

FORGOTTEN CROSSROADS: ELMORE TOWN

By Megan Trotter
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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 Elmore Town community. This community is located west of Baxter.



Buffalo Valley Road crosses First Street and continues west, but the name of the road was changed several years ago to Elmore Town Road.

“The road became a dead end road after Interstate 40 was built, blocking the western outlet. The Putnam County Archives has a 1912 map that shows this same Buffalo Road from Cookeville to the community of Buffalo Valley in western Putnam County,” Glenn Jones, Putnam County archivist said. “The center of the Elmore Town Community is located at the intersection of Elmore Town Road and Joe Elmore Road.”

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(Pictured with the Elmore Town sign are, from left, Glenn Jones, Putnam County archivist; Kim Blaylock, county executive; Bill Shanks, Eris Bryant, 8th district county commissioner; Lynell Elmore; Joe Elmore; Randy Eldridge; Diane Elmore; June Lewis; Carol Bradford, assistant archivist; Betty Stark, archives volunteer; and Fay Shanks).

George Washington Elmore, the first Elmore settler in Baxter on record, was born in 1829. He died 1873 and is buried in the Elmore-Richardson Cemetery in Baxter – now known as the Baxter City Cemetery – at the corner of First and Buffalo valley Road. He is the great-great-grandfather of Joe Elmore, who lives just off Elmore Town Road.

Joe’s grandfather, Felix Patterson Elmore, was born in 1857, and married Kansas Bradford, daughter of Giles and Nancy Caroline Bradford. Felix operated a small store and mill, which was located on Mine Lick Creek and used to ground up wheat and corn.

“Joe remembered that his grandfather, Felix, had a big block of tobacco in his store and would cut off a plug for customers in whatever size they wanted,” Jones said. “John Whitley Gentry, Joe’s maternal grandfather, operated a mill and store on Gentry’s Bluff. The store was located out from the mill near the water that fed the mill.”

Felix died in 1936.

Gentry's Bluff is also located in the Elmore Town area. In the early 1900s, visitors to the resort town of Bloomington Springs would take buggy rides to the scenic bluff. There was also a store operated by Lee Phillips near the "Burgess home" near Elmore Town Road.

Joe Elmore also remembers Charlie Green carrying mail around Elmore Town Road in a buggy.

"In winter, if the road was bad or in summer when it was muddy, Charlie would bring the mail on horseback," Jones said. "Joe remembers the first car he ever saw on Elmore Town Road; it belonged to Willie Lee."

The Putnam County Archives thanks Jimmy and Berry Harris for donating the signs for Elmore Town. These unincorporated signs pinpoint the center of the activities of the entire community.

Those with more information on the history of Elmore Town or any other local "forgotten" community, visit the Putnam County Archives at 121 B S. Dixie Ave, or call (931) 520-042.

*Read more "Forgotten Crossroads" at: <http://www.ajalmbert.com>