

LINCOLN HIGHWAY ASSOCIATION
CALIFORNIA CHAPTER

NEWSLETTER
**THE
TRAVELER**

EDITOR
Gary Kinst

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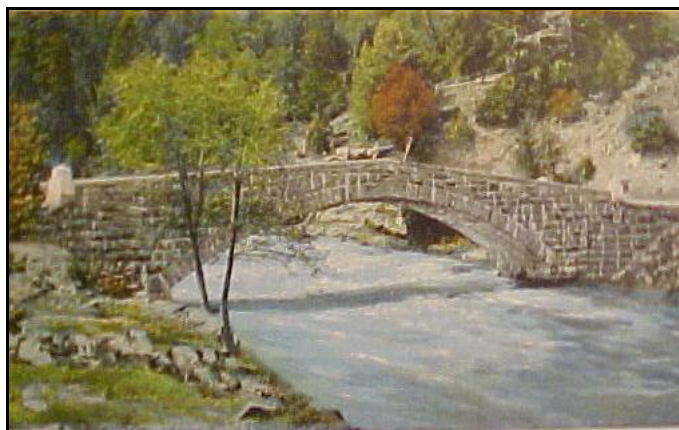
SUMMER

JULY 2008



COVER

This issues cover photo shows the Riverton Hotel on the south fork of the American River 22.4 miles east of Placerville. The stone arch bridge can be seen in the upper left of photo. The bridge, (No. 2508), was erected by the State of California in 1900 on what was then the “Lake Tahoe Wagon Road” at a location known as Moore’s Station. It was the third bridge built across the south fork of the American River at this location. Bridge number two was an old combination truss bridge, which was becoming unsafe. The ironwork from this second bridge was used to construct a truss bridge at another location on the road. The Lake Tahoe Wagon Road was acquired by action of the State Legislature in 1895 and was California’s first state highway. The stone arch Riverton Bridge was the first major improvement on that road. The bridge consisted of a single arch with an 81-foot span and an oil treated roadway 12.5 feet in width. The crown of the arch was 13.0 feet above the spring. Work on the bridge began in June 1900 and was completed on November 12, 1900. This structure was constructed from locally quarried fine cut ashlar granite and stood the test of time until it’s replacement in 1930. Reasons for replacing included poor location in relation to the river and narrow width. Numerous accidents occurred at the western approach due to the sharp entry curve.



Three of the original granite four cornered obelisks (seen at the approaches to the bridge) are all that remain at this location on US 50 to remind travelers of this historic structure.

Cover photo provided by Lloyd Johnson and information for this article provided by Norm Root, both of Sacramento. Thank You Gentlemen.

FROM THE EDITOR

WESTERN TERMINUS MARKER

For a brief moment it felt like we were close to finding the Holy Grail of the Lincoln Highway. When all else failed we broke down and contacted the famous John P. O'Grady directly. The following is O'Grady's reply to Myron Gershenson's inquiry.

“ Thanks very much for your message, and thanks too for taking a look at my blog, which I should explain is not a blog in the traditional sense, as I use it to post excerpts from a fictional work-in-progress. For the last several years I have been doing research on the former graveyards that once surrounded Lone Mountain in San Francisco. Originally I thought I'd write some kind of history of what happened to them, but the more I got into the project the more things started coming to life, including figures who are not “historical” in the strict sense of the word but nevertheless seem quite real, especially to me. Dom Camposanto is one of those figures. So I'm afraid I can't tell you how to get hold of him apart from how he appears in the pages of the book (and blog) I'm working on, but please know that he is “out there” somewhere, and with any luck one day you may happen upon him unexpectedly. Again, thanks you for your interest in my blog. I very much appreciate it. “

So there you have it. Is there really someone scrounging through the rubble at Lands End? Is there a famous Climatologist / Lincoln Highway buff who is harboring the Holy Grail in his San Francisco backyard? We are unable to locate them, if they truly do exist, so this mystery will remain unsolved until such time as they unexpectedly materialize.



Western Terminus
September 1, 1928



Photo of Sylvan Corners with newly installed Lincoln Highway commemorative sign

SYLVAN CORNERS

Citrus Heights was established in 1850 as part of Sacramento County's Central Township. In 1850 there were no settlements or roads within Central Township. In late 1850 the road from Sacramento to Auburn was shortened and realigned diagonally through Central Township. The new alignment followed what is now Auburn Blvd until it reached Sylvan Corners where it turned north to follow today's old Auburn Road. Early pioneers established ranches (quarter sections approx. 160 acres), built houses and barns and began farming along Old Auburn Road. A schoolhouse was erected on the northwest corner of Sylvan Corners in 1862. The area began to grow with the coming of the Central Pacific Railroad in 1864. The Sylvan district adopted the name Citrus Heights in 1910 as a promotional ploy to attract buyers to the new 10-acre lots being sold. With the increase in traffic on the Lincoln Highway, which became the new state highway, new businesses began appearing. William Cobb opened a store and service station opposite the school and Mr. Alexandra opened the Cripple Creek Service Station and Auto Camp north on Auburn Blvd.

