

## INTERVIEW WITH SKIP CURTIS

by David K. Dunaway

October 2005

Least known, least visited places in Missouri

Spencer – Johnson Creek – Devil’s Elbow

Collections of material

Tommy Pike, Missouri Route 66 Association – Jim Powell – Joe Sanderman, St. Louis (postcard collection) – Skip Curtis (oral histories, photos) – Ada Moore, Lebanon – The Sign Farm, near Raleigh

Skip Curtis collection

Photos – Oral histories on miniature cassettes, transcribed – His book, On the Your – Editing “Show me 66,” Route 66 Missouri magazine

Route 66 Association magazine, Missouri

Architectural survey

County histories

Vance Randolph, oral historian

Interviews in Missouri

Jim Powell – The state representative from Lebanon – Al Smith, Marshfield – Frank Campbell’s daughter – Ted Drewes, St. Louis – Shelly Graham, Coral Court historian – Esley Grammar, St. Louis – Red Chaney’s wife Julia – Curator, Powers Museum, Carthage – Jim Hounsel, author Bad Men of Route 66 – Construction crew

Archives in Missouri

Jim Powell – Lebanon County, Route 66 Museum – County archives – Route 66 State Park – State archives – The Massey Collection – Scott Sargent, Kansas City

Route 66 fanatics

Jane Dippel – Jim Evans, St. Clair Historical Society – John Bradbury, Phelps County – Emma Dunn, Bourbon – Larry Hogan, Highway Department – Kirk Pearce, Lebanon Daily Record – Wayne Dales, Route 66 Motors

Building a Route 66 collection

David Richards and Mark Stauter – Springfield-Greene County Public Library

DAVID DUNAWAY: What are the least known, least visited portions of Route 66 in Missouri?

SKIP CURTIS: My guess would be Spencer, Missouri. Which is kind of considered a ghost town now, and was bypassed when in about 1960 they built a new 2-lane road. It wasn't bypassed by the Interstate, it was bypassed by an improved old two-lane Route 66. And one family owned the town, and when they were bypassed; they just gradually just shut down their store, their market, their garage, their gas station.

The buildings are still there, it still has original pavement out front from 1928. And it's just an idyllic locale, it's right next to an old steel trust drive-through bridge from 1920, 21 and over it a place called Johnson Creek. Generally the way the road is marked, you just don't know how to get over there. You're traveling along pretty good, then all of a sudden you just miss it. And most people don't know how to get to it.

Another place would be Devil's Elbow, unless you know exactly how to get there you have trouble finding it. So, a lot of the folks have missed that unless they have real good directions. Were you talking about attractions? Or a just portions of the highway?

DAVID DUNAWAY: That's a very nice overview. Who besides yourself knows where there are collections of Route 66 materials?

SKIP CURTIS: It depends on what materials you want. I'd probably know about where stuff is more than others. Tommy Pike, President of the Missouri Association, might have some idea on some document stuff; but he hadn't been President that long.

The founder of Route 66 the Association, Jim Powell, lived in St. Louis all his life and just recently moved East. I have his address. He would have all the documentation and legal documents and anything pertaining to the highway, governmental issues type stuff, information, and old maps. He's a map collector, routings through different parts of not just Missouri, but the country. He's got a great deal of that.

As far as post card collectors, there's a lot of those, but then there's one guy in St. Louis that has the largest collection because I always-- anytime they get something new I get a copy of it because I collect images not the actual cards. I collect family photos, the postcards, newspaper stills.

Joe Sonderman, which I can get you involved with (he has a website which also has ways to get in touch with him) is [www.66postcards.com](http://www.66postcards.com). He has his email up on that and then I have his home address if you need that. He's got the largest postcard collection from Missouri that I know. As far as images, I have far and beyond the most images of the road, because of all the people that have collected postcards.

There's a lot that Joe doesn't have that other people do, and I've got those images, duplication of those. Plus I've got copies of everybody's family photos of all the people I've interviewed through the years.

