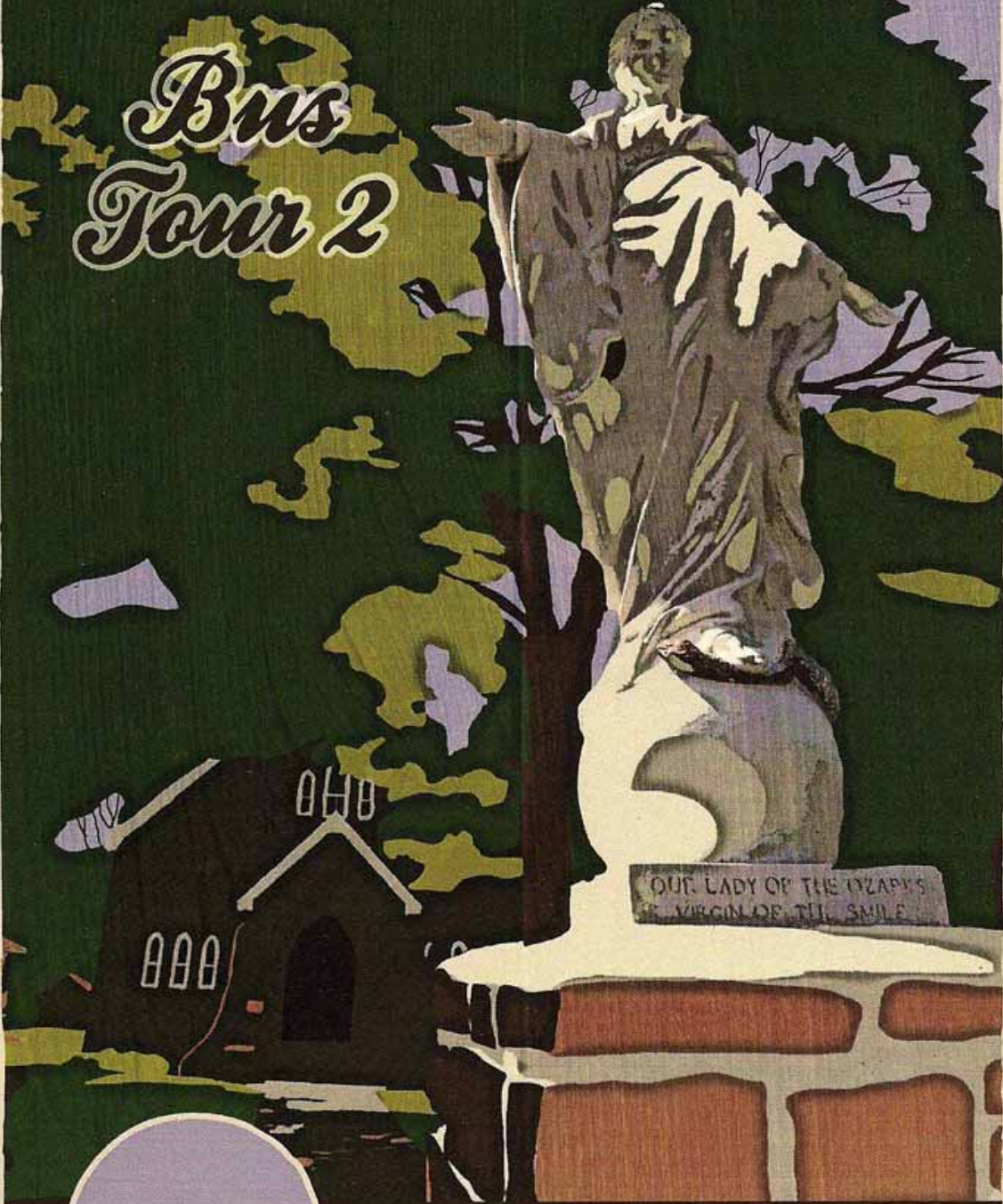


ODYSSEY IN THE OZARKS

Bus Tour 2

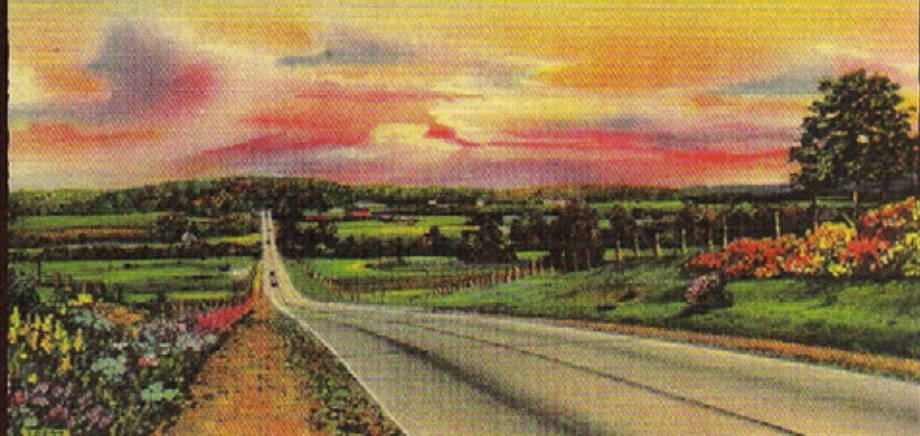


U.S. 71 and U.S. 64

OCTOBER 9, 2010

Scene on Highway 71 North of Fayetteville, Arkansas

ODYSSEY IN THE OZARKS



U.S. 71 is the main route through the Boston Mountains of Western Arkansas connecting the northwest part of the state with the Arkansas River Valley at Van Buren and Fort Smith before crossing over the Ouachita Mountains to the Red River Valley at Texarkana. One early traveler on the Butterfield Stage who was crossing the mountains on the road wrote, "I might say our road was steep, rugged, jagged, rough and mountainous...and then wish for some more expressive words in the language." Today, the

route is still mountainous and twisty providing breathtaking views of the natural surroundings.

Even though few towns developed between Fayetteville and the Van Buren area because of the region's topography and isolation, tourist courts and other facilities for motorists along with roadside attractions developed during the first part of the twentieth century. Although the opening of I-540 in 1999 took most of the traffic off of U.S. 71, remnants from the route's



Bus Tour 2
U.S. 64 & U.S. 71
OCTOBER 7, 2010

heyday still dot the landscape. Thankfully, the trip between Fayetteville and the Van Buren/Fort Smith area takes just an hour or so today, unlike the trip on the Butterfield Stage, of which the traveler wrote: "We reached Fort Smith...at five minutes after two o'clock A.M., having made the sixty five miles from Fayetteville in fourteen hours and seven minutes."

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,



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1835, Jackson issued the patent that established the original town. Later in the year, Deputy County Surveyor Chas. McClelland, John Wes, William McGarrah, 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 McLroy 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.

