

## 2024 Duluth Dylan Tour: Turn by Turn Directions

*A guide to Duluth sites related to Bob Dylan, born here Robert Allen Zimmerman in 1941.*

Follow directions for a complete tour - or use GPS to find sites you choose. Addresses are in **bold**. "Streets" parallel the lakeshore; "Avenues" go up and down the hillside.

**Tour starts at the Historic Duluth Armory, 1325 London Rd.**



1. Duluth Armory [1915], where teenager Bob Zimmerman saw Buddy Holly perform on Saturday, January 31, 1959. The Armory was the region's biggest venue for performances and exhibitions. Holly died in a plane crash near Clear Lake, Iowa early the following Tuesday. In 1998 Dylan won the Album of the Year Grammy Award for Time Out of Mind. He acknowledged Holly in his acceptance remarks:

*"... when I was about 16 or 17 years old, I went to see Buddy Holly play at the Duluth National Guard Armory, and I was three feet away from him, and he looked at me. And I just have some kind of feeling that he was - I don't know how or why - but I know he was with us all the time we were making this record in some kind of way."*

- and in his June 2017 Nobel Prize Acceptance speech:

*"If I was to go back to the dawning of it all, I guess I'd have to start with Buddy Holly... He was mesmerizing. I watched his face, his hands, the way he tapped his foot, his big black glasses, the eyes behind the glasses, the way he held his guitar, the way he stood, his neat suit. Everything about him. He looked older than twenty-two. Something about him seemed permanent, and he filled me with conviction. Then, out of the blue, the most uncanny thing happened. He looked me straight dead in the eye, and he transmitted something. Something I don't know what. And it gave me the chills."*

London Rd. & Superior St. were part of US Highway 61, Minnesota's most storied and scenic highway, before the I-35 freeway was completed.



*"Highway 61, the main thoroughfare of the country blues, begins about where I come from . . . Duluth to be exact. I always felt like I'd started on it, always had been on it and could go anywhere from it, even down into the deep Delta country... The Mississippi River, bloodstream of the blues, also starts up from my neck of the woods. I was never too far away from any of it. It was my place in the universe, always felt like it was in my blood."*

- Bob Dylan, Chronicles Volume One, p. 240-1

Dylan's song "Highway 61 Revisited" is on his 1965 album of the same name.

One of the three Bob Dylan cast iron manhole covers is on London Rd. at 13th Ave. E. Bob Dylan Way runs from the Armory through the heart of downtown Duluth to the Depot.

2. Go southwest toward downtown on London Rd. Leif Erickson Park & statue are on your left. Young Bob (age 7) and family saw Pres. Harry Truman speak there during the 1948 presidential election campaign:

*"...it's amazing how I can still feel it. I can remember the excitement of being there in the crowd. I was on top of one of my uncles' shoulders in my little white cowboy boots and cowboy hat. It was an exhilarating thing, being there --- the cheers, the jubilation, the attentiveness to every word that Truman spoke.... Truman was gray hatted, a slight figure, spoke in the same kind of nasal twang and tone like a country singer. I was mesmerized by his slow drawl and sense of seriousness and how people hung on every word he was saying."*

*[Chronicles Volume One, p. 230-1]*



3. At stoplight turn L onto Superior St.      4. Turn R onto 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. E.  
5. Turn R onto 2nd St.      6. Turn L onto 5<sup>th</sup> Ave. E      7. Turn L onto 3<sup>rd</sup> St.

On the right is **St. Mary's Hospital 407 E. 3<sup>rd</sup> St.** [bldg. scheduled to be razed.] Here Bob Dylan (Robert Allen Zimmerman) was born on May 24, 1941 to Beatrice Stone Zimmerman and Abram Zimmerman.

8. Turn R onto 4th Ave. E.      9. Turn L onto E. 6th St.      10. Turn L onto 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. E



On the right is Bob Dylan's first home: the upper flat of the yellow duplex at **519 N. 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. E.** Bob was born during World War II, a time of intense mining, manufacturing and shipping activity in the region. His grandmother Anna (Chana Greenstein) Zimmerman lived in the upstairs of **308 E. 5<sup>th</sup> St.**, 1/2 block down and 1/2 block east - Bob would sometimes stay with her, and from her back window *"...see Lake Superior, ominous and foreboding, iron bulk freighters and barges off in the distance, the sound of foghorns to the right and left.."*

