



In Search of Eldorado

Link to the Eldorado Song: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VczD1olutQ8>



Day 14
Thursday,
January 16th

Route 66
To Joshua Tree
National Park

Weather
40's to 60's and sunny

Hello to Family & Friends

Saying goodbye to the Mojave National Preserve, which may require another visit sometime in the future, I headed south and hit Route 66. Upper left is my next hiking stop, the Amboy Crater. But for now I have about 5 miles on Route 66.

Route 66 from Fenner to Cadiz is closed due to some flash flooding that occurred back in July. The 80 year old timber bridges were washed away.

Once Kelbaker Rd reached Amboy Rd (Route 66) I could have backtracked as far as Cadiz and grabbed some Route 66 historic photos, but I figured most of you have seen enough of my Route 66 photos to last for awhile.

Along the 5 miles of Route 66 from Kelbaker Rd to Amboy is what might be called the 'unofficial Route 66 Public Art Corridor. Hundreds of travelers have written their names with rocks on the dirt berm along the north side. I seriously considered adding SACHARSI, but it would be too much bending over for my back.



In Search of Eldorado

By Edgar Allan Poe

Gaily bedight,
A gallant knight,
In sunshine and in shadow,
Had journeyed long,
Singing a song,
In search of Eldorado.

But he grew old—
This knight so bold—
And o'er his heart a shadow—
Fell as he found
No spot of ground
That looked like Eldorado.

And, as his strength
Failed him at length,
He met a pilgrim shadow—
'Shadow,' said he,
'Where can it be—
This land of Eldorado?'

'Over the Mountains
Of the Moon,
Down the Valley of the Shadow,
Ride, boldly ride,'
The shade replied,—
'If you seek for Eldorado!'



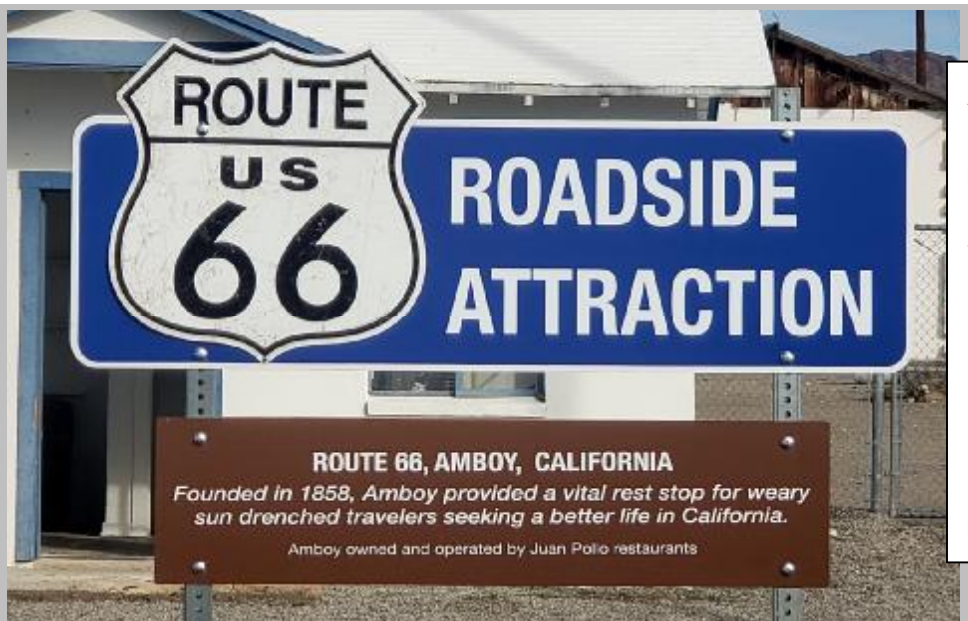
According to Roadside America, this is the second edition of the 'Shoe Tree'. The first became so overloaded it collapsed and died.

I have no idea what the artwork below is supposed to be. Garbage Tree maybe?



There are two of these lion statues. They are called the 'Guardians of Route 66', but I could find no explanation as to who put them there or why.

