

## PINYON HOLLOW

When John Cooper Sr. started Bella Vista Village in the early 1960's, part of his plan was to select valleys (known as hollows or "hollers" in the South, originating from the Old English word for hole) in which to build dams and create lakes.

Lake Ann was built in one of those valleys, then known as Pinyon Hollow with its creek, Pinyon Branch. The stream now comes down from the Lake Ann spillway, flowing west under Highway 71 across the Kingswood golf course in front of the 14th green to Sugar Creek. Along the south side of the creek, Pinion Drive (the spelling was changed when the street was built) leads to the Lake Ann dam.

The hollow was named after early settlers George and Nancy Pinyon who in 1856 came from Georgia. In 1904, Neilly and Martha Robbins bought the Pinyon property and built a large house in 1905. The house sat on the hill above what is now the north end of the Lake Ann dam, near the south end of Newquay Lane, and was home to a number of families over the years. Jim Gore, Senior VP of Engineering for Cooper Communities, occupied the house with his family from 1965 to 1974, after which it was rented out by Cooper Communities and eventually fell into disrepair. It was burned down as a training exercise by the Fire Department in the late 1980's.

Virginia Jackson Squires, who lived on a farm near what is now the east end of Lake Ann, walked the road, over a mile long, along the north side of Pinyon Branch every day to Dug Hill School. That road is now the AARP Recycle Center driveway; it goes past the Recycle Center but is blocked off shortly east of there. Back then, the road climbed up and down the hills on the north side of the hollow. It crossed Pinyon Branch in front of Virginia's house and crossed again at the low water bridge where Wem Lane crosses now at the east end of Lake Ann.

Pinyon Hollow contained several farms. The farmers raised corn and hay in the bottom of the hollow, and ran cattle and sheep in the hills. Strawberries were another popular crop. Virginia remembers she had to climb the bluff on the south side of the hollow, at what would now be the north end of Sandhurst Drive, to herd their sheep home many evenings. She said, "Under that bluff was a cool spot that stayed the same temperature year round. In the summer of 1936, there was a bad drought and it was so hot, people would drive to the spot under the bluff and park for the afternoon just to cool off." With all the trees, timber was a good crop also, and a man named Ollie Townsend had a sawmill in those hills for a couple of years.

Many years later, John Cooper Sr. bought the farms in the hollow. Gil Fite wrote in his book about the history of Bella Vista, "By late November, 1967, bulldozers had cleared the brush and trees from Pinyon Hollow....Lake Ann (was completed) in December, 1970." It was named after Cooper's daughter, Ann Basore, whose family still resides in Bella Vista.

***Picture 1: Pinyon Hollow was a popular location for fox hunts, such as this one in 1893.***

***Picture 2: Visitors flocked to Pinyon Hollow to find relief below these bluffs in the hot summers at a spot now under water at the southeast end of Lake Ann.***

***Picture 3: The large Robbins house was built in 1905 at a cost of \$2500 on the hill above what later became the north end of the Lake Ann dam. After falling into disrepair, it was burned as a Fire Department training exercise in the late 1980's. This painting of the house by Ellen Harvey was inherited by Annette Gore after the death of her parents, Jim and Cora Gore.***

