

McLean County Museum of History

Route 66 Collection

Processed by
Jonathan Oesterlein
Winter 2024

Collection Information

VOLUME OF COLLECTION:	1 Box
COLLECTION DATES:	1915-2022
RESTRICTIONS:	None
PROVENANCE:	
REPRODUCTION RIGHTS:	Permission to reproduce or publish material in this collection must be obtained in writing from the McLean County Museum of History
ALTERNATIVE FORMATS:	None
OTHER FINDING AIDS:	None
LOCATION:	Archives
NOTES:	

Brief History

Originally called Highway 4, Route 66 was one of the first roads in the nation's numbered highway system. It stretched all the way from Illinois to California and facilitated migration west during the 1930s. Later, it became a part of American pop culture, referenced in songs, movies, and TV shows, and dubbed the Mother Road by John Steinbeck. It was eventually removed from the highway system in 1985, prompting Americans to turn portions of the decommissioned route into a historical byway.

Scope

The collection includes travel guides, flyers, advertisements, recollections, correspondence, postcards, and maps.

Box and Folder Inventory

Folder 1: Publications

- 1.1 Drive US 66, booklet, March 1950, unpagued.
- 1.2 Route 66 Tour Guide brochure, Route 66 Association of Illinois, undated.
- 1.3 Where the Road Began, accordion-style foldout map and history, State of Illinois, undated.
- 1.4 Classic Illinois Route 66! "Were the Road Begins," foldout brochure, Illinois Route 66 Heritage Project," undated.

Folder 2: Trail

- 2.1 "McLean County Greenways Advisory Committee," newsletter detailing the progress of Route 66 bikeway, April 1999.
- 2.2 "Historic U.S Route 66 Bikeway McLean County, Illinois," map, no date.
- 2.3 "Possible Trail Sites" lists and maps, undated, 5 pp.
- 2.4 Preston Hawks, McLean County Museum of History, to Jeffery Busher, Springfield, IL, July 24, 2002.
- 2.5 Jeffery Busher, Hanson Professional Services Incorporated to Greg Koos McLean County Museum of History, July 10, 2002.
- 2.6 "Route 66 State Trail Ride Schedules Stops in McLean County," press release, August 10, 2009.
- 2.7 Route 66 Trail, booklet, undated, 26 pp.
- 2.8 "Trail Route 66," brochure and map, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, undated.

Folder 3: Newspaper Articles (*Pantagraph*, unless noted)

- 3.1 "Here to Talk Up Cross-State Boulevard," July 28, 1915.
- 3.2 "Automobile Boulevard is Favored Here," July 31, 1915.
- 3.3 "Busy Building 300 Mile Road," August 15, 1992, 3 pp.

- 3.4 "Old Chicago Trail, Now Nearly Obliterated, Being Retraced in This Vicinity," April 26, 1931, 4 pp.
- 3.5 "Belt Line Work May be Started this Autumn," August 14, 1938, with attached map.
- 3.6 "Work on Belt Line Right of Way Opens with Goal of 90 Days Set," December 7, 1938.
- 3.7 "Crew Plants Stakes to Mark Bypass Route," December 12, 1938.
- 3.8 "Work on Bypass May Be Started Within 6 Weeks," January 15, 1939.
- 3.9 "Chatsworth Accident," February 5, 1939.
- 3.10 "Actual Works Starts on Belt Line," May 17, 1939.
- 3.11 "State to Ask U.S Aid to Finish Widening Route 66 All the Way, Would Complete Job in Five Years," September 6, 1941.
- 3.12 "In the Path of Progress," June 25, 1944.
- 3.13 "Looks Like a Clever Move," September 11, 1944.
- 3.14 "For Those Who Appreciate The Finer Things...," *McLean County Courier Newspaper*, December 29, 1950.
- 3.15 "Route 66 Construction Begins," August 25, 1953.
- 3.16 "Four Lane 66 Will Save Lives-Stratton," August 6, 1954.
- 3.17 "Lincoln, Atlanta to Host Location Hearings for I-55," September 18, 1970.
- 3.18 "More of Main one-way north," June 27, 1975, 2 pp.
- 3.19 "Belt Line Construction Key," January 16, 1977.
- 3.20 "What's in a name? A saga of SBI 4, U.S. 66, I-55," January 16, 1977.
- 3.21 "Belt Line surrounded by controversy," undated.
- 3.22 "Group pushes for revitalized Route 66," May 28, 1989.
- 3.23 "Bill aims to put Old U.S. 66 back on map," March 7, 1991.
- 3.24 "A Route 66 History... 305 E. Pine St., Normal," *Ridgeview Reviewer (Colfax)*, Feb 22, 2007.
- 3.25 "B-N artist painting Route 66 murals," May 9, 2024.

