

*Back in the Country...*  
*Bell Acres Stories*

By Debby Rabold

**Big Sewickley Creek Road  
& the Red Belt**

**Meeting Protests Condition of Sewickley Creek Road**

*“Protesting against the condition of the Big Sewickley Creek Road, which speakers declared was impassable, citizens of Fair Oaks and Leet Township last night held a mass meeting in the Fair Oaks School House. The road passes through Beaver and Allegheny counties and speakers said that the Beaver county commissioners agreed to improve the Beaver County section of the road if the Allegheny County commissioner would repair their part of the road equaling 1.45 miles. A committee was appointed to confer with officials at Glen Osborne, Shields, Leetsdale and Quaker Valley so that concerted action might be obtained.”*

**(Post-Gazette 6 April**



1925 Allegheny County Public Works photo.

*“The building of Big Sewickley Creek Road...seems attended by hard luck. Breakdowns in machinery, large labor turn overs and bootlegging activities in the vicinity of the labor camps have all combined to form a jinx which has hindered completion of this work...The county authorities raided speakeasies and stills in the vicinity of the road and already many of those apprehended are serving time in the jail and workhouse...Each day five or six men demand their wages and quit or wander away after payday. Saturdays and Sundays bootleggers from Allegheny County flood the district with moonshine or the men wander into the nearby towns and are arrested and unable to pay fines and costs, are sentenced to the lockup to serve time. Monday mornings the foremen have hardly enough men to operate the machinery. When there is a good supply of men the machinery goes wrong.”*

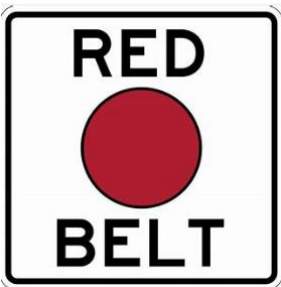
**(Daily Times 4 November 1924)**



Big Sewickley Creek Road was completed in August 1925.

### The Red Belt

It was a 1950's traffic engineer in the Allegheny County Public Works Department who had the idea of color coding existing roadways that would enable motorists to easily find their way through the twists and turns of our hills and valleys. By following color coded signs, motorists would be able to find their way to highways that radiated out from the city of Pittsburgh.



The outermost belt is the 30-mile Red Belt that connects Route 28 at Tarentum to Route 65 in Ambridge. It runs along Big Sewickley

Creek Road through Bell Acres and Economy.

Camp Meeting Road is part of the Orange Belt that almost completes a loop around Allegheny County. At 109 miles, it is the longest Belt and connects Elizabeth with Library.

Next is the 89 mile Yellow Belt that completely encircles the city of Pittsburgh, followed by Green and Blue belts. A Purple Belt was later added to help navigate city streets.

