

Drought Ends Tuesday With Heavy Rainfall

5.85 Inches Is Official Measurement At Owenton

The summer-long drought ended locally when an official 5.85 inches of rain fell at Owenton from Tuesday noon to 6 a.m. Wednesday. The figures were reported by Ronnie Redman, waterworks official and local observer for the U.S. Weather Bureau.

The rain was heavy and continuous for several hours with damages occurring to bottomland tobacco and other crops and washing of soil from hillsides. The rain appeared to be general throughout the county, however some areas got more rain than others. Severn creek was reported flooding the valley late Tuesday.

Eagle Flooding

Eagle creek, which runs through a big portion of the county and along its eastern and northern border, was reported rising rapidly Wednesday and out of the "second bottom" in the upper area. State highway officials were watching this stream closely and "guessed" Eagle creek might block some roads in the Sparta, Sanders and Worthville areas late in the day.

Considerable damage was reported at Elk Lake Shores where a number of boats were sunk at their moorings and several foot bridges were washed away in the picnic area.

US 127 at Monterey had one-way traffic in two areas where steep banks, including some trees, gave way from soil loosened by the rain. Highway crews were busy maintaining traffic in the area.

Lakes Not Filled

Fields which had been sown recently to cover crops were washed badly in many areas of the county.

The rainfall was particularly welcomed by the waterworks department at Owenton where city reservoirs had gotten down in very short supply. The two city lakes rose two-feet but were still not filled to capacity. Elmer Davis lake, an auxiliary for city water, rose from its year-long record low to about half full.

Many farmers, who had been wishing to house their water-starved tobacco crops, must proceed in a new direction as fields not yet harvested will "green up" again from the rain and force a late harvest.

Elk Lake Shores Vibrant Part Of Owen's Valued Resort Complex



AERIAL PHOTO—Elk Lake Shores on Ky. 330, 5½ miles southeast of Owenton near Hallam, offers lakefront living.

Home development and resort facilities have become a major hope for Owen's economic future.

Utilizing the natural beauty of Owen's rolling hills, Elk Lake Shores community has 1,100 acres of woodland surrounding a 300-acre lake with 12 miles of shoreline.

Established 18 years ago, Realty Service corporation of Springfield, Mass., purchased eight adjacent farms and built a dam on Elk creek.

Ranging in size from 70 to 150 feet wide and a minimum of 200

feet deep, the 1,200 lots staked from the area were initially sold for \$600 to \$5,000 each.

The farmland, assessed at \$73,800 before development began, increased to \$2,462,000 in '68 and is now in excess of \$4,437,000.

In addition to the funds added to the public treasury, the increase in population has also meant new customers for merchants in the county.

To date, there are approximately 375 vacation cottages and 40-50 resident homes on waterfront and off-

shore lots which have access to a community boat dock, white sand beach, picnic and playground areas and a central water system supplied from a separate lake.

St. Edwards church, Owenton, was built largely to serve the summer residents of Elk Lake Shores.

Restrictions exist and the property owners' association annually collects a fee to offset the costs of maintenance, beautification, providing a life guard at the beach and 24-hour security service.

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Owen County's Economic Evolution Gets a Boost From Mother Nature

OWENTON, Ky. — Job-starved Owen County is undergoing an economic evolution which bears evidence that the future of all rural Kentucky counties does not lie in the towering smokestacks and whirling machinery of industry.

In this sparsely populated county in the Eden Shale area of Kentucky's Outer Bluegrass, the future appears to lie in the dense woods and meandering creeks that abound on the ridges and in the hollows.

Owen County possesses neither the rugged terrain of Eastern Kentucky nor the caves and water wonderlands of Western Kentucky. But the county has found its natural beauty a salable—and profitable—commodity.

Owen County is the center of a triangle formed by the metropolitan areas of Louisville, Lexington and Cincinnati. And many of the "big-city"-dwellers seeking to "get away from it all" are building cottages in a number of scenic places in the county.

At this stage, the second-home evolution has had only a secondary impact on Owen County's job problem, but it has stimulated retailing and bolstered a tax base that lacks industrial and railroad revenue.

Only 8,000 Residents

The county's population has been drying up. A hundred years ago, its residents numbered 13,600 and by 1890, that figure peaked at about 17,700. Today, only about 8,000 persons reside there. Only 19 of Kentucky's 120 counties have smaller populations.

"Owen County High School graduates 90 or more every year, and there's not five jobs around here for them," Owenton banker Robert Littrell said. "They have to go somewhere else."

The answer, in the opinion of some county leaders, is industry. But Littrell, president of People's Bank and Trust, is pessimistic about the prospects.

"Our roads are so bad that every industrial prospect we bring in needs smelling salts or a tranquilizer by the time he gets here," Littrell said. "We don't have any railroads and it's difficult to find a level site to develop for industry."

Many Owen County residents are employed in other counties, Owenton Mayor H. T. Riley said. "But they travel so far to work that their jobs eventually drive them out of the community. They move to be closer to work," he said.

Developer Sets a Trend

During the 1950s the tax base was shrinking with the population, and homeowners were feeling an increasing burden. But in 1960, American Realty Service Corp., a Springfield, Mass., resort-development company, bought 12 farms and six smaller tracts totaling 1,220 acres. They dammed up Elk Lick Creek with a 40-foot earth and concrete dam.

The water backed up in the hollows of their property through which the creek formerly flowed, creating Elk Lake and 14 miles of shoreline.

brought in the kind of people who meet their financial obligations."

