



# Indiana Lincoln Highway Association

Preserving & Promoting the 1913 and 1928 Routes  
of the Lincoln Highway in Indiana

801 West Washington Street  
South Bend, IN 46601

[www.indianalincolnhighway.org](http://www.indianalincolnhighway.org)



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Anita King in her Studebaker Six.

## Anita King Exhibit in La Porte

by Lucianne Boardman, Anita's great-great niece

Anita King was born Anna Keppen to Hermann and Matilda Jipp Keppen in August of 1884 in Michigan City, Indiana. Anita was well known as a race car driver and silent film star in the early 1900s. Prior to moving to Hollywood, she and her sisters worked as house servants to help support her siblings after both parents died by the time Anita turned 14. The Barker house in Michigan City was a home where Anna worked.

Upon being discovered by the famous Lillian Russell while acting in Chicago theaters, Anita moved to Hollywood where she became a Paramount Girl and starred in films by directors, Jesse Lasky and the young Cecile B. DeMille.

**In 1915 she gained additional notoriety in becoming the first woman to travel solo across the United States along the Lincoln Transcontinental Highway from California to New York.** Continued on p. 2



Lerner Theater - 1924

## Encounter Elkhart at our Spring Event

We invite you to the Spring Gathering of the Indiana Lincoln Highway Association on Saturday, June 12.

8:45 a.m. EDT - Meet at the Lerner Theater - 410 S. Main St. <https://thelerner.com/> Ample parking available.

9:00 – 10:00 Behind the Scenes Tour, including seeing and hearing the 1924 Kimball Pipe organ. \$8

10:00 – 10:30 Drive to the Elkhart County Visitor Center for historical presentation, box lunch and our business meeting – 3421 Cassopolis St. ([www.visitelkhartcounty.com](http://www.visitelkhartcounty.com)). Social distancing and masks required during the meeting.

10:30 – 11:30 Presentation by local historian Larry App on Elkhart history and preservation efforts.

11:30 – 12:00 Box lunch catered by Baker's Nook. \$12. Bottled water provided or bring your own soft beverage.

12:00 – 1:30 Annual Meeting We will ZOOM the business meeting portion for all who wish to participate in that way rather than in person. **The meeting ID through ZOOM and the Passcode will be provided to all who request it.** The business meeting will be completed by no later than 1:30. Agenda and background information will be provided in advance to expedite the meeting. See p. 5 for meeting registration and menu options. **We need to hear from each of you who will attend either in person or remotely. Please register by June 9 using the form on P. 5.**

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

2	Website Updates
2	Mishawaka Interpretive Site?, Welcome New Members
3	Calendar, Board of Directors, Thank You
3	Nat'l Museum of Military Vehicles, In Memoriam
4	Ideal Section Bridge, Historic Schools

Continued from p. 1

After completing this amazing journey, Anita was appointed City Mother of Los Angeles by the mayor of that city and became a protector of young girls who many times would become victims of the film industry.

**From May 15 through July 30, there will be a special exhibit about Anita and some of her accomplishments at the La Porte Historical Society Museum in La Porte, Indiana.** A group of students and their professor from Purdue University Northwest spent the last two years working on research to prepare for the exhibit on this little-known local celebrity. The exhibit will include many artifacts on loan from Hollywood; pictures of Anita shared by her great-great niece, Lucianne Boardman (who, along with her sisters, honored Anita with a centennial re-enactment of Anita's trip in 2015); a Kissel Kar from the era similar to the one that Anita drove on her history-making journey; a newly resurrected silent film in which Anita stars - "Snobs"; and a documentary film created by one of the Purdue students.

