

(Oct. 1990)

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM**

403



1. NAME OF PROPERTY

HISTORIC NAME: Woolls Building

OTHER NAME/SITE NUMBER: N/A

2. LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER: 318 San Antonio

CITY OR TOWN: Center Point

STATE: Texas

CODE: TX

COUNTY: Kerr **CODE:** 265

ZIP CODE: 78010

NOT FOR PUBLICATION: N/A

VICINITY: N/A

3. STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination
request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of
Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property
☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☐ nationally
☐ statewide ☒ locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official

2-28-02

Date

State Historic Preservation Officer, Texas Historical Commission

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria.

(See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is:

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

☐ entered in the National Register

☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined eligible for the National Register

☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined not eligible for the National Register

☐ removed from the National Register

☐ other (explain):

5. CLASSIFICATION

OWNERSHIP OF PROPERTY: private

CATEGORY OF PROPERTY: building

NUMBER OF RESOURCES WITHIN PROPERTY:	CONTRIBUTING	NONCONTRIBUTING
	1	0 BUILDINGS
	0	0 SITES
	0	1 STRUCTURES
	0	0 OBJECTS
	1	1 TOTAL

NUMBER OF CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES PREVIOUSLY LISTED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER: 0

NAME OF RELATED MULTIPLE PROPERTY LISTING: N/A

6. FUNCTION OR USE

HISTORIC FUNCTIONS: Commerce: general store, Government: post office, Social: meeting hall

CURRENT FUNCTIONS: Commerce: bed and breakfast, events hall

7. DESCRIPTION

ARCHITECTURAL CLASSIFICATION: No Style

MATERIALS: FOUNDATION Limestone
WALLS Limestone
ROOF Metal
OTHER Wood

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION (see continuation sheets 7-5 through 7-9).

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The Woolls Building
Center Point, Kerr, County Texas

Description

The Woolls Building, constructed as a two-story general store circa 1873-1875, is located in Center Point, Texas at the corner of Skyline Drive and San Antonio Street. It is a vernacular structure of limestone load-bearing masonry construction. The two-story building has full-width porches and balconies on the east and west elevations. The Woolls Building is situated in the business district of Center Point, Texas. Historically the first floor always served as a place of commerce and the second floor as a social and meeting hall for the community. It is approximately 4,000 square feet and occupies 1.03 acres of land and has 3 bedrooms, 2 kitchens, 5 bathrooms, a washroom and two great rooms. The rectangular limestone construction of Cordova Cream exhibits many of its original design features including a metal-hipped roof and wood frame windows. Currently the site is a bed and breakfast and community events center. The relatively unaltered exterior of the building exhibits a high degree of integrity in its location, setting, feeling, association, design materials and workmanship.

The Woolls Building is set in a small, historic commercial district in the hill country of Kerr County. South of the Guadalupe River, the Woolls Building is bound by San Antonio Street to the east and Skyline Drive to the north. The solid symmetrical form of the Woolls Building gives a feeling of permanence in a small community. The Woolls Building anchors the two-block business district and is the oldest building in Center Point. An art gallery (formerly the First National Bank of Center Point, 1901) also referred to locally as the *Bank* abuts the south elevation. The west elevation faces a residential area. The business district is in-filled with late 19th and early 20th century modernist buildings. Other relevant buildings in the old commercial district of Center Point include the George C. Vaughan & Company (1881), the Livery Stable (ca. 1903), and the Bandera Farmer's and Ranchmen's Association (1906). The home of former Texas Ranger, Miles Lowerance, (1882; altered in 1900-1960) currently a bed and breakfast, stands to the north across Skyline Street. The George C. Vaughan Building (1881), currently the American Legion Hall, is located on the east corner of San Antonio Street and Kelly Street. The Center Point Mercantile Company (1906), a two-story concrete building occupies the opposite west corner of San Antonio Street and Kelly Street. The Center Point Mercantile Building is currently known as the Love Building and serves as an antique shop. The Love Building is a two story concrete building clad in a faux limestone exterior.

East Elevation:

The Woolls Building is approximately 52 feet long and 44 feet deep and rests on a deep bed of caliche. The building was constructed from solid, rough-cut, 24 inch thick, regular coursed native limestone. The ground floor was partially excavated to accommodate a cellar with a "trap door," which provided a quick and accessible sanctuary from raiding Indian parties. The roof is tin. The primary elevation faces east (San Antonio Street). The lower level has two sets of double wooden doors with double-paned glass. Four 6/6-sash wood

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windows are regularly spaced between doors. The windows are topped with either lintels or flat arches and all windowsills are limestone. The first and second floors are divided by a balcony, which carries a simple wood balustrade. The wood double doors with transom are the focal point of the second floor. To the right of the double doors is a set of 6/6 sash windows. To the left of the door is one 6/6-sash window. Immediately to the left of the window is an entryway, a wood door set with glass. Light fixtures accent the entryways.

North Elevation:

The exterior staircase located to the north side of the building was the only access to the second level of the building prior to 1944. Composed of wood, the stairwell is supported by square posts varying in height. Just above the stairwell sits two 4/4 wood sash windows with flat arches.

West Elevation:

The lower level has one set of wood and glass double doors. A single door located to the left of the main entrance is similar in style and position to the door on the second level of the east elevation. Square posts support the balustrade. Light fixtures accent the posts. The second story porch has a shed roof supported by square post. Three 6/6-sash windows are regularly spaced; the windowsills are limestone. On the second floor, the windows are to the left of the door. The full-length porch is accented with metal decorative lawn chairs and tables. Access to the second floor is obtained by way of a wooden staircase located to the far right of the building. Underneath the stairwell there is a utility closet and paired bathrooms. The west side of the property features a landscaped courtyard, accented by a limestone pathway which leads to an extensive rose garden, a vineyard and native Texas plants. There is an open pole tool shed with tin roof approximately fifty yards from the Woolls Building located in the southeast corner of the at the edge of the garden.

South Elevation:

The south elevation shares a party wall with *the Bank* (art gallery).

The Interior:

The building exhibits a simple, rectangular massed plan. Simple interior details include pine flooring and beaded pine ceiling. The limestone remains exposed on the interior. Wooden piers are strategically located throughout the great room to provide additional support for the pine ceiling. A commercial kitchen pantry, and bathroom occupy a quarter (1/4) of the northwestern corner of the ground floor. On the second floor, bedrooms were constructed along the west side of the wall. Two of the bedrooms have full size baths. Entry to the bedrooms can be gained via the stairs, which lead to the balcony on the west façade. The kitchenette in the southeast corner has been remodeled. In maintaining the historic character of the interior furnishings, both the first and second floors contain simple wood chairs and tables.

