



The Reel west newsletter

The Last Day....

Said my goodbyes to Kevin & Thea and hit the road.

1021 miles to home. Depending on how long I spend in Kearney, I expect to arrive home sometime Friday morning.

Below – It was a “Simpson’s Sky” as I left Colorado and entered Nebraska.



Day 21
Thursday
April 21st

Thornton, Co
to
Merton, WI

Weather

High Temp: 65+
Low Temp: TBD
Conditions: sunny

Happy Birthday to You,
Happy Birthday to You,
Happy Birthday dear
Kali!!!!
Happy Birthday to You.
Love ya Kal!!

Below is my last look at the Rockies for, who knows how long?



Above and below – A couple pics of the Archway.



the Martin Brothers
"A NARROW ESCAPE"

Commissioned by Fred A. Bosselman
Sculpted by David L. Biehl 2011

By the mid-1860s Plains Indians were being pushed off of their homeland by settlers from the East. Sioux and Cheyenne tribes made a last attempt to secure their territories by raiding homes and settlements along the Platte River Valley. In August of 1864, Robert Martin, 12, and Nathaniel Martin, 15, were putting up hay with their father, George, seven miles west of the current Doniphan, Nebraska, when they were attacked by Indians. The brothers fled the attack together on horseback. Robert was riding in front and Nathaniel behind. They were struck with four arrows, one of which pinned them together. Both boys tumbled to the ground where they were left for dead. Remarkably, the boys were found alive the next day. The Martin Brothers survived, married and raised families. Robert had chronic back pain and spinal meningitis from the incident and died at the age of 47. Nathaniel stayed in the area and was able to tell this true and harrowing story to his grandchildren. He died in 1927 at the age of 79.

I thought the story above and the sculpture to the right rather interesting.



The Archway celebrates the 'Great Platte River Road', a main route from east to west, first for the Indians, then the pioneers, and lastly for the Interstate, and me.

The Archway presents 170 years of transportation history through detailed displays and harrowing stories told by those who lived it, via headphones.

When I walked into the building I was greeted by the same host who had allowed me a quick look 18 months ago. I told him the story but he didn't seem very impressed. I took a quick walk through the gift shop, bought a ticket for the show and headed up the escalator.



The exhibit consists of several life-size dioramas depicting various time periods. Through the headphones are heard several stories from different sources who actually lived during that time and their experiences.

Riding a covered wagon across the Great Plains above....and miners discussing the gold rush below.





