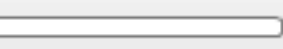


Devil's Den

Curtis Neeley



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Advisor Appleby was the first to swim in the lake in early April when it was still too cold for most to consider swimming. The high temperatures on the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd were 71, 77, and 83 respectively.

These facts were researched through the National climatic Data Center (NCDC) by Dan Skoff who was Chief Meteorologist at KNWA (NBC) / KFTA (FOX 24).

Finding about high temperatures for three days just 70 days ago would take determination but looking the same data up from 70-YEARS AGO is something else altogether!

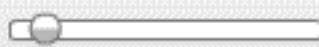
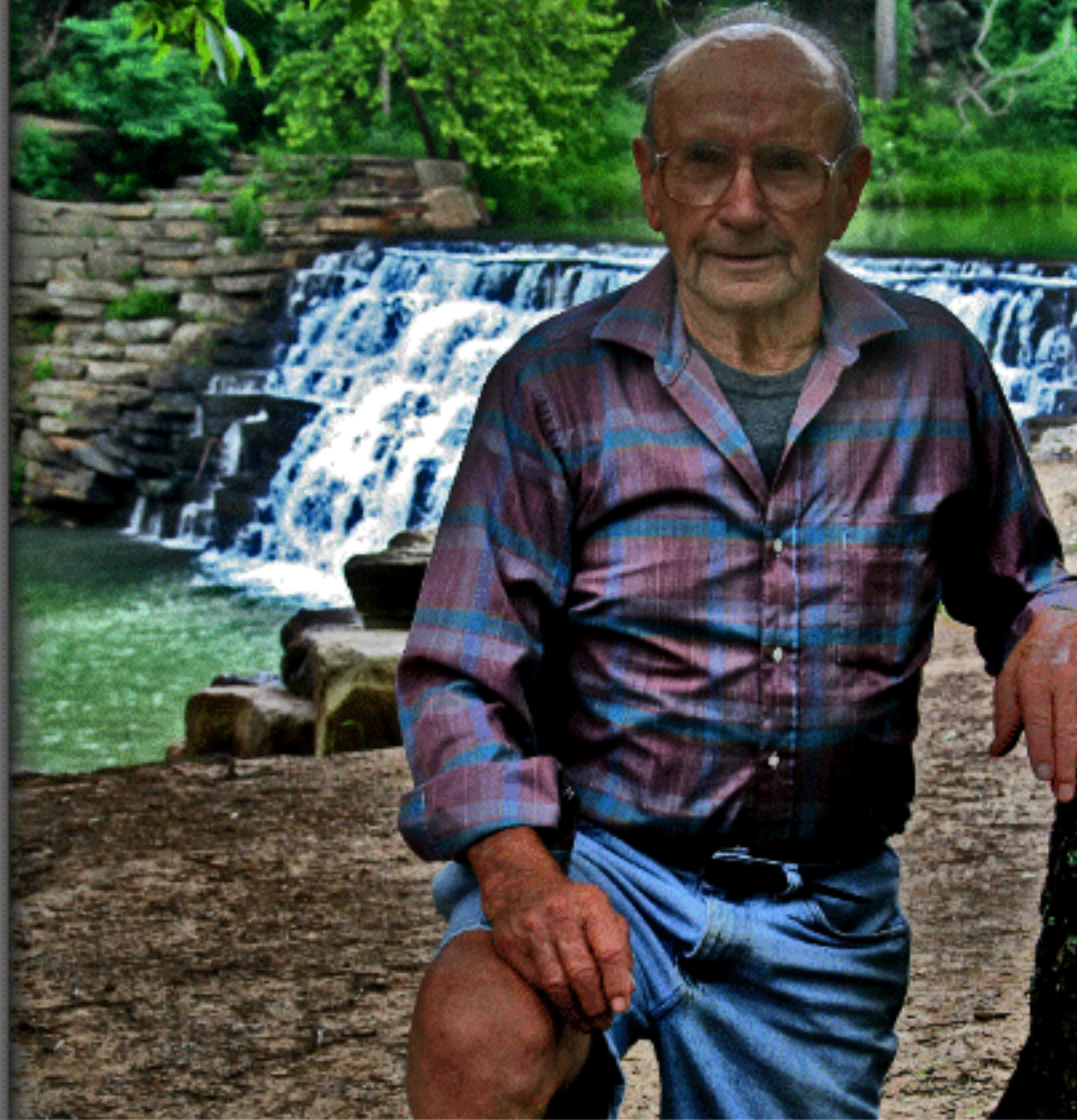
There was a 74-year reunion of the CCC workers who originally worked to build Devil Lake on the July 1, 2007 weekend. There are few high-school reunions after 74 years. Ninety-year-old Orville Taylor seen in this photo was a worker on Devil's Den from 1936-1938.

