

# ZONING CHANGE REVIEW SHEET

**CASE NUMBER:** HDP-2020-0494

**HLC DATE:**

December 14, 2020

January 25, 2021

**ZAP DATE:**

March 16, 2021

**APPLICANT:** Historic Landmark Commission (with owner's consent)

**HISTORIC NAME:** Kenneth and Mildred Threadgill House

**WATERSHED:** Shoal Creek

**ADDRESS OF PROPOSED ZONING CHANGE:** 4310 Rosedale Avenue

**COUNCIL DISTRICT:** 10

**ZONING FROM:** SF-3 to SF-3-H

**SUMMARY STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommends the proposed zoning change from single family residence (SF-3) district to single family residence – Historic Landmark (SF-3-H) combining district zoning.

**QUALIFICATIONS FOR LANDMARK DESIGNATION:**

Architecture and historical associations.

**HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION ACTION:** **December 14, 2020:** Initiated historic zoning with the consent of the owner. Vote: 10-0 (Papavasiliou absent). **January 25, 2021:** Recommended historic zoning. Vote: 10-0 (Tollett absent).

**ZONING AND PLATTING COMMISSION ACTION:**

**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:** The house is beyond the bounds of the Comprehensive Cultural Resources Survey (1984).

**CITY COUNCIL DATE:**

**ACTION:**

**ORDINANCE READINGS:** 1<sup>ST</sup> 2<sup>ND</sup> 3<sup>RD</sup>

**ORDINANCE NUMBER:**

**CASE MANAGER:** Steve Sadowsky

**PHONE:** 974-6454

**NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATIONS:**

Austin Independent School District, Austin Lost and Found Pets, Austin Neighborhoods Council, Bike Austin, Bull Creek Road Coalition, Central Austin Community Development Corporation, Central Austin Urbanists, Friends of Austin Neighborhoods, Homeless Neighborhood Association, Neighborhood Empowerment Foundation, North Austin Neighborhood Alliance, Preservation Austin, Rosedale Neighborhood Assn., SELTexas, Shoal Creek Conservancy, Sierra Club, Austin Regional Group

**BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION:**

**Architecture:**

The house is an excellent example of a vernacular, stone-veneered Tudor Revival-styled cottage. Tudor Revival architecture was a very popular style in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and was one of the “period” revival styles that embodied ties with historic traditions and cultures, representing strength and stability. Tudor Revival homes were generally

constructed with brick or stone veneer, had steeply-pitched roofs, and in many cases, round-arched entryways and unusual window configurations, including diamond-paned casements and lunettes. The Threadgill House reflects much of the character-defining features of the Tudor Revival style with its stone veneer, segmental-arched entry, and steeply-pitched roofs, both in the principal side-gabled main roof and the smaller gablet framing the entry door.

#### **Historical Associations:**

This is the home that Kenneth and Mildred Threadgill lived in from around 1945 until around 1984. Kenneth Threadgill was a legend in Austin's music history, as the proprietor of a gas station/beer joint on North Lamar Boulevard, where he hosted jam sessions among Austin's musicians, including the young Janis Joplin, who made her stage debut at Threadgill's before moving to San Francisco. Threadgill himself was a renowned country blues yodeler and collaborated with some of the greats, including Jimmie Rodgers. His band, known as the Hootenanny Hoots, entertained at his gas station, where many UT students came to listen and perform during Threadgill's open-mic nights. One of the UT students was Janis Joplin, who performed regularly at Threadgill's, one of her first experiences at performing for an audience. Her repertoire at Threadgill's was country; she played her harpsichord and sang old country blues songs, in contrast to the music that propelled her to stardom as the lead singer for San Francisco's Big Brother and the Holding Company in the mid-1960s. Joplin and Ken Threadgill maintained a close relationship. She returned to Austin at the height of her career to celebrate his birthday in one of her last public appearances before her death. While the original Threadgill's on North Lamar Boulevard is obviously a candidate for landmark designation as well, this house on Rosedale Avenue reflects the private family life of a musical legend who contributed so much to Austin's music heritage.