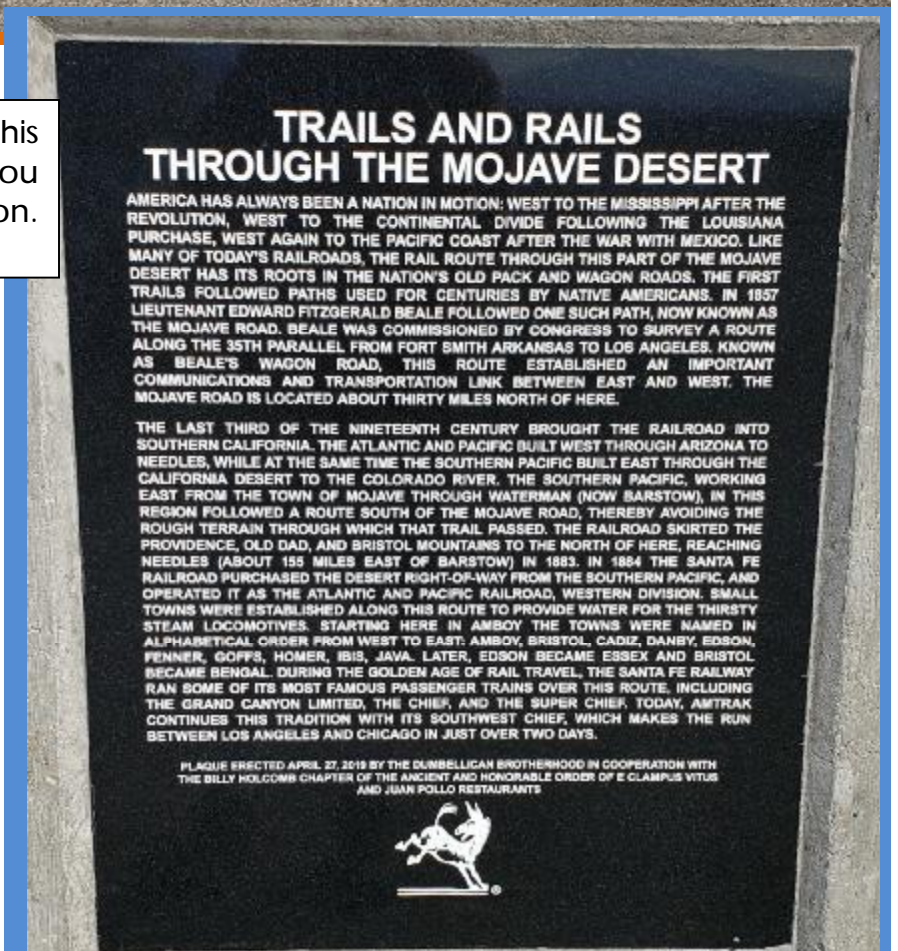




According to my ROUTE 66 book, Roy's Café above must hold the record for appearing in commercials, videos and movies. If the book says so, it must be right. In 1927 Roy Crowl started the business. It was sold to Buster Barris in 1938 who ran it for decades. In 2005, Albert Okura, of Juan Pollo (fast food, Mexican fried chicken mogul) bought Roy's and is restoring the place to its glory.



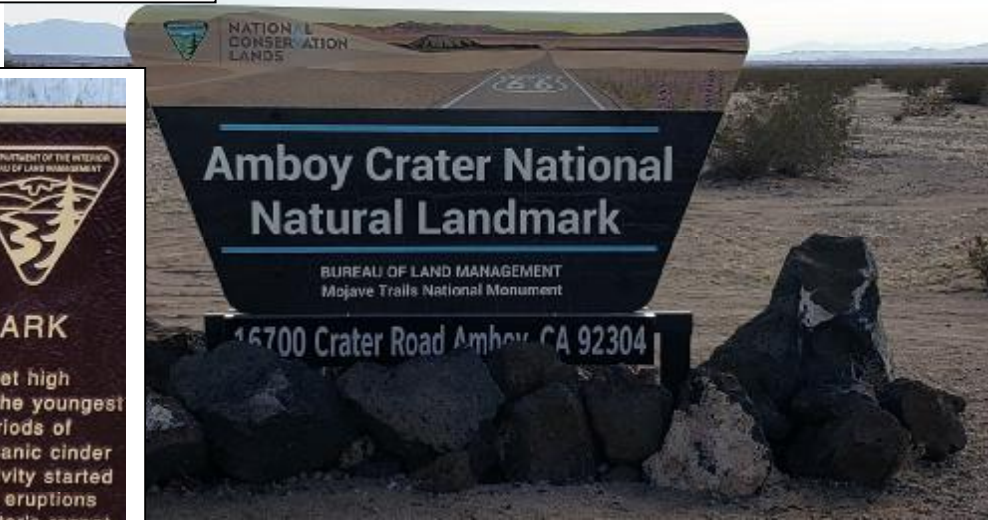
I know there is a lot of print on this plaque, but it's worth the read if you finish it. A lot of interesting information. At least it was too me anyways.



