

Nearly Factual BRIEF HISTORY of the First 153 Years of Luckenbach, Texas As Near As We Can Figure.

By M T Blossom

When people arrive at Luckenbach for the first time they often wonder why so many people want to visit here. There's not a whole lot to look at. The place looks just like it did 150 years ago. We've tried not to change things much. It started out in 1859 as a trading post by Minna Engle whose father was an itinerant preacher from Germany. She married, Carl Albert Luckenbach and named the town after him. There was trading between the Comanche Indians and the Early German Settlers.

The Germans who first came here were teachers, preachers, artisans, craftsmen, builders, farmers. They came here to escape religious persecution, poverty and other adverse conditions in Germany. They also came to the new world to witness the American Adventure, the cowboys and Indians. Many of them were intellectuals, free thinkers, philosophers. They didn't want to secede from the Union during the Civil War. They were the only people who remained friendly with the Comanche and kept their treaty with them.



The Luckenbach trading post/post-office/beer joint was the community center. Here, they had Schuetzen-fests, (Shooting Contests) Saengerfests (German song fests), yearly school closings, weddings, and town meetings. It had the only cotton gin in the area and people from miles around brought their cotton to be ginned. They usually stayed the weekend and camped under the stars. Religious services

were held on Sunday morning. The hard working, fun loving Germans enjoyed trading goods and stories and celebrating with music, dancing, contests, food and beer.

In the early 70's local rancher, regional hero, intellectual (sorta), free thinker, philosopher, Hondo Crouch found an ad in the Fredericksburg paper that read TOWN FOR SALE. At the time he had a ranch twenty miles away on either side of Luckenbach. Hondo came through here one Wednesday (Luckenbach used to be "On Wensdays Closed") and decided to buy the place so he could always get a beer.

Luckenbach became this poet-sage's stage where he held the first Women's Only Chili Cook-off, a World's Fair (because he proclaimed Luckenbach as the center of the Universe) and a Celebration of the Return of the Mud Dauber to Luckenbach the very same day the famed swallows return to Capistrano. Hondo was a magnet for musicians and colorful characters. He appreciated the simple things. He played up the little guy. Hence our motto "Everybody's Somebody in Luckenbach."

Today, Luckenbach is still a social center. Many consider the Luckenbach Dance Hall the "Best Dancehall in Texas" and the Luckenbach bar has more soul per square inch than any other, anywhere. It remains a Mecca for singers and musicians amateur or professional.

May 26th, 2001 we will celebrate our 3rd Annual 150th Birthday with one of Luckenbach's most talented sons, **Guitar Wizard, Monte Montgomery**. And on July 4th, 2001 Willie Nelson will turn our Pop, 3 into Population 20,000 when he returns to Luckenbach for his annual Picnic.

Note: From 1961-1973, Hondo (nom de plume, or alias, or AKA Peter Cedarstacker) wrote a social satire column for the *Comfort News*. The fictional town of Cedar Creek and all of its characters eventually became the real town of Luckenbach and all of its characters (and Luckenbach has some real characters!) The MOON reserves a special corner for Peter Cedarstacker, Writer, as a corner of wit and human insight for us today.

-Becky Crouch Barrales



CEDAR CREEK CLIPPINGS

By Peter Cedarstacker

Mr. Smith a color T V bought just like the Joneses in Big Flat Wednesday of last week. (Hondo's direct translation).

Miguel Schultz (Indian), Jesus McNeil (Nearly Mexican) and me (some say I) visited Trapper Gutowsky on his birthday.

It was a long walk but we got there. We took presents of a coon, possum, armadillo and a new steel trap. We tried to surprise him but he heard us comin' a mile down the canyon. He really sees and hears like the animals he lives with.

Takin' our presents from us he said hello and started cookin' 'em. Then's when I wished we'd brought cooked sausage and sauerkraut. Trapper emptied the dog's bowl and put the armadillo in the oven on the half shell.

On his way to dig up a pint of somethin' he made he set his new steel trap.

Trapper chased the dogs out and welcomed us in with a jesture not to bump our heads. His house was warm and the dirt floor was clean. When he gets a spot on the floor he just sweeps dirt over it, waters it and pats it down. With all the familiar animal hides tacked over cracks in the north wall I felt welcome to Trapper's house until I glanced at the look on the six dogs' faces, chins on the outside ground, lookin' holes thru me with amber eyes.

His room is kinda messy with so many dogs, sewin' machine, bale of shucks for tamales, trap bait, Model T motor, furs and a radio that has never worked. His long underwear that hangs by the stove look like he's been in a broad jump. He stands his Holiday Inn towel in the corner.

You'd think he hired some little old lady to come in once a week and "dirty up."

We ate supper and Jesus (Hey-soos) reminded me Bonanza was on Mr. Smith's new color T V and we told Trapper good bye for 30 minits or until the bottle was empty.

He waved us good bye, begged us to come back, threw the food we didn't eat to the dogs and they rolled in it.

Peter Cedarstacker
Writer

Remember: Fight Pyracantha