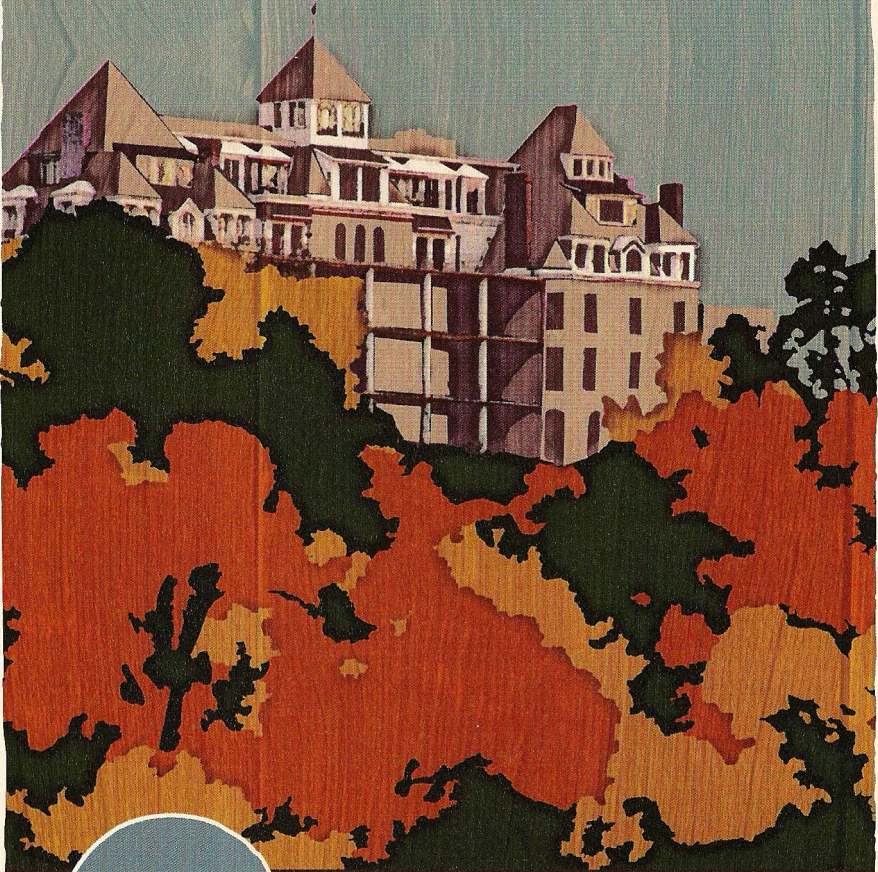


# ODYSSEY IN THE OZARKS

## *Bus Tour 1*



*U.S. 62 to Eureka Springs*

**OCTOBER 7, 2010**



# ODYSSEY IN THE OZARKS



A View of Eureka Springs, Ark.

The beginning portion of this tour follows U.S. 71 through the north-west part of Arkansas. Originally rural in nature and agriculturally centered, the area has grown tremendously in recent years. Northwest Arkansas is home to the headquarters of J. B. Hunt Trucking, Tyson Foods, and Wal-Mart. As a result, the U.S. 71 corridor today has a lot of sprawl, although some small hotels and restaurants dot the roadside. It is much different than the "level fields, broken now and then by apple orchards," as it was described in the 1930s.

U.S. 62, on the other hand, especially the further east from U.S. 71 that you go, still retains the rural feel that it had historically. In addition, from the crossroads community of Gateway to Eureka Springs the route of U.S. 62 is very rugged and mountainous, passing "through the most rugged country of its entire route, skirting canyons 500 or 600 feet deep and rearing over summits that reveal similar canyons winding away to the horizon." Tourism to the Ozarks has been popular for many decades, and an early ad stated: "To reach the Ozarks in the



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most pleasant and most economical way; take a Sante Fe Trailways Bus Vacation. In doing this you not only see the country immediately surrounding your destination but such towns and cities as Rogers, Fayetteville, Siloam Springs, Fort Smith, Hot Springs, and EUREKA SPRINGS; Harrison and Little Rock. Stop overs may be arranged at any point en route."



