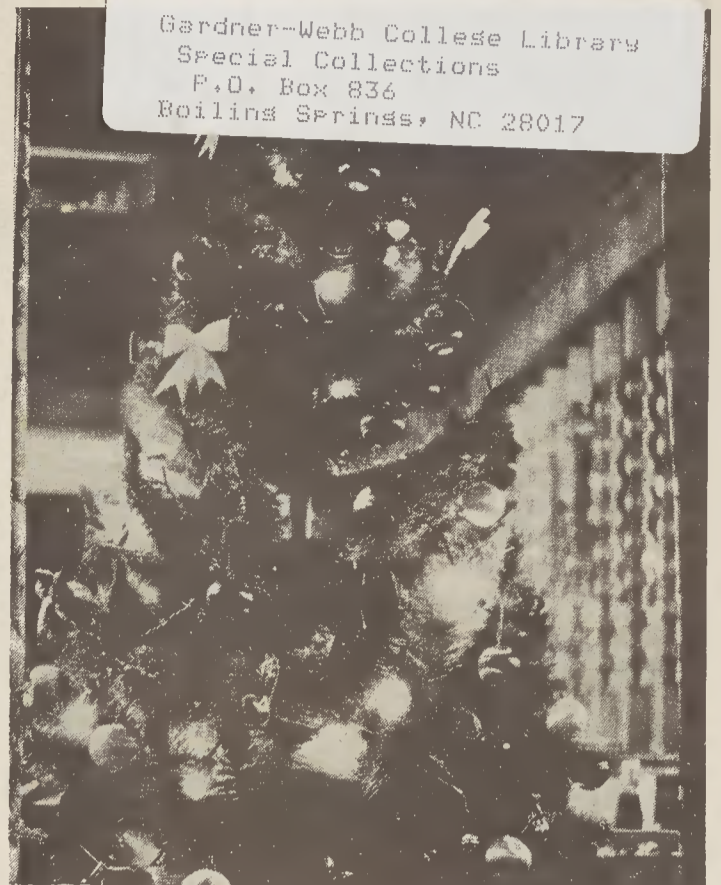


# Brightening The Corner For Christmas



The crossroads at Boiling Springs was brightened early this week when the Christmas lights and decorations went up downtown, adding seasonal sparkle to the night. Aside from those bedecking the light poles, perhaps the earliest decorated tree in town was this one at the Wagon Wheel Restaurant, shining in a window facing College Road.



## The Foothills View

Friday, December 2, 1983

BOILING SPRINGS NC

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### Destruction...

The numbness of shock gave way to the need to move ahead this week for Dean and Becky Putnam, of Mt. Sinai Church Road. Their house a framework of charred timbers, the Putnams began sifting through the cinders and rubble to account for exactly what they had lost.

Wednesday Becky Putnam sat on her heels in an upstairs hallway, pad and pencil in hand. Around her lay scraps of burned clothes and shoes and remains of the family's personal effects. A list has to be made, she said, for the insurance company.

It's a sad sight, but the Putnams are grateful for their almost last-second escape from the fire which roared through the brick and single split-level house in the early morning darkness last Friday. It was a fire that brought out eight fire departments, including Boiling Springs and Boiling Springs Rural.

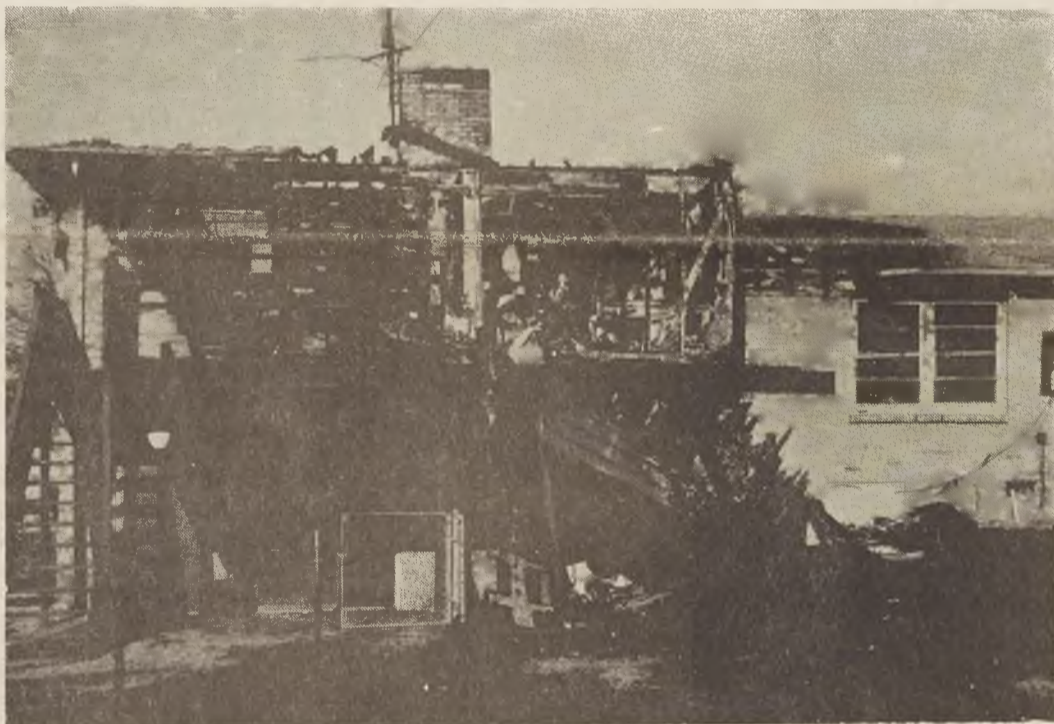
It was about 3 a.m., Mrs. Putnam said, when the shattering of a sliding glass door downstairs wake the soundly sleeping pair, in their upstairs bedroom. Their daughter Allison, 18, and her visiting friend, Jackie Laye, were asleep in the room across the hall.

