



# Along The Lincoln Highway



Volume 24, Number 1

Spring 2019

## THE NEWSLETTER OF THE IOWA LINCOLN HIGHWAY ASSOCIATION

### President's Corner By Cathie Nichols, President

I hope that by the time this newsletter hits print that we will be over the worst of this "Polar Vortex" weather. Things came to a standstill this last week of January, with temps here in DeWitt at a record low of -31 degrees. I'm ready for spring!

The good news is that ILHA membership is up three members this past quarter. The bad news is that membership is declining (and some of us, myself included, aren't getting any younger), so we have developed a committee to find a way to increase our membership. Some suggestions from the committee:

- If there is a college or university in your county, visit the history department to see if they would be interested in a National membership. The *Forum*, its articles, and also the state newsletter might encourage interest in history students.
- Visit libraries in your county to discuss the benefits of National membership and having the *Forum* available in their reading racks.
- Ask to leave back issues of the *Forum* in waiting rooms of doctor's offices. Beauty shops, hospitals, etc. (Bob Owens has been the leader on this.) Someone might pick one up and spark an interest in our organization.

Other suggestions were to modernize the header of the newsletter, or make a video for YouTube. The tally of new members

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### Military Convoy Reenactment Submitted By Harlan Quick, Marshall County

As we prepare for two reenactments of the 1919 Military Convoy on the Lincoln Highway this summer, we want to share this article from the State Center Enterprise, July 31, 1919.

#### MOTOR TRAIN ATTRACTS CROWDS Many Gather Along Highway To See Government Transport Convoy Pass Through Town

*Although the county officials had been spending considerable effort in putting the south county road in conditions for the passing of the motor truck train last Friday, and unofficial announcement had been made that they were to travel over that road, the offica's in charge of the train chose to stay on the "official" highway and the train passed through this city over the road at the north edge of town early last Friday morning. Quite a number of local people gathered along the highway and watched the speeding trucks pass through the city.*

*The military motor vehicle of the two companies numbered fifty-eight all told, including five passenger cars, two ambulances, six motorcycles, forty-three trucks, including tank trucks and two trailers. In addition there was an engineering unit with three trucks,*

*Continued on Page 5*

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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.

## Clinton County Report By Cathie Nichols, President

It's too cold to get out and work on much, so I'm focusing on getting my four new members (see President's Corner) by signing up all the libraries in Clinton County. I'm going to offer each of them a free one-year membership (that I'll pay for) in hopes that they'll see the benefits and sign up on their own next year. I'm leaving at each library a copy of the *Forum*, one of our newsletters, some of the Junior Explorer booklets, and membership fliers. I know we have four libraries in the county at least.

I have also signed up Rita Hart, our former State Senator, who ran for Lieutenant Governor alongside Fred Hubbell. Since she's between engagements (so to speak) until she can run for Congress again, and the fact that she's from Clinton County and has shown interest in the trail project for the old highway, I think she will be a great addition to our team.

**L**



*Solid Ice and Other Tales from the Heartland* is a book about life in Iowa in the 1920s, driving truck on the Lincoln Highway in the 1930s, and other stories from a time gone by.

Available for purchase on [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com).

## Stay in the Know

Visit our website to read the minutes from our winter meeting.

[www.iowalincolnhighway.org/latest-news](http://www.iowalincolnhighway.org/latest-news)

will be printed in the newsletter every quarter so we can monitor our progress.

The goal is for each county consul to sign up four new members by the next meeting in Belle Plaine in April. Try to encourage National membership, but if someone wants to just become a state member, we'll be happy to sign them up. The membership committee consists of Bob and Joyce Ausberger, Jan Gammon, and Cathie Nichols. If you have ideas, or would like to be on the committee, please contact one of us. Let's help our organization grow!

The Jeff Benson Endowment Fund, which contributes to the ILHA, is soliciting donations to help it grow. Margaret Elbert, widow of Jeff Benson, will match any donation made this year, up to \$5,000. Donations are eligible for tax credit. The fund currently stands at \$14,000. Please get your donations in this year and double the money.

The ILHA website needs your county's events. Please get them to Meredith at [mponder@prrcd.org](mailto:mponder@prrcd.org) to be added to the calendar. The *Forum* still needs articles from members. The last issue included one from me and one from Lyell Henry. Get those articles in, folks.

Harrison County received good news that the new divided Highway 30 will go past the Harrison County Welcome Center. If you have never been there, it's a must see.

King Tower Café in Tama is applying to be on the National Register of Historic Places as a Historic District.

We have lots of exciting things going on. I hope to see you at the next meeting in Belle Plaine!