Staff has evaluated this house for designation as a historic landmark and has determined that the house meets the criteria for landmark designation as set forth in City Code:

- a. **Architecture.** The house is a 1930s stone-veneered cottage that embodies a vernacular style and material that is increasingly rare in Austin. The original part of the house is intact, but it does have a dormer addition to the front roof that is compatible with the design of the house, as well as a two-story addition to the rear which is not visible from the street and does not affect the historic appearance of the house. Despite the modifications, the house satisfies the criterion for architectural significance.
- b. **Historical association.** The house was the long-time home of Kenneth and Mildred Threadgill, who lived here from the mid-1940s until the mid-1980s. Kenneth Threadgill is an icon in Austin music history as the proprietor of a service station and beer joint that offered music and provided an opportunity for young singers, such as Janis Joplin, to perform. The house qualifies for landmark designation for its associations with Kenneth Threadgill.
- c. **Archaeology.** The house was not evaluated for its potential to yield significant data concerning the human history or prehistory of the region.
- d. **Community value.** The house does not fit this criterion as it does not possess a unique location, physical characteristic, or significant feature that contributes to the character, image, or cultural identity of the city, the neighborhood, or a particular demographic group.
- e. **Landscape feature.** The property is not a significant natural or designed landscape with artistic, aesthetic, cultural, or historical value to the city.

**PARCEL NO.: 0223021110**

**LEGAL DESCRIPTION: LOT 6 BLK 9 ROSEDALE B**

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**ESTIMATED ANNUAL TAX ABATEMENT:** \$8,500 (owner-occupied); city portion: \$2,500 (capped).

**APPRAISED VALUE:** \$845,826

**PRESENT USE:** Single family residence

**CONDITION:** Excellent

**PRESENT OWNERS:**

Daniel Richards  
4310 Rosedale Avenue  
Austin, Texas 78756

**DATE BUILT:** ca. 1939

**ALTERATIONS/ADDITIONS:** Several additions to the rear of the house; a front dormer was added recently, but is in keeping with the style of the house and does not compromise the integrity or the context of the building.

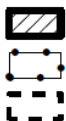
**ORIGINAL OWNER(S):** James V. Walden

**OTHER HISTORICAL DESIGNATIONS:** None.

## LOCATION MAP



1" = 151'



SUBJECT TRACT  
PENDING CASE  
ZONING BOUNDARY

## NOTIFICATIONS

CASE#: PR-20-167148  
LOCATION: 4310 Rosedale Ave.

This product is for informational purposes and may not have been prepared for or be suitable for legal, engineering, or surveying purposes. It does not represent an on-the-ground survey and represents only the approximate relative location of property boundaries.

This product has been produced by CTM for the sole purpose of geographic reference. No warranty is made by the City of Austin regarding specific accuracy or completeness.





4310 Rosedale Avenue  
ca. 1939



February, 2019 view





View showing the dormer and rear additions to the house (2019)

## OCCUPANCY HISTORY 4310 Rosedale Avenue

City Directory Research, Austin History Center  
By City Historic Preservation Office  
May, 2018

|         |                                                                                                          |
|---------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1992    | Terry F. Pruitt, renter<br>No occupation listed                                                          |
| 1985-86 | Vacant                                                                                                   |
| 1981    | J. Kenneth Threadgill, owner<br>Retired                                                                  |
| 1977    | J. Kenneth Threadgill, owner<br>Retired                                                                  |
| 1973    | J. Kenneth and Mildred G. Threadgill, owners<br>Proprietor, Threadgill's (not listed in the directory)   |
| 1968    | J. Kenneth and Mildred G. Threadgill, owners<br>Proprietor, Threadgill's, beer, 6416 N. Lamar Boulevard. |
| 1965    | J. Kenneth and Mildred G. Threadgill, owners<br>Proprietor, Threadgill's, beer, 6416 N. Lamar Boulevard. |

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- 1961 John K. and Mildred G. Threadgill, owners  
Proprietor, Threadgill's, beer, 6416 N. Lamar Boulevard.
- 1957 Kenneth and Mildred G. Threadgill, owners  
Proprietor, Threadgill's, beer, 6416 N. Lamar Boulevard.
- 1953 Kenneth and Mildred G. Threadgill, owners  
Proprietor, Threadgill's, filling station, 6416 N. Lamar Boulevard.
- 1949 Kenneth and Mildred G. Threadgill, owners  
Proprietor, Threadgill's Service Station, 6416 Georgetown Road.
- 1947 John K. and Mildred G. Threadgill, owners  
Proprietor, Threadgill's Service Station, 6302 Georgetown Road.
- 1944-45 R.D. and Alma Swearingen, owners  
Instructor  
NOTE: Kenneth and Mildred Threadgill are not listed in the directory.
- 1941 Walter E. and Alma P. Willmon, renters  
Pipefitter
- 1940 Walter E. and Alma P. Willmon, renters  
Pipefitter
- 1939 The address is not listed in the directory.  
NOTE: Walter and Billie Willmon are listed at 1106 Rose Street, Apartment B.  
He was a pipefitter.

**BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES:****Walter E. and Alma P. Willmon (ca. 1940 – ca. 1943)**

The 1940 U.S. Census shows Walter E. and Alma P. Willmon as the renters of the house at 1103 Taylor Street in Austin. Walter E. Willmon was 29, had been born in Texas, and was a plumber doing construction work. Alma P. Willmon was also 29, had been born in Texas, and had no occupation listed. They had no children listed with them.

Walter E. Willmon's 1954 death certificate shows that he was living in El Paso, Texas, where he was a plumber. He died from a gunshot wound in his chest in what was described as an apparent suicide.

**Kenneth and Mildred Threadgill (ca. 1945 – ca. 1984)**

Kenneth Threadgill appears in the 1920 U.S. Census as the 10-year old son of John E. and Lou Threadgill of Beaumont, Texas. Kenneth had been born in Texas, and was the 3<sup>rd</sup> of John E. and Lou's four children listed, all sons. John E. Threadgill was a Mississippi-born minister of the gospel. Lou Threadgill was born in Texas and had no occupation listed. Kenneth's two older brothers worked in the oil industry, the oldest as a boilermaker at a refinery, and the next as a laborer in the oilfield.

Kenneth and Mildred Threadgill are listed in the 1930 U.S. Census as Joe and Mildred Threadgill. They were living with Mildred's mother, Mrs. Ida S. Johnson, at 2202 Lindell Avenue in Austin, a house she owned. Joe [sic] Threadgill was 20, had been born in Texas, and was a surveyor. Mildred Threadgill, 19, had been born in Texas and had no occupation listed. They had no children listed with them.

The 1940 U.S. Census shows John K. and Mildred E. Threadgill living in a house they owned in Justice Precinct 4 of Travis County; their house was worth \$2,800. John K. Threadgill was 30, had been born in Texas, and was the proprietor of a filling station. Mildred E. Threadgill was 29, had been born in Texas, and had no occupation listed. They had two daughters: Kay E., 8; and Rebecca L., 6. Both girls had been born in Texas.

Mildred Elizabeth Threadgill was living in this house at the time of her death in 1976. She was born in 1910 in Austin and was a housewife. John Kenneth Threadgill was born in Peniel, Hunt County, Texas in 1909 and died in Austin in 1987.



Kenneth Threadgill with Janis Joplin (1970)

## Kenneth Threadgill

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

**Kenneth Threadgill** (September 12, 1909 – March 20, 1987) was a country singer and tavern owner, who mentored the early Austin folk music scene that included Janis Joplin. He also lent his name to two nationally famous restaurant/bar venues.

## Early Life & Yodeling

Born John Kenneth Threadgill in Peniel, Texas. His father was an itinerant minister who worked between Hunt County, Texas and New Mexico. The family lived in Beaumont and in 1923 moved to Austin, where Threadgill attended Austin High School. Later he met mentor and idol, Jimmie Rodgers while working at the Tivoli Theater in Beaumont. Backstage, Threadgill impressed Rodgers with his yodeling and eventually Threadgill incorporated yodeling into his country singing act to create his own popular style.

## Threadgill's Tavern

In 1933 he moved back to Austin and began working at a Gulf service station on North Lamar Boulevard. In December when Prohibition ended Threadgill bought the establishment, secured the first post-Prohibition beer license in Austin and opened it as Threadgill's Tavern. Threadgill and his



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wife, Mildred (Greer), ran the restaurant and tavern until World War II, when they closed for a few years. While Threadgill worked as a welder for the war effort, the music did not totally stop. When Hank Williams came through Austin and did a show at the Dessau Dance Hall, northeast of Austin, Threadgill was there. Hank was late, so Kenneth took the stage and was singing "Lovesick Blues" when Hank arrived. Hank came onstage and finished the show.

By the mid forties Threadgill was selling soft drinks and beer while his friends played and sang hillbilly blues. In the mid fifties groups of local musicians were coming every week to play, and Threadgill would pay them with two rounds of free beer. This tradition of paying singers with tavern fare was echoed later in the 'Sitting and Singing for Supper' sessions. In the beginning there was no stage and performers played sitting amongst the customers. A microphone connected to a little amp would be passed around to performers. Eventually Threadgill installed a sound system and musicians would wait in the back for their turn.

