

Rand McNally Publishing Celebrates 100 Years of the “Great American Road Trip” with a Collector’s Edition *Road Atlas*

The 2024 Collector’s Edition of America’s #1 Selling Road Atlas Will Feature a History of Travel Through the Decades

CHICAGO, April 17, 2023 – Today, Rand McNally’s **100th year Collector’s Edition** of America’s #1 [Road Atlas](#), a publication that has been commonly found in cars and trucks since the early days of the automobile, has been released. This special edition atlas highlights decade by decade changes in roadways, fuel prices, historic sites, our evolving car culture, special interest destinations, and much more.

Since 2021, atlases and paper maps have seen a resurgence in popularity with unit sales increases of greater than 20%. Why? Travelers are either discovering or rediscovering that paper atlases provide a richer, more comprehensive travel experience versus a GPS device that shows only a small portion of a road trip. Rand McNally atlases provide an understanding of route options, topography, and provide more “points of interest” destinations than many other sources. It further provides a safety net when those remote locations on your journey are not covered by a cell phone network or your GPS device fails.

“Since the beginning of the pandemic, Americans have, in large numbers, returned to the joys of road travel and the great outdoors,” said Joseph Roark, Chairman of Rand McNally Publishing. He continued, “Seeing the beauty of America, enjoying the tastes of regional foods, and seeing our historical sites are all reasons why two-thirds of American families are planning domestic travel this year. There is no better travel tool companion for peace of mind than our #1 Rand McNally *Road Atlas*.”

The First Road Atlas

The inaugural edition of the atlas, published in 1924, was referred to as the “Rand McNally *Auto Chum*.” The nation was embracing car travel as nearly two million Ford Model Ts hit the road* with gas costing \$0.21 per gallon**. Featuring the 48

states that existed, hand drawn, and covering almost exclusively dirt and gravel roads with a few made of concrete, the atlas did not contain many of the features considered common for today's printed, online, and mobile maps.

In 1924, the Road Atlas:

- Did not identify roads by number – instead, roads were listed by their names, such as Lincoln Highway which is still shown in the *Road Atlas*. In fact, the atlas depicted zero miles of interstate, as those roads did not yet exist.

- o Today's atlas contains more than 345,000 miles of highways including more than 46,000 miles of interstate.

- Did not include an index for cities, or other places. If a driver didn't know where a town was located, he or she would have to page through the atlas to find it.

- o The current *Road Atlas* features eight pages of detailed indices with tens of thousands of points of interest (including **60 U.S. National Parks** in addition to place names).

- Did not appear in full color. The 1924 atlas was printed in only two colors, dark blue and red. The first full-color edition was printed in 1960.

- o Today's maps use color to indicate road classification, terrain, and city size, among other descriptive details.

The 2024 100th Anniversary Collector's Edition *Road Atlas* includes:

- A review of how road travel has changed, a chart of fuel prices by the decade, a montage of many of the past jacket covers, and many other interesting travel insights.

- The *Road Atlas* comes in multiple sizes and formats including versions with large scale maps, standard sizes, easy-to-read midsize maps, and spiral binding.

- URLs for additional up-to-the moment information such as road conditions emergency information, and details to enhance the trip.

- Visit randmcnally.com/100years, randmcnally.com/retrospective or randmcnally.com/roadatlas for more information on all *Road Atlas* products.

*Ford Model T facts –mtfca.com.

**Gas Prices - Antique Automobile Club of America.

About Rand McNally – Rand McNally is the most trusted source for maps, directions, and travel content. Products and services include: America’s #1 *Road Atlas*, **MileMaker**® truck routing software (milemaker.com), leading geography-based educational resources and mobile fleet management solutions. (randmcnally.com)