

231108 BRA US 92 St Pete to Daytona Beach

The United States has an interstate network of highways which everyone is familiar with. What most have forgotten about is that there are US highways as well. These predated the interstate system. The most famous of these is US 66. It's amazing to remember that US 66 was built in our lifetime and was the first road system that connected the west coast of the United States with its central cities like Chicago. This trip will look at that highway experience and trace its path from St Petersburg where we are starting from Tuesday to Daytona Beach Florida using US Route 92. Also US92 is the only US highway that starts and ends in the same state. This is logical because prior to the interstate system the federal government would not have wanted to build a US highway within the same state. That would've been the prerogative of the state. But for some reason, this one violates that criteria.



US 92 - Wegenwiki

Leaving St Petersburg we take several avenues and the streets which encompass US 92. Also, there is a stretch within Tampa

where interstate 4 is US Route 92. Other than that we will try to trace the highway from St Petersburg to Daytona Beach.

Driving along US 92, which parallels interstate 4, reminds you why the majority of traffic no longer takes these routes. It was not too long ago, in fact, well within our lifetime, that the phenomenon of a US highway was born. Route 66 connected Chicago with Los Angeles. There were no contiguous highways in the United States. Until that highway, which was made famous by song and lyric came along there was no single road that Americans could take if they wanted to travel across the country and not leave the same route.

What you find initially coming out of Tampa is a double lane highway with 45-55 mile an hour speed limits that goes through small towns and has traffic lights right along its path.



This is also where a great amount of the fresh strawberries come from that are sold in the United States. This part of Florida is famous for that. It's season is starting in February. You can come with the family and pick fresh strawberries to your hearts content.

U-Pick Strawberry Farms in Plant City + Central Florida

U-Pick Farms + Farmers Markets,
Easter + Spring, Outdoor Fun /
January 6, 2023



Plant City FL is a quaint small town which if you have time to visit looks pretty interesting. There is a historic downtown area which is compact. Driving through the town you can see some of the old historic homes which are well preserved. Plant city is world, famous for its agricultural output. The most famous for this part of Florida is its strawberries, which has been mentioned. But the other thing that was grown in this part of Florida, which at one time was, a national cash crop was celery.



Publix supermarkets is famous in Florida and has expanded in other states in the southeast. It is an employee owned supermarket chain and markets itself toward the upper end of the supermarket price range. In Lakeland, you will find its corporate headquarters. It is a familiar site

to almost anyone that lives or works in the state of Florida. It was started by an employee who worked for Piggly Wiggly food chain, another supermarket corporation. He was dissatisfied with Piggly Wiggly and its customer service and food quality approach. He started his own supermarket and focused on these two services, and the rest is history.



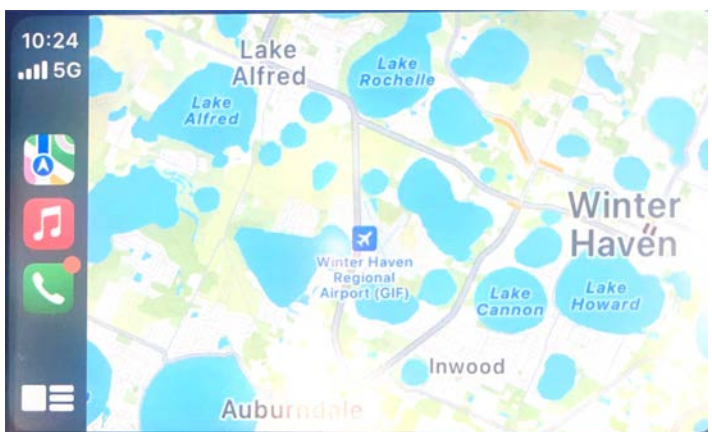
Central Florida is known for its many lakes. It's amazing when you look at a map just how many there are. Anyone that's from the north central part of the United States, or it's southern Canadian counterpart, knows what the glacial area looks like. This part of the United States is scattered with small lakes, which were created by the glaciers.

Florida has the same topography, but was never subject to glaciers. Florida's lakes are created because underneath Florida there is an extensive aquifer system.



