

LINCOLN HIGHWAY ASSOCIATION
CALIFORNIA CHAPTER

NEWSLETTER

THE
TRAVELER



EDITOR; Gary Kinst
PUBLISHED QUARTERLY ON THE FIRST OF
JANUARY, APRIL, JULY, OCTOBER



VOL. 7 NO. 3

SUMMER

JULY 2006



The Summit Garage
Altamont, California
The last original Landmark on
the Lincoln Highway between
Tracy, CA. and Livermore, CA.

Can It Be Saved ?





A CONTINUOUS CONNECTING IMPROVED HIGHWAY FROM THE ATLANTIC TO THE PACIFIC

Robert Dieterich, President
California Chapter
Lincoln Highway Association

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June 19, 2006

A Letter from your President to California Chapter Members

Next Chapter Meeting: Echo Summit Tour, July 22, 2006

At last year's conference in Ely, I asked the Nevada Sierra Chapter officers if they would be interested in a joint meeting sometime. The response was "yes" and, as we discussed at our last chapter meeting, we have arranged for a joint tour from the state line, over Echo Summit, and down the US 50 (southern) route to Placerville and Folsom. There should be plenty of opportunity at our rest stops to discuss any pending business, but this is primarily a driving tour.

We will start at 9:00 a.m. at the Lake Tahoe Historical Society Museum. Their address is 3058 US 50. This is also known as Lake Tahoe Boulevard. The museum is east of the junction with Highway 89, and just before it hits the lake and turns east to follow the lakeshore. If anyone gets lost that morning, my cell number is 916-215-1902.

It is a long way up and back, but I think the tour will be worth the time. This will be a chance to meet and get to know our neighbor highway enthusiasts. If you would like to join up in the Sacramento area that morning to share rides, please call me (916-967-7680) or Paul Gilger (707-528-7787). We will stop somewhere along the route for lunch.

National Conference

I just returned from the National Conference in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Those Iowans sure know how to do things right! It was a great conference with good food, interesting speakers, and tremendous tours. As usual there were two days of tours, one east and one west. The east tour went all the way to the Mississippi River, and the west to Colo, Iowa, almost to Ames. The next *Forum* will have all the details and pictures to drool over so I won't go into the details here. It is important to note, however, that the California Chapter again walked away with several awards:

Norm Root – Director of the Year

George Clark – Exemplary Friend of the Highway

Paul Gilger – Exemplary Friend of the Highway

All three awards are what they call the "Glass Awards." The award and the name of the recipient are etched into a beautiful curved pane of crystal. Good job guys! However, you will have to wait for our next chapter meeting to get the round of applause you so deserve.

Endowment Fund

As Chairman of the Endowment Fund Committee, it was an honor to be able to present the Board of Directors, at their annual meeting during the conference, the plans we developed over the past year for the very generous anonymous donation of \$100,000 to the Lincoln Highway Association. The Board approved the expenditures and the plan was then presented to the general membership.

Two things became immediately obvious to us on the committee. First, we didn't want to hide this fund in some savings account and use only the interest—maybe \$5000 a year. We are convinced this was not the intent of the donor. On the other hand we didn't want to squander the fund on someone's pet project. We also felt it important to encourage additional contributions to the fund, and consider the fund as a "seedling mile" fund to foster such growth. So we came up with two programs which will provide an impact as immediate funding for needed projects as well as funding for leveraging the rest of the account.

First, we would like to get a portion of this gift out to the chapters as soon as possible to honor the generous donor of this contribution and to help with worthy projects. We have developed a Grant Program for this purpose. Grant awards will be made available from the Lincoln Highway Association Endowment Fund for the purpose of furthering the Lincoln Highway cause and for assisting state LHA chapters in their efforts. State chapters are encouraged to develop projects and to seek grant awards to support those projects. The chapters will compete for these awards. Details of this program will be in the next issue of the *Forum*; however, if you would like a copy of the contest rules before then, please contact me and I'll mail or email you a copy. I would sure like to see the California Chapter apply for some of this grant money. We have until March 1 of next year to make an application.

