



## Great River Road Network of Museums and Interpretive Centers Nomination Form

**Name of organization:** Charles A. Lindbergh Historic Site

**Address:** 1620 Lindbergh Drive S, Little Falls, MN 56345

**Phone:** 320-616-5421

**Contact Person:** Melissa Peterson

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**Title:** Site Manager

**Website:** www.mnhs.org\lindbergh

**Introduction:** This is a network of museums and interpretive centers about the Mississippi River along the Great River Road. It is not our intent to select every museum or interpretive center along the Mississippi River, even though we recognize there are hundreds of museums that are doing excellent work. Our goal is to have a network of premier institutions that are willing to work together to further the interpretive and marketing goals for the Great River Road.

### Section 1- Qualifications

The institution must interpret the Mississippi River or some significant aspect or relationship to the river with a high level of quality and be open to the public on a published, regular basis.

1. What story does your institution tell about the Mississippi River as part of its regular daily visitor experience? How does it relate to the themes for interpretation which are attached? Why do you feel that this significant aspect or relationship to the river is presented at a high level of quality? Describe the quality of the visit your guests receive.

The Mississippi River was a major influence on Charles Lindbergh. Our historic site interprets Lindbergh's life and legacy, much of which stems from his youth on the banks of the river in Little Falls. Even though for many years he only lived in the house for the summer, "Camp," as the

family called the property, was home to young Lindbergh and makes up the majority of his writings about his youth. Our guided tour, "Lindbergh: Extraordinary Boy," pulls quotes and stories from Lindbergh's writings that illustrate his connection with the property and in turn the Mississippi River.

*For me, the city formed a prison. Red brick houses replaced the woodlands on our farm. Concrete pavement jarred against my heels. The crystal light of sky crawled mangily into schoolrooms. It was the clank of street cars, not the hoot of an owl, that woke me at night. Through long winters, I counted the weeks and days until spring when we would return to our Minnesota farm.* - Charles A. Lindbergh, *Spirit of St. Louis*

**Theme 1:** This past spring, we launched a new educational program for school aged children called "On The Trail." Please see question three for additional details.

**Theme 2:** Historically, as well as today, the river is a place for recreation. During the *Lindbergh: Extraordinary Boy* tour, interpretive staff shares how Lindbergh swam in the river. Our Visitor Center exhibits include a display of a boat motor from the boat Lindbergh and his father used on an ill-fated headwaters to home boat trip when he was about nine years old.

**Theme 5:** The Mississippi River impacted Charles Lindbergh in two major ways, both of which we share with our guests during their *Lindbergh: Extraordinary Boy* tour.

The first is related to what made Lindbergh famous - aviation.

*One day, before the first world war began, when I was playing upstairs in our house." "The sound of a distant engine drifted in through an open window. Automobiles had been going past on the road quite often that summer. ... Suddenly I sat up straight and listened. No automobile engine made that noise. It was approaching too fast. ... I ran to the window and climbed out onto the tarry roof. It was an airplane! Flying upriver below the higher branches of trees, a biplane was less than two hundred yards away - a frail, complicated structure, with the pilot sitting out in front between struts and wires. I watched it fly quickly out of sight,...I used to imagine myself with wings on which I could swoop down off our roof into the valley, soaring through air from one riverbank to the other, over stones of the rapids, above log jams, above the tops of trees and fences."* - Charles A. Lindbergh, *Lindbergh Historic Site Dedication Speech (1973) and Spirit of St. Louis*

The second is his connection to the conservation movement in the 1960s and 70s. Throughout the course of his aviation career, Lindbergh saw the environment change beneath his wings - and not always for the better. As a youth he developed the connection with the river and the environment in general - so much so that he realized as an adult that he'd "rather have birds than airplanes."

**Theme 8:** One of our guests' favorite moments on tour of the Lindbergh home is being out on the screened in porch that overlooks the Mississippi River. It is here that we pause and let them

absorb the river for the beauty that it is and remind our guests that the property was originally purchased for its beauty.

