



The Ozark Tour gathers at the Horning Hotel in Harrisburg, Illinois.

Trigg's Trails, Tours and Detours

PART THREE: 1935 - 1937 OZARK TOURS

Todd A. Carr

Photos courtesy of the Trigg Collection curated by Charles Hammond

In the 1930s, southern Illinois was depending on the National Forest Reservation Commission to approve purchase units in the region for a national forest. The Harrisburg Kiwanis Club foresaw the need of a local group to spearhead the establishment of the forest. The Illinois Ozarks Reforestation Unit, a nine-member committee of men from Saline, Hardin, Pope and Gallatin counties, was formed. Newspaper Publisher L.O. Trigg served as vice-president of the organization and chief promoter.

1935

As a 22 year old, L.O. Trigg printed the first Ozark News on August 16, 1901, on a homemade printing press in his parent's smokehouse. He described the "sheet" as being "hand written, hand set, hand inked, and hand printed." Now 34 years later, volume two was printed on July 13, 1935. The Ozark News would become the primary means Trigg used to report on the conservation work currently underway in the Forest Service purchase units of southern Illinois and his annual Ozark Tours. Inside this issue, the "Old Guide" pleaded with the Ozarkers to wire their reservations in so that final preparations could be made for the fifth annual tour. In dedicating the issue, Trigg said, "... looking to the development of national forests in my own native Ozark country is very gratifying and further prompts me to issue and dedicate this number to the continued educational and good will tours of the Illinois Ozarks."

The fifth annual tour met at the Horning Hotel in Harrisburg, Illinois on July 22, 1935. The tour was advertised to

leave at 8:30 a.m., but it was closer to 9 a.m. before the trucks headed south out of town on U.S. Route 45. Three miles southwest of Stonefort, the trucks left the highway driving past Walnut Grove church to a high hill where views of the four counties of Johnson, Pope, Saline and Williamson could be seen. At this stop four "tin star officers" were appointed. The first was "Sheriff" Jacob W. Myers, a Harrisburg attorney, whose job was to make sure the rest of the Ozarkers behaved themselves. He appointed two booze inspectors and one garter inspector. No further elaboration was made to the appointees or their duties.

The Ozarkers traveled back to U.S. Route 45 and on to Ozark where they were greeted with cold lemonade and a basket of apples and peaches by tour participant Paul O'Neal. They traveled to another high point, Beauman's Tourist Park where they picked up more participants. A rain shower started and since the Ozarkers were traveling by open truck, they stopped for shelter in a nearby barn on Schwartz Hill, also known as Cooper's Bluff.

After the rain passed, the Ozarkers continued to Vienna where they were joined by other participants including State Representatives Paul Powell and Abner Fields. From Vienna they traveled on Illinois Routes 146 and 37 to Goreville for the first noonday meal. Mrs. J. H. Terry and members of the Goreville Woman's Club served the Ozarkers in the community room instead of Ferne Clyffe Park (not yet a state park) due to rain showers. Mayor Cox welcomed the group.

After lunch, the group traveled to Ferne Clyffe to view Hawk's Cave, one of the largest natural amphitheaters in southern Illinois. Trigg reported that Mohawk Spring in the park was 99.23 percent pure and encouraged everyone to quench their thirst. Other features explored in the park included: Canyon Diablo; Alligator Cave; Elephant formation; Devil's Stairway; Balanced Rock; and Powhatan, Hiawatha and Tecumseh Springs.

The group continued on their tour traveling south on Illinois Route 37 to another scenic overlook in Buncombe. Refreshments were sought at the nearby roadside café of Mr. and Mrs. Troutment. Trigg noted that "Sheriff" Myers caught a game of dice going on between truck No. 1 and truck No. 2, but the "boys" went free. The next issue of the Ozark News had Trigg downplaying the gambling and alcohol use on the tour:

"On Ozark Tours many of the fellows, to get away from their daily serious business problems, resort to boyish pranks, games and pastimes. They leave the white collars, titles and much of their dignity and formalities at their office. They go on these trips to relax and enjoy themselves in close proximity with nature. It's a real rest and an inspiration which they can get only on a trip such as the Ozark Tour. And you know—"Boys will be boys."

