



OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF
THE YELLOWSTONE TRAIL ASSOCIATION

"A Good Road from Plymouth Rock to Puget Sound"



1917 Oakland on Yellowstone Trail Tour – Part 2

By John Gunnell, Iola, WI Photos by author and Arrow staff

Note: This is an edited version of John Gunnell's Yellowstone Trail Tour blog

The Yellowstone Trail, which runs through 409 miles in Wisconsin, was recently used to help celebrate 100 years of Lions Clubs. Automotive author John Gunnell and Manawa Lions Club Member and mechanic Dave Sarna, drove the Wisconsin section of the historic trail eastward from Hudson to Waupaca and from there southward to Kenosha. The Oct. 9-14, 2017 trip, in Gunnell's 1917 Oakland car, has collected over \$7,000 for the Wisconsin Lions camp for blind and disabled kids in Rosholt, Wisconsin.

Yellowstone Trail Tour Day 5 - Dave & 3 Bobs Get the Oakland Rolling



1917 Oakland at Comfort Inn - Plover, Wisconsin

After a photo session at the Plover Comfort Inn, we headed to Waupaca with the Oakland on the trailer. Dave Sarna and I wanted to get to Gunner's Great Garage by 8:30am so that he could work on the Oakland engine. Mechanic Bob Hansen starts work at that ungodly hour and would be there to help Dave. Bob Buchman was also meeting us at 8:30, as was Bob Hanson of WPAK Radio 106.9 AM in Waupaca, Wisconsin.

Things were already hopping by the time we arrived. Our plan was to have Dave and the three Bobs work on the car, before and during the Lions lunch. Debbie Sarna had brought us the good used Oakland rod bearings that Andy Wise, of Ellendale, Delaware had quick-mailed to us. Bob Buchman and Dave re-shimmed and re-gauged the rod bearings with a pretty good sized crowd watching them, as if they were entertainers, rather than mechanics. Bob Hansen sanded the bearings that Andy had sent and Bob Hanson organized the rod shims by thickness and ran tools back and forth. The work on the car progressed from 9 am on and wasn't completely over until about 2:45. The car started almost immediately and smoked like the mosquito-killing truck that we used to chase around town when we were kids (yes, we survived it!). Dave drove it around the block several times. It was smoking because we had purposely over-filed it with oil. We figured that was a better thing to do with a splash lube system, than to have too little oil. I'm surprised that no one called the Waupaca Fire Dept.

It was 3pm, two hours later than we wanted to hit the road. We loaded the car on the trailer and took off. The car was working well, but we didn't want to drive it on a 4-lane highway. So, we towed it to a spot near Fremont, and offloaded the car for the ride into Oshkosh. That was a 30-40 mile run along some of the prettiest country back roads in Wisconsin. This was one of the most enjoyable parts of the trip so far, but another high point was to come in Oshkosh.

We arrived at Leon's Custard in Oshkosh and a small group of Lions were there to greet us. One was Wayne Heiman, of the Manawa Lions, who had done so much to make our tour successful. Wayne handled all the Lions Club connections and booked all the hotel rooms for Dave and me.

The other person was Shirley, of the Oshkosh Lakeshore Lions. Shirley has been blind since she was six months old and is 87 today. She is a wonderful lady who Dave took for a ride in the Oakland. Shirley rewarded him with a \$200 donation to the Lions Club camp in Rosholt.

Continued

Yellowstone Trail Tour Day 6 - Trail of Smoke

Friday started at the Comfort Inn in Oshkosh under cloudy skies. For the rest of the day, we would cloud the air a little bit more with white or black or blue exhaust smoke. The day ended at the Super 8 in Hartford, Wis., with a roll of duct tape, some borrowed plastic wrap and cloudy skies that turned to rainy skies.

We stopped at a BP gas station at the intersection of Highway 45 and Winnebago County Road R and met Kenn Oie, who had emailed us that he would meet us with his 1960 Thunderbird. While Ken and I talked, Dave attended to some service work on the car. We started off again on County Road R, with Dave and the smoky Oakland leading the parade, Kenn following in the T-Bird and me driving the F150 Crew Cab chase truck and trailer.

The Oakland was running fairly strong and we stayed on R until we came to Fond du Lac County RP, which took us into North Fond du Lac. Several of the Yellowstone Trail road signs were spotted along this route. We were early for a change, but Lions Club members representing three different Lions Clubs in the area were already at the Yellowstone Trail Park in North Fond du Lac. The small park has a large Yellowstone Trail sign that was great for photo opportunities.



Group photo at Yellowstone Trail Park in North Fond du Lac
Mark and his brother Mike were also at the park to meet us.

Next to the Park is Northern Battery, located in a historic building that was the Yellowstone Garage from 1920 until 1967. The Garage was operated by the late Jim Mowbray from 1949 -1967. Jim was the father of Mark Mowbray, the Executive Director of the national Yellowstone Trail Association.