South 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. By 1948, there were four filling stations and two auto repair facilities in the block occupied by the Cosmopolitan, with additional facilities on Mountain Street west of College. In addition, at the southwest corner of College and Center streets is the remnant of the **Mountain Inn Hotel**, which was home to the Blue Moon Cafeteria and advertised "Comfort Without Extravagance" as "Fayetteville's newest, largest, and most modern hotel." However, south of the downtown area, facilities were not as prevalent.

Although the streetscape on U.S. 71 south of downtown has changed through the years, remnants of the auto era include:

The former **Heflin Service Station**, a Cities Service Station at 1418 South School Street and the former **Heflin's Café** at 1422 South School Street. In addition, across from Heflin's is the former **Carol Motel** at 1415 South School Street.



Bus Tour 2 • U.S. 71 & U.S. 71

Outside of Fayetteville improvement of the road that would become U.S. 71 did not begin in earnest until the 1910s. The *Third Biennial Report of the Department of State Lands, Highways, and Improvements*, published c.1918, indicated that "Plans, specifications and estimates were furnished on the Winslow-Fayetteville-Goshen road, 43.83 miles. It is to be of native gravel with an estimated cost of \$177,144.39. State aid allotted, \$50,000. All the preliminaries are completed and work will begin as soon as conditions will permit." (Goshen is located east of Fayetteville, and that part of the route is now AR 45.)

U.S. 71 south of Fayetteville

Between Fayetteville and Mount Gaylor the area around the road remains rural as it passes through Greenland, West Fork, Brentwood, and Winslow. Although the gravel highway constructed in the late 1910s was an improvement for motorists, by the late 1920s additional improvements were needed. As the Arkansas State Highway Commission undertook a major effort to upgrade and pave many of Arkansas's main highways, U.S. 71 was not overlooked.

