

Lark



August Wendorf

The Lark Settlement began in 1884 when August Wendorf built a shoe repair shop in connection with his home which was located on the southwest corner of the main crossroads - what is today Hwys G & 96.

The nature of original businesses in Lark were much like the other hamlets, serving its immediate customers with a general store, shoe repair shop and a cheese factory.

LARK CHEESE FACTORY & GENERAL STORE

The first large business place to be erected was a cheese factory owned and operated by F.C. Saenger. It was built on the northeast corner of the crossroads. Several years later Saenger purchased the Wendorf property and, by building an addition to the house, he opened a general store featuring groceries, hardware and dry goods.

On January 7, 1893, a post office was established in the Saenger store for which a name was to be selected. Naturally it was presumed the name would be Saenger's. However, the officials determined it was unlawful at the time to have a business name with more than one syllable. Thus, to describe the Saenger name it was called "Lark", a singing bird. (For more information on the post office, see the postal section, page 10.)

In the 1930's the Saenger Co. sold the old cheese factory to A.F. Otto, who started a garage to repair automobiles. He formed a partnership with Mr. & Mrs. Ferdinand Maertz to run the garage. The business the Maertz's were in was old iron and junk which they stored at the Ben Hohn farm. The Maertz's were no longer connected with the garage business in 1980 (or before) and A.F. Otto (Tony) is retired.

The Saenger Company built a new cheese factory next to and in addition to the general store. Shortly after the addition, the store, residence and cheese factory were purchased by H.J. Wagner. A cold stor-

age building with locker boxes was installed in the west end of the store in 1945. Mr. Wagner ran the business until 1965 when his son and daughter-in-law, Franklin and Ruby, took over. The cheese factory was no longer in operation.

Ruby, Franklin and their sons Noel and Leon ran this thriving grocery business for many years. Even after Franklin's death in Dec. 1996, Ruby continued to run the store until her health would not allow her to continue and she passed away in Oct. 1997. Stacy Burt ran the store for the Wagner sons until Pat McGuire purchased the building and business in August of 2000. Pat closed the store in July 2003. Plans are now to turn the space into apartments.



Lark Cheese Factory