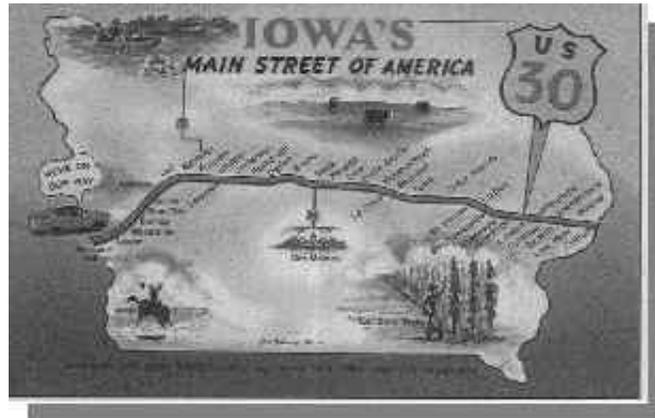


Along the Lincoln Highway



The Newsletter of the Iowa Lincoln Highway Association May/June 1998 Volume 3 Issue 2

Successful Spring Meeting in Ames on April 11

Nearly forty members of the Iowa Lincoln Highway Association attended the Spring Meeting in the beautiful Sun Room of the Iowa State Memorial Union, overlooking the Lincoln Highway in Ames, now Lincoln Way.

Our first speaker was Lyell Henry of Iowa City, who showed slides and spoke of various "one-stops" and cabin courts in Story County and Ames. Of particular interest was Ames Motor Court on E. Lincoln Way, being one of the earliest tourist courts in Iowa. Also mentioned were Travelers Inn and Overland Camps on South Duff and Grinstead's Green Gables on Lincoln Way and South Dakota.

Also speaking to us was the former owner of the L-Way Cafe, Howard Theil. The L-Way started in 1936 and lasted until the 1970s. It is currently Burger King. I would imagine it was better as the L-Way! Mr. Theil even loaned us a photograph of him in about 1936, looking very dapper in front of his restaurant.

Mr. Adel Throckmorton spoke (and later sang) and brought back memories of Scotty's Chicken Inn, which his family owned and where he was the well-known singing waiter. It was on west Lincoln Way, which was then Highway 30.

Hank Zalatel of the Department of Transportation Library told of the succession of bridges over the Squaw Creek on the Lincoln and particularly the concrete Luten Arch Bridge wiped out by the 1918 flood.

A very special treat was a talk by Mr. Farwell Brown, esteemed historian of Ames and donator of thousands of photos to the Ames Public Library. (Margaret is one of his biggest fans as he has done a tremendous amount of work collecting and writing and sharing his knowledge of Ames.) He was one of the Boy Scouts who helped erect the concrete Lincoln Highway markers along the entire route in one day in the fall of 1928. He told us about that day and about the history of the paving of the Lincoln through Ames. It is truly a treat to hear Mr. Brown and equally fun to read his books about Ames.

In addition to the many Lincoln Highway books and products, there was a display of historic photographs of the Lincoln through Ames.

We ate a delicious lunch in the Sun Room before boarding the bus for the tour.

Our first stop was the steel truss bridge about 12 miles north of Ames on the Skunk River near what is known as the 40 and 8 cabin. In 1949, the bridge was moved here from the Lincoln crossing of the Skunk in Ames.

We then drove by the site of Maxwell Park along Maxwell Avenue between 9th and 13th Streets and wound our way to E. Lincoln Way, crossing the Skunk River and entering Ames going west. The tour went all the way through Ames to what used to be the town of Ontario on the west edge of Ames and then along old Highway 30 back to the Memorial Union.

An article elsewhere in this issue describes the east half of that tour. The west half will be described in the next issue.



Spring Meeting Business Portion

Some of the action taken at the ILHA spring Board of Directors meeting on April 10th:

It was agreed to continue with the Merchants' Association and the guidance given by Keith Edwards with the cooperation of the Iowa Economic Division of Tourism.