The Floridan aquifer system underlies portions of five states. Source: USGS

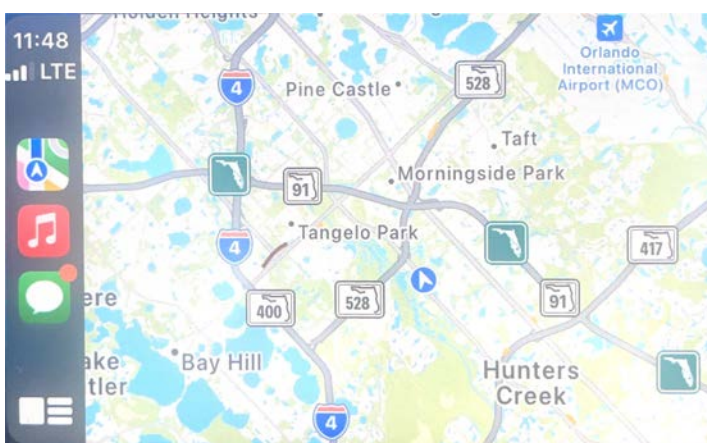
This aquifer starts in southern Georgia at the Okefenokee swamp and flows underground all the way to the Everglades at the tip of the peninsula. It then flows back north as the St. John's river and dumps into the Atlantic at Jacksonville. But along the way, there are thousands of sinkholes and blue holes. There are also many lakes that are formed because of the abundant water. Florida is unique in its size as a peninsula, as it is not a desert. Most peninsula of this size which butt out into saltwater are typically very dry. But Florida, which in Spanish means flower country, is blessed by abundant water.



One bad thing about these back roads is that you have to many times drive behind trucks. On two lane roads they can slow traffic down considerably. The other thing they can do is provide hazards. This is one funny sign we saw on the back of a dump truck. Imagine if you had to stay 200 feet behind this truck to avoid rocks that could break your windshield and if there were many trucks and if everyone did that, then the roads would hold 10% of the traffic that they could. So it's one of the things you have to live with if you were going to drive the back roads.



Orlando, Florida. Orlando is, of course, world famous. It's best known for being the home of the theme parks. The most famous of them, of course is Disney World, but Universal, Sea World and others also provide a wide variety of entertainment options. Orlando is a booming, sprawling metropolis. Route 92 through it is almost indiscernible and hard to follow. The best thing you can do if you don't want to enter Orlando is to try to go around it. Other than that there are really no back roads through the city.



Port Sanford is well inland and it's confusing when you first see the name. But it is located on the Saint John River. The St. Johns River, as I mentioned flows north from the Everglades and delivers the subterranean aquifer water all the way back to its source near the border of Georgia. At this point it dumps into the Atlantic ocean.



Whenever and wherever you find a Dairy Queen stop and enjoy a soft serve ice

cream. This is what's called the pause that refreshes. Dairy Queen has a long history in the United States and you can always get a pretty consistent, good tasting ice cream cone, and a very affordable price no matter where you stop.



Orange City Florida. Orange city Florida is located along US Route 92 and is a historic town. It boast the Independence Inn which was opened in 1876. Adjacent to it is the town of DeBary, Florida which was incorporated in 1993. So here you have a good example side-by-side of a city, which is literally brand new with one that is over a 100 years old.

DeLand Florida. If you have time to stop, this is definitely worth your visit. Deland Florida is a beautiful, quaint, chic, little city, located in the middle of nowhere. It has lots of opportunities for browsing and shopping. There are French revival and classic mid century American buildings sprinkled throughout the town. The old historic area is very beautiful and you could easily spend an afternoon here and find plenty of shopping and dining Opportunities.



If you have time, visit blue Springs State Park. It's waters are 72° year-round and during November through March it is the home of manatees that come into the warm waters for shelter

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MENU

 **FLORIDA**
STATE PARKS

HOME

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FIND A PARK

BLUE SPRING
STATE PARK

ENCOUNTER THE GENTLE
GIANTS WE CALL
MANATEES

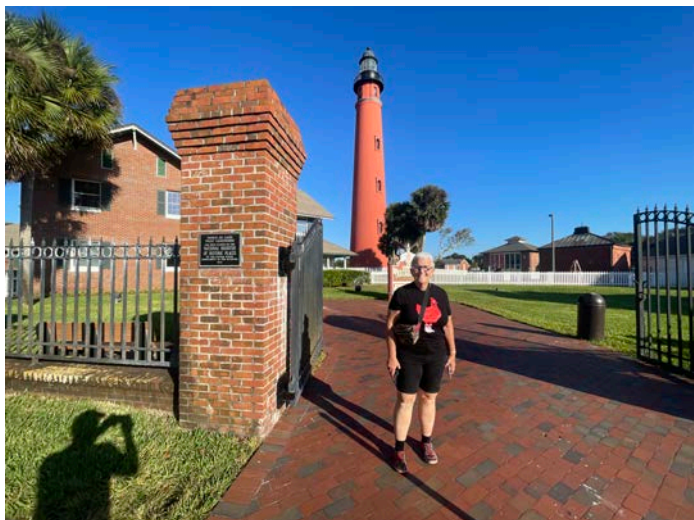
Stetson University Florida. Stetson University is a Florida heritage site as well as an expansive, historic university. It has a total of 4000 students with a teacher to student ratio of 11 to 1. It is a beautiful campus under old spreading oak trees. It

offers both undergraduate and graduate programs. The tuition per year is just under \$49,000 so it's not cheap but it looks like a beautiful, quaint, small and personal University.

