



Heritage Village, Dec. 8  
Holiday shopping in Tyler County



# W o o d s m a n



VOLUME 3 NUMBER 12N.S.

HERITAGE VILLAGE MUSEUM

WOODVILLE, TEXAS 75979

DECEMBER 5, 1990

## Twilight Tour set for Dec. 8 5-9 p.m.

Experience the joys of Christmas Past with a Twilight Tour of Heritage Village Museum, December 8 from 5 to 9 p.m. Wrap yourself in the spirit of an old fashion Christmas as you meet and greet old friends on your stroll through this century-old village swathed in candlelight, native greenery and homemade decorations.

Hear the music of Christmas as presented by choral groups from throughout the county.

Witness the true meaning of Christmas as you visit the live Nativity Scene, created by the Trinity Christian Center in an historic log barn, and hear the Christmas Story read aloud by the Rev. Bill Swearingen in the Village's Little Red School House.

Savor the smells of Christmas as you sip a cup of hot wassail and munch on delectable homemade goodies.

A gift to the community and to all its many friends, everywhere, Heritage Village's Twilight Tour is free to the public.

The celebrated Woodville High School Choir, directed by Ruth Houston, will be heard center stage at 6:30 p.m. Other musical offerings will include the Tyler County Sacred Harp Singers, the choir from Pilgrim's Rest Baptist Church, singers from the Fellowship Primitive Baptist Church of Hillister, and many other singing groups still unconfirmed.

Please join us on this nostalgic visit to Christmas past, from 5 to 9 p.m. immediately following Woodville's annual Christmas Tour of Homes.



**TENNESSEE AND TEXAS**—The David Provost home, one of the three Woodville area homes open during the Annual Christmas Tour on December 8, mixes Civil War era timbers from Tennessee with the building skills of Tyler County's finest craftsmen to create an eclectic mix of old time charm.

## Tour of Homes is Dec. 8

Christmas in Tyler County gets off to a merry start on Saturday, December 8, as three beautiful Woodville area homes are decked out for the holidays and opened to the public from 1 p.m. through 4:30 p.m.

The occasion is the 13th annual Christmas Tour of Homes, sponsored by the three Federated Women's Clubs of Woodville, who use the monies raised for scholarships and other worthy community projects.

Oldest and most-historic of the three

homes to be presented this year is the Heyward Fetner home in the Harmony Community on FM 256 South, five miles west of Woodville off Hwy 190 (No.1 on the adjoining map). This charming country home, sponsored by the Woman's Study Club, was built by the Gant family in 1850.

Of great interest to all Tyler County residents and their guests who knew and admired the late Governor Allan Shivers, will be Magnolia Hill, where his great grandmother, Nancy Tolar

Shivers, homesteaded in 1858. The home Governor and Mrs. Shivers built on that homesite in 1939 will be sponsored by the Woman's Reading Club, and Mrs. Shivers will be in residence to greet her guests. Magnolia Hill (No.2 on the map) is located on Hwy 190, approximately three miles west of Woodville. The home is set way back into the property and is reached by a beautiful drive through the East Texas forests.

(Continued on 2.)



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**Tour of Homes** (Cont. from Page 1)

Newest of the Christmas tour homes, but with a unique history all its own, is the David Provost home approximately five miles east of Woodville on FM 1746 (No. 3 on the map.) Completed just a year ago, this spacious home on beautiful Deer Lake was built by local craftsman and look much older than it is. Part of this was accomplished by the use of timbers that came from two pre-Civil War homes near Cookeville, Tennessee. Personally disassembled by family members and transported to Woodville 14 years ago, these timbers had been in storage until last year, just waiting their turn to become part of Tyler County history. It wasn't until then that workmen discovered the Civil War musket balls, imbedded in some of the timbers.

Provost home will be the massive beamed made locally from some of the Tennessee timbers and its just completed Santa Claus quilt. Mrs. Provost hand painted the old fashion santas herself and pieced the coverlet. The exquisite quilting on this and the matching pillow shams is the work of Mavis Franklin of Lumberton. Refreshments will be served at each of the tour homes, where a wide array of homemade crafts and Christmas delectables will also be on sale. Tour tickets are just \$3 and can be purchased from any club member or at any of the tour homes.

Following the home tour, Heritage Village Museum (No. 4 on the map) invites all comers to its annual Twilight Tour, featuring the sights, the sounds and the smells of Christmas past, 5 to 9 p.m. There is no admission charge.

**Christmas bird count set for Big Thicket area**

By Beth Housman, Park Ranger Big Thicket National Preserve

Birds are ideal barometers of our planet's situation; their diversity requires a wide range of ecological conditions. By studying the destruction of habitats through urban development, clearing of forests and encroachment of marsh habitats and correlating that to bird populations, we should be alerted to potential changes in global biological diversity.

Taking this one step further, as species are lost, what can be said of our future? When the first cold fronts arrive each fall many turn off the air conditioning, open the windows and welcome the smells and sounds of the outdoors back into their homes. As the weather cools, the summer sounds of crickets and cicadas are replaced by the familiar sounds of migrating birds, as they begin heading south to their winter homes.

Certain birds choose to stay in southeast Texas and enjoy our mild winter. Snow geese announce their arrival as they fly over in extended "V's" before landing at area rice fields or nearby wildlife refuges. Smaller songbirds make short stops at backyard bird feeders, offering a chance of a rare sighting before continuing their long journey to South America. While many enjoy watching this migration, we can gain valuable insight to the condition of our planet by studying it.

To help us with recognizing the value of this annual migration and the importance of having land set aside for nature's use, the National Park Service has designated a network of "Linkage Parks" to identify parks involved in certain species migrations. Two parks linked together may represent a summer breeding ground and a wintering ground, or a summer breeding ground and stopover area for birds on their way south of the U.S. border. The two parks work together to educate the public on the role of each park to their species and to the importance of habitat preservation.

Big Thicket National Preserve has been linked with Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore in Michigan by two songbirds: the solitary vireo and the northern oriole. Each year, the solitary vireo migrates to the Big Thicket to spend the

winter. The northern oriole, on the other hand, stops only briefly while on its long journey to Central America. These birds both seek protection from natural predators that can only be gained by the thick cover offered by the Big Thicket.

It is important that we collect migration data on a continuous basis, so we may identify changes in the natural patterns of bird populations. Many find it difficult to identify with a small birds like the southern oriole, but recently studies by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service show a 23 percent decline in the number of northern orioles counted from 1978 to 1987. And any local duck hunter can tell you about the loss of habitat, the decline in duck population and the reductions in daily bag limits of recent years.

Are the birds trying to tell us something?

Big Thicket National Preserve will be conducting the area's annual Audubon Christmas Bird Count on two days this month: December 15 at the Turkey Creek Unit and December 9 at the Beech Creek Unit. If you are interested in participating in this worldwide survey (now in its 91st year), contact the Preserve at (409) 246-2337 between the hours of 9 a.m. and 5 p.m.

**The East Texas Echo**

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To further the interests of the Tyler County Heritage Society, a non-profit educational corporation, and to promote genuine historical research, tourism, and the Heritage Village Museum.

John Yearwood - Publisher  
Dottie Johnson - Heritage Village Editor  
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**Tyler County COMMUNITY CALENDAR**

**DECEMBER 1990**

**DECEMBER 8: 7:00-11:00 a.m.—ROTARY CLUB'S ANNUAL ALL-YOU-CAN-EAT PANCAKE BREAKFAST.** Woodville Inn \$3.50, includes coffee, milk or juice. Sausage or bacon \$1 extra.

**1:00 p.m.—WOODVILLE'S ANNUAL TREE OF LIGHTS,** sponsored by the Tyler County Children's Services Board. Lighting of the tree on the Court House Square to be followed by the arrival of Santa Claus and his elves on a fire truck. Music, gifts and candy for the children.

