

OUR 29<sup>TH</sup> YEAR



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**On the cover:** *St. Francis Cathedral*

*While Mary Lou and I were working with the National Park Service's Route 66 Corridor Preservation Program offices in Santa Fe to draft a Route 66 Preservation bill, we traveled to the city many times. Several of these trips found us there in the snow. So the photo on the cover brought back fond memories.*

*I grew up in Michigan, and of course, snow was common, and it was cold. However, it never got all that cold in Santa Fe, making it a very nice year round climate to live in.*

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**DIRECTOR'S NOTES**

*By David Knudson, Executive Director*

Probably the biggest news of last quarter was the pandemic. As of today, Covid has all but disappeared but was responsible for significantly reducing traffic and business on the Route for over three years and because most of our road's businesses are small, it was particularly painful. Well, let's hope we've seen the last of the "C".

This issue begins with a report from the Road Ahead's Chairman, Bill Thomas about funding opportunities available through this fine organization.

Bill's report is followed by a very ambitious article by Kip Welborn telling us about the beginning of the Route. If you're new to 66, this is excellent background material. If not, it's a nice refresher. No one is more qualified than Kip to write this.

Shamrock, Texas is one of most popular locations on the Route. Mostly because of its striking U Drop In. Mark Potter, however, has turned our attention to the Blarney Inn, which has more to do with the Irish theme of the town.

Frank Gifford's *Santa Fe In The Snow* is doing a wonderful job of convincing you to see this historic town in the winter. Having been there on business several times in the snow, I can attest to its scenic appeal.

Janine Stern is currently producing a series of illustrations that relate to Route 66 titled *Exit Series*. You will see three pieces on pages 32 and 33.

In closing, I continue my series *Route 66 Preservation & Restoration* with six more notable historic properties.

**This quarter's donations to the Federation**

Our heartfelt thank you to the following members who donated dollars to the Federation in the last quarter.

**\$5-\$49**

- Sharon Maley

**\$50-100**

- - Kenneth & Susan Boyd

gallupARTS Presents

# Tapestry



Paintings by Dana Aldis  
at ART123 Gallery

*Artist Dana Aldis blends the beauty of the natural environment with elements of human nature to make unique local landscapes.*

ART123 Gallery Hours: Tues. - Fri. 2 - 6pm / Sat. 12 - 6pm





**THE ROAD AHEAD PARTNERSHIP**



**Dear Friends of Route 66,**

The Route 66 Road Ahead Partnership, with support from the National Trust for Historic Preservation has announced the following important funding opportunities, which are specific to Route 66.

**Route 66 Black Experiences Grant Program** - The Route 66 Road Ahead Partnership is helping kick off the Mother Road's birthday celebration with the Route 66 Black Experiences Grant Program. The grant program is one of the first in a series of "birthday gifts" to be given to Route 66 in the years leading up to the road's Centennial. The Road Ahead was awarded \$250,000 by American Express to provide direct grants to help Black owned and/or operated businesses and attractions along Route 66. The funds will also support research and programs that interpret and tell the stories of Black experiences associated with Route 66. The Route 66 Black Experiences Grant Program is part of the Road Ahead's 100th Anniversary of Route 66 celebration. Through the Centennial, the Road Ahead aims to help the millions of people who live, work, and travel along Route 66 with projects focused on preservation, promotion, research/education, and the economic development of Route 66. Applications for The Black Experiences Grant Program are being accepted through Tuesday, October 31, 2023, and are available at: [RoadAhead.Route66Centennial.org](http://RoadAhead.Route66Centennial.org)

**Extraordinary Women Micro-Grant Program** – The Route 66 Road Ahead Partnership is celebrating women along Route 66 with its recently launched Extraordinary Women Micro-Grant Program. The grant program is one in a series of "birthday gifts" to be given to Route 66 in the years leading up to the historic road's 100th birthday in 2026. The Route 66 Extraordinary Women Micro-Grant Program provides critical and flexible funding to businesses and attractions located along Route 66 that are majority women-owned or operated. It is part of the Route 66 Road Ahead Partnership's plan to celebrate the upcoming Route 66 Centennial by helping the millions of people who live, work, and travel along Route 66 through projects that focus on promotion, preservation, research/education, and the economic development of Route 66. In addition to direct fundraising efforts undertaken by the Road Ahead, the Route 66 Extraordinary Women Micro-Grant Program is funded in part by a grant from the Preserve Route 66 Grant Fund of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Applications for The Route 66 Extraordinary Women Micro-Grant Program are being accepted through Monday, October 23, 2023, and can be accessed at: <https://roadahead.route66centennial.org>

**Contact: Bill Thomas, Chairman Route 66 Road Ahead Partnership**  
**[rt66theroadahead@gmail.com](mailto:rt66theroadahead@gmail.com) (217) 648-5077**





*Coronado overlooking the Grand Canyon, Augusto Ferrer-Dalmau Nieto, Wikimedia Commons*



*Story by Kip Welborn. Images provided by the author and the Federation.*

**B**ack in 1993, Quinn and I took our first legitimate cruise down Route 66. Up until that time, we knew we had an interest in the legendary road but really had not taken in anything much along it. We did spend our first anniversary night at the Coral Court Motel, living in the luxury of the saggy mattresses, blood red carpet and fixtures (lamp and am radio) screwed down to the nightstands! Later that year, we tried to trek through Illinois utilizing Tom Snyder's guide. We were mostly successful, but ended up on the wrong side of I-55 a few times!

**It was not until my best friend Ron Cox let me know that he and his many years' sweetheart, Laura Leigh Rampey, were getting married in Lawton, OK on July 10, 1993, that we actually took that first legitimate cruise down Route 66.**

Quinn and I decided that we were going to make our trek from St. Louis to Ron and Laura Leigh's wedding a 66 journey. We mapped out our trip down Route 66 from St. Louis to Oklahoma City. And from Oklahoma City, we would take Interstate 44 southwest to Lawton.

