

Along the Lincoln Highway



**The Newsletter of the Iowa Lincoln Highway Association
Winter 2003 Volume 8 Issue 4**

Reed/Niland's Corner Grand Opening.

*By Joe Harper, Reed/Niland Project Leader
Colo, Iowa.*

You are invited! The Grand Opening and Dedication of the restored Reed/Niland Corner will be **July 11, 2004** at Colo.

The Iowa Lincoln Highway Association has identified the Reed/Niland Corner as one of seven key sites for presenting the history of the Lincoln Highway in Iowa. The Reed/Niland Corner was found to be the most intact and best preserved commercial "one-stop" sites on the highway in Iowa and possibly the entire country.

Reed/Niland Corner provides a self-guided walking tour of the renovation project. On the pathways you can read its history and view the actual motel facilities and gas station, full of period artifacts. Complete your tour by walking into the Niland's Café to experience a large selection of fine foods in a 1940's atmosphere. Dine at the counter, in the large corner booth or a table next to the 1939 Cadillac. While you wait, view the large photo and video display of the original site and actual Lincoln Highway construction.

The Grand Opening will be from 1:30 to 4:30 p.m. Sunday, July 11, with a Dedication Ceremony from 3:00 to 3:30 p.m. at the site. Visitors are asked to park at the high school, visible from U.S. 30, to alleviate congestion at the corner. Handicapped accessible shuttle buses will run continually from there to Reed/Niland Corner until 4:30. A golf cart will be available for those needing assistance at the site. Guided tours will be conducted at the filling station all afternoon. L

Youngville: Life Goes On.

THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

by Mike Kelly

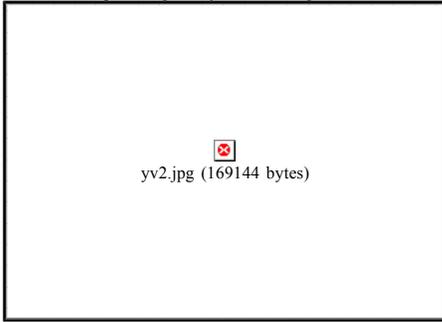
On May 1, 2004, at approximately 11:00 pm, a car was seen speeding out of Youngville's driveway and heading east on U.S. 30. Minutes later, a fire was reported by a passing state trooper. As National Arson Week officially began at midnight, three Lincoln Highway landmarks burned to the ground.

There are two questions that are inevitably addressed at any Lincoln Highway gathering. The first is usually a spirited discussion of the route of the original Lincoln Highway, and the second "Where were those old cabins? What ever happened to them?"

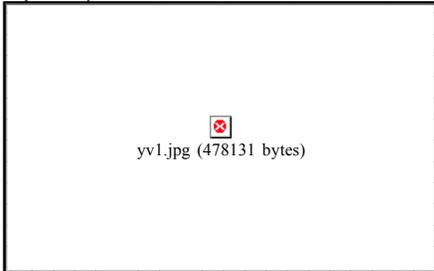
A 14-foot mural to be unveiled this summer inside the Youngville Café will answer the Benton County portion of that latter question. Despite the fire, our plans continue to create a Cabin Court representation to address this on a statewide basis.

The history of tourist lodging and the cabin court's role is a crucial part of the Lincoln Highway. The Youngville interpretive site is where the motor court story will be told... in addition to a few words about

roadside eating and especially homemade pies.



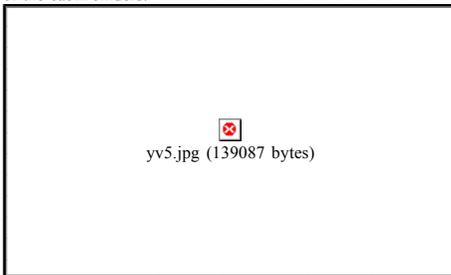
The mandate to locate, preserve, and protect the last vestiges of Lincoln Highway cabin courts is being addressed to varying degrees in all of Iowa's Lincoln Highway counties, and the Youngville site could help to unify these efforts.



