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OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE YELLOWSTONE TRAIL ASSOCIATION

"A Good Road from Plymouth Rock to Puget Sound"



The Trail is Rich with Treasures

Article and photos by Dave Habura, our Northwest correspondent

The Yellowstone Trail is an old road...and that it is...but that is not all it is. It isn't just the road, but where it takes you! And what you discover along the way!

Don't get me wrong! A vintage section of the Trail is a kick to find and drive. But look up, down, and around at where the Trail is taking you....seek out the Trail Treasures along your way. This is about an April day on the Trail looking for treasures. To be completely honest it was closer to 26 hours, from Saturday mid-morning to Sunday mid-morning. I wanted to find sites that a 1920's traveler on the Trail would have seen or experienced. And frankly I succeeded beyond my own expectations. I'm not going describe the drive in the order I traveled it, but for the record I drove from Walla Walla to Colfax, Washington on the 1915 – 1925 Yellowstone Trail, and from Davenport to Coulee City on the 1925 and later Trail, then dropped back to the 1915-25 route at Ellensburg.

Landforms can be fascinating, especially if you understand what you are seeing. The Palouse country near Colfax is some of the nation's finest wheat land, because of its rich soil. But that soil didn't originate in the Palouse, it blew there!! It blew in from glacial out-wash to the south west, and it fell like snow to form the rolling mounds of earth you see today.

And believe me, the wind still blows, as proven by the Marengo wind farm. Each of the gigantic turbines produces 1.8 megawatts of power, enough to provide electricity for 500 – 600 homes. The 78 turbines of the Marengo Farm would provide for about 40,000 homes when operating near capacity. If the idea of hills formed by dust falling like snow doesn't intrigue you,

consider a wall of water 400 to 600 feet deep bearing down on you at 50 or 60 miles an hour, carrying rocks as large as houses, and carving giant canyons as it travels! As you travel the Trail between Davenport and Waterville, you come to Coulee City, and south a couple of miles is Dry Falls, a remnant of those humongous floods of about 12,000 years ago.

12,000 years is yesterday in geologic times, and the scars of these cataclysmic events are still very fresh on the landscape. Dry Falls State Park helps the visitor understand the floods. The cliffs in the photo are dry as bone today, but they were carved by rushing water that left remnants of a water fall five times wider than Niagara, and carrying more water than all of the modern world's rivers combined. The Trail crosses the path of the floods in many places for miles. You can see the results as you drive, but you can get another view from Google Earth or another satellite map. Center your view on Coulee City, Washington on the old Yellowstone Trail, and zoom in and out. You will see crop land and the darker scab-lands, scoured bare by the floods. The floods were the result of the sudden release of water from Lake Missoula when ice dams formed by glaciers collapsed, reformed and again collapsed several times.

The lake was 2000 feet deep and as large as Lakes Erie and Ontario combined, so the floods were substantial, to say the least!!! Peak water speeds reached 80 mph, and depths of 600 feet!



(Continued on next page)



One of my favorite experiences along the Yellowstone Trail can be found in every state, many times over along the Trail....**Main Street America**. Unlike modern express roads, the Trail went through the downtown of just about every village or settlement it passed, and as often as not the road was named Main Street. Main Street Waitsburg could come out of a picture book, and of course it was on the Trail. My friend John owns and operates the Waitsburg Hardware and Mercantile store in the photo. The J W Morgan building next door, built in 1892 is another with a cast iron front. Roadside architecture is always fun, whether it is a giant advertising figure or a beautiful Victorian building. When you are on the Trail passing through a town, look up and out for

cast iron store fronts and unique cast iron decorations from the past. Some are quite beautiful.

A block off the Trail in Ellensburg stands the Davidson Building. Look up to see the cast iron eagle outlined against the sky. The entire building is decorated with cast iron. In the late 1800's and early part of the last century, it was common to upgrade your building with a cast iron face, and decorations. Many cities had foundries producing cast iron fronts. And many examples exist in whole or part along the Trail. Look for the ornate flourishes and for the foundry's stamp at the base of one or more columns. I found beautiful examples in Walla Walla, Waitsburg, Dayton, and Ellensburg. You will find others on the Trail near you.



Americans still have a love affair with movies and one of the fun discoveries along the Trail is an old **movie theater**. A beautiful example is the American (later known as the Liberty) Theater in Walla Walla. Opened in 1917 on the Yellowstone Trail, it witnessed many a traveler pass by, and no doubt many stopped to catch a movie. Of course these were silent films, because talkies didn't become popular until after 1925, and by then the Trail had shifted to a northern route and no longer passed by the American. The mighty Style D "Special" Wurlitzer at the American, installed in 1922 when the Trail still passed the door, would have filled the theater, and probably the Trail outside as well, with its thunderous tones. Special effects included auto horn, train,

horse's hoofs, siren, surf, and gong, among others! It would have provided dramatic sounds and music for movies like Robin Hood starring Wallace Barry, and The Headless Horseman with Will Rogers. Today it is preserved as part of Macy's Walla Walla department store.