walls; 63 springs have been counted inside the city limits." Beginning in the 1920s, sites catering to auto tourists began to emerge. However, when the Depression hit, little development occurred in the town, and the com-

community's isolated location meant that few people visited. As a result, nothing was changed – a great thing for historic preservation – and it was not until the 1950s and 1960s that the community was once again discovered, this time by artists and hippies who liked the quiet inaccessible location of the town as a great place to escape to. Today, Eureka Springs is

The ultimate destination for the trip is Eureka Springs, which developed in the late 1800s as a spa community. In the 1930s, it was claimed that the town "clings to valley slopes so steep that townspeople say there is no level spot here large enough for a circus to pitch its tents. . . . Springs emerge every few yards along the single through street that winds between the valley



a great tourist destination, especially during the summer and fall, and people come from all over to visit its varied attractions.



## ODYSSEY IN THE OZARKS

### *Tour begins at the Cosmopolitan Hotel*

#### Fayetteville

Fayetteville is the county seat of Washington County, which was formed in October 1828 from Lovely County. It was not until after the establishment of Washington County that true settlement in the area began. By 1834, Congress had authorized the county commissioners to sell 160 acres of land to underwrite the building of a new courthouse. An article printed in the *Arkansas Advocate* described the region as follows:

"The town is admirably situated, on a beautiful eminence, on the dividing land between the waters of the Illinois and White Rivers. On the south and east, blue hills and mountains, with intervening prairies, present themselves as far as the eye can reach; and on the southwest, there is much prairie land, of excellent quality. The growth of the adjacent forest is oak, hickory, ash, mulberry, walnut, cherry, black locust, paw-paw, spice-wood, and the largest and most delicious grape in the world."

On June 16, 1834, President Andrew Jackson authorized the patent for the land of the Original Town that would soon be Fayetteville. On February 27, 1835, Jackson issued the patent that established the original town. Later in the year, Deputy County Surveyor Chas. McClelland, John Wes, William McGarragh, James Parr, John Smallman, and A. Mankins surveyed the original lots, most of which were located between present-day College Avenue on the east, Gregg Street on the west, Dickson Street on the north, and

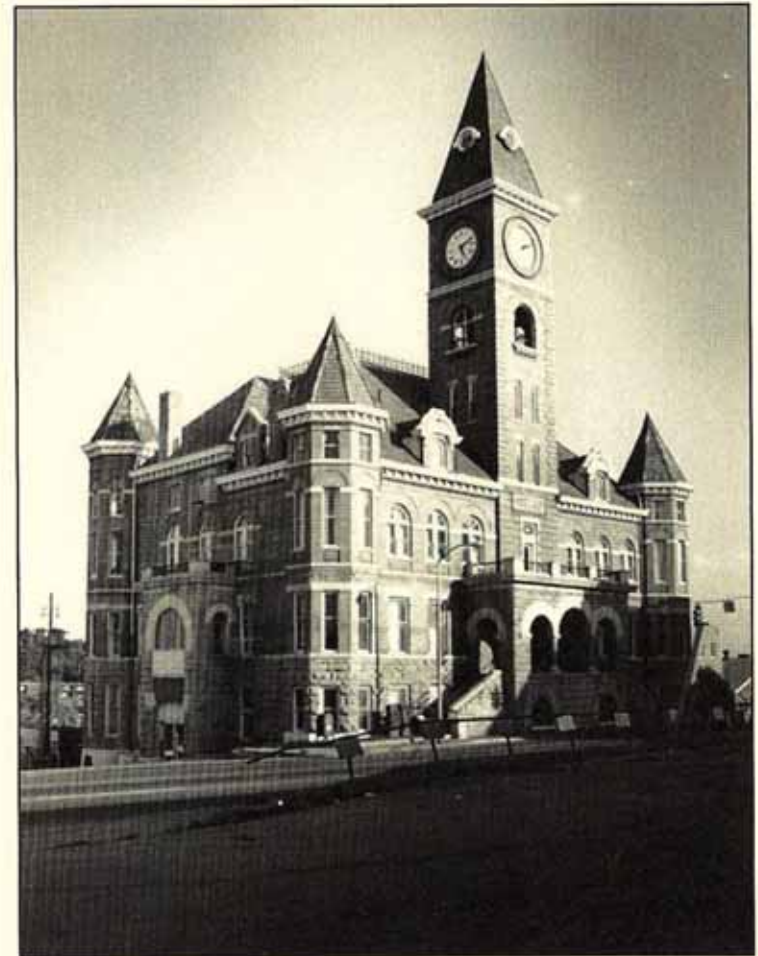
South Street to the south. The 1840 U.S. Census (the first one recorded for Fayetteville) showed the town's population as being 425 people. In 1871, Fayetteville received authorization to establish the Arkansas Industrial College, which opened its doors to the first students in February 1872. The first "school building" was a farmhouse on the McIlroy Farm which welcomed eight students, including one female. Even prior to the Civil War, Fayetteville had become the economic, religious, scholastic, and political center of the county and northwest Arkansas.