Secondly, we would like to hire an Executive Director who can aggressively seek grant money for the Association, open a staffed office, and provide the presence and attention needed for recognition of the Association by such outside bodies as the National Park Service. We would also like this individual to pursue Federal Byway status for the Lincoln Highway over its entire length and provide media relations for the Association. A job description, performance standards, and qualifications have been developed for this position. I would be happy to mail or email you a copy of an advertisement we prepared for this position. If anyone knows of someone who is qualified for and would be interested in this position, please pass on their name.

Donations for Interpretive Plaque

George Clark advanced our chapter over \$600 at our November 19, 2005, meeting to make the final payment for the interpretive plaque now installed in Lincoln Park. We still owe him over \$200. Anyone wanting to contribute can send a check to the LHA CA Chapter at the PO Box shown in the letterhead above.

Sincerely,

Robert Dieterich, President
California Chapter
Lincoln Highway Association

Norman Root
California State Director
Lincoln Highway Association
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Sacramento, CA. 95821
(916) 483-8669
norman_root@yahoo.com

California Chapter Annual Report 2005-2006

Meetings

Four Quarterly Meetings were held at old Lincoln Highway Road Houses

- August 2005: At the Valencia Club in Penryn.
- October 2005: At the Tracy Inn, a former control point.
- January 2006: At the Presidio, San Francisco.
- April 2006: At Yeager's Grill and Ale House in Folsom.

Accomplishments

- Provided van tours of the Lincoln Highway in California. Four different tours were available on four different dates in 2005-06.
- Provided artifacts and advisory help on three museum displays; one at the West Sacramento City Hall, one at the West Sacramento Museum and another at the Tracy Historical Museum.
- Through George Clark's 3-½ year effort, installed an interpretive plaque at the Western Terminus marker.
- George Clark researched and discovered the missing 1913-21 link alignment through the forest of the Presidio in San Francisco
- Assumed a reconciliatory role in the 15-year battle over closure of the Lincoln Highway "stock trail" at Donner Lake. We tried to keep the Association out of the fracas until recently when a County Supervisor stepped in and tried to get Caltrans to vacate the "stock trail" rights and turn the property over to a private landowner. That action is not in keeping with the Association's preservation goals.

Explorations

- May have to become involved in an action that appears to threaten the Summit Garage at Altamont, one of the two remaining buildings at that well-known landmark.
- Discovered a formerly unknown section of pavement in Auburn Ravine near Ophir.
- Explored a formerly closed section of 1913 highway between Clarksville and Bass Lake.
- Norman Root and Lloyd Johnson continue to explore Lincoln Highway predecessors in the South Fork of the American River Canyon: Hawley's Grade, Johnson's Placerville Road and Ogilby's Roads.
- Michael Kaelin researched and discovered a former alignment in Dublin Canyon.

Officers

President: Bob Dieterich
Vice President: Paul Gilger
Treasurer: Clark Wood
News Letter Editor: Gary Kinst
Webmaster: James Lin

From The Editor

Cover photos

The photo on the cover, with pump, is an extract from a Drake Hokanson photo. The more recent photo is from the 2004 California Driving Tour, by the editor.

Tour No. 1 2006



The Gasman Brothers, Gregory and Grant, observe as Paul Gilger describes the Galt Lincoln Highway monument to their cousin Keith Kerchenfaut from La Mesa. This tour was very special as Keith made us realize that although sight is a tremendous gift you can also enjoy the Lincoln Highway experience with your other senses. Thanks Keith, for sharing this tour with us.

Grantline Road - Tracy, CA.



As of May 2006 the stately Black Walnut trees that once lined Grantline Road west of Tracy, CA. no longer exist. They fell prey to the developers bulldozer and will soon will be replaced by a four lane parkway with center meridian. These trees were planted on Feb. 22, 1923 by the Tracy Chamber of Commerce and local civic organizations, and were donated by the State Bureau of Forestry.

