

Wisconsin Historical Society: The Rising Star Flouring Mill listed In National Register of Historic Places

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Nelsonville, Wis. – The Wisconsin Historical Society has announced the listing of the Rising Star Flouring Mill in Nelsonville, Portage County, in the National Register of Historic Places. National Register designation provides access to certain benefits, including qualification for grants and for rehabilitation income tax credits, while it does not restrict private property owners in the use of their property.

The Rising Star Flouring Mill contributed to the early local agriculture and industrial economy of the Nelsonville area. Saw and flour mills were the first industries to make an appearance in rural Wisconsin and a new flouring mill in an undeveloped area often triggered settlement in the area. The Rising Star Flouring Mill was the catalyst for the development of the village of Nelsonville. The mill became the nucleus of the community, serving both as a place of commerce and as a social gathering place. This mill is an excellent intact example of an early manufacturing facility that produced flour from Wisconsin wheat. Flour was a vital staple for the logging industry and early settlers and flour milling became the economic leader in Wisconsin’s industrial economy from 1845 to 1875.

The Rising Star Flouring Mill became an outlet for grinding locally grown wheat into flour. Jerome Nelson, who built the mill, purchased the local farmer’s wheat crop by the bushel. Some wheat was milled for consumption by the farmer who grew it and the rest was ground into flour and sold to lumber camps, local residents or shipped

to larger cities. The Rising Star Flouring Mill not only helped to encourage settlement in the area but encouraged the farmer to continue to clear land and expand their wheat crop production. This mill retains its historic appearance on both the exterior and interior and helps tell the story of early industry in Wisconsin.

We gratefully acknowledge the Fuldner Heritage Fund which paid for the preparation of this nomination. This endowed fund, created through a generous donation by the Jeffris Family Foundation and administered by the Wisconsin Historical Society, supports the nomination of historically and architecturally significant rural and small town properties.

The register is the official national list of historic properties in America deemed worthy of preservation and is maintained by the National Park Service in the U.S. Department of the Interior. The Wisconsin Historical Society administers the program within Wisconsin. It includes sites, buildings, structures, objects and districts that are significant in national, state or local history, architecture, archaeology, engineering or culture.

To learn more about the State and National Register programs in Wisconsin, visit www.wisconsinhistory.org.