Of his grandmother he wrote *"My grandmother's voice possessed a haunting accent - face always set in a half-despairing expression. Life for her hadn't been easy. She'd come to America from Odessa, a seaport town in southern Russia. It was a town not unlike Duluth, the same kind of temperament, climate and landscape and right on the edge of a big body of water."*

*[Chronicles Volume One, p. 92-3]*

11. Continue down 3rd Ave. E.      12. Turn R onto E. 5th St      13. Turn R onto 1st Ave. E.

14. Turn R into Nettleton School circle. **(108 E. 6th St.)** This is where Bob attended kindergarten. In 1947 his family moved to the Iron Range city of Hibbing. Look downhill to see old Central High School (Bob's father, Abe Zimmerman, graduated in 1929), ship channel into harbor, aerial lift bridge, sand peninsula to Park Point.

15. Cross 1st Ave. E. and proceed southwest on E. 6th St.

16. Turn L onto Lake Ave. (Approaching 2nd St. see Washington School art space, Masonic Temple, old Central High School from above - Richardsonian Romanesque style.)

17. Turn L onto E. 2nd St. Old Central High School [1892] is on your left.

18. Turn R onto 3rd Ave. E.    19. Turn R onto 1st St.    20. STOP near 2nd Ave. E.

The Clayton-Jackson-McGhie Memorial [2003] is believed to be the first public memorial to the victims of a lynching in the USA. Across the intersection is an older armory [1896] and a recently erected historical marker.



On June 15, 1920 a mob lynched three African American circus workers – Elias Clayton, Elmer Jackson, and Isaac McGhie. They were hanged at a light pole in front of that armory. Photos of the killers posed next to their victims were later sold as postcards. The three men were buried in unmarked graves. In 1991 Duluth's NAACP and First Lutheran Church placed markers at their graves in Park Hill Cemetery.

Bob's father Abe Zimmerman was 8 years old and lived at **22 1/2 W. 1st St. - just 2 1/2 blocks west** (now boarded up) when the lynching happened. Forty-five years later his son Bob Dylan wrote:

*"They're selling postcards of the hanging, they're painting the passports brown,  
the beauty parlor's full of sailors, the circus is in town.  
Here comes the blind commissioner, they've got him in a trance..."*

- opening lyrics of "Desolation Row" -  
the final song on the 1965 album Highway 61 Revisited

On the next corner is a Sammy's Pizza; their first location is in Hibbing. Teenager Bobby Zimmerman is said to have frequented that hangout, often with his guitar in hand.

21. Continue southwest on 1st St. several blocks and STOP at 6th Ave. W.

See Bayfront Festival Park (site of Dylan & Paul Simon concert July 3, 1999; also Dylan's 2013 "Americanarama" concert with Wilco, Richard Thompson Electric Trio, My Morning Jacket.)

*"You know, I was born up on that hill. Good to see it's still there. My first girlfriend lived up there. She was so conceited, I used to call her Me-Me."*

*- Bob Dylan at 7/3/1999 concert*

22. Turn L onto 6th Ave. W., go 2 blocks to end of street.

23. Turn L onto Michigan St. See **Historic Depot** [1892] (now St. Louis Country Heritage and Arts Center) on R. at **506 W. Michigan St.**

Statue of Albert Woolson (oldest Civil War veteran) is in front. The Lake Superior Train Museum and North Shore Scenic Railroad is in the lower level.

A Bob Dylan manhole cover is at intersection with 5th Ave. W. Bob Dylan Way connects this intersection and the Armory.



24. Turn L onto 5<sup>th</sup> Ave. W, proceed 1 block up hill and

25. Turn R onto Superior St. Proceed through downtown business district, Fitgers building on right (site of another Bob Dylan Way manhole cover), then on right see statue of Jay Cooke (instrumental in selling bonds to finance the Union effort in the Civil War, and later the building of the Northern Pacific Railway), then Leif Erickson Park.

26. At 10<sup>th</sup> Ave. E, turn R onto London Rd. Soon **Armory** is on your L (**1325 London Rd.**)

London Rd. was part of US Highway 61; about a mile northeast, I-35 ends. From there, MN Highway 61 continues along Lake Superior's north shore 149 miles to Canada.

27. Turn L onto 14th Ave. E., then L into Armory Annex Parking lot.

*"Thought I'd shaken the wonder    And the phantoms of my youth  
Rainy days on the Great Lakes    Walkin' the hills of old Duluth"*

*- from "Something There Is About You" by Bob Dylan*

For more information: [www.duluthdylanfest.com](http://www.duluthdylanfest.com) and [www.bobdylanway.com](http://www.bobdylanway.com)