

State of Texas *
*
County of Comal *

Proclamation

Recognizing New Braunfels Woolen Mill-Comal Steam Laundry Texas Historical Commission Marker and Dedication

WHEREAS, the New Braunfels Woolen Mill-Comal Steam Laundry located at 439 Comal Ave., New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas, has been awarded a Texas Historical Commission subject marker designating the site to be a significant part of Texas history; and

WHEREAS, German immigrants August Tolle and Dr. Theodor Koester purchased lots 271 and 272 in 1864 and built a large two-story building 100 feet long and 60 feet wide using hewn trunks of cedar. The building was built as a brandy distillery and to manufacture medicinals. In 1868, the building was sold to the New Braunfels Woolen Mill Manufacturing Company. The factory utilized Comal River water for steam power installing a boiler, chimney and warning bell. The company was successful but, lacking a trademark, closed because other manufacturers used the name and produced inferior products; and

WHEREAS, In 1901, German immigrants Franz and Anna (Mielke) Popp bought the property and converted the building to the Comal Steam Laundry. It was the first laundry in New Braunfels and capitalized on the turn of the century desire for cleanliness and reducing the laborious task for citizens to wash their clothes. After Franz retired in 1914, the laundry was run by Anna and her children, Emma, Martha, Rosa and Bruno. During the Great Depression, Emma operated the laundry and also worked as a cook at the Phoenix Café to support her children. In 1934, the laundry closed because of a kerosene stove fire that resulted in Anna's death. The building that had been a New Braunfels landmark for so many years was razed in 1954. The Popp family still owned the property in the early 21st century. Although all that remains of the building is the old bell, the rock foundation and part of the chimney, it serves as a reminder of business ingenuity utilizing the Comal River; and

WHEREAS, a marker dedication will be held on Saturday, January 30, 2016 at 11am, 439 Comal Ave., New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas. Sponsors of the marker are Lynn Ethridge Norvell and Debbie Ethridge Elliott and their families to honor their grandparents and great-grandparents.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Comal County Commissioners Court duly, convened and acting in its capacity as the governing body of Comal County, and the Comal County Historical Commission wish to commend you on your work towards receiving this marker and your dedication to historical preservation and recording the history of Comal County.

PASSED AND APPROVED on this 28th day of January, 2016.

Sherman Krause, County Judge

Donna Eccleston, Commissioner Pct. 1

Scott Haag, Commissioner Pct. 2

Kevin Webb, Commissioner Pct. 3

Jen Crownover, Commissioner Pct. 4

Attest: _____
Bobbie Koepp, County Clerk