Which would take us to oral histories, I would have the most of the oral history. No one else. They might have been one or two locally, of family, but I've got maybe 80-90 stories of the road, of which is an upcoming book. At least we've got the family names, and where they are, and this sort of thing of the different business locations in the state.

So it's kind of dispersed, but for governmental stuff and documentation that would be Jim Powell; \* and post cards would be Joe; and images and stories would be me. And I'm not sure what else, there's not a lot else left besides those categories. If you think of something, maybe I can think of who's got them.

DAVID DUNAWAY: Memorabilia?

SKIP CURTIS: Well...

DAVID DUNAWAY: Physical objects?

SKIP CURTIS: Physical objects, yeah that's a good one. Oh, I don't know who's got them. I used to know, but then she died. Ada Moore in Lebanon.

DAVID DUNAWAY: Could you spell her name?

SKIP CURTIS: A D A Moore in Lebanon, but she died about 8 or 9 years ago. Moore, she had quite a bit.

DAVID DUNAWAY: Do you know what happened to her collection?

SKIP CURTIS: Oh, no because she had a store that she sold quite a bit of this old stuff, replica stuff. I need to think on that, I don't really know anybody that has a real varied collection.

Jim Powell has some stuff, I don't know if he's added to it through the years or not. There are individual collectors that would have, this and that. Tommy Pike would help you with that because that would be--any of these collectors would be a member of this Association. And he would have the active membership list, and he would have a good feel of who's collecting stuff. Signage, outdoor signage, and gas pumps and this sort of stuff--not necessarily Missouri 66, but highway memorabilia.

There's a guy—I can't think of this name, just on the near side of Raleigh, on the other side of St. James, that has them all displayed. He's an avid collector of the gasoline memorabilia and road signs and this sort of thing.

DAVID DUNAWAY: How can I track him down?

SKIP CURTIS: Tommy Pike would know, because we've a meeting there before, once or twice, an Association meeting that's he's offered to serve lunch and let people look around. I think he calls it a sign farm.

DAVID DUNAWAY: A Sign Farm.

SKIP CURTIS: Or something. Because it's a big field you know, a cow pasture, where he's got all this stuff, so I call it a sign farm, I don't know, but I'm sure he's got a other

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\* Whose collection is housed in the Lebanon, M.O. public library.

name for it. He's an avid collector of the outdoors stuff. Now as far as—he's got maybe a couple 66 signs. The memorabilia of the road—I've got a few things, ash trays. Other people have ash trays and I've got thermometers from businesses here in the state—old motels—I've got a few things, but ah, I don't know of any one person that's got a lot that says Route 66 Missouri on it.

DAVID DUNAWAY: Maybe we could start by telling me what you've got and in what formats you have so I have a sense for your own photographic collection.

SKIP CURTIS: Two different ways. One, I have all hardcopies of the photos which are duplicates of family photos and postcards, which are high-quality, you know, like originals—original caliber, that I've used in books, you know, that type of caliber, not just a rough image.

I've got, all those catalogued and with a caption for each one of them of the history I could find out about each place--the families that lived there and years of operation and this sort of thing.

So I have all that on my captions and stuff on CDs. My images I need to scan them all; right now I don't have them done. I have them in slide format because I do give some talks here and there. Anytime you're local I'll grab 100 or 50 slides that are of that area. So we have them in slides and in hardcopy that we can scan, that I haven't scanned yet.

DAVID DUNAWAY: In jpegs?

SKIP CURTIS: Now most all of them are on hard drive. I've got on some CD, but you know I just haven't done the whole thing yet and got it in working order.

The problem I had was that I kept adding so much stuff in the last 3 or 4 years that I just felt I'd just wait until the dust settles. Well the dust settled because of my health problems and now I just haven't had the energy to go back and do it now. In my mind I've accumulated just about enough, it's time to kind of draw the line and say let's do something with what you've got and protect it.

DAVID DUNAWAY: Besides the photographic collection in various media, what form do you have the oral history that you've amassed?

