

Here's Kristen Carson's email – more very useful information:

Don,

That's some great research there.

If Milo's going to make the trip, let me add what I know.

The locals will help you find the Maud Miller place. You can stop in at the general store at the west end of town, where Hwy 706 meets Hwy. 32. Ask whoever's on duty and, while they might remember a Maud Miller, they will refer you to one of the local genealogy buffs. It may take two or three stops, but that is part of the fun.

Last time I visited, Mary Fyffe and Samone Ratcliff were the go-to ladies for genealogy in Elliott County. Unless either of them have died, the locals will probably send you to them. Mary was elderly but vigorous when I met her. Samone had cancer relatively young and went into remission, but I haven't heard from her in quite a while.

I'm also assuming that the general store is still there. It has something of an eternal nature about it, as in some of the stock on the shelves has been there since my girlhood days.

Or you could ask at the post office, a little hutch at the east end of town, near Hwy 486. That is, unless it has gone the way of rural postal close-downs.

It's never a quick trip into the mountains and until recently, Elliott County hadn't a single motel. The drive in and out from the nearest lodgings (Morehead for me, since I was traveling from Indiana) really cut into the time I had to visit and ask questions. I only feel comfortable going 40 mph on those twisty roads. I often felt the locals' impatience when they got stuck behind me. They tear around those curves at 55 or 60 mph. Anyway, ten years ago, someone built the Laurel Gorge Inn, anticipating a healthy trade from people who come to visit their relatives in the two new prisons that were being built just then. I shudder to think what prison relatives might have done to the beautiful quilts on the Inn's beds. But at any rate, the country back there is truly gorgeous. And your trip back to Anderson Branch Road will provide you with the adventure of driving on some of the one-lane roads back in the hills. You may want to include a stop at Richmond and Martha's homeplace. I did that on several of my trips. Angela even got some pictures for me. It sits on a most fetching spot on Rocky Branch Road. (Follow 706 north from the Anderson Branch turn-off.) If you want help finding it, ask the locals for Frank Gillum's place. In case Frank is dead, I think the wife's name is Charlene. She is young enough to still be around. She's his second wife and he's so proud of her because when they hunted wild turkeys, she bagged more than he did.

The people are very friendly. You may find them staring hard at your face and declaring that, yes, they really do see a family resemblance. And they're all our cousins. Heck, they're all each others' cousins, about six times over.

Have a great time up in the hills.

Kristen