

# Historic Highway 395

Volume 1, Issue 2

February 2011

***Founded***

December 4, 2010

***Mission Statement***

The preservation and the promotion of Historic Route 395 from San Diego to the Cajon Pass.



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## Telling the story, one mile at a time

### Rainbow

by Jeffery G. Harmon

Rainbow is a beautiful community, nestled at the northern San Diego County line. This area, surrounded by boulder strewn mountains, is the southern gateway into the Temecula Valley. Many relics of the historic highway wait to be discovered. From the early days to the later realignment, a labyrinth of broken off road segments can be found with a careful eye.

Our journey begins at Nahachish Rock in Riverside County. Driving south on Rainbow Canyon Road you will arrive at a fork in the road. To the southwest, the original route winds gently around ancient oak trees and to the southeast, the 1950s realignment eliminates curves and grades.

We take the southwest fork, which is Rainbow Canyon Road, and find our car driving down a small grade into a sleepy neighborhood with oak trees shading the old highway. A few highway mile markers can be spotted periodically as the car

meanders southward.

At the southern end, the road intersects with Old Highway 395, the 1950s realignment. Checking oncoming traffic, we drive safely across, continuing on Rainbow Canyon Road. The road curves south, heading into the heart of Rainbow.

When crossing the San Diego County line, Rainbow Canyon Road is renamed Rainbow Valley Boulevard. Prior to Highway 395, this stretch of road was simply known as Mission Road. After the highway realignment in the 1950s, the road was renamed in hopes of directing traffic into the Rainbow community.

There are several historic sites to view while traveling through Rainbow. The first site is the Radcliff Service Station on the road's west side. Recently, amongst protest, the property owners removed the canopy and the island's two white pillars from the front of the building. All that remains is the cement foun-

ation where the gas pumps once serviced traveling motorist.

Driving further south into Rainbow, the Vallecitos School and the Grange Hall both can be seen on the west side of the road.

As the highway curves to the west, the Rainbow Service Station sits quietly on a triangle parcel of land. Built by Matthew Cockerline in 1921, the station sports an antique bell-glass top gas pump. Beautifully restored, the building was designated a county historical landmark in 1988. Today the building is the Rainbow Real Estate office.

Further down the road, Rainbow Valley Boulevard appears to intersect with Old Highway 395. However, a few feet east of the intersection, Rainbow Valley Boulevard turns left and continues southwest into a long cul-de-sac. This sleepy neighborhood street was once part of the old highway. It too was bypassed during the realignment.

## The Driver's Seat

Greetings from the Historic Route 395 Association!

We want to thank you for the warm reception we received from our inaugural newsletter.

Ruth Atkins, President of the Lake Elsinore Historical Society wrote, "Thanks a bunch for the Historic Route 395 Newsletter!" She passed on the newsletter to other society members.

Dale Garcia, webmaster for the Temecula Valley Historical Society, wrote on the Society's Facebook page, "There is a new historical group in town . . . they are the Historic Route 395 Association." Our newsletter is now available on the TVHS website! Thank you Dale!

Barbara Baker, Outreach Specialist

for the San Dieguito River Park JPA, has invited the Association to participate in producing an interpretive panel on Highway 395, which will be installed near the original highway segment on Lake Hodges' north shore.

Tanis Brown, President of the San Marcos Historical Society, has added the Association to their list of available speakers. She informed me that many civic groups and organizations ask the Society for speakers on local history. The Association will now be on the list. Mrs. Brown also invited us to attend the quarterly C.I.N.C.H. meeting.

Founded in 1995, the Council of Interpreting North County History brings together historical societies and museums to share current news and upcoming events. In January

Route Members attended the C.I.N.C.H. meeting held at the Antique Gas and Steam Engine Museum in Vista, CA. The Association's January newsletter and information flyer was quickly snatched up. We have received several presentation requests from this meeting.

The Historic Route 395 Association appreciates all the support and encouragement. Spread the word, forward the newsletter, and please contact us. Remember, slow down and Take a Drive on Route 395!

