

Photo by Dade Rayfield

**BANDIT'S BLUFF** with the scenic San Geronimo Creek running at its base is the legendary stronghold of a group of outlaws whose deeds were often so desperate as to affect the course of history. Exactly when the name was first attached to this particular spot is uncertain, but it may well have been about 1842. Certainly a group of bandits did pull a treacherous robbery which had historical consequences, although their names, nationalities, and final punishment can not be easily proved.

## You Can Still Hear Legends Of Where There's Treasure

It was in February—126 years ago—in 1842, Texas was rife with annexation talk. The Republic of Texas since 1836 had had little peace with Mexico. There was uneasy law and order. And the new settlers coming in everyday from the United States were anxious to join the Union.

Some six months earlier, in San Antonio, Captain Jack Hays and others whose names are part of Texas history now, had organized to meet danger head-on. Street battles were a constant threat in San Antonio. The new organization was formed to range out and prevent sudden attacks—especially from Mexico.

Meanwhile, Santa Anna who had been out of power had regained control of Mexico. Now his ambition was to retake San Antonio and all of Texas.

Jack Hays didn't believe in being surprised. Scouts were staked out along the border and all the way to San Antonio. He devised means of getting the word in time.

Scouts who had been sent out West of the city in the first week in March walked into an ambush of Mexican soldiers. A couple escaped to report that a large Mex-

ican Army sent by Santa Anna under command of General Rafael Vasquez was on its way to San Antonio.

Captain—then Major—Hays hastily called for volunteers. The object was to keep the battle out of San Antonio. A group numbering 160 to 200 men headed for the Leon Creek to surprise the invaders. Before the Texans could complete setting up their camp and defenses, the Mexican Army showed up—some reported 1000 soldiers among them—and under a flag of peace demanded Hays' surrender.

Hays—in command—realized that the enemy facing him had arrived by cutting across open country. Hays was a surveyor when he wasn't fighting and he knew every foot of Texas. The Mexican Army had been expected by the usual route which would be by way of Castroville. Hays—Indian fighter—also could see by the firelight of the Mexican encampment that they were not the usual complete fighting machine. Fortunately for the Texans, Hays was looking at less than half of the Mexican force. The others had had their share of adventure in the open country.

Who told the Mexican force how to get across hostile Indian Country in hills often defended by rattlesnakes six feet long? They were carrying pay for the troops and dry provisions, but they had to take game on the way to keep going.

One version has it that the bandits who later waylaid them were the ones who gave the map to them. The route had been difficult but fast, and in the narrow passes the first troops stretched out ahead, anxious to surprise the San Antonio defenders. As is usual, the Mexican paywagon and special orders' groups were located about midway in the force, calculated at about two thousand strong by most historians.

Thus, to get at paydirt, the bandits were forced to cut the odds down to size. This they apparently did by leading the front group to outdistance the others. When they struck, they had trapped the army into a narrow cut where even getting the wagons through was torture. Open country, of course, meant high hills, deep valleys, sudden rucks, and unexpected streams. Brush

(Continued on Page 4)

## Art Group to Bring Taubes to Texas

The Helotes Art Guild will sponsor the Taubes Art Course taught by Federic Taubes, renowned artist-educator-writer with classes to be held at the Sheraton San Antonio Motor Inn. The session begins February 26 and closes March 1. Mr. Taubes will be met by a Red Carpet committee at the International Airport February 24 and will be made an ambassador to HemisFair 68. The Guild's executive board will entertain him at Grey Moss Inn.

On Sunday, Feb. 25, he will be showing his works at the local gallery, according to Paul Kime, president of the Guild.

Literally hundreds accepted the Helotes Art Guild's invitation to their Pre-Christmas Outdoor Art Show Sunday, December 3, which took place on the grounds of the Art Gallery located in the former Hohman Ranch House. The overall quality of the works by the 100 artists was very much above that usually displayed in similar shows.

The Guild members were wearing their new insignia—most of the ladies wearing colorful black-fringed ponchos and black slacks.

One of the features was a bargain-art sale with all items less than ten dollars, supervised by Betty Wilson.

Hostesses were Peggy Wurth and Jody Wright. Refreshments—which included cakes and tamales as well as coffee and soft drinks—were supervised by Joan Grot-hues.

Guild officers also acted as chairmen of the show. These were Paul Kime, president, Jean Gibson, vice president, A. J. Grothues, treasurer; Faye Schnuriger, secretary; and Lillian Hurlbut, parliamentarian.

