

Historic Highway 395

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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

Temecula

by Jeffery G. Harmon

The Southwest Riverside County segment of Highway 395 travels through the historic downtown business districts of Temecula, Murrieta, Wildomar, and Lake Elsinore. Join us now as we begin exploring Temecula's Old Town District.

Our journey begins at the intersection of Temecula Parkway/State Highway 79 and Old Town Front Street. We travel north on Old Town Front Street and drive under an ornate archway to enter Old Town Temecula. When visiting historic Temecula, it is best to plan a full day's visit. There are many shops to explore, restaurants to enjoy and two museums to see.

To start the day, we stop at the Swing Inn Café. Built in 1927, the Swing Inn Café serves delicious American comfort foods. Afterwards, we journey west on 3rd Street and drive into the new Temecula Civic Center's parking structure. There we park our car

and walk over to the Temecula Visitor's Center. Here we pick up a free walking tour map provided by the Temecula Valley Historical Society. This map is a must have when visiting the downtown district.

We leave the Center and stroll through the Main Street Plaza to a beautiful water fountain. The 20-foot diameter Luiseno basket design pays tribute to the earliest settlers of the valley, the Luiseno people. We continue down Main Street until we reach Old Town Front Street. Here we find three historical landmarks of the downtown area: The Machado Store (ca 1909), the Welty Store/Ramona Inn (1890s), and the First National Bank of Temecula (1914). If you are looking for a unique lunch experience, pull up a chair and dine in the bank vault at the Bank Mexican Restaurant and Bar.

Continuing west on Main Street you will see a brick building.

Built in the 1890s, the Mercantile Building was renovated by the City of Temecula. Today it serves as the ticket office and front lobby of the Old Town Community Theater. Each of the 361 theater seats provides a perfect view in this modern theater. Next door is The Temecula Children's Museum. Across the street is the Temecula Hotel (1891), which is now a private residence. The 4,700 square foot hotel is for sale at \$3.4 million dollars.

After exploring some of Temecula's historical landmarks, we walk back to our car. We then drive back to Historic Highway 395 and turn north on Old Town Front Street, passing the Old Town Root Beer Company. This was the location of the Al Knott's Garage, which serviced the area for over forty years. In the 1990s, flood water damaged the historic building and it was razed in 2000. The Knott family home is north of the modern building.

The Driver's Seat

I spoke to Tom Casey by phone in October 2010 and he mentioned the idea of creating an event to commemorate the anniversary of the June 2008 Legislation that declared US Highway 395 a historic route from San Diego to the Oregon state line. On June 25, 2011, that conversation became a reality as classic cars cruised along the historic route from two different locations and met at the Elder House in Fallbrook. Sixty cars participated in the event, and many attendees wanted to know when we would do it again.

The day began when my dad and my children pulled into the Perris Theater parking lot at 8:00 a.m. Anthony Ganci, owner of a red 1930 Ford, and John and Judy Parrack, owners of a red 1936 Ford, were already in the parking lot. It felt like I was unwrapping presents on Christmas morning every time another classic car pulled into the driveway.

At 9:00 a.m., I honked the horn and announced that we were leaving. The engines rumbled to life as the day's fun run was about to begin.

Highway 74 between Perris and Lake Elsinore was the first leg of the journey. It was amazing to look back and see a half a mile of classic cars following us as we cruised down the historic highway. I felt young again, just like when I would play with my Hot Wheels on the kitchen floor.

One of our memorable moments on the Fun Run from Perris to Fallbrook happened in Murrieta. In the Historic Downtown District, several crowds gathered on street corners and on the porch of Joanie's Cantina awaiting for our car caravan. As we drove through town, they were cheering, waving American flags and holding signs that read, "We Love 395". We honked and waved to the spectators as we

cruised on through.

It took our caravan of classic cars two hours to travel from Perris to Fallbrook. When we arrived at the Elder House, the cars pulled into the front yard and parked. Rock Mountain was about to begin to play some Classic Southern Rock music. Trupiano's Italian Bistro was already serving lunch.

At the end of the event, Tom Casey, Steve Varner, and I agreed that our first annual event was a great success. If you were not able to attend the Fun Run, but would like to take the drive yourself, then please visit us on Facebook. Maps are available for both the Southern and Northern routes.

Have a great summer!

Jeffery G. Harmon

Editor

Temecula Continued....

Across the street is the Pالمار Inn Hotel. Built around 1927, the hotel provides ten rooms for weary travelers. Some say that a few visitors never left the building. The Thunderbird totem pole is the signature piece of the hotel façade. The Old Town Temecula Candlelight Walking Tour starts in front of the hotel on weekends. Up to 15 people can take an hour and forty-five minute narrated tour, learning the rich, colorful past of the town.

As we drive under the north entrance archway, we turn right on Moreno Drive and come to Sam Hicks Monument Park. Here we find the "They Passed This Way" Monument, which lists many historical pioneers who traversed this valley over the last two hundred years. Also in the park is the Chapel of

Memories (1917), the first Catholic Church built in Temecula. The Temecula Valley Museum is at the east end of the park. The museum offers a complete history of Temecula. The life of Erle Stanley Gardner is the latest permanent exhibit. Gardner, who authored the Perry Mason novels, lived in Temecula for thirty years.

