

Along the Lincoln Highway



The Newsletter of the Iowa Lincoln Highway Association

Volume 10, Number 3

Autumn 2005

Iowa Legend Norma Berns Passes Away.

by Su Aros.

n August 12 the Lincoln Highway Association lost one of its biggest Norma Berns, Carroll County Consul and my mother, lost her battle with cancer on that date. A tribute to Mom was written by Chuck Signs, reporter for The Carroll Today, a weekly Carroll newspaper, in its August 26 issue. I'd like to share some of what Chuck wrote:

"Norma was a teacher. Although this 1942 Carroll High graduate never received formal teacher education or a degree in history, she became one of the most effective and valuable teachers of history in Carroll County. Time and energy was found by Norma to be involved in a myriad of community activities including American Legion Auxiliary, Farm Bureau, Carroll Co. Genealogy Society, Carroll Co. Historical Society, CHS Alumni Association, Retired Senior Volunteer Program and of course, her beloved Lincoln Highway Association.

As eager to learn as she was eager to impart what she learned, Norma was an invaluable community resource.

Seen those red, white and blue Lincoln Highway signs around town and along rural roads showing the path our parents, grandparents and great grandparents took? They are there because of Norma. Norma worked tirelessly for Cone

her community. Through her leadership and countless hours of volunteer effort, Carroll County residents, including many children and young people, now have an appreciation for the Lincoln Highway.

I'm thankful for Norma. There was no better source of information for a journalist new to Carroll. A person's death always leaves a void. There is no escaping that. But Norma's contributions during her lifetime live on through those she taught. That is, if some of us do what she would expect and pick up There's a lot of unfinished business to take care of in Norma's absence, such as being responsible caretakers of the historic former Wittrock Motors building, currently empty.

The work of restoring and preserving the Lincoln Highway is just getting started, she would remind us. There are children eager for knowledge we can share with them about the history of their community. So let's get started."

She touched so many lives in such a positive way. "Aways a smile on her face," I heard countless times. Thanks to her I am one of those LH fanatics and proud of it.

I want to thank all of Mom's Lincoln Highway friends for their emails, cards, and words of support during Mom's brief battle with cancer. She may be

physically gone from our association but as someone recently remarked, "I bet she's up there writing a LH story for the Angel Herald."





www.lincolnhighwayassoc.org

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Have Spare Tire, Will Travel By Van & Bev Becker

Those who attended the Iowa LHA board meeting at the John Ernest Vineyard east of Tama will recall Joe Moore showing off his latest Lincoln Highway finds. As the meeting adjourned, he proudly displayed a Lincoln Highway tire and LH letter opener. This brand of tire is rare; few survived the landfill. Joe, please bring it for show and tell at the next membership meeting.

There is more to this old tire story. While Bev and I were in Lyons (north side of Clinton) researching LH tourist camps, we paused at the edge of the Mississippi River where the old Lyons-Fulton Bridge was located on the Iowa side. Where was this tire company? We knew it was somewhere in Fulton, Illinois, on the other side of the Mississippi. We looked out to the east, but there was no 5-story light gray stone building on the horizon. The factory was nowhere to be seen, so we crossed the "new" bridge downstream and started our search.

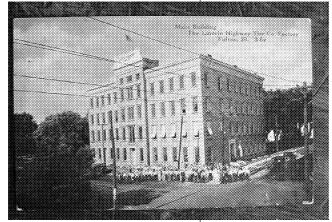
We visited the tourism desk in Fulton's new windmill (Fulton was settled by Dutch immigrants.) We were directed to the Martin House, home of the Fulton History Society. There was a 1928 Lincoln Highway marker near the front porch—this had to be the place! There we found the answers we sought.

The main building of the Lincoln Highway Tire Company as shown in photos and on postcards was known initially as the Dement House. Built in 1855, the building was a whopper of a landmark in Fulton; 5 stories tall, including basement and measuring 96 X 110 feet with walls 23 inches thick. It was originally a luxury hotel with rooftop gardens where bands played. It cost \$100,000 for construction and \$40,000 to furnish—in 1855 dollars—WOW! The promoters of the hotel had hoped for railroad business from the Galena and Chicago Union Railroad; but before the railroad could even bridge the Mississippi, the hotel was forced into bankruptcy in 1861. The impressive stone building then became home to a succession of colleges and military academies (1861-1911) and even played a role in Civil War training and rehabilitation.