**1:00-4:30 p.m.—WOODVILLE 13th ANNUAL CHRISTMAS TOUR OF HOMES.** Tickets available at any of the three beautifully decorated tour homes, just \$3. Refreshments served. Homemade crafts and edibles for sale. (See map on page 3)

**5:00-9:00 p.m.—HERITAGE VILLAGE'S THIRD ANNUAL TWILIGHT TOUR.** The sights, the sounds, the smells of Christmas past in a quaint 19th century village swathed in candlelight and Christmas greenery. No admission charge.

**DECEMBER 15: ANNUAL AUDUBON CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT.** Turkey Creek Unit of Big Thicket National Preserve. For further information, call (409) 246-2337 between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m.

**DECEMBER 20: SINGING OF THE MESSIAH.** Ecumenical Choir at the Woodville United Methodist Church, 7 p.m. Public is invited.

**DECEMBER 29: SECOND AREA CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT.** Beech Creek Unit of Big Thicket National Preserve. For further information, call (409) 246-2337.

**Chamber News**  
TYLER COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Beautification Award was presented to Dr. R.J. Shields, 106 Kelly Blvd. November 8. Dr. Shields has remodeled his office and done lots of landscaping.

**New Members:**  
Women's and Children's Shelter  
They have opened an office in Woodville on the Courthouse Square in the Absentee Voting Building. Dianne Duhon and Sharon Baker are there daily to help you with any problems you might have. Call them at 283-8720.

**New Attitude**  
This new shop owned by Betty Davis had its Grand Opening November 15. They have three operators besides Betty, Gladys, Carol and Mark. They are open Monday thru Saturday so drop by 1125 S. Magnolia and say Hello. 283-8373.

We certainly want to welcome these new members and wish them well in their business endeavors.

Get your nominations in for the Outstanding Citizen of the Year and Honorary Outstanding Citizen of the Year Award. Our deadline is December 14. Call 283-2632 if you have any questions. These awards will be presented at our annual banquet January 17, 1991.

Be sure and call the Chamber if you want to be included in the December Beautification Award. The criteria is outdoor lighting and window decoration. The date of the judging will be December 12 and the award will be presented December 14th. Any business in Tyler County that wishes to may join in this Christmas decorating. Lets make our county really light up!

Paid For By The City Of Woodville Tourism Fund

**Spirits of Christmas past: interviews as history**

Each year at this time, Woodville Middle School Texas History teacher Mildred White does a unit on Christmas in Texas. She's done a great deal of research on the subject, which she shares with her students in many interesting ways.

One of those ways is assigning each student to interview an elderly person about his or her remembrances of Christmas as a child. The students then put what they have learned in story form, turning it in for a major grade. All stories are read aloud in class.

Here are some excerpts from stories turned in last year, which Mrs. White would like to share with you.

Natalie Midkiff wrote her story about 91 year old Inez Williams in first person: "When I was growing up, my papa worked in a saw mill in Woodville. The first doll I ever had was a little rag doll. It had a rag body, china head, hands and feet. Our Christmas tree was a pine tree that Papa cut down in the woods. When he brought it home, all of us children would hang little ornaments on it that we made out of colored paper. I believed in Santa Claus until I was 9 years old. That Christmas Eve, I stayed up and watched mama and papa put the presents under the tree. Unfortunately they caught me and I got a "whooping."

According to Carlos Gonzales, who wrote in the third person, then 97 year old Claude Read "believed in Santa Claus until he was 8 years old. His brother told him that the tracks their father was making as they walked

through the woods were Santa Claus tracks, because their father was Santa Claus. His mother knitted stockings out of wool and hung them by the fireplace. They were filled with candy, fruit and nuts.

In interviewing Elsie Norwood, who was born in Lobe, Texas, in 1907, Sharon Collier learned that her aunt's father worked in a saw mill for fifty cents a day, which was good wages for those times. "When she was about ten years old, she was in a Christmas play at school. She was to be an angel and needed a costume. There was no money for this so her mother took one of their bed sheets and made her a costume.

Elizabeth Sullivan used the first person in her writing about Dr. Blanche Phillips, who was born in Paxton, Texas, in 1913. "All seven children believed in Santa Claus. We left popcorn, milk and molasses cookies for him, and to our stockings. We first found out Santa wasn't real when we found a large box of raisins. Missing from it were exactly seven pounds of raisins.

"We had fun seeing who could find the biggest pair of stockings. In our stockings, we received all kinds of fruit, apples, oranges, raisins, grapefruit and occasionally a plum. There was never any jealousy over presents between us because if we shared our things we got to play with different toys."

And Mable Dean, now 88 and residing in the Woodville Convalescent Center, told Jenna Kenesson "I wish everyone could have Christmases as happy as mine."

**CHRISTMAS TOUR OF HOMES**

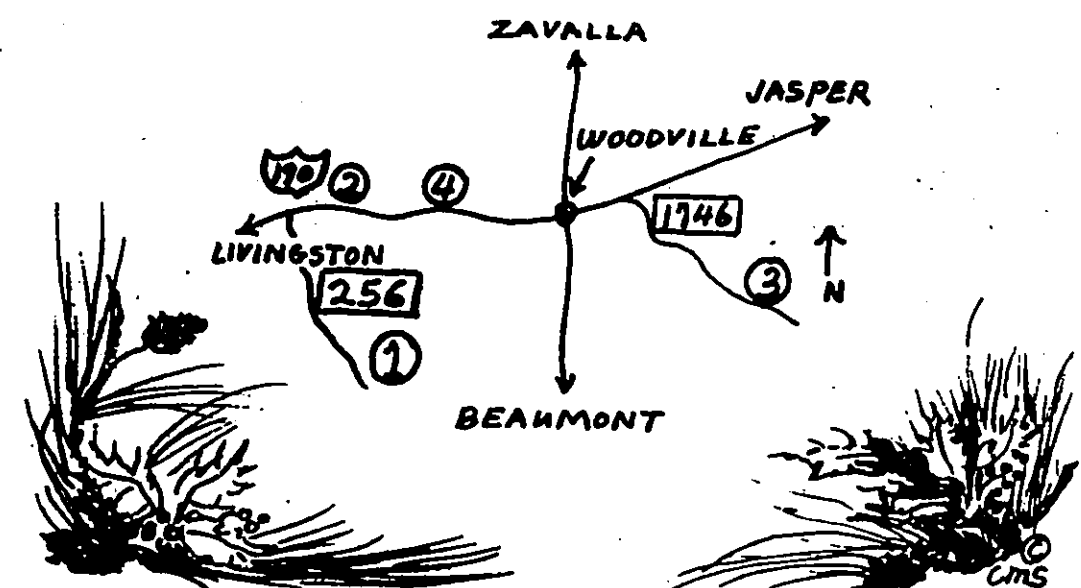
1:00-4:30 Dec. 8

- ① Fetter Home
- ② Shivers Home
- ③ Provost Home

**CHRISTMAS TWILIGHT TOUR**

5:00-9:00 Dec. 8

- ④ Heritage Village Museum



**Legend of The Poinsettia**

According to a Mexican legend, a peasant girl visited a cathedral on Christmas Eve. She began to cry because she was too poor to bring a gift to lay on the altar. An angel appeared to her and told her to gather some nearby weeds as her gift. The girl obeyed and when she placed her simple gift of weeds near the statue of the Christ Child, they burst into glorious red blooms which were called "Flor de la Noche Buena" (Flower of the Holy Night) and today we know them as The Poinsettia.



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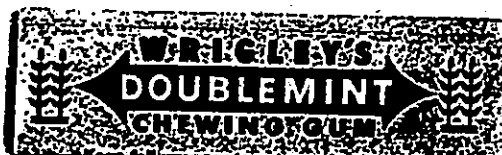
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D E C 0 5 0 9 0

# Double your fun in '91

Gum's the Word. And Wrigley's Double Mint gets all the credit. So what does double mint gum have to do with the Tyler County Heritage Society?

