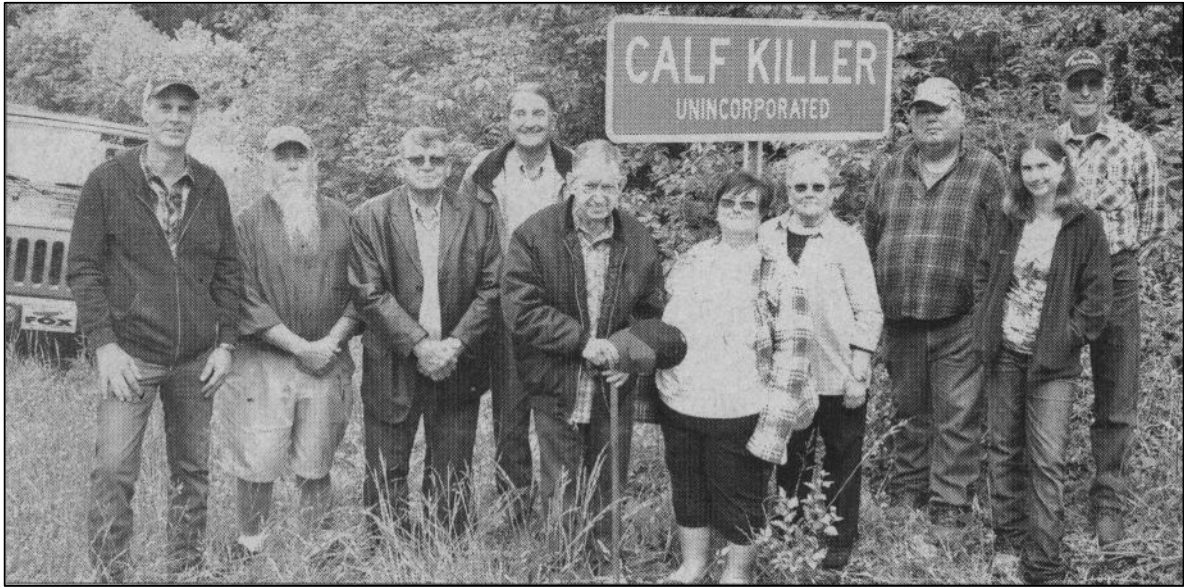


PUTNAM COUNTY ARCHIVES DIGS UP HISTORY ON
CALF KILLER COMMUNITY
‘Forgotten Crossroads’

PUTNAM COUNTY – In their search for “almost forgotten crossroads” of Putnam County, the Putnam County Archives has been collecting information from local residents about the Calf Killer Community. It is located along Highway 84 and Mill Creek Road intersect.



(Pictured at the new Calf Killer sign are, from left, Glenn Jones, Roy J. Brown Jr., Waylon Tabors, Clarence Tays Jr., Mason McCormick, Brenda Bullock, Betty Stark, Steve Bullock, Kara Phillips and Jimmy Holloway. Photo by Ty Kernea/Herald-Citizen).

John Henry was the first to come settle the area in 1812 from North Carolina. He made his home at the head of the river in a log home thatched with cane, which grows everywhere in the area. Other North Carolina pioneers followed, including James Robinson, James Scarbrough and Ned Ellems. Another pioneer, James Stamps, came from Virginia.

The origin of the community’s odd name is up for some debate.

“According to one tradition,” Glenn Jones, Putnam County archivist said, “the river is named for an Indian chief. Another story says the river comes out of a cave, and supposedly a calf fell in and was washed out.”

The post office was established on Feb. 13, 1872, with Benjamin F. Burton as the post master. Postal services would later be moved to Monterey on June 15, 1905. The community also had several stores, including Brown’s Store and the Calf Killer Store. T. J. Moore, father of the late Dr. J. R. Moore Sr. of Algood, was a farmer and merchant in

the community before moving to Algood. He operated a general store next to Johnson Baptist Church for several years. There was also a gristmill operated by Luther Gooch on the opposite side of Long Hollow Road. The community voted at the gristmill. The community also made gun powder during the Civil War from saltpeter in a local cave.

Local resident Clarence Tays Jr. recalled his days at Calf Killer School across from the Bohannon Cemetery. His mother, Gladys Tays, taught at the school education herself. The building had four rooms and kept students grades 1-8. Dolly Stamps and James Alcorn also taught there during this time.

Clarence Tays Jr. remembers when he was about 12 years old and sneaking off with friends Willie B. Henry and Waylon Tabor to go swimming in the river during recess and then returning to puzzled teachers noticing the boys' wet hair. One day a teacher, Alcorn, spotted the boys enjoying the river. When they returned, he let them know he had seen them.

“He whipped us hard,” Tays said. “We never went swimming in the river again.”

Tays, along with Roy Brown Jr. donated the funds to purchase the signs to mark the Calf Killer Community in honor of the family of Jay and Alma Brown, the family of Leslie Milligan and the Calf Killer Reunion.

Those who would like to share more information on the history of Calf Killer Community or any other local “forgotten” community, or to donate funds for signs for other unincorporated communities in Putnam County can visit the Putnam County Archives at 121 B S Dixie Ave., or call (931) 520-0042.

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Read more about the History of Putnam Co., TN at: <http://www.ajlambert.com>