After work on July 6th, we threw our stuff in the car and we headed as far west as we could that night. We made it to Rolla, braving a huge rain storm, and saw the light on at the Wayfarer Motel, a motel that is part of what was once a large strip of motels on Route 66 heading West out of Rolla on Martin Springs Road. The next day we took Route 66 through Kansas and Oklahoma, seeing the rainbow bridge and





*The Pits in Claremore, OK*



*Narvaez Expedition sign, St. Petersburg, FL, Wikimedia Commons*



*Chaco Canyon, Allison Ruth Hughes, Wikimedia Commons*



*The Alamo, Wikimedia Commons*

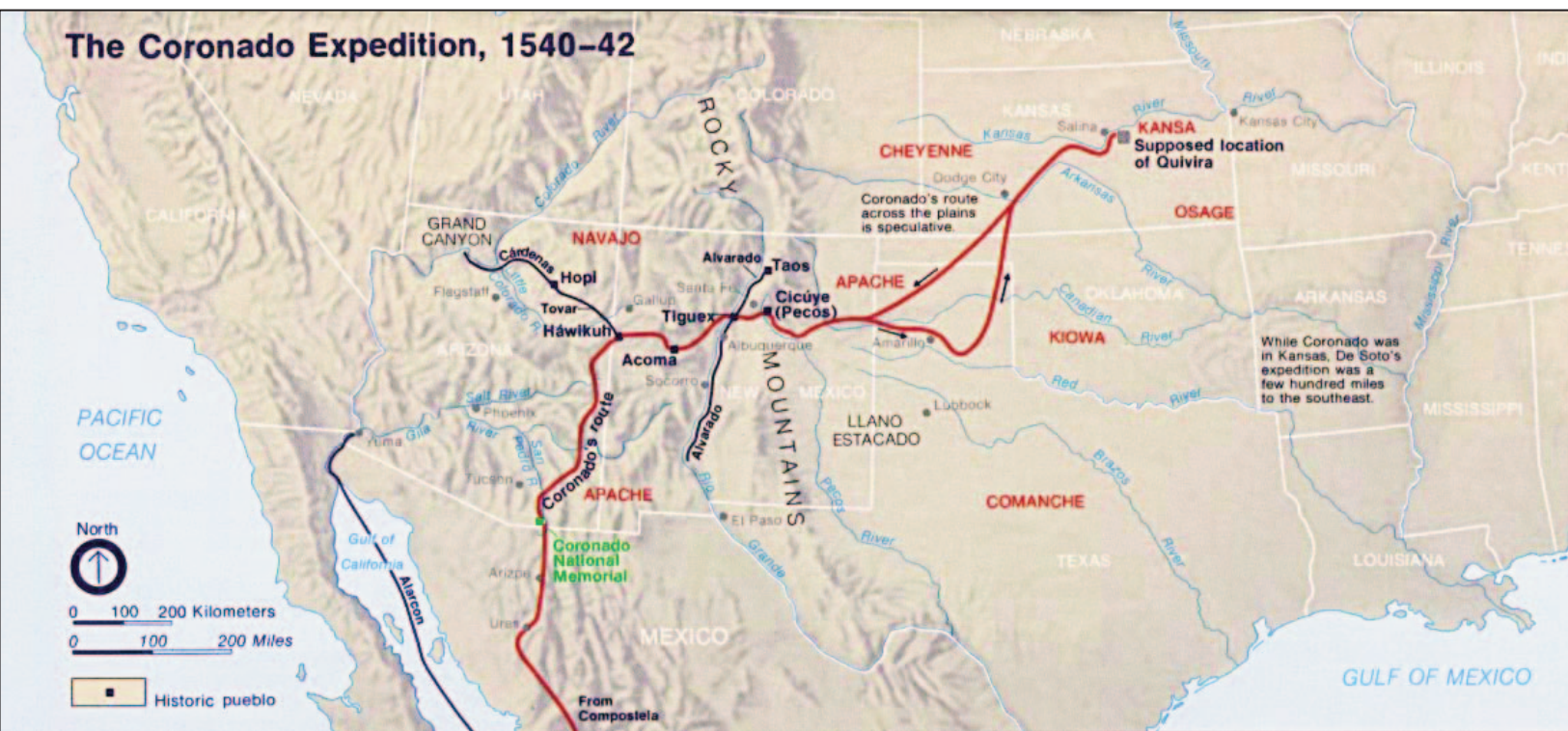


*Monks Mound, Cahokia Mounds, Wikimedia Commons*



*Sitgreaves Pass, Maury Foubister, Wikimedia Commons*





*Assigned the task of locating the fabled Seven Cities of Cibola in the New World for Spain, Francisco Vázquez de Coronado, governor of the New Galicia province of New Spain (present Mexico), left Compostela in February 1540. The twenty-seven-year-old led 240 mounted soldiers, 60 foot soldiers, 800 Indians and slaves, and hundreds of head of cattle and horses northward.*

eating at Wayans Ku Ku Burger for the first time. That evening we stayed at the then Best Western Will Rogers Motor Court in Claremore, OK, and ate at what I still think is one of the greatest watering holes that ever existed on Route 66, that being The Pits. In 1993, the Pits not only had great food and atmosphere, it had a huge trough full of ice and cold beer that really made the place special.

Short of the Coral Court, The Pits was the first place we ever stopped where we felt like we had found something special along Route 66. There is something magical about pulling a cold beer out of an ice filled trough that runs the length of a wall. It gets your mind creating a movie about your surroundings featuring the lovely lady that had driven with you all this way (that being my wife Quinn), with a Ry Cooder song in the background. It doesn't hurt that the place served up some excellent BBQ courtesy of a guy from Poplar Bluff, MO who was more than justified in referencing the BBQ at

the Pits as "Barbecue That Is". Thanks to Tom Snyder for the recommendation.

Our first trek down Route 66 was like the odyssey that scores have embarked on since Route 66 was completely decertified on June 27, 1985, and scores more embarked on between



*Zebulon Pike, Charles Wilson Peale, Wikimedia Common*



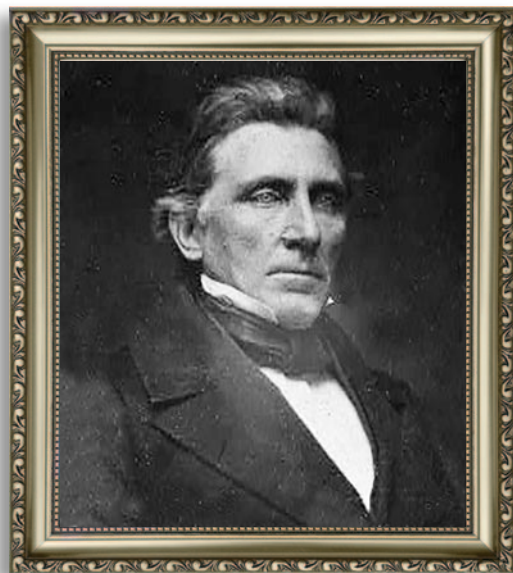
*Covering approximately 800 miles, the Santa Fe Trail extends from Independence, Missouri to present day Santa Fe, New Mexico. The Trail originally began in Franklin, Missouri, but the trail head was moved to Fort Osage and, by 1827, to Independence.*

November 11, 1926 and June 27, 1985. However, the Portland Concrete that people planted their automobile treads on on November 11, 1926 was the end result of a thousand years of people figuring out how to create the path west, by foot, by hoof, by rails, and eventually by Route 66. And as we approach the 100th anniversary of the certification of Route 66 in 2026, it is time to start remembering a time when “the Route” came to be, a time far before BH Peipmeier, Cy Avery and John Marshall Page met at the Woodruff Building in Springfield, MO, to propose the Route that would become Route 66.

