

Along the Lincoln Highway



**The Newsletter of the Iowa Lincoln Highway Association
Winter/Spring 1999 Volume 4 Issue 1**

Grants Fund Lincoln Highway.

Greene County has been a front-runner in efforts to preserve and promote the Lincoln Highway, the first coast-to-coast road for automobile traffic in the United States.

Those efforts were rewarded recently when the county was awarded two grants to further promote the transcontinental landmark.

Bob Ausberger, a Jefferson farmer, said the two grants will be used to publish a guide to historic bridges and a book about bridge construction in Iowa.

Both matching grants were awarded by the Iowa Department of Transportation through its Transportation Enhancement Funding program. The two grants were part of \$2.7 million in federal money disbursed statewide for 11 projects. Greene County was the only applicant to be awarded two Enhancement grants this year.

The first grant for \$68,385 will be used to publish a 96-page paperbound guide to historic bridges, both rail and highway, in the Lincoln Highway corridor. The Lincoln highway Association will match the grant with an additional \$27,279.

Plans call for publication of 3000 guides that will be distributed at various tourist locations throughout the state.

Ausberger said the association hopes to have the booklets, entitled "Guide to the Bridges of the Lincoln Highway Corridor in Iowa," to be printed by September 2000 and ready for distribution early in 2001.

"It will be oriented toward tourists' interest in heritage," Ausberger said.

The second grant of \$98,923 will help publish a book that covers the development of bridge construction in Iowa. The book will show how this development fits into the general development of the transportation system, and will include both highway and rail bridges.

The bridge construction book, to be titled "The History of Bridge-Building in Iowa," will be prepared on the same time schedule as the tourist guide booklet, with release in 2001.

Ausberger said this project will be more technical than the first, oriented as a reference or textbook on bridge construction. The Highway Association will use assistance and additional funding from Iowa State University Press for the book project, according to Ausberger. Matching funds for this project will total \$42,396, of which the Highway Association will furnish \$18,600.

The Greene County chapter of the Lincoln Highway Association is working with the county board of supervisors on both projects. The supervisors and the DOT will oversee publication of both the tourist guide and the book.

Greene County residents who are active in the association and its projects include Ausberger and his wife, Joyce; Bob Owens and Wayne Taylor, both of Jefferson; Marge and Clare Robson of Grand Junction, and Kirk Citurs of Scranton. L

Travel the Lincoln Highway in Woodbine.

One of the few original bricked segments of the Lincoln Highway exists in Woodbine, and is the longest section remaining in the state of Iowa. The highway brought the world to the small communities, and enriched the lives of the people. It exposed them to cultural and historical influences which greatly influenced their lives and shaped their destinies.

Many of the lovely homes of the era were built along the Lincoln Highway which passed through Woodbine. It was a point of pride with the residents to make certain their properties were neat and well kept, since they were constantly exposed to public scrutiny by those traveling by.

Many of the homes still exist, with very few exterior structural changes having been made. Their owners still take pride in appearance, and in preserving the original architectural style, or restoring it.

The people of Woodbine also take pride in the fact that the unique "stair-step" portion of the highway has been made eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. A large crowd attended the dedication of the old highway, now known as "Lincoln Way," several years ago. A number of events using the Lincoln Way/Lincoln Highway theme have drawn attention to this old brick street steeped in tradition and history.

But the Lincoln Highway, now U.S. Highway 30, was re-routed to bypass Woodbine years ago. Since the city is now more remote, today's travelers on U.S. 30 are not aware of the remaining portion of the roadway, or

that it even exists, for the most part. And Woodbine, like most smaller communities today, is economically disadvantaged, with limited cultural resources. For these reasons, the people interested in preserving and protecting this part of their heritage are seeking ways and means to once again bring the world to their door.

A special project was needed, so a planning committee was formed, and after a number of brainstorming sessions, they developed a format for a day of commemoration, education and celebration. The program agenda planned for the event has been designed to keep in mind the historical significance of the area, and the intent to convey to the people of western Iowa and beyond the importance of pride in their heritage. Every event has as its basis either literature, art, history, music, architecture or genealogy.

The program will take place on Saturday, June 26th in the Woodbine Community Building. Some of the programs sponsored will include:

- 1) A writers seminar, with presenters Phil Hey and Drake Hokanson. These men are literary figures who have written about the history of the Lincoln Highway and the lifestyles of the people of that period.
- 2) A presentation of replicas of old postcards, transferred to slides, showing scenes of the Lincoln Highway from the early 1920s and 30s (when it was still a mud road) and after.
- 3) A presentation by Bob Ausberger, including an update on current activities, progress of naming the remnant to the National Register of Historic Places, proposed projects, etc.
- 4) A vintage style show by Valerie Van Kooten, featuring fashions of the past, an insight into the social structure of the days when the Lincoln Highway was prominent.
- 5) Oral histories - the memories of Wilma park and Beulah Pelton, who lived along the highway as children and young adults.

The program is planned as follows:

Friday 25 June

7:00 pm - Writers Seminar

Saturday 26 June

10:00 - Welcome and remarks by Bob Ausberger, Iowa LHA past president.

10:30 - John Fitzsimmons, Lincoln Highway artwork.

11:00 - Concurrent offerings of bus tour of the homes and business buildings from the Lincoln Highway era, or slide show.

12:00 - Lunch catered, with entertainment from the men's choral group "The Noteables."

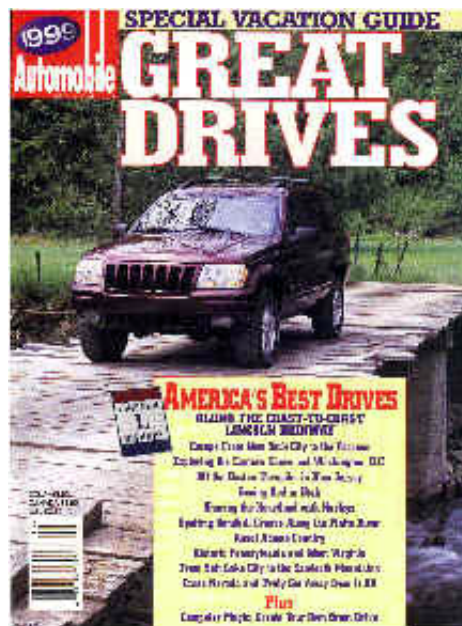
1:00 - Concurrent bus tour or slide presentation.

2:00 - Vintage fashion show, Valerie Van Kooten, presenter.

4:00 - Wrap-up by project director Elaine Ehlert.

All information, artifacts, and photos will be made available for research purposes, and copies placed at the Harrison County Genealogy Center and the Lincoln Way Restoration/Lincoln Highway files. L

Ford has not yet jumped on the Lincoln Highway bandwagon - little change since 1913!)



We enthusiastically greet Jean Jennings's idea to use its route as a jumping-off point for all our drives. Not only did it assure that the drives would be spread out democratically across the country, but it also gave us an excuse to revisit the fascinating subject of the Lincoln Highway itself.

For our historical briefs on the Lincoln highway we turned to Drake Hokanson, who, in addition to being a widely published writer and photographer and an assistant professor in mass communication at Winona State University in Winona, Minnesota, edits the "Road in American Culture" book series for Johns Hopkins University Press. He is an expert on this storied road, having authored *The Lincoln Highway: Main Street Across America*.

Hokanson further assisted us by getting us in contact with James Fox of the Special Collections Library at the University of Michigan. The Special Collections Library houses the materials of the Lincoln Highway Association and was an invaluable source of artwork to illustrate the historical pieces. Paging carefully through those seventy-year-old photo albums gave us an appreciation for the Association's heroic undertaking and renewed our desire to set off on the road ourselves.

Dictators, kings, queens, and socialist governments can wave their wands and make big public projects like transcontinental highways happen in a flash. In a democracy, it's a more difficult process, and it often falls to the private sector - operating in the area known as enlightened self-interest - to get things going. Such was the case in 1912 when Carl Fisher assembled a small group of pioneer automotive men to discuss this idea for America's first transcontinental highway. Europe already had first-class roads, but there was no single highway linking America's east and west coasts.

Local communities were urged to create short demonstration sections, and the Lehigh Portland Cement Company provided for "seedling miles" scattered across the Midwest. What became the Lincoln Highway was a sort of connect-the-dots series of roads of varying width and surface, very little of it paved, but by golly, an estimated 150 vehicles traveled the length of the Lincoln Highway in 1913. By 1924, more than 20,000 had made the trip, and Portland Cement was being poured right across the country.

For the last thirty years, my parents lived above their antique shop in an old hotel (built around 1835) in New Pittsburg, Ohio. One of my first discoveries about their home was that the Lincoln Highway (there named "Old Lincoln Way") ran through that area only some four or five miles away. The idea of the Lincoln Highway never fails to excite me. The way it came to be is so American! This year, we've chosen the gorgeous countryside traversed by the old Lincoln Highway as the connecting link for all of these Great Drives. This is America at its typical best. Each of these drives holds tribal memories for every one of us. Start the car! L

Lincoln Highway trip reports will appear in our upcoming issues.

Ramblings Along the Lincoln Highway.

Minutes of the Winter 1999 Iowa LHA Board of Directors Meeting.

9 January 1999.

Tama, Iowa.

Submitted by Joyce Ausberger, Secretary.

The meeting was opened by co-presidents Jeff and Margaret. Jeff reviewed the Lincoln Highway Interpretive Site plans. Each site is planned to have a specific story of the Lincoln that it will tell. The Youngville site was reviewed and discussed.