In 1916-1923 the Lincoln Highway Tire Company occupied the fading stone structure with boilers and factory behind the office building. This structure often found on Lincoln Highway postcards was on the NE corner of 4th Street and 10th Avenue in Fulton. There is a

brass plaque post on a near the corner commemorating the historic building. Today this is the location Fulton's of Post Office.

From a lavish hotel to tire factory, the



structure was a real landmark on the Lincoln Highway —only a few blocks east of the Lyons-Fulton Bridge. Before being razed in 1934, the building also served as the home of a chicken hatchery and a filling station. The magnificent 23-inch stone blocks live on—they were moved to a state park in Savannah, Illinois and were used to construct shelters.

Yes, I know this is the Iowa LH newsletter and I'll surely get email—but, before 1934 you could see the LH Tire factory from the Iowa side of the river. We'll see the site, not the building, from the Iowa side during our 2006 Conference east tour.

The sharp eyes of a scripophilist (lover of financial paper) can also find obsolete stock certificates for the Lincoln Highway Tire Company. These old certificates now are better

(**Spare Tire**, Continued on page 4)

Ramblings Along the Lincoln Highway.

Minutes of the Summer 2005 Iowa LHA Meeting John Ernest Winery, Tama, Iowa. 9 July 2005. Submitted by Su Aros, Secretary.

Donuts and beverages provided by our host, Tama Consul **Allan Richards**, greeted the approximately 32 attendees at the ILHA meeting in Tama at the John Ernest Winery. **Bob Stinson**, President, called the meeting to order at 9:40am.

Motion was made, seconded and carried to accept the minutes of the April 9, 2005 meeting as published in the Summer 2005 ILHA Newsletter.

Membership Report

Six new members have been added since the summer newsletter was published, bringing total Iowa membership to 223. Iowa retains the highest headcount for LHA members. Ohio is second.

Treasurer's Report

Joyce Ausberger reported a checking account balance of \$2,701.83 and \$4,559.29 in the investment account. Membership brochures and map packs are available. Silos & Smokestacks organization is sponsoring a program in Maquoketa on July 19, 9am to 4pm. \$25/person. Content to include development of interpretive sites and outdoor exhibits.

State Director's Report

Jeff LaFollette reported that a film crew (State of Iowa film office) made their way across Iowa doing a film on the LH coast to coast highway – for the History Channel it is thought. The Board of Directors meeting minutes from the Ely annual conference were made available to members.

President's Corner

Bob Stinson was proud to report that he signed up one new member since the last meeting. The Fall meeting will be hosted by Cedar County Consul Keith Whitlatch and held at the B&B Restaurant in Clarence.

Business Meeting

- * A certificate of appreciation plaque as outgoing Iowa State Director was presented to **Paul Walker** by **Van Becker** who accepted the award for Paul at the Ely annual conference.
- * Election of a Vice President was tabled until the Autumn meeting. Bob Stinson to write a paragraph for the Autumn newsletter looking for an interested person. A replacement for Jeff LaFollette, who holds this position, is required since Jeff's election as Iowa State Director.
 - * IDOT Meetings: Jeff Benson
- The Scenic Highway application is under analysis. However, the DOT will work with the ILHA to sign the route across the state (pay and

produce the signs and give to counties to install). One route needs to be identified – Jeff proposes staying close to the 1924 route since most of it is paved. Each Consul to look at Jeff's proposal and send edits or approval to Jeff, as well as any historical sites that Consuls recommend for an historic directional sign. It was suggested that the sign template be similar to signage used in Illinois to provide consistency to travelers along the highway. A meeting in August with Jeff Benson, Jeff L., Van and Elaine Ehlert will define the route.

