

Reminiscence

On The Road In 1949



The fabled '38 Olds that Walter Walker, Skip Powers, and Harold Crane repaired in the basement shop of Andover High School and then drove 15,000 miles around the USA in the summer of 1949. Photos: Walter Walker

By Walter Walker
Andover High School '49

Walter Walker accompanied Harold Crane and Skip Powers on an epic summer trip around the United States in 1949. He writes:

My great uncle, a wise old man by the name of Jerome Hoyt, gave each of us a diary in which, he hoped, we would record our trip. It is from mine that I am able to record the following:

We graduated on the 16th of June, 1949, and at 8:20 AM on the 20th of June, with less than thirty dollars cash in each of our pockets, we headed for New York. My diary shows we made 339 miles the first day at an average speed of 34 mph!

The second day, we made it to James Roberts' (remember the store he ran in East Andover for many years?) where he and his wife were very good to us, as were all the people we ran into along our way. Costs were always on our minds, and I noted how we stopped to swim in a "mud hole" before reaching "Doc" Roberts' and how we had to shell out 40¢ apiece to swim in it!

The third day, June 22, we finally got work. First we worked at a nearby farm from 9 AM until 5 PM, then at a pea canning factory from 7 PM to 12:30 AM. "Gad, what a day!" says my diary.

On the fourth day, we worked from 7:30 AM to 6:30 PM at the pea factory. We got three meals at the plant cafeteria, and I describe a great evening meal – all I could eat and drink for only 55¢. But we got laid off that day.

On the fifth day, we went back to

work at the farm and spent 10 hours there. In the evening we went to Batavia and saw our first TV. After a lot of talk with an elderly barber who had no idea what a crew cut was, we all got them before leaving New York.

On July 1, we got our checks from the pea factory: \$70.58 for each of us;



They each earned \$42 for two days of work at this New York farm – then saw a TV set for the first time ever that evening.

and checks from the farm: \$42 apiece. On Saturday, July 2, we headed for Canada; from there we entered Michigan, then Ohio, then Indiana, all on the same day.

We hear a growl in the '38 Olds' transmission but cannot locate it. Trouble ahead?

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Birthday Party Benefits Andover Food Pantry

For her fifth birthday, Emma Pine asked her friends to bring food for the Andover Food Pantry instead of presents. As you can see from the photo, her friends responded in a big way.

Emma also plans to grow food in the family garden for the food pantry.

Staff photo: Charlie Darling



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