

Oklahoma Route 66 Association, Inc.

901 Manvel Ave., Chandler, Oklahoma 74834
(405)258-0008

Volume 6, No. 6 NEWSLETTER December 94



PRESIDENT'S CORNER BY RON BURDEN

Well, another year has come and gone as 1994 is gradually fading into the History Books. It has been a good year with many exciting things happening on Route 66. Our annual meeting was held on November 19, 1994 in Luther. I want to thank the folks at the Armstrong Center for allowing the use of their facilities. Special thanks to Eula Teuscher and Maxine Campbell from the Arcadia Historical Society, to Sandy Stratton from the Oklahoma Historical Society and Clinton's Route 66 Museum, and to Sally Ferrell for their input and programs at the meeting.

During the meeting there was discussion and changes made to the Association By-Laws as follows: The position of Vice President was changed to Two Vice Presidents, one in Western Oklahoma and one in Eastern Oklahoma. The second change was a consolidation of the Individual/Family Membership dues to \$25.00. Officer and Directors were elected as follows: Western Vice President, Carol Duncan from Clinton; Eastern Vice President is Don Gray from Vinita; Secretary is Cletus Simpson from Davenport; and Treasurer is Jackie Kreeger from Miami. Following is a list of Trustees and the County they represent: Beckham County - Mr. Morton Scott; Blaine Co. - Mr. Allan Long; Caddo Co. - Mr. Odean Huiatt; Canadian Co. - **Vacant**; Craig Co. - Mr. Don Gray; Creek Co. - **Vacant**; Custer Co. - Ms. Carol Duncan; Lincoln Co. - Mr. Jack Sims; Oklahoma Co. - Mr. Jimmy Blue; - Ottawa Co. - Mr. Renick Kreeger; Rogers Co. - **Vacant**; Tulsa Co. - Mr. John Ackenhausen; Washita Co. - Mr. Fonny Spears; At-Large - Mr. Tom Myers and Mr. Ron Burden.

If anyone would like to serve in the three vacant trustee positions, please call the office and we will get back to you. We need everyone's input and participation.

I want to thank all of you for the help and support you have given me over the past two years. It has been a pleasure to serve the association and I hope many good things will continue to happen for our association and for Oklahoma.

I wish all of you a "Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year!"

COUPLES HEAD FOR CALIFORNIA IN MODEL-T

In the pre-dawn hour of Friday, December 17, 1954, two Ohio couples shook, rattled, and rolled out of Clinton, Oklahoma in a 1919 Model-T Ford. They were on their way on Route 66 to the Rose Bowl in Pasadena, California.

The trip started in Columbus, Ohio. It was a spontaneous idea, that developed at a dinner party. Mary Riggles made the suggestion to her husband, Malcolm and their two friends, Maxine and J. Alfred Shuman. The

Buckeyes were to play UCLA that New Year's Day. A number of their friends were flying to California, but the Riggles and the Shumans decided to go by car. But it wasn't just any car. C. Malcolm Riggles had owned and restored a Model-T.

They dressed in hunting suits with pockets for warming hands. Side curtains were affixed to the sides of the car roof to keep out the cold. The Tin Lizzie was checked over and seemed to be running good. On Saturday, December 12th, the couples started out. The plan was to get on Route 66 and head for the West Coast and the Big Game.

At Rolla, Missouri, the trip was delayed for 24 hours because of generator trouble. A local radio program found out about their problem and asked their listeners for help. Nine generators were found. A man by the name of Mr. Coffee replaced the broken part.

Newspapermen and T.V. reporters created some delays. T.V. cameras from Tulsa followed the couples to the start of the Tulsa Turnpike on Thursday morning, where they were met by more T.V. crews from Oklahoma City T.V. stations.

The Riggles and the Shumans had to stop each night at a place where their car could be garaged. People wanted to steal parts of the car for souvenirs. Reflective lettering was put on the sides and rear of the Lizzie so people could see them at night. The lettering said "Shake, Rattle, and Roll-OFF we go to the Rose Bowl."

They averaged about 200 miles each day. While in Clinton, the couples stayed at Glancy's Suburban Courts. Model-T's were not built for speed but for longevity. Passing anything on the road was a highlight, even if it was a farm tractor.

In one town, local businessmen came out and lassoed the car and invited the travelers to breakfast. At the California state line, two people, Mr. and Mrs. Duppler, came riding up on horses, covered with silver trappings, to greet the Ohioans. It seems as though they were from Ohio too.

Palm Springs, California was the end of the trail. The couples stayed in suites on the top of the Biltmore Hotel. The hotel management made arrangements for flowers and fruit to be placed in their rooms. A chartreuse Christmas tree was part of the holiday decoration.

The Riggles and the Shumans attended the Rose Bowl in the rain, but that did not dampen their spirits or the good times they had. Some of the things they got to do was to drive down Christmas Tree Lane in Los Angeles and see the fabulous light displays. They also got invited to the "Art Linkletter's House Party" t.v. show. The Model-T was moved out on the stage and they were interviewed.

A fire broke out on the lower level of the Biltmore Hotel. This created some excitement. The firemen and firetrucks were everywhere. But being trapped on the top floor of a

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building on fire can be scary too.

Mary Riggle took a Bell & Howell movie camera along on the trip to record all the happenings on Route 66. The film is missing. It was part of Mr. Riggle's estate. He passed away in 1974. It is regrettable that this historic home movie was misplaced and can't be shared by all, who would like to see it. The trip took nine days and nights. So there was lots of footage that showed the people and the times.

Malcolm Riggles had the car shipped home. The couples flew home from California to Dallas to Columbus.

