

# Moving Deadline Near For Fontana Reservoir Residents

## 1,200 FAMILIES HAVE DEPARTED FOR NEW HOMES

### Water Soon Will Begin Inundating 23,800 Acres In Swain And Graham Counties

KNOXVILLE, TENN. — Moving time is nearing an end for folks in the reservoir area of Fontana Dam, highest east of the Rocky Mountains, which is nearing completion in the mountains of Western North Carolina. Also for those in the 44,000-acre area which will be added to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. The final date for vacating is Nov. 1.

Early in November, water will begin rising back of Fontana Dam, east of the war power construction projects in the present program of the Tennessee Valley Authority. Approximately 10,800 acres will be flooded.

#### 67,800-Acres Involved

Land purchased and to be purchased totals approximately 67,800 acres, including 44,000 acres to be transferred to the National park ser-

vice. There were 1,319 families in the entire area, of which 599 were what are known as "original families" or long-time residents, while 720 were transient families or those which had settled and sought employment on the project. When the last count was made, 1,200 families had moved—517 original and 683 transient. That leaves 119 families to be moved. Most of the original families were landowners, rather than tenants, and much of their acreage was in woodland.

Most of the families will remain in North Carolina with some having moved toward Asheville or even beyond.

#### Five Villages Involved

Five villages will disappear. Japan, Bushnell, Almond and Judson will be under the water level and Proctor will be in the new park area.

Nearly all families have been cooperative, according to the TVA. The majority back at cabins in coves were eager to move. They wanted to go where they would have advantages. Some could get those advantages just by moving to better locations within their own county.

Few had electricity back in the mountains, but nearly all cabins had battery-operated radios. The world came to their door over the radios. They learned much about what was beyond the blue horizon without traveling. Some mountain homes were above the average. They had waterwheels to produce electricity. The Proctor CCC camp had electricity from a waterwheel, and both Judson and Almond had electricity. One family had an old-fashioned wheel which was used to grind corn. Even the cogs were made of wood. Arrangements have been made to take the old mill wheel down, piece by piece, and move it to a museum at Fontana village.

#### Agencies Assist

TVA and cooperating agencies help in relocating families and assistance also is given in readjustment problems. A helping hand is given by the agricultural extension service, the Farm Security administration, state welfare departments, American Red Cross, and various other federal, state and local agencies.

Under the purchase procedure followed by the T. V. A., all families, except in unusual cases, are permitted to remove the improvements from the land and buildings. That

is an important relocation resource. Materials are being salvaged due to wartime scarcity which nobody would have looked at two or three years ago. In many instances, the old log houses are torn down and used for rebuilding. The wood alone in them is valuable these days.

North Carolina's state extension service gives help through the county agent in appraising farms which families plan to purchase. A list of available farms is also on hand in the office of the county agent. TVA has a contract with the North Carolina State extension service for such assistance.

When TVA buys land, it makes payment to the owner and plans are begun for removal. Often the time of purchase is several months in advance of the date for moving. Assistance which may be needed in moving or advisory service is given both property owners and tenants.

#### Many Employed

"The TVA has been able to use a considerable number of employable families, which also affords an important relocation resource," says W. T. Hunt, principal population readjustment representative, who is in charge of the TVA readjustment

program in the Fontana Reservoir, with headquarters at Bryson City.

"A total of 901 of 1,200 families have been employed by TVA during the period of working there. That started in January, 1942.

"Many men have worked not only on Fontana Dam, but in reservoir clearance near their homes. A third of the reservoir clearance personnel came from around that area. They have worked on the relocation of the Southern Railway line from Bryson City to Wesser.

Some of the women have worked in the cafeteria.

"All of the people of that section who worked for us are very good workers," Mr. Hunt said.

Mr. Hunt has been in population readjustment work at 11 reservoirs in the TVA system and he had only the highest praise for the North Carolina area, as did J. Ed Campbell, assistant director of the reservoir property management department, Knoxville, who was interviewed too on the work.

More residents of the reservoir have done clearance work than at any other project. And a higher number of tenants have become land owners than at any other.

#### Buy Own Farms

Stories could be told of mountain men who have been able to get a small farm of their own by saving from what they earned on the Fontana project. There was, for instance, a typical mountaineer on Tuskegee Creek, in Graham county. He was a farm tenant, 39 years old, married, with six children. For 17 years, since marriage, he had lived in a three-room box house on his father's farm.

He went to work on reservoir clearance and made enough to buy himself a farm with 15 acres of level land. He had two children who could carry on work at home while he was at work on the reservoir. He cut enough timber at his new location to build himself a house.