Auto related facilities came to Fayetteville in the early 1910s. Interestingly, one of the first auto-related businesses, the Ingalls Bryan Auto Company Garage, was located where the Cosmopolitan Hotel is today. However, wagon-related facilities were still found in Fayetteville, with a wagon yard located at the northwest corner of College and Mountain streets.



*First buildings at the University of Arkansas (UA) in Fayetteville (Washington County); 1872. Special Collections, University of Arkansas Libraries, Fayetteville*

### *Bus Tour 1 • U.S. 62 to Eureka Springs*



*Washington County Courthouse in Fayetteville. Photo by John Gill*

#### N. College

Throughout much of the nineteenth century, College Street was known as Sycamore – it was not until sometime between 1886 and 1892 that the name was changed. By the first half of the twentieth century, as the automobile became much more prevalent and U.S. 71 was improved, many auto facilities appeared on the street. Small motels, such as the Town House Motel at 215 N. College and the Sands

Motel at 229 N. College (both demolished) provided lodging, and filling stations between Meadow and Spring streets provided other services. Some of the surviving roadside resources that remain in the immediate downtown area are a **Garage/Filling Station** at 70 N. College (built 1926, heavily altered) that had a capacity of 100 cars and the **Goff-McNair Motor Co., Inc.** at 331 N.



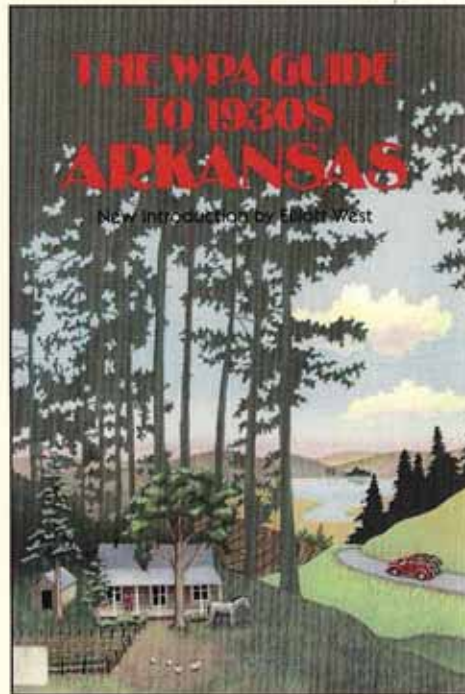
## ODYSSEY IN THE OZARKS

College. The Goff-McNair Building was built in the 1940s, and by 1959 the company was Fayetteville's Rambler, Edsel, Mercury, and Lincoln dealership. (Interestingly, according to Sanborn maps, the company was also involved in boat sales.)



Apple pickers in W. E. Brown's orchard at Rogers (Benton County); circa 1900. Rogers Historical Museum

