



Colorado Collector Car News

In association with the Collector Car Council of Colorado

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Jim and Carolyn's Route 66 Adventure through New Mexico, Arizona and California.

Jim and Carolyn Despres are club members of the Rocky Mountain Corsa Club and the Rocky Mountain Thunderbird Club. This is the story of their adventure touring Route 66.

For a few years it has been our dream to travel Route 66 to see exactly what the "Mother Road" is truly all about. When 66 was constructed and opened for traffic in 1927 it was one of a handful of two lane highways being built that made travel between states on one road a reality. The starting point of the highway begins in Chicago and travels a total of 2,448 miles through Illinois, Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona and California where it terminates at the Santa Monica Pier on the Pacific Ocean. When Carolyn and I were planning our trip we were a little apprehensive about doing the entire length since traveling to Illinois from Denver to start the trip and Los Angeles back to Denver would add 2,000 miles of boring interstate to the trip so we opted to start the adventure at Albuquerque and take in as much of the

(Continued on next page)



Route 66 Story (Continued from previous page)

unique scenery and attractions as we could.

We started on Route 66 the morning of October 11 out of Albuquerque on I-40 which for the most part was paved over existing old portions of 66. A few weeks before we left for Albuquerque, I purchase a set of maps for each state that focused on Route 66, so we had a good reference where to turn off to drive the portions of 66 that were bypassed by I-40.

The first of these stretches was a few hours west of Albuquerque which gave us our first taste of the classic winding two lane blacktop that rolled through ancient lava beds on its way to Gallup New Mexico which was our first overnight stop on the trip. One of the things that really fascinated me was that when 66 was built it followed the existing railway lines of the time. The reason for this was that back then it was far easier and faster to follow the grade of the rail lines around hills than to make cuts through those hills.

We met a lot of people along the way that still live on abandoned portions of 66. The first character we met was a fellow named Douglass who had traveled the world and ended up opening an antique-curio store years ago in the abandoned town of San Fidel N.M. The house that Douglass lives in is an adobe structure (built in the 1880s) that looks as though at one time may have been a service station. It is right on 66 and is the only building in town with an inhabitant. Even though he no longer sells stuff he was gracious enough to give us the nickel tour of his building and show us some of his valuable collection. Walking through his place was like experiencing the TV show "American Pickers" firsthand. Once in a while you will meet a real character that you will never forget. Douglass is one such person.



Our next overnight stop was Gallup New Mexico. When I booked the hotel months before I was looking for a historic place on 66 that would characterize what the area was like in its heyday. The place I found was the rustic El Rancho Motel which was built in 1937. The El Rancho is a beautiful three

story structure that was built by the brother-in-law of movie mogul D.W. Griffith to provide a nice place for movie stars of the 30s, 40s, and 50s to stay while making movies in that part of the country. The motel was a favorite of John Wayne, Gary Cooper, Ronald Reagan, and Forrest Tucker to mention a few. As was typical of motels of that era, there was no A/C so we had to open up the old sash windows for cooling and the elevator was the old style manual that needed one of the hotel employees to operate.



Our next destination was Winslow, Arizona which took us through Painted Desert and Petrified Forest. This stretch of the original 66 zigzagged back and forth across I-40 interstate eight times and was impassable due to its deteriorating condition so we had to stay on I-40. There was no disappointment this day however because I-40 took us through the exact same country that 66 followed. The views of the Painted Desert were breath taking and a walk through the petrified remains of an ancient forest were two natural wonders that made this part of the trip well worth it

When we arrived in Winslow we met us with the Route 66 motor tour group that started their journey in Chicago the week before. There were 48 people that signed up for the tour and some of the cars they drove were phenomenal. Some of the best cars were a '53 Mercury, '56 Chevy, '57 T-bird, a '59 Corvette and several later model Camaros and Corvettes.

(Continued on next page)



Pickup Trucks Detroit Should Have Built.

The next day of our trip was truly the highlight of our Route 66 experience with an uninterrupted 158 mile length of original 66 that runs from Ash Fork to Topock located near the Arizona-California border. I mentioned before that 66 followed the train line. Because this stretch of the road looks like a large arced tri-angle, this entire section was bypassed in its entirety when I-40 was constructed. Along this 158 mile run are eight towns that are now either ghost towns or have a few businesses that cater to the Route 66 enthusiasts.



The remainder of the trip through the California portion of the highways has some good sights but not as neat as New Mexico and Arizona. The big event here is the end of Route 66 at the Santa Monica Pier where all the participants of the tour gather for one last photo opportunity.



A total of 2,200 miles was driven on this trip, with 765 of it being original Route 66 and paved over portions of it now known as I-40. We would have liked to have added the front half of the trip of 66 onto our itinerary but that would have hiked the total miles driven to over 4,000. The leisurely pace that we took splitting the run in half gave us more quality time to really savor and enjoy what we experienced. Perhaps next year we will drive to Chicago and do the first two thirds to Albuquerque then head back to Denver. For a genuine piece of automotive history it is definitely trip worth taking.