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Additions, Alterations and Rehabilitation:

When the property was used as Edens Implements Co. (1944-1946) both the exterior and interior underwent change, such as the removal of the east and west balconies and porches. Modern windows with non-functioning shutters and imitation turn-of-the-century light fixtures were symmetrically placed between the windows. The east elevation was altered, signage was placed on the facade and tree saplings were aligned along the walkway. The interior changes included the addition of staircase, which provided access to the second floor, for the first time from within the Woolls Building. In 1945, plaster was applied to the original limestone walls. The second floor served as an apartment throughout the existence of the Eden's Implements Company.

Exterior:

The limestone is original and needed no work, thus rehabilitation began with the removal of tin sheds, outbuildings and a cement slab on the west side of the building. The metal roof was reconstructed and several beams were replaced throughout the roofline. The square posts, porches, balconies, balustrades and stairs were all constructed to conform to the design reflected in the 1902 historic photo. The historically inappropriate shutters and metal windows on the first floor of the east façade were taken out and replaced with hand crafted wood frames to match the 1902 wood frame windows on the second floor. The double doors located on the primary elevation are original. The double doors on the west elevation were hand made to compliment the original doors on the east elevation. Although there is no historic image, which features the west façade, the stairwell, porch and gallery were restored and presumed existent prior to the circa 1902 photograph. The configuration of the door on the second floor indicates it is original to the 1875 building and physical evidence suggests access was gained by way of a staircase.

Interior: First Floor

The stairwell installed during the 1944-45 renovations was removed. The deteriorating plaster applied to the limestone walls in 1945 was removed to reveal the original wall treatment. The interior walls were not re-pointed. The non-historic, classical posts were replaced with milled, 5x5 inch, square pine posts. Much of the flooring from 1901 was reusable, however the ceiling suffered from age and neglect and was replaced with beaded pine to match the original ceiling. One-fourth of the ground floor was converted into a commercial kitchen, with pantry and bathroom.

Second Floor:

The rooms were partitioned during the Edens' period, but under the ownership of James Terry Crow, the partitions were removed, causing the ceiling to sag. The current property owners stabilized the ceiling by restoring the partitions. Three bedrooms were constructed along the west side of the wall. Two of the bedrooms hold full-size baths. Entry to the bedrooms can be gained via the stairs, which lead to the balcony on the west façade. The kitchen (added in 1945) in the southeast corner has been remodeled. The remainder of the space

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serves as a great room. The original pine beaded board ceiling was retained, but the flooring was completely replaced with similar pine flooring.

The Woolls Building retains a high degree of architectural and historical integrity. Quality materials and superior workmanship were employed to maintain the integrity of the Woolls Building. The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitation Historic Buildings were followed during the rehabilitation of the Woolls Building, which began in May 1999. The rehabilitation plan included the removal of the non-historic signage, shutters and trees along the walkway.

A c.1902 historic photo, the earliest image of the building was used as a guide during rehabilitation to ensure the superiority of workmanship, materials and design, which contribute to the preservation of the location, setting, feeling associated with the Woolls Building.

8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

APPLICABLE NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA

- ☒ **A** PROPERTY IS ASSOCIATED WITH EVENTS THAT HAVE MADE A SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION TO THE BROAD PATTERNS OF OUR HISTORY.
- ☐ **B** PROPERTY IS ASSOCIATED WITH THE LIVES OF PERSONS SIGNIFICANT IN OUR PAST.
- ☒ **C** PROPERTY EMBODIES THE DISTINCTIVE CHARACTERISTICS OF A TYPE, PERIOD, OR METHOD OF CONSTRUCTION OR REPRESENTS THE WORK OF A MASTER, OR POSSESSES HIGH ARTISTIC VALUE, OR REPRESENTS A SIGNIFICANT AND DISTINGUISHABLE ENTITY WHOSE COMPONENTS LACK INDIVIDUAL DISTINCTION.
- ☐ **D** PROPERTY HAS YIELDED, OR IS LIKELY TO YIELD, INFORMATION IMPORTANT IN PREHISTORY OR HISTORY.

CRITERIA CONSIDERATIONS: N/A

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE: Commerce and Social History; Architecture

PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE: 1875-1944

SIGNIFICANT DATES: 1875

SIGNIFICANT PERSON: N/A

CULTURAL AFFILIATION: N/A

ARCHITECT/BUILDER: Wellborn, Sam H.

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (see continuation sheets 8-10 through 8-19).

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES

BIBLIOGRAPHY (see continuation sheets 9-20 through 9-22).

PREVIOUS DOCUMENTATION ON FILE (NPS): N/A

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

PRIMARY LOCATION OF ADDITIONAL DATA:

- ☐ State historic preservation office (*Texas Historical Commission*)
- ☐ Other state agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other -- Specify Repository:

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Statement of Significance

Built in 1873 -1875, the Woolls Building is the oldest extant building in Center Point. Named after its original owner, George W. Woolls, the building was the "center point" for the community. Throughout its existence, the building has served as a place of commerce, a post office and a general meeting place for the town. The Woolls Building is nominated to the National Register under Criterion A in the area of Commerce for its contribution to early business enterprises and Social History, as the meeting place for local fraternal organizations through 1944, and Criterion C for Architecture as an example of the work of a master stonemason, Sam Wellborn.

Center Point is on the Guadalupe River eight miles southeast of Kerrville in southeastern Kerr County. The site became a focal point for business activity after early settler Dr. Charles de Ganahl opened a post office in his home on the north side of the river in November 1859. Ganahl called the post office Zanzenburg in honor of his ancestral hometown Austrian Tyrol.¹ When the post office was moved to the south side of the river in 1872, Dr. G. W. Harwell, the new postmaster, renamed the growing community, Center Point. Oral history suggests Dr. Harwell renamed the settlement because it was halfway between Kerrville and Comfort, and halfway between Fredericksburg and Bandera. The area's potential as a farming and stock-raising center, its healthful climate and its abundant game continued to attract settlers and ensured the town's position as a trade center for the 244 "law-abiding and God-fearing" folk (1870).¹

George W. Woolls

According to deeds and records, C.C. Kelly built a residence and blacksmith shop in the spring of 1870 on what is now the location of the Woolls Building. George W. Woolls bought the property from Kelly on April 11, 1873, and a few months later builder, Sam Wellborn, began construction on Center Point's first limestone building that would become known as the *Woolls Building*. The home and blacksmith shop of C.C. Kelly was demolished.² Exactly when Woolls settled into the community is unknown, but his building became synonymous with business and community. The history and significance of the Woolls Building is directly related to the various roles that George W. Woolls assumed within the community. Woolls was a businessman, postmaster and Mason. Woolls ran the store and served as postmaster until his death in 1877. George W. Wooll's wife, Kate succeeded him as postmaster and operated the grocery successfully until she sold the store to James Sellers and George Leigh in 1880. Soon after selling the general store, on December 11, 1881, Kate assigned her ownership of the upper floor of the Woolls Building to the Rising Star Masonic Lodge. In 1882 Sellers purchased Leigh's share of the business and operated the store until its sale in 1895 to William Alexander Cocke.