Northern Battery, former Yellowstone Garage

Mark had told Kirk Donskey, the vice president of Northern Battery, about our plans to stop at the building. Kirk made a healthy donation to the Lions Club and also donated a new 6-volt Northern Battery that his crew installed in the Oakland while we were there. We also got a tour of the inside of the old Yellowstone Garage. This was of particular interest to me, being the owner of another Yellowstone Garage in Waupaca.

After an hour or so, we were ready to take off and smoke up the highway to Hartford. Dave had been advised to put a little diesel fuel in the Oakland's tank, so we went looking for a gas station with diesel fuel. On the way to the Quik-Trip station, the Oakland started acting up. At the station, Dave took the distributor apart and cleaned the

contact points with sandpaper. He then checked and adjusted the carburetor.

I suggested we might want to put the car on the trailer and tow it to the museum in Hartford, but Dave was having none of that. He insisted the car was going to make it under its own power. It wasn't "good," but it was functioning enough to drive the car.

So, we skipped lunch and went smoking through downtown Fond du Lac on our way to Hartford on Highway 175. Mark had mentioned something about a hill we'd have to climb—and he wasn't lying!



Smokin' on Main Street!

Continued

In the old days, Oakland automobiles were known as good hill climbers, but our 1917 “Sensible Six” huffed and puffed a little climbing those grades south of Fond du Lac. Sometimes it would come to a halt near the top of a hill and I would think we’d be loading the trailer. Then, the car would shake, a puff of smoke would come out of the tailpipe and the Oakland would start moving uphill again. As you might imagine, we had traffic backed up at various points. Dave was usually going about 20 mph. I was driving behind him, with the 4-way flashers going on the truck and trailer.

About 10 miles out of Hartford, Dave stopped for a breather and I told him I had checked the GPS for an easier way to get to the auto museum. He said that I should get ahead of him and lead him in. All went fine with this, until the last couple of turns. Dave got stuck in traffic coming up a hill and lost sight of me turning left. He continued straight. I did a U-turn when I could and went the way he had gone. It was easy to find him. All I had to do was follow the smoke!



Wisconsin Automotive Museum - Hartford, Wisconsin

The GPS soon got us to the Wisconsin Automotive Museum, where again members of three different Lions Clubs were waiting, along with Dawn Bondhus, the director of the museum. After some pictures, Dawn offered us a tour of the museum. The specialties there are Kissel Kar, Nash, and short track racing cars, but the overall collection included everything from a gorgeous Ruxton on special display to a 1913 locomotive. Highly recommended!

It was dark when we left the museum, but Dave drove the Oakland to the hotel where we were staying. It was raining pretty steady, so Dave decided to walk down the street to try to buy a tarp to cover up the car, which has absolutely no rain protection other than the windshield and the top. In the meantime, I went inside to register.

Dave met me in the lobby a little later with scissors and a couple of big sheets of plastic that he had “bummed” from the Walgreens next door. We tucked the light plastic into the top rails and used duct tape to attach it to the car body. In the process, we made the ugliest “side curtains” anyone has ever seen. But, they worked fine.

Dave Sarna gets my Michael J. Dowling Award of the Day for Friday. Dave is a guy who doesn’t give up. If Dave wasn’t involved in this Yellowstone Trail Tour, it probably never would have started and it would already be over. He just doesn’t know what the word “quit” means. Two weeks before this tour, he realized a personal dream by driving a Trans Am over 200 mph at the Bonneville, Utah Salt Flats (2-way average over 208 mph). Now, he’s driving a 1917 Oakland at 25 mph across 409 miles in Wisconsin. Somehow, some way, Dave achieves what he sets out to do.

Yellowstone Trail Tour Day 7 - Rain, Rain Go Away

Saturday had us dealing with rain all day. The rain was pretty light in Hartford in the morning, got worse in Hales Corners at noon and was pretty heavy in Kenosha late in the day. We had starting problems in Hartford and we decided to trailer the car through the Milwaukee area. In Hales Corners, we stopped at a historic old tavern where we met local Lions Club members who turned out with a nice donation. Bob Hanson of WPAK Radio caught up with us for the end of the tour. His cousin from Kenosha came along to guide us through the area. After leaving Hales Corners, we headed the Oakland towards Kenosha. There we ended the tour at Gateway Classics, a giant collector-car dealership. We traveled 409 miles from Hudson in seven days.



It looks like we’ll also be towing the car home in the rain tomorrow. I’ll bet the Oakland will be happy to return to her normal berth in Gunners Great Garage’s Waupaca location.