The group again joined Illinois Route 146 and traveled to Jonesboro where an evening program and meal had been arranged by Randall Harrelson of the Red Star Café. The Ozarkers were welcomed by the mayor, city officials and citizens of Jonesboro. Talks were conducted by various members of the tour highlighting the value of southern Illinois as a forest and resort region. Tour member Bob Burnett had prepared a musical program with his fellow Ozarkers. After their first performance at Jonesboro, it was decided to dispense with any future performances. After the dinner program, the Ozarkers stayed overnight in an abandoned C.C.C. camp at the nearby Union County Forest Preserve (Trail of Tears State Forest).

It was raining when they woke for the second day of the tour. The Hutchin's Creek C.C.C. camp sent their canopied trucks to pick up the Ozarkers and bring them back to their camp for breakfast. After eating they traveled to the 60-foot fire tower on Bald Knob near Alto Pass. At 1,030 feet above sea level, it's the second highest point in southern Illinois. On the way a stop was made on the highway bridge in Cobden where Dr. Leighton, Chief of the State Geological Survey, talked on the extent and effect of glacial drift in the region.

Leaving Bald Knob, a stop was made at Mrs. Ava James' farm and orchards for refreshments. In Alto Pass, banker Roy Wilkins welcomed the tour with a basket of peaches as he pointed out the Balanced Rock formation on the Mobile and Ohio railroad right-of-way. This rail line is now the Quetil Trail accessed in downtown Alto Pass.

The tour continued through Makanda to Giant City Park where they were greeted by Charles Gore, park custodian, Mr. Ruedinger, C.C.C. camp superintendent, and John Mulcaster, local historian who was instrumental in getting Giant City recognized as a state park. Lunch was served at one of the C.C.C. camps. After eating, the C.C.C. provided trucks with seats for a tour around the park.

The Ozarkers left at 4 p.m. for an evening banquet and program organized by Roger Kimmel and the Murphysboro Chamber of Commerce at Riverside Park. Itineraries for the tour had been made to pass out once the tour left Harrisburg. Somehow, the itinerary fell into the hands of some of the wives and they showed up at Riverside Park. Consequently

and without elaboration, Trigg reported that some aspects of the program were changed. It was decided that no itinerary would be prepared the following year so there wouldn't be any future unexpected arrivals.

The main speaker of the evening at Murphysboro was Scott Leavitt from the U.S. Forestry Service in Milwaukee who was impressed with southern Illinois and the possibilities available through cooperative endeavors. He had joined the Ozark Tour this year and proclaimed it to be the, "most enjoyable experience of my life." The tour camped overnight in the park with several sleeping in the newly completed band shelter. The tour had breakfast at the Riverside C.C.C. Camp the following morning.

The third day of the tour started by viewing the Gen. John A. Logan memorial located on the grounds of the Murphysboro Junior High School. Just south of the Mobile



The Ozark Tourists had a remarkable view of the Mississippi River from the Fountain Bluff lookout tower.

and Ohio railroad station another marker was viewed that designates the birthplace of Gen. Logan.

The tour headed west out of Murphysboro on Illinois Route 144 (today Illinois Route 149) stopping at a scenic overlook outside of town. The Ozarkers made their way to the top of Fountain Bluff on a newly constructed forest road to reach the fire tower on top. From here the tour saw a vast panorama of scenic river bottoms in both Illinois and Missouri and the Mississippi River below.

The tour traveled south on Illinois Route 150 (today Illinois Route 3) to the C.I.P.S. power plant. Postcards and booklets describing the plant were distributed. A tour was offered but declined due to time constraints. The tour continued south to Grand Tower where they were welcomed by Rev. Morse and Dr. Darnall. Tower Rock in the Mississippi River could be seen from the Main Street of town. The tour made their way back to the Hutchins Creek C.C.C. Camp for the noon meal.

The tour visited the Pine Hills and drove the newly improved skyline drive. Here, Rep. Field killed a rattlesnake with his cane. He missed with the first swing, but the snake stood still long enough for a second blow. Rep. Field intended to have it mounted as a trophy of his first Ozark Tour. The Ozarkers returned to Harrisburg arriving at 6:30 p.m. in the afternoon. They disbanded at the Horning Hotel having traveled 287 miles over the three days.