CHAPTER MEETING April 12, 2008

After a very successful Chapter meeting, seven members explored what was the original site of Dublin, California at the intersection of Dublin Blvd and Donlan Street. The tour then proceeded west through Dublin Canyon to east Castro Valley where we traveled a section of Lincoln over San Lorenzo Creek.



Mike Kaelin, in official Cal Trans safety vest, points out a section of the 1916 Lincoln heading west up Dublin Grade towards Castro Valley. Just a month earlier this section was a pristine section of Portland Concrete

Minutes for this meeting are available on the Chapter web site www.lincolnhighwayassoc.org/ca.

OTHER HAPPENINGS

Our Thanks go out to Mr. Leon Schegg, a California Chapter member since 1993, for becoming a life member of the LHA. Leon and his wife Kathy live in Truckee and are very active in the Association. Leon informs us that he has in his possession a well-protected plastic replacement sign, which he will install at the Rainbow Bridge on Donner Summit. The original bronze plaque, which had been removed earlier, will be donated to a local museum.

Mr. Hubert Booze, President of the homeowners association for the housing development located above the Orangevale Bridge in Folsom, is moving forward with the installation of two Historic Lincoln Highway signs. These signs are part of the restoration project and Herbert wants them installed to emphasize the importance of the bridge.

I was contacted by a Mr. Jason Bezis in regards to the Lincoln from Oakland to Stockton. He is writing a comprehensive history of Interstate 580 and plans to incorporate material dating as far back as the Mexican land grant era. I'm hoping this will produce several articles for the Traveler.

Chapter minutes, from our last two meetings, have been posted on the Chapters web site.

Special Thanks to Kell Brigan who has graciously accepted the responsibility of assisting James Lin in updating and keeping the web site current. In the near future we hope to have articles from prior "Travelers" posted so people interested in the Lincoln Highway can see what the California Chapter has been up to.

MOUNTAIN HOUSE

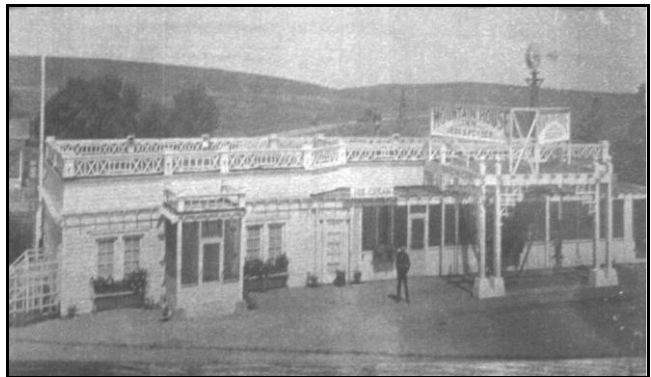
Michael Kaelin and Gary Kinst presented the new owners of the Mountain House Bar with a Historic Lincoln Highway sign on Sunday May 18, 2008. Josie Alvarez (the current owner) along with her mother Sara Pina operate the bar. Sara, who is very interested in the history of Mountain House, remembers the area when she visited as a young girl. She would like to restore the bar back to its 1880–1925 splendor.



Sara, Michael and Josie



The Editor



Mountain House 1910

A BRIEF HISTORY

Located at the junction of Grantline Road and Mountain House Roads, 4 miles west of Tracy and 6 miles east of the Altamont Summit. It is situated at the east end of Livermore Pass (Altamont Pass) in Murray Township, Alameda County, California.

In 1849 Thomas Goodall (Goodale) erected a large blue denim cloth tent at this location to provide a house of entertainment, offering refreshments for passing miners. The location also served as a stage stop and horse transfer point for the McLeod Stage Line coming from Stockton on the Sutter's Fort-Mission San Jose Road. Sometime after 1849 Goodall erected an adobe structure to replace what had become known as "The Blue Tent" and built a corral for the stage horses. From 1849 – 1859 the location served as a special camp for stockmen, rancheros and immigrants. Goodall added a wooden structure to the front of the adobe building in 1868. A Mr. Simon Zimmermann occupied this structure for 27 years. In 1860 Zimmerman opened a school in his residence, and the first teacher was a Miss White. The school was transferred in 1861 to a location 2 ½ miles north on the open plain. In 1890 it was still referred to as the Mountain House School. In 1852 the location was known as "the outpost of civilization" east of the Livermore Valley. Simon Zimmerman married Mary Ann Leigh in 1853 and purchased the property from Thomas Goodall.