Another often sighted Trail remnant is the **ghost sign**. These are the signs painted on the sides of buildings advertising products or announcing the name of a Hotel, or other business. I spotted a couple once I started looking. The one in Dayton would seem to be a waste today as it was on the back of a building facing the Trail roadway...but it was visible from the railroad tracks and the railroad station. The Dayton ghost sign reads Cleveland' Superior Baking Powder - Purity Strength Perfection....and according to a 1913 newspaper ad it contained "no poisonous alum!" The Ross Bros ghost sign is in Ellensburg.

One of my objectives on this short trip was to drive the Faux Trail between Dayton and Pomeroy. The official 1917 Route

Folder erroneously placed Pomeroy on the Yellowstone Trail, and anyone following it would have driven through the hamlet of Marengo on what I have christened the Faux Yellowstone Trail. (Continued on next page)





The **schoolhouse** was later a **community church** in Marengo that combines the two examples of evocative roadside architecture.

I find the stories on headstones interesting and of course often poignant. A **graveyard** tells many stories. The one near the abandoned village of Covello on the Faux Trail is a good example. There are only a couple of headstones with dates after the 1920's, for the probable reason that Covello was likely abandoned by then. It

had been a village of over a hundred people at the turn of the last century, but apparently it was depopulated by the late 1920's. It was likely the result of a shift from small family farms to larger holdings. I couldn't resist photographing the juxtaposition of Minnie's tombstone and the giant wind turbines. As was true for many buried at Covello, she died as a child. Minnie was only a few months old when she died in 1892.

The Trail is rich with treasures waiting to be recognized and appreciated. What do you look for when you are driving the Trail? Ψ



What's new on my Bookshelf?

By Mark Mowbray

I spent some of the recent cold and rainy spring days reading “**The Big Roads: The Untold Story of the Engineers, Visionaries, and Trailblazers Who Created the American Superhighways**” by *Earl Swift*,

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.



Don't let the title fool you, this book is as much about the “**old roads**” we love as it is about Interstates. Published in 2011, it's up to date and very well researched. It's an interesting read for any road trip fan. The early chapters cover the development of roads from buffalo trails to wagon routes to the named automobile trails and then numbered roads follows the development of the automobile and the phenomenal growth of that industry. With only a very few horseless carriages on the road in 1900, by 1923, the 20's

were roaring, and the total number of cars on the road was 15 million, with 3.9 million cars and trucks produced in that year alone. Much of the information is available in many other earlier published books but Swift does a commendable job of condensing and integrating many sources. I am not, however, totally behind his lavish praise and the credit given to Carl Graham Fisher though. Fisher was one of the “originators” of the Lincoln Highway and was a flamboyant promoter of many other schemes. His work on “selling” the Lincoln Highway is well documented here and the vast publicity that Fisher, and the LH, gained also shown some light on the Yellowstone Trail, and many other lesser auto trails, by raising the public's awareness and creating more demand for “Good Roads” everywhere. But there were hundreds, probably thousands of people who also contributed immensely to the development and improvements over the years. Fisher's story is a good read though.

The book proceeds to define early development of both in-state and inter-state roads, and early planning, beginning in the 1930s, of what would eventually be known as the Interstate Highway System. Swift devotes a great deal of space to President Dwight Eisenhower, who is wrongly credited today as the “Father” of the Interstate. I won't ruin that story but it is a darn good one, you will have to read this book to get the truth. I have never come across some of that information before, and it was worth the price of the book and the time spent reading it. The problems with routing freeways through inner cities, destruction of neighborhoods, anti-automobile critics, and the slow death of small towns by-passed by interstates are also well-covered. Politicians, both the good guys and the bad are adequately described, along with toll roads and the various methods of taxing of fuel, oil, tires, and fuel to finance the billions of dollars for projects over the years. The unsung heroes of this book, and the real “fathers” of all our favorite roads, are the legions of engineers and planners who studied, measured, and quantified each and every detail. They stood fast against differing political influences and created the vast highway system we have today. New and used copies and an e-book are available online, or visit your local book store or library. Ψ

Maiden Voyage-Lessons Learned

Article by Sarah Gilbert / photos by Carolyn Rock

Idle time spent in front of the computer can lead to fun – so long as you get out and hit the Trail. One lazy winter afternoon while searching out the best back road route between Stevens Point and Marshfield, Wisconsin, I spotted something called “Yellowstone Road.” My memory started to tickle a little bit and I remembered seeing Yellowstone Trail signs in Marshfield. An internet search yielded the Yellowstone Trail Association website and I began to learn about this historic route that, to my surprise, is a block from my home and the road I drive on nearly every day.