For details on the National Route 66 Motor Tour check out the website: <http://route66motortour.com>



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Packard Club Sedan Serves as a Prop for a Theatrical Promotion

This press photo was a dream come true at the time for any new car dealer because of all the resulting free publicity in the newspaper and on posters. In this case, the Packard Seattle Company was fortunate to get the attention that may have led to a few sales. The Packard appears to be a 1928 443 "Custom Eight" club sedan, with attractive close-coupled coachwork that ends just behind the rear axle.

The Packard's L-head straight eight-cylinder engine has nine main bearings and with a 3.5" x 5" bore and stroke the 384.8 c.i. engine produced 109 h.p. It is backed up by a dual-plate dry-clutch and a three-speed gearbox.



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Vintage Gasoline Stations in Hollywood and New Englan

Here are a pair of gasoline station images taken by photographers that worked for the Farm Security Administration during the Great Depression and the Office of War information during World War II, photo documenting scenes around the country.



Russell Lee took this photo one evening in April of 1942 of Mark C, Bloome's gasoline station and tire store in Hollywood, CA. The business sold fuel by both Macmillan and Conoco, Goodrich tires, and Kendall and Quaker State motor oils. Note the deluxe pump with a merchandising cabinet on the gas pump island the far-right of the photo.

Earlier in February of 1936 Arthur Rothstein took this image in the City of Fitchburg, MA, a manufacturing and industrial center at the time. The United Co-Operative filling station was a small operation which sold Gulf Gasoline, Firestone tires and had only one service bay.



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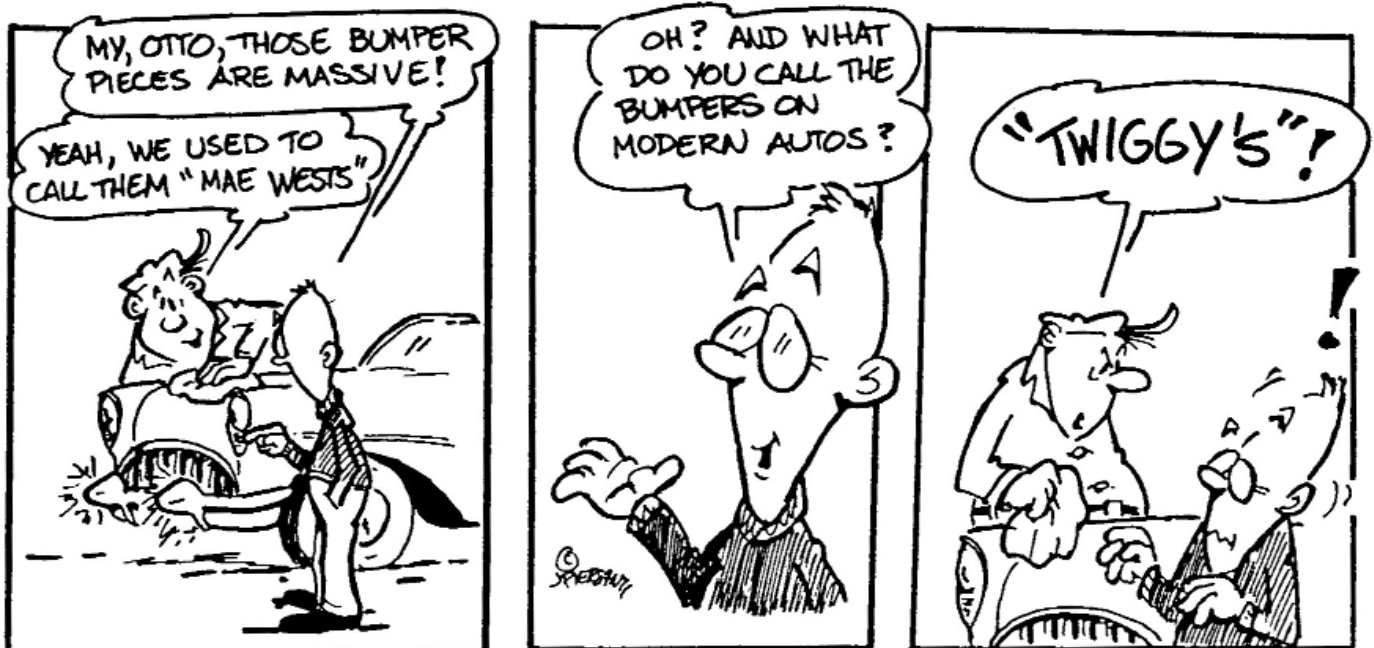
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"Otto Mechanic"

By Jay Piersanti



Interesting World War II Gasoline Rationing Images

This image of the entire scene at a Texaco Service Station show the long line of cars and motorists waiting to receive their ration of gasoline. The billboards feature Swan Floating Soap (a competitor to Ivory soap) that is “baby gentle” along with the Sunken Gardens Restaurant.



A new sign at Frank Field's Sinclair Station below spells out exactly who the facility was serving in accordance with the Gas Rationing Program; note that the station was only selling fuel at eight AM, noon and five PM for an hour.

