

People who lived in Krum in the early days were not isolated from the outside world nor ignorant of what was going on in it. They had come here from Eastern, Southern, and mid-Western states, and from foreign countries, and had brought the culture of those regions with them. Though roads were impassable in rainy seasons—as late as 1910 Denton County had only 15 miles of surfaced road—rail fares were cheap enough for anyone to travel. In 1912, the Santa Fe advertised a one-way ticket to California for \$32.35. Service was convenient. There were six passenger trains each day—three south-bound and three north-bound, and one freight each way. The local newspaper of that era routinely reported citizens arriving from or departing on trips to Kansas, Oklahoma, Galveston, St. Louis, Arkansas, and points in Texas. A one-way trip to Fort Worth was more easily undertaken by train than an over-land trip to Denton.

Local families subscribed to the Fort Worth and Dallas newspapers; to the New York World; and to national magazines. Several homes had good libraries and this reading matter was generously shared. People read, discussed and debated. A Literary and Debating Society was organized in 1891. It was active, with 20-35 members, and met weekly for more than 20 years. At one meeting, the local newspaper reported, the members answered roll-call with quotations from Sir Walter Scott.

The IOOF and WOW (Woodmen of The World) Lodges were organized about 1898. The men always had a domino game going on downtown. Croquet was a popular game with old and young. The school was the “Community Center.” Spelling Bees and “box suppers” were held, and plays were staged by both students and outsiders.

The young people made their own entertainment in those pre-radio and pre-tv days. Regardless of church affiliation, they all attended the BYPU (Baptist Young People); the Christian Endeavor (Presbyterian), and the Epworth League (Methodist). They had “parties,” preferably in a home where there was a piano. Silas Koiner was the leader of a popular “Barber Shop Quartette” (as is his son, Bob, today). A skating rink was located on the present site of Howdy-Doody (now Gammons Grocery) which provided a popular pastime, especially for the young married couples. In summer, there were picnics, tent-shows, medicine shows, “Chautauqua,” and revival meetings (held out-of-doors). And one could always pass the time by going down to the depot to watch the trains come and go.

THE BRASS BAND

One of the great entertainment attractions was Krum’s Brass Band under the direction of W.F. Clevenger. A bandstand was erected in the intersection of First and McCart Streets (between Lamm’s Grocery (now Krum Diner) and the Muncy Building (now Terri Case Photography, R.J.’s Tearoom & other businesses) , and a concert given every Tuesday night. The musicians were: A.F. (“Rusty) Lindley and his brother Tom, on the drums; O.J. Chism, bass; Clevenger, baritone; Paul Gose, lead coronet; Jimmy Wright, Dee Baker, John Dean, and others.

The band was in demand in other towns for concerts or to furnish the music for civic celebrations. When it broke up, a string band was organized by Paul Gose, base violin; W.F. Clevenger, guitar; J.E. Padgett, fiddle; Tom Lindley, snare drums.

REST HOUR THEATER

Hal Knox erected the brick building adjoining the bank about 1915, and Mr. E.L. Black, editor of the weekly newspaper at the time, leased the building for a picture show. It was named the “Rest Hour Theater.”

Since the building was not designed to be a theater, a few problems arose. For instance, the floor did not slope—an architectural feature in a proper show house, which enables the viewer on the back row to see over the heads of the people in front. However, Mr. Black had a simple solution to the problem. Starting at the front row of the house, the first rows of handmade benches were low enough for toddlers, and then each succeeding row was built a little higher until even a tall man might sit on the back seat with feet dangling.

There was a player piano and rolls of mood-music supplied with each film. This created a problem too. Since the film broker more often than the music, the mood was not always synchronized—while a bloody battle raged on the screen, tender love notes might roll from the piano.

To the folks of Krum—ten miles of winding, muddy roads from Denton—the Rest Hour Theater was the “great cultural leap forward.” The place was jammed on Saturday nights with an excited audience awaiting the next episode of such drams as “The Perils of Pauline.”

Mr. Black sold the newspaper and moved away. Tom Lamonica took over the show and renamed it “The Love Theater.” He presented some good pictures, one being the famous “Birth of a Nation.”

Eventually Denton theaters took the audience away. Mysteriously, the “H” disappeared from the sign painted across the front of the building and for the next forty years, there it was for all to see—“Rest our Theater.”



The Brass Band



W.O. W & F & M Bank & Rest Hour Theatre –on right