We continue driving north on Old Town Front Street. When we pass Rancho California Road, the road becomes Jefferson Avenue. Rosa's Café Tortilla Factory is on the eastside of the road. Behind the restaurant, in the southern vacant field there are a few wooden posts sticking out of the ground. Upon closer investigation, we discover that this is a culvert crossing segment of Historic Highway 395!

Driving further north on Jefferson Avenue, we see In-N-Out Burger on the east side of the road. Directly across from the restaurant is the Adobe Plaza. Nestled in the center of the plaza is the historic Jose Maria Gonzalez Adobe. Built in 1879, the adobe is one of the oldest structures in Southwest Riverside County. The adobe has been used for multiple businesses including a florist, a chocolate shop, and a language school.

Our journey ends at the intersection of Jefferson Avenue and Winchester Road. Join us next time as we drive north into the city of Murrieta. So remember, pull off the interstate, slow down and Take a Drive on Route 395.

Spotlight: Leaving One's Mark along the Highway



The Meadowbrook Apple

Since the dawn of time, humans have left their mark along the roads they have traveled. Whether it was Native American petroglyphs or pioneers on the Oregon Trail carving their name on a passing rock, highway “graffiti” tells a story of those that journeyed along the way.

US Highway 395 has a few memorable spots where graffiti has become part of the landscape. A modern piece can be found on State Highway 74 between Perris and Lake Elsinore. The “Meadowbrook Apple” is a boulder that was split through its core. Each piece of the boulder was painted like an apple wedge. The artistic piece appears as though a giant is getting ready to sit down and have an afternoon snack.

One boulder in Temecula, marked with graffiti, halted construction of US Highway 395. The message read, “Here lays the body of D.B. Lower, wife and daughter who died of starvation 1910” An inquiry was made in

Temecula about the grave marker. It was revealed that it was a practical joke played on D.B. Lower, who would complain every time his pay envelope was late. The boulder was moved aside and highway construction continued. The marker’s location is currently unknown. (California Highways and Public Works, January-February 1949, pg. 33)

The Nahachish boulder can be found on Rainbow Canyon Road. This boulder was a sacred meeting spot for the Luiseno people. According to legend, Nahachish named the village, Temecula. When he left the valley he looked back and turned to stone. Around a hundred years ago, travelers painted a grotesque face on the boulder complete with jagged teeth. A small man was painted at the base of the rock. Today the historical graffiti is located on private property.

The Fallbrook water tank overlooking S. Mission Road and Fallbrook High School has a long standing tradition. In June 1974,

high school seniors climbed the fence and painted ‘74 on the side of the tank. The graffiti was painted over by the water district who thought it was a fluke. The next year, the class of ‘75 repeated the prank. Realizing the futility of fighting the tradition and the dangers the prank posed for participating seniors, the water district decided to embrace the graffiti. Now each year the number on the water tank is updated as a gift to the graduating class.

In the Poway Valley, the Diegueno and Luiseno people lived in the area for several hundred years before the Spaniards came. Throughout the valley there are multiple ancient petroglyphs and pictograph sites. In the early days of Highway 395, travelers would pull off the road, climb the rocks and take pictures of these wonderful works of art.

However, not all graffiti along the highway is welcomed. Both the historic Bonsall Bridge and the Penasquitos Bridge, currently pedestrian bridges, are victims of excessive vandalism. The understructures of these bridges are now covered in a kaleidoscope of colors. The beautiful cement support columns are now covered in gang affiliations, love declarations, and political diatribe. Ironically, if this graffiti is not removed, it may become historical artwork.

This is a small sample of human “art” found along Historic Route 395. If you know of other sites past or present, please let us know. Remember to slow down, take a look around as you “Take a Drive on Route 395”.

1st Annual Historic 395 Fun Run & Car Rally

June 25, 2011



Historic Route 395 Association Founding Members:

Left to Right: Jeffery Harmon, Tom Casey, and Steve Varner

We want to say thanks to the many who helped make this event possible. They include Julie Reeder and the Village News for hosting the event at the Elder House, Trubiano's Italian Bistro for providing delicious food at their booth, Rock Mountain which presented great entertainment, Jimmy Moore and Bonnie Martland from the Temecula Valley Historical Society, for hosting our information booth, and The City of Perris and Councilman Mark Yarbrough for hosting our starting point at the Perris Theater.

We also want to thank the newspaper reporters who covered our event: Tiffany Austin-Suniga for The Press Enterprise, John Hunneman for The Californian, Jeff Frank for The North County Times, and Debbie Ramsey for The Fallbrook Village News and The Valley News.

Our thanks go to Tom Casey and to all those who donated Highway 395 signs. The Association would also like to thank all the cities and county officials who have worked with us to install the signs along the route.

To all the car clubs and car owners who "Took a Drive on 395," thank you for participating!

Finally, we want to thank all the volunteers who helped to make this a great day to celebrate and enjoy Historic Highway 395.