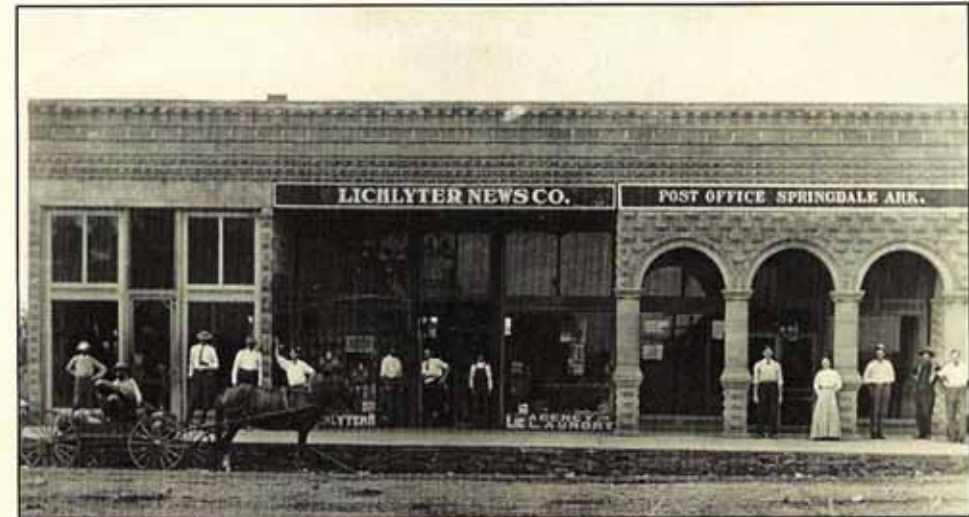
Throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the area remained rural and farming was the foundation of the area's economy. Even in the 1930s, the WPA Guide to Arkansas indicated that "South of Rogers US 71 again traverses farm and orchard country, passing the BENTON COUNTY NURSERY... which sells young trees to apple, plum, and peach growers in the region. Farther south occasional vineyards appear, reminders that grapes from some 4,000,000 vines rank next to apples as a commercial fruit in northwest Arkansas. Concords are the most important variety, although Moore's Early and Niagara are also cultivated."



### U.S. 71 North of Fayetteville

The area north of Fayetteville when compared to the rest of northwest Arkansas, is relatively flat. As a result, early settlers actually more often than not came from the north rather than from other parts of Arkansas. As the WPA Guide to Arkansas pointed out, "Set apart from the rest of the State by the Ozarks to the south and east, and climatically distinguished by a rather high altitude, Benton and Washington Counties offer a scene unlike other parts of Arkansas. Though their land is rich, the people here have never known a plantation economy. Culturally oriented toward the Midwest rather than the South, and owning few slaves... diversified agriculture gives to this northwest corner a degree of prosperity comparable to that found in the average good farming area in the United States."

## Bus Tour 1 • U.S. 62 to Eureka Springs



Lichlyter News Company and post office in Springdale (Washington County); circa 1905. Butler Center for Arkansas Studies, Central Arkansas Library System

**Springdale** (originally known as "Spring-in-the-Dale") was one of the centers of the farming region. In the 1930s, it was home to a Welch Grape Juice Factory that employed 50-100 people and the Nelson Wine & Distillery Company Plant, which produced "about 100,000 gallons of sherry, claret, and port each year." Nelson's adjoining packing plant also canned tomatoes, spinach, beans, and apples.

Because of the farm economy of the northwest part of the state, and the need to transport produce, road construction was important early on in the area, especially in Benton County. The *Third Biennial Report of the Department of State Lands, Highways, and Improvements* reported in the late 1910s that "Benton County has for several years given a great deal of attention to the improvement of her earth roads, and at present, practically all of the principal roads are

well graded and in excellent condition. The surface and soil conditions are very favorable to road construction and maintenance. With the abundance of gravel and stone in all parts of the county, good roads may be constructed at a minimum cost."

Although historically the U.S. 71 corridor was rural in nature, the past few decades have changed it dramatically. Washington and Benton counties are the headquarters of three major corporations – Wal-Mart, Tyson Foods, and J.B. Hunt Trucking – which has caused tremendous growth throughout the region. As a result, the U.S. 71 corridor between Fayetteville and Rogers today is a textbook example of sprawl. However, even so, a few scattered restaurants and small motels exist along the highway.





**U.S. 62**

At Rogers U.S. 71 intersects U.S. 62, the major east-west road across northern Arkansas. As with other communities throughout the area, the early history of Rogers centered on farming. The farmers in the area secured the location for a depot when the St. Louis San Francisco Railway built their line through the area in 1881. Farming has remained a key part of the area's economy throughout much of the twentieth century.

With Tyson Foods in the area, chicken farming has been an especially important aspect of the farming economy from the area since at least the 1930s. A 1930s account of the industry stated that, "Here [in Rogers] in January 1939 was held the first of the annual live-broiler shows, intended primarily to ad-

vertise the fact that Benton County produces several million young chickens each year. Varieties raised are chiefly White and Barred Rocks and White Wyandottes. Modern methods have elevated broiler-raising to an industry: the young chicks are confined in coops from the day of their hatching, stuffed with feed carried on conveyor belts, permitted no exercise, and shipped to market hardly able to stand on their feet but tender and succulent."

