



Iowa Lincoln Highway Association

Winter 2019 Newsletter | Volume 24, No. 4

President's Corner

by Mary Helen Preston

As I write this Column, everyone's planning and preparing for the holidays and by the time it's published, the holidays will be behind us and we'll be in a new decade. We'll be back in the "Roaring 20's!" Garry and I don't have much experience to gauge the activity from across Iowa but it sure seems a lot happened along the Lincoln Highway in 2019!

Let me try to pick up where I left off in my last column. In September, a 'convoy' of Lincoln Highway Association enthusiasts in an array of vintage vehicles retraced the 1919 Military Convoy route. I think Garry said we had 60 vehicles stop by Preston. Everyone was thrilled to see the Station open so they could step back in time and share stories of visits with Grandpa and Dad.

In September, we lost our friend Bob Owens. He was a friend to many and shared so much knowledge. He reminded me a lot of my Grandpa. He had been a member of the Lincoln Highway Association since 1992 even helping organize the Green County chapter. According to his program, he received the Meritorious Achievement Award from the Lincoln Highway Association in 2008. Bob was active with keeping the legacy of the Lincoln Highway going until his passing. Bob will be missed.

In October, at the invitation of Janice Gammon I spoke to the Byways of Iowa Coalition when they held their annual meeting in Belle Plaine. I was able to share the history of Preston's, what we've been doing and our vision. Thanks, Janice Gammon

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Photo: Sandii Huemann Kelly

Larry Schlue Sound Park

by Jan Gammon

Iowa Valley Scenic Byway, along with a multitude of partners, helped develop and install a sound park in Belle Plaine, Iowa. Larry was a long-time community supporter. His son, John, is an artist in Los Angeles and submitted the winning design, which includes "whisper" dishes and outdoor musical instruments for all ages to play. The park was dedicated this fall. Sandii Huemann-Kelly and Mike Kelly were there to take photos with Jan Gammon there to support a fellow byway with their project.



www.iowalincolnhighway.org

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Mission Statement

The Lincoln Highway Association shall identify, preserve, interpret and improve access to the Lincoln Highway and its associated sites, pursue the appropriate measures to prevent further deterioration, destruction or alteration of the remaining sections, publicize and seek public awareness of its goals and activities for preserving and developing the LH, facilitate research about the LH, and publish a magazine for articles and news of activity relevant to the LH, work with local communities and businesses to promote the LH as a tourism destination, and be exclusively charitable and educational within the meaning of the Internal Revenue Code.

Bob Owens

by Jan Gammon

What can I say about our friend, Bob Owens? He was so full of life and loved to crack jokes. I only knew him for a few of his 93 years. I know many of you have known him for much longer. But I remember him always with a smile and wanting to shake my hand. He knew my name right off after first meeting me. Bob made small replica Boy Scout Markers and I bought one in Missouri Valley at the Welcome Center. I gave it to Meredith Ponder as a graduation gift when she moved on from Iowa State and started her professional life. (She stayed on to help with the ILHA newsletter, etc.) Meredith was delighted to get that as a gift and the fact that Bob made it made it even sweeter!

Bob heard that I was looking for a replica for myself and having trouble finding one. He said he would make a special one just for me and that it would be his last. I believe that it was. It has a special place on my desk at home and every time I look at it, I see Bob's friendly smile and I want to reach to shake his hand.

Reflection of Bob Owens

by Jan Gammon

Robert Dean “Bob” Owens has been a member of the Lincoln Highway Association since 1992. He had helped organize the Greene County Lincoln Highway chapter the year before and served as the Greene County Consul for many years. In 2008, he received the Meritorious Achievement Award from the Lincoln Highway Association. He and his wife, Janet, have one of the original concrete Lincoln Highway markers in their front yard in Jefferson.

Bob was airplane crazy as long as he could remember and spent his free time as a child building model airplanes. After returning from WWII, he started taking flying lessons at the Jefferson Airport. His first solo flight was in 1948. While living in Estherville, Bob and his friend Les Duoos built their own airplane; a single-seat 1964 Corben Baby Ace Model C. Bob and his brother-in-law, Melvin Miller, had their own private 1,200 foot runway at the Miller farm near Cooper, Iowa. Bob enjoyed collecting literature and photographs detailing the history of powered flight, aviation memorabilia, 1920s records and a phonograph. He also had a 1929 Ford Model A that he enjoyed driving through Jefferson on the Lincoln Highway.