¹ Texas Historical Commission, *A Historic Sites Survey of Kerr County*, p. 7

² Kerr County Deed Records: Vol. D. pg. 341, April 11, 1873

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William Alexander Cocke

William Alexander Cocke was a second-generation citizen of Center Point. Little is known about him except that he was a Mason, member of the lodge, and he married Brownie Rees, the daughter of Texas Ranger Captain, Mason and prominent businessman Alonzo Rees. He operated the store under the name *Wm. A. Cocke Mercantile*. On December 25, 1900 a fire destroyed Cocke's merchandise and the building's woodwork within it, however, the thick limestone walls remained unscathed by the blaze. On April 1, 1901 William Alexander Cocke sold the Woolls Building to M.A. Callaway.

M.A Callaway

M.A. Callaway, a signer of the petition to form Kerr County in 1855, was an early settler in Center Point. After purchasing the property from Cocke following the fire, Callaway refurbished the building and leased it to the Farmers Mercantile Cooperative Association; a private corporation organized February 2, 1902. After a year of occupation, Callaway sold the Woolls Building to Hance McCain Burney, a board member of the co-op, on December 20, 1902. Based on documentation Callaway appears to have been a speculator and one of the towns' first real estate agents specializing in commercial development. Callaway built the Bandera Farmers and Ranchmen's Association Building (1906), located directly across the street from the Woolls Building.

Farmers Mercantile Cooperative

The Farmers Mercantile Cooperative Association was organized by Hance McCain Burney, Washington DeWitt C. Burney (brothers) and a number of community leaders to offer a wide range of goods and services to farmers, stockmen and citizens of Center Point. The cooperative represented itself to be a "money saving" collaboration. It sought to purchase goods directly from factories and offset the cost of shipping and handling fees charged by the San Antonio and Aransas Pass Railroad (1887). After all business expenses were paid, the remaining net profits were then returned to the patrons as a dividend on their purchases. Non-members received half dividends on purchases. Members of the cooperative received interest bearing certificates of stock that were redeemable on short notice. The co-op was an opportunity for the town to band together, combine resources and save on expenses associated with farming, ranching and herding. An advertisement in the *Kerrville Mountain Sun* on February 14, 1902 illustrates the importance of populist sentiments in Center Point, "*Now let every farmer come right out, like a man, and identify to yourself and family, as well as to the farming interests in general, that you should join.*" The Farmers Mercantile Cooperative Association's liberal credit policy caused the business to fail and the board of directors was forced to call in their loans and liquidate the business. Washington DeWitt Clinton Burney served as the president of the co-op until its demise 1910.

Washington DeWitt C. Burney and Hance McCain Burney

The surname of Burney appeared before the Sixth Texas Legislature at the time Kerr County was created from the Bexar Land District on January 26, 1856. The story of the Burney family's history is so intricately

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interwoven with the history of Kerr County that it is difficult to discuss either Kerr County or the Burney's without cross-referencing both topics.

The first Burney to set foot on the beautiful hill country along the Guadalupe River was Washington DeWitt Clinton Burney, also known as DeWitt. Born 1828 in Guilford, North Carolina, DeWitt lived with his mother and father, Robert H. and Lydia Burney, Sr. in North Carolina and Tennessee. At the age of 24, the adventurous young Burney traveled to San Antonio, Texas. Upon his arrival he began earning his living working in the hay fields. The San Antonio Express newspaper relates an account of DeWitt being bit by a rattlesnake, which left him unconscious for twenty-four hours and unable to work for two months. After recovering his health, DeWitt made many excursions into the hills northwest of what was known then as Hill Country. On one particular trip to the Hill Country, DeWitt met Charles Schreiner and Casper Real. The local herdsmen spoke of the many opportunities for the young and strong willed, such as DeWitt in the hill country. In 1854 DeWitt decided to stake his claim on the south side of Verde Creek. The second homestead of DeWitt was a 1,490-acre ranch purchased in 1871 was just outside of the new budding settlement of Center Point, Texas.

Hance McCain Burney, Dewitt's elder brother. was born on May 2, 1826. Hance first came to Texas in 1853. On December 28 of that same year he married Mary A. Tatum of Washington County, who had moved to Texas with her parents from McNair County, Tennessee a few months before of that same year. After their wedding the couple returned to Tennessee, where they remained until after the birth of their first child in 1854 when they returned to Texas, accompanied by Burney's mother and two sisters, Hance settled near his younger brother DeWitt in the Guadalupe Valley.

DeWitt and Hance's first few years in the region were spent as apprentices making shingles. They eventually began a "freighting" business, using mules and wagons to transports goods, like lumber, dry goods and produce from San Antonio, to other new and aspiring settlers. In addition to their commercial enterprises, the two brothers cleared land with a grubbing hoe and stump puller to make it suitable for raising sheep and cattle.

Along with their aspirations to become successful businessmen and ranchers, the Burney brothers believed in community, a social order in which everyone benefited according to their contribution². Both Hance and DeWitt's signatures can be found on the 1855 petition that requested the formation of Kerr County. Hance served as first postmaster of Kerrville from 1858 to 1866. He also served as Kerr County Judge in 1864 and 1879-80. As one of Kerrville's early leaders, he established a trading business and one of the area's first sawmills from which he sold lumber to the United States government to build forts and military camps. He owned a ranch on Turtle Creek and served as president of the First National Bank at Center Point. Hance and Mary Burney had nine sons; one of their sons, Robert Hamilton, became a state legislator and district judge. Hance Burney died on April 23, 1915. At the time of Hance Burney's death, the *Kerrville Mountain Sun* said,

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"He has been known among the leading and most highly respected citizens of the county." His heirs owned the Woolls Building until 1944.

The Burney's played an important role in establishing the region as a peaceful, tranquil community. DeWitt was the first sheriff of Kerr County and one of the first Masters of the Rising Star Masonic Lodge. In addition to serving the public at the local level, DeWitt fulfilled his civil duties as Texas Ranger and Confederate Solider. As businessmen, Masons, civil servants and community leaders, Hance and DeWitt Burney played an important role in the establishment of Center Point, Kerr County, Texas.

