

Sunday May 3, 2009

There was a load limit on the bridge to Council Bluffs so we had to make a quick detour. Eventually we got back on Highway 92 east. As we travelled through Iowa we were impressed by the rolling hills and the well-kept farms.



There were lots of pretty lakes, very green grass and many cows with tiny calves cavorting around the fields. Each time that Percy sees cows he barks at them. We think that perhaps he is counting them. The more cows, the higher the number of barks!

As the fields are usually on hills, the farmers have developed a unique way of terracing the land and separating the levels with berms.



At 3 pm we arrived at Winterset – a lovely city in Madison County.

The campground is at the edge of the 76 acre city park. This park is a real gem with 34 sites, all with full hook-ups, very thick green grass and fantastic places to walk - all for \$17 a night. It reminded us of Springbank Park in London (but even better as we could camp in it).

Monday May 4, 2009

Winterset is the home town of Marion Robert Morrison. You may not know who this is - but you have undoubtedly seen him many times on both the big and little screen. He was a true “legend” and is nicknamed “The Duke”. This is of course, the actor we know as John Wayne.



One of his admirers painted this van in his honour.



John Wayne was born in 1907 and spent the first three years of his life in this little one bedroom house.



The house next door has been turned into a gift shop.



Fundraisers have plans to build a larger museum to showcase all of the memorabilia.



One of the main streets in Winterset is named John Wayne Drive.



In the afternoon we ventured out into the country to see some of the “Bridges of Madison County”. Many of them were used in the movie by the same name.

The first was the Hogback Bridge north of town.



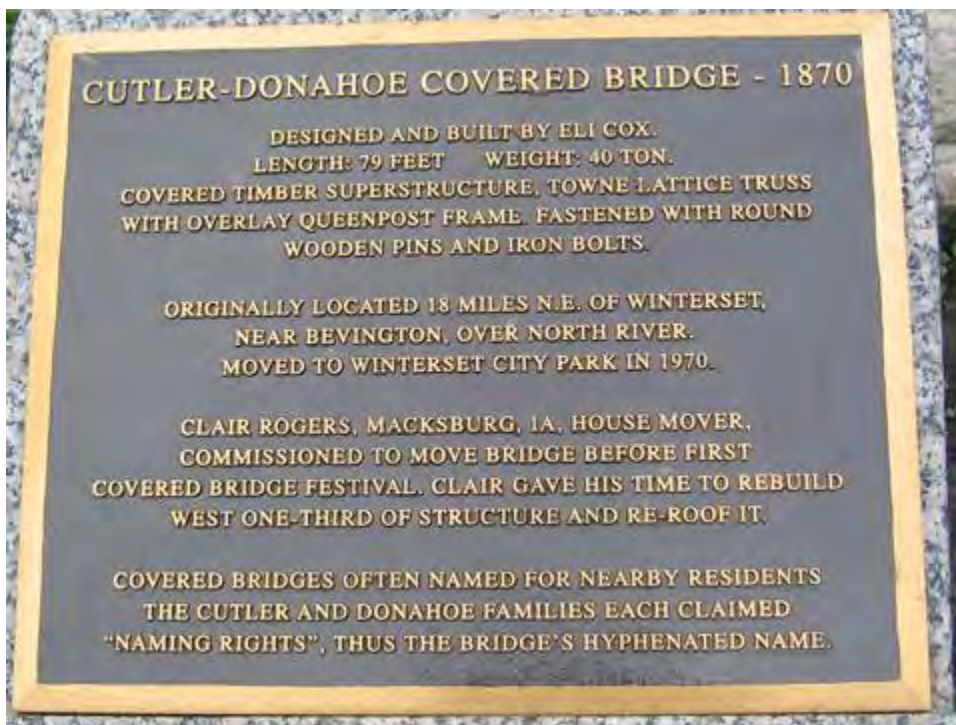
Just down the road was a solid stone school house



Heading south again we stopped at the Cedar Bridge and took a walk around the attractive park beside it.



Back at the campsite we took a short hike to the Cutler-Donahue Bridge.



Just down the lane is a beautiful stone bridge that was also used in the movie.

The park has a hedge maze. We did not try it out, but did admire how nicely trimmed it is.



Percy enjoyed chasing the squirrels and resting in the thick grass.



This is our site. All are large and extremely well planned and maintained.



Tuesday May 5, 2009

We left the rolling hills of Iowa and traveled west into Illinois.

Both the roads and the surrounding countryside became much flatter and the drive was easy as we made our way through many little towns and villages. Finally we arrived at Peoria and crossed the bridge on the way to the Millpoint Park.

Our site looked OK but underneath, the ground was quite soft.



This park has about 80 campsites. As we looked towards the River we noticed that many of the trees were in water.



A closer look showed that most of the sites were under three feet of water. According to the owner it was water all the way to the road a few weeks ago. He is hoping that the water will recede all the way by June.



This park is going to need a lot of work to make it a viable business. The owner seems to be working hard to make this happen. Hopefully mother nature will cooperate with him.

Wednesday May 6, 2009

Under partly cloudy skies we left the underwater campground and headed east on Highway 24.

Finding fuel was a bit tricky. A Shell station advertised a price for diesel but when we turned in, it was impossible to determine where the diesel pump was, so we left and found another station. Why don't they put up signs to guide us? Perhaps they do not want to sell Diesel?

The next station had a designated pump for diesel so we were soon fuelled up and on our way again.

As we entered Indiana a happy water tower greeted us.



Traffic slowed down due to a wide load ahead and it was impossible to get around it, so we followed for about 20 miles. It was escorted by two trucks and two police cars with lights flashing. When it turned off we found out that it was a part of a wind turbine. By then there were dozens of cars and trucks following behind us.



An hour later we arrived at White Oaks on the Lake, a beautiful Coast to Coast park on Lake Freeman, just south of Monticello Indiana. We plan to stay here for four days to get ready for the last leg of the trip back to Ontario. Laundry facilities have been scarce since we left Cheyenne so it is definitely time to do some washing.