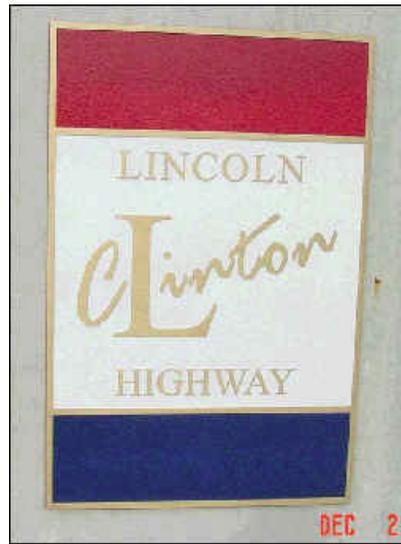


Along the Lincoln Highway



**The Newsletter of the Iowa Lincoln Highway Association
Autumn/Winter 2001 Volume 6 Issue 4**

The Time To Act Is Now.

*By Catherine Noble, Director
State Center Main Street Program*

**“What we understand we love.
What we love we protect.”**

For too long Iowa has not realized what it has. The Lincoln Highway is a significant piece of history filled with the right stuff to attract tourists nationwide. Look at the excitement Route 66 generates.

We have the potential for that same success. The highway is simply not promoted to its fullest, and its highest and best use has yet to be realized. Its role as a tool for preservation and the ensuing development of tourism lies dormant while we, as a state, struggle economically.

This mismanagement of our historic legacy cannot go on. I am not criticizing anyone’s efforts or opinions. We must, however look at the bigger picture. Every day landmarks are lost to well intended but harmful ignorance. Until people are aware of the value of this road and it’s unique landmarks, it will continue to slowly disappear.

About eight years ago an application was made to the DOT by the Lincoln Highway Association to have the LH designated a scenic byway. The application was turned down, as the road was not considered “scenic.” An admittedly subjective scoring system is in place to insure the integrity of any road labeled “scenic.” The National Trust was called in to help present the concept of a scenic beauty all it’s own, but the DOT was not convinced.

Historic significance is also a consideration in the designation as a scenic byway. Not enough of the original Lincoln Highway is intact for it to qualify as “historic.” Ironically, this disqualification came into being because of constant DOT improvements to the roadway over the years!

Having lived in places where you cannot see the sun rise or set, I appreciate the wide-open sky and beautiful horizons our views afford. Think of all the people, the many important historical figures, who have traveled through Iowa on this, the first artery of our great nation.

It is time to explore this avenue anew. Illinois has designated their entire length of Lincoln Highway a scenic byway. Possibly there is some other type of historic trails designation to be considered. It is great that our Association was formed to promote this road, however it is time the state of Iowa stepped up to the plate and added it's support and endorsement to the effort.

We cannot afford to take "no" for an answer. L

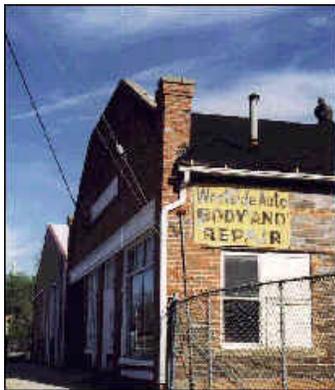
Reminiscences of Crawford County.

*By Ardith Sporleder
Crawford County Director*



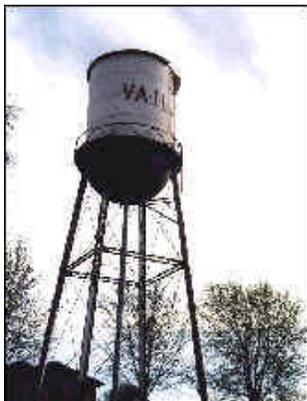
Most of my life has been spent living in or near Crawford County in western Iowa, and when I agreed to write about my experiences for the newsletter I was certain it would be a breeze because my childhood memories would be interesting and exciting. However, such recollections required a reach—perhaps a stretch—back in time, so I decided to take a drive along our Lincoln Way, from Dow City, through Arion, to Denison.

The road from County M14 to Arion is a winding, well maintained gravel road and is two miles long. A bit uneventful as I was looking for abandoned cement abutments in fields and pastures [photo].



There's a well preserved "V" culvert that suggests this road was used frequently. However, I notice the County Home is in disarray. The once-pretty brick home with adjoining buildings was sold by the County Board of Supervisors several years ago and was rented out as a rooming house. I remember this "Home" being well kept with a groundskeeper that was employed full-time. His duties included building repair and numerous maintenance chores. Prior to that, livestock and gardens were maintained by the residents.

