

# Dru Pippin - a reminiscence

## Part Seven

### Ozark Caves

Did you know that Pulaski County ranks third in the state in the number of known caves. There are 3,313 known caves in Missouri, with more being discovered every year. Perry County has 358, Green County has 234, and we are close behind with 226. Cave exploration reveals the history of Man as using caves for homes, for worship, and for burials. They have been used for wine cellars, beer gardens, mushroom growing, manufacture of gunpowder, potential fallout shelters, places where meetings of the Ku Klux Klan were secretly held, as well as dress-up Inaugural Governor's Ball. For mining, air conditioning, and source of guano for fertilizer, and commercialized for sightseeing and conducting tours. *[The reference to a Governor's Ball is Fisher Cave in Meramec State Park, operated as a tour cave for a time by Lester Dill. Dill, a flamboyant cave promoter, apparently fabricated the story that Gov. Thomas Fletcher's 1865 Inauguration Ball took place in one of the large rooms in the cave.]*

Dr. Wallace B. Howe of the Natural Resources Department at Rolla reminds us that contrary to the beliefs of some, caves are much more than mere holes in the ground. They have been used as hide-outs for some of the state's most notorious outlaws. For instance, Sam Hildebrand, William Quantrill, Jesse James and his band, as well as the notorious Dalton gang.

Today, in our planning for the future, the knowledge of and study of caves is vital to highway construction, for waste disposal site selection, for designs and for impoundments in construction, and many, many more. One cave in Phelps County houses the University of Missouri seismograph, which measures the intensity of earthquakes. Caves many times offer to the

trained explorer bones of animals that are now extinct. For instance the mastodon, the woolly mammoth, sabre-tooth tiger, tapirs, giant armadillos, ground sloths, peccaries, and even camels that lived here in the ice age period. Their remains are found in caves. A cave within a twenty minute drive from my home has furnished many human skeletons of cave dwellers that are studied and have been studied by the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D.C.

The Ozarks boasts of about 80 percent of the caves in Missouri and due to a gradual yet continued leaching of the soft materials sandwiched between harder limestone, new caves are being formed to bring history to light.

### Springs and Mills

Many, many springs are regularly measured and studied by the University of Missouri. Some of the springs are Big Spring, Schlicht, Stone Mill, Shanghai, Pruett, Miller, Boiling, Bartlett or Pippin Spring, Creasy or Bubbling Spring, and Falling Spring. An average of measurements taken from 1915 through 1942 revealed that every twenty-four hours in excess of 85 millions gallons of water entered into the Gasconade, Piney, or Roubidoux rivers. These springs have played a most important part in the history of this area. At least four of these springs were harnessed at a time in the early days to furnish power with which to grind corn or wheat or to run a sawmill. The falling of the water would turn a turbine or concentrate as to run over a water wheel or under it in a confined trough to turn a shaft and a series of gears and belts that are attached to the buhrs that crush the grain. These stone buhrs were called "French buhrs." The best quality of stone came to America as ballast in French ships of trade and the hard rock was sold, traded, and

# Dru Pippin - a profile

by William Eckert

**D**ru L. Pippin was born April 13, 1899 in Pulaski County, Missouri, son of Bland Nixon Pippin and Nancy May Vaughn. The Pippin family had settled in the Pulaski County area in the late 1840s, having come from Tennessee and Alabama. Dru was named after area doctors Drura Clai-burn and Lavega Tice. His father was a professor of Dentistry at Washington University in St. Louis and Dru grew up in large part in St. Louis. Dru caught the so-called Spanish Flu and moved to Waynesville to recover. He attended the University of Missouri at Columbia and met and married Eva Luther. Dr. Pippin, who had a great love of the Ozarks and the outdoors, purchased property near Bartlett Spring and built a resort there named "Pippin Place". Dru and Eva took over management of Pippin Place and ran it until Dru closed it in the late Sixties. While Eva stayed at Pippin Place, Dru also had an insurance agency in Waynesville. In 1947 Dru was appointed to the Missouri Conservation Commission and served until 1959. He served another term from 1961 to 1964. Dru was very active