The Woolls Building continued to serve as the anchor for the town as it developed to the south along San Antonio Street. George Woolls originally owned the remaining land on the west side of San Antonio Street between Skyline Street and Kelly Street, which he sold for commercial development. The business enterprises that developed along San Antonio eventually formed the commercial district of Center Point. From 1875 to 1920, Center Point had enough business pouring through it to sustain several hotels, the first of which was owned and operated by Mrs. Kate Woolls. The San Antonio and Aransas Pass Railroad built its first depot in Center Point in 1887 leading to the opening of grain and feed stores. In 1893 the Guadalupe Valley Livestock and Agricultural Association organized and held the first fair and horse race in the area. Texas Governor Joseph D. Sayer considered the fair a major event for he was the guest speaker on September 30, 1899. By 1900, the population of Center Point had grown to 500 and the town could boast of a thriving economy driven by ranching, agriculture, and milling. A two-story brick building (circa 1911) further south of Kelly on San Antonio housed the telephone company, doctor offices and a café. Other businesses in the commercial district of Center Point included the meat market (which housed the public library on the second floor), the local bakery and the ice cream and confectionary shop.

The Woolls Building ceased to operate as a place of commerce from 1910 to approximately 1928. In 1929, A.B. Griffith, moved his variety store into the vacated space adding hardware, groceries and furniture to his stock. and the Woolls Building once again housed Center Point's general store. The business failed, however, during the Great Depression. During the time Griffith operated the store, it was legally known as Griffith's Variety Store; but the locals continued to refer to it as the Woolls Building. Although Griffith's Variety Store failed, the Woolls Building continued to serve as a meeting hall for the community. According to senior residents of Center Point, dances, galas and musical events were held in the building up until 1944. In 1944 the Burney estate sold the building to John Young. Young leased the space to Curtis Edens, who owned and operated the Edens Implement Company, a farm implements store. Curtis Edens was able to purchase the property from John Young.

During the period following World War II, Kendall and Kerr Counties were active Angora goat and sheep ranching areas supported by international markets. Moreover, incentives to raise Angora goats were

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strengthened by the National Wool Act of 1954, which provided a subsidy for Angora wool for use in military uniform fabric. Texas accounted for 90% of Angora mohair production, from 1955 to 1965. Due to lack of competition in the area of farm implements, Edens Implement became synonymous with farm equipment and supplies in the Texas Hill Country and, more specifically, Center Point for forty-three years.

On May 12, 1980 James Terry Crow obtained title to the Woolls Building. Crow continued the tradition of commerce and thus the building became the home of Edens Ford Tractors Company. The Edens Ford Tractor Company operated until the Edens estate foreclosed on the building in settlement of Crow's promissory note due the estate in 1989. From the time of the foreclosure until October of 1995, the Woolls Building periodically operated as a place of commerce for various vendors. In May of 1999, Zanzenberg Storyville, L.L.C. purchased the Woolls Building and began rehabilitation of the building. Today the Woolls Building continues to serve as a place of commerce as a bed and breakfast and events center. Despite the change of various owners and enterprises, the Woolls Building has remained a *constant* within the community of Center Point since 1875.

Fraternal Organizations

The role of fraternal organizations across the nation at the turn of the century is profound. While the Masons are an ancient order, other groups such as Knights of Pythias, Elks, Odd Fellows, Praetorians and similar groups were founded in the 19th century. Incorporating philanthropic, social, secret ritualistic and sometimes, insurance and burial society comments, these fraternal organizations found popularity in large and small communities throughout the nation. Patriotic and genealogical groups, trade unions, ethnic groups, agricultural and women's organizations also found great favor in providing fellowship and continuity in a rapidly changing world. The Woolls Building was a resource by which Center Point's two prominent and most influential fraternal organizations, the Masons and the Woodmen of the World could manifest their missions and fulfill their moral, civil and patriotic obligations to "God, Country and Brethren".

Rising Star Masonic Lodge #429

In March of 1875, George W. Woolls entered into an agreement with Texas Rangers Captain Neal Coldwell, DeWitt Burney and several other noteworthy Texas Rangers and business leaders to use the upper level of the store as a meeting hall for the members of the Rising Star Masonic Lodge #429. The lodge was an ideal place for businessmen, lawmen and community leaders to gather, socialize and voice their desires and concerns for their small peaceful community. The creation of the Masonic lodge within the Woolls Building brought an element of importance to the community of Center Point for it was the only organized fraternal group between Comfort and Kerrville. Thus, membership of the Rising Star Masonic Lodge extended beyond Center Point into the neighboring towns. Kerrville did not have a Masonic lodge until 1890. Participation was key, for the lodge provided a forum in which the interests of the town could be represented and discussed on the first Sunday of the full moon in each month.

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Woodmen of the World

Joseph Cullen Root, a staunch supporter of fraternal orders, founded the Modern Woodmen of America of Colorado in 1883 (some sources state 1882). A feud between Root and the organization's head physician caused the expulsion of both men and splintered the group. In 1890, three Colorado members formed "Pacific Jurisdiction, Woodmen of the World." In 1916 this group changed its name to Woodmen of the World; it is now formally known as the Woodmen of the World and/or Assured Life Association and is referred to as the Woodmen of the World (of Colorado). Root moved to Omaha, Nebraska, in 1890 and founded the "Sovereign Camp of the World, Modern Woodmen of the World" on June 6 of that year. At its first Sovereign Camp meeting that August, the organization changed its name to the Woodmen of the World Life Insurance Society [WOW]. Committees formulated a constitution, fundamental laws for "Head Camps" (also called "Jurisdictions"), and bylaws for subordinate "Camps." This fraternal society was dedicated to helping others, but benefit certificates were the reason many individuals joined. The organization issued benefit certificates in denominations of \$1,000, \$2,000, and \$3,000.

Initially, only white males between the ages of 16 and 52 could be members. Root's membership in the Freemasons, the Independent Order of the Odd Fellows, the Knights of Pythias, and the Ancient Order of United Workmen influenced the organization of the WOW. The rituals Root and F.A. Falkenburg designed for the WOW are decidedly Masonic, yet they are specific to woodcraft. Rituals and secrecy are taken very seriously. An Escort, a Watchman, and a Sentry, each have specific roles to perform in ritualistic ceremonies. Woodmen are initiated according to the ritual's prescriptions and each given an annual password. Unlike the Masons, the identity of its members was a secret and little information is available on their activities. The Lodge fulfilled the requirements of the national organization in providing burial and insurance benefits. And similar to the Masons, patriotism, philanthropy, fellowship and fraternization were important to the organization. WOW members gathered monthly to discuss business, plan fraternal projects, and enjoy a social evening. Woodmen of the World continue to have a presence within the community of Center Point.

Sam Wellborn: Builder

The Woolls Building was designed and constructed by Samuel H. Wellborn in 1873. Born in Mississippi in 1839, Wellborn came to Texas in 1849 with his parents. Settling in Gonzales, young Sam soon began to learn the art of stone masonry. When the call came for soldiers to fight in the Civil War, Wellborn answered the call and served as a lieutenant in the Confederate Army. Attracted to the new opportunities in Kerr County, Wellborn and his wife settled on a farm three miles northwest of Center Point in 1872. In addition to being a stonemason by trade, he was a charter member of the Rising Star Masonic Lodge (in Woolls Building) and served as the lodge's Worshipful Master from 1880-1882 and as a County Commissioner from 1879 - 1880. He continued to be an active community leader until his death in 1913.