- Corridor Management Plan. Since preservation sometimes conflicts with "good highway design," the IDOT will re-write the policy to allow highway designers to make changes. A draft of the re-write, called a Programmatic Agreement, will be sent to county engineers for review and adoption. The ILHA is also being asked to review meeting late August in Ames with as many consuls as possible present. ILHA understanding of the proposed agreement will facilitate work with county board of supervisors.
- Jeff B. advised consuls to continue with ongoing signing, since there is no timeline for the IDOT project; pole painting should continue.
- Ideally the route will be signed in time for the 2006 National Conference. Mention of this conference to the IDOT might hasten the process.

2006 National Conference Planning

- * Motion made, seconded and carried for a sub-committee of Allan Richards, Lyell Henry and Van Becker to meet and propose a plan for mini or side tours (e.g. Cedar Rapids cultural spots). Comment made that all Lincoln Highway related sites should be incorporated into the all-day tours as opposed to those sites being on a side tour.
- * Conference Guidebook (Paul Walker). Tours will be laid out in a postcard format. Map packs would be available to attendees (at a cost) for additional detail
- * Book Room (Sandy Kelly). Advised to contact Russell Rein, Jess Peterson for past experience and specific details relative to fees charged. A visit to Coe will determine how many tables can be accommodated. This room will be kept secure.
- * Display Room (Sandy Kelly). This area is not secured and would be similar to a mini museum. Elaine Ehlert, Lyell Henry, John Fitzsimmons have displays for this area.
- * Registration Form (**Jeff Benson/Margaret Ebert, Annette** LaFollette). Form is to be ready for inclusion in *Winter* 2006 Forum. When describing the dorm rooms, mention that this would be similar to Elderhostel accommodations.
- * Transportation (Van and Bev Becker). The group agreed that 4 buses should be reserved. Deposit of \$100/bus is required. The association treasurer will be asked to write the check.

(Ramblings, Continued on page 4)

(Ramblings, Continued from page 3)

- * Off-Campus Lodging (Van and Bev Becker). An \$85/night rate was negotiated with the Four Seasons hotel. Other hotels/motels will be mentioned. Attendees are on their own for making reservations at these facilities.
- * Communications (Jeff L., Bob S.). Press releases will be ready within the next couple months and will be forwarded to Consuls for local publications; metro areas to be included. Good contact for TV and radio promos is Roger Reilly. Suggested that the DVD developed by Mike Kelly be sent to TV stations for possible use. Other states should be provided with these materials.
- * Food Service (Bob S.). A Saturday breakfast should be included.
- * Decorations (Annette L.). Joyce has LH logo'd plastic mugs that could be used for centerpieces; work to get flowers donated.
- * Grant Monies / Sponsorships (Jeff L., Catherine Noble). Jeff reports first phase complete for Alliant grant of \$5,000 which would cover bus costs. Eastern Iowa Tourism to be asked for the maximum amount available. Use to cover production costs of program. Jan from Indiana is a good resource for other grant opportunities.
- * Name Tag Design (Paul W.). Group suggested simple red or white or blue lanyards. Having a code on the badges indicating what that person paid for was discussed.
- * Polo Shirt (Van/Bev). LH logo and an Iowa logo planned for front. The LH Trading Post will sell leftovers. It was asked if we could see a sample shirt at the Fall meeting.
- * Promotions/Conference Souvenir (Joyce A.). For the welcome packets we could include booklets: Iowa's Main Street, Seedling Mile in Linn Co., Marsh Rainbow Arch Bridges, Ogden Walking Tours. The can of dehydrated mud was discussed as the souvenir possibly use a fruit jar.
- * Keynote Speaker/Seminars (Jeff B.). Look into a humanities grant to cover costs of a guest speaker if needed. Paul to send Jeff the Ely survey results of suggested seminar topics.
- * Survival Kits (Bob S.). Include Kleenex, gum, moist towelettes, etc. Plan on 200 kits for each tour day. Pass out leftover kits on Saturday.

Consul reports were not made due to the lengthy 2006 conference planning discussions.

The meeting adjourned at 12:53pm.

Following the meeting...

