

# Life In Early Seabrook

By John Ballentine and  
Emogene Brummerhop

Following the early settlement of Seabrook under a land grant issued by the Spanish government in 1832, the area had no real identifying name until Seabrook Sydnor established the township of Seabrook in 1895. Although many things have affected the course of Seabrook's history, nothing has been more important than the people who chose the city for their home.

Before Sydnor established the township, however, families with names recognized today led the early settlers. Two of the most prominent families were the Menards and Brenners, and some of the Menard descendants are still in the area today.

Although pieces of paper designate the creation of a town, *people* make the town. Seabrook's list of contributing people is as colorful as the events responsible for the shaping of its history. Shortly after Sydnor established

the township, Houston businessmen Ben Taub, Ben Campbell and Sewel Myer purchased the town for a reported sum of approximately \$1,600.

Most of the homes built in the area were used as summer residences by such recognizable families as the Ballentines, Brummerhops, Larrabees, Hesters, Chapmans and Palms. Other families taking advantage of the bayfront community were the Currys, Porters, Rodicks, Burns, Olsens and Kellets. Many of these families chose to move to the town on a permanent basis instead of only for the summer months.

During the early 1900s, Second Street served as the town's main road and Houston residents soon began to make round trips using their new-fangled motor cars. In 1900, a hand-drawn ferry was in operation between Seabrook and Kemah on the Clear Creek Channel. It wasn't until 1928 that a bridge was finally built between the two towns. In 1964, a new drawbridge was built and Highway 146 was established as a four-lane highway.

During the early 1900s, the welcome sight of one or two horsemen riding over from Webster meant the mail had arrived. Brothers Sam and Joe Brum-

merhop were responsible for the daily mail runs. Later a post office was placed in Dick Larrabee's grocery store. The Southern Pacific Railroad brought the mail into town, throwing it off the train at what is now NASA Road One and Highway 146. Someone would run over, pick up and load the mail on a cart then take it to the post office.

In order to provide an education for the children of Seabrook, a two-story school was built on Hardesty Street. Three teachers taught first through seventh grades in four rooms. Eighth-grade students went to the school in Webster by bus. In 1926, 57 students were enrolled in classes. The towns of Seabrook, Kemah, League City and Webster consolidated in 1948 as the Clear Creek Independent School District. At the time, Humble Oil and Refinery Company paid about 90 percent of the school taxes.

As a welcome addition to the town, Mr. and Mrs. George Hamman built and gave to the community the Seabrook Community House for use by the town youth. The house was also used by the school, the church, civic clubs and the Texas State Guard. Both the Kemah and Seabrook schools joined for lunch dur-

## AD-COMPANY OF CLEAR LAKE

*Advertising Specialties*

- EMBLEMS
- EMBROIDERY
- BANNERS
- CALENDARS
- PATCHES
- PENNANTS
- LIGHTERS
- BUCKLES
- KNIVES
- CAPS
- CUPS
- T-SHIRTS
- SAFETY AWARDS
- UNIFORMS
- COVER-ALLS
- COPY CLUB

4002 NASA ROAD 1  
SEABROOK  
**326-0577**



**Daily  
Lunch  
Specials**

**docked at 2613½ NASA Rd. 1  
(713) 326-7613**

Across from Pine Knot Pharmacy, Seabrook, Texas  
Houston, Texas - Clear Lake Floating Restaurant & Tavern