Just south of Greenland, a segment of the original concrete highway remains intact and still in use as a county road. Paved with concrete in 1929-1930 by the Porter Construction Company of Tulsa, Oklahoma,



the Greenland segment of Old U.S. 71 is approximately 0.75 miles long and is the best preserved section of the original concrete highway between Fayetteville and Alma. The segment also includes a three-span Parker pony-truss bridge over the West Fork of the White River built by the Maxwell Construction Company of Columbus, Kansas. Amazingly, this narrow road (18 feet wide) remained the main highway in the area until it was bypassed in 1980. The Old U.S. 71, Greenland Segment, was listed in National Register of Historic Places on September 24, 2004.

ODYSSEY IN THE OZARKS



South of Greenland, the next community is West Fork, which started out as a small farming community founded by the railroad in the 1880s. Interestingly, during the 1930s, it was common to see piles of bois d'arc, also known as Osage orange, mock orange, bowwood, yellowwood, hedge, applewood, or rabbit hedge, near the highway going through the four-year period of seasoning. At the time, bois d'arc was used extensively for the manufacture of archery equipment. Early farmers also found that it made fences that were "pig tight, bull strong, and horse high," and they also used it to make neck yokes and wagons. Bois d'arc fence posts were ideal since the wood could be stapled or nailed without cracking and lasted forever.



West Fork is also home to the **Dixie Motel** which was built c.1940. The Dixie Motel would have been a convenient rest stop south of the Fayetteville area, especially for motorists traveling south. South of West Fork one enters into the ruggedness of the Boston Mountains, which the road stays in until it emerges into the Arkansas River Valley near Alma, and West Fork would have been a good stopping point before entering the challenging terrain of the mountains. The Dixie Motel exhibits fieldstone construction, something that was used extensively in the Ozark region of the state because of the prevalence of rock. In fact, the *WPA Guide to Arkansas* noted in regards to West Fork, that "jagged shoulders of limestone project from the valley wall, ranging in color from slate to brown to yellow." The Dixie Motel is currently in use as small apartments.

Bus Tour 2 • U.S. 71 & U.S. 71

Native stone construction was also used for the **Brentwood Café** in Brentwood, which was built c.1945. Brentwood has always been a small community – it was not even mentioned in the 1930s WPA Guide – and the Brentwood Café is now vacant.



A short distance south of Brentwood, U.S. 71 passes into Crawford County, which was created on October 18, 1820, and named for William H. Crawford of Georgia, who was Secretary of the Treasury. As in Washington County, by the 1910s the State Highway Commission reported that "there is a strong sentiment throughout the county for better and more permanent roads." The *Third Biennial Report of the Department of State Lands, Highways, and Improvements* also reported that "Plans, specifications and estimates have been furnished for [a] shale and macadam road, 35.43 miles long from Van Buren via Alma to Winslow. This is to be a part of a system of roads from Fort Smith

through Crawford, Washington and Madison counties. Estimated cost, \$110,893.46. State aid allotted, \$34,801.40." Although there was much work done in the 1910s to improve the route of U.S. 71, it was still a road that was not for the faint of heart. The *WPA Guide to Arkansas* indicated that "south of Winslow US 71 passes through the most rugged country of its route. Unable to find a creek valley sufficiently wide to admit passage, it careens over a series of ridges, whipping from curve into curve as it climbs and descends."

Mount Gaylor

Approximately one mile south of the county line is the community of Mount Gaylor, home to some of the best attractions on this stretch of U.S. 71. Although it is not known when people began to be drawn to Mount Gaylor and its magnificent vistas, during the late 1920s and early 1930s, Adrian Brewer, an American Impressionist painter who came to Arkansas was drawn to the area to paint. Although Brewer was best known for his portraits, he also painted Arkansas landscapes. Brewer was drawn to the state's high vantage points, such as Mount Gaylor or Petit Jean Mountain, for the panoramic vistas of hills or river valleys that they offered.