Due to the amount of rain the tour endured, the Ozarkers decided "Captain" Trigg should be promoted to "Admiral." A total of 73 men were invited to attend, and of those, 43 participated. Each participant was asked to contribute \$11 toward the expenses of the tour.

1936

For the 1936 tour, 124 invitations were sent out. Three trucks were required to haul the 48 men who responded on the sixth annual Ozark Tour into the Shawnee Purchase

Unit of southern Illinois. Each Ozarker was asked to pay \$15 toward the expenses of the tour. For \$5 your seat would be reserved with the balance paid on departure. Members left from the Horning Hotel in Harrisburg at 8:55 a.m. on July 20, 1936.

The Ozarkers headed southwest out of Harrisburg on U.S. Route 45 to the Ozark turnoff where they were greeted with lemonade by tour member and "mayor" of Ozark, Paul O'Neal. Travelling on they arrived at the Boy Scout Camp Pakentuck (now Camp Ondessonk). The Ozarkers saw the tallest free-falling waterfall in the state, Cedar Falls, also known as Lay Falls. Today at Camp Ondessonk it's referred to as Pakentuck Falls.

Leaving Camp Pakentuck the Ozarkers drove to Cotton Hill where the Trigg Lookout Tower had been built. The U.S. Forest Service named the fire tower in honor of L.O. Trigg for his work promoting a national forest in southern Illinois. From Trigg Tower the tour continued to Simpson and then to Cletus Thomason's house near Cornish Bluff for refreshments consisting of cake, ice cream and lemonade. The remains of a signaling tower and one of the prehistoric stone forts across southern Illinois was viewed on the hill. Below the bluff, a cave, dubbed Nature's Frigidaire, was seen before moving on to Vienna where the Kiwanis Club had arranged for a program on the courthouse lawn with lunch served by the Methodist Ladies' Aid.

The Kiwanis program consisted of a playing of "Illinois" by the Vienna High School Orchestra followed by a welcome address by Mayor Walter E. Smith. Trigg gave a response to the welcome. Vern Williams, Vienna Kiwanis Club president, gave an address followed by Ozarker and past Kiwanis Club Lieut. Gov. Jacob Myers. Trigg reported the real lesson of the Ozark Tours could be found in an address made by Attorney O.C. Bruhlmann of Chicago, ". . . how people from his city sought places to visit where they could see things of interest. They are willing to spend money but first must be told where to go." The luncheon consisted of

The group took a break at the original Trigg Lookout Tower on Cotton Hill in 1936.



fried chicken with cream gravy, potato salad, sliced tomatoes, deviled eggs, rolls, ice cream, wafers, and iced tea.

After lunch, the tour continued south past Indian Point to a Daughters of the American Revolution (D.A.R.) marker near Foreman denoting the spot George Rogers Clark and his soldiers camped on their first night out from Ft. Massac on their overland march to Ft. Kaskaskia in 1778. The Ozarkers retraced some of that day's march. They also visited Footprint Rock on the Sherman Evans farm and drank from the Clark or Nutty Spring 12 miles north of Metropolis where Clark's soldiers had stopped to rest and refill their canteens in 1778 (this was speculation from Trigg).

The tour was welcomed by the Metropolis Chamber of Commerce and given an autotour of the city. In Metropolis the D.A.R. provided entertainment at a pavilion in Camp Massac Park (Ft. Massac State Park). One of the speakers for the evening was Miss Julia Kincaid whose ancestors had obtained the land where Kincaid Mounds are located. The family built their home on one of the mounds. She displayed relics that had been found including: ancient battle axes, pot shards, fragments of a skull and flint arrowheads. Afterwards, the Ozarkers were treated to a fish fry by the Izaak Walton League.

While in Metropolis some of the Ozarkers bought firecrackers left over from the 4th of July celebrations. After everyone bedded down for the night in the park, someone started a reenactment of "Ft. Massac versus the Indians." Subsequent Ozark Tours would be advertised as "no fireworks allowed."

