

**SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES  
2006  
MOTOR MILL FOUNDATION OF  
CLAYTON COUNTY**

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

<b>JOHN NIKOLAI -</b>	<b>CHAIR</b>
<b>JON DENEUI -</b>	<b>VICE CHAIR</b>
<b>LARRY STONE -</b>	<b>SECRETARY</b>
<b>CHUCK MORINE-</b>	<b>TREASURER</b>
<b>JOLEEN JANSEN</b>	<b>DIRECTOR</b>
<b>LES KLINK</b>	<b>DIRECTOR</b>
<b>JEANETTE MULLER</b>	<b>DIRECTOR</b>
<b>TOM GIFFORD</b>	<b>DIRECTOR</b>
<b>LEE LENTH</b>	<b>DIRECTOR</b>
<b>JIM HOSCH</b>	<b>DIRECTOR</b>

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

*To protect and preserve the architectural integrity, history, natural beauty and serenity of the Motor Mill site and its surroundings and to develop appropriate uses and interpretation as a regional treasure for the benefit of future generations.*

## **FOUNDATION BUSINESS**

The Foundation held their first Annual Meeting on February 9, 2006 at the Central State Bank Community Room. Public attendance was low due to the weather, but the meeting was a success at promoting and educating the attendees what the Foundation was about and their plans and goals for the site.

The Motor Mill Foundation of Clayton County received their 501c3 tax exempt status in September of 2006. The status allows the Foundation to write grants, hold their own accounts, and offer a tax benefit to donors.

At the regular meeting held on October 19, 2006, the Foundation held their annual election of officers. The elected officers and board of directors are as follows, John Nikolai-President, Jon deNeui-Vice President, Larry Stone-Secretary and Chuck Morine-Treasurer, Joleen Jansen, Les Klink, Jeanette Muller, Lee Lenth, Tom Gifford and Jim Hosch.

Records have been kept recording the number of volunteer hours Foundation Members and volunteers have donated to the Motor Mill. Totals for 2006 were estimated at 1,024 hours of volunteer time.

## **VISIONING**

Throughout the past few years the Foundation has discussed long range planning and visioning for Motor Mill. In October the Foundation felt before a major fund raising campaign was kicked off, a clear vision was needed to show perspective donors.

In December the Foundation met with Molly Bagby for their first visioning meeting.

## **MOTOR MILL**

In January, the Conservation Board received a Technical Advisory Network (TAN) Report written by Doug Steinmetz. Steinmetz reported that the mill needs immediate attention to assure its structural integrity. He advised us to hire an engineer to assess the situation, and to address structural problems as soon as possible; to hire someone to prepare "as built" drawings of the mill; consider using an alternative to wood shingles to replace the roof; to replace the missing chimneys; and to hire a consultant to prepare construction documents for letting bids for work on the mill.

The Conservation Board applied for a REAP Historical Resource and Development Program Grant to cover an engineering report, as-built drawings, construction documents, emergency repairs,

mothballing and safety issues, joists, beams and flooring. They received \$38,500 and will have to provide a 25% in-kind match and a \$19,900 cash match.

The Conservation Board hired Doug Steinmetz as the architect and technical advisor for the grant. Steinmetz hired Joe Rosensteil as an engineer to conduct an assessment of the building. Steinmetz and Rosensteil completed the work and produced a 20 page Project Outline-Master Plan in December. The document outlines a work plan for the preservation of the mill.

Tom Gardner of Gardner Architect in Strawberry Point volunteered to donate his time to develop the as-built drawings to count as in-kind match for the grant. The drawings for the mill have been completed and Gardner plans on completing drawings for the rest of the buildings as well.

During the fall, foundation members constructed a set of stairs to provide easier access and for safety to the second floor and a set of stairs leading to the basement. This project is part of the REAP Grant and has helped with the assessment of the basement.

After the stairs were completed, an assessment of the basement was conducted. Silt was dug out from around the posts to allow them to dry out. Evidence was found that there was another floor to this level as well. The silt was probed and estimates are the silt is 10 feet deep in some areas. A pair of mill bills was also discovered during this time period.

Steinmetz report recommends the silt be removed from the basement, but advised only under the supervision of an archeologist due to the chances of finding evidence of milling equipment.

The tunnel on the north side of the mill that sits between the mill and the road was investigated as well. It is believed the tunnel was open on both ends and was used as a ventilation system to keep the north wall dry. Some of the top stones are cracked and there are holes allowing water from the roof to drain through causing water damage. Due to safety concerns and to stop the water damage, two loads of gravel were placed over the cap stones to prevent accidents and to stop the water damage.

Through the encouragement of the State Historical Society, the Conservation Board also applied for a Historic Site Preservation Grant. The grant was awarded for \$55,400 with a \$55,800 cash match. The grant is for the replacement of the roof and two chimneys on the mill and the replacement of the roof on the inn.