## Post World War II & Janis Joplin

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After World War II Threadgill's Tavern reopened and UT students came to the tavern to hear Threadgill and his Hootenanny Hoots play. Threadgill's open-mic nights became popular and helped form the basis of the fledgling singer-songwriter community in Austin. Two musicians from the Hootenanny Hoots, encountered Janis Joplin while driving in Austin and invited her to Threadgill's. She came and sang and soon Joplin became the star attraction for the Wednesday open-mic. Eventually she became a close friend of Kenneth and his wife Mildred. In 1970 a concert near Oak Hill was held to celebrate Threadgill's birthday. Janis Joplin, who by this time was a major star, had been in Hawaii the day before, canceled a \$15,000 appearance to fly to Austin for the occasion. Joplin and Threadgill sang and danced for the crowd. Threadgill's birthday picnic was noted in the Congressional Record when Congressman J.J. Pickle called Threadgill the "Father of Austin Country Music".<sup>[2]</sup> After Mildred's death in 1974, Threadgill closed the club and later sold it to Eddie Wilson, the owner of the Armadillo World Headquarters. Wilson reopened Threadgill's as a restaurant on December 31, 1981. As late as June 1983 Threadgill continued to entertain at the restaurant, singing and yodeling on most Wednesdays evenings.

## Music and Movie

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In the early 1980s, Threadgill and Willie Nelson appeared together and sang in the movie Honeysuckle Rose. In September 1981 "Silver Haired Daddy" with Renee Best, Steve Mendell, Bill and Bonnie Hearne and Johnny Gimble was released on Armadillo Records. It was recorded at Onion Audio and produced by Michael J. Osborne and Hank Alrich.<sup>[2]</sup> His work showed the early influences of Jimmie Rodgers ballads and Al Jolson movies, which could be seen in his singing and dancing. Some of his best-known songs were "Silver-Haired Daddy of Mine," and "T for Texas, T for Tennessee."

## Death and legacy

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Threadgill died of a pulmonary embolism on March 20, 1987, at Brackenridge Hospital in Austin.<sup>[1]</sup> The city of Greenville (which annexed Threadgill's hometown of Peniel in 1957) hosts the Kenneth Threadgill Concert Series in his honor. He was inducted into the Austin Music Memorial in 2010. A second Threadgill's opened as a restaurant by Eddie Wilson in 1996.<sup>[1]</sup> Kenneth Threadgill's reputation for good food and great music continues in Austin according to Austin Chronicle music writer, Margaret Moser.<sup>[1]</sup>

**AUSTIN WOULDN'T BE AUSTIN  
WITHOUT THREADGILL'S**

Let's face it. No one ever would have said "Keep Austin Weird" if Threadgill's hadn't made it weird in the first place.

When bootlegger and country music lover Kenneth Threadgill opened his Gulf filling station just north of the Austin city limits in 1933, he had more on his mind than just pumping gas. After all, just months before he had stood in line all night to be the first person to own a beer license in the county. And soon after, his joint would become a favorite for traveling musicians interested in grabbing a drink after their gigs.

The quintessential beer joint continued to flourish into the sixties, and changed with the social climate of the era by inviting the folkies, hippies and beatniks to his Wednesday night singing sessions with open arms. Threadgill's love for people and music smoothed out the conflicts that usually occurred when longhairs crossed paths with rednecks, and because of this, a new culture tolerance emanated from the tavern, which had a profound effect upon its patrons and the music that came from it.

Not to mention it was here that Janis Joplin developed her brassy style that would propel her to become the first female rock and roll superstar.

After nearly succumbing to the wrecking ball, the original Threadgill's site was saved by legendary Austin City Councilman Lowell Lebermann Jr., and purchased by Eddie Wilson, owner of the Armadillo World Headquarters. Wilson's idea, however, was to make Threadgill's a Southern style restaurant, based on the success of the menu that he offered at his kitchen at the Armadillo. So, on New Year's Eve 1980, the Armadillo closed, and on New Year's Eve 1981, Threadgill's opened as a restaurant. It was an instant success.

## THREADGILL'S WORLD HEADQUARTERS

In 1996, Threadgill's World Headquarters was opened in south Austin, right beside the residence of the Armadillo Headquarters. Wilson has made a distinction between the two locations: the original location on North Lamar has the theme of Austin between the 1930's and the 1960's. The south location celebrates the history of the Armadillo and its salad days of the 1970's. The memorabilia of the Headquarters represents the hey-day of this era from the juke box which contains many of the artists who played the Armadillo, to the piano that hangs from the ceiling which has been played by artists as diverse as Jerry Lee Lewis to Captain Beefheart.



# Threadgill

## *Country Music King Gets His Day*

By GREG OLDS

Special Writer

Austin's major contribution to "people music" will be honored Friday when Kenneth Threadgill, the local patriarch of country and folk music, will receive expressions of gratitude and love. Threadgill has for nearly four decades presided as the benign maestro of the local country and folk music scene and has put Austin on that map. His influence has helped along some notable musical careers and has provided countless hours of entertainment for thousands of people.

