

Preserving the Last of Camp Joy



Approved
Continuing
Education



Gary Sosniecki

Missouri Preservation
Conference
September 14, 2026

Learning Units 1.25 LU

AIA Session # mp26-09

AIA CES Provided by Missouri Preservation #G555

Provider can be reached at conference@preservemo.org

Preserving the Last of Camp Joy



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Col. A.T. Nelson's
Top O' The
Ozarks Camp



NELSON PARK AND COTTAGES, JUNCTION U. S. HIGHWAY No. 66 AND STATE HIGHWAY No. 5, LEBANON, MO.



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Preservin

Bonnie and Clyde



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Emis and Lois Spears



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Lida
and Charles
Spears



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June 22, 1927

The Laclede County Republican

NEW TOURIST CAMP

Mr. and Mrs. C. E. Spears and son, Emmons Spears, and wife, formerly of Nebraska City, Nebraska, recently located in Lebanon, Mr. Spears buying the Lippincott place with the intention of establishing a tourist camp. The family temporarily is located in the store building on the Chubb place, while getting their camp in shape.

Mr. Spears and family traveled 6,000 miles and inspected 500 tourists' camps, visiting six or seven States during the course of the trip, looking for a location. They consider the Lippincott place superior to any other location seen during their extended trip, and are finding it ideal for a camp. They will build a number of cottages and install every camp comfort and convenience.

The place comprises twenty-six acres and has a frontage of 417 feet on Highway 66, The "Main Street" of America. The consideration was \$4,000.

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Charles and Joy



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Emis and Joy



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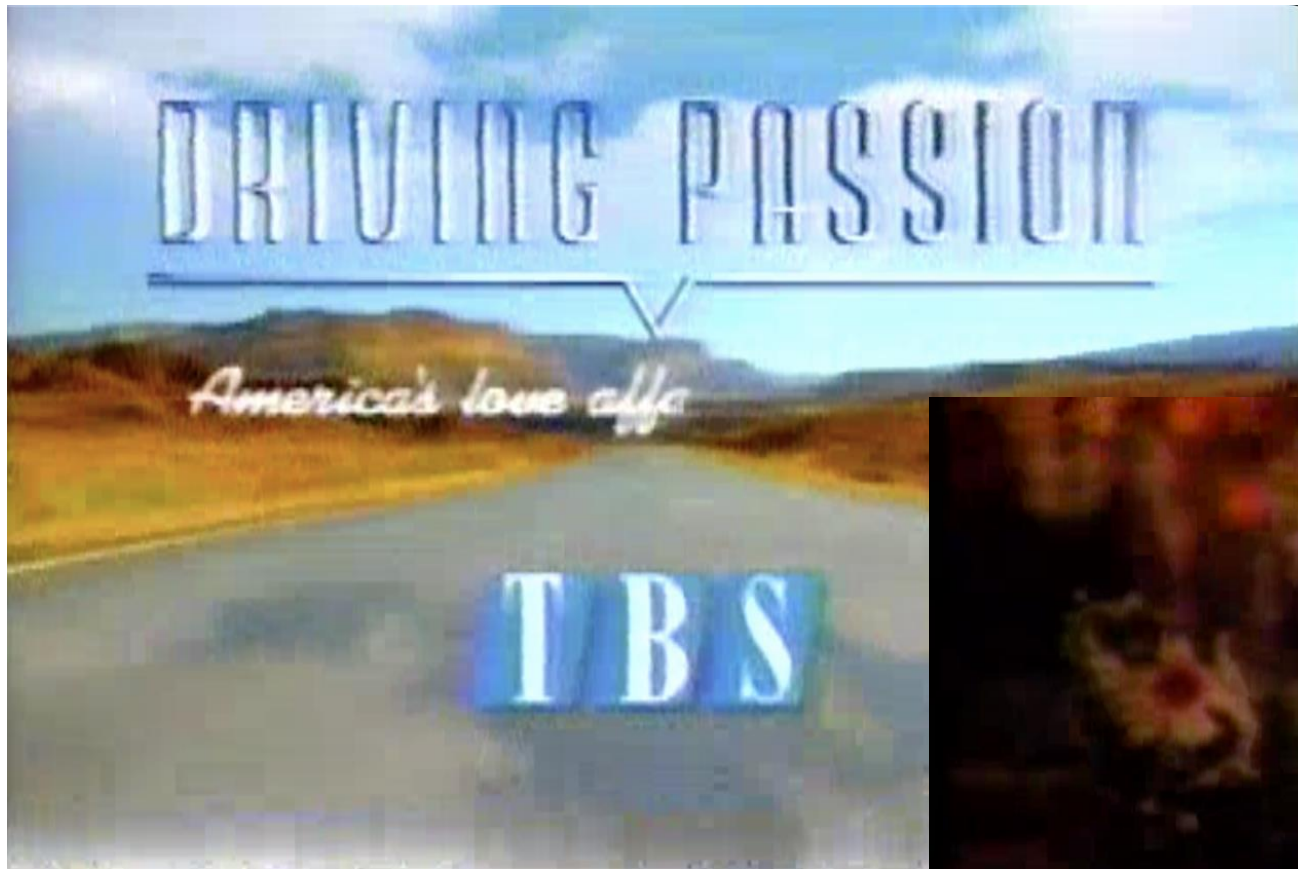
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Joy Fishel



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Cabins at Camp Joy around 1950.