Below – Since the population of Amboy is probably less than the 23 people in Goffs, I'm not sure why they would've needed a school at all. I guess it must have been a hopin' place at one time, but only Roy's and the Hill Brothers Chemical Factory are there now. Everything else is boarded up.



Thar she blows – Sorry, I just couldn't resist. The Amboy Crater.



**AMBOY CRATER
NATIONAL NATURAL LANDMARK**

Amboy Crater, formed of ash and cinders, is 250 feet high and 1500 feet in diameter. The crater is in one of the youngest volcanic fields in the United States. Six distinct periods of eruptions created the resulting nested group of volcanic cinder cones encompassing 24 square miles. Volcanic activity started an estimated 6000 years ago with the last period of eruptions occurring as recently as 500 years ago. Amboy Crater's recent origin and its near-perfect shape led to its designation as a National Natural Landmark in 1975. Climb to the rim of the crater to see an outstanding view of the associated lava field and surrounding desert area.

Please, take only pictures
Leave only foot prints on trails.

Plaque placed on May 3, 1998 by
The Ancient and Honorable Order of E Clampus Vitus
BILLY HOLCOMB CHAPTER 1089

In cooperation with
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
NEEDLES FIELD OFFICE

AMBOY CRATER
National Natural Landmark

Trail To The Crater

Allow yourself a minimum of 3 hours hiking time. Located 1.1 miles from the day use area, the cone is one-mile in circumference. Round trip is roughly 3 miles. Follow the trail to the west of the cinder cone. This will take you to a wide opening where an explosive eruption had breached the crater wall. From here, the climb to the top is an 80-foot incline. Due to the extreme heat, it is suggested that hikes be planned between the months of October thru April.

Below is most of the same info as the plaque above

Amboy Crater

Amboy Crater, formed of ash and cinders, is 250 feet high and 1,500 feet in diameter. It is situated in one of the youngest volcanic fields in the United States. It is located in the Barstow-Bristol trough, a conspicuous west-northwest trending physiographic feature which approximately straddles the boundary between the Mojave and Sonoran tectonic blocks.

This field was created by at least 4 distinct periods of eruptions, resulting in a coaxially nested group of volcanic cinder cones. The most recent eruption of Amboy Crater was approximately 10,000 years ago.

The lava flows consist of basalt rich in minerals of magnesium, iron, and calcium. Upon close examination, you may be able to see minute green-colored olivine crystals. The red color indicates the presence of ferric iron and is a result of steam on heated rocks.

Amboy Crater is located on public land managed by the Bureau of Land Management. It's recent origin and its near perfect shape led to its designation as a National Natural Landmark in 1973.



The trail leads right through? across? the lava field.

I guess you CAN teach an old dog new tricks. I made sure I had BOTH hiking poles when I set out to circle the rim of this crater, and it was good thing I did.



Onward and upward. The view better be worth it.



Above is a panoramic from south to north looking west from the rim. I guess it was worth it. Below – You can't see it unless you blow the picture up, but the arrow is pointing to the RV.





You can see the extent of the lava flow field and just above the center of the photo is Amboy



Above - Looking into the crater.



Below - The Rim Trail



About 3 feet wide at most, it's 250 feet down to the left and a roll into the crater to the right



That trail back down, not the same one I climbed to get up here, is all loose lava. I used both hiking poles like never before. I sure didn't want to fall and roll on lava rocks, I would have been a bloody mess

It took me 2.5 hours to finish the hike, and that was with a sit down on a bench to remove a sweatshirt, have a drink and read the brochure, and a sit down on the rim trail for a snack and a drink. Not sure if it's the time of year or my personality, but I had the entire place to myself again.