The "K. T. Jubilee" will be held at the BRW party barn from 6 p.m. to midnight on Friday. The barn is near the Oak Hill intersection of highways 290 and 71. Tickets, for \$1, are on sale at the Spill Rall Inn, Bevo's Westside Tap Room, Discount Record Store, the Spanish Village and will be available at the door.

Good country food will be offered. Entertainment will be provided by Nance Lipcomb, the black folk singer from Navasota, Shiva's Head Band, the popular local rock group, and the Nacogdoches Bluegrass Group, which has won acclaim in amateur circles here and elsewhere in the state. In the group are Stanley Alexander, a faculty member of Stephen F. Austin University, who has often performed in Austin. Threadgill's Hootenanny Hoots will also play. Musicians from Nashville and San Francisco have made plans to attend the jubilee and some surprise guest performances are expected. John Henry Faulk, the nationally known Austin humorist, will emcee.



## *He Inspired Janis*

Operating out of a humble "castle" on North Lamar, Threadgill, the king of Austin folk-country music has had a hand in the careers of such musical luminaries as Janis Joplin and Powell St. John. But, even more than that, he has inspired countless lesser known musicians to spread the good word of music to other people, energizing a widening circle of happy times.

There is a stabilizing effect in evoking the past. Probably this is the reason that so many widely varied types of people are attracted by the Threadgill type of music. Particularly in this so in these, the most tumultuous period in the nation's recent history.

Thus it is that each performance of Threadgill and his Hootenanny Hoots—

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whether they are playing at the Split Rail Inn on South Lamar or Threadgill's Old gas station on North Lamar — draw such varied sorts as cedar choppers, hippies, fraternity and sorority types, goal ropers, rednecks, and just plain students and townspeople. As is said in the song "Split Rail Inn," written by Hoots members Chuck and Julie Joyce: "Split Rail Inn, do you think they'll let you in? Are you straight, are you hippie, are you Klan? No matter what your game, there's someone there to blame. If at closing time you still can take a stand."

The songs of Kenneth Threadgill are out of the nation's recent past, a time of relative social stability, boundless optimism. He sings, among other numbers, "Silver - Haired Daddy of Mine," "There's a Star-Spangled Banner Waving Somewhere," "Waiting for a Train," "Down in the Old Cherry Orchard," "T for Texas, T for Tennessee," "Just Because," and "It Is No Secret What God Can Do." Patriotism, religion, heritage, the simple and good life. And somehow, even in these times of lost innocence, the songs as performed by Threadgill and the Hoots ring true.

Threadgill's "Silver-Haired Daddy" is sung with the deepest of feeling, the result, no doubt, of his love for a father who raised a good family and who travelled a long and hard road to preach the word of his God. "There's a Star-Spangled Banner Waving Somewhere" is the ultimate in patriotic American ballads from a period when there was almost no doubt about the purity of this nation's motives. Threadgill imbues the song with the reverence he has for the country, and probably with the memory of some friends he lost in World War II. Light moments abound, too, as in "Just Because," where he takes off in a lively jig step. And then, each evening, as the clock nears closing time, there is "It Is No Secret What God Can Do." Almost inevitably this is preceded by the apologia, "Folks, that old clock on the wall has about caught up with us. We don't make these laws, we just try to get along with 'em."

Probably the best-known musicians that Threadgill has been associated with are Janis Joplin and Powell St. John. Miss Joplin made her first "public performance" ("If you want to call it that,"

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Threadgill says) at the North Lamar gas station in 1962. She, St. John and Lannie Wiggins had a trio going at the time around Austin.

"They were singing bluegrass stuff," Threadgill recalls. "Powell wasn't loud enough with his harmonica; I put him on a microphone with it a bit later and that was better. Lannie played with us a little bit but he didn't stay long. Janis was playing an autoharp in those days. Janis played around the gas station a little but she never really did do any good to speak of."

Threadgill was born in Hunt County, Texas, at Peniel, on Sept. 12, 1909, the son of a Mississippi man and a Texas woman. He recounts that his parents met when both were five years old. The meeting occurred in 1878 when Grandfather Threadgill, on his way into Texas from Mississippi, passed by the Spoonmore place near Commerce in his covered wagon and stopped to water his mules. The elder Threadgill asked Spoonmore if he could use a hand, the immigrant thereupon took a job at the Hunt County farm. Twelve years later, at age 17, the parents of Kenneth Threadgill were married, a union that endured 63 years, until Mrs. Threadgill died at 81. Her husband lived to be 90.

