

Pacific Highway: 1913 - 1926¹

Pacific Highway: 1913 - 1926 There were several land transportation systems before and after the official Pacific Highway in southwestern Oregon: from Indian trails to pioneer trails and wagon roads, and during the auto age from dirt and granite roads to narrow paved roads, and finally the four-lane Interstate 5 freeway. The completion of the 345 mile Pacific Highway in 1922 gave Oregon the distinction of being the first state west of the Mississippi to have a paved highway the entire length of the state. The Pacific Highway was officially dedicated the length of Oregon and Washington October 1923. It became U.S. 99 in 1926.

Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT)² Pat Solomon, Archivist, ODOT, wrote the following about Hugo's Milepost 268.

"These are concrete mile markers (for main Oregon Highways). Mile markers general ran north to south and west to east. In 1971, a Federal Highway Administration directive changed the numbering of mileposts for Pacific Highway No. 1 (I-5) to run south to north, starting at the California-Oregon State Line and ending at the Oregon-Washington State Line."

1. Hugo Neighborhood Association & Historical Society. March , 2006. *Historical Auto Camps and Service Stations, Hugo, Oregon Region*. Hugo, OR. <http://www.jeffnet.org/~hugo/autocamp.htm>.

2. Solomon, Pat, Archivist Oregon Department of Transportation, General Files/History Center. April 5, 2010 Email Communication to Mike Walker, Education Chair, Hugo Neighborhood Association & Historical Society. Salem, OR.

3. The Mail Tribune. October 7, 2007. *Since You Asked: Old Mileposts Still on Highway 99*. Mail Tribune Newsroom. Medford, OR.

4. Oregon State Highway Engineer. August 6, 1914. Letter to District Engineer, Bureau of Public Roads, Portland, Oregon.

5. Oregon State Highway Commission. December 1, 1924. *Sixth Biennial Report*. Covering Period December 1, 1922 to November 30, 1924. Pages 15 - 16. Salem, OR.

Use of Mileposts or Milestones Dates Back to Roman Times

Since You Asked³ Questions were asked to the Mail Tribune in 2007. *Can you find out what is the origin of the triangular concrete posts along Highway 99? There is one marked "286" a few hundred yards east of Savage Creek Road at the edge of the highway.*



Gary Leaming, Spokesman for ODOT, said an ODOT historian (Pat Solomon) was able to figure it out for us. "The short answer is yes, these are old mileposts from the days of U.S. Highway 99, obviously before the interstate system," Leaming wrote back. "In 1924, the State Highway Department instituted a system whereby permanent concrete mileposts were placed on state highways. "What's interesting is during the days of U.S. Highway 99, the mile markers began at the Columbia River and went south. So, milepost 286 is the number of miles from the Oregon-Washington border.

The interstate system changed that — mile markers now begin at the Oregon-California border. Thus, Medford is at exits 27 and 30, Grants Pass at exits 55 and 58. Leaming also passed on a bit of trivia:

"The practice of mileposts or 'milestones' date back to Roman times."

Interesting, the Savage Creek Road milepost in the *Since You Asked* article has the same three digits (286) as the Hugo milepost marker on Oxyoke Road (268). In ca., 1924 the Oxyoke Road Milepost was 268 miles from the Oregon and Washington border.

Pacific Highway/U.S. 99 Milepost Marker No. 268

1924 Oregon State Highway Engineer Letter⁴ "Our policy is in this regard is to erect permanent concrete mile posts on all our main state highways and our bridge and culvert numbers and maintenance operations will all be tied into a definite mileage system."

Oregon State Hwy Commission: 1922 - 1924⁵ Distance and direction signs have been placed to plainly mark the state highways.

Concrete mile posts indicating the distance from Broadway and Washington streets, Portland have been set on the entire length of the Pacific and West Side Pacific Highways. These mile posts, having been accurately set, become an interesting and informative guide to tourists as well as affording valuable aid in designating maintenance operations. Supplementing the mile posts, each bridge, culvert or other structure has been measured in and indicated on the department records with the proper decimal of the mile in which it is located.

Want more information? Contact an officer of the *Hugo Neighborhood*.



**Wayne McKy at Oxyoke Road
Pacific Highway Milepost
Marker No. 268**

Hugo Neighborhood Association & Historical Society's Mission

This information brochure is one of a series of documents published by the Hugo Neighborhood Association & Historical Society (*Hugo Neighborhood*). It is designed to be shared with neighbors for the purpose of helping protect our rural quality of life by promoting an informed citizenry in decision-making. The *Hugo Neighborhood* is an informal nonprofit charitable and educational organization with a land use and history mission of promoting the social welfare of its neighbors.

Land Use & History

The *Hugo Neighborhood's* land use mission is to promote Oregon Statewide Goal 1 — Citizen Involvement, and to preserve, protect, and enhance the livability and economic viability of its farms, forests, and rural neighbors. It will act, if requested, as a technical resource assisting neighbors to represent themselves.

Its history mission is to educate, collect, preserve, interpret, and research its local history and to encourage public interest in the history of the Hugo area.

Volunteer membership dues are \$10.00 annually per family and normally used for paper, ink, envelopes, publications and mailings. Send us your e-mail address if you want to know what we are doing.

Email: hugo@jeffnet.org

Web Page: <http://jeffnet.org/~hugo/>

Edited by Jacque Hardwick, Karen Rose & Mike Walker

Hugo Neighborhood Officers

Hal Anthony, Outreach Chair
3995 Russell Road
Grants Pass, Oregon 97526

Wayne McKy, Chair
6497 Hugo Road
Grants Pass, Oregon 97526

Mike Walker, Education Chair
3388B Merlin Rd #195
Grants Pass, Oregon 97526

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Brochure 1B of Auto Camp Series - HNA&HS 2010
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Pacific Highway Oxyoke Road Triangular Concrete Milepost No. 268: ca., 1924

Brochure 1B of Hugo's Auto Camp
Brochure Series



*Pacific Highway Oxyoke Road
Milepost: Hugo, Oregon*

April 11, 2010

**Hugo Neighborhood Association &
Historical Society**