



Don't be embarrassed, I'm singin' too!



Anybody ever hear of Bobby Troup? Well, then I get to give you a little history lesson, so to speak.

He was an American actor. You might remember him as Dr. Joe Early in the T.V. series 'Emergency'. He also had rolls in

'Dragnet', '77 Sunset Strip' and the movie 'MASH'.

Can you place him yet? Me either!!! BUT, what if I tell you he was the songwriter responsible for the iconic song 'Get Your Kicks On Route 66,' uh huh, now you know. I'll bet you thought it was written by singer Nat King Cole. Personally, my favorite version is by Asleep At The Wheel. I'd also bet you're sittin' there hummin' or singin' it right now!

♪♪ Now you go through Saint Looney

Joplin, Missouri,

And Oklahoma City is mighty pretty.

You see Amarillo,

Gallup, New Mexico,

Flagstaff, Arizona.

Don't forget Winona,

Kingman, Barstow, San Bernardino. ♪♪

Don't be embarrassed, I'm singin' too! I sang it all the way back from Las Vegas last month . . . On ROUTE 66!!!

So, let me clarify a few things. Interstate 40 replaced Route 66 and in many places runs parallel, if not overlappin' and in a lot of places they ain't even close. But, as we all know from watchin' the movie "CARS," 40 bypassed the cities and towns along the way. To see Route 66 you can't just hop on it and drive. You gotta ride the 'road less traveled' and in a few places it's like a washboard or only marked by a row of unused telephone poles.

So, now that I live in Oklahoma, I'm just 'bout 20 miles from Claremore, Oklahoma and Route 66. It also runs thru Tulsa and Oklahoma has done a fairly good job of preserving and marking the original route.

We drove like lightnin' out to Vegas to visit with John's daughter LeAnne, son in law John and grandson Jack . . . oh and so that they could do a 3 generation tandem skydive! WOW! I was on the ground but it was totally exhilarating!

After a relaxin' visit, that did not include the Las Vegas strip, we headed out on our Route 66 Adventure.

We picked up Route 66 in Kingman Arizona with a few old Motel and Diner signs but I think my favorite place in Arizona was Winslow. And since we're on this little musical journey . . . when Jackson Browne wrote 'Take It Easy' and The Eagles recorded it, I'm sure they had no idea it would be so memorable. But I gotta tell ya . . . "I WAS standin' on a corner in Winslow, Arizona . . . such a fine site to see"! And once again, you know you're singin' too!

Winslow has done a wonderful job at makin' their corner of Route 66 a must stop location. With a bronze statue of Browne and a parked 'flat bed



Ford', there are many photo opportunities you won't want to miss, includin' the Route 66 logo painted in the middle of the brick street. AND some really cool items in the Route 66 store!

But my next question is . . . 'Have you slept in a WigWam lately?'



Holbrook, Arizona, another stop along Route 66 is most famous for it's WigWam Motel. While very cute and interestin' to look at, I don't really think I'd want to sleep in one. Talk about a place so small you'd have to go outside to change your mind! WOW! I once stayed in a motel in Austin that was so small you had to step into the tub to close the bathroom door, but I'm not sure these WigWams are even that big! Cute . . . I repeat, really cute and the owners completed the experience by parkin' a few vintage cars outside. Makin' for some really great photos.

New Mexico has done a fair job, mostly citizens workin' to preserve the historic Route, but there are signs along the way and you can jump off the Interstate and catch a few miles of 66.

But when you get to Santa Rosa, you gotta stop at the Route 66 Auto Museum. Seriously, it was worth the trip. With over 30 cars and literally thousands of pieces of memorabilia on display it was easy to spend well over an hour wanderin' the museum and getting' lost in the past. Check them out at www.route66automuseum.com



Now, for your next musical clue . . .

♪♪ I've been from Tuscon to Tucumcari
Tehachapi to Tonapah

Driven every kind of rig that's ever been made
Drivin' the back roads so I wouldn't get weighed...
"Willin'", by Little Feat.
Okay, who won that round of 'Name That Tune'?

Tucumcari, New Mexico is home to the Blue Swallow Motel . . . complete with lots of neon and rooms that included an attached garage! Can you imagine what you'd pay for a motel/hotel room with a garage?

And you've all heard of the Cadillac Ranch in Amarillo . . . yeah well, we didn't go there but we did go to the Bug Ranch in Conway, Texas. Five VW Bugs, buried nose down and like the Cadillac Ranch, visitors are allowed, yes, even encouraged to bring their favorite color spray paint and leave their mark.



Along the way we saw literally dozens of old motels and service stations abandoned or as our trip motto became . . . re-purposed! Old stations now serve as signs of a long lost past when you could pull in and get your gas pumped, oil checked and windows cleaned . . . all for \$.25 a gallon! And although many of the motels are empty some have been turned into apartments or rooms to rent or as I began to call 'em . . . Flop Houses!



I find it very sad to see our American history becomin' so ramshackled and forgotten.

But I can't lie, my favorite place was in Texas . . . imagine that! Shamrock, Texas is home of the iconic Tower Conoco Station covered in neon lights and used as a model for the station in the movie CARS.

I wasn't happy to be getting' there after dark . . . not just after dark but 'bout 11pm, but once there I changed my mind. Because of the time, traffic was low and photo ops were high. This place just lit up the night and brightened the sky like the Taj Mahal on the Texas night... and my disposition brightened accordingly.

Built in 1935, the art-deco style 'Tower' Conoco buildin' included the U-Drop Inn Café and what was planned as retail space. Although the additional space was never used for retail stores it was used as overflow for the U-Drop Inn and as a ballroom.

I hated not havin' the chance to tour the buildin' but now I have a reason to return, and you know me . . . I'm always up for a road trip!

I'll never forget our adventures in American history along Route 66 and I hope you'll get out there and do the same!

Well, that's it for now!

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