



# Getting Around

By ETHEL SIMMONS

Every woman who walked in the door of the Village Tea Room in Franklin just beamed. The charming, old-fashioned decor and the first place, anywhere, to eat out in Franklin was just too much.

Jane Roberts, appropriately in costume, served as hostess that day. She and two other Franklin housewives, Sandra Voikin and Rose Galkes, took turns working as hostess or together in the kitchen preparing cups, salads, sandwiches and sundae.

I had been browsing and strolling in Franklin Village on a warm, sunny morning. The quaint shops that line both side of the street make you feel like a tourist out of town.

Of course, Franklin, known as "the town that time forgot," has managed to keep its residential peacefulness despite progress, and its shopping center is equally nostalgic.

"THERE WASN'T even a place to get a cup of coffee in this old town," Mrs. Roberts explained, as she poured me a cup of coffee in the tea room. "Our husbands helped us. We took an old house, built around 1880, and restored the interior. We did our own decorating."

This was only the second week of operation for the new dining room, but when I left at noon, customers were already standing on the porch, waiting to get in.

Menus, with calico fabric covers.

told the story of the George B. Congleton House, circa 1880.

"The original white frame house with yellow windows is early Greek revival architecture. The basement still has original log beams with bark attached and fieldstone walls. The present kitchen was the woodshed."

From the summer menu, of salads, sandwiches, desserts and beverages, I started out with a bowl of gazpacho, the cold vegetable soup from Spain.

"We make it fresh every day," Mrs. Roberts said, when I complimented her on its delicious taste. I haven't enjoyed such a nice bowl since first trying gazpacho in Marbella.

NOT HEAVY on oil or spice, it was flavorful with chunky cucumber and tomatoes, served with cheese cracker fingers.

I followed with a sandwich. Prices range from peanut butter and jelly for the kids, at \$1.25, to \$2.80 Salads include a Maurice Salad, Franklin Style, at \$3.25, and Chicken Salad on Fresh Melon, at \$3.75.

I spotted one man among the customers, and Mrs. Roberts assured me that men were definitely welcome.

The menu features "free coffee to all" paid, Franklin Firefighters'. Elizabeth has its own volunteer fire department. Another offering is the

## Franklin's first eating place



Congleton House, circa 1880, is now Village Tea Room.

"Franklin Police Special-coffee and cookies, 36 cents.

On a beautiful day, as this was, it's great to sit out in the backyard or Tea Garden, where they were serving box lunches in the "good ole summer-time."

"We have a separate menu for the Tea Garden," Mrs. Roberts explained.

I TOOK a look in the yard after I left the dining room. Only a half-dozen tables dotted the green grass, leaving room for lots more.

Mrs. Roberts said the tea room has

been attracting both shoppers in the village and residents.

"All items in the shop are hand-crafted or antiques, and all are for sale," she pointed out. The cheerful decor was further enlivened by these touches.

Come September, the menu will change. Mrs. Roberts said "We go to hot soup and sandwiches, and probably crepes."

I didn't have time to stay as long as I would have liked in "the heart of historic Franklin Village" but I did manage to wander into an antique shop next door, in a red barn originally the

Congleton Carriage Shop, snoop in the back room of the Franklin Country Workshop and Gallery, where they invited me to tour the premises: peer through the frame of a window just before the glass was installed at the Gorbuck Studio of Photography and talk to a mature woman standing on a chair outside solemnly painting the building's trim, and look into the window of the period barber shop next door, where a man was getting his hair cut. (See related story Business page 1.)

Just up the road, on the other side of Franklin and 14 Mile, is the old Oiler Mill, getting ready to open Saturday for the new season. You can get cider and doughnuts seven days a week, from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

TALKED ABOUT a banquet of Chinese cuisine in last week's column, but due to limited space every thing but the soup course landed on the cypress room floor. Herewith the rest of the menu.

The meal progressed to what hostess Neil Benedict described as "mandarin pancakes, the Chinese version of a crepe" into which you put slivers from an "American version of Peking duck," both the white meat and crispy skin, then added a little green onion brush, poured on hot sin sauce and folded the pancake to eat.

Ah, delicious! With all the textures and flavors lasted separately.

More courses in the banquet were shrimp toast with their tails showing, fried sweet and sour Joe Won Ton, curried squid, Chinese barbecue pork with bokchey—a crispy vegetable cooked quickly in a wok, and flaming pineapple dessert.

The four-hour feast concluded with almond flavored Italian liqueur and a sampling of pear brandy, complete with large pear in the bottle, which the Benedicts brought back from Italy.

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