Bob Owens announced that there will be a Lincoln Highway Quilt Show August 27/28 in Jefferson; proud that the LH was chosen for the theme of the show.

Joe Moore of Boone County shared some LH memorabilia – namely an automobile white wall tire (possibly for a 1932 auto) made by the Lincoln Highway Tire Co. and a letter open also with Lin-

coln Highway Tire Co. etched in the handle part (cost to Joe \$37.50) and a mint LH cigar box.

John Fitzsimmons, also of Boone County, displayed another of his sketches - a LH pole painting scene.

Chris Maakestad of Linn County shared plans to turn her family farmhouse on the LH outside of Cedar Rapids into a specialized restaurant.

Lunch was served at the Sweet Repeats restaurant in downtown Tama.

An antique store was part of the restaurant and pro-

of the restaurant and provided the group with some good browsing. Joyce and Bob Ausberger couldn't pass up a LH cigar box – to the tune of \$35 – not in mint condition.

Bob and Lauraetta
Metz opened up the King
Tower cabin for the group
to marvel in the progress
made on the restoration.
Half of the cabin houses the
Mens and Ladies restrooms
and showers. Furnishings are now planned for

the other half of the building, which was thought to be the office for the original 18 cabins

Back to the winery for a tour of the facility and the wine making and bottling process ended the planned activities for the day. What a great success story for the family who joined together in building this business. Local support was evident when the people of the Tama community showed up to help bottle the wine. And the John Ernest Winery became the newest member of the ILHA.



Tama meeting: members with restored King Tower cabin.



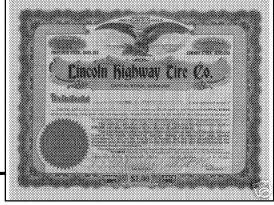
Tama meeting: John Ernest Winery.

(Spare Tire, Continued from page 2)

suited for the wall in the den than the financial

portfolio. LH fans are undoubtedly the buyers of these certificates.

It was on our beloved highway, but the building is now a memory. Finding actual tires, letter openers, post cards and stock certificates keep the memory alive . . . that and a little bit of research.



The President's Corner

By Bob Stinson, ILHA President

By now you all have heard of the passing of our good friend and Carroll County Consul Norma Berns. Norma went home to be with the Lord on Friday, August 12th. Norma was a person you liked from the first moment you met her. Her sweet smile and gentle spirit made her a person you wanted to spend time with, and when you spent time with her, you learned a lot about Carroll County history and the Lincoln Highway. Her knowledge of both was vast.

Like the true historian she was, Norma loved to share that knowledge with everyone through the many articles she wrote. Whoever takes on the job of new Carroll County Consul will have some big shoes to fill, for the way in which she performed her duties was an example of a job well done. Her love of life, the Lord, her family and things historical was evident in all she said and did. The Lincoln Highway Association is a better group because of Norma Berns.

As ILHA President, I say thank you Norma, for all your time and contributions to the association. As friend, I say not goodbye, but farewell until we meet again.

On to some association business. With the promotion of Jeff LaFollette to ILHA State Director, the position of ILHA Vice President comes open. Now is the time for one of our members to step forward and take on that job. The position of Vice President is actually the easiest job on the board of directors. I held it for two years under past President Mike Kelly and in those two years, I didn't have to do a thing. At the end of my term in 2006, the Vice President will take over the duties of presiding at the meetings and serving as spokesperson for the ILHA. You also get to shoot your mouth off every quarter in the Presi-

dent's Corner (some day I hope to get some floor to go with my corner).

To make our association a better organization and for the longevity of the LHA, I call upon someone to step forward and take this position. You may contact me personally at any time, or make yourself known at the general membership meeting in Clarence.

Another position that needs to be

filled is that of editor of our fine newsletter Along The Lincoln Highway. Paul Walker has done an exemplary job in this capacity but with his new career duties and his move to Minnesota (on the Jefferson Highway, I might add) he no longer has time to serve as editor. Any individual interested in taking on this most important task may contact either myself or Paul.

That's all for now. I hope to see everyone in Clarence when Cedar County Consul Keith Whitlatch hosts our fall meeting and tour.