Consul Reports

Benton County

Anne Schoonover reported that mid-November the contract for Youngville rehab was let to a contractor in Belle Plaine for \$73,900. Its completion schedule is July 1st, 1999. It is also anticipated that the cabins just east of Youngville will be moved to the site. The Youngville group continues to look for more manpower and money for ongoing projects. They are carefully deciding what will be appropriate to have displayed. Some original photos will be among the display.

Boone County

John Fitzsimmons reported that he had repainted several of the poles with the logo and plans to do more in 1999. He also reported that Shirley Walrod and he are hoping to get notecards with Lincoln Highway photos and artwork on them. *Ty Casotti* passed around postcards of cabins located by the old Highway 30 bridge. He mentioned cabins that are still in Boone that were once located on the Lincoln.

Carroll County

Norma Berns is visiting another historic city - London! Carroll County applied for an ISTE (T21) enhancement grant to interpret the Lincoln Highway and allow green space between the railroad and U.S. Highway 30 (old Lincoln Highway).

Cedar County

Keith Whitlatch has been working with the community of Lowden and their effort to purchase the old canopy gas station, once Phillips 66 station [see last issue]. An ISTE enhancement grant has been applied for.

Crawford County

Ardith Sporleder has arranged for our next spring meeting location to be the Cronk's Cafe in Denison on Saturday, April 10th. The tour will be after lunch.

Greene County

Bob Owens reported that during the Greene County LHA Christmas party a list was made of challenges for 1999. The bust of Abraham Lincoln to be reset on the Moss markers, work on the 1918 Army box, consideration of location of a Quirk cabin and its rehab, and consideration of replicating the Eureka Mill by Eureka bridge.

Harrison County

Elaine Ehlert has set June 25th and 26th as the dates to be in Woodbine for special programming and the kick-off for their tour of Woodbine homes on the brick Lincoln Highway.

Linn County

Lyell Henry reported that Iowa LHA still maintains that we would like to see the seedling mile between Mt. Vernon and Marion remain eligible for the historic register. A letter is being prepared to send to the Linn County engineer.

Pottawattamie County

Bob Tomlinson worked with the Union Pacific to make it possible for the Greene County Lincoln Highway interpretive site to use some culvert limestone that had been abandoned.

Story County

Margaret Elbert reported that the New Frontier motel on old U.S 30 was gone. Also the Ash House, located on the old Lincoln Highway. The Ames Motor Lodge - built in 1925 - is still there. Lyell Henry expressed a desire to have the old motel put on the historic register. Margaret asked if anyone had heard the term "Shun Pikers," and Ty Casotti had. Members agreed it is a good thing to be.

Tama County

Ron Cory reported that Tama had done several things in 1998 to enhance the community. New banners, painting, general clean-up as well as the planning for a new city library. Their LH Bridge Festival this year will be May 14th and 15th. It will be their 20th anniversary celebration. The LHA will have a display set up and material available. L

Denison Site of ILHA Spring Meeting.

The Spring (snow or no snow!) Meeting of the Iowa LHA will be in Denison on Saturday, April 10th. Persons attending should notify Bob or Joyce Ausberger, or Jeff or Margaret Elbert-Benson so arrangements can be made for lunch and bus reservations.

The schedule follows:

9:00-9:20 Coffee, rolls, registration.

9:30-10:00 Business meeting and reports from directors.

10:00-11:30 Report from new owner of the Park Motel.

Report from Cronk's, including history, etc.

Report on the Donna Reed center, theater, soda fountain.

Report on Denison's Queen Anne bed and breakfast

Report on McHenry House and its LH marker.

11:30-12:30 Photo opportunity and visit to the Park Motel (across from Cronk's)

12:30-4:30 Crawford County tour from Denison west to Dunlap, including sites in Denison, and the original highway (gravel) stops in Arion and Dow City. At Dow City we will visit the Dow House, and return via a county road to Charter Oak to drive by Helen Ausberger's childhood home as well as visit Charter Oak's gateway park. We want to imagine how it could be used as a model for Lincoln Highway towns' gateways. We will return to Denison via Highway 141. Please note - the

return trip will not be on the Lincoln Highway but will travel through some beautiful Loess Hills landscape. L

American Safety Razor Acquired.

*Reprinted from The New York Times,
15 February 1999.*

J.W. Childs Equity Partners II L.P., a closely held investment company, agreed today to buy the American Safety Razor Company, the maker of **Burma Shave** shaving cream, for about \$298 million in cash and assumed debt.

American Safety Razor, whose founders invented the safety razor in 1875, said Childs agreed to pay \$14.125 a share for all of its outstanding common stock. That is a 43% premium to American Safety's closing price of \$9.875 on February 12. Childs will assume about \$125 million in debt.

American Safety Razor's products are sold under retailers' private-label names as well as under the Gem razors, Personna, Flicker Legmate and Bump Fighter brand. L

Rampaging Rustics!

by David Ivins

In case you city dwellers and suburbanites haven't noticed, be warned: the countryside is slowly creeping up on you. Like a rapidly growing weed that smothers everything in its path, rural areas are encroaching on our cities and suburbs, and no one - not our elected officials, public interest groups or citizens - is doing anything to stop this rural sprawl.

In countless confrontations, rural extremists are preventing businesses from building industrial parks, shopping malls, condominiums, single-family homes, theme parks, airports and sports arenas. They are even fighting the construction of new highways! What would the country be without the network of freeways and parkways linking our cities, suburbs, shopping malls, theme parks and sports arenas?

Rural sprawl began quietly with the infiltration, in ever-increasing numbers, of wildlife - squirrels, rabbits, songbirds and other small, cuddly, apparently innocuous creatures - into our suburbs and the fringes of our major cities. Now it seems that these small animals were only the advance guard of a cunningly planned invasion that also includes deer, coyotes, beavers, mountain lions, bears and other despoilers of our cherished suburbs and urban habitats.

Areas that otherwise would be given over to job creation and highly profitable logging, strip mining and oil drilling are being expropriated by wild animals, which are inherently valueless since they contribute nothing to our economy. Once these beasts establish themselves, shielded by hellbent wildlife-protection groups and misguided politicians from Al Gore to Christie Todd Whitman, they can never be dislodged.

But these animals are only the unwitting servants of the quaint-seeming "country folk" whose diabolical plan is to eradicate or make unlivable our suburbs and cities by covering our streets, sidewalks and highways with grass, shrubbery and trees. They want to inundate shopping malls and sports arenas with lakes, ponds and streams; replace our condo developments with "picturesque" villages and hamlets and our suburban tract homes with drafty, old-fashioned farmhouses.

The ultimate goal of these fanatical rustics is to return all of us to lives of unsophisticated rural primitivism. Is this the kind of life we want? Fight rural sprawl now, before it's too late! L

*Reprinted with a wink from
The New York Times, 25 February 1999.*

Last Minute News & Upcoming Events.

Lowden's Kreinbring Phillips 66 Station featured in our last newsletter will be visited by Jennifer Bridge who will spend two days gathering information for the station's Historic Register nomination. In addition, the station's grant application has cleared the first of five reviews.

Boone/Greene County's Lions Club Tree Park Interpretive Site will have a ground-breaking ceremony on **April 14th**.

Salt Lake City has a Lincoln Highway section in an interpretive site recognizing historic transportation routes entering the city through Parley's Canyon (today's Interstate 80).

The Museum Committee is active and is working on creating a funding source and plans to be included in an October 1st TEA21 grant application.

The grant application for the Iowa and Lincoln Highway Bridge books was successful - publication is set for the end of 2000.

The Corridor Management Plan is moving ahead and we hope to have a complete report at the April meeting in Denison.

The LHA National Headquarters are now officially open for business in the restored building in Franklin Grove, Illinois.

And let's not forget...

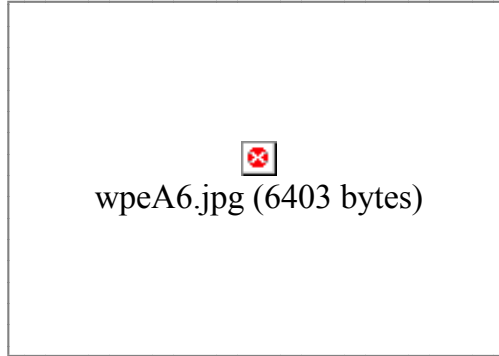
June 15-19 is the LHA National Conference in Rochelle, Illinois!

Feature Photo.

This issue's mystery photo is actually no mystery. It's a 1940s/50s era postcard featuring Denison's Park Motel, advertised as "Air-Conditioned, Steam Heated, 24 Rooms with Innerspring Mattresses and Tub or Shower."

Nearby stands Cronk's Cafe, another long-time Denison landmark, "Open All Night, and Specializing in Tourists Breakfasts."

Both buildings will be featured at the April state meeting of the ILHA. We'll run another "mystery photo" in the next issue of *Along the LH*.



The mystery photo in our last issue fooled almost no one, as several persons recognized the Sheldon Lodge on Sheldon Avenue (LH) in Ames, including all the officers of the ILHA, Van and Bev Becker of Cedar Rapids, but Betty Gulliver Johnson of Minneapolis was first. Ms. Johnson reports that her grandparents owned the Lodge from 1957 until 1973, and she has fond memories of Christmases spent there. L

Along the Lincoln Highway



The Newsletter of the Iowa Lincoln Highway Association
Spring/Summer 1999 Volume 4 Issue 2

Ground-Breaking Ceremonies Held at Interpretive Site.

Reprinted from The Jefferson Bee.

Groundbreaking ceremonies were held on Wednesday, April 14th at the Lions Club Tree park east of **Grand Junction** for the Greene/Boone County Regional Interpretive Site of the historic Lincoln Highway. About 65 were present.

Development of the site culminates four years of work by Bob and Joyce Ausberger of Hardin Township, Greene County, who spearheaded the project for the Lincoln Highway Association. A federal highway grant of \$300,000 is funding the project, along with some in-kind assistance from the Greene County engineer's office.

