

Past Perspectives May 2017

Bolain Family

The Bolains have been part of the farming community of Bella Vista for many decades. Ed and Doris Bolain still live on a farm that has been in his family for generations, on Dartmoor Drive at the south edge of Bella Vista.

Ed's great-grandparents were Zack and Cordelia "Ann" Bolain. He died in 1944 and she in 1956; both are buried in the Pea Ridge Cemetery. They raised their family originally on a farm north of Pea Ridge.

The area now known as Blowing Springs Park used to be called Bolain Springs because Zack and Ann Bolain moved there in the late 1920's and remained there until his death, although they never bought the property. Zack always had a milk cow, a mule or horse, and a cornfield to feed his chickens. He also raised wheat and ground it to make flour.

The farm was called the Beal place when they moved there, but Bob Cates, an oil man from Tulsa, purchased it at some point. He had a fishing pond built at what would now be the upper end of the RV park, and would bring his buddies over from Tulsa to fish.

Bolain Springs went by that name until Cooper Communities, having opened a retirement village in the area in 1965, changed the name to Blowing Springs. Ed Bolain, who was born in 1945, remembers when he was young that the spring was always referred to as the "big spring." He said, "We would haul water from the spring in milk cans and barrels for the cattle."

Ed bought the farm on Dartmoor Road, where he and Doris still live, from the widow of his great-uncle Merrit Bolain, Zack's first child. Merrit had a saw mill across the road and Ed was told that every time Merrit came across a good piece of lumber, he saved it for the floor of his house. He first dug the basement by hand, and then put down the floor above it. He played the fiddle in a band, so the band began playing on that floor. Eventually Merrit built a rock house over that floor, which was still standing until Ed tore it down to build their new house in 1976.

Ed's parents were James "Luther" and Chloe Bolain, who died in the 1990's, and are buried in the Bentonville cemetery.

Ed was born in 1945 in Bentonville, but a year later his parents moved to a 120 acre farm in the area of what is now Latshaw Drive. Luther bought the farm from Bob Cates' widow after Cates died.

Luther had over 20 milk cows and a dairy barn. He bought milking machines when they got electricity in the 1950's. Luther's barn still stands, a building that is now Jim Edgington's Old Fashioned Heating and Air Conditioning business. That structure started out to be a church, with entire families picking up rocks to use in its construction, but the bank that was holding the community's savings went under in 1930. Eventually C.A. Linebarger, Sr., who owned Lake Bella Vista and the summer resort, bought the farms in that area, totaling over 800 acres (some of which he later sold to Cates). Linebarger's purchase included that church building, which he roofed and made into a barn. Thus the building became one of the few barns with a row of windows on each side.

Luther and Chloe lived on that farm until they sold to Cooper Communities about 40 years ago, at which time they bought a farm on Price Coffee Road near Bentonville, where they were still living at the time of their deaths in the 1990's.

In addition to raising crops, lots of farmers back then were in the dairy business, selling their milk to several local companies. Ed's father sold his milk to Kraft. Ed's job at one point was to test it for milk fat, but Kraft said it had less fat than what Ed found, so Ed's father decided to get out of the dairy business. He then went into raising beef cattle, and started custom bailing for other farmers, which was a profitable business.

Ed's grandparents were Edgar and Millie Bolain. He died in 1972, and she in 1984, both are also buried in Pea Ridge. They owned the 120 acre farm just east of their son Luther's farm, in the present Spanker/Euston Road area. Edgar also bought what was called the Wilson place, east of Bolain Springs. It consisted of about 80 acres and went west almost to the big spring. According to Ed, "The big bluff at the east end of the Blowing Springs parking lot was on Grandpa's land. The cattle took shelter under that bluff in the wintertime."

All the farms that Ed's parents and grandparents owned were eventually sold to Cooper Communities. Ed and Doris' daughter and her family bought a lot on

Latshaw Drive in the early 2000's, and built their house right on the spot where her grandparents' house formerly stood, straight north of the old barn.



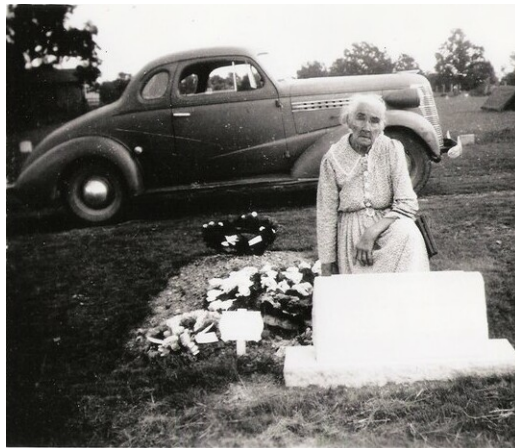
This picture of the Bolain family barn, now the home of Jim's Old Fashioned Heating & Air Condition business, was taken just before Jim Edgington started remodeling the barn in 2003. See more pictures of the remodeling at <http://jimsoldfashionservice.com/photo-gallery/>. Photo courtesy of Ed Bolain.



Ed Bolain's parents, James "Luther" Bolain and Chloe Bolain, posed for this photograph in 1980. Photo courtesy of Ed Bolain.



Blowing Springs as it looks today. Photo courtesy of Xyta Lucas.



Ed Bolain's great-grandmother, Cordelia "Ann" Bolain, at her husband Zack Bolain's grave at Pea Ridge Cemetery in 1944. Photo courtesy of www.findagrave.com.