

Old Pulaski THEN and NOW

John Bradbury and Terry Primas

So what's left in "Old Pulaski" that brings the past to mind? Modern Phelps, Pulaski and Texas Counties share historical antecedents with their neighbors, and we date the beginning of Old Pulaski to Spring 1816 when frontier sawmillers rafted the first lumber down the Piney Forks of the Gasconade to downstream markets. Also in 1816, James Harrison built his log home and tavern along the ancient trail southwest across the northern Ozarks near where the Pineys and Gasconade come together. In 1830 the trail became the state road to Springfield. Harrison's home, the first permanent structure in the area, welcomed lumbermen, rafters and travelers on the road and was the first post office (Little Piney P. O.) and place for legal and electoral proceedings. Sawmills and Harrison's Tavern put Old Pulaski on modern maps as a populated industrial zone in an otherwise empty Ozarks.

Six big sawmills operated along the Big Piney around Licking by the 1840s. Railroad ties replaced lumber in the trade following the Civil War, but rafting linked northern Texas, southwestern Phelps, and Pulaski Counties until it ended about 1925. By then, millions of ties had arrived at the Jerome landing, the best on the Gasconade with the most convenient access to the railroad. Its landing was a stone's throw from Harrison's home, already a local landmark.



James A. Bates (Geer) house west of Slabtown.

house (1861) in Rolla. The upstart railroad town was the end-of-tracks for nearly six years during the war and became a critical military hub on the Springfield road. The Union army zealously protected Rolla and Waynesville, sparing them of the fate of most Ozark county seats. Occupied intermittently by Yankee soldiers, Texas County did not fare well. Guerrillas burned most of Houston by mid-war. The Old Stagecoach Stop and Rolla's public buildings survived thanks to Union troops.

The stalled railroad was an immediate post-Civil War concern, but it was years before workers bridged the Gasconade (1869) and laid tracks to the western border of Missouri (1870). The railroad (the "Frisco" after 1876) dotted the landscape every twenty miles or so with facilities for its own purposes. Most important in Old Pulaski was the creation of Arlington, Jerome, Dixon, Crocker, Richland, and Newburg. The railroad towns grew quickly, developing local markets. In Pulaski County they nearly eclipsed Waynesville and challenged it for the county seat. They also enjoyed a substantial seasonal tourist trade. For a generation, Frisco trains delivered urban visitors to nearby Gasconade and Piney resorts. Wagon rides from the tracks at Newburg took sportsmen to the Big Piney and from Richland to the upper Gasconade at Hazelgreen. The trade put the hotels at Jerome, the whistle stop at Schlicht, Cave Lodge, and a host of other resorts on the summertime map of Old Pulaski. The main building at Cave Lodge still stands from the time when the Frisco advertised its trains "out of the smoke zone and into the ozone" of healthful Old Pulaski.

After World War Two, the transition from steam to diesel and the end of passenger service cut the railroad labor force and eliminated the need for most facilities. The depots and water tanks are mostly long gone. Although removed from its original location, the Crocker Depot museum is the last example of a small town Frisco depot from the steam era, but railroad era hotels and boarding houses still stand in Dixon and Newburg. Formerly a railroad division point, Newburg has its original commercial building, the Houston House (1881), and the Sullivan Hotel, but the roundhouse, crews and travelers they once served are gone. No railroad structures are left in Rolla, but special mention is granted to Frisco locomotive 1501 in Schuman Park. No stranger to Old Pulaski, 1501 hauled fast trains between St. Louis and Springfield for two decades.

The era of town growth is obscured by fires and the passage of time. Fires in the 19th and early 20th centuries obliterated most of the original structures. Phelps County has its original courthouse, but those in Texas burnt three times and in Pulaski once. Fires burned closely-built commercial areas frequently and randomly, but in nearly every business district a block or two remains dating to the turn of the last century, easily identified by brick



James Harrison's house and tavern near Arlington, 1930s. It no longer stands.

Place names along the Big Piney (Paddy Creek, Baldrige Creek, Slabtown, Pike's Defeat, and Devils Elbow) recall pioneer lumbermen and rafters, but the sole physical remnant of the age is James A. Bates's home west of Slabtown in Texas County (known locally as the Geer House). Bates made a fortune in lumbering and other ventures in Old Pulaski. His 1850s house, a two-story frame building of sawed pine lumber, cut stone fireplaces and glass in all the windows, was a rich man's home when most people still lived in log houses. Looking its age these days, it is the last relic of the glory days on the Piney Forks of the Gasconade and possibly the earliest structure still standing in Old Pulaski.

The second oldest building in Old Pulaski is likely The Old Stagecoach Stop on the square in Waynesville. Believed to have been built by W. W. McDonald about 1860, the building served people with business at the county seat and as a way station on the state road to Springfield. It was probably also the first building in Pulaski County to shelter United States soldiers.

Next youngest structures are the first Phelps County jail (1860) and court-

buildings that replaced wooden ones, not only along the railroad but inland as well, such as those in Licking and Houston.