The Guild is open every day except Monday from 1 until 5 p.m. Jean Gibson is director. "We're pleased to have visitors drop in," she said. The Gallery is located on Bandera Road about a mile east of downtown Helotes going toward the Park Plaza.

## Dogs To Get Shots Jan. 27

A licensed veterinarian will be at the Grey Forest City Hall, located on Scenic Loop Road at Park Drive, to vaccinate dogs and other pets from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday, January 27. He also was there on January 20. Rabies shots will be available at \$2.

A city ordinance makes it mandatory for all Grey Forest residents to have vaccination tags on dogs. The service is open to all in the Helotes area.

Distemper shots may also be obtained.

## Mr. Schuh Wins Grange Award

Walter Schuh, a dairy farmer here for many years who lives on Leslie Road, has been notified that he is entitled to a trip to the National Grange Convention to be held in Syracuse, New York in celebration of the Grange's 100 years of activity.

Schuh received this award in recognition of his work as membership chairman of the Leon Valley Grange 1851, a position which he holds for the second two-year term. He has obtained more than 50 members for the local chapter. He is also assistant steward.

Instead of the trip which entitles him to five cents per mile round-trip expenses, he was offered a choice of a cash award of \$150 and a 25-transistor radio.

Mrs. Dewey Hart is recovering from major surgery and is improving rapidly at the Methodist Hospital, according to latest reports.

## Helotes Hunting Guide Makes News

Hunting season was heralded by TEXAS, the Sunday magazine appearing in the Houston Chronicle and Houston Post, showing a day in the life of a rancher-hunter guide in Helotes. The picture story—which was the lead article—was by local Photographer Dade Rayfield who is also a well-known feature writer.

If you thought you knew the rancher—no doubt you do. He is personable Frank Stone who is well-known at the Gallagher Ranch as well as his own spread—the BARB Y Ranch. The article covers five pages and showed a dozen excellent scenes, and appeared on November 5.

## Hill Country Catches Rains to Help Springs

Rainfall in January started 1968 off with a total of 8.8 inches registered by Weatherman Ross Barham at Scenic Loop near Bandera Road. This included the total of 7.2 inches which in a four-day session sent creeks out of their bounds and should keep them running all Spring.

December, proving rather average, tallied 1.95 inches.

Rain for this area in November averaged 4.1 inches here according to Weather Observer Ross Barham. Although the wells had not been measured this month, he said water now stands at 957 feet above sea level. Water in the wells had risen 35.7 feet from the

low of August.

This may be interpreted, he said, to mean that we had a good average rainfall for November, and that the area is in good shape generally. Water supplies can be expected to continue in excellent supply for several months, as August is usually a low point for the year.

The first December rains came on the morning of December 5. The Bluebonnet crop should be unusually heavy this Spring after a very poor one last year, Mr. Barham noted, as the plants are up well ahead of schedule, like cool weather, and will have sufficient moisture.

# HELOTES ECHO

"Ye shall know the Truth."

January 26, 1968

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## Fritz Braun Dies

Frederick C. (Fritz) Braun, 77, a native of Helotes who lived all his life on Leslie Road died suddenly in a local hospital, on January 12. He was a member of a pioneer family of Helotes and belonged to the Helotes Zion Lutheran Church. He was also a member of Hermann Sons here.

He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Agnes Braun; two sons, Henry and Burton; and a daughter, Mrs. Ernest Kempf—all of Helotes. His grandson Frederick Kempf and great-granddaughter, Shelly K. Kempf, both of Fort Hood, Texas, also survive him. His sister, Mrs. Marie Pilkington, is a resident of Comfort.

Services were held January 15 in Zion Lutheran Church and burial was at the Helotes Lutheran Cemetery.

Active in the community and a lover of the outdoors, he remained able to do his work until the day of his death. Sympathy is extended to his family and friends.

Smith—The boss says that when he was a boy on the farm they had a mule that was just like one of the family.

Jones—Yes, and I know which one.

## Fred Anderson Is 'Mr. Park Estates'

By Charlie Moss

Had it not been for a pinto mare called Sugar, which Fred C. Anderson bought for his daughter several years ago, there possibly would not now be an attractive Helotes Park Estates gracing our area today.

Freshly released from the Air Force, Mr. Anderson was in need of land to pasture the animal. Resourcefully, he conceived the idea of leasing some land and sub-dividing the surplus acreage to pay for the lease. This venture was so profitable that he has devoted his life developing land, adding beauty and progress to communities.

The son of the late Sam Anderson, former Bexar County Commissioner, Fred spent his early life working in the fields of his father's asparagus farm. It was when he attended Jefferson High School that he spent week-ends in Helotes.

