

Friends of Froelich



2007 A Year of Expansion

Annual Meeting Feb. 17th

The Froelich Foundation will hold its annual meeting on Sunday, February 17, 2008, at Maggie's Diner, located east of Giard on U.S. Highway 18.

The meeting will begin at 2 p.m. and will include the election of one new board member, as well as presentation of the annual business and financial reports for the foundation.

Members interested in serving on the board need to attend the annual meeting and present their background information before the voting takes place.

"We will also hear a presentation on expanding our web site services, as well as plans for the 2008 tourist season," reports Diane Malcom, secretary and executive director of the foundation.

Julie Tschirgi from Divine Doodles in Elkader will make the web site presentation.

Summer Hours

For 2008 Season

In 2008, summer hours will be 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. six days a week from Memorial Day through Labor Day weekend. We're closed on Wednesdays. From Sept. 2 to 30 we're open on weekends only.

There's a lot to see at Froelich – if you have out of town visitors this summer, bring them by for a great afternoon of enjoyment with a visit to an authentic, historic rural Iowa 1890's Village.

And mark your calendar for Fall der All – Sept. 27 to 28, 2008.

The year 2007 will certainly go down as a growth year for Froelich as the Froelich Foundation celebrated its 20th anniversary.

Highlights included completing the barn basement renovation project, hosting the start of a major farm tractor ride, and holding a "first ever" barn dance during Fall der All in the Dettmann Barn Event Center.

To get the barn renovation project started on the right foot, Diane Malcom, museum curator, board secretary and foundation director, wrote a proposal to the Upper Mississippi Gaming Commission (UMGC) to secure a \$10,000 grant. The funds were used to hire a local carpenter, purchase materials and complete the barn basement.

The new basement features a conference room, storage rooms and men and ladies restrooms, which are needed for events and large crowds.

And large crowds came.

In July the Froelich Foundation hosted the KGLO tractor ride with more than 300 tractors and visitors, and in September the event center served a dinner during Fall der All as well as the barn dance upstairs with live music provided by the "Toe Tappers" band from Waukon.

In May, before the summer opening, the Froelich Museum also became a history classroom for more than 130 students

from MFLMarMac, with three touring stations set up – the general store, the one-room schoolhouse and the train depot.

Foundation members acted as volunteer guides for this event.

And, during the summer tourist season, you could find cars, pickups and campers parked in front of Burlingame's General Store with license plates from just about every state.

"It's amazing where the visitors come from and how they hear about the Froelich Tractor and Museum," says Malcom. "We ran our history video tape on RFD-TV, and that's where a lot of visitors heard about Froelich. I'm sure there's a lot of good word of mouth advertising going on, too, especially with tractor clubs and farm history enthusiasts."



More than 300 vintage tractors, along with their owners and friends, gathered at Froelich on July 22 and 23 to launch the KGLO Radio Tractor Ride. A buffet dinner was served to all in the remodeled basement of the new barn.



Financial Summary

The Froelich Foundation is a non-profit organization and its fiscal year runs from February 1 to January 31.

In fiscal year 2007, ending January 31, 2008, the foundation had revenues of \$44,185 and expenses of \$42,971 resulting in surplus funds of \$1,214.

The largest income category was donations and grants, \$27,264 (62% of total income) and the largest expense category was maintenance and repair, \$25,131 (58% of total expenses).

Here's the operating statement.

Froelich Foundation

Fiscal Year 2007

Operating Statement

REVENUES		%
Donations & Grants	\$27,264	62
Events	7,539	17
Rental Income	7,200	16
Tours & Museum Store	1,140	3
Interest Income	1,042	2
Total Revenue	\$44,185	100
EXPENSES		%
Maintenance & Repair	\$25,131	58
Payroll	6,568	15
Service Fees	5,012	12
Insurance	2,270	5
Advertising	1,522	4
Supplies & Inventory	1,360	3
Utilities	1,108	3
Total Expenses	\$42,971	100
SURPLUS	\$ 1,214	3

Volunteers Are Always Welcome at Froelich

Much of the work that gets done at Froelich is in the spirit of volunteerism.



