

# Lou Bell Harris Drew People To Her

A saga that had its beginning in the small Central Texas town of Holland just a short distance north of Taylor, and developed through times in Whitney, Huntsville, Houston, Chicago, New York and finally Taylor, came to a climax with the official gift of the Oliver P. and Lou Bell Harris home to the Taylor Garden Club for its use as a garden center in 1976.

After an interesting and enthusiastic life in all the places mentioned, plus many others where Lou Bell spent brief periods, Mrs. Harris closed out her household here and moved to Brownwood to make her home with her invalid sister, Mrs. Fred D. Spencer Sr., better known in Taylor as Vera. Because of her love of flowers, her enthusiasm for Garden Club work where she made a name for herself as an arranger and table setting expert, and her feeling that the club should have a permanent headquarters, Mrs. Harris made the gift of her home on Fowzer Street to the organization of which she is a long time member.

At the age of 87, Mrs. Harris finds her physical strength not keeping up with her enthusiasm for life.

Cookbooks have been her love — after her passion for gardening and attractive table settings. At one time, she had over 1,500 cookbooks, plus a huge number of pamphlets garnered from various food product manufacturers, etc.

She has always been gregarious, and has often supplied the necessary initiative to provide some cultural outlet for people in towns where she has lived.

Prior to her marriage, she organized the Holland Woman's Study Club, and when the club observed its 50th anniversary in 1963, current members were entertained at Lou Bell's home here. At that time she returned to the club the gift that the organization had given her when she married and moved from Holland to Whitney in 1914.

In Whitney, she also experienced a need for club activities and organized a study club there which continued in existence for

more than 40 years before finally disbanding.

In Taylor, she was the guiding hand in organizing the Business and Professional Women's Club.

When her husband's business interests took the couple to New York, Lou Bell joined the Texas Club and in a brief time was elected its president. In that capacity, she was invited to be on the hospitality committee to welcome the visit of King George and Queen Mary, father and mother of the present Queen Elizabeth of Great Britain, on their trip to the New York World's Fair in 1939.

She also became interested in bridge while in New York, and as was her custom, she entered her activities with enthusiasm. In bridge, the enthusiasm grew until she earned a bridge teaching certificate signed by no less than Ely Culbertson.

But her love of flowers and table settings finally overcame these other interests. She was particularly interested in a course taught at Columbia University by Fannie Farmer, author of that acme of cookbooks of early days, the Boston Cookbook. Because of lack of a chemistry course in her former college work at Sam Houston State Normal School in Huntsville, Columbia U. would not accept Lou Bell as a student until she made up the lack by undergraduate work. Not to be daunted, she took the chemistry courses and two years later could enjoy the Farmer classes with emphasis both on cooking and table setting.

Her artistic temperament found its greatest expression in her flower show judging and her table setting and decoration lectures. A Master Judge, the highest honor in the Texas State Garden Club, she has participated, both as judge and exhibitor, in many shows each year. She has won four national awards for her arrangements using hemerocallis.

So expert was her knowledge of flower arrangements and of table settings and so interesting was her manner of

presenting her lectures that she became widely sought after to give programs. She has lectured on table setting in every major city in Texas and in most of the towns within a 50-mile radius of Taylor.

She has always been generous with her time and her talents with the Taylor Garden Club. When ideas, materials, knowledge, enthusiasm would get low, Lou Bell would come to the rescue and provide the

necessary ingredients for good flower shows, interesting programs, civic improvement goals and other helps which endeared her to club members and to the general public.

The gift of her home to

Taylor Garden Club insures a place where projects can be undertaken, committees can meet, small flower shows can be staged, and where the ideals of a creative and talented woman can be continued.



## OUR CONGRATULATIONS AND BEST WISHES

We congratulate the

## TAYLOR GARDEN CLUB

on their beautiful new

## LOU BELL HARRIS GARDEN CENTER

and extend best wishes

to one of Taylor's finest

civic organizations.

We commend the  
Taylor Garden Club

on the dedication  
of their new

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