



THE TRAVELER

LINCOLN HIGHWAY ASSOCIATION - CALIFORNIA CHAPTER

www.lincolnhwy.org/ca/traveler

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Donner Summit Bridge as seen in the late 1920's

July Chapter Meeting

The California Chapter held its quarterly meeting in historic Crockett, CA. Crockett became part of the Lincoln Highway with the opening of the Carquinez Bridge in May of 1927. Crockett was also located on the State Hwy that followed the shore along the Carquinez Strait between Martinez and Valona. Prior to the bridge the only way to cross the strait was by ferry, either by the Benicia-Martinez ferry, the Vallejo-Valona ferry or the Vallejo-Rodeo ferry. Once reaching Crockett the motorist would continue south on San Pablo Avenue to Berkeley where he would cross the bay on another ferry to San Francisco.

The meeting was held at a quaint Mexican restaurant on Pomona Street called "Judy's Place". We had another nice turn-out of 23 members and guests. Before adjourning the meeting, Chapter President Paul Gilger presented a power-point slide presentation that he uses when speaking to various groups and organizations. The show was a highlight of prominent locations on the Lincoln between Times Square and Lincoln Park.

After adjourning, the remaining group drove to a spot on the old Lincoln, parked and approached the 1958 span, which is an exact duplicate of the 1927 bridge recently replaced by the new Al Zampa Memorial bridge. The group strolled across the 3400 foot span admiring the fantastic view while discussing the history of the area.



Minutes of the meeting can be found on the Chapter's web site
www.lincolnhighwayassoc.org/california



The Back Door to California

The routing of the Lincoln Highway, as originally laid out, left Salt Lake City, Utah and travelled west to Ely, Nevada. At both junctions travelers were given the option of continuing to the western terminus in San Francisco or turning south toward Los Angeles. The fine folks in Salt Lake City encouraged autoists to head south through the state of Utah into Arizona and enter California at Needles, thus avoiding what they described as "the terror of the desert" between Salt Lake City and Ely. Although that section of highway was still in rough condition in several locations as late as 1924, the LHA felt confident that a well prepared motorist would have no difficulty following the route. In 1915 when A.L. Westgard, Vice President and Director of Transcontinental Highways, noted in an article written for Motor Magazine, that described the main motoring routes to the Panama-Pacific Exposition, he stated that the alignment from Salt Lake City to Reno, Nevada was the most improved and the suggested route for those motorists not prepared to rough it in bad weather or breakdown. For all others he suggested the "organized route" which coincided with the Midland Trail for 300 miles to Ely.

Once reaching Ely, the traveler was again faced with a choice. Continue westward to Leeteville, Nevada where he again must choose between the Reno or Carson City routes into California. Or turn south following the Midland Trail over Westgard Pass to Big Pine, California. Westgard himself described this route as an "impressive gateway into California". Turning south at Big Pine the Midland Trail continued down the valley to the town of Mojave. At Sagus the Trail reached the macadam road which lead through the Newhall Grade tunnel into San Fernando and finally Los Angeles.

The Midland Trail route became the more practical route into California for the serious transcontinental traveler. In 1915 the Lincoln Highway over the Sierras was closed from November 10th to May 15th due to snow. June, July, August and September were suggested as the best months to travel this route. Other months were subject to rain and flooding. Except for occasional snow in the White Mountains, at Westgard Pass, the Midland Trail was for all practical purposes a year round highway .

In the book "On Sunset Highways", by Thomas D. Murphy from 1921, Murphy recants two trips to California in 1915 and 1921. Several suggestions to those motorists making a round trip from the east coast were to either sell their auto after reaching California, shipping it back via railroad or traveling to California via the Lincoln Highway and returning over the Santa Fe Trail. He also notes that the best time to motor in California are the months of April, May and June.