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The Woolls Building
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The Woolls Building was Center Point's first commercial limestone building. Following the completion of the structure, Wellborn was commissioned to build "Fairlands," the ranch house of legendary Texas Ranger Captain Neal Coldwell, in 1876. The home of Texas Ranger, Miles Lowrance (north of Woolls Building), was built in 1882. According to the owner, Mrs. Sue Harvey, Wellborn built the Lowrance home after the burning of Lowrance's wood frame house. It is believed that Wellborn also quarried the stone and designed the home of Texas Ranger, Lieutenant Nelson Reynolds, also known as "Reynolds the Intrepid." No written documentation can be found to confirm Wellborn as the builder, however the building bears all of Wellborn's signature architectural details, such as the 18" inch cut stone, caliche foundation, trap door and cellar. Wellborn's use of limestone was primarily due to its availability and durability.

Although Wellborn constructed only a few structures in Center Point, he used the same technique on each of his projects. His method was to quarry 18" inch to 24" thick limestone blocks from the Verde Creek. He would then cut it down to caliche on the site, thus allowing the bedrock to be utilized as the foundation. Wellborn used lime itself as mortar to seal the units together. In addition, he alternated the joints, which resulted in a structure able to with stand substantial amounts of stress. His use of this natural material influenced other important commercial and residential buildings in Center Point, including the design of the First National Bank of Center Point, built in 1901 and the Love Building, which displays a faux limestone exterior constructed in 1906.

Unfortunately, the Woolls Building is the only example of Wellborn's work that retains historical integrity. Examples of Wellborn's work remain, such as the Miles Lowrance home and "Fairlands". However, both buildings have been altered significantly thereby making them unrecognizable as the work of master stonemason, Sam Wellborn.

The Woolls Building was awarded the *San Antonio Conservation Society Restoration Award* in the spring of 2000. This prestigious award speaks to the quality of materials, workmanship, and the commitment with which the Woolls Building was rehabilitated. The Woolls Building is worthy of listing in the National Register of Historic Places. It is an excellent example of a property associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the history of a community. Therefore it is being nominated under Criterion A in the area of Commerce for its association with business enterprise as a general store, co-op, and implements company and presently a bed and breakfast. In the area of Social History, it is also nominated for its continuous association with local fraternal orders such as the Masons and Woodmen of the World from 1875-1944, as well as its continued service as a meeting and social hall to the community. In addition, the Woolls Building is being nominated under Criterion C for Architecture as it represents the work of master stonemason, Sam H. Wellborn in Center Point at the local level of significance.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 16

The Woolls Building
Center Point, Kerr, County Texas

Woolls Building Historic Photograph 1902



Courtesy of Dub Crowder

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 17

The Woolls Building
Center Point, Kerr, County Texas

Woolls Building 1998 Photograph



Courtesy of Edward Story

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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Section 8 Page 18

The Woolls Building
Center Point, Kerr, County Texas

**Woolls Building
2000 Photograph**



Courtesy of Edward Story

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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The Woolls Building
Center Point, Kerr, County Texas

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The Woolls Building
Center Point, Kerr, County Texas

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- Volume T, pg. 257, April 7, 1899
- Volume U, pg. 313, April 1, 1901
- Volume X, pg. 15, December 20, 1902
- Volume 74, pgs. 233, 235, 237, 239, 241, November 10, 1944
- Volume 119, pg. 323, October 5, 1964
- Volume 234, pg. 795, May 12, 1980
- Volume 503, pg. 387, March 15, 1989
- Volume 819, pg. 56, October 5, 1995
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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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The Woolls Building
Center Point, Kerr, County Texas

Bibliography (continued)

Interviews

Byrd, Richard, a great grandson of Tarlton Lane, Center Point Ranger and Mason (1847-1912). Interviewed by E. T. Story on June 30, 2000. Notes available from interviewer.

Davis, Joe, President of Texas Former Texas Ranger Association. Interviewed by E. T. Story on June 27, 2000 and July 31, 2000. Notes available from interviewer.

Harvey, Mrs. Sue, owner of the Miles Lowrance Home. Interviewed by J.V. Story on July 5, 2001. Notes available from E.T. Story.

Meadows, Glen O., a great grandson of A. J. Sowell, Ranger and Mason (1847-1921). Interviewed by E. T. Story on June 29, 2000 and July 26, 2000. Notes available from interviewer.

Opperman, Donald E., Secretary of the Rising Star Lodge No. 249, Center Point, Texas. Interviewed by E. T. Story on June 30, 2000, July 26, 2000 and July 27, 2000. Notes available from interviewer.

Raiford, Mr. And Mrs. Gene, longtime residents of Center Point and neighbor to the Woolls Building. Interviewed by Aubrey Raiford on July 30, 2000. Notes available from E. T. Story.

Reiter, Giles, husband of Diane Reiter, great granddaughter of Texas Ranger Lieutenant N.O. Reynolds. Interviewed by E.T. Story on July 2, 2001. Notes available from interviewer.

Thomason, Frank, Jr., great grandson of Samuel H. Wellborn. Interviewed by E.T. Story on July 3, 2001. Notes available from interviewer.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF PROPERTY: less than one acre

UTM REFERENCES Zone Easting Northing
 1 14 496438 3312460

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION (see continuation sheet 10-23)

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION (see continuation sheet 10-23)

11. FORM PREPARED BY: WITH ASSISTANCE FROM DIANE HOUSTON-FLOYD; TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

NAME/TITLE: Edward T. Story, Jr., Manager and Owner

ORGANIZATION: Zanzenberg Storyville L.L.C.

DATE: August 30, 2000

STREET & NUMBER: P.O. Box 1523

TELEPHONE: 830/634-2307

CITY OR TOWN: Center Point

STATE: Texas

ZIP CODE: 78010

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION

CONTINUATION SHEETS

MAPS (see continuation sheet).

PHOTOGRAPHS (see continuation sheet Photo-27)

ADDITIONAL ITEMS (see continuation sheet Plans-24 through Plans 26)

PROPERTY OWNER

NAME: Edward T. Story Jr.