Inspiration, that's what.



It was this gum and its familiar jingle that inspired the campaign theme for the society's annual membership drive, which has as its goal to double its membership for 1991.

It's a campaign theme that challenges the Society's current members to not only renew and upgrade their memberships, but to go out and get a new member.

For those of you who have been members in the past, but somehow or other never got around to renewing last year, this campaign challenges you to double your pleasure for 1991 by coming back to the fold and bringing along a new member.

And for those of you who have never been members of this very important and productive organization pledged to the preservation of Tyler County history, this is definitely the time for you to climb on board for some of that pleasure and fun the Society's campaign slogan promises you.

The Tyler County Heritage Society has a number of membership choices: Individuals memberships are just \$15 a year, family memberships \$25 and Small Business memberships \$50. Just call Bob Bender at Candy Cleaners. He'll tell you all about that last one.

And for all you bigger businesses out there, there's a Corporate Membership for just \$500 a year. The Society would really love to hear from you this coming year.

So, where does this money go? Primarily it goes to Heritage Village Museum, which the Tyler County



FOR ALL THE GENERATIONS TO COME—Sunny and Tiffany Gardner exemplify the goals of the Tyler County Heritage Society in its quest to preserve Tyler County history for generations to come. The daughters of Susan Gardner of Woodville, the twins are decked out in their best pioneer dresses, created especially for this photo session by their grandmother.

Heritage Society owns and operates, in the public trust, as a non-profit educational facility to preserve the history of Tyler County.

Three years ago, the Society raised \$125,000 in just six weeks to purchase Heritage Village. You helped make that happen by responding to a simple slogan that asked you to "Have A Heart; Save the Village." There were no promises. No talk about Harvest Festivals, Twilight Tours at Christmas, Outdoor Historical Dramas, and an award win-

ing Junior Historian program. No one was even thinking at that point about a genealogy library, major exhibits, a Village church or one of the finest collections of books on history to be found in the entire area. All you were asked to do was to help save the Village. You did, and look where that Village is today, a museum of note, recognized throughout the state and across the country, even in foreign lands. The Village register is filled with names of visitors from Japan, Germany, Australia, England, South America and more.

But there is still so much to be done to bring Tyler County's fascinating history together and preserve it for the generations to come. That takes money, yes. But it also takes your dedication, your willingness to join hands with your neighbors and be a participating member of the Society.

And this time, the Heritage Society can make promises. It's all in the slogan: "Double your fun."

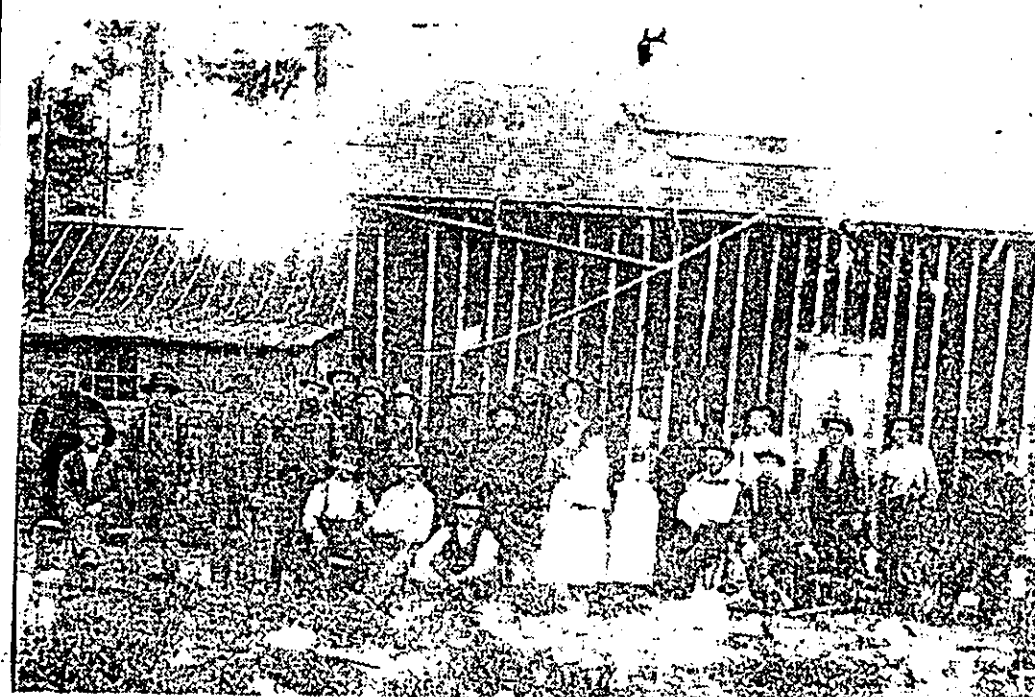
Join the Tyler County Heritage Society for 1991.

But that pleasure and fun business can only happen if you become a participating member and help double the society's membership by bringing along a friend.

Send your membership check to the Tyler County Heritage Society today, PO Box 888, Woodville, Texas 75979. Or better yet, drop by the Village and see for yourself where your membership money is going and how you can be of help.

Gum's the word.

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UNIFYING HISTORY—Junior Historian Jennifer Smith does the honors during the dedication of the log utility crib at Heritage Village Museum. Members of the Junior Historians dismantled the historic building and rebuilt it log by log at the Village.



Ed. Note: T.E. Phillips, former Municipal Judge for the City of Woodville and currently "commissioned" as the Judge of Heritage Village, served his early years in the fledgling Border Patrol along the Rio Grande Valley. Involved in more than 30 gun battles and shot twice in the line of duty, Judge Phillips' stories of his career in the Border Patrol are straight out of the Wild West—the Wild West of the American Border during three decades from 1920 to 1950. The Judge is a regular feature of the East Texas Echo.

By T.E. Phillips

During the 24 years my wife Bobbie, our son Carl and I lived near the Rio Grande River, we celebrated many memorable Christmases, but there was one I remember particularly that didn't involve my family at all, although it certainly could have.

It was during prohibition, when smuggling liquor was the way most Mexicans made their living in the area near Camargo, where Pancho Villa had made his headquarters. Most of his men still lived nearby and continued doing what they were best suited for—smuggling.

Now the Military Highway from Rio Grande City, or Fort Ringgold, to Fort Brown at Brownsville usually ran about four or five miles north of the river. There were very few houses south of the highway. In some places, however, there would be a number of jacals, one room huts made of brush. The smugglers used these jacals as look out points, and the Border Patrol officers had been warned not to venture south of the highway, as the land still belonged to Mexico.

At the time of this story, I was in charge of the Border Patrol Station at Mission, which was known as a fighting station. I had eight men working under me, two officers and six others studying to become officers.

I had also, by this time, earned the nickname of "Felipe," which made me welcome by law abiding Mexicans, but hated and feared by the smugglers.

As usual, on the evening of this event, I had two men riding with me, one who had almost finished his probation and another just starting out. As we rode about our territory, the older officer would help teach the younger one the laws and how to speak Spanish.

The older man on this occasion had just been accepted as an officer. He had been with me in at least two gun battles and had saved my life in one of them. The other man was just starting his probation. He was a nice looking young man, over six feet tall and slender, but he had the biggest feet I had ever seen on any man. I couldn't use him in the woods, as he made so much noise we couldn't slip up on anyone.

On this particular evening shortly before Christmas we were headed home. It was dangerous to be on the highway after dark. But still we drove slowly, looking for aliens or smugglers, when suddenly we heard music, then singing and realized it was coming from a large group of jacals near the river. Since I knew the spot was used for smuggling, I decided we should investigate, which I should not have done with only two men. But one of them had been tested, and I trusted him.

