

## **PRESS RELEASE:**

### **NEW ORGANIZATION AIMS TO PROMOTE HISTORIC US ROUTE 20**

BOSTON, MA - Spring, 2014 - A new nonprofit organization is placing the spotlight on the longest highway in America this spring. The Boston-based Historic US Route 20 Association Inc, with a five member board, was founded by Bryan Farr after he completed the 3,365 mile cross-country journey on Route 20 from Boston, MA to Newport, OR in 2010. "This is one of the last great highways that you can still drive in its entirety that has not been lost to history, cut up, or rerouted to the interstates" says Farr. "Everybody's is obsessed with or romanticizes Route 66 when they think of American highways, that I kept thinking to myself, we have the longest intact highway in the country, that meanders through small town America just as it did in 1926 right here in our own backyards," continues Farr "yet Route 20 has always played a second fiddle to its more famous cousin". Farr also noted that "there was nothing out there to preserve and promote its significance and history as a whole in American culture." This is what the Historic US Route 20 Association was created to do.

US Route 20 was born to be a transcontinental highway in November, 1925, as the zero in 20 was meant to indicate, but was cut short of its Atlantic to Pacific route when the states of Montana, Idaho and Oregon were concerned that their roads through the mountains could not be maintained in the winter months, limiting year round travel. Route 20 therefore ended at the eastern entrance to Yellowstone National Park. However by 1940, those states upgraded their highways and by 1945, US 20 had made its way to just shy of the Pacific Ocean.

"Our goal as a nonprofit organization is to link the road, Route 20, by means of educational programs and promotion of the sites, towns, buildings, culture and heritage of those places that lie from Boston to Newport". Farr knows that this is a huge task, but hopes that those with a love of history and the highway will join the organization and form State branch associations reaching the same goals. "We aim to work with the leaders of the communities and states as well as with other organizations to place signage on sections of Route 20 designating them as 'Historic Routes'. This will allow the traveler to get a glimpse of Americana, tracing the history and touring the old alignments of Route 20; in return giving an economic boost to the local economy on their trip whether it is local, statewide or cross country.

Route 20 reveals the broad scope of American expansion from an early Native American trail through the very first National Park, Yellowstone. Travelers can connect with history by visiting the homes of Presidents Grant and Garfield, stand in the place where Lincoln once debated Douglas, and even experience where the first Women's Rights Convention was held. Motorists will view classical architecture in New England towns, traverse the striking beauty of the Finger Lakes as well as the grandeur of the Great Lakes, experience inspiring possibilities of the wide open farm lands of the Great Plains, cross high mountain sage brush deserts, climb the Rockies and Cascades before they reach the shores of the Pacific.

Farr is planning the first nationwide trip fronting and promoting the new organization this spring. He will be speaking to local historical societies, town leaders, small local businesses as well as the public about the history and the present day state of the road and coordinating events to assist with community development. He will also be selling the organizations full color, 166 page book *Historic US Route 20: A Journey Across America's Longest Highway*, that he wrote, which was the impetus for creating the organization. The book details the history along US 20 told through his photographs that he took along the highway. "The interstates are great for fast travel from A to B, but you miss so much traveling at 70 mph." concludes Farr. "Take the time, and journey through history across America's longest highway!" Persons interested in the journey can follow daily updates on the organizations web page or follow on Facebook or Twitter.

The Route 20 event is scheduled to leave Boston, MA on May 22 and reach Newport, OR on June 21.

### **About The Historic US Route 20 Association:**

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The Historic US Route 20 Association is a 501 (c) 3 nonprofit organization, based in Boston, MA, aimed to preserve the cultural heritage and importance of, and to promote the economic development of inner cities, small towns and rural communities along all 3,365 miles and former alignments of US Route 20. For more information visit [www.historicUS20.org](http://www.historicUS20.org); find us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/HistoricUsRoute20](http://www.facebook.com/HistoricUsRoute20) or call 617-733-5796. Memberships available.

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