Folder 4: Conferences/Tours

- 4.1 "Join us... For the US 66 Reunion at the 'Taste of Country' Fair," July 23, 1989," flyer (2 copies).
- 4.2 "Join us... For the Illinois US 66 2nd Annual Reunion at the 'Taste of Country' Fair," pamphlet, July 22, 1990.
- 4.3 "A Taste of Country Fair ... Annual Rte. 66 Reunion, card.
- 4.4 4th Annual Red Carpet Corridor, pamphlet, May 1-2, 2010, unpagged.
- 4.5 Illinois 66 Midpoint, Funk Grove, 23rd Annual Route 66 Association of Illinois Motor Tour, booklet and ticket, June 9, 2012.
- 4.6 Miles of Possibility Conference, flyer / card, 2016.
- 4.7 Miles of Possibility Conference, booklet, October 20-23, 2016.
- 4.8 11th Annual Red Carpet Corridor, pamphlet, May 6-7, 2017.
- 4.9 2019 Fifth Annual Route 66 Miles of Possibility Conference, schedule, 1 sheet, October 17, 2019.
- 4.10 Under The Big Top 5th Annual Route 66 Miles of Possibility Conference, flyer / card, October 17-20, 2019.
- 4.11 Under The Big Top 5th Annual Route 66 Miles of Possibility Conference, flyer, October 17-20, 2019.
- 4.12 Slow Art Day on Illinois 66, Bloomington-Normal, April 15, 2023.

Folder 5: Businesses

- 5.1 "Formal Opening of The Blue Lantern ... Route 4 – Orphans' Home Corner – Normal – Today," *Pantagraph*, May 1, 1926
- 5.2 "Corn Belt Kno-Knox Gasoline," Corn Belt Oil Co., undated.
- 5.3 Photo of Streid's Inc., from 1952 *Aepix*, Bloomington High School yearbook.
- 5.4 Postcard, The Palamar, Pontiac, published by View-Cards, Pontiac.
- 5.5 Email exchange, September 15-16, 2022, regarding 507 Pine Street, Normal.
- 5.6 "The Colaw Room House," Atlanta, brochure, undated.

Folder 6: Recollections

- 6.1 "Route—66," Elmo Page, Lexington, April 9, 1991, typed, 5 pp., with map.
- 6.2 "Route 66," Ty Whiteman, no date, 10 pp., typed,

Folder 7: Route 66 Hall of Fame and Museums

- 7.1 Route 66 Tour Guide and Hall of Fame, Route 66 Association of Illinois, brochure, no date (cover includes illustration of palm tree).
- 7.2 Route 66 Tour Guide and Hall of Fame, Route 66 Association of Illinois, brochure, no date (cover features the Gemini Giant).
- 7.3 Route 66 Hall of Fame and Museum, brochure card, circa 2010.
- 7.4 Route 66—A Photo Journal Exhibit, brochure card, circa 2010.
- 7.5 Correspondence, photocopied, Route 66 Hall of Fame nominations, 1992, to Tom Teague, Springfield, regarding Chad Albeck; Floyd Todd; Paul Lanterman; and Paul Lanterman (all Chenoa), 6 pp.

Folder 8: Route 66 Association of Illinois

- 8.1 Open letter regarding May 21 meeting to organize Route 66 association in Illinois, Tom Teague, 25 April 1989.
- 8.2 Route 66's meet in Illinois, March 5, 1989, handwritten photocopies, Bob Waldmire, with Waldmire envelope, Rochester, IL, addressed to Nancy Saul, McLean, postmarked March 16, 1989.
- 8.3 Typed notes or article, Nancy Saul, no date, blue paper, 2 pp.
- 8.4 Letter nominating Warren Dean Eddy of West Construction Co., Bloomington, to the Route 66 Hall of Fame, Susan Brunswick to Tom Teague, 19 February 1990.
- 8.5 News on a two-day tour and hall of fame induction ceremonies, press release, April 1990.
- 8.6 Meeting summary, July 7, 1991, typed, 5 pp., with photocopy of handwritten notes, 1 p.
- 8.7 Brochure (blue), undated.
- 8.8 Route 66 Adventure Guide of Illinois, five brochures: Guides #1 (yellow); #2 (gray); #3 (pink); #4 (green); and #5 (purple).
- 8.9 New on Route 66: Museum, Motor Tour, Hall of Famers," press release, no year.

Association Newsletters

- 8.10 For the May 21, 1989 meeting, written by Dana Swann, Urbana, IL, no date.
- 8.11 March 1990.
- 8.12 1990-1991.

Folder 9: Illinois

- 9.1 U.S. 66 By-Pass and Construction Notes from Illinois Highway Maps, by M.L. Powell, Peoria, 3 pp.
- 9.2 Visit Exciting Route 66 in Illinois, All Attractions are Free!, Projects of the Route 66 of Illinois Preservation Committee Volunteers, 1 double-sided sheet.
- 9.3 Pamphlet: Annual Route 66 Events in Illinois, 2024.

Folder 10: McLean County

- 10.1 Historische Route 66 – Eine Geographische Reise, Towanda, Illinois, brochure for German tourists, undated.
- 10.2 “The Towanda, IL Route 66 Parkway,” undated, 1 sheet.
- 10.3 Email, April 11, 2017, and two photo prints, related to the construction of Highway 4 through Towanda.
- 10.4 The Ollie & Dorothy Myers Trail, Lexington, brochure, undated.

Folder 11: Bloomington-Normal

- 11.1 Route 66 Driving Directions through Bloomington-Normal,” undated, 1 sheet.
- 11.2 Bloomington-Normal Historic Route 66, brochure, undated.
- 11.3 Bloomington-Normal Route 66 Attractions Map, 1 sheet, undated.

Folder 12: Miscellaneous

- 12.1 Key to Illinois “Tails,” from article in March-April 2013 *Illinois Heritage* magazine.
- 12.2 Two postcards, Elizabeth Weir of Lake Bloomington, 1952—Glancy Courts, Clinton, OK, and Monterey Court, Albuquerque, NM.
- 12.3 Brochure, Route 66 Monarch Flyway, includes membership application and pollinator garden application, c. 2024.