



# NEWS from the *David Davis Mansion Foundation*

Winter 2023



Visit us online!

## *Voices from the Past*

By: DDMF Researcher Pat Schley

Thanksgiving in Illinois had a false start in 1838. It ended up being “a ‘stag party’ at the new American Hotel in Springfield” [1], described as being “a rousing ...celebration that would...‘knock the spots’ off anything the Battle of New Orleans or Washington’s Birthday had ever shown Sangamon County in the line of good cheer”[2]. Understandably, it was 2-3 years before the first true Thanksgiving in Illinois was decreed in 1842.

The Presbyterian State Synod, at their 1842 meeting in Bloomington, requested that Gov. Carlin decree a Thanksgiving holiday. As a result, it was held on the last Thursday in December. “Very quietly...the state...slipped into an observance of the holiday...”[3] On Dec. 5, 1854 Sarah Davis reminisced in a letter to her son, George Perrin, a pupil at Mr. Hyde’s School for Boys in Lee, MA:

“Your Uncle Daniel wrote that you were to spend Thanksgiving at his house [*in Stockbridge MA*] – I always think of your Grandparents on each Thanksgiving festival – and the days of my childhood... – My Father in the prime of life, tall erect and dignified sat opposite your Grandmother (who was always in my eyes, the prettiest and pleasantest woman in the world) and then nearest her sat my Grandmother Walker with Sunday cap and gown...and your great Grandfather sat on the other side of the table always dignified, with a pleasant word and smile for all – ... ranged around in their proper places eight children- each trying to behave with propriety, ... – Each was helped in turn – and did ample justice to the good things provided – The older ones conversed and the young ones listened ... –Illinois is so new a State, and a day of Thanksgiving is so new to us – that we cannot expect our children to entertain the same feelings that the children of New England parents do –“

... Your affectionate Mother, Sarah W. Davis

[1] The First Official Thanksgiving in Illinois, Isabel Jamison, A. P. Field, Joseph Duncan, L. P. Kimball, *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* (1908-1984), Vol. 11, No. 3 (Oct., 1918), pp. 370-378 (9 pages), 373 <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40187115>

[2] Ibid., 373

[3] Ibid., 378

## *Mansion Books Make Great Gifts!*



If you have a friend or family member who loves the mansion, a book would make an excellent holiday gift! We currently have 5 different books about the mansion available for purchase at the Clover Lawn Museum Shop inside the mansion, and in our online store at <http://clover-lawn-museum-shop.square.site/>:

- Two different versions of our sesquicentennial book, ***The David Davis Mansion, 1872-2022: 150 Years at Clover Lawn*** by Dr. Marcia Young
- ***Managing Clover Lawn*** by Sarah Vales
- ***Lincoln’s Manager: David Davis*** by Willard L. King
- ***Sarah’s Garden*** by Steve McDaniel

We also carry a large variety of other books on Civil War, Victorian, and Gilded Age topics. Stop in and pick one up today!

## *Mark Your Calendars*

Check <https://daviddavismansion.org/> and our Facebook page for details on these and other events.

### **Upcoming Events at the David Davis Mansion**

December 1-12  
Christmas Pie Fundraiser: Order Online

December 6  
Christmas Open House: Members and Volunteers

December 9  
Christmas at the Mansions

December 15-16  
A Gilded Age Christmas...with Santa!

December 21-23  
Christmas Pie Fundraiser: Pick-Up

February 10  
Abraham Lincoln’s Birthday Celebration

March 30  
Spring Festival and Egg Hunt



# Celebrate the Holidays with the David Davis Mansion!



## Decorating Has Begun!

The decorating committee has been hard at work, making the David Davis Mansion beautiful for Christmas! Come enjoy the spirit of the season at one of the following events:

## Daily Christmas Tours

During the month of December our regular daily tours become Christmas Tours! Come visit us Wednesday-Saturday from 9am-3:30pm, with tours beginning at ten minutes past the top of each hour.