Curtis Neeley got to interview and photograph Orville Taylor with Devils Den spillway as a backdrop. There were few people at the reunion who had worked to build the lake at the reunion. There were fewer than five of them alive. Orville Taylor worked at Devils Den more years in the past than most who read this have been alive.

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Devil's Den State Park





Few think a rainstorm would lead to an empty lake. In 2004, there were heavy rains in Washington County Arkansas. The heavy rains made it prudent that Devil Lake be drained to ensure it was safe after the rains. This may have seemed drastic to many. Devil Lake was not created to manage drainage in any other way than collecting it.

Twelve inches of rain over several days on the four-acre lake was roughly one and a quarter of a million gallons of water. This counts only falling on the lake's surface directly and doesn't include the rest of the Lee Creek's drainage area of many square miles.

Devil Lake was heavily overran and the swinging bridge over Lee Creek was washed away. Concerns were that the dam was compromised and a decision was made to open the sluice gates and drain Devil Lake and repair anything found amiss and ensure that it was safe.

After 67 years Lee creek flowed completely through the park once again as a gurgling stream like you find it doing along Lee Creek Trail.

On a historical marker near the lake boat dock you will read that when the sluice gates were originally closed April 1, at 2:30PM in 1937, there was a friendly wager on how long it would take to fill.

Dr. Roberts estimated it would take at least fifty hours to run over the top. He bet two super-fine nickel cigars. On April 2nd at 10:30 PM 1937, or 32 hours later, he lost the wager.

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A bone-dry lakebed is exactly what one saw when visiting the park in March 2005. You see the dry lakebed exposing the boat dock in the cover photo. There were backhoes and dump trucks in the middle of what you see now as Devil Lake. Seeing a working backhoe at a boat dock is a rare scene.

In this book or visiting you may see how the very same scene looked after two years and millions of dollars of repair work in the other photos.

Call Devil's Den at 800-264-2417 to reserve a cabin and visit this popular park and hike or mountain-bike trail ride or arrange to bring your horse. Come view the rustic scenery from the CCC work and enjoy the sedimentary or limestone caves in the same park. Seldom will you find both types of caves in the same park.

Come hike the trails or perhaps rent a cozy cabin for a honeymoon or anniversary? Devil's Den State Park beckons you to come and build an Ozarks memory to impact your life in a positive way.

Here in the Ozarks we ALL share.

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The six CCC camps of 2754, 2762, 2764, 3777, 3795 and 797 built Devil's Den State park and the lake. They probably thought they were building a lake that would be full forever. Those who built the Hoover dam and other lakes never expect to see the lakebeds dry again.

A bone-dry lakebed is exactly what I saw when visiting the park in March 2005. You see the dry lakebed exposing a boat dock in the cover photo. There were backhoes and dump trucks in the middle of what you see now as Devil Lake. A backhoe at a boat dock is a rare scene.

You can see how the very same scene looked after two years and millions of dollars of repair work in the other photos. Call Devil's Den at 800-264-2417 to reserve a cabin and visit this popular park and hike or mountain-bike trail ride or arrange to bring your horse.

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This is the image to the left before removing the people whom you see above in the photograph. This is the photo that was modified to be the photo to the left and digital revision was easier than waiting for the docks to be empty.





Digital REMOVAL of people and cars! Seeing used to be believing. Seeing can now be deceiving.



DIGITALLY removed the lake and added a backhoe. HA. Kidding... This would not be impossible now but this is a straight unaltered photo.













Curtis Neeley on Yellow Rock after a three mile "hike". This may be the only wheelchair visitor it ever gets. Curtis couldn't get there, even in the Extreme4x4~, without his little brother's hard work helping him. Here you see Lee Creek as it drains the valley into Devil's Den Lake and can see the white barked trees.



To the upper-right you see hundreds of acres that will drain into Devil's Den Lake and you see young lovers enjoying the beautiful November 7, 2008 weather. Yellow Rock is rated a "moderate" hike and, in the author's opinion, was worth it. Even in a wheelchair!



Looking over Lee Creek from Yellow Rock on Nov. 7, 2008 we see the last of the Fall leaves. The Sycamore tree bark along the creek are the author's favorite.