Happy Highways,

Вов

Traditions Live On.

arrison County Consul Elaine Ehlert sent photos and a story from *Logan Observer* of the 4th of July parade that took place on a nice, sunny day in 1924.

The article could have been written in 2005, describing the parade through the downtown,

and congratulating the parade committee for their hard work.

Following the parade, denizens enjoyed a pro-

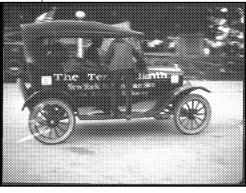


gram in the park with band music (have you seen Logan's band shell?) and recitations by locals, including a talk by W.S. Lewis on the accomplishments of the state of Iowa. "He also called attention to the need for law and order, the upholding of the constitution and standing by the landmarks of our nation's progress."

Another Independence Day tradition was the baseball game between Logan and Woodbine, won 2-0 by the local team in 1924.

Most important, Logan was visited by the ten-millionth Ford that afternoon on its trip

from York to San Francisco, and we are grateful at least one citizen was quick with camera in hand. L



The Counterintuition of Good Road Engineering.

The answer to traffic congestion in most towns is to put roads on a diet. By taking lanes away, traffic slows down, drivers feel safer as they get closer to the car in front, and the road will actually carry more vehicles more efficiently."

Dan Burden, founder of the non-profit Walkable Communities, has other traffic-calming remedies, including making intersections smaller, constructing roundabouts, building boulevards divided by medians and designing places where people walk, bike and use public transit.

Mr. Burden holds workshops on fixing traffic problems across the U.S. and Canada.

- Q. What do you call your job?
- A. I'm a specialist in converting towns that were overdesigned for cars back into town for people.
- Q. In terms of traffic, the engineering approach is to make things bigger, wider and faster.
- A. That's correct.
- Q. You are showing that the conventional approach is often counterproductive. Give me an example.
- A. By not moving vehicles as fast, by paying attention to intersections, by controlling access and turns, roads actually move more traffic, are safer and are more attractive.

Here's an example. The typical road we've been building for a long time is five lanes. The fifth lane, where people make left turns, is called a scramble lane. By getting the driver making a left turn out of the picture, the thought was to greatly increase road capacity and reduce crashes.

It was a mistake. By making it possible to turn left into every single driveway, we created incredible friction in the street. It reduced the carrying capacity of the road 30 percent and increased the number of crashes. A better idea is to build boulevards with divided medians. A typical boulevard has an opening every 660 feet and a lane to allow people to make left turns.

- Q. Are some cities downsizing their roads?
- A. They are. We call them "road diets," where we take away lanes. In some cities like Hartford, we made a list of 12 roads to go on a road diet and lose some lanes. Six are done and on all of them traffic has improved.

Typically before a road diet, speeds are 10 miles per hour too fast, which means it's not as safe, it's harder to get out of driveways, it's harder to maneuver. The road diet gets

down to the right number of lanes, and the speeds come down. In Hartford, the average speed has come down 6 mph on neighborhood streets. It's so much easier to get across a two-lane road instead of a fourlane road.

- Q. What are other ways to solve traffic congestion?
- A. Pay attention to the intersections. We build big roads that build up huge volumes of traffic at the intersections. The typical response of the engineers is to widen the entire road. Then intersections become so wide that the traffic cycle is longer and we lose efficiency.

Another solution is a roundabout, where we have more volume per lane and therefore keep the intersection much more compact. We can keep crossing distances down to 14 feet, and with no signal to hold up cars.

- Q. You say speeding traffic increases congestion.
- A. We actually lose capacity on a road if we design it for high speed. If you are in an urban area with a lot of driveways and intersections, you get your best capacity at somewhere around 30 mph. But we've designed places where the running speed is 40, 45, even 50 mph. When you drive at a slower and more uniform rate, you need less space between cars. Since drivers feel more comfortable, you can move more cars through than if the cars are traveling faster and require more space per car.
- Q. Presumably not everyone agrees with you.
- A. Many people don't understand how traffic works. They think if you have a street where people aren't driving as fast and it's not as wide, that traffic will come into their neighborhood streets. That's not what traffic does. Traffic wants to stay on the significant road and does not want to go into a neighborhood unless it gets strangled at an intersection and gets forced there.