This spring we plan to organize a clean-up with volunteers needed to cut brush and polish up the exhibits.

Another big need is tour guides to present the Froelich story to visitors. If you'd like to volunteer this summer, just let us know what you'd like to help with and the days you're available.

And thanks to all from the board who have helped so generously with their time in the past!

Fall der All on September 29 and 30 brought out local residents and visitors to enjoy numerous historic rural displays plus an old-fashioned barn dance for young and old alike.

The Froelich Barn is available in 2008 to foundation members for holding events. There will be a clean-up fee for each event. Please contact a board member for more details.

Record Membership

The Foundation has more than 450 members scattered around the country and is governed by a seven-person board of directors along with an executive director who serves as museum curator during the summer months.

Annual membership is \$20 and lifetime membership is \$200. Funding for the Froelich Foundation comes from memberships, donations, scheduled events, museum admissions and grants.

If you wish to make a donation, or sign up a new member, mail us at: Froelich Foundation, P.O. Box General Delivery, McGregor, Iowa 52157.



A Cook for Froelich's Threshers

By Eleanor Koether

When Anna Wickersheim left her Giard home for Froelich one morning in September, 1891, she must have been anticipating exciting adventures. She was going to South Dakota! She was going there to cook for the 16 men in John Froelich's threshing crew. She was nearly twenty-two and had hired out for years, but her traveling had been limited to Clayton County.

No eyebrows were raised about the impropriety of Anna's going to work and live with so many men. John Froelich himself was a first cousin of Anna's mother, Catherine Rosencranz Wickersheim. Moreover, another girl (believed to be Rose Mundt) would accompany her. Also, a neighbor, John Benzing, father of Newton Benzing of Monona, would be working as a thresher.

South Dakota by Rail

With the others, Anna would board the train at Froelich, change cars at Beulah, and then travel over the rails to South Dakota. Besides the workers, the train would be carrying John Froelich's big steam engine, threshing machine, and other necessary outfitting.

When they arrived in South Dakota, autumn seemed to arrive with them. Days were warm, but nights were cool.

As soon as the rigs were set up, the girls faced a main challenge: adjusting to their living and cooking arrangements. To cook and serve meals they were provided with a portable "tin kitchen" mounted on a wagon. Their chief piece of equipment was a two-burner kerosene stove used for cooking, baking, and heating water.

The tin kitchen also served as the girls' bedroom. Each morning they had to get up before dawn, move their cots outside and make room for tables and seats which were carried inside for the men to use at meals. At night the tables and seats were moved out and the cots were carried back in.

One of the threshers, suffering from an excess of Victorian prudery, became obsessed with preserving the girls' virtue and advised that the door to their kitchen be nailed shut at night to eliminate temptations. He volunteered to take on this assignment himself. The girls rejected his idea with considerable indignation.

Sometimes the threshing would take place within walking distance of a church and the girls, who enjoyed some time off on Sundays, would walk to and from services.

Threshed in October

Most of the threshing was done in October. The wheat, of course, had been cut earlier and tied into bundles by a binder and shocked by hand to await the threshing crews. Anna was amazed that the threshed wheat was deposited in big heaps right on the ground. She was used to seeing grain

carefully sacked and binned in Iowa.

In November it was time to head for home.

But Anna had become acquainted with a housewife nearly her own age. This young prairie mother had two children and pregnant with third. She was dreading the months ahead. Already in poor health and overburdened with raising a family amid primitive conditions, she feared she could not cope with childbirth again.

Anna agreed to stay and help her get through the year. She told John Froelich that she would not return to Iowa with him, but would remain in South Dakota and be ready to rejoin his crew as cook the following year.

She was true to her promise, and another big change happened.