**L**

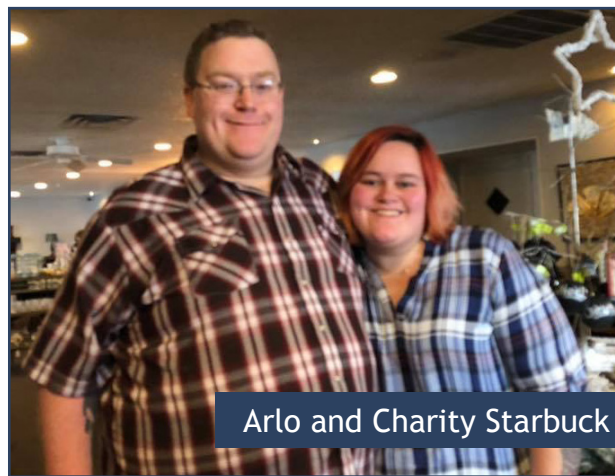
## Meet the New Operators for Reed-Niland Corner

The new operators for the Reed-Niland Corner in Colo are Charity and Arlo Starbuck. Charity has a business entrepreneurship degree and is working on her B.A. Previously, she ran the café in the Boone DMACC campus and helped start Whatcha Smokin' in Luther.

They have planned a retro type menu including burgers, malts, pie, a full breakfast menu, and dinners including steaks, chops, fish, and pasta.

In the future, they may add a smoker and offer barbeque. Plans are to open March 1, but they will hold a grand opening after that. Watch our website for more information.

**L**



Arlo and Charity Starbuck

## Welcome new members of the Iowa Lincoln Highway Association!

Carl Anthony of Brooklyn, Iowa  
The City of Grand Junction

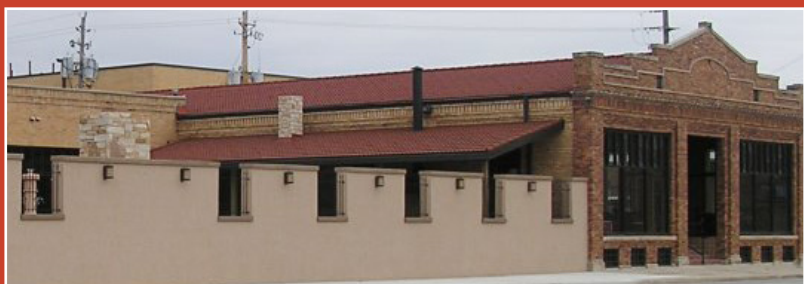
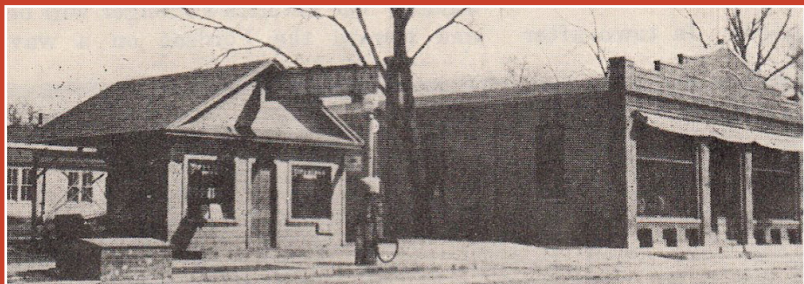


**Carroll County Update**  
**By Barbara Hackfort**  
**Carroll County Consul**

The corner of Highway 30 and Carroll Street has seen many changes over the years, from car dealerships to the present-day winery. The intersection is located where the original Lincoln Highway turned south to cross the railroad tracks, then turned west to intersect with Highway 71, in the vicinity where Lincoln Highway tourist cabins were located.

W.A. Swaney began the construction of the complex in 1913. The opening of the building closely coincided with the announcement of the route of the Lincoln Highway that same year. Swaney, the first Lincoln Highway Consul for Carroll County, sold the dealership to "Mort" Mackey, who also served as a Lincoln Highway Consul in 1924. At this time the business was listed as the "control" measuring mileage from the towns east and west of Carroll. Mackey would sell the business to McCoy Motors, who would add the double canopy, brick pillars, and tile roof in 1931. Wittrock Motors would restore the building in 1996. Today the complex is the Santa Maria Winery.

**L**



Photos and Research by Vicki Gach

**LHHB Update**  
**By Jan Gammon, LHHB Coordinator**  
**Prairie Rivers of Iowa**

Things are going well at the Byway office. We applied for, and received, an extension for Youngville's oil room restoration project. We also received a grant for design and printing cost about the 1919 Motor Convoy, the Lincoln Highway, and Mamie and Dwight Eisenhower. We have applied for a Tama County Community Foundation Grant for an interpretive panel about Henry Ostermann, the LHA's first Field Secretary who lost his life on the high, sharp curves east of Montour. The panel will be put in a nearby cemetery. The Tama Bridge project is coming along and some early engineering work being done this winter, with the bulk of the work being done this spring and summer.

