

Mentor & U.S. Route 20 -- 'The Road Most Traveled'



“To all who remember the crowding and heat in the backseat of the family sedan...”

In 1925 the Joint Board of Interstate Highways designated with a '0' a major east-west transcontinental road. That route was US 20. Officially declared a federal highway in 1926, US Route 20 became the most important east-west terminus. Although not continuous, it is the longest road in the US spanning nearly 3365 miles total. US Route 20 has its origins in Boston, Massachusetts and ends in Newport, Oregon. It passes thru three major American cities - Boston, Cleveland, and Chicago. Other well-known names on this historic route include Yellowstone National Park, Buffalo NY, and Erie Pennsylvania.

US Route 20 remains mostly intact to this day. In Ohio, one can start east of Conneaut and travel the roadway to Indiana. Route 20 is known locally as Mentor Avenue from Painesville to Willoughby, Euclid Avenue into downtown Cleveland, Clifton Blvd into the west side and Center Ridge

Road on the far west side of N.E. Ohio. Other historic names associated with US Route 20 include the Yellowstone Trail, Old Mass Pike, Buffalo Stage Road, and Lake Avenue in the greater Chicago area.

A book release, the third in a series occurred in September 2013. The title of Michael J. Till's most recent book is 'Along Ohio's Historic Route 20'. The author has traveled the entire route and gathered pictorial images thru vintage postcards and archival images to record this important piece of Ohio transportation history. It would be hard to find anyone residing in Lake County who has never driven on Route 20 either behind the wheel or as a passenger. Till's book pays tribute to another hidden gem in our county's history and is well worth the cost as an addition to your ideal bookshelf.

In 2017 the Lake County Visitors Bureau sponsored a US Route 20 travel flyer. Highlights of the informational flyer include a detailed map of the trek along with some FAQ's. The trip is mostly a rural two-lane highway trip that avoids the interstate. A trip is best attempted between May through October and your 12 state sojourn spans the continent in a minimum of two weeks, although a month is recommended. Visit www.lakevisit.com for more details or to obtain this flyer.

Submitted by Dan Maxson

Local lore by Max- 2010-2016. News-Herald Community Media Lab Blog - Volunteer Trustee - FHHS / Fairport Harbor Lighthouse & Marine Museum - Volunteer Curator / Docent - Old Stone Schoolhouse Museum - Concord Township