The tour continued at 6 a.m. heading to the Christian Church in Brookport for breakfast. After breakfast they visited Dam 52 on the Ohio River for sightseeing. The tour continued to Kincaid Mounds where they stopped for an hour to view the archeological digs being conducted by the University of Chicago. The mound site on the Pope-Massac county line contained several mounds, one 30 feet high and several low mounds and ridges. This was the fifth summer the university had been excavating the area. It's believed Mississippians inhabited the site from 1050 to 1400 A.D.

The tour continued to the New Liberty Schoolhouse where lunch was prepared. After lunch the group traveled country roads to Hamlettsburg and then westerly back to Illinois Route 145 and traveled north to Dixon Springs Park for the second overnight stop and meals. Both dinner and breakfast were provided by the local 4-H Ladies Club. At the adjacent C.C.C. Camp Dixon Springs, movies were shown

by the Izaak Walton League showing forestry work that had been completed. Scott Levitt of the U.S. Forest Service's Milwaukee office gave a review of the forest service's ongoing work in the region.

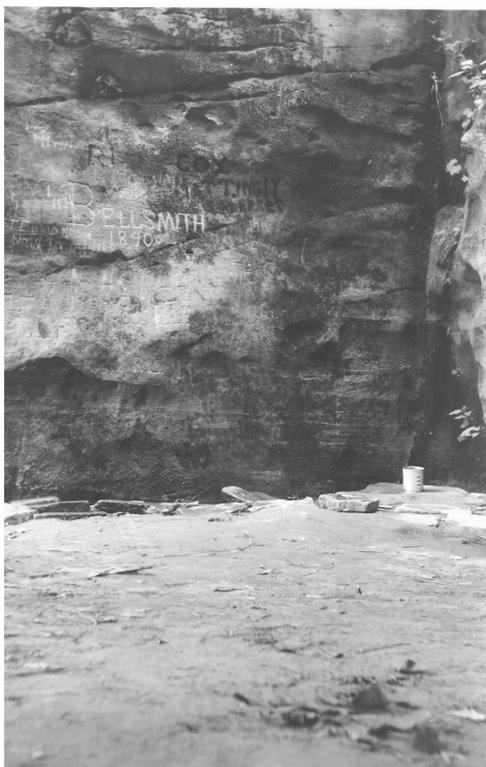
The next speaker had been a participant of several Ozark Tours, L.E. "Buck" Sawyer. He was a former University of Illinois Extension Forester and had been instrumental in southern Illinois being chosen for a national forest. He reported on the current efforts of the five state resettlement project he was administering including the new Crab Orchard Lake project.

The last day of the tour the group traveled to the Robbs Resettlement Project and saw the main administrative building under construction (now the Dixon Spring Ag Center). Several cattle, horse, and sheep barns were under construction. Prof. H.P. Rusk, head of the Animal Husbandry Department for the University of Illinois, told the tour that research on grasses being conducted at this project would be applied to 15 million acres of land in a group of states.

The tour continued north and stopped at Glendale for refreshments at the home of George Mealer before continuing on to Eddyville and Bell Smith Springs. Lunch was served under the shelter of the bluffs overhead. By pointing out the strata of the rock, State Geologist George E. Ekblow, explained how the natural bridge at Bell Smith Springs (the largest in southern Illinois) was formed. It was noted that the Forest Service had recently released its first deer at Bell Smith Springs, two bucks and three does, in hopes of reestablishing deer in the region.

Before the tour disbanded, Judge Rumsey stepped forward and spoke so eloquently of the beauty that they had experienced over the three days that many were moved to tears. The tour ended with a prayer by Rev. Knud A. Larson of Eldorado. They left Bell Smith Springs at 3 p.m. and returned to Harrisburg after covering 187 miles over the three-day tour. Five Ozarkers, W.W. Wheatley, L.O. Trigg, Charles B. Wheeler, Jacob Myers and Judge B.F. Anderson, had attended all six Ozark Tour to date and were deemed "100 percenters." One participant said, "In such a limited space of time, it would be impossible for the uninitiated or uninstructed to have done all which was done under your [Trigg's] guidance."

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So here is to the boys
Who made the '36 trip



Bell Smith Springs took its name from this carving in the canyon wall.

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Bubbling over with joys
And all full of zip.

We met with handshakes
As good fellows do
But parted with heartaches
As we said adieu.

