will make the Homestead more energy-efficient.

The storm windows were funded through James Millikin Homestead, Inc. and a grant from the Historical and Architectural Sites Commission.

1976 to nearly 400 in 1979. This year's goal, of course, is to continue that expansion.

Our membership dues are essential to the existence of the Homestead. We are most fortunate that Millikin University and Junior Welfare Association have taken financial responsibility for restoring the Homestead. However, restoration is only one segment of the Homestead.

If it is to be an ongoing, vital part of the community, the Homestead needs the support of its membership through their dues and, when possible, their time. Our Homestead dues are used to maintain the house, to pay for its utilities, and to support such programs as "Mr. and Mrs. Millikin at Home."

More than 1500 soliciations for membership will be mailed by the end of March. Please encourage your friends and neighbors to join you as a member of the Homestead.

Most important of all, we want you to renew your membership in the Homestead. You expressed your support of the Homestead project when you joined the Homestead; please reaffirm your support by renewing your membership. Won't you respond to your renewal request right away?

DECATUR ART CLASS ENTERTAINED

The James Millikin Homestead hosted members of the Decatur Art Class at a luncheon on March 22, 1980. A tour of the house was given to the Art Class members after lunch.

Mrs. Millikin was a charter member of the Decatur Art Class.

REMINDER: HOMESTEAD COOKBOOK AVAILABLE

Visions of Sugarplums, a mini-cookbook compiled by a Homestead member and committee two years ago, is still available at The Bell Pull. The cookbook contains numerous old recipes, many of which have been handed down through families. An added bonus are the charming period illustrations.

The cookbook sells for \$1.50, and all profits go to the Homestead. If you don't have one yet, be sure to look at a copy. In addition, mailing envelopes are available, and it makes a delightful gift.

**LEIBY FURNITURE'S HISTORY
SIMILAR TO MILLIKIN'S
CONTINUED**

Cora Irene Leiby, the youngest daughter of George and Cora Reeme Leiby, attended the fledgling Millikin University. A 1909 graduate, it is likely that she frequently saw James and Anna Millikin as they took their places in the President's box in the university auditorium (now Albert Taylor Hall) for special programs. It is likely that her university commencement exercises were held on the Millikins' lawn.

Cora Leiby was a woman of most unusual talents, particularly for the period in which she lived. She taught at both the University of Montana and the University of Idaho. She traveled widely, apparently as a part of her career as educational secretary for the H. W. Gossard Co., and she

wrote numerous educational pamphlets. She also wrote a regular column called "Cooking with Cora" for a leading women's magazine.

Eventually Cora Leiby returned to Decatur where she married Isaac Shellabarger Hall in 1931. They made their home at the South McClellan address. He died in 1967. Cora Leiby Hall died in 1979 and their furniture was passed on to their son, Leiby Shellabarger Hall, who has generously allowed it to be displayed in the Homestead.

It seems most fitting that this furniture, which goes back to Decatur's early days (as well as Pennsylvania) should now be in the Millikin Homestead. We are very grateful to Mr. Hall for sharing his heritage with all of us.

(See related article: "Homestead Receives 'New' Furniture")

HOMESTEAD CALENDAR

- April 24, 1980 — James Millikin Homestead, Inc., Annual Meeting
7 P.M. at The Homestead
- 29
April 30, 1980 — Special Program
"Antique Jewelry"
2 P.M. at The Homestead
- May 5-9, 1980 — "Mr. and Mrs. Millikin at Home" — a program offered
to all Decatur third graders.

Junior Welfare Association
proudly presents

Music Machine II

the entertainment extravaganza
of 1980!

Tickets: Thur. - Fri. - Sat.

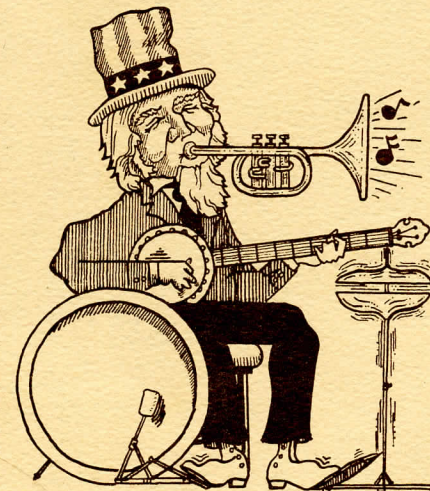
\$30.00 per couple • \$15.00 per single

Patron Tickets: Fri. - Sat.

\$45.00 per couple • \$22.50 per single

Tickets go on sale March 17th at

- ★ Enloe's Southtowne Drugs
- ★ Northtown Bank
- ★ Bell Pull - Millikin Homestead
- ★ 1st National Bank - Downtown
- ★ Macon Music - Downtown
- ★ Kay's Women's Apparel - Mt. Zion
- ★ Country Roads - Hickory Point



April 17, 18, 19
at the Decatur Club

JAMES MILLIKIN HOMESTEAD, INC.
125 N. Pine St.
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