

Visit Old Orangefield
in the
Orangefield Cormier Museum



*The Spirit of
Old Orangefield
still lives - in the
Orangefield Cormier Museum*

Orangefield ISD

9974 FM 105

Orange, Texas 77630

Web Link: www.orangefieldisd.com

Phone: 1-409-735-2285

A 1920'S ERA VILLAGE

This museum is the dream of an oilman who grew up poor. The times were hard. His family, as well as many other families in the community, had to do without many things. When he was older, he wanted people to see how it really was in the "good old days." He started gathering every imaginable piece of rural America he could find.

He created, in a plain metal warehouse, a 1920's village that contains places like a jail, a bank, a saloon, a boarding house, a post office, a dentist office, a school, a general store, and a soda fountain.

This small town would represent not only old Orangefield, but also many other small country towns all across the south. The work and planning that went into building this town was nothing short of brilliant. Each room representing a particular building is built to last forever in a controlled air environment. Most of the village is built with lumber from old buildings that were torn down in old Orangefield. The bank is built with materials stripped from one of the beautiful banks of the 1900 - 1930 eras.

Each of the rooms in the building is equipped with materials from the late 1800's to the 1960's: a restaurant ready to serve food to the oil men, a boarding house ready for a new shift of men to sleep, and the Cormier Tool Shop with tools used in the Orange oil field.

Pictures of the Orange oil field are found all over the museum. A power point presentation uses an audio of Paul Cormier describing the Orange oil field pictures taken during this period of history.

If you had relatives that worked in the Orange oil field, you may find them in the Cormier Museum.

THE SECOND BUILDING

In the second building one room salutes an Orangefield School building which was affectionately referred to as the Alamo. This school was built in 1928 and served students in the first grade through graduation, until the Orangefield Elementary was built in 1955. Portions of the exterior brick wall were actually cut from the old school when newer buildings in the late 80's and early 90's replaced it. Dedication plaques for the Alamo and McLewis Elementary are prominently displayed on the wall. The inside displays old school books, and lunch boxes of the period.

Across from the school the Orangefield Skating Rink built in 1956 is located. This section includes part of the original wooden floor and cubbyholes filled with the original leather boot-type roller skates that people rented. "I always said Daddy built the skating rink to keep us in Orangefield," Carlene, Paul's daughter, said. "He probably didn't want us driving to the big city of Orange a few miles away where carhops at one of the drive-in restaurants wore halter tops."

In some of the glass display cases hundreds of old pocket-knives and straight razors are displayed. Other rooms in this building are dedicated to musical instruments, audio-visual machines, the office of Paul Cormier, and toys (thousands of model cars, trucks, airplanes, and more). It was said that as a boy Paul Cormier only received one toy. Later after his oil business became very successful he delighted in collecting model cars and trucks. A large collection of 50s and 60s era pedal trucks and cars are also seen throughout the building.

THE BACK ROOM

The back room houses several antique cars. In the very back of the room is one of the original oil work-over rigs purchased by Paul Cormier in the early years.

A REAL FLASHBACK TO THE 20TH CENTURY

The 20th Century started with people using wood stoves, wood heaters, and many other antiques from the 19th and earlier centuries. However, with the oil boom in small towns such as Orangefield, our country was able to fight and win two wars, build automobiles and homes for everyone willing to work, and even invent airplanes that could fly us around the world. This rapid rise in the quality of life started with men like Paul Cormier; men willing to pay with hard labor for the material rewards for their family, their community, and their country. The Orangefield Cormier Museum is a reminder of how things were, and the progress that was made through the decades of the 20th Century. Join us as we continue to learn how our ancestors lived in this flashback to the 20th Century.



VISIT OLD ORANGEFIELD
in the
Orangefield Cormier Museum

THE ORANGEFIELD CORMIER MUSEUM

Paul Cormier was born the son of a wooden derrick builder. The family would move from one area to another as the oilfields were discovered in Louisiana and Texas. After they moved to Orangefield Paul's dad was injured in an accident. Paul had to quit school to help him build derricks and deliver supplies to the oil producers. Although not in school, young Paul studied the drilling habits of oil companies.

When he was grown he was finally able to purchase a small oil work-over rig and pursue his dream of drilling for oil. Paul started first by drilling for the larger companies and then later by purchasing and drilling leases of his own.

After he became a successful businessman, he started collecting many items with the vision of building a museum in mind.

In the spring of 2009 the Cormier family made a gift of the museum to the Orangefield ISD. Paul's dream for the museum was for it to be used as a tool for bringing back memories to older people and to teach our younger people, how life really was in the "good old days."





DIRECTIONS:

(#9 on map) I-10 exit 873 on to TX 73/62
South 2.5 miles. Turn right on FM 105.
Drive 2.5 miles to Orangefield High
School. The museum is on the east side of
the campus.

HOURS:

Open 3rd Saturday of each month
10 a.m. – 2 p.m. without reservations.

TOURS AVAILABLE:

Monday – Friday by reservation.
Admission Free – Donations Appreciated

CONTACTS:

Brian Ousley – bousley@esc5.net
Phone: 409-735-2285

Harvey Wilson – hawilson@esc5.net
Jesse Fremont - jessefremont@msn.co