The café was not damaged and on the following Monday morning, as the fire marshal investigated what was soon labeled as arson, workers from Roster Masonry were donating their time and expertise and began a major facelift on the Café's exterior: applying a special elastic-type paint to the stucco and finishing all the red trim [photo].



The café, fortunately unscathed, was able to open on schedule Tuesday, May 4th, with all three local news affiliates covering the story. The farmer's market season opened May 28th with the ominous backdrop of the cabin cinders.



Ironically, the unsolicited and unplanned extra publicity hopefully will be the impetus for additional volunteers and support locally as well as statewide. It was reassuring to receive messages of support from Lincoln Highway members, local pie lovers as well as groups like the Ames preservation group who suffered a similar arson set-back at their Bauge cabin this year.

We are vigilant in identifying threats to Lincoln Highway landmarks and implementing strategies to protect them. Unfortunately, there is no defense against random acts of arson. When that occurs, we are all victims.

As of now, the cabin court remains an active crime scene, with the Sheriff's Department following up on potential leads. Make no mistake—this is a major setback. But in the meantime, a hopeful next step emerges.

After debating whether to attempt to rebuild replicas, a local farmer called to offer a cabin he had on his property. We are looking into whether this original Lincoln Highway cabin, moved to his property over 50 years ago, might be the first step of rebuilding the dream. L



Have Spare Tire,
Will Travel.

Summer has sprung, and it's once again travel and tourism season. Most important, it's time for a road trip along the Lincoln Highway. No respectable road trip is complete without a short spin along our Seedling Mile. This year be ready for a pleasant surprise.

Here in the middle of 2004, new memorials to the Highway are rare—so keep your eyes open and camera ready.

At the west end of our Seedling Mile stands a new monument, complete with the traditional Lincoln "L" and a brass plaque telling the story of the Seedling Mile on this site. The marker notes the important dates and provides a brief description of the concrete. It rests on a piece of concrete curb removed from along the Lincoln route during previous construction. The site is landscaped with crushed rock and chipped bark for weed control.

"One monument is not enough!" you say. Well, continue on. As your summer tour travels west toward Cedar Rapids, 4 1/2 miles further west, watch for the abandoned dead end piece of Lincoln Highway near the corner of Lincoln Heights and Wilder Drive SW.

The Linn Co. Engineers have been busy this spring, and they built a faux bridge here of scavenged bridge pieces. We understand these bridge rails came from the Lincoln Highway near Abbe Creek School just west of Mt. Vernon. A "Bridge to the Past," this new bridge also has a stone with the Lincoln "L" and brass plaque. The landscaping is just being finished as this text is prepared. See the photo.

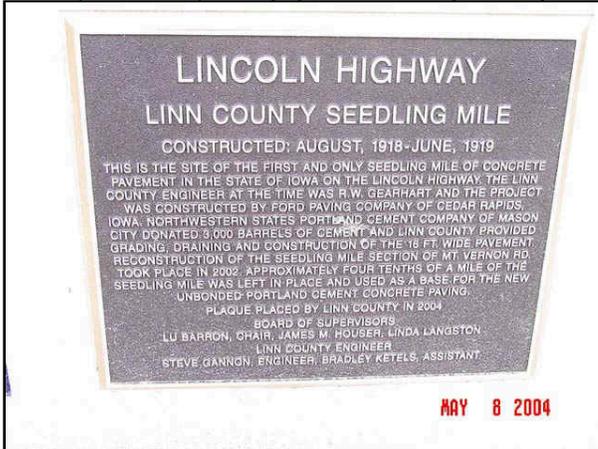


That makes two memorials to the Lincoln Highway this spring! And both arrived at no cost to you or to the Lincoln Highway Association, and for that we are grateful.

