

It is curious how names we attach to places or things often far outlast their apparent connection. I thought about this today when Runo took hay to the cattle. There is a little wet hole on that piece of pasture where the cows can drink, and we have called that watering place The Apple Tree Pond as long as I can remember.

There is no apple tree there, nor has there been for decades. At one time, though, our favorite early fall apples came from the seedling tree that grew there by the pond. Time and windstorms eventually put an end to the tree, and now, there is just a stone pile where the tree once grew and produced large, yellow, tasty fruit.

In fact, the tree probably was in that spot because of the stone pile that must have preceded it by many years. Perhaps some farm boy or girl threw away an apple core that landed in a patch of soil between two stones. In time, a little tree grew up. It wasn't in the way for field work, as the stone pile protected it, and it was close to the wet spot that was never worked anyway. So, eventually, the seedling apple tree grew up, produced fruit, and, finally went the way of all living things.

But, we still refer to the spot as The Apple Tree Pond.

In the days when there was a one room school house every two miles, ensuring that most children would have no farther than that to walk to school every day, Burdell #7 was on the corner just east of our farm.

I never went to school there. Unfairly forced consolidation had already determined that we would go to the town school. But, the school house stood in its spot for many years. My uncles, who owned the farm where the one acre school lot was located, bought the corner lot and used the building to store equipment.

Eventually, the building came down, so there is no school house there any more. But, the hill to the east of the location was and will always be The Schoolhouse Hill. Once again, the name has endured far longer than the reason for the original designation.

Plank Hill is blacktopped now and has been for several decades. But, "old timers" ---and their descendants---still refer to the hill by its old name.

Sometimes, we have a pretty good idea of how long people have lived in the area by what they call a particular road or place. In order to reach a blacktopped road, we travel what we have always called The South Road. I assume that people who lived on the other side of the blacktop call it The North Road. That applies, of course, to people who have lived here a long time. Folks who moved to our neighborhood after roads were named call it Norman Road. And those who came even later refer to the same stretch of gravel as 230th Avenue.

I am certain that this phenomenon is not unique to our area. It stands to reason that the names we attach to places and roads, and even to people, will remain in use by those who are aware of the circumstances that caused the designations in the first place. And, it also makes sense that, to other people, these names have no relation to what they describe. And yet, the often colorful descriptions add a unique flavor to any area, and their preservation is part of the heritage of any community.