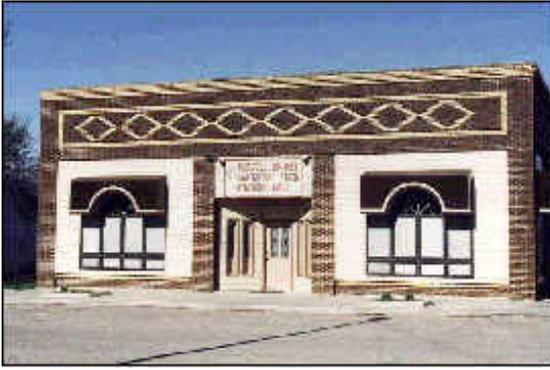
The original road nestles down a bit from the hills and becomes Lincoln Way. It continues on through feed lots, abandoned farmsteads and pastures that are a wonderful reminder of another era of 160-acre tracts of diversified farming. It is here that we catch a brief glimpse of the Loess Hills—or their shorter relatives—with red cedar trees atop the hills between deep ravines.



Lincoln Way winds through the land owned by IBP, the meat-packing company started by Andy Anderson in conference with other townfolk on the second floor of the Park Motel in Denison. This jump-started the local economy, and though it started with a small group of investors, it is one of the largest meat-packing corporations in the nation. But that's another story.

We cross the Union Pacific railroad and four-lane U.S. 30 and are once again on the old Lincoln which now suffers under the label "Access Road." The Sunset Trailer Court and Days Inn are located here as we intersect with Iowa Highway 59.

Denison has hired a consultant to come up with a vision for **Denison 2020**. He expressed a desire to work closely with the LHA in the event that the first ever "Natural Corridor" becomes a reality.



up with a changing rural scene, and each has much to offer. Westside, Vail and Dow City will forge ahead with new businesses and the building of many fine, new homes. And when you have time for a leisurely drive, we hope you'll come visit us. L

Youngville Station Crock Series Continues.



The commemorative crocks have been ordered, and as you read this, the Red Wing craftsmen are busy preparing our order which should be in. The price of the crocks is \$30.00 plus shipping. Orders can be placed with **Renae Tharp** at the Benton Development Group **(319) 472-5545**. To see a full color rendition of the crocks see our website at:

www.videoportraits.com/yv/yv1.html. L

Don't Hibernate - Join Us at Youngville

Youngville will be hosting the January 12, 2002 ILHA board meeting. Coffee, rolls and juice will be served beginning at 9:00 a.m., with the board meeting to follow at 9:30.

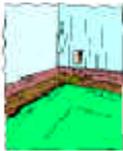
The Youngville cafe is on the northeast corner of U.S. Highways 30 and 218. Although you can't miss the building, don't forget our driveway is approximately 50 yards east of the cafe and is easy to miss if you are really "rollin' down that Lincoln Highway." The median crossing is not very visible and coming from the west you will be turning from the passing lane—watch out for impatient drivers.

We look forward in January to showing you our progress. In November we installed the new retaining wall behind the cafe and, earlier this month, **Karr Tuckpointing** of Vinton installed the permanent foundations and set the cabins in place. Now the *Cabin Court* is really taking shape!



Our Fall Festival was held October 14, 2001. Highlights included pie and coffee in our recently installed renovated cafe booths [see photo page 3], hand pressed apple cider, and live music by Todd and Kim Franks.

The **Youngville Crocks** are in and can be ordered from Renae at (319) 472-5545 or Mike (mtk@videoportraits.com). They are \$30.00 each and can be shipped 2 day priority mail for \$6.45.



From the President's Corner...

Last year I wanted to write a State of the Union address, but Bev wouldn't let me, so I suggested a State of the State—she vetoed that too. This year as the deadline looms for the last newsletter of the year, I'm sitting at my desk with a radio whispering in one ear, the television droning across the room and the computer humming in front of me. On this evening of December 7, 2001, the 60th anniversary of Pearl Harbor, all of the news media are reporting on that generation's war, this generation's war and the events that led up to both.

Many of the patriotic speeches today are intended to unite this country. After listening again to the speeches, phrases and political blustering surrounding Pearl Harbor and our recent September 11 tragedy, anything I might say seems hollow. In this light, let's look back at our Lincoln Highway Association objectives and how those who formulated the original mission statement of our organization planned to unite the country.

To immediately promote and procure the establishment of a continuous improved highway of the Atlantic to the Pacific, open to lawful traffic of all descriptions, without toll charges and to be concrete wherever practical, this highway is to be known, in memory of Abraham Lincoln, as "The Lincoln Highway."

