

Feeling Isolated



The construction of Buckhorn Dam turned a short drive for the residents of Saul into a 65-mile drive to Buckhorn.

Residents of Saul, Ky. took a stand in 1967 for better roads; tired of being mistreated

(Editor's Note: This story originally appeared in the Courier Journal on March 1, 1967. Photos are courtesy of the Buckhorn Lake-U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Louisville District Facebook page.)

By Kyle Vance-Courier Journal Staff Writer
SAUL, Ky.—Only the tax bills remind Saul that it is not truly a community without a county. All other considerations weigh in favor of the local feeling that it is “nowhere.”

Even the tax bill must take the long way around, because mail from Hazard—Saul's seat of government in Perry County—must follow a routing west to Lexington, south to Richmond, east to Corbin, and then into Saul post office by way of Oneida, more than 300 miles.

The county-seat newspaper received today was printed in Hazard four days ago.

Saul was cut off from the rest of Perry County by the building of Buckhorn Lake. Residents with business in the county seat must travel 50 miles through three counties—from Perry into Owsley, Clay and Leslie, and then back into Perry.

The trip from Saul to Buckhorn by automobile, formerly nine miles, now covers 65 miles.

High school students cut off from Perry County schools must pay \$5 a month each to be taught at Oneida Baptist Institute in Clay County.

Police protection is almost totally missing. Sheriff's officers must travel through the three other counties to reach Saul.

A recent automobile accident in Saul was investigated 43 hours later by state police from Hazard.

Saul felt it had no friends and nearly no hope when the Leatherwood Citizens Committee formed to fight for improvements. Almost any achievement would denote some progress.

The committee has been listening to encouragement from its own members and a few visitors at monthly meetings in the schoolhouse by little Leatherwood Creek. It is in a fighting mood now.

Owen Napier, committee chairman, knows what must be done in the future if Saul ever is to take its place as a part of Perry County.

Whereas the children in and around Saul formerly had to walk every step to school, the work of the committee has resulted in assignment of a bus to the isolated pocket of Perry.

“The bus brings our boys and girls from up and down the creek to school and takes them home,” he said. “The bus takes our high school students across the hill to catch a Clay County bus for school over there and brings them back after school. Of course the parents still have to pay \$5 a month tuition in Clay County for each of their children taught over there.

“We have had several junked cars moved from our roadsides, so we are a little more attractive to look at. We voted the community dry and eliminated a source of disturbance...

(The Saul precinct is the only dry one in Perry

County. A beer depot in the community formerly served the tri-county area of Perry, Owsley and Clay.)

“And,” Napier continues, “we now have a telephone system which at least has given us a voice of connection with the rest of the county.”

The committee's more important objectives are yet to be achieved. No. 1 on the list is a new, three-mile road to connect Saul with Otter Creek and the Squabble Creek Road.

“This would put us only nine miles from Buckhorn, which is now 65 miles away, and would help solve our No. 2 problem,” Napier said.

“Our kids could go to school in Perry County if they could get to Buckhorn and we wouldn't have to pay tuition in Clay County.”

The third objective is have Saul's own road improved and bring economic improvement to the community.

“You can justify paving our road the six miles from Oneida road to the Leatherwood boat ramp in two ways,” Napier said. “This road served a community with 341 people the year around. But in addition to that it is one of five access roads to Buckhorn Lake.

“The official figures of the U.S. Engineers prove that 42,000 visitors used the road to the boat ramp in 1966.”

George Wooton, Leslie County judge, told a recent meeting of the committee that is should cash in on Saul's isolation, since so many city folks are looking for isolation.

“Get your road blacktopped, clean up your yards and grounds, whittle out some chains to sell, and you will see the city people streaming in here,” Judge Wooton suggested. “Campers and boaters will be coming in a stream to make use of your isolation and there will be plenty of prosperity.”



Dedication ceremonies at Buckhorn Reservoir in 1960.

LOOKING BACK:

Taking a look back through the pages of The Manchester Enterprise

April 5, 1951

County Man Charged In Robbery Cases

A Clay County man, Millard Hubbard, 23, was arraigned before Police Judge Kenneth Park in Richmond and bound over to the May grand jury on two charges of armed robbery. Hubbard, a mine guard employee, was arrested at his apartment by his father Sheriff Oscar Hubbard. He is charged with robbing Thornsberry Market and the Dixie Dry Cleanery, both in Richmond.

April 5, 1956

Moonshine Still Is Winner In Duel with Sheriff

Sheriff Daniel Davidson came out second best in a “revenooing” duel with a moonshine still in the Bear Branch mountains of Big Creek. The 46-year-old sheriff was wounded in the right leg when he lifted a high-powered 30-30 rifle and fired at a steel barrel. When he fired, the bullet bounced back and struck him in the leg. Davidson had to go to the Berea Hospital to have the bullet removed from his leg.

April 6, 1961

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April 7, 1966

GRADE SCHOOL CHAMPS. ... Burning Springs Grade School Basketball players who won the county championship are front row left Jimmy Mathis, James Metcalf, Joe Mobley. Second row left John Young, Mgr. Ricky Grubb, Donnie Smith, Gilbert Day, Farrell Hale, Landis Comett, Sparks Reynolds Mgr. The trophies are for winning the championship and the all conference title.

April 8, 1971

Rash of Dog Deaths Credited to Poison

A rash of dog poisoning in Manchester has got several citizens “up in arms” and is causing a complete investigation by the Manchester Police Department. Chief Geston Roberts said at least 10 dogs have already been killed by the poison, a measure that is strictly prohibited by law.

April 9, 1981

Woman 71, Robbed Left Tied At Home

A lone masked robber reportedly took about \$40 in cash from Mae Sizemore after forcing his way into her home on Greenbriar Road, early Monday morning. The elderly Sizemore woman lives alone and was unhurt by the robber. She said he came in through the side door, tied her up, and took money from her purse.



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