An article in the September 11, 1921 Oakland Tribune tells the story of an 10 year old, eight foot tall Sequoia redwood tree being planted at Westgard Pass on the Midland Trail in honor of Amos G. Batchelder, late executive chairman of the American Automobile Association. The tree was officially named the Three A tree. A quote from that article reads; "PASS OPEN ALL YEAR - Westgard Pass is the ten-mile crossing over White Mountains. It is the thirty-five mile stretch from Oasis, Cal. on the Nevada line, westward to Big Pine. This stretch is part of the Roosevelt-Midland Trail, which also in 1915, was chosen as the Lincoln Highway branch from Ely, Nev. southwestward to Big Pine. The pass is open all year." The Lincoln Highway Official Road Guide book of 1924 states;" The road running from Ely, Nevada, by way of Tonopah and Goldfield into southern California and ending at Los Angeles is one of the main line branches of the Lincoln Highway and the one probably most used by Lincoln Highway tourists." An interesting note to that statement lies in the book "The Lincoln Highway - The Story Of A Crusade That Made Transportation History" published in 1935. "Even after the official designation of the city by the Golden Gate as the western terminus, Los Angeles interests led by the Automobile Club of Southern California continued their effort to have the road connecting Los Angeles with the Lincoln Highway at Ely, Nevada, declared an alternative route, equal in prominence and importance with the section from Ely into San Francisco. This probably would have been done had the automobile club and the highway association been able to agree upon Southern California's share in the cost of improving this connection".

NOTE; Refer to pages 74-77 in the 1924 guide for further info regarding the Midland Trail



University of Michigan Special Collections

Southern California Automobile Association sign crew on Midland Trail. Sign in center of photo shows Salt Lake City to San Francisco via Lincoln Highway



University of Michigan Special Collections

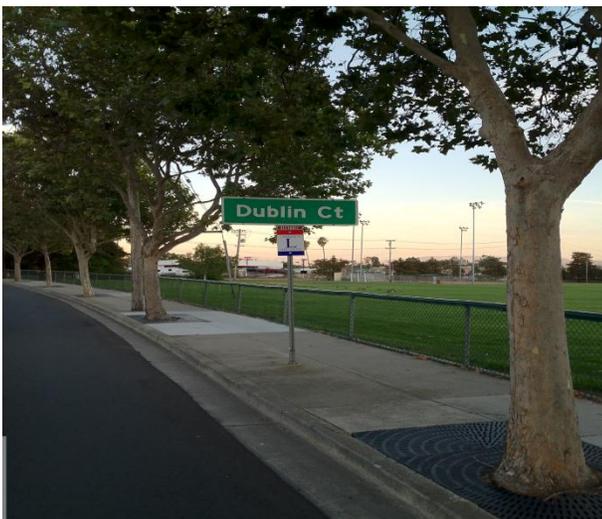
Gael S. Hoag and Austin F. Bement consult map while touring the Midland Trail south of Goldfield, Nevada

Signing the Lincoln

Mike Kaelin has been busy approaching numerous representatives of cities in San Joaquin, Contra Costa and Alameda Counties in an attempt to place signage at key locations along the Lincoln. Due to the economic downturn a number of these cities just don't have the funds to purchase and install historic signage. Others have ordinances preventing their installation. But all-in-all most of the cities he has approached are interested and anxious to sign-up. Mike has been able to get signs up in French Camp, Banta, Tracy, Altamont, Dublin and San Leandro. Livermore is working with a local historical agency to keep interest alive, but also has issues with a problem with graffiti taggers. Livermore has requested that a protective coating be applied to the signs and the signs be placed on existing sign poles 8 feet above ground level. Stockton is pushing to get signs installed on Pacific Avenue. And in Contra Costa County, El Cerrito is working to get signs approved for San Pablo Avenue. There are currently several older signs in Richmond.



New signage on Dublin Boulevard in Dublin. Four signs were installed



Dublin Blvd @ Dublin Ct.



Foothill Boulevard San Leandro

There's No Way To Get There From Here (CONTINUED)

In the July Traveler I told the story of the need for a permanent structure to allow travelers to cross the Yolo basin, west of Sacramento, in order to reach the towns of Davis, Dixon, Vacaville and eventually Vallejo on a year round basis. Thus the history of the development of the Yolo Causeway. I only briefly touched upon the question, where did you go once you entered Solano County and how did this causeway shorten the route to San Francisco ?