About two-thirds of the cost of the project will go for construction. The other one-third was invested in historical research and site design, undertaken by the Iowa State University Department of Landscape Architecture. Troy Seifert of the ISU department and Doug Adamson and March Schulte, landscape architects for the project, were present for the ceremony.

Bob Ausberger served as master of ceremonies for the event, and he asked for remarks from representatives of the project's many partnering organizations: the Grand Junction Lions Club, the city of Grand Junction, Greene County, Boone County, the Lincoln Highway Association, the Iowa Department of Transportation, the Federal Highway Administration, the ISU Department of Landscape Architecture, the Greene County Historical Society, and citizens of Greene County.

Several of the spokesmen commended the Grand Junction Lions Club for its beautification work at the site. Some of the trees will be replanted elsewhere on the site this week to permit construction walkways by Greene County crews and an information center. They also praised the Ausbergers for their initiative and determination in seeing the project through to construction.

Ausberger emphasized the appropriateness of the "living history" highway site for historical interpretation. An original Lincoln Highway concrete bridge spans West Beaver Creek just north of the adjacent Union Pacific Railroad, and a "second generation" bridge lies just south of the railroad on Old Highway 30 (now County road E53).

A third, newer bridge spans the creek at the south edge of the site on new Highway 30. With the railroad bridge and the Highway 30 overpass just to the west of the site, then, there are five bridges that mark the history of overland transportation over the past century.



The *real* workhorse of the Grand Junction ground-breaking ceremony, in a pose that would make her Lincoln Highway-building ancestors proud.

A computer class of East Greene Community High School developed a website on the Internet for the historical site. A Lincoln Highway marker for the site has been donated by a woman from Cedar Rapids. Ausberger noted that Grand Junction has more historic old service stations on the Lincoln Highway than any other town in Iowa.

Greene County engineer Wade Weiss explained how some federal highway funds are earmarked for historical and beautification projects like the Lincoln Highway Interpretive Site. He added that the project grew from a relatively small plan budgeted at \$50,000 to its current status as a \$300,000 undertaking.

A letting date for August 17 is planned for the project's construction by the Iowa DOT.

Greene and Boone County individuals, townships, towns and county governments worked with the original Lincoln Highway Association to improve the route from 1913 to 1924. In 1914 a group of Greene County citizens, along with the board of supervisors, donated funds for improvements to the roadway. The highway across the county was graded and graveled, thus giving Greene County the distinction of being the first county in Iowa to complete that project. Later, Greene County became the first county to pave its section, and also the first county to have "first class" bridges built using cement.

In 1925 a group of highway engineers recommended numbering highways with even numbers running east and west and odd numbers running north and south. In Iowa, the Lincoln became U.S. 30. From 1926 until the present, the route has been managed and maintained by the state and federal highway administrations and local county officials. L

THE TEN MILLIONTH: New York to San Francisco.

The following is reprinted from a 1974 article commemorating the 50th anniversary of the ten-millionth Model T.

In 1924 Henry Ford produced his 10 millionth Model T and as a publicity stunt the car was painted with appropriate lettering and Lincoln Highway markers. It was driven on the Lincoln Highway from New York to San Francisco by Frank Kulich, a well-known contemporary racing star.

The car was immortalized and the Lincoln Highway became a legend. For many years it was the major cross-country artery. With the expansion of the Interstate Highway System, the importance of the Lincoln Highway has diminished to the point that much of it has been lost from current road and street maps.

In commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Ten Millionth Ford's cross-country tour, the trip is being reenacted, using an identical car painted in the original manner. The car is being driven on the entire original route as far as can be determined by research of old maps. In some cases, where the only road is now high speed freeway, the car will either be driven on an adjacent access road or, if that is not possible, it will be trailered to the next safe portion of the Lincoln Highway.

The trip will start at Battery Park in New York City on Sunday, June 2, 1974, and is expected to terminate at the Ferry Building in San Francisco on Saturday, June 15, 1974.

The fifty-year-old car will have to average nearly 300 miles per day to meet the schedule but unless major mechanical difficulties occur, today's Lincoln Highway should provide an easier trip than the one in 1924.



LINCOLN HIGHWAY REDISCOVERY

Dr. Al Hathaway is going to repeat his feat of 1924 this coming June. The same car that covered the route in 1974 will repeat the feat in June of 1999 for the 75th "diamond" anniversary of the tour of the Ten Millionth Ford.

TEN MILLIONTH MODEL T LINCOLN HIGHWAY SCHEDULE

Sunday 6 June Battery Park, New York City

...

Wednesday 9 June Overnight at De Kalb IL

Thursday 10 June To De Witt IA, overnight at Davenport IA

Friday 11 June Overnight at Denison IA (Bob Ausberger will be joining the tour from De Witt to Denison)

Saturday 12 June Overnight at North Platte NE

...

Saturday 19 June Ferry Building, San Francisco CA

Let's give him a great big Lincoln Highway welcome! L

Chasing Lincoln.

Motorcycle Cruiser is a magazine for motorcycling enthusiasts. Two staff writers recently rode the Lincoln highway across the country to promote the new Polaris Victory, (manufactured in Spirit Lake, Iowa) and a Harley-Davidson Dyna Convertible. Their best promotion, however, was for the Lincoln Highway itself.

Jamie Elvidge wrote of their adventures in the article below. Watch for her continuing story in subsequent issues.



Say "Route 66" and Americans bristle with nostalgia. The human adventure gland opens and you immediately picture an empty two-lane road stretching out before you. A tumbleweed rolls across your temporal lobe. It doesn't matter that you've never been on the famous road, you know exactly how it would feel. That's marketing for you. We've been conditioned to think of Route 66 as our country's historic highway – our beloved Mother Road.

There is a road out there that truly deserves the glory though. It's the Lincoln Highway. It was America's first transcontinental road, "The Main Street Across America," made official in 1913. Heard of it? Most haven't. Sadly, Lincoln Highway would be the household name if a historic highway's value were measured in history rather than hype. Instead, the old Lincoln lies abandoned, quiet and without glamour; a tattered thread that connects New York City with San Francisco.

We used the excuse of testing the Harley Convertible and the new [Polaris] Victory to find this old road and the spirit of adventure that inspired it. Since the original plan intended to open a pathway from east to west – with the Panama-Pacific Exposition in San Francisco being the destination – we started in Times Square, New York. I would meet editor Art Friedman at 46th and Broadway seven days before we were scheduled to be in San Francisco. About halfway into the trip, he would hand off a bike to Evans Brasfield, who would complete the journey.

FROM POINT A TO POINT B –VIA H, Z, AND C

Thanks to the Internet and AAA we had detailed maps of the Lincoln's route west. Road maps scarcely existed in the 1920s, and what was available was far from accurate. Travelers relied on markers. All 3389 miles of the Lincoln Highway were at one time negotiated by following uppercase letter Ls painted on the telegraph poles. An arrow on the red, white and blue emblem told travelers when to turn.

Even if the markers still existed it would be impossible to follow them through modern-day Manhattan. The scene – and the smell – must have been quite different in 1913. Imagine a sea of Packards and LaSalles.

To leave Manhattan in 1913 one had to take a boat across the Hudson River. A Lincoln journey, in fact, began and ended with a ferry ride – the final one crossing the San Francisco Bay from Oakland. Today the trip begins and ends with tolls. As Art and I inched our way toward the Lincoln Tunnel, our boot soles dripping with grease and antifreeze, I thought the ferry ride must have been a very pleasant way to begin the trip.

Although our map was well-marked, we blew past several key turns. Staring at your gas tank bag-map while riding on the New Jersey Turnpike is not something I'd recommend. We finally got off the turnpike and followed a busy street that began to meander as it faithfully followed the old King's Highway.

This stretch of the Lincoln – between New York and Philadelphia – was used as a coach route for almost a century before the combustion engine was invented. Back then it took five to seven days to complete the 94-mile journey. Before it carried coaches, the old King's Highway is said to have been an ancient footpath. It was on this wooded, residential back road that we found our first Lincoln Highway sign. And although it was green and swung from a stoplight, it brought enormous satisfaction.

Of course, as Art and I sat smirking at the stoplight, we had no idea we would shortly prove ourselves to be an astonishingly poor navigating team. Two people can indeed get lost more efficiently than one. We'd been told the Pennsylvania portion of the historic highway would be the hardest to chase. We didn't understand the weight of that warning until we accidentally crossed into Delaware. L

Ramblings Along the Lincoln Highway.

*Minutes of the Spring 1999 Iowa LHA
General Membership Meeting.
10 April 1999.
Cronk's Cafe, Denison, Iowa.*

Submitted by Joyce Ausberger, Secretary.

President Margaret Elbert welcomed the LHA members and guests. She reviewed the agenda and asked others to feel free to add information.

Upcoming events were discussed. Ron Cory asked us to remember Tama's Lincoln Highway Bridge Festival May 14 and 15. Saturday the 15th, the Iowa LHA will have a display. John Fitzsimmons mentioned that his Boone County Civil War group would be performing after the parade Saturday afternoon.

Elaine Ehlert and Linda Dickman passed out their invitation to Woodbine's Lincoln Highway program 26 June. Drake Hokanson will be the keynote speaker. Their walking/car tour booklet will be completed and available at that time. Morning and afternoon bus tours will be available.

Ron Preston invited those who were attending the LHA Conference in Rochelle, Illinois, to stop by the Preston station. He will have it open both before and after the Conference.

Utah guest Rollin Southwell suggested that we let other state LHA members know of Iowa activities.

Margaret reported that Colo has applied for a RIG grant to help in the restoration plans of Niland's Corner. They met March 30th with a landscape architect to review their goals.