**It is time to start remembering the 100 years prior to that November 11th, 1926 and to remember the footpaths, wagon trials, and railroads that were used to forge the path that would become Route 66.**

The fact is that the story of the course that would evolve into Route 66 originated hundreds of years ago with people who shared the same passion as those who traveled in a

direction in search of a job during the Great Depression or in search of jobs in the aerospace and defense industries, or in search of “living”, after World War II. An essential piece of reading on this subject is *Route 66 Iconography of the American Highway* by Arthur Krim, which is



*William Gwin, Library of Congress*



quoted extensively in this article. Krim's book discloses how Route 66 transcended its gravel and concrete physicality to become an enduring metaphor for the American spirit of exploration.

And for there to be a transcendence, there has to be something to transcend from. And with respect to US 66, it was the evolution from a series of footpaths to 2,448 miles of Portland Concrete. Those who would create Route 66 would use, in part, many of these ancient trails that had been created centuries before anyone had a concept of a road, much less Route 66. The foundation of Route 66 was built on ground that once Native American trails, used for hunting animals or trading with neighboring tribes, such as the Mojave Trail across California.

### **When the Spanish came to the Southwest, they built their roads along these older pathways.**

As the United States defeated the Spanish to take control over what would become Arizona, New Mexico and California, it would send expeditions west to create a pathway that would become suitable not only for railroad travel, but also for wagons, and eventually for automobiles. British author Terry Hatchett was one of many, I presume, to remind us that "everything starts somewhere". And we have to go back long before November 1, 1926 to find out where Route 66 actually "starts"

According to Krim's book, the evolution of Route 66 began with the series of paths and trails that the multitude of indigenous people that lived in this area created in their search for food. Many of these nomadic peoples came together to create two of the great early societies in North America in the mid 13th century. One was in Chaco Canyon in Northwest New Mexico, the other was near Cahokia in what is now St. Clair County, Illinois. Both societies would create major population centers. From these population centers, in turn, they would create trails in an effort to extend their influence. Trails extended in spoke-like fashion from Chaco Canyon in all directions, including directions SW towards Gallup and what would

become Route 66. Cahokia's influence sent tribal members SW through the Ozark Mountains, down what would become the Route 66 corridor in Missouri. While neither of these civilizations extended past the early 1300's, according to Krim. Chaco Canyon and Cahokia would establish the foundation for the path that at least part of Route 66 would eventually follow.

### **A few centuries after these great civilizations came and went, the travels across the lands on which Route 66 was built were influenced by the Spanish and the French.**

Spanish explorers' initial foot setting in what would eventually become the Southwest United States commenced with the Narvaez Expedition, which was sent to Florida by the King of Spain in 1527 to establish colonial settlements. The expedition would last over the span of 8 years. The Narvaez Expedition was the first non native caravan to see the Mississippi River and to cross into the Southwest United States. They were wooed by stories told by Native American tribes they encountered of an alleged Seven Cities of Gold, purportedly located at what was the Zuni Pueblo near Gallup, NM. Of the 600 that made up the Narvaez expedition when it initially set sail, only 4 survived.

The story told by the four survivors of the Narvaez Expedition would reach the ear of one Francisco Coronado, then the 30 year old Governor of New Galicia, which was a Province in New Spain (Mexico). To Coronado, the survivors of the Narvaez expedition presented enough evidence to lead Francisco Coronado to embark on a journey north from Spanish held Mexico into what would become the Southwest United States. The expedition followed the path that would eventually become the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro, the royal highway from Mexico City North to the Capital of New Spain in San Juan Pueblo (north of what is now Santa Fe). Coronado's expedition did not find the alleged Seven Cities of Gold. However, Coronado's expedition did discover the Grand Canyon, the Continental Divide, and most of the

Southwestern United States. His encounter with Native Americans that he was not at war with led him to send expeditions west into California and east across the great plains in search of the mythological Quivira Province in central Kansas, encountering the herds of wild buffalo that once populated the great plains.

After two years, Coronado returned to Mexico without gold and without anything of value. What Coronado's expedition did was to "discover" much of the lands—from Kansas to California—that would become the lands that Route 66 would eventually cross, and would find a way around the north rim of the Grand Canyon to connect with what became the Mojave Trail which ran just north of Route 66 in what is now the Mojave National Preserve located in Western California. Coronado's expedition was the beginning of the building blocks that would inspire travel to California and would inspire the construction of the railroads from the Mississippi River to California, and Route 66.

**While the Spanish began to control the southwestern United States, the French took over the lands from St. Louis to the Pacific Ocean and would eventually move South to New Orleans.**

While initial expeditions focused on their new found bounty in a search for a water route from the Mississippi River to the Pacific, with respect to the history of Route 66, most notable of the French expeditions was the Mallet Expedition of 1739. Pierre and Paul Mallet were born in Canada, but would eventually settle in Kaskaskia, IL in 1734. In 1739, the Mallet brothers, with the assistance of native American guides, forged a path from Illinois to Santa Fe. They then went from Santa Fe to New Orleans, and enroute followed a river that they would name after their homeland, the Canadian River, in what would become Oklahoma, a river that would become an essential component of mapping the location of Route 66.

It was only a short time after the Mallet's

trudging along the Canadian River that the then newly born United States managed to acquire the lands taken over by the French, then known as Louisiana. The acquisition was the result of desperation on both sides. The Americans feared that France under Napoleon would lead France to take over New Orleans and the mouth of the Mississippi River, thus enabling the French to restrict travel on the Mississippi River. American settlement was becoming reliant upon the Mississippi as its population expanded West from the original 13 colonies.

**President Thomas Jefferson dispatched one Robert Livingston to negotiate with the French to purchase New Orleans.**

They found a willing negotiator as the French, faced with problems at home and the threat of war with the British, were looking for financing. As such, they offered the entirety of their holdings from New Orleans to the Pacific, and in exchange the United States agreed to pay approximately 11 million dollars, or three cents an acre, to more than double the landmass of the then fledgling United States.

After acquiring the Louisiana Territory, the United States, while focusing on what they had just acquired, also focused on the Spanish occupied lands in the Southwest United States. In 1806, the U.S. Government sent Zebulon Pike West to find the sources of the Red and Arkansas Rivers. During his expedition, he discovered a mountain which he would name after himself: Pikes Peak. He would continue West, his intention not only to find the sources of the Red and Arkansas Rivers, but also to gather information for an eventual invasion of Spanish territory. He made it to near Santa Fe before he was captured by Spanish troops and taken to Mexico City for interrogation. Nothing apparently came of this and he was eventually escorted back to the United States.