"I fell in love with this coun-

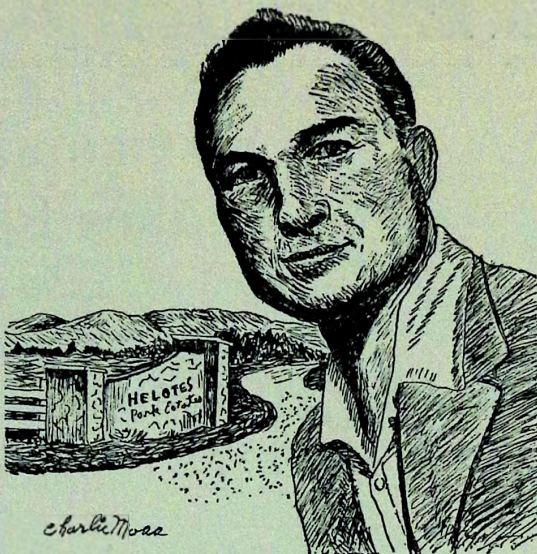
try," he fondly recalls. "I told myself that some day I'd live here."

In 1962, in collaboration with Gilbert E. Kinder, he not only fulfilled his dream of living in Helotes, but opened opportunities for others to enjoy comfortable living in spacious surroundings with modern conveniences. On a former livestock ranch, they built paved streets and named them for historic cattle brands. Modern homes were erected on picturesque lots. A water district was formed. Two churches chose the Estates for their permanent location.

Then came the Helotes Park Plaza with its shopping center providing stores and growing businesses. Now under construction, a new annex will offer even more conveniences. Fred Anderson has joined the ranks of Alex Parrigin, Dewey Hart, John T. Floore and those others who strive for the growth of Helotes.

Even with his success, Fred is still a farm boy at heart. He prefers to be called by his first name and dreads having to wear a business suit or necktie. He enjoys informal, friendly mingling with folks and feels equally at home with a cowboy as with a tycoon. An ardent sportsman, he has bagged many dear trophies in Colorado and other areas where he has hunted.

In 1940, he married Daisy Caldwell. Their daughter, Bonnie Sue, is studying in Aix-en-Provence, France. The Andersons plan to visit her during Spring of this year.



Charlie Moss

The Anderson family are ardent horse lovers. All of them ride well. Bonnie rode her palomino stallion, Golden Prince Charming, with Jack Sellers' Palomino Patrol during several stock show rodeo seasons. Her silver-mounted saddle is her most prized possession.

While Fred has bought, sold, and traded many horses, he still has and hopes always to keep some of the original livestock that started him on his way to success.

### Bill Temple Passes

William (Bill) Temple, 61, died at his home at Lakehills on November 23. Sympathy is extended to his widow, Mrs. Helen Temple. He is also missed by a large circle of friends.

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## Country &amp; Western Roundup

# Show From Here To Hit Big Time

By JOHN T. FLOORE

Upon this writer's visit to New York, I was astounded to learn of the tremendous interest in Country and Western music in the Big City. I had the pleasure of being with Willie Nelson and his agent "Crash" Stewart Nelson was appearing in the Louisville Room at the Taft Hotel which was overflowing every night. This spot plays nothing but

Country and Western music and I understand they pack 'em in every night.

This gave me further encouragement for my project I have been working on for some time, taking a big Country and Western show to New York. Confered with Carnegie Hall but find that is too small. Capacity 200. So I contacted Madison Square. Now under construction for a date. Hope to line up four or five top artists for a show in early Spring.

Bill Hall's "Golden Stallion," the huge dance hall and Country & Western club on Ackerman road opened with Willie Nelson on December 9. This is really a big beautiful spot and we hope every success in the world for our very good friend Bill Hall

and his Golden Stallion. Welcome to the Club, Bill.

The HemisFair received millions of dollars worth of publicity in Macy's Thanksgiving Parade with Cowboy and Western Star Ed Ames on the HemisFair '68 Float along with the famous Jazz Band, Chordsmen. With Rosita and her lovely daughter, too, it was one of the most impressive floats in the parade. Another indication of the popularity of Country and Western Music was the invited appearance of that very popular rising star in Macy's Thanksgiving parade of Jack Greene.

Greene did his new hit, "There

Goes My Everything," atop a large specially built float. Jack Greene has won so many trophies that in order to photograph them, they had to take them outside the house to get them in the pictures. Officers of the First American National Bank of Nashville held a luncheon in honor of Jack Greene. Many notables from every branch of the industry were present and high in their praise for this promising young star.