At this point, Bev and I want to wish everyone a better New Year. We look forward to meeting and getting to know more of you in the coming year. Meet us along the Lincoln Highway.

Welcome to the LHA!

So Many New Members From Near and Far!

Dale Benskin	Marshalltown
Kenneth Carson	Toledo
John & Judy Carter	Belle Plaine
Arnold Chantland	Toledo
Thomas Coenen	Charinda
Trace Harris	Anchorage, AK
Rick Hickman	West Des Moines
Janis Kaup	Camanche
Mearl & Lillian Luvaas	Denison
J.R. & Kathy Manning	Germantown, SI
Dennis Meyer	Johnston
Ann Presley	Auburn
Katherine Shane	Des Moines
Andrew Sorenson	Jefferson
Verilyn Strellner	Tama

Dirt Roads.

Reprinted from "Paul Harvey."

What's mainly wrong with society today is that too many Dirt Roads have been paved. There's not a problem in America today that wouldn't be remedied, if we just had more Dirt Roads, because Dirt Roads give character.

People that live at the end of Dirt Roads learn early on that life is a bumpy ride. That it can jar you right down to your teeth sometimes, but it's worth it, if at the end is home...a loving spouse, happy kids and a dog. We wouldn't have near the trouble with our educational system if our kids got their exercise walking a Dirt Road with other kids, from whom they learn how to get along.

There was less crime in our streets before they were paved. Criminals didn't walk two dusty miles to rob or rape, if they knew they'd be welcomed by barking dogs and a shotgun. And there were no drive-by shootings.

Our values were better when our roads were worse! People did not worship their cars more than their kids, and motorists were more courteous, they didn't tailgate by riding the bumper or the guy in front would choke you with dust and bust your windshield with rocks.

Dirt Roads taught patience. Dirt Roads were environmentally friendly; you didn't hop in your car for a quart of milk, you walked to the barn for your milk. For your mail, you walked to the mailbox. What if it rained and the Dirt Road got washed out? That was the best part, then you stayed home and had some family time, roasted marshmallows and popped popcorn, had a pony ride on Daddy's shoulders and learned how to make prettier quilts than anybody.

At the end of Dirt Roads, you soon learned that bad words tasted like soap. Most paved roads lead to trouble. Dirt Roads most likely lead to a fishing creek or a swimming hole.

At the end of a Dirt Road, the only time we even locked our car was in August, because if we didn't some neighbor would fill it with too much zucchini.

At the end of a Dirt Road, there was always extra springtime income, from when city dudes would get stuck, you'd have to hitch up a team and pull them out. Usually you got a dollar... always you got a new friend...at the end of a Dirt Road. L



Have Spare Tire, Will Travel

By Van & Bev Becker

SWEEPING MORE GRAVEL BACK TO THE CENTER OF THE ROAD

Once again this is an opportunity to clean out the inbox. I trust there will be a few pearls of information here that may be useful or at least interesting.

* * *

Lisbon's renovated downtown area is slowly starting to move forward. The filling station (ceramic-veneered Standard if memory serves) on the west end has been leveled for the city square, which is to include a gazebo.

The first of Lisbon's Tax Incremental Fund (TIF) for improving the exteriors and interiors of business district buildings has been awarded to **John's Hairstyling** and **Bill's Tap**. Both owners are pleased with the good deal.

The other side of the coin, Lisbon's main street—our beloved highway—is slated for utility work, landscaping, faux brick and ornamental lighting at the corner of Main and Washington Streets. The City Council has already authorized \$400,000 for this project. However, the bid letting is going slowly. The entire project is scheduled for completion in June 2003. Check on their progress the next time you are cruising the Lincoln Highway in Linn County.

* * *

Mount Vernon has a new restaurant in the business district. The **Lincoln Café—Honest Food**—is a half-block east of the fire station on Main Street. Housed in a vintage brick building, the owners are very proud of their chef. In addition to such simple fare as a Lincoln Highway Burger, the chef prepares daily specials. Yes, Bev and I have eaten there and will stop in again. They serve a good snack.



This column previously requested your help in identifying the six local residents of Mt. Vernon who were responsible for rescuing and installing the original LH marker just west of the Visitors' Center in Mt. Vernon. There was no response to my request. Therefore, I fear their names are lost, although we do appreciate their foresight.

* * *

As mentioned in the last issue, the Linn County Highway Department, in anticipation of the renovation and (de)construction of the Lincoln Highway route from Lisbon to the east edge of Cedar Rapids, has removed the metal Seedling Mile signs.