They began operating a popular tavern and hotel, which they named "Mountain House". Travelers also referred to the location as Zimmermann's. In 1880 Zimmermann pulled down the original structures and erected a one-story wood frame board and batten building with a redwood façade and a bracket cornice. Zimmermann's personality, humor and story telling earned him the name "Old Man of the Mountain". An overnight stop at Mountain House was the aim of every man who journeyed to California. Simon and Mary ran the hostelry until Simon's death in 1883 at age 62. Mary died in 1889 and their two sons, Fred and Charlie assumed responsibility. The 1920 census shows four of the Zimmermann's nine children still living in the Mountain House area. In 1919, the Zimmermann's sold 160 acres to J.B. Bunte of Tracy. Bunte, who had operated a garage on Central Ave in Tracy since 1914, sold that business to a Mr. E.J. Devine and moved to Mountain House. In 1915 the county road, passing in front of Mountain House, became the Lincoln Highway, America's first coast-to-coast paved road. The Lincoln ran from Times Square in New York City to Lincoln Park (at Lands End) in San Francisco. Mountain House provided cold refreshments and motoring assistance to travelers heading through Altamont Pass and over the Summit.

An article in the July 21, 1921 issue of the Byron Times, tells of the improvements being made at Mountain House. When Bunte arrived at Mountain House in 1919 he erected a service station, which included a restroom, on the northwest corner of Grantline and Mountain House Roads. He installed a complete electric light plant to provide lighting for the station and resort. Light refreshments were also provided. In July of 1921 Bunte was finishing a new Garage and Service Station on the northeast corner. The station provided light repair work along with selling gas and accessories and was open night and day. A park was being planned, adjacent to the station, which would provide an ideal stopping place for auto parties. Palm trees were planted to provide a windbreak. The Resort on the opposite corner was leased to a Mr. Jess Peyser, of Brentwood, who planned to run a first class resort. A fine floor was being laid to allow dancing and special dinners were prepared upon request, accompanied by soft drinks and cigars. Mrs. Peyser assisted as hostess. The Bunte's, having invested thousand of dollars in the improvements, continued to be very successful in pleasing the public with good service at right prices.

The Byron Times of December 28, 1923, mentions a Mr. G.A. Brown and a William Young of Oakland leasing the service station and garage built in 1921. Two five-room cottages were erected for the new residents and their families. PG&E installed transformers to provide power. In the spring of 1923, six two-room cottages were planned on a large camp ground below the station, each with it's own electric lights and heating. A common garage for tourists' autos was also to be erected.

In 1925 the resort, built in 1880, burned to the ground. The cause being a coal oil stove explosion. Bunte rebuilt the resort the same year as a "cozy soft drink resort". The Peyser's continued to lease the resort and provided lunch, dinner, soft beverages along with music and dancing. A Magnavox radio outfit, with an 800-mile broadcasting feature, provided travelers with the latest news without the need for headphones. In February of 1930, fire again destroyed the Mountain House Inn. Bunte rebuilt and reopened in April of 1930 as the J.B. Bunte Deluxe Service Station and 24hr. Restaurant. In the summer of 1926 Idra Enos French and his wife Annie were operating the Mountain House coffee shop. In 1929 a couple named Pete and Sally were listed as proprietors.

The resort and service station were sold to Nick Spadorcio in 1946. Spadorcios ran a thriving business at Mountain House until 1979 when he sold to Mr. Ron Lima. In 1948 the Coffee Shop on the northeast corner was called the Antique House and the Shell service station and garage were still operating on the northwest corner.

In 1950, an advertisement in the Tracy Press referred to the location as Mountain House Service, RE 1 Box 700 Hwy 50.

I've Been Working on the HighwayGeorge Clark

These two images, probably unseen by present –day Lincoln Highway aficionados, were sent to me by Mr. Jim Kern, Director of the Vallejo Naval and Historical Museum. At the time the Boy Scouts set in excess of 2400 concrete memorial markers across the country on September 1, 1928, and, according to Gael Hoag's log, 13 of them were placed in Vallejo, California.

The September 1, 1928, edition of the Vallejo Times Herald carried an item headlined, "Boy Scouts Will Place Signs."