SKIP CURTIS: These were just miniature cassettes. Through the years I'd just taped over some of the oral history. This is the early 90s that no one really considered so I just transcribed each of these tapes into the rough format of what they were, and then I've gone back and edited those transcriptions—typed-out transcriptions into story form, you know into readable story. So, I've got kind of the original transcript and then my story-form—my edited version of what we discussed.

DAVID DUNAWAY: Now are these mainly cassette recordings?

SKIP CURTIS: Yeah, those little mini...

DAVID DUNAWAY: They're all in the mini cassettes?

SKIP CURTIS: Some are, yeah..

DAVID DUNAWAY: And some are full-size cassettes?

SKIP CURTIS: No, no they were all just the mini cassettes—just the hand held mini cassettes. I didn't have a whole set up and a lot of the folks didn't even want to talk into the recorder. Some of the older folks said they got nervous, so we just kind of went with whatever the individual wanted. Some people enjoyed chatting and I enjoyed that and just taking notes.

And then after I transcribed the notes I would send them a copy of the transcription and have them add more thoughts or change something--names, and add stuff to it, and then we'd build it that way; just piece-meal. So a lot of it wasn't a comprehensive interview, one time. It's two or three follow-ups to get as much information as we could.

DAVID DUNAWAY: How about correspondence about Route 66, somebody asking you or you asking someone else?

SKIP CURTIS: I've got a ton of correspondence of people writing me to ask me questions, and I've kept most of that, and also any original letters that were sent to me saying I have the story or something. Word would get around that I did.

I interviewed a lot of people starting out with my first book, On the Tour. I'd find a postcard or an image and then I'd track it down, historically find out where it was and then ask around and find out if their family was still around. Once I got a family name, then I'd look them up and talk with them and everything. So word would get around and people would write me and say they'd have some other stories.

Then I became editor, on purpose of all things, editor of the quarterly magazine of the 66 Association. But my idea was that I'd use the format—I changed the magazine around to where each issue was about one county and just in Missouri, not about Arizona or anything else like it had been previously. It was a true magazine about, it was called *Show Me 66*, the "Show Me State". I did 20 or 25 issues of the ten counties, just about every county go two issues, of stories of people in those counties.

People would write into the magazine, then I'd track them down, and I would conduct the interviews. We didn't have a staff, it was the ol' staff of one that you're familiar with.

But then that correspondence I have, and I have a foot high worth of correspondence in folders of people responding to the book or to the articles saying they'd really like to get involved. And then also governmental stuff saying thank you for this, or would you come up to speak—we've got a tourism thing going on and we'd like some information—this sort of thing.

DAVID DUNAWAY: Where could I find a complete set of the quarterly magazine of the Route 66 Association Missouri?

SKIP CURTIS: Tommy Pike has one because I was historian for a while and I had the complete set and then I gave it to him. He's here in Springfield. I don't know if Tommy's there this morning or not he was there yesterday from 9-10. Tommy has a complete set—he has the archives for the Association, started out as just a Xerox, a front and back Xerox with a staple on it. He's got that whole set, keeps that current.

They did the architectural survey at two different times Missouri. They did half of it back in like '90, '91, which was a grant that the Association got with, I guess, the state and then they did it again about four years ago. I got actively involved with that I have correspondence on that. They went around and identified every structure, whether it's in business or not and then took a photograph and then tried to track down some history of it. So the whole state—well pretty much has been done and, Tommy would have all that information—Jim Powell would have the first one, but he's probably given it to Tommy now, being President of the Association. He would have copies, and I do have a copy of their complete report.

And I got actively involved in that helping them with my images because they got some before and after shots. That was a very exhaustive study of every dwelling they could identify as historic along the road.

DAVID DUNAWAY: Who sponsored that?

SKIP CURTIS: Well, the Association applied for the grant, I'm trying to think of which federal program. It's been so long ago. I've got a copy I could email you all the information on that.

Tommy and I've got a copy of their complete report. You know a listing of these buildings, and they go by the names and they track down the ownership and when they're built. It was an architectural survey, so it was the type of stone used, the type of roof line; that sort of thing.

