

The Preservationist

The Member Newsletter of the Elkhart Lake Historic Race Circuits Preservation Society
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Calhoun and Grunnah Elected to Board of Directors

John Calhoun and Tom Grunnah were elected as Directors of the Preservation Society at the 2009 Annual Meeting held at Road America on Sunday, July 12th. They join George Bruggenthies, Spencer Chapple, Tom Hollfelder, Clyde Morter and Mark Pfaller increasing the Board from five Directors to seven. John is a retired corporate attorney and Tom is a retired businessman. Both are from the Chicago area and now reside in Elkhart Lake. John Calhoun has been appointed to the Preservation Committee where he will be working with Heritage Research on the development of the Preservation and Maintenance Plan for the historic circuits. Tom Grunnah has volunteered to chair the "60 Years of Racing" exploratory committee to begin the development of a major celebratory event for 2010. We are excited and happy to welcome both John and Tom to the Board

Preservation and Maintenance Plan Finally Moving Forward

In May of 2008 as partial after-the-fact mitigation for the unauthorized grading and filling of the banks and ditches along CTH A, the Wisconsin Historical Society required the Sheboygan County Highway Department to contract with an archeological historian for preparation of a Preservation and Maintenance Plan (the Plan) for the Historic Race Circuits. In June of 2008, the Highway Department contracted with Heritage Research, Inc. to prepare the Plan. Traci Schnell, a historian on the staff of Heritage was assigned to handle the project. Although HRC interacted regularly with Heritage and offered assistance on many occasions, one full year passed and no Plan was forthcoming.

Frustrated by the lack of progress, HRC requested a meeting with John Vogel President and Founder of Heritage Research in a effort to determine the reason for their lack of progress and to find out what could be done to move forward at a more rapid pace. The

meeting was held on June 30th at the National Exchange Bank in Elkhart Lake. Present were Directors Chapple, Hollfelder and Calhoun for HRC and Traci Schnell and John Vogel for Heritage. Pressed by HRC, Heritage admitted that the project had not been receiving the priority it should have and pledged to begin immediately to develop the Plan. John Vogel indicated that he would be personally handling the project from that time forward. He felt that his background and experience in historic road preservation would make it possible to develop the plan more quickly and promised to lay out a timeline for the Plans development within the next two weeks.

Following that meeting, John Vogel met with Highway Commissioner Greg Schnell to obtain his input and two weeks later walked the entire historic circuit taking measurements and photographs, more activity than we had seen in a very long time. However, the promised timeline was not forthcoming and Heritage seemed to resist pressure from HRC to keep that commitment.

On July 29th, Heritage submitted a document titled "Consideration of Historic Characteristics" to HRC and to the Highway Department requesting comments and a response by August 21st. We did not feel that the document was a significant step forward in development of the Plan and although we responded to Heritage's request on a timely basis, we also submitted the "Consideration" document to Chip Brown at the Wisconsin Historical Society for his comments. Chip found the document to be "not helpful" with regard to the Plan and contacted Heritage to schedule a meeting with John Vogel in which he hoped to establish "a more definitive direction" for development of the Plan. That meeting took place on September 21st.

On September 28th Directors Calhoun, Hollfelder and Chapple traveled to Madison to meet with Chip Brown at the headquarters of the Wisconsin Historical Society. The objective of the meeting was threefold: First, to determine if Heritage Research was the best resource to produce the Preservation and Maintenance Plan and if so, to determine when a first draft of the Plan could be expected; Second, insure that all parties

whose project plans might be expected to affect the Historic Circuits were on notice that such plans must be first submitted to the Wisconsin Historical Society for review and that no projects should be initiated pending development of the Plan; Third, to determine if some of HRC's long term goals for preservation of the Historic Circuits could be incorporated into the Plan. At the meeting Chip Brown reported that the earlier meeting with John Vogel had gone very well. He was satisfied that Heritage could and would produce a first draft of the Plan within two to four weeks. He further agreed to send letters the Village of Elkhart Lake Trustees advising them of the Wisconsin historic preservation statutes and the pending Plan, to the Manager of the Non Motorized Transportation Pilot Project confirming an earlier conversation regarding the adverse effect of projects under consideration by them and to the Sheboygan County Highway Department reminding them of their earlier commitment not to initiate projects affecting the Historic Circuits pending development of the Plan. Chip also confirmed that restoration of the graded banks was still an open mitigation issue.

HRC requested that the following goals be included in the Plan or agreed to concurrent with the adoption of the Plan. One, that the Historic Circuit roads, shoulders and adjacent "mowable" vegetation be regularly maintained and cared for consistent with their significant historical status. Two, that certain existing historical markers be relocated into the right of way to improve accessibility. Three, that the Historic Race Circuits roads be pavement-marked to identify original racecourse path of travel as an aid to visitors. Chip felt that these were reasonable goals and would make every effort to see that they are realized.

Also discussed was the potential for the Historical Society to approve a bicycle and pedestrian path around the lake physically separate from the Historic Circuits roadway but which might lie partially within the historic right-of-way, something that HRC favors. Chip felt that this might be possible depending on the actual plan.

HRC Directors came away from the meeting greatly encouraged that at long last, work on the Preservation and Maintenance Plan was moving forward and were cautiously optimistic that a plan might yet be developed before the end of the year.

Summer Dinner Social Draws

Record Attendance

The main dining room at Siebkens was filled to overflowing for the Summer Dinner Social where 127 members and their guests enjoyed a delicious Beef Wellington dinner and a great program developed and presented by Conrad Barrows. Connie presented both still and color film from the 1951 and 1952 races. He was ably assisted by Henry Jung, Steve Knauf, Richard Bemis and Tom Wiese each of whom actually attended the historic races (as small children of course) and were able to share their memories of the events. In the early fifties there was not much exciting happening in Elkhart Lake; that is until the race cars started showing up and the races were held. For the Villagers it was a great excuse for a party. To quote Steve Knauf, "We didn't know much about cars at the time but we sure knew how to party!" As well do the members of the Preservation Society for this was the largest and most convivial Dinner Social yet held by the Society.

Preservation Society Teams Enter Kettle Call Rally

Seven Preservation Society member rally teams entered the Kettle Call TSD "fun rally" held in Elkhart Lake on Friday, July 31st. Organized by Society member Bill Hall and sponsored by Maserati, the rally drew a fantastic collection of marquees that included Maserati (of course) Ferrari, Porsche, Lamborghini, Morgan, Cobra, Corvette, Alpha Romeo and Austin Healey to name just a few. For its part in promoting the rally the Society received a generous donation from the proceeds. A big thank you goes to Bill for his efforts on our behalf.

Fall Dinner Social Features Ferrari

The Fall Dinner Social was held on the fine dining side of the Lake Street Café where Society members dined on their choice of salmon or steak. The program featured a presentation by Tim Kemmis on the history of Ferrari with emphasis on the Ferrari 166 Touring Barchetta driven to victory by Jim Kimberly in the 1950 main event. To conclude the evening, special guest George Giesen who was a member of the Kimberly race crew, related some of his experiences. Sixty-six members and their guests were in attendance.