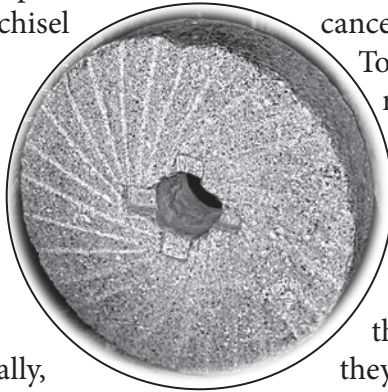


in the effort to make Fort Leonard Wood a permanent installation. Dru had two children, Dan and Nancy. Dan was captain of the United States Olympic Basketball team in 1952 and won a gold medal. Eva died in 1962 and Dru later married Wilda Miller. After Dru closed Pippin Place, he and Wilda moved to a small house in Waynesville where he died in 1981 and Wilda in 1980. Dru's father was always fascinated with the unique aspects of Ozark culture, such as the stories and the dialect, and Dru followed in his footsteps. In the 1970s he was asked to record some oral history memorializing his own observations of Ozark culture, customs, stories, and dialect and he recorded some 10 hours, most of which are available at Ft. Leonard Wood.



A young lady tests the 55°F water at Bartlett Spring in 1945. The spring had an average annual flow of 10 million gallons. Courtesy of William Eckert.

many times stolen for the purpose used. The stones with the flat surface were wrapped tightly in an iron container, circular iron bands about forty inches in diameter. The upper circle on the lower stationery buhrs. A temporary steel pick, sharpened like a chisel edge, was used to sharpen the buhrs, the sharpener simply pecking up and down making whatever cut he so desired. Periodically, the miller would deepen parallel grooves on the face of the buhrs and running parallel from the center to the outside. These cuttings furnished the crushing and grinding procedure while the direction of the grooves threw the crushed grain to the outside and out of an



opening where it was sacked. Sharp buhrs, good grain, and proper speed regulated by the amount of water allowed through the wheel produced a meal or flour which was unheated and of even texture. Nothing was added, nothing was taken away. No cancer producing additives here.

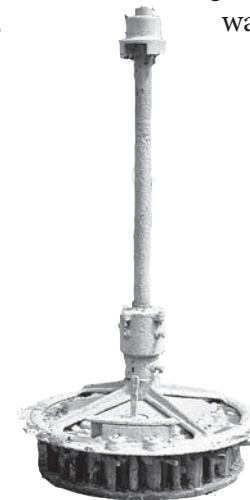
Today, only Schlicht's Mill still remains, standing restored pretty much as it was when it was in its heyday. *[It's gone now, too.]*

Going to the mill in those days was a day for gathering the news - visiting those, as they said, was "a fur piece from home" - as well as getting the larder well stocked for the winter. Ample time for visiting was afforded as the mill often had to be shut down and let the water catch up above the dam awaiting another turn of grain. There was talking, chewing and spitting, whittling, and maybe a

game or two of horseshoes, or five? marbles, some gossiping, some bragging, and a lot of tale swapping, mostly about women, fishing, and hunting. There were serious discussions about the candidates for office, the preacher and the church, the teacher and the school, the outlook for crops and prices. Some came with wagonloads of grain, all sacked up and already shelled, and the grain carefully sorted. Some came with only one sack. They came on horseback and with just three-fourths of the sack full of grain because when the corn when it is ground, the sack might not hold the crushed product. Funny thing about meal— it's kinda like beans asoaking. When they swell, the pot runs

over. For every three sacks of grain brought to the mill, he would bring an extra sack empty to hold the extra of that which he had to take home. The only thing that I know of anywhere where you take more home than you brought, after giving away some to begin with. I almost forgot to tell you that the miller was paid as regulated by law.

When the corn was shelled, the miller was allowed to weigh it and take one-eighth for his service and this was called his "toll." Later, when the steam mills came, the miller was allowed one-sixth for the same service. If the corn was brought in the ear, and many, many times it was, the miller was allowed to take the nub, which is the tip end of the ear, and the butt, which was the big end of the ear, and the




Metal turbines were in use by mid-19th century.

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**Above** The Hazleton Mill in northern Texas County may be the last mill building standing (and probably not for long) on the Big Piney and Gasconade rivers in our area. The spring is not a large one, averaging about 4 million gallons per day, but big enough to recharge a mill pond and spin the turbine. The community that grew up around the grist mill included a large general store, blacksmith shop, and a tie and lumber yard. The store had a post office and an Oddfellows Lodge on the second floor. Sawmilling ceased in the 1920s, grist milling in the 1930s, and the post office discontinued in 1944. The store closed and the community dispersed. Photo by Terry Primas.

scatter grain for his pay to shell the grain. Nubbin' and buttin' was done by hand. Oh, yes, the cobs were part of the toll. The patron always furnished his own sacks. Usually, denim bags or sacks tied with binder twine and secured with a miller's knot. Bartlett's Mill, for many years, shipped water ground corn meal by parcel post to customer all over the United States. It was the last to operate for the public in this county but it kept on grinding until a flood with its floating debris hit the underpinning and the mill collapsed. Today, all that is left is the dam site to remind me that I was probably the last water mill operator left in the area. And when I see it, I mentally spell that word "dam" with or without an "n." Just depends on my disposition at the time I do the spelling.