Linn County constructed these monuments based on the five-year-old agreement between the County and the Iowa Lincoln Highway Association when they wanted to tear up and "improve" the Seedling Mile and the surrounding county highway. The ILHA acceded to the destruction of the original paving for the welfare and safety of drivers. Then and now, the Lincoln Highway Association has stood for better roads, and better roads are safer roads. Creation of the two memorials is a concession made by Linn County.

However... ya gotta keep an eye on 'em all the time!

The County used identically-worded plaques at both sites. Despite the bridge site being 4-1/2 miles west of the Seedling Mile, its plaque also states, "This is the site..."



Unfortunately this is a 4-1/2 mile historical and geographic error. After a brief, intense round of correspondence with Linn County engineers and elected officials, we have been assured by the Chair of the Linn County Board of Supervisors that the engineers will be instructed to correct the bridge plaque.

As with all political promises, we will monitor progress toward a timely correction and resolution of this discrepancy.

In the meanwhile, plan a visit to our two new markers. L

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

Larry & Vicki Anderson Clarence, Cedar Co.^L

Steve Kroeger Casey, Gruthie Co.

Bob Merritt Carroll, Carroll County Co.^L

Kathy Rohling Wheatland, Clinton Co.^L

Central Iowa V-8 Club Adel, Dallas Co.

^L*Iowa Lincoln Highway County*

Ramblings Along the Lincoln Highway.
Minutes of the Spring 2004 Iowa LHA Meeting

Community Center, Colo, Iowa.
10 April 2004.
Submitted by Su Aros, Secretary.

Approximately 31 members and guests attended the April 10 ILHA Spring meeting held at the Community Center in Colo, Iowa. Our hosts, Joe and Phyllis Harper, provided coffee and pastries.

President **Mike Kelly** called the meeting to order at 9:33am. Minutes of the January 10, 2004 meeting held in State Center were approved as published in the Spring 2004 ILHA Newsletter.

Treasurer's Report

Joyce Ausberger reported a checking account balance of \$3,033.55 (\$1200 of which is held for the Ogden walking tour booklet due out in June); savings account \$4,695.68. In 2003 monies made from logo'd merchandise sales totaled \$1,163. Financial records are available for anyone to audit. Hundreds of LH brochures are available, and are yearning to be distributed.

Membership Report

Cecil Stewart reported Iowa has 257 national members and 38 Iowa members. Approximately 343 newsletters were mailed including 20 to the LHA national officers and 21 complimentary copies to historical societies, city governments, etc. Membership dues do not cover the costs of newsletter mailings. ILHA receives a 'good deal' from the printer and of course the much appreciated volunteer services of the **Bev and Van Becker** in this effort.

State Director's Report

* **Paul Walker** presented a 2004 Lincoln Highway calendar to **Jeff & Annette LaFollette**, for traveling the most miles to attend the meeting.

* Forms were distributed to all county consuls to document activities for the year for the annual report.

* Paul has extra copies of the National Conference brochure for those who did not receive theirs.

* The California LHA is conducting four tours in 2004 (April thru Oct) covering various sections of the LH in CA.

* Lapsed membership report received. County consuls are to follow up and these people re-signed.

* Ohio LHA newsletter contains info on scenic byway status. The ODOT judges on 6 characteristics: archeological, cultural, historical, natural beauty, recreational uses, and scenic areas.

* Updates for 2006 National Conference: tentative tours outline east to Clinton and west to Ames, and will include a "mad dash" tour through western Iowa; haven't signed contract with Coe College yet due to insurance clause in contract - working with national organization to finalize. Paul polled the group for speakers / topic ideas - guest, seminars (single or panels), entertaining, inspirational.

Discussion Items

* Scenic/Historic Byway Designation Application: **Jeff Benson/Catherine Noble** reported application is due October 1st. County Consuls' help is requested in securing Letters of Support from all city and local governments, tourism bureaus, etc. Consuls are encouraged to get on agendas at city meetings to solicit support for this exercise. A "standard" letter will be drafted and sent by Jeff and Catherine to Consuls for use in this effort. The goal is to get this designation for the highway from state line to state line, not a section here or there.