DAVID DUNAWAY: It wasn't the State Agency?

SKIP CURTIS: It might have been the State Agency. Anyway, there is an exhaustive architectural survey of everything in the state.

DAVID DUNAWAY: We've got your photographic collection, we've got oral history which exists as mini cassettes, and then transcriptions. Are those typed transcriptions or handwritten?

SKIP CURTIS: Typed. I don't have a complete cassette of all of them because a lot of them were taped over. It was back when I didn't know that they could have been valuable in their own right.

DAVID DUNAWAY: In all this research you've done on Missouri and Route 66 you must have run into some historical societies that would have materials, county historical societies, city or town historical societies. Tell me what where the caches of material are.

SKIP CURTIS: They don't have much. What they have is just their county histories which are published in various forms. Some are very well done and others are just reminiscences of people who have tapped in and then they gathered them into county history.

The Springfield library has most of them but otherwise it's just ten counties, so the libraries in that town would have them. A lot of them don't have an active historical society. The county seat always has a library and they would have each one of the volumes. Most of the larger libraries, like in Springfield, would have a copy, Mc Clede County, Orange County, and St. Louis County. They would have most of them in one place.

There are different ways of going about it. If you have a family name then you can do the research. Or, they just have an on-going timeline history. Some other counties have a section of highways and 66 because they were really proud of it. Other counties like St. Louis could care less whether the road was there or not because they just went about their business before and after.

DAVID DUNAWAY: These are public libraries?

SKIP CURTIS: Public libraries in the county seats. In the ten county seats. But I would think that the Springfield Library and the St. Louis Library would have a copy of all the counties. If not, then each county themselves would have one. I went to each one of those and would make a Xerox of the applicable pages. Then if I wanted to research a family who owned a business then I would look in the family section. Generally, people write in with their own family histories; so you can kind of get some information from that.

DAVID DUNAWAY: You mentioned James Powell and yourself as historians of Route 66 in Missouri. Who else has information that is particularly relevant to one county or another, or the state as a whole?

SKIP CURTIS: Wherever I went there was always somebody locally that was always a good help that knew people who I could go talk with. Somebody would always have photos that I made copies of and had little brief histories. But I didn't find any go-to guy. That certainly would have made it easier.

DAVID DUNAWAY: It's you and Jim who really know where 66 materials are?

SKIP CURTIS: Jim would have correspondence, historical correspondence. He's actively sought documentation for this and that.

I've got copies of the plat(?) maps of each county on the history of Route 66 highway construction; the years that each section was done and what materials were used. It's all coded and then cipher those codes. When the improvement was done, when the extra lanes were added in each county.

Years ago I had the big D-size drawings; blueprint drawings. They always kept adding to it each time they would do something to it; in the 80s, 90s, whatever. I've got copies of all that which is road construction documentation. I got that so I would be able to say "this four-lane was added in this part of the county because that's when so and so's

business was torn down because they had to move” and that fit in with the story. I got those years off of those prints. So if you need those? That gives you the dates of road construction which is just another part of the puzzle.

Jim might have the correspondence on some local representative or Senator asking the State to do his project next. That’s the sort of stuff he’s sought and pursued and accumulated through the years.

DAVID DUNAWAY: I’d like to talk a little bit about interviews and oral histories. Who besides yourself has done oral history interviewing in Missouri?

SKIP CURTIS: In the last hundred years? Vance Randolph.

DAVID DUNAWAY: I know Vance Randolph, the folklorist. But I mean about Route 66.

SKIP CURTIS: Nobody. Except that some people, because it’s become popular now have been asking people to write in and send their stories in. Or they interviewed their Dad or Uncle and sent that story in. But no one has actively gone out and knocked on doors. I’m the only one who’s sat on someone’s front porch that wasn’t a family member.

DAVID DUNAWAY: I know where your tapes are now, but what about when somebody does interview their cousin or parents? Any idea where those tapes might be?