STETSON TODAY



Ponce Inlet lighthouse. Nancy recalls; "You can walk up to it now, well last time I was here it was all broken glass. None of this was here; how they fixed it up with grass and everything. What I recall it was just a dump. Nobody took care of it and there was no gift shop either. Well the house was here but it was just that there is no gift shop. The boats come in from the Atlantic ocean, the fishing boats and it was so much fun to go over there and watch them take all the fish off and you could buy fish from the fisherman or they'd give you one or two you know for a couple bucks." But now the whole area has been completely modernized. There's a nice park here that's well-maintained. The lighthouse is now open and I think we're going to climb to the top.



Nancy was last here as a young girl more than 40 years ago. As is stated, the area was completely abandoned at that time and this lighthouse was in ruins.



You have to hand it to the community. This lighthouse and the grounds were meticulously restored. This is absolute museum grade quality restoration. And the entrance is only seven dollars per person. It's really a bargain.

THIRD ORDER FRESNEL LENS

In 1933, the US Lighthouse Service decided to change the *characteristic* of the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse from fixed and steady to a flashing light. A rotating Third Order Fresnel lens with an electric light source was installed.



When the lighthouse was decommissioned in 1970, this lens was removed and sent to the Coast Guard Academy Museum. In 1973 the lens was returned to Ponce Inlet where it was completely restored. The tower was reactivated in 1980 with a modern marine aerobeacon as the light source.



That beacon was destroyed by lightning in 1996, and a Vega VRB-25 with a rotating Fresnel lens was installed.

On April 30, 2004, the restored Third Order Fresnel lens was returned to service in the tower, and the lighthouse became a private aid to navigation.

Where is the trip. It's the same height as the leaning tower of Pisa and there are nine levels to reach the summit. Well worth the time and the view is spectacular.




To this day, they are maintaining these

facilities. The lighthouse is beautifully maintained. Again, it's a museum grade.



This light made in France was able to shine 22 miles out into the ocean. That is nearly nap of the Earth, which means it couldn't shine any further, because the curvature of the Earth would take light into space.





The Ponce Inlet First Order Fixed Fresnel Lens was installed after the tower was completed in 1887. The height of the lens is 10 feet, and the inside diameter is 72 inches. It weighs 3,800 pounds and has 15 prism panels containing 215 prisms, and three reflector panels. The lens covers a 225 degree arc, produces a 15,000 candlepower beam, and has a range of 18 nautical miles. The lens shone until 1933 when the tower was electrified and a Third Order Rotating Fresnel lens was installed.

THE PONCE INLET FIRST ORDER FIXED FRESNEL LENS


The nightly illumination of the lens for the guidance of coastal navigation was the reason light stations were constructed at such expense by the US Lighthouse Service. No other artifact has more significance to this National Historic Landmark than its original First Order lens.

Built by Barbier and Fenestre in Paris, the First Order Fixed Fresnel lens was installed after the tower was completed in 1887. The height of the lens is 10 feet, and the inside diameter is 72 inches. It weighs 3,800 pounds and has 15 prism panels containing 215 prisms, and three reflector panels. The lens covers a 225 degree arc, produces a 15,000 candlepower beam, and has a range of 18 nautical miles. The lens shone until 1933 when the tower was electrified and a Third Order Rotating Fresnel lens was installed.

When the First Order Fixed Fresnel lens was installed in 1887, the light source inside it was a five-concentric-wick kerosene lamp. A glass chimney and burner from this type of lamp are located in one of the cases along the back wall.

The five concentric wick design allows air to reach both sides of each fuel soaked wick, creating a bright flame. The glass chimney provides an increased and steady draft of air. The burner and chimney were only part of the apparatus, which actually reached to the top of the lens.

A life-size diagram of the entire system is located on the west wall of this room. Can you find the burner and glass chimney in the diagram? Notice the fuel reservoir beneath the burner. Kerosene was forced from this reservoir up a tube and into the burner itself.