Jan Gammon, Byway coordinator, will be making presentations at City Council and Board of Supervisor meetings this year. In January, she visited with Greene County Board of Supervisors, Grand Junction City Council, and Scranton City Council. She had to reschedule time with Jefferson due to weather. In February, she hopes to attend Boone County, City of Boone, and City of Ogden- depending on the weather. You are invited to attend the meetings as well and show your support.

We have been doing further research for the American Society of Civil Engineering's Historic Landmark Award and hope to have a third draft completed soon. There are several more grants we are researching and applying for, so stay tuned as more projects unfold.

**L**

one carrying a pontoon bridge with a trailer. Each of the two companies was a complete unit up to war strength. The trucks each contained a compliment of from three to a half-dozen men. Each company had its ambulance, dispatch bearers in motorcycles, a truck repair shop, and gas and oil tank truck carrying a quantity of heavy timbers and planks to bridge bad spots and (to) strengthen weak bridges.

Because of the dust the trucks traveled far apart in the country, the train spreading out over a distance of five to ten miles. All the trucks are traveling on solid tires and the rate of travel is not to exceed ten miles an hour.

Recruiting for motor transport and tank corps is being emphasized on the tour. The recruiting is in charge of Captain Murphy. Such invitations as "We want good men. Be one of the 8,000 men for the motor corps moving the army," were painted on the bodies of the trucks.

Commercial interests were well represented with the train. The Goodyear contingent, including the band, numbered nineteen people in charge of C.C. Wittoeft, assisted by Carl H. Stbig. The trucks carrying the commercial detachments brought the total number of vehicles up to nearly seventy. The Firestone and Goodrich tire companies had representatives and service men with the convoy as have also the Dixon Crucible Company and the Packard Motor Car Company. These representatives are making observations along the trip and are taking notes on tire and fuel consumption and other statistical data.

**L**

## Mystery Place By Mike Kelly

### This Issue's Mystery Place



It's a ghost,  
but not  
necessarily  
paranormal.  
What is it?



### Last Issue's Mystery Place



This is the Bridge located on the "Historic Loop" between State Center and Marshall-town—several miles east of State Center.

If you think you can identify the Mystery Place, send an email to [lincolnhighway@prcd.org](mailto:lincolnhighway@prcd.org) or call 515-232-0048. Call with the correct information and we will take your name and contact information. We then will hold a random drawing for a winner to receive a 2013 Iowa Lincoln Highway Map Pack! This is to accommodate for the varying time and travel the postal system can take and to give all a fair try.



**Alex Park**  
**Submitted By Cathie Nichols, President**

This article on Alex Park is from a Wheatland History book, found in the Clinton County Historical Museum. It is believed to have been written by Elmer Ketelsen, a former Iowa Lincoln Highway Association member. Text in parentheses is Cathie Nichols.

*It has been a very long time since Alex Park provided entertainment and convenience for touring vacationers, but some of our older residents still remember it fondly.*

*L.E. Alexander began the venture by showing moving pictures in Lowden Cedar County and then in Wheatland (Clinton County), sometime during World War I. At first they were "silent; and then "talkies" starring Douglas Fairbanks, Mary Pickford, and the like.*

*Soon after the Lincoln Highway was completed through Clinton and Cedar Counties and in the waning days of the Schuetzen Park, the Alexanders started their new project. They purchased some timberland on Walraven's Island midway between Calamus and Wheatland. The park would have been on the land between the old and new highways (the 1913 and 1928 alignments) and a bit to the south.*

*They built a home, a log cabin store, and a small swinging footbridge across a stream that ran through the property. After clearing away brush and some small trees, they built a dance pavilion which hosted some popular name bands of the time, including Wheatland's own Whizz-Bangs. There was room for a baseball field and bleachers, a parking lot for cars, and their own electric power plant.*

*In a very short time, it became a very popular place for celebrations, picnics, and baseball games. It also provided a resting spot for travelers to camp, lay in supplies, and, maybe, do a little fishing.*

*Weekends would see visitors from Clinton, Cedar Rapids, and the Quad-Cities. Attendance grew steadily when the Alexanders added new attractions, such as a merry-go-round, owned and operated by Herman Martens of Wheatland; and a big aerial swing made of the bodies of old Model-T and Ford Automobiles. They named it "The Flying Fords." Herman was Ralph Martens' grandfather.*

*Mr. Alexander continued to show his movies, which was later taken over by Louis Klahn. Alex Park continued to flourish until Mr. Alexander became ill and passed away. His wife sold the park, and eventually, all the buildings were torn down. Maybe it wasn't Disney World, but it provided people with a lot of fun, and memories.*

**L**



Nancy & Ronny Hauser

Hours:  
M-F 10:30 AM - 5:30 PM  
Sat 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM  
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**The James H. Andrew Railroad  
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Monday - Friday 10 am - 4 pm

Saturday Noon - 4 pm

Closed Sunday

**May 23 through October 31**

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Visit one of Iowa's most interesting railroad collections

Wineries on the Lincoln  
By Meredith Ponder,  
Newsletter Editor & Webmaster

Are you interested in exploring the Lincoln Highway through local wineries? This is a list of privately owned establishments that will give you an opportunity for a weekend getaway with friends or loved ones on our beautiful, highway. Find your new favorite wine to sip on—sweet or dry—the choice is yours!