## *Son of a Preacher*

Threadgill

Kenneth, the ninth of 11 children, saw a good deal of Texas and a part of New Mexico during his early life. His father was a travelling minister of the Church of the Nazarene. Most of Kenneth's earliest years were spent in Hunt County and in New Mexico.

In 1919 the Threadgills moved to Beaumont, where Kenneth began school. Four years later the family moved to Austin, which has been Kenneth's home ever since. His father became pastor of the local Nazarene Church, then located at the corner of San Marcos and Spence Streets but since removed to the north side.

Kenneth graduated from the old City Junior High School and, in 1928, from Austin High School.

He returned that year to Beaumont, a fateful move for him, as it turned out. There it was that he first met Jimmie Rodgers, the great "father of country music." Threadgill didn't talk much with Rodgers during those Beaumont meetings. Their acquaintance would become established awhile later. But it was in Beaumont that Threadgill as an usher at the Tivoli Theater first heard and fell in love with Rodgers' singing.

Kenneth, as he grew up, had come to admire the singing of Al Jolson, whom he had seen in the movies and whose records he had heard. The young Threadgill began to sing Jolson. But that ended when he heard Rodgers in Beaumont.

Threadgill and Rodgers got to know each other in Houston, where Threadgill



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had gone to work — at another theater that also was on the Majestic circuit that Rodgers travelled. "I got acquainted with Jimmie in 1928. I was working at Loew's State Theater in Houston as a ticket taker. When Jimmie was playing there, he'd arrive early. Anybody could get acquainted with him, so I did. This was just a few years before he died on May 26, 1933, while still a young man. He died in New York City, where he worked recording. They'd release a single record of his each month."

About this time Threadgill moved back to Austin and opened his place at 6416 North Lamar, then called the Dallas Highway. (The city limits were out only to 45th Street in those days.) He maintained his relationship with Rodgers until that singer's death. Threadgill recalls that once in the early '30s, Rodgers and the famed comedian Will Rogers appeared at the Austin airport (then located just north of Threadgill's place on Lamar) to raise money in behalf of the victims of a flood at San Saba. Will told a few jokes, Jimmie sang a few songs, then the hat was passed for San Saba.

The Threadgill place quickly became a music center. Threadgill got Travis County's first beer license in December, 1933 (having a few years before done a bit of Prohibition-age bootlegging, though he is inspecific about this). His place echoed weekly with the sound of good "people music." Threadgill says it took him a good while

to get over being  
"stage-frightened," but  
clearly he got beyond that.

Recalling how music  
became an institution at his  
Austin place Threadgill  
says: "Before the war (World  
War II) we used to have a  
fella here in town named Pop  
Wheeler and his wife. He was  
an old bass man. Her name  
was Mildred Womack; she  
played piano. They made little  
dances here around town.  
They got 'em a little group  
together. They had a Mexican  
feller by the name of Joe  
Ramon. He played fiddle. We  
stayed open all night those  
days. That was legal for a  
number of years back in the  
'30s. That was when beer  
came back in. I didn't have a  
key to the front door there for  
nine years. We'd stay open  
24 hours a day.

"But, anyway, they'd pay  
other places and when they  
got done they'd come out to  
our place and play. They'd  
usually get out there about 1,  
2 o'clock, when other places  
had closed up. I had a little  
band that played out there.  
There'd be music all night  
long. That's how music got  
started there.

"When the Second World  
war broke out we more or  
less shut down. I was working

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as a welder right where the American-Statesman is now. I worked for the U.S. Army Engineers repairing equipment like pontoon bridges, caterpillars, draglines, and all that stuff. Just before that I went to work out at the magnesium plant, out where Balcones Research Center is now, also for the Army Engineers.

"I had plenty of work to do right here. I never did have to go out of town to weld. We spent the war right here, living at my place on North Lamar. I had sold my house, taken my physical, I was I-a, and was ready to go. But I was getting a deferment every 90 days because I was working on that welding."

Not long after the war Threadgill reopened his tavern. In that period he met Dolores and the Bluebonnet Boys, whom he describes as "one of the real old-time dance bands. Joe Castle, Johnny Ross, Dolores and Lee and Aubry Cox did more to teach me about music than anybody I have ever known. I made a recording with them 'Mean Mama Blues.'"

"I also had the good fortune to sing with various other groups about this time, Jesse James and All the Boys, Harry 'Jole Blon' Choate, Alan Rummel and the Golden West Playboys, and others. Also, as a guest I sang with Floyd Tillman, Ernest Tubb, Moon Mullican, Ben Christian and Jerry Jericho."