Then, in 1819 Stephen Long would lead an expedition to Santa Fe, following the Missouri River to Kansas before cutting across Kansas to the Arkansas River. Following the

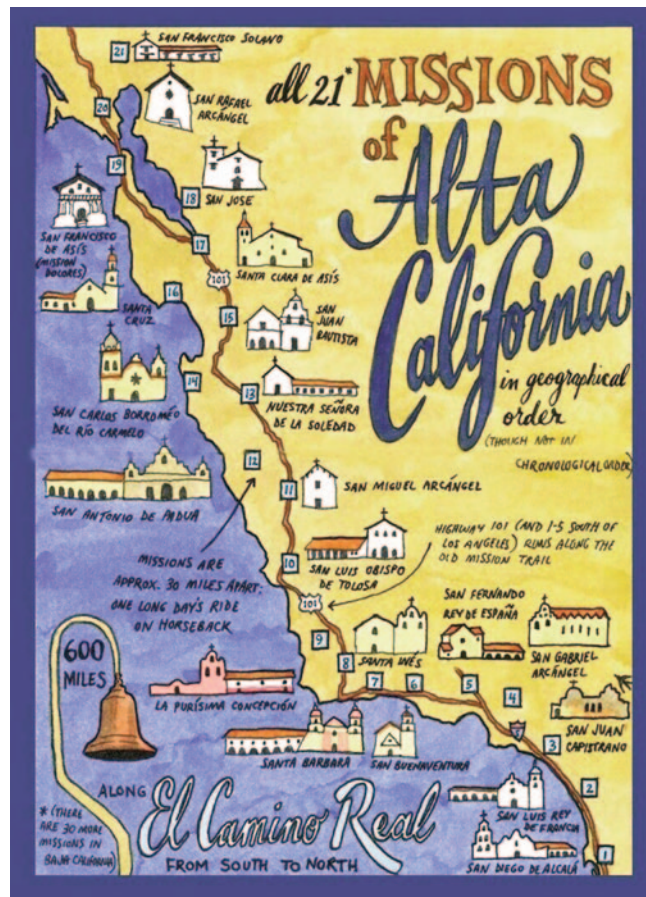


Arkansas River, the Long Expedition would veer South through the Raton Pass to Santa Fe. While this expedited travel through the pass provided a more direct route through the Rocky Mountains, the Raton Pass, was in and of itself a treacherous passage for anyone, much less wagon traffic.

**Then in 1821, an expedition led by William Becknell would follow Long's path to Santa Fe.**

However enroute back to Missouri, the Becknell expedition would take an alternative route bypassing the Raton Pass. Instead, Becknell headed across the great plains, NW New Mexico and the Oklahoma Panhandle, and into Kansas, cutting across the Cimarron River to connect with Long's trail in central Kansas. It was a dry, hot trek across the great plains, but Becknell's alternative route provided a flat even grade that was much more suitable for wagon and horse traffic than trying to navigate the Raton Pass. Eventually, Federal Troops would build forts along Becknell's trail, which became known as the Santa Fe Trail, extending from New Franklin, MO to Santa Fe, NM.

While progress was being made in forging a way West, even with the "improved" alternative of the Santa Fe Trail, that forging was still perilous. There were two reasons for this, one being that, as a result of the Nonintercourse Act of 1834, a chunk of land that would eventually become most of the State of Oklahoma was set aside for tribes who accepted



*El Camino Real was built during the Spanish period (1542–1821) and then extended 600 miles from San Diego to Sonoma. It connected the 21 missions and 4 presidios.*

land grants in the "Indian territory" in exchange for their displacement from their native lands. Simply put the mere encounter with Native Americans (justified or not) was enough to veer folks around and away from "Indian Territory". Then there was the fact that, when they reached Santa Fe, they were in hostile, Mexican occupied territory, with no safe way to make it to the Pacific Ocean.

**The Mexican American war would change all of that.** The conflict between Mexico (which gained independence from Spain in 1821) and the United States started off with settlements in Texas which commenced

in 1821 after Mexico's gained Independence. By 1830 the number of Americans who had settled in Texas had swelled to a level that led the Mexican Congress to outlaw further American settlements. But the Americans who resided in Texas had already developed a desire for independence from Mexico, even if it meant becoming their own country. The Americans in Texas declared their independence and in 1835, a group of those Americans occupied the Alamo near San Antonio. The Mexican Army, under Antonio Lopez De Santa Ana, laid siege upon the Alamo, and in the end, 200 Texans died. Their loss was an inspiration to Americans living in Texas, and in April of 1836, Sam Houston beat Santa Ana back at the Battle of San Jacinto, and the Independent State of Texas was born.

As railroads were constructed to the Mississippi River (the first bridge for railroad





*William Becknell blazing the Santa Fe Trail, Legends Of America website [www.legendsofamerica.com](http://www.legendsofamerica.com)*

traffic across the Mississippi was opened between Rock Island IL and Davenport, IA in 1856), American forces moved against the Mexican government. In California, according to Krim's book, a "presence" had been established by Americans in Monterey, south of San Francisco. Then president James Knox Polk decided to galvanize its presence in Monterey by sending a force under John C. Fremont to California. When Fremont arrived, and declared California an independent republic, a U.S. Navy warship was sent to California, and in a two week span the American flag was raised over Los Angeles.

The combination of the actions in Texas and California led to war with Mexico. Between 1846 and September 1847, American forces moved into Mexican territory, taking, along with California, Santa Fe in 1846 and eventually taking Mexico City in September of 1847. While Mexico was easily defeated in battle, they were not so easy in terms of negotiating a peace

treaty. After a year of negotiations in the Mexican town of Guadalupe Hidalgo, the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was reached in 1848.

The treaty effectively ceded all of Mexico's holdings in what is now the United States short of a small section of land on the New Mexico/Arizona border to the United



*Richard Kern, Krim book*



States. For its part, the United States agreed to pay Mexico \$15 million and to pay all of Mexico's debts in the United States.

As a result of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, the United States owned the entirety of the territory between what would become Chicago to Los Angeles. Now the question was how to get wagon trains and railroads from the Mississippi River to California. Will the routes that had been created over the centuries by folks like Coronado, Mallet and Bucknell, be extended, or will more direct routes be developed? Geography, hostile territories and national boundaries had thus far contorted the route to the Pacific. However, the power of the railroads, and the desire for many to make that California Trip would come to outweigh those concerns (the final piece of the continental United States, the small section of what would become part of Arizona and New Mexico that would become known as the Gadsden Purchase, was effectuated so that the Southern Pacific Railroad could be completed). This especially came to pass after the discovery of gold in California and the ensuing "Gold Rush", during which the population of San Francisco rose from 200 residents to 36,000 residents.