We hid our car and made our way through the woods until we could see, a short, sleepy river, a large group of people, grownups and children, gathered

# Christmas on the Rio Grande

in a cleared space near the jacals but away from the river. There were also a number of musicians playing guitar, accordion and fiddle. They had two big fires going and two lanterns for lights. The music was beautiful, the musicians were good and so were all the people who joined in the singing.

We watched and we listened for quite some time before I made my move.

We could also see two men at the edge of the lighted area. They had the refreshments, the Mescal and Tequila.

Now, I must admit that I love good music, especially good Mexican music. I was still studying Spanish, and the more I listened to this music, the more I wanted to hear. And so, against my better judgement, I decided to ask permission to join the party.

The man who seemed to be in charge was a man I had seen before, but I didn't know him. I told my men to cover me, then walked out a few feet so they wouldn't be in the line of fire should someone start shooting. When I called out that I was "Felipe" and wanted to come up to the fires, the man in charge and two other men started toward me.

I watched them very closely, but out of the corner of my eye, I could see the two men serving refreshments pick up their sacks and leave and the young man with big feet head out to catch them. Just as he reached the place where they had stood, he realized there was fallen tree about two feet above the ground. Well, the young man tried his best to jump over the tree, but his big feet got in the way. His rifle went flying in one direction, his pistol in another, and he crashed to the ground with a thud. The women all laughed, then ran over to help him. They brought him up to the fires, covered him with a blanket and got him a cup of coffee.

Meanwhile, as the three men came closer to me, the head man reached out his arms. I knew Mexican men often greeted their friends by hugging them. I think they call it *embraso*, but I wasn't sure whether this man was going to hug me or strangle me. I hoped for and received the embrace, while the two other men shook my hand, letting everyone know that we were welcome.

After checking with my big footed friend, who was getting so much attention he didn't need me, I decided we would stay and enjoy the music.

All the people at the party seemed to be glad that we had come, and they made us feel most welcome. They sang songs for us, put on special dances, invited us to dance and kept us supplied with coffee and cookies.

The head man asked me what song I like best, and I told him *Cielito Lindo*, "Blue Skies." I loved that song, especially the phrase "canto y no llores," which means "sing and don't cry." And so he had one of the young ladies sing it for me, and she sang it beautifully.

As most everyone knows, the Mexicans have a game they call *Pinita*, in which they fill a sack with candy, cookies and small toys for the children. The sack is then tied from a tree limb, just high enough so the children can't reach it. The children are blindfolded, turned around a few times and then given sticks with which they try to hit and break open the bag. Once it is hit, the one in charge lets the bag fall and burst open, and the children all scramble for the goodies on side.

Well, the grownups had their own version of this game, which I was soon to discover. First I noticed four young ladies talking to the head man, who listened intently, grinned and seemed to agree with their plan. I had a hunch something was up, and sure enough, just as we were getting ready to leave, the young lady who had sung for me asked if I would swing the bag for their game of *Pinita*. Naturally I agreed. After some of the young men went down to the river's edge to gather small willow tree branches for the girls to use, blindfolds were tied in place, supposedly so they could not see, and the girls turned around. But once I started swinging the bag, they all came at me and started hitting me with the willow branches. It was all in fun, of course. I was supposed to outrun them. Instead I hid in the trees and avoided most of their good natured whipping. Everyone laughed and enjoyed the game and the trick they played on me.

After thanking the head man and everyone else for a wonderful evening, I made a special effort to tell the musicians how much I had enjoyed their playing. As we left, my big footed friend having

recovered from his fall, we had just reached the end of the lighted area when the musicians started playing my song, and all the people joined in singing "Cielito Lindo."

It was one of the best Christmas parties I ever attended.

Adios y vayo con Dios.  
Siempre, Felipe

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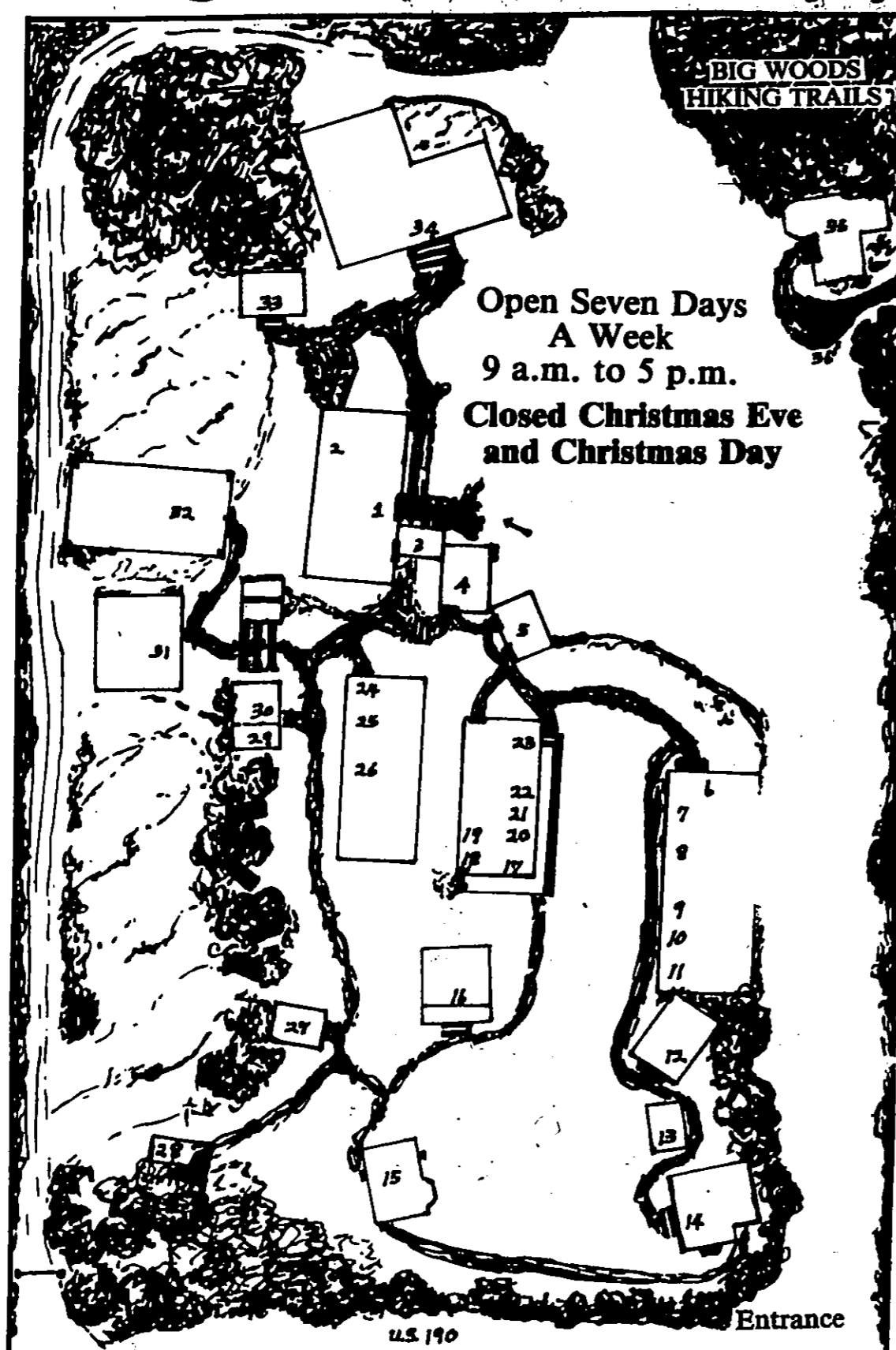
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D E C C 0 5 9 0