**Loess Hills Vineyard & Winery**  
[www.loesshillsvineyardandwinery.com](http://www.loesshillsvineyardandwinery.com)  
Crescent, IA

**Santa Maria Vineyard & Winery**  
[www.santamariawinery.com](http://www.santamariawinery.com)  
Carroll, IA

**Rock Garden Vineyard**  
Boone, IA

**Prairie Moon Winery**  
[prairiemoonwinery.com](http://prairiemoonwinery.com)  
Ames, IA

**Wine Styles**  
[winestyles.com/cedarrapids](http://winestyles.com/cedarrapids)  
Cedar Rapids, IA

**Kirkwood Winery**  
[www.kirkwood.edu/winery](http://www.kirkwood.edu/winery)  
Cedar Rapids, IA

**Glyn Mawr Vineyard and Winery**  
[glynmawr.com](http://glynmawr.com)  
Mt Vernon, IA

**1st Avenue Wine House**  
[1stavenuewinehouse.com](http://1stavenuewinehouse.com)  
Cedar Rapids, IA

**Tycoga Vineyard & Winery**  
[www.tycoga.com](http://www.tycoga.com)  
DeWitt, IA

**Wide River Winery**  
[www.wideriverwinery.com](http://www.wideriverwinery.com)  
Clinton, IA

Did I miss your favorite Lincoln Highway winery? Let me know by emailing me at [mponder@prrcd.org](mailto:mponder@prrcd.org).

**L**

Excerpts from “Report on the Trans-Continental Trip”  
D.D. Eisenhower—November 3, 1919  
Rock Island Arsenal in Rock Island, Illinois

*“I was detailed for duty as observer on Trans-Continental Motor Truck Trip on the day that the train left its initial point (Washington D.C.).... I joined the train at Frederick, MD, the first night’s stop out of Washington.*

*....The Lincoln Highway was almost constantly followed after meeting same at Gettysburg, PA. The road through Maryland was of concrete and excellent in all ways, except that it is a little narrow for convoy work. Ten miles of dirt road from Emmitsburg, MD to Gettysburg had several old, low covered wooden bridges. They were too low to admit passage of high topped vehicles.*

*Road through Pennsylvania was almost entirely tarvia, and very good, though at some points, poorly graded. Through Ohio and Indiana a great portion was paved and macadamized. In Illinois train started on dirt roads, and practically no more pavement was encountered until reaching California.*

*The dirt roads of Iowa are well graded and are good in dry weather; but would be impossible in wet weather. In Nebraska, the first real sand was encountered.... Wyoming roads... are poor dirt ones, with weak culverts and bridges. In one day 14 of these were counted, broken through by the train.*

*...In Western Utah,... the road becomes almost impassable to heavy vehicles. ...the road is one succession of dust, ruts, pits, and holes. This stretch was not improved in any way, and consisted only of a track across the desert... In observing the effect of the different types of road ....rough roads, sandy ones, or on steep grades the truck train would have practically no value as a cargo carrier.*

*...Some of the good roads are too narrow... The truck train was well received at all points along the route. It seemed that there was a great deal of sentiment for the improving of highways, and, from the standpoint of promoting this sentiment, the trip was an undoubted success.”*

**L**

**The next ILHA meeting will be April 13, 2019 in  
Belle Plaine, Iowa, at the Belle Plaine Area Museum.  
Refreshments at 9:00 AM with general meeting to follow.**

Coming from the east on Highway 30—turn south on V66 and go until you are in the heart of Belle Plaine at the intersection of V66 and Highway 21. Go one block south to Main St (12th St) and turn left onto Main St and head east 2 blocks. You will find the Museum in the 3rd block on the south side of the street.

Coming from the west on Highway 30—turn south onto Highway 21 and follow it into Belle Plaine. It turns into 13th St. Go to the intersection of V66 and 13th St. Turn 1 block south to Main St (12th St) and then turn left onto Main St and head east 2 blocks. You will find the Museum in the 3rd block on the south side of the street.

There should be parking available in front of the building or across the street at the library.

The group will be ordering lunch from the Lincoln Cafe.

Upcoming Iowa LHA Meetings

April 13: Belle Plaine, General  
July 13: Harrison Co., Business  
October 12: Clinton Co., General

**FIRST CLASS**

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Here

[www.iowalincolnhighway.org](http://www.iowalincolnhighway.org)



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