

DeKalb Co. Community Foundation grant



Jerry Smith, executive director of the DeKalb County Community Foundation, presented a \$4,500 check to the Homestead, for purchase of a 4-color laser printer and copier. Back row: Jim Morel, past president; Smith; Kathy Vance Siebrasse, president; J.D. Bowers, Jeff Marshall, Steve Johnson and Barry Schrader. Front row: Natalie Churyk; Sarah Glidden DeMink; Denise Rode; Linda Schwarz and Amy Polzin.



Holiday Open House, Toy Show

The lower level of the Homestead filled with visitors during the annual Holiday Open House in December. All ages enjoyed an ornament-making project, tours, educational displays, music and refreshments. Pre-1950s toys and dolls of all types also were featured.

The Glidden Women

[This is the last in the series about the Glidden women based on an exhibit created by Sally DeFauw.]

Glidden women played a key role in DeKalb's history and the making of barbed wire. An exhibit on display at the Glidden Homestead & Historical Center highlights the lives of six women, all related by blood or marriage to Joseph F. Glidden.

Jessie Elva Glidden

She was the first and only Glidden born at the Homestead. Jessie Elva Glidden was born in 1912, and was the youngest child of Mabel and John W. Glidden. She was named for her mother's sister, Jessie Carter Leishman, and her father's cousin, Elva Glidden Bush.

Jessie attended McMurray Grade School on the college campus, and DeKalb Township High School. She graduated from Northern Illinois State Teacher's College in 1935, majoring in Home Economics.

Following graduation, Jessie moved to Chicago where she began work with the Works Progress Administration and the National Youth Administration. She worked as a sewing project supervisor. She also helped to get government food surpluses into the schools for hot lunches. It was the time of the Great Depression and Jessie threw herself into the work of keeping families afloat financially and emotionally.

After her father's death in 1941, Jessie returned to DeKalb and ran Glidden Florist with her brother, Carter. Jessie was an able administrator in a time when many women were not business owners. In 1975, she and Carter sold the flower shop to Sven and Wenke Hansen.

Seeing the need for social services in DeKalb County, Jessie became a key player in the creation of the Family Service Agency in 1956. It was the first privately funded social agency in the County, and Jessie served as the first board chair. Launching the Family Service Agency was Jessie's proudest accomplishment.

Jessie participated in many local club activities. She was the co-founder of the DeKalb-Sycamore Altrusa formed in 1960, and was a recipient of their Woman of the Year award. She was an active member of the DeKalb County Democratic Party, and a charter member of the Thursday Arts Club, Stage Coach Players, and the Children's Community Theatre. She received the Woman of Accomplishment Award through the DeKalb Chamber of Commerce's ATHENA Award program. In 1991, the community recognized the contributions of this grand dame of DeKalb with an "Honoring Miss Jessie" tea.

Jessie lived in the house on West Lincoln Highway longer than any other Glidden family member, remaining here until 1998, when she moved to Oak Crest Retirement Center. Jessie died in December, 2004, at the age of 92. Though somewhat limited by her physical disabilities, she retained an active mind, and was known for her positive "can do" attitude. She was a founding member and active on the board of the Glidden Homestead at the time of her death.



Jessie was very proud of the fact that the house and barn are both listed on the National Register of Historic Places. This photo was taken at the 2003 Patent Day Dinner.



Jessie in the Glidden Florist greenhouse, around 1945.

Chase Glidden: letters from the Yukon

(Part 2: The Story of Chase E. Glidden)

Chase Elphalet Glidden was born May 17, 1854, in Paw Paw, MI, the son of James B. and Juliette Beard Glidden, pioneers in the Michigan wilderness. The family moved to DeKalb six years later. His father was an autocratic school master. In 1896, the death of his beloved wife, Anna, left Chase, who was a nephew to Joseph Glidden, with four young children. He plunged headlong into the effort of providing for their future by joining the gold rush to the Klondike in 1898.

During his time in Alaska, Chase wrote faithfully to his family. Some of his letters will be featured here in coming months. It should be noted that misspellings and unrecognizable words have deliberately been left in this copy in order for readers to get the true sense of Chase's letters.



Letters From The Yukon

Dawson, NWT, Feb 25th 99

Dear ones at home

I am wondering this A.M. how you are all getting along and how pleased I would be to know but I have had no letters from you since the ones sent in August from Coleta. A long time to wait I can assure you but cannot think it your fault.

I rec'd a letter from Aunt Adie on Jan 25th sent 6 December 98 from Chicago and the boys have been getting mail from home as late as Jan 9th. So please try to send one each month at least and address Via Victoria B.C. as letters seem to come much quicker that way.

Do you realize it will be a year tomorrow since I left you, it hardly seems possible. Yet it is true and it has been a very busy year With me full of hardships, as well as a great deal of pleasure and an experience that I would not have missed for considerable (even?) though with all of the danger I have passed through.

The winter is practily ended now as the sun has returned to us once more. A welcome visitor I can assure you to us all. (Tal?) I have quite enjoyed the winter months while the thermometer registers low, we do (roof tell?) The cold as we do in the states as there is seldom any wind here.

I feel a little the worse for wear this morning as have just returned from a 75 mile tramp but will recuperate soon and will have to, for expect to start on a stampede the eve to stake a claim about 30 mile from here, returning tomorrow morning will have to be out all night by the way, but that is nothing for Alaska.

Dawson is a little quiet as the most of the people are on the Creeks at work. Will be quite lively after the clean up in the spring. The boys two of them have just returned from the Upper Klondike bringing down 5 moose so you see we will have plenty of fresh meat for some time. I wish you could have a few of the nice "stakes."

I am in hopes ere long to receive a letter from some of you, as we are promised mail daily now. You see what mail was brought in was letters sent from the outside m (mid?) Dec as they knew the recent mail was more essential, so will hope for the best and expect mail soon.

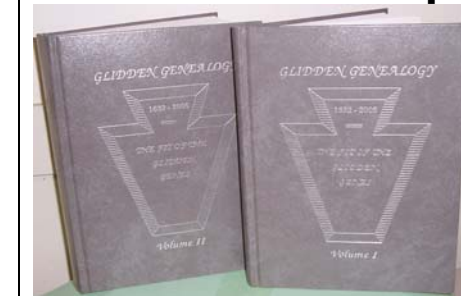
I hardly know what to write you in the way of news as there is none to write more than to tell you. That I am well and as happy as can be expected. I hope you can say the same. I will enclose you the toes of one of the artic birds here. I called Tlarmigan and you will see how well their little toes are protected from the cold.

Now my dear ones will close as I must get ready for my flying trip. Feed the dogs and given them the promise of the end of the leash if they do not mush and make good time. Trusting that I may return with a frosted nose and hope to return to you in a few months from now hale and harty.

From your loving Papa Chase E. Glidden

Adress your letters to Lock Box No. 23

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**When the flags are flying out front,
it's a sure sign the Homestead
is open for an event or tours!**

Homestead Calendar

Jan. 14: Annual Meeting, 7 p.m., Glidden Homestead

April 26: Annual Student History Fair

May 18: Open House/Open Barn,
noon-4 p.m.

June 1: Glidden Homestead open for
tours, noon-4 p.m.

June 15: Glidden Homestead open for
tours and "Music on the Porch."

****NEEDED: Musicians interested in
playing for Sunday events in 2008.
Please call Gayle, 815-899-3237.**