



### Oak Fest at Oak Crest

Board member Jeff Marshall demonstrated how to make "The Winner" barbed wire for participants at the annual Oak Fest at Oak Crest Retirement Center in September. (Photo by Kathy Vance Siebrasse)

## Patent Day celebrated

The Seventh annual Patent Day Dinner was enjoyed by about 70 Glidden Homestead supporters Nov. 8, at DeKalb's Hopkins Park Community Center.

The annual fund-raising event celebrates the date in 1874, when Joseph F. Glidden was awarded a patent for his barbed wire "The Winner."

The evening included a slide show featuring events at the Homestead in 2007, an Annual Report to the members, educational exhibits and entertainment by Barbara Steg with her one-woman show "Barb Wired."

Photos from the event will be included in the next newsletter.

## The Glidden Women

[This is the fifth in an ongoing 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.

### Mabel Carter Glidden

Mabel Carter Glidden was born Oct. 23, 1871, in DeKalb. Her father, Orlando Carter, and mother, Huldah White, were married in 1855. They began farming and one of their activities was producing cheese. Mabel remembered her industrious mother turning and greasing the large, round cheeses daily.

By 1880, Orlando retired from farming and the family, which now included seven children, moved into town. Mabel's father decided to open a livery stable at Third and Locust Streets. Mabel's mother, Huldah, was active in the Woman's Christian Temperance Union and once entertained the organization's founder, Frances Willard, at the Glidden home.

Mabel attended a DeKalb public grammar school and then entered an Episcopal school for girls in Sycamore called Waterman Hall. It was here that her love of art was fostered. Mabel furthered her art studies at the Art Institute, where she attended classes for three years, but received no degree, as this was not yet offered. In 1893, she worked for many months on the decorating of the Children's Building at the Columbian Exposition in Chicago. This structure was designed as a comfort station for the care of as many as 100 children, whose parents attended the Fair.

John W. Glidden, son of Mary and Josiah Willard Glidden, married Mabel in 1896 or 1897. It was reported in local newspapers that the couple were the "ideal entertainers" of DeKalb. On a summer's eve in 1902, they threw a "moonlight dancing party" for 200 of their friends. Guests danced the night away on a wooden floor placed in front of the house, with the DeKalb Concert Band providing the music. Sandwiches, coffee, nut ice cream and fancy wafers were served. Soon after his Uncle Joseph's death in 1906, John moved with Mabel and the family to the Glidden Homestead. The family would eventually include five children: Nansen, Carter, Doris, Jerrold and Jessie.

What is now the Glidden Campus Florist was started by Mabel in 1925, when she started selling vegetable plants grown in a small lean-to greenhouse. In 1936, a 25 x 40 foot greenhouse was built, allowing flowers, including perennials, to be sold, as well as vegetables. Another greenhouse was added in 1941, and in 1966, the current flower shop was built. The business was sold to the Hansen family in 1975.

Like Annie Glidden, Mabel was a charter member of the Library Whist Club and the DeKalb Garden Club. Mabel never lost her love of gardening and could be seen tending to her flowers in the front yard of the Homestead until she was more than 90 years old. Mabel died in June of 1967, at the age of 95.

[Next issue: Jessie Elva Glidden]



Mabel Carter Glidden, 1871-1967



Examples of Mabel's artwork on display at the Homestead.



Chase Glidden at the gold rush's infamous Chilkoot Pass



Chase Glidden - 1898

## Chase Glidden: letters from the Yukon

(Part 1: 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.

Returning with a comfortable stake, and coming into his middle years, he might have lived out his life in ease and comfort. Instead he chose to spend his strength and substance in a mighty effort to acquire an estate for himself and those dear to him.

After returning from Alaska and while on the road selling barbed wire, Chase met a real estate man who had been to western Canada. A short time later, Glidden was dealing in farmland south and east of Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan. He saw the young, struggling towns pull their streets out of the mud and expand while southern Saskatchewan developed. About 1900, the J.E. Martin Land Company secured his services to make a survey of 225,000 acres of C.N. Railway land they were contemplating purchasing, in and around the Snipe Lake district.

Glidden was at once captivated by the beautiful broad expanse of the undulating plain, unbroken for miles except here and there a small patch for homestead requirements. The fertile soil of great depth, carpeted with lush grass and decked with native flax, small sage, and practically free from stones with water available at variable depths over the entire area, convinced him that here was one of the greatest potential dry farming areas still open to man. He reserved several choice sections for himself. The Martin Land Company accepted his judgment and commenced operations on land sales. More about Chase's time in Canada and his family in DeKalb will be included in future editions of this newsletter.

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.

*Dawson, YT, Dec 25<sup>th</sup> (1898?)*

### My Dear Little Son Chase

As this is xmas time I have no doubt – but – what you are having a nice time and papa would be pleased to be with you and aid in making it more pleasant.

You must write me and tell me about your preasants. Papa did want to send you something but could not as I had no assurance of a package reaching you but will make it all up on my return.

I suppose you are learning fast in school, are you not? You must try to improve your time and get a good education so you can help papa in his work.

Try at all times to be a good boy, for papa loves you dearly and I hope to be with you again next fall.

With love and kisses from papa

## SPOTLIGHT on the Glidden Gift Shop



**Barbed Wire  
Ornaments  
\$8 includes tax**

Designed and handmade by Glidden board member, Jeff Marshall, these ornaments are dated collectibles.

For more details about this and other Glidden Gift Shop items, see [www.gliddenhomestead.org](http://www.gliddenhomestead.org) or visit the Gift Shop at the Homestead!



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

### Homestead Calendar

**Dec. 2:** Holiday Open House with Antique Toy & Doll Show, noon-4 p.m.  
**Jan.-May:** Glidden Homestead open for tours by appointment only.  
**January:** Annual Meeting TBA.  
**May 18:** Annual Open House/Open Barn, noon-4 p.m.  
**June 1:** Glidden Homestead open for tours.  
**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.**