**The main alternative routes to California after 1848, from the first wagon trails to the railroads to Route 66, would evolve around the 35th parallel.**

According to the National Register Application for the 35th Parallel: The 35th Parallel Route, which cuts across central Arkansas, then central Oklahoma, Northern Texas, north central New Mexico, Northern Oklahoma and Southern California "is of regional significance in the categories of exploration settlement and transportation." Richard Kern, the surveyor for an expedition led by John Elonzo Sitgreaves, touted the 35th parallel route because of "its freedom from obstruction by show, it's easy passage through the Rocky Mountains, Zuni Mountains and the

Sierra Nevada, and its location through a country, already settled in more or less degree as far as the 110 degree meridian west from Greenwich, and the necessary material and labor can be obtained, and only needed an outlet to develop its various resources." While no railroad or wagon trail followed the exact path of the 35th parallel, the 35th parallel served as a basis for most of the travel across the southwest United States, and for Route 66 from Oklahoma to Los Angeles.

**In 1838, the U.S. Army Corps of Topographical Engineers (after 1863 known simply as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers) was formed to map out the Western United States.**

The Long and Bucknell expeditions were headed by officers in the Corps. The Corps objective was to promote and facilitate settlement of the new lands acquired by the United States by mapping out and documenting "all Western phenomena, including mapping out all trails and seeking out alternative "avenues" for traversing the many miles of territory between the Mississippi River and the Pacific Ocean." The first such expedition that took place after the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was in 1848 and was led by one Captain Randolph Marcy, who along with Lt. James Simpson, led frontiersmen, women and children to California via a trail along the Canadian River established by one Josiah Gregg in 1839. Marcy and Simpson reached Santa Fe in June 1849, and from there would, according to Krim's book, embark on an expedition West beyond the Grand Canyon, surveying and establishing a trail that would eventually be followed across Arizona by the builders of Route 66.

Then in 1851, Captain Lorenzo Sitgreaves, with the assistance of one Antoine Leroux, would embark from the Zuni Pueblo in New Mexico, following the Zuni and Little Colorado Rivers to Grand Falls northwest of Winslow AZ. Joining them would be a surveyor named Richard Kern, referred to above, who was designated to document the "route" that



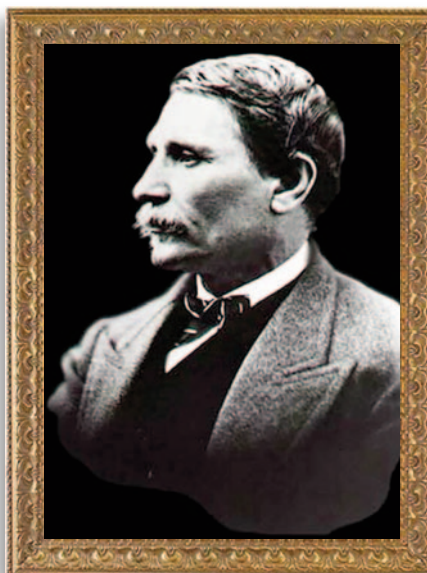
*The Gadsden Purchase is a 29,640-square-mile region of present-day southern Arizona and southwestern New Mexico that the United States acquired from Mexico by the Treaty of Mesilla, which took effect on June 8, 1854.*

was followed. At Grand Falls, Sitgreave's guide, Antoine Leroux, induced Sitgreaves to stop following the path of the river (as it would flow "into a great Canyon") and instead head west through the San Francisco peaks, paralleling the 35th parallel and loosely following the path that would eventually be followed by Route 66. The Sitgreaves expedition would pass through the Black Mountains, near a gap in the mountains near Oatman, AZ, which would later be utilized in the mapping and construction of Route 66, and which would be named after Lorenzo Sitgreaves.

**The combination of the Marcy/Simpson and Sitgreaves expeditions would create the beginnings of a path between the Mississippi River and the Pacific Ocean.**

The "path" would inspire a Senator from the new State of California named William Gwin. Gwin was one of the first Senators elected to represent the new State of California, and went to Washington championing the cause

for a transcontinental railroad connecting California with the population centers east of the Mississippi. Gwin saw the argument of following the 35th parallel which was suggested by Richard Kern in his detailed report of the route traversed by the Sitgreaves expedition. According to Krim's book, while the 35th



*Edward Beale, public domain, Wikimedia Commons*





*In 1857, Lieutenant Edward Fitzgerald Beale was assigned the job of building a wagon road across New Mexico and Arizona near the 35th parallel. It had a two-fold purpose: to survey a wagon road from Fort Defiance, New Mexico, to the Colorado River and to test the efficacy of camels as a means of military transport in the American deserts .*

parallel route would inspire the route that would be developed for Route 66, the 35th was deemed suspect for steam railroad travel due to steep grades to be found along the surveyed path.

**As a result, under the Pacific Railroad Survey Bill, monies were allocated for the Corps of Topographical Engineers to do complete surveys of four proposed routes for the new railroad.**

One of these Routes would follow the 35th parallel. The creation of the survey following the 35th parallel was assigned to a Lt. Amiel Weeks Whipple. Whipple gained notoriety for his assistance in surveying the new boundary between the United States and Mexico. According to the Southwest Explorations website, Whipple's expedition left Fort Smith on July 14, 1853. When all the personnel had joined him, the expedition consisted of about 70 men, 240 mules, a huge flock of sheep for food, and a train of large

freight wagons. His scientific staff consisted of about 17 people, including astronomers, geologists, naturalists, artists, botanists, and surveyors. Antoine Leroux, who had been Sitgreaves' guide two years earlier, was hired on as guide. They generally followed Sitgreave's route as mapped by Richard Kern, though, according to the Southwest Explorations website, they veered South after Williams and connected with the Bill Williams river, following the Bill Williams River to the Colorado and following the Colorado River north to Mojave Village, AZ. There the expedition crossed the Colorado River, where they were greeted by the spiked mountains on the horizon that would become the namesake for the new town of Needles.

**Of some significance was the Whipple expedition's interaction with the Mojave Indians.**

A problem navigating a route to California had always been the fear of encountering Native Americans that were presumed to be hostile. However, when

Whipple encountered the Mojave, they found Native Americans that were curious and interested in trade. And rather than treat the Mojave with hostility, those in the Whipple Expedition communicated with and traded with the Mojave, earning their trust and their approval of a road across their territory. They also chose to advise the expedition of their “secret” trail to the Pacific and chose one of their own to guide the expedition to the Pacific.