As U.S. 71 and U.S. 62 developed into major highways in the early twentieth century, facilities developed in the Rogers area to cater to them. Several are scattered throughout town, but the best of the bunch is the **Susie Q Malt Shop** at 612 N 2nd Street. Built

in 1960, this roadside restaurant has been a landmark in Rogers for years. The sign out front is original, although the neon has not worked in years. Items from the menu include chili made from scratch, burgers and fries, and the Big Pig, a freshly breaded pork tenderloin on a toasted bun.



Approximately ten miles northeast of Rogers, U.S. 62 passes **Pea Ridge National Military Park**, 4,300-acre park that has been called by the National Park Service the "most intact Civil War battlefield in the country." The Battle of Pea Ridge was an extremely important battle of the Civil War since it saved the state of Missouri for the Union. The engagement, which lasted two days, was a Federal victory, even though the Union forces were outnumbered and fighting in Confederate territory. The engagement at Pea Ridge was the last stage in Union General Curtis' campaign to drive the pro-Confederate forces from Missouri and it also ended Confederate commander Earl Van Dorn's ambitions toward gaining control of Missouri. Pea Ridge National Military Park was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on October 15, 1966.



*Battle of Pea Ridge, Arkansas by Kurz and Allison  
Source: Library of Congress.*

On the south side of the highway west of Eureka Springs is **Hunt's Tavern**. Hunt's Tavern was built c.1939, and used log construction, which was popular at that period in the Ozarks of Arkansas. Described in historic ads as "one of the Ozarks' nicest places to eat" Hunt's served steaks, chicken, and fish, and was famous for salads and squaw bread. The building is currently vacant, but still a fixture on the highway in the area. Hunt's Tavern was also known as the Log Cabin Tavern, and an early advertisement for the Log Cabin Tavern stated that "native wine, cold drinks, salads, sandwiches and home-made ice cream are sold here. The furnishing is of native cedar and the interior is quiet and restful. They also have cedar souvenirs. A good place to stop and relax."







Approximately 1.25 miles south of U.S. 62 on AR 187 is **Dinosaur World** (aka John Agar's Land of Kong). Interestingly, when Emmet Sullivan (who served as an apprentice to noted sculptor Gutzon Borglum at Mount Rushmore and sculpted the dinosaurs at Dinosaur Park in Rapid City, South Dakota) came to Arkansas, he again became involved with the sculpting of dinosaurs. Several meetings with Ola Farwell (and a trip to Rapid City, South Dakota, by Farwell) in the mid-1960s led to Sullivan sculpting eleven dinosaurs for Farwell's Dinosaur Park, which opened to the public in 1968. Farwell had originally wanted to build a giant statue of General Douglas MacArthur, but the Eureka Springs City Council rejected the proposal. Farwell then turned his love for children into the idea of developing the theme park. Sullivan employed the same construction methods for the dinosaurs at Farwell's Dinosaur Park that he had used in Rapid City in the 1930s. A few of the park's dinosaurs were featured briefly during the opening



scenes of the 1968 horror movie *It's Alive* and the Tyrannosaurus is featured in the 2005 film *Elizabethtown*. The park has been closed since c.2005.

Back on U.S. 62, as motorists approach the White River valley today, the original route of U.S. 62 veers off to the south of the current road as Old U.S. 62, Busch Segment. (Today, Old U.S. 62 follows County Roads 173 and 109 west of the White River, and County Road 107 east of the river.) *The Third Biennial Report of the Department of State Lands, Highways and Improvements* reported on the construction of the road:

*Of the Eureka Springs-Seligman road 15.74 miles run through Carroll County. Work is progressing rapidly on a native stone macadam and gravel road 14 feet wide on a 22 ft. dump. W. W. Blockson, E. M. Bare and F. D. Cook are the commissioners. C. A. Fuller is attorney and R. D. Alexander, engineer of construction. The mountainous nature*

*of the country render construction difficult and expensive, although excellent material is abundant along the right of way. Convict labor is being used as provided by the legislature of 1917. Estimated cost, \$125,000. State aid allotted, \$32,500.*

The construction of improved roads was important to the residents of Carroll County. The Biennial Report indicated that "The sentiment for better roads is good throughout the county and a strong tendency toward permanent construction is everywhere manifest."