As the Frisco developed Old Pulaski, it promoted farm-to-market roads to its tracks. Better roads and bridges to replace low-water fords became major items on every county budget. The process knit rural neighborhoods to railroad towns and county seats, creating a modern road system just in time for the automobile age. Route 66 defines the era, but it doesn't appear on Missouri's earliest modern road maps but Highway 63 does. The Piney Inn in Houston recalls the day when Highway 63 became the "main street" in south-central Missouri. In 1928 the authorization of U. S. Highway 66 designated the old Springfield Road through Old Pulaski as the favored avenue to the Southwest. The national highway revitalized Rolla and Waynesville. Filling stations, garages, tourist courts and eateries popped up everywhere despite hard times. Especially notable were road and tourist-related businesses between Arlington and Waynesville that lasted into the 1960s.

The Route 66 era is the hardest era to spot now following decades of realignments, improvements such as dual-lanes and limited access, and, finally, construction of Interstate 44. Each change destroyed some of the original businesses, caused them to relocate, or left them by-passed and abandoned. The Totem Pole Trading Post, still doing business in its third location west of Rolla, is a survivor of the highway's fickle nature. In Rolla, redevelopment of the best commercial locations along the road is now several generations old. The Edwin Long Hotel, built in time to celebrate completion of the highway in 1931 is the last remaining building directly-associated with Route 66. The ruins of the cabins are a far cry from the spectacle that was once Stonydell, but more than mark the tourist lodge at Powellville, or the mom & pop enterprises at Basketville, and Hooker. Devils Elbow is the road's most evocative spot in Old Pulaski. In one of the most scenic stretches of the road, every bridge built over the Big Piney (Route 14, Route 66, and I-44) still exists. The original bridge, post office and Elbow Inn still stand, making Devils Elbow easily recognizable from old photos and post-cards.

We've barely touched on older homes, churches and cemeteries, but standing structures in the views that follow (grouped geographically) reflect major historic developments of the past. We quibble about the end of Old Pulaski. Fort Leonard Wood may have marked its end, but others hold out for the end of the classic age of Route 66 in 1955. Either way, there are still things to see in Old Pulaski.

STONYDELLE



West of the Little Piney, the ruins of the arched stone entryway and cabins on the north side of Highway D are the last remains of the tourist and recreational complex at Stonydell. Built by Vern Prewett and opened in 1931,



most of the tourist and recreational complex was on the south side of the highway. It included a swimming pool, restaurant, rock garden, free tourist park, and filling station. A bus station/souvenir shop with a goldfish pond were built later on the north side. Everything was hand-crafted in local sandstone in Vern Prewett's distinctive style. Stonydell thrived

through the 1950s but died when it was cut off by new dual westbound lanes on I-44. One of the most unique enterprises along Route 66 in Old Pulaski, most of Stonydell was razed about 1965.



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ROLLA



Rolla's commercial district developed along the railroad tracks north of the Phelps County courthouse during the Civil War. Largely destroyed afterwards by fires, it was rebuilt in brick. An impressive post office and the Edwin Long Hotel, built in 1915 and 1931 respectively, marked the heart of the business district on Pine Street for decades. Both were only a block from the railroad depot, but as signs of what was to follow, the post office replaced a livery stable and the hotel was rushed to completion to host a gathering of Route 66 dignitaries and a celebration of



the road's completion across Missouri. Both buildings had easy access to the railroad, but by the 1940s, there was already enough traffic congestion on the Main Street of America to require a stop light. Both buildings survive, the post office as the Rolla Public Library and the hotel as the home of the Phelps County Bank.



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PUBLIC BUILDINGS



Phelps County's first courthouse was under roof but not quite completed when the Civil War began in 1861. The Union army's use and protection during the war and subsequent fiscal conservatism of voters kept it in regular use until 1994, and it is presently maintained by the Phelps County Historical Society. Because the business district developed away from the square the town's founder envisioned, the courthouse and a few late 19th century buildings also escaped the commercial turbulence that made the lots more valuable than old buildings in many places elsewhere. This view from the 1880s shows one of the vaults added to the courthouse after the war, and a fine two-story brick residence that still stands along Rolla Street.



In terms of preservation, the public buildings in Old Pulaski survive longer than most commercial and residential structures, but they have not been immune to fire. Arsonists wantonly destroyed Texas County's first courthouse and accidental fire claimed a fine 1882 courthouse (shown here) in 1930. Its replacement (1932, below), the county's sixth courthouse, has since been remodeled to serve as the county's administrative offices, with court matters held nearby in the Texas County Judicial Center.



Pulaski County's fourth courthouse, built at a cost of \$10,240, is pictured above shortly after completion in 1903 and before a town ordinance was passed in 1911 that prohibited animals from roaming the streets. A new courthouse was built in



1989. Part of the agreement with county citizens for passing the bond issue for the new structure was to save and maintain the 1903 courthouse during the term of the bond issue. The old courthouse is now the Pulaski County Museum.

HOUSTON



Houston is the county seat of Texas County, the state's largest county in area. Looking south on Grand Avenue, the town's business street in the late 1930s, near its intersection with Pine Street, Blankenship's Rexall drug store is on the left, which John Blankenship established in 1868. The next corner two-story building is Leavitt's Department Store (1875), which was in business for 120 years. On the right side of the street foreground, was Brown Motor Company, purveyor of Chevrolet automobiles and Sinclair petroleum products with gasoline pumps at curbside. Brown's price for Sinclair H.C. (stands for high compression) gasoline in May of 1939 was 15 cents a gallon, 17 cents for Ethyl. The two story next to the Chevy dealer was the Texas County Bank building (1905) which went bust in 1931. Herron's Drug Store is visible across Pine Street.