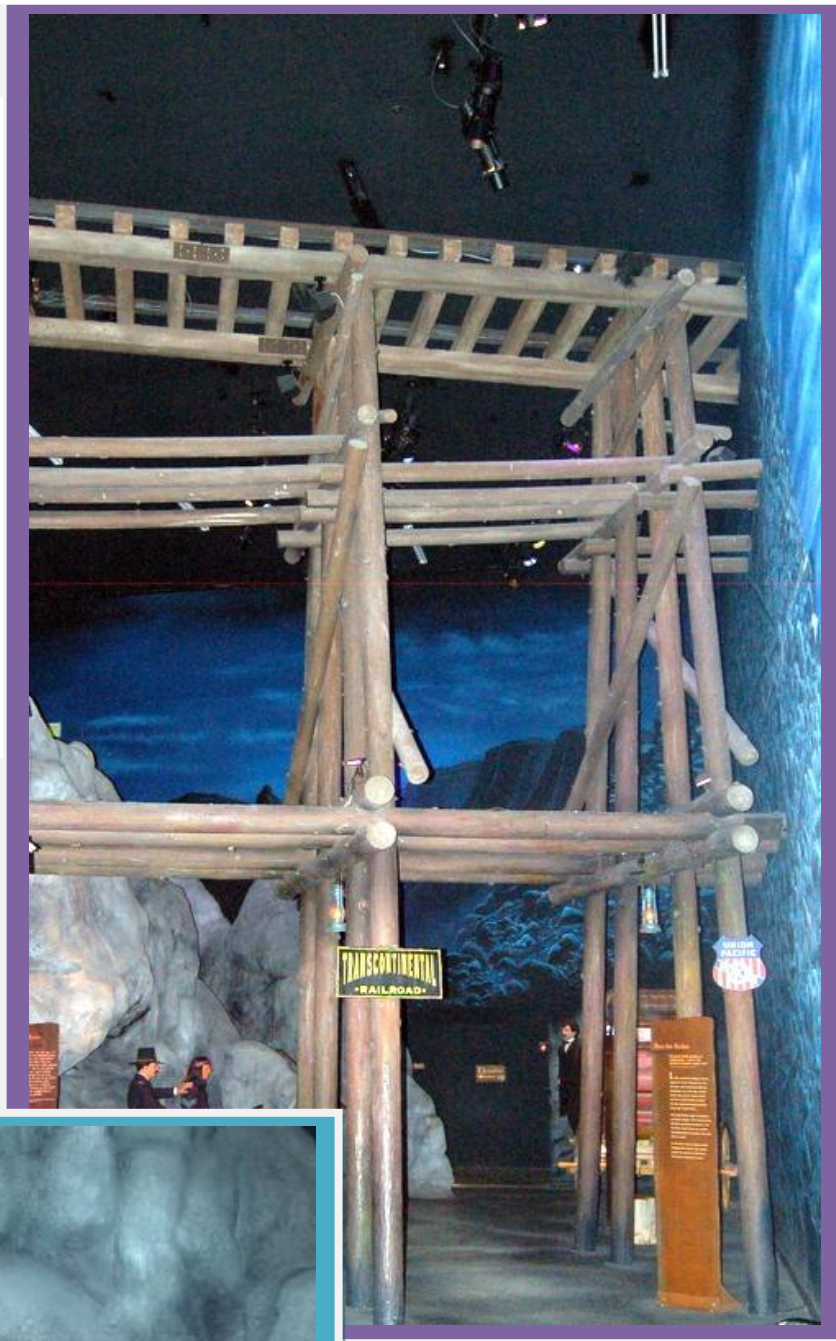
The Mormons attempting to reach Zion.

Abandoned wagons and death on the trail.



The short-lived Pony Express

The challenge of the railroads to connect east and west.



The hiring of Indians as scouts.



Mark Twain arriving by stagecoach.

As westward expansion boomed, the new automobile required roads to make the trip. In 1912 the 'Lincoln Highway', from Boston to San Francisco was born. If you remember the first day of my trip, I mentioned that Route 66 in Illinois follows some of the old Lincoln Highway. According to the sign further below, Kearney is just about the midpoint.