Ann Schoonover sent a report on Youngville. Late in July she hopes to have the Youngville renovation completed. A stove and refrigerator were donated from Amana.

Bob Ausberger reported that county engineers need to have guidance from federal highway as well as the state DOT representatives in designing historical roads using the flexibility of design criteria available. Crawford

County supervisor Robert Lehrman, after welcoming the Lincoln Highway Association and guests to Crawford County, agreed that it was difficult to know what was the right thing to do.

Bob Owens reported Greene County has located another concrete mile marker and that it would be placed in Scranton. He also reported that the Martin Guess memorial money would be used for several projects this year.

Margaret reminded members that this fall would be the new election of state association members. So far, Paul Walker has expressed interest in the National Directorship, vacated by Bob Ausberger.

Eric Skoog, the owner of Cronks, reviewed the history of the restaurant. It opened in 1929. He passed around old menus. The original owner, Mr. Cronks, understood that the Lincoln Highway moving a block north to its later location would be a boon to businesses there, and bought the café existing on the spot at that time. The early café was torn down to make room for the present structure, which has been expanded and renovated.

Jason Gessy, the owner of the Park Motel across the street from Cronk's, said that the original part of the motel was built in 1939. He and his dad are actively restoring it.

Sandra Scott, the director of the Donna Reed Center in Denison, reviewed the restoration of the old Opera House into the Donna Reed Center. The facility also houses the restored and magnificent Candy Kitchen with authentic soda fountain.

Tour highlights included a new culvert "discovered" behind the Best Western motel west of town. This is the same motel which lost its slabs of original highway two years ago in a widening of the Boyer River. Two rarely seen culverts were investigated near Arion. The buses returned through Charter Oak. L

News of Good Things to Come.

The ILHA has two important announcements to make.

First, Public Relations Chair Jim Ranniger will announce at the national conference that starting in 2000 the AAA will formally recognize the Lincoln Highway in their TourBook series.

In a letter to Jim, they agreed that it would be beneficial and of interest to AAA members to highlight the highway's history and points of interest: "...our Editorial staff will create and add a Lincoln Highway informational sidebar to each state section for which the highway passes through." Congratulations to Jim and his public relations committee for their good work!

Second, U.S. Congressman Ralph Regula of Ohio made a proposal to Congress asking for a \$500,000 appropriation for the "Lincoln Highway Study Act of 1999."

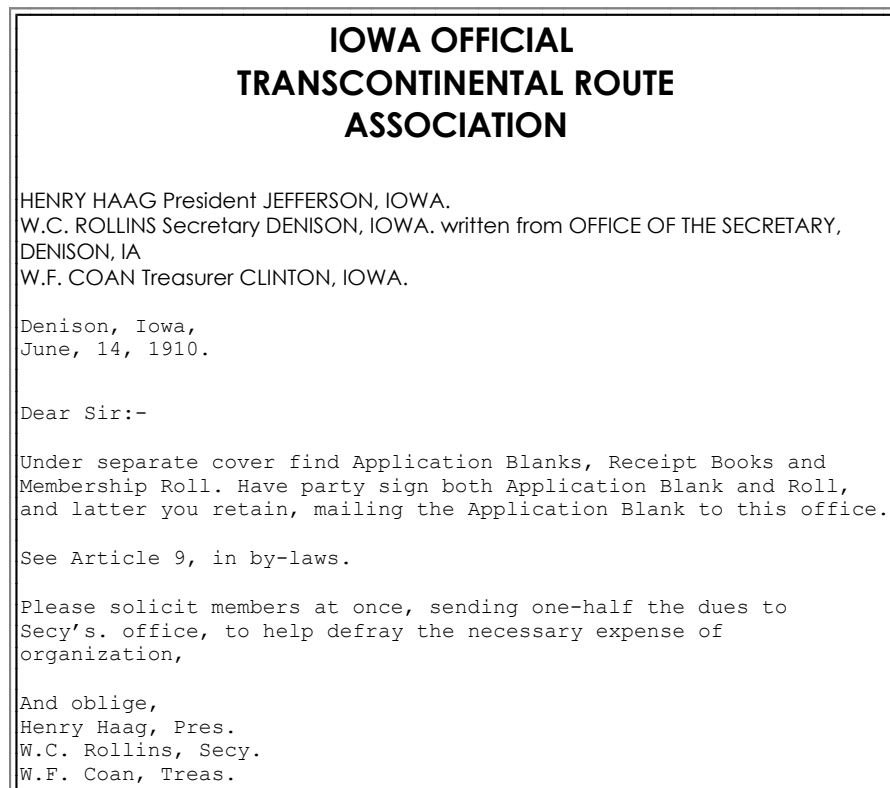
In his bill the National Park Service will do feasibility reports on the Highway and study its historical significance. Benefits of the process include funding for public and private preservation and economic development; state, national and international exposure; and a mechanism for individual and group projects. Stay tuned for more information! L

ILHA Board to Meet in Ogden.

The Iowa LHA Board of Directors will meet in Ogden on Saturday, July 10th, at 9:30 am. Coffee and doughnuts will be provided at 9:00. The meeting is open to the public.

The semi-annual meeting will be held at the Community Center Building on West Walnut Street in downtown Ogden. There will be no follow-up local tour, though attendees are welcome to stay and see the sights. L

Rummaging through their backroom recently, the owners of Wittrock's Garage in Carroll - a car dealership dating from Lincoln Highway days - found this letter addressed from the Iowa state officers of the Transcontinental Route Association, the forerunner of the Lincoln Highway Association. Due primarily to its lack of resources, the Transcontinental Route Association was not as well promoted as the LHA although the route was essentially the same, at least across Iowa. Note that the letter predates the LHA by more than three years, and some of the officers would later hold positions in the Iowa LHA.



Feature Photo.

The Lincoln Highway Association has gone space-age! This issue's mystery photo was taken from a fascinating website that displays actual Earth images captured from an orbiting Russian satellite. While there are gaps in the ground area covered by the satellite, the newsletter staff did manage to trace the Lincoln Highway across most of the state.

In this image, the seasoned Lincoln Highway observer should, without too much difficulty, spot an historic bridge as well as a restaurant serving as a long-time Lincoln Highway landmark. As always, if you wish to identify the location of the highway and see your name up in lights - or at least black ink - you can submit your guess to the *Along the Lincoln Highway* email address at pwalker@inav.net. L

Outside Iowa in the LHA.

*From the NE New Jersey Chapter Newsletter
Spring Issue 99*

Membership in our chapter is increasing. We are now 52 and spread from New England to the land of Dixie. That there is an increasing number in Central New Jersey is very encouraging.

We are getting a handle on this presentation of a national meeting; Jesse Petersen [Utah State Director] sent an outline of tasks. The obvious first chore is the appointment of an able coordinating group, each with an area to handle.

Iowa LHA members should be interested to know that the 2000 national conference will be in New Jersey.

Lots of Upcoming Events - Join Us!

Jefferson's annual Bell Tower Festival takes place on **June 12th** with the parade at 10:00 am. Look for the LHA booth.

Crossroad's Festival in Colo also on **June 12th** with parade on Saturday morning.

Al Hathaway's Transcontinental trip with the "10 Millionth Ford." Leaving DeWitt for Denison the evening of **June 12th**.

The 41st Annual Rose Festival festivities will run Friday through Sunday, **June 18, 19, and 20**. The Grand Parade is on Saturday, **June 19th**, at 10:00 am. The theme of the Festival this year is "A Century of Memories."

Lincoln Highway Association national conference in Rochelle, Illinois **16-19 June**.

Woodbine Lincoln Highway Program and Tour **June 26th**.

LHA Directors Meeting in Boone **July 10th**.

Nevada Lincoln Highway Days **August 28th**.

Fall LHA Meeting in Jefferson **October 9th**.

Can you help us out?

By checking the renewal date on your mailing label and resubscribing well in advance of the date, you will save your ILHA from having to send renewal notice letters.

Thanks!

Along the Lincoln Highway

The Newsletter of the Iowa Lincoln Highway Association
Summer/Fall 1999 Volume 4 Issue 3

Lincoln Highway Preservation: Meeting of the Minds

by Bob Ausberger

County engineers representing eight Iowa counties were accompanied by county supervisors, state historical society and Iowa tourism officials, an IDOT representative and several of our own LHA members at the “Context Sensitive Design Workshop” on July 27th in Ames at the Federal Highway Building. The discussion centered on preservation of the Lincoln Highway in conjunction with institutional progress toward continually improved and safer roadways.

The county engineers were thanked for what they had already done to preserve the Lincoln Highway, ranging from assistance with grant-writing to historic bridge preservation. It was made clear that much of the early LH alignment is now in the counties’ domain, and therefore the future of historic segments and structures is in their hands.

ILHA president Jeff Benson recapped the progress made in the Association’s short history. He emphasized the recent AAA decision to include the LH in their state guidebooks, and the House of Representatives’ bill recently introduced by Congressman Ralph Regula of Ohio. Outlining the progress made across the state and nation, he emphasized the importance of the county engineers’ help in continuing that progress.

Leah Rodgers and Lowell Soike discussed keeping Historic Register-eligible segments and engineering structures on the Register after they have been rehabilitated, and focused on preservation of the *integrity* of a segment or structure. Integrity includes workmanship, materials, setting, location, feeling or impression, and association with the site. In other words, after the road has been rehabilitated, does it still seem like an old road..

In the discussion that followed, LHA members pointed out that keeping the road on its original right-of-way is important for integrity. The county engineers were generally in agreement that the row usually needed to be widened to provide safety and bring the road up to modern standards.