The modern view below clearly shows the Grand Avenue and Pine Street intersection. Blankenship's building is still a drug store, although now Forbes Pharmacy and "Powered by Walgreens." Leavitt's still stands. Across the street, the building that housed Herron's Drug Store is still a mercantile. The old bank building and Brown's structure, along with three other businesses, were destroyed by fire on April 5, 1999. Those lots are now Lone Star Plaza, a city park (right foreground behind bearded man.)



John S. Freeland and wife operated Freeland's Park Hotel in Houston since 1918. On Sunday morning, November 25, 1928, the hotel erupted in fire and the building and all contents were destroyed. The guests were successfully evacuated. While operating their other hotel in Licking, the Freelands built a new hotel on the site, the Freeland Hotel, which opened the first week of May in 1930. The exterior of the first floor was finished in cobblestone and the second with tinted stucco. In addition to a lobby, kitchen and family living quarters on the first floor and coffee shop, the hotel contained 19 guest rooms and 23 beds, with baths in connection with all the rooms. The *Houston Herald* reported it cost "probably \$25,000." The hotel also served as the Rolla-Cabool Bus Station, with buses making connections with buses in both directions on Highway 66 at Rolla and on Highway 60 at Cabool.

Business was on the boom in Houston during the construction of Fort Leonard Wood in 1941. Soldiers then resided in Houston and continued the economic growth. The rustic Freeland Hotel on Grand Avenue, Houston's main street, enjoyed the boom. In August of 1941, Mr. and Mrs. John S. Freeland, now in their seventies, sold the hotel to two sisters, Mrs. Maude Knapper and Mrs. Rose Mack. The two ladies were experienced hoteliers. They owned the Big Spring Inn at Neosho but it was leased to another operator. The sisters promptly renamed it The Piney Inn. Today, it is an apartment house with a cafe.

Houston Herald, September 4, 1941



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Houston Herald, May 16, 1935

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LICKING



On June 28, 1895, the first serious fire in Licking's history burned 20 commercial buildings, all wooden, on the business block of South Main Street. The fire originated in W. S. Nichol's store on the northeast corner. Nichol constructed a new store, this one of brick. It became known as the Licking Farmers Exchange building and for many recent years was the MFA cooperative store. The 137 year old building survived a second Main Street fire in 1896. It has been vacant for the past three years.



The fire jumped Main Street and burned down J. L. Campbell's store on the northwest corner. Like Nichol, Campbell soon started building a new two-story brick store in 1895. They were two of only three building owners with insurance. The first floor of the building became Dunlap's A. G. Store in the 1920s-30s, later Williams Western Auto Store, and is now Licking's VFW Hall. Resident Lewis Parker remembered, "At one time Clark Dunlap had a grocery store in this end building. His boys, Frankie and Clark, were pranksters. They lived above the store. The boys would tie an icepick onto a long string, lower it through a hole in the floor, stab an apple, and draw it back up for a snack." Although slightly damaged, it survived the 1896 fire.



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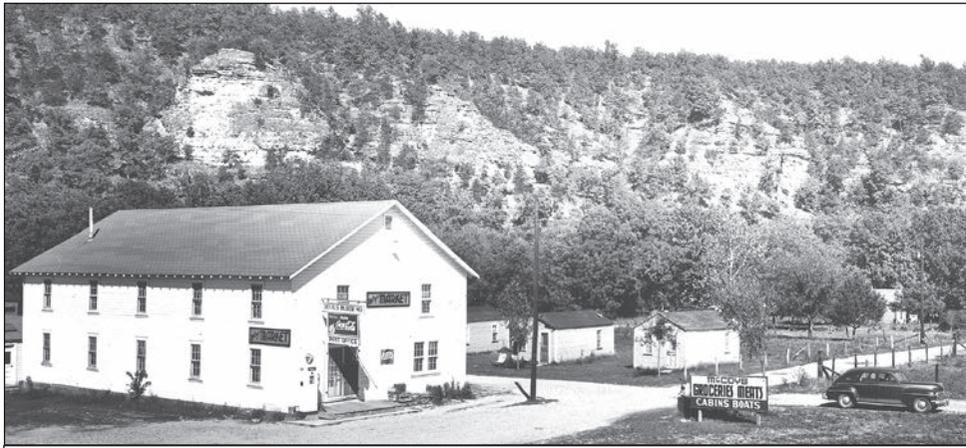
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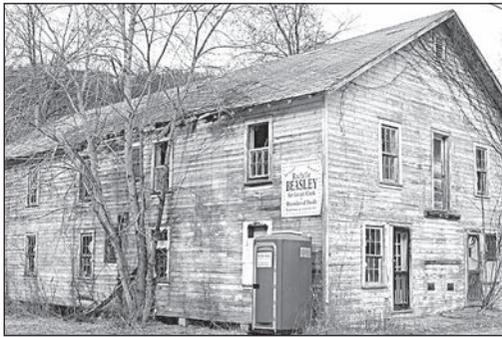
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DEVILS ELBOW



Charles O. McCoy came to Pulaski County in 1941. After operating the Devils Elbow Cafe for a year, he erected a large two-story building in 1942. There were family quarters on the second floor and the ground floor provided space for a grocery store and post office. He also built six rental cabins to the east of the store. In 1952 McCoy sold the building to George Childs of Newburg, who discontinued the grocery business and converted the building to apartments. The 24.5-foot flood of the Big Piney River in December of 1982 damaged five of the six cabins. Childs had sold the apartment building and it fell into severe disrepair (right). The historic



flood of April 2017, which crested at 30.67 feet, shifted the building on its foundation. The building was razed later that year. Today, all that remains of the structure are a few building piers on an empty lot to the east of the Devils Elbow Post Office (left). The village of Devils Elbow was accorded National Register of Historic Places Historic District status in 2017.

