The Natural Beauty of the Byway

You’ll find beautiful parks and scenic vistas along the Byway including the Marais des Cygnes Wildlife Area and the Frontier Military Scenic Byway Rest Area. Migrating waterfowl, wading birds, shorebirds and bald eagles can often be seen without leaving the roadway.
The Frontier Military Scenic Byway is a 168-mile ribbon of history across the Kansas landscape within the Freedom’s Frontier National Heritage Area. Originally built to move soldiers and supplies, the Military Trail has watched American history unfold.

At the north end, the Byway begins in Leavenworth County near Fort Leavenworth, a National Historic Landmark. Established in 1827, the Fort is the oldest Army fort in continuous commission west of the Mississippi River.

Heading south along the route is Wyandotte County, home to Grinter Place. In 1831, Moses Grinter began operation of the first river ferry on the Kansas River, used by the military and by westward migrants.

Further along you’ll find the Johnson County Museum which explores life in Johnson County since the 1820’s. Legend has it that the Legler Barn Museum, built in the early 1860’s, sheltered Quantrill and Jesse James on their infamous raids.

The Adair Cabin in Miami County was a frequent stop for noted abolitionist John Brown. The cabin now houses the John Brown Museum.

In Linn County the Marais des Cygnes Massacre Park and Mine Creek Battlefield are Kansas Historic Sites listed on the National Register of Historic Places commemorating incidents from the turbulent times of Bleeding Kansas (1855-1860) and the Civil War (1861-1865).

Bourbon County is home to one of the 12 original National Cemeteries established by President Abraham Lincoln in 1862. The Fort Scott National Historic Site and the adjoining Fort Scott Historic Downtown sweep you back in time.

Hotel Stilwell, built in 1889-1890, is found in Pittsburg (Crawford County). Guests of the historic Romanesque Revival structure include William Jennings Bryan, Eugene Debs, Susan B. Anthony and Theodore Roosevelt.

Baxter Springs in Cherokee County is the site of a Civil War monument memorializing soldiers killed in the Quantrill Raid on October 6, 1863.