## Christmas Pie Fundraiser



Our second annual Christmas Pie Fundraiser, featuring incredibly delicious pies from our friends at Busy Corner in Goodfield, begins on December 1!

There are 9 different options to choose from: Caramel Apple, Cherry, Peach, Pumpkin, Toll House, Banana, Coconut, French Silk, and Peanut Butter Bliss.

Place your order online at <https://daviddavis mansion.org/christmas-pie-fundraiser> between December 1-12 and pick up your pies at the David Davis Mansion Visitor's Center between December 21-23.

For every \$18 pie sold the foundation receives \$5 to put towards education and preservation initiatives. Don't miss this opportunity to support your favorite non-profit AND have an amazing Busy Corner Pie at your holiday table. Thanks so much for your support!

## Christmas Open House: Foundation Members and Volunteers Wednesday, December 6: 4:30-6pm

Consider this your invitation to join us for a special preview of the David Davis Mansion's beautiful Christmas décor and an opportunity to catch up with friends! There will be music and refreshments, and the Clover Lawn Museum Shop will also be open to use your 20% member discount.



Not a member yet? You can become one by visiting us at <https://daviddavis mansion.org/support-us/become-a-member> today!

## Christmas at the Mansions

Saturday, December 9: 2-7pm



Experience a special self-guided tour of the David Davis Mansion and Ewing Manor, decorated in period Christmas finery! Take in the architecture, the historic holiday postcard settings, and hosts dressed in period costumes as you walk back in time to the late 1800s and early 1900s. Music and other surprises will complement your tour!

Advance tickets are \$15 each, cash or check, and can be purchased November 1 through December 8 at the following Bloomington-Normal, IL locations: AB Hatchery and Garden Center, Casey's Garden Shop, Donny B's Gourmet Popcorn and Gifts, and Hy-Vee Market, or online for \$16 each at <https://daviddavis mansion.org/catm-tickets>.

Please note that advanced tickets may NOT be purchased at the David Davis Mansion or Ewing Manor.

Same day tickets will be \$20 each, cash or check, and available only at the front door of the David Davis Mansion or Ewing Manor during the hours of the event. Tickets are available only until sold out and are non-refundable.

### What's New in 2023?

This year, the David Davis Mansion's decorations will highlight the differences between America's innovative holiday customs and traditional Victorian Christmas celebrations in England. At Ewing Manor, rooms will be decorated in observance of Hazle Buck Ewing's birthday, as well as other Christmas festivities celebrated there. Hazle was born on December 25, 1880.

## A Gilded Age Christmas...with Santa! Friday, Dec. 15 & Saturday, Dec. 16: 5-7pm

Another great opportunity to walk through the David Davis Mansion at night, enjoying decorations, costumed hosts, and Christmas music! This event will also feature visits with a Victorian Santa, and you are welcome to take all the photos you wish with your own camera. This would be a great chance for your kids/grandkids to tell Kris Kringle what they'd like to have for Christmas, take a nice family photo, or even just capture a magical moment with your children.

Tickets are \$10 per adult at the front door of the mansion (kids are free!) on the night of the event, cash or check only. We hope you will join us for this family friendly program!

# New Membership Brochure

Just in time for a brand-new year, the David Davis Mansion has updated its tri-fold membership brochure! You can see screenshots of the brochure below (be sure to use the zoom feature on this PDF so you can see it larger), or take a look in person the next time you are in the visitor's center. If you have a friend who you think would like to support our education and preservation initiatives, be sure to take one and pass it along. We love new members!

**Who We Are**

The David Davis Mansion is one of fifty-eight historic properties which is preserved and interpreted in-part by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources.

It's Foundation, which is a privately funded entity founded in 1986, has long supported the Historic Site by providing additional funding for restoration and maintenance, educational programs and public events, and scholarly research and writing to preserve and present the history of the mansion.

One of the main ways you can support the David Davis Mansion Foundation is through the purchase of an annual membership.

Join us, and be a part of history!

