

Along the Lincoln Highway



**The Newsletter of the Iowa Lincoln Highway Association
Winter/Spring 2001 Volume 6 Issue 1**

The Lincoln Highway Study Act.

By Bob Ausberger

On December 23, 2000, Public Law #106-563 was signed into law by President Clinton. It had passed the House and Senate as The Lincoln Highway Study Act of 2000. The "Act" provides \$500,000 for a massive twelve state study of preservation, interpretation and economic development opportunities along the 3,000 mile corridor of America's first transcontinental highway.

The National Park Service will facilitate the study which has the potential of creating America's first and only heritage corridor stretching across the country. Other participants will be state historic preservation offices, local governments and interest groups, and individuals knowledgeable in American history, historic preservation, popular culture, and economic development.

The Lincoln Highway was built through a remarkable partnership of interests. In 1913, leaders of the "Good Roads" movement, largely from the automotive and construction industries along with historians and proponents of recreation formed the Lincoln Highway Association. The association worked through local civic boosters to achieve the building of the road. The original alignment was built primarily with individual, city, and county funds.

The LH fostered rapid growth of the automobile and subsequent economic development opportunities. Similarly the Lincoln Highway Study Act will provide a structure of national leadership working through local groups to put the highway to its best uses and to let it tell the story of the development of our national highway transportation system. It will recognize that the automobile and its transportation system have changed America forever.

The National Park Service, a division of the Department of the Interior, has recognized that the Lincoln Highway is significant in national, state and local history through the standard of the National Register of Historic Places.

Jess Petersen, national LHA president, recently reported that Sondra Washington will be in charge of the Lincoln Highway Study Act. Ms. Washington is stationed at the Omaha office of the National Park Service. L

State Center Hosts Spring Meeting.

The Spring 2001 meeting of the Iowa LHA will be in Marshall County, and everyone is invited to attend. Come to State Center for the meeting and tour on **Saturday, April 14th**. The business meeting will be at Char's Cafe, and visitors are welcome to join an afternoon tour of the Lincoln Highway from State Center east through Marshalltown, ending at Shady Oaks Campground.

Char's Cafe is located at **112 West Main**, across the street from the Central State Bank in State Center. Come early to enjoy coffee and conversation at 8:30 a.m. with newsletters from other LH states on-hand for your viewing pleasure. Van and Bev Becker's gavel will open the meeting at 9:00. The group will enjoy lunch at Char's before the tour begins.

Want to get on the agenda? Send inquiries to Paul Walker at 319-358-7056 or the Beckers at IowaLHA@mcleodusa.net.

Iowa's Treasured Monument to the Lincoln Highway.

by Ron Cory, Tama County Consul

The Lincoln Highway Bridge in Tama was constructed on the dirt Lincoln Highway leading into Tama in 1915. The bridge was renovated in the 1980s and subsequently listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Many years after its construction it remains a vital, working bridge just off U.S. Highway 30, on East Fifth Street on the east edge of Tama.



Today we commemorate the bridge and the highway each May during the Lincoln Highway Bridge Festival, by celebrating its significance and working to maintain. But how much do you really know about the bridge?

Aware of its deteriorating condition, concerned community members in 1987 formed a restoration committee. Many of the ten committee members were active in the Tama Chamber of Commerce. The goal was to bring the bridge back to its original appearance. In addition, the creek flowing under, and the park adjacent to the bridge, needed landscaping, and signage marking the area had to be created and placed.

The project included extensive sandblasting and cement work with special sealant applied to prevent cracking. The lighting pillars—which had disappeared long ago—were to be recreated in their original likeness.

The cost of the project was \$15,000 with funds provided by the city, chamber and the Mansfield Foundation of Tama. Mansfield was the original owner of the nearby King Tower “gas, food, and lodging” one-stop.

After completion of the work, consultation with the architect provided the committee with the words they wanted to hear—the bridge would last another 75 years.

The Lincoln Highway Bridge was officially rededicated in August of 1987. The project was awarded the Iowa Treasures Award and also received the KCCI TV-8 Community Betterment Award. It also earned the enormous gratitude of Lincoln Highway enthusiasts nationwide.

To say that the area needed landscaping is probably an understatement. During the spring of 1987, for two weekends, over forty volunteers with rakes, chain saws, and weed eaters worked to clean the creek area over the distance from U.S. 30 on the north to about 30 yards south of the Lincoln Highway Bridge. Four loads of garbage and debris were hauled away in dump trucks. In addition, trees were trimmed or cut down and flat rock placed along the creek bed to protect the bridge from erosion.

The park adjacent to the bridge was renamed the Lincoln Highway Bridge park that same year to tie in with the area located northeast of the bridge.