## **EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES**

### **AMERICORPS MEMBER**

In October of 2005, Jeanette Muller was rehired as an AmeriCorps Member for a 12 month term filling 1700 hours. Her contract expired on September 30, 2006. Funding was lost for the program due to Federal Budget cuts. The Conservation Board has applied for the AmeriCorps Program again through a program Linn County offers. They have applied for funding from the federal level and if awarded, a member could start in September of 2007.

## **TOURS**

The mill was open for tours two weekends a month May through September representing 11 weekends for a total of 25 days. There were 12 special tours given over the course of the season as well. The Special Tours included, the Motor Guzzi, the International Brotherhood of Motorcycles, Vesterheim Museum, Clayton County Genealogy, Homeschooler Group, Caver Group, Channel 2 "Iowa Traveler", Tidying the Turkey, Midwest Trail Roaders, Deer Run Campground Wagon Ride and a VIP Tour.

In all, there were 1,291 visitors to the mill in 2006. Of this total 260 were part of a special tour group. Visitors represented 26 states and two Foreign Countries. Five volunteer tour guides donated their time during the open weekends and special tours for the season as well.

Don Sass donated two mill stones that came from the Wagner Mill along Robert's Creek. The stones were placed in the icehouse and opened during the open weekends. A display was developed to tell the story of the stones and Wagner Mill.

## **EVENTS**

The Civil War Living History Camp was held for the second year on the weekend of May 20 and 21. About 25 to 30 people dressed in military or Civil War era civilian costumes camped for the weekend and put on several demonstrations. This was also the first weekend the mill was open for tours.

The Turkey River Rendezvous was held at the Motor Mill September 16 and 17, 2006. The mill was open this weekend as well.

The Motor Mill Foundation hosted a VIP Tour of the mill October 14. Invitations were sent out and six dignitaries attended along with four of their family members for the tour. The tour was held in conjunction with Osborne's Heritage Days.

The Motor Mill Foundation had a booth at Heritage Days well. Members talked to visitors about the Motor Mill, plans for the future, current projects and generally promoted the site and answered questions. The booth was open both Saturday and Sunday.

## **BENEFIT CONCERT**

The Motor Mill Foundation sponsored, promoted and coordinated a Benefit Concert held at the Elkader Opera House on Saturday October 14, 2006. The Big Blue Sky Band was recruited to perform the concert.

The Foundation planned the concert and sought sponsorships for the event to offset costs. Sponsorships came from 62 businesses and individuals for a total of \$4,090. After ticket sales and expenses, the event raised over \$4,500 in funds to be used toward the Foundation and Motor Mill.

## **NEWSLETTER**

A Motor Mill Foundation Newsletter was developed to keep interested visitors and parties informed about the progress and events happening at Motor Mill. Milling Around was produced four times in 2006 and goes out to a readership of approximately 225 readers.

## **WEBSITE**

Joleen Jansen of Elkader, volunteered to develop a website for the Motor Mill. The site was up and running by May of 2006 and is located at [www.motormill.org](http://www.motormill.org). Jansen has been updating and refining the site as time allows. Alpine Communications has donated web hosting for one year.

## **ROBERT GRAU SAVANNA PROJECT**

Control of exotic plant species continued on the savanna this past year. The main targets were garlic mustard, common mullein and Canada thistle.

Control on garlic mustard included pulling the adult plants and removing them from the site. In the fall, a weed torch was used to burn the seeds that were left on the plant. Starting in November, Roundup was sprayed on the first year plants. The main effort was on the ridge top and the east hillside from the rock quarry south.

The Canadian thistles were simply cut and seed heads were removed from the site. Seed heads of the common mullein were also removed and then the entire plant was pulled and left.

The development of a sign was started this fall. The Grau family would like to donate a sign educating the public on savannas and the restoration process. The sign will also have a memorial for Robert Grau. Staff worked on the sign this fall. Installation should be ready by spring of 2007.

## **BRIDGE PROGRESS REPORTS**

### **JANUARY**

Engelhardt was able to discuss the proposed trail from Pony Hollow to Motor and the Motor bridge with the Board of Supervisors and the county engineer. They were very supportive of both projects and offered support (but not money) toward the projects.

### **MARCH**

deNeui has met with several Iowa DOT employees to discuss engineering issues. He has proposed a duplicate of the original bridge, but with modern steel and minor technological changes. The group discussed what restrictions – weight, height, speed, or width – might be needed for traffic and pedestrian safety and structural stability. Muller noted the concern of keeping the site relatively quiet and secluded, rather than allowing the road to become a busy thoroughfare. deNeui said the county engineer has asked that the bridge be able to support a road grader.

Olson moved that we authorize deNeui to pursue costs, engineering facts and regulations preparatory to a project to replicate the bridge at Motor. Morine seconded. Carried.