The 1923 bridge in Devils Elbow (below) still straddles the Big Piney on original Route 66. It was slated for closing in 2002. Through a combination of grants, Pulaski County completed rehabbing the bridge in 2013 at a cost of \$1.3 million. The native rock Devils Elbow Cafe in this 1930s view is gone but the house behind is still standing, though vacant, surviving a long succession of historic crests of the river.



BRIDGES



For many people, bridges do not come immediately to mind as remarkable structures of the cultural landscape. However, for earlier county citizens, the construction of bridges around the turn of the 20th century was life-changing. When the Gasconade and the Big Piney rivers were on a rampage and the Roubidoux was roaring, travel was dangerous or simply stopped. Circuit Court sessions were postponed and the mail was not delivered. Ross Bridge over the Big Piney River, above, was constructed in 1908. Riddle Bridge, right, spanned the Gasconade in 1912. Three bridges were built at what was known as Fish Dam Ford on Highway 28 south of Dixon. The first



one was built sometime prior to 1904 (left). A new steel truss bridge was constructed in 1932 and replaced by the present one in 2001. Riddle Bridge was replaced in 1987. Ross Bridge was blown up by the Army in 1998 after being replaced by a new bridge upstream in 1995.

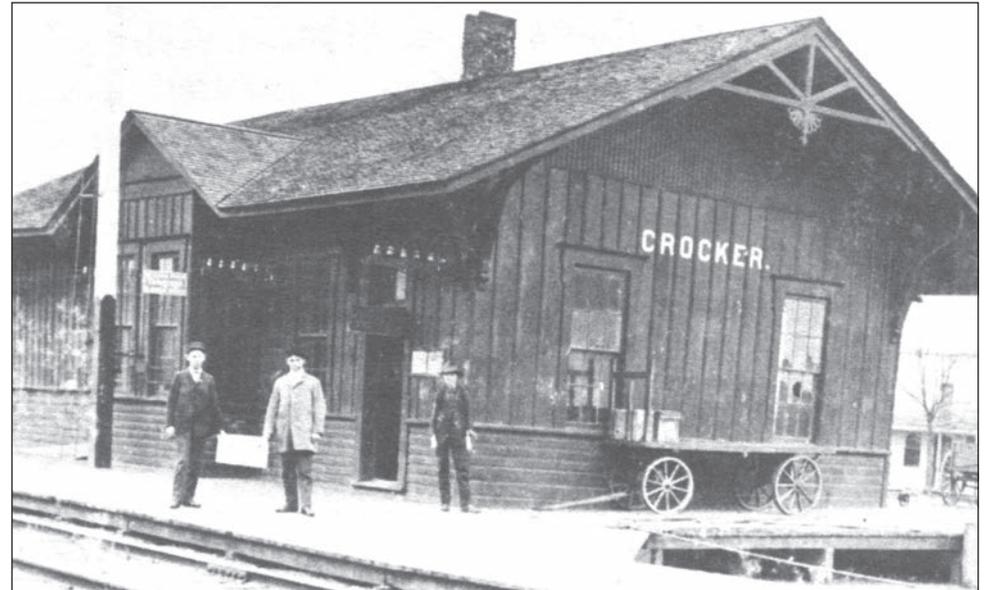
The old bridges were steel truss bridges, each unique with their approaches and wooden decks, and replacement was necessary. The new bridges are low profile concrete structures, such as the new Ross Bridge below, functional, quite uninteresting, and all look the same. Two vintage bridges of note remain in the county: the steel truss bridge over the Big Piney at Devils Elbow (left) and the concrete arch bridge over the Roubidoux in Waynesville. They were both built in 1923 as part of an improvement to State Highway 14 which became Route 66 in 1926.



FRISCO



The St. Louis & San Francisco Railway never reached the Pacific, but became well known for its nickname and distinctive logo. The Frisco served the towns across northern Pulaski County and created Newburg from scratch in Phelps County in 1881 to serve as a roundhouse, switching yard, and associated facilities. The white gabled Houston House (above left), Newburg's first commercial structure, can be seen behind the crowd in this World War One era postcard view. It stands today but everything railroad except the tracks are gone.



The Crocker Depot Museum is the best surviving example of the formerly all-important Frisco depots in Old Pulaski. Railroad stations were once small-town centers of commerce and portals to world's fairs, world wars, and railroad league baseball games in rival towns. Crocker moved the old depot about a block west and restored it. It features displays of railroad memorabilia.



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DIXON



Saturday shopping in Dixon, circa 1920, was certainly a crowded affair. We are looking east on 2nd Street from near its intersection with Pine Street. The large two-story stone building in the center was originally Rinehart & Holland Hardware. The first American Legion Hall, established in 1920, was on the second floor until 1989. The T. A. Murphy and Co. Dry Goods and Groceries (building with many windows) anchored the west corner

In the modern view, the stone building is still standing tall. Beyond the stop sign, the Murphy and Co. corner building now is home to Goodrich Gas.



