



## Face of Fillmore

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Not many years after arriving in Fillmore, we learned of a spot where teenagers, and probably others, went to do a little drinking away from the eyes of watchful parents. Some used this spot as a get-away just to socialize. This place northwest of town was known as Pink Elephant Lane. It is unclear how early this practice began but the construction of I-15 helped this along, as there was now a spot in a box-type underpass under the passing traffic that was indeed more private for the gatherings.

Why Pink Elephant? Wikipedia says that for many decades before the pink elephant was seen by those who had drunk more than they could handle, they saw snakes. Beginning about 1889, the form of the animals changed to rats, monkeys, giraffes, hippopotamuses, or elephants or combinations of animals in a variety of colors. In 1896, what may be the earliest recorded



East side of Pink Elephant Lane

example of a partially pink elephant appeared in Henry Wallace Phillips' in *Fables of Our Times* referring to a drunken man seeing a pink and green elephant and a feathered hippopotamus. Jack London in 1913 wrote of blue mice and a pink elephant. Even in the 1941 Disney film *Dumbo* there is a song about *Pink Elephants on Parade*.

At any rate, Fillmorites didn't invent the pink elephant but this location became part of the local culture.

With the completion of the underpass in about 1978, a few local students including Rozann Scottorn and friends signed their names to celebrate their graduation. This was the first writing done there.

Unfortunately, with it came the graffiti, much of it, gang looking images and phone numbers and other things you didn't want your children reading.



East side

Our first introduction to Pink Elephant Lane came as we acquired ATV's and our grandchildren loved riding through the "tunnel" and hearing the echo of their voices.

Lately, I am not exactly sure when, an interesting transformation has happened at Pink Elephant Lane. People kept telling me I needed to go see it, so one day I did.

As you enter the underpass from the east, there is a huge pink elephant! There is another on the west as well.

Other colorfully painted animals and characters have been painted over the old graffiti, making this a much more pleasant and entertaining place to drive through.

The reformation began with a trip Shameka Simons and her children made to a part of Ogden where some interesting street painting has been done that has really added to the atmosphere. Shameka decided something like this could be done at Pink Elephant Lane and then the thought occurred to her that she was probably the one that would have to initiate this. She met with city, county and state officials to get permission and all were positive about the project.

As word spread donations came of paint and brushes and time and hard work. James and Kami Dearden and Brian and Jenny Bartholomew were among those would paint tirelessly in the beginning to cover the graffiti and give the artists a "clean canvas" to create on. Brian borrowed a tractor and cleared the dirt and debris from inside the overpass. Lisa Teeple was one of the big contributors of paint and other supplies. Having community members and leaders all coming together for this positive effort brings a feeling of friendship and unity.



West side

The new paintings were mainly the artistic work of Shameka Simons, her mother Rozanne Stuckey, and her children Vanessa, Gabriel, Dominic, and Morgan. Both entrances were painted by the family with additions inside by various people from many locations.

Interestingly, when Rozann's Millard High School Class of 1978 had their reunion, they painted what looked like a few yearbook pages and the class members signed it, just as Rozann and friends had years before.

Recently vandals were caught in the act spray painting over the images and generally ruining a portion of the artwork. It is hoped that this mistake is a costly one for them and an example for others.

A huge thank you to Shameka for this new artistic addition to the Face of Fillmore with the hope there are more yet to come.