

# THE BRICK BOARD BUGLE

Herriman Mansion website: <http://freepages.history.rootsweb.com/~herrimanmansion/index.html>

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**Newspapers of Fayette  
County Online** website link  
[The Herriman Mansion  
Restoration Project](#)



## The Herriman Mansion

the State Historical Society of Iowa sponsored TAN visit to the Herriman Mansion.

**On-going Tasks** - The various on-going efforts to help move the project along include these tasks:

The charter for the Illyria-Wadena Community Betterment Association is being revised to allow tax-deductible donations to be made. The association will serve as an interim organization to allow The Brick Board or similar committee type structure to function in the near-term. Ed Gage initiated that effort and has been functioning as the interim local area coordinator for this group. The project needs to function with local Wadena area leadership to have the most influence and success.

Information is being collected to prepare a National Register application to be considered by the Iowa State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO). The Herriman Mansion now has a Certification Of Eligibility so the application, with proper documentation, should be approved at the state level and forwarded to the national level.

These and many additional tasks need to be done. Most can be broken into small packages so the volunteers performing them need not feel overwhelmed. If you are interested in this project and would

<< Segment of drawing from the 1875 Andreas Atlas showing the Herriman Mansion as it appeared in the 1870s.

### Community Sites:

**Elgin:** ([Iowa Related Links](#) - [Misc. Links](#))

**Clermont:** ([Links :: Of Local Interest](#))

### Fayette Co. Genealogy:

<http://www.rootsweb.com/~iafayett/>

like to help out, contact Everett or Ed to let us know what you would be most interested in doing.

**Local Publicity** - Orlan Love, Northeast Iowa Bureau Chief, The Gazette, Cedar Rapids, IA, wrote an excellent article on restoring the Herriman Mansion which was published in The Gazette, page 1B, on March 31, 2002. This article has made the proposed project known to more people and gained some enthusiastic supporters. You can see the pictures published with the article and read the text of the article by going to the Herriman Mansion website. The URL for this website is located below the newsletter banner at the top of this page.

Continued publicity on the activities of the local committee and individuals supporting the project is needed. Recent contact with The Oelwein Daily Register has indicated the editor would like to work with us on a future article for publication in The Register.

The importance of the Herriman Mansion and the status of the progress being made on the project needs to be frequently displayed before the people of Northeast Iowa, especially the immediate local community, and people with ties to Wadena or having an interest in preserving history and property landmarks..

**Third Issue** - This is the third issue of a periodic newsletter to inform the public, supporters and friends of the Herriman Mansion project about its progress. Whatever seems to be significant about the actions to preserve and restore the Herriman Mansion, commonly referred to as "The Brick" will be published here.

### Title History Completed

The research and construction of a title history from abstracts and deeds for the Herriman property has been completed. The history was prepared by Jan Baade, a staff member in Tex Heyer's Fayette County Abstract Company. Jan and Tex deserve a heartfelt "Thank You" for this monumental task. Jan's efforts are really appreciated. This title history is of significant importance to the project and the effort to get the property added to the National Register of Historic Places.

### Thanks To Supporters

Special thanks are in order to Jan Baade and Tex Heyer for their support and efforts to produce the title history for the Herriman Mansion. Continued thanks to Ed Gage who has been serving as the focal point in the Wadena area and to Allen Knox who has provided even more valuable contacts. Also, I would like to thank Kim Tschudy for his efforts to help arrange for

**Other Support** - Kim Tschudy from Wisconsin, who has his own historic building project underway in Clermont, has also continued to be very supportive of the Herriman Mansion project. He has been instrumental in bringing to our attention and helping us to arrange a Technical Advisory Network (TAN) visit on April 27, 2002, to evaluate the Herriman Mansion project. Although the weather conditions were miserable, the visit was excellent and provided some immediate beneficial input. When the full TAN report is available, a special news edition is planned to relay the information.

### **Herriman Mansion website**

- The interim website has been established on RootsWeb and is being expanded as time permits. A permanent website with its own domain name will be established when the project matures and we are confident the restoration effort is a going proposition. Please provide inputs by signing the guest book on the website or sending me an email with your feedback. This will help with the refinement of this website and the eventual development of the permanent site.

### **Links To Other Websites**

- There are links to our RootsWeb site on a Newspapers of Fayette County Online website page, items on two community websites, and a Fayette County Genealogy website link being planned. (URLs on first page of this newsletter next to the drawing.) The Herriman Mansion restoration project website has links to two on-line photo album websites which show the condition of the mansion and provide other visual and textual information that offers possibilities for the preservation and use of the property for public benefit. Also, there are several links to other related websites for you to view.

### **Additional Planned Near-Term Efforts**

- **Register of Historic Places application** is a priority task. The most significant progress is the recent completion of the title history. We continue to gather other data for use in this effort.

**The TAN visit** has already provided important feedback and the report will include significant guidance to aid all of the project tasks including guidance for applying for REAP/HRDP<sup>1</sup> grants. REAP/HRDP provides resources to preserve, conserve, interpret and educate the public about Iowa's historical resources. The TAN visit is designed to provide guidance and advice for this effort

**Hiring a professional** to assure a quality product is the optimum approach but additional funds are needed. This application is a very important step in the march toward being listed on the National Register. While some funds are potentially available with the Certification of Eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places we now have, listing is necessary to be eligible for much of the private and government funding that is available.

Another near-term task is doing some **stabilization of the property** to prevent or minimize further deterioration. Kim Tschudy had suggested covering the leaking roofs with tarps. The TAN advisor, Marlin Ingalls, suggested using tin roofing. Either would involve a significant expense and the approval of the property owner.

I have had further discussions with the property owner, Mr. Eldon Lenth, and negotiations need to be initiated to establish the specific conditions for **acquiring the Herriman Mansion** and the needed land surrounding it to support the restoration project. We need to develop a fair offer for the

property and then get an agreement for it to be made available for preservation as a historic property. I would like your comments and suggestions, or offers of support on this effort or any of the other near-term tasks.

### **Contributions/Donations**

- Cash donations were received from two contributors in the amounts of \$500 and \$20, respectively. In addition, there have been contributions "in kind" by Tex Heyer and Jan Baade (Herriman Mansion title history) with a value of between \$500 and \$750, by Vipal Prem (Herriman Mansion Restoration Project website) - an on-going effort - in the amount of over \$500 to date. This is a continuing effort being expanded to include additional history and material on the project. Other in-kind volunteer support: Pat Smith, Lois Erickson, Ralph Fest, Lorraine Foster, Ed Gage, Al Knox, Bill (Frank), Bev & Jere Probert, and Kim Tschudy.

### **Former Residents Of The Brick**

- Several former residents of the Herriman Mansion have provided information about the property as it was during the period that they lived there. Pat Smith, Ralph Fest, Lois Erickson, and Lorraine (Mrs. Earle Little) Foster, have responded with details about the mansion and the surrounding farmstead. Requests for information have been or will be sent to the family of Leo & Grace Durnan and to Earl Wilbur. Members of the Davis and Probert families have shared memories and stories about their families' past association with The Brick.

### **Next Issue of the Bugle**

- I plan for another issue to be out in mid-July. Tentatively, I plan to be in Iowa in late June for a family reunion and to meet with as many people as possible about this project. Send inputs by US mail or email, i.e., any suggestions on content or material to be included.

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<sup>1</sup> REAP (Resource Enhancement and Protection Act), the source for the REAP/Historical Resource Development Program (REAP/HRDP) funding.