Also, it was agreed to continue working with Iowa State University in conjunction with the city of Colo in developing an Interpretive Site at Niland's Corner. ISU will also be involved with the LHA to further explore the possibility of a transportation museum.

In addition, the reprint of the Iowa Map Packs is completed. We have 1500 available for sale. The Leonard Good Trust provided \$3000 to help pay for the reprint. L

Lions Club Tree Park to be Interpretive Site

Excerpted from The Globe, Grand Junction, Iowa; May 26, 1998

In that special place in time before paved highways and the interstate systems, there was just in idea; a route with no number, only a name: The Lincoln Highway, the first coast-to-coast motor highway. The Transportation Interpretive site on the Lincoln Highway at the Lions Club Tree Park in Grand Junction is the first in a series of interpretive sites across the country to tell that story.

The site itself tells much of the story. It is a four-acre tract of land surrounded by the Union Pacific Railroad, the original Lincoln Highway, old Highway 30, current U.S. 30, and five bridges. Two road segments and two bridges are on the National Register of Historic Places.

Upon the urging of the Lincoln Highway Association, in 1914 Greene County became the first county in Iowa to grade and gravel its portion of the Lincoln Highway, a 30-mile, 30-curve stretch. Individual donations paid for one-fourth of this project. In 1926, the name was removed from the Lincoln, and in Iowa the highway became U.S. 30.

The 1950s alignment of the U.S. 30 bypass created the site. In the 1970s, the Grand Junction Lions Club adopted and landscaped the site and it became the "Lions Club Tree Park."

Lions Club Tree Park will now become the first in a series of state entry points and regional and local interpretive sites. As a regional site, it will serve as a resource for Greene and Boone counties. Outdoor exhibits will demonstrate how the Lincoln Highway and the development of our national transportation system helped shape our world and our place in time.

Just as the citizens of the county pitched in and supported the early construction, your support will be critical in making this project a reality. Obtaining a large part of the funding for this \$300,000 project from the Federal Highway Historic Highways Program requires \$40,000 to be raised by the Lincoln Highway Association. With your help, this interpretive site can set the standard for this national program.

Contact the Grand Junction Lions Club to make any of the following donations:

\$5-50 Load of Gravel Club

\$50-200 Load of Cement Club

\$200-500 Friend of Lions Club Tree Park

\$500-1000 Friend of Lincoln Hwy

\$1001+ Presidents Club

Growing the Membership of the ILHA

At their meeting in April, the Board of Directors discussed ways to increase the membership of the Iowa Lincoln Highway Association. The Directors agreed on the following general steps.

- Improve communications with members, particularly those who are members of the Iowa Association only.
- Involve county directors more in membership retention and growth.
- Establish a set period during each year to recruit new members into the organization.

The national organization sends a written welcome to new joint members in the national and state Lincoln Highway Association. It also reminds joint members when it's time to renew. However, it is not in touch with members of the Iowa chapter only. The Iowa association uses a computerized system to record new member information and needs volunteers to update this and send form letters to Iowa members.

Anyone who knows a little of the Microsoft Access program (or any similar database program) and has a computer and a few hours available each month can do this work from home. It is a basic but vital activity to preserve the association and help it grow.

Anyone interested in volunteering to maintain membership information, please contact Co-Presidents Jeff Benson or Margaret Elbert at 515-233-1445, 1505 Curtiss Ave., Ames, IA 50010, e-mail: jbenson@iastate.edu.

By sorting this information by county and regularly sending it to county directors, the Iowa association can put county directors directly in touch with new members. County directors can then personally welcome them into the group and recruit them for interesting projects in their own counties or to help the statewide effort. County directors could also call members to remind them to renew.

These basic, organizational steps can help retain members. To help welcome new members, the directors endorsed the concept of an annual membership campaign in October.

