

Beauty Abounds In Hines Parkway

Rest And Relaxation Go Hand-In-Hand With Nature's Handiwork

A rippling stream winding alongside a silver-like ribbon of concrete highway ... through lush green areas ... through age-old woods that have stood the test of time ... overhead bridges dotted here and there along a 21-mile route with lakes, waterfalls ... rapids, picnic grounds and playgrounds.

Sounds fantastic—almost unbelievable.

Where, in this day of a population explosion and sprawling subdivisions, could such a jewel of nature be found?

Well, one wouldn't have to look very far, for Hines Parkway fits all these descriptions, and it literally is right at our back door.

WHILE ITS SURFACE may be marred here and there with pollution and symbols of man's carelessness, basically the parkway is an area of unmatched beauty. Winding through western Wayne County—from Northville down to Dearborn, it is the envy of countless thousands of visitors from other states.

To those seeing it for the first time, it is a reminder of Fairmont Park that winds along the Schuylkill River in Philadelphia. Even easterners are quick to add that it even surpasses Fairmont in many respects.

There's nothing like it in the wooded areas of the New England States, or in the Allegheny Mountains. Even the famed Smokies don't have such stretches of combined beauty and usefulness.

In its basic beauty, Hines Parkway stands as a jewel and is a lure in all seasons.

With baseball games on its playfields almost every daylight hour, weekend family picnics and fishing grounds, it is a recreation mecca during the summer months.

UNLIKE OTHER AREAS it isn't left forgotten and forlorn in the dark days of winter.

With its hills and slopes, it is attracting young skiers and tobogganers. Bob-sledders take full advantage of the man-made hills in the area east of Merriman Road. And there are plans afoot to make it a real winter sports attraction unmatched until you reach the ski areas of the north country.

How did Hines Parkway come about?

Who had the vision, years ago, to see such a jewel of beauty come about in what was looked upon only as a flood area along the middle branch of the Rouge River?

It all happened back in 1930 when Edward N. Hines was chairman of the Wayne County Road Commission. He was the "missionary" in the struggle for good roads and it is to his everlasting enthusiasm that the colorful drive and parkway carry his name.

It is written in the pages of local history, that he drove over the area one afternoon and dreamed of the day when it would be a drive worthy of the land and scenery around it.

Not satisfied with the dream, he became dedicated to the idea that it would become a reality. So, in a pace-making role, he convinced the county to take on the project.

AT THE START it was just a winding drive. Picturesque as it was, it was just a drive until the visionary Ed Hines had another dream. This time what he saw was a parkway through which the drive would wind and twist in a panorama of beauty.

He painted such a lovely picture of his dream that the county officials approved the idea and immediately got control of all the

land it could on both sides of the drive. The ground soon was cleared and put into condition for picnics by the raising of grass and the installation of hundreds of outdoor stoves and thousands of benches.

In its beginnings, Hines Parkway was to be a place of quiet beauty where one could enjoy surcease from his daily toil.

The facilities for the playing of games came later to round out an area for enjoyment for the entire family—or even groups in the rapidly growing community.

Each year it became more and more of a mecca not only for the residents along the curving drive, but for folks from other areas seeking the peace and quiet of nature's beauty.

FOR YEARS the drive extended only from Northville to Telegraph Road in what is now known as Dearborn Heights.

Then in 1956 the Ford Motor Co., catching the spirit of the area, deeded 410 acres to the county for an extension of the parkway to Ford Road. This was completed in 1959. It was an unusual addition, and the folks became interested in the quest for large rocks that Hines, in his original dream, saw lining both sides of the drive.

Somewhat, somewhere, the county obtained a sufficient number of them to make the addition conform and carry out the rural atmosphere right to the edge of the major city.

Several times since, attempts have been made to lengthen the drive and parkway, but lack of funds and, in some cases, the objections of the residents, prevented the undertaking.

But taken as it is, the uniqueness of the drive and parkway stand it apart, and area residents can bask in the beauty of one of nature's real jewels right in their own backyard.



STORY:

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