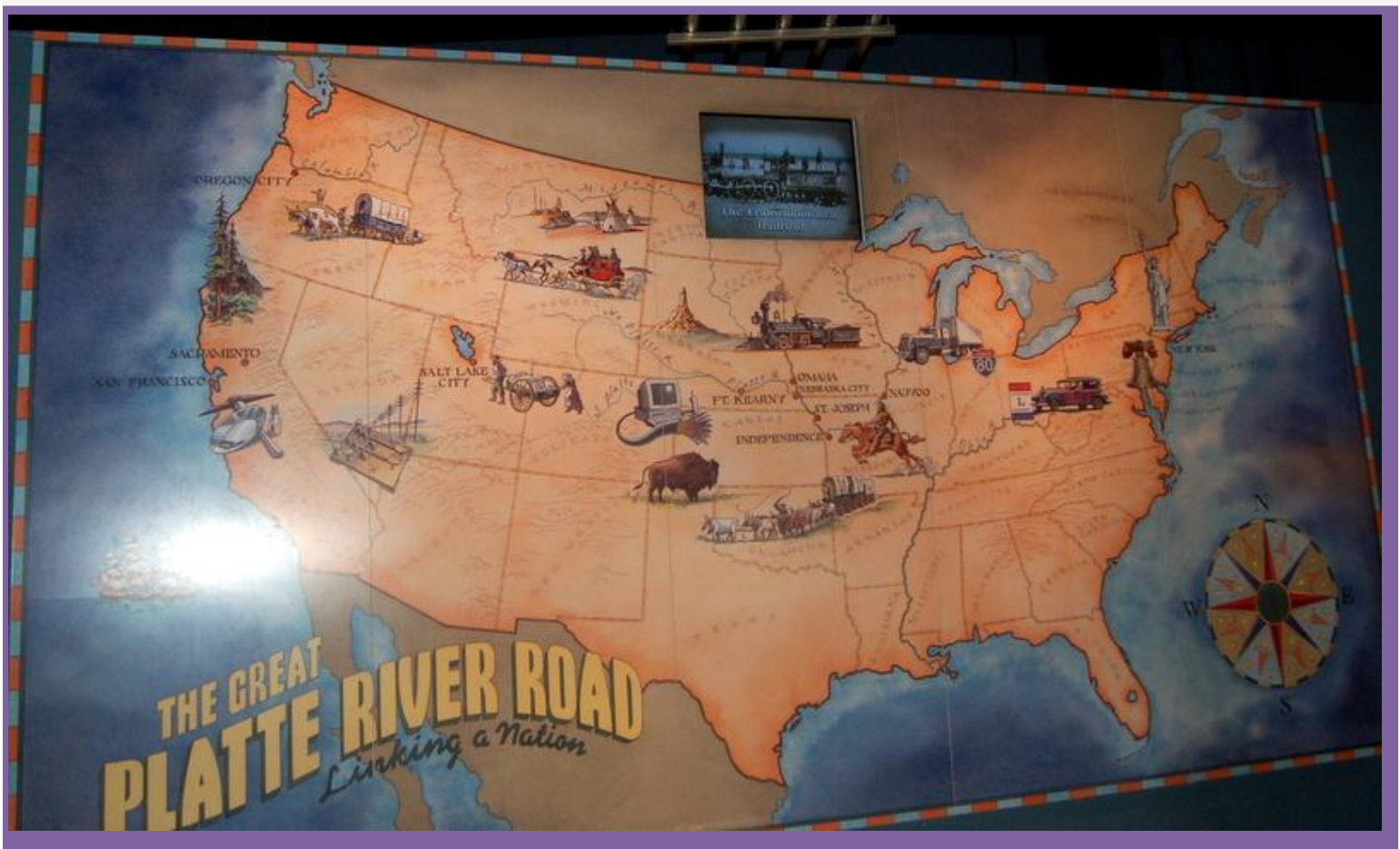
Of course travel on the Lincoln Highway and Platte River Road meant places for travelers to eat and sleep, like the Kozy Kabins above.





Civilization arrives; drive-in theaters, roadside cafes, convertibles, National Parks.

The lights showing the path of the Platte River Road are lit up, but did not show up on the photo.





The view from a window inside the café.

4023 miles and three weeks later, I have traveled Route 66, The Lincoln Highway, The Ozark Trail, The Santa Fe Trail, The Navajo Trail and the Great Platte River Road; crossed the Rockies, starred in a Western movie, ridden horseback as a cowboy, met some great characters, made some wonderful friends, seen some beautiful scenery and, without a doubt, made some unforgettable memories. Not to steal the name of Steve's business, but I think this really was "A Great American Adventure".

I am glad you could share it with me, and I am especially glad I have friends like you to share it with. It makes life so much more interesting when you can share it.

I leave you with the plaque to the right and the message of a "search for freedom and the promise of America."

Good Night!!!!

Ace

Building A Country

"He who travels best travels not only with the sun but with history."

-Hal Borland, author

The Great Platte River Road helped build a country. From the creaking wheels of the first covered wagons to the blur of automobiles on the Interstate, this grand corridor has fed the restless spirit of a pioneer nation on the move.

Like few other places, it has brought together generations of men, women, and children from the far-flung corners of the country and united them, if only for a moment, in their search for freedom and the promise of America.

