

ARCHIVES HIGHLIGHT PEEKVILLE 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 Peekville community. The community is located at the intersection of Old Bridge Road and Seven Springs – which was formerly known as the Falling Water Road in southern Putnam County, near the Falling Water River.



(Celebrating the dedication of the Peekville sign are, in front, from left, David Walker, Bob Lee Bilbrey, Kim Blaylock, Sherwell Tolleson, Gwen Ray, Lois Boyd Horsley, Connie Farris Sircy, Myra Farris Kernea and Betty Stark. In back: Glenn Jones, Glenn Bradford, Joseph Farris

Wallace and Tyrus Clay Kernea. Photo by Megan Trotter/Herald-Citizen).

Common family names from this area include Bohannon, Bounds, Boyd, Bradford, Bullock, Burgess, Cox, Dearing, Holman, Hopkins, Huddleston, Huges, Mansell, Nicholas, Peek, Phy, Pinkston, Sliger, Walker and Wilhite. Many of the male members of these families were Confederate Survivors’ Association veterans of the Civil War. These families were mostly farmers, but there was also a saddler, miller, distiller and a tailor in the community.

Local children attended Bridge School, founded in 1874, and located at the corner of Old Bridge Road and Boyd-Farris Road.

Churches in the area included Antioch Church of Christ, Caney Fork Baptist Church, Mr. Herman Presbyterian Church – whose congregation met in the school for a short time – Salem Methodist Church and Stone Seminary.

The post office was located on what is now the Bob Lee Bilbrey property at 2050 Seven Springs Road, and opened in March 1894, with James K. Peek as the postmaster. He continued until July 1897 when Lourana “Luraney” Bounds Peek, his wife, became postmaster. The mail service was later moved to Cookeville in September 1903.

According to Connie Farris Sircy, James Peek served as a justice of the peace and signed the first petition to form Putnam County from White County in 1842, and the second petition in 1854. James and Luraney Peek's great-granddaughter, Arlene Sliger Powers, continues to live in Cookeville, as do many other descendants.

According to Bob Lee Bilbrey, the land grant for property was owned by Joseph Crawford Freeze and Margaret Bounds Freeze, who were the parents of two sons and six daughters. When Cookeville sold its first lot at auction, it was he who purchased it. Glade Street's name was later changed to Freeze Street for him.

One of daughters, Sara Freeze, married R. A. Peek. In 1905, the property was transferred from R. A. Peek. In 1905, the property was transferred from R. A. Peek to W. A. Peek and wife. In October 1915, the property sold to brothers-in-law William Taylor Bilbrey and Arthur Whitson for the sum of \$900. Bilbrey was the grandfather of Bob Lee Bilbrey.

In January 1917, G. C. McCormick and his heirs purchased the property from Bilbrey and Whitson. Over the next several years, Luther McCormick and wife, Vallie, and Dave McCormick and wife, Lola Belle, bought the property from the other heirs. Luther and Dave were brothers.

In September 1980, Bob Lee Bilbrey purchased the property, where the post office is located, from the McCormicks. His grandmother told him when he was very young about riding a horse from her house to the Peekville Post Office to pick up mail.

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