Elm Street (looking north) also sported quite a few businesses, as well as the post office, in this late 1930s scene. Prosperous Dixon had three banks through the 1920s: State Bank, People's Bank, and the Bank of Dixon. The State Bank cornered 2nd and Elm and is visible in both vintage pictures. In 1932, the State Bank merged with the Bank of Dixon to become the State Bank of Dixon. Part of Paris Christeson's first Modern Mercantile Co. store is visible at extreme right.

Straddling the tracks in almost the same spot, the old post office building is at left with quite a few of the old buildings lining the left side of the street.





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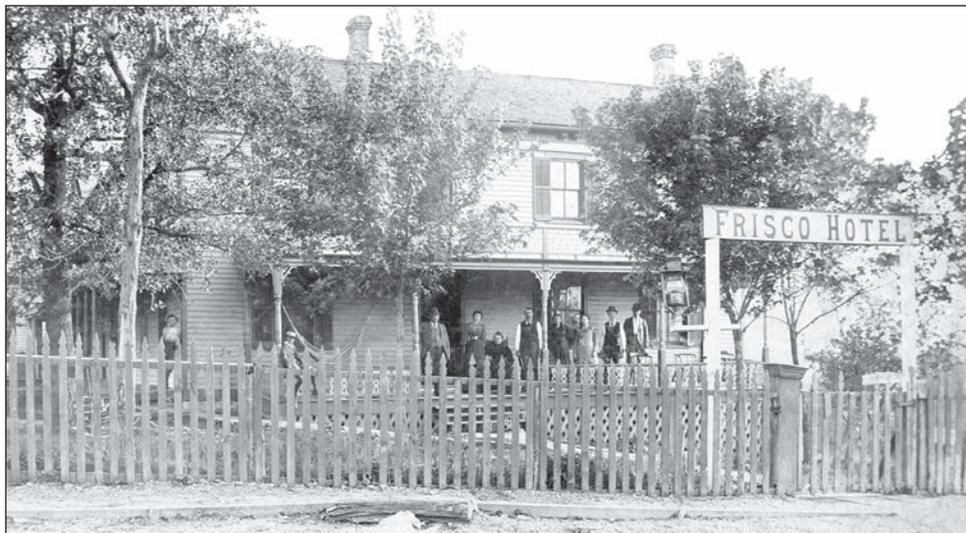
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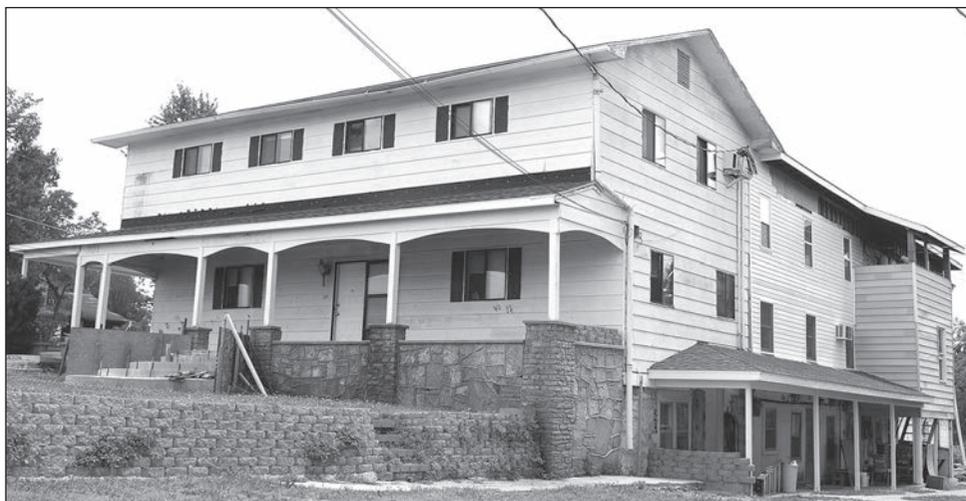
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DIXON



The Frisco Hotel, ca. 1910, was built by William H. Harris in 1876. Harris ran it until the roundhouse was moved to Newburg in 1884. It had a prime location at the corner of Elm and Chestnut, across from the railroad depot. The hotel was operated then by each of the Imboden brothers (John, Tom, and Frank) at different times during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Attorney Fred L. Scott, who managed Pippin Place for a short time in 1914-1915 and operated the Black Hotel (Old Stagecoach Stop) for a few months in 1917, left Waynesville to run the Frisco Hotel.

Over the years, there have been additions to the rear of the building, some stone work done to the front, and other remodeling. The old hotel is now an apartment house.



Built in 1906 by Chris Veasman, who managed the Dixon Hardware Company, this large structure was billed as the “traveling men’s home” at \$2.00 per day or \$10.50 by the week. Veasman sold his interest in the hardware business in 1911 and became increasingly involved in civic affairs, heading the Liberty War Bond Drive during World War I and taking the lead in securing an electric light plant and operator the community could count on. He served as mayor and as a Pulaski County Judge (commissioner), 1919-1922.

The Cottage still stands, though it has been a private residence for several owners for at least six decades. It is a stunning 116-year-old residence with a well-groomed yard.



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CROCKER



The view above is of Main Street in Crocker in 1918. Crocker was founded shortly after the railroad came through Pulaski County in 1869. The large brick building is the Independent Order of Odd Fellows (I.O.O.F.) building. The original brick building (1908) was destroyed in November of 1914 by the first of three devastating fires within a span of six months. The Odd Fellows' lodge on the second floor and Crocker State Bank on the ground floor were casualties. Replacement of the original building was completed by May of 1915. The lodge and bank resumed their locations. There still is an I.O.O.F. lodge, Number 108, on the second floor.

