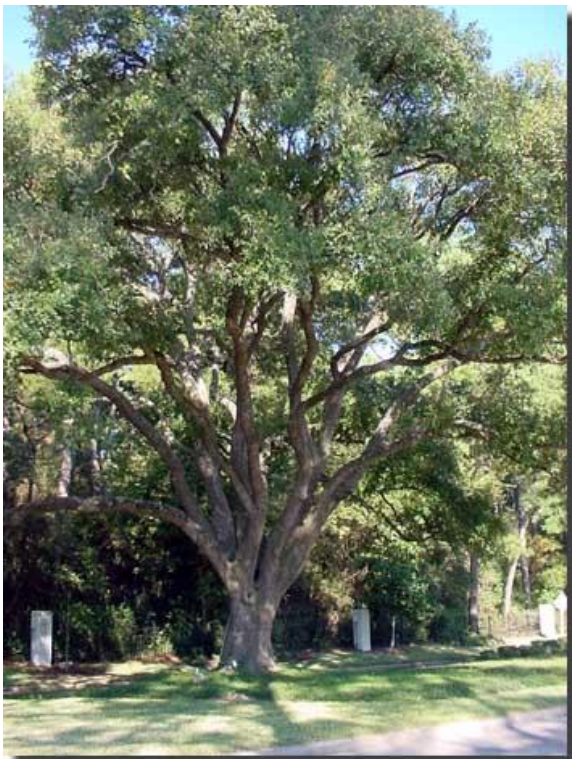




by Jack Hickey

The Northampton MUD is proud to present to the residents of Northampton a factual and pictorial history of our neighborhood. Mr. Jack Hickey has conducted extensive research and interviews with many people provide the basis for this account, which starts before the "beginning", with the original Spaniards looking for an elusive "water route to the Orient" and continues through the present. Photographs and graphics for the story were compiled by author Jack Hickey, and contributing editor, Lisa Moore. Website preparation by Lisa Moore. We hope you enjoy it.

Chapter I - Before the Beginning



Nestled deep in the lush forests of North Harris County lies a subdivision described by many as 'one of the best kept secrets' in southeast Texas. This is beautiful Northampton. It is serenely hidden from the bustle of nearby roads and highways by towering pine and oak trees mixed with sweet gum and Chinese tallow trees which add New England-type colors in the fall.

The Live Oak Tree in the esplanade at the front of the subdivision is estimated to be nearly 100 years old.

Today Northampton is home for approximately 5,000 residents: men, women and children from all walks of life. There are executives, doctors, teachers and students, business owners, tradesmen, pilots and others. It is a low-cost haven for many retired couples on fixed incomes as well as young couples with school age youngsters or those just beginning a family.

Since the 1960s, Northampton has occupied an area far removed from the frantic pace of metropolitan Houston, although its location for centuries before was the home for various early-day inhabitants. As long ago as the 1750s the Spanish governor of 'The Province of Texas', San Jacinto De Barrios, for whom the San Jacinto river is thought be named, sought to establish a mission here on Willow Creek near its junction with Spring Creek. His plan moved several thousand Indians of the Orcoquisac* Tribe from the swampy mosquito-infested Anahuac area east of Houston to a creek site near Northampton, west of Gosling Road and south of the Montgomery/Harris County border.

The confluence of Willow and Spring creek, near which a Spanish mission was built over 200 years ago.



Although the mission soon failed, the Indian village survived for years and furnished many nineteenth century youths with an exciting area in which to search for arrowheads and other bits of Native American artifacts. Across Spring Creek on the Montgomery County side, another village populated by the Bidais Indians flourished. Spring Creek provided a natural barrier separating the peaceful Bidais from the often hostile Orcoquisacs.

Possibly the backyard barbecue ritual so popular in modern society and practiced every weekend by many Northampton working 'warriors' had its beginning with two of the Indian tribes of the area. With most of the Texas Gulf Coast considered their domain by the hostile Karankawa Indians, the forced invasion by the Spanish governor of the Orcoquisacs set off occasional fierce turf skirmishes between the two tribes who were recorded in history as being cannibalistic in their dietary habits. Early day Frenchmen exploring this area claimed the winners of these Indian battles added the captured losers to the menu in a frenzied victory celebration.

*Alternate spellings for the Orcoquisac tribe include Arcokisa and Akokisa.



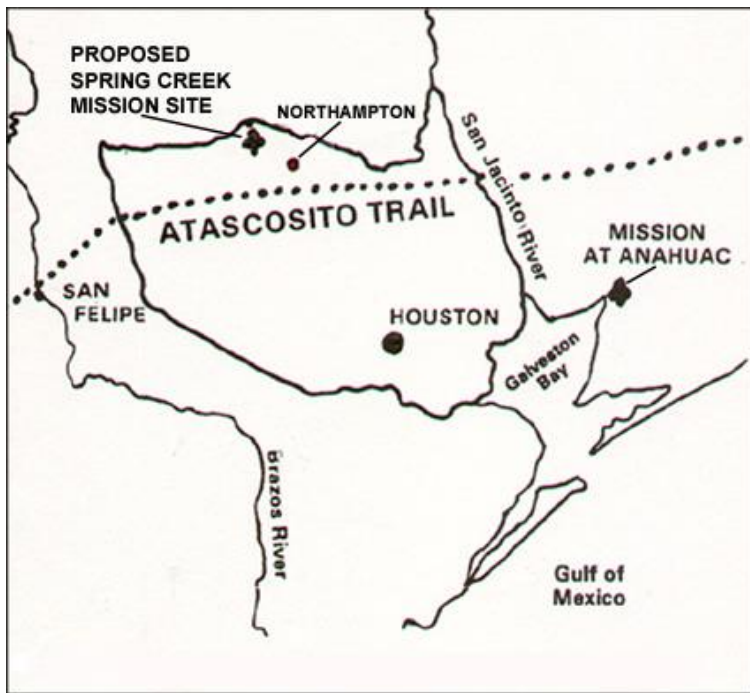
The Atascosito Trail, one of the most important early Texas routes.

Depiction of nomadic Karankawa Indians and a lean-to constructed of sticks and hides or woven cloth.



A more recent Indian incident occurred shortly after the Civil War. A youthful warrior hiding in the Willow Creek underbrush charged a Gosling Road farmer. One shot was fired, killing the young Indian brave. He was buried on the spot and the incident was concluded without further notice. For years however, some local residents claimed they heard the ghost of the youth roaming the banks of Willow Creek when the moon was full.

Even these historic events and legends did not mark the earliest record of the area where Northampton lies today. The first known explorer trekked through our pine forests only 27 years after Columbus discovered the new world. It was in 1519 that a Spanish captain led his company through the North Harris County forests searching for an elusive 'water route to the Orient'. His adventure strengthened Spain's claim to Louisiana and all of Texas, a claim that lasted for three centuries.



The Atascosito Trail, one of the most important early Texas routes.

But Spain's claim was not without challenge. The French explorer LaSalle led a party through this area in the 1680s, crossing Spring and Willow Creeks before setting up a camp a few miles west of the town of Tomball. LaSalle's expedition gave weight to France's disputed claim of all the territory in Texas as far as the Rio Grande River. The Spanish however continued their presence and by the 1750s had established a trade route extending from South Texas to Louisiana. Known as the Atascosito

Trail, it crossed northern Harris County near the entrance to Northampton. Used by both Spanish and French military units, traders and later by Anglo-American colonists, the Atascosito Trail played a major role in early-day commercial development.

An important business of this early-day commerce saw lumber from our plentiful forests railroaded to barren West Texas for use in building frontier forts, homes, churches and schools. A major logging and sawmill operation across Spring Creek in South Montgomery County laid a narrow gauge tram track. It connected to a link of the International & Great Northern Railroad that ran through Westfield, Spring and branched off to Hufsmith, just south of Tomball. These early tracks still are in use today near Northampton. The narrow gauge operation, known as the 'Dinky Tram', is part of the past, but old timers remembered it rumbling across a rickety bridge over Spring Creek with a load of wood headed for West Texas.