This particular section of highway was paved c.1932 and consists of a series of sharp and sweeping turns that follow the topography of the area. It would have been a very dangerous section of highway, especially given its narrow width of approximately 16 feet. In addition, the sharp curve and narrow bridge at the White River crossing would have been increasingly dangerous as the size of cars and trucks grew during the 1940s and early 1950s. As a result, by the 1950s, it was decided to bypass and straighten out the section. A new route for the highway, built to the north and east of this alignment, was constructed in 1950-1952, and remains in use today. The **Old U.S. 62, Busch Segment**, was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on September 25, 2008.

Just to the west of the White River at the end of County Road 109 are the remnants of the **Hamlin Tourist Court**, now in the front yard of a private residence, and the **White River Camp Restaurant**. The Hamlin Tourist Court was built in 1930 and

three stone cabins and an apartment/garage building remain. (The camp also consisted of some frame cabins and a frame house originally.) The White River Camp Restaurant likely pre-dates the Hamlin Tourist Court, and provided meals and services to travelers in a setting that provided scenic views of the White River.





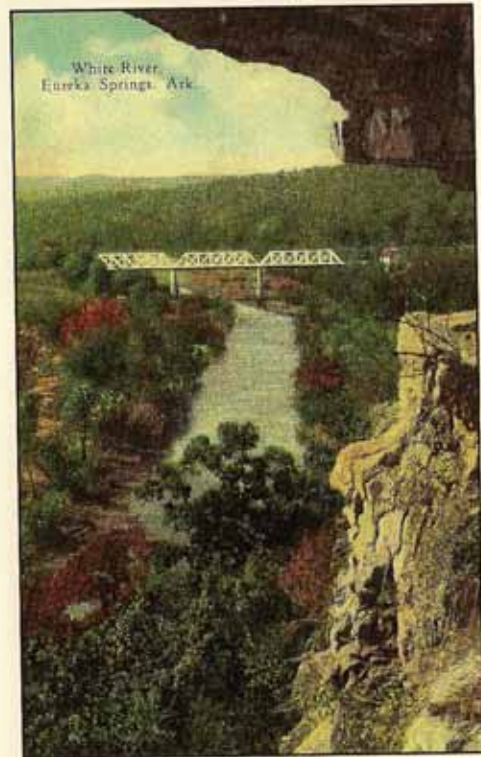
## ODYSSEY IN THE OZARKS

Back on U.S. 62, the original White River crossing was replaced by the current **White River Bridge**, which was built in 1950-1952 by the Focum James Company of Dyersburg, Tennessee. The 787-foot long deck-truss bridge made the trip in the White River area a lot safer for motorists, and it remains a vital transportation link today. The White River Bridge was listed in National Register of Historic Places on January 24, 2008.

The building houses an antique shop and Inspiration Point is still a popular place for travelers to stop and admire the view.



Just west of Eureka Springs, on the north side of U.S. 62 is one of Arkansas's architectural wonders, **Thorncrown Chapel**. Thorncrown Chapel was the dream of Jim Reed, who purchased the land in 1971. People would often stop at the site to get good views of the Ozark hills. Instead of keeping the people out, Reed commissioned architect Fay Jones to design a small chapel so that others could better appreciate the site. Construction began on March 23, 1979, and it opened to the public on July 10, 1980. The building has 425 windows and over 6,000 square feet of glass. The building has won numerous awards including the AIA Design of the Year Award for 1981, the AIA Design of the Decade Award for the 1980s and the AIA recently placed the building fourth on its list of the top buildings of the twentieth century. Thorncrown Chapel was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on April 28, 2000.



Approximately 1.5 miles east of the White River is Inspiration Point, a popular place for early motorists to stop and admire the view of the Ozarks. Inspiration Point is currently home to **Castle Antiques**, which was also built c.1939. The building also uses the log construction that was popular in the area.