The afternoon was given to the county engineers to explain their projects involving the LH, and which may lead to destruction of integrity in certain areas. The issues were narrowed to the two most problematic: the Mt. Vernon road—four miles running northwest from Mt. Vernon which include Iowa’s only seedling mile—and the 1928 through-truss bridge over the Des Moines River west of Boone. This bridge is scheduled to be dismantled this winter. A modern replacement will be constructed next year.

The issue of liability was brought up time and time again.

The meeting closed with LHA preservationists and county engineers more informed but still with quite a gulf in their thinking. One concrete idea that everyone agreed upon was proposed by an engineer from Tama County. He felt that the ILHA should have the early alignments well-marked across the state. On this positive note, the meeting was adjourned. L

Marsh Rainbow Arch Renovated

James Marsh (1854-1936) was one of America's most prolific early bridge builders. One of his bridges—and the last remaining of his arch design in Iowa—was rededicated on Sunday, July 25th in Ogden at the Leonard Good Community Center.

Built in 1919 on an early Boone County alignment of the Lincoln Highway, this bridge reflects his esthetic sense and his masterful handling of the medium of reinforced concrete which made his bridges appeal to both public taste and the public pocketbook.

The preservation project has been an exciting venture for the ILHA. For the rededication ceremony, Association officers Joyce Ausberger and Margaret Elbert sponsored a fund-raiser. Sandwiches and homemade ice cream were provided, and LHA bridge expert Jim Hippen gave an outstanding program on the story of James Marsh and the history of the bridge. Copies of his well-reviewed booklet *Marsh Bridges of Iowa* were available free to the public.



The Association donated \$1000 to Boone County for the renovation, which included the money raised at the July presentation. Donations are still accepted and welcome. Please contact Secretary Joyce Ausberger to help out.

After the program, participants toured to the bridge where a bottle of Beaver Creek water was broken over the arch to christen it. Contractor Ed Shaw and his crew were on hand to display some of their handiwork in the rehabilitation process.

The bridge is located four miles west of Ogden and just north of Beaver. Take U.S. Highway 30 to Beaver

and at the west end of town turn north on B Avenue. Drive one mile and turn east for 1/4 mile. Park carefully on the edges of the gravel road to the east or west. L

Chasing Lincoln.

Motorcycle Cruiser is a magazine for motorcycling enthusiasts. Two staff writers recently rode the Lincoln highway across the country to promote the new Polaris Victory, (manufactured in Spirit Lake, Iowa) and a Harley-Davidson Dyna Convertible. Their best promotion, however, was for the Lincoln Highway itself.

Jamie Elvidge wrote of their adventures in the article below. Watch for her continuing story in subsequent issues.



PAINT BY NUMBERS

Art and I finally completed the stretch to York, Pennsylvania, although we were five hours late meeting our photographer at the Harley-Davidson Museum. York's other historic leg-up is its claim to have been our nation's capital in 1777, when the Brits drove Congress out of Philadelphia.

Riding through Pennsylvania you begin to realize the roadside has layers, like coats of paint on an old barn. If you tune in you can pick out the scenes and structures that were there before the Lincoln Highway, those established as it grew, and structures relevant to its heyday. Motels, for example, didn't even exist until the 1930s.

Looking off to the right or left of U.S. Highway 30 you sometimes see original sections of the old road snaking across the land in a less aggressive course. The original highway didn't move with the forthright, dynamite-driven attitude of later highways. It took a more tentative path... like the first stroke of a painter's brush on an empty canvas. If highway building is an art, the first roads were impressionistic. Those soft lines are now mostly lost in our efficiently modernistic roadways. [This is one of the best metaphors for the Lincoln Highway I have ever read, *ed.*] As the highway system grew more impersonal and bypassed the quiet country lanes and slow-moving city streets, the intimate names given to roads were replaced by numbers.

I'd ridden across the country three times this summer, almost entirely via interstates. In my first day of exploring the Lincoln I felt more connected to the country I was traveling through than in all the other thousands of miles combined. On an interstate, you know when you're leaving one state and entering another. On the state and secondary routes everything blends into one impression.

As we began our ascent into the Alleghenies it grew dark. Earlier roads didn't breach this range. Most driving routes had gone to great lengths to skirt them. The Lincoln plowed up and over in a fashion that must have daunted early motorists. The braking systems of that era were nominally functional as the turnouts at each summit remind us. Wise businessmen set up shop on these peaks so travelers could cook their heels along with their brakes.



The most famous of these rest stops was built at Grand Point, which boasts a view of seven counties. What started as a roadside stand was eventually turned into a three-story ship called the S.S. Grand View Hotel (above). The project required 63.5 tons of steel, at a cost of \$120,000 – which in 1931 was a shipload.

GIRL POWER

Our slow-motion journey also inspired mental wanderings about what it would have been like to travel this way 80 years ago. The Lincoln was mostly dirt until it was paved in 1931. I live on a dirt road, so I know what that really means. It was either a dusty road or a muddy road; only a few days a year was it just plain dirt.

Ever hear of the Van Buren sisters? Adeline and Augusta? On July 4, 1916, these two young women left New York alone on two Indian Power Plus motorcycles bound for San Francisco via the new Lincoln Highway. They encountered all sorts of horrific weather and slogged their way through countless miles of slippery mud. In one section of Illinois, they rode through 40 continuous miles of deep sand. At the time, women weren't even allowed to vote. The Van Buren sisters arrived safely in San Francisco almost two months after leaving New York, smiling and seemingly none the worse for the wear.

After three long days of riding, Art and I had mastered map-reading enough to reach Fort Wayne, Indiana, home of the Lincoln Museum. We discovered a temporary exhibit called "Coast to Coast on the Lincoln Highway" (open until January 31, 1999). It was quite a feast for two people famished for Lincoln Highway facts. That evening Art broke away to hand off the Victory, like a relay baton, to Evans. L

Next issue: Iowa!

Ramblings Along the Lincoln Highway.

Minutes of the Summer 1999 Iowa LHA

Board of Directors Meeting.

10 July 1999.

Community Center, Ogden, Iowa.

Submitted by Paul Walker, Acting Secretary.

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 am by Secretary and Acting-President Joyce Ausberger at the Community Center in Ogden (on the Lincoln Highway).

Ausberger announced plans to order additional Lincoln Highway tri-color banners. The new banners will cost \$56.50 each for a set of 100. Approximately the same size as the existing banners, the colors are closer to LH red and blue and should be more colorfast.

Plans are finalized to send reminder postcards to Iowa members of the LHA if their membership is soon expiring or has already expired.

Lyell Henry gave an update of progress in the Niland's Corner Interpretive Site. Current plans by the city of Colo - the present owner of Niland's - call for the restaurant to re-open soon. The town is working on ways to raise money to renovate the site and how to run the roadside attraction.

Bob Ausberger reported that the Lowden Phillips 66 gas station renovation is proceeding. A decision must be made whether to fix the cottage-style station and service bay, or the station alone. Both are eligible for National Register of Historic Places nomination. Ausberger noted that the station is unique due to the placement of the chimney on the side, instead of Phillips usual front chimney. The Phillips company will be solicited for help in repairing the station.

Joyce Ausberger reported that the Woodbine lecture and tour-of-homes program was successful, and plans are underway to duplicate the program in Ogden. National as well as Iowa LHA members were involved in the Woodbine presentations. At present, a guide to Ogden's historical architecture is being compiled for the local program – dates to be determined.

Van and Bev Becker of Cedar Rapids are cataloging the 1928 LH concrete markers in Iowa. If any county directors or members are aware of an unrecognized marker anywhere in the state, they are asked to notify the Beckers at 319-362-5447

Ausberger and President Margaret Elbert are heading up the effort to raise funds for the renovation of the Marsh Rainbow Arch Bridge north of Beaver on the original LH. The repair work should be finished by press time.

On 27 July Bob Ausberger will be meeting with the County Engineers and Supervisors from most of the Iowa LH counties, as well as federal and IDOT officials. They will be discussing ways to repair old roadways and incorporate them into the highway system. Bob wants to work from the idea of preserving the integrity of the road, *and* make it safe for modern use. An example is the old Highway 30 bridge at the west end of Boone slated for demolition this winter. County engineers would need \$200,000 to build a new road to a different location if the existing bridge is to remain in place.

The Treasurer position in the ILHA is open. Tama County director Ron Cory has been nominated. Although approved by the national membership, Paul Walker's position as State Director requires a vote by the state membership. Elections will be held at the fall meeting.

COUNTY REPORTS

Boone

John Fitzsimmons reported it has been too wet this summer to paint poles. There will be an LH story in Boone County's upcoming "Senior Sounds" publication. Ty Casotti reported that tour guides for the Mamie Eisenhower site are now given instruction in LH history and directions.

Tama

Ron Cory reported that the LH Bridge Festival was successful. The county has had a large number of new members. A nine-year effort to get a library built in Tama recently passed. The King Tower one-stop is doing good business. Long-time owners the Taylors recently sold the establishment, so the status of the neon Indian head sign is uncertain. Application to the Mansfield Trust (Mansfield was the original owner) will be considered.

Benton

Joyce Ausberger announced that the Youngville Station building in Benton County will be open for business by August. The next step in the project is relocating the "one-stop's" original cabins to the rear of the main building.

Greene

Bob Owens commented that the Jefferson/Perry radio station KDLS 1310am is giving good coverage on LH events. In the future, LH news releases will be routed to the station regularly. Owens reports a friend of the LHA has discovered original plans detailing the 1920 paving of the Lincoln Highway in Boone County – an exciting find indeed.

Crawford

Ardith Sporleder reported that there will be an LH display booth at the county fair in August, with a tape of the KCRG Lincoln Highway broadcast playing. Owners of the Park Motel in Denison are working to get the motel on the National Register.

Story

The LHA is planning to have a table set up at Nevada's Lincoln Highway Days.