The trees were planted from the Alameda County line (west of Tracy) to Paradise Cut (on Tracy's east side) a total of 14 miles. Within the next several years the planting extended east to Stockton. Some of these trees remain on Harlan Road. The developer has promised to incorporate Lincoln Highway signs into the masonry facades to be erected at both ends of the new parkway. One will be at the intersection of Grantline Road and Mountain House Parkway and the other on Grantline Road at the Alameda County line.

Summit Garage

As reported in the last Traveler, the demise of the Summit Garage may be close at hand. Mike Kaelin has been working closely with the current lessee, Mr. Dan Silveira to ascertain just exactly what the landlord, Mr. Tom Egan's plans are for this historic structure. As the story unfolds, it becomes more uncertain as to the Garage's future. Mr. Egan has again stated to Dan that the property has indeed been sold and awaits a September closing of escrow. Dan is being told that he must acquire a three-year use permit in order to remain in business until the end of his current lease. This doesn't appear to be a problem. Nearby land and easements have been purchased from the Egan's by an entity for use as an aqueduct, which will transport water from a new reservoir, west of the Summit, into San Joaquin County. The water is destined for Byron, CA. and possibly the new Mountain House development. We are speculating that this entity may be the State Department of Water Resources. The Tri-Valley Youth Services board held their quarterly meeting Thursday June 8th to discuss the future of the Garage. In attendance were representatives from The Livermore Heritage Guild, The Lincoln Highway Association, and Kate Kyrlyuk from Assemblyman Guy Huston's office and Alameda County Supervisor Scott Hagerty. It was agreed that until the buyer is identified, we are unable to proceed with the Garages salvation. In September, with the close of escrow, we will approach the new owner and determine what can be done to save this historic location. The subject parcel is currently owned by the "Joseph O.Egan etal. Trust", administered by Tom Egan. The Egan Family purchased the parcel in 1872.

The stage route over the summit was given the name Livermore Pass in 1857 to honor Robert Livermore. It was later to become known as the Stockton Road. The crest of the pass was originally called Altamonte, a Spanish word meaning "high place", but was changed to "Summit" in 1869 with arrival of the Trans Continental R/R. A stage stop is known to have existed at the Summit as early as 1820. A blacksmith/buggy shop was erected at this location in August of 1862. This structure also served as the Post Office from 1872 until 1901. The office portion of the current garage was moved from Byron to the Summit, in 1901, having been a railroad building at that location. Between 1901 and 1913 the structure was added to and became a carriage shop, machine shop, repair shop and a body repair shop. In 1913 it became a Richfield Service Station and Garage incorporating the Post Office. The Post office closed in 1955. The County road over Altamont Pass was dedicated in 1867 and the town of Altamont in 1868. The Summit Church was erected in 1870, directly in front of the blacksmith shop, and served as a community library and dance hall. It was demolished in 1993. The Summit Hotel was erected in 1860 and torn down in 1968. The Stockton Road became an alignment of the Lincoln Highway in 1913 and was paved in 1915, becoming State Road 818. From 1923-1957, the Station sold Union Gasoline and Oil products. The Garage expanded to its current configuration in 1931. Bill Armstrong Sr. operated the Garage from 1927 until 1977 at which time his son Bill Jr. continued the family operation. The Station stopped selling Union Gasoline in 1957. The Visible pumps were removed in 1988, and are currently in the possession of Mr. Joe Morgenstern. Bill Jr. operated the Garage until his death in 1991. From 1988-1991 Mr. Joe Morgenstern sublet ½ of the Garage from Bill Jr. From 1992-1998 he was the sole lessee. The current lessee, Mr. Dan Silveira, took possession in 1998, operating Tri-Valley Youth Services.



Armstrong Family Collection

The Summit Garage 1955

Bill Armstrong Jr., Mike Armstrong and Bill Sr.



Armstrong Family Collection

The Summit Garage and Service Station between 1913-1923. The Summit School can be seen in back-center of photo with the Lincoln Highway crossing the SPRR at the left-center of photo. The overpass was erected in 1917. Photo is looking East toward Tracy.





