

Crane's Mill

This area was settled by James B. Crain, who opened a post office and was appointed postmaster on October 19, 1857. The Post Office was discontinued in November 1866 (reason unknown), but was re-opened in January 1873 by Rev. August Engel, Sr., who Americanized the spelling to Crane's Mill. He operated the post office within the Engel Store until his son, August Engel, Jr., was appointed postmaster in 1905. The site is now at the bottom of Canyon Lake.

In July 1852, Martin Simon arrived in Texas from Salzburg, Nassau. For six years he and his wife, Katherine, farmed near New Braunfels. On May 23, 1859, Simon acquired 80 acres of land 15 ¼ miles northwest of New Braunfels on the Guadalupe River. By 1883, he had acquired a total of 1,316 acres along Tom Creek and the River. In 1860, Simon built a home for his family, which still stands on what is now Highway 2673 near Crane's Mill Park. Indians roamed the area and the house's peep windows are still there for a lookout. Sleeping quarters were in a loft in the house, and at night the

rope ladder, the only access, was raised to the loft. The original stone structure has been preserved as much as possible.

Also on the grounds, stands the log cabin used by the Simon Family while the "big house" was under construction. The old smoke house where they cured their meat and the root cellar are still present.

Startzville

This area takes its name from the Startz family, who first settled in this area around 1845. During that time there were five or six families living in the community. The mail for this area was delivered by the Crane's Mill Post Office because the Post Office in the Startz Store was not established until after the completion of the dam (the Post Office has since been re-located to Sattler).

The Startz family raised cotton, as did most farmers in the area. In the mid 1880's, the German independent farmers began planting cotton, and by the early 1920's, it was a major crop in Comal County. Among the early gins in the county were Fisher's at Fisher Store; Emil Guenther, Sattler; Frank Guenther,

Hancock; the Oberkampf Gin, later Flugrath's at Crane's Mill.

The Startz Café was opened in 1941 and is still in operation.

Sattler

In 1845, William Martin Sattler and his bride left Germany to settle in Texas. He was not interested in farm land, so he traveled 16 miles north of New Braunfels into the beautiful hills and chose a scenic spot east of the Guadalupe River at the foot of a "mountain." He named this mountain Mt. Lamar after a close friend, Mirabeau Buonaparte Lamar, the second President of Texas. There he built his home near a spring which gave pure cold water for all his family and livestock.

Soon after his arrival, Sattler signed a contract with the government to set up the first Post Office in the area and this building still stands at the family home just off Highway 306. The original house which burned down in 1925 was rebuilt and is now occupied by William Sattler's great-granddaughter.

After Sattler's death in 1880, the Post Office operation was moved to the general store. Adjacent to the general store was a dance hall. People came from miles around to attend the dances held once a month. Across the street were a saloon and a bowling alley. Beer could not be sold in the dance hall, so folks would cross the road to the salon to get refreshments. The Sattler Post office was discontinued in 1950.

School was held in the log cabin home of the teacher who lived on River Road. In 1874 a one-room schoolhouse, Mountain Valley School, was built on land conveyed by John Marschall on the corner of the Guadalupe River and Jacobs Creek. Mountain Valley was the last of the one-room schools in Comal County and was closed in the 1950's. The building was moved around 1962 to its present location in the heart of Sattler. It was purchased in 1965 and renovated for modern day living.

Canyon City

This community sprang up when construction on the dam began in 1958.

Hancock

Theodore Heise was appointed postmaster of the first post office in the Hancock community in 1914. In 1916, the Post Office was relocated into Frank Guenther's store, and he was appointed postmaster (this store is now at the bottom of Canyon Lake).

As in most of the surrounding communities, Hancock had a dance hall. It would seem that dancing was the prime source of entertainment and social gathering for the early settlers of the Canyon Lake area.

The Sorrell Creek School served the area for 67 years and was then combined with the Fischer school.

Fischer

Fischer Store was established in 1853 by Hermann Fischer, Sr. A year later he opened the first general store in

the area. The store was rebuilt in the 1880's and again in 1902. It is believed that the current store was first used as a warehouse.

The Post Office was set up in the store in 1876 with Hermann Fischer, Sr. being appointed Postmaster. The Post Office is still in operation within the Fischer Store and the postmaster is still a Fischer, just as it has been since its inception. On October 1, 1950, the Post Office Department changed the name from Fischer Store to Fischer.

The children of the area originally attended a school located on Cranes Mill Road, a portion of which is still standing and has been incorporated into a private residence. This school was established in the early 1970's. The teacher, Adolph Schlameus, was actually a private tutor and taught in the German language only.

In 1886, Otto Fischer Sr. conveyed 30 acres to the Fischer Store School Community. The school which burned down in 1940 was rebuilt and still stands in Fischer.

It is believed there were no churches built in the Canyon Lake area

until after the construction of the dam. Services were generally held in an open field in Sattler except once a month when the minister of the First Protestant Church in New Braunfels (the oldest church) held services in the first Mountain Valley School.

The modern day telephone arrived in the area about 1946 the same time as electricity. These became very important during the flu epidemic between 1917 and 1918. When the doctor was needed, he was called (toll-free) in New Braunfels. If he was unable to come, he would mail the medicine which took approximately two days to arrive.

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A Brief History Of The Canyon Lake Area



New Braunfels was founded on Good Friday, March 21, 1845 by Prince Carl of Solms, Germany. He brought with him a number of immigrants from his home country. Some families were not satisfied with stopping in New Braunfels, so they continued their travels into the beautiful hill country. They settled in several communities now known as the Canyon Lake area.