STREET & NUMBER: P.O. Box 1523

TELEPHONE: 830/634-2307

CITY OR TOWN: Center Point

STATE: Texas

ZIP CODE: 78010

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 10 Page 22

The Woolls Building
Center Point, Kerr County, Texas

Verbal Boundary Description

The rectangle formed by beginning at a ½" iron stake set at the intersection of the west right-of-way line of San Antonio Street, a sixty (60) ft. wide public street and the south right-of-way line of Skyline Drive, a forty (40) ft. wide public street for the northeast corner of herein described tract, said Woolls Addition and Tract No. I in said Schwethelm to Edens deed, thence with the said west right-of-way line of San Antonio Street and east line of Tract No. I, S.00°03'E., 58.36 ft. to a ½" iron stake set for the easterly southeast corner of the herein described tract and Tract No. I, the northeast corner of Lot No. I and northeast corner of a certain tract conveyed from James Howard Peters to Gordon A. Peters by a Warranty Deed executed the 5th day of October, 1967 and recorded in Volume 130 at Page 537 of the Deed Records of Kerr County, Texas; thence, along the north line of Lot No. I with the common line between Tract No. I and Peters to Peters tract N.89°55'W., 99.33 ft. to ½" iron stake set for a reentrant corner of the herein described tract, the northwest corner of Peters to Peters tract and northeast corner of a certain tract conveyed as TRACT NO. II from G. A. Peters to Curtis Edens, et us, by a Warranty Deed executed the 14th day of June, 1971 and recorded in Volume 149 at Page 719 of the Deed Records of Kerr County, Texas.

Verbal Boundary Justification

The nomination only includes the parcel historically associated with the Woolls Building.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

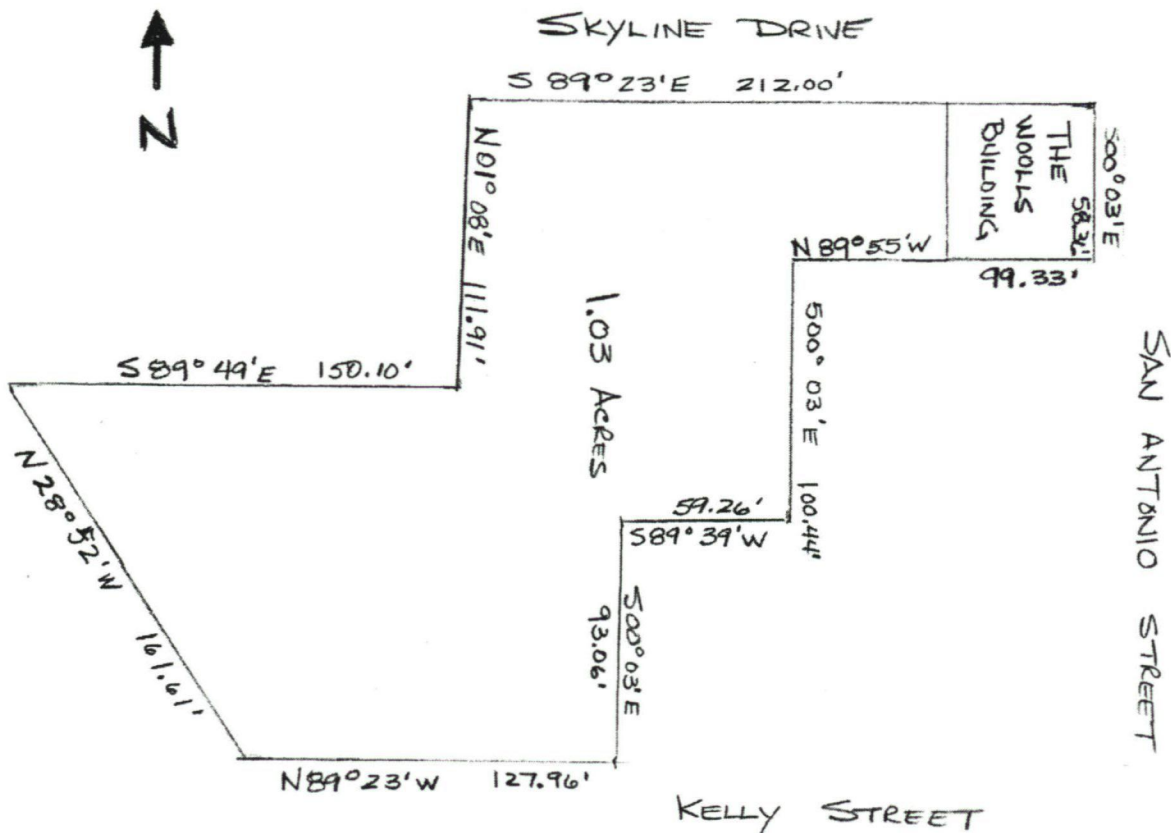
National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Plans Page 23

The Woolls Building
Center Point, Kerr County, Texas

SITE PLAN

Source: Edward T. Story



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

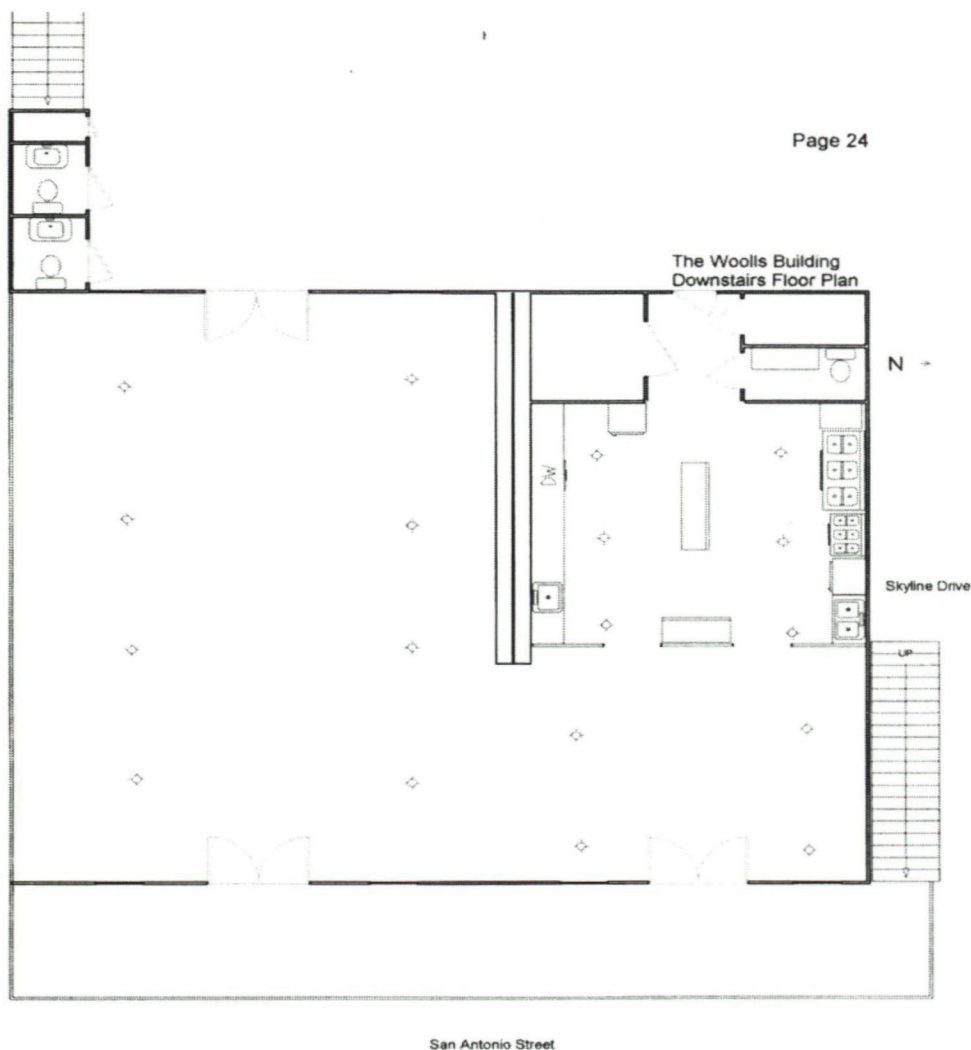
National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Plans Page 24

