

History of The Farris 1912 Last Hotel of Early E.L.

Texas Historical Marker To Be Dedicated July 4th

Editor's Note: [From the request for a Historical Marker, prepared by Helen Hobbs Farris in May of 1977. The marker has been approved and will be formally dedicated in a ceremony at The Farris 1912 at 2:30 p.m. on July Fourth, 1979.]

The Farris 1912 is located on land that was originally granted to Patrick Reels by the Mexican government on October 14, 1827. Known as the Patrick Reels Survey thereafter, this is presently the site of the City of Eagle Lake. Patrick Reels' heirs received patent to the land following his death in the 1840's by a patent from the State of Texas March 2, 1848, signed by Governor George T. Wood.

Gamaliel Good of Tennessee arrived on the coastal prairie in the early 1850's with his wife, Julia, and their three sons and their wives. The sons were William S. (Will), James B., and Edward L. Good. Family tradition says the Good entourage arrived in 1851. However, the first public record of the Goods' presence in the area is recorded in 1856. Gamaliel Good built a cedar log cabin on the

eastern side of the lake about where the Lake-side Drive now stands. His cabin served as a stagecoach stop, or "stage stand" as it was called in those days, for travel between Houston and San Antonio. The Good sons were reportedly stage coach drivers.

October 29, 1856, Gamaliel Good purchased 2300 acres from James Reels, son of Patrick Reels, on the sum of \$1800.00. In May, 1857, Gamaliel Good deeded three-fourths (3/4) of his land to his three sons, Will S., James B., and Edward L., with Will S. receiving the quarter lying west of the present Lake Avenue and north of the present Southern Pacific Railroad. Shortly after this, July 13, 1857, Gamaliel Good sold an undivided half of 600 acres of land he held in partnership with his sons to D.W.E. Harris for the express purpose of laying out a townsite at Harris expense.

In the following two years the land was platted, streets and lots were designated, and a hotel was built. Named The Good Hotel, it was built facing southwest on the present corner of McCarty and Postoffice Streets on land deeded to Will S. Good by his father. When the railroad finally arrived, the Goods had a townsite ready for

land speculation and a hotel that was the only stopping point between Richmond and Alletton on the Colorado River. Three vivid descriptions of The Good Hotel remain to be enjoyed today—two from members of early Eagle Lake residents, Dr. Jacquelin Bruce and Mrs. J. W. McCarty; and the third by authors Alex E. Sweet and J. Armory Knox in their book, On a Mexican Mustang Through Texas, From the Gulf to the Rio Grande, published in 1883.

Dr. Jacquelin E. Bruce arrived from Virginia in the Eagle Lake area in December, 1857 on a journey to visit Dr. Lawrence Washington, grandnephew of George Washington, who lived across the Colorado River about eight miles from the southwest. Dr. Bruce recounts that a wooden hotel was under construction but not ready for occupancy when he and his travel companion, a relative of Dr. Washington's, reached the area. Shortly afterward it was "nearly" throughout the district that the day of "justification" had arrived. The Good Hotel was to have its formal opening. He describes the very vividly how tools, cares, and chores were laid aside as all came for the affair. A cold Texas norther blew in, whistling through the cracks; nevertheless, the fiddlers sawed away very repetitiously over the few tunes they could master. The walls swayed, drums fell down the stairs, dancers stomped, and the celebration continued until nearly dawn. Dr. Bruce stated that the completion of The Good Hotel and the ensuing celebration was such an event in the memory of those present that it became a point in time from which all things were forever measured.

Described by Dr. Bruce as "not possessing much architectural beauty," The Good Hotel was a two-story wooden structure with front

galleries built facing the Houston-San Antonio Road. When the railroad finally arrived, the tracks were a mere few yards away from the hotel's front galleries.