**Become a Member**

**Membership Levels**

\$20	Senior Citizen or Student
\$35	Individual
\$50	Family
\$100	Supporting
\$250	Patron
\$500	Benefactor or Corporate
\$1000	Supreme Court Fellow
\$2500	President's Circle

Memberships are tax deductible.

**How to Join:**

- Fill out an online form at <https://daviddavisfoundation.org> under the Support Us tab.

OR

- Mail us your membership check at the address below.

OR

- Contact us for more information.

**Contact Us**

The David Davis Mansion Foundation  
1000 Monroe Drive  
Bloomington, IL 61704  
(309) 828-1084  
<https://daviddavisfoundation.org>

**David Davis Mansion Foundation**

**Membership Information**

**Membership Impact**

Your contribution supports the following:

- Restoration and maintenance of Sarah Davis' historic garden and heirloom plants.
- Over 20 yearly public events on the mansion grounds, bringing in over 8,000 visitors each year.

These events include a celebration for Lincoln's Birthday, a Spring Festival and Easter Egg Hunt, seasonal car shows, the Clonions Garden Festival, Christmas at Clover Lawn, and more.

- Educational programs including school field trips, scout programs and other events for youth, presentations about the mansion to community organizations, special guest lectures, daily tours, and seasonal experiences.
- Research and publications including a recent book commemorating the 150th anniversary of the mansion, books on special topics, and the ongoing transcription and digitization of the Davis Family correspondence.

**Membership Benefits**

- 20% discount on most items in the Clover Lawn Museum Shop
- Invitations to members-only events
- Early registration or discounted tickets for special events and programs
- The joy of supporting a non-profit organization that actively preserves local history and provides educational programs and family-friendly events for the entire community

## In the History Books: The 2023 Glorious Garden Festival

The 2023 Glorious Garden Festival was held on July 14-15 with absolutely beautiful weather, attracting gardeners and garden lovers of all ages and interests.

Thank you to the families who planned, planted, pruned, and primped to proudly showcase their private gardens on the Garden Walk:

Vicky Crouch, Ray Reed & Cindy Diekhoff, David & Danette Trupp, Phil Houser & Marcia Rossi, Kevin & Marsha Fogarty, Jay & Lisa Sparks, Larry & Laurel Schumacher, Tracy Evans, Dan & Wendy Anderson, and Carol & Clarence Josefson

The Garden Fair filled the mansion lawn with approximately 40 local small business vendors offering eager shoppers plants and garden-inspired art, crafts, clothing and more, as well as refreshments.

With a focus on welcoming future gardeners to the Festival, Sarah's Garden hosted a Bloomington Public Library Story Walk, featuring "The Honeybee" by Kirsten Hall. Several community partners offered activities on the lawn for children. Kids of all ages eagerly sought to find the scavenger hunt items at each garden walk garden.

Our sincere thanks to the local businesses who partnered in the event as Corporate Sponsors, Supporting Sponsors and Advertisers.

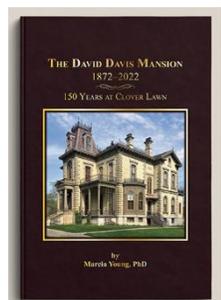
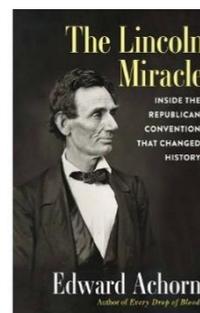
Additionally, we are grateful to the amazing Glorious Garden Festival volunteers who served on the committee, greeted people at the private gardens, shared the mansion and Sarah's Garden with visitors, and helped on the mansion lawn during the event.

Proceeds from this David Davis Mansion Foundation event provide private support for the David Davis Mansion State Historic Site, its educational programming, and its preservation initiatives.