While the intercontinental railroad route that was eventually chosen did not follow the 35th parallel, a groundwork had been laid for some sort of pathway along the 35th parallel to the Pacific Ocean. And the job of creating a “Wagon Road” was placed upon the shoulders of Lt. Edward Fitzgerald Beale, an officer and adventurer who fought in the Mexican American War, and who made numerous trips from California to the United States, one being in 1848 to bring proof to President Polk that there was in fact gold in California.

#### **The Beale Expedition commenced in 1857.**

It would stretch from Ft. Defiance, New Mexico to Ft. Tejon north of Los Angeles. It would bring camels to the western hemisphere “to test the efficacy of camels as a means of military transport in the Southwest United States, and to create a road for wagon travel in response to the multitudes that were moving their lives in search of a dream, like so many who planned to motor west on Route 66. His expedition, according to Krim’s book, headed South to the Zuni Pueblo and then followed Whipple’s trail West, passing through Sitgreaves Pass before crossing the Colorado at Ft. Mojave. According to Krim’s book, it was after crossing the Colorado and entering the Mojave desert that the camels became effective, getting Beale across the desert to Ft. Tejon.

Unfortunately, Beale’s Expedition did nothing to instill confidence in the Native Americans that they encountered in the expedition’s trek west. Beale had little or nothing to do with the Indians, and when he reached the Mojave reservation he did not respect their boundaries, did not trade with them and did not seek any permission to cross their lands.

According to an article about the Beale Expedition on the Mojavedesert.net website, the Mojave Indians got from Beale, who had, inappropriately enough, been the Superintendent of Indian Affairs for California and Nevada since 1852, the sense that he owned the place...certainly not the first time that Native Americans would feel that way.

#### **Our relations with Native Americans will always need to be addressed with a fine tooth comb.**

However, for purposes of this article, centuries of explorers and those commissioned by the Corps of Topographical Engineers had created a pathway from Oklahoma City to Los Angeles. Combined with the efforts of John A Phelps who, in 1852, utilized the Missouri Grant Act to forge a railroad project that would connect St. Louis with Springfield, MO, and from Springfield, MO to Oklahoma City, by the beginning of the Civil War, the “groundwork” had been laid for a “route” that would wind from Chicago to LA.

Route 66 was not something that simply came to pass in the Woodruff Building in Springfield, MO. Route 66, like almost everything else in our lives, was a process, one which started with Native Americans searching for food, to conquistadores searching for all that the New World had to offer, to officers of the Corps of Topographical Engineers working to paint a picture for those who had made it to the Mighty Mississippi and were searching for more. The hope that Route 66 has brought to so many, the hope of a trip through history, a trip to our past, a trip to a great barbecue restaurant with a better beer trough, was the hope for many for a trek to a new life, via vehicles carrying peoples lives down Route 66 during the dust bowl or horse drawn vehicles carrying their lives through Sitgreaves Pass. The Story of Route 66 is going to be told over and over again over the next few years as we approach the Mother Road’s centennial. But like all good stories about anything, including the history of Route 66, as Terry Hatchett so astutely reminds all of us: everything starts somewhere”.

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**Kip Welborn** is a founding member of Friends of the Mother Road, Inc., a nonprofit corporation dedicated to preservation and rehabilitation along Route 66. He is also a member of the Route 66 Association of Missouri, and has cochaired the Missouri Association's Motor Tour for the past several years. He has written a book "Things To Look Out For On Route 66 In St. Louis" (which is available at [friendsofthemotherroad.org](http://friendsofthemotherroad.org) for \$12.25, shipping included), and cruises the Mother Road with his wife Quinn and his daughter Natalie Kay.



## SHAMROCK'S BLARNEY INN OFFERS A "WEE BIT OF IRELAND"

Story by Mark Potter, images by the author and Pinterest.

The Blarney Inn at 402 East 12th Street in Shamrock, TX is a classic Route 66 motel in every sense of the word and offers excellent overnight accommodations at a reasonable price (would you believe \$36 a night) with clean, comfortable rooms.

This is just right for the Route 66 traveler wanting a low-priced place for the night (or two or more). It's reminiscent of the original Route 66 experience—like it was in days past before the coming of interstate highways and cookie-cutter chain hotels and restaurants.

**A 1950s-vintage motel which previously operated as the Rambler Motel for many years, the Blarney Inn emphasizes the town's Irish theme.**

It proclaims it offers "A Wee Bit Of Ireland Here in Shamrock." The motel includes room amenities such as free wi-fi, air conditioning, micro fridges, flat screen TVs, in-room coffee makers and doors opened by modern key cards.



*The Blarney Inn is reminiscent of the original Route 66 experience—like it was in days past before the coming of interstate highways and cookie-cutter chain hotels and restaurants.*



*The motel is located just a few blocks east of the iconic U-Drop Inn Café and Tower Conoco Station.*

The front desk is available 24 hours a day and there is also an on-site laundry. The Blarney Inn is a pet-friendly motel and there is also a nearby charging station for electric vehicles.

Various types of rooms are available including those with one or two queen-sized beds, one king-sized bed and a triple room with three queen-sized beds. All rooms are non-smoking units.

The motel accepts cash and most major credit cards for payment. Check in is 3 p.m. and check out time is 11 a.m.

The motel is located just a few blocks east of the iconic U-Drop Inn Café and Tower Conoco Station that was built in 1936 and considered one

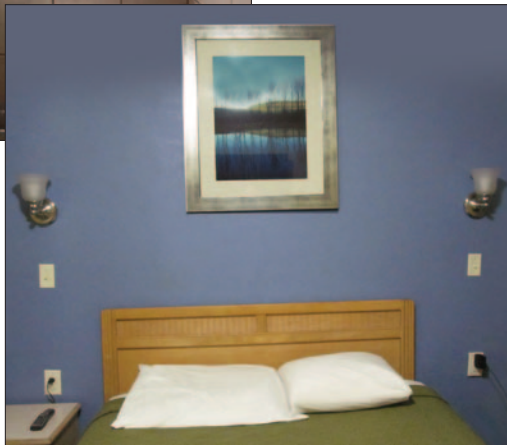


of the finest café and service station facilities on Route 66 between Oklahoma City and Amarillo at the time of opening. The U-Drop Inn/Conoco Station was extensively restored inside and out a few years back and now serves as office facilities for the Shamrock Chamber of Commerce as well as a venue for numerous events.

Also nearby is Shamrock's Blarney Stone located in Blarney Stone Plaza at the intersection of East 2nd and Main Street in the downtown area.

