

## Dear Friends of the Niles Historical Society,

As you know, the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the United States is rapidly approaching. In addition to this important date, the Niles First Ladies Gowns are approaching the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of their creation.

In 1976, in order to honor the Bicentennial, some of the ladies of Niles formed an organization to recreate the First Ladies Gowns that were in the Smithsonian collection.

The gowns were all locally made and sewn after many painstaking drawings, photos and visits were made to Washington DC in order to ensure absolute accuracy.

After the gowns were made, they were modeled and displayed in many venues around the area, and the ladies even went back to Washington DC to model the dresses there.

The Niles Historical Society is incredibly fortunate to have been given most of the First Ladies Gowns. In order to put this in perspective, Niles is the only community in the United States to have a life sized collection of these gowns, outside of the Smithsonian National Museum. But as all things age and deteriorate, the gowns have also, and as they approach their 50<sup>th</sup> year, the Niles Historical Society is asking for your help.

We are asking you to sponsor a First Ladies Gown. This would entail paying for the cleaning, mending where necessary, and storage of the dresses. A one-time fee of \$100.00 will ensure your sponsorship of one of the dresses. When the dress is displayed, as we hope they all will be between now and 2026, your name and/or your family name will be prominently displayed with the dress.

Please take some time to consider this opportunity. If you are interested, please fill out the form below, enclose it with your check and mail it to:

The Niles Historical Society  
PO Box 368  
Niles, Ohio 44446.

As we work together to preserve the past for the future, we appreciate your generous support.

Sincerely,  
Meredith Elliott  
Niles Historical Society

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

I/we would like to sponsor a First Ladies Gown.  
Enclosed please find a \$100.00 donation for the cleaning and preserving of one of the gowns.



*Rose DeJute as Mrs. Ida McKinley with Ladies of the White House dresses. taken at Washington DC.*

The dress is heavy white satin with rose point lace throughout the bodice and the over skirt embroidered with rhinestones and pearls.



Ladies of White House displayed in the Ward-Thomas House parlor, Portrayed are Mrs. Lincoln and Mrs. Tyler

Since the Niles Historical Society is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization (EIN 34-1276513) and no goods or services are provided for donations, your donation is fully tax deductible.