

## SHERWOOD FOREST WEST

By W. W. Latimer

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What comes to mind when you hear “Sherwood Forest”? A beautiful forest? Robin Hood? Nottingham? An area of rich history in the English countryside? Well, Galveston County has its own Sherwood Forest nestled right here in Dickinson, with the same beauty, breathtaking enchantment and unique history.

Sherwood Forest West is a great subdivision with towering pines and lovely homes, but it didn’t start out that way. Here is a brief history of our Dickinson gem.

The first plat was approved in 1977 by League City, as Dickinson was not yet a city. Later, in 1978, it was approved by the Dickinson Planning Commission. Kirkwood Development Company was the owner and developer. A sales company, Bay Area Investment Corporation, was involved for a short time.

The subdivision’s streets were also completed in 1978, and, during the flood of 1979, all the streets were above flood water.

Unfortunately, at this time the subdivision was dormant and became a dumping ground. It was an eyesore, and going nowhere fast. The original covenants/restrictions from May 1979 were unsatisfactory, to say the least, and needed an upgrade. The new, revised restrictions were adopted in April 1979, at my insistence. The Board improved/revised the covenants/restrictions again in 2007, with approval by all of the residents.

I was a builder in Galveston, but lived in Dickinson and needed lots. During 1977, I watched the installation of the streets and utilities. I was impressed with the subdivision location and quality of the construction by Mischer Engineering. The developers had been successful in Houston, but I was not happy with the small lot sizes.

I agreed to purchase the first lots in 1980 if certain elements were completed and the streets were renamed, and more in keeping with the theme. Long Tom Drive became King's Court; Friar Tuck Circle was renamed Nottingham Lane; and Little John Circle was changed to Olde Oaks.

I closed on the first lots in January 1981 and began construction on the first home (now 620 Nottingham Lane) in the fall of 1982. Bill Cooke had agreed to build houses, as well, so 616, 620 and 703 Nottingham Lane were under construction at the same time. It took a lot of faith to construct homes at this time. Bill Cooke and I had to hire security personnel to keep looters away, and I wasn't sure of the future of the development. Dumping was still a problem and the developers did some cleanup. However, Bill Cooke built some great homes and that jumpstarted sales.

I completed construction of my home and we moved in just before hurricane Alicia in 1983. The storm made quite a mess of things, and we lost many trees, as well. Soon, Hometex and Southwest Custom Homes bought lots and constructed houses. Many were built in 1984 and 1985, but the 1985 recession slowed construction and many homes were in foreclosure. Hurricane Ike came along in 2009 and created destruction similar to Alicia. Then, tropical storm Harvey flooded about 24 of our homes in 2017. Still, Sherwood Forest West thrives and is a wonderful place to live.

What makes Sherwood Forest special is the variety of homes - one and two story homes with all manner of styles. Many were custom built by at least 18 different builders. Along the way, lots were often sold as larger lots by making two lots out of three.

The first Board held its inaugural meeting in 1986. At some point, approximately in 1989, new stop signs and stanchion monuments were installed, which added a nice touch. After 1990, concrete light poles were also added to replace the unsightly, originally installed wooden poles, as were additional street lights. The decorative entry lights and an irrigation system were added in 1990, as well. The HOA took over the maintenance of the sidewalks in about 2009. In 2011 the mailbox covers were constructed. The various HOA Boards were responsible for those improvements.

As part of the agreement to purchase lots, I required a nice entry monument. The entry monument installed in 1979 has served us well. Several attempts at entry landscaping were installed, and the final one, in 2015, is the best! Early on, one of our neighbors, Elaine Harpold, planted the two oak trees at the entrance. She grew them from acorns and they were 3' tall when she planted them. Elaine had to carry buckets of water to them to keep them alive.

A special resident, Carlos Clark, who does a lot of HOA maintenance, has been on the Board for many decades. He also maintains the Sunset Townhouses. That is important to our subdivision, and Carlos and his crew are a big help to many of our residents.

In 2015 the HOA acquired the north few feet of Sherwood Forrest Drive to prevent any future roadway, as well as traffic, coming to and from League City.

So, for a 40 year old neighborhood, Sherwood Forest West is very desirable because of the people who have lived here and good work by the HOA Boards.

We are a great neighborhood and we participate in national celebrations. The National Night Out is well attended each year. The Rotary Club Flag Fund Raiser really makes a statement, as the majority of the residents participate.