First established in 1838 as a trading post on Spring Creek, in the 1840's Spring became a farming community producing cotton and sugar cane. In the 1870's Jay Gould brought the International and Great Northern Railroad through town and Spring began to grow. This picture shows the Spring Train Depot. †

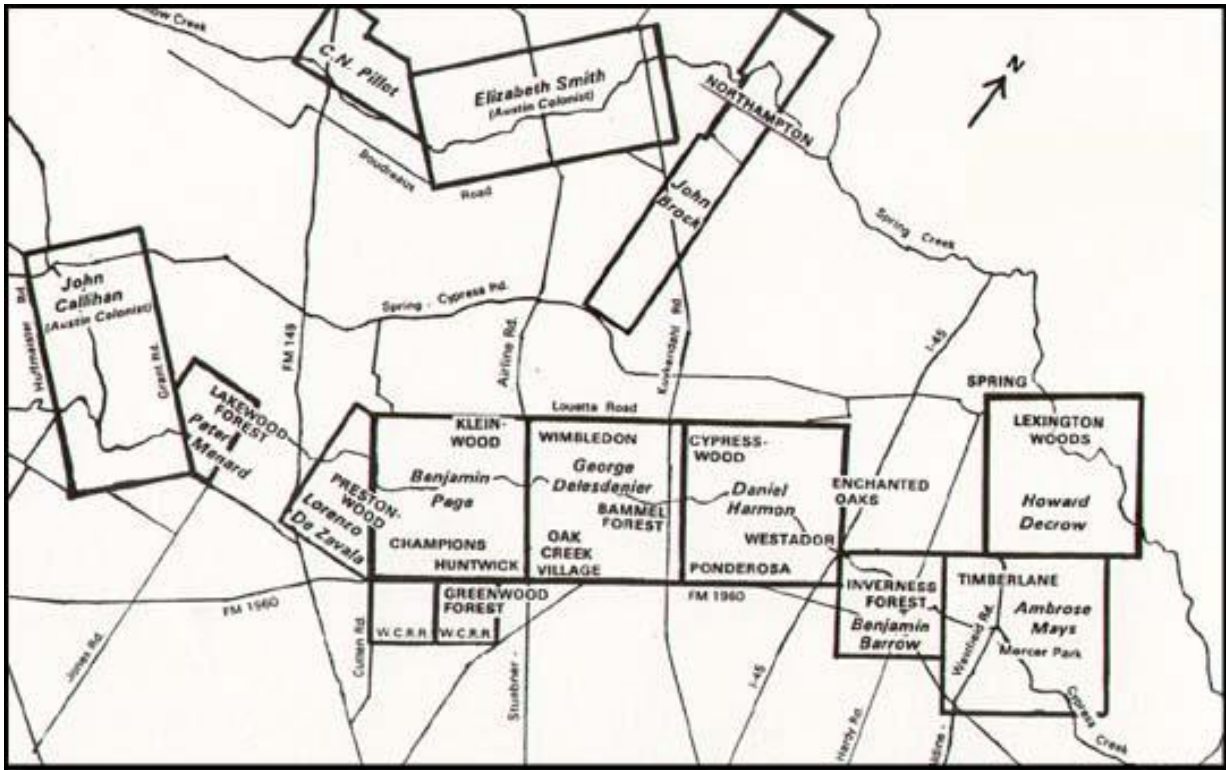
At the beginning of the 1800s all of Texas was part of Mexico. The Texas war for independence ended in 1836 and set up the legal machinery which influenced the selection of Northampton's present site.

When independence was declared after Sam Houston's army defeated Santa Ana at San Jacinto, framers of the new Texas constitution granted free land rights to all settlers with the exception of 'Africans and Indians'. One of those land grants, which included up to 4,600 acres for the head of a family, was presented Texas pioneer John Brock. His claim extended northward from Spring Cypress Road across Willow Creek almost to Spring Creek. The original Northampton tract was carved out of the northern end of John Brock's grant. Later development in Northampton included part of the survey of another pioneer, Levi Goslin.††

Although modern day Northampton is a city in itself with approximately 1,400 homes, it is by no means the first community to follow the earlier Indian villages. One of the land grants following the 1836 war went to Frenchman Claude Nicholas Pillott. He established a community on the banks of Willow Creek. It was called Willow.

†Photo and information provided by the Klein, Texas Historical Foundation.

††The spellings of many family names have changed over the years. Many local streets and small towns are spelled differently than the original family name.



Some of the area's most populous subdivisions are carved out of headright lands granted by the Republic of Texas.

Although the village of Willow has disappeared, as late as the 1920s a one-room schoolhouse, Willow School, served youngsters from the surrounding area. One local resident remembers walking five miles to school as a youngster. "The poor kids walked," he recalled, "And the rich kids rode their ponies." He didn't claim, as some old timers do, that it was uphill in both directions and the trail through the woods was covered with six inches of snow both summer and winter.



Willow School, located 1/4 mile north of Willow Creek. This 2-story building was the second school built there. The first was made of logs. In 1910 the school was praised for its up to date equipment of maps and globes.†

The Frenchman Pillott's role in establishing Willow was one of the few foreign influences not German in nature. The influx of immigrants from Germany beginning in the middle 1800s still is reflected in Northampton's vicinity by street and road names and the Germanic names of nearby schools. Although Willow School has long disappeared, site of the educational facility known originally as 'Rural High School' still exists and is now the Klein Independent School District tax office on Spring Cypress Road. Rural High School was the forerunner of Klein High School and later Klein Forest and Klein Oak.

Just outside the entrances to Northampton today, three modern schools put education from the first grade through high school within walking distance of subdivision youngsters. Now that motorized vehicles have replaced ponies, ample parking space is a necessity rather than hitching posts, although bicycle racks still are important for the younger set as they count the days, months and years until they reach their magic 16th car-driving birthday.

The development of the elementary, middle and high schools within a few hundred yards of the entrances to Northampton has had a major influence bringing families to our beautiful subdivision. It is interesting that as Northampton youngsters grow up, graduate and leave their parent's home, many of them return and purchase homes here when they marry and begin their own families.

The Northampton lifestyle is unique in that it offers a variety of facilities to meet whatever type of lifestyle is desired. It appeals to people of all age groups and interests.

†Photo and information provided by the Klein, Texas Historical Foundation.



Chapter II - The German Influence

Venture out any Northampton exit in any direction - north, south, east or west - soon you will discover traces of the rich German heritage of Northwest Harris County.

German names adorn signs on the streets, roads and highways, schools built on land often donated and formerly owned by descendants of German settlers, modern stores and other businesses still serving our community. Rural mail boxes front homes which are still occupied by family members of these early settlers.



By 1902, Spring had 5 saloons, 5 hotels, a gambling hall, and an opera house. †

Farms overflowing with bountiful vegetables of many types dot the sandy countryside around Northampton. The Strack farms and Hasslers along with others turn crop after crop from the rich soil. Their produce often winds up in local food markets. In nearby Tomball the Klein family continues to serve our community with a modern supermarket featuring local products and old-fashion courtesy. A funeral home and memorial park also are part of the family business. Tomball's Klein Bank advertises 'deeps roots and strong branches'.

†Photo and information provided by the Klein, Texas Historical Foundation.

Forerunners of today's businesses tracing their colorful past to early German settlers include Juergen's General Store, once a landmark in Cypress. At one time Rosehill, just down FM 2920 from Tomball, boasted of its seven cotton gins owned by settlers Hirsch, Hoffman, Bauer, Kleb, Scherer, Mueschke and Krug. Like all gins in this part of Texas, they have long ago disappeared.

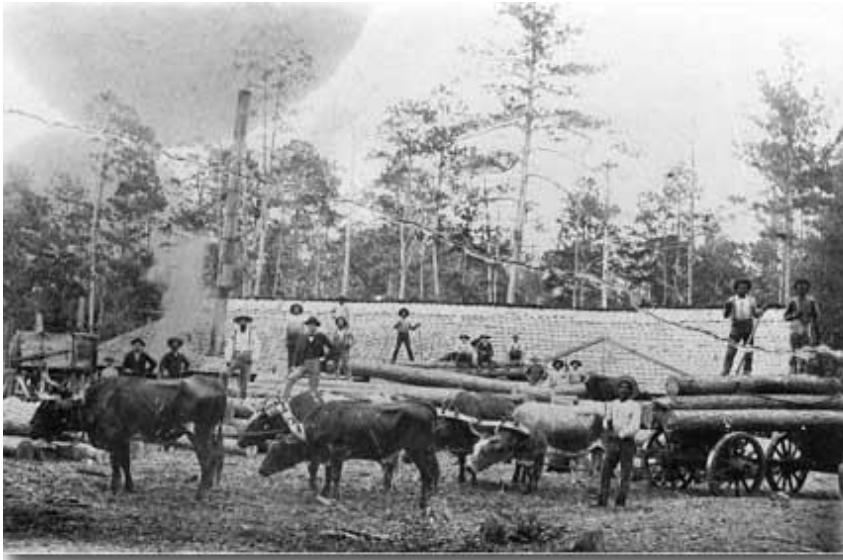
One of the oldest stores, which has recently disappeared, was Froehlich Hardware in Rosehill. Two other old-time businesses, now gone, were Brautigam's Grocery and Hoffman's General Store in Tomball.

