

Milling Around

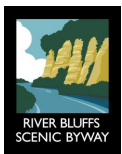
Motor Mill Historic Site Newsletter



Pamela Brandt



Clayton County Conservation Board
29862 Osborne Rd
Elkader, IA 52043



2018 Motor Mill Tour Schedule



“Stories in Stone” Tours: Noon – 5:00 pm

- All weekends from Memorial Day to Labor Day
- September 15th – 16th
- September 29th – September 30th
- October 13th – 14th

Upcoming Events

Art Show

September 15th 1:00pm – 5:00pm

- Artists can sell or simply display their artwork. Other activities will take place and refreshments will be provided.
- To register, please email or call aharkrader@claytoncountya.org or 563-245-1516.

Bridge Lighting

November 17th 4:30pm – 6:00pm

- The bridge’s holiday lights will be officially lit for the holiday season. Enjoy the beautiful sight along with hot chocolate and cookies. The lights will be lit every night from 5:00pm – 11:00pm until January 6th.



Flavors of the Great River Road Giveaway

The Great River Road National Scenic Byway is one of Motor Mill’s partner organizations. This year they are celebrating 80 years. For their contest, share one of your favorite flavors of the Great River Road for a chance to win \$500! Enter before August 24th.

To enter the contest, visit:

experiencemississippiriver.com



David Beck

A Step Back In Time



David Beck

On the north side of the Inn, there is an unnoticed impression on the sidewalk leading up to the second floor. A child's tiny footprints and the year 1943 are an indication of a small portion of Motor Mill's history.

Two years after meeting at the Communia Dance Hall in 1938, Ralph and Eileen Kuehl were married at the Little Brown Church in Nashua. Their first job was at Motor where they helped the Klink family operate their farm. They were provided with living quarters at the stone house and were paid \$50 a month for their help.

Ralph and Eileen had a son, Neal, in 1943. In the same year, Neal's father helped build the concrete sidewalk that leads to the upper level of the house. During the process, he lowered Neal's feet into the wet concrete and wrote the year.

Neal only lived at Motor for five years until they moved closer to Elkader in 1948. He doesn't remember a whole lot, but he does recall being reminded, "how remote and deep in the woods we were when a black snake fell from the roof of the house into the sand box I was playing in". With only a few of their own memories, Neal and his sister Kathy were lucky to have heard stories over the years and find written notes their mother had kept.



Neal Kuehl pictured standing next to his footprints made in 1943, the year he was born.



David Beck

Friends of the Motor Mill Foundation

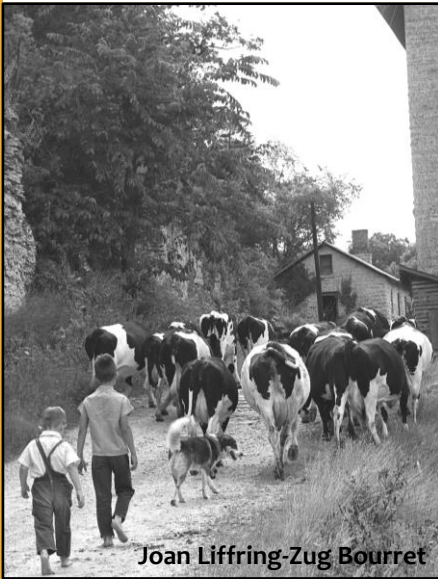
Become a friend of Motor Mill to help with the ongoing restoration and educational programs offered at the site which are funded through sponsorships, donations, and grants. The Membership Endowment Fund is used for the long-term operation of the Motor Mill Historic Site.

You can find yellow donation envelopes at the mill and at the Osborne Nature Center.

Membership Levels:

Apprentice (youth).....	\$5.00
Stone Cutter.....	\$25.00
Carpenter.....	\$50.00
Stone Mason.....	\$100.00
Cooper.....	\$250.00
Miller.....	\$500.00

Hank Beck Interview



Joan Liffing-Zug Bourret

Hank's brothers, Milton and Dave, guiding the cattle to the bridge with their dog, Bing.

Hank (Harold) Beck is the son of Lawrence and Mabel Beck. In 1948, Hank's parents and their first child, Milton, moved to Motor with a team of draft horses and a wagon. Hank was born two years later in 1950, and has three younger, full siblings; Dave born in 1953, Lennie in 1957, and Laurie in 1960.

Hank lived on the farm with his family intermittently, although he was always in the area. He'd return to help his father farm, especially if he was sick, or to simply assist with their neighbor's farm. Most of his life was spent at or near Motor and it was always fun for him.

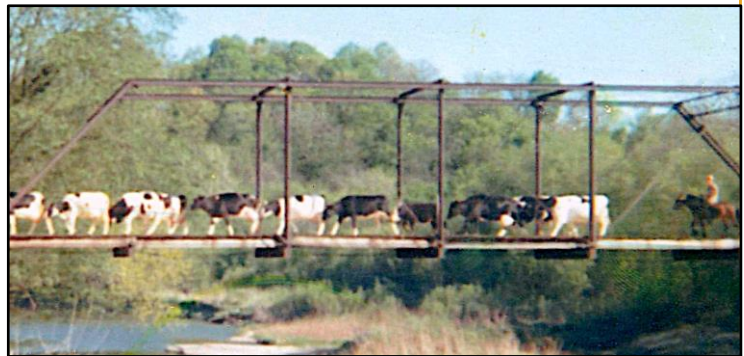
When Lawrence and Mabel moved to Motor, the Klink's had already made some changes to the original limestone buildings. Using wood from inside the mill, they built up the roof of the stable for hay storage. In the smokehouse, chutes were added to the first-floor ceiling for the granary on the upper floor. A small window was used as an auger hole for the transportation of oats. Hank remembers shoveling oats in the very hot and confined upper floor.