Without the use of ferries and bridges, the only escape from Solano County was north to Woodland, Winters and Northern California. Even if you travelled west past Vallejo and happened to reach Sausalito, there was no way to cross either the rivers nor the bay.

But luckily for the 1917 motorist, there was such a ferry. Located at Benicia it crossed the Carquinez Strait to Contra Costa County at Martinez. The Ferry began operation in 1847 as the first ferry service on the Bay. Robert Semple, founder of Benicia, commenced the boat service between the two cities which lasted over a century until 1962.

The city of Martinez, realizing the need for a vehicular ferry, constructed a new ferry slip in 1911-12. The Martinez-Benicia Ferry & Transportation Co. was founded and a small steamer named "City of Seattle" was purchased to carry automobiles. In 1917 a new ferry was constructed and placed into service. The "City of Martinez" served the motoring public until 1936 when she was condemned. The ferry service between Benicia and Martinez ceased in 1956.



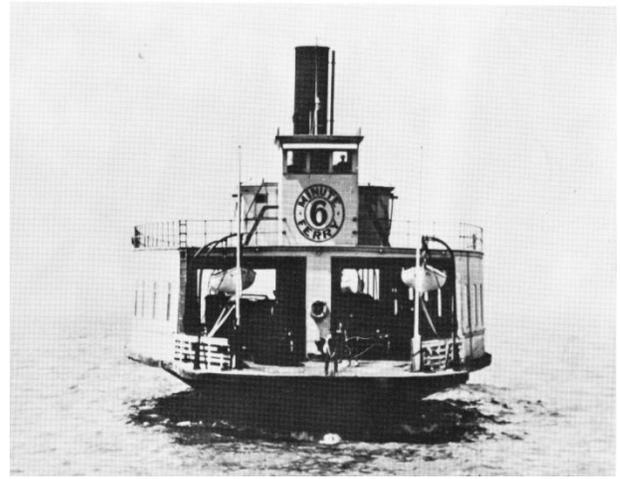
City of Seattle 1888-1947



The City of Martinez approaching Martinez slip



Motorists line-up to board the ferry at Martinez



Only known photo of San Jose

In 1919 the owners of the Vallejo-Mare Island Ferry decided to expand their operation to provide a shorter route for employees of the Mare Island Naval Shipyard living in Contra Costa County. The new ferry became known as the "Six Minute Ferry". This new route crossed the strait between Morrow Cove, on the Vallejo side, to Valona on the Crockett side. The Valona slip was located just west of Crockett. This ferry provided a secondary route for motorists coming from Sacramento via Cordelia and Jamison Canyon. The Six Minute Ferry had a short life, as a landslide in the winter of 1920-21 closed the Vallejo approach to Morrow Cove. The only operating ferry boat on this route, the San Jose, was sold to the Rodeo-Vallejo Ferry Company in 1922.



Six Minute ferry slip at Morrow Cove . Current location of California Maritime Academy at foot of Carquinez bridge

State Highway, 1918 (Later Lincoln Highway)



Upon reaching Martinez, the motorist was once again offered several choices of routes into the Bay Area. He / she could follow the State Highway, which ran along the shore of the Carquinez strait from Martinez, past Port Costa to Crockett and entered Richmond on San Pablo Avenue. Or they could follow the county highway south from Martinez and turn west into Franklin Canyon which delivered them onto the State Highway just south of Rodeo (San Pablo Ave). A third choice was to follow the county highway south from Martinez to Walnut Creek where they would turn west and travel through Lafayette, Orinda and the Kennedy upper level tunnel arriving in Oakland. This third route was also a detour for the Lincoln Highway between Tracy and Hayward when severe weather closed the route through Dublin Canyon.

The 1918 Automobile Club of Southern California map shows the State Highway from Cordelia to Benicia crossing the Carquinez strait to Martinez. Notice there is no ferry at this time from Vallejo to Crockett. Franklin Canyon road can be seen joining the State Highway between Rodeo and Pinole. Once arriving in Oakland the motorist would continue the journey to San Francisco by crossing the Bay on the "Creek Route Ferry" located at the foot of Broadway on San Antonio Creek (now the Oakland Estuary).