Still operating today and a favorite watering hole for locals and tourist alike is Wunsche's Café and Saloon near the tracks in Old Town Spring. Just down the I-45 freeway toward downtown Houston and across from Spring High School lies the Wunsche Family Cemetery. It is nestled beneath a stand of trees between the freeway and frontage road.



Brothers Charles and Dell Wunsche behind the bar of the landmark Wunsche Brothers Saloon. †

†Photo and information provided by the Klein, Texas Historical Foundation.



Kriegel Sawmill, one of the first in the community, operated from the 1850's to the 1870's. It was located near the present Mittelstadt Elementary School. †

Other family businesses that have disappeared through the years include Holderrieth General Store in Hufsmith, Stuebner's Store between Willow and Spring Creeks, and Hildebrandt's Sawmill adjacent to Northampton. In the early days this and other nearby sawmills transformed the towering pine trees in the area into lumber which helped build homes and businesses in Harris County as well as being railroaded north and west to barren parts of Texas.

It was in the middle 1830s that German immigrants started arriving in Southeast Texas. Almost all came through the thriving port of Indianola or the smaller port of Galveston. After two major hurricanes wiped out the town of Indianola a few years after immigration began, Galveston then became the major Texas port for ships bringing these newcomers to Texas. Many were fleeing the chaos of a fractured Germany, often following the footsteps of earlier family members already here. They came from Hesse in west Germany, Hamburg in northeast Germany, Prussia, Liechtenstein, Saxony, Waldeck, Westphalia, Wurttemberg, Pomerania and other areas and cities of central Europe.

Prince Carl Sohm-Braunfels, dispatched from the Rhineland in 1844, paved the way for others who were to follow. His destination was the area that today bears his name, New Braunfels. His failure to be able to negotiate with the Comanche Indians who dominated much of Texas' frontier, especially the area he sought to colonize, resulted in his downfall. A new leader, Baron Ottfried Hans von Meusebach, decided to bypass the area selected by the prince and moved farther west to the present city of Fredericksburg.



Prince Carl Sohm-Braunfels, for whom New Braunfels is named.

†Photo and information provided by the Klein, Texas Historical Foundation.

Many early settlers in this area chose not to follow the dangerous route carved out by the prince and later the baron. Instead they joined others who decided to settle in the area that now extends from Westfield to Cypress to Rosehill to Tomball and on to Spring. This is where you will find many family names that link Northwest Harris County to the thousands who fled Germany to establish a new life in Texas.



*J.W. Blackmon
Blacksmith in Spring.†*

Although they spoke a variety of Teutonic dialects representing the different regions of their motherland, the close-knit group kept their heritage bonds as they faced new challenges in Texas. The various families intermarried through the years, and even today many of their descendants maintain close ties when marriage vows are exchanged.

The ways of their motherland continued to influence their lives even as they found new freedom. For example, the two major religions in Germany were protestant Lutherans and the Catholic Church. Intermarriages between the two faiths frequently brought disfavor to the newlyweds from both sides of the family.

In one incident, a German immigrant who came through this area and then ventured farther north changed his name. Even with a thick German accent, he chose to hide his origin by dropping an 'n' from his name, Litzmann. Once he became Louis Litzman, he had to prove he was a Lutheran and not Jewish before the family of Josephine Maas gave their blessing. His bride entered the U.S. through Galveston as a five-year-old in 1873.

†Photo and information provided by the Klein, Texas Historical Foundation.



*Brautigan's I.G.A. store on
Tomball's Main Street. †*

Although nearby Tomball today is the largest town remaining of the original communities near Northampton, others still reflected on area maps include Rosehill, Klein, Cypress, Spring, Hufsmith, Stuebner, Willow, Kohrville and Louetta. Many original family names can be found in the listings of these communities. Some spellings of proper names changed through the years, but many descendants still reside in the vicinity of Northampton. This is indicated by the following schools in the school district that derived its name from the Klein family.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS: Ehrhardt Elementary, Hassler Elementary, Haude Elementary, Klenk Elementary, Krahn Elementary, Kuehne Elementary, Lemm Elementary, Mittelstadt Elementary, Nitsch Elementary, Roth Elementary, Schultz Elementary and Theiss Elementary.



*Hildebrandt School - 1926 1st
Grade Class with teacher Miss
Emma Froehlich. †*

†Photo and information provided by the Klein, Texas Historical Foundation.

INTERMEDIATE SCHOOLS: Hildebrandt Intermediate, Kleb Intermediate, Strack Intermediate and Wunderlich Intermediate.

HIGH SCHOOLS: Klein High, Klein Oak High and Klein Forest High, and Klein Collins, named after Northampton resident Don Collins for his contribution to our community through his long and dedicated service as superintendant of Klein ISD.

Old records, documents and census data from 1850 through the remainder of the century and into the 1900s reveal the following names of families who have been and many still are residents of Northwest Harris County. It is certain you will recognize some as current friends and neighbors. No doubt there are others who are unintentionally missing from the list.



*Fishing on Willow
Creek.†*

The families: Bahr, Froehlich, Hillegeist, Ehrardt, Lemm, Wunsche, Wunderlich, Theiss, Brill, Strack, Klein, Klenk, Zahn, Schneider, Kaiser, Krimmel, Benfers, Bernhausen, Mittelstadt, Haudes, Litzmann, Holzworth, Hirsch, Hoffman, Maas, Bauer, Kleb, Krug, Scherer, Mueschke, Metzler, Brautigam, Roth, Hildebrandt, Rudel, Seidel, Roesel, Kohrman, Stecil.

Also: Tautenhahns, Bammel, Kuehnle, Ehrhardt, Meyers, Schultze, Richey, Boettcher, Eppes, Duer, Frelek, Kruger, Mettler, Oeft, Raths, Schmidt, Struck, Beckendorf, Thaisz, Wincher, Winkler, Quades, Krahn, Fenskes, Matzkes, Holderrieth, Bernhausen. There are others.

†Photo and information provided by the Klein, Texas Historical Foundation.



Chapter III - Develop It and They Will Come

"We never could ride our horses through that danged thicket. So, we'd just tie them up and flush those stubborn critters out of the brush on foot." That's how a former ranch boss described trying to round up cattle once they infiltrated the brambles that were to become prestigious Northampton.

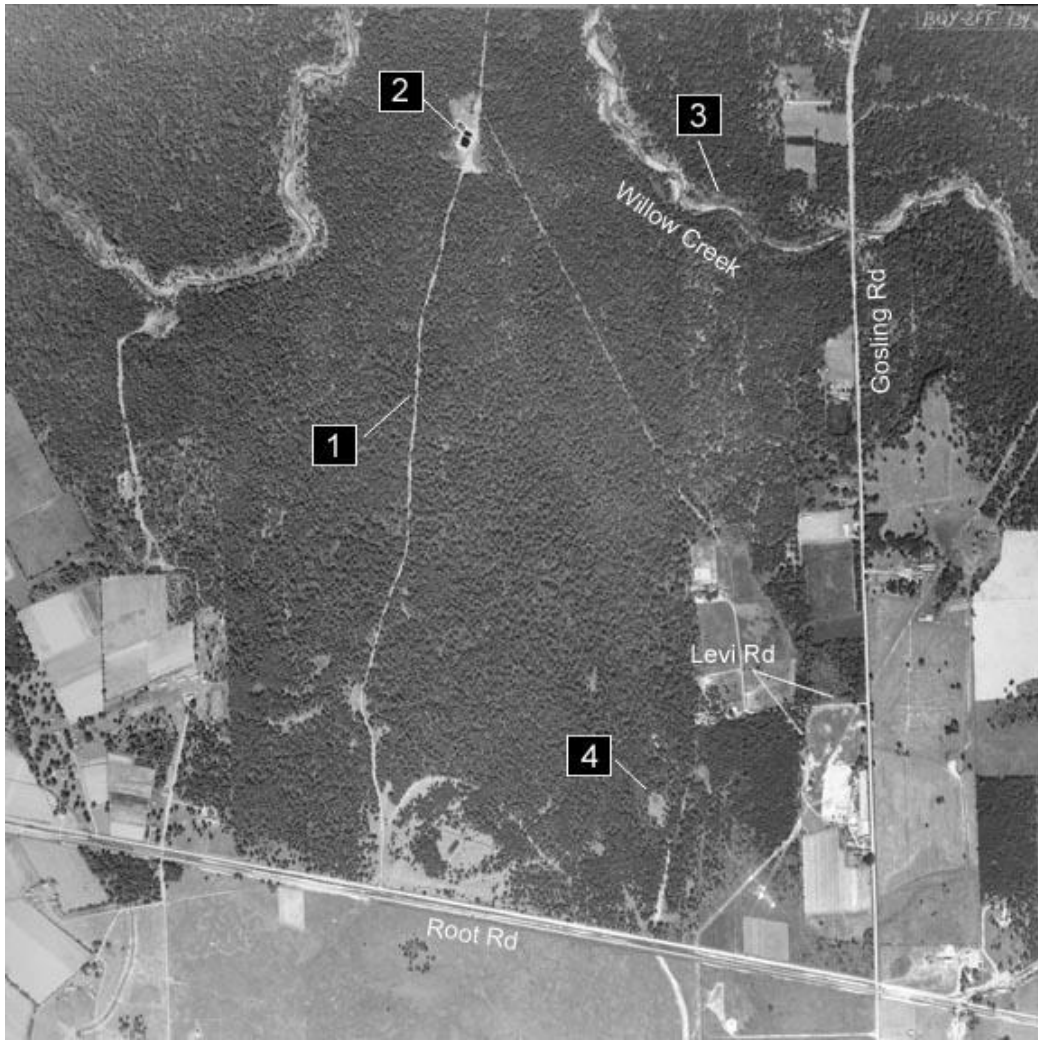
Before Northampton became a reality in the late 1960s, many referred to this area as Root pasture or Root meadow. Despite the colorful rural image painted by the words 'pasture' and 'meadow', much of it beneath the towering trees was a tangle of briars, vines, and underbrush too thick to be penetrated on horseback. Trying to work cattle on foot wasn't met with much enthusiasm by saddle-weary ranch hands.

