

The Bandera PROPHEET

September 1, 2020

Growing Up In Bandera

By Glenn Clark

The Bandera Prophet

There was a time when the river loop area would have been visible here from my favorite front porch location. Back in the day it didn't amount to much more than a big flat area covered with huisache brush crisscrossed with dirt roads containing potholes big enough to swallow a car. Most of the brush has disappeared and houses are popping up in the area now.

As a youngster after a day of swimming at Dripping Springs with my sisters and our friend Margaret Davenport (now Lovelace) we sometimes rode home through that area in the back seat of Nanny Blackwell's car with her grandson Jimmy Davenport behind the wheel. It's a fact that I never in all my years had a desire to ride on a roller coaster but after those rides I think I have a pretty good idea what it would have been like.

Down in that area of the river there are several slabs where houses were located before the big flood of 1978. I remember when Jimmy Foster and his crew lived in one of those houses back when I was in school. Luckily they moved on and were in a dryer place when the flood waters came. The slab in the city park near 9th and Maple Street was where the home of Bud Kalka and his family was located back in the day.

There was a house on First Street where Clay Jones and his wife lived and it was swept away in the '78 flood too. They were at home when the water rose and they managed to get on the roof as it floated down the river and both were later rescued. Unfortunately others living in the area were not as fortunate.

The very birth of our town was connected to the cypress mill on the banks of the river just below what is now the Highway 173 South bridge. The dam to divert water to the millrace for the mill was located about midway on the river bend. Sadly all traces of the dam and millrace were removed in the name of progress.

The rough road that allowed people to drive all the way from the current dam on the river to a location near where the Sonic is now located disappeared as land owners began fencing off their property. It never was a smooth drive and if you were in a car there was a possibility you could lose a muffler. It did provide access to some quiet, isolated parking places for a guy to take his girl for some stargazing.

There isn't one spot along the length of the river surrounding our town that I don't have a memory associated with as I was Growing Up In Bandera. Everyone I grew up with around here knows and feels what the river meant to all of us. I was fortunate to live so close that it was almost a daily experience for me.

#245

2020