The Lincoln Highway Bridge Festival has been an exciting yearly event of the Tama community for many years. The Festival is scheduled for the third weekend in May on Friday and Saturday nights and is sponsored by the Tama Chamber of Commerce.

Friday events include magicians and other family entertainment as well as pie-eating contests, demonstrations of local talent, various musical groups, and much more. Saturday events kick off with a 5K run followed by a big—and we mean BIG—parade at 10:00 a.m. The beef barbeque commences after the parade and serves over 2000 each year. In addition, over six hours of continuous entertainment of state fair quality is enjoyed by over three to four-thousand participants each year. L

Greetings Friends!

Please welcome our newest members:

Ron & Arlys Anderson	Denver, CO
Dwayne Augspurger	Marion
Rory Autenreith	Jefferson
Gerald Baldwin	Dunlap
Scott Blackledge	Slater
Pat Cain	Ames
Fred Doerring	Jefferson
Calvin & Nora Ferris	Jefferson
Chuck Finn	Mantorville, MN
George Hoering	Takoma Park, MD
Scot Hughes	Cedar Rapids
Larry Larson	Marion
Walter & Claudia Light	Grand Junction
Charles Lundberg	Derby
Don & Phoebe Renslow (Don's Texaco)	Grand Junction
Leland Smith	Newton
Al Warren	Des Moines
Dallas & Joyce Wiese	Toledo
Harold and Mary Woodruff	Jefferson

National Lincoln Highway/MAFCA Tour Planned for September.

Contributed by

Stan Larson, Bill Ackermann, Al Warren, Jeff Benson and Paul Walker

The Lincoln Highway Association is hosting an Auto Tour across the United States, and the tour is planned for the weekend of 15-16 September, 2001.

The national LHA hopes to sponsor a tour in each of the twelve states of the Lincoln Highway, including Iowa. Most participating states will have two tours, starting at both their east and west borders and traveling to a selected city near the state's center. Preliminary plans are for a car show to held at the end of the tour in the host city.

The Auto Tour is being planned to showcase as much history as possible, and to drive on or near the original Lincoln Highway. The travel itinerary will include highways of yesteryear, through small towns with their historical buildings, and with the LHA highlighting many of the local historical and important landmarks.

Old car friends, as well as old car clubs are invited to join in this historic trip across America—one state at a time—and to help put the Lincoln Highway back on the map.

In Iowa, the weekend will indeed consist of two tours, one from the east entrance of the Lincoln Highway at Clinton, and a west tour starting in Pottawattamie County. On the morning of Saturday, September 15th, both tour groups will start driving toward Marshall County at the center of the state. The west tour will stay overnight at Jefferson, and the east group will finish the first day at Cedar Rapids.

On Sunday the two groups will meet in Marshalltown in the early afternoon for an open-to-the-public car show.

The west Auto Tour will be comprised mainly of members of the Des Moines Model A Ford Club. They surveyed the road in early March, and will return later this month with Joyce Ausberger to finalize their route.

Members of the Cedar Rapids Model A Club will make up the bulk of the east Auto Tour. Club leadership will meet with State Director Paul Walker on March 21st to drive from Clinton to Cedar Rapids and make their road assessment. The route is being planned to avoid the gravel of the original highway.

Other car clubs are welcome to join MAFCA and the LHA in this historic event. Already the Des Moines chapter has registered 27 entries in the west tour, not including members of the Omaha "Meadlowlark" club who may participate. And registration is not limited to Lincoln Highway states. Al Warren of Des Moines reports interest in the Auto Tour from the Kansas City MAFCA chapter.

Tour leaders are already planning special events along the way to commemorate the century-old relationship between car and road. These include a photo of Model A's crossing the 1912 Eureka Bridge in Greene County, or driving the brick streets of Woodbine in Harrison County. Another popular idea is to temporarily replace the new cars on the Wittrock lot in Carroll with a bevy of Model A Fords for a once-in-a-lifetime photo shoot. The Wittrock dealership is on the National Historic Register and sports a rare front double canopy.

Additional events will be planned in various Lincoln Highway communities, organized by county directors of the Iowa LHA. Think RAGBRAI for old car fanatics!

Details of the Auto Tour are still emerging, so stay tuned for additional information. A more complete schedule will appear in this column in the Spring/Summer issue of *Along the Lincoln Highway* in June.

To participate in either tour, please direct inquiries to the leader of your preferred tour:

<u>West Tour</u>	<u>East Tour</u>
Al Warren	Bill Ackermann
4010 SW 12th Street	P.O. Box 59
Des Moines IA 50315	Amana IA 52203
515-243-5398	319-622-3756

Ramblings Along the Lincoln Highway.

