History
“We are always yapping about the ‘Good Old Days’ and how we look away back and enjoy it, but I tell you there is a lot of hooey to it.”

– Will Rogers
The Teens

• **First Commission Created**
  ✓ No Highway Department
  ✓ No Highway System

• **3,600 Vehicles - $72,000 Total Budget**

• **36,000 Miles of Public Roads**
The Twenties

- Highway System Created
- Highway Department Created
- First Gas Tax – 1 cent per gallon
- 200,000 Vehicles/8,800 highway miles (1,400 Paved)
- Highway Commission Structure Changed Twice
The Thirties

- Gas Tax Raised to 6.5 cents per Gallon
- 1960’s Before Next Increase
- 255,000 Vehicles; 9,300 Highway miles (3,000 Paved)
- Commission Structure Changed Two More Times
The Forties

Dillard’s Ferry, a hand-cranked operation, crossed the Buffalo River at Highway 14 from 1929-1958.

• World War II – Major Influence

• 455,000 Vehicles; 9,700 Highway Miles (4,900 Paved)

• Commission Structure Changed Two More Times

• Too much Political Influence on Highways – Growing Discontent

Operation of the Henderson Ferry at Norfork Lake cost $117,981 for 1947-48. During this period 189,856 vehicles were ferried over at an average cost of 62¢ per vehicle.
The Fifties

1951 - Highway Audit Commission Report

- "the advice, counsel and expert know-how which is available from the Department’s own technical and administrative staffs bear scant weight indeed when they are in conflict with the political pressures and political promises of the moment."

Interstate Era

- 750,000 Vehicles
- 11,000 Miles State Highways (8,800 Paved)

9 Legislative Acts Restructured Commission since 1913

1952 – Mack Blackwell Amendment

Widening Hwy 67 near Malvern, 1956
The Sixties

- No changes to Commission Structure
- Arkansas - National Forefront in Interstate Construction/Completion
- Legislature transferred 3,400 miles of County Roads to Highway System
- 1.1 million Vehicles; 14,500 Highway Miles (13,000 Paved)
The Seventies

- Department became Debt Free
- Legislature transferred nearly 1,000 more miles of County Roads to Highway System
- Department adds “Transportation” to its name – Authority Expanded
- 1st State to Complete its Interstate System (1975)
- 1.7 million Vehicles; 16,000 Highway Miles (15,000 Paved)
The Eighties

- 1985 – Rural Road Program – out of the mud
- Early Retirements – huge workforce turnover
- 2.0 million Vehicles; 16,200 Highway Miles

East-West Arterial linking Hwy 270 W and Hwy 70 W in Hot Springs.

Transportation Safety Agency, 1989

The Nineties

- 1991 – Highway Improvement Program
- 1993 – Last Federal Gas Tax Increase
- 1999 – Last State Gas Tax Increase
- 1999 – Interstate Rehabilitation Program – First Highway Bond Issue in 50 years
  - I-540 (now I-49) and I-530 Completed
  - 2.1 million Vehicles; 16,400 Highway Miles
Winter Weather in Dec 2000 and Jan 2001 cost almost $40 M.

- 2011 – 2nd Interstate Rehabilitation Program
- 2012 – Connecting Arkansas Program
- Governor’s Working Group on Highway Funding
- 3.0 million Vehicles; 16,400 miles State Highways

New White River Bridge on Hwy 64 at Augusta opened in 2001.
• ArkansasHighways.com
• ConnectingArkansasProgram.com
• Vimeo.com/AHTD
• IDriveArkansas.com
• Twitter.com @AHTD
Questions?