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### Jefferson Highway Association, Crawford County Division, records, 1915-2023

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## MS 33 Jefferson Highway Association Records

### ***Introduction***

The collection contains materials from the Jefferson Highway Association, both from the original association in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, and the revival of the association which took place in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century. The content ranges from 1915 to 2023.

### ***Descriptive Summary***

Creator: Jefferson Highway Association  
Title: Jefferson Highway Association Records  
Dates: 1915-2023  
Size: 4 linear feet  
Collection Number: MS 33

### ***Donor Information:***

Jefferson Highway Association

### ***Citation Note***

Jefferson Highway Association Records (MS 33), Special Collections and University Archives, Pittsburg State University Axe Library, Pittsburg, Kansas.

### ***Administrative Information***

**Restrictions:** None

**Related Collections:** Photographs of downtown Pittsburg, Kansas from the time of the creation of the Jefferson Highway can be found in MS 182, the Prentice Gudgen Collection.

### ***Historical Sketch***

The Jefferson Highway Association, named after Thomas Jefferson, was formed in 1915 to build a highway through the Mississippi Valley. The highway was the idea of Edwin T. Meredith, publisher of *Successful Farming* and *Better Homes and Gardens* and later Secretary of Agriculture under President Woodrow Wilson, who thought the highway would be economically beneficial to the region's farmers.

In November 1915, a meeting was held with representatives from all the Louisiana Purchase states to organize an association for the purpose of constructing an international highway from Winnipeg in Canada to New Orleans, Louisiana. This convention was also held to determine the route of the new highway. Several Kansas counties were competing against each other and against the state of Missouri to get to be part of the highway. A contest was to be held to determine the route between Kansas City and Joplin, Missouri. The winner to be determined by whichever state, Kansas, or Missouri, completed the most miles of new road by September 1916.

The Crawford County division of the Jefferson Highway Association was formed after the 1915 convention to help plan and fund the highway. Townships and private landowners were to be the primary sources for funding. It was decided initially that the Kansas route would go through Pittsburg, Girard, and Fort Scott, but there were several disagreements that took place while the road was being built. Some places did not want to fund the road and did not see it as a benefit. Girard was later excluded from the route, in spite of many protests, in favor of the Commercial Highway, which went north from Pittsburg to Arcadia and then to Fort Scott.

The contest between Kansas and Missouri, in a decision that angered some, ended in a stalemate with both states being awarded the highway between Joplin and Kansas City. After these dual roads were built, they were considered too narrow and rough. Despite all these problems, the highway was eventually completed and used by the area communities for many years. The federal and state governments later passed laws that enabled them to build and maintain better highways. The Jefferson highway designation eventually faded away with sections of the road becoming parts of US Highway 69 and US Highway 71.

### ***Scope and Content Note***

The collection has been arranged into 9 series, divided by content type and topic.

#### **Series 1: Crawford County Division, Jefferson Highway Association Records 1915-1931**

Series 1 contains paperwork from the Crawford County Division of the Jefferson Highway Association between the dates of 1915 and 1931. Papers include correspondence, newsletters, meeting minutes, and other assorted papers related to the association in this era.

##### **1-1: Correspondence 1915-1928**

This subseries consists of correspondence relating to the Crawford County Division of the Jefferson Highway Association. Much of this correspondence is with local chambers of commerce.

##### **1-2: Newsletters 1916-1922**

This subseries consists of the *Jefferson Highway Declaration* and *The Modern Highway* from dates ranging between 1916 and 1922. *The Modern Highway* is the name that the newsletter changes to in 1919.

### **1-3: Organization Paperwork 1915-1925**

This subseries contains paperwork relating to the Crawford County Division of the Jefferson Highway Association such as meeting minutes, statements, registrations, bills, a Crawford Township Directory, resolutions, a hearing manuscript, notes concerning the campaign fund, and advertisements including a brochure.

### **Series 2: The Jefferson Highway Association 2011-2023**

Series 2 contains content relating to the Jefferson Highway Association since its reorganization in 2011. Materials found in this series includes newsletters, a large correspondence, conference papers, meeting minutes, assorted paperwork relating to the association, pieces used for advertisement such as brochures, stickers, business cards, and other assorted items, and a large amount of paperwork concerning the Iowa divisions and their work in congruence with others of Iowa's Scenic and Heritage Byways.

#### **2-1: Newsletters 2003-2022**

This subseries contains the newsletters of the *Jefferson Highway Declaration* from 2011-2022. It also contains a singular newsletter of the *Cass County Historical Society, inc.* circa 2003.