I called my friend Carolyn and told her about my find. A road trip to take a break from the stress of work and daily life was just what we both needed. Like many other YT travelers before us, we picked our day to travel (which we planned to be a perfect sunny spring day), put gas in the car, gathered our Yellowstone Trail Driver’s Guide and a few maps, made sure the camera was ready, and off we went. A drizzly and cold spring day was what we ended up with.

Sarah on left, Carolyn on right near Stevens Point

Despite that dreary day, here are a few things we learned on our first Yellowstone Trail road trip:

- Embrace: “It’s about the journey, not the destination.”
- Even if the trip photographer says, “Stop right here! I want a picture of that,” every mile or so, the trip driver has to stop saying, “We’ll never make it out of Portage county” after you cross the county line.
- Overconfidence will cause you to miss your turn more times within 10 miles of home than during a whole day of driving.



- Missing your turns causes laughter.
- “Stop right here!” is much easier to execute on rural roads than in town.
- Remember that you actually did turn the oven off. It will save the time it takes to return home to turn the oven off.
- Stop for photographs.

- Silly photographs cause laughter.
- Take a few extra YT guides with you to leave with people you meet who find out what you’re doing and say, “That sounds fun! I didn’t know anything about it.”
- If you see a yellow fiberglass cow, stop for photos. (How can you not?)
- Don’t be afraid of a little rain; even rain can cause laughter.
- When you post pictures of your trip on Facebook, you’ll gain traveling companions for next time.



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- After you've been on the trail for a couple hours take note that the troubles you were talking about before you got in the car are nowhere to be found.



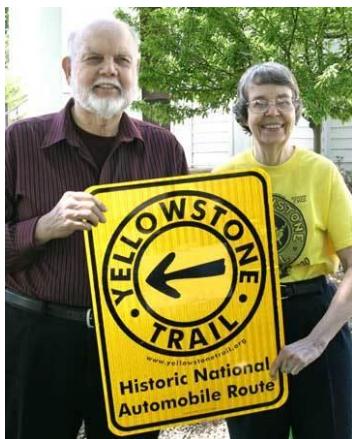
Elm Road West of Stevens Point, Wisconsin

I think that last one surprised both Carolyn and me. The evening before, we'd spent our time catching up; we only see each other a couple times a year. Our conversation had been about all the things going on in our lives, good and bad. The most valuable part of our YT trip was getting us to stop thinking about all those things. For one day, our biggest concerns were whether the next turn was right or left, the story of the interesting little church on the horizon, what kind of cows were at the farm we just passed, and getting just the right angle on the photograph. (Oh, and don't forget the important decision of waffle cone or dish for your ice cream.) Ψ

Mapping the YT

John Ridge, co-founder and President of the modern Yellowstone Trail Association is diligently updating the YT maps that he has developed over the past many years. They will be used in Alice and John's upcoming YT book; as the basis of our upcoming GPS maps; and on our website for all to view and use. He is using his extensive collection of antique maps and his many years of research, along with the fantastic map resources now available on the internet, to digitally plot both the original route and today's exact drivable one. He reports great progress and even has a grad student intern to assist him.

The following is John's brief description of that development.



We first learned of the Yellowstone Trail through a family story about that "highway marked with yellow stones" that passed through our part of the country and that "led to the West." Casual interest changed to commitment to learn more about the Yellowstone Trail during our first trip west after retirement. Locally, the route was apparently US 12, so we followed US 12 toward Helena, Montana, picking up bits of information along the way but discovering the First Year Book of the association in the Montana State Historical Society archives. In it we learned about America's early named routes and the struggle to accommodate bicycles and the early automobiles on dirt wagon roads. And we learned of the route of the YT at least from the Twin Cities, Minnesota, to Three Forks, Montana.

John (left) and Alice Ridge

Translating the 1914 route to modern roads turned out to be challenging – and intriguing, as did the complete 3500 miles of constantly changing road alignments and modified routings. We had a thousand questions during our attempt to create a modern map of the old routings. By the time of our first book, **Introducing the Yellowstone Trail**, we still had little definitive knowledge of the exact routing.

Over the next years we added much of what we learned to maps on the YellowstoneTrail.org web site. We scoured hundreds of newspapers, the early auto maps, auto club strip maps, the popular Automobile Blue Books and anything we could find to gradually make our maps more accurate.

We are now attempting to prepare a book that will both document the route and history of the YT AND serve as a travel guide for the modern traveler to personally rediscover this old route that had a name. As the series of maps is completed they will be added to the web site so that others might find the Trail – and join us in correcting and improving those maps. Ψ

"Back on A Good Road"

By Cameron L. Goetz

Travelling the Yellowstone Trail from Plymouth Rock to Puget Sound over the past year and a half has been an adventure, and I will share some of the adventure through story, philosophy, and photos. Starting with segments through Wisconsin in my Ford Escort wagon, my wife Phyllis and I first went north to Withee, Wisconsin to view the only preserved "R" in Wisconsin, painted yellow on the side of Pippin's Tavern in the center of town, indicating a right turn heading east to Owen on the YT. We then stopped at the circa 1909 Woodland Hotel in Owen for an ice cream social and tour celebrating the YT's 100th anniversary.