* NPS draft study complete documenting findings and recommendation by NPS on how the federal government should be involved in the future of the highway. Comments from anyone who received or requested copy of draft study should be sent to NPS and Jeff to use in recommending next steps. Jeff will bring recommendation to the National Conference in June. The original four objectives outlined by the Iowa NPS Committee were 1) Mark the route, 2) Tell the Story, 3) Save the Road, and 4) Honor Lincoln. The goal is completion by 2009, which is the 200th anniversary of Lincoln's birthday.

* 2004 National Conference in Chester, WV: **Bob and Joyce Ausberger** are taking their motor coach, leaving on June 13. They are looking for riders.

* Future meetings: June in Ames; October in Des Moines. 2005 meetings will be held in the eastern half of state to prepare for the 2006 conference: April 2005 meeting set for Clinton County; October 2005 for Cedar County. Board meeting and tour at both meetings. Spring 2006 meeting at Coe College, site of 2006 conference in Cedar Rapids, Linn County.

* "A Place on the Highway" slide presentation was given by **Lyell Henry** - celebrating the story of Reed-Niland's corner.

County Consul Reports

Clinton - New Consul **Jeff LaFollette** has been making contacts with tourism bureaus, DeWitt City Council, and Chambers.

Cedar - no report

Linn - **Van Becker** reports the Lincoln Cafe in Mt. Vernon, the Iowa lunch stop on last year's coast-to-coast anniversary tour, will be the subject of an article in the May issue of Oprah's magazine *O*. The spring issue of our newsletter, *Along the Lincoln Highway*, achieved a milestone when Paul Walker transmitted it electronically to the Grant Wood Area Agency in Cedar Rapids for printing, which should result in higher quality photos. A "Bridgethe Past" - Linn County is building a bridge on an abandoned alignment of the LH from vintage scavenged parts just east of the Cedar Rapids City Limits. The finished bridge will include a stone monument reading "Lincoln Highway."

Benton - **Mike Kelly** tells that Youngville will open first week of May; open on Tuesdays and Thursdays. They are hoping soon to expand the days open.

Tama - **Ron Cory** announced the May 14/15 Tama Bridge Festival. 2004 marks the 18th year for bridge maintenance. Phase 3 (paneling) for the remaining King Tower One-Stop cabin is finished with project completion in the fall. Tama County is also touching up markers on telephone poles.

Marshall - **Catherine Noble** relates that the Rural Heritage Center Grand Opening is scheduled for May 14. State Center's Rose Festival is June 18/19. They are looking for a vintage car for the parade to promote the Lincoln.

Story - **Jeff Benson** is working on the Lincoln Highway Studio Artists Tour brochure, and will send each Consul a copy.

Boone - **John Fitzsimmons** has two new drawings available, the "Tama Bridge Showdown" and "Setting a Marker." Co-Consul **Joe Moore** is freshening up telephone pole markers, and says a "new" section of the highway has been uncovered in the Des Moines River valley.

Greene - **Bob Owens**: Jefferson CofC featuring the LH in their ad in the Iowa tourism brochure.

Carroll - **Norma Berns**: REC newsletter contains LH article; continuing to write articles for the *Carroll Today*. Asked for ideas on how to note "In Memory of" on the back of LH metal signs (12"x15") posted on 'street' markers on LH roads. Fisher Monument concept drawings received and shared.

Crawford - no report

Harrison - no report

Pottawattamic - no report

Meeting adjourned at 11:40am.

Lunch was served at Niland's Café followed by a walking tour of the grounds and the restored service station. Joe Harper, project leader for the renovation, conducted the grounds tour and hosted the bus trip following. The bus tour explored the old Lincoln Highway and U.S. 30 grade at the Union Pacific underpass west of Colo, and a Jefferson Highway barn south of Hubbard. L

Cedar County Garden Walk; Clarence At It Again.

by Liz Norton,
Cedar County Consul.