Time for some shuteye! Ψ

Board of Directors Meeting

The Yellowstone Trail Association annual Board of Directors meeting and luncheon was held in PJ's Restaurant at Sentry World in Stevens Point, Wisconsin on February 2, 2018. A number of business items were discussed, including Mark's planned trip to New Jersey in June to promote the Yellowstone Trail at the Lincoln Highway Association's National Conference. This photo shows, from left, John Ridge, President; Alice Ridge, Secretary; Sheila Nyberg, Vice President; Dave Sarna; John Gunnell; Mark Mowbray, Executive Director; and Sara Brish, Treasurer.



Honorary Trailman Awards

One important item of business was the awarding of **Honorary Trailman** certificates to **Dave Sarna** and **John Gunnell** in recognition of their epic Yellowstone Trail Tour with a 1917 Oakland Touring car across the entire 409 miles of Wisconsin. Mark Mowbray presented the certificates. Ψ

Trailwoman of the Year

Another Board decision resulted in the Yellowstone Trail Association honoring **Juanita Ketcham** as **Trailwoman of the Year-2017** for her extraordinary work in forwarding the goals of the Association which are: educating the public and preserving the history of the Yellowstone Trail in Indiana.



Dave Sarna Mark Mowbray, YTA John Gunnell

The award ceremony took place at the Marshall County Historical Society Museum in Plymouth, Indiana, March 9, 2018 at the museum's monthly luncheon program. The site was propitious in that the Society's museum is directly on the Yellowstone Trail and has a transportation wing which features the Trail, among other historic routes. Linda Rippey, Executive Director of the museum, graciously orchestrated the event for the 70 attendees.

You may recall Juanita's name because of her several activities which were noted in past *Arrows*:



Trailwoman of the Year
Juanita Ketcham

- For about the past three years she has taken leadership in mounting Yellowstone Trail Fest in Hamlet, Indiana. Each year has brought more public notice to the Trail.
- She was responsible for getting Yellowstone Trail signs up in her county with help from Nipsco, a local business.
- She has contacted the Indiana Department of Transportation to get the YT logo on personal license plates. More Indiana signatures are necessary before the DOT will accept the logo as an option. She is working on that now.
- In 2017 Juanita produced (with others) two events for the benefit of the Trail: a "Sociability Run" on the Trail in June and the Yellowstone Trail Fest in August. For this Fest she acquired a \$1000 grant for advertising, a \$2500 grant to bring the "History on Wheels" display from the Indiana Historical Society, and \$2500 to promote and fund the popular "Repurposed Metal Sculpture" contest at the Fest.

• She is currently working on getting a Passport app. wherein travelers on the Trail visit sites and are credited upon completion with a prize.

The Association applauds Juanita, who proves what one determined person can accomplish for our organization. We can only hope that there will be others so motivated. Ψ

*We received a nice letter from Stephen Thiel who just learned of the Trail. He has allowed us to quote him:

“I grew up in **Slinger, Wisconsin** where my family roots go back to the 1850s. While I knew that what-is-now state hwy 175 was once US41, I never knew that was the original Yellowstone Trail in Slinger. This has been an exciting day of discovery for me, and . . . I have gained historical knowledge. Whatever this organization does as its purpose, it has given me a deeper understanding of the evolution of Slinger, auto transportation history, and ongoing efforts to tie disparate communities together in the good ‘old US of A.’ Allowing people to “discover their Trail” and get excited about it is one aim of our organization. Good for you, Stephen.

* Juanita Ketcham was invited to conduct a bus tour along the Trail in **Marshall County, Indiana**. The tour was sponsored by a convent in Donaldson, Indiana. Sister Mary Baird, PHJC, and Cliff Berger, facilitators, said in their announcement: “Fascinated by the sites that a 1920 traveler saw? You will learn about the Trail’s origin, how it traversed Indiana, and its present history.”

* Another busy YTA member, Stephen Schreiter, has been appearing on the speaking platform in southeast Wisconsin. Most recently he was invited by the **City of St. Francis Historical Society** to speak at their general meeting in April. In preparing, Steve reported that, for a previous presentation in February he had driven the YT route through that city and attempted to identify landmarks that would have been there in 1920. Since that went over well with that audience, he would do the same for St. Francis. The YTA congratulates Steve on his quest for accuracy and local interest for Trail audiences.

* **Hudson, Wisconsin’s annual Yellowstone Trail Heritage Day** will not be held in June this year, in case some readers were looking forward to attending. Trail Days has been held in June for the past eight years, but at a meeting in the historic Dick’s Bar (on the Trail) in Hudson, the committee decided to expand the event and hold it on **October 13**. Stay tuned for further developments. In the meantime, mark your calendars. Ψ



A big “Thank You” to Kirk Donskey of Northern Battery for their Corporate sponsorship, recently renewed for the sixth year. Your support allows us to educate folks and promote the Yellowstone Trail across the country.