Jeffery G. Harmon, Editor

CINCH WEBSITE:

<http://www.sandiegoarchaeology.org>

Special thanks to

Duke and Jonell Maples, owners of the Rainbow Oaks Restaurant.

<http://rainbowoaksrestaurant.com/>



Special thanks to

Tim O'Leary, Editor of The Valley News.

Read the Article:

<http://www.myvalleynews.com/story/53203/>

## Rainbow Continued...

At the intersection we take a detour heading north on Old Highway 395, stopping at the Rainbow Oaks Restaurant. Built in 1946, this restaurant serves as Rainbow's only eatery, a place where locals call home. Recently renovated and reopened, the restaurant displays wonderful black and white photographs of the Rainbow community.

After leaving the restaurant, we head south on Old Highway 395, returning to the Rainbow Glen Road intersection. South of the intersection, on the east side of Old Highway 395 there is a segment of East Mission Road still servicing a few homes. This is the final missing segment of the original route. As Old Highway 395 crosses over Interstate 15, we will end our jour-

ney.

Our next trip will take us up the Red Mountain Grade on Mission Road in route to Fallbrook. We will need more stories of Highway 395 from Rainbow to Main Avenue in Fallbrook. Please send us your stories and photos. Join me next time as we tell the highway's story one mile at a time.

## Spotlight: The San Dieguito River Park

The San Dieguito River Park is an outdoor enthusiast playground. The park extends from the ocean shores of Del Mar to Volcan Mountain, just north of Julian. Walking, equestrian, and bicycles trails lace the San Dieguito River Valley. The park includes Lake Hodges, San Pasqual Valley, Boden Canyon and Pamo Valley, Lake Sutherland, the Santa Ysabel Creek drainage, Volcan Mountain and portions of the high desert in San Felipe Valley. Within the park, tucked along the northern shore of Lake Hodges, hikers can traverse a portion of asphalt known as Highway 395.

To reach this stretch of road, take Interstate 15 to the Via Rancho Parkway exit and head east to Sunset Drive. Turn right on Sunset Drive and drive to the end of the street where you will find a small parking lot. Historically, Sunset Drive was an off ramp of US Highway 395. The bridge crossing over Bolas Creek was built in 1950 and sported beautiful wood guardrails. During the 2007 Witch Creek Fire, the bridge was severely damaged. Afterwards, modern wood guardrails were installed in hopes of maintaining a historic rustic appearance.

At the Sunset Drive parking lot, walk south on the North Shore Lake Hodges Trail, following the eastern flank of Interstate 15. The tree line will end and an open meadow will be visible. With a careful eye, one may see a cement post protruding out of the ground. This is a C-Block, highway markers that were installed between 1914 through 1934. This marker shows that the highway at one time trav-



elled through this green meadow heading north to Escondido. These historic highway artifacts are in need of protection and preservation.

The trail continues underneath a series of Interstate 15 bridges, a mammoth cavern of cement, humming with the sounds of motorists speeding over the lake. The trail then turns north along the interstate's western flank and appears to end at a highway service gate. Then the trail turns southwest, with the strange appearance of broken pieces of black asphalt. This is US Highway 395!

Time is slowly taking away the last remnants of this beautiful road. The white line down the middle of the highway is slowly fading under the sun. The eastern guardrail, overgrown by brush, was destroyed in the 2007 fire. A small wooden directional sign pointed hikers to the old highway was also reduced to ash. However, a few metal highway markers can still be found along the western edge of the road.

The path ends at the David Kreitzer Lake Hodges Bicycle Pedestrian Bridge. Opened in 2009, this bridge will one day be considered a national historic site, for it is currently

the world longest stress ribbon bridge. This beautiful bridge mirrors the location of the original Bernardo Station Bridge that once crossed the lake. While standing in the middle of the bridge and closing your eyes, one can imagine hearing Model T cars rambling over the lake's bridge while travelling US Highway 395.