The Blarney Inn is one of a few vintage





Route 66 motels still intact along the Route as it passes through the Texas Panhandle. Some others include the Western Motel, Shamrock Country Inn and Route 66 Inn, all in Shamrock; the Cactus Inn in McLean, the Route 66 Inn in Amarillo, the Bonanza Motel in Vega and the Fabulous 40 Motel next to the Mid-Point Café in Adrian.

For reservations or information, the Blarney Inn's phone number is **(806) 256-2101**.



**Mark Potter** of Vernon, Texas is a newspaper reporter who has researched and traveled most of Route 66. He has developed a vast collection of collectibles including vintage road maps, postcards and other items pertaining to The Mother Road and he is a regular contributor to the Oklahoma Route 66 Museum in Clinton. Potter has also staged collectibles displays at various Route 66 events including many of the International Festivals.



# HOLIDAY GIFT IDEAS FOR THAT ROUTE 66 FAN.

<https://national66.org>







*Evening settles on Santa Fe's historic plaza.*

# SANTA FE IN THE SNOW

*Story and photos by Frank Gifford.*

**S**anta Fe doesn't have off-seasons. There's no "bad" time to visit New Mexico's 400 year old capital city, one of the original tourist destinations along Route 66. The Mother Road looped up here and then back down again until 1937. It was horribly inefficient but made for a scenic adventure worth reliving today—especially in winter when nature adds a powdered-sugar coating to the rounded

natural forms.

Santa Fe's downtown Plaza is the place to start: a unique and beautiful square with an abundance of cafes and upscale shopping. Many streets leading from here are lined with art galleries, and then real art: homes that seem organic, a part of nature rising from the soil.

Santa Fe's original builders, centuries ago used adobe bricks: sun-dried clay, sand,





*A gentleman leaves the Inn Of The Anasazi maybe because a thousand dollars a night was a little expensive for him.*





*One of several art galleries along Canyon Road.*





*Fresh snow accents on rounded adobe.*





*The Plaza after snowfall looking toward the St. Francis Cathedral.*





*Fresh fallen snow at a Santa Fe residence.*





*This store sells primarily handmade, tribal goods, textiles and antiques.*





*A burro loaded with firewood is a well-known public art sculpture by Charles Southard in Burro Alley just off the Plaza:*





*A Plaza scene during snowfall.*





*No footprints in the snow. Could be a second home, or third or fourth or....*





*Wall built out of logs in Santa Fe style.*

dung, straw and water. Today's local contractors generally rely on concrete blocks, wire mesh and a spray-on stucco troweled to a rustic finish. It looks about the same and cuts way down on maintenance.

The Plaza and surrounding streets remain the center of everything four-centuries later. State government offices are nearby, but this is not a big place: the population is just 88,000.

**And once you're on-scene Santa Fe is best explored on foot without consulting a map.**

Everything is beautiful and the scenery is unlike most other American cities. So if time is not a concern, why not wander and get lost for an hour? Or an afternoon? (I left my car parked at the motel for a week.)

One impressive walk is southeast of the Plaza down the street of Acequia Madre (mother ditch). This was a hand-dug irrigation system bringing in mountain water centuries ago, when New Mexico was under Spanish

control. The acequia still functions today, water gurgling over cobblestones adds to the charm of massive ancient trees, and adobe (or faux adobe) walls with heavy wooden gates suspended on wrought iron hinges.

And everything turns from lovely to magical in winter when gently-rounded corners on homes and walls seem to magnetically attract powdery snow, adding white frosting highlights to the dominant palette of brown.

**With good timing and luck, you might even get to enjoy a snowstorm or two.**

This isn't grungy Midwestern commuter snow, the heavy wet kind that gets polluted with Interstate soot, salt and mud. Santa Fe's 7,200 ft. elevation keeps the moisture content low, and I-25 keeps intrusive modern traffic at a respectable distance—more than 3-miles from the downtown Plaza.

This is snow you can actually enjoy. The confectionery kind you see on Christmas cards. Art galleries for most every taste (and





*When you visit Santa Fe, you will want to stroll down remarkable Canyon Road.*

inheritance or trust fund) extend along Canyon Road east of the Plaza. Restaurants around the Plaza are good but expensive. (A Subway there has closed permanently.) Lodging ranges from \$\$\$\$ to \$\$\$\$\$.

Fortunately, many chain motels and ordinary restaurants are along Cerillos Road, a commercial strip running southwest of the Plaza toward I-25.

**A typical mid-winter day is full of high-altitude sunlight making the average 44-degree high feel warmer.**

Daylight at year's end is from 7:15 AM to 5 PM MST.

Some areas along Route 66 have scenery, some don't. Just a guess: Santa Fe has 100-times the visual interest of Oklahoma City, which has eight-times the population.

I walked around Santa Fe for a week in winter and enjoyed the experience—for the first time in my life. And by closely monitoring [www.weather.gov/abq](http://www.weather.gov/abq) before making

reservations and driving, I was able to arrive on dry pavement and get a two-fer: a pair of snow-falls days apart.

Live color images of the Plaza are at [www.earthcam.com/usa/newmexico/santafe/](http://www.earthcam.com/usa/newmexico/santafe/) from a building across the street. Prime viewing is near sunset when the Christmas lights come on. It won't be long now!



**Frank Gifford** has photographed Route 66 and other American roads for more than 20-years. His site [www.rt66pix.com](http://www.rt66pix.com) is viewed in 175 countries.



