

Wednesday, January 6, 2010

Restoration project enhances Meadow Brook Hall's original kitchen

By **Katie Land**, news editor

Over the years, Matilda Wilson's original kitchen has been used to prepare fine cuisine for thousands of formal events at Meadow Brook Hall. This winter, the kitchen will receive a major renovation to update, improve and restore one of the most functional rooms in the mansion.

Focusing on structural and practical repairs, the project will change the ventilation system, provide new kitchen equipment, refurbish the counter tops and replace flooring, plumbing and lighting that will impact other areas, according to Kim Zelinski, associate director of The Hall and manager of the kitchen project.

"The kitchen is the key component for our business operation," Zelinski said. "We need the kitchen to be in stellar condition in order to present the elegant, catered events that enable us to maintain our status as a self-sustaining facility. It is important at the same time to bring the area back to what it originally looked like when Matilda was here."

The kitchen previously was renovated in the 1970s and again in the 1980s. The dated florescent lighting and floors added in those times will be removed and replaced with original materials to recreate its authentic appearance.

Work also will be completed to preserve the original structure of the refrigerating system while updating it to modern standards.

Financed with a \$701,000 grant through the Matilda R. Wilson Fund, the kitchen project should be complete in early April 2010. The grant also provides support for a variety of additional projects over a nine-year period.

Conservation projects include the restoration of dining room portraits of Matilda and Alfred Wilson, as well as ongoing preventative repair projects and ecological systems preservation.

The last project for The Hall was an assessment of the building, which served as a guide to show which renovations and repairs need to be tackled in the following decade. The kitchen project was rated the highest priority.

Preparations for the kitchen project began late in the summer, with visiting architects working through the design and planning phases.

"It is exciting to have the renovations done," Zelinski said. "Not just for the brand new touches but also because we are bringing things back to Matilda's original vision."

The Hall is available for special events and weddings. For more information on tours or reservations, visit oakland.edu/mbh.

SUMMARY

Matilda Wilson's kitchen will receive a major renovation this winter to update, improve and restore one of the most functional rooms in Meadow Brook Hall.

Created by Katherine Land - Deleted (land@oakland.edu) on Wednesday, January 6, 2010
Modified by Katherine Land - Deleted (land@oakland.edu) on Friday, January 8, 2010
Article Start Date: Wednesday, January 6, 2010