To learn about the upcoming exhibit at the museum:

[https://www.nwitimes.com/lifestyles/pnw-student-s-research-celebrates-the-life-of-michigan-city-native-anita-king/article\\_e9f53fdd-f19c-5148-b6e8-f354f9955528.html?fbclid=IwAR0vlgDgml7qYtc1Z08tYzUaLhtt5FfoHeFR4IXUvuDG6PiqD2omyWdlFiw](https://www.nwitimes.com/lifestyles/pnw-student-s-research-celebrates-the-life-of-michigan-city-native-anita-king/article_e9f53fdd-f19c-5148-b6e8-f354f9955528.html?fbclid=IwAR0vlgDgml7qYtc1Z08tYzUaLhtt5FfoHeFR4IXUvuDG6PiqD2omyWdlFiw)

For more information about Anita King and her nieces' centennial re-enactment of her historic trip - check out the Facebook page, *Anita King - the Paramount Girl*, or <http://anitakingfilmstar.blogspot.com>

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## Website Updates

It has been several years since we updated our website and added some additional tours or important stops. As a result, we have been busily adding key features of the Lincoln Highway across Indiana that researchers and travelers alike will find useful. Among the new features you will see before long are:

- Four (4) updated Turn-by-Turn Guides: a 1913 route guide in each direction and a 1928 route guide in each direction, sorted by county, identifying mileage, key stops to consider, and highlighting memorable areas
- A list of all 11 LH county courthouses—classic structures worth seeing; A list of all the entries in the National Register of Historic Places in our 11 LH counties;
- A list of all the 1928 markers, commemorative plaques and memorials, kiosks and historic panels, and important historic stops along the

routes of the Indiana LH

- A list of all of the CVBs and Museums along the LH routes
- A list of parks, walks and trails through our 11 counties
- A list of historic bridges on or near the LH across Indiana

We plan to provide even more information on possible day trips for drivers along this important route. If you have other ideas or suggestions for our website, please contact our webmaster Russell Rein or Jeff Blair.

## Mishawaka Interpretive Site?



Laing Park in Mishawaka

Jeff Blair, Joyce Chambers and others will be meeting soon with the folks in Mishawaka to see if an appropriate display and/or memorial can be developed for Laing Park. Laing Park is located on Lincolnway East (IN 933) on the east side of Mishawaka, near the intersection with IN 331. The park has an interesting old cemetery on the hill, plenty of parking, a nice tributary off the St. Joseph River flowing through, is nearly halfway across Indiana in either direction, and has some local attractions! Other than labeling the highway here and there, there is no other specific LH attraction currently in this great town so maybe we can create one! Among the ideas to be brainstormed are:

- A kiosk with bench seating
- Pavers or Wall of Fame to recognize LH contributors over the years
- Historical panels about the area
- Historical panels about the national LH and state-wide LH
- Replacement of the old cemetery sign

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## Welcome New Members

Hanna Lion's Club - Hanna  
Robert Lang Sr. – Columbia City  
Ross & Wendy Valentine – Hanover, MI  
Richard Ward – Marietta, GA

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**JUNE 12, 2021 ~ INLHA SPRING GATHERING AND ANNUAL MEETING - ELKHART, 8:45 A.M.**

**FALL 2021 ~ LHA FALL EVENT - PLACE AND DATE TBD**

**NOVEMBER 4-5 ~ INDIANA BYWAYS CONFERENCE - METAMORA AREA/WHITEWATER VALLEY**

**JUNE 2022 ~ LINCOLN HIGHWAY ASSOCIATION NATIONAL CONFERENCE - JOLIET, IL**



## Thank You

### For donating to our Year-End Fundraiser

Tim & Ann Carlson  
Joyce Chambers  
Patrick Finley  
Beverly Gillespie  
Judy Greeson  
Nancy Harter  
Mark Jennes  
Carl Littrell  
Judy McCollough  
Russell Rein  
Howard Stovall

### In Memory of Monte Gillespie

Andrew Beckman



## INLHA Board of Directors

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*How it works:*

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## NATIONAL MUSEUM OF MILITARY VEHICLES

by Jeff Blair

Last fall on a trip to visit relatives in Wyoming I was taken to this museum in Dubois, Wyoming (<https://www.nmmv.org/>). What a place! It is located on the west side of town along US 26 on a direct route northwest to Yellowstone National Park. Its founder, Dan Starks, bought a tank in 2012--and this is how it began. Today his collection is the largest collection of military rolling stock in the US outside of the armed forces!

