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April 1993

# Fred Chase Preliminary Outline for Tractor Test Museum

Tractor Museum

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Fred M. Chase  
2171 Gulf Shore Blvd., North #601  
Naples, Florida 33940-4625  
813 / 262-6554  
Fax 813 / 262-8437

April 8, 1993

Mr. Richard Maresh, Chairman  
Tractor Test Museum Committee  
220 No. 16th St.  
Geneva, NE 68361

Dear Dick:

In my letter of March 31st. I said that a brief outline of what I feel are the next steps for the committee would be forthcoming. This is attached.

Thought has been given to follow up procedures but I have not tried to put these on paper at this time. These can be developed in detail after the committee adopts the broad procedural outline of the report, or rejects it and produces another.

Present thinking visualizes the activities of this group, for the immediate future, falling into four categories:

Statement of goals (objectives and procedures)

Contemplated physical requirements (building and interior equipment)

University relations

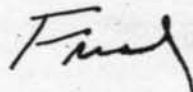
Budget and finance (money raising)

At your meeting next Wednesday some thought should be given to the selection of chairmen and members of these sub-groups and the responsibilities of each with a time limit for completion of their work.

Sorry that I can't be with you but I still want to help in any way possible.

cc. Glenn Hoffman  
W. E. Splinter

Very truly yours



To: Tractor Test Museum Committee

Subject: Preliminary, and very broad, outline of the state of the project and proposed steps to move it along.

Since the committee meeting in January I have been giving the matter of the Tractor Test Museum considerable thought. I have reserved any ideas developed for presentation to a planning sub-committee which apparently has not been organized. Here they are, in summary form, for the consideration of the full committee.

From my observations at the January meeting it is obvious that we have two groups with different objectives trying to combine.

1. A group that has as its primary interest the preservation of the Tractor Test Laboratory Building together with exhibits showing the early history of the power farming industry, why the Nebraska Tractor Test Law was passed and how the program developed, what it has accomplished and what may be expected of the industry in the future. This group might well have as an objective the restoration of the building to 1920-24 condition with the old test equipment in working position.
2. The collectors group which has as its primary concern the acquisition and exhibiting of various tractors of interest to farmers who may have used the models shown.

A quick review of the situation shows that, while they are both interested in the power farming industry, they have different objectives that can best be achieved if they co-operate but function separately. The Tractor Collection group could very well be combined with the State Antique Farm Implement Committee and any private groups now existing in the state.

The Tractor Test Laboratory Group would have as its objective the preservation of the record of salient changes in farming practices such as the inception of mechanical power at harvest time (steam), development of the small tractor for tillage purposes and the design and marketing abuses that were common at that time, what was done to correct them (The Nebraska Tractor Test Program).

If we are to consider each of these groups as separate entities it soon shows that they can best operate by themselves.

The Tractor Test Museum will be a small technically oriented operation directed towards history, development and education.

The Tractor Collection will be a large project with mass appeal to the nostalgic instincts of the our farming industry.

Each of these will have different physical and financial problems. As I am primarily interested in the Test Laboratory Museum what follows will apply to that only.

First: We must develop a concise statement of purpose and how we propose to accomplish this, including space requirements, a money raising plan, proposed legal organization, future plans.

Then: With this homework done and prepared in presentation form, (printed proposal, Dog and Pony Show) we will be ready, and only then will be ready, for the next steps.

These will be to secure University approval for the Museum and, hopefully, promises of future cooperation and a money raising campaign. If this is successful we will be in a position to start on the preservation of the Tractor Test Building and the early test equipment.

Personell considerations must be considered. If, as hoped, the Tractor Test Museum becomes a responsibility of the University then two functions must be thought of:

1. Director or curator. Because of the close administrative connections between the sponsoring organization, the University, and the Museum it will have to be a representative of the University with Faculty connections.
2. The advisory committee, which is represented by the present group. This committee will have two purposes: policy advice for the Museum and money raising. Experience has shown that the majority of the members, and the chairman, should **not** be institutionally connected. In effect they be an outside board of directors. This will minimize any conflict of interest.

If you have any questions call me at 813/262-6554 or FAX number 813/262-8437. I am very sorry that prior commitments will keep me from attending the April 15th meeting.