

HORSESHOE FALLS RANCH

ABOUT US

Welcome to Horseshoe Falls Ranch. Originally built in the early 1900's, as a state park by the Civilian Conservation Corp. Horseshoe Falls Ranch maintains local rich Texas History. The 378 acre land holds uniquely themed cabins and is covered with beautiful oak trees. The Ranch has many activities such as archery, fishing, hunting or simply a nature walk. Check out the Activities tab.

Horseshoe Falls Legend

Captain J.F. Brannon of the Ninth Infantry returned to Lampasas with 193 men commissioned to build "The Lampasas State Park" on this site on the Sulphur Creek in June of 1933.

The Lampasas Chamber of Commerce raised \$2,500 to buy land and complete the project. The Civilian Conservation Corps. (C.C.C.) under the supervision of R.D. Morgan, set up camp, called Camp Miriam (Ferguson), which cleared brush, built gravel roads, a native stone entrance, a concession house, a low water dam, native stone pic-nic tables, bar-b-que pits, native stone cabins, a baseball field, and a polo field. The Lampasas State Park had an official opening 12-13, 1934. In 1941, during World War II, the State Park was sold to Mrs. Margaret Griffin for a high bid of \$5,000. Leo K. Gunderland bought the land from her the same year. The privately owned park was renamed "Gunderland Park" and later renamed "Horseshoe Falls" due to the shape of "the camp" areas as the Sulphur Creek horseshoes around the camp. Mr. Gunderland drowned in the severe flood in Lampasas of 1957. The park was popular for fishing, Boy & Girl Scout camps, church groups and family outings. It was converted to private exotic game ranch and fishing resort in June 1995.

Story in the Temple Daily Telegram

Temple, Texas, Sunday Morning, September 10, 1933

"Lampasas State Park, Being Built By Tree Army Boys, One of Outstanding Development Projects In This Section" by Walter R. Humphrey



Out two miles east of Lampasas, where winding Sulfur Creek twists into a particularly useful "U" lies one of the most amazing park developments in Texas.

No one who has not been there can possibly have any conception of the work that's being done. Only seeing is knowing and believing. When the New Deal of President Roosevelt began to expand into public works, and particularly into parks, the business men of Lampasas had vision enough to get busy. They raised \$3,000 by public subscription, bought 154 acres of land out east of the city along Santa Fe, and presented the site to the state park of Texas. The result: Lampasas State Park, a veritable forest of tangles scrub oak and cactus, beautiful spot in the raw, perhaps, but hard to recognize such

All that was B.C.C.C. before the Civilian Conservation Corps arrived. The "tree army" (193 strong) arrived in Lampasas June 18. It was assigned to Lampasas State park and there encamped. The camp became know as Camp Miriam, in honor of the governor of the state.

Here's where the story begins:

The man who had inspected the countryside and had selected the site and visioned its possibilities in development was a tall, clean athletic looking West Virginian named Captain J.E. Brannon of the Ninth Infantry, Fort Sam Houston. Captain Brannon is the powerhouse of the park development as the commanding officer of Camp Miriam. He has two likable and personable young officers as aides, John Stricker, Jr., 1st lieutenant, infantry reserve, San Antonio and James P. Newberry, 2nd lieutenant attached to the air corps at Brooks Air Field. Supervision and direction of the park improvement itself is vested in a representative of the national park service, A.S. Adams, who is superintendent in charge.

The park is about a mile North of the Temple highway. Efforts are being put forward by the business men of Lampasas to have Highway No. 53 rerouted into Lampasas so that it will pass the park entrance. The park is interested in this proposal, wants to help put it over. Rerouted, the road would be slightly longer than the present route, but there would be one turn instead of the several dozen curves now on the road from town to the point where the road from camp would meet the present highway.

What about the park? Almost the entire acreage of the park falls within the plot which is bounded on the North, South and East by Sulphur Creek. Creek's normal flow is 7,000,000 gallons a day. The stream has all the required nature beauty has rocky banks, made to order for landscaping. There are good fishing along the course. The park was a tangles mess when Captain Brannon moved in

his boys in June. Today all the scrub oak and tangled wild shrubs have been cleared out. Dozens of truckloads of cactus have been hauled away and burned. Roads and walks have been built, a small underpass at the tracks enlarged to accommodate the park's traffic.