SKIP CURTIS: They would just be in somebody’s drawer. Generally I have never heard those because those would be the ones they would type up themselves and send in to a magazine or in to me personally and see if I’m interested in including it somewhere. A lot of the younger generation are interested in having something in print. A lot of them could care less.

We’re losing so many of the people that were actually on the road. I’m saying your mom or dad’s story needs to be told. You dig through your stuff and find any letters or anything that pertains to their business, stubs, purchase orders of gasoline, or photos, we can make copies of everything. I’ll work with you and we’ll put together the story. They’re all agreeable to doing that.

DAVID DUNAWAY: If you had to choose five people to talk to about Route 66 in Missouri, to do interviews with, who would they be?

SKIP CURTIS: You mean that are alive now? Do you mean to learn more about the road, or just to get the stories I haven’t accumulated yet?

DAVID DUNAWAY: To learn more about the road. Even amongst the people you’ve interviewed who are still with us. If you had to set a priority for oral history interviewing in Missouri, who would you put on your list?

SKIP CURTIS: You need to have Jim Powell because he’s got the overview of the road and he’s heard a lot of second-hand stories.

DAVID DUNAWAY: I'm thinking about all the parts.

SKIP CURTIS: I never have gotten too much in the governmental aspect of it. What's his name from Lebanon who was a Representative for 20 years. I'll think of his name here in a minute. He's retired now.

He was actively involved with getting 66 declared an historic highway here in the State. I've always kind of been interested in politics and that would be a good interview to get the political side of the road, not from the 20s, but from the 90s when everybody started to help in the preservation aspect of it. I'll get his name for you. I assume he's still living in Lebanon. Now that's on the political side.

I can't think of any others. It sounds kind of silly. If you just want stories of the road, Al Smith. His family has been in the trucking business for years and years.

DAVID DUNAWAY: Where's he?

SKIP CURTIS: Al lives in Marshfield.

Speaking of trucking, if she would not bullshit and lie to you, <can't make out> Campbell, or whatever her name is now. A daughter of Frank Campbell. Campbell 66 <can't make out>.

Frank was a good friend of my father's, but he's passed on. He died in the 80s. I think my Dad was his attorney for awhile. She's still around. She's out of jail now. She's never told her family's story.

A lot of other people have written some articles on the Campbell's 66—I haven't, even though they were a station here. I wasn't able to get with her. If I was going to write one, I would do it with her because Campbell's 66 was probably the best known trucking line in the 40s, 50s, and 60s. If for no other reason, not because it was the largest, just because of old Snortin' Nortin on the side. Which is a big collectible now. The trailers, wherever they happened to be located everybody kind of did a —Snortin' Nortin "sighting".

She lives here. She has another name, but I could get you in touch with her. Someday I would like to interview her, but I don't know if she would ever want to talk about it or not.

DAVID DUNAWAY: Who else? Maybe even people you've already interviewed who are still alive.

SKIP CURTIS: Just for merchandising—I've always been interested in merchandising, you know, marketing. That would be Ted Drewes. His Dad started that back in the 20s. He's a talker. He's seen people from everywhere come to his window and get a <can't make out> or frozen custard. I've interviewed him; he's always an excellent interview. Except he's getting a little older now.

DAVID DUNAWAY: Anyone else from St. Louis? Talk about that St. Louis experience.

SKIP CURTIS: Coral Court is gone and there's not any one person. Shelly Graham has a pictorial history of the Coral Court and has written a little snippet book. She accumulated some stories. That's a famous place as far as nation-wide everybody's heard of it.

Esley Grammer with the county is a member of the Association. He works for the county and he's familiar with St. Louis County Route 66. I can track him down for you.

DAVID DUNAWAY: How about here in town?

SKIP CURTIS: The problem with ST. Louis is nobody cared, and in Springfield nobody cared about the road itself—government people, people in power--just the people who owned the businesses. Nobody really had a big overview, they just knew what they were doing. That's why it's really difficult to have a list of people other than just characters.