The Root family of Houston owned much of the tract carved out of the John Brock land grant dating back to Texas' war for independence in 1836. The owners however didn't work their land but leased many acres to German families who settled here following the massive German immigration through the Galveston and Indianola ports in the middle and late 1800s. Many farmed the fertile sandy soil once it was cleared while others raised cattle. Some did both. Many still do in the fields surrounding Northampton.

The MUD has obtained several aerial photos of the Northampton area in different stages of development. We hope you enjoy witnessing Northampton's evolution!

Then in the 1960s, in what has been described as 'a remarkably bold move' by one historian, a well-known Houston developer looked beyond the dense underbrush, majestic pine and oak trees and forest that was home for deer and other wildlife (*Aerial Photo #1 next page*).

That developer was Glenn McMillan, who earlier helped rescue the affluent Memorial section of inner Houston from post-World War II tract homes and turned it into one of today's most prestigious residential areas. Memorial's pine and oak forests were similar to the forest he found stretching from Root Road to Willow Creek and beyond in Northwest Harris County. One of the major and most important differences however was that while Memorial lay only a short distance west of downtown Houston, the area that became Northampton was 30 miles northwest of the frantic pace set by the city's traffic, noise, pollution and congestion.



This aerial photo was taken by the Army Corps of Engineers in 1964. Our now familiar streets had not yet been planned:

1 - One of the most prominent features of this photo is the cattle trail that begins near what would eventually be the Northampton Elementary playground, continues northward, roughly along Pine Knot to Inway, and then on to the future site of Northampton Estates.

2 - Watering hole for cattle, approximately at the intersection of Northcrest and Kingscrest Lane.

3 - In a year or so, the District's Waste Water Treatment Plant would be built here.

4 - This watering hole would eventually become the cul-de-sac at the east end of Allentown.

This era was prior to the explosive growth of the FM 1960 corridor, before the two-lane blacktop was renamed '1960' rather than Jackrabbit Road, before the completion of Bush Intercontinental Airport, before mixed drinks were legal in restaurants and bars. It was before subdivisions such as Westador, Oak Creek Village, Huntwick, Cypresswood and others were more than an idea.

Even those soon-to-be-built developments were far removed from the serene Northampton area. After the subdivision was laid out on paper, its development began in 1968 with the backbone of Northampton's streets being the main thoroughfare, Northcrest Drive. Northcrest anchored the only entrance off Root Road and originally extended to a dead end at Darby Way, the fourth street that branched off Northcrest at right angles. The other three streets of Section One were Allentown, Bayonne and Craigway. A second north-south street paralleling Northcrest was carved out, providing youngsters an uncongested walking and bicycle path to the soon-to-be-completed elementary school. This street was Pine Knot (*Aerial Photo #2 next page*).

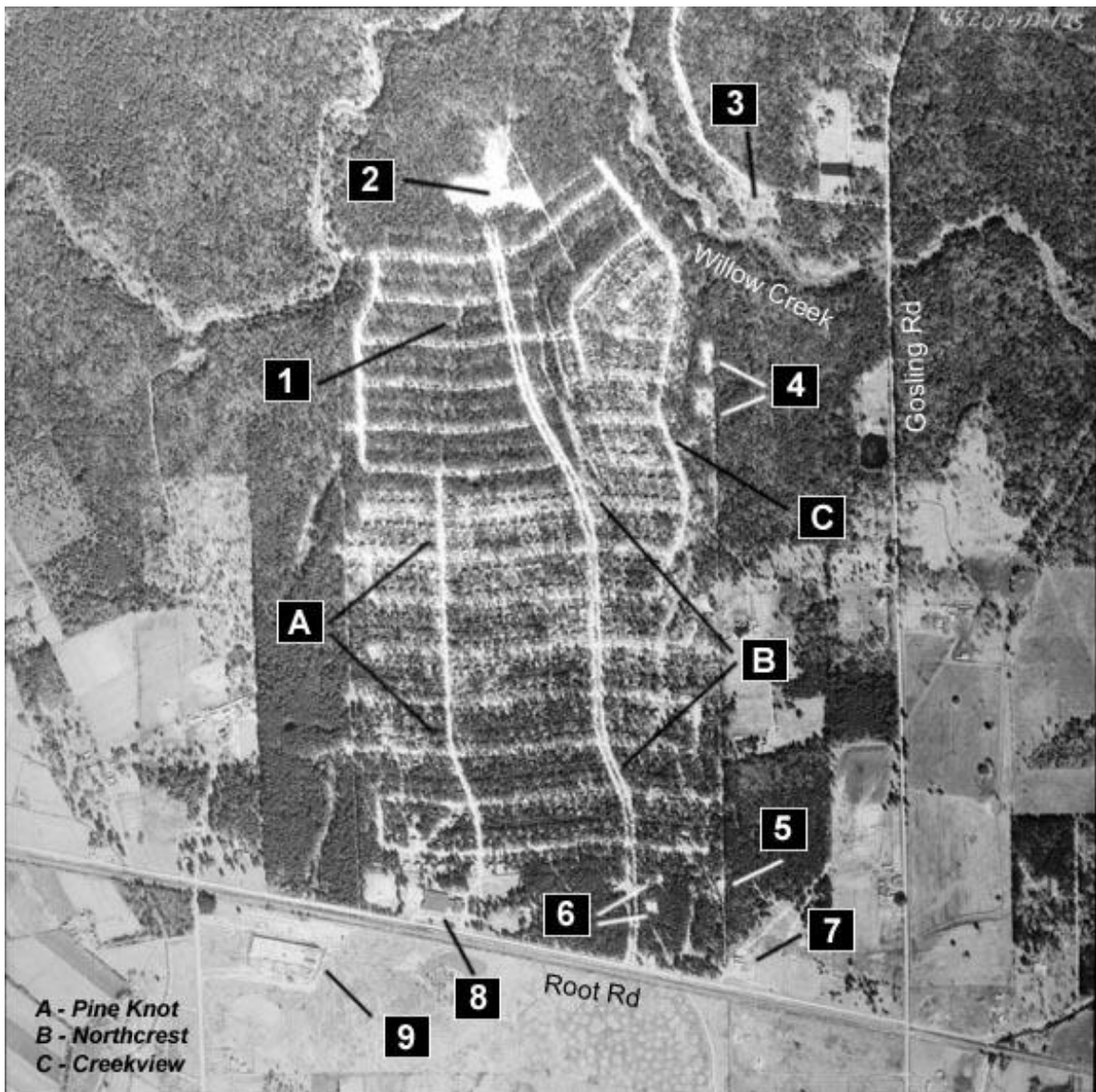
Like mercury extending upward in a thermometer as it heats up, Northcrest extended northward as sales in Northampton heated up. As additional sections opened, Northcrest reached almost to Willow Creek by the early 1980s. It then extended across Willow Creek and presently dead ends at its junction with Rayford Road. On the drawing board however there are plans to extend it past Rayford Road as future developments become reality.

But back to the beginning. The first Northampton home stands at the corner of Allentown and Northcrest Drive. A picturesque white two-story house with colonial-type columns, it was the original Model Home. Section One's opening attracted a limited number of prestige homebuilders whose work measured up to the high standards demanded for Northampton.