# Heritage Village Museum: A Unique Collection Of Early Tyler County Artifacts

- 1.—ENTRANCE & MUSEUM STORE: Enter the Village through the Museum Store, where you'll find an intriguing collection of unique country crafts, an outstanding selection of books dealing with the history of the area, and many unusual gift items.
- 2.—WHITMEYER GENEALOGY LIBRARY: Research your Tyler County roots right here at the Village. Share information through our Genealogy Register, use our microfiche and microfilm readers, browse through our growing collection of family histories and books.
- 3.—EXHIBITION ROOM: Monthly exhibits are shown in this room to further explain the history of Tyler County that is being preserved in the Village.
- 4.—KILLAM JEWELRY SHOP: Talented jewelry designer John Killam demonstrates early methods of jewelry making for visitors, while operating his custom jewelry business. Many of his designs are found exclusively in the Museum Store.
- 5.—JUSTICE OF THE PEACE: The JP's duties once included assaying minerals, performing marriage ceremonies and handing out punishment to criminals. Former Woodville City Magistrate and Border Patrolman T.E. Phillips offers interesting evidence of his colorful careers for Village visitors.
- 6.—PAWN SHOP: Old time mechanical money banks in the window invite visitors inside, where a wide variety of treasures can be found that stir memories of days gone by.
- 7.—WAGON SHOP: Plans are under way for reworking this area into a wagon shop and Tack Room.
- 8.—TEXAS DINNER BELL FACTORY: The traditional triangle, which rang across pioneer lands both as an alarm and a chow time "come and get it", is made here for sale at the Museum Store. The bells are also sent out on special order to specialty shops from coast to coast.
- 9.—POST OFFICE: There really was a Pluck Post Office, and Willie Reinhardt was the last Postmaster for the little mill town near Corrigan in Polk County. In-side fixtures are all authentic to the original.
- 10.—BARBER SHOP: If you wanted a Saturday night bath, this century old barber shop could accommodate you in the back room. The 1836 copper tub once belonged to a Jefferson, Texas, blacksmith. The century old fixtures of the shop included two chairs, which could be laid back and revolved, but not raised or lowered.
- 11.—SHERIFF'S OFFICE AND JAIL: Every town had one, of course. The Village's offering is a replica of the type of facilities one might have found in early Tyler County days.
- 12.—BLACKSMITH SHOP: In use in Colmesneil in the late 1800's, this shop is now the home of the East Texas Blacksmith Alliance. Village Blacksmiths fire up the forge whenever a touring group is expected, inviting them to share in what was once one of the most important businesses in any town.
- 13.—CANE GRINDER AND SYRUP MILL: Horses or mules were used to turn the grinders through which sugar cane was squeezed before the slow process of cooking the juice to produce a delectable syrup. In the shed beyond is an old wagon donated by the late Gov. Allan Shivers, a famous Woodville son.
- 14.—TOLAR CABIN: Built by Robert Tolar for his bride in 1808 and donated



Open Seven Days A Week  
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- 15.—RAILROAD DEPOT: Materials for this depot came from the 1890 station in Hillister. The loop hanging on the outside wall held the Order Stick, which the Station Master would hold out to a passing train so orders, information and outgoing mail could be picked up without the train having to slow down.
- 16.—COLLIER STORE: Much of the original materials and furnishings are included in the reconstruction of this general store, built in Town Bluff in 1863 by Zacharia Cowart Collier. No visitor to the Village should miss this fine collection of interesting 19th century items.
- 17.—TURKEY CREEK INN: A reconstruction of what an early hostelry looked like in Tyler County. Furnishings being assembled to accompany the handsome upright piano donated by Phebe Armstrong and her sister.
- 18.—LAWYERS OFFICE: Every so often, every one in town needed a

- variety of demonstrations.
- 24.—MUSIC SHOP: Musical history memorabilia from the collection of Bubba Voss of Orange, who spent many years in a circus band, has been increased to include old sheet music donated by Fred Bennett of Woodville.
- 25.—CHAIR FACTORY: Dallas Miller operated this chair factory in Burkeville until 1964, when it was donated to the Village by his family. Besides being the best chair maker in this part of the country, Miller was also a genius in fabricating the machinery he needed to make those chairs.
- 26.—INDUSTRIAL AREA: Soon to be the home of the Mattress Factory, Seed Separator and other early machinery needed to keep an early Village operating.
- 27.—LITTLE RED SCHOOL HOUSE: Typical of the one-room school houses where all grades were taught by one teacher and older students were pressed into service to help the younger ones with their lessons. Nestled in the woods next to the school is a picnic area, where visitors who wish to "brown bag it" can relax and enjoy.
- 28.—THE VILLAGE STILL: Once shamefully located right outside the school building, the Whiskey Still has thankfully been moved up into the woods, where it can turn out its moonshine without corrupting young souls at recess.
- 29.—SHINGLE SPLITTING: Under the overhang of the log utility shed you'll often find Ewell Woods, one of the Village's most faithful volunteers, who splits shingles to the entertainment of Village visitors.
- 30.—LOG UTILITY CRIB: Dismantled by the Tyler County Junior Historians and then reassembled log by log by this same group of history-minded youngsters, this sturdy log structure comes from the Pleasant Hill Community near Spurger, southeast of Woodville.
- 31.—CANTILEVER LOG BARN: This 140-year old log barn once belonged to the family of famed timber and oilman, John Henry Kirby, at Peach Tree Village near Chester. It was moved log by log to the Village by a team of volunteers.
- 32.—DEMONSTRATION BARN: Since old time craft demonstrations are the life line of the Village, this open sided pole barn offers a perfect spot for large demonstrations, outdoor gatherings and workshops. Most recently it saw dozens of portable forges in action during a statewide meeting of blacksmiths.
- 33.—THE COTTAGE ROSE: Antique and miniature roses surround this delightful little shop, which is located outside the Village proper, up the hill from the Pickett House Restaurant. Outside, you'll find a profusion of beautiful containerized plants for sale. Inside, dried flowers, dried arrangements and floral potpourri fill the air with delightful and aromatic gift ideas.
- 34.—PICKETT HOUSE: Country cooking abounds in this world famous restaurant housed in a turn of the century school house.
- 35.—HAMM HOUSE: Donated by the Hamm Family of Town Bluff, this century old home will soon be restored as a Nature Center at the head of the Big Woods Hiking Trails.
- 36.—BIG WOODS HIKING TRAILS: This 11.5 acres of well-marked hiking trails offer most of the treasures that can be found in the Big Thicket.

# In Woodville Visit

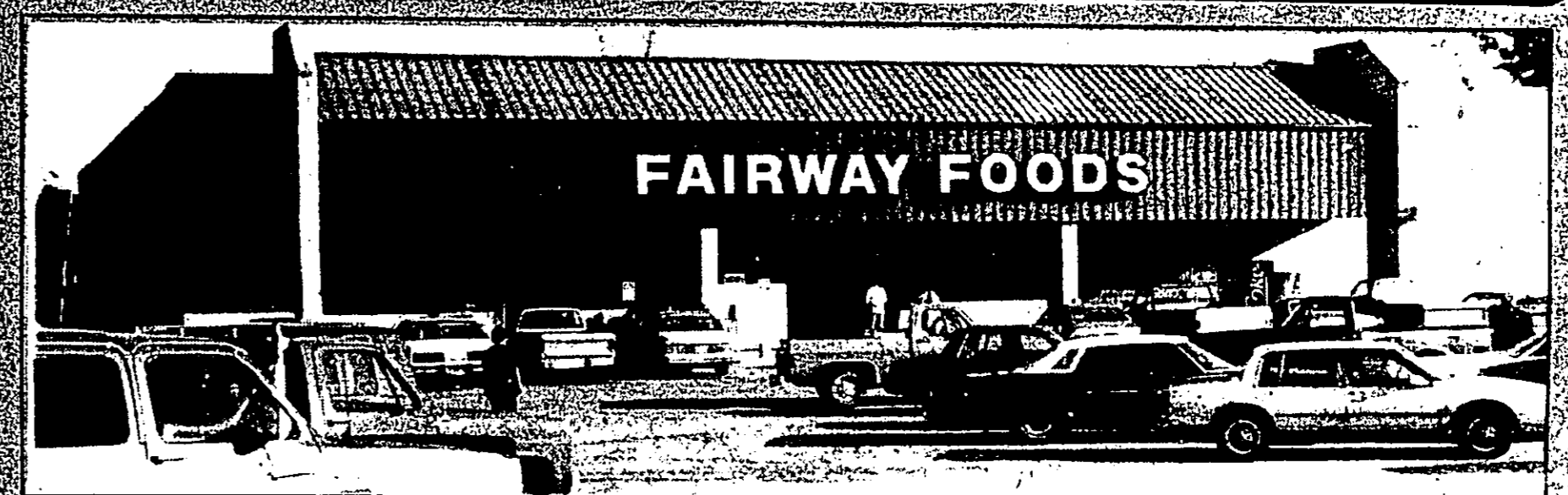
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D E C 5 1 9 0

