



# Abraham Lincoln Tourism Bureau of Logan County

ABE66.com 217-732-8687

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## **Ernie Edwards dies at age 94 - Logan County loses an icon of the Mother Road**

It is with a sad heart that the Abraham Lincoln Tourism Bureau of Logan County bids a fond farewell to an icon of not only the county but of the Mother Road, Route 66. Ernie Edwards, fondly remembered for his many restaurants and gas stations along historic Route 66, was the founder of the Pig Hip, located in Broadwell, and its famous Pig Hip Sandwich. Ernie passed away in his sleep last night on April 11, 2012 at his residence at St. Clara's Manor in Lincoln, IL. He is survived by his wife, Francis, and many relatives (details and funeral arrangements pending at Fricke-Calvert-Schrader Funeral Home in Lincoln).

Ernie, born August 5, 1917, came to Lincoln in 1934 with his family. His early years included military service before becoming a restaurant owner at the ripe age of 24. His life was full of adventures, with the changes of Route 66 and the addition of Interstate 55 all playing a role. The Pig Hip Restaurant Museum, calling Broadwell, IL its home, was lost to a fire in 2007. With wife, Frances, by his side, he continued the museum portion out of their home, entertaining many visitors and groups throughout the years, as the site of the Pig Hip remained iconic along the Mother Road.

In 1990, Ernie was among the first to be inducted into the Route 66 Association of Illinois Hall of Fame, and continued to be sought out by tourists from all over the world throughout the years at the renovated Pig Hip Museum. His induction plaque is on display at the Information Station office in Lincoln (1555 5<sup>th</sup> Street).

"Ernie was a friend, a neighbor, a mentor and a visionary," said Geoff Ladd, executive director of the Abraham Lincoln Tourism Bureau of Logan County and president of the Illinois Route 66 Scenic Byway. "It was Ernie who insisted that I step up to the plate to save The Mill" (an iconic Route 66 restaurant in Lincoln, IL). "What I learned is you don't say 'no' to Ernie – and he was right about saving The Mill," said Ladd.

Ladd noted that efforts are underway to revitalize the Pig Hip sign in Broadwell and along with the marker that is in place, the site will become a memorial to Edwards. Pig Hip artifacts will eventually be on display at The Mill when it opens as a museum. Edwards will also be remembered at this year's Route 66 Association Hall of Fame Banquet in Lincoln on June 9<sup>th</sup>.

Logan County Information Station - Corner of Fifth Street and Historic Route 66 - [www.abe66.com](http://www.abe66.com)  
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