

Cross-Country Caravans Celebrate Lincoln Highway Centennial

The Livermore Heritage Guild celebrated in grand style the 100th anniversary of the Lincoln Highway, the nation's first transcontinental road, on Sunday, June 23rd.

Dozens of vehicles, including many antique cars, visited the Guild's Duarte Garage/Lincoln Highway Museum for more than one hour that morning. Most of these vehicles began the day at the Palace of the Legion of Honor in San Francisco, the highway's western terminus. Most were destined for a weeklong journey to Kearney, Nebraska (the highway midpoint), where they would meet a similar caravan headed westward from the road's eastern end, Times Square in New York.

The first vehicles arrived at around 10 a.m., turning from Portola Avenue to L Street to Pine Street and Junction Avenue. Many of the oldest cars were parked in front of the garage. Most cars parked along Junction Avenue. The last vehicles left just after noon, headed for lunch in Banta near Tracy and ultimately an overnight stop in Sacramento.

Visitors in the caravan enjoyed their stop in Livermore. Most were from the western United States; some were from the United Kingdom, Germany and other foreign countries.

Gary Kinst, editor of the Lincoln Highway Association, California



Photo by Richard Jones, RJ Aerial Photo, June 23, 2013

The Duarte family constructed the Highway Garage of Livermore at the Lincoln Highway's western entrance to town in 1915, the same year that the State paved the highway and County and City paved L and First Streets. It has become a nationally-known Lincoln Highway landmark. Since 1976, the Guild has converted it into a museum, housing three retired city fire vehicles, among other items. On Sunday, June 23, 2013, the Lincoln Highway Centennial Caravan stopped at the garage en route from San Francisco to Kearney, Neb. On Friday, July 12th, some westbound caravan vehicles visited the garage.

Chapter journal *The Traveler*, says, "Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the garage and the displays. Some even went on to say that it was the highlight of their first day. You guys are the greatest and always go over the top to promote the Lincoln Highway."

A mockup of a soon-to-be constructed monument to the Lincoln Highway was displayed in the Garage. The Murrieta Chapter of the E Clampus Vitus organization plans to install the monument in the park next to the garage later this year. The

Guild worked with the Lincoln Highway Association, California Chapter (Michael Kaelin) and the City of Livermore to place Lincoln Highway signs along the 1913 original route earlier this year.

A team of Guild volunteers, led by garage curator Will Bolton, (*Continued on p. 2*)

In This Issue:

- President's Message, p. 3.
- Lincoln Highway History, p. 4.
- Calendar: AGM on Sept. 28th, p. 5.

Highway Caravans *(Cont'd from Page 1)*

planned for several weeks to accommodate the visitors. Coffee and light refreshments were provided. Tim Sage and Ed Rominger helped to augment restroom facilities.

Paul Gilger, president of the Lincoln Highway Association-California Chapter, presented the Guild with a "Certificate of Appreciation" for hosting the centennial caravan. Guild Vice President Marie Abbott accepted it. Guild Secretary Susan Junk made brisk sales of Lincoln Highway merchandise.

Members of the Altamont Cruisers Car Club, including Dick and Dodie Jones, helped with traffic control. Other local auto enthusiasts contributed to the festive atmosphere by displaying their own vehicles. The 1914 Packard Six vehicle in the caravan needed the aid of a few pushing pedestrians in order to get a "running start" when leaving town. Henry Joy, LHA and Packard company president a century ago, once owned it.

On Friday, July 12th, some cars from the western caravan returned to the garage, joined by some vehicles from the eastern caravan that left New York City on June 22nd. Dick Finn, Ron McConnell and Marie Abbott opened the Garage on short notice in order to accommodate the visitors.

Twenty-five years ago, on July 10, 1988, the 75th anniversary Lincoln Highway caravan (the "Old Cars Lincoln Highway Tour") also stopped at the Garage. That caravan began in New York City on June 11, 1988. Cars joined along the way. It arrived from the east via the Portola Ave. route. The Guild sent its 1944 Mack fire truck to the western entrance to the Altamont Pass to escort that caravan as it approached Livermore. The Guild's Muriel Dean helped to arrange that event.

Will Bolton has begun planning for the next major event at the Garage. In 2015 will be the 100th anniversary of its construction by the Frank H. Duarte family in 1915. *-by Jason Bezis*



Some caravan participants wore period clothing, including Ed Archer (left), the driver of a 1915 Ford Model T speedster (below) and the women who admired the Guild's restored 1920 Seagrave fire engine (far below). Mr. Archer treated the crowd to a spectacularly speedy U-turn on L Street as his car departed. Special banners greeted the visitors (below left). Photos by Dick Jones.