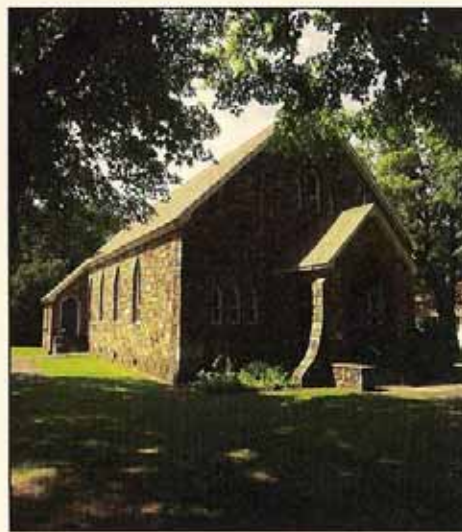
ODYSSEY IN THE OZARKS



By the 1940s facilities for tourists began to develop in the Mount Gaylor area. The **Vista Courts**, for example, was likely built in the 1940s as was the **Sky Vue Cabins**. Using fieldstone construction like so many of the other resources in that part of the state, the Vista Courts provided what its name implies, a vista from the top of the mountain ridge. The complex still retains its original neon sign, although it appears that it has not been operational for a long time. In its heyday, the Vista Courts advertised "Air-conditioning and panel ray heat. Kitchenettes, free TV, tile combination baths."

Although many things in Mount Gaylor were oriented towards motorists on the highway, **Our Lady of the Ozarks Shrine** served local residents. The Our Lady of the Ozarks Shrine was built in 1946 to serve the Catholics in this rural part of northern Crawford

County and southern Washington County and was administered by the Stigmatine Fathers, a Catholic religious congregation of priests and brothers founded by St. Gaspar Bertoni in Verona, Italy, in 1816. Stigmatines empha-

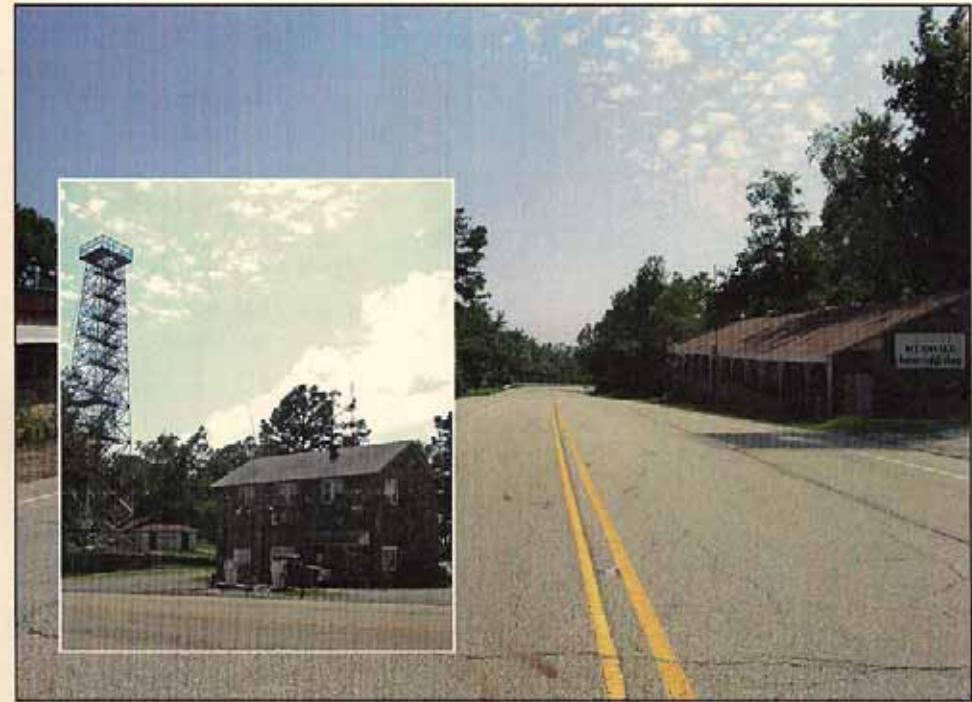


Bus Tour 2 • U.S. 71 & U.S. 71

size preaching the Word of God, helping in the formation of the youth, and assisting in clergy formation. The complex consists of the church, rectory, parish hall, and school. The complex still houses an active Catholic congregation, although the school is partially used for commercial purposes.