With the completion of the Carquinez Bridge in 1927 the faith of the ferries crossing the strait was sealed.



Creek Route Ferry at Broadway slip Oakland

Topics for Future Consideration

In an on-going attempt to provide historical information on key and interesting locations on the Lincoln Highway through-out California, I'm endeavoring to develop new stories that cover all alignments of the highway. Hopefully there are a few of you out there that don't know the history of the Lincoln inside and out. Hopefully there are a few who lust to learn more. Following is a list of just some of the locations worth researching; North Sacramento, Roseville (the Lincoln and the railroad), American River Canyon, Placerville, Auburn Blvd., Donner Summit and Sylvan Corners.

If you like one of those or have a favorite of your own, PLEASE E-MAIL me.

The Ridge Route

Although not a part of the Lincoln Highway, the Ridge Route between Los Angeles and Bakersfield was a major engineering marvel in 1915. This new route allowed autos to cross the Tehachapi and San Gabriel Mountains from Castaic Junction on the south to Gorman, in the San Joaquin Valley, on the north. In his book "Ridge Route - The Road That United California", Harrison "Scotty" Scott reveals that without this highway connection between Northern and Southern California, we may well have had two California's. Huell Howser Productions of Los Angeles produces a series for PBS Television called California Gold. A sub-series is titled Road Trip. In 2008 Huell along with Scott filmed a road trip between Castaic and the site of the former Sandberg's Summit Hotel. The trip followed the original Ridge Route on the original 1915 concrete. A half-dozen period Model T Ford's braved the old highway to reach the summit, stopping along the way to seek out remains of historic landmarks. There are very few places left in California where we can still travel on this long of a piece of original highway. Watching the Model T's climb the grades, in a single file, opened up visions of what the motorist had to deal with in the late 1900's. This particular Road Trip is # 122 and can be purchased from Huell Hower Productions. In my opinion A-Must-See video. The road was heavily damaged by winter storms several years back and is currently open on a limited basis. Contact www.ridgeroute.com for current conditions. Scott worked with the National Park Service to have the segment which lies on US forest land entered into the National Registry as an historic site.

Other Note Worthy Videos

Another fantastic video is called "This Highway Dedicated to Abraham Lincoln" and is produced by the Harrison County Historical Center of Missouri Valley, Iowa. It recounts the development of the highway across the U.S. and is another Must-See video. The California Chapter plans to show this video after its October Chapter meeting.

Still another video is entitled "The Lincoln Highway Story" produced by Chamberlin Video productions and can be purchased from their web site; www.chamberlinvideo.com

In 1995 TBS Television aired a series called "Driving Passion - America's Love Affair with the Car". It was a twenty-six episode story of the development of the automobile from its inception to 1995 and the impact it had on America and the development of the Nations highway system. It can be found on Utube. Also rated Must-See.

A Trip to Caltrans

In August Joel Windmiller and Myself made an appointment to research the Transportation Library and History Center at the headquarters for the California Department of Transportation in Sacramento. For avid researchers, such as Joel and I, what we found was a veritable GOLD MINE. Everything one might seek as to the history and development of California's highway system was there. Photos, maps, vintage magazines, construction bids. You name it they have it. Each county has its own reference material listed by the current highway designation IE; 580. The individual files contain photos and documents for that particular route going back to the original legislative route number. An appointment is a necessity as the staff is busy working on in-house requests. We found the staff to be very friendly and helpful. Photos that we obtained will be included in future Travelers.



1914 photo of the Lincoln Garage of Mallett & Tucker in the 300 block of N. El Dorado Street Stockton. Although this business doesn't show up in the R. L. Polk City Directories of that time, its location can be confirmed by the steeple of St. John's Episcopal Church in the upper right corner. This places the garage 1/2 block north of the Hotel Stockton and across from City Hall. The garage was torn down in the 1990's.



