

## PORTUGUESE POINT – Continued from page 58.

two times a week in their youth. They hid their canoe for when they could return for the next joy ride. A relative of mine also recalled that there was a hang-out called “Gibbonsville” atop that area in the early 1940’s that was owned by Bill Gibbons.

Despite being familiar with this piece of ground, I haven’t known very much about Portuguese Point’s history. When I started asking about it, folks said, “Any who would know are already gone by now.” Sources, such as Frank Weber’s “Place Names of Six South Central Counties of Missouri.” M.A. thesis, University of Missouri-Columbia, 1938, cites the point was named for Portuguese settlers in the area. Another source, Benita Jones (a great-great granddaugh-



Vintage postcard - that reads “Portuguese Point is located on Route 28 leading to Dixon, MO a short drive north of U.S. Highway 66 near Devil’s Elbow.” Submitted



The beautiful view of the river below Portuguese Point enhances the delicious dinner you enjoy while dining at Di Trapini’s Italian Bistro on Highway 28. Submitted

ter of local settlers), said in her 2002 interview with The Dixon Pilot, that the family of John Smith purchased the land in 1866. She said they were part Cherokee Indian, but claimed to be Portuguese for trade and other reasons.

The report also said the Smith’s had five children and had come by covered wagon to Missouri from Kentucky in 1858. They also raised nine grandchildren, after the death of their parents, and took in a nephew and his two children. John Smith also served in the Confederate Army and, after retiring from the battlefield, he was captured by bushwhackers and hanged from a tree. Thankfully, Smith’s fellow companion cut him down after the bushwhackers left, and spared his life. John Smith later died on August 22, 1922, and is buried in Sheppard Cemetery near Dixon.

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