Probably the most notable landmark along U.S. 71 in the Boston Mountains, the **Mount Gaylor Complex** consists of two gift shop buildings, an old service station, and a look-out tower. Although it existed in the 1930s, what is there today appears to date from the late 1930s up through at least the 1940s. The *WPA Guide to Arkansas* stated that from this location "spreads a vista of Ozark peaks and valleys, the nearer slopes green in summer and brown in winter, the father

ones invariably dust-blue shadows against the clearer blue of the sky. Here are several lodges and cabins where travelers may stay overnight and rise early to see sunrises unexcelled this side of the Rockies." An old postcard for Burns Gables, on the east side of the highway, touted it as "one of the most beautiful places of its kind in the Ozarks. Located on top of the Ozarks, elevation 2,353 ft. Known for good Southern Vittles, modern rooms and cabins, and the largest novelty shop in the Ozarks. A place, for mother, sister, or sweetheart. Once you stop at this place, it will always remain in your memory." Another postcard touted its "Ultra modern cottages. Gift Shop. Recommended by Duncan Hines... Mrs. Lavada Burns, Owner and Manager."





Approximately three miles south of Mount Gaylor is **Artist Point**, another location that takes advantage of the road's ridge-top location. The gift shop, which sells "a variety of unique items, including handmade dolls, Indian artifacts, homemade jams and jellies and other small treasures, all of which are produced by local craftsman," opened on July 4, 1954, and was the brainchild of Bill and Helen Folks. Artist Point also has an observation deck with telescopes that provides views of the Boston Mountains with Lake Shepherd Springs and White Rock Mountain in the distance. It is also popular with visitors in the spring when hundreds of hummingbirds flock to feeders put up on the property.

South of Artist Point, U.S. 71 winds through the southern part of the Boston Mountains as it descends towards the Arkansas River Valley. Residents and services for motorists

are few and far between, even today. However, one **Tourist Court**, located southwest of the U.S. 71 and Shepherd Spring Road intersection, is located on the west side of the road. Likely built in the 1930s or 1940s, the buildings employ the native stone construction that was prevalent during the period. Its location, high above Mountainburg, would have given tourists a quiet, secluded setting overlooking Lake Fort Smith and the valley below. From the court, it was just a short 5.5 mile trip down into Mountainburg.



Mountainburg

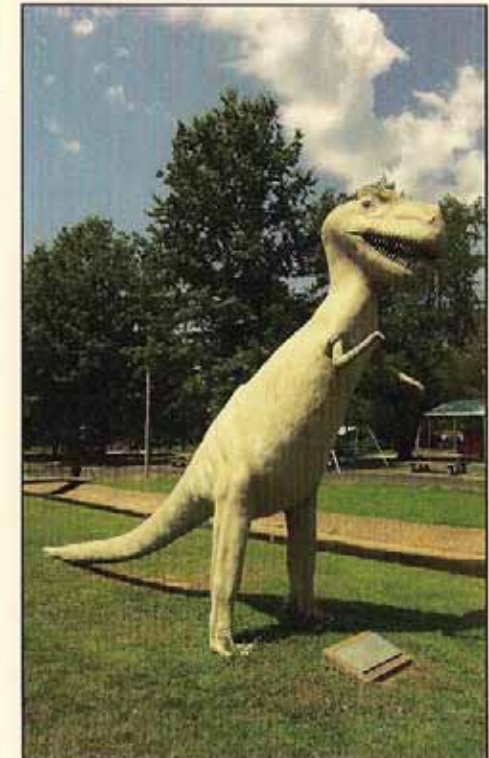
On the north side of Mountainburg, a **stone tourist court** sits back from the highway on the east side of the highway. The building features stone construction, which was also carried out in the decorative planter out front. Appearing to date from the 1930s or 1940s, the building, which has partially burned recently, has most recently been used as apartments.



Also on the north side of Mountainburg, the **City Park** on the west side of the highway features two dinosaurs, a Tyrannosaurus Rex and a Brontosaurus, that greet motorists on the road. Both dinosaurs were built by Douglas W. Birchfield of Mountainburg in 1980.

Mountainburg was originally known as The Narrows and had a post office established in 1840. The arrival of the railroad in 1882 caused Mountainburg to grow and it was incorporated as a city on July 29, 1882. Mountainburg was an important shipping point for timber harvested from the surrounding hills. However, the improvement of the highway in the early 1900s switched the transportation focus of the area away from the railroad.