First Order Illuminating Apparatus

CAPE CANAVERAL LIGHTHOUSE FIRST ORDER ROTATING FRESNEL LENS



This rotating First Order Fresnel lens warned passing ships of shoals and sandbars that extend seaward many miles from the Cape Canaveral coast. The lens was manufactured in 1860 by Henry-Lepaute and Company of Paris, France. It was installed at Canaveral in 1868 and removed in 1993.

The Canaveral lens stands 16 feet 5 1/2 inches tall and weighs 12,800 pounds. The interior diameter is 70 inches. The lens contains 24 panels and 368 prisms. Its *characteristic* or flash pattern is one flash every 15 seconds. The luminosity is 430,000 candlepower and the visual range is 22 nautical miles. The rotational mechanism consists of 10 chariot wheels and is powered by a 5 HP Jarrett electric motor. It would have originally been powered by a hand-wound clockwork.

When the lens was removed from the lighthouse tower at Cape Canaveral, it was sent here for restoration and display.



WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE BULB BURNS OUT?



Buoy light with sun valve.

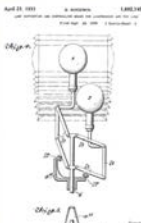
Early lighthouses were illuminated by fire baskets, candles, and eventually oil and gas lamps. Until the gas powered lamps came along, keepers had to tend the beacon all through the night in order to keep the flame burning correctly. Gas lamps were generally powered by acetylene. In 1907, Gustaf Dalen invented an ingenious sun valve that would allow the gas beacon to be operated automatically.

As the sun set each day, cooling temperatures would allow a valve to open causing ignition of the gas via a pilot light. The rising sun would warm the valve causing it to close, and the gas flame would be extinguished. Not only could the sun valve activate and de-activate the light, it could also be used to create a flash characteristic.



Taken in about 1950, this photo shows a Coast Guardsman changing the bulb in the third-order rotating Fresnel lens at the top of the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse. This was not the most efficient method for dealing with burned out bulbs!

When lighthouses and buoy lights became electrified, a convenient way to deal with burned out light bulbs (officially called "lamps") was needed. Even though the life-spans of bulbs could be fairly lengthy, they were subject to lightning strikes and other forms of damage. Instead of having a keeper climb the tower every time a bulb needed changing, an automatic lamp replacement system was needed.



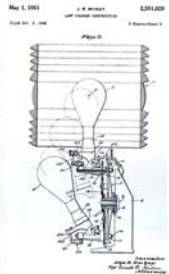
1928 patent drawing for a lamp changer made by the American Gasaccumulator Company of Elizabeth, New Jersey.

The automatic lamp changer was first developed in 1916, and variations began appearing in lighthouses in the 1920s. Many changers had a two-armed design. When the main lamp burned out, the secondary lamp would either swivel around or flip up into position like a teeter-totter.

A variation was a daisy chain style changer that could hold as many as 18 bulbs, giving months of service.

Another design, common in many navigational aids, was a wheel with 6 to 8 bulbs. When the wheel turned, a good bulb rotated into position at the beacon's focal plane.

Flashers could also be added to these systems to create an identifying characteristic for the light.



Patent drawing for a teeter-totter style lamp changer made by Wallace & Tieman in the 1950s.



C-R Development Corp.



(Cooper) Crouse-Hinds



Carlisle & Finch Company
Note the reflectors used behind the bulbs to intensify the light.

The lighthouse at night. The glue of the barn red paint on the brick set the lighthouse against the black sky. They even have a rotating light at the top. Again a beautiful professional restoration of a landmark.



The leaning tower of Pisa has 294 steps, and the lighthouse has 304 steps. So even though it's not leaning, it's still the same type of challenge. You would have to be very young and very good shape not to stop before you get to the top. But it can be done. Also, there are nine landings and you

can stop at each take a breath and keep going. Nancy and I were both able to do it. Thank God.

Dinner. We had dinner at the Hidden Treasure Restaurant, which is located in the shadow of the White House. It's a beautiful day, the wind is less than 5 mph and the sun is at our back. Can't get better than this.



Great food. Nice atmosphere



A Karaoke, ice cream bar. Yes, read that a couple of times. What a unique place. It was an old 7-Eleven where my wife lived here 40 years ago. The place is full of older and senior citizens and it's a place where you go. Have an ice cream sit and listen to karaoke. I've never seen this anywhere before.



Cherryhill ice cream all handmade. For six dollars you can get about 2 cups of ice cream. And there's lots of flavors including ones for adult, i.e. with alcohol.





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