**Theme 9:** The tour briefly touches on the river's connection with the logging industry. During Lindbergh's youth he would spend time with the lumberjacks as they passed through the area. In addition, we share that Lindbergh's father was a lawyer for the Pine Tree Logging Company.

2. What is the length of stay for the typical visitor experience at your institution? Please provide what you consider an average time, what you consider a short stay and what you consider a long stay for regular attendance.

The typical length of visit is 90 minutes. A short stay would be 40 minutes. A long stay would be 3+ hours. The short stay is when people come for a guided tour and leave after. A longer stay would include both the house tour and exploration of exhibits and grounds.

3. What educational or interpretive programs beyond exhibits do you conduct that interpret the Mississippi River or some significant aspect or relationship to the river?

"On The Trail," program is geared for youth in grades 2nd-6th. During the course of this program, interpretive staff lead youth on a nature scavenger hunt on our hiking trails along the bank of the Mississippi River. A large portion of this program is comparing the flora, fauna, and animals Lindbergh recalled seeing as a youth to what we can now see today. We are currently working to modify this program to be a self-guided experience for guests to participate in during the summer tourism season.

4. What are your published and regular hours? Please describe hours for various seasons.

Memorial Day Weekend - Labor Day: Thurs - Sat 10 am - 5 pm, Sun noon - 5 pm  
September; Sat 10 am - 5 pm  
Holiday Special Events: Hours determined annually  
Open by appointment for groups of 10+ year round  
The Charles A. Lindbergh State Park is open year-round, including trails

5. What is the annual attendance for regular museum hours at your site, exclusive of special events? What is the admission fee?

Annual attendance is approximately 5,000 for non-special events and group tours.  
Admission rates: \$8 adults, \$6 seniors, college students, active military, youth (5-17),  
Free children 4 and younger and Minnesota Historical Society Members

6. What is your proximity to the Great River Road?

The historic site is located on the Great River Road.

7. Did you enclose a letter of endorsement from your state Mississippi River Parkway Commission?

Yes; see attached.

## **Section II- Duties and Obligations:**

1. Members of the network must have the Great River Road map at their site, at a minimum for reference, but preferably for sale or for distribution to visitors. One map will be provided as will an order form for additional maps. Will you agree to stock and/or sell the Great River Road map?

Yes, we can both stock and sell Great River Road maps.

2. Members of the network must ensure that front line personnel who have contact with the public are knowledgeable of and will promote the Great River Road and the museums and interpretive centers in the region. Describe how you will ensure that your front line personnel will be trained, briefed and monitored.

The Charles A. Lindbergh Historic Site will work with other MNHS sites designated as GRR Interpretive Centers to ensure initial training sessions and provide materials for newly designated sites as well as annual review visits for all GRR Interpretive Centers under the MNHS umbrella. The MNHS Director of Historic Sites and Museums will coordinate with the MN-MRPC Director and Regional Commissioners to schedule the training sessions and meetings. The MN-MRPC office will also serve as an on-going contact point for questions and needs during the year.

3. Are you willing to display signage at your center showing that you are a member of the Great River Road Network? This may be inside or outside signage, but must be prominently displayed. Where will you display the Interpretive Center sign?

Yes we are willing to display signage at our site. Our preference would be outdoor signage, as it would be more accessible to guests when the buildings are closed but the trails are available for hiking. If the GRRN would prefer indoor signage, we will add it to our lobby area in our visitor center, again to ensure maximum access for guests.

4. Are you willing to secure the needed funds to have an officially approved Great River Road Interpretive Center sign erected at your site?

Yes.

### Section III - Capacity:

The following questions are asked primarily for information purposes and will not be major factors in determination of inclusion in the network.

1. Do you have access to the internet? If your facility has a website, what is the address? Do you have the ability to post the [www.experiencemississippiriver.com](http://www.experiencemississippiriver.com) website on our website?

Yes we have internet access. Our website is [www.mnhs.org/lindbergh](http://www.mnhs.org/lindbergh). We can include a link under our "Plan a Visit" section.