Permanent residents include retired corporate executives and professional men, and many weekend residents are in similar upper-income groups.

Their spending habits have bolstered retailing generally in Owenton, according to Mayor Riley, a clothing-store owner.

"Their dollars are just like new blood. They're earned elsewhere and spent here," he added.

"Before Elk Lake, we couldn't keep all of our filling stations open. Since then we've added one and we're going to have another new one," Riley said.

A boat dealership in Owenton has

opened on the strength of the demands of Elk Lake boaters. In a related non-commercial development, Owen County's first Catholic church has been built, and on summer Sundays it maintains high attendance.

Littrell said an Owenton grocer has attributed a summertime increase of \$1,500 a week in his gross to the weekend residents of Elk Lake.

The building boom at Elk Lake is slowing down, but Guy R. Patterson, a grade-school principal with a real-estate license,

See OWEN

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Ten years ago, Elk Lick Creek flowed through poor farmland and dense forest at this site in Owen County. The dammed-up creek re-

9/1/68 Louisville Flyer-1

Cincinnati Banker Is ELSA President

A. D. Snyder, vice president of First National bank in Cincinnati and owner of Lot No. 780, was elected president of the Elk Lake Shores Property Owners association at the organizational meeting of the newly-elected board of directors last week.

Assisting him will be Frank Hotze, Cincinnati, as vice president, and Mary Lee Penn, also of Cincinnati, as secretary-treasurer.

The new resort officials are expected to meet soon and set-up regulations for the future development and daily activities at Elk Lake Shores.

Other directors are John C. Thomas, Owenton, Emmitt Moore of Frankfort, Norma Wilcheck of Louisville, William R. Cobb and Harold Hughes of Owenton, and Chester Nowicke of Louisville.

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Owen County Economic Evolution Gets a Big Boost From Mother Nature

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estimated that 10 cottages have been built since last fall.

Patterson and two other men bought the last 140 unsold lots from the developers and are now selling them. His own view of the development:

"It changed a lot of pretty poor farmland into some valuable property."

Owen County's evolution is in its most advanced stage in the Elk Lake Shores project. Less advanced, but equally promising, are these other developments in the county:

✓ **Perry Park Resort**—Adjacent to the tiny community of Perry Park, the 2,600-acre development in a 5-mile bend of the Kentucky River is to have 2,000 homesites, an 18-hole golf course, yacht club and accommodations for hunting, fishing, tennis, swimming and horseback riding.

✓ **Eagle Valley** — A 600-acre fishing, camping and wildlife area near Wheatley along Eagle Creek, it has 14 small lakes, nature trails and a riding stable in addition to campsites.

✓ **Fairway Golf Course**—Located in Wheatley, it was the first course in Owen County or any surrounding counties other than Franklin, when its first nine holes opened in 1960. The public facility was expanded to 18 holes in 1962. Owner Harold England, an Owen County School teacher for 16 years, has since become a golf-course designer and builder, first as a sideline and now as a full-time occupation.

✓ **Proposed Golf Course**—Charles Grugin, of Monterey, is converting farmland near Monterey into a 9-hole golf course. The course along the Kentucky River is to be open for play in 1969.

✓ **Elmer Davis Lake**—The state-owned 165-acre fishing and boating lake has been in existence nearly 10 years, and is undergoing general improvements. A 284-acre tract adjacent to the lake has been purchased by Glen O. Duke, a former associate of the company that built Elk Lake Shores, and is to be subdivided for summer homes in the early '70s.

✓ **Eagle Creek Dam**—An Army Corps of Engineers project initially authorized in 1962, the flood-control dam would be in adjacent Grant County, but the resultant lake would provide development potential for Owen County. Plans for the dam have been dormant since a 1963 protest of farmers who claimed 5,000 acres of good farmland would be destroyed by the lake, and that the land is seldom flooded.

tion and second-home influence are hopeful that the completion of Interstate 71 between Cincinnati and Louisville, offering three exits near the county line, will accelerate the evolution.

The highway now is open from Cincinnati to Carrollton, but Louisvillians can reach Owen County only on twisting, low speed two-lane highways.

"This is the biggest thing that has happened to Owen County in years," Mayor Riley said. "The recreation trend is accelerating and the potential is wonderful."

County Clerk Harold Hughes has seen the impact first hand in the form of increased property valuations.

"Since there's no industry here, it has

really been a shot in the arm for the county. If it hadn't been for these developments, I don't know what the county would have done for adequate school taxes," Hughes said.

Of the new weekend residents of Owen County, Hughes said "they're a wonderful type of people, and they are in the middle- and upper-income groups."

"They have been our most reliable customers," said banker Littrell, "and a lot of Owen County farmers are finding the recreation business more profitable than farming."

That's the industrial revolution, Owen County style.

Rod Wenz

Elk Lake Officials

1965



DISCUSS PROBLEMS — Directors and officials of the Elk Lake Shores association are shown above during a recent meeting. Front row, left to right, they are: Miss Mary Lee Penn, Cincinnati, secretary-treasurer; A. D. Snyder, Cincinnati, president; Mrs. Mary Ann Cobb, Owenton, assistant secretary-treasurer; and Mrs. Norma Wilcheck, Louisville, director. Back row directors are William R. Cobb, Owenton; Frank Hotze, Cincinnati; Harold Hughes and Guy Patterson, both of Owenton. Mr. Hotze is also vice president. Directors absent when the photo was made are Chester Norwiche, Louisville, and John C. Thomas, Owenton.