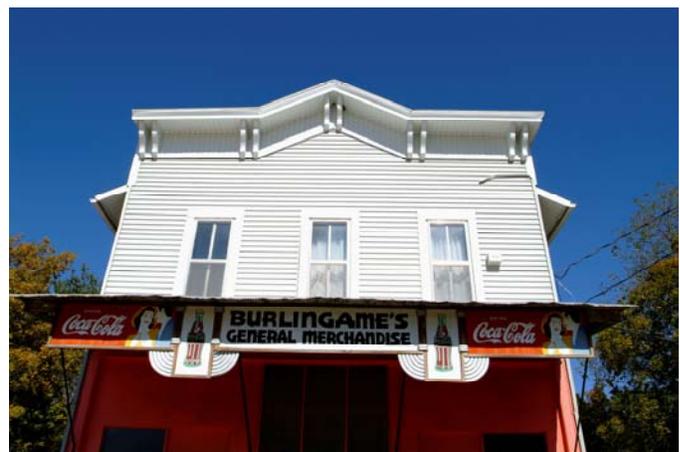
Froelich Tractor in Action

When John Froelich and his threshers took off for Langford, South Dakota, September 8, 1892, the engine loaded on the freight car at Froelich was not the old familiar steam. Instead, it was his latest creation -- a gasoline tractor -- which would power the J. I. Case threshing machine.

Marian and Melvin Beimfohr quote Froelich's assistant, Will Mann, as follows: "Its performance surpassed our fondest expectations and we wound up threshing operations on November 16, 1892, after a run of 52 ½ days." The crew had threshed an average of 1000 bushels of wheat a day.

That year, Anna came back to Giard in November and her threshing trips with John Froelich ended ... but they would remain in her memory as days of hard work and rewarding adventure.

(Anna Wickersheim married George Koether in 1895 and became the mother of Charlotte Koether Olmsted, Rev. Luella G. Koether, and Eddie S. Koether.)



Stories like this, from Froelich's past, bring to life the historical significance of where the first gasoline powered tractor was invented - Froelich, Iowa.



**NEWS FROM THE
FROELICH FOUNDATION**

**Froelich Foundation
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Alan Feldman, Treasurer
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Gary Moritz, Board Member
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Dennis Eilers, Board Member
Luana, Iowa

Diane Malcom, Board Secretary and
Foundation Director

Got a question?

Call us at:
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E-mail us at:
froelichtractor@netins.net

Visit Our Web Site!

www.froelichtractor.com

Mail us at:

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McGregor, Iowa 52157

*If you have Feedback on our
newsletter, send us your thoughts or
story ideas.*

Message from the President...

As I wind up five years of service on the Froelich Foundation board of directors a lot of great memories come to mind. We took a number of big steps forward in expanding the Froelich Museum and historical grounds, and I want to send a big “thank you” to all the foundation members, visitors and friends who helped us grow.

Most of all, I want to thank our many donors who made financial contributions to the foundation – both large and small – and also those who donated equipment, museum artifacts, materials and even their time.

The bottom line is the Froelich Foundation relies on your contributions to maintain this historic site, and make it the “top-notch” attraction it was meant to be.

One of the biggest steps in the past several years has been the expansion of our facilities to provide even more services to those who love history and respect traditions of the past. This has been the donation by Joyce and Julius Dettmann of their barn, which a local newspaper editor has since dubbed “The Froelich Events Center.”

An events center is exactly what it’s becoming, especially with the completion of the barn basement last summer. In July, we hosted our first tractor ride for KGLO Radio in Mason City, Iowa, with over 400 attending. In September, it played an important role during our annual Fall der All when it became the perfect spot to hold our first-ever barn dance – with live country music ringing from the rafters.

You just can’t hold a great barn dance without an authentic hayloft, wood floors and lotsa’ space.

Froelich, with its historical significance, makes an outstanding contribution to society and to rural Northeast Iowa. Because of your hard work and donations, it’s been heading in the right direction for the past 20 years. My wish is that it continues to grow through sponsored events, contributions and with more families that enjoy farm history visiting every summer.

Thank you for allowing me to serve such a worthwhile cause on your behalf.

**Frank McMillin,
President
The Froelich Foundation**



An old-fashioned barn dance was the highlight event of Fall der All as visitors danced in the hay loft to the live music of Joe Sweeney and the Toe Tappers band.



The Dettmann barn was dedicated in July with a plaque honoring donors, Julius and Joyce Dettmann, center. At left is Frank McMillin and on the right is Diane Malcom.