

# ALONG THE LINCOLN HIGHWAY

The Newsletter of the Iowa Lincoln Highway Association

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## Lincoln Highway Sesquicentennial Exhibit

This is Iowa's big year for the Sesquicentennial. Many events will focus on the Lincoln Highway. *Along the Lincoln Highway: Iowa's Main Street* is an exhibition of photos, postcards, and writings, signs, maps, guides, and memorabilia of the highway. The exhibit was the idea of Lyell Henry of Iowa City who has an extensive Lincoln Highway collection. Many of the photos in the exhibit are taken from the extensive Iowa DOT collection. Henry teaches at Mount Mercy College in Cedar Rapids, which is sponsoring and hosting this exhibit. Henry enjoys researching the early history of the King Tower and the one-stop concept. He also has researched Niland's Corner near Colo, and is now gathering information on the Twin Towers in Cedar Rapids.

Henry encourages people to take stock of the people and places of the early days of the Lincoln Highway. Many people are gratified to know that others are interested in their Lincoln Highway adventures and experiences. He encourages people to record memories on tape.

Henry's exhibit will run June 24th through September 8th. A reception will be sponsored by the Cedar Rapids Gazette June 27th from 4:30 to 7:30 at Mt. Mercy College in Cedar Rapids. Lincoln Highway members are encouraged to attend that day if possible.

## Wittrock Ribbon-Cutting

Economic development and historic preservation can go hand in hand. This is certainly evident in the remodeling and refurbishing of the Wittrock Motor Company complex in Carroll. The Chrysler, Plymouth, Dodge, Jeep, and GMC dealership is on the northwest quadrant of the intersection of Highway 30 and Carroll Street. The intersection is where the original Lincoln turned south across the railroad tracks. There is a lot of Lincoln Highway history at this location.

W.A. Swaney built the original building at the east end of the complex in 1913. He was the first Lincoln Highway Consul for Carroll County and the City of Carroll. The opening of the new building coincided almost exactly with the announcement of the route of the Lincoln that same year (do you suppose he had some inside information on the route?).

The Swaney Ford dealership was sold to "Mort" Mackey who is listed in the 1924 guide as Lincoln Highway Consul. The business was also listed as the "control" from which mileage was measured from the towns east and west of Carroll.

The transition from Mackey to McCoy in 1931 brought about the building of the beautiful double canopy station and west end of the present complex. This spacious double canopy station with brick pillars and a tile roof has been completely rebuilt, without doubt is the most outstanding example of this type of structure on the Lincoln Highway in the United States.

The original 1913 east building was also remodeled and updated with much sensitivity to its historic integrity. Especially notable are the decorative metal ceiling, polished wood floor, original entry door, plus original exterior brick and roofline.

Carroll is in the preliminary stages of planning for the depot restoration. Wittrock's and the depot can be an important part of our Lincoln Highway corridor management and interpretative site program.

**State LHA President,  
Bob Ausberger**

## Iowa Lincoln Highway Association Hires State Coordinator

The Iowa Lincoln Highway Association has received a grant from the State Department of Economic Development to use toward the hiring of a state-wide coordinator. State President Bob Ausberger has announced that Roger Riley has begun this position on June 3rd. Riley will be responsible for working on a historic corridor management plan for the roadway across

Iowa. He will also work with membership, towns and counties on preservation projects, promotion of Lincoln Highway events, and working on the monthly newsletter.

Riley was with WOI-TV as a reporter. He lives in Ames and will be based at our state office in Ogden. Give his a call at 515-275-4966. Leave a message!

### **Bricks Pave the Way**

A 4000-foot section of the Lincoln Highway in Woodbine has been declared eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. This was announced by the State Historic Preservation Office. A preliminary determination does not mean that it is on the Register, only that after a study of submitted material and photos, it appears eligible. The general factors which determine eligibility include: originality of materials, setting, location, feeling, and workmanship, as well as its significance to the development of the area. As a rule, such features are at least fifty years old.

While building roads with brick was popular for about fifteen years (1910-1925), it became increasingly evident that the torque applied to the surface by driving wheels caused the bricks to move and distort. This was especially true as loads got heavier and vehicles acquired more power. The Woodbine segment is the longest brick segment remaining in Iowa, and one of the longest in the nation on the Lincoln Highway. Through a series of town meetings, the preservation and rehabilitation of this segment was determined to be the number one priority in planning for the future. Woodbine has received a \$24,000 ISTEA Enhancement Grant from the Federal Highway Administration. This will be used to do an engineering study and to begin work on some of the roughest sections.

Preliminary materials used to gain the determination of eligibility will be expanded with the goal of a very complete story being compiled. This more complete story should result in an actual listing on the National Register.

### **Upcoming Event**

The Lincoln Highway will be a part of a Sesquicentennial Event in August. The Community Building in Woodbine will host Leah Rogers on August 10th at 7:00 pm to speak on Early Transportation. On August 11th, at 7:00 pm, Lincoln Highway Association President Bob Ausberger will talk on the Lincoln Highway in western Iowa. Bob Ausberger may lead a late afternoon walking tour of the Lincoln Highway in the area. There will also be displays which will feature pioneer toys, genealogy, oral histories, the Dunham Barn, and the Loess Hills on the Internet. This event is sponsored by the Harrison County Genealogical Society and the Sesquicentennial Commission.

### **Official Board Meeting**

The Iowa Lincoln Highway Board of Directors met May 28th at the home of Glen and Jeannie Reedholm in Nevada. The board moved to hire Roger Riley as state Coordinator. The Board also discussed establishing a state membership category for those who might not wish to belong to the national association. The Board will deal with this at the June 26th Board meeting. The Board also discussed launching an "adopt-a-highway" program as a fund-raiser, and the possibility of a road rally this fall to generate interest and some funds for our cause.

The Board will meet on Wednesday, June 26th at 2:00 pm at the Ames Public Library. President Bob Ausberger is attempting to find two board members from each Lincoln Highway county in Iowa. Ann Vogelbacher from the Central Iowa Tourism Region will meet with us to help focus the LHA on its missions of preservation and promotion of the Lincoln Highway corridor.



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