



Journey down the Great River Road during Hosmer-Williams Lecture Series at Farley's Music Hall in Elsah

November 6 2017 1:43 PM



ELSAH - Take a journey along the Great River Road with local businessman, re-enactor, and lecturer Scott Adams during the Hosmer-Williams Lecture Series at Farley's Music Hall, Elsah, IL, Thursday, Nov. 16 starting at 7:30 p.m. Adams will describe the history and natural beauty involved in the local completion of the Great River Road.

The lecture is the last of the Hosmer-Williams Lecture Series for 2017, described often as the area's preeminent free lecture program. The Series is presented by Historic Elmhurst Foundation and sponsored by Liberty Bank, Godfrey, Illinois.

Certain sections of the Great River Road, over 2,000 miles long, have national scenic byway status, including a 33-mile segment from Hartford to Grafton, Illinois. Plans for a national road along the Mississippi River go back to the late 1930s but were interrupted and postponed by World War II. Those plans were revived in 1949 when Congress approved a feasibility study. Because it was deemed too expensive to build an entirely new parkway, it was recommended instead that the project be designated a scenic route.

The proposed scenic route would consist of existing riverside roads, and new construction and would be limited to connecting the existing roads so that a continuous route could be developed. The existing roads would be upgraded to parkway quality. The modified approach would save a great deal of land acquisition and new construction costs. Another consideration was that some of the most scenic locations along the river had already been preempted by existing highways, railroads, and towns and cities.

On completion, the Great River Road changed travel dramatically in the region. Once travel between Alton and Grafton was a choice between rail or steamboat. No longer. Scott Adams' lecture will provide dramatic and graphic insights into the closing days of this project, and its dedication in September 1965.

The Hosmer-Williams lectures are free and open to the public. Reservations are not required. Parking is plentiful and nearby. Refreshments will be served following the lecture.