Originally advertised as a horse lover's paradise, Northampton featured riding paths behind these early homes. Two equestrian stables on each side of Northampton on Root Road provided horse owners needed services for their steeds. The tall trees and picturesque Willow Creek provided a beautiful setting for riders. Early planners considered the Willow Creek area suitable for larger home sites on which horse owners might stable their mounts.

This and other ideas for the area north of today's street of Northway were scuttled when the U. S. Corps of Engineers surveyed the flood plain area and included this section of land. Following intense discussion with Northampton representatives, the Corps agreed to revise and lower the flood plain level. This removed much of the area from the flood plain and later improvements in drainage helped assure the area was suitable for development.



This aerial photo (#2), also taken by the Army Corps of Engineers in 1973, shows a fast growing subdivision:

- 1- The cattle trail is still apparent in the undeveloped section of Northampton. Streets Inway, Jadecrest, Knollview, Larkmount, Meadowtrace and Northway have been constructed, but no houses have been built yet.
- 2 - The watering hole is still evident.
- 3 - The Waste Water Treatment Plant has been built.
- 4 - Inway clubhouse facilities, pool and tennis courts have been constructed.
- 5 - The first water storage tank for the subdivision has been built.
- 6 - The pool and tennis courts on Northcrest are also visible.
- 7 - Stables have been constructed for a rural subdivision whose population enjoyed horseback riding. This was the original site of the annual garage sale, known as the Calico Pumpkin.
- 8 - The Northampton Elementary School has been built to provide for a quickly growing area.
- 9 - Hildebrandt Intermediate School has also been built.

Demand for these homes in the 1970s was fueled by Houston's expanding domination of the petroleum and petrochemical industries, the growth of the aerospace facility at NASA and the contractors who served NASA and the soon-to-be-completed Bush Intercontinental Airport. All of these triggered an influx of highly trained, highly paid employees. Many of them sought the quiet and peaceful atmosphere promised by Northampton as an escape from the hurried pace of their profession.

As word spread through real estate circles in 1968 and 1969, Northampton began to fill with stately homes. Today more than 260 houses have been built in Section One.

Section Two followed shortly, and new residents began moving into their homes on Elmgrove and Fawnwood Streets by 1970. Northcrest Drive was extended to serve the second section. During the next decade Northampton continued its growth, proving the original concept to be a successful one. This new growth called for new streets, including Glenhill, Hickorycrest, Inway, Jadecrest, Knollview, Larkmount, Meadowtrace and ending at Northway. Lateral streets were Forestcrest and ambling Creekview whose horseshoe-shaped contour spun off Morningcrest, Norchester Way, Hampton Way, Willowcrest Court and Courseview Court.

Next came a secluded section whose homes were enclosed inside an entrance gates on Northcrest and were built around circular Kingcrest Lane. Cul-de-sac streets were Squire Court and Stratmore Court.

With the completion of beautiful Willowcreek Golf Course (*Aerial Photo #3 next page*), Northampton's growth jumped across Willow Creek into an area off Northcrest Drive now called The Greens of Northampton. Many of these palatial homes back up to the greens and fairways. The golf club was finished in the 1980s by a small group of resident golfers. This came after the Corps of Engineers redrew the flood plain boundary, releasing the golf course area and surrounding home sites.



By the mid 1980s, Northampton had become a community, with schools, convenience stores, and a golf course (*Aerial Photo #3*):

- 1 - The Estates has not been constructed yet, but the what remains of the watering hole can still be seen.
- 2 - Waste Water Treatment Plant.
- 3 - Inway Forest has begun development.
- 4 - Water storage tanks.
- 5 - Northampton Pines is underway.
- 6 & 7 - Circle K (present day EZ4U) and Dave's Express are serving our community.
- 8 - Klein Oak High School has been built.
- 9 - Streets have been constructed for Northampton Forest, as is evident by Wellington Court, but no houses have been built yet.
- 10 - Willow Creek Golf Course has opened.

11 - Rayford Road has been constructed and connects to Dovershire.

12 - The streets of The Woods have been constructed.

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This growth helped influence the extension of Northcrest to join Rayford Road, an important development for those living in homes in The Woods of Northampton whose only entrance previously was from Gosling Road. Although developed in 1972 by Northampton founder Glenn McMillan, The Woods of Northampton off Rayford Road did not have direct access to the rest of the subdivision. The extension of Northcrest changed that and also provided a rear exit on Gosling Road to the rest of Northampton ([Aerial Photo #4 next page](#)).

Another purpose of this extension of Northcrest was to provide access for heavy oil field trucks and equipment as Northampton witnessed its own miniature petroleum 'boom'. Although exploration for oil and gas in the Willow Creek area past Northway was brief, the excitement of drilling rigs operating on the edge of Northampton had a major impact on residents. Approximately a dozen holes were punched in the late 1970s before the homeowners association turned down a royalty proposal that would have permitted drilling to continue. The only treasure found by the searchers was a small pocket of gas, which was burned off as it flowed. These flares, which lit up the sky for miles around, exhausted the pockets after several weeks. The wells then were plugged and abandoned. Northampton's 'boom' ended, opening the way for development of the golf course and nearby home sites.

Not all of the subdivision's growth was confined to a northward movement. In the early 1980s Northampton Pines was started near Section One. This resulted in a second entrance on Root Road and connected to the earliest section of the subdivision when Bayonne Street was extended to the east. This added more than 80 new homes, and the area still is growing.

On the west side of the original section, another development known as Northampton Forest called for a third entrance off Root Road. The entry street, Wellington Court, dead ends 11 blocks deep, but future plans call for it to extend farther into the forest as it creeps closer to Willow Creek in answer to continued growth.



In this aerial photo, taken about 1994 (*Aerial Photo #4*), Northampton Estates is developed and the Greens of Northampton is well underway. Also, construction has begun in Northampton Forest. The school's complex has grown with a football field, track and tennis courts.

1 - The watering hole has now become Northampton Estates.

2 - Waste Water Treatment Plant

3 - Inway Forest is continuing to develop.

4 - A new bridge over Willow Creek is being constructed.

5 - The new MUD Building has been built.

6 - Northampton Forest continues to grow quickly.

7 - Rayford Road now connects to Northcrest and provides both southerly and northerly access to Northampton.

6 - The Greens of Northampton is underway providing more homes with scenic views of Willow Creek Golf Course.

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The newest addition is Northampton Oaks, a beautiful addition between the elementary school and the soon-to-be-built nine-acre park on Root Road and Northcrest Drive (*Aerial Photo #5 next page*).

This then is a look at the ever-changing Northampton Subdivision (*Aerial Photo #6 subsequent page*). The vision of the original developer likely has been far exceeded. Other developers have entered the picture through the years and continue to fulfill the original dream. Now more than 30 years old, Northampton continues to see new and bigger homes. Older homes have appreciated greatly in value, and today's homeowners take pride in their upkeep and beautification of yards and the public areas.

Yet despite this amazing growth Northampton continues to offer today's 5,000 residents the same advantages first enjoyed by the original few. Privacy, far removed from the bustling city streets and freeways, convenient to major shopping areas, kindergarten to high school classrooms within walking distance, low taxes and best of all, a wonderful lifestyle among friendly neighbors.



Chapter IV - Groups Who Make it Great

It ain't no town. It ain't no city. It's mighty small and mighty pretty." Phil Harris said it best. The silver-hair set will remember the lyrics from the 1950s hit song. The younger residents will shrug and say "Phil who?".

Phil was talking about a place called 'Do Wah Ditty', but he could have been describing Northampton. We're not a city. There's no city council. We're not a town. No mayor. If you search for a one-word label, how about "Northampton is family".

Northampton, with its 5,000 neighbors and friends, has a group of organizations working for the benefit of all of us. These are residents of the subdivision who work and play together to improve our lifestyle. These volunteers do not include the regular sports rivalries on the tennis and basketball courts, the Friday night bridge foursomes, the weekly poker buddies, the Boy Scouts nor the cute little elves who spoil our New Year's diet resolutions with Girl Scout cookies.

Following is a brief description of the groups, all composed of volunteers who give their time, talent and energy.

NORTHAMPTON HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

Social and civic activities are planned and carried out by NHOA board members who are chosen by residents during regularly scheduled elections. Funding for NHOA activities is voluntary, and a small charge is included each month in the bill for water, garbage and sewer services.

Ongoing projects of NHOA include publication of the Northampton Neighbor, a monthly newsletter that gives all residents and groups an outlet for their news items. It is distributed free to every home. Another important responsibility is the annual publication of the Northampton Resident Directory. Complete with names, addresses and telephone numbers of all in the subdivision, it is an important tool for newcomers to be integrated into our 'family'.