## Bus Tour 1 • U.S. 62 to Eureka Springs

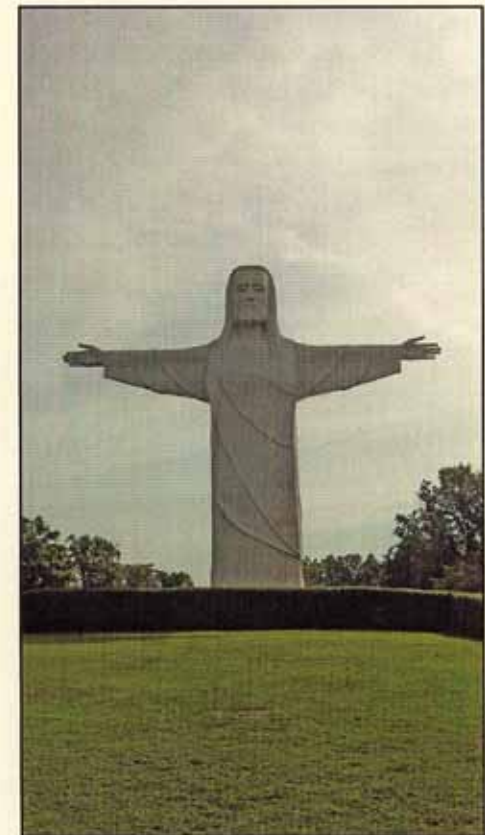
### Eureka Springs

The city of Eureka Springs developed in the late 1800s as a spa community. Interestingly, because of the area's topography, it was easier to reach Eureka Springs in its early years from Missouri. It was not until the construction of the St. Louis & North Arkansas Railroad in 1900-1901, which connected Eureka Springs and Harrison, that Eureka Springs really became accessible to the rest of Arkansas. In the 1930s, it was claimed that the town "clings to valley slopes so steep that townspeople say there is no level spot here large enough for a circus to pitch its tents. . . Springs emerge every few yards along the single through street that winds between the valley walls; 63 springs have been counted inside the city limits." Amazingly, Eureka Springs was supposedly originally platted with a grid street pattern, but because of the topography it was impossible to ultimately carry out the plan.

Beginning in the 1920s, sites catering to auto tourists began to emerge. However, when the Depression hit, little development occurred in the town, and the community's isolated location meant that few people visited. As a result, nothing was changed — a great thing for historic preservation — and it was not until the 1950s and 1960s that the community was once again discovered, this time by artists and hippies who liked the quiet inaccessible location of the town as a great place to escape to.

However, the economic future of Eureka Springs was forever changed in 1966 with the completion of the **Christ of the Ozarks**, which overlooks the city from the top of

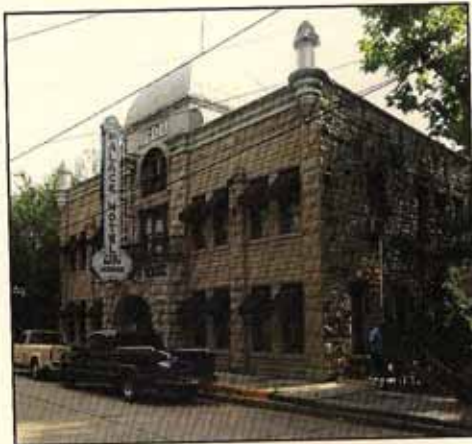
Magnetic Mountain (also known as Mount Oberammergau) at 935 Passion Play Road. Built in 1965-1966 as the brainchild of Gerald L.K. Smith and his wife Elna, and sculpted by Emmet Sullivan, who also worked on Mount Rushmore, Christ of the Ozarks is made of 24 layers of white mortar on a steel frame and weighs over 2 million pounds. The statue is seven stories tall with an arm spread from fingertip to fingertip of 65 feet. Each hand, from wrist to fingertip, measures seven feet. Christ of the Ozarks, which really turned Eureka Springs into the tourist mecca that it is today, is the centerpiece of the grounds of the Great Passion Play.