This campaign would kick off at the fall semi-annual meeting and provide directors and all members with membership recruiting materials, lists of potential members and sources of contacts for new members. At this time every year a coordinated media campaign will build awareness of the Iowa Lincoln Highway Association and the important work we do to research, preserve and interpret the Lincoln Highway. A membership committee will coordinate county directors for membership building and learn how to improve our membership recruiting work.

Please help us plan this October membership campaign. Contact Co-Presidents Jeff Benson or Margaret Elbert at 515-233-1445, 1505 Curtiss Ave., Ames, IA 50010, e-mail: jbenson@iastate.edu. L

A Tour of the Lincoln Highway in Ames, Iowa

As with many towns along the Lincoln Highway, the history of the highway is part of the history of the town and vice-versa. In Ames you can still drive the entire route along what is now Lincoln Way, Sheldon Avenue, Hyland Avenue and Ontario Street. However, because of the growth and "progress" in Ames during this century, you cannot really feel what the Lincoln was like without learning something of the history of the road and the buildings along it.

In preparing for the 1998 Spring Meeting of the Iowa Lincoln Highway Association, we have learned some of that history by researching old city directories, the Farwell Brown photography collection, the Iowa State University archives, and other sources and by speaking with people who lived and worked on the Lincoln Highway. We shared that history with the people who toured the route on April 11. In this article, we summarize that history for the portion of the Lincoln Highway in Ames east of the Squaw Creek. In the July/August newsletter we will describe the history of the west portion.

East Lincoln Way

We know little of this area before the Lincoln Highway and in the first few years after it was established, other than that the basics were in place: a road with a bridge across the Skunk River. There were a few residences scattered along it.

In 1915 the road was paved and in 1918 served the new Ames Canning Factory located one block north, where Collegiate Manufacturing was later to operate and where another manufacturing business operates today.

By 1921 Ames Auto Repair was located at 505 E. Lincoln Way and by 1926 Ames Motor Court was at 318 E. Lincoln Way, making it one of the earliest motor courts in Iowa. It was to become a beautiful and long-running facility variously known as Ames Tourist Court, Ames Tourist Camp, Ames Tourist Motel and today Ames Motor Lodge.

In the 1930s the Bourne family established the Bourne Super Service Station at 604 E. Lincoln Way and Luella's Kitchen at 520 E. Lincoln Way. They also began Motel Auto Camp at 527 E. Lincoln Way, later known as the Conoco Motel. It included individual garages, ornamental landscaping and an alligator and monkey collection.

In 1949, the high-truss bridge was moved from the Lincoln Highway route to a crossing of the Skunk about twelve miles north, where it still stands today. A new bridge was built.

The well-known Tip-Top Lounge at 201 E. Lincoln Way started in 1952 as a cafe and later became known as Bob's Tip Top. Before it was built, the site was part of the nicely landscaped and fenced yard of the beautiful home at 203 E Lincoln Way. Across the street at 202 E. Lincoln Way, the Lincoln Lodge motel was begun by 1962.

Many of these buildings that provided valuable tourist services on the Lincoln still stand today. As a side-trip note, travelers on the Lincoln were invited to camp overnight at Maxwell Park, described in the 1924 Lincoln Highway Guide as "Tourists' camp at Maxwell Park, seven blocks from Lincoln Highway, containing conveniences for tourists, water, light, fireplaces and fuel." This park was the site of Chatauquas until 1927 and was eventually consumed by the expansion of the Ames Municipal Cemetery now stretching from south of Ninth Street to Thirteenth Street along Maxwell Street.

The intersection of Duff and Lincoln Way evolved from the early Lincoln Highway days into an area packed with auto and other services. All four corners have been the site of service stations, perhaps the earliest being a Standard Service Station on the southeast corner established well before 1921, by which year the H. L. Minert Auto Co. sat at the southwest corner.