# *Janine Stern*

## —EXIT SERIES—

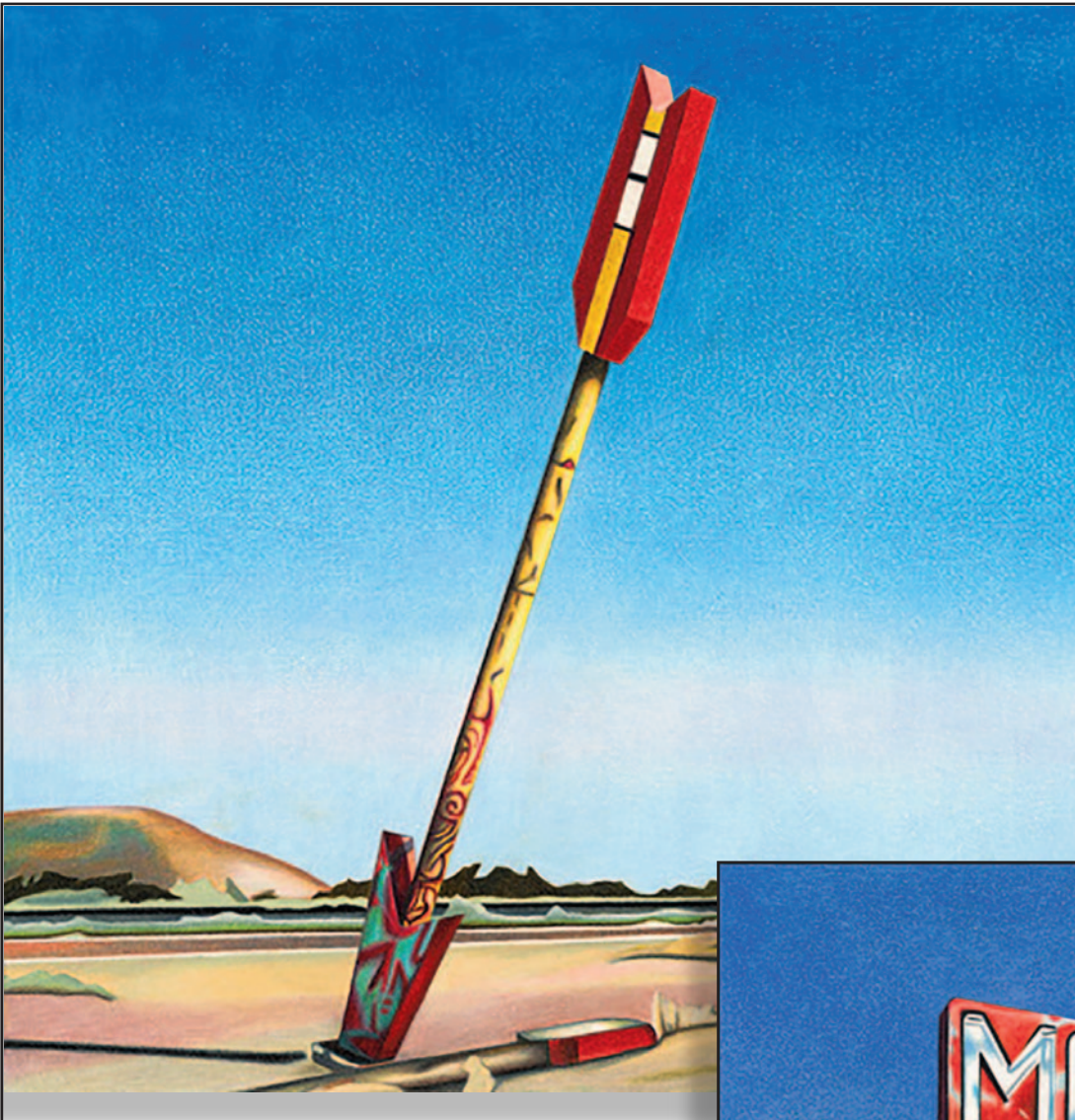
The Exit Series began early on as pencil on roofing tar paper and evolved into brilliant white paper. Years, of color on black emerged to pencil on white, while simulating the same sensuous surface. Color tones are rich adding vibrancy to the skies and desert land. My color palette is enormous with over one hundred and fifty pencil shades, allowing for many multiple layers of pencil.

Accompanying my technique is subject matter: Industrial, Iconic remnants dotting along US highways. These relics have reached the same demise as the steel mills. An original sign becomes a valuable find.

Each artwork title is named after a highway exit to Needles, California. Route 66 runs through downtown Needles.







Left: Needles 66 Motel  
Above: Twin Arrows  
Right: Two Guns



# PRESERVATION & RESTORATION

Article by David Knudson. Images provided by the author.

This series of articles covers a random selection of sites that were on Route 66 during the road's heyday (1920's-1960s) and are still there today. They are the primary reason the Mother Road has

enjoyed a resurgence of interest.

These are, by no means, all the preserved or restored properties along the Mother Road. But a sampling for history-lovers to discover.



🌻 **Nelson's Old Riverton Store** was built by Leo Williams in 1925 and little has changed since.

Joe and Isabell Eisler of Allen, Texas, purchased the business in 1973 and it has continued to operate as a grocery and deli, just as it had.

The store was managed for the Eisler's by their nephew, Scott Nelson who purchased it in 2011 from the estate of the Eisler's.

Scott is the President of the Route 66 Association of Kansas.





🌸 **Rainbow Bridge** is approximately two miles west of Riverton, Kansas on old 66. It is a single-span concrete Marsh arch bridge and is the sole surviving bridge of this type on the Route. It was built in 1923.

The bridge is fairly narrow making it treacherous when traffic was heavy, so a secondary bridge has been built.

In the year 2000, country singer Brad Paisley performed "Route 66" on the bridge for the TLC special, "Route 66: Main Street America".





🌸 **Totem Pole Park, Foyil, OK**

The park is the creation of eccentric wood carver Ed Galloway. He built it from 1937 to 1961 after a fire consumed his studio and virtually all of his carvings.

Although it is 3.5 miles off the Route, it is considered a Mother Road attraction.

The largest pole in the park is said to be the largest cement totem pole in the world. Images on it include birds and Native Americans of Northwest Coast/Alaska and Plains cultures arranged facing each of the four directions.





☀ **The Blue Whale** is a waterfront attraction, located just east of the town of Catoosa, OK. It has become one of the most recognizable icons on Route 66.

The story varies. One says it was built by Hugh Davis, a zoologist, for his wife, Zelta's birthday. Another says Davis built the whale as a special place where his grandchildren could play and swim.

In either case, with the help of his friend, Harold Thomas, they spent two years welding the metal framework together and applying the hand-mixed cement over it, one five-gallon bucket at a time,

When done, they had a 20 feet tall, 80 feet long whale.





❁ **The Campbell Hotel** was originally named the Casa Loma by its builder Max Campbell. It was built in 1927 and became the first full service hotel on the Route in Tulsa.

It was located on the outskirts of Tulsa where it was less formal than downtown. This appealed to the oil-field workers and oilmen doing business in the oilfield country.

Patrons who wished to visit downtown Tulsa without the hassle of paying for parking and negotiating city traffic could leave their cars in the adjacent parking lot and take the nearby streetcar downtown.

Ties to Route 66 were so strong that the hotel closed in 1960, within a year after I-44 replaced the older highway.

In 2010, the hotel was listed on the National Register, and in 2011, it was completely renovated.

Today, it is a luxurious historic hotel, each room decorated in a striking historic theme.





☀ **The Rock Cafe** opened in Stroud, OK in 1939 after three years of on again - off again work; a pattern experienced by many Route 66 start-ups in the Route's early years.

Its now-famous giraffe stone exterior was likely the result of a deal for construction leftovers made by the cafe's builder, Roy Rieves.

The cafe flourished even during the rationing years of World War II, in part because it doubled as a stop for the Greyhound bus lines that carried thousands of travelers and GIs.

Dawn Welch, the current proprietor, has become famous beyond simply Route 66. Sally Carrera, the blue Porsche 911 in the movie "Cars" was based on her.

