

MORMON PIONEER NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA (MPNHA)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WHAT: "Discovery Road" local television series, Episode 2
WHEN: 7:30 p.m., Sunday, Oct. 28, 2012
WHERE: KJZZ Television, Channel 14
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"Discovery Road" episode discovers a temple, a rat, and — Hey, what are those things?

MANTI, Utah — The second episode of a television series dedicated to the heritage and culture along U.S. Highway 89 will take a look at some of the better known — and some less well-known — treasures of central Utah.

With stops in Manti and Ephraim in Sanpete County, "Discovery Road" (airing on Sunday, Oct. 28, at 7:30 p.m. on KJZZ TV Channel 14), will take a look at the culture and historical importance of an LDS temple and, just a short distance away, a certain rodent.

It is the second episode in the series, which follows a '55 Pontiac as it travels through the Mormon Pioneer National Heritage Area* (MPNHA), which includes U.S. 89, All-American Road State Route 12, and Scenic Byway State Route 24. The program invokes the idea of the Sunday-afternoon drive of times past.

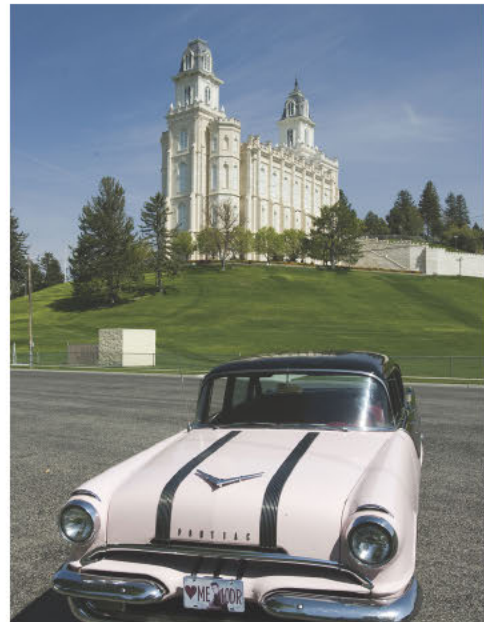
Even after only one episode, people who watch the show are discovering the things that make the MPNHA worth driving to themselves.

"Viewers are really telling us the road trip is back," says MPNHA Executive Director Monte Bona. "When they see how fun these excursions are and how families can interact and enjoy the trip, it makes sense to them. Toss in Facebook and GPS, and you've got a fun outing for a lot people."

The second episode takes viewers back in time as hosts James Nelson and Gena Persinger explore the faith and determination of the pioneers who settled the area, symbolized now in the most prominent landmark of the area — the majestic Manti LDS temple.

"We'll explore how the Manti temple was built and what challenges had to be overcome before the doors were opened in 1888," says Nelson. "Stories about hardship and accomplishment are blended with heartwarming personal histories born on the Manti Temple Hill."

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The history and significance of the Manti LDS Temple is explored in an upcoming episode of "Discovery Road," which features a '55 Pontiac on a road trip through the Mormon Pioneer National Heritage Area in central and southern Utah.

Descendants of those who built the temple have great respect and veneration for the work of ancestors such as George Paxton, whose great-great-granddaughter Celia Benson is interviewed during the show.

Just two blocks down the road from the temple, Discovery Road's hosts find one of two unlikely critters they encounter in the episode — a rat at the former home of hot-rod car designer and cartoonist Ed "Big Daddy" Roth.

Roth is known worldwide by car lovers. He designed cars for both real life and illustration and is known to have had an early influence on some who are now top auto-industry executives.

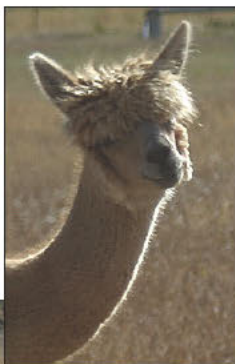
And he is known for another cartoon creation: Rat Fink.

"Ed liked to draw things and he didn't want to copy anyone else's' work. So he drew the Rat Fink and figured he was ugly, smelly and no one wanted to mess with him. So that was Rat Fink. He started drawing him in 1962," says Ilene Roth, Ed Roth's widow who still lives in Manti, maintains a museum dedicated to her husband's memory and craft, and hosts a Rat Fink Reunion each spring for "Big Daddy's" many fans.



A statue of the cartoon rodent "Rat Fink" stands in front of a lifesize mural of Ed "Big Daddy" Roth, the creator of Rat Fink and a renowned hot-rod car designer. Both are found in a museum to the late Ed Roth, maintained by his widow Ilene Roth in Manti.

Also in the episode, Nelson and Persinger come across a herd of animals that seem out of place in a land of turkeys and sheep. They figure the animals to be llamas. They stop for some pictures with the odd but adorable critters.



Alpacas — as well as turkeys, sheep, cows and horses — are now part of the landscape of richly agricultural Sanpete County. The animals resemble, and are sometimes mistaken for, llamas, as our hosts discover for themselves.



The hosts discover later that that the animals are alpacas, which are raised by for their precious wool. (To be fair, alpacas do resemble llamas.)

"They add diversity to the road trip. We loved 'em," Persiner says. "Alpacas are part of the landscape these days. It is no longer just horses and cows."

Regarding the case of mistaken identity, Nelson says, "Part of the fun is not knowing. We are not experts, and if we are shown to be gazing at what we think or llamas, and we aren't — well, the jokes on us.

"Discovery Road" is produced by the Snow College's Mormon Pioneer Heritage Institute at Snow College in coordination with the MPNHA.

***The Mormon Pioneer Heritage Area (MPNHA) is a federally designated area of central and southern Utah running along the beautiful and historic U.S. Highway 89 — including the All-American Road Utah State Route 12, and Capitol Reef Scenic Byway Utah State Route 24, which both intersect with U.S. 89 and together form the MPNHA's Boulder Loop. The area includes the counties of Sanpete, Sevier, Piute, Wayne, Garfield and Kane.**

The Utah Heritage Highway 89 Alliance is the local coordinating entity of the MPNHA and receives annual funding from the National Park Service. Its purpose is to preserve, tell and interpret the stories, history and heritage of the area, and to promote its culture and value.