By the 1930s not only was the Standard station still operating, but just east of it was Dirksen's Service, while the Minert station had become Diamond Master Service and the Mollleston Shell station was next door to it. At the northeast corner was Loeschen

Service with Eastons Lunch next to it and the northwest corner had service stations as well. Some of the buildings on these corners today may well be the same structures (much changed!) that housed these early businesses.

Downtown Area

Generally, the Lincoln from Duff to Grand had a similar evolution from the early years of the automobile to the peak of the Lincoln/U.S. 30 as a travelers route in the 1940s and 50s.

One of the early exceptions was the Paulson Grocery at 404 Lincoln Way, where there was enough of a public space and prominence to the Kellogg corner by the late 20s for Mayor Parley Sheldon to gather the Boy Scouts and citizens there for speeches on the day the markers were set.

By the 1930s you could not fail to find service somewhere along this part of the recently numbered Lincoln: the Fall Inn was in the 200 block, the Texaco Super, Heggen, Mobilgas Master and Royal 400 service stations operated at Kellogg Avenue (along with the Dutch Mill Root Beer Stand for non-auto refueling). Further west was McGee Motor Co. at 321 Lincoln Way and Trucker's Home near Walnut Street, which by the 1940s evolved into the Fall Oil Co.

Mixed among these businesses were residences with perhaps the most interesting at 218 Lincoln Way, which still stands. Before and during the early Lincoln Highway days, this was the Martin home, one of the early black families in Ames. The Martins provided a place to gather and, on the second floor, housing for the few early black students at Iowa State College. Although this was after his graduation, George Washington Carver did stay here a few times when he visited Ames later. Archie Martin was instrumental in getting black students admitted to the Iowa State College dormitories.

Of course the most prominent building for Lincoln Highway travelers downtown was not even on the highway itself, the Sheldon Munn Hotel at Kellogg and Main. This fine hotel was opened May 31, 1916 and later was the control point for Lincoln Highway travelers to check their mileage from town to town. It was the finest lodging available and has a glittering history all it's own.



Grand Avenue Area

If you stand and look at the Grand Avenue and Lincoln Way intersection today, you see little recognizable from the early Lincoln Highway years. But as you examine old photographs the similarities begin to appear. Of course, Grand was there from the early years of Ames, then known as Hoggatt. At the time the Lincoln Highway was established, it was known as Grand and had a "T" intersection with Lincoln Way and crossed three sets of tracks at grade just to the north. One of these sets curved south across the Lincoln, east of Grand. These were the Interurban tracks that went to Des Moines. The Interurban Depot was west of Grand, about where the ISU Credit Union building is today and Burt's Cafe likely sat north of it. There were oil and coal companies dotting the area, including one which became Skie Coal and Wood, which sat on the east side of Grand Avenue a little north of Lincoln Way until a few years ago. Two blocks further west was the new brick St. Cecilia Catholic Church built in 1906.

By the 1920s several changes were underway. In 1924 the State Highway Commission moved to the south side of the Lincoln, just west of Grand. In 1927, the Ames School Board purchased a round Chautauqua building located at Maxwell Park and moved it to the area where the Target store stands today, where it became the Ames High Field House until 1965.

By the 1930s, the service stations were blossoming here also. At 802 Lincoln Way on the south side, very close to the intersection of Lincoln Way and Grand - possibly where the entrance to the DOT is today - was Sorenson Service Station. On the north side to the west was Loyd's Service at 815 Lincoln Way and Baily Oil Company at 825 Lincoln Way. Bucking the service station trend, at 819 Lincoln Way was Woodland Farms Dairy. The Grand Avenue underpass construction in 1938 was perhaps the most dramatic change.

Later years brought the Sixty-Six Motor Inn to replace the dairy and the Sorenson Oil Phillips Station moved to 821 Lincoln Way by 1949. The Decker Petro Palace at this location is the only service station still existing in this area. And most of the early buildings are gone, with the exception of the Highway Commission Building, now part of the complex of the headquarters of the Iowa Department of Transportation, although the Lincoln Highway marker that used to be out front is now inside the building.