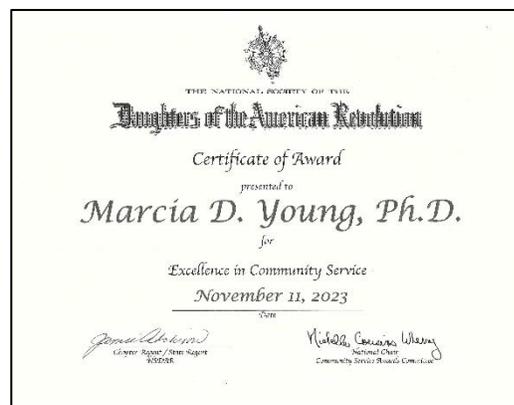
## In the History Books (Continued)

- **A Saturday Stroll in Sarah's Garden** went so well in 2022 that we decided to do it again in 2023! On June 17 Master Gardeners and mansion volunteers dressed in Gilded Age costumes walked through Sarah's Garden and answered questions for visitors, who were welcome to take in the early morning sunshine and the garden's beauty while enjoying a cup of lemonade. A wonderful surprise was a visit from a plein air painter, who fascinated guests with her artwork.
- On Saturday, August 26 we had 25 kids at the David Davis Mansion for the **Children's Gardening Program!** They had a ton of fun taking a tour of the mansion and Sarah's Garden, making a flower and a tussie mussie, learning about seeds and how plants grow, dissecting a flower, and more! Junior Girl Scouts in attendance earned their Flowers, Gardening, and Playing the Past badges, and every Girl Scout took home a Gardening Fun Patch. All of the kids who participated had some great projects from the event to show off to their families!
- We love welcoming local schools to the David Davis Mansion, and we were excited to see a few field trips this fall! One specific group who visited on Friday, October 6 included approximately 80 first grade students from **Tri-Valley Elementary School**. As part of their visit they toured the house and Sarah's Garden and did a special activity with Master Gardeners. One of their teachers, Ms. Connor, had this to share about their experience: "We all had a blast and the kiddos can't stop talking about how awesome and beautiful the house was. They learned so much and we hope to come back to visit again!" We also had visits from about 50 area **homeschoolers** and 30 museum studies students from **Illinois Wesleyan University**. We're looking forward to seeing even more students in the spring!
- On Wednesday, October 25th the David Davis Mansion hosted author **Edward Achorn with Special Guest Dr. Marcia Young** in the mansion barn for a discussion on his book entitled *The Lincoln Miracle*. Ed was a highly informative and entertaining speaker and the audience was large, with over 50 people in attendance. Dr. Young also gave an excellent talk on the David Davis Mansion as a Gilded Age home, which was enjoyed by all. *The Lincoln Miracle*, as well as Edward Achorn's first book, *Every Drop of Blood*, and Dr. Young's book *The David Davis Mansion, 1872-2022: 150 Years at Clover Lawn* were available for sale in the Clover Lawn Museum Shop after the event, and both authors graciously offered to sign them in the mansion sitting room while attendees enjoyed a reception.