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CAMP JOY

LEBANON MISSOURI

3 Blocks East of Junction Mo. 5 On U. S. Hy. 66

Sinclair Service Station

CLEAN COTTAGES & DRIVEINS

WELL EQUIPED FOR SUMMER OR WINTER

Fine Tenting Space

Lots of Shade

Electric Lights

Groceries

City Water

Tell Your Friends About **CAMP JOY** C. E. Spears & Son Mgrs.

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GUEST REGISTER CARD

CAMP JOY

Lebanon, Mo.

Date 194

No. in Party Cottage No. Rate

We Are Not Responsible For Accidents, Fire or Theft

Name

Address

Town

Make of Car Model License

Guests Must Register Correctly As The Law Requires

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JOY MOTEL

MODERN UNITS — OPEN ALL YEAR

ON CITY ROUTE 66

LEBANON, MISSOURI

TELEPHONE 532-3491
AREA CODE 417

E. G. & LOIS SPEARS
OWNERS AND MANAGERS

Preserving the Last of Camp Joy



Joy Spears Fishel and her children in front of the Camp Joy office.

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Charles "Carlie" Spears with Sharon and Craig Fishel, September 1951.

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From left:
Bill Jones
Bruce Owen
Lee Sing



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Craig Fishel
and Lee Sing



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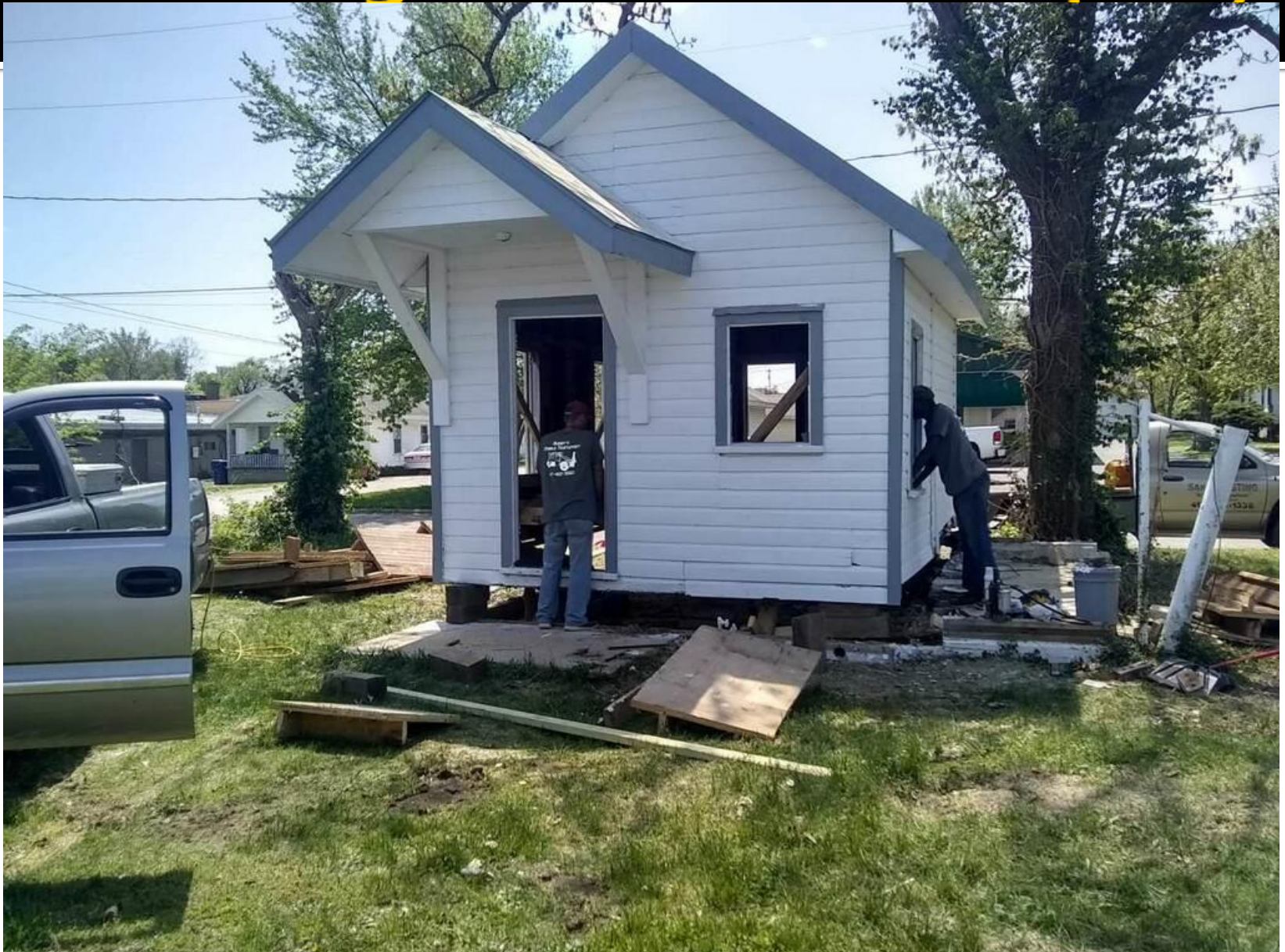
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Camp Joy