Squaw Creek

Yes, a service station also marked this crossing, the Daulton Oil Company at 1408 Lincoln Way. But the more noteworthy history is the crossing of the Squaw Creek.

The Squaw Creek and the swamp and sloughs associated with it, particularly north of Lincoln Way divided Ames from "the College" for many years. Early on, it was really an adventure to leave your home in Ames and go away to the College. This separation also made the railroads, such as "the Dinky" and the Interurban, and Lincoln Way play such an important role in shaping Ames. Ames is still grappling with issues having to do with the lack of cross-town routes and the costs of crossing the Squaw.

At the Lincoln Highway crossing of the Squaw, there was a succession of bridges. The first were wood timber bridges. In 1908, with some controversy between the engineers (of both the State Highway Commission and Iowa State College) and City of Ames officials, a concrete Luten Arch Bridge was built. In June, 1918 as a delayed consequence of one of the worst floods in Ames history, the bridge dramatically collapsed. This caused a two-mile detour between Ames and Iowa State College and a temporary wood bridge was built and used until a steel plate girder bridge was built in 1921.

As you crossed the Squaw Creek in the Lincoln Highway days and until much later, there was a nice view of the campus on the top of the hill on the north side of the tree-lined Lincoln. The big dorms have blocked that view for the most part, but if you get in the right spot, you can see what the view may have looked like. It was very welcoming. L

by Margaret Elbert and Jeffrey Benson

Next issue:

The Lincoln Highway from Squaw Creek to the town of Ontario.

Save Money on LHA Decals

As part of its on-going community improvement work, Lisbon is considering redoing all of its Main Street street name signs to add the distinctive red, white and blue Lincoln Highway symbols. It is looking for others who may want to combine an order for the decals needed to accomplish this, because the decals are much less expensive when ordered in larger quantities.

Please contact **Becky Hess, Canton Studios, P. O. Box 822, Lisbon, IA, (319) 455-0141.**

175 Trees for Lincolnway

A group of about 50 volunteers turned out to help the Jefferson tree committee plant 175 trees along Lincolnway last month. The trees were purchased with a \$10,000 grant from the Iowa Living Roadways program and included swamp white oak, purple ash, ginkgo, linden, and three varieties of flowering crabapple trees. In addition, hawthorn trees will be planted on West Lincolnway on the west side of Jefferson when the final grading is done on last year's construction project.

Marsh Bridge Book Review

A new booklet, *Marsh Rainbow Arch Bridges in Iowa*, written by James C. Hippen, is now available from Boone County or from the Iowa Department of Transportation.

Jim Hippen is a Lincoln Highway Association member, and some of you may remember him from our Ames Conference in 1994 when he presented a program on the history of bridges. His work was part of an agreement between IDOT, FHWA, the State Historical Society of Iowa, and Boone County. It resulted from a need to replace several of the Boone County Marsh arch bridges due to obsolescence. We should all be happy that the Marsh Bridge connected with the Lincoln Highway will be rehabilitated and continue in use as a county bridge.

The 23-page booklet, complete with colored cover photographs, documents the 11 Marsh bridges that were standing in Iowa in 1996. Nine of these remain today. It also sheds light on the life of James Barney Marsh, who was born sometime between 1854 and 1856, and died in 1936. Marsh was a prolific bridge salesman and later a prolific bridge builder in Iowa, the midwest, and the western United States.

The most monumental outcome of the study and this booklet is the discovery that Marsh had a more sophisticated design, both structurally and economically, than had been previously thought. Hopefully this discovery will lead to the saving of several of the bridges scheduled for replacement.

As we might expect from a Jim Hippen production, the booklet is very readable, well-documented, and contains ample sketches, photos, and maps. And much to my delight, there is page devoted to the Lincoln Highway and its Marsh Arch Bridge north of Beaver. L

Review by Bob Ausberger.

