

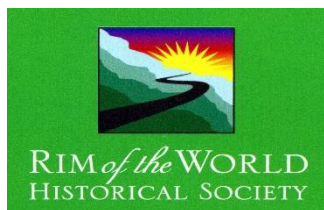
MOUNTAIN MILEPOSTS #1143

By Bill Pumford, Image from ROWHS Collection

INTRODUCTION OF AUTOMOBILES INTO THE SAN BERNARDINO MOUNTAINS

By the late 1890s a number of roads led into the San Bernardino mountains. Nearly all of the roads were toll roads that were intended primarily to transport lumber off the mountain or to transport materials up the mountain. During the period 1905 to 1913 San Bernardino County began the piecemeal purchasing of the various toll roads for future management and to provide free usage. With the popularity of the automobiles in the Inland Empire cities legislation was passed in 1902 by the county to prohibit automobiles from going into the mountains ostensibly because the sound of an automobile might frighten the animals on the steep and narrow roads. This legislation was not popular with the growing number of auto enthusiasts and in May of 1908 two automobiles started up the Arrowhead road through Waterman canyon in direct violation of the ordinance. The autos were followed by two policemen on horses who soon lost contact with the vehicles. In May of 1909 the ordinance was repealed and several automobiles tackled the summit of the San Bernardino mountains during the remainder of the year. It is generally agreed that the most significant event to promote the use of vehicles in the San Bernardino mountains took place in August of 1910 when Jack Heyser drove a car that roughly followed the later Rim of the World Drive. Jack Heyser was an automobile mechanic who used a stripped down White steamer to make the trip. The image above from the Russ Keller archives shows the vehicle ready for the trip. With Jack for the adventure were Opie Warren and George Wood. They came up Santa Ana Canyon, up the rough Calrk's Grade, through Big Bear, along the ridge to Pinecrest where they had a great feast. They then used reverse on the steam engine down the switchbacks. Trip took a little over 8 hours and was remarkable by any standard for the time.

Our Mountain History Museum located at 27176 Peninsula Drive in Lake Arrowhead is now open every weekend for the season with lots of new exhibits, activities and interactive displays. Visit us Friday 12-4 and Saturday/Sunday 10:30-4:30. Check out the website for events and additional information.



JOIN
THE RIM OF THE WORLD HISTORICAL SOCIETY.
FOR INFORMATION PLEASE CALL (909) 744-8625.
ALSO, VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT
www.mtnmuseum.org
FOR MORE EXCITING HISTORICAL INFORMATION