Today the pedestrian bridge provides a 360 degree panoramic view of the San Dieguito Valley. To the east, Interstate 15 roars on carrying millions of cars across Lake Hodges every year. However, on the north-western shore of Lake Hodges, a ribbon of asphalt reminds us all of bygone highway era.

For more information about San Dieguito River Park visit: <http://www.sdrp.org/home.htm>

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To learn more about Historic Route 395 visit: <http://www.floodgap.com/roadgap/395/>

**A HISTORIC ROUTE 395  
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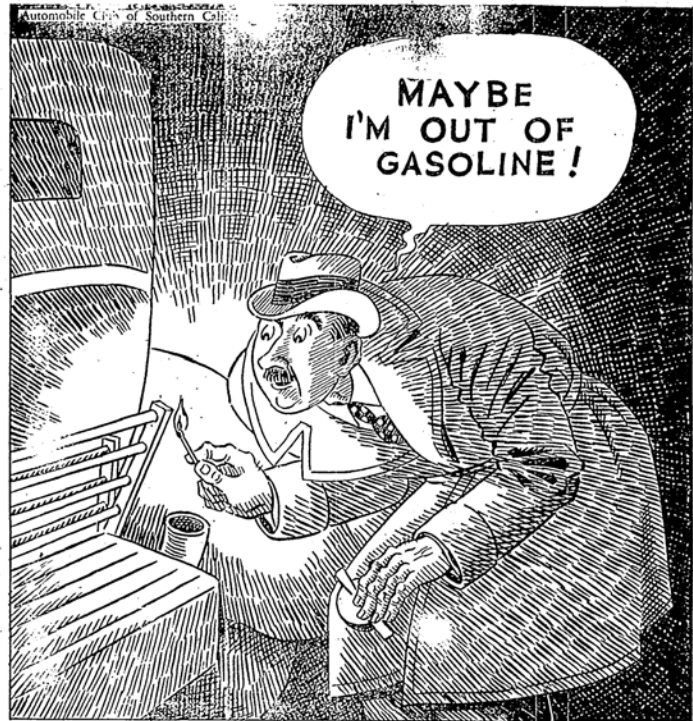
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*Take a Drive on Highway 395*

Join the Discussion: <http://www.americanroads.us/forum/index.php?board=28.0>

**OUR THOUGHTLESS MOTORISTS—No. 3**



Reprint: The Vista Press March 20, 1930

## Taxpayers to Save Thousands of Dollars by State Taking Over County Road Maintenance

(Reprint: Elsinore Leader Press, August 20, 1931)

### Gigantic Road Program for Next Twelve Months to Cost One Million Dollars, Planned in So. California.

Thousands of dollars will be saved Taxpayers of Elsinore by the action taken this week by the state in taking over 539 miles of county boulevards in Southern California for incorporation as a secondary highway system.

It was predicted today that the gigantic program will result immediately in the establishment of a maintenance station at Elsinore as a headquarters for all highway work in the valley.

Maintenance of Graham Avenue and Main Street – the two principal arteries of the city – will divert at

once to the state. It is further expected that the comprehensive plan will result shortly in general improvement of both boulevards. During the next year the engineers of the highway commission will make a study of the reconstruction needs of the roads included in the secondary highways and will recommend changes in routing that may be deemed necessary in the interest of through travel.

Then the legislatures will no doubt provide for a program of improvements, from highways funds, that will greatly increase the efficiency of all roads concerned.

This condition will result first in marked savings to the Elsinore taxpayers and will bring new capital into our valley for improving our

highways.

The establishment of a maintenance station here will bring a new crew of workmen to the city and provide additional employment to residents of Elsinore.

The local headquarters will be a headquarters not only for our own Elsinore arteries, but also for the Pomona-Corona-Temecula road.

Information has been received that considerable reconstruction work will be done on Graham Avenue soon, as in many places this street has been badly torn up. It is also expected that the highway will eventually be widened.

The money appropriated by the state is obtained in the tax on gasoline.