#### **2-2: Organization Paperwork 2011-2016**

This subseries contains paperwork from the reborn Jefferson Highway Association, which began in 2011. Paperwork in this subseries includes directories, agendas, meeting minutes, bylaws, and bank statements associated with the association.

#### **2-3: Correspondence 2006-2023**

This subseries contains correspondence, mostly in the form of printed emails, the majority of which is pertaining to the reborn Jefferson Highway Association. Emails from prior to 2011 relate to the historic parts of Pittsburg, Kansas in accordance with Jefferson Highway.

#### **2-4: Conferences 2012-2023**

This subseries contains papers from multiple Jefferson Highway Association Annual Conferences, from years between 2012-2019. These conference papers include photos, programs, registration paperwork, a Crawford County bid to host the conference, and printouts of presentations.

## **2-5: Advertising**

This subseries contains different advertisements concerning the Jefferson Highway and the Jefferson Highway Association presented in multiple forms of media. Pertaining to the association itself there are multiple brochures, stickers, magnets, an ice scraper, a pin, a hotel key from the bicentennial celebration, and business cards of members of the organization. There are also three separate pieces of advertising pertaining to sites to see along the highway. Also included is a posture advertising a trip along the highway, and an advertisement for signs concerning the highway.

## **2-6: Iowa Heritage Byways Bulk Dates: 2007-2016**

This subseries contains assorted materials concerning the Iowa Heritage Byways organization which consists primarily of the Lincoln and Jefferson Highways. In this series there are infographics, blog post printouts, maps, newspaper printouts, proclamations, a DVD, presentation printouts, a list of points of interests, assessments, correspondence, logos, government resolutions, and directories. Directly associated with the Lincoln Byway are brochures, and photos of highway markers. Also in this subseries are brochures, programs, and information from the Heartland Byways Conference. One piece outside of the association is a copy of the *Annals of Iowa: A Historical Quarterly* circa 1928.

## **Series 3: Photographs 1929-1930**

Series 3 consists of multiple photographs from Jasper, Missouri circa 1929 of a grader attached to a tractor used to help the surfaces of the roads. There is also one photo of downtown Jasper. Lastly is a collection of correspondence about the use of the grader and tractor in the photos.

## **Series 4: Newspaper Clippings: 1915-2022**

Series 4 contains assorted newspaper clippings and newspaper printouts. Newspaper found in this series are *The Morning Sun*, *The Carthage Press*, the *South Hardin*, *The Savannah Reporter*, *The Joplin Globe*, *The Jackson County Historical Journal*, *Discover Vintage America*, *The Best Times*, *The News Xpress*, the *Hampton Chronicle*, *The Pittsburg Daily Headlight*, *Des Moines Sunday Reports*, *The Kansas City Star*, the *Northwood Anchor*, the *Topeka Capital*, the *Lamar Democrat*, and *The Carthage Press*.

## **Series 5: Travel Information Materials**

Series 5 contains assorted travel information in the forms of magazines, handouts, guides, brochures, postcards, and business cards pertaining to businesses and regions found along the Jefferson Highway.

## **5-1: Publications 2008-2014**

This subseries is made up of multiple magazines and guides from regions the Jefferson Highway passes through. These include a section of Route 66 adjacent regions such as the Four States. It also includes selections pertaining to Iowa's Byways, the Iowa Barn Foundation, and assorted other city and regional guides along the highway.

## **5-2: Brochures**

This subseries contains a multitude of brochures from businesses and attractions that can be found along the Jefferson Highway.

## **5-3: Cards**

This subseries contains multiple postcards showing attractions found along the Jefferson Highway and a handful of business cards from businesses found along the highway.

## **Series 6: Research and Writings:**

Series 6 contains assorted pieces of research relating to the Jefferson Highway. These include bound pieces, article clippings, a manuscript of the book *The Jefferson Highway: Blazing the Way from Winnipeg to New Orleans*, and a research paper.

### **6-1: Lyell Henry c. 2012-2015**

This subseries contains papers relating to the research of Lyell Henry. This includes a manuscript of *The Jefferson Highway: Blazing the Way from Winnipeg to New Orleans*, presentation notes, notes to a tour on the Jefferson Highway, and a copy of correspondence relating to the permission of photos to use in the book.

### **6-2: Research**

This subseries contains multiple articles on the Jefferson Highway and sites on the route, as well as a research paper written in 1978 on the highway by a university student at Pittsburg State University.