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, piles of railroad ties were stacked along Main Street (later renamed Commercial Street) waiting for rail shipment. Crocker was the closest railroad depot to Waynesville. In early 1941, materials for the construction of Fort Leonard Wood were off-loaded along the street for truck transport to the building site.

The one-story building in the middle of the pictures has long been a drugstore, housing such doctors as J. E. Rayl, Wilmer Sell, and Cyrus Mallette. Part of the building houses a medical clinic today.



CAVE LODGE



Cave Lodge was built in 1912 by Joel Lane. He erected the 12-room hotel atop a hill overlooking the Gasconade, five miles southwest of Crocker and less than a mile downstream from the long established Schlicht Mill and Forest Lodge. At the bottom of the hill is a cave reached by a long wooden walkway. Before the beginning of the 1913 tourist season, Lane sold the hotel to Marion J. Laws, who built a dancing platform in the cave and installed a waterworks in the hotel, providing each room with running clear spring water.

In mid-summer of 1913, Laws sold the business for \$2,300 to George E. Ebersole of St. Louis. Joel Lane and Marion Laws, country and county boys, offered Cave Lodge as a base for hunting and fishing trips. Ebersole, a young man of 32, made further improvements, building a rustic log cabin on the grounds and a screened open air dining room and kitchen. He bought pigeons from California, adding squab to the menu, an entrée familiar to the St. Louis elites. Ebersole was not selling a wilderness experience but an Ozark vacation for the whole family with comfortable accommodations, excellent table fare, and a variety of recreational pursuits.

Business was excellent during Ebersole's tenure and he sold it in 1918 to Harry V. and Lona English, also from St. Louis, for \$3,750. The English family, including son Ted, owned the resort until 1948. They built three more cabins to handle the many vacationers. Ownership of the Cave Lodge property passed through the hands of seven owners over the next three decades. Its glory days as a bustling and fine river resort were gone. It was primarily used as a vacation retreat by St. Louis County families. Beginning in 1979, the old hotel has been rehabilitated by two consecutive owners, as a fine residence. For a more detailed history, see "Cave Lodge on the Gasconade," 2005 *Old Settlers Gazette*.



RICHLAND



If you were standing at the corner of Chestnut and McClurg streets in the 1930s, you would be at the west end of the business section. The tall building on the corner was the C. L. Evington building, built in 1912. In that year, Edward Lutz had the Palace Drug Store in the front of the building and the post office was in the rear. The upstairs rooms provided an office for Dr. Campbell, a dentist, and others. By 1928, The Palace Drug Store was replaced by Chas. J. Seeburger Drugs with Cowan and Bryant's store next door. These two buildings escaped the fire that destroyed seven other store buildings to the east on July 4, 1930.

In the current view of the corner below, the large Evington building is gone but the smaller adjacent building is still there, now housing a chiropractor. The rest of the block has been rebuilt.



The east end of the business district was the corner of South Pine and McClurg streets, here looking northeast on Pine. On the right is the H. E. Warren & Sons store, established in 1869, and recognized as the oldest business in Missouri operating under the same name. On July 23, less than three weeks after the fire mentioned at left, fire erupted in the Gem Theatre, three buildings north of the Warren store, spread to the Gem Cafe on the south and the Richland Hardware and Furniture Company building on the north. The roof of H. E. Warren & Sons caught fire in several places but as watchers were on the roof, the blaze was soon extinguished. All three buildings and contents were destroyed. The hardware store was rebuilt, along with another store, visible in the "now" view below. (Read more about the fires and resultant waterworks in "Richland Fire and Water," 2012 *Gazette*.)



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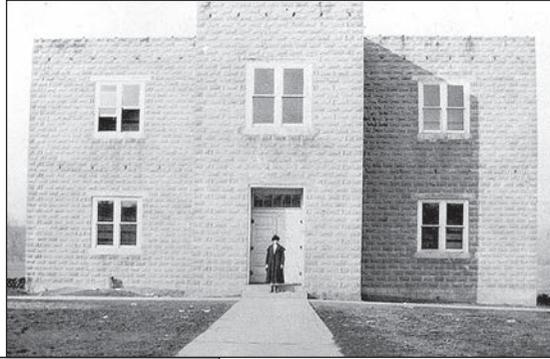
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WAYNESVILLE

Waynesville had several four-room frame school buildings until it built the four-room concrete block building at right. It measured 30x60 feet and opened in January of 1913.



The block building was razed in 1936 to build, with WPA assistance, the brick building on



its site on School Street. Smaller school districts were consolidating in the 1930s and Waynesville offered a four-year high school curriculum, attracting the small districts. A two-story, four room Arts and Sciences

addition was built behind the west (left) end of the main building in 1942.

Several new schools were built in the late 1950s and Fort Leonard Wood was growing. In 1959, the school enrollment reached a record 3,000. A new high school opened on Route 66 in West Waynesville. The WPA brick building also contained elementary grades for a few years but became the junior high then middle school with many modifications for almost 50 years.

The old school was torn down in 2019 and the site is now the location of the Pulaski County Justice Center (county sheriff, below), erected in 2020.



