

Vol. 34 • July 2024

Milling Around

Motor Mill Foundation

Motor Mill Historic Site Newsletter

OUR MISSION

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

THIS ISSUE:

Mission
Page 01

Stable Renovation
Page 02

Honoring Jon deNeui
Page 03

Preservation Award
Page 04

History Along the River
Page 04

Tours and Events
Page 05

Support
Page 06

Partner Organizations
Page 07



Clayton County Conservation Board
29862 Osborne Rd
Elkader, IA 52043

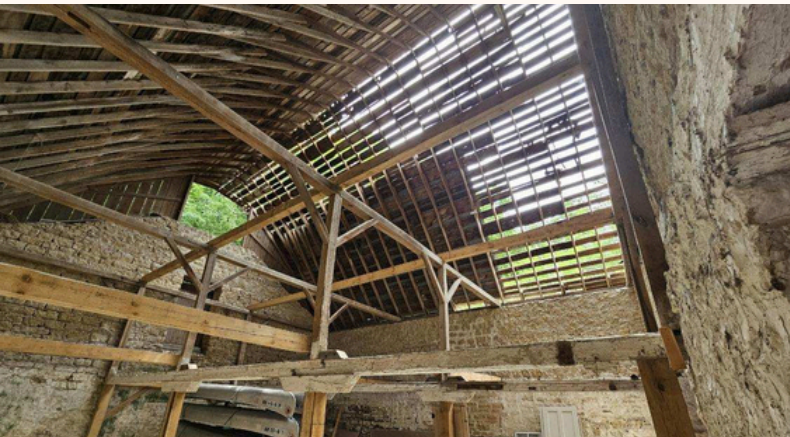
Follow us!





Stable Renovation

Though the Inn is recognized for its dramatic 2023 makeover, it is not the only historic building at Motor to receive attention. The Stable's roof was replaced in June, 2024 by Daniel Miller and Sons. Work began on the steep-pitched gambrel roof with one eye on the unpredictable Iowa summer sky, as wind and rain make such a job even more hazardous. The workers also stepped carefully since some of the rafters below had become soft with rot. After construction of the new rolled-seam metal roof, electricity will also be brought to the structure to facilitate its use as an open-air venue.



Originally, a split cedar-shake roof provided shelter to the horses and mule teams that hauled grain to the Mill for area farmers. The farming years began when the Louis Klink family rented the property in 1896. The building eventually served a new purpose, becoming a milking barn. Perhaps in the 1940's, the original gable end roof was replaced with a higher gambrel-style design, creating a hay loft. The stories of both the milling and the farming years are worthy of preservation. The stable, with its original limestone and its modified roof shape, represents both eras.

Reach Daniel Miller and Sons at 563-605-7341



Honoring Jon deNeui

Jon Deneui, founding member of the Motor Mill Foundation, passed away December 21, 2023 and was remembered on June 15, 2024 beside the Mill that received so much of his time and talent. Friends and family were there to witness as a plaque was unveiled to honor Jon’s successful effort to replace the Motor Bridge in 2012. One span of the 1899 twin-span, pin-connected, Pratt Through-Truss bridge was destroyed by the 1991 flood severing the county road between Motor and Communia. The 2008 flood swept away the second span. The event at Motor followed a memorial service at Grace Evangelical Free Church in Elkader, IA.



In 2004, Jon joined the Motor Mill Foundation bringing his construction genius to repairing the 1860s limestone buildings at the Motor Mill Historic Site. Always a teacher, Jon guided volunteers individually and as a team as they approached each project. He brought them step by step to understand the technical problems and how to resolve them. Jon believed that they could repair anything, including closing a 12-inch-wide gap in the peak of the Mill, and they did it! His knowledge, his humor, his twinkling eyes and ready laughter are missed by his Motor Mill family.





Preservation Award for the Inn

Through vision and dedicated effort, the 150-year-old Motor Mill Inn was restored in 2023. Its historic bones were conserved, while modernizing the facility to create a visitor center, meeting rooms, a gift shop, and lodging rental space. Modern restroom facilities are now available to the site's visitors. The effort was recognized on June 6th, 2024 with a Rural Preservation Award from Preservation Iowa. This award honors work that demonstrates a commitment to excellence in historic preservation in our rural landscape. Jenna Pollock, Executive Director of Clayton County Conservation, accepted the award at the Preserve Iowa Summit in Mt. Pleasant.

