

The Bandera PROPHEET

February 27, 2024

Today in Texas History

By Bandera Spirits of Texas
The Bandera Prophet

On this day in 1907, Justina Luckenbach died, four years to the day before the death of her husband Jacob.

Both Luckenbachs were born in Germany and came to Texas in late 1845. In January 1846, they were among the first settlers in Fredericksburg. Jacob Luckenbach was allocated a town lot in the new village and a 10-acre lot southwest of town, where he built the family's first home.

The Luckenbach family became American citizens in 1852, and shortly thereafter sold both Fredericksburg properties and moved 12 miles southeast. When she was appointed postmistress at the site, Sophie Engel named the post office Luckenbach in honor of her fiancé, Jacob and Justina's son Albert. Jacob and Justina Luckenbach raised three boys and nine girls in all.

In 1883, they sold their property in Luckenbach and retired in Boerne, to be near six of their children who lived there. The population of Luckenbach peaked at 492 in 1904, but declined dramatically in the following decades.

John Russell (Hondo) Crouch, from nearby Comfort, bought the "town" in 1971. Styling himself the "mayor" and "Clown Prince of Luckenbach," Crouch declared Luckenbach "a free state...of mind." Popularized in regional culture as the place where "Everybody is Somebody," Luckenbach achieved mythic proportions in 1977, the year after Crouch's death, when the Waylon Jennings song "Luckenbach, Texas (Back to the Basics of Love)" became a national favorite.