GOODBYE 'MR. MAPS'

M. T. Lee saw Gulf Oil Corporation's greatest years of expansion

After 32 years of managing the road map and travel folder supply in the Gulf Oil Corporation's Pittsburgh, Pa., Tourgide office, "Mr. Maps" M. T. Lee has retired. He plans to spend a lot of time traveling. By automobile.

But his "busman's holiday" retirement is not unusual. "I've always enjoyed traveling by car," Mr. Lee said. "I think this interest helped me in my work over the years. I was able to map the best routes for tourists because in many instances I had already been there."

In recognition of his 35th anniversary with the company and his retirement a couple of months later, Mr. Lee was honored at a party recently by R. B. Phillips, Gulf's coordinator of U.S. Marketing; H. P. Strock, manager of Advertising for Gulf's Eastern Marketing Region; Kenneth Clapp, manager of the Pittsburgh Tourgide office; and Roy E. Kohler, manager Special Projects for Gulf's Public Relations Department.

It was pointed out at the party that Mr. Lee's years with the company spanned the greatest period of growth of both motor travel in the United States and the Tourgide service.

Gulf's Tourgide service is one of the several features available to tourists stopping at the "Sign of the Orange Disc" which makes Gulf service stations "travel agencies with pumps."

At Gulf stations, or by calling at one of Gulf's Tourgide offices in Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Atlanta, Chicago, Houston, Tulsa or Los Angeles, the motorists may request a total travel package to help him get the most out of his motoring vacation — clearly marked maps showing the best and most scenic roads, pamphlets on places of interest in the localities he plans to visit and information on motels and hotels.

All the tourist has to do when visiting a station is ask for a Tourgide card, fill in his destination, name and address, and drop the card in a mailbox.

The card will arrive in a Tourgide office where a skilled and knowledgeable staff of travel planners will prepare his kit and send it to him. The service is free.

Seeing that these kits are prepared promptly and correctly was M. T. Lee's job in the Gulf Building in Pittsburgh. He was in charge of the bureau's annual supply of about 800,000 road maps and companion travel folders, and about 250,000 copies of other pieces of literature. He directed the final checking and mailing of the more than 100,000 travel kits prepared by his office annually.

GOODBYE TO 'MR. MAPS'— Henry Strock, right, manager of Advertising for Gulf's Eastern Region, came from Philadelphia to attend the farewell banquet for M. T. Lee, who is shown accepting an award from the company. Mrs. Lee is seated.

Mr. Lee had been with Gulf as long as there has been a Gulf Building in Pittsburgh, the corporation's executive headquarters. He first came into the company's Advertising Department October 31, 1932 to handle exhibits on the first floor of the then brand-new building.

"I got in on the ground floor," he said with a smile. "But by 1936 requests for maps and travel assistance had reached such proportions that I was transferred into Tourgide."

And there he worked for 32 years — watching the transformation of U.S. roads from two-lane macadam panse of freeways and turnpikes that now help speed the motorist comfortably and scenically to vacation lands, and the transformation of roadside accommodations grow from rows of wood cabins to the inviting, swimming pool and restaurant equipped motels of today.

In fact, seeing these changes grow over the years has made "M.T." one of the leading boosters of the travel industry's "Discover America" campaign. "I can't imagine a more pleasant way of getting someplace," he said. "And you're able to stop enroute to look at something that catches your interest. Try that on an airplane sometime."

He is especially proud of the travel services offered by Gulf. "I can take my Gulf Travel Card and go all the way across the country without having to carry hardly any cash. Just something for tolls and an occasional soft drink stop. I can stay overnight and eat at Holiday Inns and charge it, I can charge my gasoline bills. If something should go wrong with the car — a mechanical breakdown or a fan belt wearing out — I can get it fixed and charge it.

Looking back over the years, Mr. Lee said that his proudest achievement was putting his children through college. "I helped them plan the best route through life," he mused. "I guess you could say my whole life has been spent helping people get from one place to another in the best possible way."

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