Bob Owens departed this life in September 12, 2019 at his home in Jefferson at the age of 92 years, 7 months, and 28 days. Bob and his twin sister, Bonnie, were the youngest of ten children and their father died in an automobile accident when the twins were one year old, leaving the mother to raise the family.



Bob and Janet Owens

He graduated from Jefferson High School in 1945 and was drafted into the U.S. Army. He trained and served as a military policeman in Germany until his discharge in November 1946 with the rank of Corporal. Bob returned to Jefferson and was employed by Baller Auto Supply. In 1949, he married Janet Miller. He joined the Sieg Auto Supply Company as a parts salesman and the Owens family (Bob, Janet, and 3 kids) made their home in Carroll, Estherville, Clarion, and Fort Dodge. After 32 years with Seig, Bob and Janet returned to Jefferson.

He was an active and vibrant member of the Lincoln Highway Association up until the end. The Iowa Lincoln Highway Association will miss him very much.



CeCe and Bob Owens

Photos: CeCe Otto of American Songline

Memories of Bob Owens as told by Dr. J.G. Donovan

Dr. Jack has memories of Bob going back to their school days. One of the most exceptional is from their high school days when Bob and he tried to catch turkeys being tossed off the courthouse in Jefferson by the Chamber of Commerce as a Thanksgiving promotion. They didn't realize at first that it could be dangerous as well as fun! Dr. Jack recalls Bob as creative and hard-working, always wanting to be of service, notably with the Mahanay Bell Tower in Jefferson, and especially with the Iowa Lincoln Highway Association, to which he was truly dedicated. Dr. Jack remembers Bob's delight when he gave Bob a stack of early 1900s license plates, and some 6 to 8 inch-thick chunks of concrete taken from the original surface of the Lincoln Highway when the street (part of the original Lincoln Highway through Carroll) was being resurfaced in front of the doctor's office. Bob was a great friend.

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for the invitation and assisting with the presentation. After their meeting concluded at the Belle Plaine Museum, everyone came down to Preston's to see firsthand our "Labor of Love" project. I think we made some new contacts and gained additional support from the group.

By now, we should have our first submission to the State for the nomination of Preston's Historical District to the National Parks Service for the National Register of Historic Places. We will continue through the process for another year!!!

It was a pleasure to have Melissa Hardman from Lowden's Lincoln Hotel join us at our last meeting in Lowden. Even more exciting was to tour the Hotel to see what lovely job she's done with the renovation.

As a collective "WE", we will continue to preserve and restore the Lincoln Highway so it's not forgotten in time.

Here's to a tremendous 2020!

The James H. Andrew Railroad Museum and History Center

at the Boone and Scenic Valley Railroad

November 1 through May 22

Monday - Friday 10 am - 4 pm

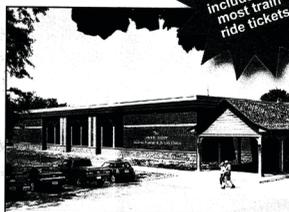
Saturday Noon - 4 pm

Closed Sunday

May 23 through October 31

Sunday - Thursday 10 am - 4 pm

Friday and Saturday 10 am - 5 pm



www.iowarailwaymuseum.org

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LHA Convoy Centennial Tour

by Jan Gammon



The Lincoln Highway Association's 2019 Military Convoy Centennial Tour drove into Iowa on Friday, September 6th after spending the night in Rock Falls, Illinois. Organizers Jim Cassler and Paul Gilger were among the many others who traveled from Washington, D.C. to Gettysburg, Pennsylvania to meet the Lincoln Highway and take it all the way across the nation to San Francisco. This is the same route a young Lt. Col. Dwight Eisenhower took when he was in the 1919 Army Convoy.

This modern day convoy was limited to 60 vehicles and drivers could use either classic or contemporary cars. Vehicles ranged from a restored airstream camper to modern electric Teslas. The group was able to stop and see the new Ostermann interpretive panel in Montour and then had an overnight in Marshalltown.

