

Ballinger City Park Becomes One of West Texas' Finest Beauty Spots as Citizenship Joins in Development

Abilene 1935

Special to The Reporter-News

BALLINGER, July 13.—By using relief labor and contributions by every civic organization, many business firms and individuals, Ballinger has developed since 1931 one of the most beautiful parks in West Texas.

Through efforts of K. V. Northington, city secretary, the work was started in 1930 with 400 men clearing underbrush, black jack and mesquite from a 16-acre tract beside Elm creek near the city pump station. Many of the workers were paid part cash and given water bill credits.

In 1931 clearing and landscaping were finished, water pipes laid, roads graded and 25 pecan trees planted. A hundred other pecans have been added since that time.

There is a natural growth of elm, willow and hackberry trees and a high bluff overlooking the park is a particularly beautiful sight in the spring, when it is covered by a wealth of red buds and wild plum blooms. A scenic driveway winds along the top of the bluff, which is land owned by the Santa Fe Railway company.

Work of developing the park has been continued until the present, with expenditure of \$2,382.21 by the city, including \$600 used this year for additional playground equipment, which is the best in this section.

Shrubs, lombardy poplars and other trees have been planted and interesting beds of cacti laid out. In 1932, using relief labor, rock curbing barbecue pits, furnaces, dutch ovens, rock tables and benches, rest rooms, a lighting system and playground equipment were added. The "Nook," one of the interesting features of the park, has been arranged in a ravine that for-

merly was unsightly with piles of dirt and gravel. It is easily adapted to a Japanese setting and is used much for private parties and picnics.

A Boy Scout house located in the park was purchased by the city last spring and converted into a dwelling for the park keeper. Through efforts of Bruce Creasy an attractive building of native stone was constructed for Camp Fire girls, with all material and labor donated by interested citizens.

The park has become a popular meeting place for groups from all parts of Runnels and other counties, as many as seven counties having been known to be represented at once.

It is proposed soon to begin construction of a swimming pool and interest is being shown in construction of an outdoor theatre at the foot of the bluff overlooking the park.

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