## **APRIL**

DeNeui reported the DOT Engineers will not be able to help with the bridge. Nikolai has contacted his brother and deNeui has talked to a structural engineer who was very positive and seemed to be willing to bring in a few others. DeNeui is asking the engineer folks for a design for the existing bridge new. When this is completed we will know the load capacity.

Another issue that needs to be solved is the removal of the driftwood on the center pier. Photos show some blocks missing toward the bottom, currently the driftwood has this covered up.

The plan is to go with all new materials, two spans, if holes were drilled, we could assemble it, and local bridge builder will put it up. When completed it will be a replica of the old bridge.

DeNeui is still reaching out and sending out feelers for contacts and help. Nikolai and deNeui visited a facility in Rockford IL to look at their riveting process and to make more contacts.

The Clayton County Engineer is in favor of the bridge and would like to be involved in the process.

The hoops to go through include, the river is the Corps of Engineers, the DNR has the flow rates for the river, they will need to see and approve the plan, support of the Clayton County Historical Preservation Society. This year, Jon would like to get the engineering done and be ready to repair the piers.

## **MAY**

Nikolai distributed a written update from Jon deNeui, who was unable to attend.

Highlights:

Jon has contacted several engineers about bridge work;

Volunteers have agreed to help remove logs and driftwood from the pier;

The north abutment was repaired in the 1980s, and the south abutment should not need much work;

To obtain a permit, we must assure the DNR and the Corps that construction will not impede the river;

Jon suggests constructing new stairways for better access to the upstairs and basement;

We will need at least 40 joists to stabilize posts and beams on the third and fourth floors, in addition to posts needed in the basement;

We need to develop a flood control plan for the Inn;

We need to remove silt from the basement.

Refle moved to authorize deNeui to get cost estimates for work on the bridge and mill. Morine seconded. Carried.

## **JUNE**

Jon deNeui has talked to contractors who restored covered bridges in Madison County, to engineers at Shive Hattery, and to Kehe Construction in Waverly.

He also talked with Harlan Thurn at the Clayton County engineer's office, who recalled working as a youth to help remove the floors of the Mill. Thurn also provided more information about the original bridge and the plans to rebuild the bridge in the 1980s.

DeNeui is looking for people to inspect the center bridge pier and to remove the logjam above the pier.

## **JULY**

Jon deNeui has been in touch with Calhoun & Burns, the firm that reconstructed the Madison County covered bridges that burned. He's also talked with people from Shive-Hattery in Cedar Rapids.

deNeui has found a source for the 3/4 -inch steel rods needed for bridge reconstruction. He has talked to Wheeler Lumber in Des Moines about bridge timbers.

Engelhardt attended a Mississippi River Trail meeting in June. A Motor Mill connection to the trail is a possibility. The first step is a bridge. Then come connections to Elkader and to Garnavillo and Guttenberg. deNeui noted that a useable bridge might make landowners more receptive to the idea of a trail.

## **AUGUST**

Engelhardt has talked to Iowa DOT planner Rod Larson, who said a historic structures grant from Statewide Enhancement Funds might be a good option for the bridge repair. The Board discussed what state and federal restrictions might be placed on the bridge if we use such a grant for funding.

Nikolai proposed making the bridge private and not open to commercial vehicle traffic. He is exploring the legal implications.

Refle concurred that the bridge should be limited to a multi-use trail. Klink questioned where trail users would park. The board briefly discussed whether it would be possible to provide parking on the south side of the river.

deNeui said he always had envisioned the bridge as a public roadway. But he said Iowa Department of Transportation officials he has talked to have not shown much interest. He said the Clayton County engineer has expressed more interest. deNeui said traffic from the bridge through the site might be restricted by gates or other structures to reduce safety concerns. He has been working with 20 tons as a possible weight limit. He proposed proceeding with plans for a traffic bearing bridge, although the question remains about how it will be restricted.

Stone said the Clayton County Conservation Board on August 7 agreed that any bridge construction plans should make provisions for a structure to handle vehicles, even if vehicle traffic is restricted.

Engelhardt noted that if we apply for a grant through the Iowa DOT, all bidding must be done through that agency. The board agreed not to apply for an Enhancement grant at this time.

## **SEPTEMBER**

Engelhardt and deNeui met with the county engineer and the Board of Supervisors to discuss preliminary engineering for a new bridge. The supervisors agreed to pay for engineering if it is for a vehicle bridge and if the county would not have to pay for bridge construction. They also asked for letters of commitment from suppliers that deNeui has contacted. They noted that Conservation Board would be responsible for maintenance and liability for a pedestrian bridge, but Secondary Roads would cover those issues with a vehicle bridge.

deNeui said he's gotten estimates of approximately \$100,000 for materials to build a new bridge very much like the old one. deNeui moved that he be authorized to proceed to get more formal letters of commitment from material suppliers, with the understanding that the bridge will have a 20-ton (vehicle) capacity. Stone seconded. Carried.

## **OCTOBER**

deNeui reported the next step is to have letters of interest from a variety of vendors who have expressed interest in the project.