

I think I remember.....Migrant Camps

During the summer months, Argos was home to a significant number of Migrant Laborers. Many of the workers called southern Texas and Mexico home in the off season. The largest crop produced at that time was cucumbers/pickles. Later, other crops were grown as well. Many fields in the surrounding county including Argos yielded a large crop that had to be worked throughout the summer. Planting, weed control and finally harvesting of the mature crop in a timely manner was crucial to a successful season. Most workers, children and adults, worked in the fields and a few worked at what was called the "Argos Pickle Factory". It was located just south of and adjacent to the railroad on south West street. The factory had platforms for loading/unloading and also contained large vats within for processing. The business may have been owned and operated by Weidner's located in Plymouth. What most of the workers called home for the summer was a camp that was located NE of Argos. It was on the east side of south Jarrah road about ½ mile north of Marshall street. The camp contained about twenty plus white wooden structures. Each structure typically housed a family. The size was about eight foot wide and twenty foot long. The inside of the structure was usually divided up into rooms using curtains to meet the wants/needs of the residing family. Restrooms and bathing facilities were in a separate structure. The migrant community pretty much kept to itself for social events and ventured out mostly to work and make purchases for whatever was needed to provide for daily existence.

A second, larger camp was located about four miles north of Argos on the east side of Route 31. This location is about 1/8 mile north of the current intersection of old Route 31 and the new four lane highway. It was much more visible to passing traffic than the camp at Argos and attracted much more attention than the camp at Argos. A few of the families maintained "charge" accounts at businesses in Argos throughout the summer. It was often mentioned that all accounts were always settled up before anyone left to return to their homes in the south. They were good customers.