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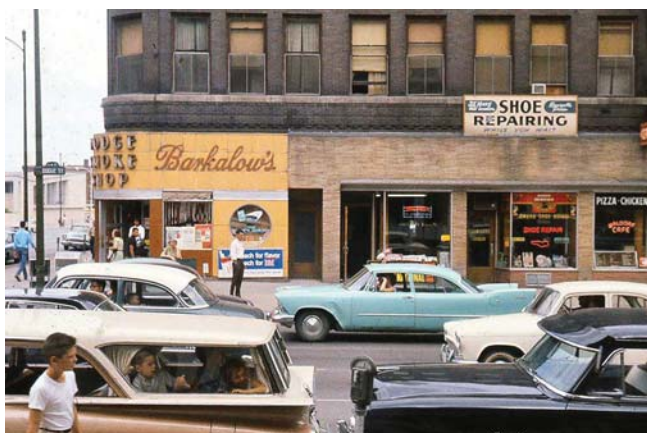
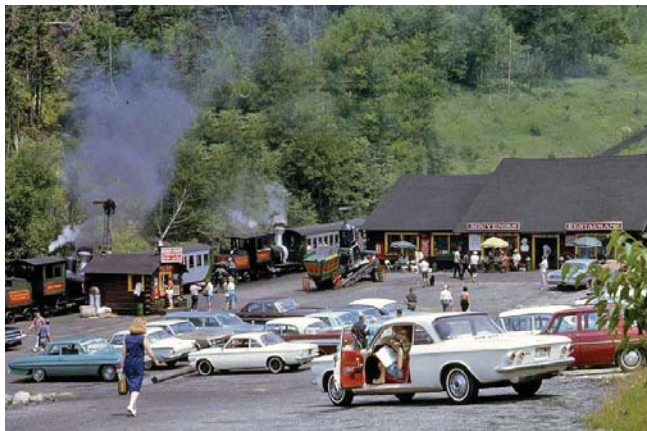
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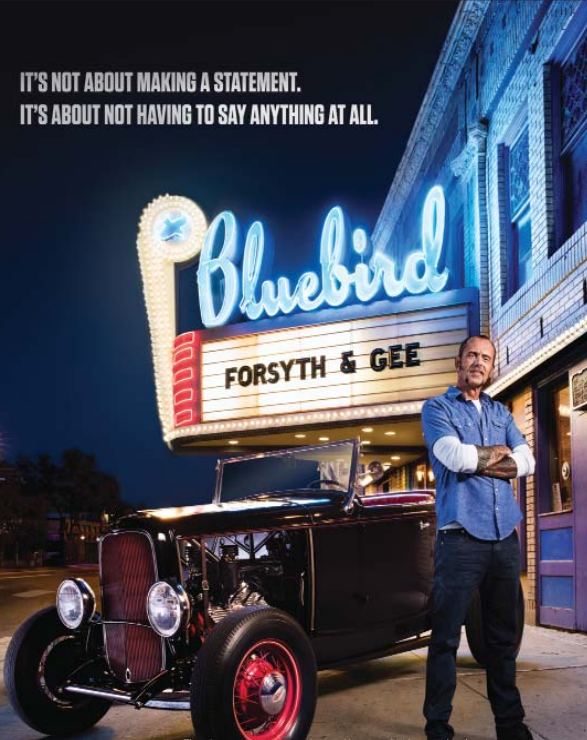
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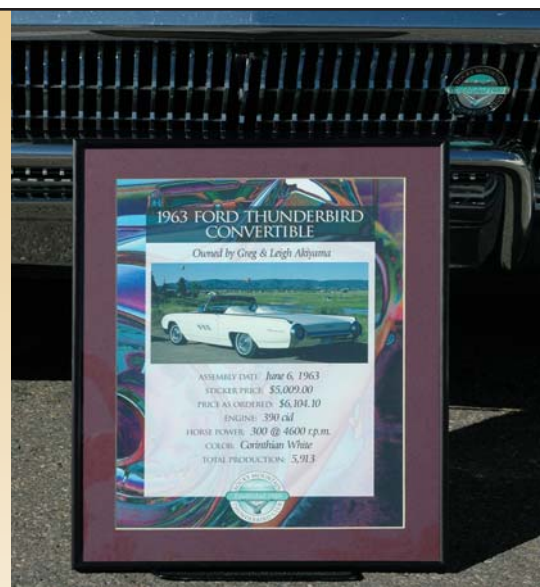
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Colorado Collector Car News

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This is a monthly publication dedicated to the enjoyment of the collector car hobby in Colorado.

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ED: I am looking for other Cars of the Month. These cars do not have to be concours award winners, just cars that have owners who are proud to own them. (Don't we all feel that way?) To nominate a car and owner, please contact me at gakiyama@earthlink.net. Thanks.

ED: I am always looking for more subscribers. If you know someone who you think would enjoy getting my newsletter, please have them send me an e-mail complete with their name, club affiliation and phone number. I ask for a phone number because when (not if) an e-mail stops working, I can contact that person for an updated e-mail address rather than just stop sending them the newsletter. My e-mail address is: gakiyama@earthlink.net. Thanks.

Collector Car Council of Colorado (CCCC)

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