Plans for Summer Board Meeting

The July meeting of the ILHA Board of Directors is scheduled for 9:00 am on Saturday, July 11, in Marshalltown.

The meeting will take place at the Marshall County Courthouse on the corner of Center and Main Streets in downtown Marshalltown. Main Street was one route of the Lincoln through Marshalltown, and the Courthouse is over a century old. In the late 1970s the Courthouse was perilously close to being demolished before rescue and restoration to its early splendor.

Stone's Restaurant has been reserved for lunch for the Board members and attendees. Stone's is on the original Lincoln Highway through Marshalltown, alongside - or rather "under" - the 3rd Avenue viaduct. Started in 1887, the restaurant earned its fame by serving hot meals to railroad workers and passengers. Visitors will get the chance to see the equally ancient railroad depot across the street.

All ILHA members are welcome to attend this quarterly business meeting. Proceedings take place in Meeting Room #2 at 9:00 and coffee will be served. L

Not Computer-Minded? *You Can Contribute to our Web Site*

The ILHA web site needs your help. There is a Lincoln Highway postcard section on the site now, but this electronic art gallery is currently home to only one postcard, of the Abraham Lincoln Bridge at Missouri Valley.

If you have Lincoln Highway postcard images that you'd like to make available to web browsers *around the world*, and take credit for it, please contact site developer Paul Walker.

All you have to do is mail your postcards to Paul at his Iowa City address. In just a few minutes he will scan them into the computer to produce electronic copies that can then be posted to the web site for everyone to enjoy. The procedure does not harm the card in any way, and Paul promises to pay your postage and return the card within 48 hours of receiving it. In addition, the caption for each postcard will list the contributor's name and any quotations offered.

There is an abundance of Lincoln Highway postcards in the good hands of our membership. This is a wonderful way for members and prospective members to share them without having to leave their homes. And because they're only images on a computer screen, the postcards themselves won't wear out after hundreds of viewings.

Please contact Paul at (319)358-7056, or at 2542 Bartelt Road #1A, Iowa City IA, 52246. L

A Hearty Welcome to Our New Members

Mr. and Mrs. Don Badding	...Arcadia, Iowa
Bette Coulson	...Ames, Iowa
Jean Fleshner	...Carroll, Iowa
Richard Grovert	...Newall, Iowa
Lyle Larson	...Portland, Oregon
James R. Neal	...East Lansing, Michigan
Michael Olson	...Grinnell, Iowa
Ardith Sporleder	...Charter Oak, Iowa
Irene Swanson	...Ames, Iowa
Bessie Trumbower	...Ames, Iowa
Howard Walsh	...Davenport, Iowa
Edward Winter	...Cedar Rapids, Iowa

We're very glad to have you on board for our ride along the Lincoln Highway!

Lincoln Highway Author Appeared

Author Mary Elizabeth Anderson of Grand Island, Nebraska, was available on Friday, May 22, at the Jefferson Public Library to sign copies of her book, *Link Across America: A Story of the Historic Lincoln Highway*.

Anderson received a Special Author Award from the Antique Automobile Club of America for the book. She has also published several children's books. She has published over 100 articles and stories, and her writing has appeared in over 70 publications.

She is a graduate of Northwest Missouri State University and has taught at the elementary level.

Anderson and her husband Don lived in Jefferson for ten years and still have many friends in the area. L

Calendar of Upcoming Events

June 17 - 20 National LHA Meeting in Salt Lake City, Utah

June 30 Deadline for July *Along the Lincoln Highway*

July 11 Board of Directors Meeting in Marshalltown (see article inside)

August 30 Deadline for September *Along the Lincoln Highway*

October 9 Board of Directors Meeting (location to be announced)

October 10 Fall Meeting and Tour (probably east-central Iowa)

October 30 Deadline for November *Along the Lincoln Highway*