A particularly fond memory of Threadgill's centers around a night when country music great Hank Williams was to perform at Dessau Hall near Pflugerville after a concert in Austin. "Hank was late getting there and the crowd was getting fidgety. Mrs. Hallie Price asked me to join their band and sing some of Hank's songs. I was up on the bandstand singing 'Lovesick Blues' when Hank walked in. He just stood there and listened and then we all had a good time talking about our likes in music.

"When the war ended some of the guys came back from overseas and we started up the music (on North Lamar) again. There was Shorty Zieger, me, and an old boy we called Ole; his name was Peterson, a Swede boy. We had a one-legged fella playing the fiddle for us, Herman Thompsen. He's still around but I don't see him very often. Shorty don't play much these days. He's out there some Wednesday nights now, playing the guitar a little bit and then he hands the guitar to his little boy. Played all around with me; he was playing when Powell St. John worked with us.

"After the war we had to play on Wednesday nights only; before, it had been on Fridays for a long time before that. But we just didn't have any room for people on weekends after the war," Threadgill recalls.



Threadgill visited with Rodgers' widow and sang some of the late singer's songs for her. "After seeing she liked the way I sang her husband's songs I decided to see what I could do away from my own place."

By this time Threadgill's popularity had grown to the extent that, a few years ago, an effort was made to provide him a weekend outlet. Zieger and Bill Neely (who learned his guitar playing from Rodgers personally and then had joined the Threadgill circle) approached Bob Bass, who had just assumed ownership of the Split Rail Inn on South Lamar near the river. He agreed to let Threadgill play there weekends. "It was just an old shed out there," Threadgill recalls, "with a few picnic tables. We'd play out there and it'd get so darn cold during the winter time we'd have to go inside. We started five years ago at the Rail. A number of us have played out there; the musicians have come and gone until we've gotten down to us four."

The four are Threadgill, Chuck and Julie Joyce and Bert McGuire. Chuck is a printer at the American-Statesman, an exciting vocalist, and an accomplished electric guitarist. His wife, Julie, is a good singer and plays the standard guitar with a compelling verve and rhythm. Bert, the likeable and taciturn lead guitarist of the group, like the rest of the Hoot-

emanny Hoots, an able musician and is capable of doing an enjoyable singing job. He is best known for his rendition of "Folsom Prison Blues."

The Threadgill career was climaxed in 1968, when he and the Hoots were invited to participate in the annual New-

port Folk Festival, the signal honor in their field. "It was the biggest thing we were ever in," Threadgill says. Roy Acuff, a country music great, was there at the same time and told Threadgill he'd never been in anything bigger. Threadgill says, "They treat-

ed us like long-lost kinfolks." At Newport the Hoots were received enthusiastically, winning a standing ovation from a crowd of 21,000.

There is a monument to Jimmie Rodgers in that singer's native Meridian, Mississippi, which is also his burial

place. The words on the monument seem to apply just as well to Austin's Kenneth Threadgill:

"His is the music of America. He sang the songs of the people he loved; of a young nation growing strong. His was an America of glistening rails,

thundering boxcars, and rain-swept nights; of lonesome prairies, great mountains and high blue sky. He sang of the bayous and the cotton fields, the wheated plains; of little towns, the cities, and the winding rivers of America. We listened. We understood."

Story on the life and career of Kenneth Threadgill  
Austin American-Statesman, July 5, 1970

**THREADGILL, Mrs. Mildred Elizabeth, 66, 4310 Rosedale, died Sunday. Services 10 a.m. Tuesday at Weed-Corley Funeral Home. Survivors: husband, Kenneth Threadgill of Austin; daughters, Kay Banks of San Antonio, Dotty Maxwell of Conroe, Becky Thompson of Austin; sister, Dorothy G. Bowling of San Antonio; five granddaughters; five great-granddaughters.**

Death notice for Mildred Threadgill  
Austin American-Statesman, November 8, 1976

**Jas. V. Walden**

**4310 Rosedale Ave.**

- - - 9 6 - -

**Rosedale B**

**Rock veneer res. & frame garage**

**1/16/39 - 255n**

**4**

Building permit for the construction of this house (1939)