The Northern Starting Point
The Perris Theater, Perris, CA
Photo by Anthony Ganci



Looking through the back window
of his 1930 Ford while on the Fun
Run

Photo by Anthony Ganci

The Car Rally at the Elder House,
Fallbrook, CA
Photo by Anthony Ganci





On Tuesday, May 24, 2011, Tom Casey presented two signs to the City of San Marcos.

Sign Installation Project Donations

Riverside

- 2 – Donated by Tom Casey
Installed on Main Street
- Installed on University Avenue

San Marcos

- 2 – Donated by Tom Casey
Installed on Mission at Pico and Twin Oaks

Rancho Bernardo

- 2 – Donated by Jay W. Henderson LTD
Installed on Pomerado Road

Perris

- 1 – Donated by Phillip Delaney
Installed on D Street
- 1 – Donated by Al Landers
Installed on D Street
- 2 – to City of Perris
Installed on Highway 74

- 1 – Highway Directional Arrow

Escondido

- 2 – Donated by Tom Casey
Installed on Grand Avenue
- 2- Donated by The Dubrule Family

Installed on Broadway

- 1 – Donated by Anthony Venier
In memory of Dr. James Venier
Installed on W. Mission Avenue near
the late Dr. Venier's Veterinary Clinic
- 1 – Donated by The Keele Family
Installed on S. Escondido Blvd at Centre
City Café

San Diego

- 2 – Donated by Tom Casey
Installed on Park Boulevard at Balboa
Park

Total Installed Signs to Date: 75 Signs

If you are interested in Donating a Sign
please contact us.

Each sign costs \$70

Together, we can rebuild Historic Route 395!

For more information contact Tom Casey at (760) 723-3232 or Tom@RainbowCrestRanch.com

**A HISTORIC ROUTE 395 ASSOCIATION
PUBLICATION**

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Meeting Location:

Rainbow Oaks Restaurant

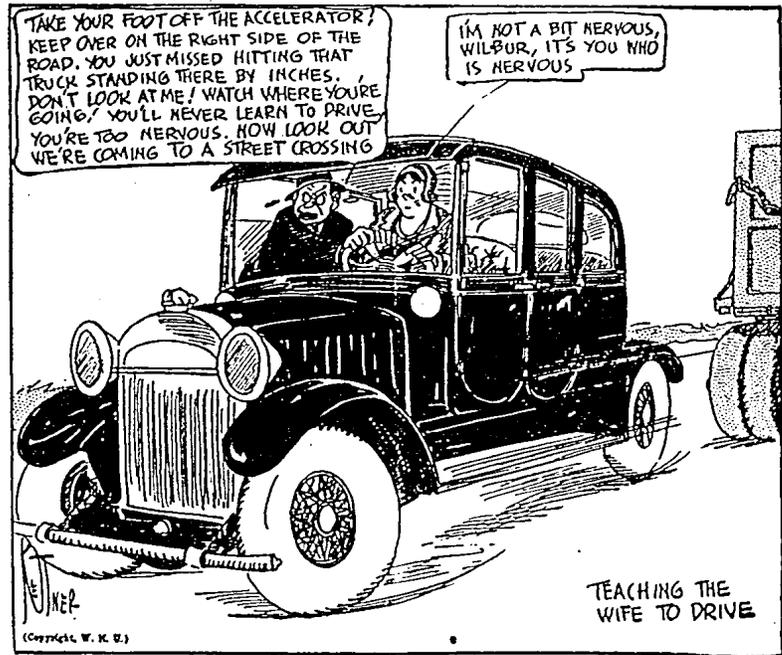
Time: 8:00 a.m.

July 9, 2011

August 6, 2011

September 10, 2011

Along the Concrete



Reprint: The Vista Press August 7, 1930

Offer from Scripps to Build Roads

Miramar Resident Willing to Reconstruct Murray Canyon Route

Escondido Daily Times Advocate April 12, 1916

An offer from E.W. Scripps to reconstruct the Murray Canyon grade and the ford across the San Diego River at the old county infirmary site, approved by Mayor Capps, is referred to City Manager Lockwood today to arrange with Mr. Scripps for the construction. In a letter to the mayor and council, Mr. Scripps stated:

"I think I can do this work for about \$5000 or a little more. I would like the co-operation of the city manager and the city engineer. The distance between San Diego and Escondido by this route is fully two miles shorter than the Murphy Canyon route and three miles shorter than any other practical route.

"When, some years ago, I constructed the Murphy Canyon Road, it was for the purpose of diverting congested traffic from the older and shorter route.

"Trusting that you will accept my proposal, I remain, yours sincerely, "E.W. Scripps"

It is expected that City Manager Lockwood will approve the offer and place it before the council for acceptance tomorrow.

"I was street superintendent at the time Mr. Scripps built the Murphy Canyon Road," said Councilman Moore today, "and I think that the council should vote thanks to him when the offer is formally accepted, for the assistance he has given the city in

building and maintain our public highways." – San Diego Sun.

We are now on

Facebook!

Search: Historic Route
395 Association

Please "Like" us!

Send us your photos and
your memories!