History Along the River

July is a great month for river recreation and Motor Mill is a point of interest along the Turkey River. Why not enjoy both? Each summer, families and groups of friends navigate along the Turkey's curves, letting the current be their guide for a few hours or even a whole day. Sun on the water, fishing, paddling, or just floating and soaking it all in - it's a restorative way to spend time. With convenient canoe access at Motor Mill Historic Site, consider planning your trip to include a tour of the Mill.

And you don't need to own your own canoe or kayak to take advantage of the natural and cultural scenery. Turkey River Rentals, a local business based in Elkader, provides the vessels as well as transportation. Motor Mill can serve as either a starting or ending point, and the site also offers both camping and lodging rental accommodations. Make this weekend one to remember!



Present at the award ceremony were (front row) Bethany Jordan of Martin Gardner Architecture, Executive Director Jenna Pollock, Clayton County naturalist Abbey Harkrader, and (back row) Motor Mill Foundation Board members Chris Schoen, Jane Metcalf, and Dr. Ken Zichal.





TOUR SCHEDULE

”Stories in Stone” Tours:

Noon - 5:00 pm

Every Saturday and Sunday from Memorial Day to Labor Day, as well as:

- September 14-15th
- September 28-29th
- October 12th-13th

➔ **New for 2024:**

The Mill is also open Monday through Friday for self-guided tours



Night at the Inn

A Night of Music, Food, Wine, & Art

Saturday, August 10th 5pm-8pm

Motor Mill Historic Site

Featured Events:

- Local artists' displays
- Live Plein Air painting
- Hands on activities-all ages
 - Wine tasting
 - food and more!

Live Music Featuring:

“Kismet Rendezvous”

For more information, contact us at: 245-1516 or motormill@gmail.com



Motor Mill Historic Site 23002 Grain Road Elkader, IA

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Prairies and Fireflies**
July 10 7:30-9:30 pm - Come and explore the magic of a midsummer night on the prairie.
- **STEAM Motor Mill Camp**
July 12 9 am-3 pm - Enjoy a fun-filled day exploring historic Motor Mill discovering the connections between science, technology, engineering, art, and mathematics with nature.
- **STEAM Camp - Paddle the Turkey**
July 26 9 am-4 pm - Join this fun paddle exploring the Turkey River from Elkader to Motor.
- **Night at the Inn**
August 10 5-8 pm - A night of of Music, Food, Wine, & Art. An event for the whole family.

Visit www.mycountyparks.com for details and registration

Mark your calendar for **Heritage Days** at Osborne Nature Center, October 12 and 13!



VOLUNTEER!

Volunteers are nothing less than the heart and soul of the Motor Mill Historic Site. One way to volunteer is to become a weekend tour guide. Before you become a guide yourself, you will shadow another guide in order for you to get comfortable with the site and giving tours. It is a rewarding experience to share this special place with its visitors!



Another way to support the Mill is to help with renovations as a member of the volunteer work crew. It is impossible to maintain the Mill without the crew's contributions. Bring your hands and heart and enjoy the camaraderie with like-minded people in common effort.

DONATE

We are dependent on your generosity for keeping the doors open. Please consider donating to preserve this valuable historic resource. Help us tell this story of milling, agriculture, transportation, and the impact on rural Iowa.

Also, consider contributing to the Motor Mill Foundation Endowment.

This sustainable source of funding supports the long-term operation of the Motor Mill Historic Site, payable to Community Foundation of Dubuque and Clayton County.

Donations to the Motor Mill Foundation or Clayton County Conservation Board are tax deductible. Any amount helps. Become a Friend of the Motor Mill at any of these levels!

Friends of Motor Mill

Apprentice (under 14)	\$10.00
Stone Cutter	\$25.00
Carpenter	\$50.00
Stone Mason	\$100.00
Cooper	\$250.00
Miller	\$500.00



'here he would build a mill finer and bigger than any that had yet been conceived by pioneers.'

John Thompson

TO SEND DONATIONS OR FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Donate online at:
www.motormill.org/donations

Mail to:
Motor Mill Foundation

-or-

Clayton County Conservation Board
29862 Osborne Rd
Elkader, IA 52043

Phone: 563-245-1516
Email: cccb@claytoncountyia.gov



OUR PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

The [River Bluffs 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 beautiful green landscape.

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



[Silos and 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 model and 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 businesses and historic attractions as well. <https://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. Motor Mill Historic Site is a designated Interpretive Center (IC) of the Great River Road - An All American Road! www.experiencemississippiriver.com