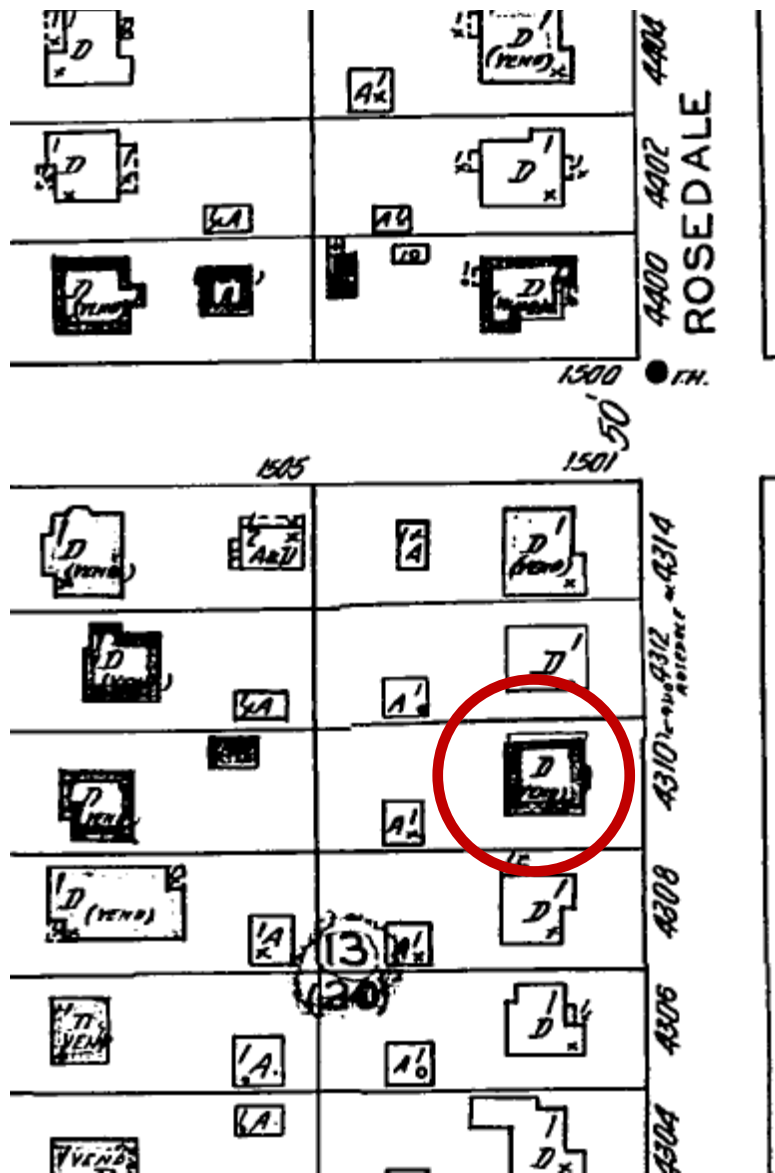
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| WATER SERVICE PERMIT               |                      | No. 11938A            |                 |
|------------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| Austin, Texas                      |                      | Date 187 Jan 19, 1939 |                 |
| James V. Walden                    |                      |                       |                 |
| Received of                        | 4310 Rosedale        | Date                  |                 |
| Address                            | Two and 50/100 - - - | Amount                | \$ 2.50         |
| Plumber                            | Freya                | Size of Tap           | $\frac{1}{2}$   |
| Date of Connection                 | 1/29/39              | No. Fittings          |                 |
| Size of Tap Made                   | 1 1/4                | 1 Curb Cock           | 5' 0"           |
| Size Service Made                  | 3/4                  | Elbow                 |                 |
| Size Main Tapped                   | 6"                   | St. Elbow             |                 |
| From Front Prop. Line to Curb Cock | 8'                   | 1 Bushing             | 2 1/4 x 1 1/4   |
| From Prop. Line to Curb Cock       | 13' 9"               | 1 Retainer            | 1/2 5/8 x 1 1/4 |
| Location of Meter                  | C 11 AD              | 5/8" Pipe             | 2 1/4 x 1 1/4   |
| Type of Box                        | 2 1/2 x 1 1/2        | 1 Lead Comp.          | 2 1/4 x 1 1/4   |
| Depth of Main in St.               | 3'                   | Nipples               |                 |
| Depth of Service Line              | 2'                   | 1 Union               | 2 1/4 x 1 1/4   |
| From Curb Cock to Tap on Main      | 5'                   | Plug                  |                 |
| Checked by Engr. Dept.             | 8-5-39 LE            | Tee                   |                 |
|                                    |                      | 1 Stop                | 2 1/4 x 1 1/4   |
|                                    |                      | 1 Box                 | 2 1/4 x 1 1/4   |
|                                    |                      | 1 Lid                 |                 |
|                                    |                      | Valves                |                 |
|                                    |                      | Job No.               | C 29-1013       |
|                                    |                      | Req. No.              | 31234           |

INDEXED

Water service permit for this address (1939)

City records indicate a permit to construct second-story additions and other modifications to the house in 1993 and in 2008.



The stone-veneered house appears on the 1962 Sanborn map. Earlier maps do not show this section of the neighborhood.