# Tearing down old Colmesneil

By Dottie Johnson

"They're tearing down the last building of old downtown Colmesneil." We didn't get the caller's name, but we certainly got his message. Another bit of Tyler County history was biting the dust and this man wanted to make sure it had a decent burial.

So, off we went to Colmesneil, camera in hand, with the second part of his message ringing unclear. He had said that it had been the Collier Store.

Well, everybody who has been involved with Heritage Village knows there is and was only one Collier Store. Right? Wrong.

The Collier Store at the Village is a reconstruction of the Zacharia Cowart Collier Store of Town Bluff fame, belonging to a member of the Collier clan which migrated to Tyler County from Early County, Georgia, in 1852.

The store in Colmesneil belonged to Sylvanus Edward Collier III, whose grandfather S.E. the first, better known as "Uncle Sil", came to Texas from Mississippi, settling in Hemphill, where he had a sawmill. Later he moved to Woodville, bought a home and rented part of it to Paul Powell, who had the Ford Agency.

S.E. III and his wife, Julia, still live in Colmesneil. He's 81, almost 82, and going strong, most of the time. He graduated from Colmesneil High School, worked in Houston, was superintendent of a WPA project before the war, went to Orange where he worked for Consolidated Steel and Livingston Ship Yards, and returned then came back home. First he opened a grocery store in the old Pomp Meadow store building, which a lot of folks we called thought might be the store being torn down, but that store's been gone for some time now.

Ten years later he bought the building in question, which stood on the west side of the old roadway running through Colmesneil. Now it's just another of Colmesneil's many memories. G.W. Patrick tore it down for the materials which will be used to expand the facilities of the Grace Baptist Church on FM 256, which he pastors.

The Collier store was the last of its kind to occupy the building which was probably built sometime in the 1920's. It replaced a building owned earlier by S.H. Fuller, which burned down. Collier used the entire building, operating a grocery store in the main part, a feed store in back and a service station out front.

Before his time, the building had seen a number of owners, businesses and uses, as we discovered when we visited Miss Betty Enloe, who had done her homework. After many calls to old timers in the area, she came up with a sketch of how the store had once been and a list of the various people who had operated businesses in it.

She told us that this structure had been built by Lee Peagin and J. Perry Mann from lumber from another building. Clyde Freeman bought the building from them and operated a furniture and hardware store there from 1945 to 1950. Hesper Justice ran it for him. Later he built two apartments in the warehouse area in back. Abi Campbell Corntz had a corner in the furniture store where she sold pies and cakes and other baked goods.

Freeman, who is still in the hardware and furniture business in Colmesneil,

sold the building to S.E. Collier, who in time sold it to Charles Fortenberry, owner of the Colmesneil Telephone Company, who in turn sold it to Contel, the present owner.

Prior to Freeman's tenure, Miss Enloe told us, the building housed several drugs stores, run at various times by S.H. Fuller, Samuel L. Mann and Richard Best. Mr. Collier said the first druggist after rebuilding was Dick Best. Lila Kirkland had a beauty shop on one side, circa 1934-35, which Miss Enloe believes was the first beauty shop in Colmesneil. The sign on the window was still there to the last, in spite of the fact that we were told that Oliver Fowler operated a barber shop in that same spot for 18 years.

And at least four doctors had their offices in the building. Miss Enloe gave us the names of a Dr. Parton, Dr. J.C. Clements, Dr. John Tate and Dr. Jim Mann, the uncle of Dr. Sam Mann, who practices dentistry in Colmesneil.

Dr. John Gilchrist, who met us in Colmesneil to make sure we were all talking about the same building and to reminisce with S.E. Collier, remembered that his sister had her tonsils taken out in the back room of Dr. Clements' office with only the good doctor and his wife in attendance.

Dr. Gilchrist's mother, Ruby, also had a variety store in the building for a time, and for about a year in 1928-29, Cecil and Odna Ogden operated a City Service Filling Station out front. "We didn't have any money to start a business," Mrs. Ogden recalls, "but Wood Fain got us started, buying the gas and letting us pay him back a few cents on every gallon we sold." The Ogdens later moved next door to the Pomp Meadows Store and in 1935, when the new highway was built, they moved up there and opened a garage.

At one time, S.E. Collier's father, Edward, had a barber shop just north of this building. Like the barber shop at Heritage Village, it offered a shave for ten cents and a bath for a quarter. Dr. Sam Mann said the tub was white porcelain and the prettiest thing he ever saw. In fact, it was the first bathtub he ever saw. Up to then all he had ever seen at bath time was a No. 3 wash tub.

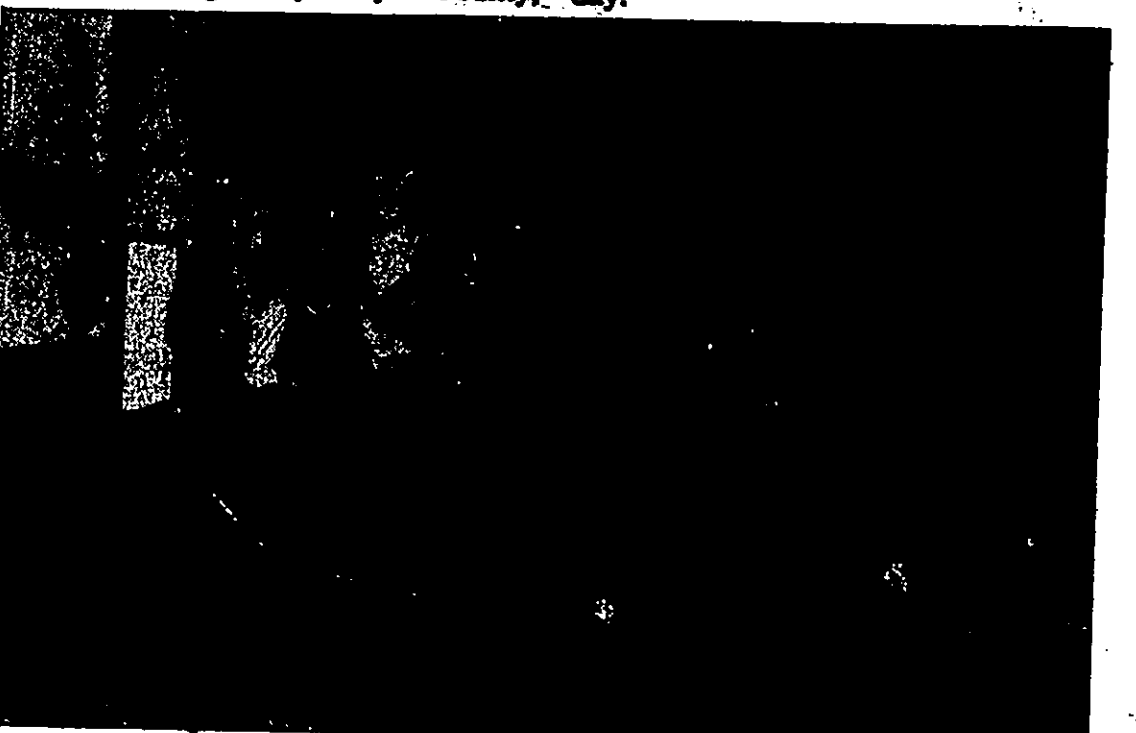
Mr. Collier told us the bathtub was cast iron and 6 feet long. One of his jobs as a boy was to clean the bathroom. The other was to shine shoes. He started his first bank account at the First State Bank of Colmesneil doing just that. "I wanted to buy my own clothes," he said.

