



Elgin, Texas
12-26-2021

The City of Elgin will celebrate its Sesquicentennial in 2022. As we look forward to a year to commemorate, educate and celebrate in our community we look forward to sharing retrospectives about the community.

New Year's Eve in Elgin 70 Years Ago

December 31, 1951 ended a tradition that Elgin had experienced for 31 years – Ralph Jensen had his last fireworks display near his home at Pe Lee. The annual shows became a regular feature of the Jensen Family Christmas years before when Mr. and Mrs. Jensen's children were small. First it was only a private fireworks display, but soon neighborhood children were coming over to watch and participate. Before many years had passed, many adults were turning out, increasing the numbers of attendees. Mr. Jensen kept adding to the annual display and the crowds kept coming until the show became one of the highlights of the holiday season in the vicinity.

The crowds became too large for Mr. Jensen's land and the fireworks display was changed in different years to some of the neighbor's pastures. One year it was held in Martin Kastner's pasture (over 1500 attended) and another year it was held at the John Dube farm. Cannon crackers, sparklers roman candles, skyrockets, pin wheels and just about everything else in the fireworks catalogue was featured in the display close to a roaring bonfire so onlookers could stay warm. Mr. Jensen encouraged the Elgin people to meet in town and carefully follow the highway patrol to the fireworks site.

Special thanks to Sydna Arbuckle, native Elginite and local historian for sharing these stories. The Depot Museum, operated by the Elgin Historical Association manages the photography collection and archives. In addition, several books on Elgin area history, Elgin, and stories from Elgin people are available at the Depot Museum 14 Depot Square in downtown Elgin, open Saturdays 12 to 4 and at the Elgin Public Library 404 North Main Street open Tuesday – Saturday.

Join the celebration for the Elgin Sesquicentennial – volunteer by emailing community@ci.elgin.tx.us or call 512-229-3227.