The oldest building in town and the county is the Old Stagecoach Stop, built in the 1850s by William Walton McDonald as a three-room log structure. The view above was taken shortly after it was raised to two stories in 1876 by the proprietor at the time, Alexander Bryan. A three-room lean-to addition was also built on the back of the building. He called the hotel the Waynesville House.

Located on the east side of the town square, it has served as a stagecoach stop, Civil War hospital, hotel, and apartment house. It became vacant in the late 1960s and through the next decade. The old hotel was condemned by the city in 1980. In 1983, a group of citizens formed the Old Stagecoach Stop Foundation, purchased the building, stabilized it, and began its restoration. Today, it is a house museum.



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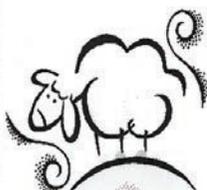
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WAYNESVILLE



The first medical facility to serve Waynesville citizens was a private hospital built by Dr. Ralph Ogden DeWitt and located on Fort Hill. Previously, patients in need of hospitalization were sent to Rolla, Lebanon, or elsewhere. The DeWitt Hospital was 76x36 feet, red brick, and accommodated fourteen patients. The living quarters of Dr. and Mrs. DeWitt were five rooms on the first floor and had a fireplace. Dr. DeWitt financed the construction with \$25,000 of his own money (\$494,330 in 2022 dollars). After its opening in January of 1942, the local MDs still sent their patients elsewhere because Dr. DeWitt was a DO and the MDs were medically opposed to the osteopaths. The building was razed three years ago and only a vacant lot remains on DeWitt Street.



The Waynesville General Hospital held an Open House on Sunday, July 15, 1945. The building had originally been constructed in 1942 as a school with a federal grant for school construction and improvement but never occupied. The government spent \$250,000 in 1945 to repurpose the building as a 46-bed general hospital for the community. In 1951, the hospital was turned over to the county for operation. After several attempts, a \$450,000 county bond issue yielding a matching amount in federal funds was passed in 1962 to build a new hospital. Construction of the 50-bed hospital was completed in May of 1965.

The hospital began having financial difficulties in 1985 and closed in 1988. The building is now the location of a residential treatment center for youths.



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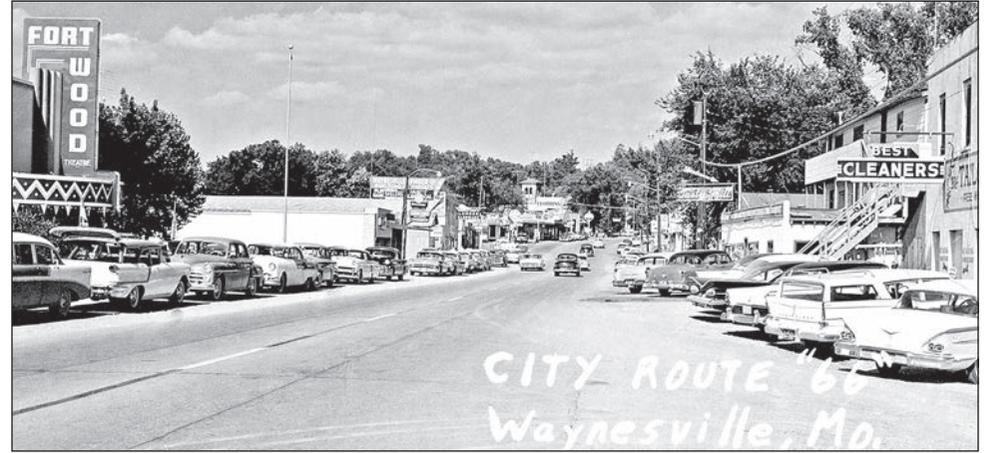
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WAYNESVILLE



The west side of the square was slow to commercially develop, most business being on the south side. The view above is in 1942. The businesses were (l-r): Talbot Building/City Drug (1941), Dodds General Store (early 1930s, formerly J. W. Wheeler store), Wayne Theater (1941, remodeled from Anderson Produce built in the 1930s), Post Office (1941), Wilson-Long Building (1942, home to the *Pulaski County Democrat* until 1960), and barely visible at the end of the block is a small frame building housing a tailor shop.

The block today (below) still features the Talbot Building, remodeled for an attorney's office. Dodds and the theater became a Western Auto store (1954) which burned in 1998 and the space is now Roubidoux Plaza with several small shops. The post office and the Wilson-Long Building belong to attorneys. At the end of the block, Sterling Rollins built a new hardware store in 1949, which became Bob Dodds Sundries in the 1960s, followed by several other businesses until Larry and Karolyn Lercher established Business Graphics in the building in 1977.



This is a view of Route 66 looking east from the east side of the 1923 bridge over Roubidoux Creek in 1959. Sitting on the east bank of Roubidoux Creek is the Fort Wood Theatre at left. It opened in 1941 and was flooded at least three times. The theater had no parking lot so the first cars to arrive parked along the highway. Both sides of the street were packed with retail businesses. The bell tower of the old courthouse is visible in the middle of the picture.

The same view below features fewer buildings. Some were razed and others succumbed to fire, such as the theater, which closed in 1977 and burned shortly thereafter. The Shop Guns and Pawn now occupies the site. Across the highway, the Tasty Grill and Waynesville Hotel site is now a vacant lot. On the east side of the lot is the Greyhound Bus Station building built in 1963, now the Bo Peep Ceramics shop.