In the Eagle Lake Headlight, June 24, 1906, Mrs. J. W. McCarty describes her arrival in Eagle Lake in 1870 as the bride of Captain J. W. McCarty. They lived in The Good Hotel for over a year. She describes in sentimental Victorian terms that it was the most imposing structure in the town, "comfortable even though not elegant." She referred to living there during her "bridal winter" saying that the best people of the village boarded there as there was no other accommodation for the traveler. The McCarty's purchased three acres nearby from the Goods at \$15.00 per acre and established the home where they lived the rest of their lives.

The Good Hotel served as a stage coach stand until the railroad bridge replaced that mode of travel. Will S. Good and his wife, Phoebe Jane, operated the hotel with Will also driving the stages on the Houston to San Antonio route and the route south to Matagorda.

As the 19th century moved toward its last decades, two more railroads arrived in Eagle Lake making it the only small town in this area of the state crisscrossed by three lines: The Buffalo Bayou, Brazos and Colorado, later to be the Southern Pacific Railroad; The San Antonio-Aransas Pass Railroad; and the San Antonio-Aransas Pass Railroad, called "The Sap" locally, running southwest toward Hallsville; and the Cane Belt Railroad connecting Seely to towns south to Matagorda Bay. With so much railroad activity, Eagle Lake quickly became a commerce center for the area. Other hotels quickly sprang up in the prairie town to accommodate the travelers there for business and recreation on the nearby lake shore. We find record of The Merkle Hotel in 1888, The Waddell Hotel in 1895; The Drummer's Home built in 1889; The Callison Hotel; The Brown Hotel built in the 1890's, expanded and remodeled in 1908; Mrs. Nell's Boarding House; and The Lake Hotel in 1905, in addition to The Good Hotel.

Eagle Lake rapidly became a major stop on the itinerary of traveling salesmen, peddlers or "drummers" as they were called during those days, at the close of the 19th century and the birth of the 20th because of its accessibility with the three railroads intersecting the town. Rather than continuing a straight path in his journey, a drummer had the option to change directions in his travels upon arrival in Eagle Lake. The hotels really vied for the drummers' and

travelers' business. The more prominent ones hired "hawkers" to meet the incoming trains. As passengers detrained, each hawker shouted the merits of food, lodging, and services of his respective hotel. Garnering as many of the incoming travelers as possible, each hawker also served as a porter assisting with luggage and the drummers' sample cases. Thus the hotel business became very important to the town and played an integral part in its business, cultural, and historical development.

Mrs. Phoebe Good Anderson Clower continued to operate The Good Hotel until her death in 1906. Though the old wooden structure was dilapidated, editor Bruce McCarty wrote in the October 9, 1903 edition of the Eagle Lake Headlight of Mrs. Clower's concern and good Samaritan manner in taking in a sick but penniless traveler. He concluded, "It is a well known fact that Mrs. Clower feeds all the hungry and shelters all the homeless."

Following Mrs. Clower's death early in 1906, R. B. Dobbins, administrator of her estate, was granted permission by the April, 1906, Colorado County Court to sell her estate. Sale of the old Good Hotel and its property was completed to W. A. Dallas in the summer of that year.

W. A. Dallas, purchaser of The Good Hotel, was an official of the San Antonio-Aransas Pass Railroad. He came to Eagle Lake in 1891 from Brenham. Born in 1833, he was the son of early Texas settlers in the area of Old Independence. He was educated at the original Baylor College and was also a graduate of Eastman College, Poughkeepsie, New York. After his arrival in Eagle Lake, he met, courted, and married Miss Georgia Zeigler, daughter of Captain and Mrs. George Zeigler and granddaughter of Mrs. Dilue Rose Harris. Mr. and Mrs. A. B. Reynolds, June 26, 1895, Mrs. Dallas' father, Captain George Zeigler, was the first postmaster of Eagle Lake following the Civil War. Her mother, Sarah Harris Zeigler, was the daughter of Mrs. Dilue Rose Harris whose name is synonymous with The Runaway Scrape to Texas historians.