Visit us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/YellowstoneTrail/

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Use this form and mail with a check OR Apply at www.yellowstonetrail.org and use either the [online form with PayPal](#) or the [mail-in form with a check](#).

<p>APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP</p> <p>Name: _____</p> <p>Address: _____</p> <p>City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____</p> <p>An e-mail address is required because the <i>Arrow</i> newsletter is sent via email. If you need yours printed we’ll make special arrangements.</p> <p>e-mail address : _____</p> <p>Phone: _____ (Required if you do not use email.)</p> <p>If this membership is for a business or organization:</p> <p>Organization: _____</p> <p>Your Position: _____</p> <p style="text-align: center; color: red; font-weight: bold; margin-top: 10px;">VISIT WWW.YELLOWSTONETRAIL.ORG</p>	<p>Cut off and mail this form with your payment. OR apply online at www.yellowstonetrail.org</p> <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">Send to: Treasurer Yellowstone Trail Association 340 Division Street North Stevens Point, WI 54481</p> <p>Membership category and annual dues:</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%; font-size: small;"> <tr> <td style="width: 80%;">_ Regular (Individual or small business) - - - - -</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$15</td> </tr> <tr> <td>_ Not for profit (museum, car club, historical) - - - - -</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$25</td> </tr> <tr> <td>_ Tourism Promotion Agency - - - - - (C of C, CVB, Econ Development, similar)</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$50</td> </tr> <tr> <td>_ Corporate (Contact the Exec. Director for sponsorship details. mmowbray@yellowstonetrail.org)</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$100</td> </tr> </table> <p>Check one: _____</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%; font-size: small;"> <tr> <td style="width: 60%;">Enter Amounts:</td> <td style="width: 20%;">Dues for 1 year (June -May) -</td> <td style="width: 20%; text-align: right;">\$</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Gifts are tax deductible.</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Dues for 2nd year -</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center; font-size: x-small;">Same rate. Optional.</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Additional contribution -</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td style="font-size: x-small;">We are a nonprofit 501c3 corporation.</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">Total =</td> <td style="text-align: right; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">\$</td> </tr> </table>	_ Regular (Individual or small business) - - - - -	\$15	_ Not for profit (museum, car club, historical) - - - - -	\$25	_ Tourism Promotion Agency - - - - - (C of C, CVB, Econ Development, similar)	\$50	_ Corporate (Contact the Exec. Director for sponsorship details. mmowbray@yellowstonetrail.org)	\$100	Enter Amounts:	Dues for 1 year (June -May) -	\$		Gifts are tax deductible.			Dues for 2nd year -	\$		Same rate. Optional.			Additional contribution -	\$		We are a nonprofit 501c3 corporation.			Total =	\$
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Two Minnesota Connections - It Isn't just Lutefisk

By Alice Ridge, Arrow Editor Emerita

First, Carol Ahlgren of the Jefferson Highway Association met with Alice and John Ridge in Minneapolis to explore possible avenues of cooperation between that group and the Yellowstone Trail Association. The discussion was wide-ranging and included mutual concerns about energizing members to help carry forward the message of the two historic routes. The Jefferson Highway Association traces its beginning to 1916. It runs from the Minnesota/ Canada border south to New Orleans and has an informative web site. The two great roads cross and travel with each other for a brief time in the Twin Cities. The two have much in common historically and in the present efforts of both organizations to create interest in old roads. It is early days yet, but it was evident that our two great highway associations could work together in their common goal of educating folks about early auto transportation.



Carol Ahlgren, Jefferson Highway Assn.

As a result of this meeting the Ridges were invited to hear Ahlgren's presentation that she gave to a group called the Minnesota Independent Researchers Forum. Grants from the state legislature may support research on many fronts - historical, political, and artistic. Ahlgren had won a grant and was reporting her research about the Jefferson's role in early transportation. A portion of her talk included the role of the Yellowstone Trail. If her audience knew naught of our Trail before, they learned there. We got some free publicity and we thank Carol.

Also at the Forum was Vicki Albu who has written a super-specific exploration of the Trail in Carver County, Minnesota, at the request of the Southwest (MN) Corridor Transportation Coalition. The Coalition wished to know about the relationship between US212 and the Yellowstone Trail. Albu untangled that relationship and dealt with the erroneous assumption that the Trail subsequently was numbered US212 "to the eastern edge of the state." This is a common false assumption: the Yellowstone Trail that you see in your neighborhood is not on that same numbered highway forever. After 1926, the Trail was given 25 state

road numbers, 14 US road numbers, two Interstate numbers and a myriad of county road numbers or letters.

The Ridges also attended a meeting of a group of enthusiastic folks in Olivia, Minnesota, from small towns along US 212 in southern Minnesota. The group calls themselves the "Yellowstone Trail Corridor." As with the original Yellowstone Trail Association of 100 years ago, this group sees a tourism and economic advantage to advertising themselves as being on the Trail.