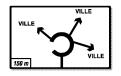
On a four-lane in Missoula, pedestrian fatalities compelled the Council to put the street on a road diet and reduce it to two lanes. The business owners got nervous because of the misperception that the diet would reduce traffic. It won't reduce traffic, just move it slower, and when traffic moves slower people will see stores better.

Resistance to these projects can come from many places. **L**

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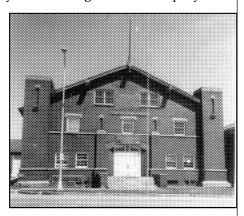
Lyell Henry

GREAT GRADES.

any people in Boone falsely assume that the old, demolished Lincoln Armory was named after the Lincoln Highway. Long before the Iowa National Guard was organized, Boone had a military company. It was organized by James Rush Lincoln, a Virginian who had served as an officer in the Confederate Army in the Civil War and for a time was a member of General Lee's staff. After the war, he came to Boone County, purchased a farm in Harrison Township and started farming.

Some time later, he was employed in the county treasurer's office. He promptly organized a military company which was commonly called the Lincoln Guards, a name that was applied to the local company for a great many years and long after the company was

incorporate into the Iowa Guard. Lincoln was a military expert and his method of teaching military tactics in Iowa gave him a reputation yond the borders of Iowa. President McKinley appointed him



brigadier general in the volunteer army during the war with Spain.

When the armory was built, it was called the Lincoln Armory in honor General Lincoln. **L**

Thanks to Joe Moore, Boone County Consul.

Happy 80th Birthday, Shady Oaks!

Shady Oaks—an open air museum with historical landscape and trees, loop road, 1925 restored cabin, original office residence and dayroom. The Iowa Hawkeye Division of the Mercedes Benz Car Club recently toured the

Big Tree-house and viewed the C a m p - grounds, now 80 y e a r s y o u n g! Thanks to proprietor Mary Gift.



ILHA Returns to Cedar County for Meeting and Tour.

he autumn ILHA board meeting and tour will be held for the first time in Cedar County on Saturday, October 9th. Cedar County Consul Keith Whitlatch has planned a fun, informative day, kicked off at 9:00 a.m. at the B&B Bakery

and Restaurant on the Lincoln Highway-north side-in Clarence. Find them by the "OPEN" flag and flower box outside the door. The day's business commences at 9:30.

The place-formerly Le Hi's-has been a restaurant for many years, and the chef/owner will visit with us on its history, complete with photos. Attendees can order off the menu for lunch.

For the afternoon tour, Keith is organizing a visit to the restored Paige Hotel in Mechanicsville, as well as Monument Square in Tipton to view the new military memorial, and inside the Carnegie Library to see their Grant Wood lithographs and paintings. He's also researching the Bloomington-to-Marion Road, Bloomington later becoming Muscatine. "The first concrete pavement poured on any road in this part of Iowa on the Muscatine to Marion route about 1918 to 1920" [Cedar County Historical Reviewl.

Keith can explain how a road marked in 1836 later became part of the Lincoln Highway. This road runs through the center of the old village of Shiloh, which is where Keith and his wife live. **L**

See YOU on the Lincoln Highway! This issue's new members...

Allen Anneberg Scott Bachmann **Edward Calvert** David and Elaine Haren **Roland Herrmann** Alicia Dee Jackson John Ernest Vineyard & Winery Urban Kunkel

Jill Lutz

W. Ross Marshall Don Sandra McQuillen **Cathie Nichols**

Colin Sandell **Dorothy Scott**

Peter Youngren / Carroll Today Carroll, Carroll Co.L

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Marshalltown, Marshall Co.^L Boone, Boone Co.L

Mission, KS

lowa City, Johnson Co. DeWitt, Clinton Co.L Cedarburg, WI Ames, Story Co.L

^Llowa Lincoln Highway County

In This Issue...

A Loss in Carroll County.



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