

Our History & Heritage

The first settlers of northern McLennan County arrived in the 1840's. They were farm and ranch families drawn from the east by the rich lands made available by the government sale of land to build schools in Texas. The area farmers cultivated the land growing cotton, wheat and maize and raising cattle. The farming community centered around a fresh water spring that became known as Bold Springs. In 1860 Bold Springs had a population of about 300 and provided services such as a blacksmith, churches, and a post office.

The Katy Railroad was laid between Hillsboro and Waco in the fall of 1881. The path of the railroad cut through land owned by Thomas West. Mr. West moved to the area in 1859. He farmed land that he had purchased and served as postmaster of Bold Springs. A train depot was built on the land he sold to the railroad company and the land run



ning beside the tracks was divided into small sections and sold to people wanting to start businesses. The new depot included a post office and from that time forward it was known as the West Post Office. Mr. West served as postmaster while opening the first general store. He became a successful businessman later owning a hotel, a furniture store and a bank.

The railroad brought prosperity to the area during the 1880's. More businesses were opened and more surrounding land was purchased. Czech immigrants came to the area purchasing the rich lands to farm and start a fresh life in the new world. They also opened businesses sharing their European culture. By the 1890's the Czech businesses flourished in West.



On June 11, 1892 West was officially organized into a town. It had become the center of commerce for the area. There were cotton gins, grocery stores, churches, schools, doctor's offices. Many of the farmers and business men of West

contributed to the success of West as a great little farming community.

The turn of the century brought electricity, running water, and natural gas. The population of West and surrounding area grew. The Czech's brought with them the custom of having very large families and by the 1920's they became the dominate culture in West.

Many of the descendants of the original settlers continue to farm the lands and run the businesses still today. You can still hear Czech spoken by some of the older folks around town.

The West Depot is now home for a railroad museum and Information Center for West. In it you will find information and old photographs of the railroad and it's relation to the West community.