Now hoping to see you
On the tour next year
With many faces anew,
And our hearts full of cheer.

1937

At 7:30 a.m. on July 19, 1937, three trucks and two cars set out from L.O. Trigg's house in Eldorado for the seventh annual Ozark Tour. They arrived at the Horning Hotel in Harrisburg, the official gathering place for the beginning of the tour. A light rain shower was falling and tarpaulins were used for cover.

A total of 41 men paid \$15 to join the touring party. This was the first (and only) Ozark Tour where a female was invited to participate. Ann West, columnist for the *Cairo Daily Citizen* was to ride in one of the cars with Mrs. Trigg and Mrs. Norman Moore. Mr. Moore drove the other car as a vehicle for "errands" over the course of the tour. The same five "100 percenters" of the previous year's tour extended their streak of participating in all seven Ozark Tours.

The Ozark Tour left Harrisburg at 9:25 a.m. going southwest on U.S. Route 45 to Vienna to state Route 146 and then continuing west to U.S. Route 51. The Ozarkers viewed a marker placed by the Daughters of the American Revolution for the George Rogers Clark trail west of Vienna. The tour turned south on U.S. Route 51 and arrived in Dongola at 11:57 a.m. Several showers of rain fell during the morning.

Lunch was served by the Blue Willow Café at the Lutheran Church in Dongola. The program began with a group singing of "Illinois." Music was provided by a German band under direction of Allison Douglas, a teacher of music in Iowa. Southern Illinois' youngest mayor, L.J. Dodd gave a welcome address with a response by "Captain" Trigg. Mayor Dodd had begun his term at the age of 24. An address was made by R.S. Doe of the Civic Club with a response by Ozarker Circuit Judge Rumsey. During the mayor's address he spoke of Dongola as a farming and fruit growing com-

munity and that on one Fourth of July, 24 railcars of cucumbers had been shipped from the local station. In Trigg's response he spoke of how the primary purpose of the Ozark Tours was "to get southern Illinois acquainted with itself." He also read telegrams from those who had participated in previous years' tours, but were unable to join the current tour.

Due to the rain, the tour bypassed the road from Cypress to Dongola that was originally planned and a morning break of lemonade and cake at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Harvey L. Beggs was also skipped because the roads were impassable.

The Ozark Tour left Dongola and traveled northwest to the Kiest farm where several coral fossils had been found on the south-side slopes of the southern Illinois hills which Trigg said proved the Gulf of Mexico at one time covered southern Illinois. A sign next to the display of fossils read: Welcome Ozark Tourists. A planned trip 3 miles north to Roaring Spring, an underground river flowing from a cave, was cancelled due to the muddy dirt roads.

A planned trip to the Indian workshop near Mill Creek was cancelled due to road construction and lack of a passable road. Instead, the tour traveled by U.S. Route 51 to Ullin, then by gravel roads to Elco where they were met by Wayne White of the Cairo Minerals Co. who gave a tour of one of the six nearby silica mines. The Ozarkers were permitted to walk 500 to 600 feet into the 30-foot high mine where White explained the workings of the mines and the uses of silica. Compressed air was used to drill into the ore then dynamited. Loadings are made by hand into dump cars and taken to the plant in Elco for milling. The plant at that time had been operating for 22 years.

Following the excursion into the mine, the Ozarkers traveled to the Bass Hill lookout tower where observations of the surrounding countryside were made. The Bass Hill tower stood 90 feet above the ground and was 870 feet above sea level. The Ozarkers were shown how to use the firefinder and cross wires to locate various sites on a detailed map of the area that was held stationary under the instrument.

By 5:40 p.m. the Ozarkers arrived at the Delta C.C.C. Camp where they participated in a ball game with the "boys" and had supper in the mess hall. The Ozarkers

camped overnight on the grounds. Some preferred to "camp" indoors. Mrs. Trigg, Mrs. Moore and Miss West stayed with a Mrs. Greer in Elco.