The next day those that wanted to, could stop at the Reed-Niland corner and grab coffee or a roll then head to the town of Nevada where a ribbon-cutting was held at their new Lincoln Jefferson Highways Heritage Park. The folks on the LHA Centennial Tour were invited to help with the festivities. Mayor Brett Barker and Jim Cassler, LHA tour organizer from Ohio, cut the ribbon. There were music and freebies for the LHA attendees to enjoy.

The Centennial Tour group then headed towards Grand Junction for lunch in the Community Center. Bob and Joyce Ausberger had the ILHA Museum open and several toured the garden in the shape of the United States with the Lincoln Highway as a walking path.

The group then traveled to Council Bluffs where they spent the night before heading on into Nebraska.

Michael S. Owens, who wrote a book called "After Ike - On the Trail of the Century-Old Journey That Changed America," was on this 2019 trip and he left some paperbacks with Joyce Ausberger. They are for sale for \$17.



Nancy & Ronny Hauser

Hours:
M-F 10:30 AM - 5:30 PM
Sat 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM
LincolnHwyTrdingCo@gmail.com

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Welcome new members of the Iowa Lincoln Highway Association!

Jeremie Johnson, West Des Moines



Five graduate students from the University of Iowa are working with the City of Tama to create a Comprehensive Plan for the community. This plan will include sections on economic development, housing, transportation and downtown development. The students have held several community events to solicit public opinion on several of these topics. In the spring semester, they will write the plan and make final presentations to the city council and the public.

Lincoln Highway Heritage Byway Update

By Jan Gammon, Coordinator

Wow! 2019 is coming to a close and what a year it has been- convoys, Iowa State Fair, parades, interpretive panels, and partnerships.

One of the projects that happened recently is installing two interpretive panels at the Lincoln Jefferson Highways Heritage Park outside the Nevada City Hall. One panel is about the Lincoln Highway and the other about the Jefferson. There are also 4 reversible banners hung on the Byway side of the park. One side has the Lincoln Highway logo and the other with the Jefferson logo. You may remember the LHA Centennial Tour stopped at this park and helped with the ribbon cutting in September.

The City of Nevada also installed new street signs with both the Lincoln and Jefferson logos on them. They are now selling the old "Lincoln Hwy" signs for \$100, so let me know if you are interested. There are limited quantities of these. Four of the signs say "W Lincoln Hwy."

Another project that was completed recently is the repair to the concrete floor in the oil room at Youngville and re-hanging the original door. The Byway had garnered a grant from the Benton County Community Foundation in 2018 and had an extension to complete it by October 31, 2019. We made it under the wire!

I am busy looking for grants for projects for the coming year and preparing a project list for the Department of Transportation. In late October, I served



Above: Lincoln Highway Interpretive Panel
Photos: Jan Gammon

as a trainer at the National Scenic Byway Leader Training in Sublimity, Oregon. I had also been a trainer in the spring in Minnesota. I serve as the secretary on the National Scenic Byway Foundation Board and serve on their education and membership committees.

A bill was passed and signed into law September 22, 2019 to accept new nominations for National Scenic Byway status. Guidelines and procedures are being developed and should be out by late November/early December. We plan to apply for this designation. There is no funding attached to the program at this time- just recognition.

2020 will be an another exciting year for the Lincoln Highway!



Clues for Mystery Photo

#1 It's on the Lincoln Highway corridor. This neighborhood has seen six name and/or route changes if you include the "Trans-Continental." By my count it's on #4.

#2 Celebrated it's first birthday in the new frontier.

#3 After #48 no longer greets customers...only the "Hawk."

**The next ILHA meeting will be January 11, 2020 at the
Niland Café in Colo. (Refreshments at 9:00 AM
Meeting at 9:30 AM)**

Directions to the ILHA Meeting: Coming from either the east or the west on the Lincoln Highway, the Niland Café is at the intersection of the Lincoln Highway and the Jefferson Highway (US 65). It is on the north edge of Colo at 24 Lincoln Avenue.

Upcoming Iowa LHA Meetings
April 11: Carroll County,
Family Table Restaurant
July 11, 2020: Location TBD
October 10, 2020: Location TBD

FIRST CLASS

Place
Stamp
Here

Iowa Lincoln Highway Association
P.O. Box 224
Grand Junction, Iowa 50107