In a last-minute effort before the Model A tour in September, I placed a homemade sign marking the start of the Seedling Mile west of Mt. Vernon. We expected it to last through the weekend, but to our surprise, it stood proudly for almost three months. Since construction crews will probably not tackle that stretch until spring, I reinstalled the fallen sign in early December. If the last time was good for three months, we hope this sign will stand all winter as I used heavy-duty, UV-resistant tie wraps. [way to go, Van. -ed]



* * *

The highway between the Seedling Mile and Cedar Rapids, known as Mt. Vernon Road or "Old Highway 30," now sports six new metal LH signs mounted on utility poles, three facing east, three west. This must be part of the County plan to improve the road next spring. At any rate, their appearance this fall was a pleasant surprise.



How is the Lincoln Highway signage in your area? Are there any new ones? Old ones? Missing signs? Have you painted any poles? Drop a note to our newsletter editor. I'm sure Paul would appreciate the information including photos for future newsletters. [yes, he would -ed] L

Ramblings Along the Lincoln Highway.

Minutes of the Fall 2001

Iowa LHA Meeting

Montour, Iowa.

13 October 2001.

Submitted by Bev Becker, Co-President.

Members began their meeting at Rube's Steakhouse in Montour at 9 a.m. with good fellowship and refreshments of coffee, rolls and juice.

Van Becker called the business meeting to order at 9:40 a.m. with 40 members and guests in attendance. The minutes of the October 13 Board of Directors' meeting in Nevada were approved as read. **Joyce Ausberger** was asked for a treasurer's report and she provided the treasurer's report. Consult with Joyce for further details.

National LHA President Jim Ranniger wants to attend LH events in each state, so let State Director **Paul Walker** know of any local chapters events planned.

Walker called to our attention the \$5 increase in Association dues, which took effect on October 1.

Clinton County Director **Elmer Ketelsen** reported that the new Clinton bridge is open and a lamppost bears the familiar Lincoln Highway emblem.

Greene County Director **Bob Owens** gave an account of the Moss Corner marker rededication near Scranton in Greene County, which was reported in the last issue of *AtLH*. The restored markers look like new and are very impressive.

Director **Ardith Sporleder** of Crawford County reported on participation in the MAFCA tour and advised that renovation of the Park Hotel in Denison is complete and ready for guests.

Director **Elaine Ehlert** from Harrison County reported that the Applefest in Woodbine was a big success and that Joyce and others represented the LHA with a display. Elaine advised that efforts are ongoing to raise more funds for the preservation of the original brick portion of the Woodbine LH, and she shared her photos of the Model A Ford procession. Ehlert has been busy with a crew repainting the LH signs on poles in Woodbine. She also reported that four painted concrete LH markers from a yard in Council Bluffs were moved to a farm near Logan.

Co-President **Bev Becker** asked for nominations for the office of President Elect/Vice President with a term to run from October 2001 until October 2002, with that person to assume the duties of President of the ILHA for the two-year term ending in 2004. **Mike Kelly** of Vinton and **Bob Stinson** of Des Moines were nominated. Voting was by ballot and those ballots were counted by Past Co-Presidents **Jeff Benson** and **Margaret Elbert-Benson**.

Results were close with Mike Kelly the winner. Congratulations to Mike and thank you to both Bob and Mike for their participation. When Mike assumes the office of president next year, we will elect another President-Elect/VP for a two-year term.

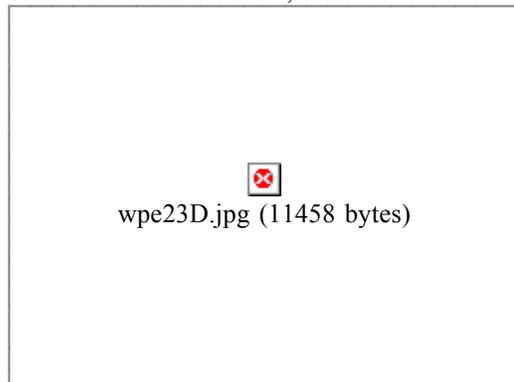
New/Old Business

Ausberger reported that Scranton Manufacturing is now making our Lincoln Highway banners and shirts. The banners remain at \$60 each. The brackets may be purchased separately.

Owens informed us that video of the Moss Corner rededication is scheduled to air on PBS's "Living in Iowa" in November.

Sporleder reported that a person in Belle Plaine has a logbook from the Wayfarer's Cabin Camp in Belle Plaine's LH days, and has offered it to the association for photocopying. Noble Sojourner **Lyell Henry**, volunteered to investigate.

President-Elect Kelly volunteered to host the ILHA Board meeting at **Youngville** in January. Here's the current state of the newly remodeled interior. Nice, huh?



