



A vintage 1965 Ford Mustang, part of "America's Road: The Journey of Route 66" at the National Museum of Nuclear Science and History.

DEAN HANSON/JOURNAL



The interior of a 1965 Ford Mustang.



A signpost for each state Route 66 passed through is displayed in "America's Road: The Journey of Route 66."



Exhibits technician Ryan Painter installs a guardrail for the National Museum of Nuclear Science and History.

albuquerque | exhibit

A DRIVE DOWN 'AMERICA'S ROAD'

Route 66 exhibition opens this weekend at nuclear museum

By Adrian Gomez
Arts Editor

Route 66 is an iconic piece of American history. Over the course of 90 years, it has become a symbol of American lifestyle often etched into the mind through TV shows or songs.

What was once a thriving roadway was almost derailed with the invention of the interstates.

Communities along the historic route have made an effort to preserve the history.

The latest exhibit "America's Road: The Journey of Route 66" opens Saturday, May 14, at the National Museum of Nuclear Science & History.

Jim Walther, director of the museum, says his staff has been working on acquiring the exhibit for

more than a year.

"There are stories and details in this exhibit that show how Route 66 became iconic," he says. "And this is in celebration of the 90th anniversary."

This "Main Street of America" was one of the original highways within the U.S. Highway System, running from Chicago through Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico and Arizona, ending in Santa Monica, Calif.

Walther says this special exhibition will help to celebrate the 90th anniversary of Route 66 as the major pathway for those who migrated west and the communities it helped support.

"Visitors will be transported to a time in history where the open road meant having the wind in your hair and a new adventure at every stop," he says. "This exhibit will paint a picture of this National Scenic Byway and will celebrate the communities that prospered largely due to its popularity, Albuquerque included."

The exhibit will display an original Ford Mustang as the keystone artifact alongside artifacts and photographs depicting classic Route 66 service stations, motor courts, cafes, public art installations and more.

It also provides a true historic experience to visitors from all over the world, and local community members will be able to further their knowledge of the iconic road as it plays a part in their daily lives.

"In its 90th year of existence, our

museum will celebrate the journey of Route 66 in a number of ways," Walther says. "We look forward to welcoming visitors of all ages, not only to this monumental exhibit but to a number of family events and educational activities that will take place throughout the duration of the exhibition."

Walther says Route 66 played a big part as people moved out West and took the road to get there.

"There's some nuclear history in this exhibit," he says. "People were moving to work in the nuclear field. Some stopped in New Mexico and worked for the labs. There's so much history."

Walther says additional programming will include "Movie Under the Wings," an outdoor movie event taking place on June 18, as well as a car show and other events that will be fun for the whole family.

The National Museum of Nuclear Science & History's exhibit is running in conjunction with The Albuquerque Museum's "Route 66" Radiance, Rust, and Revival on the Mother Road," which also opens on Saturday, May 14.

"Having two exhibits dedicated to Route 66 in the same city is a great opportunity to learn about the importance of the road," he says. "It's such a big draw and we have 16 miles of it in our city."

For more information on the exhibit, visit nuclearmuseum.org for more information.



A retro parking meter.



A Burma Shave sign is part of a new exhibit celebrating Route 66.



A plate on a 1965 Ford Mustang.

'America's Road: The Journey of Route 66'

WHEN: 9 a.m.-5 p.m. daily. Opens Saturday, May 14. Runs through Sept. 25

WHERE: National Museum of Nuclear Science and History, 601 Eubank SE

HOW MUCH: \$12 adults, \$10 seniors and youth ages 6-17; children under 5 are free, \$8 veterans, \$7 active military