### Houn' Dawgs

Old Drum was a beautiful and powerful coon dog. Wide-eyed, flop-eared, deep bay voice and

always the leader of the chase. One could always pick his voice above all other dogs and naturally he was the prize dog of the coon hunter's fraternity. He had one bad habit, however. And it was a well-known and watched-for trait. If the coon jumped from the tree, or dislodged from his perch, and Old Drum could, he would grab the coon as it hit the ground, and try to mount it in dog-fashion style. One night a coon was treed in this tree against which a fallen tree was lodged at an angle. One of the hunters attempted to dislodge the coon by climbing the tree. Failing, he yelled down, "Hold Old Drum, you guys, I'm coming down."

### Beautiful Music

"Listen to that music. Ain't it wonderful? Ever hear such sound in all your born days?" These were the comments of the owner of some of the fox hounds who were hot on the trail of a fox. A city cousin huddled close to the fire, strained his ears,

and said, "I can't hear it through those damn dogs barkin'."

### Mousers

When it was raining, many times Uncle Tom would say, "Boys, let's go in the barn and shuck some corn while we're restin'." As we threw the shucks out the crib door and sorted the ears into two piles, one to feed and the other maybe to select meal corn and meal from, usually the cat was eagerly waiting for a mouse nest to be disturbed or a frightened mouse to appear and usually this meant that this was a good breakfast for the cat. Robby Robbins, who was shucking corn with us, and after a cat had pounced on a mouse nest, said, "That's a pretty fast cat. But I guess I've got about the best mouser that you ever saw. T'other day I was shuckin' corn some and ole Boon jumped out and with all four feet landed right into the nest. Well, sir, she had a mouse under each paw and one in 'er mouth. She kept all five of 'em at the same time and I only saw one mouse get away." Without cracking a smile, Uncle Tom replied that the cat right there that they'd been looking at would have caught that other mouse if he had been there. "Well," he said, "what he woulda done was to clamp that sixth mouse down under his tail and held him there tight until he had swallowed the one he had in his mouth."

### Shoes

There was a time and there are still isolated communities that refer to Saturday as tight shoe day, because that's the day they put on their best shoes to go to town. Bare-footed or brogans all week long let the foot spread for six days and the cramping came on Saturday.

In the old days, when foot-fitting day came before the chill of Fall, all the kids had to have shoes. Buster Brown make was a great favorite with his dog Tige and Buster himself on the box and maybe stamped in silver letters on the insole of the shoe. Anyway, a whistle was always

a free gift with each purchase. What I liked best, as you walked in a new pair of Buster Brown shoes, everyone knew you had on new shoes — they squeaked with every step. And because they could out-squeak the best of squeakers, they were the most popular, at least for me. Shoes in those days were made from real leather, and were made to wear. Now, I often think they are made to wear out. But gone forever is the thrill of a freshly shod youngster being able to tell the world of his new shoes just by the squeak. Kids were supposed to be seen and not heard in those days. But not with shoes. In order to be seen, they had to be heard. There are others who wouldn't have Buster Brown shoes because of the squeak. One of these people was Tom, who said he always avoided Buster Brown shoes because of the loud squeak they had. His taste for the squeak and mine, you can readily see, were very much different.



*Buster Brown and his dog Tige, an American Pit Bull, were the mascots of the Brown Shoe Company and appear on this souvenir button. Buster Brown was the children shoe brand of the Brown Shoe Company, headquartered in St. Louis, with factories in several Ozark towns. Buster and Tige appeared in Dixon in May of 1912. See 1912 Gazette, page 16.*

### Apple Butter

Long before anything was known about insecticides, fungicides, pesticides, and what would happen to our insides if we ate them, every farm had a few apple trees

grown from planted seed, maybe of the Johnny Appleseed variety, who knows. There were the Ben Davis's, the Jonathan, Winesap, Grimes Golden, June apple and many others and while not having the size, the coloring, and the keeping qualities of the modern sprayed grafted types we use today, they did have flavor.

