



GOVERNOR WILLIAM G. MILLIKEN • ELIZABETH S. ADAMS • FRANK J. KELLEY

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

To commemorate, in part, the Centennial of the Michigan Historical Commission, the Commission established the Milliken/Adams/Kelley award. Specifically on June 20, 2013 the Commission chose to:

Create a new, signature award for lengthy and/or visionary public service to the cause of Michigan history, relying on recognition of the distinguished careers of William G. Milliken/Elizabeth S. Adams/Frank J. Kelley, and honoring individuals who have taken what Governor Milliken described as “the long view of what is best for the state and its cultural resources.”

The purpose of the William G. Milliken/Elizabeth S. Adams/Frank J. Kelley Award is to recognize significant contributions to the preservation, understanding and/or promotion of Michigan's history by individuals through lengthy and/or visionary service.

ELIGIBILITY

- A. The nominee shall be any individual or agency who has materially contributed to the preservation, understanding and/or promotion of Michigan's history. The award may recognize significant contributions in such areas as legislation, publicity, advocacy, restoration, public history programming, or long-term fiscal support.
- B. The award is for service over the long-term or for a visionary approach to preserving Michigan's history. The nominee needs to demonstrate lengthy and/or visionary public service to the cause of Michigan history.
- C. Nominations must be made by a third party.
- D. Nominations for the award will be accepted throughout the year. All nominations received by March 1, will be considered by the Michigan Historical Commission at its next regular meeting. Awards will be presented in the spring at a public ceremony.
- E. Current commissioners and staff members of the Michigan Historical Commission are not eligible for nomination.

NOMINATING PROCESS

- A. Nominators complete the nomination form (describes nominee and the reason for the nomination) and are encouraged to attach supporting information.
- B. Nominations may be submitted to the Commission by current Michigan Historical Commission members or by any other person. Nominations made by those outside of the Michigan

Historical Commission must be supported by two other individuals, with a letter of support attached. Nominations made by current Commissioners do not require additional letters of support.

- C. Nominators may submit no more than one nomination per year.

SELECTION PROCESS

- A. A committee of the Commission will review nominations and select potential award winners. This may require additional information from the nominator and potentially the nominee.
- B. Included in the selection process will be the breadth of the nominee's contribution to Michigan history as well as the ability to make this an event. Factors to consider would include whether the recipient, or appropriate representative in the event of a posthumous award, would participate in the ceremony.
- C. Efforts will be made to ensure a diverse pool of nominees and recipients.
- D. The committee will present the potential award winners at a full Commission meeting for final approval.
- E. The President of the Michigan Historical Commission will manage the notification of the award to the recipient(s) and determine the necessary arrangements for the award ceremony.
- F. The President of the Michigan Historical Commission will manage the written notification to nominators informing them of Commission determination.

For a Nomination Form and More Information please go to:

www.michigan.gov/mhcommission

or contact

Sandra Clark, Director
Michigan Historical Center
Michigan Department of Natural Resources
P.O. Box 30740, Lansing, MI 48909-8240
(517) 373-6362





BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES

*William Grawn Milliken
Elizabeth Sparks Adams
Frank Joseph Kelley*

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William Grawn Milliken

On March 26, 1922, William Grawn Milliken was born in Traverse City, the second child in a family already attuned to public service. His father James had served as state Senator, and mother Hildegard was the first woman elected to public office in that city. In 1942, Milliken interrupted his studies at Yale University to enlist in the Army Reserve Corps and, in early 1943, volunteered for the Army Air Corps, where he served with distinction, receiving seven commendations including the Purple Heart. After discharge, he married Helen Wallbank in 1945, graduated from Yale in 1946, and the couple moved to Traverse City. Milliken became president of J.W. Milliken, Inc., the department store founded by his grandfather.



In 1947, Governor Kim Sigler appointed Milliken to the Michigan Waterways Commission. In 1960, he was elected to the Michigan Senate, where he emerged as a leader, becoming Senate majority floor leader. In 1966, he won the Republican nomination for lieutenant governor and was elected along with Governor George Romney. Milliken became Michigan's 44th governor on January 22, 1969, upon Romney's resignation to accept a presidential Cabinet appointment. He was elected in his own right in 1970 and won reelection in 1974 and 1978, making him the state's longest serving governor at nearly 14 years in office—a record not likely to be surpassed.

As governor, Milliken established a legacy of conservation and environmental protection, commitment to civil rights, support for arts and cultural heritage, and the highest standard for integrity and civility in office. He was fond of the quote "good policy is good politics." In an emblematic speech, he said:

To me, the measures of real leadership have never been associated with promoting our differences. To me, the measures of real leadership involve searching for common ground as we work to develop responsible public policy. That means not spending our time and energies in armoring our issue differences, but in forging common solutions.

