

# Photo of the Month

## Daisy Manufacturing Company



Daisy Manufacturing was honored at the December 1957 Rogers Chamber of Commerce banquet following groundbreaking on the new plant. Arkansas Governor Orval Faubus is speaking; Daisy president Cass Hough is second from left. (Neg. #N010053)

As the first major business in Rogers, Daisy Manufacturing Company had a profound influence on Rogers and its history. The company began in the late 1800s in Michigan as the Plymouth Iron Windmill Company.

In 1888 when Lewis Cass Hough, the company's treasurer and manager, saw Clarence Hamilton's gun-like invention that shot lead BBs and declared it a "daisy," the company began to produce a metal version to reward farmers when they purchased a windmill. Later airgun sales soared, and in 1895 the company was renamed the Daisy Manufacturing Company.

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In 1957 Daisy purchased the Benton County Nursery property on Highway 71 (South Eighth Street). Garner-Larimore Construction Corporation erected the plant which opened in July 1958. Over 400 local people were hired, and the \$2.5-million payroll helped trigger growth in Rogers.

Daisy moved 100 families from Michigan to Rogers. Although they were mainly Republican and Catholic — not the norm for Northwest Arkansas — the new arrivals made a concerted effort to blend in and become active members of the community. The Rogers Post Office felt a major impact, as all Daisy products were shipped there, significantly increasing volume. When the Post Office later moved in 1961, a \$100,000 donation by the Hough-Kimble Foundation, chaired by Cass Hough of Daisy, provided much of the renovation funds for a new home for the city library, which moved into the building in 1964.

Cass Hough was executive vice president of the company when Daisy came to Rogers, a position he held until 1986. Eventually the company began to outsource parts and moved their assembly work to Neosho, Missouri. Daisy now maintains only its corporate offices on Second Street in Rogers. The only current operation at the plant is the production of BBs.

Today the Daisy Airgun Museum, which opened in 2000 in historic downtown Rogers, offers a complete line of Daisy products for purchase and maintains a permanent exhibit of Daisy airguns and memorabilia.