Carroll

Tony Vorstein was part of the ILHA reception at Wittrock's auto dealership to welcome the Al Hathaway ten-millionth-Ford party.

Linn

The director position is open and nominations are welcome. Unfortunately, the Happy Valley gas station on the west end of Iowa's only Seedling Mile has been torn down against the wishes of the Linn County Engineer. Lyell Henry is doing an article on the Ames Tourist Court for Drake Hokanson's new book.

Harrison

Two firms are working on getting enhancement grants to cover the renovation of Woodbine's main brick streets.

The meeting was adjourned at noon. Directors and members retired to the Chit-Chat Restaurant in downtown Ogden for lunch. L

Luxembourger Likes Lincoln.

They came from near and far to learn more about the Lincoln Highway, but across the sea just about beats them all.

Tyge Jantzen came all the way from Luxembourg, Europe to attend the Lincoln Highway Seventh National Conference in Rochelle. He became interested in the Lincoln Highway after researching and traveling on Route 66. His interest in Route 66 began when he saw a show about it on German television. Jantzen then came to the United States in 1992 with his family to explore the route. They started in Baltimore and caught up with the historic route at St. Louis. The family then followed the road to California.

Jantzen decided to come back by himself to drive the route from start to finish the summer of 1994.

Driving the whole route took five weeks. During that time Jantzen “met a lot of nice people and bought a lot of gooks.” The next few summers, from 1995 to 1997, were spent driving on the route.

“I know it by heart,” Jantzen said.

Jantzen had heard about the Lincoln Highway and thought it could be interesting to know about other roads.

In 1998, Jantzen came to North Carolina, where one of his three sons is attending college. He and his son traveled on part of Lincoln Highway, east from Chicago. However, when Jantzen went looking for more information, he didn’t find anything about it.

“The only thing we knew was that it was mostly on U.S. Route 30,” Jantzen said.

He came back in August of 1998 with another son and traveled west from Chicago on Lincoln Highway.

They came across Franklin Grove, home of the new Lincoln Highway Association National Headquarters, where Jantzen found lots of books and guides.

Since then Jantzen has become a member of the Route 66 Association and the Lincoln Highway Association. He has gone on numerous motor tours of both roads. This is his first national Lincoln Highway convention.

In August, Jantzen plans to travel with his brother, his brother’s wife, and Jantzen’s wife and son on Route 66 from Chicago to Los Angeles, California [its entire route], up to San Francisco, and back to Chicago on the Lincoln Highway.

Jantzen is a retired worker of the European Union, which is based in Brussels, Luxembourg and Strasbourg. Jantzen is Danish, but has lived in Luxembourg over 20 years. He had four sons and a daughter from two marriages. He is part of a family of travelers, as his children live in China, Spain, France and the United States. L

Bet They'll Still Hide in the Trunk.

It is true that the men behind the first and only drive-in movie in Russia overlooked a few things, such as telling the audience that films are best viewed with headlights off. Also, popcorn. Somehow, a drive-in isn't quite the same munching on cabbage pie.

But those are nits. With a hastily built 56-by-30-foot screen and a projection booth mounted on stilts, three Moscow entrepreneurs staged a two-night dry run this weekend of the quintessentially American motion picture experience, and appeared to have a hit on their hands.

Once the sun set this weekend the Moscow Kinodrome could well have been the Kenwood in Louisville or the Moonlight in Pittsburgh instead of what it was: a deserted parking lot by an equally deserted velodrome built for the 1980 Olympics.

Drive-ins may be a dying breed in America, where their number has shrunk to about 500 from 10 times that at the peak of their popularity. But the story may well be different in Moscow, a place desperately short of theaters and where the economics of movie-going is completely different.



While most American drive-ins aim for the teenage crowd seeking a cheap night out, the backers of the Kinodrome have their sights on a slightly older, more upscale crowd. When it reopens – the theater is in hiatus after its two-night premiere – it will cost 195 rubles per person, or \$8, for a movie and a light meal.

Aledsandr Volkov, who came up with the idea after seeing drive-ins in Hungary and Germany, said in an interview that the backers decided to expand on one partner's successful experience running nightclubs.

"It's based on the idea that in Moscow in the summertime, a great number of people are living the night life," he said, "and secondly, that Moscovites love to watch films. We found that there are a great number of people who haunt these clubs during the night and prefer to sit not inside, but outside. They ask to move their tables to the open."

And so the Kinodrome sports an outdoor café at the rear of the parking lot, where filmgoers can buy apple, mushroom and cabbage pies, fruit-stuffed pirozhki, or pastries, American soft drinks, beer and – soon – vodka.

The drive-in itself is a decidedly makeshift affair. The parking lot, equipped with green gates to keep freeloaders out, holds only 150 cars and lacks a ticket booth. The screen is anything but oversized.

Although the Kinodrome promises the best in Russian and foreign film, the main events Thursday and Friday were on American sci-fi potboiler, "Virus," and a Mel Gibson vehicle, "Lethal Weapon 4."

College girls and boys strolled up and down the rows of obediently lined-up Audis, Mustangs and other imported cars. On the road by the theater, more cars – including one police cruiser – squeezed onto the gravel shoulder on Friday night seeking their own free view. Still more people simply walked in and squatted on the pavement, straining to catch the sound track broadcast from the projection booth to car radios. At the first showing on Thursday, drivers in the front row had to be told to switch off their headlights. Some who came on motorcycles or in cars with out radios were disappointed to find that they were watching a silent movie. The viewing season is also brief: The Kinodrome will close for the winter in October, a projectionist said, because the oil in the projectors freezes.

Still, at least one oversight is about to be remedied. When the Kinodrome reopens later this month, Mr. Volkov said, it will serve popcorn.

*Reprinted from The New York Times,
21 June 1999.*

Dear Iowa LHA,

I would like to enroll my father as a member. He is 98 years old. When I read the small brochure to him, he was so interested. He had me drive him to the west end of Lisbon to show me the first route of "30." Then we drove from Lisbon to Marion, showing me the original route, around hills, etc.

He can remember the building of the road through and around Mechanicsville. He was born there in 1901. He told me of a "Mr. Fisher, slept on his front porch with his team harnessed, ready to pull cars. The boys used to drive from one end of Mechanicsville to the other – only paved road around."

He told of driving his uncle's Haines car to the interurban depot in Lisbon to go to University of Iowa games.

Good luck with this ongoing project.

Sincerely,

Sue Davies

Wausau, Wisconsin

Feature Photo.

This issue's Feature Photo scores a 10 in difficulty for anyone who wants to play "spot-the-culvert." Clues: One of the larger culverts existing on the original LH, this concrete semi-bridge is on an abandoned alignment that, as shown, is still used by the farmer who owns it—definitely an off-the-beaten-path location.



Lincoln Highway enthusiasts have no problem recognizing LH landmarks from the stratosphere. Last issue's Russian satellite image of the LH bridge in Tama and the King Tower one-stop (above) was identified by Cecil Stewart of Ames, Chuck Brandt of Kansas City who grew up in Toledo, Chris Smith, and repeat winners Van and Bev Becker of Cedar Rapids. If you know the location of the mystery photo, call or write: walkerpaul@home.com.

Outside Iowa in the LHA.

*From the Heritage Corridor
Lincoln Highway Journal of central Pennsylvania.*

It's not too late— 100 have already registered. The route has been determined. The stops have been confirmed. The **4th Annual Lincoln Highway Road Rally** is an opportunity to SLOW DOWN and enjoy the many interesting sites along the Route 30 Corridor.

Rally motorists (driving vintage/classic, contemporary cars, even limos) will kick off the beautiful fall day at the Mountain Playhouse in Jennerstown, enjoy a brief LH slide show, followed by a gourmet brunch. We should all be rolling into Old Bedford Village around 2 p.m. to tour the re-created pioneer village.

The LH Heritage Corridor's Interpretive Plan is taking shape. [We] have developed a prioritized list of interpretive projects along the 150-mile Corridor. The "short list" offers a variety of projects: indoor/outdoor exhibits, interpretive/marketing brochures, children's activity book, oral history documentation, and first-person interpretation for special events. Interpretive Committee members have identified fourteen sites along the LH Heritage Corridor as possible sites for wayside interpretation.

Meet You in Jefferson!

The next meeting of the Iowa LHA will be Saturday, October 9th in Jefferson. This will be the Association's semi-annual general membership meeting, with a tour planned for the afternoon. The meeting is open to members and non-members alike.

We will meet at **9:30** at the Greene County Community Center on Lincoln Way and Highway 4. The morning program will include a presentation by the Greene County LH Preservation Group. In addition, the updated Iowa Lincoln Highway video will be shown. Lunch will be downtown.

The bus tour begins at 1:00 p.m. and includes a stop at Deal's Orchard just off the Lincoln. Greene County can claim some of the most ardent LH enthusiasts in the state, not to mention some of the most interesting historical artifacts, too numerous to mention. Combined with the fall colors, this meeting should be one long-remembered.

Remember...

By checking the renewal date on your mailing label and resubscribing well in advance of the date, you will save your ILHA from having to send renewal notice letters.

Thanks!

And greetings to our newest member!

Larry Forney... ..Colo

Emerson & Phyllis Seim... ..Ames

Since our last mailing, there have been ten new Iowa memberships!

Along the Lincoln Highway

The Newsletter of the Iowa Lincoln Highway Association
Fall/Winter 1999 Volume 4 Issue 4

Lincoln Highway Exhibit at Ames

by Jeff Benson

An exhibit on the Lincoln Highway in Story County and Ames is now on display at the Story Center in Ames. The Story Center is located at 417 Douglas in downtown Ames and is open on Saturdays from 10 am until 5 pm, on Sundays from 2 pm until 5 pm and on Wednesdays and Fridays from 1 until 4 pm.

