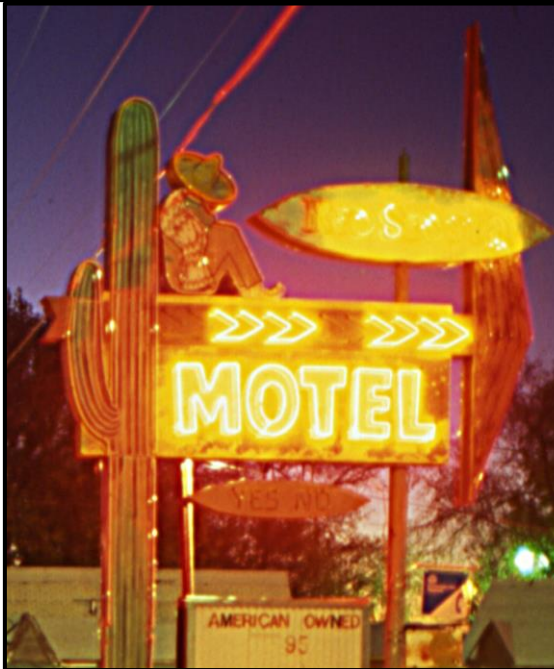


MUSEUM

BILLBOARD

Celebrating American Outdoor Advertising

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March 2015



Rio Siesta Sign Rescued!

Route 66 motel sign
from Clinton, OK
now in our
collection!

*Photo credits:
Jerry McClanahan, Carol Duncan*

More on the Rio Siesta:



As you can see from the photos on the front cover, the Rio Siesta sign, like so many along Route 66, fell on hard times. The motel was once known as the Rio Courts. In the early 1960s, the courts expanded, the name was changed to the Rio Siesta and at some point the sign was erected. The best-looking image on the front cover dates from 1983, and even back then the elements were already taking their toll. At a later date, the stereotypical peasant was sold off to a local real estate agent who in turn sold it to a collector in New York. In 2007, the property owners tried to sell the sign locally, asking a 1,000.00. Then later in the year, a storm came through, knocking the sign over. Given how big and solid the sign is, it must have been quite a storm!



The owners finally had enough and were ready to get rid of it. The Oklahoma Route 66 Association, through the determined efforts of Carol Duncan and Don Mullenix in particular, rescued it from a trash pile. It found its way to Elk City, where Don stored it, hoping the Association would be able to raise enough money to restore it. Although some funds were raised, the amount simply wasn't enough.



Once our Billboard Museum Association had storage space, we contacted the 66 organization about it becoming a part of our collection. As a result, they have donated the sign and the funds they had raised to date.



On September 25, 2104 Jim Ross, Jerry McClanahan and Justin Booher drove to Elk City to retrieve the remains of the Rio Siesta sign. Don and Carol helped on the Elk City end while Jim Gleason helped offload on the OKC end. The auto trailer was loaned to us by John Hargrove of Arcadia.

We've calculated we are going to need nearly 19,000.00 to restore just one side of the sign, including the fabrication of a replacement napping Mexican. Materials estimate is about 7,000.00, with labor making up the rest of the cost. If you are interested in making a donation toward the restoration of the sign, please contact us.

Top to bottom: Don Mullenix; Jerry, Jim, Justin & Don loading up; Jim checking the load; Jim, Justin & Jim Gleason unloading at the warehouse. Photos by Jerry McClanahan.

Sign of the Month



In our last issue we announced the rescue of the Ralph's Drug sign in Oklahoma City. As promised, here is more information.

In September 2014, the Billboard Museum acquired the Ralph's Drug sign at SW 29th and Blackwelder. This sign dates from 1947 and is significant to the local community. The store was a family-owned business in the neighborhood for 67 years. In fact, while the sign was being removed, a woman who lived nearby saw the sign coming down and arrived to take photos. She told Monica Knudsen that her dear friend's mother had worked there for years. The mother was now deceased and the sign was a reminder of a cherished friendship. She told Monica she remembered the day the store was robbed. Her friend's mother stuffed the money safely in the trash can by her desk. This is just one tale to be told about this venerable old business.