Another Lincoln Garage ,located at 325 Center Street, was owned by George A. Sanguinetti. The garage was known as the Westcott Garage. Photo is from the 1920's. Both garages were on the Lincoln Highway. These two photos were sent by Kevin Shawyer of Stockton. His friend Ron Chapman, of Facebook's Stockton History group, provided them from his collection.

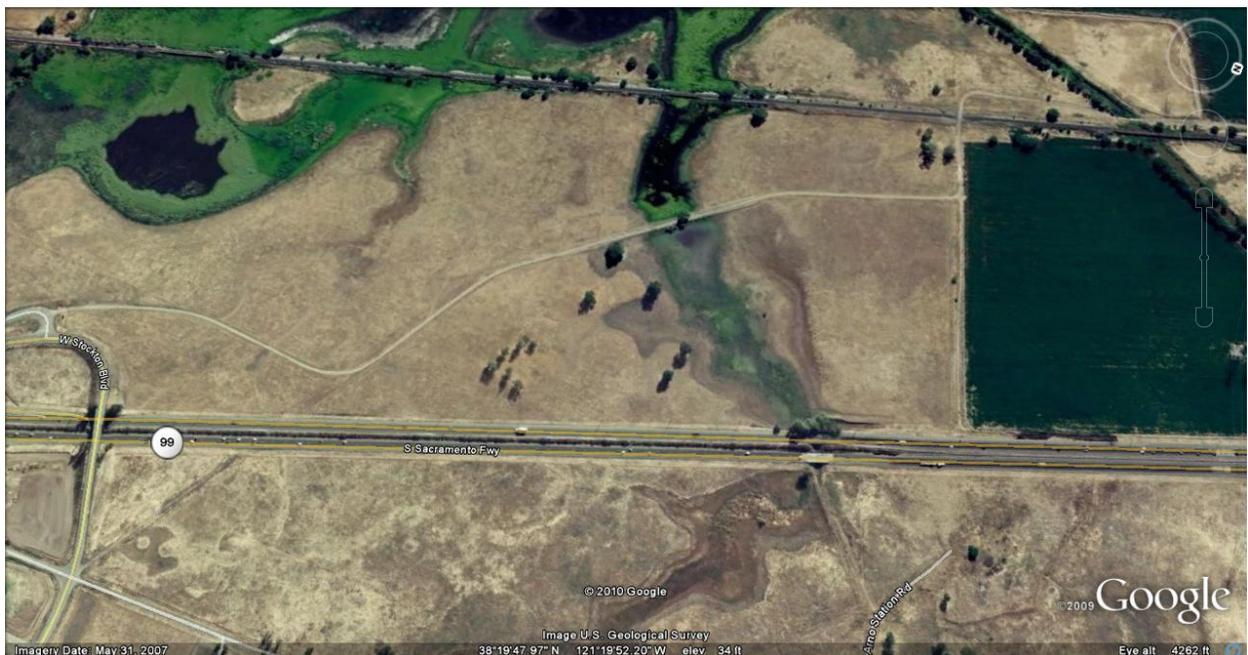
Where-Oh-Where Can That Alignment Be

There has always been the need to know exactly where the Lincoln was routed. Many of our members are purists in their need to know, while others could care less. Many want to know what it was like to travel cross country in the early 1900's, how did the early motorists deal with road conditions, weather, mechanical issues, food and lodging.

The one issue that seems the most relevant was that of routing. What road do we follow, do we turn here or continue, which way is the shortest, the safest, the easiest? As the Lincoln Highway developed, many sections were re-aligned to make traveling conform to those questions. The question now arises; where were those original alignments? If there were more than one, when were they altered and why?

Currently there are three such alignments in question here in California. Michael Kaelin, along with member Scott Miner, has been hard at work researching these three alignments in an effort to clarify the exact routing. This is not an easy task, as there is either a lack of documentation or conflicting information. On top of that, add personal interpretations. As you have read in other articles, there are some folks that can't or won't be enlightened from their opinion. Thus the old adage; "My minds made up - Don't confuse me with facts".