## *In the History Books (Continued)*

- 21 visitors had a great time on the **Behind the Scenes Tour** on Saturday, October 28. A couple of those who attended went on to attend Mystery at the Mansion or purchase tickets for Christmas at the Mansions!
- We are happy to report that this year's 1920's Murder Mystery Night, **Mystery at the Mansion**, was even more successful than the 2022 event! On Saturday, November 4th we welcomed over 120 people into the mansion for an evening of live ragtime and jazz on our antique piano, great food and drink, beautiful flapper-style party decor, and a fun, clue-inspired mystery game. The feedback from attendees was overwhelmingly positive and everyone had a wonderful time. We hope to offer this program again in 2024, so stay tuned for more information!
- Our **Christmas Barn Sale**, held on Saturday, November 11, was extremely popular this year. It brought in a much larger crowd than the first year we held this fundraiser in 2021! Several people showed up early and waited in the cold, (followed by hundreds more later on) to enter the barn and shop our extensive selection of holiday decorations, some of which were donated by mansion supporters, and others which were retired from the mansion's own Christmas collection. Almost everyone who attended brought something fun home with them and the David Davis Mansion brought in an excellent profit which will be used for various education and preservation projects throughout the year.
- The **Christmas Open House in the Clover Lawn Museum Shop**, which also took place on Saturday, November 11 brought in another huge crowd. Visitors took home a wide variety of new Christmas merchandise, including ornaments, books, candy, and other holiday decorations, as well as gifts for friends and family. Didn't have a chance to stop by? You can visit the gift shop during regular business hours, Wednesday-Saturday from 9am-3:30pm or visit the shop online at <https://clover-lawn-museum-shop.square.site/>.
- Dr. Marcia Young was honored with an **Excellence in Community Service Award** in the area of History/Historic Preservation at the Saturday, November 11 meeting of the Letitia Green Stevenson Chapter of the **Daughters the American Revolution** for her authorship of our sesquicentennial book *The David Davis Mansion, 1872-2022: 150 Years at Clover Lawn*. We are honored that Marcia and her hard work were recognized by this cherished community organization. You can see a picture of the certificate and lapel pin she received at the meeting on the right.



## Voices from the Past

By: DDMF Researcher Pat Schley



Three years, 4 months, and 5 days after the death of his beloved wife, Sarah, Judge Davis married his 2<sup>nd</sup> wife, Adeline "Addie" Ellery Burr. Forty-year-old Addie had long been a traveling companion of her paternal aunt Adeline Burr Ellery Green. During their visits to Washington, D.C., they became quite well acquainted with the Judge and his wife, Sarah. Sarah even gave Addie her calling card with an invitation to visit her in her rooms written on the back.

The Judge & Addie were married on March 14, 1883. By the end of June, Addie was entering the Bloomington social scene.

A new addition to the online collection tells us with whom the Davises socialized during their marriage. It is Addie Davis' "List of Companies Attended & given ---- Since Coming to Bloomington - June 1883". It is a plain, pocket-sized, ruled notebook in which she kept a record of all of the invitations she received, from whom, and if she attended, along with, in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half, all of the invitations that she extended, who she invited, and what, if any, special reason there was for the invitation. One interesting notation was this one:

*14<sup>th</sup> Nov 1885 - Lunch to 150 ladies all who have called on me since I have lived in Bloomington*

One has to wonder if by this time it had become apparent that the Judge's health was failing and she sensed that her time in Bloomington was limited. After this lunch, until the time of the Judge's death on June 26, 1886, Addie issued invitations for only 6 more "companies" and increasingly refused invitations she received.

An index identifying people mentioned has been added. They are best guesses because many of them are the adult children of the Judge and Sarah's friends with similar names. Being only 8 months younger than the Judge's son, George, the invitations are often a mixture of both the Judge's friends and their children's friends.

If you would be interested in seeing the transcribed journal, go to: [https://collections.carli.illinois.edu/digital/collection/iwu\\_davis/id/1469/rec/9](https://collections.carli.illinois.edu/digital/collection/iwu_davis/id/1469/rec/9) Click on the Enlarge icon in the upper right corner of the document to see the complete document. Enjoy!



### About these photos:



*The top left image features Addie in her wedding dress. It was taken at Ormsby Studio in Oakland, CA on the Judge and Addie's wedding trip. On the reverse side of the original photo, which resides in the Adeline Burr Davis Green Collection at Duke University, it says "In my wedding dress 15<sup>th</sup> May 1883", presumably in Addie's handwriting. It also says, "Addie Burr Davis" in a different handwriting. Both are written in pencil. In ink, it also says "Golden Brown Silk". Our DDMF Researcher checked the letters from the wedding trip, and the Judge and Addie were indeed in Oakland, according to their traveling companion, the brother-in-law of Sarah Davis, Daniel Rogers Williams. He had made a similar trip to the west nearly 20 years before via Steamship through the Panama Canal, up to California, in the spring of 1865. The letters from both of these trips are on the Illinois website listed above.*