*Minutes of the Winter 2001
Iowa LHA Meeting
Cedar Rapids, Iowa.
13 January 2000.
Submitted by Norma Berns, Secretary.*

Twenty-two members of the Iowa chapter of the Lincoln Highway Association met Saturday, January 13, 2001 at the History Center. Coffee, juice and kolaches were provided.

Co-President Van Becker opened the meeting, and members introduced themselves. A verbal thank-you and round of applause were conveyed to Jeff Benson and Margaret Elbert as co-chairs for the past three years. A thanks was also passed to Paul Walker for the super Fall/Winter newsletter.

Minutes were approved as published. Joyce Ausberger gave the Treasurer's report. Cecil Stewart's membership report indicated 280 Iowa LHA members, and 15 new members.

Elmer Ketelsen kicked off the County Consul reports. He displayed some Clinton County photos that he wanted to identify.

Anne Schoonover has retired as president of the Youngville Association in Benton County but is still working on the project. She is currently working on getting water supplied and on locating the cabins in the spring and finding a manager for the coffee shop.

Ron Cory said Tama County is locating the original cabins for the King Tower grounds. The LH Bridge Festival celebrates its 15th year this May 19th and 20th.

Marshall County will have an Easter Egg Hunt on the LH in April.

Bob Owens reported that renovation of the Moss markers commemorating "Moss Corner" north of Scranton in Greene County will be completed by spring. Moss family descendents are coming June 27 for rededication of the Lincoln busts on the Moss markers. He also reported that Jefferson has rented the 1920 Hamburger shop on LH as a LH office, open by volunteers every day.

Norma Berns reported that Tony Vorsten, long time advocate of the LH from Carroll County, died New Year's Day. Also, Greg Franzwa presented a slide show of the new edition of 1924 LH Guide book at Glidden, Carroll and Jefferson in December.

Ardith Sporleder reported that the Park Motel at Denison is now on the National Historic Register.

The board re-visited the issue of the garbage-strewn old Lincoln Highway grade at Honey Creek, asking if volunteers are needed to help the EPA clean it up.

New Business

*** The national Lions Club has benefit fund-raisers from which they will split proceeds with the LHA.**

*** Margaret Elbert-Benson and Anne Schoonover are looking into crockery items as fund-raisers for the ILHA.**

*** Bob Ausberger reported that the federal bill to have the National Parks Service study the LH was passed by Congress and signed by President Clinton on December 20, 2000.**

Bob noted that this needs to be a grass roots effort by the state organizations. The National Parks Service won't organize the effort, they will help lead it. State efforts include how to mark the route, how to tie it together across the nation, and recognize its significance.

*** The status of interpretive site projects was updated, including Youngville, Lions Club Tree Park at Grand Junction., Nilands Corner at Colo, the Krienbrink Station at Lowden and the Harrison County Welcome Site.**

*** It was noted that the state organization is running out of brochures, and Joyce will order more.**

*** Bill Ackermann, Al Warren and Craig T. Martin introduced and explained the Model A. Tour across the U.S., and specifically across Iowa occurring Friday through Sunday, September 14-16, 2001.**

One group will start at Council Bluffs and one at Clinton, with the objective to meet somewhere at the center of the state on Sunday, the 16th.

*** The Iowa Chapter has decided to donate \$300 to fund the National Headquarters in Franklin Grove IL, and provide a \$300 loan to be paid back as the Headquarters becomes permanently funded.**

*** Group adjourned to reconvene at Bricks Restaurant on the old LH where they viewed old advertisements of the early LH era. L**



Have Spare Tire, Will Travel

By Van & Bev Becker

SWEEPING THE GRAVEL BACK TO THE CENTER OF THE ROAD

It's spring-cleaning time and time to clear various notes, scraps of paper and articles off the desktop. There may be a nugget of information here that you'll find reported nowhere else.

They're talking about us:

Home and Away, Iowa, January-February 2001. This is the AAA Motor Club magazine. In an article titled "Fine Food," AAA lists five of its favorite Midwest eating places. Two of these restaurants sit on the Lincoln Highway in Marshalltown.

Tremont on Main, 22 West Main Street. Specialties include grilled pork tournedos. This place is complete with a piano bar and features a sophisticated menu in a renovated historic downtown building. The Tremont is open for dinner. For more information, call (641) 752-1234.

Stone's, 507 S. Third Avenue. This restaurant features home-style cooking in a 113-year-old restaurant tucked under the Iowa Highway 14 viaduct. Don't miss the "Mile-High" lemon chiffon pie. Stone's is open for lunch and dinner. Call (641) 753-3626.

