

Ogemaw

Like several of the other communities of the county, Ogemaw was born during the days of the timber industry in the area. However, the name of the town came from a sister community in Michigan and both were named to honor Ogemaw-Ke-Ke-To, chief Speaker of the Chippewa Indians. The name was selected when Charles E. Potts, who would become the first postmaster, filed an application to establish postal service for what had been the Evans community.

Ogemaw itself was founded in 1892, but its roots can be traced to the M.A. Johnson Lumber Company which was organized in 1889. That establishment failed in 1891, and on October 17th of the same year Charles E. Potts took over the lumber business. Lumber then became the livelihood of the area. However, on April 14, 1920 it appeared that the fortune of the community would change when oil was discovered a mile south of the historic Holt-Poindexter Store. The Lester & Haltom No. 1 well—later known as the “Hunter Well,” named for S.A. Hunter who drilled it. The dreams of oil wealth were short lived, but the well was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1976.

Today, like so many of the former prosperous communities of the county, Ogemaw is only a memory on Highway 79 as one drives from Camden to Magnolia. But for a time it thrived as the area provided the livelihoods for many of its residents.