Mountainburg was described in the 1930s as "a resort village at the southern edge of the mountains, easily accessible to Fort Smith residents and popular for week ends. Summer homes appear frequently along the highway." The older buildings in downtown utilize stone masonry construction, and a couple of highway-related resources exist. Remnants of a garage, possibly the **John Hobbs and Son Garage** building, and what appears to have possibly been **Earl Satterfield's Filling Station** are located in the heart of downtown. Other buildings have interesting stone features, such as the built in benches at a former store on the west side of the highway.



ODYSSEY IN THE OZARKS



Approximately four miles south of Mountainburg is another remnant of the highway's original concrete pavement, **Old U.S. 71, Winn Mountain Segment**. This bypassed segment of U.S. 71 was paved in concrete in 1930 by the Sandy Hites Company of Warsaw, Missouri. Consisting of a series of banked curves to allow greater speeds in the hilly terrain, referred to as "super-elevated" curves by the state highway department at the time, this segment was bypassed by the current U.S. 71, in order to follow a straighter route.

After being at 2,353 feet at the top of Mount Gaylor, the motorist drops down to 430 feet above sea level at Alma, which is located in the Arkansas River Valley. Today, Alma mainly exists as the community at the intersection of U.S. 71, U.S. 64 and I-40, and the town has a plethora of businesses that cater to the modern-day motorist. However, even as

early as the 1930s, Alma had "filling stations and restaurants typical of a main-highway junction." However, in addition, it also had "platforms for shipping strawberries and other truck crops grown in the neighborhood."



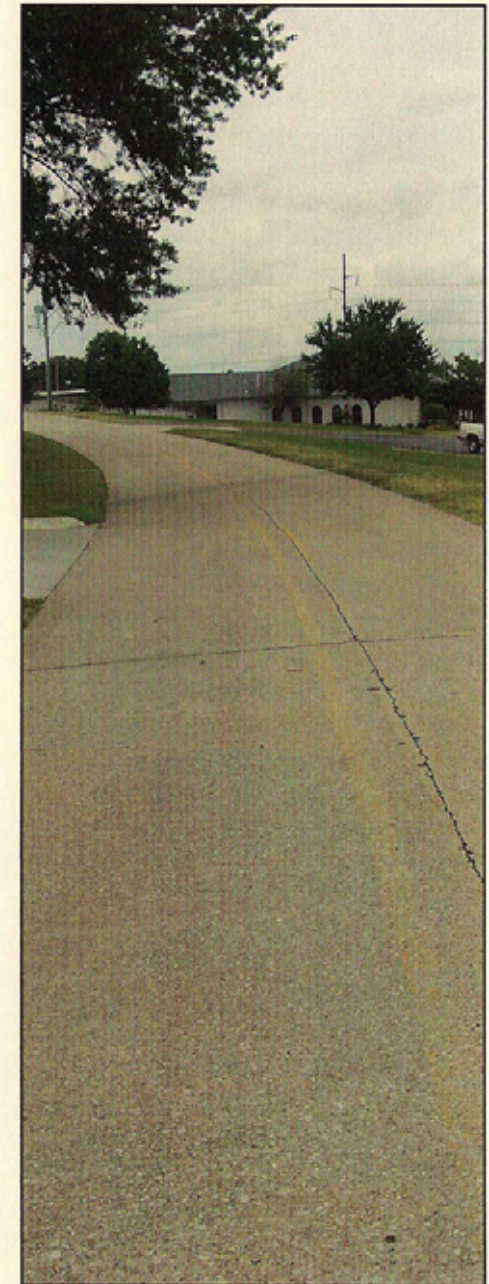
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Turning west on U.S. 64, in approximately 2.75 miles, on the south side of the road is **Kopper Kettle Candies**. The Kopper Kettle Candies building was originally built as a restaurant on U.S. 64, one of the major east-west U.S. highways in Arkansas. It was likely built in the late 1940s or early 1950s, and employs what is sometimes referred to as Mixed Masonry construction, which features fieldstone walls with brick detailing around doors and windows. Kopper Kettle Candies, which the Greer Family has operated for four generations, has been in business since 1925.



Just west of I-540, on the north side of the road is **Old U.S. 64, Van Buren Segment**. This section of Old U.S. 64, was paved with concrete in 1928-1929 by the Shultz Construction Company of Wichita, Kansas. Today, approximately 0.65 miles of concrete pavement remain as part of the segment. This section of the old highway remained in use until 1968 when I-540 was constructed through the area and a new interchange was built linking I-540 to a four-lane version of U.S. 64. The Old U.S. 64, Van Buren Segment,

was listed in National Register of Historic Places on January 21, 2010.



