

History

Incorporated in 1893, Woolsey will celebrate its centennial this year. The town takes its name from Dr. Issac Gray Woolsey, a physician, Baptist minister and Confederate veteran who settled in the area after the Civil War. First called Woolseyville, the name was changed in 1889.

Much of the land around Woolsey was originally owned by Thomas Gay in the early 1820s. The first post office opened in the 1880s. For most of its history, the town was surrounded by farmland. The Southern Railroad came through during the mid-1880s. At one time, as many as six stores, a cotton gin, gristmill and hotel were clustered in the tiny downtown. Dr. Woolsey operated one of the first mills. A bank opened in 1907.

In 1934 the position of mayor and two council seats were held by women. But from the period after World War II until the early 1970s, the governing body was largely inactive.

The first roads were paved after World War II. Most of the residents who were not farmers found work packing peaches, apples and grapes at several large orchards in the town.

Woolsey folklore says the ghost of Thomas Gay still walks the woods and pastures searching for the silver he buried to keep out of Yankee hands.

Population

125

Home prices

Range from \$60,000 to \$500,000

Public schools

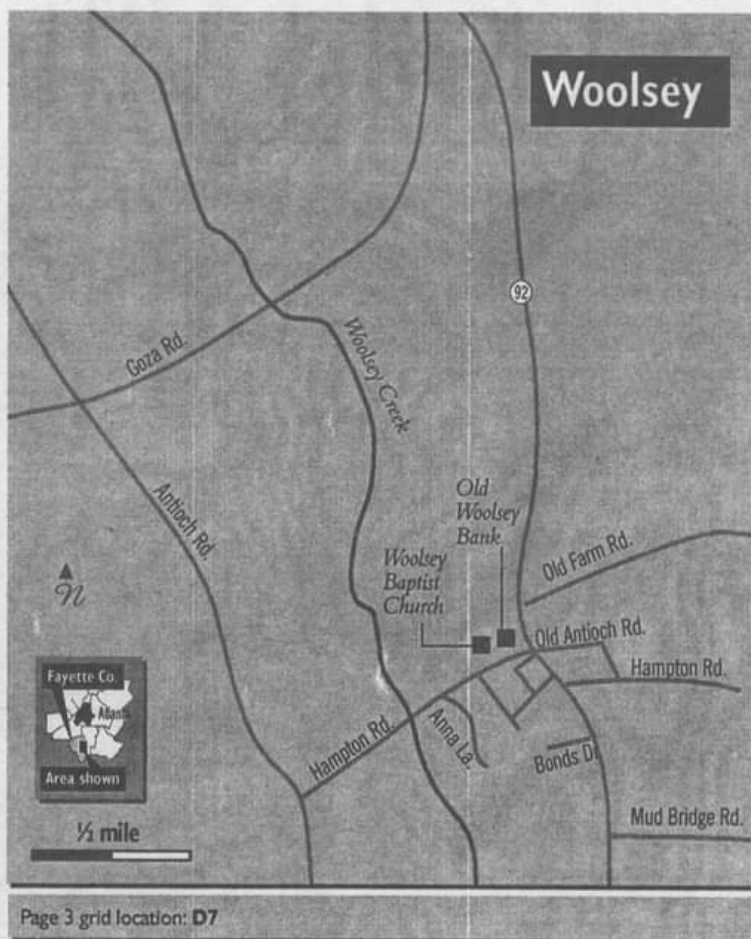
Brooks Elementary
Whitewater Middle
Fayette County High

Commuting time

Downtown: 50 minutes
Midtown: 55 minutes

Landmarks

► Woolsey Baptist Church, Hampton



Page 3 grid location: D7

STAFF

Getting there

From Downtown, take Interstate 75 south to Georgia 85 to Fayetteville. Turn left on Georgia 92 and follow into Woolsey.

Road, was originally established as the Harmony Grove Baptist Church in 1888. Dr. Woolsey, a Baptist minister, led the congregation for several years and is buried in the adjacent cemetery.

► **Masonic Lodge**, Hampton Road, has seats from the old Loew's Grand Theater in Atlanta.