The Riggles had one son and he lives in Columbus, Ohio. Mary Riggles Fourman lives in Auburnondale, Florida. The Shumans had one child. Maxine and Alfred Shuman have passed away.

For a period in time, the Riggles and the Shumans went for the "Gusto" and "Got their kicks on Route 66."

Highway Safety on Route 66

From the Files of The Clinton Daily News...

In the December 23rd, 1954 newspaper, a special front page picture showed a Highway safety warning display. During the fifties the Okla. Highway Patrol Troop H Headquarters was located on Route 66 in Clinton, Okla. At Christmas time the patrol officers would decorate for the holidays and they would also set up a highway safety exhibit.

The picture was too dark for us to copy, which was unfortunate. It showed a partially open casket with the funeral tent around it. Behind the casket a big sign that read:

**THIS...COULD BE YOU!
DRIVE SAFELY!**

The men viewing the display was W. K. Blood, assistant commissioner of public safety, Lawrence Bellatti, commissioner of public safety, Highway patrolman, Ray Griffin, and Lt. Charlie Burks.

That same Christmas OHP took part in the state line operation near Texola in which incoming out-of-state motorists were given safety talks. *DON'T BE A HIGHWAY FATALITY! HAPPY HOLIDAYS AND SAFE DRIVING ON OKLAHOMA ROUTE 66!*



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CHRISTMAS EVE

By Diana Dannatt

Johnny's just a little boy only three;
I have two more brothers older than me
Ma's in the kitchen, big, fat, and jolly
There's Pa, that one hanging' up the holly.
Later Johnny and Pa hasten out
To cut down the Christmas tree, no doubt;
See, there's a big one on the hill
That I can see from our window sill.
We're going to have chicken Christmas day.
We had turkey when Thanksgiving came its way.
I didn't want Ma to kill the chicken yet
It was the one I'd raised as a pet.
Ma and Pa's got the tree to fix
And to put Johnny to bed by six;
I'spose I'll go to bed at eight
Maybe I'll get to stay up a bit late.
We've sung all the carols we could sing;
Ma's told us about the birth of our king.
About ten we start up to bed
To a deep silence cold and dead.
Oh, Ma and Pa's forgot to trim the tree,
There they go downstairs again, I see.
I guess they think I'm fast asleep,
As quietly down the stairs they creep.
About two hours later, they're back at rest.
But I must be really careful lest
I make the bottom stair squeak
As I go downstairs to take a peek.
Oh, there's the tree, trimming and all,
And even Johnny's long-wanted ball
There's two or maybe three presents for me
And some for my brothers too, I see.
I must put the presents back in place,
Ma would know by the expression on my face.
The angel on the very top of the tree
Seems to smile and say "Merry Christmas" to me.
Now in the stillness of the night
I hear someone shout with all his might
"Merry Christmas" and a Happy New Year"
Wonder who this is, bringing good cheer?
I hear some footsteps on the roof
And even the sound of a reindeer's hoof,
I look out and I see a red coat so bright
Fading away in the darkness of the night.
I creep up the stairs, one by one
And look back on the things that I've done.
I hear Pa snoring away
As I eagerly wait for break of day.



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NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY INTERESTED IN ROUTE 66

The Oklahoma Route 66 Association received the following letter from the National Geographic Society. We hope to get very involved and we encourage our members to do the same. This could be an exciting project and a benefit to Oklahoma:

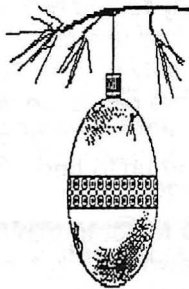
"National Geographic Explorer, the weekly documentary program on TBS Cable Television every Sunday night, is researching a potential film about Route 66. We are seeking characters, contacts, information, and history about the Mother Road.

*If you plan to travel east to west on Route 66 for vacation, study or work, in the spring or summer of 1995, please contact us!

* If your family has old home movies of your travels on old Route 66, please contact us!

*If your own history is closely tied to the story of the Mother Road, please contact us!

Please write to:
Lynn Dougherty
3430 34th Street NW
Washington, DC 20008
Or
Mike Mayers
10 Bank Street
New York, NY 10014"



A VIEW FROM THE OFFICE by Bill Blair



Another year has passed and it has been a good year. We have greeted visitors from all over our great country and the world. Folks come into the office wanting to know the history of our "Mother Road" and we try our best to share the resources available to us. There is a sparkle in their eye as we chat. One can see that the magic of Route 66 is still very much alive and growing.

New videos and books have been published about Route 66 in this past year. This demonstrates that *Route 66* is part of the *Roots* of America. This is sensed world wide.

I travel daily from Davenport to Chandler and back and have watched the changes to our road. The four seasons take their toll with extremes in heat and cold. The road survives thanks to the maintenance crews that patch and repair our history. This seven mile stretch is not very long but it is very dear. If the pavement could speak it would tell many stories that have never been heard.

Route 66 is our main road to many of the small and large towns in Oklahoma. The turnpikes are necessary in this day and age but when one has the extra time it is refreshing to travel the "Mother Road" and reflect on the past and how life used to be (and still is in many places along the route). Sometimes we need to slow down and catch the essence of the moment before the moment runs away from us... This can be done on Route 66...

Many thanks to all of those involved "behind the scenes" to make our association work: Jack Simms, Sally Ferrell, Carol Duncan, Cletus Simpson, Max Stoll (Central Oklahoma Federal Credit Union), Susie Brown & Carol Odom.

It has been a pleasure serving the Oklahoma Route 66 Association and I am looking forward to 1995.

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