## ODYSSEY IN THE OZARKS

The popularity of Eureka Springs with tourists for over 125 years has meant that tourist accommodations have taken on a wildly diverse number of styles over the years. The earliest hotels, such as the **Palace Hotel and Bathhouse** at 135 Spring Street, which was built in 1900-1901, and whose sign is supposedly the first neon sign installed west of the Mississippi River, used popular – and often exuberant – Victorian styles, and were built to fit the topography. For example, the WPA Guide to Arkansas touted that “each of the seven floors of the **Basin Park Hotel**, on Spring Street [12 Spring Street], may be reached without riding an elevator or climbing stairs, since the position of the building against the side of the mountain makes every floor a ground floor.” The **Twigg Log Cabin Court** at 42 Kingshighway (now the Log Cabin Inn-Motel) illustrates how some of the early tourist courts used natural materials, such as logs



and stone, which were plentiful in the area, as does the **Rock Cabin Tourist Court** at 10 Eugenia (now the Rock Cottage Gardens, built c.1914). Some of the more modern hotels, such as the Joy Motel, built in 1960 at 216 West Van Buren, and the **Bavarian Inn Lodge & Restaurant** at 325 W. Van Buren, use more standard motel architecture, but often spiced it up to reflect a particular



## Bus Tour 1 • U.S. 62 to Eureka Springs

theme. A few historic service stations are also scattered around the city, especially on the historic U.S. 62 business loop, which also retains its original 1920s concrete pavement. Examples of auto-related buildings include:

**Pennant Service Station** at White and Mountain streets, which is now the Texaco Bungalow.

**Continental Oil Company** service station at 104 Spring Street (across from the Post Office).

**Cook and Border Motor Co.** at 1, 2, and 3 North Main Street.

**Hussey Garage and Battery Shop** at 61 South Main Street.

### Crescent Hotel

However, the grand dame of the hotels and tourist accommodations in Eureka Springs is the Crescent Hotel, built in 1886, located at 75 Prospect. At the time it was built, the Crescent Hotel was one of the nicest hotels in America, and it cost \$294,000 to build. However, after the turn of the twentieth century, tourism to Eureka Springs for “taking the waters” began to wane. As a result, beginning in 1908, the Crescent Hotel became the Crescent Conservatory for Young Women, a role it played until 1932.

After the Crescent Conservatory for Women closed, the building was purchased by Norman Baker who turned it into a Cancer Hospital. Although Baker called himself “Dr. Baker” he was not a doctor and had no medical training. Dr. Baker advertised, “If you have cancer, come to Eureka Springs and I will cure you—100% guaranteed.”

Hundreds of sick people traveled to Eureka Springs to get treatment at the Baker Cancer Hospital, but many of them ultimately died. Dr. Baker did not want the citizens of Eureka Springs to know that his patients were dying, since it would hurt his business. Supposedly, Dr. Baker worked out a deal with the funeral home so that they would wait until after dark to send the hearse to the hospital.

The American Medical Association was suspicious of Dr. Baker, and they asked the police to begin investigating him. It was discovered that Dr. Baker was involved in illegal activities, including scamming money from the families of his patients. He would have patients write stacks of letters to families asking for money, and after a patient died, Dr. Baker would continue mailing out letters. Dr. Baker was ultimately convicted of mail fraud and sent to Leavenworth Penitentiary. Ironically, Dr. Baker later died of cancer.

Today, the Crescent Hotel is once again Eureka Springs’ premier hotel. Purchased in 1997 by Marty and Elise Roenigk, they have spent over \$3 million lovingly restoring the hotel to its original grandeur.

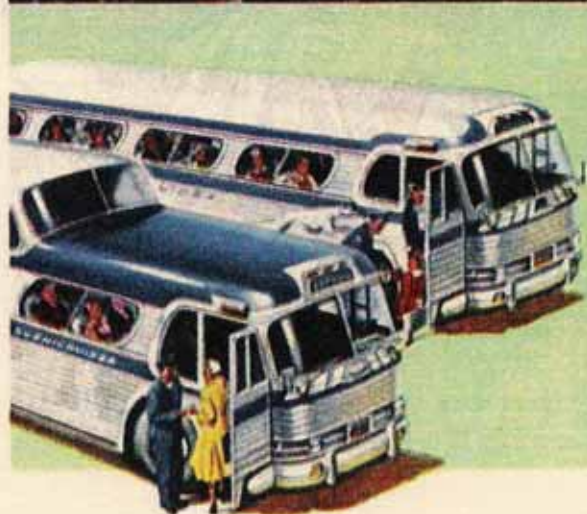
**Tour returns to Fayetteville on U.S. 62 and I-540...**





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