It houses 140,000 square feet of museum space and includes over 200 historically-significant firearms, too. There are more than 450 different vehicles in the museum, and further into town they have dozens more being refurbished for presentation. They have tanks, half-tracks, trucks, jeeps, motorcycles, armored vehicles, amphibious vehicles, and more. The collection is superb...and the admission is a mere \$15!

We were some of the first visitors ever to this new museum and after the guided tour I had the opportunity to spend some time with the curator congratulating them. We also got into a conversation about the military convoy across America (including Wyoming, though a ways south from here) in 1919 with a young Dwight Eisenhower along for the trip, and how some of these vehicles might well have been on that trip or at least well represented in the convoy. He showed sincere interest in learning more about the convoy and the potential for a nice display somewhere in the museum that speaks to the purpose of the convoy, the role of the Lincoln Highway (the path followed across the US), including pictures of some of the WWI-era armaments and vehicles enroute. I promised to communicate with him after returning home.

When I got home I reached out to National Field Secretary **Russell Rein** in Michigan and he has truly carried the mail with the curator ever since. He has had many conversations and email notes back and forth, sharing the details of the convoy, pictures, and more. I look forward to seeing our Lincoln Highway display in this great museum sometime soon.



## In Memoriam



**Daniel Gilman at the Denison Conference in 2017**

Daniel Gilman of Portage, MI passed away on November 21, 2020 at the age of 82. He and his cousin, Virginia Davis also of Portage, attended many INLHA gatherings and LHA Conferences together. Peace to his memory.

## Eureka!



In 2023 the State of Indiana will replace the Ideal Section Bridge in Dyer (above), located very near the Ostermann Memorial Seat and the plaques dedicated to the Ideal Section. INLHA is part of the planning process to determine the best way to maintain the LH presence long-term on the new bridge. Recently we have located the lettering molds made by Art Schweitzer and used 40 years ago when the current bridge was constructed! Potentially they can be used again or duplicated. We have also uncovered pictures from the original bridge construction from the 1920s showing the Indiana limestone construction of that much-earlier version. We are working with the contractors on the right way to incorporate both the lettering and the limestone, if possible. Sincere thanks go to Art's wife Doris and daughter Eileen for finding and donating the molds to the INLHA!



Bridge lettering molds made by Art Schweitzer



Art Schweitzer at the bridge with letter mold

## Ideas Anyone?

Two very old schoolhouses on the 1913 route of the Lincoln Highway are worth a picture. Over time we hope to learn even more than we know today about each of them, but take a look at each on your next trip.

In Besancon on the far East side of Allen County is an 1892 one-room schoolhouse, the Jefferson Township #5 Center School. It is owned by the St. Louis Besancon Catholic Church today and is adjacent to and across an original piece of the Lincoln Highway from the private academy and west of the beautiful Gothic-style church. You might want to visit all of these as well as the nearly 200-year-old cemetery nearby. The school operated from the 1890s through the 1930s prior to the current academy being constructed. Some restoration had been completed several years ago. You can see worn-down front steps, and maybe even some of the original wallpaper through the windows. We read an article on this school recently that highlighted teacher Miss Hallie Hume who proctored a spelling bee for the students in 1910. The church and the district including the school are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.



### Schoolhouses in Besancon and Merriam

In Merriam the 1913 route of the LH is actually just east of US 33. As you pass through the village you may see a large cemetery on the west side of town, reputedly the final resting place for "Uncle Sam" Wilson! Just to the east of the cemetery on Oak Street is the 1914 Noble Township District #4 Schoolhouse, a two-room schoolhouse--rare for its day. We know a lot less about this schoolhouse, but hope to keep learning about its life in the early education of Noble County residents. Unfortunately the building is in need of significant repairs if it is to be restored or maintained.

We are working with Indiana Landmarks to explore options for potentially saving these two old structures. If you have ideas for repurposing either space, please let us know.



### Photo Credits

- P. 1: Russell Rein Collection  
Elkhart County CVB
- P. 2: Beverly Gillespie
- P. 3: Mike Kelly
- P. 4: Jeff Blair      Brad Miller      Leo Salamis