Autoweek, January 29, 2001. Book Reviews: *The Pacesetter: The Untold Story of Carl G. Fisher*. The name should be well-known to Lincoln Highway Association members. This new book covers, of course, his driving force behind the Lincoln and Dixie Highways, mentions how he missed being included in *Who's Who* and according to the *Autoweek* reviewer, includes some wonderful tales about his early publicity stunts. Gotta have it? Look for *The Pacesetter* by Jerry M. Fisher in hardcover, 440 pages, Lost Coast Press at <http://www.nctimes.net/thepacesetter>, priced at \$22.95.

Old Car Weekly, March 8, 2001. "An Old Highway Welcomes Old Cars" by Stan Larson. Stan Larson is the current president of the Wisconsin Chapter of the MAFCA (Model A Ford Club) and a member of the LHA. Stan gives a brief history of the Lincoln Highway and then of the plans to tour the highway September 15/16 in vintage automobiles. Our chapter voted at the October membership meeting to support this effort. Paul Walker and Jeff Benson will have more information about this event at upcoming meetings. We received half-page exposure from this article.

More sweepings—

In the summer of 1913, Grand Central Station in New York City was completed. Now if you were planning a trip to the World's Fair in San Francisco, you could chose the luxury of Pullman and dining cars or the dust and mud of the Lincoln. Which would you have chosen?

Fire up those computers. Check out this site and bookmark it. <http://luigecam.com/lincoln.htm>. Time and temperatures from New York to California on the Lincoln. Look fast—Lew (AKA Luige) is known to change his webpage often.

No film tonight? There are not many drive-in theaters left. "How many?" you ask. The nationwide count is now just 68, down from 76 in 1998 according to the *Wall Street Journal* of December 21, 2000. The drive-in pictured here is the Ranch Drive-In Theater on Lincoln Way in Ames, Iowa. This theater was destroyed in April of 2000—in its 47th year—due to a "fire of suspicious origin."



Finally, not wishing to disappoint the readers that have come to expect a radio-related article in this column. The cars and trucks are traveling so fast today—I only have time for a *short wave*. L

GREAT GRADES.

Lincoln Highway fanatics will be challenged to identify this abandoned road grade with washed-out wooden bridge—and well they should, because it's not the Lincoln Highway.



Sitting atop a high grade and enjoying the shade of a lush shroud of trees (once the snow melted), this old road served as an important regional highway years before the use of concrete. The road is useless now, as it runs into the side of the even higher Interstate 80 embankment out of frame to the right.

So the next time you're traveling on Interstate 80 and find yourself between Des Moines and Iowa City near the 202-mile marker, look to the north to see our friend here And keep in mind—as important highways go, our Lincoln is top of the heap, but there are examples of our environment having been shaped and shifted into early roadway artifacts *everywhere*.

* * *

Our cover photo celebrates the new welcome sign constructed at both ends of the town of Clarence in Cedar County.



Clarence has never been slow to display its Lincoln Highway pride. Townsfolk understand the importance the highway held for their community when it was the Lincoln and today as U.S. 30. The town has been hanging LH banners for years, so it's not surprising that they would include the "L" symbol of the Lincoln Highway so prominently in their new and quite stately welcome sign.

Always eager to make a good first impression, Clarence wants visitors to know that the Lincoln Highway is part of their heritage. L

New Banners Ready.

A fresh batch of red, white, and blue Lincoln Highway banners have been manufactured and are now for sale. Made of a more durable grade of tough vinyl, the new set of lamppost banners should last longer and be more colorfast than the last issue—which are five years old and still “hanging in there” on city squares and roadways across the state.

Cost of a banner and bracket pack is \$100, while the banner alone is \$60 (used with your existing bracket). Shipping and handling is \$10. Direct your order to Joyce Ausberger. L

Outside Iowa Along the Lincoln Highway.

Andy Near, Merle Deets and Everett Kraft, all of Dixon, Illinois, completed a 4,263-mile trip on old Route 66 and the Historic Lincoln Highway. They drove three antique cars, Andy's 1930 Model A, Merle's 1937 Pontiac, and Everett's 1931 Model A.

The trio drove at a top speed of 45 miles per hour. Come and hear about the fun the wandering three had. The program will be presented at the Chapter meeting Saturday March 31 at the Sugar Grove School and Church in rural Dixon.

- from *Land of Lincoln News*
 Newsletter of the Illinois LHA.

The featured section of Lincoln Highway in this issue is a twelve-mile part between San Pablo and Oakland. There is no way of knowing for certain, but this short section of the Lincoln Highway may have had the largest concentration of musical establishments than any other part of the highway.

- from *The Traveler*
 Newsletter of the California LHA.

Newsletters from all LH states will be on display at the April 14 Iowa LHA meeting in State Center!

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