Armstrong Family Collection

Bill Armstrong Jr., Irene Armstrong with husband Bill Sr.
Note the mileage chart between Irene and Bill Jr.



Armstrong Family Collection

West side of Garage. Small building on right of photo is the original Blacksmith Shop erected in 1862. The area between the fence and the Garage, is where the Summit Church was located.

A Special Thank You to Mrs. Betty Armstrong and Dan Silveira for allowing me to reproduce their photos of the Summit Garage and Altamont area, and for the historical information.

Gary Kinst

We are now taking reservations for the 2006 Lincoln Highway California Tours!

Tour #1 Sat. April 29: 1913-1927 Central Valley Route: *Sacramento to San Francisco via Altamont Pass*

Tour #2 Sat. June 24: Sierra Nevada Southern Route: *Sacramento to Lake Tahoe via Echo Summit*

Tour #3 Sat. Aug 26: Sierra Nevada Northern Route: *Sacramento to Nevada via Donner Pass & Dog Valley*

Tour #4 Sat. Oct 28: 1928 Central Valley Route: *Sacramento to San Francisco via Carquinez Strait*

Each tour - \$40 per person.

All tours are one-day trips beginning and ending at the Holiday Inn "Sacramento I-80 N.E."

5321 Date Ave. in Sacramento, at the Madison Ave. exit off I-80

Boarding at 8:45 am. Departure at 9:00 am sharp!

You may select a single tour or any combination of tours.

Please fill out order form below and mail with check or money order in the amount of \$40 per person per tour made out to "Lincoln Highway California Chapter", to:

Lincoln Highway Association California Chapter, PO Box 2554, Fair Oaks, Ca 95628-2554

Name: _____
Street Address: _____
City, State, Zip: _____
Phone Number: _____

Indicate the number of people in your party for each tour: Tour #1 ___ Tour #2 ___ Tour #3 ___ Tour #4 ___

All tour participants agree that the Lincoln Highway Association, the California Chapter of the Lincoln Highway Association, its officers, directors and agents, shall have no responsibility or liability, in whole or in part, for any loss, damage, or injury to person or property, or any act of omission resulting from, arising out of, or occurring during any activity, program, tour, meeting, meal, or other service or facility furnished or supplied in conjunction with the tours. All participants must sign and date below:

Signature #1: _____ Date: _____

Signature #2: _____ Date: _____

Signature #3: _____ Date: _____

Signature #4: _____ Date: _____

Please include other dated signatures, if applicable.

Order Lincoln Highway Driving Maps for California now!

We have received hundreds of orders from all over the United States for our very popular Lincoln Highway Driving Maps for California. They are essential for exploring the Lincoln in California.

Please fill out order form below and mail with check or money order made out to

"Lincoln Highway California Chapter", to:

Lincoln Highway Association California Chapter, PO Box 2554, Fair Oaks, Ca 95628-2554

Name: _____
Street Address: _____
City, State, Zip: _____
Phone Number: _____

Number of map sets: _____ x \$10.00 each = _____
Packaging and postage + \$6.00
TOTAL: = \$ _____

MARK YOUR 2006 CALENDAR

June 13 – June 16

14th National Conference
Cedar Rapids, Iowa

June 16 – June 29

Interstate Highway System 50th Anniversary
Reenactment of 1919 Route. Western Terminus San
Francisco, CA. to Washington, D.C.

Saturday **June 24**

Tour #2 Sacramento to
South Tahoe via Echo Summit

Saturday **July 22**
9:00 am

State Chapter Meeting
Lake Tahoe Historical Museum
3058 Lake Tahoe Blvd. (US 50)
(See additional information in the Presidents Letter)

Saturday **August 26**

Tour #3 Sacramento to Verdi Nevada
Via Donner Pass

Saturday **October 7**
12:00 noon

State Chapter Meeting
Location to be announced

Saturday **October 28**

Tour #4 Sacramento to San Francisco
Via Yolo Causeway / Carquinez Bridge

NOTE: All tours depart the Holiday Inn Sacramento Northeast, Madison @ I 80
at 9:00 am.



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