NHOA also sponsors several special events during the year. These include the Valentine Soda Shop for sweethearts of all ages, a once-a-year garage sale at a central location. In recent years it has been held at Klein Oak High School's parking lot.

Other recent activities include a Crawfish Boil in May, Fourth of July parade and party, a Teen Back-to-School party, special Halloween refreshment and safety stands for little trick-or-treaters, a Texas two-stepping Chili Cook Off and special Christmas programs including Breakfast with Santa for the tiny tots and their big brothers and sisters.

Volunteers are always welcome to help in NHOA activities.

NORTHAMPTON MAINTENANCE FUND

The responsibility of the fund, which is overseen by an elected and voluntary five -member Board of Trustees, is to administer a uniform master plan for the improvement and development of Northampton homes and building sites. To accomplish this, a set of Deed Restrictions have been adopted for the subdivision. These restrictions outline requirements for building, improving and changing existing homes. Enforcement of these rules by the NMB is designed to support property values and provide a safe and desirable atmosphere for the Northampton family.

The Maintenance Board is funded by an annual fee charged each homeowner. This fee pays for such activities as security by contract constable services, electric power for public-area lighting, esplanade maintenance and landscaping, mosquito spraying, deed restriction enforcement and administrative costs.

NORTHAMPTON M. U. D. BOARD

The prime responsibility of the Northampton Municipal Utility District is to deliver safe drinking water to every home in ample quantities and to dispose of waste water in a safe and sanitary way.

The M. U. D. Board is composed of five volunteers who are elected to alternating four-year terms by all residents. The board has the responsibility of working with consultants and contractors, who operate the water and sewer plants, collect and remove garbage, levy and oversee collection of M. U. D. taxes and maintain and administer various Northampton recreational facilities.

These include the children's playgrounds on Northcrest and Inway Drives, the two swimming pools, the Northcrest and Inway clubhouses and pavilion, the Inway exercise room, the Northcrest and Inway tennis courts and the Northampton Center M. U. D. headquarters building. A new park is in the planning stage.

Many of the older recreational facilities were financed and built by an earlier group, the Northampton Club. Membership in the Northampton Club was restricted to members who paid an annual membership fee. Several years ago the M. U. D. board agreed to take over these facilities and assume the financial responsibility for their ownership, operation and upkeep. This provided the use of these facilities for all residents at no cost or a reduced fee.

NORTHAMPTON ARTISTS & HANDCRAFTERS

Since 1976 this group has provided creative outlets for Northampton members and guests. Meeting monthly, the crafters present programs that share art and craft skills by experts in various fields. It is open to membership to beginners as well as more experienced crafters and artists.

During one of the fall months, usually October, the Northampton Artists & Handcrafters sponsor a 'Crafters Christmas Market' where members and other vendors display and sell their wares to the public. This well-attended event usually is held at and near the Northcrest Clubhouse and pavilion. Profits generated by the group fund a scholarship for deserving art students at Klein Oak High School.

NORTHAMPTON GO BIRDS

The old saying "You are only as old as you feel" can be applied to these energetic on-the-go 'seasoned' citizens of Northampton. The Go Birds was formed to provide a series of traveling adventures to those 55 years and older. Free transportation by comfortable air-conditioned buses is provided by Harris County Precinct 4. The Go Bird group is a very informal organization with no dues, no officers and no obligations other than pay a small fee for some of the trips. Arrangements are made by various members of the group.

Recent trips have included the George Bush Presidential Library at College Station, Moody Gardens in Galveston, the Fine Arts Museum and Museum of Natural Science in downtown Houston and the Sam Houston Race Track. Although not scheduled on a regular basis, the Go Birds make several trips each year, and everyone 55 and older is welcome to be a Go Bird.

NORTHAMPTON HOME & GARDEN CLUB

If your interests include home decorating and gardening, this is the organization for you. The NHGC meets each month except during the summer to share tips on beautifying your home, garden and public areas around Northampton. The members provide and install the nativity scene at the main entrance to Northampton during the Christmas season.

An annual fund raiser supports the various beautification projects around the subdivision, and the members schedule field trips throughout the year.

NORTHAMPTON TENNIS ASSOCIATION

Since 1995 the NTA has sponsored and organized tennis activities for players of all levels within the subdivision. With some of the finest, well-lighted courts in Harris County, M. U. D. has provided tennis enthusiasts facilities that bring many outsider admirers to Northampton. Northampton fields several men's and women's teams playing in various leagues around the area.

Although membership in NTA is not a requirement for Northampton players, the small annual fee for membership provides funds to pay tournament expenses, social activities and similar events to promote the sport. One of the highlights of the year for NTA is the Summer Mixed Doubles Team Tennis. It is open to men and women of every skill level and provides a forum for social contact as well as competitive combat.

WILLOW CREEK GOLF CLUB

Once a member-owned 18-hole course, Willow Creek now is a business-owned facility in which more than two-and-a-half million dollars has been invested recently to make it one of the premier layouts in Southeast Texas. This infusion of cash has made a great course even better.

With picturesque and historic Willow Creek winding its way through the lush fairways and past the beautiful clubhouse and dining facility, Willow Creek Golf Club greatly enhances the beauty and values in Northampton and brings hundreds of outside golfers to visit our area. Club memberships are available for golfers, and a new social membership category has been established to give non-golfing Northampton residents an elegant dining facility for family and friends.

NORTHAMPTON PINES GARDEN CLUB

Formed during the early days of Northampton's development, this group emphasizes stimulating interest in gardening and exchanging knowledge about the maintenance of our ecology system within the Northampton area. Membership is open to all residents who are invited to attend the regularly scheduled monthly meetings.

The group brings special guest speakers to enlighten their members and schedules interesting field trips, luncheons, fund raisers and workshops throughout the year.

SPRING VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

Northampton is fortunate to have a fire station and modern rolling equipment right at the front of the entrance to the subdivision. Many of the volunteers who respond to fires as well as other emergencies or major disasters in the SVFD area live in Northampton. Founded in 1955 the SVFD maintains five stations and has approximately 125 members. Each undergoes rigorous training and many are Texas State Certified Fire Fighters. Some of the fire fighters who volunteer their free time are employed by career fire departments in Houston, The Woodlands and Conroe. Many have industrial and military fire fighting experience.

The SVFD is funded by the Harris County Rural Fire Prevention District No. I. Training is provided for Northampton volunteers and others who wish to serve the Spring area.

These then are the men and women, boys and girls, parents and grandparents who help make Northampton the 'family' that we all enjoy every day. Each resident makes his or her own contribution to a wonderful lifestyle. If you wish to be one of them and volunteer your time and talents, information concerning who to contact can be found in the Northampton Resident Directory.



Chapter V - Development of Nearby Schools

Taxpayers in the Klein Independent School District, including those in Northampton, have invested approximately \$30 million in building our three public schools to assure the type of future that education promises. This investment resulted in the development of excellent learning facilities within walking distance of the students in our subdivision.

A check of the student parking lot at Klein Oak High School quickly reveals that walking to school is not fashionable for the 16 and older set. For the younger lads and lassies, walking and bicycling remains the way to go, unless mother chooses to provide limousine service.

Although Northcrest Drive is the main route for the vehicle crowd to reach Klein Oak, Pine Knot, which extends south from Inway Drive directly to the elementary school and middle school, is the safe path for foot traffic and bicycle jockeys. If you enjoy the sounds of birds in the early morning, listen for and compare the chirping of the tiny tots as they trudge along Pine Knot on their way to class.

One of the primary advantages Northampton has offered parents since the first of our schools was built in 1971 has been the easy access to education for their youngsters. That also accounts for many Northampton youngsters returning with their budding families once they graduate, marry and begin their careers.

Northampton also has several private and church schools within easy driving distance for those who choose not to attend the public schools. Following is a brief look at the three Klein I. S. D. schools adjacent to our subdivision:

NORTHAMPTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

This modern facility located on Root Road adjacent to the south edge of Northampton was built and opened in 1971. Home of the 'Colts', education begins with kindergarten and goes through the fifth grade. The building contains approximately 67,000 square feet and has a capacity for about 1,000 students. Built at an original cost of \$1.5 million, today the school features an extensive library, cafeteria, playground, a computer friendly environment, and a newly constructed gymnasium.

HILDEBRANDT INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

Directly across Root Road from Northampton Elementary School, Hildebrandt was named for one of the early German families who migrated from their native land in the 1800s and settled in this area. Several of their descendents still live nearby, and the school's address is 23800 Hildebrandt Road. A special school zone crossing on Root Road provides a safe passageway for students from Northampton. Hildebrandt Intermediate School, home of the 'Mustangs', opened early in 1974. The 165,000-square-foot facility was designed to accommodate 1,500 students. Its initial cost was approximately \$3 million, and the broad expanse of land surrounding the school provides ample outside room for the students.