Replacing the Escort, I bought a new Chevy Equinox so I could cover both the eastern and western extensions of the YT in style. Driving east through Milwaukee and Chicago on the YT route was hair-raising but informative. South Chicago through Hammond, Indiana was confusing but once I got to Valparaiso, people seemed more aware of the YT and were genuinely welcoming. The YT follows the railroad, more or less, into Ohio and then up along Lake Erie into Pennsylvania. New York is full of sights and sounds of natural beauty – Niagara Falls and the Adirondack Mountains. However, in a hurry to get to Plymouth Rock we only stopped at Niagara Falls and drove straight though New York and Massachusetts but for overnight stays. We always stay at mom and pop motels that look like they could have been built in the thirties or forties.

The western route of the YT – from Milwaukee, WI to Seattle, WA - was more hospitable. Meeting people that really talked to you about the history and lore of the YT was the highlight. Be sure you look up these helpful local historians: Joel Bernhard at "Confections for Any Occasions" in Theresa, WI; Butch Pomeroy (CEO), International Bank of Amherst, WI - in his family since 1893; Dick Hogan in Olivia, MN at the Chatterbox Café; Harrell "punk" Bender at Butterfield Chevrolet in Ellensburg, WA, a business on YT since the 1920's.



"Rustic Road", the road that starts at the end of the road; it is the road "somewhere in time."

Before there were numbered roads and highways there were many named trails, some long and still remembered like the Lincoln Highway, the National Old Trails Road, and the Yellowstone Trail. Other lesser routes were short lived. It is exhilarating to compare and contrast how the communities, businesses, and transportation priorities have shaped the early highways. The YT predominantly followed railroads and old stage lines because of geographical grade preference and to be near goods and services. In many areas, the YT followed the best existing routes. For example, near Excelsior, Minnesota is a restored 1880's Stagecoach Inn and nearby Jail at the intersection of Yellowstone Trail and Tee Trail. (Continued on next page)

Let's begin with a brief historical perspective. As you travel the YT you learn that The Yellowstone Trail can be many things to many people:

*The YT is historically the first highway across the United States, formulated at the Good Roads Meeting Oct. 9, 1912 in Lemmon, South Dakota.

*The YT is biographical and anthropological of the towns, cities, autos, rail roads, and people along the road.

*The YT is motivational and it encourages public awareness of the folks that invented and traveled its majestic beauty.

*Last but not least, the Road is spiritual. It is as Robert Frost put it, "the road less traveled." It is a



On their journeys out west, early travelers discovered that Yellowstone National Park was off limits to autos. In 1915, the US Senate, with the encouragement of the Yellowstone Trail Association and many others, directed the National Parks Department to permit cars in the Park.

The communities and their drivers and vehicles of the early 20th century became increasingly independent of public transportation. Folks were leaving the farms, getting better paying jobs, and having freedom to buy cars and to take vacations throughout the USA. Gas stations, roadside cabins, and campgrounds were needed, and they started popping up. Also, the milk, livestock, produce, and manufacturing industries were transporting goods farther by truck and the need for dependable city to city roads were required.

The YT and successive association and networking of travel information blossomed in the 1912-29 period. Businesses on the route encouraged travelers to “go west” and spend their vacation dollars at the national parks, scenic wonders, and on family or group adventures. The teens and roaring twenties were a time of freedom and exploration for Americans. The visionary founding YT leaders such as Parmley, Marston, Dowling, Preebe, Wiley, and Prindle organized publicity events and developed public relations throughout the YT route. They set up Information Bureaus, Yellowstone Trail tents, and camping sites on the Trail. Garages, restaurants, and overnight accommodations were publicized in brochures and newspapers. Sociability runs from town to town and city to city were all the rage. Signs, painted stones, and other yellow and black markers were set up all along the Trail, especially in the west.

Finally, I would like to share the true nature of the YT. The spirit for the Trail united a nation’s feeling of freedom and adventure. The phrase “See the USA in Your Chevrolet” didn’t come until the Dinah Shore Show of the 50’s, but that spirited ideal lifted all Americans from 1912-1929 along the YT. Folks ventured out on their own to become aware of their national identity. When people along the Trail ask this writer why I travel and study the YT, I tell them what Kevin Kostner, in a line from the movie “Dances with Wolves” says, “I go out to the wild west because I want to see it before it’s gone.” So the YT is a fading piece of history, anthropology, and sociological phenomenon. It is the spirit of Americans’ integrity and hope. When I visit many of the “Trail” towns across the country, I see remnants of a nation willing to work hard and yet to share with their fellow travelers. The YT gives safe passage to its travelers without asking for much in return beyond its maintenance and respect. The Trail is a gift to all Americans. So be glad to drive “A Good Road from Plymouth Rock to Puget Sound.”