The three alignments in question are (1) The routing through McConnell and Arno. (2) The routing through Livermore. (3) The routing between Hayward and Oakland along Foothill Blvd., MacArthur Blvd. and/ or East 14th Street. The sources that are currently being researched are: Local newspapers, documents from local museums or historical societies, period road maps (preferably those of the State Auto Clubs), and Caltrans. Caltrans As-Built plans are very helpful when available.



This alignment, through the town of Arno, as seen in Google Earth, is one of the alignments that requires further investigation. These questions hopefully will be answered in future Travelers. If you have any information, photos or maps of these areas, Please forward them.

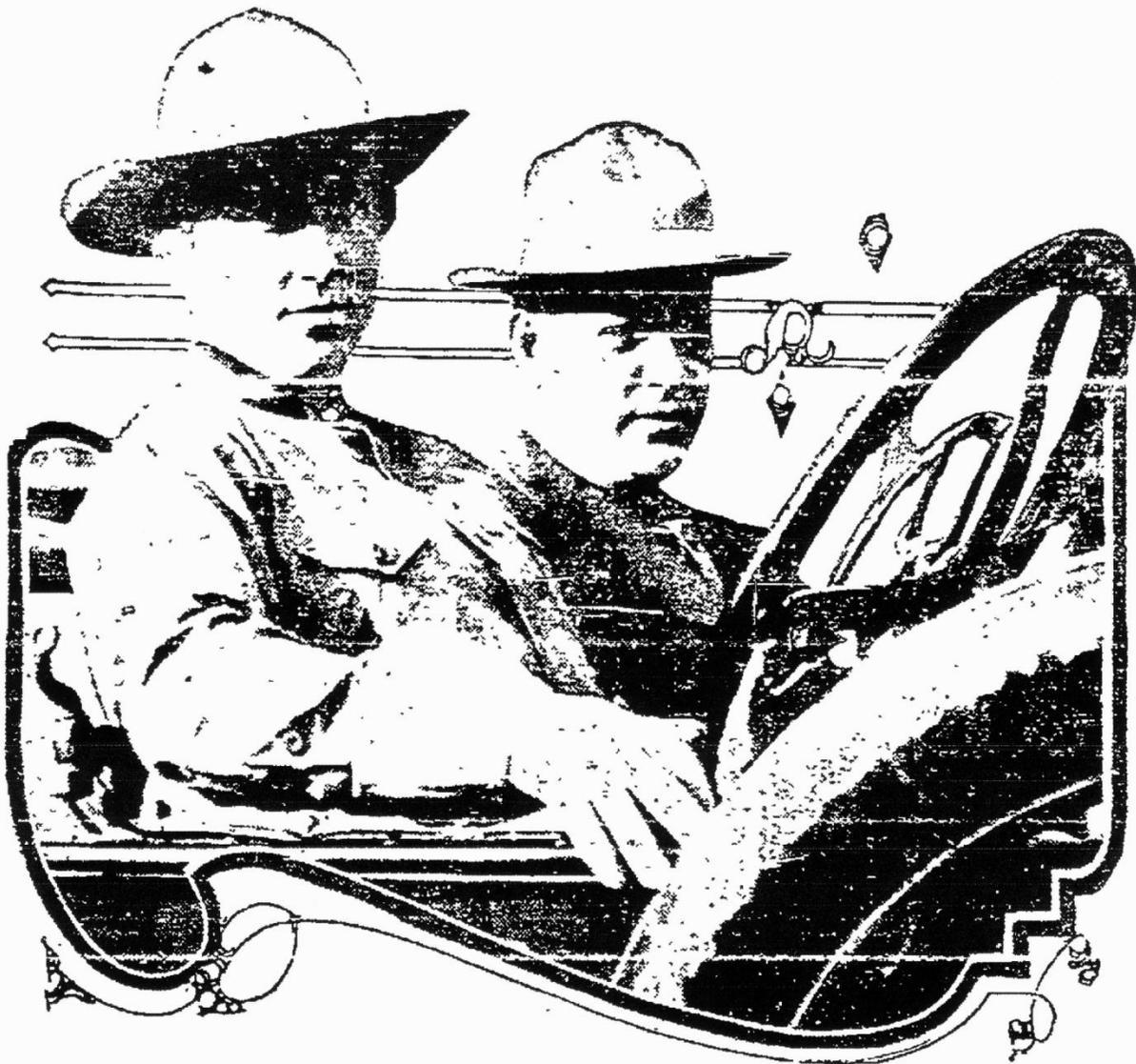


The route through Livermore has raised a number of questions. Did the Lincoln ever travel on what is now Portola Avenue between First Street and Junction Avenue. This 1941 Historic Aerials map shows Portola crossing photo just below the US 50 shield, but not designated as the State Highway. The 1923 & 1928 maps from the same source do not even show this section of Portola. Stay tuned, hopefully we will uncover the exact alignment(s).

TO MOTOR ACROSS CONTINENT

SHE WILL TRAVEL OVER LINCOLN HIGHWAY

WOMAN MOTOR ENTHUSIAST



MR. AND MRS. FREDERICK DAVIS IN THE AUTO WHICH WILL TAKE THEM OVER THE LINCOLN HIGHWAY. MRS. DAVIS IS THE FIRST WOMAN TO ATTEMPT THE TRIP.

Women are grabbing all the jobs and difficult honors as usual.

Now that men are in the minority no man will be permitted to drive a car and men as chauffeurs will soon be relegated to the shades of tradition. Already they are as unfashionable as last year's hats! Already they have been forced to relinquish places at the wheel while their wives steer triumphantly across continents, soaring in Zeppelins and shooting zebras by way of diversion en route.

There is nothing left to do about it! Carriage is no more. Man is perishing from the earth. Now that he is rare and ornamental he cannot be allowed to lead a life of hardship any more.

The first woman to drive a motor car