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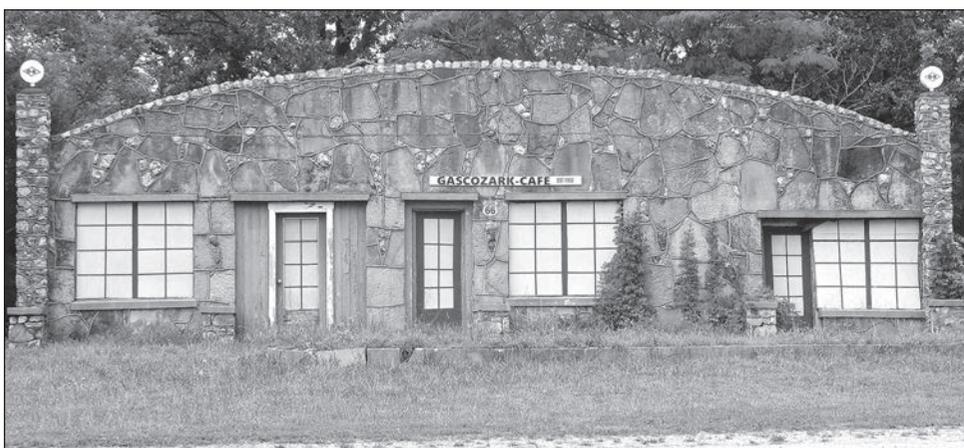
Frank A. Jones retired rather early as Vice President of the Automotive Division of Shell Oil Company with a vision to transform the several hundred acres he bought in 1927 along the Gasconade River between Barlow Ford and Hazelgreen in southwestern Pulaski County. He immediately began building a herd of registered, purebred Hereford cattle as part of the Gascozark Hereford Farm. Also part of that vision was “to build and operate a resort of the type I had so often wished for but never found.” Frank realized that dream by building the Gascozark Hills Resort (now known as Gasconade Hills Resort) on the farm, 1.25 miles south of Route 66, on which modern cottages, tennis court, boat dock, main lodge, dining hall, and swimming pool were constructed.

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Frank established another business on Route 66. He bought a small building on the north side of the highway in 1931 and made some additions to it. The original concept was part cooperative and part store/filling station. In 1935, he hired a stonemason named Lillard to rock the several structures. The roof lines did not match so Lillard fashioned a singular sweeping arch (top picture). Columns at the front corners added an even more distinctive touch. By the mid-1940s, the station/cafe was known as the Spinning Wheel Cafe. The rock building still stands, though vacant (bottom).

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For a more detailed account of the Gascozark development, see “Frank A. Jones and Gascozark,” 2007 *Old Settlers Gazette* at www.oldstagecoachstop.org. Click on *Old Settlers Gazette Archive*.



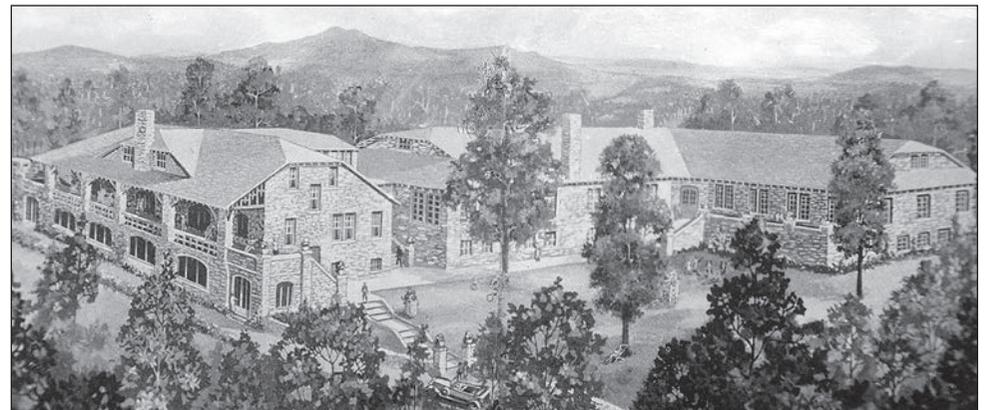
Pippin Place



Pippin Place was the premier resort in Old Pulaski and a gem of the Ozarks. The site is on the Gasconade River, four miles northwest of Waynesville. The large retreat began with the cobblestone Bartlett Springs Club House (top right) constructed by Dr. Bland N. Pippin, native Pulaskian and professor of dentistry at Washington University in St. Louis (see page 61). Pippin paid fifty cents for each wagon load of stone delivered and hired local craftsmen to build the clubhouse to his specifications. The resort opened in 1915 with 17 guest rooms. It offered the usual outdoor pursuits, but also featured one of the first clay tennis courts for its mostly upscale urban patrons. Hollywood discovered Pippin Place in 1931, when Douglas Fairbanks, Jr. and Joan Crawford signed the guest register.

DATE	ROOM	NAME	RESIDENCE	TIME OF ARRIVAL	DEPART
22		Douglas Fairbanks Jr.	Hollywood		
22		Joan Crawford	Hollywood		
		Mr. & Mrs. H. V. Moore	Meriden		
		Mr. & Mrs. C. B. Buckley Jones	Highwood		
Aug 23, 1931		C. W. Alley & wife	Walter Grove		

Register courtesy of William Eckert.



Above The club house saw several additions, expanding to the large complex above.

Below Today it is but a rock shell after being gutted by fire on June 13, 1984.