Let me end this article with a personal note. My favorite story comes from Marmarth, North Dakota where I met this wonderful elderly gentleman who remembered the YT in its glory. He went on for hours telling stories of meetings, plays and concerts at the grand old auditorium that was the site of the 1923 North Dakota Division meeting of the



Yellowstone Trail Association. When he found out I had a grandson, Carson, who collects rocks, he walked back to his house and got a collection of petrified wood that he had salvaged from the Petrified Forest just north of the YT. What a memento; to remember the YT with a remnant of the oldest trees in America. Ψ

“The Road Not Taken”
By Robert Frost (excerpt)

“...Two roads diverged in a wood, and I---
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.”

Yellowstone Trail Association
www.yellowstonetrail.org
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Help get the word out

Join with us – just \$15/year

A Beginner's Guide to Old Road Systems...or, “How the heck did I end up here?”

By Tom Morehouse, our Eastern States Correspondent.

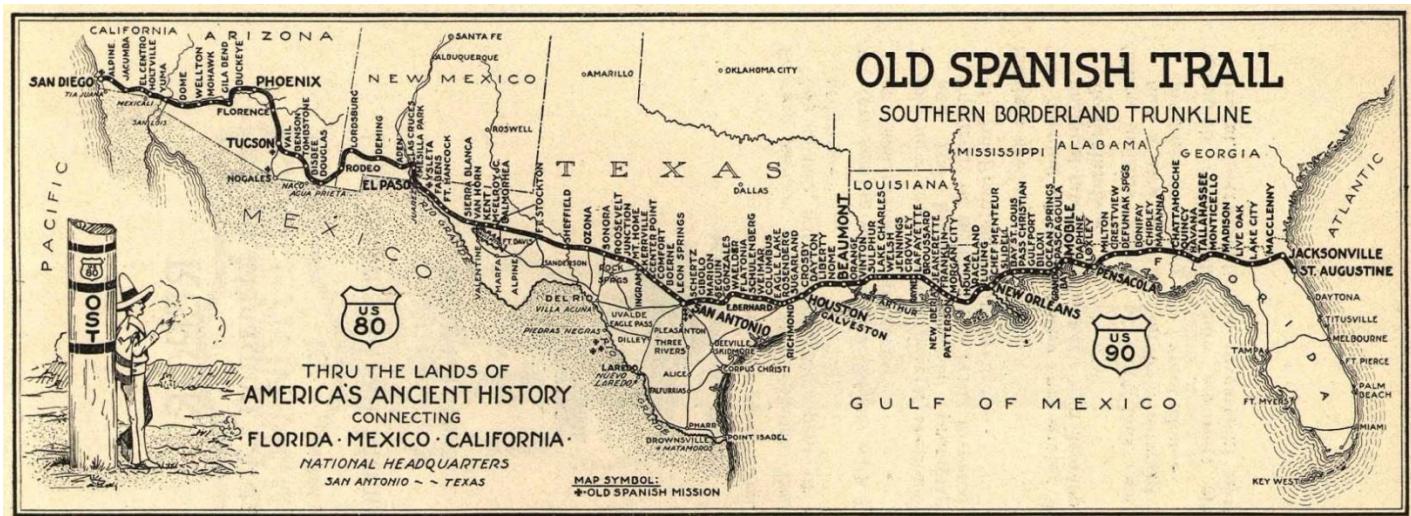
About twenty years ago I had to drive to a meeting in downtown Providence, Rhode Island - about an hour from where I live in eastern Connecticut. Back in those ancient pre-GPS days, we found our way using something called a "road map": a piece of paper showing cities, roads, parks, etc., and sometimes bound with others to form an atlas.



Fortunately, US Hwy 44 runs from near my house in Connecticut, all the way into downtown Providence. I found my meeting-place, but due to parking restrictions, I had to park about three blocks away. In typical fashion, I managed to stay awake during the meeting by counting light bulbs and window panes, and listening to the attendees make recommendations of "important things which must be done!", while they carefully avoided taking any responsibility for actually doing something. At the close of the meeting, I grabbed a few left-over doughnuts, and headed back to the car. Driving out of the parking lot, I saw a poorly-lit highway sign "Rt. 44 to the right". Turning right, I followed that street a few blocks,

and then I saw "Rt. 44 left". Turning left, I continued for nearly a mile until my sagging confidence was boosted when I saw "Rt. 44 ahead". I stayed on that street as it left the downtown area and entered a suburban residential district. Soon the road became gravel, and then it just ended at an empty field...in the middle of nowhere. Long story short: After finally making it home, I eventually discovered that those Rt. 44 signs had been set up at least forty years before. As highways were re-routed, the signs remained in place. There's always a committee to recommend new highway signs; there are evidently few committees who keep track of whether those signs are still needed.

