Dexter Town Council to decide fate of Fitzgerald Mansion

Kimberly J. Sawtelle, University of Maine
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by Kimberly Sawtelle

DEXTER — The fate of the 118-year-old Fitzgerald Mansion at 270 Lower Main St. will be decided by Dexter Town Council at a meeting Feb. 6. The deadline for submitting last minute bids on the property is Jan. 31.

The old house has sparked the interest of many community members since the building was purchased by the council early this month. The building was purchased by the council, the building was put up to bid in the hopes of attracting a developer to the property. At the Jan. 2 council meeting, abutting property owner Alton Crosby, said he was interested in buying the house and demolishing the structure. The cleared space would provide parking for his business, Crosby Funeral Home.

Town Manager David Holt said at least two persons have indicated an interest in purchasing the mansion for restoration purposes.

The history of the Fitzgerald Mansion is a reflection of its first resident, Dr. Orrin Fitzgerald Jr., a spiritualist doctor.

Built in 1890, apparently by the young doctor, the house was one of the finest in the state. The names of the architect and builder remain a mystery today. Despite the structure's current state of disrepair, the estate still commands a mourning aura of attraction.

Two original sets of ornately carved mahogany double front entrance doors still hang on their hinges but only one etched door-window remains. Inside, another set of double mahogany doors hang, shutting off the entrance of what once may have been the front parlor. Again, a single window of finely etched glass survives.

When built, the exterior walls were painted with murals by an unidentified Boston artist. Chandeliers hung from 12-foot high ceilings of copper and steel and a gas fixture was shut off. A damaged chandelier still hangs in a first floor room.

Four big grand marble fireplaces grace the house. At least two brick oven hearths remain intact, a gray fireplace on the first floor and a more elaborate inle of red and green marble on the second floor. According to the old newspaper accounts, the two original chimneys, which was Fitzgerald's Improved Inverter, advertised in 1886, were covered by a large frame constructed to prevent paralysis, make blood and flesh cure everything from neuritis to heart disease, dropsy, biliousness and hypochondria. The 'inverter' was manufactured by Dr. John Fitzgerald, who later abandoned his practice.

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After her reign the Rainbow Assembly will have a "Shop and Save" of all that is good, which you have not laughed. "Her flower is the pink rose, mascot is the seal, colors are shades of pink and white. Her scripture is John 3:16, and her stations honored are Love, Hope and peace."

Rainbow installs officers

Milo — The International Order of Rainbow for Girls held a public installation of officers Sunday, Jan. 18, in the Milo Masonic Hall. Kerri Hayes, daughter of Robert and Marie Hayes of Milo, was installed as Worley Advisor. Miss Hayes' motto is "The most wonderful day of all is that one which you have not laughed." Her flower is the pink rose, mascot is the seal, colors are shades of pink and white. Her scripture is John 3:16, and her stations honored are Love, Hope and peace.

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Dexter accepts registrations for Adult Ed. courses

Milo — David Walker, director of Adult and Community Education for SAD 41 in Milo has announced the spring semester registration figures. Registration will be accepted in these areas.

There is limited space still available in English, sewing, stained glass, investing in real estate, knitting, crochet, round dancing, government and the arts.