

Historic Lincoln Highway Gears up for 100th Anniversary

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In 1905, not a single mile of paved road existed in the United States. By 1912, the automobile was well established, but good roads were not. Detroit businessmen put their heads (and wallets) together to promote the idea of a cross country highway – the Lincoln Highway. Designated in 1913, it stretched from Times Square in New York City to San Francisco. With the 100th Anniversary of the Lincoln Highway around the corner, PA communities are gearing up for a party that will last all year!

For more than 16 years, the Lincoln Highway Heritage Corridor, a nonprofit organization, has been creating a buzz among residents and tourists along the old Lincoln Highway in the Laurel Highlands of PA. Shortly after the Lincoln Highway 200-mile Roadside Museum debuted (12 Lincoln Highway murals, 65 interpretive exhibits, and 21 painted vintage gas pumps), a project dubbed Roadside Giants of the Lincoln Highway was launched. Five larger-than-life metal sculptures (Packard car, 1940 Bennett Gas Pump, Bicycle Built for Two, Quarter, and a 1920 Selden Pick-up Truck), created by career and technology students began dotting the historic highway.

Today, about 200 QR code stickers (like example on facing page) are on storefronts of antique shops, local eateries, gas stations, etc. A smartphone user can scan the code (at no cost) to find out what is near, what is open, contact information, etc. This information

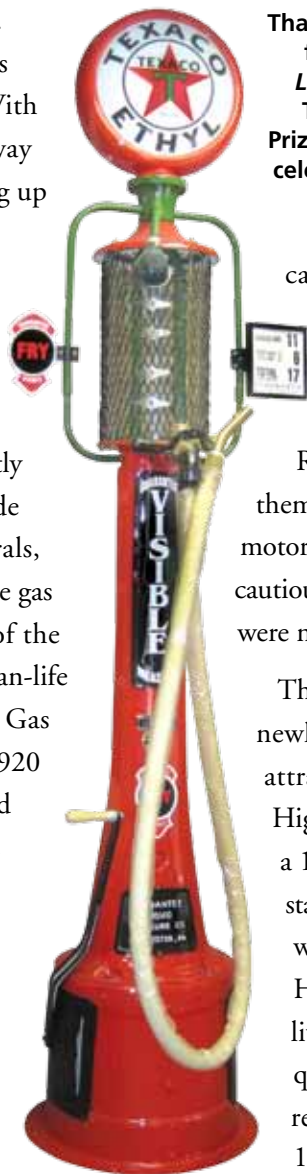


Thanks to W.W. Norton and author, Michael Wallis, for the use of this cover photo of the book, *The Lincoln Highway – The Great American Road Trip*. The best-selling author of *Route 66* and Pulitzer Prize-winning photographer, Michael S. Williamson, celebrate America's first transcontinental highway in all its neon glory with 300 color illustrations.

can enhance a trip by providing instant information.

With the completion of the Lincoln Highway (which by the way, is twice as long as Route 66 and 10 years older), came the inevitable themes of Gas, Food and Lodging. On one hand, motorists were adventurous to explore, but somewhat cautious because gas, food and lodging establishments were not as conveniently located as they are today.

Those three themes will have center stage at the newly developing Lincoln Highway Experience attraction, which will be the premiere Lincoln Highway attraction in Pennsylvania. Situated in a 197 year-old stone structure that was a former stagecoach stop, the Lincoln Highway Experience will give visitors a glimpse into the Lincoln Highway era (1912 through 1940) by viewing a lively orientation film, by sharing stories about quirky Highway architecture (like the 1927 restored Coffee Pot in Bedford, or the former 1932 S. S. Grandview Ship Hotel); by viewing





Find what's nearby!

www.LincolnHighwayExperience.org

Top: The Lincoln Highway spans coast to coast through 12 states.

Above: QR coded stickers are located at storefronts, eateries, gas stations, etc. along the Lincoln Highway.