They had specks, spots, and worms, and, as today, could be defended by the Yellow Jacket as his very own — and usually he won out. More fruit fell to the ground than was ever used, but it wasn't wasted. Flesh not eaten by the hogs and chickens went back to the soil organically and reappeared in future fruition. Or if the fruit ripened, beginning with the month of June, there were apple pies, sauce, jelly, apple dumplings and the like and in autumn that brings back the memories of the cider and apple butter.

My daughter acquired one of the copper kettles, probably would hold

about twenty gallons, it's beside her fireplace in her family room no longer used for its intended purpose but as an antique. It's a wonderful conversation piece and the holder of kindling for building the evening fire. It is a beautiful piece of workmanship. If this kettle could talk, in all probabilities it will tell a story about like this. Pa and the kids gathered the apples, sorted as best they could the better and the firmer ones, while Ma and the girls scoured and cleaned the copper kettle and placed it over an unlit heap of kindling and chopped wood.

The apples were most likely peeled, with one of those 1883 patented apple peelers, then quartered into pieces, or maybe ground if a grinder was available, but most often just cut into uniform sizes from six bushels of fruit which was about the amount used for a kettle of this size. To this fruit was added three buckets of water, 125 pounds of sugar, three

boxes of star anise, five boxes of stick cinnamon and, in those days, a dollar's worth of red-hots. Probably four dollars worth today. Some red food coloring but be careful, it's not the kind the Food and Drug people say causes cancer today. Start the fire, get the long wooden paddle with holes in the paddle part, and you start to stir. About ten hours of this stirring is ahead of you, so you better have a relief stirrer close at hand. The fire must be kept low and even, and the kettle must not be too close to the hot coals. It is either placed on a foundation of stacked rocks under the kettle legs, or the kettle is placed in an iron drum, or it's held higher by a rack made from discarded wagon tires by the village smithy. Every safeguard known must be taken to prevent scorching or sticking, and this means constant stirring and an ever-mindful watch of the fire. Well,

when it's done, it's finger-licking good. But careful, it's hot as well — it always did take apples a long, long time to cool— especially apple butter when there's home-made bread and home-churned butter waiting to get all mixed up with your taste buds. As an after thought, just noticed a jar of apple jelly in the refrigerator with the trade name on the glass "Musselmans." If you ever help make apple butter, you will appreciate that

name. Never knew a better way to make a man's muscle than a ten hour sentence to the stirrer with a paddle.

Audio tapes transcribed by:  
**William Eckert**, son of Lauramae Pippin Eckert and Dru's nephew, is an attorney in private practice in Arcadia, California;  
**Terry Primas** is the editor of the *Old Settlers Gazette*.

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# Dru Pippin - a reminiscence

## Part Eight

### Pippin Place

When Pippin Place was built an old mill was still in operation. My father, who built Pippin Place, decided to use this water power to generate electricity for the building that he was building. So he bought a five kilowatt generator and by turning the water wheel on to a series of belts, the generator generated sufficient electricity to light Pippin Place.

We had working for us at that time a very fine gentleman by the name Roberson. He could make anything with a pocket knife, a foot adze, an ax, and a hammer and a nail, and it's too bad that he had not had the education or the equipment because he certainly would have made a wonderful cabinet maker, had he been so trained. Anyway, he had never seen an electric light, as had very very few people in the county at that time [1914], and they came from miles around to see the electric lights burn.

Well, the first night that we turned the direct current on, because it was a direct current system, the light lit up in the house. At that time, no switches had been created so that individual lights could be turned off. It was simply wired as a test to see if the water flow from the spring would be sufficient to generate power for the entire day. Therefore, the lights that were on continued to burn all night. The next morning, I said to Billy, "Billy, how did you sleep last night?" He said, "I didn't sleep, very little. Those electric lights, they bother me," I said, "Then why didn't you put it out?" "Well," he said, "I couldn't find no way to put it out. I blew on it and it wouldn't blow out. I shook it and it wouldn't go out, so I finally just took my shoe and laced it up over that thing. It kind of scorched the shoe a little bit but by jing, I got to sleep."