Dear Members:

Our Duarte Garage is a hotspot this year as we celebrate the centennial of the Lincoln Highway dedication. In June, we enjoyed being a stop along the Lincoln Highway Association's 100th Anniversary Tour, with about 60 vehicles stopping in to say "hello" as they made their way towards the Highway's midpoint in Kearney, Nebraska. They met up with a similar group that made the trip from Times Square in New York.

On the afternoon of Saturday, August 31st, we will host Cece Otto, singer/songwriter, who has been touring the Lincoln Highway singing songs about the Highway and songs from the era when the Highway was established. She is a classically trained mezzo-contralto and has a Dual Masters from the Lamont School of Music at the University of Denver. Her talents are widely varied, so her calling card says "Professional Artistic Journeywoman." She will sing at the Duarte Garage. Doors will open at 4:00 p.m. At 4:30 p.m., we will dedicate a Lincoln Highway marker. Cece will sing at 5:00 p.m. We will have a suggested donation of \$5.00 at the door to help support both her and the Garage. Visit our website livermore-history.com or call the History Center for up-to-date information. If you want to check out Cece's blog about traveling and singling along the Lincoln Highway, you will find it at americansongline.net. I have spoken with Cece and she is having a great time on her cross-country trip and is very excited to visit our garage - it may be her only stop in California for the tour.

But that's not all! As lucky as we were to link up with Cece on her musical travels, we also were recently contacted by the Valley Heritage Questers, San Jose's Questers group. Betty Miller, a Questers Member, has had a Lincoln Highway marker in her yard for a number of years that came from her parents house in Crockett. Betty's family believes the marker was one of the ones installed along the road in Crockett and removed as part of more modern work on the roadway. As you will read in Jason's excellent Lincoln Highway article here, a faction of the disbanded Lincoln Highway Association re-routed the road in 1928 across the Carquinez Bridge, which takes it right through Crockett. That diversion (its legitimacy is still in question) was unfortunate for Livermore, because 1928 is when the Boy Scouts installed the concrete Lincoln Highway markers all along the route from coast to coast. Due to the re-routing, Crockett got concrete markers and we did not.

Back to Betty. Based on a visit that the Valley Heritage Questers made to the Garage earlier this year, Betty decided that the Guild was the best custodian for her marker and worked with her group and our Guild to arrange the donation. I am pretty sure that Betty had no intention of inserting herself or the Questers into the politics of the Highway rerouting, but I'd like to think that bringing the Crockett marker to Livermore helps us reclaim a little bit of the highway that we allegedly lost in 1928. And so, on the same day that Cece Otto will travel the Highway to come sing in our garage, the Questers will have a donation ceremony to officially transfer Betty's concrete marker to the Duarte Garage. In the photo to the right, you will see this original marker (short) next to the model of a marker (tall) that our ingenious Garage Crew created for the visit of the Centennial Caravan. Visit them when you come to the Garage for the songs and dedication on August 31st. See you there!



The Livermore Cultural Arts Council (LCAC) is a collection of many of the local arts and culture organizations, and the Heritage Guild is a member. It gives us a forum for discussing common problems, creating collaborations and finding other ways to support art and culture in Livermore. The Guild has benefitted from this organization directly as a recent recipient of a grant to help with the completion of our History Mobile. This month, LCAC gave its member organizations an opportunity to get their message out by putting up an exhibit in the Livermore Library gallery (to the right as you enter the library). The Guild has two panels there, and it is a good opportunity to see some of the other organizations that work to keep arts and culture active in Livermore.

Speaking of exhibits, we have a new one of our own at the History Center. Alicia Eltgroth, docent and active volunteer, has created a display of clothing showing what would have been worn 100 years ago when the Lincoln Highway was dedicated. It is interesting to see where fashion has kept the thread, so to speak, and where it has diverged distinctly. In particular, some of the women's clothing is somewhat recognizable, but the women's swimsuit is a dramatic reminder of how times have changed. Drop in and take a look.