Turning south on Amboy Rd I leave Route 66 behind and run across these mounds and trenches, some on the right but mostly on the left. This is the Bristol Dry Lake which is noted for its chloride mining operations which have been ongoing since the early 1900's. Trenches are dug out, filled with brine solution pumped from the lake bed, then allowed to evaporate. Much of the world's table salt comes from Bristol. If you did any chemical experiments in high school or college, the calcium chloride probably started here.



This looks like snow and ice, but it's really just salt.



About 10 feet tall, Roadside America just mentioned big metal tortoises at this address....



...they didn't mention it was at the Tortoise Rock Casino. Now it makes sense.

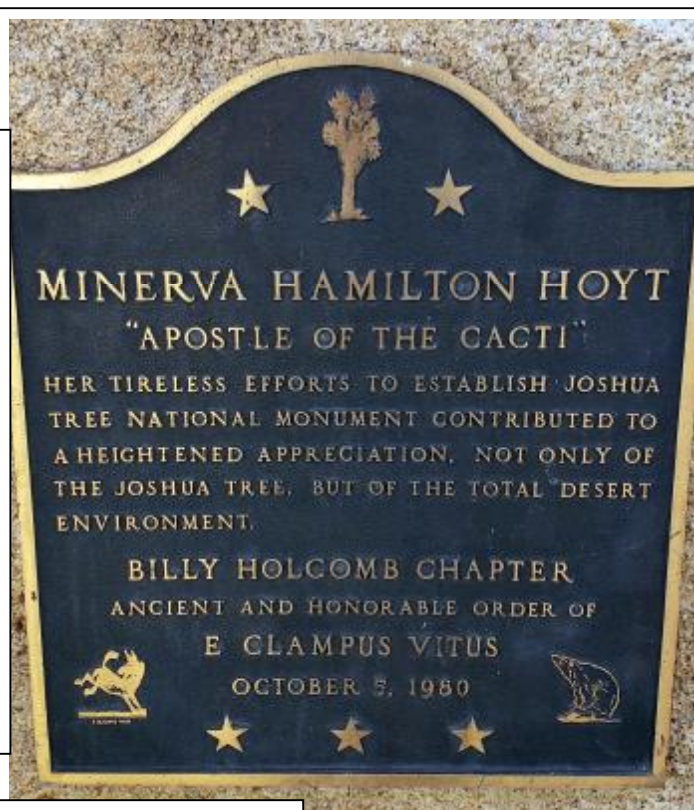
This is also from RA. This guy collects old neon signs and puts them in his yard



BY the way, I forgot to mention that starting with the Casino, I am now in Twentynine Palms, California.



HOLY MOLY, look what I found. A grocery store. I can finally start eating again. This place was as big or bigger than most Pick n Saves, a lot of selections. However, as I mentioned a few days ago regarding milk? They had no chocolate milk at all. Not only that, as I left the RV I decided NOT to take my reusable shopping bag with me. At the checkout I was asked if I wanted a bag. "How much does it cost?" I asked. "Ten cents". "If you give me a moment I'll run out to my vehicle and get a bag." I paid the ten cents.

