On a picture perfect late summer day nearly 250 Friends and dignitaries gathered at the Oliver H. Kelley Farm to harvest thanks, break ground and celebrate the historic achievement that comes with the $10.5 million funding of the revitalization and expansion of The Farm project by the MN Legislature bonding bill of 2014.

Special guests in attendance at the event held September 13 included MN Historical Society Director Steve Elliott, MNHS Executive Council Board Chair Bill Stoeri, MNHS Emeritus Council Mark Davis, donors Whitney and Barb MacMillan, MN Representatives Alice Hausman, Mary Kiffmeyer and Nick Zerwas and MN Senator John Hoffman.

Harvesting Thanks
Kelley Farm Break Ground on Revitalization Project

Attendees enjoyed the music provided by the Petticoat Rustlers on the porch of the historic farm house.
What if?

John Kuester, Friends Board President

On September 13 over 200 people from many walks of life gathered at the Oliver Kelley Farm to celebrate the passage of a $10.533 million bonding allocation by the MN Legislature to create a new visitors center.

According to the September 20th edition of the Elk River Star News, “the expanded visitors center … will have a teaching kitchen, four-season shelter and more public space and classroom space for the thousands of visitors that learn about Minnesota’s agricultural history.” The event, in the words of one guest, celebrated a “really big deal.”

Most of life’s experience teaches – or at least tries to teach – that “really big deals” don’t miraculously appear out of nowhere but rather emerge as the culmination of the interplay over time of various past decisions and incidents. This 2014 celebration builds on decisions and incidents that trace back to 1849 when Oliver Kelley established a farm on the banks of the Mississippi River. From this specific date, one can consider a number of what ifs. For example:

What if Oliver Kelley had not become immersed in learning the best scientific practices of his day, and with sharing these with other farmers?

What if Oliver Kelley had not in 1867 co-founded the Order of the Patrons of Husbandry (The Grange), which for decades has been one of the most influential farm organizations in the country?

What if The National Grange had not bought the 189 acre Kelley Homestead in 1935, preserved it until 1961, and then donated the site to the Minnesota Historical Society?

What if the Friends of the Kelley Farm had not resisted efforts by the Minnesota Historical Society to close the Oliver Kelley Farm in 2003?

What if the Minnesota Historical Society had not mustered a highly effective campaign which targeted the MN Legislature and private donors to generously support major changes at the Kelley Farm?

What makes this “a really big deal” first of all is that Oliver Kelley’s love of scientific learning plus sharing this knowledge with fellow farmers resonates with today’s agriculture. The foundations of modern agriculture in MN rest right here on the Oliver Kelley Farm. Of equal importance however is that over the years the site has touched the lives of people in ways that have generated loyalty, sharing, and a love of learning. The past plays out in the present with profound implications for our collective future.

ANNUAL MEETING

NOVEMBER 1, 2014

AT THE KELLEY FARM

Pork Chops! Grange Program

Mark your calendars and plan to attend our Annual Meeting to be held Saturday, November 1, 2014 at the Farm. Registration begins at 11:15 a.m., followed by a Pork Chop Lunch at 12 noon (free will donation accepted).

During our lunch you will enjoy a program highlighting the work of the Grange in Minnesota, followed by our Annual Meeting which will include presentation of our financial reports, election of new officers and board member and an overview of the state of the organization.

Please note: The historic farm site will be open for visitors during the day before and after our lunch and annual meeting. Come prepared to enjoy a great Fall day at The Farm!

The Work Goes On!

The grain was flying as attendees of our September 13th, 2014 Celebration pitched in to help with the threshing.
Upcoming Special Events

For more information or reservations for these events CALL 763.441.6896.

Prairie Sugar Weekend
10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, noon to 5 p.m. Sunday • FAMILY EVENT

Join the Kelley Farm hands as they make prairie sugar, also known as sorghum molasses. Help strip the leaves off the sorghum canes, press the canes through a horse-powered press to extract the juice and stir the juice as it boils down to make a sweet, syrupy molasses. Then, enjoy a sweet treat of molasses confections such as gingerbread and molasses candy.

Harvest Days
10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Thursday through Saturday; noon to 5 p.m. Sunday • FAMILY EVENT

The days are getting shorter, the temperatures are dropping and the last of the garden produce and farm crops need to be harvested, processed and stored for winter use. Join the Kelley Farm staff as they prepare the farm for winter. Visitors will help finish up the field work, put food away for the winter in the root cellar, make corn husk dolls or join in a quilting bee, and play 19th century games.

Build A Bird Feeder Workshop
Nov. 8, 2014
1 to 3 p.m.
$10 materials fee.
Reservations required
Call 763-441-6896

Birds are a valuable resource for farmers, aiding in insect control and pollination of plants. The Kelley Farm has hundreds of bird species that pass through on migration or that live at the farm year round, including woodpeckers, orioles, blue birds and more. Participants will make a bird feeder to take home complete with directions for mounting. All materials and tools will be provided. Workshop does not include a tour of the farm.

Toy Making Workshop
Dec. 6, 2014
1 to 3 p.m.
$5 material fee
Reservations required
Call 763-441-6896

Visit the Kelley Farm just in time to make homemade toys to give as gifts for the holidays. In the visitor center, guests will choose between making several 19th-century toys, including a ball-and-cup game, buzz saws, pick-up sticks and corn husk dolls. All tools and materials will be provided. This workshop does not include a tour of the farm.

A Yankee Thanksgiving
Nov. 23, 2014
2 to 4 p.m.
$10/$8 for MNHS members.
Reservations required
Call 763-441-6896

Oliver H. Kelley was from Boston and like many others he migrated west as soon as he turned twenty-one, settling in Minnesota in 1849. In 1863 Abraham Lincoln proclaimed the first day of Thanksgiving. Visit the Kelley Farm to explore what Thanksgiving was like on a “Yankee” farm in the 1860s. Guides will lead visitors along the wooded trails to the farm yard to meet the animals. Then guests can explore the farm house, filled with the aromas of a harvest celebration. Following the tour, pie and refreshments will be served in the visitor center. Be sure to dress for the weather.

Christmas on the Farm
2 to 4 p.m.
$10/$8 for MNHS members.
Reservations required
Call 763-441-6896

Join a guide for a 75-minute tour of the Kelley Farm including a hike along the nature trail, a stop inside the historic farmhouse and a visit to the livestock pens. Discover how farm families and their animals coped with shorter days and colder temperatures, and how they prepared for the upcoming holidays 150 years ago. Enjoy a horse or oxen-drawn bobsled or wagon ride. Dress for outdoor weather. Warm refreshments follow in the Visitor Center.

Visit the MNHS website for a complete list of events at The Farm!
http://sites.mnhs.org/historic-sites/oliver-h-kelley-farm
Paint the Farm

Art Sale
Local artists offer paintings of historic Oliver Kelley Farm

Art activities for kids

Show Dates
October 4 - Saturday 10:00AM to 5:00PM
October 5 - Sundays Noon to 5:00PM
Reception October 5 - Sunday 1-4PM
There will be fall treats and drinks at the reception.

Oliver H. Kelley Farm
15788 Kelley Farm Rd
Elk River, Mn

Sponsored by The Friends of the Kelley Farm