

Hugh R. and Lucy May Etter

Hugh and Lucy Etter, true humanitarians and longtime Plainview residents, worked quietly behind the scenes to help people in need, even taking some into their home. They reached out to unfortunates ranging from struggling young couples and families lacking shelter to alcohol abusers seeking a way to overcome addiction. The Etters helped found the local Alcoholics Anonymous and Al-Anon and supported those programs for many years. One of the countless men they helped wrote, "No one has helped so many, never refusing to answer a call of help, regardless of the hour of the day or night and never complaining of the verbal and sometimes physical abuse you take while helping those sick of drink."

Hugh Etter was born in 1907 in Phoenix, Arizona and moved with his father and brother to Mason County, Texas in 1918, then to Plainview in 1921. Young Hugh worked as a cowboy in Castro County but returned to Plainview in 1925 and took employment with the John Burt Electric Company. His first job was wiring the Harvest Queen Mill. Later, he wired the Harvester Building on Fourth and Broadway and many other buildings in town. Hugh also helped a friend do carpentry on the weekends.

Lucy May Hopkins was born in 1910 in Denton County, Texas. Her grandparents had been among the earliest settlers in Hale County. In 1918 the family moved back to Plainview, which they considered their home.

Lucy married Hugh Etter in 1928. The couple had two daughters and also raised the two children of Hugh's brother. They were members of the First Methodist Church.

In 1939 the Etters bought a local commercial refrigeration business and operated it as Hugh R. Etter Electric. In 1948 Hugh had a hunting accident in New Mexico, almost froze to death, and lost both legs and some of his fingers. The Etters had to sell the business, and Lucy worked for Sears. After he recovered, Hugh built a shop next to their home and ran an electrical business from it. Later, both worked for the Welfare Department, and Hugh was the predatory animal control officer in Hale County for the federal government for many years.

Hugh Etter died in 1991 and Lucy Etter, in 1996.

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