University of Nebraska - Lincoln
DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln

Museum Planning and Development Documents | Tractor Test and Power Museum, The Lester F. Larsen

1-1-1993

Outline for Tractor Testing Farm Machinery Museum

Tractor Museum
University of Nebraska-Lincoln, TractorMuseumArchives@unl.edu

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/tractorplanning

Part of the Applied Mechanics Commons

Museum, Tractor, "Outline for Tractor Testing Farm Machinery Museum" (1993). *Museum Planning and Development Documents.* Paper 4.
http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/tractorplanning/4

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Tractor Test and Power Museum, The Lester F. Larsen at DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln. It has been accepted for inclusion in Museum Planning and Development Documents by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln.

OUTLINE FOR TRACTOR TESTING/FARM MACHINERY MUSEUM AT IANR - UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA

General Statement

There are several people or groups of people in Nebraska who are interested in the development of a museum to house antique tractors and/or farm machinery. One such group is interested in preserving the famous Nebraska Tractor Testing facilities and examples of the tractors tested at the World Famous Nebraska Tractor Testing Station. Research data generated at the Tractor Test Station has been in demand internationally.

In addition to tractor testing, research has also included development of subsurface tillage, farm safety programs, till planting, and irrigation development. The University of Nebraska has been a leader in development of mechanized farming systems applicable to the originally dry plains of Nebraska. The people interested in a tractor/machinery museum feel that there is a need to preserve the history of the Tractor testing facilities and the tractors and machinery tested and developed during the era of the operation of the Tractor Testing Facilities. The development of a plan for such facilities will help bring interested parties together to help this dream become a reality.

The people currently interested in Tractor and Farm Machinery preservation are a unique generation of people who owned and/or operated many of the tractors and implements that need to be preserved. They are the last of a generation who have seen and lived the development and transition from muscle powered horse drawn and hand labor agriculture, to steam engines, to the present petroleum powered, hydraulically and electronically controlled examples of mechanized ingenuity. This transition saw the development of steel framed horse drawn implements, the development of steam powered tractors for pulling field implements and to furnish stationary belt power, the development of petroleum powered tractors of various vintages, including the transition from steel wheeled tractors to more modern rubber tired tractors and implements. It is imperative that the current generation of interested people be involved in recording the stories and history of the development of agricultural mechanization while they are still available to lend their mark to history.

Agriculture is America's success story. When this country was established a little more than 200 years ago a farmer using mostly hand power and a little horsepower, was barely able to feed himself and his family. Since then, the evolution of agriculture has been nothing short of amazing. Today through mechanical power and the development of and advancement of technology "or science power", the American farmer is now producing enough to feed himself and more than 120 other people. The development of farm mechanization and the farmers subsequent improved ability to produce food and fiber correspond to the development of the farms homesteaded by our Grandparents a generation or two ago. Many of us are in a position to know much of this important history because of first hand experience and/or because of stories told to us by our parents or grandparents.

Additional Justification

In addition to the need for historical preservation of the tractors and implements mentioned above, other valuable uses of a museum can be available to future generations such as:

1 - Educational purposes.
a. For student use - for the historical study of design of implements.
b. For Public Use - for use by groups interested in the restoration and preservation of historically important tractors and implements and for study of antique tractors and implements.
c. For visitor use as a museum.

2 - Foundation for the study of the past and development of the future.

3 - Library Use - To preserve important collections.
a. Tractor Test Records.
b. Company advertising, literature and instruction books and manuals (An important collection is available from a man in Montana)

4 - Display of Power Sources - muscle, steam, petroleum, wind, solar, other.

5 - Farm Safety - Preservation of Nebraska's prominence in Tractor and Farm Safety - Professor Rolin Schnieder has been a National and International leader in Farm Safety and that prominence should be preserved in the Library section of the Museum. This should be done in written form, by color slides, films and video tapes as well as displays (Such as models and the exhibit of the Roll over Tractors used in demonstrations.)