Dr. Sam Mann told us another wonderful story, which has nothing to do with the store but is worth telling. After graduation from Colmesneil High School, Sam and his dad rode horse and mule into Colmesneil, where Sam put out his thumb and started on his journey to Huntsville and college. It was June, and it was hot, and he was wearing a heavy herringbone tweed suit. But, you wore a suit when you went off to college in those days, even if you were hitch hiking and had only \$30 in your pocket. And, of course, it was the only suit he had.

There are hundreds of stories that could be and hopefully will be told about that old store building and the people involved. Every family name mentioned is a volume in itself. The Manns, the Enloes, the Gilchrist and more. And so our quest goes on, and surely this story will bring more information as well as a number of corrections.

"You haven't been in Tyler County long enough." Dr. Gilchrist chided us. "Our families have been here since the Civil War and before. How could you know who all these people are?" We don't. Not all of them. But we're learning. After all, don't we already know that Colmesneil was once the meeting place of two railroads, the Trinity and Sabine and the the Texas and New Orleans, and that Colmesneil in its hey day was the largest city in Tyler County,

its population once surpassing that of Beaumont. But that was before the mill burned in 1893. And don't we know that the good doctor's grandfather was J. Perry Mann, and his mother Ruby Mann, who married W.H. "Gil" Gilchrist and was "the prettiest girl" S.E. Collier ever saw. "I remember him as a boy," replied Dr. Gilchrist, who is some years Collier's junior. "He was quite a rounder in his day."



SHAVE AND A HAIR CUT—Edward Collier prepares to give Clyde Abbott a shave (right) while Lewis Bligham, (left) trim Johnny Johnson's hair in the Collier Barber Shop c. 1928. Barely seen on the right is Collier's son, S. E. III, waiting patiently for a shoe shine customer.

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D E C 5 1 9 0

Notes from the Village

'Christmas in Texas'



Marjorie Schultz

It's not only beginning to look a lot like Christmas all around the Village, it's beginning to feel like Christmas. Everyone is a little hurried, a little hurried, trying to find that one special gift for that one special person.

homemade jellies and jams, plus a selection of very special gift baskets from the OBEDOT Pecan Farm in Spurger. Many of these combine pecans with one or more jars of jelly.

Decorating the Village for Christmas and our Twilight Tour this Saturday was a lot of work and a lot of fun for everyone who got into the act. And a lot of folks did.

First there was the gathering of the green, and we thank Temple Inland for their generosity in letting us just go in and get what we needed, which was a lot. We wanted a tree for every building and then some.

On hand for that adventure were Village staffers Mark Greer and John Castilaw, Jack Whitmeyer with his flat bed trailer and Christine Sanders with her smaller box trailer. Dottie and O.B. Johnson and Mayme and Isaac Brown came up from Spurger with their pickups and everybody loaded down.

Then there was Saturday, when our first group came and spent the day decorating. Joseph Gerrits had already done his thing in his delightful Seamstress Shop, but our volunteer crew tackled the rest, aided and abetted as always by John Castilaw.

First out was Mildred White, who decorated a large tree in the Little Red School House with the help of Mary

Hale. The decorations were all made by Woodville Middle School students of art teacher Cynthia Stewart, and it's really old-fashioned. They did a great job.

Peggy Burton brought in some pretties for the Physician's Office, then worked with Steve and Jo Porcari and Dottie Johnson in decorating along the street front and the gazebo.

Joan and Bob Bender decorated the big tree in the Village Creek Inn, while Eva Duncan and her daughter, Linda Hosni, were up and down the street tying ribbons and bows and bits of greenery on just about anything that stood still, and it looks great.

Meanwhile, Christine Sanders tackled the front entrance, and it's a knock-out with Connie Clark's large grapevine wreath setting it off.

And once John Castilaw finished stringing lights on the big tree center stage and got the beautiful big star in place, Dottie and Mary started decorating. They had already finished off the depot, the jail and the barber shop.

And speaking of that barber shop, Lo-ween Greer decided something had to be

done about that sign that said *Barber with Joe 25 cents*. So, she put Joe in the huge brass tub in the back room, which gives you quite a jolt when you walk in and whoops, there's a man in the bathtub, fully stuffed and clothed, of course.

On Sunday, the Sullivan clan, Heritage Society president Fred, Karen and the kids, literally, making it come alive with the spirit of Christmas.

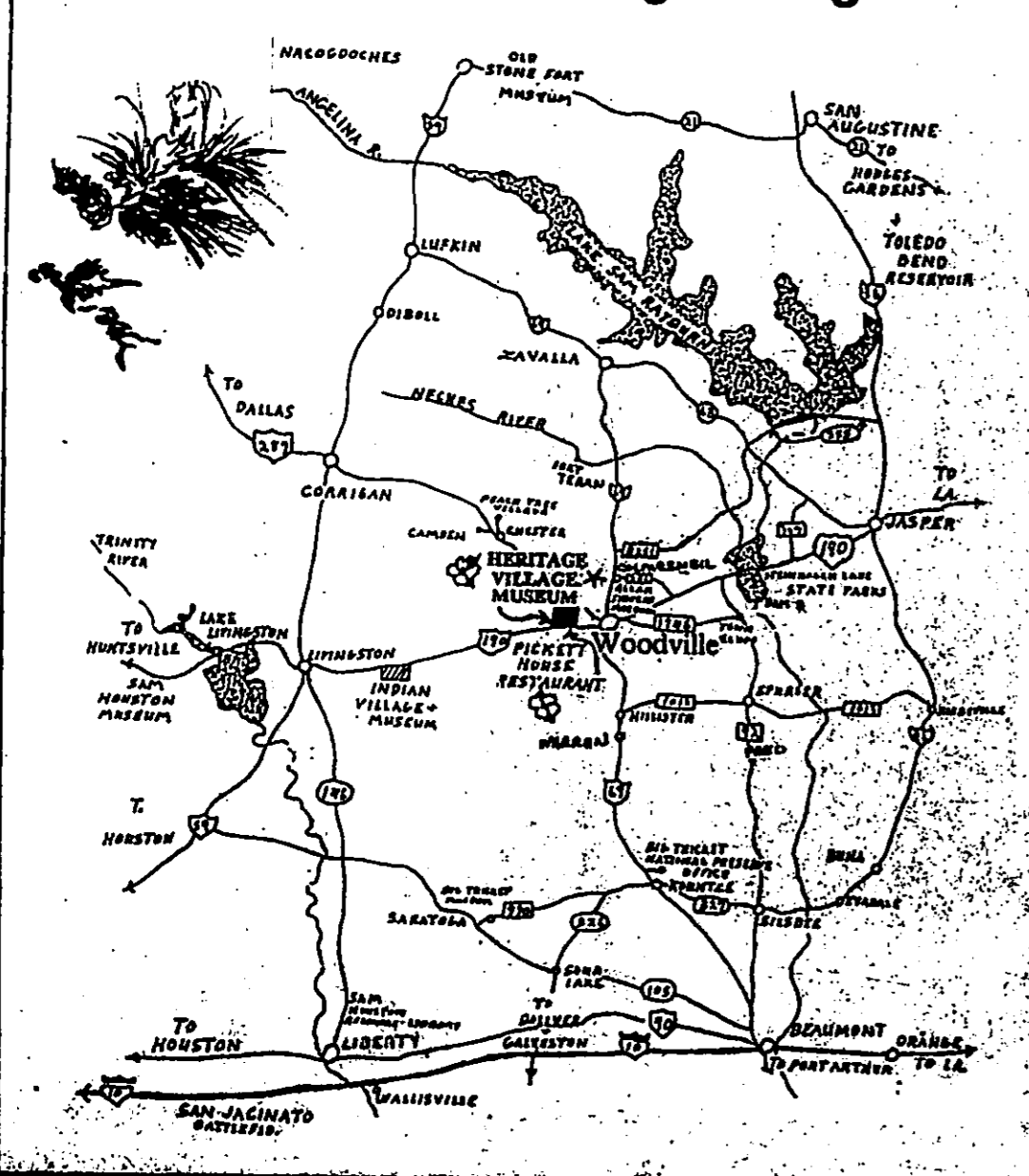
And Aloha-Freeland created old time decorations to doll up the pharmacy. We thank all of these good volunteers for their time and talents. We couldn't have done it without you.