*The other two photos are also from the Adeline Burr Davis Green Collection. The first, to the right was taken of Addie when she was approximately 42. The last photo, at left, is of a young Addie on the left and her friend Bessie Moriarity on the right. This was taken during her time in school in Cambridge, Massachusetts, c.1860 through most of the Civil War. She was likely in her late teens.*

# 'Tis the Season for Giving



## GIVING TUESDAY



Visit our Facebook page on **November 28** for Giving Tuesday, a global day set aside for contributing to your favorite non-profit organizations! Be sure to log in while you're enjoying your morning coffee and make a donation to the David Davis Mansion!

## THRIVENT FINANCIAL MEMBERS



**THRIVENT  
FINANCIAL**

“choice dollars.” Also, if you have unused Action Teams, we've got ideas!

Please consider directing your Choice Dollars to the David Davis Mansion Foundation. You may direct your dollars online by logging in at <https://www.thrivent.com/> or by calling 1-800-THRIVENT and saying

## KROGER COMMUNITY REWARDS

<https://www.kroger.com/i/community/community-rewards>



Be sure you have your Kroger Plus card registered with David Davis Mansion Foundation as your charitable organization. When you shop, use your Kroger Plus card and Kroger sends us a

percentage of all your purchases! If you don't have a card, pick one up at Kroger today!

To register your card:

- Scan the QR code or visit <https://www.kroger.com/> to sign-in or create your digital account.
- Make sure your Kroger Loyalty Card information is updated in the “My Account” tab.
- Click the “Community Rewards” tab.
- Locate our organization and click “Enroll.”



Thank you for your support!

## MATCHING GRANTS

Many companies will match eligible donations to qualifying non-profit organizations such as the David Davis Mansion Foundation, such as **Caterpillar** and **G.E.** Be sure to check with your company's HR Department to determine if they have a matching gift program.

## It's About Our People

**Welcome to New Members:** Jeana McAllister of Champaign, Laurie Burke of Normal, and Terrence Kelahan of Bloomington. We look forward to getting acquainted!

### Those We Are Missing:

Sadly, we note the loss of long-time Sarah's Garden volunteers, Lona Robinson and Robin VanDerMay. We are so grateful for all they did here.

We also mourn the passing of Sarah Butler, a descendent, a very dear friend of the mansion, and a long-time volunteer who could light up a room with her smile. She was always willing to help in any way she could and she will be dearly missed. Our deepest condolences go out to her family.



This portrait of Sarah Davis, which hangs in the master bedroom of the David Davis Mansion, is owned by the Butler family and Sarah's namesake. Please take an opportunity to enjoy its beauty on your next visit.

## Supporting Sarah's Garden

Fall is coming to a close in Sarah's Garden at the David Davis Mansion after a beautiful spring and summer of blooms thanks to the ongoing work of the Master Gardener volunteers. They do an amazing job and spend countless hours in Sarah's Garden. But did you know the maintenance, ongoing restoration, and improvements to Sarah's Garden are funded by the David Davis Mansion Foundation? The foundation raises money through mansion special events, but the primary source of funds comes from our valuable members. For future generations to enjoy Sarah's Garden, please consider becoming a member. We need supporters like you to help us with Sarah's Garden and the other amazing work. If interested, please go to <https://daviddavis mansion.org/support-us/become-a-member> to find out more.

**The David Davis Mansion Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization**

**President: Dave Oloffson  
Executive Director: Sheri Brownfield  
Program Coordinator: Adrienne Huffman**



**1000 Monroe Drive  
Bloomington, Illinois 61701  
Phone: (309) 828-1084  
[davismansion@yahoo.com](mailto:davismansion@yahoo.com)  
[www.daviddavis mansion.org](http://www.daviddavis mansion.org)**

*Hours: Wednesday - Saturday: 9am - 3:30pm*

*I do the very best I knowhow—the very best I can; and I mean to keep on doing so until the end. – Abraham Lincoln*