Timeline of Route 66

**1920** Cyrus Avery, highway commissioner of Tulsa, OK, leads effort for a Chicago-Los Angeles highway thru Tulsa

**1926** U.S. highway 66 officially commissioned with 2,448 miles of mostly existing road crossing 8 states and 3 times zones. By the end of the year, 800 miles are paved.

**1927** U.S. 66 Highway Association formed to promote the road

**1928** Transcontinental foot race, nicknamed the Bunion Derby, held to help promote U.S. Highway 66

**1935** Route 66 is extended from downtown Los Angeles to a terminus near the Santa Monica Pier in Santa Monica.

**1937** Route 66 in New Mexico is rerouted, bypassing Santa Fe

**1938** Paving of Route 66 is completed

**1939** John Steinbeck publishes *Grapes of Wrath*

**1946** Robert (Bobby) Troup writes a road map song with the words “Get Your Kicks on Route 66”. Nat King Cole releases popular recording of it

**1953** I-44 between Tulsa and Oklahoma City opens, bypassing 100 miles of Route 66 and beginning the gradual replacement of Route 66 by interstates.

**1956** Congress authorizes construction of the Dwight D. Eisenhower National Interstate Highway System

**1960** Route 66 television show starring Martin Milner and George Maharis debuts. Runs for 116 episodes

**1970** Nearly all segments of the original Route 66 are replaced by Interstates 55, 44, 40, 15, and 10

**1984** Final section of Route 66 bypassed by Interstate 44 at Williams, AZ

**1985** Route 66 officially decommissioned as a federal highway

**1986** Historic Route 66 Association of Arizona formed, led by Angel Delgadillo and others in Seligman and Kingman, sparking formation of similar groups in other states

**1999** Congresses creates the Route 66 Corridor Preservation Program

www.lesliegoddard.info

L-Goddard@att.net

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www.lesliegoddard.info

L-Goddard@att.net



Route 66 Recommended Reading

***Route 66: The Mother Road*** by Michael Wallis (2001). The definitive history, with chapters on each of the eight states as well as profiles of significant people and hundreds of photos.

***Route 66: Then and Now*** by Joe Sonderman(2018). Gorgeous then-and-now photographs of Route 66 landmarks.

***Route 66 Road Trip*** by Jessica Dunham (2019). My favorite Route 66 travel guide. Includes descriptions of significant attractions, turn-by-turn directions, maps and suggested itineraries.

***EZ66 Guide for Travelers*** by Jerry McClanahan (2019) Easy-to-use spiral-bound book of maps for traveling the entire length, westbound or eastbound

***Billy Connolly’s Route 66*** (2011). Fun four-episode television travelogue by the Scottish actor and comedian. Available on DVD and Acorn TV. Also has an accompanying book.

***Route 66: An American Odyssey*** directed by John Paget (2002). A documentary film, available on DVD. Although outdated in parts, remains interesting and includes appearances by Rt. 66 icons including Bobby Troup, Angel Delgadillo and Michael Wallis.