Scott Tedrick, who drew the group together March 9, said, "They have the opportunity to create an exponential value, somewhat akin to a cooperative." Now they are solidifying their purpose, organizational structure, advocacy plans and activities.



Members of the Minnesota "Yellowstone Trail Corridor" group.

The Trail is the common thread linking the towns of Granite Falls, Sacred Heart, Renville, Danube, Olivia, Bird Island, Hector, Buffalo Lake and Stewart. So far the group is reaching out to other links to form a vibrant network: Minnesota Main Street Program, Artist in Residency Program, Renville County Visitor's Guide, Baker House National Register, and historical societies.

We wish them success, and the Yellowstone Trail Association stands ready to aid them. Ψ

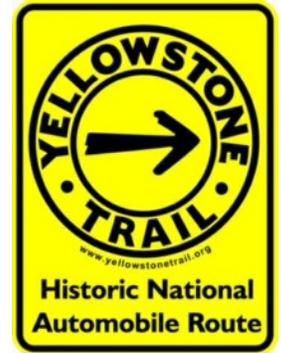
Note: This is the fifth of five articles tracing the emergence of the Yellowstone Trail through Adams County and Hettinger, ND, in an effort to increase awareness of this historical roadway and to focus on the important part that Hettinger and Adams County, ND, played in that effort.

Preserving the Dream You want to do this NOW?

By Bonnie Smith, Hettinger, South Dakota

DID YOU KNOW . . .

- that the Yellowstone Trail (YT), now US Highway 12, began as a dream?
- that the Yellowstone Trail was developed as a shorter way to get from Minneapolis, MN, to Yellowstone Park, and that it grew in length to 3,700 miles from Plymouth, MA, to Seattle, WA?
- that the Yellowstone Trail was the first transcontinental highway across the northern tier of the United States?
- that the Yellowstone Trail was built by local citizens with volunteer labor and materials?
- that the Yellowstone Trail is the only highway of this length built without Federal funds?
- that, for the most part, the YT followed section lines?
- that the only place the Yellowstone Trail can be found in North Dakota is right here, in the far southwest?
- that the YT was so popular, business owners named their places after it?
- that three Hettinger, ND, men were members and officers in the first Yellowstone Trail Association?
- that Hettinger's own O. T. Peterson not only served as the first Secretary/Treasurer of the Yellowstone Trail Association (YTA), but in 1914 also edited and compiled the first official publication of the YTA: *First Year Book of the Twin Cities-Aberdeen-Yellowstone Park Trail Association*?
- that three known original stone YT markers are in Adams County?
- that 104 years later, people now have the chance to keep the dream alive by reading, studying, learning about and passing on this unique legacy?
- that the future of the Yellowstone Trail legacy is up to you? Ψ



Example of signs found along US Highway 12 in South Dakota

A little unknown history about the Yellowstone Trail

Humor by Terry Blanckaert, Lomira

A little over a year ago, my wife attended a casual evening dinner with her employers and colleagues. Haunted Houses were one of the topics of discussion, as well as the focal point of a few anecdotes. Previously I had informed my wife of certain "occurrences" that had been witnessed in our house, long before she had taken residence with me. It was always a topic that she considered taboo and refused to discuss, until this particular evening.

I received a text message from her that evening, asking in what year our house had been built. My wife had always been aware that we lived on my mother's family homestead on the outskirts of Lomira and that it was rather aged. She noted to me that they were deep in scary stories and legends of old. So I felt that it was my duty to stir up the pot while raising my bride's blood pressure. The following was my response to my wife and her comrades: "Our house was built in 1793, after the great Milwaukee witch burnings. It was originally built as a community halfway house for re-homing reformed exorcists. Solomon Schaumburg was the original overseer and head monk. He later moved the tenants and practice to Fond du Lac. Apparently there was more evil farther north. The Yellowstone Trail was actually set through highway 175 because that was the trail Schaumburg used as he went north. His followers believed that yellow was God's color, and that they would be protected spiritually if they followed the yellow stones north. It wasn't until somewhere in the 1820's that the Schaumburg brick crematorium was tore down on the old homestead and the land was blessed by the first pastor at St. Paul's, Lomira. For years people said that if you listened closely, you could still hear late at night...the sound of Solomon Schaumburg painting yellow stones."

My wife hasn't had a good night's sleep since, and I'm still not comfortable on the couch. Ψ

Crossing the Cascades in Winter

By Curt Cunningham, YT Washington Correspondent

When the Yellowstone Trail became a transcontinental highway in Washington in 1915, it was truly only "transcontinental" for about 5-6 months of the year. Back then motoring was a summer activity and all the freight and many passengers were carried on the rails, so this didn't matter so much.