Jeff Kaskey

Lincoln Highway in Eastern Alameda County: Part I



The Lincoln Highway in Livermore Valley generally followed today's I-580 to First St. to Portola Ave. back to I-580 after these segments were paved in 1914-16. The "LIVERMORE" sign depicted above spanned L St. at the city's western entrance to the highway from 1916 to 1931. The Duarte Garage (built 1915) is at left. A similar sign over First St. at Portola Ave. served as Livermore's eastern gateway from 1916 to 1932. The City and County paved portions of L Street and First Street in 1915 to draw traffic into town. (Courtesy of Hayward Area Historical Society)

Crossing the country by automobile was extremely difficult one century ago. The Lincoln Highway, linking the Atlantic and Pacific coasts via the Livermore Valley, helped to change that. This article discusses the history of the Lincoln Highway in eastern Alameda County, from the San Joaquin County line through the Livermore/Amador Valley up Bulmer Hill to Dublin Canyon. A future article will discuss landmarks and roadside businesses.

The Lincoln Highway was the nation's first transcontinental roadway. A group of industrialists and other "good roads" advocates formed the Lincoln Highway Association (LHA) in 1913 in order to plan, promote and sign the highway.

The LHA can best be described as a "catalyst" of highway improvement; it left almost all of the actual construction of the road to other institutions, mostly public entities. In the LHA Records at U.C. Berkeley's Bancroft Library, LHA co-founder Henry B. Joy reflected, "What we really had in mind with regard to the Lincoln Highway was not to build a road but to procure the building of many roads by educating the people. Beyond question, we did bring about what is known as the 'Good Roads' movement in America."

The LHA proclaimed the highway's general route from its Detroit headquarters on September 10, 1913. The Livermore Valley felt confident that it was included as Stockton and Oakland were listed in the proclamation as cities through which the highway would pass.

The *Livermore Herald* ebulliently touted the Lincoln Highway routing in its September 27, 1913 edition, "Livermore is to be on the route of the proposed Lincoln highway from ocean to ocean. This announcement may not arouse much enthusiasm in the casual reader at this time but it will mean a great deal to the community ten years hence, and that is a short time in the history of a town."

However, this decision was not a complete surprise. The State Highway Commission had issued in August 1912 a statement designating the main highway between the Bay Area and the Central Valley through Livermore. This decision was made months before the LHA came into existence. Today's Interstate 80 corridor was not a viable alternative to

the Livermore route because the Yolo (Sacramento River) Bypass near Sacramento and the Carquinez Strait needed to be bridged.

Local Route of Lincoln Highway

The precise route of the Lincoln Highway through eastern Alameda County is unknown today. Records in the LHA Collection at the University of Michigan have yet to be studied. (See LHA *Traveler* January 2013 issue.)

The Lincoln Highway is believed to have generally followed the route of the State Highway (Legislative Route No. 5) from the San Joaquin County line to Dublin Canyon. On a modern map, heading east to west, it followed Grant Line Road past Zimmerman's Mountain House. (Abandoned portions of the original road can be seen today on both sides of the California Aqueduct, just west of Mountain House Bar.) It then followed the length of Altamont Pass Road into Livermore Valley (some curves have been straightened and grades cut down over the years). Between Greenville Road and First St., the old highway route is beneath the median and no. 1 lane of eastbound I-580.

The Lincoln Highway likely then followed First Street to Portola Avenue to the last few hundred feet of E. Airway Blvd., where it re-joined I-580. Bob Follenfant of the City of Livermore said in 2013 of the Airway Blvd. stretch, "The cracking every ten feet on the existing pavement is a sign that the original concrete pavement is still underneath the existing roadway."

Just east of today's westbound Isabel Ave. exit, the highway cut across all nine lanes of I-580 to the Esdon concrete bridge (built 1907) over Arroyo Las Positas just north of today's freeway. In 1927, that bridge was replaced with one a bit to the south. From Isabel Ave. to Hopyard Road/Dougherty Road, the Lincoln Highway alignment is now beneath the westbound I-580 lanes and westbound BART tracks.

West of Dougherty Road, the highway followed Dublin Court and Dublin Boulevard through Dublin to Hansen Drive. There today, curving from Dublin Blvd. towards I-580 (between the Hexcel Corporation and De-Silva

Group buildings), can be found an intact, but crumbling, segment of Lincoln Highway, formerly Reimers Way.

Here the 1913-33 highway alignment crossed beneath all lanes of today's I-580 to what is now Dublin Canyon



Copyright 1925, California Department of Transportation (AL-A-4)

In 1924, the State widened the Lincoln Highway between Livermore and Greenville to 20 feet, by adding 2½-foot concrete shoulders to the original 15 foot-wide road constructed in 1915. Above is a view of what is now Portola Avenue, looking east between today's Livermore Valley Charter High School and Enos Way. The house still stands in 2013. Below is believed to be a view of where First Street today intersects with I-580, looking easterly. Note the absence of a center line, first painted through the Livermore Valley in 1927.