► **The Woolsey-Bell House**, Georgia 92, built in 1825, believed to be the oldest residence in town. During the 1880s, when the house was occupied by Dr. Woolsey and his family, the facade included double porches and ornate gingerbread trim. Today the house has four simple white columns across the front porch.

Some of the houses in the Woolsey area sell for \$60,000 to \$70,000, said Mr. Burns. "Then there are some gorgeous ones, priced from \$150,000 to \$250,000. And there are a few with a lot of land over half a million. But the new subdivisions coming in are running \$120,000 to \$130,000."

When Virginia Bell moved her family from Buckhead to Woolsey in 1969, people in her old neighborhood thought she was crazy.

"There wasn't even anything in Fayetteville when we moved here," she said. "But this was my idea. I grew up in a small town in South Carolina, but even that was bigger than Woolsey."

People in Woolsey thought she was crazy, too, when she bought the oldest house in town: a Federal-style mansion on Georgia 92 that had been vacant for three years.

1825 house rescued

"I love old houses and this one needed a great deal of help," Mrs. Bell re-

Houses in the area's new subdivisions are priced in the \$120s and \$130s.

called. "Basically, I rescued it. It's quite a change from the contemporary house with a glass atrium I used to live in."

The original part of the brick house dates to 1825, when it was four rooms with a shed off the back. A kitchen and dining room were added before 1860, and sleeping porches were built on by the 1920s. It took almost 15 years to restore the six-bedroom home.

"To me, this is one of the most beautiful places I've ever been," said Mrs. Bell, who also purchased a Victorian cottage nearby. "At night, it's so peaceful."

"The people have always been friendly; the day we moved in, someone drove

up with a bunch of turnips that still had dirt on them as a welcome gift," she said. "But it's very different from 1969. It used to be you could drive from Fayetteville to Woolsey and never pass another car."

Johnnie Snead has seen even more changes in Woolsey, where he was raised on a 100-acre farm. Thirty-six years ago, he moved into "downtown Woolsey," to a Victorian cottage on 3 acres.

"There are only a few old dwellings left," said the retiree. "Old Farm Road was a huge peach and apple orchard. We never worried about looking both ways when we crossed Hampton Road. But the biggest change is people building houses and moving in."

And more people means more commercial development down the road.

"We're considering a town square type of shopping district instead of strip centers," said Mayor Laggis. "It would be nice to have some small stores, offices, maybe a hardware store. We've been a bedroom community, but the commercial growth will no doubt pick up."

Recent home sales

**\$126,450**

140 Old Farm Road. Located in Bak Field Farms, this 8-year-old brick ranch on 5-plus acres has three bedrooms, two baths, living/dining room combination, fireplace, family room, basement, fenced yard, breakfast bar, vaulted ceilings, wet stove, deck and family room. Asking price was \$129,900. It sold for \$126,450 in days.

**\$155,000**

125 Grandview Trace. Located in Stubbs Plantation on about 2 acres, this year-old Victorian has four bedrooms, 2½ baths, fireplace, partial basement, two-car garage, country kitchen, living room, family room, dining room, and nus room. Asking price was \$159,000 sold for \$155,000 after more than a year.

**\$170,000**

121 Mud Bridge Road. This 6-year-two-story frame colonial on 5 acres has four bedrooms, three baths, tile foyer, living room, dining room, family room, fireplace, screened porch, two-car garage, tray ceiling in master bedroom, country kitchen, three-stall barn and fenced pasture. Asking price was \$179,900. It sold for \$170,000 after 6 days.

— Compiled by Ellen B.

Other sales in the Woolsey area

A sampling of residential transactions in the past year:

Address	Sales price
1049 Antioch Road	\$80,900
369 Snead Road	\$89,900
403 Hampton Road	\$148,900
131 Mud Bridge Road	\$155,000
326 Woolsey-Brooks Rd.	\$175,000
130 Flagstop Run	\$230,000
2083 Georgia 92	\$1,500,000

Sources: Patrick and Jewell Munn of Re/Max of Fayette; TRW Redi Property Data, Fort Lauderdale, Fla.