How do roads become named and numbered highways? How long has that process existed? Construction of our current federal "Interstate Highway System" began in 1956, but what was the system prior to that?



As we know, the Yellowstone Trail was the first coast to coast highway system in the United States, established early in the twentieth century. But there were dozens of "auto trails", most with descriptive names, guiding travelers from one point to another, supposedly on improved roads. Such auto trails included the Dixie Highway from Chicago to Miami, the Lincoln Highway from New York City to San Francisco, and the Old Spanish Trail from Saint Augustine Florida to San Diego California. Note the "OST" on the post at the bottom left of the map.

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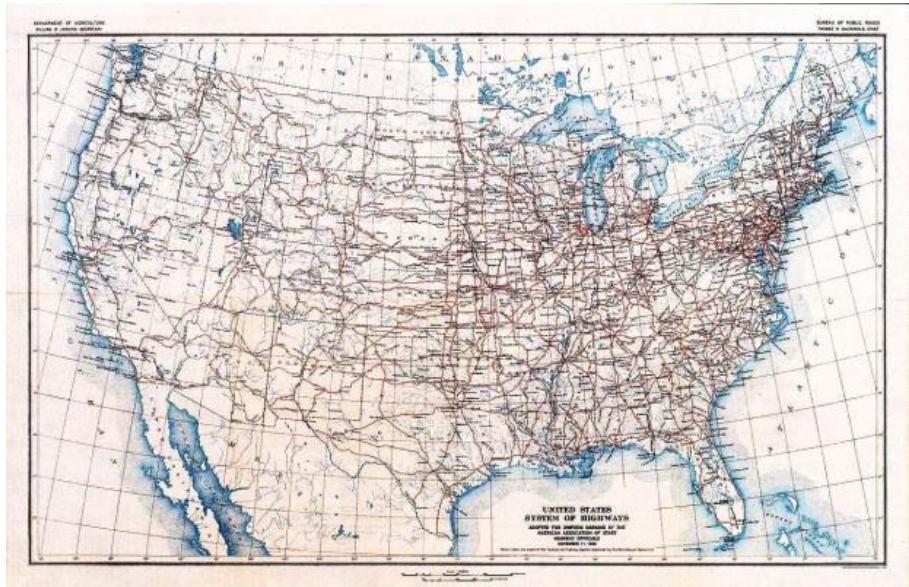


Even as early as the first decade of the nineteenth century, there was a "National Road", often called the Cumberland Road, financed by the young federal government, stretching between Cumberland Maryland and Vandalia Illinois. We may owe the idea of a systematic numbered highway system to the State of Wisconsin. In 1917, the Wisconsin legislature prohibited the naming of auto trails without prior authorization, and enacted legislation for the creation and signing of a state-wide numbered highway system. Following many studies and recommendations, numbered highway signs were erected on roads all over Wisconsin in a single week in May of 1918. Thus, Wisconsin created the first signed system of route-numbered highways. Wisconsin allowed the

Yellowstone Trail markings to remain because it was so well-known and well-used in that state. But, what about the regional highway systems? The six New England states created the first multi-state numbered road system in 1922. The goal of the "New England Interstate Routes" was to simplify the often conflicting state numbering systems, where "Massachusetts Route 4" became "Connecticut Route 6" at the state line. Most of those New England highways still exist, still using the same shared numbers. For example, Route 8 still runs from Searsburg, Vermont to Bridgeport Connecticut.

Seeing the success of these simpler, numbered systems, the American Association of State Highway Officials began to plan a system of marked and numbered "interstate highways" at its 1924 meeting. Route proposals were made, submitted to states, and refined. In 1926 the final "United States Highway Plan" was approved; this plan included some federal subsidies for road construction and systemization.

Interestingly, some people were not happy about the replacement of "names" with numbers. From the New York Times in 1925: "The traveler may shed tears as he drives the Lincoln Highway, or dream dreams as he speeds over the Jefferson Highway. But how can he get a 'kick' out of 46, 55 or 33 or 21?"



That American Association of State Highway Officials still exists, and even today recommends changes in routes and numbering systems.

With the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1956, the great "Interstate Highway System" began. The Act built on FDR's pre-WW2 idea of "interregional roads", as well as finding some inspiration in the German Autobahn system. Although the Interstate system was originally meant to supplement the old US numbered highway system, many states began to re-route highways along the new Interstate highways. Named highways still exist today, and numbered highways may have "nick-names", but most large cities in the USA are now connected by numbered "Interstate" highways.