Copyright 1925, California Department of Transportation (AL-A-5)

Contact Us

President

Jeff Kaskey

jkaskey@yahoo.com

1st Vice Pres. (Program Chair)

Marie Abbott

925-443-9740

2nd Vice Pres. (Membership Chair)

Sandra Grafrath 925-443-6655

sandragrafrath@comcast.net

Secretary

Susan Junk - susan.kbsj@gmail.com

Treasurer

Usha Khullar

Duarte/Highway Garage Curator

Will Bolton

Directors at Large

Bill Junk & Barbara Soules

Newsletter Editor

Jason Bezis

925-962-9643 & jbezis@yahoo.com

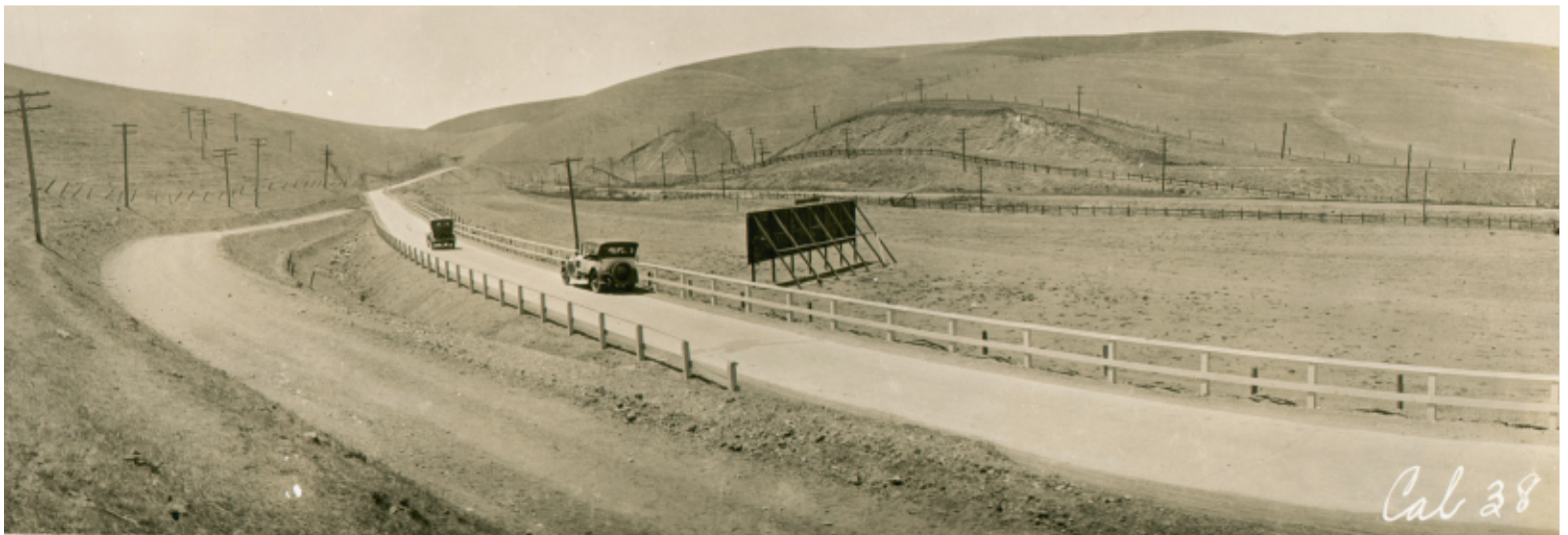
Events Calendar: AGM on Sept. 28th

Sunday, August 18th: Duarte/Lincoln Highway Garage open from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Portola Ave. at L St. Suggested donation: \$2.00

Saturday, August 31st: "American Songline" musical performance. See back cover.

Sat./Sun., Sept. 14/15th: Hoenig estate sale. Details to be announced.

Page 5 **Sat., Sept. 28th:** Annual General Meeting. See back cover.



View of Lincoln Highway in Altamont Pass, facing westerly, between Altamont town and Carroll Road, probably in 1920s. Original caption is "Alameda County, California, showing efficient construction; note old road at left."