Local legend is that Mrs. Dallas intended to build a fine home on the site, a prominent corner across the Southern Pacific Railroad from the town square. However, following the demolition of The Good Hotel, he apparently had change of plans of the April 6, 1912 headlines of the Eagle Lake Headlight announced another hotel would be erected on the site. (Continued next week)

24 YEARS AGO LET'S LOOK BACK

[April 21, 1955] Bill to set up local water district passes Senate. Lissie 4-H Club lands two top spots in Wharton County fryer show with Melvin Shuman coping seventh place and James Adkins tenth. Services held last Saturday for Mrs. V. S. Campbell. Leonard Walker elected by City Council to serve as chairman of the Police Committee to succeed A. H. Seaholm; Mr. Seaholm appointed to serve as Mayor Pro-tem. Bill Peebles of Rock Island named Mr. Future Teacher at WCJC. Earl Braden, Jr. arrives April 15th for Mr. and Mrs. Earl Braden. Former Dairy Mart now known as the "Dairy Hart" announce proprietors Mr. and Mrs. Eneal Tomlinson. Mrs. C. C. Cole honored at stork shower April 14th in Sheridan. Eagle Lake FFA's attending District banquet were Mr. and Mrs. L. J. Rosprimm, Charles Harris, John Beseda, Kenneth Mahalic and FFA sweetheart Jo Sue Salladay. Ruby Lee Perry of Lissie is candidate for Miss South-west Texas State. Wayne Brasher and Torbio Barela share hitting honors, each collecting three safe hits in four trips to the plate, in Eagles win over Orchard.

Bids For Water Ground Storage, Pumps Due June 26

The City of Eagle Lake is now accepting bids for the construction of water ground storage tank and pumping equipment for the city's new water expansion on Davitt Street. Bids will be opened at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, June 26th. Work is now underway on a new water well at the location on Davitt Street and is expected to be completed before the end of the summer.

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POLICE 234-2727
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Serendipity

Subject: Cooks
If you're thick and tired of being fat, you aren't the only one. At times I go starch craving mad and eat instead of lose a pound. Some folks live to eat while others eat to live. Have you ever noticed that many who like to cook are broader than those who hate the kitchen? A lot of women are good cooks, but find a man with such a penchant, and that's the table under which you want to put your legs. I guess Dr. Thomas has the reputation of being the best cook in town. Lots of folks make potato soup, but Ray waves his magic wand, and it becomes delectable vichyssoise.

best all-around student in the school. Senior class play, "Mary Fixes K-Up" to be presented under direction of Mrs. Gabe Swanson. Q-P Store to open here for business Saturday. Edwin Housler of Goose Creek in charge of crop here. Tomato store to begin movement to market here. William Wallace wins first in low hurdles in state meet. Misses national record by one-tenth of a second in Houston meet.

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Boyd W. Belyue, Manager

Let's Look Back 48 YEARS AGO

[May 16, 1931] Bottom falls out of potato market as growers begin digging. Most growers waiting for better prices before continuing their digging. Several carloads sold for 90 cents per hundred pounds. Rev. W. E. Rodgers, Baptist pastor kills four foot alligator seeking refuge in his garage. Seven graduate

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Alpha Delta Phi Donates \$100 To Community Center



Mrs. Terry (Dianne) Consey is presenting a check for \$100 on behalf of the Alpha Delta Phi to Eagle Lake Community Center President Tommy Pilkington. The donation by the local sorority knocks off another big chunk of the debt incurred by the Community Center improvement project which is still about \$7000 short of being completely paid off. Pilkington expressed his appreciation on behalf of the center to the sorority and to the many citizens, organizations and businesses that have donated to the center.

First Horse Program Winners Are Listed

The 1979 edition of the Colorado County 4-H Horse program is underway each Monday night at 7:30 p.m. at the arena located in Memorial Park in Columbus. The program is open to all youth in the county. Registrations are still being accepted.