In town, just about everybody's died. Red Chaney's died from Red's, the first drive-up window. The first neon sign that set the standard for Holiday Inn, was Hillary Brightwell. He passed on along with his wife. Red's wife, Julia, is still alive; she's 92. She's got memorabilia of Red's that she's selling to some guy, he's buying the name, he's going to try to replicate the chili (?).

Julia lives here in town with a woman who takes care of her. Tommy's going to interview her. I've done a couple stories on Red's. Speaking of a good storyteller, we just lost one two years ago. Bruce Debo (?), there in Devil's Elbow.

DAVID DUNAWAY: How about that Carthage, Web City, Joplin area? Who really needs to be interviewed out there?

SKIP CURTIS: The only person other than Brad, who would give you a lot of other names, I can't remember her name, but he would give it to anyway. She's the curator at the Powers Museum here in Carthage. Her hobby is collecting Route 66 stuff, but she has a lot of newspaper memorabilia and articles of that area down there. Her name is Michele somebody. If you make a little wish-list I can send you everybody, because I have everybody's phone numbers and addresses.

DAVID DUNAWAY: That will be valuable.

SKIP CURTIS: She knows quite a bit about the Carthage area. The Joplin area Brad would know. If there's anybody down there. I've never talked to anybody who knew very much about it except for individual owners.

Then the patrolmen down there. There was this guy that's written a book on the bad men of Route 66 in the Joplin Carthage area.

DAVID DUNAWAY: Who's that?

SKIP CURTIS: Jim Hounsel. He's published a book called *Bad Men of Route 66*. Going back to Bonnie and Clyde and also guys in the 60s and 70s that did crimes along the road. Kidnappings and killings. I've used one or two excerpts from his book.

DAVID DUNAWAY: Is there anybody left who remembers the building of Route 66 in Missouri?

SKIP CURTIS: There's a couple people who worked on it when they were kids.

DAVID DUNAWAY: Who were they?

SKIP CURTIS: I'd have to dig through my file; I don't know them right off. I never did a story on that. Except just in passing to mention when "Johnny so-and-so was a kid he was a water boy".

DAVID DUNAWAY: I'd love those names.

SKIP CURTIS: I will see if I can find anything on that. I can find them; I'm sure they're still around. I know a lot of people, when they were kids, would go down to watch the building of the road.

DAVID DUNAWAY: That would be useful.

SKIP CURTIS: I know a few people. Their dads didn't work on it but they would go down to the construction site. They would sell pop to the workers. I've got a few of those guys.

DAVID DUNAWAY: Where are the major archives, other than yourself, on Route 66?

SKIP CURTIS: By-the-way, every name of anybody I've ever interviewed or had a contact with; I've got all their names and numbers. I don't know how current they are, but I've got a big list of contacts—that, I maintain. I might have taped over an interview, but I kept the name and phone number.

DAVID DUNAWAY: We've mentioned the private collections of you and Jim. Where are the archives in Missouri that have the most stuff on Route 66?

SKIP CURTIS: Jim would have that in his own private archives. Some of the counties are starting to get, like Lebanon and <can't make out> County are starting to come up with their own Route 66 segments of libraries. They've got quite a bit of stuff in Lebanon—memorabilia in their new library. They called it Route 66 Museum. They have quite a bit.

As far as the governmental archives, I doubt they have much of that. I would think that Jim would have the majority of that in one place. The rest of it you would have to go through County archives.

DAVID DUNAWAY: So there's no big Library?

SKIP CURTIS: For instance we don't have a museum perse, state-wide here. It's just like little county deals. The closest thing we have is maybe up at <can't make out> they've

got a lot of memorabilia up there of the Route 66 State Park. They've got some stuff there. They would have access, since they're state owned, to anything, I would guess, that they wanted from the State archives, if they knew what to ask for because they are the State.

DAVID DUNAWAY: Do you think there is material in the State archives of Route 66?

SKIP CURTIS: There's got to be. It was commissioned and I've got a court document, a copy of a document of incorporation of the U.S. 66 Highway Association that was done in 1927. John Woodruff, in Springfield, was the first President of that. He and Avery set that up. That incorporated each state, but I've got the incorporation papers for Missouri. Then Missouri would have to have that somewhere. You would have to know what to ask for. I don't think there's any one person that could be a clearing house.