Ralph's was opened in 1947. A family bought it in the 1960s from the original owner, whose name was Ralph. They kept the name. First it was a drugstore and a tag agency was added to the drug store several years later. The building was sold this past summer.

Jim Gleason said, "The original sign was made of porcelain and lit with neon. This 67-year-old porcelain still looks like it was made yesterday. It has retained its beauty quite well."

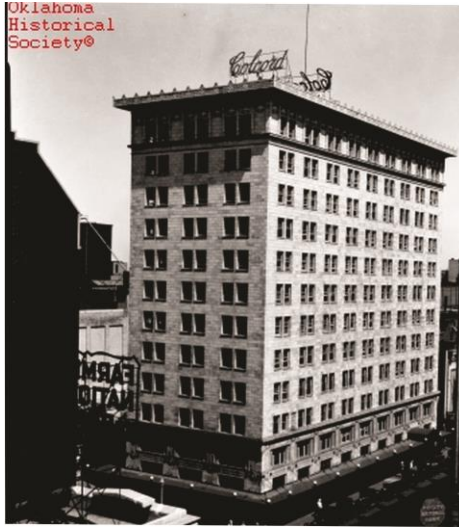
Years ago, the sign also had three emblems advertising Canada Dry Spur Cola and a clock. Spur was Canada Dry's version of Coca-Cola, made until sometime around the mid-50s. Unfortunately, the Spur emblems and clock no longer exist but they can be recreated.

We are delighted, through the efforts of Jim Gleason, Vice-President of the Billboard Museum and Dan Lorant, General Manager of Superior Neon and his crew for their hard work acquiring and removing the sign. In a twist of fate and an illustration of the saying, "what goes around, comes around," we note Superior Neon made the sign in 1947, and 67 years later, they safely removed it.

Thank you, one and all!

By the way, the estimate to fabricate a new bottle logo, neon clock, and side light acrylic panels, plus make other repairs and fixes to restore one side is about 10,000.00. Materials would be about 3,000.00 with labor making up the rest of the cost. If you are interested in helping restore this sign, please contact us!

Billboard Museum Acquires the Historic Colcord Sign!



*The Colcord in the 1920s.
From the Oklahoma Historical Society*



The Colcord Building in downtown Oklahoma City is iconic on many levels, including its distinctive red script signs on top. Recent conversion from neon to LED resulted in one of the signs coming down, and the guts of both signs being removed. These have since been donated to the Billboard Museum. We'll have more about this historic sign in a future newsletter.

Private Showing of Our Collection



On November 2, 2014, we gathered most of all of collection in one spot, and threw open the warehouse doors to our local members and others interested in our fledgling museum.

Thank you for your support!



HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO US!

We're one-year old and still growing, thanks to members and friends like you. We hope you will continue to help us in our mission.
We can't go forward without you!

Board of Directors:

Kathy Anderson—President
Jim Gleason—Vice-President
Monica Knudsen—Secretary/Treasurer
Bill Condon—OAAA (Outdoor Advertising Association of America) Liaison
Justin Booher—Volunteer Coordinator

Membership Levels:

Junior Poster (Student)	\$25.00
30-Sheet (Individual)	\$50.00
Streamline (Family)	\$100.00
Lizzie (Sustaining)	\$500.00
Spectaculars (Corporate)	\$1000.00

Become a member and help the Museum become a reality!
Your contributions enable this currently all-volunteer organization to grow. Donations of any amount are also accepted to help restore the signs that have been acquired as well as further the mission of the museum. Thank you!

Find us online!



www.billboardmuseum.org

or on

Facebook: Billboard Museum



Billboard Museum Association, Inc., PO Box 446, Bethany, OK 73008