July 24, 1912,
August 15, 1913
August 1914
June 25, 1916
June 29, 1917
June 1, 1918
June 1, 1919
May 10, 1920
May 17, 1922

Snoqualmie Pass opening dates

The Cascade Mountain Range was the culprit as it was completely impassable for seven months a year. Snoqualmie Pass at a mere 3000 ft. elevation was blocked by a deep snowpack and many fallen trees. Every year the snowfall would knock over trees on the western side of the pass. It took a tremendous amount of physical work to remove these barriers so that the road could be made passable by the summer opening.



Trees blocked the pass in many areas during winter months

In a July 9, 1916 article by C. H. Lester, the *El Paso Herald* described the arduous journey over Snoqualmie Pass when the pass finally opened on June 25th. *"When we got well into the Cascades the snowline got lower or we got up to it, for the mountains were then generally covered from base to summit and the ground under the trees covered deep under the white mantle. When we neared the summit, we entered a cut through the snow just wide enough for the car to pass and with almost perpendicular sides higher than the auto top. The road was fine all the way up and we reached the Summit Inn at an elevation of 3,018 feet at 11:30am."*

"At this point the total snowfall during the past winter, according to U. S. Forestry measurement, was over 600 inches. On the east slope from the summit the road had not been cleared, and there was a distance totaling about four miles where the snow was still from two to five feet deep and softened by a heavy, continuous, rain all day yesterday and today. Two young men, driving a Dodge, were with us and in the lead."



Buick in snow

"We had a good dinner and then, with our fighting clothes on, sent the Dodge into the snow on "The Trail to Sunset" in midsummer. We sure worked hard on that Dodge and when night came we had worked it into the snow something less than a half mile. We then went back to the inn but we walked, and after drying our clothes and eating supper, spent a pleasant evening and later enjoyed the sleep that belongs to the weary."

This morning, with the aid of a team hired last night for \$10 per car, we renewed the battle. After a fight against the snow, in which we used all our resources and, without stopping for lunch, we got the cars through at 2pm although during the

day we had to put them over three fir trees that had been crushed by the snow and had fallen across the roadway."

"After, and immediately, we all joined in singing a song the opening line of which, as I remember, was "Glory, Glory, Hallelujah" and then started to beat it down the road for something to eat and a chance to change our wet clothing -- remember that, to add to our joy, it had rained steadily all day."

Every year efforts were made to open the pass as early as possible. Clearing snow up to 20 feet deep required men to shovel snow to clear the way. After they had made a path, it took more labor to keep it from filling up with snow again. There had to be a better way to clear the snow.

Continued

In 1915 Popular Mechanics ran an article about the first use of a steam shovel to clear the pass. *"Every spring King Frost's control of Snoqualmie Pass, on the Sunset Highway where it crosses the Cascade Mountains, has to be broken to permit motor-car traffic. In former years horse teams were put to work in April, and the pass generally opened by the first week in May. About three miles of the snow bound area lies in King County, and five miles in Kittitas County, Washington, or a total of about 42,000 lineal feet. This year, for the first time, a steam shovel was used to remove the snow in the pass. Although snowfalls occurred later than usual and opening the pass this year meant conquering other obstacles, the innovation was successful."*



Clearing the Way for the Motor Tourist on the King County Side of Snoqualmie Pass, the Sunset Highway Crossing of the Cascade Mountains: The Advantage of the Steam Shovel over Horse Teams with Scrapers and Block and Line will be Readily Seen

"Some idea of the amount of work done may be gleaned from the fact that the snow averaged more than 8 ft. in depth. A roadway 12 ft. wide was cut, necessitating the removal of more than 140,000 cu. yd. of snow. The procuring of fuel was no small task. The snow was so deep that bark or firewood could not be obtained along the right of way, so coal was hauled in wagons along the cleared road. Melted snow water was used in the boiler, obtained by pumping from rivulets along the road. The steam shovel functioned efficiently and with a minimum amount of labor. Scooping up the snow and depositing it off the right of way proved much simpler than removing it with block and line and horse-team scrapers. Under favorable conditions, it was estimated, the pass could be cleared by the new method with 50 per cent less physical effort than by the old."

When Snoqualmie Pass was closed, a motorist who wanted to travel could still get a car over the pass. You just had to ship your car by rail. The Northern Pacific had a terminal at Easton on the east side and a terminal at Kanaskat on the west side. The Milwaukee Road also had a terminal at Easton and a terminal at Cedar Falls, which is near North Bend. One could say that the Milwaukee Road could have been the official Yellowstone Trail transporter of cars over the pass, as their tracks parallel the YT.

My opinion is that shipping your car by rail was very common in those days so it wasn't discussed much and I also think the good roads people would dare not promote shipping a car by rail. I think this is why I can't seem to find much on this subject. At a meeting held in Walla Walla on December 15, 1916, a group of delegates from Southwest Washington, Missoula, Montana and Lewiston, Idaho met to discuss the formation of an Interstate Highway Association. They authorized the Pasco Chamber of commerce to extend invitations to the Yellowstone Trail Association, delegates of Southwest Washington; Portland, Oregon; Missoula, Montana; and Lewiston, Idaho to meet in Pasco on February 3, 1917.