Speaking of the State archives, they do have and I have gone through a photographic collection by Massey, a photographer, aerial photographer mostly back in the 40s and 50s. He traveled in an airplane over the whole state and he's got all these images. A lot of them are of the road construction. He has his own collection, "The Massey Collection" that's up in Jeff City that I've gone through and made copies of some of the images. I didn't make that many, I just made a few.

Scott Simpson, a buddy of mine, lives in Kansas City, up in Lee's Summit. He's a collector of images, postcards, memorabilia, and matchbooks. Scott has a lot of stuff. His collection of postcards isn't quite as big as Joe's, but he's got stuff that Joe doesn't have. He likes the real photo postcards; I do too. He'll pay 60, 80 bucks for one if it he doesn't have an image of it. I can't wait to see his bidding on Ebay and I'll call and say "hey Scott I'll be up tomorrow". Or he sends it down to me and says "hey did you see what I got the other day?"

He went over about five years ago and I gave him the print-out list of what they have in that collection and they'll make copies for you for a buck or two. He just had a copy of everything made. So he's got a whole set in 8x10s.

DAVID DUNAWAY: Of the Massey Collection?

SKIP CURTIS: Of the Massey Collection pertaining to Route 66 highway construction. They have it catalogued pretty good from the 30s to the 60s. That's a nice photographic collection.

DAVID DUNAWAY: Are there any other photographic collections you know of?

SKIP CURTIS: No, I just forgot about that one. If I keep thinking I end up with something. I think he was the only one that I have used. I'm always looking for any photo images because people enjoy those more and it makes any story you're telling more interesting. That's the only person I think I've found that had his own personal collection.

DAVID DUNAWAY: Who are the Route 66 fanatics, the ones who live and breathe it?

SKIP CURTIS: Tommy would give you a couple. There's two or three in the Association that I don't know that well, some of the younger kids. Jane Dippel who I got Tom Carter to interview for this series has traveled the length of the road 13 times. She's goes once or twice a year and takes her grandkid or her neighbor. She enjoys seeing it through someone else's eyes. So she's got a lot of recollection of the road. I would call that a fanatic. I think she would qualify.

Then there's a couple of these younger kids whose e-mail lists I have somehow gotten on and they're always sending stuff back and forth. They send current photographs of bridges being torn down or signs being torn down. They're actively involved in what's happening right now. They don't have much of a collection of any one thing, but they're avid seekers, if you want some enthusiasm. They're young kids too, 30ish.

DAVID DUNAWAY: I'm looking over the acknowledgements in your Missouri Route 66 Guidebook, and I see a Jim Evans and Scott Sargent...

SKIP CURTIS: Oh not Scott Simpson, I was thinking of Adele Simpson. It's Scott Sargent.

DAVID DUNAWAY: I also see Vernon Starks.

SKIP CURTIS: Vernon has passed away now.

DAVID DUNAWAY: And Jim Evans of the St. Clair Historical Society? Do they have any materials?

SKIP CURTIS: St. Claire Historical Society has quite a bit of images for Crawford County; that whole county. They've got a nice little collection. Once and a while they will publish a set of reproduction cards. I think they have five sets or so. Jim was the photographer who captured those images. Jim just takes the images and works with the guy who runs the historical society up there. I can get you his name, the curator of the Historical Society in St. Claire. They have a nice collection of Crawford County images.

DAVID DUNAWAY: No oral history?

SKIP CURTIS: They might have some now; I don't know how actively they have gotten into it now. They gave me the names of locals to interview years ago and I went out and interviewed them. I don't think that they've done that. They keep adding. It's been four or five years since I have been to their museum so I don't know if they have added a lot of stuff or not. They did a nice job, it's a cute little museum.

DAVID DUNAWAY: Is there anybody who has an attic full of materials?