"I ran and started banging on our daughter's door," Mrs. Putnam said. While she was trying to rouse the girls the attic fan fell, and the heat singed her hair. Mrs. Putnam ran to the phone and it was dead - the lines already burned.

"I kept hearing Allison calling, 'Mama! Mama!' I had no idea she was outside. But she was. The girls had gotten outside." In the smoke no one could see anyone; "I had no idea what smoke could do to you," Mrs. Putnam said. "It just engulfs you."

While her husband tried vainly to save belongings from the house Mrs. Putnam said she ran to a neighbor's house to call for help. "I was barefooted and about half dressed," she said.

Firemen were hindered by running out of water, which they finally tapped from the family's swimming pool. They were also thwarted by spewing gas from a propane tank, after its



The back side of the Dean Putnams' home on Mt. Sinai Church Road shows the devastation of last Friday morning's fire, from which the family miraculously escaped.

safety valve blew out. The origin of the fire was either a leak in the gas line or a defective switch on the heater in a hot tub, the family said.

The extent of the damage is still being assessed, but it is severe. The Putnams have brought in a mobile home to live in while they decide what to do with the burned out shell of their home. About all that was saved was a couple of antique guns.

It was a hodge they had built themselves about 20 years ago and had added the pool and the hot tub and a satellite dish and such niceties as came along. Now remains of scorched mattresses and furniture await removal from the lawn, and the focus now is on starting over.

"As for inside, everything's gone," Becky Putnam says, surveying the ruins from the steps of the trailer. "We are just thankful—so thankful—that we all got out. From three o'clock that morning, our neighbors have been there, helping us. We didn't know how many good neighbors we had. We will never be able to repay what they've done for us."

Will the Putnams rebuild, if the house must be demolished?

"I'm not going anywhere," Mrs. Putnam says. "This is our home. We're strong and young. We can start again."

### ...But Not Despair



Becky Putnam rests briefly on the steps of the mobile home that is their temporary shelter, while the family inventories the losses in their burned home. "We're strong and we're young -- we can start again," she says.

### McBrayer Services At Sandy Run

Edwin Yates McBrayer was buried Sunday afternoon in Sandy Run Church cemetery. He died Nov. 25 at Crawley Memorial Hospital, at the age of 79.

Born Feb. 10, 1904 at the old McBrayer farm on Sandy Run Creek, he was the son of the late John E. and Margaret Lovelace McBrayer. His wife, Helen Blanton McBrayer, preceded him in death.

Mr. McBrayer attended school in Mooresboro, high school at Boiling Springs and Gardner-Webb College. His wife was a college classmate. He went to work after graduating for the state highway department, running a motor grader, but a severe case of pneumonia 10 years later forced him to find an inside job.

So McBrayer found a job, then, with the Gaston County Health Department. He became the senior sanitarian, inspecting

sanitary conditions at restaurants, rest homes, hospitals, food markets and other public places. He worked there until he was 70, retiring after 32 years.

His hobby said his son John Robert, was an unusual one — he loved to cut grass and do landscaping. His main interest was in preserving the old homeplace, where he, his father and his grandfather had been born. "He wanted to keep it historically beautiful," said John.

Funeral services were conducted Sunday at Sandy Run Baptist Church, where he had been an active member and a deacon, by Rev. Tim Hendrick. Lutz-Austell Funeral Home was in charge of arrangements.

Surviving are two sons, David Yates McBrayer of High Point, and John Robert McBrayer of Rt. 3, Shelby, and four grandchildren.

### A Pennyroyal's Worth Of Spice

There are several herbs and spices that have become associated with the history and legends of Christmas. Some families may hang sprigs of herbs to lend a subtle fragrance to the air. Others who plan to have a crèche in their homes may wish to use herbs in its decoration.

Five herbs are commonly used in this way: lady's bedstraw, wild thyme, pennyroyal, rosemary and basil. One of the reasons for their use in a crèche is that they all grew in the region around Jerusalem at the time of Christ's birth and were almost certainly used in cookery, as room fresheners and for other practical purposes.

Besides, in medieval times, medical and other therapeutic values were attributed to these herbs, which may have further endeared them to people.

Lady's bedstraw (or yellow bedstraw) has been used for

many purposes for many centuries.

Since the foliage is sweet-smelling, it was widely used as a mattress in the Middle Ages, and its fragrance was thought repellent to insects, thus, another English name for it, "fleaweed."

Pennyroyal is another fragrant herb that was mixed with bedstraw mattresses because it would repel insects. Its name derives from the Anglo-French, "puliol real," meaning royal fleabane.

Rosemary also was used to treat laryngitis, as an antiseptic and as a stimulant. Basil, also common in Jerusalem, was added to water perhaps as a fragrance or as a purifying agent and antiseptic.

Rosemary has had a long history of medical usage and was brought to England when the Crusaders returned from the Holy Land.