Lincoln Highway *(Cont'd from Page 5)*

Road. It followed Dublin Canyon Road until it re-joined I-580 on Bulmer Hill, a bit east of Rowell Ranch. Two historic bridges are Lincoln Highway artifacts on this stretch of Dublin Canyon Road. [In 1933, the highway was constructed straight up Bulmer Hill, following today's Dublin Blvd. (to below Rampart Drive) and I-580.]

Construction History: First Paved Locally 1911-18

The County of Alameda and State of California first paved what became the eastern Alameda County section of the Lincoln Highway in seven projects from 1911 to 1918. Various construction contractors did the work, including Parrott Bros., Palmer & McBryde and P.H. Hoare.

In 1911-12, the County paved the Castro Valley-to-Bulmer Hill (Dublin Canyon) segment, followed in 1913 by the Bulmer Hill-to-Dublin section (both by Ransome-Crummey Co. for \$105,749 and \$78,691). In 1914-15, the State paved six miles of highway from Altamont to the San Joaquin County line [15 feet wide (just 1¼ modern freeway lanes) for \$82,404], forcing through traffic to detour to Patterson Pass Road for many weeks.

The highway was paved on the valley floor in three segments: (1) Greenville to L Street in Livermore via today's I-580/First St./Portola Ave. (built 1914-15, 15 feet wide, 4.97 miles long, for \$52,379), (2) L St. to Santa Rita (1916, 18 feet, 3.82 miles, \$68,073) and (3) Santa Rita to Dublin (1917-18, 18 feet, 3.24 miles, \$58,579 - motorists detoured through Pleasanton during construction). The Greenville-Altamont segment was paved in 1918 (15 feet, 3.68 miles, \$91,955), completing the paved surface of the Lincoln Highway in eastern Alameda County just in



The sinuous Carroll Overhead Bridge (above the S.P.R.R. tracks) was a Lincoln Highway landmark in the Altamont Pass near the intersection with Carroll Road. *Popular Mechanics* featured the engineering marvel in its June 1923 issue. Governor Friend Richardson dedicated it on February 25, 1923; his daughter-in-law christened it to "safety and service" with a champagne bottle. Southern Pacific removed its tracks beneath the bridge in 1985-86. On March 25, 1987, a Union Pacific train (three locomotives and seven empty cars) de-railed nearby and hit the viaduct. After 64 years of use, concrete was spalling, exposing its supportive rebar. These factors, along with the bridge's narrowness, made it dangerous for garbage trucks headed to and from the Altamont Landfill. The bridge was demolished in November 1988 after a bypass was built nearby on a culvert over Altamont Creek. The *Historic American Engineering Record* documented it as Survey No. CA-52.

time for visitors to Livermore's first modern rodeo that July. After these roads were paved, tanks that held sprinkling water for dust control became obsolete and were moved to

dirt roads in the area, including Arroyo Rd. (paved in 1925). The Lincoln Highway was not completely paved nationwide until a segment near North Platte, Neb. was built in 1935.

Temporary Alignment Along Today's Junction Ave.?

The State Highway was under development in 1913. The segment of Portola Ave. in front of the old Portola school was not yet in existence. The State created the portion of today's Portola Avenue from L St. to Enos Way (then called Highland Avenue, laid out in 1888) in 1915. Therefore, the Lincoln Highway possibly was first routed along today's Junction Avenue, Old First St. and Gardella Place. The State likely selected a state highway alignment along Portola Ave. because it was shorter and avoided two railroad crossings.

Creation of the Portola Ave. segment between L St. and Livermore Ave. caused destruction of a redlight district called "Mexico," notorious for criminal activity back to the early 1870s (including prostitution). Its residents were evicted in Dec. 1912 after a woman shot a male visitor late one night.

End of Lincoln Highway Era: 1930s: Four-Lane U.S. 50

The Lincoln Highway was among the first of many named highways in the United States. In 1925, the American Association of State Highway Officials (AASHO) adopted the "U.S. Highway" numbering system (U.S. 101 is the surviving example today in the Bay Area). The state highway through eastern Alameda County first was "U.S. 48," then changed to "U.S. 50" in 1931. Nevertheless, few people in Livermore referred to the highway numbers until the late 1930s. Among the most persistent myths about the Lincoln Highway is the claim that the highway was officially re-routed from the Stockton-Livermore-Oakland route to a Yolo Causeway-Solano County-Carquinez Bridge route in 1928.

The modern LHA's *Lincoln Highway Forum* editions of fall 2004, winter 2004-05 and spring 2005 examine this dispute.

