Thank you for visiting Sauceda Historic District. We hope you enjoyed your stay. But don’t stop now. Big Bend Ranch State Park has even more to offer.

EXPLORE!

COVER IMAGES

Unidentified ranch hand with J.M. Fowlkes, Jr. on Grey Boy at tack room, c. 1942. COURTESY OF THE FOWLKESS FAMILY

B.F. Hill and guide during a 1902 mineral survey sponsored by the University of Texas’ Bureau of Economic Geology. The structure was likely built by rancher Theo Burnhart in the 1890s or by W.W. Bogel in the turn of the 20th century. The site is located west of the nearby arroyo near Sauceda.

SUCCESSION CENTER FOR HISTORY & SCIENCE, UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS, AUSTIN

The tract surrounding Sauceda was the second one settled by George A. Howard who originally occupied nearby uplands where he established the Chillicothe Ranch. He then purchased this site to form the Chillicothe-Saucita Ranch in 1905 and developed the core of the historic district’s main building. Howard moved to Marfa and Gus, Gallie, and Graves Bogel—sons of the early Presidio County settler and rancher W.W. Bogel, who lived to the north on Akomito Creek—acquired the land by 1915.

The Bogel sons established their ranch headquarters here. They began running stock on the once rich grasslands of the surrounding plateau, turning later to raising sheep and goats. In the years before the widespread use of barbed wire, stone fences helped manage the livestock, and the fences stand today as reminders of the Bogels’ enterprise. By 1923, the Chillicothe-Saucita Ranch exceeded 25,000 acres.

The Bogel brothers introduced their brides to this place and modified the complex to suit their growing families and ranching needs. Gus’s wife, Maude, remembered seeing Sauceda Ranch for the first time, describing it as “beautiful, [with] a running creek just in back of the house—and beautiful cottonwood trees on both sides of the stream. There were several places where natural waterfalls and clear deep pools with beautiful maiden-hair ferns were growing around the falls.” World War I interrupted the ranch’s calm when members of the Bogels’ men were called into military service. Drought forced the Fowlkeses off the land. But when the oil business, which helped finance Diamond A, was in a recession during the early 1980s, something had to change. Anderson sold half-interest to Walter Mischler, then the owner of Lajitas Resort, to market Big Bend Ranch as a private hunting preserve. In order to accommodate this new function, the partners made considerable changes to what is today the historic district.

Individuals and groups involved in land conservation in Texas worked for many years before TPWD was able to purchase the ranch in 1988 from Hondo Corporation and/or Texas Depository Libraries.

In accordance with Texas State Depository Law, this publication is available at the Texas State Publications Clearinghouse and/or Texas Depository Libraries.

TPWD receives federal assistance from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and other federal agencies. TPWD is therefore subject to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Age Discrimination and state anti-discrimination laws. TPWD will comply with the state and federal laws prohibiting discrimination based on sex, race, color, national origin, age, or disability. If you believe that you have been discriminated against in any TPWD program, activity or event, you may contact the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Division of Federal Assistance, 4801 N. Fairfax Drive, Mail Stop: MGSP-8103, Arlington, VA 22203, Attention: Civil Rights Coordinator for Public Access.

Early maps call this area Saucita—named for the willows growing around a spring that once flowed in the nearby arroyo. Its name evolved to “Sauceda” over time. One century ago, what we now call the historic district looked quite different: the buildings were fewer and less refined than today. Just fifty years ago, Sauceda was a shipping hub with many pens and corrals extending over several acres.
1. FOREMAN’S HOUSE
As the hub of daily operations for the Fowlkes Brothers and Diamond A Cattle Company, the foreman’s house sits on the location of the Bogels’ original stone carriage house expanded by the family into living quarters between 1917 and 1920. Graves and Mary Bogel moved into the enlarged space. Adobe brick and plaster were added during the 1940s when Preston Fowlkes occupied the house as ranch foreman. Other foremen followed him and continued to live in the residence.

The exterior adobe walls surrounding the yard were added in the mid 1970s. In early 2008 the structure was renovated, and today it serves as the residence of the superintendent of the Sauceda Unit of Big Bend Ranch State Park.

2. THE APARTMENTS
These structures were built during the 1940s as a commissary, a residence for the caporal (field manager), a garage, a residence for the cook, and a kitchen and informal eating area for the ranch hands. Working cowboys and their families purchased food and equipment at the commissary. The kitchen could feed many of the cowboys who lived on the open range, and it also housed some of the hands when they gathered at the headquarters during roundups. The building now serves as staff apartments and storage.

3. WOOL BARN
Constructed during the 1940s, the barn stored wool. At their most productive period, in 1955, the Fowlkes Brothers sold more than 200,000 pounds of wool—“the largest wool clip in the state of Texas.” The Fowlkeses eventually adapted the barn’s interior by building wooden stalls for their riding horses and milk cows.

The barn now stands empty, awaiting work that will help preserve it.

4. CORRALS
While stone and wood often formed early corrals, the ones you see are constructed of pipe. Anderson’s Diamond A Cattle Company built most of these corrals.

5. TACK ROOM AND BUNKROOM
Modified by the Fowlkeses and their workers during the late 1930s or early 1940s, this building housed the tack room and also functioned as a bunkroom. Having changed little during the past 70 years, the tack room serves its original purpose; the bunkroom now functions as storage.

6. THE MAIN HOUSE
Although the exact date of the house’s construction is unknown, the first recorded landowner, George A. Howard, probably built a structure in this area between 1905 and 1908. It may have been the core of either the main house or the foreman’s house. We do know that when the Bogel brothers acquired the property, they lived with their families in a structure believed to have been already standing on the property.

When Gus and Maude Bogel lived here, the house had only two bedrooms, a bathroom, and one fireplace located in the living room. The kitchen’s large wood burning range heated most of the house. Armchairs of upholstered leather and a large oak table furnished the living room where the Bogels played cards and listened to the phonograph.