The Beck family used only the first floor of the mill, primarily for straw as well as storage. Previously, most of the upper floors were taken out for hay storage by the Klink's, so the interior was just an open skeleton frame. This created a place of residence for many pigeons. Hank and his brothers would hunt pigeons, sometimes even catching them by hand, and come out with more than forty at a time. The large family would then have pigeon gravy with baking soda biscuits as a meal.

Hank and his brothers would also spend their time building forts. Up on the hill overlooking Motor Mill, they would build forts in the old quarry. They would use cut down branches for wind breaks and chunks of tin sheets lying around the farm for roofing. Sometimes, they would build a fire and camp out there overnight. Their camping adventures also took place down by the bank of the Turkey River. The boys would fish all night long and catch plenty of fish, primarily redhorse. Sadly, they had to be up by six o'clock the next morning which would make for a long day, especially if it was hot.

Only until mid-July would the limestone house be cool inside. After that time it became hot like an oven. Because the stove was on the first floor, the Beck family would live mostly on the top floor. They would spend much time outside as well. As for the winter, the cold temperatures wouldn't be noticed until December. Once it got cold enough, frost would form on the walls, inches thick.

While living there, traffic was extremely scarce. The roads were in bad condition, so barely anyone tried to make their way through Motor. Only in the 1960's, did traffic increase when they finally laid out gravel. During the winter, the Beck kids would use the lack of traffic and icy roads to their advantage. Using a steerable runner sled, they would start their ride at the top of a hill, south of Motor Mill and manage to make it across the bridge and all the way to their house without stopping.



One of the Beck boys riding their pony, Dan, while driving the cattle across the bridge. Sometimes if the cattle ran across, the bridge would sway so hard, it made it hard to stand up.

How You Can Help Motor Mill

Donate: Donations of any amount help to maintain and enrich the architecture and beauty of the Motor Mill site. Any donation is appreciated and no donation is too small!

Donations to the Motor Mill Foundation or the Clayton County Conservation Board are 100% tax deductible due to their 501c3 status.

Donations may be sent to:

Motor Mill Foundation or

Clayton County Conservation Board

29862 Osborne Rd
Elkader, IA 52043



Volunteer: There are two different ways to volunteer with Motor Mill. Volunteers are greatly needed and appreciated since they are nothing less than the heart and soul of the Motor Mill site.

One way to volunteer is to become a tour guide. Tours are given every weekend during the tour season. Before you become a guide yourself, you will shadow another guide in order for you to get comfortable with the site and giving tours.

Another way to volunteer is to help with renovations by serving on the volunteer work crew. It is impossible to keep the mill up and running without the crew's help. Experience with construction or a similar area is preferred.

Current Project: In the mill's basement, there sits around 15 feet of silt that has accumulated over time. This year, silt removal should begin and will hopefully be completed by next year. Discovery of the mill's original turbines may be a possibility. Completion of this project will extend visitors' tours, improve their experience, and enhance the interpretation and history of Motor Mill.

For More Information:

Phone: (563)245-1516

Email: cccb@claytoncountya.gov

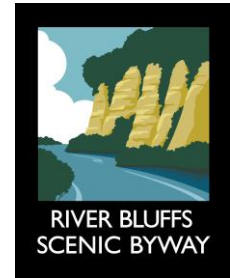
Website: <http://motormill.org>



Our Partner Organizations

- The **River Bluffs National Scenic Byway** stretches throughout both Clayton and Fayette counties. This scenic route extends for 109 miles and passes through “Bluff Country”, an area in Northeast Iowa known for its rolling hills and valleys, towering bluffs, and a beautiful green landscape.

- www.traveliowa.com/trails/river-bluffs-scenic-byway/11/



- **Silos & Smokestacks National Heritage Area** preserves and tells the story of American agriculture and its global significance through partnerships and activities that celebrate the land, people, and communities of the area.

- www.silosandsmokestacks.org

- The mission of the **Clayton County Conservation Board** is to promote the health and general welfare of the people; and to encourage preservation, conservation, education and recreation through responsible use and appreciation of our natural resources and cultural heritage.

- www.claytoncountyconservation.org



- The mission of the **Motor Mill Foundation** is 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.

- www.motormill.org

- The **Turkey River Recreational Corridor** provides several outdoor activities, like land and water trails, that people can enjoy along the Turkey River. The scenic river connects the towns of Elgin, Clermont, and Elkader offering various business and historic attractions as well.

- www.turkeyrivercorridor.com



- The **Great River Road National Scenic Byway** follows the course of the Mississippi River for 3,000 miles from northern Minnesota to the Gulf of Mexico. The scenic route passes through 10 states and hundreds of river towns. The Great River Road is arguably the longest and most important scenic byway in America.

- www.experiencemississippiriver.com