The Lowden (Cedar County) Garden Club has planned a Garden Walk on June 26th, 2004 from 9:00 to 4:00, rain or shine. The biannual event features six gardens, two seminars, one by Linn County Master Gardener Ken Lafferty and one by Scott County Master Gardener Dan Mays.

The day also includes a box lunch in the park as well as a craft fair in the park pavillion. Such a bargain for only \$10.00.

* * *

Also in Cedar County, the **Clarence Economic Development Visioning Group** has purchased an original Lincoln Highway Marker in mint condition. They will dedicate and display it during their Lincoln Highway Festival July 30, 31 and Aug. 1, 2004.

The festival, in its second year, carnival rides and games, softball tourney, dances, kiddies' fests, fabulous food, a car cruise on the Lincoln Highway and an extensive parade. L

Honey Creek Overlook Nears Completion.

by Brett Ford,
Pottawattamie County Consul.

Near the Honey Creek grade, the Lincoln Highway Overlook Deck is taking shape. Consul Brett Ford comments that, "our design was finalized and final bids opened, and construction began.

The deck is 16x16 feet with angled corners. I am currently working on text for one interpretive sign that will include photos and text regarding the Honey Creek Grade.



From the deck, visitors will be able to look into the remnant cut and enjoy the fantastic view to the north and northwest. The structure is treated lumber with the decking built with a product call Timber Tech, a recycled plastic/wood composite that allows us to meet our mission of using recycled products, not to mention that it provides fantastic durability and low maintenance."

Regarding the campground, Brett reports he opened for business on May 17th, with the first cabin rentals on Memorial Day weekend.



"We had Buffalo Grass sod (local native grass) laid the week of May 3rd, which should be the final major step. Our cabins will feature furniture made from red cedar that was harvested from the preserve. And the bunk beds are *gorgeous*."

The *Crescent Connection* (Crescent, Iowa) has been running a series of articles on the Lincoln Highway and on the Honey Creek grade, and it's generating some local interest. Brett is working toward a feature in the *Council Bluffs Nonpareil* that will highlight the campground and its colorful history – including the highway and the infamous "angry farmer" former landowner. L

Linn County Consuls Van and Bev Becker returned recently from Maifest in the Amana Colonies, a rite of spring at one of Iowa's premier tourist attractions, located south of Cedar Rapids, host city for the 2006 national LHA conference.

One of the featured attractions was new for 2004—a juried contest for amateur wine makers. There were three categories: red grape, white grape and fruit (what? no cicada?).

The **Lincoln Highway Winery** (Van and Bev Becker, *proprietors*) walked away with two first-place medals. One was for their white wine entry—a Niagara—and one for their fruit entry, a fragrant raspberry. The red grape entry earned a second-place medal in the fruit category.

Best of all however, was the *Best of Show* won for the raspberry wine entry! Judges were from Iowa City and were not associated with the Amana wineries, while judging was a blind tasting of numbered wines with labels obscured.

The Beckers will be offering their premium wines at the 2006 conference banquet. L

Website Spotlight.

The national LHA has had its own website for two years, and various states maintain their versions. States sites have been listed here in the past, but there are many more amateur and professional highway sites that are getting their chance now **in the spotlight**.

Take a stroll on the Lincoln and lesser known byways, as envisioned by some talented website impresarios.

www.lincolnhwyil.com/

A celebration of Illinois' LH scenic byway.

www.roadfan.com/

Author's road trip photos, including the LH.

www.roadsidephotos.com/

News from the road, travelogues, and even a postcard tour.

www.highwayman-routes.com

Got an inkling for California highways?

www.route40.net/index.shtml

Any U.S. 40 site would have to include the LH.

www.roadtripusa.com/index.html

Brief descriptions of major U.S. highways and trails.

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