Governor Milliken has remained a committed and loyal Michigander from his base on Old Mission Peninsula since retiring from public office. He has continued to speak out on issues of concern, helped found the Center for the Great Lakes, a private economic and environmental research center devoted to protecting regional lake resources, and championed civility in public discourse.

Sources: William G. Milliken Biography, Michigan Department of Natural Resources. Dave Dempsey, William G. Milliken: Michigan's Passionate Moderate (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2006). National Governor's Association. Remarks at dedication of Milliken State Park, October 22, 2009.

Elizabeth Sparks Adams

Elizabeth Sparks Adams made history in her own right thanks to a lifetime of devotion to the cause of Michigan's heritage.

With 54 years of service, Ms. Adams was not only the longest-serving member of the Michigan Historical Commission, she was the longest-serving member of any State of Michigan board, commission, or committee. She is likely the longest-serving public official in Michigan history. She shattered the glass ceiling as the first female president of the Commission, first elected to that position in 1947. She served as president for 14 years and vice-president for 2 years.

She was appointed as the first woman commissioner by Governor Murray Van Wagoner on March 20, 1941, age 29, and then was reappointed in 1947 by Governor Kim Sigler, in 1953 and in 1959 by Governor G. Mennen Williams, in 1965 by Governor George Romney, in 1971 and in 1977 by Governor William Milliken, and in 1983 and 1989 by Governor James Blanchard – for a grand total of 9 six-year terms. Her contributions to preserving and advancing Michigan history merited an unbroken series of reappointments by governors of both parties.



She had a zeal for Michigan history perhaps unrivalled by any contemporary. Despite her youth and gender, after only a year on the Commission, she was writing the Governor on May 7, 1942 to say “I feel that an aggressive person either from the Upper Peninsula or Detroit should be appointed to the Commission. Two of us are conscientiously trying to put some life into this particular department, and with the appointment of one or two more who are sympathetic with us I feel sure more substantial contributions could be made.”

During her tenure, she contributed to creation of the Centennial Farm and State Historic Marker programs, publication of numerous works on Michigan history, and creation of the Michigan Historical Museum. She continued to serve the people of the State of Michigan “with integrity, honor, and scholarship” until her retirement from the Commission in 1995, age 83.

As *The Oakland Press* summed up her public career a few years earlier in November 1991, “She is surprising enough at 79, still active in keeping the interest and passion for history alive. But at 29, in the less liberated 1940s, Adams was a standout indeed.” Born December 12, 1911 in Romeo, Michigan, she passed from this life October 11, 2007.

Sources: Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan, Elizabeth Sparks Adams papers. Certificate of Special Tribute issued by Governor John Engler on May 17, 1995. House Concurrent Resolution 450 adopted in May 1972; House Concurrent Resolution 496 adopted in November 1991. Designation by Secretary of State Candice Miller of a Michigan Week award for longtime, outstanding volunteer work in May 1995.

Frank Joseph Kelley

Born in Alpena on December 31, 1924 and raised in Detroit, Kelley's career in law began after receiving both his Bachelor of Arts and Juris Doctor degrees from the University of Detroit. He practiced law in Alpena, where he served as both city attorney and the Alpena County Supervisor. In December 1961, Governor John B. Swainson appointed him Michigan's 50th Attorney General. The following year, he was elected to his first term and was reelected every term until he retired on January 1, 1999. His 37-year uninterrupted service made him both the youngest and oldest Attorney General in Michigan history.

Recognized for an enduring commitment to good government, he was instrumental in the passage of Michigan's Open Meetings and Freedom of Information Acts. Kelley was the first state attorney general to start Consumer Protection, Environmental, and Civil Rights Divisions. He was honored with public service awards throughout his career, including the Wyman Award from the National Association of Attorneys General. The Frank J. Kelley Institute of Ethics & the Legal Profession at Michigan State University College of Law recognizes and builds upon the dedication, professionalism, and ethical code that marked his career.



In his almost four decades as Attorney General, Kelley earned the respect and admiration of those he worked with and the millions of citizens he represented. He, like his contemporary in office Governor Milliken, espoused civility despite policy differences:

I just call upon my good friends from both parties ... to fight to preserve the best elements of our democracy and move our great experience of freedom forward with good will towards all.

His love for Michigan and its history includes service for many years as a member of the Mackinac Island State Park Commission, with a current term that runs until April 2015, and on the Michigan Supreme Court Historical Society. The "Eternal General" continued to serve the people of Michigan as he approached his 90th birthday.

Sources: Michigan State University. National Association of Attorneys General. Michigan State Bar. Michigan Political History Society. University of Detroit Mercy. Act No. 486 of the Public Acts of 2012.