A nineteenth century network of winding dirt roads has slowly become a system of paved, all-weather highways linking major metropolitan areas. And as the weather warms, I hope to continue my exploration of the Yellowstone Trail here in New England. Ψ

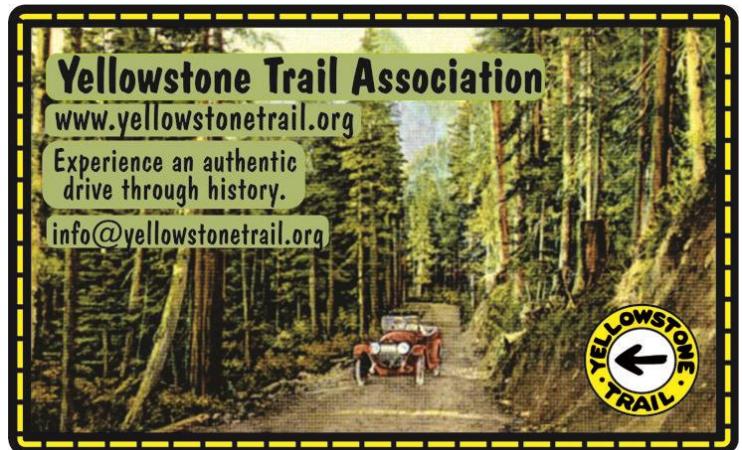
Correction and Apology

I committed a stupid error in Arrow #28. In the well written road trip article by Tom Morehouse, our Eastern States Correspondent, he told about viewing the one and only original Bugatti airplane at the EAA Museum in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. He had submitted the correct information to me. When I edited his article, I looked up some reference material on the internet and I changed Tom's article after mistakenly identifying the photo of the airplane as a replica that is now in California. The airplane that is in Oshkosh is not the replica; it is the original. Please accept my sincerest apologies Tom. I also apologize to our readers for my error.

Memberships

Many of you have already renewed your Yellowstone Trail Association memberships, and some you have joined for the first time. Your support is very much appreciated.

If you have not yet renewed or joined us as a member, now is the time. Our membership year is from June 1st to May 31st and we welcome one and all to help support the research and promotion of "our Trail". We are a non-profit, all-volunteer group and we work for free, with all money used for YT business expenses only. Donations are always welcome.



Byron Historical Society Annual Meeting

I had a very enjoyable visit to Byron, Wisconsin on March 17 for the 2014 annual meeting of the Historical Society. They had asked me give a presentation because Byron is directly on the YT route and this year they are celebrating their history of being a vital link for both rail and road travel through the area.

There was a "standing room only" crowd of about 60 folks in attendance at the Town Hall and they were a friendly and interested group.



Byron on your next trip in Wisconsin.

Standing L to R: Mark Mowbray, Jackie Hansen, BHS secretary; Francis Ferguson, BHS board member; Jan Guell, BHS vice president; Linda Vollmer, BHS board member; Maureen Betz, BHS president; Seated: Erv Kraft, BHS treasurer.

After their brief business meeting, I started off with the excellent 24 minute DVD presentation that John and Alice Ridge developed, and it was very well received. I followed up by answering a few questions and informally told them of some of the exciting things we have going on. We had a door prize drawing for three reproduction 1919 YT Route Folders and I also had a small display of my collectible YT items available for viewing.

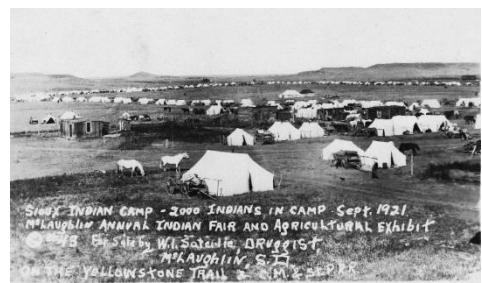
I had some great conversations with many individuals after the program was over. The most common comment was: "I live on the Yellowstone Trail!" followed by their stories. Their small town pride and enthusiasm made it a quite rewarding visit for me. Great fun! Don't miss

YT Forum News

Our Yellowstone Trail Forum has been a great deal of fun to participate in so far and has included a number of very interesting details. There have been 39 separate "Topic Posts" since we began, and a total of 275 replies. To read topic posts and reply comments:

1. You do not have to sign in!
2. You do not have to register!
3. You do not have to be a member of the Yellowstone Trail Association!

Only members can post anything, others can read all they want, OK? Some of the very interesting topics have been "YT History Mystery" about "ghost signs", those faded signs painted on the sides of old buildings; "The Faux Trail", about an apparent error in the 1917 YT Route Folder that routed the YT travelers through Marengo, Washington; and "The Big Roads", a post about both early and recent road development.



