



# Rebuild Fulton Helps Community Celebrate Dutch Heritage

Rebuild Fulton, IL joined the City of Fulton, elected officials and a crowd of more than 1,000 at the dedication of an authentic 92-foot windmill from the Netherlands to celebrate the community's Dutch heritage on May 6. The dedication took place during Fulton's Dutch Days Festival, an eagerly anticipated annual event that attracted an estimated 10,000 celebrants.

The dedication drew regional television coverage from two Davenport, IA area stations, Moline Public Television and AT&T Cable. Newspapers from as far away as Peoria, which is about 75 miles from Fulton, covered the dedication.

Through Rebuild Fulton, the City plans to use the windmill as an educational tool and will explore its potential for generating electricity to light the Fulton Great River Walk in downtown Fulton.

For over 20 years this predominantly Dutch community has sought to erect an authentic windmill to celebrate its ancestry.

Originally used to grind flour in Holland, the windmill symbolizes the past and represents Fulton's future. The City views the windmill as an opportunity to educate the community about the benefits of renewable energy and to stimulate the

local economy through tourism, notes Joan Boyer, Fulton City administrator and leader of Rebuild Fulton.

Fulton Mayor Paul Kikkema and Burt Bulder, CEO of Lowland's Management, the company that helped Fulton obtain the windmill, unveiled the official name of the windmill at the dedication: de Immigrant. Rachel Ottens, an 11-year-old area resident, submitted the winning name. Deputy Consulate General of the Netherlands Hans Hageman released the brake on the windmill to allow the sail to turn.

The \$790,000 installation of the windmill was funded by the Illinois Department of Commerce and the Community Affairs Tourism Department. Visitors may purchase personalized bricks to pave the walkway leading to the windmill. Their contributions help fund the installation of working grindstones that will demonstrate how the original windmill ground flour and wheat. The working windmill would serve as a demonstration project for area schools and neighboring communities.

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