The Woolls Building
Center Point, Kerr County, Texas

Floor Plan: First Floor

Source: Edward T. Story



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

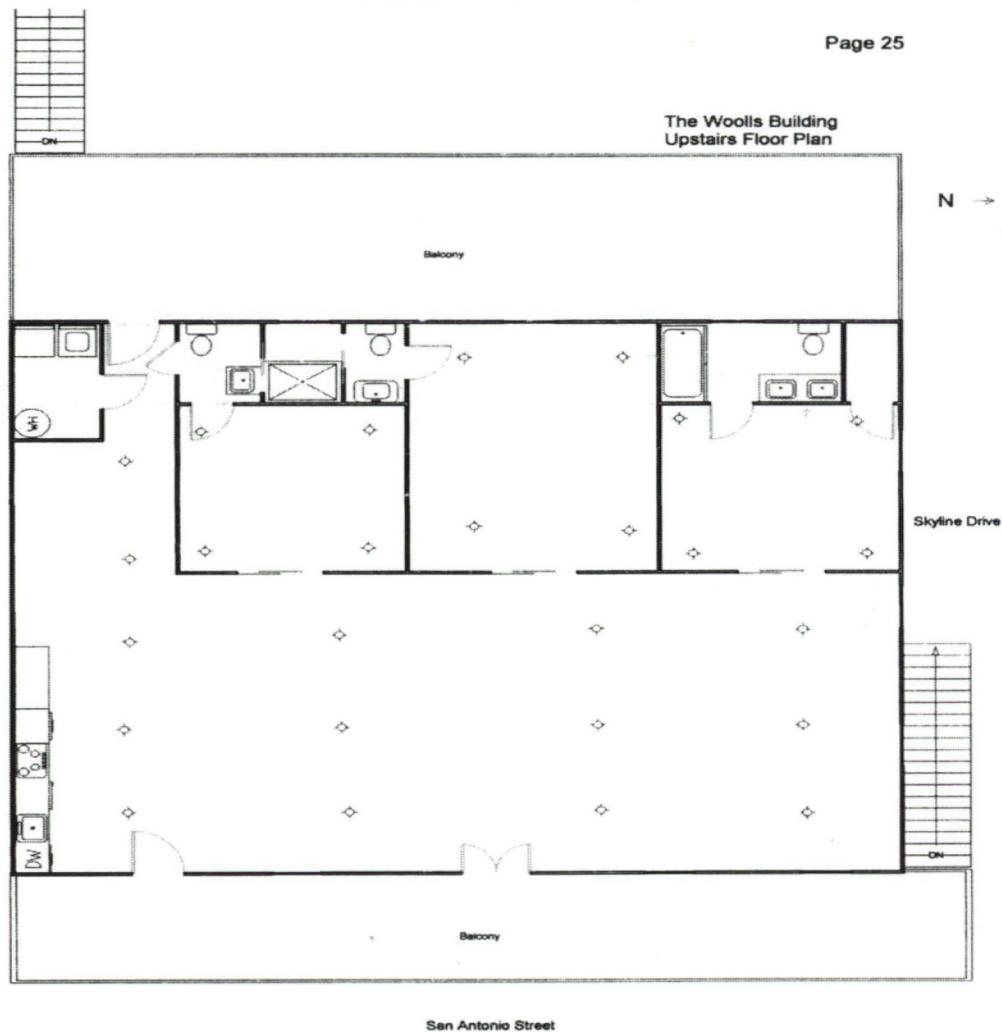
National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Plans Page 25

The Woolls Building
Center Point, Kerr County, Texas

Floor Plan: Second Floor
Source: Edward T. Story

Page 25



United States Department of the Interior
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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

The Woolls Building
Center Point, Kerr County, Texas

Section PHOTO Page 26

Photo Log

Woolls Building
318 San Antonio Street
Center Point, Kerr County, Texas
Photographs by Edward T. Story
August 2000
Negatives on file with Texas Historical Commission
Courtesy of Dub Crowder

1 of 9

Historic Photograph 1902

East Elevation, camera facing west

2 of 9

East Elevation, camera facing west

3 of 9

Northeast Elevation, camera facing southwest

4 of 9

West Elevation, camera facing east

5 of 9

Interior, First Floor, camera facing northwest

6 of 9

Interior, First Floor, camera facing south

7 of 9

Interior, Second Floor, camera facing south

8 of 9

Interior, Second Floor, camera facing north

9 of 9

Interior, Second Floor, camera facing northeast

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Woolls Building

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: TEXAS, Kerr

DATE RECEIVED: 3/11/02 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 4/01/02
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 4/17/02 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 4/25/02
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 02000403

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 4/26/02 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in the
National Register

RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER _____ DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N



