

Emerald Wells Café and Bakery 39, August 1956, Movie Night

The sign on the store front read, 'Emerald Wells Cafe'. Each morning at 6 a.m. Emmy turned the key in the front door, hit the lights, turned the little sign with the clock hands facing outward announcing 'Open' and made her way to the coffee machine to get the first pot brewing. Em has been staying home more and more awaiting the arrival of her twins. Rose and LeeAnn opened the Café this morning.

"Could it get any hotter?" Rose was saying to LeeAnn as she entered the door ringing the bell above the jam. The Texas drought was wearing on even the hardiest.

"I don't know; it is so hot and it's still early." LeeAnn told her. She walked over and turned on the ceiling fan.

"Good morning Earl," they called one after the other. Then they heard the familiar flapping of the back screen door. "Good morning, Earl." They called again.

"Good morning. It sure is hot. Ya know Harold left those movie reels here. It must be time for movie night."

Rose went around and grabbed a piece of paper to tape to the door. "In this heat? Are you sure?" she asked Earl.

"Let's make it later in the evening, say nine o'clock. Maybe the heat will have dropped some and it will be plenty dark out. After breakfast, I'll go hang the speakers. You know we are all going to be sitting outside tonight no matter where we are."

The side of the building is painted white for such events and the poles for the speakers are wired.

Dale arrived and Earl started his breakfast of eggs and hash browns. LeeAnn started him off with fresh coffee. "Movie Night? We haven't done that in awhile," he told LeeAnn. "What's playing?"

LeeAnn glanced at the movie reels. They were unmarked as far as she could see. "I don't know. Harold brought those reels with him last Speakeasy Night. Sure is hot," she said as she returned the coffee pot to its cradle.

"Is Harold in town?" Dale asked LeeAnn.

"Haven't seen him," she answered.

Gabby crossed over carrying her travel cup. Her dress was loose at the shoulders and the waist. It looked cool and comfortable. She walked around the back of the counter

and filled her travel cup. Then she eyed the glass domed covered pastry tray. She lifted the lid and picked a cheese danish.

Rose seeing Gabby said, "We are going to show the movie Harold brought tonight. Nine o'clock. There will be some chairs set out. But most will sit in their pickups."

The day progressed and as the kids came and went getting their burgers and fries and a milkshake the word spread. The Café was having a movie night. Earl called Paul and placed an order for extra ice and borrowed metal tubs from the hardware store. There would be plenty of iced Coca Cola. Then he called the Townsends and they would arrive towing the popcorn trailer usually used for the fairs and carnivals around the local counties.

By mid afternoon those that could attend had made plans to arrive. Earl was wondering if the level field beside the Café would be large enough.

People began arriving about seven p.m. they ordered dinner. The high school kids drove into the lot and parked their pickups with the beds of the trucks facing the building. They planned to sit on the tailgates or throw some pillow against the rear of the truck bed. There they would hold hands and snuggle while the movie played.

The popcorn trailer was busy and the air was filled with the smell of hot popcorn. The Townsends charge five cents for a number three size bag. The ice tubs with the sunken Coca Cola had a jar which the kids dropped their dimes in as they served themselves a Coke.

Carl pulled up in his convertible Cadillac with a woman he knew from Olton. Harold and Em followed closely and parked his pickup near the Cadillac with his tailgate facing the building. Earl had the projector set up in the bed of his pickup near the back. He and Rose had chairs set up near the front. They sat alongside Em and Harold.

Richard and A.A.'s pickup trucks were near the back of the lot. They sat on the tailgate and played their guitars and sang songs they knew or had written while they waited for full dark.

The temperature dropped as another Texas day was recorded in the history books. A mild breeze carried the scent of Texas lilac. Em took a deep breath, it was almost time for the twins which she was very happy about. She was holding Harold's hand and feeling both content and miserable at the same time. Her beauty glowed.

Carl walked to the tubs of ice, put some ice in two glasses they brought with them and slipped a dollar bill into the jar for two cokes. He climbed back into the caddy and filled each glass half full from a flask in his pocket and topped them with Coca Cola.

Gabby, James and Jane walked around the corner. James was carrying chairs for the three of them. Gabby chose this moment to say, "So what is your middle name?" This brought an odd look from James.

The lot was full. The summer breeze and iced drinks had everyone in a fine mood. At nine Earl looked around to see everyone was settled in and turned the projector in motion. The scent of Texas lilac and popcorn was in the air. The crickets ceased their symphony. The residents of Emerald Wells enjoyed their evening together.

"Around the World in 80 Days" (1956) Trailer

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fEqkeNTLrcM>