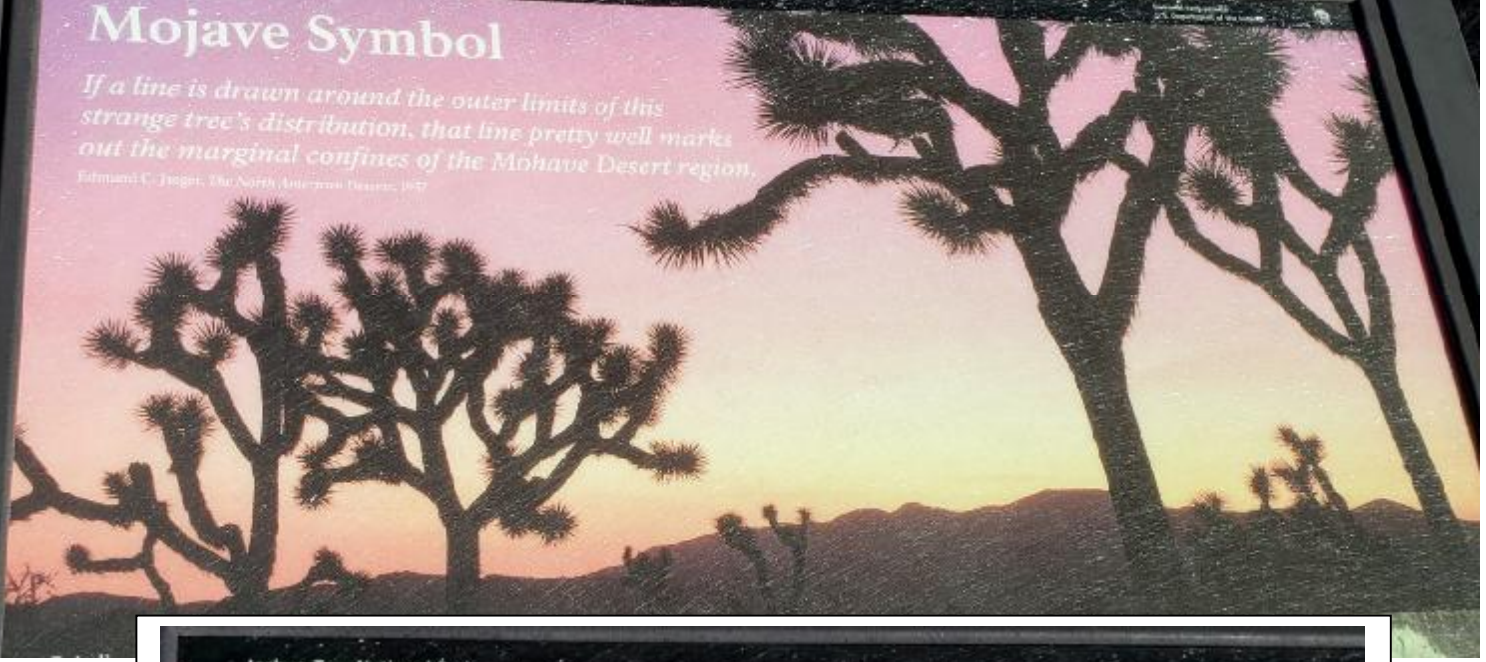


Chalk another National Park
off the bucket list.

Mojave Symbol

If a line is drawn around the outer limits of this strange tree's distribution, that line pretty well marks out the marginal confines of the Mohave Desert region.

Edmund C. Jaeger, *The North American Deserts*, 1937



Mojave Symbol

If a line is drawn around the outer limits of this strange tree's distribution, that line pretty well marks out the marginal confines of the Mohave Desert region.

Bristling with dagger-shaped leaves, the Joshua tree's upraised branches impressed Mormon pioneers in the 1850s. The tree reminded them of the upstretched arms of biblical Joshua, who led the Israelites into the Promised Land. The Mormons coined the tree's name and it stuck, unlike other less intriguing Joshua tree names: cabbage tree, Spanish bayonet tree, yucca palm, yucca tree, or tree lily.

The Joshua tree (*Yucca brevifolia*) reaches the southern edge of its range in Joshua Tree National Park. This edge marks the transition from the Mojave to the Colorado Desert—as you move from the Mojave to the Colorado, Joshua trees fade away.





I entered Joshua Tree from the north, and here I am, 50 miles later, at a Harvest Host in the form of the General George S. Patton Museum. That's right, I drove in, through, and out the other side. As I was talking to the Ranger in the VC about hiking trails, I asked how crowded the park is. He tells me it gets very crowded on the weekends and most of the campgrounds are already full. Hmmmm.....change of strategy. My original plan was driving and hiking down this same road for a day or two, then this museum, then Desert Center and Desert Mountain before heading back through Joshua Tree on the other road and hiking and camping for a day or two. Unfortunately, I lost track of the days and thought today was Friday and I had only one day to kill before heading back to the Park on Sunday. Oh well, it's nice to be having such a good time you don't know what day of the week it is. So I will spend Friday doing the things I want to do on the south side, then maybe spend Saturday hiking around Cottonwood Springs so I can camp for free on BLM land just outside the park border. We will see what happens.

As I passed through Cottonwood Springs I did take the opportunity to take a dump. Sorry, I mean dump the RV holding tanks. It was only five bucks.

I would not recommend this Harvest Host site. There are three other campers here, one of which is blocking one of the exits, exactly what I was told NOT to do. He is right next to me. I am also a stones throw from I-10, a pretty noisy highway. Not to mention the truck stop and the semis going back and forth.

Like I should complain. It's free isn't it?

Until next time.....