Lebanon Missouri

Camp Joy on Route 66 was started in 1927 by Lee and Lada Spears with the help of their son and his wife Lois. In 1927, the Spears traveled Route 66 from Atlanta eastward looking for a good place to establish a tourist camp.

Counting out-of-state cars at various points along the way they finally chose Lebanon. Camp Joy began as a tent camp, with fees set at 50 cents per night.

Tents were soon replaced by 10' x 42' frame cabins, furnished with a double bed, wall-mounted folding table, 2 straight back chairs, kerosene cook stove, and a wood-burning pot-bellied stove for heat.

These early cabins cost \$1.00 to \$1.50 per night. Arranged in a park-like setting.

The cabins surrounded a central bathroom, store, and service station.

Over the years cabins were modernized, with parking garages adjoining some. When vehicles outgrew these garages, they too were remodeled, providing extra lodging units.

After World War II, during the golden years of travel on Route 66, Camp Joy was renamed "Joy Motel." In 2019, the last existing cabin was donated by Lee Sing to the Lebanon-Laclede County Route 66 Society, which restored it and, with the help of the City of Lebanon, moved it to Boswell Park.



www.LebanonRoute66.com



DEDICATION JUNE 15, 2019

Special thanks to:

Lebanon-Laclede County Route 66 Society,
City of Lebanon, Lee Sing, Bruce Owen,
Owen Sandblasting LLC, Craig Fishel Family, Ivey Roofing,
Denny Rhoades Drywall, RP Lumber, Sherwin Williams,
Crow Paint, Meeks Lumber, Starnes Auto LLC
& all those who contributed to this project.

Signage Donated by Fishel Family 2019



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Route 66
Society
Repainting
Camp Joy
2024



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*Merry
Christmas*

*from the
Lebanon-Laclede County
Route 66 Society*



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Adventure
Lodge on
Route 66
(former
White Sands
Motel)



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Top o' the
Ozarks

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LEBANON-LACLEDE COUNTY ROUTE 66 SOCIETY

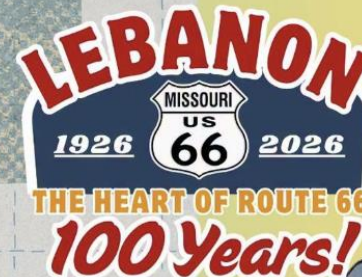
A FILM BY JOHN PAGET

**FREE ADMISSION!
NO TICKET REQUIRED!**

**MONDAY
SEPTEMBER 14TH**

**SHOWTIME
6:30PM
COWAN CIVIC
CENTER THEATER**

**Q&A TO FOLLOW
WITH
JOHN PAGET
& GUESTS**



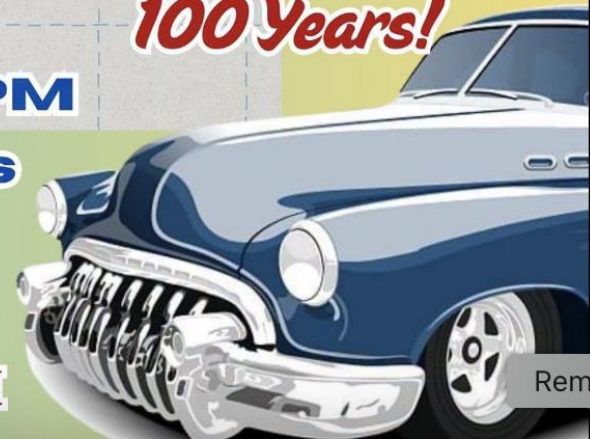
COME EARLY 3PM-6:30PM

CLASSIC CARS & FOOD TRUCKS

ROUTE 66 MERCH AVAILABLE

COWAN CIVIC CENTER X-HALL

WWW.LEBANONROUTE66.COM



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