The exhibit is titled "From Mud Road to Miracle Mile" and tells how and why the Lincoln Highway was established, how it changed the way Americans traveled and how it changed the communities through which it passes. It has historical photographs of places along the Lincoln in Ames and Story County as well as maps of the routes of the Lincoln Highway across Story County, Iowa and the U. S.

Also on display are various Lincoln Highway guides and products as well as tools and supplies the typical early Lincoln Highway traveler would have taken along. Of course, various types of Lincoln Highway markers are included. It even includes a set of Burma Shave sign reproductions made by Clare and Marge Robson of Jefferson. A portion of the exhibit describes the proposed restoration of Nilands Corner one-stop in Colo.

The exhibit was planned by a group of Story County LHA members, assembled by Jeff Benson and Margaret Elbert-Benson and installed by Jeff and Margaret with generous assistance by Phyllis and Cecil Stewart, Larry Forney and Bob Ausberger. The exhibit will run through the middle of January. L

Reed/Niland Corner Preservation Moves Forward

Since the Niland family donated a portion of Reed/Niland Corner to the City of Colo one year ago, the Niland's Corner Committee of the Colo Development Group has made substantial progress toward preserving one of the best examples of a roadside "one stop" in the country. Using a Rural Innovation Grant from the Iowa Department of Economic Development, it hired a design team, established objectives and prepared a restoration plan. It recently applied for a Statewide Transportation Enhancement Fund grant for \$252,000 to restore the gas station and build interpretive signs for the site.



From 1923 until the 1960s, the Reed/Niland Corner served travelers with a canopy gas station, later a cafe, and eventually tourist cabins and a motel. At the intersection of the Lincoln Highway and Jefferson Highway (now U.S. 65), it was one of the first such convenience stops on the Lincoln Highway.

The grant will help restore the service station to its appearance in the early 1930s. Future work will restore the cafe to its appearance in 1955, open it again for business, and sponsor an interpretive display. Eventually, one room of the motel will be furnished to about 1946 and open for display. The shower and restroom building for the cabins will be restored. The site will become one of seven state and regional Lincoln Highway interpretive sites across Iowa.



The Niland's Corner Committee is chaired by Joe Harper and includes various Colo and Story county residents and members of the ILHA.

The design team is headed by landscape architect Doug Adamson of Adamson + Associates in West Des Moines and includes David Arbogast, architectural conservator, Lyell Henry, historian and Troy Siefert.

The Iowa Department of Transportation staff is now reviewing the grant application. The Commission usually makes the final decision on these grants at their January or February meeting for funding to be available after October 1, 2000. The grant requires \$108,000 in matching funds. For further information, to make donations or to help, contact Colo Development Group, PO Box 294, Colo, IA 50056, or call (515) 377-2238. E-mail at colocity@netins.net. L

Chasing Lincoln.

Motorcycle Cruiser is a magazine for motorcycling enthusiasts. Two staff writers recently rode the Lincoln

highway across the country to promote the new Polaris Victory, (manufactured in Spirit Lake, Iowa) and a Harley-Davidson Dyna Convertible. Their best promotion, however, was for the Lincoln Highway itself.

Jamie Elvidge wrote of their adventures in the article below. Watch for her continuing story in subsequent issues.



THE PARTING OF THE CORN

The stretch from Illinois into Iowa was once known as the Lincoln's mudhole. Now it's an enormous sea of corn. When Fisher and Joy plotted their highway they mostly strung together existing roads, almost all of which were not graveled, crowned or raised to shed water. The skinny tires of the day simply chopped up the mud and worsened the problem. With its limited funds, the Lincoln Highway Association set about creating "seedling miles" in 1914. These concrete sections were used to demonstrate how pleasant it was to travel on a solid surface. With donated concrete they planted the first seedling section in Illinois. It was 10 feet wide and only a mile long, but it was just a beginning.

Just east of Iowa, between Schererville and Dyer, Illinois, is another example of the Lincoln Highway Association's educational attack. In 1921, the year the Federal Highway Act was passed and government assistance was assured, the Association spent nearly \$200,000 and built "The Ideal Section." It was more than one mile long, four lanes wide with concrete laid 10 inches deep. It had landscaping, lighting and a pedestrian footpath. Today, it looks just like every other suburban street in America.

In Iowa, everything about the Lincoln Highway changed. The terrain gave way to gentle swells and the densely populated East suddenly became the essentially empty Midwest. The best part is – the Lincoln Highway is alive and well in Iowa. The new Lincoln Highway Association began its redemption campaign here. "Iowa" is the first volume in a collection of historical travel guides being published with Association funds.

The donations also supply towns with lamppost banners, declaring each street part of the original highway with the traditional L. Volunteers in Iowa repainted phone poles with the red, white and blue insignias. Instead of educating the public about the benefits of good roads, the new Association seems bent on teaching the advantages of good marketing. A town that finds economic value in their historic positioning is inclined to preserve it.



In Mt. Vernon, I found my first original concrete marker. I was so elated I almost kissed Lincoln's little copper face. When it got dark I was still two hours east of Des Moines and my meeting with Evans. I decided to jump off the Lincoln and onto I-80 to make up time. The feelings I had were unexpected. As I sped along undistracted by route numbers, cross traffic or roadside ambiance, I realized I missed it – I was lonely for the Lincoln. I knew it was running along just north of me in the darkness just as it had for almost a century. The interstate felt so impersonal – so cold and without character.

ESCAPE FROM IOWA

Evans couldn't understand what all the fuss was about. Following the Lincoln Highway here was like a big game of Connect-the-Ls played in a giant cornfield. The road was open and empty. What were we whining about? I tried to explain that if Art and I had been measuring distance in seat time instead of stoplights we would have ridden all the way to Hawaii by now.

Much to our astonishment, Evans and I got almost nowhere our first day on the road. We became trapped on the Lincoln Highway. We were riding down an old gravel section of the road when we discovered we were mysteriously surrounded on all sides by roads closed for construction. It had a Twilight Zone feel. Perhaps we had witnessed some secret corn testing and we were being detained while our identities were filtered through some government department. After hours of fumbling around like kids in a House of Mirrors, we popped out on Route 30 pretty much where we had departed from it. The endless gravel roads – though thoroughly groomed – gave me renewed respect for all those who'd passed this way before the cement was poured.



The land in Nebraska rises toward the west with deceptive speed. Evans and I didn't realize how far into the high country we'd traveled until his bottle of sunscreen imploded. What a different world this must have seemed to early travelers new to the West. The emptiness must have been astonishing.

The Lincoln Highway through Nebraska runs within a stone's throw of the mighty I-80 for much of the way. At one gas stop the girl behind the counter had no idea what the Lincoln was even though she had grown up with it right under her feet. When an older gentleman walked in, she asked him if he knew about it. He said he personally laid tricycle tracks in the west cement during the Highway's first paving.

When stuck on I-80, I would occasionally get a feeling about how the old Lincoln had been laid, and catch a

glimpse of its scraggly remains cautiously flowing over and around what it couldn't blast through. Where U.S. 30 had taken sips and swallows from the old road, I-80 simply devoured it. L

Next issue: *Wyoming and the End of the Road.*

Ramblings Along the Lincoln Highway.

Minutes of the Fall 1999 Iowa LHA

General Membership Meeting.

9 October 1999.

*Jefferson/Greene County Community Center,
Jefferson, Iowa.*

Submitted by Joyce Ausberger, Secretary.

President **Jeff Benson** welcomed the LHA members and guests. Three new members were introduced: **Bill Paeth** from Cedar Rapids, **Bob Stinson** from Des Moines, and **Larry Forney** from Colo.

COUNTY REPORTS

Benton

Anne Schoonover sent a progress report for Youngville. Newspaper articles from the *Cedar Rapids Gazette* reminded us what Youngville was like before restoration. Schoonover is accepting ideas and help for photo displays in the on-site museum.

Boone

Ty Casotti and John Fitzsimmons set up a LH display near the Cultural Center in Boone during "Pufferbelly Days." Ty is working with the Tall Corn Car Club to loan their 1903 Hans Apperson for the Story County Museum's LH display.

Carroll

Norma Berns introduced her daughter from California. Carroll submitted a grant to establish an interpretive site near the LH between the railroad depot and Wittrock Motors that will tell the story of businesses adapting to highway transportation.

In August, Norma had a LH table at Carroll's annual "Kids Fest" at Graham park on the LH.

Cedar

The nomination for the National Register of Historic Places has been completed for the Keplinger Phillips 66 station in Lowden.

Clinton

Elmer Kettelsen reported that two new access roads were built to connect the abandoned LH with new U.S. 30.

Crawford

Ardith Sporleder will be visiting with prospective members in Westside.

Greene

Bob Ausberger reported for **Bob Owens**. The county LHA association set up a display at the restored train depot near the LH and a new bike trail (on railroad grade). The display was for a regional Questers group to tour. The county relocated and removed trees and shrubs necessary for the LH Interpretative Site to be built at the Lions Club Tree Park in Grand Junction. The county engineer plans to have the trail completed yet this fall.

Harrison

Zell Millard reported on the LH brick streets renovation process in Woodbine. An engineering and consultant firm have made plans and cost estimates that were submitted for an ISTE (T-21) grant. The city of Woodbine is responsible for raising \$400,000 for its part of the initial grant.

Linn

Bev and Van Becker are photographing and documenting all the LH markers in Iowa. They continue to find new markers and ask members to notify them of unrecognized ones.

Marshall

No report.