SKIP CURTIS: John Bradbury—they've got a lot of stuff. John and Mark's daughter who are both part of the association. Their western historical manuscript stuff has got a

lot of stuff. People have sent stuff to them. A lot of it pertains to 66. It's not just all trains and planes and things, there's quite a bit of 66 memorabilia.

If I find something for Phelps County, then I take it up to them and they make a copy of it, and when they get something I do the same. We've been exchanging images for ten years. They would have letters and family writings and this sort of thing. It doesn't sound like a western historical manuscript collection. They have quite a bit of Route 66 stuff. They have the family stuff that families have given them. I'm sure they've hoarded stuff and haven't told me about it.

Emma Dunn; I think she's still alive there in Bourbon. I've published a couple of her articles. She's had talked to people and got true stories there locally. I don't know who all she interviewed. One was about the Bourbon water tower; she has the dates on that. Larry Hagar, at the Highway Department, is who I got the maps from; the copies. They've got a little bit of stuff out here in the library in Springfield.

Kirk Pearce, he's one of the editors of the newspaper there in Lebanon; the *Lebanon Daily Record*. He's got file articles from newspaper's archives on some of the little towns. Hazlegreen and some of these other towns.

I tried to get newspaper archives from all over the place and no one could track them down, but they have quite a bit there in Lebanon for Mc Clede (?) County.

As far as who we've interviewed, Wayne Dales at Route 66 motors, which is vintage cars and a Route 66 gift shop. He's got some memorabilia. He's a charter member of the Association and had been actively involved in it for years; he hasn't been lately. He knows quite a bit of the old folks around the Raleigh area.

He's a good interview pertaining to foreign travelers. They all stopped there because it's a vintage car and motorcycle gallery. He's always talking with them. If you ever need a feel for foreign travel—he'd be the one. More people stop at his place than any other place because you can see it, #1, and you might not know it's there and then you see all these old cars and you pull in. He's got Route 66 signs. So for foreign travel, the impact and how extensive it is, he would be the one to interview of anybody I know.

DAVID DUNAWAY: Thank you very much for giving this overview of materials. What I'll do is let you be thinking about this and then I'll send you a letter.

SKIP CURTIS: Give me a little wish-list on what we did and then I'll send you addresses and phone numbers as current as I've got.

DAVID DUNAWAY: What were really looking towards is trying to build a collection of materials for Missouri on Route 66. I think the current thinking is that it's going to be David Richards here at this University and it's going to be Mark Stodder (?) at UM Raleigh. They're going to share collections. The idea is that if someone wants to do work on Route 66 in Missouri they will be able to find some materials. Do you think you would be interested in working with them, such as Dave Richards and eventually when you don't have use for them anymore, passing the materials to the University here?

SKIP CURTIS: I've thought about that. Right now since I had throat cancer and now lung cancer of all things, you start thinking about all this shit you've got laying around and what you're going to do with it.

The library center will get all of my entire collection; I've already talked with them. They've already got a lot of stuff online.

DAVID DUNAWAY: That's the Springfield Green County Public Library?

SKIP CURTIS: The library center outside of town. They've got different grants and they're expanding and all their materials will eventually be accessible online. They've already got that started. The historical center here doesn't have that and they keep changing curators and I don't trust them right now. Someday I might. My mother was a charter member of that when it was created. Right now that's where everything will go.

If this was assured of what the future and purpose of it was going to be, I would certainly talk with anybody about that. This is the only place I know that someday in the next 5-10 years it would be accessible. Other than that it would just be in boxes somewhere. That's why I selected them. It's the only place where it is a progressing work.

If there was a Route 66 museum that the Association and State were involved in and I knew who was running it and the funding of it and knew it was going to last and what type of facilities they were going to have, then that would be a natural place for it. I'm just concerned about what the purpose of it's going to be and how accessible it's going to be and if it's going to be protected. It sounds like you're approaching it as to be a State-wide archives of the road.

DAVID DUNAWAY: I'll be sure to have Mark Stodder or Dave Richards contact you and describe what their plans are.