THE WOOLLS BUILDING
318 SAN ANTONIO STREET
CENTER POINT, KERR CO., TEXAS
PHOTOGRAPH 1 of 9



THE WOOLLS BUILDING
318 SAN ANTONIO STREET
CENTER POINT, KERR CO., TEXAS

PHOTOGRAPH 2 of 9



3

THE WOOLLS BUILDING
318 SAN ANTONIO STREET
CENTER POINT, KERR CO., TEXAS
PHOTOGRAPH 3 of 9



4

THE WOOLLS BUILDING
318 SAN ANTONIO STREET
CENTER POINT, KERR CO., TEXAS
PHOTOGRAPH 4 of 9



THE WOOLLS BUILDING
318 SAN ANTONIO STREET
CENTER POINT, KERR CO., TEXAS
PHOTOGRAPH 5 of 9



THE WOOLLS BUILDING

318 SAN ANTONIO STREET

CENTER POINT, KERR CO., TEXAS

PHOTOGRAPH 6 of 9



THE WOOLLS BUILDING
318 SAN ANTONIO STREET
CENTER POINT, KERR CO., TEXAS
PHOTOGRAPH 7 of 9



THE WOOLLS BUILDING
318 SAN ANTONIO STREET
CENTER POINT, KERR CO., TEXAS

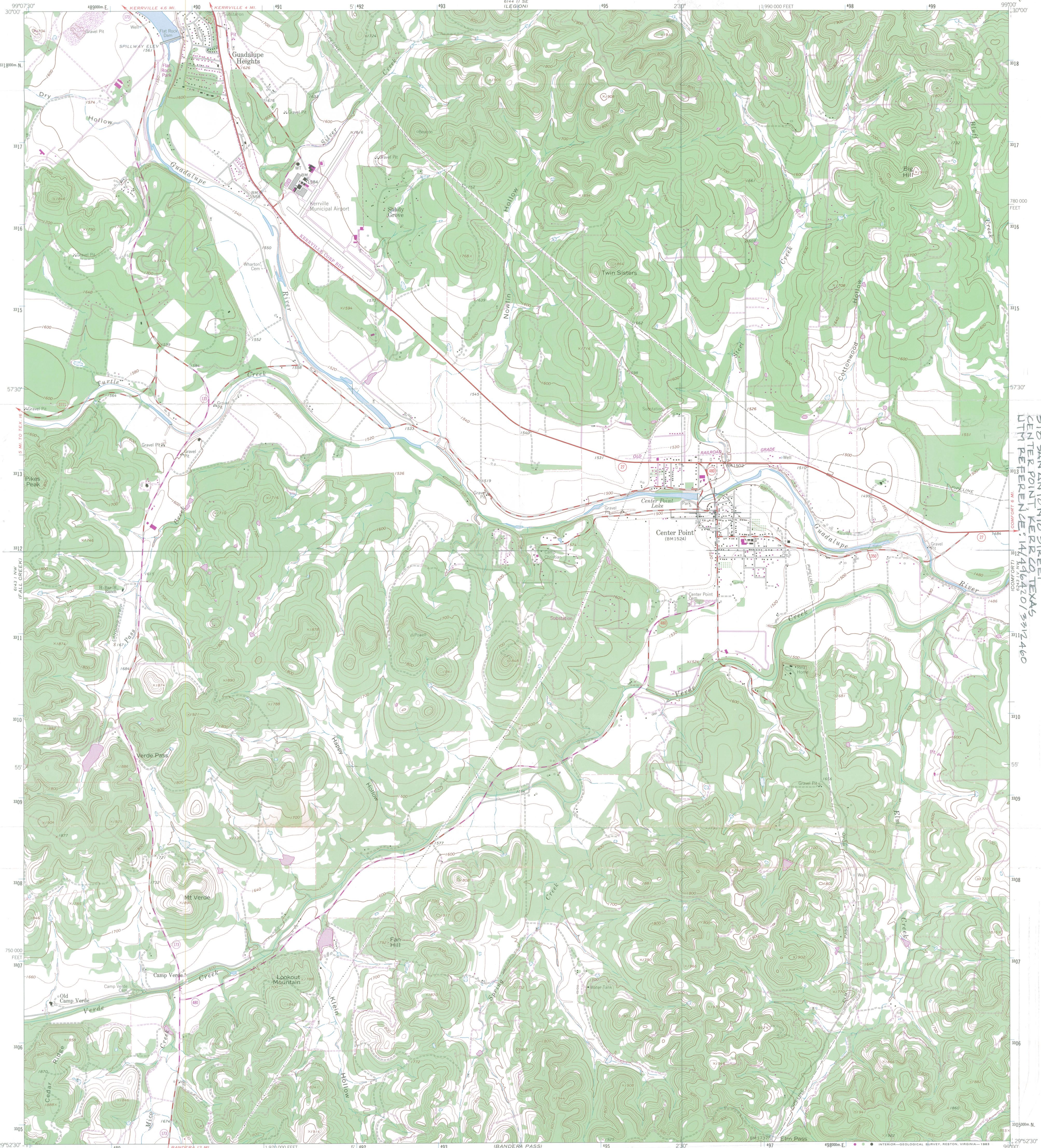
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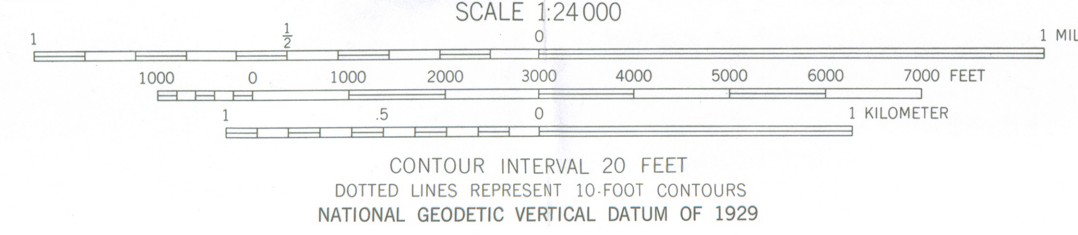
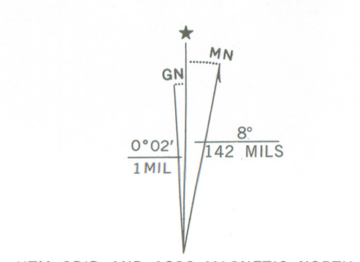
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THE WOOLLS BUILDING
318 SAN ANTONIO STREET
CENTER POINT, KERR CO., TEXAS

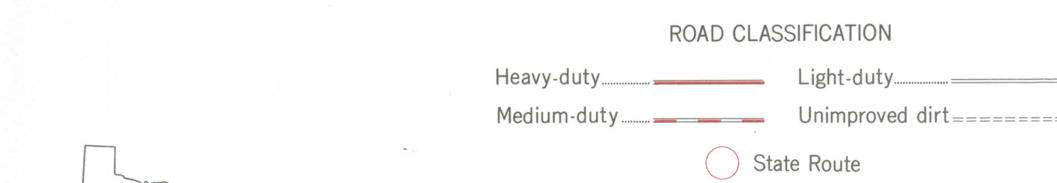
PHOTOGRAPH 9 of 9



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS and NOS/NOAA
Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial
photographs taken 1963. Field checked 1964
Polyconic projection. 10,000-foot grid ticks based on Texas
coordinate system, south central zone. 1000-meter Universal
Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 14, shown in blue. 1927
North American Datum. To place on the predicted North American
Datum 1983 move the projection lines 19 meters south and
31 meters east as shown by dashed corner ticks
Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence lines
Revisions shown in purple and woodland compiled from aerial
photographs taken 1979 and other sources. This information
not field checked. Map edited 1982



THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



QUADRANGLE LOCATION

CENTER POINT, TEX.
N2952.5-W9900.7.5

1964
PHOTOREVISED 1982
DMA 6143 I NE-SERIES V882

2999-444

THE WOOLLS BUILDING
318 SAN ANTONIO STREET
CENTER POINT, KERR CO. TEXAS
UTM REFERENCE: 14496420/3317460