Van Buren

Crawford County, which Van Buren is the county seat of, was created by an act of the Territorial Legislature on October 24, 1820, only two years after David Boyd, the first white settler, arrived in Van Buren. The new county, which was named for William H. Crawford, Secretary of the Treasury under James Monroe, encompassed most of the land now occupied by Yell, Logan, Johnson, Franklin, Scott, and Sebastian counties. The first county seat was temporarily located at the house of John Jay on the south side of the Arkansas River near the site of the Old Crawford Court House. The county seat was eventually moved several times, ending up in Van Buren in 1838.

Initially, the Arkansas River played a large role in the settlement and commerce in Crawford County. However, in the second half of the nineteenth century, the railroad became the supreme mode of transportation in the area. The Little Rock and Fort

Smith Railroad, which was organized in 1853, acquired a vast amount of land in the area, including "alternate even sections for six miles on each side of the track." Work began on the line in 1869 and by August 1871 120 miles of track were completed. Finally, on June 24, 1876, the first train entered Van Buren.

Although railroad travel would have been important in Van Buren and Crawford County for traveling longer distances, roads would have been important for traveling in the immediate vicinity. In the early nineteenth century few roads traversed the Van Buren area. By 1839, a "cross road" connected Van Buren and Fort Smith, and a "4 Horse Mail Post Coach Road" connected Van Buren with Cotocton on Frog Bayou to the east in Crawford County and Pleasant Hill and Ozark in Franklin County. The same road connected Van Buren with Vineyard, Cane Hill, and Fayetteville to the north.



Road construction continued in Crawford County throughout the early nineteenth century. By 1854 more roads connected the Van Buren area with points to the north, but the original "4 Horse Mail Post Coach Road," which roughly followed the current route of U.S. 64, was still the only road that connected Van Buren to points east. (The mountains in the northern part of Crawford County would have made road construction in the nineteenth century in that part of the county very difficult. The route of U.S. 64, closer to the Arkansas River Valley, would have been a much easier route to travel.)

Although the roads that were built during the 1800s were sufficient in many cases for the horses and wagons that were the main means of travel in the nineteenth century, road requirements in the first part of the twentieth century were very different. By the early twentieth century, as automobiles became more prevalent, it was necessary to provide good roads for easier travel. Since the route of U.S. 64 east from Van Buren was an important route connecting Van Buren with counties to the east and Arkansas's capital at Little Rock, it would have likely been one of the first roads in the county to be improved.

Facilities for motorists began to appear in Van Buren in the 1910s. They tended to be clustered around the Courthouse on Main Street, which would have been the heart of the city and county. In 1914, for example, a garage existed across from the Courthouse that was also connected to a livery, and an-

other garage was under construction at the intersection of the railroad line and North 6th Street. By 1930, a large auto facility had been built across from the Courthouse. According to the 1930 Sanborn Map, it had a sales and auto repair section to the south, a garage with a capacity of 40 cars in the center and a garage and repair facility with a capacity of 25 cars to the north. Today, a former auto sales and service facility, which was built in the 1930s, stands to the north of the Courthouse. After being an antique store for several years, it is currently vacant.

I-540

Although U.S. 71 provides a scenic route through the Boston Mountains between Alma and Fayetteville, the amount of traffic using the road and the twisty nature of the route really made it a dangerous road by the late twentieth century. Although the route of I-540 had been planned since the early 1970s, it was not until January 8, 1999, that the road was fully opened. The road is also designated the "John Paul Hammerschmidt Highway" in honor of a former U.S. Representative from Arkansas. I-540 also has Arkansas's only highway tunnel, the Bobby Hopper Tunnel, named for the chairman of the Arkansas Highway Commission at the time of its construction. Even though I-540 bypasses the roadside attractions of U.S. 71 and provides a much quicker and safer route through the Boston Mountains to Fayetteville, it still provides magnificent views of the surrounding mountains and valleys.

Tour returns to Fayetteville on I-540

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Tour the
"Natural State"
by Bus!



White River Bridge
Near Eureka

GREETINGS FROM

ARKANSAS



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