KLEIN OAK HIGH SCHOOL

Built in 1982, Klein Oak has modern athletic facilities for all sports and a new building to be used primarily by the Music Department has been completed. The school has a modern theater for its award-winning drama students who present several productions each season and also an in-house bakery and cafeteria. One of the highlights of the school year is 'German Fest', held each spring. This is a heritage program open to the public featuring German food, music and ethnic costumes and honoring the German families who settled in the Northampton area in the 1800s. Many of the descendants still live nearby.

Klein Oak, home of the 'Panthers', originally contained 475,000 square feet of space and was designed to accommodate 3,000 students. The original cost was \$24 million.

Several new schools in the Klein I. S. D. area are in the planning stages. At present there are 22 schools in the system with an enrollment of approximately 23,000 students. None of these students, however, have the advantage of being within easy walking distance of home from the time they enter kindergarten until they graduate. That is, none except those who live in Northampton.



Chapter VI - Games People Play

By working and playing together, the Northampton 'family' has created a varied assortment of athletic facilities and social and group activities for kids of all ages. Whether two or twenty, nine or ninety, there are programs tailored to every age group and physical ability. These include:

PLAYGROUNDS

For the youngsters two modern and safety-designed playgrounds provide challenges both physical and mental. They also give mothers and fathers a place to let their tots work off some of the energy we adults envy. The Inway playground, adjacent to the Inway Clubhouse, exercise room and swimming pool, is nestled among towering pine and oak trees. It provides youngsters a closeness with nature and Northampton's natural beauty as squirrels, rabbits, birds and other wild creatures romp nearby.

The second and newest playground is situated in the park area close to the MUD Headquarters Building and the Northcrest Swimming Pool. Located nearby are convenient restrooms, the pavilion and the new lake and tennis courts.

GIRL SCOUTS

Out of cookies? Don't despair. It won't be long before a knock on your door will let you know it's 'cookie season' again for this very active group of young ladies. Northampton has approximately 150 girl scouts of all levels within the subdivision. While most of us know them for their cookies, that is only a small part of their involvement in the community. They participate in many Northampton social events including the annual Valentine Soda Shop and Easter Egg Hunt and are always searching for way to help in other worthwhile activities. The five levels of membership provide a forum for the girls to continue in the scouting program from kindergarten through the 12th grade at Klein Oak High School. These levels are Daisy's, Brownies, Junior Girl Scouts, Cadets and Senior Girl Scouts. Top achievement for Girl Scouts is the 'Gold Award'. Currently 10 scouts at Klein Oak have earned this honor, and eight of them live in Northampton. The cookie sales program is the primary fund raiser with 45 cents of each box sold going to the local groups. Recently one local scout sold more than 300 boxes, providing early lessons in the basics of the business world.

BOY SCOUTS

Long after American Indians and early-day Spanish explorers camped along Willow Creek and before today's local duffers began dunking errant golf balls in its crystal clear water, another group of explorers used it as their outdoor home-away-from-home. These were and still are the Boy Scout of Northampton who now must explore a little farther up or downstream but still find its rugged natural beauty an ideal place to learn about and enjoy outdoor life.

Northampton's first Boy Scout Troop is still very active. Young men of all levels of scouting and from other areas now make up its membership. Troop No. 878 was chartered in the earliest days of our subdivision and then, like now, many of its adult leaders called Northampton home. Originally meeting in the Northcrest Clubhouse or in members' homes, the troop now meets at Klein Methodist Church, its current sponsor.

From the Cub Scout level to the high ranking Eagle Scout honor, there are activities for everyone in Troop No. 878 as well as other scout groups who list Northampton youths among their membership.

NORTHAMPTON SWIM TEAM

Watch out for the 'Barracudas'. That's the warning cry around this area. It's not about vicious finny creatures amidst the swimmers. Rather it is a warning about the Northampton Swim Team which walks away or rather swims away with honors every summer. The 'Cudas' make up a group open to all neighborhood swimmers 18 and younger. Practice beginning in May prepares the group for competition with other teams belonging to the Northwest Aquatic League. Swim meets usually are held on Saturday at the Northcrest Pool or at neighboring pools.

The summer swim season provides Barracudas a chance to experience team spirit, sportsmanship and competition. Team parties and social events are scheduled regularly for members and their families. The swim meets are open to all Northampton spectators who want to turn out and cheer for the winning 'Cudas'.

YOUTH TENNIS

Northampton has some real swingers among the younger set. These are swingers with rackets in hand, the Northampton Youth Tennis Teams. Many tennis enthusiasts ranging from ten years through the early teens make up the several Northampton teams which compete in the Northwest Youth Tennis Association. Each team plays a schedule of matches against youngsters in other subdivisions in Northwest Harris County. The teams include both lads and young lassies that are drilled by our own tennis pro who gives lessons on a regular basis at the Northcrest courts. These courts are also the site for NWYTA matches. Spectators are welcome, and a pavilion between courts provides an excellent viewing area to watch these swingers in action.

SPECIAL YOUTH ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMS

VALENTINE SODA SHOP: First event of the new year is the Valentine Soda Shop. Usually held at the Inway Clubhouse for lovers of all ages, the shop is staffed by young ladies of Northampton who wait on the colorfully decorated tables and serve up delicious sundaes and sodas of various types and flavors. Everyone is welcome to bring their 'sweetie' and enjoy the treats.

EASTER EGG HUNT: When the Easter bunny hops around in the spring, she thoughtfully hides hundreds of brightly colored eggs so every little searcher will find enough to send him or her home with a basket full of potential stomach ache. Held at the park and playground area near Northcrest Drive, the Easter Egg Hunt is one of the highlights of the spring season. The search areas are divided into sections catering to specific age groups so that 'big brother' cannot find all the eggs before 'little sister' has her chance.

JULY FOURTH PARADE: Uncle Sam thumbs his nose at the Texas July heat and dons his red, white and blue suit, whiskers and top hat for the annual Fourth of July Parade. This event features children from babies on up who dress in patriotic colors and decorate their bikes, wagons, pets and little brothers and sisters. The parade marches up Northcrest behind the Spring VFD fire truck with Uncle Sam atop.

The final stop is the Northcrest Pavilion where awards for best decorations are passed out to winners of the separate age groups. Identity of the judges is a closely held secret for obvious reasons because every entrant is a winner in the parents' view.

TEEN BACK TO SCHOOL PARTY: That often dreaded cry 'It's back to school time' is softened by Northampton's annual Teen Back To School Party. One primary goal of this particular event is to make easier the transition from Northampton Elementary to Hildebrandt Intermediate School for youngsters 12-13 years old. The party, held at the Northcrest Pavilion, welcomes all Northampton student teenagers in the sixth, seventh and eighth grade at Hildebrandt. Held a week or so before school begins, the youngsters feast on pizza, cold drinks and other snacks. The newly-heated swimming pool is opened for swimmers, and a disc jockey provides pop tunes and other entertainment.

HALLOWEEN: When the goblins start roaming the Northampton area on Halloween, they share the neighborhood streets with our little 'trick or treaters'. In order to provide a safe haven for these little 'creatures of the night', refreshment stands are set up in convenient neighborhood yards. These provide a rest stop for the youngsters as well as adults who keep their eyes open for potential trouble, danger or lost little goblins.

BREAKFAST WITH SANTA: If it's December it's time for Santa to dust off his red work clothes and get ready to thrill the tiny tots in Northampton. He accomplishes this by hosting the annual Breakfast with Santa, held most recently at the Willow Creek Clubhouse. Doughnuts and doughnut holes make up the basic menu with milk and soft drinks for the little ones and hot coffee for the moms and pops. Every youngster gets the chance to climb into Santa's ample lap and pose for a souvenir Polaroid photo. And each year Santa gets to ride the SVD fire truck around the subdivision to announce the beginning of the Yuletide season and the breakfast party. This gives his reindeer a chance to rest up for their Christmas Eve duties.

SPECIAL ADULT ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMS

Tennis anyone? How about golf? Or swimming, bicycling, jogging and just walking? It's all here in Northampton in safe and secure surroundings.

TENNIS: The six tennis courts, two in the Inway Clubhouse area and four near the front entrance on Northcrest, provide combat areas for local competition within the subdivision as well as league play for Northampton players pitted against other subdivision teams. Both men's and women's leagues schedule their matches here on our well lighted courts. One of the highlights of the local tennis year is the summer mixed-doubles team tennis which features players of all levels in a social atmosphere. Northampton also has its own tennis pro who is available for lessons and drills for players of all ages.