Heritage Village will be open every day from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. through December 23, and again from December 26 right through the end of the year and New Year's Day. But, on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, the Village and all its employees will take a well-deserved rest with their families.

So, to your family from ours, we wish you a happy and blessed Christmas.



How To Find Heritage Village



Advertisement for Allan Shivers Library & Museum News, listing various events and films scheduled for December 5-19, 1990.

Ernest Martin: Fifty years at Cherokee

—Third In A Series—

By Dottie Johnson

For 57 years, from 1929 to 1986, Ernest Martin lived a double life.

Fifty of those years were involved with the spiritual life of the Cherokee/Dies Community and the Cherokee Church, which has now found a new home at Heritage Village Museum.

During the church's entire life as home to the Baptist congregation of Cherokee, Ernest Martin served as its pastor, while earning his living at a series of jobs that at times took him away from Tyler County to work but never to live.

"I never did depend on the church for a living," said Martin, which was a good thing since the church at its peak had only 35 to 40 members.

The son of William Christopher Martin, a farmer from Alabama, and Abby Fountain Martin, Ernest and his twin sister Ernie (Stump) were born in Center, Texas, in January 1911. In 1913 the family moved to Tyler County and settled on a black land farm two miles east of Woodville. Ernest received all his schooling at Woodville, graduating from Kirby High School in 1931. He played football and baseball, ran track and "all of that," he said. The following year, in March 1932, Ernest married the late Eva Gay Garrett, who passed away five years ago.

Eva is well remembered "as the best Sunday School teacher I ever had", as a fine singer and a loving wife. Ernest

misses her every day, as do her children and grandchildren.

Ernest and his siblings were raised in the First Baptist Church of Woodville. He said "It was the Rev. Billy Nash that figured I'd make a minister." And so Ernest was licensed to preach and accepted his first call in 1929, when he was still in high school.

Shortly after they were married, Ernest decided he wanted more education, so he and Eva went to Waco and Baylor University. "We went in a Model T and we came back in a Model T a year later," he quipped. That was after their first child was born. Ernest went to farming to nourish his family and preaching to nourish his soul.

For eight years, Ernest rode his horse out to Campground one Sunday a month to preach. For 15 years he preached every other Sunday at Harmony and for another 15 years, every other Sunday at Fairview. He even preached at the Doucette Union Church for a time, half time.

But it's with the Cherokee Church that most people identify him, although he never preached there full time. But he was there when it began as a Baptist congregation. Aaron Durham and Herman Pool were his first Deacons. He was there when the doors were closed 50 years later. And he was there nodding agreement, when the few remaining church members decided to give the church building, the proceeds from the sale of the land, and the remaining monies in the church treasury

to Heritage Village Museum.

He was also there when the church, just barely dried in, welcomed the Village's first worship services on October 21 during the Annual Harvest Festival and later that same day, a concert by the Martin Family Singers, headed by son Joe and his family. Joe and his brother Christopher, a teacher in Woodville schools, remember as children being laid on pallets to sleep in that church, while their father preached.

Ernest remembers the Cherokee of 1935 as a bustling little community of farmers. There was a saw mill, a gin, a store and a post office, which accorded the community the additional name of Dies, since there was already a Cherokee, Texas.

During his years at Cherokee Church, he helped build the sturdy wooden pews that are now being used at Heritage Village Museum. That was in the 40's. And while he preached there every other Sunday, or maybe only one Sunday a month, and held revivals every summer after the farmers' crops were laid by, sometimes at two churches at once, Ernest Martin provided for his family with a series of jobs. The first, which brought an end to his farming, was as District Clerk of Tyler County, which paid him a whopping big \$60 a month, later discounted to \$48.

He worked in the Post Office and could sort mail faster than anyone else.

He was clerk of the Draft Board in 1940 and served as County Tax Assessor/Collector for four years, starting in 1947. And for another four years during the War he drove back and forth to Orange every day to work in the ship yards.

For nine years he ran the Long Bell Mill in Doucette, and for the next nine years he worked for the Forestry Service.

Then in 1972, Ernest Martin retired. He retired from everything but his family, his church and his many friends. And as long as anyone wants to hear him, he'll never retire from preaching the word of the Lord with his ever present touch of humor.

He hasn't had a regular church since Cherokee closed its doors in 1986. But he's called on quite frequently to preach at the funeral of an old friend. We're losing a lot of our good ones, we ventured. That's the way it has always been, since the beginning of time, he retorted.

Getting old isn't so bad, he says. And we agreed. It sure beats the alternative.

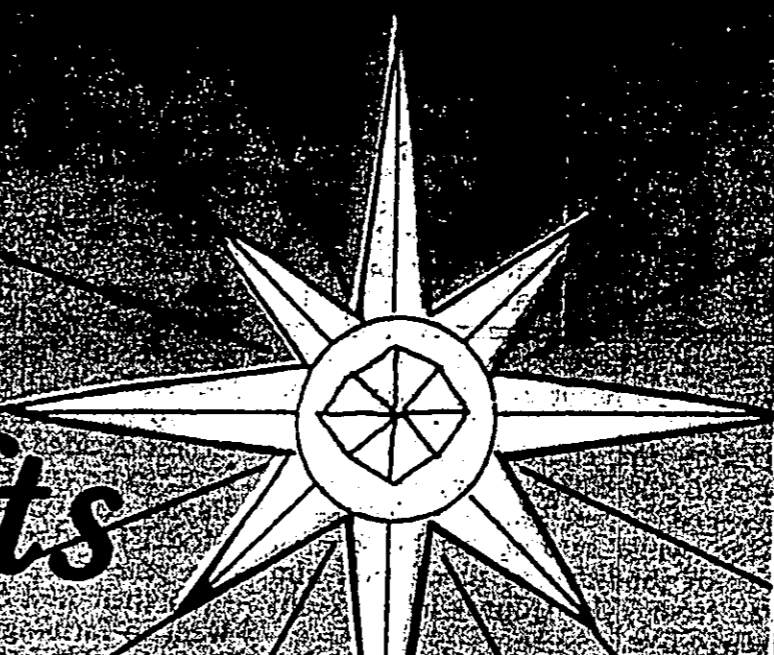


Advertisement for Tyler County Hospital, highlighting quality cardiac care and the Heart Network program.

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Large vertical text on the right edge of the page: DECEMBER 5 1990

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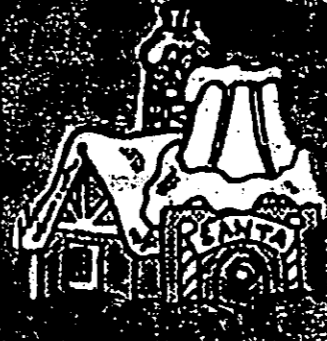


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