Current Tractor and Farm Machinery museum Groups

Currently there are several groups interested in the preservation of Tractors and Farm Machinery. They include:

1. The Antique Farm Equipment Commission created by the Legislature. This is the umbrella group which can Coordinate the interests of other groups interested in the preservation an antique tractors and equipment.

2. UNL Tractor Test Museum Committee. (Perhaps there is a need for a different "Official Name" for this committee)

3. Camp Creek Thrashers

4. Western Nebraska Antique Farm Machinery ~~Club~~ Society

5. Others

UNL Tractor Test Museum Committee

The Tractor Test Committee was created by Dr. Glen Hoffman, Head of Biological Systems Engineering Department on the East Campus, University of Nebraska. The purpose of this committee was to create a Tractor Test Museum to preserve and exhibit antique farm tractors showing design changes since 1892 until the present time, and to seek funds for this purpose. Former Senator Richard Maresh, Geneva Nebraska was designated as Chairman of this committee. (Perhaps consideration should be given to a more complete name such as The UNL Tractor Test and Power Museum Committee.)

MISSION STATEMENT

The Agricultural Tractor Test and Power Museum Committee was formed in 1991 to create a museum at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln for education, preservation, and exhibition of the development of power in Nebraska's agriculture. The scope of interest will highlight tractor power, but will also encompass all sources of power, including human, animal, electrical, hydraulic, Solar, and wind.

Buildings and Locations Currently being Considered

Old Tractor Test Building - This building is a cherished Shrine of Agriculture mentioned in "Successful Farming" in 1992. (Exhibit A) In 1980 this building was dedicated as a Historic Landmark by the American Society of Agricultural Engineering, St. Joseph, Michigan. (Exhibit B) Perhaps it should be on the National Historical Register also.

This building was built in 1919 but due to neglect the roof has deteriorated and needs to be replaced. The foundation and walls are all solid. Eight tractors are stored in this building. This old building is presently used as a shop to restore tractors. It is equipped with tools and shop facilities and office facility.

The Old Horse Barn and Judging Pavilion - Twenty tractors are stored in the Judging Pavilion in the Horse Barn. Considerable renovation will be needed to successively use this space. Additional space on each side of the building could be used for the Museum but will take much renovation and cost.

The Old State Fair Park Commercial Building

Other Considerations in Buildings - Perhaps consideration should be given to obtaining a new building and a new location. It may be cheaper to build a new Behlen or Butler steel building than to try to renovate the old Horse Barn.

Additional Building Considerations

Pictures, sketches and floor plans should be added for buildings being considered for renovation or construction. A more detailed written description should be included. Details of where concrete floors are needed, heat needed,

parking needs, restroom locations, office space, library location and needs, and reception area should be spelled out.

Utilities, parking, security and student accessibility are a plus for the Campus location. Should there be a shop for the restoration of tractors and machinery? Should the shop be large enough for meetings or for Restoration Clubs to meet?

A description of the reception area should be included describing the statues, busts, pictures and stories of the history of the collections.

Physical Considerations

What main collections will be included and featured? Where will they be displayed? W which collections are pretty certain to be included? Which are collections we would like to have that might be considered?

For example there is a nice collection of steam engines and tractors near Geneva which might be added if space is available and if it would appeal to the family who own it at the present time.

A nice collection of farm machinery catalogues is available from a man in Montana. Also, some of the solar panels from the Mead Station Solar Tests, and windmill collections from within the state might be added. Adequate space should be reserved for such expansion if deemed to be important.

Funding Sources

A well planned layout of the facilities needed, including pictures and floor plans for the finished product is important in a fund raising campaign, but a well planned campaign for raising those funds is equally important.

Sources of funding

A - From famous or well known Nebraskans present and past. (Examples - Behlins, Fleischers, Gupta, and others.

B - From Nebraska and/or National Foundations - There are many who give only to Museums and or historical projects. (See Attachment C)

C - University Foundation - May be able to donate some funds and could be the "Holder of the Museums Funds".

D - Interested Nebraska Individuals, Organizations, or Businesses.

E - American Companies whose tractors were tested at the Tractor Test Station.

F - State Funds

G - Government Grants

H - Other sources such as bequests, etc.