GOLF: The world-class 18-hole Willow Creek Golf Course winds its way along the banks of Willow Creek. Open to members and their guests, the layout emphasizes the natural beauty of Northampton's towering trees and rolling landscape. The beautiful clubhouse overlooking Willow Creek also provides elegant or casual dining for its members, social members and guests.

SWIMMING: Northampton's two swimming pools stay busy during the summer months with splashers of all ages and abilities enjoying the main pools while tots enjoy their own nearby wading pools. The Northcrest facility, site of the swim team's matches, recently added a heating system which keeps the temperature comfortable year round. Northampton teenage lifeguards are on duty during the summer months and on special occasions.

ON THE STREETS: Early morning, midday and late in the evening you will find walkers, joggers, runners and bicyclers on the move along the streets of Northampton. The tree-top umbrella that shelters the area from summer's sun or winter's cold make such activities easy to continue year round. As the surrounding areas are taken into the Northampton perimeter, additional wooded paths and trails open up for exercisers.

GARAGE SALE: The once-a-year Garage Sale is as much a social event as a commercial outlet for those unwanted items in the attic, garage or closet. Normally held on the parking lot at Klein Oak High School, this springtime event draws buyers from near and far to look over and purchase the garage sale wares. More than 100 Northampton families set up shop each year and frequently end up bargaining with each other. It's not unusual to buy an item from your neighbor one year and sell the same item at the following year's sale. The event is an entertaining activity for buyers and sellers alike.

CRAWFISH BOIL: 'Mud Bugs' to the connoisseur, crawfish are the main course for the annual Crawfish Boil. Each year the amount of crawfish served up barely keeps pace with the growing number of attendees. For the faint-of-heart who question the wisdom of dining on 'mud bugs', hot dogs make an appreciated substitute. The Crawfish Boil is held at the Northcrest Park in and around the pavilion.

CHILI COOK OFF: If it's November and a cold north wind is whistling down your neck, that's a sure sign its time for the annual Chili Cook Off. Competing cooking teams vie for cash awards based on their culinary expertise, decorating talents and side dish originality. Attendees sample each team's creations and then vote for their favorites. The competition is fierce, the chili is spicy and a suggested side dish would be a bowl of Tums or Roloids to control the chili's fire. However, frozen Margaritas and tap beer help quell the burning. Also helping settle the chili is the opportunity to do a little Texas two-stepping to a live band which entertains not only the cook off area but for blocks around. The popular event is held around the lake and park near the MUD office building.

PUBLICATIONS

Three other special projects very important to residents is the annual publication of the Northampton Resident Directory which lists names, addresses, phone numbers and children of those living in our subdivision. It is distributed to newcomers by the NHOA Welcoming Committee and contains an information form to insure their inclusion in the next edition. The Northampton Neighbor, a monthly newsletter distributed free to every home provides an outlet for news items of individuals and groups and contains advertisements for products and services used by all Northampton residents. And the "Waterline", a quarterly publication published by the MUD, provides important information for residents pertaining to water and sewer services, as well as parks and recreation.



Chapter VII - Outstanding Facilities

With the addition of a professional manager and staff to look after our facilities and help plan future programs, Northampton's Municipal Utility District's Board of Directors provided the framework to make this subdivision one of the most modern, complete and desirable in Harris County. Utilizing the natural beauty of the area, the MUD Board laid out a program for improvements which make Northampton the envy of visitors who come here for team competition, family and friends events and just to gaze at what so many area people brag about.

Included in the attractions that make Northampton unique are:

SWIMMING POOLS

Two official size pools, one near the Inway Clubhouse and the other near the main entrance on Northcrest, feature deep-water diving as well as shallow splashing pools for tiny tots. The Northcrest pool recently has been equipped with a heating system which makes it usable year-round. It is the site of Northampton's Barracudas Swim Team meets against other members of the Northwest Aquatic League.

WEIGHT ROOM

Located near the Inway Clubhouse, the weight room is a busy spot for those who try to shed the pounds put on by a diet of Girl Scout cookies and other no-no's for the weight conscious. Equipped with the latest exercise equipment, the weight room is a state-of-the-art facility available day and night.

CLUBHOUSES

Two clubhouses, one on Inway and the other on Northcrest, provide meeting facilities for the subdivision's various clubs and organizations. Both are available for rent for private functions such as receptions, parties and dinners. The Inway Clubhouse has a complete kitchen and wet bar and an outdoor deck overlooking the swimming pool and playground. The original and smaller Northcrest Clubhouse is conveniently located near the pavilion and tennis courts. Both clubhouses have modern rest rooms.

PAVILION

The location of the pavilion on Northcrest Drive makes it a convenient spot for youth activities as well as for such adult events as the Crafters Christmas Market and Crawfish Boil. The pavilion is adjacent to the Northcrest Swimming Pool and the four tennis courts.

LAKE, PARK AND PLAYGROUND

The scenic lake and shelter house give Northampton youngsters a place to try out their fishing skills while mom or dad provides lessons in the technique of baiting a hook, a most essential skill for youthful anglers. The park area nearby features a picturesque waterfall and flowing stream, which usually is full of minnows, tadpoles and other aquatic life. The playground across from the lake has modern equipment to keep the little ones busy while their parents rest on nearby benches. The lake area also has tables and charcoal pits for serving up steaks and other picnic snacks.

TENNIS COURTS

Six well-lighted courts, two near the Inway Clubhouse and four at the front on Northcrest, provide combat arenas for both private play and league competition. The front courts have a pavilion that offers spectators excellent views of the action. The two back courts also have a viewing area and are used for private and overflow league matches. Future plans call for the possible addition of two additional courts at the front of the subdivision. Northampton tennis players of all levels of ability have access to lessons by a visiting tennis professional who works with younger players as well as adults.

MUD HEADQUARTERS BUILDING

This modern brick structure houses the offices of the MUD Board and the manager and crew who maintain our facilities. It features a meeting room and kitchen used by various clubs and other organizations. The MUD Building also is the site for most political elections in Northampton's Precinct 552. Nearby water treatment plant and rest rooms serving the Northcrest Park are nearby.

OTHER NEIGHBORHOOD FACILITIES

Will Creek Golf Course

Laid out around and along Willow Creek, this 18-hole championship course provides a challenge for both beginners and low handicappers alike. The lakes and water hazards which line the fairways add much beauty to the layout and feed on the balls of errant shots. A beautiful clubhouse overlooking Willow Creek features a restaurant for both elegant and casual dining. The clubhouse also is available for private parties.

Spring Volunteer Fire Department

Located on Northcrest Drive near the front entrance, the Spring Volunteer Fire Department Station houses modern rolling equipment used for fire and other emergencies in the SVFD area which includes Northampton. Many of its volunteers are Northampton residents and some are professional fire fighters who volunteer their off-duty time to help protect our homes and property.



Chapter VIII - Epilog

The first written record of our beautiful area of North Harris County dates back to the year 1519. That year marked the trek through these forests by a party of Spanish explorers who first established Spain's claim to Texas. It is certain native Americans lived here even before.

If these early adventurers returned today, they would not believe the evolution of the area that has resulted in Northampton. We have maintained the slightly rolling hills, towering pine and oak trees and winding stream and still have established home sites for 1400 beautiful homes housing approximately 5,000 residents of the Northampton 'family'. Almost all are friendly folks although like in all families, a few are grouses.

Where does Northampton go from here? Certainly it is not going to stand still. New home sites are being developed on the land adjacent to existing sections. The few vacant lots within the present boundaries of Northampton, Northampton Estates, Northampton Pines, Northampton Forest, the Woods of Northampton and Northampton Oaks are being filled quickly as more and more outsiders choose to join our 'family'.

Part of the constant growth results from those who are transferred from the Houston area, sell their homes and later are transferred back. Many return to new homes in our subdivision. The same is true of children who graduate from the nearby schools, leave to start their professional career and begin a family. They also frequently return to Northampton.

As our 'family' grows, so too do the plans to make this an even better place to live. The modern recreational facilities and the planned social and educational events for adults, teenagers and the little ones attest to the fact this is a place for everyone regardless of age. A new nine-acre park is taking shape on the corner of Northcrest Drive and Root Road. Purchase of this tract by the MUD Board from a group of investors assured that the acreage will not become an undesirable commercial operation. The new park also will provide additional recreational facilities for everyone.

This then is a look at Northampton today: Fourteen hundred homes and more to come, 5,000 residents and more to come, beautiful facilities and more to come. It is convenient schools and friendly neighbors. What more would make it better? Suggestions are always welcome. So are volunteers.