## Jim and Sue's more than diner

By JAY BLINDERMAN Staff Writer

The Yellow Pages' ad lists Jim and Sue's restaurant as 17 miles east on Highway 30 toward Huntsville. When you get to Jim and Sue's, which is also a convenience store, gas pump and bar, the menu states the eatery is 15 miles down the road. To set the record straight, this allpurpose stop is 16.25 miles east on the Huntsville dirt road, there is no highway.

After you walk through the convenience store portion of the establishment, you enter the dining room.

To the left of the entrance is the salad bar and at a 90-degree angle to the bar is a serving area that looks identical to the cafeteria serving line at every public school I have ever attended.

I didn't eat cafeteria food when I was in school - I always did my best to stay away from the stuff. Luckily for me the serving line at Jim and Sue's is used for the lunchtime buffet and I was there to eat dinner.

Once in the dining room, you can

sit at any one of 24 tables. In keeping with the traditional country diner, the tables had checkerboard tableclothes and plastic water cups. When I arrived, all the tables but one were empty, and it was occupied by two waitresses.

The menu at Jim and Sue's is as typical as any roadside diner with that had no wine in them. checkerboard tableclothes. There On the wall opposite the was a choice of steak, seafood, and fried items.

Fried catfish is the speciality of the house and is offered on an all you can eat basis. Liver and onions — a meal I have a hard time classifying as food — is another option on the

Our original order for dinner included a shrimp basket, but on the evening of our arrival, shrimp baskets were scarce. My dinner companion had to settle for the same dinner that I was having, chicken fried steak with gravy and french

While waiting for my dinner, I took the time to savor the surroundings Jim and Sue's had to offer.

The salad bar was furnished with the basic essentials to make a salad: someone went into the adjoining bar lettuce, tomatoes, croutons, cheese and put an AC/DC song on the juke-

Fish netting was attached to the wall above the salad bar. Hanging from the netting were plastic replica lobsters, star fish, crabs, a wicker anchor, and seashells, which might have been authentic. Above the sea-arama display were wine racks

On the wall opposite the salad bar was a fire place, that if lit, would add a needed coziness on a cold Huntsville Highway night. The night I was at Jim and Sue's wasn't cold enough for a fire, but one would have been welcomed if it would have attracted some life to the restaurant.

About the time my analysis ended, the chicken fried steak arrived. It was now time to analyze dinner. The "chi-fry" looked like it had a crispy light crust, but after a couple of bites I realized the coating was cake-like. The fries were a little on the limp side; well, they were greasy. My roll was cold and hard but I softened it up by dipping it in

my gravy.
While we were eating dinner

box. We waited for a while but that person never returned.

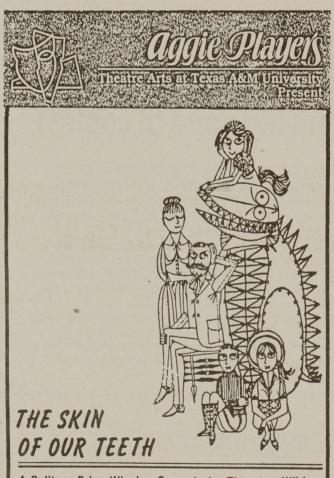
Amazingly enough some patrons showed up for dinner at Jim and Sue's before our departure. Those patrons supplied us with the evening's entertainment.

Three men, who looked as if they could be regulars, sat down at the table beside us. The waitresses called them by name, confirming my belief that these men frequented the establishment.

The pot-bellied man in the group asked the waitresses, "who's cookin dinnah?" The younger of the two waitresses replied "I yam." The potbellied man groaned and said "then you betta bring me anotha glass of

That comment sums it up for Jim and Sue's. For a road-weary truck driver, the stop may be a welcomed one, but for an Aggie looking for an escape from the food of Bryan/College Station, the adventure or the food is not worth the drive.

The prices at the roadside cafe ranged from \$4 to \$9. On a scale of 5, my hungry Aggie rating is a 2, and if you're a hungry truck driver my rating would be a 3.



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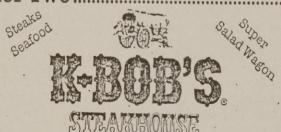
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