One man in Swain county owned several hundred acres, scattered around in little patches. At one time he operated a little store in Judson. He had a saw mill and cut timber off his tracts. TVA bought all of his property except one tract. He took the money and went over toward Gateway. There he bought a nice 75-acre farm, comparatively level, and heavy farm machinery.

He always had an ambition to raise stock. Now he can cultivate crops, raise grain and cattle. He received enough from his four or five tracts of scattered rough land to buy the new farm, with a substantial amount of money left to realize his long cherished hope of stocking a farm with purebred stock, including Aberdeen Angus.

#### Not Much Traveled

Some of those who lived deep in the mountains have never been far from home.

For instance, there is an old woman who lives back in the Proctor area, two miles up in a cove, where it is impossible to take a car. She is rather feeble. Mr. Hunt was talking to one of her sons not long ago.

"I impressed on him the necessity for getting out of the cove while the weather is good," said Mr. Hunt. "He told me that his mother had not been to Proctor in 30 years and had never been to Bryson City, about 25 miles away. She had never been in an automobile."

At one place below the water line near the dam, a TVA man had been surprised to see women's clothing in an old abandoned trailer, which had formerly been used by a construction worker's family. He inquired around and found the answer at a house on a hillside nearby. The woman explained that she had taken the clothing to the old trailer "to store them" until the household belongings could be moved. The trailer was nearer a road which would be used in moving.

#### School Consolidations

Some school consolidations are resulting. All schools in a bend of the river will be eliminated. There will be fewer one-teacher schools.

School bus service has been a help, but many children walk across mountains to catch the bus. One pupil has been using a path across a ridge, three miles, to get the school bus at Highway 288.

There are many churches, served by pastors on a circuit. A number of churches have moved to new locations.

Among the families moving are two of Indians, who have lived on property belonging to Cherokee Indian Council.

In one community, it was found that out of 163 families, 58 had lived there all their lives, 26 more than 20 years, 27, 10 to 20 years,

27, five to 10 years, and 25 up to five years. That indicated a fairly stable native population. It showed that more than 35 per cent of the families have lived in the community all their life and nearly 70 per cent at least 10 years.

Many of the families have gone into places where farming conditions and methods will be somewhat different. It is considered important that these families have some follow-up assistance if they are to make a success of their new relocations. The agricultural extension service of the University of North Carolina is doing along that line.

## GAY NEWS

By Mrs. Roy Beck

Mrs. Walter Wilson has received a cablegram from her son, Lester, stating that he is now serving in France.

Little Mr. Kenneth Ray Buchanan, four year old son of Mr. and Mrs. Perry Buchanan, is spending a few weeks with his aunt, Mrs. Joe Pyatt, of Oak Ridge, Tenn.

S. Sgt. Paul S. Buchanan of Fort Jackson, S. C. is spending a ten-day furlough with his wife and parents of Gay.

## RITZ THEATRE TO SPONSOR PICTURE OF ARMED FORCES

The Ritz Theatre has signed a contract with the Progressive Picture Company to make up a picture entitled "We Americans" to be run on their screen in the near future.

The picture will be made up of photos of local men and women in the armed forces, who are serving in all branches of the army and navy; it was learned from R. C. Allison, manager of the Ritz Theatre.

Anyone desiring a member of their family or a friend or sweetheart who is in the service to be in the picture are asked to leave the photograph or snap shot at the box office of the theatre.

In leaving the pictures, which are to be incorporated into a patriotic theme, the name and rank of the person in service is wanted by Mr. Allison.

The pictures will be sent to the laboratories to be reproduced on film with music and sound and then starting some time in November the first group of the pictures will be shown at the Ritz Theatre, and the program will be followed through thereafter until all the pictures have been shown.

The pictures are not an advertising medium and there is no commercial connection to the program as far as the public is concerned, it was pointed out by Mr. Allison.

Everyone who has realtives in the service are asked to submit a photograph so that when the parade of Jackson county men and women in service is shown on patriotic occasions in the future years, there will be no one left out, it was explained by Mr. Allison.

The photographs will be returned after the picture has been made.

# Where Time Doesn't March On...



... unless you step in now to help men in German prison camps fight that deadly "barbed wire" boredom

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Nothing to see but that wire, the barrack's wall, and a sentry's back. Nothing to hear but the tramp of his feet, the beets of your comrades.

So you go slowly, grimly, and sometimes not-so-quietly, progressively towards the "barbed wire disease" unless...

Unless you're lucky enough to have

the folks back home get behind the War Prisoners' Aid (one of the 19 participating agencies of the National War Fund) and provide the money to provide the things to feed the hunger of your heart and soul and mind.

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And don't just give a "token" contribution. The job is too big for that. Give—really give! Remember that no matter how much any of us gives in money it's still little compared to what the people you'll help have been giving in "blood, sweat, and tears."

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