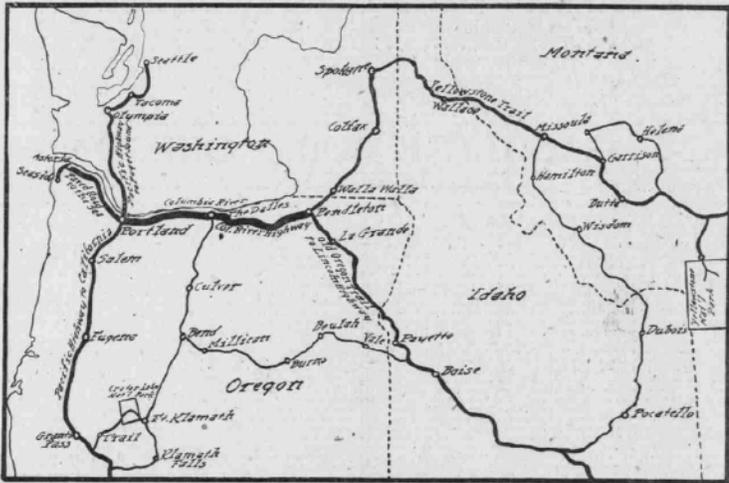
At this meeting a proposal to create the Evergreen Highway was discussed. This highway would be open year-round and begin in Lewiston, ID and terminate at Seaside, Oregon.



Shipping Automobiles by Rail

The attendance at the Pasco meeting exceeded all expectations. One exception was that the President of the Yellowstone Trail Association, J. W. Parmley and the Secretary, H. D. Cooley were late due to (ironically) being stuck in the snow out in the Dakotas. At the last days session of the joint meeting of the Yellowstone Trail Association and the Interstate Highway Association the following proposals were adopted. The first was to create a connection between the highway systems of Washington, Idaho and Montana by way of the Lolo Pass and the Lewiston Gateway. Next was to push for the completion of the Inland Empire Highway in Washington to connect with Lewiston, Idaho. Third was to promote and construct an all-year-around highway to the Pacific Coast as soon as possible.

Continued



Map shows route using the Inland Empire Highway, Columbia River Highway, and Evergreen Highway in Washington and Oregon

The Evergreen Highway was proposed by the association as the shortest all-year-around route to the Pacific Coast. The organization went on to say that they must support and promote the Yellowstone Trail so eastern travelers will have a good road to connect with the Evergreen Highway. This was because the Yellowstone Trail had the best access to maintenance facilities and lodging to make travel from the east less burdensome than by taking the Lincoln Highway. The Lincoln Highway traversed sandy deserts and uninhabited patches of the country. Motorists taking that southern route may not stop in Oregon or Washington but go directly to California when they reach Granger, Wyoming.

By 1919 the newspapers were running articles calling for national roads to be built in the west. This was due to the western states not maintaining their roads and many were reluctant to connect their roads to other states that would benefit the cross country motorist.

In 1921 the Columbia River Highway was opened for traffic though not officially completed until 1922. This was the first highway to be built as a scenic highway and was constructed like a railroad. This route was also the first all-year-around highway across the Cascade Mountains. A westbound motorist would leave the Yellowstone Trail at Walla Walla, WA and drive to Pendleton, OR. From there drive west to Umatilla, OR and then on the Columbia River Highway to Portland, OR. In 1921 a proposed route called the Umatilla Cutoff that would eventually be built bypassed Pendleton for a shorter route via Wallula, WA. This saved a motorist 88 miles.

At the Yellowstone Trail Convention held in Spokane in 1921. Delegates from Portland had come to petition for their town to become the terminus of the YT. Some had proposed that Seattle and Portland should share the terminus. All proposals were voted down and Seattle was to remain the terminus of the Yellowstone Trail. The main reason for the dismissal was due to the fact that ever since the Yellowstone trail was organized it has been an unalterable rule of the executive committee not to make any radical changes in the route. They said if they approved this change they would have over 200 petitions for route changes at the next meeting.

As it turned out, three years later the route indeed made a radical change to the northern route to follow the Sunset Highway. That would divert traffic away from Oregon at Spokane.

In 1922 a Billboard was erected just east of Spokane enticing motorists on the Yellowstone Trail to travel to Portland on the Columbia River Highway. This was one of six billboards erected across the western US to bring motorists into Oregon. In 1923 another all-year route across the Cascades was opened. This was called "The North Bank Highway". A westbound motorist would leave the Yellowstone Trail at Pasco, WA then drive to Goldendale, WA and down to the Columbia River at Lyle, WA and take the North Bank Highway to Vancouver, WA. From here the motorist would then go north on the Pacific Highway to Seattle.