The national Lincoln Highway Association disbanded on December 31, 1927. Gael S. Hoag, secretary of the defunct LHA, announced the alleged route change at a Sacramento press conference in August 1928, under questionable authority. The *Livermore Herald* emphatically disputed any contention that the highway had been re-routed. A front page article titled "Still on Lincoln Highway Route" on December 14, 1928 declared, "The Lincoln Highway is still routed through Livermore and although unofficial announcement of a change has been made it is not yet receiving recognition by the automobile touring associations."

The California State Automobile Association (CSAA) then was responsible for signage along state highways. The *Herald* wrote to the CSAA and received an answer from C.C. Cottrell, manager of the CSAA's highway bureau, "We have not been officially advised of this change, and until that is the case, it is not the intention to make any change in the map. As a matter of fact, the Lincoln Highway Association went out of existence about a year ago, and I know of no one having authority to make any such change."

Regardless, the *Herald* reported Sept. 2, 1932 that the new LHA planned to erect signs routing traffic back to the Livermore route instead of via the Carquinez toll bridge. LHA field representative F.K. Bibb of Cedar Rapids, Iowa visited the Tracy Chamber of Commerce to share the news. Furthermore, in the 1930s the *Herald* often referred to the "Lincoln Highway" (e.g. in articles about local road projects and dedication of the Robert Livermore rock monument in 1935 that stood along Portola Ave. until the early 1970s).

On August 4, 1938, California Gov. Frank Merriam opened the four-lane Livermore Pass highway through the Altamont region east of Livermore (see photo at left). Two cowgirls from Livermore, Rose Murray and Lois Mulqueaney, held the ends of a rawhide riata as the governor burned through it with a branding iron. From this point forward, locals more often called the route "Highway 50." By the early 1950s when the four-lane U.S. 50 was extended across the Valley, the "Lincoln Highway" name had faded out of use. -by Jason Bezis



Guild To Celebrate 40 Years at Annual Meeting: Sat., Sept. 28th

The Livermore Heritage Guild will commemorate its 40th anniversary at its Annual General Meeting (A.G.M.) on Saturday, September 28th.

We will show exclusive video clips of early LHG members talking about the founding days of the Guild. President Jeff Kaskey will make a presentation of the Guild's many accomplishments over the past four decades since its formation in 1973. If you have photographs of LHG events over the years that you wish to share, please contact the History Center or send digital images directly to lhg40th@gmail.com. Guild official business at the A.G.M. will include election of the 2nd Vice President (Membership Chair) and Secretary.

Tickets are available at the History Center for \$15 each. Doors will open at 5:30 p.m., dinner will be served at 6:00 p.m. and the program will begin at 7:00 pm. Please contact the History Center if you wish to volunteer.



Photo by Jason Bezgis, May 25, 2013

SIDE BY SIDE: Preservation of the Southern Pacific Depot (1892) was the LHG's first project in 1973. The community dedicated the Guild's new HistoryMobile, adorned with a steam locomotive mural, at the depot on May 25, 2013.

"American Songline" Performance on August 31st: Cece Otto of Chicago has travelled the Lincoln Highway route westward from New York City on April 13th, along the way giving performances of "American Songline," a "singing travelogue" of Lincoln Highway songs and other

music from the era when the road was created (circa 1913). On Saturday, August 31st, she will perform at the Duarte Garage/Highway Museum in Livermore. Doors open at 4:00 p.m. A Lincoln Highway marker will be dedicated at 4:30 p.m. Music is at 5:00 p.m. Suggested donation of \$5.00 at the door.

The Livermore Heritage Guild History Center is located in the historic 1911 Carnegie Library building at 2155 Third Street. History Center hours generally are Wednesday through Sunday, 11:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Phone: (925) 449-9927. Free admission.

Annual membership dues are:
 Individual \$25.00, Family \$35.00, Senior (age 62+) \$15.00, Student \$15.00, Sponsor \$75.00 and Patron \$150.00. Life (Individual) \$500.00 and Business \$300.00 memberships are also available. Please make checks payable to "LHG." Mail to P.O. Box 961, Livermore, CA 94551.

"Help Save Yesterday for Tomorrow"
LIVERMORE HERITAGE GUILD
 40th Anniversary: 1973-2013
 P.O. Box 961
 Livermore, CA 94551
 Address Service Requested

Non Profit Organization
 U.S. POSTAGE
 PAID
 LIVERMORE, CA
 PERMIT NO. 172