2. Do you have traveling exhibit space? If so, what size is it in square footage? Would you be willing or interested in hosting a traveling exhibit?

Currently we do not have traveling exhibit space. This is something we are working towards and once we accomplish it we would be interested in hosting a traveling exhibit.

*Please send photos of your interpretive center, both inside and outside, to 701 E. Washington Ave. Suite 202 Madison, WI 53703. Call 866-763-8310 if you have questions.*

### PROCESS

Nominations may be sent simultaneously to the chair of your state Mississippi River Parkway Commission and/or directly to the National Mississippi River Parkway Commission Office, 701 E. Washington Ave. Suite 202 Madison, WI 53703. Nominations must be received by September 1 to be eligible for consideration at the Annual Mississippi River Parkway Commission meeting each year. Please include a letter of endorsement by your state Mississippi River Parkway Commission Commissioner. This is extremely important.

Nominations are reviewed by the Heritage and Culture Committee of the National Mississippi River Parkway Commission. This committee has representation from all 10 states of the Mississippi River. Nominations are then also approved by the Board of Directors of the National Mississippi River Parkway Commission.

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To date, there are over 70 centers in the Great River Road Network that interpret the stories of the Mississippi River. These centers reside along the 10-state stretch of the river and range from museums, parks, nature centers, aquariums, historic and prehistoric sites. Benefits to Network members include: a listing on the Great River Road map distributed nationally, a listing in the touch screen kiosk at the National Mississippi River Museum & Aquarium in Dubuque, listing on the MRPC website, and listing on signage at each GRR center along the river.



## Minnesota Mississippi River Parkway Commission

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*Members of the House:* Sheldon Johnson (DFL – 67B) – Chair *Members of the Senate:* David Senjem (R – 25); Patricia Torres Ray (DFL – 63) *State Agency Appointees:* Paul Hugunin – Agriculture, Scott Bradley – Transportation, Adam Johnson – Explore Minnesota Tourism, Keith Parker – Natural Resources, Andrea Kajer – Historical Society *Regional Appointees:* Nancy Salminen – Lake Itasca to Grand Rapids, Anne Lewis – Grand Rapids to Brainerd, Karl Samp – Brainerd to Elk River, Cordelia Pierson – Elk River to Hastings, Sheronne Mulry – Hastings to Iowa Border *Member at Large:* Mark Anderson

July 29, 2016

Mississippi River Parkway Commission  
701 E Washington Avenue, #202  
Madison, WI 53703

Re: Charles A. Lindbergh Historic Site Interpretive Center Nomination

The Mississippi River Parkway Commission of Minnesota is pleased to recommend the Charles A. Lindbergh Historic Site for addition to the Network of Great River Road Interpretive Centers. The site includes the Lindbergh home as well as a visitor center which includes a wide array of information and memorabilia about the world famous aviator.

As a National Historic Landmark, the highest designation given by the U.S. Department of the Interior, the Charles A. Lindbergh Historic Site is a globally-significant feature along Minnesota's Great River Road. This Minnesota Historical Society property is located along the Mississippi River in beautiful Little Falls, an important destination in the Scenic Region (Brainerd to Elk River) of Minnesota's Great River Road.

Little Falls and the Lindbergh Site were featured as part of the 2015 MRPC Semi-Annual Meeting, hosted in Minnesota. The MN-MRPC consistently highlights the Charles A. Lindbergh Historic Site in materials marketing the Minnesota Great River Road. The site is an important stop along the byway and it tells a unique story that transformed the world. The Minnesota Historical Society (MNHS) is a member agency of the Minnesota Mississippi River Parkway Commission, and the new Minnesota Great River Road Corridor Management Plan includes a recommendation to nominate MNHS sites that are not yet included in the Network of Great River Road Interpretive Centers. This nomination helps carry out that recommendation.

The MN-MRPC looks forward to the Charles A. Lindbergh Historic Site's selection as a National Great River Road Interpretive Center, and to helping promote this unique and exceptional site to travelers from all Mississippi River states and beyond.

Sincerely,

Rep. Sheldon Johnson  
Chair