### **6-3: Journal 2009**

This subseries consists of a journal of Mike Conlin who drove the entirety of the Jefferson Highway and documented his journey in daily journals written to "undisclosed- recipients" at the time.

### **6-4: Binders**

This subseries consists of two binders of research done on the Jefferson Highway going through Missouri. The binders are divided into sections based on county.

### **Series 7: Maps and Directories 1917-2013**

Series 7 contains an assortment of maps and directories related to the regions which the Jefferson Highway went through. This includes official Jefferson Highway maps, a roadmap of Missouri, an Oklahoma-Kansas Mining Directory circa 1926, blank Jefferson Highway Association letterhead featuring mapping on the back, a Jefferson Highway Atlas circa 2013, a map of greater Kansas City circa 1921, maps of Pittsburg Kansas circa 1917, a map of Minnesota with the Jefferson Highway highlighted, a map of the Three Rivers Park District in Minnesota, an automobile roadmap of the U.S. circa 1921, an auto trails map of Iowa circa 1923, and auto trails map of Minnesota circa 1924, and a guide to Minnesota circa 1922. Larger maps and atlases can also be found in the Oversized series.

### **Series 8: Media**

Series 8 contains media in the form of DVDs. The first is a CD *Songs from the Jefferson Highway* by Glenn Patscha. The second, a DVD with a collection of scans of brochures advertising the Jefferson Highways and the many stops along the way for tourists, these include "Free Tourist Camps," "International Tourist Guides," a "Tourist Camp Manual," and lastly, a guide for Minnesota specifically. The final CD is an arrangement of map scans, many of which can be found in print in the map's series.

### **Series 9: Oversized 1921-2016**

Series 9 contains an assortment of oversized items related to the Jefferson Highway Association, both in its infancy in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and its rebirth nearly a century later. This includes pieces concerning Jefferson Lines, such as a small standing advertisement from Jefferson Coffee Shop, an embroidered cloth, a bag tag, and a tote bag. Items concerning the reborn Jefferson Highway Association are a string back with the association logo, posters with the Iowa Heritage Byway emblem for the Jefferson Highway, a mug with the same, and a cooler bag from the 2016 convention. Lastly, there are items more closely related to the start of the Jefferson Highway Association. This includes a print of *The Joplin Globe: Magazine Edition* circa 1921, the Rand McNally Auto Road Atlas of the United States Ontario, Quebec and the Maritime Provinces, the Official Paved Road, and Commercial Survey of the United States, and two copies of the Auto Trails and Commercial Survey of the United States. Also included is a cigar box.

### ***Collection Inventory***

-Box 1-

**Series 1: Crawford County Division, Jefferson Highway Association Records 1915-1931**

**1-1: Correspondence 1915-1928**

f.1 Correspondence

**1-2: Newsletters 1916-1922**

f.2 Newsletters

**1-3: Paperwork 1915-1925**

f.3 Paperwork

**Series 2: The Jefferson Highway Association 2011-2023**

**2-1: Newsletters 2003-2022**

f.4 Newsletters 2006-2016

f.5 Newsletters 2017-2022

**2-2: Organization Paperwork 2011-2016**

f.6 Paperwork

**2-3: Correspondence 2006-2023**

f.7 Correspondence

**2-4: Conferences 2012-2023**

f.8 Paperwork

-Box 2-

f.9 Photographs

f.10 Programs

**2-5: Advertising**

f.11 Advertising

**2-6: Iowa Heritage Byways Bulk Dates: 2007-2016**



f.12 Papers and *Annals of Iowa*

f.13 Papers

**Series 3: Photographs 1929-1930**

f.14 Photographs

**Series 4: Newspaper Clippings: 1915-2022**

f.15 Newspapers

-Box 3-

**Series 5: Travel Information Materials**

**5-1: Publications 2008-2014**

f.16 Iowa Publications

f.17 Route 66 Adjacent Publications

f.18 Publications

**5-2: Brochures**

f.19 Brochures

**5-3: Cards**

f.20 Cards

**Series 6: Research and Writings:**

**6-1: Lyell Henry c. 2012-2015**

f.21 Papers

**6-2: Research**

f.22 Article and Research Paper

**6-3: Journal 2009**

-Box 4-

f.23 Journal

**6-4 Binders**

f.24 Binder

f.25 Binder

**Series 7: Maps and Directories 1917-2013**

f.26 Bounded

f.27 Unbound

**Series 8: Media**

f.28 Media

-Box 5-

**Series 9: Oversized**

f.29 Oversized

Processed by Brent McDowell 2/28/2024