Astonishing progress has been made in beautifying the creek banks. Six hand dug wells have been put down. Three are good water wells to supply the park, with an available flow of 10,000 gallons a day each. One of the others began flowing sulphur water at 115 feet. Its flow is 12,000 gallons a day. That discovery brought joy to the people of Lampasas. Mr. Adams has a windmill on the ground, ready to be erected at the well to utilize its flow.

Natural stone walks and walls are being constructed along the creek. One side is nearly finished. The entire creek on both sides will be landscaped in that fashion before the park is finished. One of the most attractive picnic grounds is in the making. Already a large number of rock benches, made out of flat stone in rustic style, have been built. A picnic or barbecue table of rock has been erected. It will seat 200 people. Permanent benches of rock surround it. There is a stone serving table and another barbecue pit close by. Some of the cactus have been tamed into modern cactus beds, as an entrance way to the picnic grounds. It is set off by four large Texas lone stars, built of stone. Fine trees are going to be replanted to replace the unattractive ones that have been cut down due to the clearing out process. But all that is just the beginning. It will take four or five months to finish the parking work. When the park is finished, there will be 16 rock cottages, an adequate water supply system and a sewer system. It is the plan to build two dams in the creek one on either side of the park. There will be a community center, a polo field, baseball field, bridle paths and a complete road system. Mr. Adams is waiting for the final plans from the state park headquarters before this part of the improvement is launched.

Out of all the parks being built by C.C.C. labor, the Lampasas park is said to be the 2nd most beautiful in the state. When Sulphur Creek has been cleaned out, the dams built and all the contemplated improvements placed on the grounds, Lampasas will have a state park which will be a credit to this section of the state.

Most folks have a misconception of the personnel and the work of the C.C.C. camps. Anyone who visits the camp at Lampasas will have their eyes opened. I sat down for lunch at Captain Brannon's table under the trees just outside his tent. I heard the story of his boys. The captain himself is the kind of a gentleman I couldn't help being forceful and popular leader. His camp was rated 3rd among 34

camps in Texas on Sept. 1st on a basis of health, sanitation, morale, work accomplishment, initiative of commanding officer and a dozen other requirements.

The 183 boys who now remain in the camp are happy. They are fed well. Their time is up at the end of this month, but probably 90% of them will reenlist and stay.

The boys get \$30 a month \$20 of which must be allotted to some dependent. They work 5 days a week for 8 hours each day. The rest of the time they remain conspicuously out of mischief. There hasn't been a man arrested, a case of drunkenness or a fight since the camp moved in. The boys have worked themselves into the life in Lampasas. They are guests in the homes of Lampasas people. They take part on communities activities and church programs. They're not a bunch of bums. In the words of their captain, "They're the finest bunch of men I've ever worked with anywhere". They were from mostly North and South Texas. Captain Brannon had 24 leaders in the corps. Nine leaders get \$45 a month, and 15 assistants receive \$36. Out of his army of boys, the captain is training cooks, clerks, mechanics and blacksmiths.

The camp has a 98 foot mess hall, 28 foot storeroom, a 28 foot kitchen, a 40 foot shower house and 32 tents. There is a recreation which contains a library and radio. An arena to seat 250 has been set up in the park and Wednesday night boxing shows are the camp's popular attractions. Texas Terror from Austin will be on hand to fight Baldy Jackson, one of the camp's best boxers. Kid Colle, a negro boxer from Austin, will mix it up with Sailor Wilson former sparring partner of Jim Godfrey and one of the boys. Nine fighters from the camp at Blanco are coming over to fill out the night's card. Twice a month Lampasas ministers come out to camp and conduct church services.

Captain Brannon is going to entertain his boys with a barbecue Sept. 15th and Sept. 22nd he is putting on a dance for them. Lampasas is proud of its parks and ought to be. The camp spends \$300 a day in wages. A considerable investment will be represented when the park is finished. It will attract visitors from everywhere. But outside all that, the park will have an intrinsic value which can never be measured in money spent or in investment represented. The \$3,000 investment of those Lampasas business men in providing the land to give the state for this park, will be returned many times...not in money but in service and pleasure which will reflect to the lasting credit of Lampasas.



COPYRIGHT © 2021 HORSESHOEFALLS - ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.



POWERED BY GODADDY WEBSITE BUILDER

