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January 2001

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FRIENDS OF THE LARSEN TT&P MUSEUM  
ANNUAL MEETING - JANUARY 15, 2001

INTERIM DIRECTOR REPORT

In the past year a number of changes have taken place in the Museum. The most important one is that Bill Splinter took on the duties of Interim Dean of the School of Engineering at UN-L. Hopefully this assignment will not keep him away too long from the Larsen Museum. In the meantime I will do his duties as well as I can.

Following are a few points which we can discuss in greater detail at the meeting if so desired,

**1. Student Assistance and other personnel matters.**

1.1. Brian Mancuso, a graduate student at Museum Studies has left us after a short but very helpful stint as the person responsible for the educational aspects of the museum. He set up our system of notices, and improved a number of displays. Brian will be replaced with **Yunju Kim**, also a museum studies student, who has started work already after working for a short period with Brian before he left.

1.2. Luis Vasquez has been working sporadically on Saturdays and did work during the Christmas Holidays, but his new position As Curator at the Germans of Russia Museum will not allow him to take on a permanent obligation to our museum. He does want to remain connected as much as we can and we will make use of his expertise gratefully. We wish him luck at his new position and thank him for his efforts

1.3. We have engaged a student from the Ag. Education department to help out on a day-by-day basis with the maintenance and improvement activities. Tonya Pick is from a farm in the Hardington area and seems to be quite knowledgeable about tractors - which is what we need.

1.4 Mark Nickolaus had to curtail some of his activities and will now be at the museum only twice a week. He will be missed because he took care of keeping the tractors running whenever the weather was good enough and the track dry enough. Some of those duties will now be taken over by Tonya.

1.5. Due to the fact that on those days when neither Judy nor Mark or our students will be absent and I would be alone, I have decided, because of safety concerns, not to do any physical work on the collection during those times. It will depend upon the schedules of our students and of the volunteers such as Jerry Kohl, how much work we can accomplish.

**2. Equipment and collection items and maintenance**

2.1. The area around the Belt Dynamometer has been re-arranged and we are now ready to start designing explanatory text and display notices and diagrams - I have not yet discussed or

decided what should go on the walls.

2.2. The display case of the Traction Dynamometers was finished by Brian and in addition he designed a large display board above it with the historical background of the Tractor Testing Program.

2.3 Luis Vasquez has been putting the finishing touches to the display around the Ford Model T area. At the time of the writing of this report, the display cases with the tools are not mounted yet but they may be on the walls by the time of this meeting. The Ford T-Room, as we call it, has been rearranged and the rotary display case (the former Student Union cake chiller) has been moved out.

2.4. We contacted an ex-Nebraskan, who owns a tool and tractor museum in California and sent him test reports and other materials plus information on other questions he had. He then sent us a set of old and interesting wrenches. We hope to get him to visit here and will use his expertise in identifying some of the mysterious items which we have.

2.5. We have become members of the Missouri Valley Wrench club, which has its headquarters in York. They put out a very interesting newsletter. See Judy if you want to have a look at it.

2.6 I have met with a repair shop near Ulysses (K&K brothers) and they will give me an estimate how much it will cost to fix up the COOP E3 tractor which was donated by Ned Meier of Grand Island. I can't see us doing complete overhauls with the current staff. We may need to look for some special funding to accomplish this.

2.6 There are currently only two days (Tuesday and Thursday) that I will be actively working on equipment. Those days there is someone else present. The other days I am alone and it would be unsafe for me to be working alone in the building on equipment

### **3. Building and opening times**

3.1. We have started in cutting out more pipes which have prevented us from utilizing our wall-space. At the same time, we are cleaning and painting the walls as well as mounting plywood in some areas. Hey Friends, we can sure use some help from time to time. Let me know if you are willing to be called when needed.

3.2 We need desperately to insulate and fix the outside walls of the garage. It is in bad shape and getting worse. If that could be done we could use the area for work and storage. Since the roof is OK I think that plastic siding would be a quick and cheap way to do this. It could be done on one Saturday if we could get someone who knows how to do this to help us (me and a few volunteers).

3.3 After the garage is done we need to install a new door between the garage and the workshop. This will help keep the workshop dryer and warmer.

3.4 The overhead door on the east side of the museum has to be blocked in. I recently had to put a wooden side support in, but the frame wood is not in good shape and there is a chance that the whole door will fall outward since it is not well attached at the top.

3.5 Museum open times will have to be adjusted to the availability of personnel. In the meantime we have the museum generally open from 9:00-11:30 am from Monday through Friday and from 1:00-4:00 pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays, when Judy is here. Currently the museum is closed on Saturdays since we have no one to keep it open. If we cannot find members of the Friends group to volunteer for duty as docents on Saturdays, the museum will not be open.

*Yvonne Reirke*