The Sunday Star ran an article in 1923 that touted the benefits of winter motoring. *"How the automobile is helping make winter a season of pleasure instead of a trying ordeal is one of the most interesting chapters in the history of motoring, in the opinion of Paul B. Lum, president of the Washington Automotive Trade Association. There is at present a great movement to convert winter into the season of rejuvenation, but few realize that the automobile is the keynote of the whole thing. Without 13,000,000 (in 1923) motorists to revolt against the idea of putting away their cars, the country would doubtless still be content to dig in for the winter in the good old-fashioned but highly useless way."*

In 1931 the Snoqualmie Pass was kept open all year around and the Yellowstone Trail finally became a "year-round" transcontinental highway. Ψ

Nobody Ever Told the Bumblebee It Couldn't Fly

Photo-essay By Bill von Tagen, YT Correspondent from Boise, Idaho

Editor's note: this is the third installment on Bill & Linda von Tagen's trek on The Yellowstone Trail last summer. Bill is Life Member of the Lincoln Highway Association and a member of the Yellowstone Trail Association. The blog of their adventures can be found at: www.afordonthelincoln.blogspot.com

Ipswich South Dakota and the Yellowstone Trail

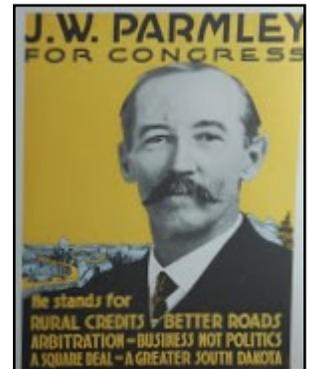
Ipswich is the birthplace of the Yellowstone Trail due to the vision and leadership of Joseph W. Parmley, a lawyer and land office owner in Ipswich. Parmley was a product of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.



Parmley sought to make his city, his state, and the region a better place to live. Initially Parmley sought a road from Ipswich, east, to Aberdeen, South Dakota. It is from this seed, that the Yellowstone Trail grew. Very soon Parmley and others envisioned a road all the way from Minneapolis, Minnesota to Yellowstone National Park. The goal was later expanded to include Chicago, Illinois to Yellowstone. That eventually grew to include the goal of "A Good Road from Plymouth Rock to Puget Sound."



He was caught up in the progressive movement. He joined the prohibition movement and his wife was a member of the Women's Christian Temperance Union. Parmley was also active in the reclamation movement, which turned the West into productive farmland. But most of all, Parmley is remembered for his advocacy and hard work in the "Good Roads Movement".



One wonders how Parmley and others from South Dakota ever thought they could build a transcontinental road from Plymouth Rock to Puget Sound. I found myself saying to myself: "Who did these guys think they were?" What is even more amazing is that they did it. They did it in a manner different from the way that the Lincoln Highway accomplished its goal, and if the truth be told, the road probably was not quite as good, (After all they had far less money) but they did it nonetheless. The story reminds me of a movie I once saw where a character in the movie said that aerodynamically there was no way that a bumblebee should fly. He then added that nobody told the bumblebee that, and so the bumblebee flies. I guess nobody ever told Parmley and the other businessmen and farmers from South Dakota and Minnesota that they could not build a transcontinental road.

Continued

Parmley is still held in high esteem in South Dakota and particularly in Ipswich. Parmley was also a very good public speaker. As I noted before he believed in Prohibition, at least initially. Before the Prohibition Amendment to the Constitution was ever passed Prohibition, foes are suspected of setting fire to Parmley's house. Parmley built second house which also burned down. The next house he built was built of concrete, brick and stone. Linda and I toured that house. It will last for centuries.



Parmley Home Museum

Joe Parmley was really a remarkable fellow. While I know he wouldn't join me for a drink, I would like to sit down and have a long chat with him. What he and others from South Dakota and Minnesota accomplished, even without the resources and public relations savvy of the Lincoln Highway Association, is nothing short of amazing.



J. W. Parmley Land Office (left) and Opera House, Ipswich, South Dakota



J. W. Parmley sitting at the hearth in his home



Bill von Tagen sitting at the hearth in Parmley Home Museum



Tom at Parmley Land Office Museum

Tom, the docent at the Parmley Home Museum acted as our tour guide for much of the day. For him this is a labor of love. He led Linda and me on a very informative tour of the Home Museum and then a tour of Joe Parmley's Land Office Museum. We felt bad that we had to keep moving on as Tom had much more information to share with us. I am very grateful for people like Tom, who desire to keep these local museums going for the next generation. Many times, this is where the history lies. This day is a day I will long remember. Ψ



Tire Cover from the car Joe Parmley drove to promote the Yellowstone Trail