These topics and many more can be found at <http://yellowstonetrail.ipbhost.com/>

"Well, how do I use it?" you ask. Once you click to that home page, you will notice below the gold YT map, on the right side is "**Recent Topics**" with a list of the five most recent ones.

Click on one of them and read down through the Topic post and replies. Simple, isn't it?

Now click the **Blue Arrow** button way at the top left of your screen to go back to the home page. Then, under "Recent Topics" pick another one. And away you go!

The Always Changing Trail

On my recent drive near North Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, my brother Mike pointed out to me that the road, locally known as Lakeshore Drive, that crossed from the Van Dyne Rd. (county RP) over to WI Highway 45 across the rail yards in now permanently closed to all traffic. That segment was part of the early route of the YT between Oshkosh and Fond du Lac, but is no longer drivable. Check your **Driving the Yellowstone Trail in Wisconsin** guide or the maps on our website for alternate routes.

Another Anniversary

Although the Trail was established in 1912, it took a few years to fully route it across the entire United States. 2015 will be the 100th anniversary of the completion of the routing of the western 2/3rds of the YT from Seattle, Washington to Chicago, Illinois. The route East of Chicago to Plymouth Rock was being mapped and routed, but would not be completed until 1917. If you live along the Trail, now is the time to be planning anniversary parties!

Happy Trails

Mark Mowbray, Executive Director, Yellowstone Trail Association

707 Rockshire Drive, Janesville, WI 53546

Please feel free to write, email me at mmowbray@yellowstonetrail.org or call me, afternoons and evenings only please, at 608-436-3978.

Trail-O-Grams

***Saturday June 7th & Sunday June 8th, 2014** - Hudson, Wisconsin is having its **5th Annual**

Yellowstone Trail Heritage Days celebrating the 102nd Anniversary of the founding of the YT.

There will be a Vintage and Classic Car Show, "Slow Race", and "Explore the Trail" sociability auto tour on Saturday, along with many other local events. More at <http://www.hudsonwi.org/events/yellowstone-trail-day>

***Friday thru Sunday June 13th, 14th & 15th, 2014** - Ipswich Trail Days in Ipswich, South Dakota will include the eighth annual Yellowstone Trail Art Show, along with a full line-up of food, golf tournaments and concerts. Special attractions include a pie social, "Bull-riding Bonanza", tractor pull, a car show and parade, and much more. More at <http://www.ipswichtralldays.com/schedule/>

***Friday thru Sunday August 15th, 16th, & 17th, 2014** - Hamlet, Indiana's annual **Yellowstone Trail Fest** will feature a full weekend of fun activities, including food, games, contests, and the **Miss Yellowstone Trail Queen** contest. Located at the Fairgrounds, 400 South Division Street, Hamlet, IN 46532 More at <http://www.yellowstonetrailfest.com/>

Mullan Road Conference

May 2-4 found John and Alice Ridge at the 2014 Mullan Road Conference in Missoula, Montana. The Mullan Road was a military road carved by Captain John Mullan through the wilderness from Walla Walla, Washington, to Fort Benton, Montana, 1859-1862. Why a "military road"? Congress was interested in having a way for army supplies to reach Washington from the last upriver steamboat port on the Missouri River, Fort Benton. Encouraging trade through this route and protecting settlers were also mandated.

Because of the challenging Bitterroot Mountain terrain, choices of route were few - follow the streams and the passes, - but avoid having to build too many bridges. By 1880 the Mullan Road was largely replaced by the railroad. About 35 years after the demise of the crude Mullan Road, the Yellowstone Trail and the automobile faced the same challenges - but avoid crossing the tracks too many times. As a result, the Trail and the old Mullan Road were intertwined at several places. The YT is only a faint track of asphalt next to the Mullan path. The Mullan Conference has been held for about 25 years, by the Mineral County Historical Society of Superior, Montana, assisted by other historical groups. Like the Yellowstone Trail Association, everything is done by interested volunteers. Sites for the conference are chosen from towns along the Mullan Road - Fort Benton, Helena, Missoula, Superior, and Walla Walla. Speakers did their homework well, traveling to the Library of Congress and the National Archives as well as scouring local libraries and

even finding Mullan descendants to attend. Field trips along the Mullan are included in conferences. The group pictured here viewed and heard about the Mullan and the YT running parallel. The YT ran next to a railroad bridge in Milltown in this picture. The Mullan has been reduced to a mere foot path in some places, but walking those paths along sides of hills carved with early surveying tools, and viewing sites of their bridges and "cantonments" made us realize the physical struggle the builders experienced. The Yellowstone Trail Association's struggle was one of persuasion. But both groups persevered because they knew the importance of roads - something we don't even think about today. Ψ



Breaking News

The **World Auto Tour** had completed the first leg in Japan and had arrived in Vladivostok, Russia on May 19th. They will begin the United States leg of the Tour in September on the YT. <http://worldautotour.com/>

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