Willie Nelson, under the able management of Crash Stewart is breaking all records in South Texas recently.

We at the Country Store are very proud of our band—led by Smilin' Bob Algueseva, a local boy. He is one of the most sincere, and more dedicated to his music and band than any boy I ever saw. He will succeed in a large way if he keeps entertaining the people as he does now.

Some people who are dying to attract attention don't until they do.

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HELOTES

## Club To Hold Fun Auction

The Women's Club Invites Guests to Fun Auction with Mrs. Nell Ochs, auctioneer. Meeting to be Tuesday, February 6, at home of Mrs. Walter Johnson, Scenic Loop Road.

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Trench is being dug for the gas lines to allow the City of Grey Forest to provide natural gas for residents of this area. Sub-surface of Fort Worth reports progress averaging a mile a day.

## Gas Lines on Way—Water Next

Progress has been made in the laying of gas lines, the City of Grey Forest was told at a regular Council meeting, and plans are now underway to offer residents of the City and of Ranch Acres a central water system, according to Major Jack Nottingham.

The wells will be placed East of Helotes allowing the water to be drawn from the Edwards lime-

stone rather than the Glen Rose upon which most of the local wells depend.

Reports were read showing that the cost of customers would average about \$6 a month and would not require any taxation. The customers needed include a minimum of 250 families. It was suggested that a \$25 deposit be required—to be made in installments if that is convenient. Word will go out soon to interested residents. The plan suggested would not take ad-

vantage of the pipe line trenches being laid for the gas.

Gas lines will be hooked up upon completion of units, as rapidly as possible. At present, contractors able to put in lines on the private property of individual owners are making bids. Gas lines will be furnished by the City to within five feet of the property line, but each customer must make arrangements for his own work unless a subdivider has agreed to handle it for him.

(Continued from Page 1)

## Treasure . . .

had been avoided, but not entirely. To leave the route mapped out was to get hopelessly lost.

Details get hazy here. The last half of the Mexican Army—not knowing who had attacked their central flank—or if the first part was safe, turned back and took the longer more familiar route to San Antonio—sending word back to Mexico for reinforcements.

The first part of the Army under Vasquez arrived safely in the valley of Leon Creek to face Hays' men. Their reluctance to fight on the spot—although they outnumbered the Texans—may have stemmed from the fear that some sort of battle was being fought by their rearguard.

To this day, therefore, historians argue whether at any time Hays' volunteers faced one, or two thousands at a time on the Leon Creek.

Probably the bandits were few in number—from seven to 20 outlaws often banded together and harassed travellers. It is said that they struck just after night-fall, took what they came for, and that they overturned two wagons to block passage. They headed for their bluff—no doubt to a cave. Legend has it that one of the bandits was seen to ride his tall-legged horse literally in to the side of the mountain. Other horses were caught, but the soldiers dared not delay to find the men.

Hays—realizing that 160 Texans would have the kind of battle on their hands to put them in mind of the Alamo six years earlier—nevertheless held a Council of War. He then announced that his men had refused to surrender and intended

to fight. Indian style he began moving his men toward the Northeast. The Mexicans had help on the way—General Adrian Woll—but Vasquez stayed only two days. The battle that ensued was fought on the Salado on another day.

But in the Hill Country, men are still trying to locate the Hideout—a cave said to be located in Bandit's Bluff—perhaps on the San Geronimo Creek.

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## Women Voters Hear Purpose of SABCORP

The John Marshall unit of the League of Women Voters met Dec. 4, at the home of Mrs. Paul McGuff. Members and their guests discussed what SABCORP can mean to residents of Bexar County.

"San Antonio-Bexar County Organization for Regional Planning is a positive step which we are taking locally to end duplication and fragmentation of services," said Mrs. Mario Barrera. "The initiation of program after program to meet problems of population, unemployment, crime, water supply, pollution, education and recreation has resulted in log jams at different levels of government. The aim of SABCORP is the solution of area-wide problems through joint action by community leaders."

The Northside School District, San Antonio, Grey Forest, Leon Valley, Bexar County, and Edwards Underground Water District are among the 31 members of this voluntary organization.

"Citizens should have an important voice in selecting the pattern of regional development. We should all be able to respond intelligently to plans prepared for our consideration by following

the progress of SABCORP," Mrs. Barrera said.

Any woman citizen over 21 years of age is eligible to join the League of Women Voters which educates its members and the public on important issues and trends. The next unit meeting in this area will be in Feb. For information telephone Mrs. Barrera at MY 5-8036.

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