across the Lincoln Highway started this morning from Oakland. Mrs. Frederick E. Davis and her husband, a wealthy merchandise broker and the car, which was shipped especially for the trip, are from Honolulu.

The mayor of Oakland bade them bon voyage and the mayor of New York will congratulate them on their arrival at their destination. The Davises took with them as an official passport a letter from Joseph E. Caine, state counsel of California of the Lincoln Highway Association. All the state counsels on the way will be visited.

Lincoln Highway is the former overland trail over which came the pony express. It encompasses about 3500 miles

of roads selected to form the most direct route from the Pacific to the Atlantic. Oakland is the western terminus, New York the eastern.

Leaving Oakland via the Boulevard and Dublin Canyon it winds in leisurely fashion, stopping along the line at Reno, Orden, Salt Lake Omaha, Council Bluffs, Chicago, Fort Wayne, Canton, Philadelphia, Newark and other cities.

Mrs. Davis will attempt no spectacular feats, but will proceed in leisurely fashion, stopping along the line at Reno, Orden, Salt Lake Omaha, Council Bluffs, Chicago, Fort Wayne, Canton, Philadelphia, Newark and other cities.

But records or no records, women are the coming chauffeurettes.

MARK YOUR 2013 CALENDAR

Saturday **OCTOBER 6, 2012**
12:00 noon

State Chapter Meeting
Bud's Pub and Grill
100 South First Street
Dixon, CA

NOTE: Bud's Pub & Grill is located on the S/W corner of South First and West A streets.
There is a large parking lot directly across First Street

Saturday **JANUARY 5, 2013**

State Chapter Meeting
Location to be announced

Saturday **APRIL 6, 2013**

State Chapter Meeting
Location to be announced

JUNE 21 - 30

100th Anniversary Tour

JUNE 30 - JULY 5

21st Annual LHA Conference
Lincoln Highway Centennial
Kearney, Nebraska



Saturday **JULY 13, 2013**

State Chapter Meeting
Location to be announced

Saturday **OCTOBER 5, 2013**

State Chapter Meeting
Location to be announced

NOTE: Announcement of Chapter Meeting locations are mailed via postcard to all current members approximately 2 weeks prior to the actual date. They are also posted on the California Chapter web site. Contact Joel Windmiller regarding mailing of postcards.

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