

Cook's Hardware & Tin Shop



The original building was built by A.B. Heston in Mechanicsville in the 1880s. Cook's Hardware was purchased by John Cook and his partner in 1926. Within 3 years John was the sole proprietor and later the store was passed to his son Jim. Both John and Jim worked in the tinsmith shop that was located above the hardware store. Up to 10 men would work in the shop fashioning duct work and other tin products.

In 2012 The Cedar County Historical Society started building a scaled down replica of the hardware store with plans drawn by Jim's daughter, Collette. The replica was constructed with a false-front wooden frame construction. For ease of access to the public the tinsmith shop was placed in the back of the hardware thus keeping the building one level. Thanks to an EXTREMELY generous donation from Walter Hanson in memory of his wife Vesta, we were able to finish the entire building in 2012. Jim's widow, Marie, donated the following items: the original Cook's hardware sign - which hangs on the front of

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the replica, the original 9-foot-tall doors that are currently on the replica as well, the contents (templates and tools both) of the tinsmith shop, and one wall of the tinsmith shop was kept and used to divide the hardware store and tinsmith shop areas. In the interior the walls are covered with carsiding and the ceiling covered to look like a tin ceiling. It is furnished with counters and shelves that hold a variety of



goods including household goods, farming items, different ages of washing machines, a post office desk

(because it was common at one time that the local post office was in the local general store), wood burning stove, and other items one may have purchased at a hardware or general store. After its construction was completed a front porch was added to the building with a boardwalk.

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