The Delta Camp served breakfast at 7:20 a.m. the second day of the tour and the Ozarkers left traveling

Ozark Tourists wait for breakfast at C.C.C. Camp Delta.



northwest to the extreme high elevation of the McClure cemetery hill. This was said to have been at one time an Indian lookout. The tour spent an hour using field glasses to make observations and "kodacking" the scenery from the high point. Cape Girardeau, Missouri, and lowlands along the Mississippi River could be seen from the elevation. Two huge stones on the hill mark the graves of Thomas J. and Caroline McClure, who died in 1882 and 1918 respectively. There was a very steep climb to the top of the hill and the Ozarkers marveled at how the stones and cofins were carried to the top.

The Ozarkers traveled back roads on Bean Ridge road to Salaman Creek to Sturgis Spring where they stopped for 15 minutes. Another half mile of travel brought them to Illinois Route 3 where they traveled south to the Baptist Church at Thebes for the noon meal. Holly Marchildon was in charge of the meal and an informal program by the Commercial Club of the city. The Ozarkers visited the Thebes Courthouse which had been the Alexander County Courthouse from 1845 to 1863.

The courthouse was a refuge for victims during the recent flooding of 1937. When the Ozark Tour visited it, the courthouse was under major renovations.

Traveling to the riverfront, the tour boarded the Holiday Mississippi River ferry for an extended trip to Missouri and back. Upon returning to Illinois the tour continued down gravel roads to Olive Branch and on to the Horseshoe Lake State Game Preserve. A ferry was used to carry the trucks and one of the cars to the island in the lake.

A tour of the island was conducted by Charles F. Thompson, head of the state Game and Conservation Department; A.J. Thomasek, State Forester; J.C. Conaha, club organizer for the Department of Conservation; and Eddie Doran, Game Department. A fish fry and turtle dinner was served to 40 people that evening. After the meal, Mr. Conaha showed movies of game and wildlife. The Ozarkers camped overnight on the island. The three women stayed in rooms in the Horseshoe Lake custodian's home.

By 6:50 a.m. the following morning all vehicles had been ferried back across the lake and the tour traveled to Mounds for breakfast at the First Methodist Church. City officials and several citizens met the Ozarkers there. A brief talk was given by W.L. Toler on behalf of the Mounds mayor. Ozarker Circuit Judge D.F. Rumsey gave the response. Miss Eleanor Bauer with Mrs. Hobart Jenkins as accompanist, sang "I

Want to Live in the Ozarks." This song had been composed by Thomas B. Holloway of Eddyville and dedicated to L.O. Trigg and the Ozark Tours.

By 9 a.m. the Ozark Tour left Mounds and traveled to the National Cemetery where over 6,000 soldiers were buried (over 8,000 are buried there today). The Ozarkers then traveled to the flood damaged Mound City where they viewed a Historical Marker and the site of the Marine Ways on the Ohio River. Mound City was the site of a major naval yard and hospital during the Civil War. Gunboats and Ironclads that patrolled the Ohio, Cumberland, Tennessee and Mississippi Rivers during the war were served by the Mound City Naval Yard.

The Ozarkers traveled north on Illinois Route 37 to Olmsted where they turned off onto a gravel road to a home which had been built in 1834 by Peter S. Jaccard, a Napoleonic war veteran who died in 1837. Mr. Jaccard built his home with home-made bricks from 13 to 20 inches long. His motivation was said so he could defend against Indian

attack. The home was never put to the test. The tour traveled on to view Dam 53 on the Ohio River.

Returning to Illinois Route 37 the tour traveled north to Cypress to the home of Mr. and Mrs. E.E. Brown and their 188-acre cliff farm. The farm is fenced by nature with bluffs on three sides and accessible only by an incline earthen road built

by man. Lunch was served by the Cypress Baptist Church ladies. The mayor of Cypress gave a welcome address to the Ozarkers. Trigg gave the response on behalf of the Ozark Tour. The group departed at 3:05 p.m. for the return trip to Harrisburg.

The seventh annual Ozark Tour ended on July 21, 1937, after traveling 228 miles over the three days. A large bell had been placed on the lead truck and rang out as the trucks made their way across southern Illinois. It, and a whistle carried by Trigg, were used to call the Ozarkers back when it was time to depart the various locations. Trigg had acquired the bell from a flood-ravaged farm in Saline County and would use it on several of the subsequent tours.

The custodian's house sits on the island at Horseshoe Lake.



Next Issue
PART FOUR: 1938-1940