April's Member Meeting will be at the Greene County LHA headquarters in Jefferson.

Van adjourned the business meeting at 10:30 a.m. and turned the program over to our host, **Ron Cory**.

Ron introduced **Peter Butler** from Iowa State University who explained a survey that the Corridor Study group is conducting. Peter requested that we complete a survey indicating our preferences in the new corridor plan for the Lincoln Highway. Copies of the survey were distributed with SASEs. Members not in attendance can request a survey from their County Consul.

Matt Anderson of Rube's Steakhouse greeted us and explained the present operation of Rube's and gave a brief account of the history of the business, describing the businesses that formerly occupied the building. Rube's can be located on the Internet at www.rubesmeats.com

Darla Cory presented an interesting account of the history of Montour, once a small thriving community on the Lincoln Highway and the M & St. L Railroad.

Attendees were captivated by **Marie Vileta**, long-time Chelsea historian, who told interesting stories about the tiny community. Points of interest included the Lone Elm nightclub east of town which included a restaurant and a swimming pool as well as a dance hall/speakeasy— forbidden attractions for local youths. We learned about the settlement of Gladstone which thrived east of Tama during the middle 1920s. Gladstone once boasted a post office, tourist cabins and a grocery store along the railroad tracks between Tama and the “Bohemian Alps.”

Lyell Henry entertained and informed us with a slide show depicting the Lincoln Highway past and present in Tama County.

Bob Ausberger reported on the status of LH projects. He advised that Illinois is catching up with Iowa with the number of LHA members. The Illinois membership count is approximately 170, while Iowa is around 200. Bob also informed us that the Joy Monument in Wyoming has been relocated from the LH to a point west of Cheyenne on I-80, increasing exposure to the monument. The added visibility will protect it from further vandalism.

The program concluded and the group paused for a delicious lunch featuring Rube's smoked beef and turkey.

Following lunch, we boarded a chartered bus for a tour of the Tama County LH. As we left Montour, we noted long-closed vintage filling stations and Burma Shave signs. We proceeded toward Tama and we noted the spot where Harry Ostermann's Packard left the road and took that fatal tumble down the steep embankment.

In Tama, we toured the Cherry Mansion which was built in 1904—a grand structure with a 3rd story ballroom. In its prime it boasted a small golf course and a landing strip.

We visited downtown Tama with its LH mural, Civic Center original concrete markers, and the historic Lincoln Highway bridge. We proceeded east past King Tower café and the one cabin remaining at the former tourist court, which is being considered for well-deserved renovation. When completed, it may be moved to the LH Bridge Park.

On we drove through nearly invisible Gladstone, and the tiny community of Chelsea, much of which has been relocated due to incessant flooding by the Iowa River. We viewed Otter Creek Marsh, another historic LH Bridge, and then concluded our tour as Marie Vileta pointed out the former location of the Lone Elm and Mr. R's. L

GREAT GRADES.

Thanks to Elmer Ketelsen, the alert Consul in Clinton County, we learned of new Lincoln Highway signs in Clinton near the bridge on the southwest entrance into the city. A quick visit to Iowa's Gateway City provided more than just one or two signs.



clintonCast2.jpg (17287 bytes)

All along U.S. Highway 30, known as Lincoln Way, from the Coan marker at the junction of US Highway 67 and Highway 30 to South 14th Street - almost a mile and a half – the road is marked with professionally designed, red, white and blue cast metal signs. There were so many I had to stop counting.



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The length of the Miracle Mile shopping area, also known as “Sand Burr Hill,” has been revitalized to include new 5-lane concrete, new sidewalks, brick-patterned and colored crosswalks, blue period lamp posts and street signs. The lamp post and cross street signs are all adorned with the LH emblem with “Clinton” in gold-colored script overlaying the “L.” The city is congratulated for acting to improve the west entrance to Clinton. Attention, cities and towns on the LH—Clinton has done it right. *This* is how you renovate the Lincoln Highway! L

After our initial dismay of seeing a big red fire truck turn into the entrance of Shady Oaks on the afternoon of September 29th, my family welcomed Craig Harmon.



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Undaunted by his lone mission, we shared stories and exchanged gifts. Craig was awed by the Treehouse just as we were by the 1964 Maxim fire truck with 100-foot extension ladder, that circled our camp driveway.

Last January 20th, Harmon drove this unique truck, "Spirit of the Lincoln Way," in the Inaugural Parade for George W. Bush in Washington, DC.

Now Craig is my Ohio neighbor!

Mary Gift
Proprietor, Shady Oaks Campground, and Marshall County Director

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