You take the first road to the right

as you go west from Waynesville. Follow that road under the bluff down the Roubidoux and up the Gasconade River for five miles, you will come to an old rock building standing to your left on the top of the hill overlooking the river valley of the Gasconade River. At the foot of this big building is a spring known as Bartlett Spring. This spring furnished the power for a grist mill that was in operation before the Civil War and it was a meeting place for people miles around who brought their grain of wheat or corn to be ground for consumption during the winter. Pippin Place was operated as a summer resort and was the first summer resort in the Ozark area that had modern equipment, hot and cold running water, electric lights, and so forth. I am holding in my hand the last brochure that was put out when I operated Pippin Place and I think it might be interesting that it be recorded because there are very few of these brochures left. It reads as follows: *[Dru reads the back panel of the 1955 brochure reproduced on the next page.]*

It was recommended by the Scenic Inns of America. It was highly recommended by Duncan Hines, the outstanding food connoisseur of that day. Today, Pippin Place stands as a monument of foresight for Dr. Pippin. It stands as a challenge for future generations to preserve this historical building.

I sold it in 1969. It has deteriorated a lot during that time because it was not in operation. But today [1976], thanks to the present ownership, I can see that it is being improved and I hope that as time and years go on it will be preserved for future generations as a landmark where people met, played, worshipped, and lived — for the country met city where individuals were accepted for what they were, not for what they had.

# Dru Pippin - a profile

by William Eckert

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Dru was committed to good conservation practices. This photo appeared in the August, 1947 *Conservationist* magazine when his first term on the Missouri Conservation Commission began.



Guests arriving at Pippin Place. Courtesy of William Eckert.

## GASCONADING

The Gasconade, Roubidoux, Piney river area is rich in legend and historical events because growth and development have depended entirely on natural resources. Once it was a paradise for the wild creatures of the forest and streams and the happy hunting grounds for the Indians who lived by the skill of the hunt. Then came the white trappers, followed by the covered wagon with those who would build a home. By 1831 the present U. S. Highway 66 was well established as the "Old Kickapoo Trace", only to be known later as the "Wire Road" because it was paralleled by the only telegraphic communication between St. Louis and Springfield.

Settlements grew around the springs which are so numerous in the area. Water mills were built with turbines or overshot wheels to harness the power with which to grind the grains for food. Timber was cut and rafted as logs or railroad ties down the rivers, and farms were carved out of the alluvial valleys and uplands. Then came the Civil War and a fort was built at Waynesville to protect the region from bushwhackers, and to preserve a military communication line on the "Old Wire Road". The late Dr. Bland N. Pippin, founder of PIPPIN PLACE, as a boy rode horseback on top of a sack of shelled corn to Bartlett's Mill from his home, some eight miles distant. He dreamed, as boys will do, of the time when this spot would be his.

And so it was, for in 1911 he bought the spring and mill and forty acres of land and his dream came true, as in 1914 the first section of PIPPIN PLACE came into being. Guests rode the Frisco trains to Crocker, Missouri, and completed the trip by horse and buggy. Then came the Model T and in 1918 another section of PIPPIN PLACE was completed.

As the years went by, PIPPIN PLACE kept time with progress, continued to improve and today, still under PIPPIN management practices the principle of service, hospitality, and courtesy that have so well established it for over 40 years.

The dictionary defines a Gasconader as a braggart, one given to boastful talking, so if we seem to be boasting in this booklet, please excuse us, it is a part of our heritage. All we ask is a chance to show you PIPPIN PLACE, then, you too might become a Gasconader.

Dru and Eva Pippin, Managers.