Story

Margaret Elbert-Benson has been working with the Story County Historical Society's display during November and December. It will feature the LH in Ames as well as Story County. Larry Forney, representing the Reed/Niland Corner Restoration Committee, reported that their grant was submitted to the IDOT. Lyell Henry and Elbert-Benson reported that the Ames Motor Court is undergoing extensive remodeling, changing its focus from apartments to motel units only.

Tama

Marie Vileta reported for **Ron Cory**. They had another successful LH Bridge Festival. New management is doing very well at the King Tower Restaurant. The four-lane development of U.S. 30 will go north of the city.

Following County Consul reports, **Marj Robson** summarized some of the Greene County LH Preservation Groups activities. The group organized in February 1992 in an effort to save the National Register eligible sections of the LH in Greene County. Marj and her husband **Clare** have recently put up two sets of Burma Shave signs near their home. Another one they recently completed is for sale for \$100 and will be on display in Ames in November and December.

ELECTIONS of OFFICERS and DIRECTORS

Ausberger moved and Casotti seconded that **Paul Walker** be Iowa Director to the national LHA. Motion carried unanimously.

Henry moved and Berns seconded that **Bev** and **Van Becker** be the Linn County Directors to the Iowa LHA. Motion carried unanimously.

Henry moved and **Elaine Ehlert** seconded that Norma Berns be the new Secretary to the Iowa LHA. Motion carried unanimously.

Joyce Ausberger moved and Marie Vileta seconded that Ron Cory be the new Treasurer. Motion carried unanimously. Elbert-Benson and Benson will continue as co-Presidents for another year.

Following lunch in downtown Jefferson, the group toured four abandoned sections in Greene County and several bridges, all listed on the National Register of Historic Places. L

Lincoln Highway On the Air

by Van Becker

We find the strangest things when looking for Lincoln Highway markers!

The Lincoln Highway radio show was an NBC feature broadcast from March 16, 1940 to June 6, 1942 grouped under the category of “Dramatic Anthology” or Soap Opera. The 30-minute show was broadcast on Saturdays at 10 a.m. 1940-’41 and at 11 am. Shinola Shoepolish and Hecker Products were sponsors. It is said to have been a show worthy of broadcast in “prime time” and it was amazing that the super line-up of stars including Ethel Barrymore, Mary Astor, George Murphy, Betsy Barnes, Benny Baker, John Carradine and John McIntire, as announcer, were willing to participate at that hour of the day and on a weekend.

We understand that the show was scheduled for broadcast opposite CBS’s hit show “Let’s Pretend,” sponsored by Buster Brown Shoes, which proved to be too stiff competition in that particular time slot.

We have been told repeatedly that only two episodes of the Lincoln Highway Radio Show have been preserved, yet we have found three episodes. Tapes of the old shows that Bev and I have been able to locate are as follows:

August 2, 1941. Starring Betsy Barnes—a struggling female understudy got her break when the old star is mysteriously drugged. The bumbling doctor cannot understand how prescription drugs keep disappearing from his desk. The understudy is an instant star and she and her boyfriend live happily ever after.

February 14, 1942. Fruit market owner is found guilty of killing his banker. Visits to prison near Marshalltown, Iowa, are along the Lincoln Highway. The hardships bring the family closer together. This episode was performed at the 1999 National Conference by the Vince Carney Community Theatre Players during the final banquet.

Date unknown, although it must be close to World War II as it refers to military shortages. Two professional writers, one a married man, collaborate on a book in a remote farmhouse retreat just off the Lincoln Highway. The man’s wife is just “too nice” to the interloper. The scheming home-wrecker gets sent packing. Shinola Shoepolish advertisements throughout the program.

How would these shows be ranked today for literary and theatrical merit? Don’t ask!

Do any of you readers have additional episodes that you would be willing to share with the membership of the LHA? If anyone has information that would help identify the date of the third show, please notify Paul Walker or us: Van & Bev Becker, becker2@mwci.net

Thanks to Rollin Stockwell of the Utah Chapter of the LHA and Lyell Henry for providing the tapes of the above-described shows. Thanks also to numerous Internet old-time radio sources. L

~ WANTED TO BUY ~

Original bronze Lincoln medallion from 1928 concrete marker, in excellent condition, to complete renovation of marker. 319-358-7056

Youngville Station.

By Dave Rasdal

Reprinted from the Cedar Rapids Gazette.

Youngville is 19 miles west of Cedar Rapids on the northeast corner of the intersection of Highway 218 and Highway 30.

The Youngville cafe was an old dilapidated service station/eatery out in the middle of nowhere along Highway 30 in Benton County when I first wrote about it in 1994. It was a graffiti-stained eyesore overgrown with thick brush, a condition that had worsened each year since it closed in 1967. By all rights, it could have been torn down and only a handful of people would have missed it.

The Iowa Department of Transportation had planned to do just that as it turned Highway 30 into a four-lane divided highway.

Then Anne Schoonover of Garrison and Ruth Mayhew of Vinton stepped up. They saw the cafe as a way to help Benton County celebrate Iowa's sesquicentennial in 1996.

"Are you out of your cotton-pickin' mind?" Ruth heard friends say.

But Ruth and Anne held a couple of meetings, generated some interest and convinced the DOT to build its highway south of the cafe. They worked to secure about \$120,000 in state and federal grants, appealed for volunteer labor and continued to direct the project under the non-profit auspices of Youngville Highway History Association, Inc.

In a bit of irony, the four-lane highway appears as if it will soon open. The cafe has a ways to go.

"You always set this mental target date to look forward to," Anne says. "You always have your hopes."

Donations and volunteer labor have provided for a new roof, a restored exterior, a reinforced balcony, refurbished floors, repaired window frames. The women and the volunteers have plodded along, never giving up. After all, these people have lives too. It's not as if they're building the two-story stucco structure from scratch like Joe Young did in 1931.

In those early days, the Youngville Station was the only all-night stop between Cedar Rapids and Tama. Highway 30 was the old Lincoln Highway. Travel was more leisurely then, more of an adventure.

When Youngville opens this spring, it will be a wide spot in the road to recall those times. Old authentic gas pumps will stand guard outside, a 24-seat restaurant will serve pie and short orders, a manager will live upstairs. One corner will feature a gift shop and a small museum. The oil room at the west end will be furnished just like it was in the '30s. L

From a July 8th letter to the *Nevada Journal*.

We started our journey in Nevada, Iowa.

As you travel the old Lincoln Highway, it can be a bit perplexing, as many sections of the highway are either all but consumed by progress, or they are hardly noticeable because of neglect in the fact that it IS the original highway.

We took our time, though, and would meander along winding road, with rolling hills of scenery, and come upon communities that hardly had a trace of evidence that the Lincoln Highway had actually went through there, while other areas were festooned with colorful red, white and blue banners, flowers, planted in beautiful array and sections of the road preserved, adorning the heritage it deserves with plaques, signs, posts and memorabilia of an earlier era.

Nevada should be very proud to be a part of that heritage, and Nevadans can boast of living in one of the towns that has a strong historical attachment to the development of such a grand highway. Nevada is great small town living!

Cec Landis
Nevada

Feature Photo.

When it comes to identifying culverts on the Lincoln Highway, don't ever bet against Bob Ausberger. Bob was the only person to correctly identify this culvert on the abandoned segment of original LH at Honey Creek in Pottawattamie County. The culvert is just north of the historic Honey Creek grade area—a real treasure for any LH fan. The grade and culvert are on private property, so be sure to knock at the farmhouse before hiking the hill. The Loess Hills view, however, is free to the public.

Outside Iowa in the LHA.

*From the North-East Chapter of the New Jersey LHA,
Keith Hixon, President*

The program is beginning to fill in with speakers and activities. We have cut the nights of attendance from five to four, but we also seem to have cut only a few spots for seminars. As we have so much to see in New Jersey, the bus tours won't be as much mileage as previously. The latest great idea is to have an evening New York Harbor Dinner Cruise, an extra cost item, but for our guests, it may be popular. More later.

We will call our [June 2000] conference "Highway of History." As we have been working on this planning, it appears that this old road is justified in assuming that more historic, industrial, educational, scientific activity has occurred than any other sixty miles in the U.S. Every mile has exciting things to consider.

*From Buckeye Ramblings,
Ohio Lincoln Highway Association,
Mike Buettner, President and Editor*

Seven members of the Mid-Ohio Chapter of the LHA made their way to Beaverdam, Ohio, on Saturday, October 16, where they erected a brick Lincoln Highway pillar dedicated to Carl Fisher.

The pillar was built on the same concrete base of a previous Lincoln Highway pillar which was long ago destroyed. The first pillar was dedicated October 20, 1928, when the last stretch of concrete pavement was opened across Allen County, Ohio.

Because Carl Fisher was the founder of both the Lincoln Highway and the Dixie Highway, it was appropriate for the Beaverdam pillar to be dedicated to him. The pillar is at the intersection of the two routes. As testimony to the wisdom of his ideas, the never-ceasing hustle and bustle from the four-lane traffic on both Interstate 75 and U.S. 30—the modern descendants of the two transcontinental named roads - is within earshot of the new pillar. L

Ames to Host Winter Board Meeting.

Members and non-members alike are invited to join the Iowa LHA Board of Directors at their semi-annual business meeting. We'll convene at the Ames Library at 515 Douglas, upstairs at the Founders Suite, on Saturday, January 8th, with coffee and conversation at 9:00 and the meeting at 9:30. Lunch in downtown Ames follows the meeting.

After lunch the fun continues at the Founders Suite with a Lincoln Highway presentation; speakers will be Lyell Henry and Joe Harper. Joe is the head of the Colo Nilands Corner project addressed on page 1. He will describe the community's progress on the project, and Lyell will present a slide show of roadside accommodations.

Remember...

By checking the renewal date on your mailing label and resubscribing well in advance of the date, you will save your ILHA from having to send renewal notice letters.

Thanks!
