



Devil's Elbow Revisited

By Gordon Warren

Missouri Highway No. 14 was the precursor of Highway 66 and I-44. It was built with funds from a 1920 state bond issue of \$60 million. The basic route from St. Louis to Springfield followed the "Wire Road", the Civil War Federal Troop link between the two cities. When building Hwy. 14, the excavation and earth moving was done with horse drawn slips. This piece of equipment seems to have disappeared from the language, but not the dictionary. It was in effect a large scoop pulled along the ground to be filled with dirt or gravel to be moved when creating a cut and fill. It could be tipped and emptied at the desired location. Compared to present earth moving dozers and loaders it was like a child's tricycle alongside a Harley Hog. This explains the curves and steep grades on the early roads. If you could not move the mountain, you went over it or around it. From Hazelgreen, just west of the Laclede County Line, No. 14 went

east on what is now AB to the present Laquey Store and Post Office, around past the school to the old Laquey Store and Post Office, on up to N junction and from there to Buckhorn. From Buckhorn, it followed 17 past the T junction and on down through Waynesville. It went through Waynesville on Historic 66 and down to the I-44 exit 163. From this exit to the North is No. 28 to Dixon; to the south is the ZZ junction. The east-west south outer road encompasses the two lane double pavement which was the last version of Rte. 66 before it became I-44. A branch to the south and east is the original Mo. 14 which leads to Devil's Elbow and the first Piney River Bridge. Here is where the true history lies.

This road was rugged to travel but the scenery was beautiful. The original road followed a steep grade around a broad sweeping curve that overlooked the Piney River Valley as far as the eye could see. Looking into the valley on either side and in the distance were limestone bluffs that accentuated the green timber on their

heights and the fertile valley at their feet. During the summer months when relatives from the flat lands of Kansas and Oklahoma came to visit, the Devil's Elbow Vista was a must on the local travel list. It ranked with caves and springs that were favorite viewing sites. At the bottom of the Elbow curve was the neat village store and post office where a cold soda would slake the thirst on a hot day. This was BAC (before air conditioning) when dust from a gravel surface roadbed fogged through the open car windows. A bit farther on was the bridge across the Piney. If you wished, you could go down to the river bank and skip a rock or two across the water. The bridge has now become a "white elephant". When these roads were abandoned by the State, the surfaces were both concrete and asphalt. They reverted to the County but no funds were provided for maintenance and county road crews were not equipped to deal with this burden. Over the years the right of way, devoid of upkeep, has sprouted brush and mature trees. No longer



The Devil's Sugarbowl at Devil's Elbow. Courtesy of the Pulaski County Historical Society.



**Westside
Computers
LLC**
Jody Miner, Owner

Computer Sales • Service • Repairs & Upgrades
Voice: 573-336-5646
Fax: 573-336-3368
E-Mail: westsidellc@socket.net
690 Missouri Ave. Ste. 2 • St. Robert, MO 65584

Post Pawn Store

Money In A Flash

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS
TVS • STEREOS • JEWELRY
GUNS • AMMO • DARTS
Just Outside Main Gate to Fort Wood
St. Robert
573-336-3441



EXCAVATING WYATT EXCAVATING

FREE ESTIMATES

- Landleveling
- Dump Truck Work
- Road Building
- Backhoe & Cat Work
- Site Preparation
- Insured

573-774-6647
Family Owned & Operated Since 1952



Onyx Mountain Caverns

- Woodland Indian Culture on display in huge Entrance room.
- Ash beds - bear beds - fire pits and artifacts.
- Underground river
- The Big Room, one acre in size, is one of the largest in the central Ozarks

Adults \$7.75 Children (5-12) \$3.75
Group Rates Available
Between Waynesville & Rolla on I-44 Exit 169
573-762-3341
Listed In The National Historic Register



Lebanon Bible & Book Store

200 W. Commercial • Box 991
Lebanon, MO. 65536
(417) 532-9516
Fax: (417) 588-7068

Your Christian Supply Headquarters

BOOKS • BIBLES • MUSIC
CHURCH SUPPLIES

Compliments
of
Your



Circuit Clerk and
Recorder of Deeds

RACHELLE BEASLEY

"Experience at work for YOU"



can a motorist view the beautiful scenery of past years. The once smooth road surface is now difficult to travel. My sympathy extends to both the residents in that area and the County Commission faced with an insurmountable problem.

In the glory days of Route 66 the Munger-Moss Cafe at Devil's Elbow featured hickory smoked bar-b-que and was famous from east to west. In the mid 30's when I was courting Maxine, who was then teaching at Dixon, the Munger-Moss Cafe was one of our favorite eating places. The name came from a Mrs. Moss, a Dixon widow, who married a gentleman by the name of Munger. The native oak building which housed the cafe and living quarters still stands; its present status is yet to be revealed. To the west side of the cafe was a large oven fired with native hickory wood, an ample supply of which was adjacent. The oven was built of native limestone with two chambers; one for the fire and the other from the meat. The chambers were connected so that the meat was exposed only to the smoke and heat from the fire. Mr. Munger

told me the meat cooked from twelve to eighteen hours. My taste buds may have been sharper then in the twenties than in the nineties, but to me the Munger-Moss bar-b-que has never been equaled. When the highway changed the Munger-Moss name was bought and reincarnated in the form of a Motel and Restaurant in Lebanon, Mo.

To borrow a phrase from Paul Harvey: "And now the rest of the story." The Devil's Elbow Munger-Moss location is alive and well under new signage, new decor, and mod clientele. It is now the Elbow Inn. A Daily Guide (9/10/02) headline reads, "MORE THAN 125 GET THEIR KICKS ON ROUTE 66." The group was traveling Rt. 66 from St. Louis to Cartersville and made a stop at the Elbow Inn. Jane Dippel, speaking for the group, admitted they were even joining in on the tradition of the Elbow Inn. I shall leave it to readers who are interested to learn the secret of the Elbow Inn tradition.

Good as it might be, not even the Elbow Inn has matched the original Munger-Moss bar-b-que flavor.



Dorothy (Mc Coy) Miller poses in front of a Devil's Elbow sign in this 1943 photograph. Courtesy of the Pulaski County Historical Society.

The carpet is not just crush resistant,
it's [your seven-year-old-playing-championship-wrestling-
doing-power-slams-off-the-top-of-the-couch] **resistant.**



Nothing stands up to everyday use like smart performing carpet made with Anso CrushResister III[®]nylon. Thanks to patented CrossBond[™]technology, Anso CrushResister III nylon can handle your pile driving, body slamming, little hellion. And best of all, it still looks great. If you need beautiful carpet that lasts, choose carpet made with Anso CrushResister III nylon. Designed for fashion. Engineered for performance.



Voted #1

Floor Covering in

Pulaski County,

Six Consecutive Years.

**BUCKHORN
CARPET**

Hwy. 17, Buckhorn, MO.

573-774-2958

**PATCRAFT
FASHION
SHOWCASE**