Results of the June 8 events are as follows:
Barrel Racing:
Beginners: 1, Belinda Morrow, 2, Nova Lee Mann, 3, James Wick, 4, Craig Potter, 8 & Under: 1, Mike Braden, 2, Kathy Lee Gaddy, 3, Jason Pavlicek, 9-12 years: 1, Matt Potter, 2, Jill Ruffalo, 3, Keith Klump, 4, Diana Braden, 5, Glenda Hoegemeyer, 6, MacDonald Ruffalo, 13 & Over: 1, Bruce Besch, 2, Terry Willenborg, 3, Paul Saul, 4, Scott Kleinmann, 5, Edward Pavlicek, 6, Bruce Besch.
Pole Bending:
Beginners: 1, Belinda Morrow, 2, Craig Potter, 3, Jimmy Wick, 4, Shee Marie Venghaus, 8 & Under: 1, Mark Besch, 2, Kathy Lee Gaddy, 3, Mike Braden, 4, Jason Pavlicek, 9-12 years: 1, Matt Potter, 2, Sonya Besch, 3, Keith Klump, 4, Diana Braden, 5, Paula Baumgarten, 6, Laure Bartels, 13 & Over: 1, Bruce Besch, 2, Terry Willenborg, 3, Paul Saul, 4, Kristen Beken, 5, Scott Kleinmann, 6, Edward Pavlicek.
Results of the June 11, 1979 events are as follows:
Barrel Racing:
Beginners: 1, Belinda Morrow, 2, Audrey Wil-

AARP Covered Dish Luncheon Wed., July 11

The Eagle Lake Chapter of the American Association of Retired Persons will have a covered dish luncheon at 12 noon on Wed., July 11th in the fellowship hall of the First Baptist Church.
A live program will follow the luncheon. All AARP members are invited to attend, says the chapter president, Albert Pustejovsky.

Garwood Time-Out Lounge

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The Management

Step-Grandson Of Sylvester Castles Killed

Kevin Daryl Moody, 16, of Hearne, a step-grandson of Mr. and Mrs. Sylvester Castle of this city was killed after falling from a flatbed hay truck, and was struck by two on-coming vehicles, Wednesday, June 13th.

Service for Kevin Daryl Moody, 16, were held Saturday, June 16, in the Old Elam Baptist Church with the Rev. B. B. Ziegler officiating. Burial will be in Riverside Cemetery.

Kevin was born March 16, 1963 in Robertson County. He was a student at Hearne High School and was an active member of the Future Farmers of America (FFA). Included among his FFA activities were: participating in the Robertson County Road; delegate to area and state FFA conventions; member of the supervised farming committee and the earnings and savings committee.

Kevin was a member of St. Paul Baptist Church where he served as usher, tribe leader and enrollment reporter. Survivors include his father and step-mother, Eugene and Christina Moody, Jr. of Hearne; mother, Laura McNeal of Tennessee; grandmothers, Mrs. Christine Moody of Hearne and Mrs. Dovie Moore of Gause; sisters, LaMonica Moody and Roshette Moody; and step-brother, John Thomas.

7 From Area Graduate From SHSU

Area students receiving degrees from Sam Houston State University in Huntsville at the end of the spring semester, 1979, included:
Terri Ann Fojtik of East Bernard who received a Bachelor of Business Administration majoring in General Business;
Joseph Stephen Frybert of Eagle Lake, awarded a Bachelor of Fine Arts, majoring in Radio, TV and Film;
Denise Ann Hagendorf of Sheridan, awarded a Bachelor of Arts for teaching, majoring in Elementary Education;
Elisa Ann Heines of Columbus, awarded a Bachelor of Arts for teaching, majoring in Elementary Education;
Melba Lynn Horelica of East Bernard, awarded a Bachelor of Arts for teaching, majoring in Elementary Education;
Deborah Schoellmann of Garwood, awarded a Bachelor of Business Administration majoring in Accounting;
Wesley Paul Wick of Eagle Lake, awarded a Bachelor of Science majoring in Agriculture.

Wintemann Library

News From

Library Summer Program Is Well Attended

The Summer Program on June 15th was attended by 75 children and 14 adults.
Glenda Blair read

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