

Joseph F. Glidden

# Homestead & Historical Center

Membership Newsletter – August 2006

[www.gliddenhomestead.org](http://www.gliddenhomestead.org)



921 W. Lincoln Hwy., DeKalb IL 60115

## National Archives exhibit Aug. 20

The Glidden Homestead & Historical Center will unveil a permanent exhibit that includes photographs from the National Archives and Library of Congress, entitled "Barbed Wire: A Cultural History."

The opening event will be Sunday, Aug. 20, from noon-4 p.m., at the Homestead, 921 W. Lincoln Hwy., DeKalb. Everyone is welcome.

J.D. Bowers, Glidden Homestead board member and NIU history professor, facilitated acquisition of the display. It will feature a variety of photographs depicting the impact barbed wire has had on the shaping of America and the world beyond. The exhibit will remain part of the Glidden Homestead's permanent collection.

Dr. Eric Mogren, NIU history professor, will discuss his book *Native Soil: A History of the DeKalb County Farm Bureau*, published by NIU Press. His presentation will be from 3-4 p.m., inside the Glidden home. He will sign copies of *Native Soil* that will be available for purchase at the Aug. 20 event.

### Save the date!

**Thursday, Nov. 2  
Patent Day Dinner.  
Watch for more  
details!**



**Roger Keys, historic preservationist, points to significant architectural features inside the Glidden barn.**



**Tom Oestreicher shares his Civil War knowledge and mementoes with a large and interested audience.**

## "Open House, Open Barn" attracts crowd

Many visitors took the opportunity during their one chance this year to see the inside of the DeKalb barn where Joseph F. Glidden first manufactured "The Winner" barbed wire.

The Glidden Homestead & Historical Center Spring Open House May 21, featured an "open barn." Visitors were able to view the inside of the large brick structure located between Glidden Florist and Burger King on West Lincoln Highway, DeKalb.

Roger Keys, historic preservationist who has done much work on the barn and home at the Homestead, was on hand to describe the barn and its historical significance.

The barn is perhaps the most historically significant barn in the country, Keys said, because it is where Joseph Glidden invented and manufactured the first practical barbed wire. The house was completed around 1861, and the brick barn was built between 1861-1871. Glidden's first barbed wire manufacturing office was located in the southeast corner of the barn.

Architecturally, the Glidden barn also is very significant. It is one of the oldest barns left standing in DeKalb County. It reflects the German tradition and is built of local bricks with transverse frame, post and beam construction. The foundation is made of locally-quarried limestone. There were 14 eight-paned double-hung windows and 7 single-pane windows for luxurious livestock lodging. Originally, there were 2 large arched entrances, 7 stalls, a large haymow, gable, hayhood and a dirt or wooden plank floor.

The Glidden barn has remained solid throughout its years of usage for livestock, horses, barbed wire manufacture and storage. It provides us with a priceless link to our past and evokes images for us of our agricultural roots and pioneer spirit upon which our communities are based today.

"During this Sesquicentennial year celebrating DeKalb's 150th anniversary, the Glidden Homestead is proud to showcase the house and barn which have a significant place in history," said board president, Jim Morel.

"Joseph Glidden's invention of barbed wire not only put DeKalb on the map, it shaped the entire westward movement of America and had far-reaching impact throughout the world."

Glidden was granted the patent for "The Winner" in November, 1874. He built and lived in the house at 921 W. Lincoln Hwy., in the 1860s and early 1870s.



## Student History Fair at Homestead

Sarah Glidden DeMink looks at the history displays at the annual Student History Fair April 1, at the Glidden Homestead & Historical Center. The annual event always offers creative and interesting exhibits.

The History Fair displays the work of sixth-12<sup>th</sup> graders. All of the student work was part of the Northern Illinois Regional History Fair, held at NIU. Many of the student exhibits advanced to state competition. (Photo by Kathy Siebrasse)

*For more Glidden Homestead news, visit our website:  
[www.gliddenhomestead.org](http://www.gliddenhomestead.org)*

## ***Your membership is key!***

**If your mailing label DOES NOT have an asterisk, your membership has expired.  
Now more than ever, your membership is critical to the work at the Homestead!**

**PLEASE MAKE CHECKS TO: Glidden Homestead (Mail to 921 W. Lincoln Hwy., DeKalb, IL 60115)**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ \$25 Individual Membership

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\$ \_\_\_\_\_ **TOTAL ENCLOSED**

***Thank you! Your membership allows the Homestead to continue work at this important historical site!***

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& Historical Center**  
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