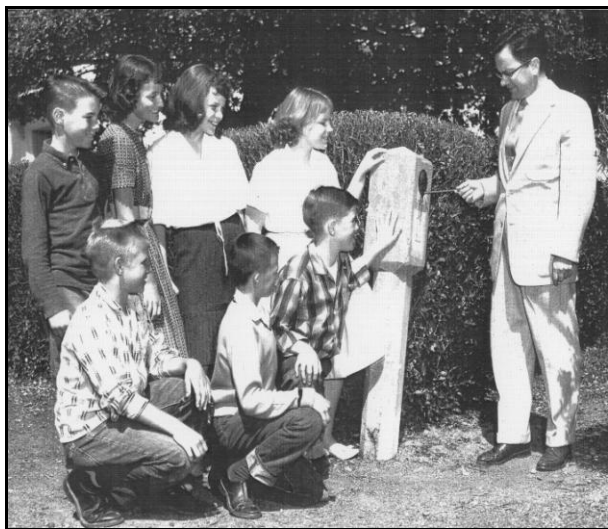


It went on to state, "Today at 11:45 AM Boy Scouts from all Vallejo troops will meet at the McKinley School before starting out to set up the 16 Lincoln Highway signs. Before they leave the school a short address will be delivered by Secretary of the Chamber of Commerce, T. Frank Chaffee, on the subject of boy's duties as citizens. E. H. Bellows, Chairman of the Vallejo Boy Scout District and manager of the California State Automobile Association, will also be present.

At a little past noon the boys will set off with their shovels and tampers to place sixteen signs along the highway from the Carquinez Bridge to Cordelia. Captain Frank Silva of the traffic squad and three of his officers will patrol the highway during the procedure.

Over 3000 miles of signs will be erected along the Lincoln Highway during the one hour from 12 noon to 1 PM."

Mr. Kern tells me these images (with no captions) were found in a file, which relates to the McKinley School in Vallejo. One Marker appears upright with a neatly trimmed hedge in the background. It was not one of Gael Hoag's designated sites. Was it moved from an original location? Why was it moved? and who moved it? In light of the Vallejo Times Herald could this have been a "rehearsal" marker, viz: a marker set at the time of the above mentioned meeting at the school as an example of how to set a marker and never removed?



The second image depicts a not-so-upright marker. Inasmuch as the image (dated April 10, 1959) carries no caption we do not know the occasion for the gathering. Could it be a history lesson studying the Lincoln administration and the Civil War? Or might it be a driver's Ed class being shown what happens when you lose control of your vehicle and it strikes a concrete post? We will never know.

Mr. Kern tells me the marker has since disappeared. However, the museum does have an original marker and hopes someday it will be on display. Mr. Tom Lucy, Vallejo writer and photo-historian, wrote an article relative to the Lincoln Highway as it traversed Vallejo which can be found in the Solano Historian, Vol. XVI, No. 1, May, 2002.

We are now taking reservations for the 2008 Lincoln Highway California Tours!

Tour #1 Sat. April 26: 1913-1927 Central Valley Route: *Sacramento to San Francisco via Altamont Pass*

Tour #2 Sat. June 28: Sierra Nevada Southern Route: *Sacramento to Lake Tahoe via Echo Summit*

Tour #3 Sat. Aug 30: Sierra Nevada Northern Route: *Sacramento to Nevada via Donner Pass & DogValley*

Tour #4 Sat. Oct 25: 1928 Central Valley Route: *Sacramento to San Francisco via Carquinez Strait*

Each tour - \$45 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 make payable to "Lincoln Highway California Chapter", mail 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.

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"Lincoln Highway California Chapter", to:

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Name: _____

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Phone Number: _____

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

MARK YOUR 2008 CALENDAR

California Chapter Lincoln Highway Association
Summer Quarterly Meeting

Saturday, July 12, 2008

12:00 noon

Lou La Bonte's Restaurant, 13460 Lincoln Way, Auburn, California.

DIRECTIONS

Exit Interstate 80 at exit 121, Foresthill Road, make a quick left onto Lincoln Way, go 0.3 miles.

Lou La Bonte's is a long time eatery on the Lincoln Highway. It was formerly located along U.S. 40 at Paoli Road in Weimar.

Lunch sandwiches are \$7.95 to \$11.95

Salads are \$5.95 to \$14.95

Major topics to be discussed are: van tours, Lincoln Highway signs, and National Conference reports and other stuff too.

Following business, Laurretta Powell will lead us on a tour of hidden segments of the Lincoln Highway between Bowman and Weimar.

ALL CHAPTER MEMBERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND

Saturday **AUGUST 30**

Tour # 3 Sierra Nevada Northern Route
Sacramento to Verdi, NV.
via Donner Pass and Dog Valley

Saturday **OCTOBER 4**
12:00 noon

State Chapter Meeting
Placerville (location to be announced)

Saturday **OCTOBER 25**

Tour # 4 Central Valley 1928 Route
Sacramento to San Francisco
Via Yolo Causeway and Carquinez Strait

NOTE: All tours depart the Holiday Inn Sacramento Northeast, Madison @ I 80 at 9:00 am. Boarding begins at 8:45 am.



Participants of Tour #3, 2006 posing at Donner Summit