

NEWSLETTER

Spring /Summer2018

WDMHS RECEIVES SIGNIFICANT DONATION IN 2017



Dorothy Wilson and
Gordon Smith

The West Des Moines Historical Society announced in early December 2017 that member Gordon Smith made a donation of \$100,000 in honor of long-time volunteers and Society founders Ed and Dorothy Wilson.

The Wilsons, long-time friends of Mr.

Smith, were two of the many volunteers critical to saving the Jordan House in the early days, when the historical building was in such bad shape, officials were going to have it demolished. The Wilsons and others raised funds and awareness to

save the Jordan House, then continued to volunteer and give their time and talents. From serving on the Board of Directors to giving tours, the Wilsons truly made a difference at the West Des Moines Historical Society.

Gordon Smith, a retired investment banker and incredibly skilled gardener, is passionate about all aspects of preservation and education. In addition to supporting educational programs and outreach, \$15,000 of Mr. Smith's donation will be used to fund new gardens and landscaping at the Jordan House

Mr. Smith and Mrs. Wilson were honored guests at a holiday reception at the Jordan House. The Society presented Mr. Smith with a framed picture of the Jordan House with a plaque of acknowledgement and thanks for his generosity.



AN EVENING WITH ROGER MAXWELL; STORIES OF SONGS AND CIVIL RIGHTS

Monday, February 19 * 7pm

West Des Moines Community Schools
Learning Resource Center
3550 Mills Civic Parkway

Roger Maxwell is an internationally known musician, composer, staunch civil rights advocate whose amazingly positive outlook has led to a life rich with stories, music and hope. His love of jazz music allowed Mr. Maxwell to meet some amazing

musicians, and his skills enabled some amazing projects, including composing a musical score to sportscaster Jim Zabel's excited call of a Hawkeye game.

Mr. Maxwell will share stories about growing up in segregated Marshalltown, including the time Olympian Jesse Owens stayed with the Maxwell family because no hotel would allow African Americans to stay.

In honor of Black History Month, this event is free to the public, but free will offerings will be accepted.

DISCOVER DECORATION DAY



**Sunday, May 20
1p.m. - 3p.m.
Jordan House
2001 Fuller Road**

Discover the history behind Decoration Day by joining the West Des Moines Historical Society and the WDM Parks and Recreation Department on Sunday, May 20 at the historic Jordan House and Jordan Cemetery.

Bring a blanket or lawn chair and enjoy Civil War era tunes played by the West Des Moines Community Band from 1:30-3:00. There will be activities for children and free treats for all!

Tours of the Jordan House will be held from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Cost of a tour is \$5 for adults and \$3 for youth (6-17).

After the concert guests are invited to walk ½ mile to the historic Jordan Cemetery where limited parking is available. Cemetery maps and educational brochures will guide people to the gravesites of notable West Des Moines citizens. This event will be a great way to teach children and adults alike the true meaning of Memorial Day.



WEST DES MOINES
HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Preserving the past for the future.



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Gordan Smith



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Additional Corporate Partners & In-Kind Support

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Hold Your Next Meeting or Special Event at the Jordan House

- Bring your own food or use your preferred caterer.
- Rental includes a tour of the Jordan House, featuring stories of the Underground Railroad and early Iowa history.
- Intimate and unique location!



2017 Contributors*

Thank you to our generous donors! To become a member or to renew your membership, please complete the remittance envelope enclosed with this newsletter or visit our secure donation page at www.wdmhs.org.

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(In honor of Ed & Dorothy Wilson)

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* Represents donors who gave between January 1 and December 31, 2017. All efforts are made to ensure accuracy. If there is an error in our records, please contact the West Des Moines Historical Society at 515. 225.1286.



WEST DES MOINES HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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Make and live history with us!

BECOME A MEMBER AND VOLUNTEER!

West Des Moines' history is colorful, rich and diverse. You are a part of this history so help us preserve and keep it alive for future generations.

We invite you to join us as we uncover, explore and shape our history. For volunteer opportunities, call 225-1286

Go to wdmhs.org today or use the attached envelope.



JORDAN SCHOLARS LEARN FROM COMMUNITY LEADERS

The James C. Jordan Scholars Leadership Institute Scholars are a class of 20 metro high school students who are learning about James Jordan's role in local history. Recent programs have focused on Jordan's legislative career, philanthropy, banking and civil rights. The Jordan Scholars Leadership Institute is sponsored by John Deere, Kemin Industries, Polk County, West Bank, West

Des Moines Community Foundation, and the West Des Moines Historical Society.

In 2017 & 2018 the Scholars met with or are scheduled to meet with state legislators, leaders from West Bank and Kemin Industries, Polk County Supervisors, the World Food Prize, Greater Des Moines Partnership and leaders in the fight for civil rights.

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