



*Barrels of longnecks. Hileman's Hall, circa 1913.*

#### **4 Hileman's Hall**

1913

In rural Texas, dance halls were as important to community life as courthouses and churches. From the beginning, these halls provided necessary recreation vitally important to hard-working farmers and ranchers and their families. In time, they became one of the crucial vehicles for the development of Texas music. Originally built by Wilbert S. "Bert" Hileman (1873-1956) in 1913 as a dance and recreation venue called Hileman's Hall & Scenic Loop Pool Room (now [Serenity Manor](#) Social Events Venue) this spacious building with original hardwood flooring has housed a mercantile, church, restaurant, bar, sports store, and special events venues.

Hileman's Hall was a popular destination for locals and San Antonians from 1913-1916. New owners transformed the dance hall into a mercantile from 1916 until 1919 as can be seen in the iconic 1916 photo of a cattle drive that passed through

downtown Helotes with the backdrop of the Helotes Mercantile Company owned by Emil Gottschalck & Sons.

The building's initial success as a dance hall could not be forgotten and in the early 1930s, new owners opened the Helotes Inn, which operated through the 1960s. Advertisements in San Antonio papers called it the "Famous Old Helotes Inn."

