

# Felix Chevrolet Showroom & Neon Sign

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## ROAD TRIP with Huell Howser (episode #103 "Figueroa Corridor" copyright 2001)

### Speaker: Huell Howser

"We're getting ready to go to a place I've always wondered about. You see it when you drive up and down this street. It's been here for a long time. Its part of the pop culture of Figueroa. There it is up on the left. The big old sign, Felix the Cat. See it, right up on the left. We're going to go and find out what Felix is all about. Good Morning."

### Speaker: Darryl Holter (Manager of the Shammass Group and son-in-law of the widow Shammass)

"Huell, how are you?"

### Speaker: Huell Howser

"How you doing. Your name is?"

### Speaker: Darryl Holter

"Darryl Holter"

### Speaker: Huell Howser

"You're going to be the Felix The Cat guy for us this morning."

### Speaker: Darryl Holter

"I'm going to tell you the story."

### Speaker: Huell Howser

"This Sign is a landmark here on the side of Figueroa right across from USC. Tell us about the Sign."

### Speaker: Darryl Holter

"The Sign is a landmark everybody can see it because its so tall. The letters, the F,E,L,I,X, each one is fifteen feet tall. This is a sign that was built when we moved Felix Chevrolet from 11th and Grand down here to this corner in 1955. The Sign was built in 1958. It was designed my an aeronautical engineer from World War II, named Mr. Heath... There's a whole story and I can give you some more background and some photos. Here's the story; there was a man, Mr. Felix who came here from Tucson and started a Chevrolet dealership in 1921. We believe he was the 1st Mexican American to own a dealership in the LA area. He stated Felix Chevrolet and he became good friends with a man named Pat Sullivan. Pat Sullivan was the designer of Felix the Cat, the cartoon, which started in 1919. Because they were close friends and because Mr. Felix had Felix Chevrolet he was able to use the Cat and the Cat was used all through the 1920's 30's and up through the 50's and 60's and today. The Cat has always been used in connection with Felix Chevrolet... For many, many people the Sign is a landmark that they have arrived in Downtown LA, coming in from the freeways coming in from out of town. People will tell me that when they were a little kid, when were five years old in the back seat of the car and saw the Cat they got excited because they knew were getting home or they knew they were getting to LA. So since 1958 the Sign has been kind of a landmark in the area."