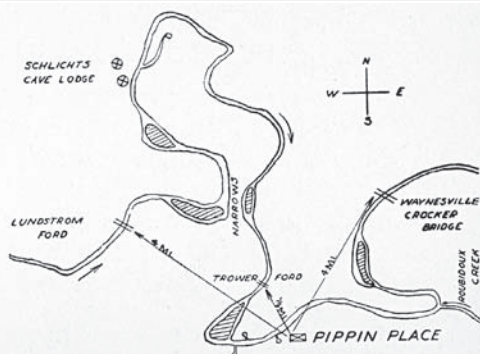
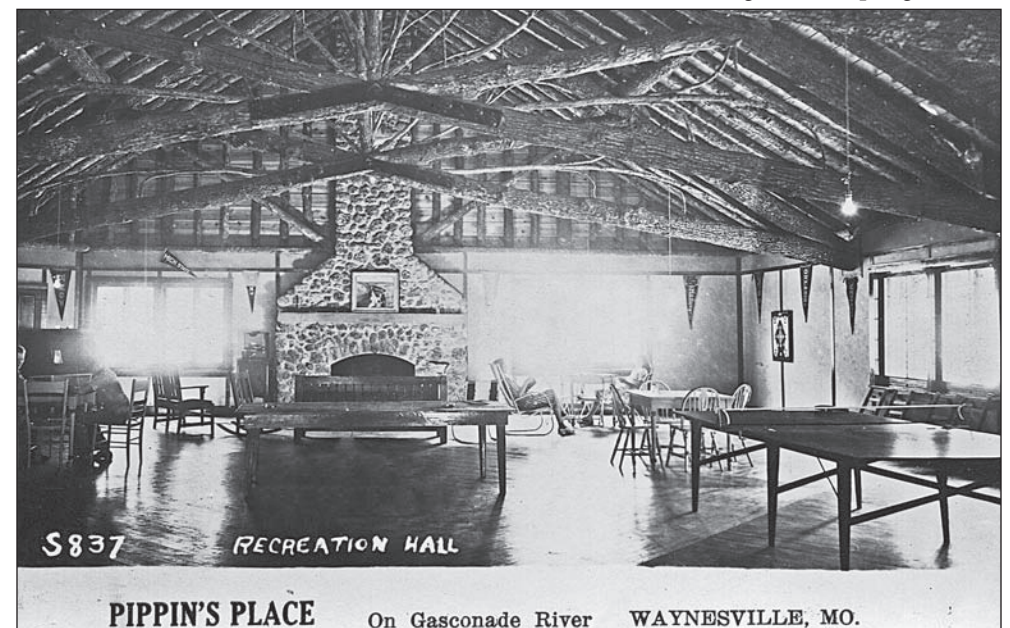


Dru was justly proud of the table fare at Pippin Place and the recommendation by Duncan Hines. Dru was a graduate of the University of Missouri College of Agriculture. In the 1930s he operated the 500-acre model farm at Pippin Place. A herd of registered Jersey cattle provided dairy products. Sheep, chickens, and hogs were raised and found their way to the kitchen, along with a wide variety of vegetables and fruits produced on the grounds. Probably the biggest factor affecting the success of the menu was the gentleman pictured at left, John Brahn, often referred to as the "Dean of Chefs." This picture of John appeared in the resort's 1955 brochure, which mentioned that John's service at Pippin Place started in 1918.

For an in-depth history of Pippin Place, see "Pippin Place—Serving Pulaski County as a Long-time Resort" by Lynn Morrow and Gary Kremer in the 2001 Old Settlers Gazette.

For more Pippin Place views and the complete 1929 and 1955 brochures, visit our web site and click on "Vintage Image Gallery" in the green navigation pane at:

[www.oldstagecoachstop.org](http://www.oldstagecoachstop.org)



Four scenic and fishing floats of about twenty miles each may be taken from Pippin Place.

Left The map is from Pippin Place's 1929 brochure which promotes the area rivers where "the flyfisherman may drop his favorite lure in a likely spot, and, if a small-mouth black bass chooses to take it, a battle royal will ensue."

Right The "Nancy" is Dru and Eva Pippin's daughter. Courtesy of William Eckert.





### Variety of Sports

Games and pastimes are never lacking at Pippin Place.

Many a snappy match is played on the clay tennis court. Guests of both sexes vie with each other at horseshoe pitching.

Hiking is always popular. Parties of two or more strike out confidently to reach a distant hill-top, cave or spring, and flower lovers are rewarded by countless blooms of wild plum, cherry, hawthorn, dogwood, crabapple, redbud, verbenas, sweet William, violets, bluebells, foxglove, columbine, scarlet sage, tulips, daisies and others, each in its season.

### Horseback Riding

Good saddle mounts from Pippin stables are ready to take guests over winding Ozark trails which unfold a seemingly endless series of beautiful spectacles of Nature's handiwork in form and color. A gentle pony is a favorite mount for small children.

Then, too, are the cool, spacious living rooms, recreation hall and shady porches and lawns for quiet games of cards, or plain loafing.

—from the 1929 brochure



Above Dru at the age of 17.

Audio tapes transcribed by:  
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**Terry Primas** is the editor of the *Old Settlers Gazette*.

A collection of the eight parts is available in our online *Old Settlers Gazette* Archive ([www.oldstagecoach-stop.org](http://www.oldstagecoach-stop.org)).

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