Below: The Ten Millionth Ford traveled coast to coast on the Lincoln Highway. This photo was taken at the Allegheny Mountain curve near Schellsburg, PA.

the beautiful black and white photography exhibit that traces the Lincoln Highway all across the state; and by learning about other attractions and special events from the 'rolling calendar.' The goal of the Lincoln Highway Experience is to draw visitors in, but to also send them out along the 200-mile Lincoln Highway Heritage Corridor to experience first hand all the attractions, sights, and beauty of the historic Lincoln Highway in Pennsylvania.

But, the fully restored 1938 Jerry O'Mahony diner, considered the Cadillac of diners in its heyday, with striking mahogany interior, ceramic tile walls, and porcelain exterior—that will be the featured gem. Once it is relocated to the Experience site, visitors will be treated to pie and coffee at the diner counter or booth. A restored tourist cabin and filling station façade will share space with the diner in a yet-to-be built building addition.

Memorial Day, 2013 is the weekend that Lincoln Highway communities in PA will strut their red, white and blue flowers as part of a Lincoln Highway in Bloom project. The colorful gateways will welcome all motorists, those in vintage vehicles or family vans, to the historic route. To keep abreast of the progress on the building addition to the Lincoln Highway Experience, or on all of the special programming that will occur throughout 2013 along the Lincoln Highway in Pennsylvania, visit www.LHHC.org.

The Lincoln Highway Experience Museum is located at 3435 Route 30 East, Latrobe, PA 15650 and a short drive from the **Deep Creek Lake, MD** area. Please call 724-879-4241 for hours of operation. Also visit www.laurelhighlands.org.



The S.S. Grand View Point Hotel and Other Attractions along the Lincoln Highway in Pennsylvania

The Lincoln Highway's most famous landmark was the Ship Hotel located in Juniata Township, Bedford County, Pennsylvania. Before the full-size ship was constructed, the Allegheny Mountain curve housed a roadside stand offering refreshments to early motorists, and water to cool their engines.

The architecture of the Grand View Point Hotel began as an open-aired castle courtyard. In 1932 it was transformed into the shape of a steamer ship. The Ship Hotel came complete with a dining room, living quarters and observation decks to view the three states and seven counties from the Allegheny Mountainside.

Some famous guests of the Ship were Thomas Edison, Henry Ford, J.P. Morgan, Will Rogers, John Barrymore, Joan Crawford, and Calvin Coolidge, just to name a few. Tourists and local residents ventured to the grand ship for dining and entertainment. The ship thrived through the 1930s, yet business drastically declined with the unveiling of the Pennsylvania Turnpike in 1940.

On October 26, 2001, the S. S. Grandview Ship Hotel burned to the ground; the cause of the blaze unknown. The Ship was considered by many to be the most recognized landmark of the Lincoln Highway in PA, and an icon of the entire coast to coast road.

Today, only the beautiful vista of "three states and seven counties" remains, but the memories linger on.... memories of dining, dancing, ice cream cones, and looking through the telescope.



Above: Yaste mural on the Lincoln Highway; .7 miles east of Rt. 219 in Stoystown, PA.

Right: The Coffee pot in Bedford, PA.



The increased number of automobiles during the Lincoln Highway era (1912-1940) led to the development of programmatic architecture. Proprietors took daring approaches to appeal to the new motoring public.

All across the country, oversized buildings were being created in the likeness of objects. Some of the more famous were constructed in Pennsylvania along the Lincoln Highway route — the Coffee Pot, the Ship Hotel, the Shoe House, etc. Many have fallen into disrepair.

In 1927, Bert Koontz designed and quickly erected the Coffee Pot on the west end of Bedford. His intention was to attract visitors to his adjacent gas station. The early restaurant served ice cream, hamburgers and Coca-Cola. In 1937 it was connected to a bar and a hotel was built in the rear. The Coffee Pot became a regular stop for Greyhound bus passengers since the bus depot was next door. In an effort to save the Coffee Pot, the Lincoln Highway Heritage Corridor moved it to its present location (near the Fairgrounds) and restored it in 2004.