

Guiceland Cemetery Newsletter

April 2020

Jimmy's Mutterings

We are living in a new and constantly changing environment today. The Caronavirus (Covid 19) Pandemic has presented all of us with unprecedented challenges and changes in how we live. As of this date, the Annual Guiceland Memorial events are still scheduled to continue on Sunday, May 31. As the date nears, we will make the necessary announcements if we need to cancel this annual tradition. This decision will only be made after using an abundance of caution. Please consult the Guiceland Cemetery web site or contact a board member for updates near May 31, 2020.

Thinking about the possibility of cancelling the Guiceland Cemetery Memorial event, the annual meeting, the singing and the prayer service followed by dinner on the ground has emphasized for me the importance of this gathering. For each of us with family and friends buried at Guiceland, Memorial Day visitation is very meaningful (as well as other times of the year). I was reminded of the comforting atmosphere of Guiceland Cemetery while passing the cemetery on Valentine's Day 2020. I observed a gentleman in the old section, an open Bible was on a chair at the foot of the grave. After introductions he told me that he was visiting his wife, but that she requested no roses this year. The comfort we experience visiting our departed is one of many used for our beloved country cemetery.

Our thoughts and prayers are with anyone affected by Covid – 19.

Happy Trails,

Jimmy

Board Members

David Franklin

Christy Harris

Jim Gaines 361-215-7048 President

Jo Morehead Oster 903-764-5906

Donna Garrison McEwen

Rodney Roberson

Joe Garrison

Tracy Salmon – Secretary

George Wallace Vice-President/Caretaker 903-956-6117

Important Dates (Provided circumstances allow)

Work Day – Sat. May 2 at 9:00 AM

Memorial Day, Sunday, May 31 at 10:00 AM

HISTORY OF OLD GUICELAND AND UNION SCHOOL

By Calvin Duitch

According to the information handed down from old settlers, the first person interred in Guiceland Cemetery was an infant. Mr. W. F. (Uncle Billy) Brooks carried the box containing the body on his shoulder to the cemetery. The first adult to be put in the cemetery was Mr. George Brightman. The headstone shows he died in 1877. This pretty well establishes that Guiceland Cemetery originated about the year 1877. The Guiceland School was also there then. The first acre of land for cemetery and school was donated by Mr. Benjamin Jeremiah Howard Guice. Later on, Uncle Billy Brooks gave another acre where the building is and still later on, more land was obtained by Mr. Monroe Weisinger. In 1908 the Guiceland School District was abolished and part of it, (the part in Houston County) was annexed to Union School District which was now in existence.

As to the Union School, we cannot find the exact date it started but it was sometime in the 1890's, probably about 1891 or 1892. When the first school started, it was a one room affair build of rough lumber and this room never knew what it was to have a coat of paint. In the year 1908 another room was added and two teachers were employed. Then years later, a third room and teacher were added. Finally, as the years went on this entire building was demolished and a new modern three-room building was erected. This building was used until Union School was consolidated with Grapeland for the 1931-32 term. The average daily attendance at Union during its highest peak was possibly 75 or 80. This writer remembers one year that there were an even 100 pupils reported the first day but part of them dropped out after a few weeks. In those days there was much absence and the average daily attendance did not make any difference as to receiving state aid like it does today. Some mothers would keep the girls out a day each week to help with the washing and fathers would keep the boys out to maybe help with the hog killing, wood cutting, and plowing.

The first group picture made of Union pupils was in the Spring of 1909. The 36 pupils shown in this picture are as follows: Minnie Montgomery, Ida Smith, Nada Dubose, Johnnie Dubose, Adela Duitch, Lucille Kolb, Lillie Collins, Lucretia Collins, Pearl Ray, Ola Wells, Corrie Keen, Linnie Keen, Moselle Chaffin, Dora Gaines, Martha Gaines, Ima Walling, Mabel Morehead, Gracie Morehead, Carl Spruill, Frank Montgomery, Hiram Smith, Calvin Duitch, Coleman Ray, Curtis Walling, Jessie Caskey, Luther Caskey, Prewit Dubose, Felix Beeson, Bunk Beeson, Roy Morehead, Roy Caskey, Alva Caskey, Thomas Caskey, John Carter, Carlton Morehead, and Ben Keen. All these mentioned pupils were actually in the picture but we will have to add an asterisk here and mention Frank Caskey. Frank was too shy and all the coaxing from the teacher could not convince him to have his picture taken. He hid behind a large oak tree while the picture of the group was made. The teacher was Mr. Sam Duitch and one of the

trustees was Mr. Will Dubose, was there and you could not keep him out of the picture. Mr. Duitch also is in the group picture.

The first teacher at Old Union School was Mr. Jimmy Miles, followed by Miss Beulah Sheridan, Mr. Willie Kolb, and Mr. Sam Duitch. Other teachers after them (and I may not have them all listed here) were Miss Ethel Brawley, Miss Roxie Powers, Miss Ida Woodard, Miss Iva Sadler, Miss Inez Haltom, Miss Rosa Ford, Miss Alice Montgomery, Mr. Dayton Montgomery, Mr. Albert Gainey, Miss Ruth Branch, Miss Blue Belle Wills, Miss Emma Wallace, Mr. Curtis Walling, Miss Johnnie Dubose, Mr. Graton Streetman, Miss Norma Lee Pate, Miss Adela Duitch, Mr. Will Brannen, Miss Mabelle Brannen, Miss Pauline Brannen, Miss Blanch Kennedy, Miss Ollie Larue, Mrs. Lottie Sime, Mr. Frank Beathard, Miss Sammie Lee Woodard, Mr. & Mrs. Preston Wilcox.

When Mr. Preston Wilcox turned in his last report, that was it as for as Old Union School was concerned. That was the Spring of 1931. 'Twas such a sad day to break up the Old Gang.

Many thanks to Mrs. Nelda Guice Kent for sharing this information with us. You have our undying gratitude.

If any of you have pictures or other stories about our beloved cemetery, we would be honored if you would share it with us.



Mr. George Gaines and Mr. Isaac Newton Haltom 1957. Picture was given by Melba Haltom Wallace to be used in a newsletter.

Reminders from the Caretaker

Please remember to confirm your plot reservations. The "old system of marking you plot with corner stones has been abandoned since the markers can get lost in the sand. **ALL** reservations are recorded on the plat held by George Wallace. The plat will be available for your viewing May 31, 2020.

George must be contacted before placing markers and tombstones in the graveyard. George must be contacted as early as possible before a burial is to take place at Guiceland.

Guiceland Chapel and grounds may be reserved for family reunions, funerals, etc. by contacting George at 903-986-6617.

Please do not trim any shrubs or trees at Guiceland. Contact George and the appropriate measures will be taken.

If graves are not cleaned off after a funeral, wilted arrangements will be removed by a board member.

Other flowers will not be removed by any board member. Please remember that the wind does blow flowers around.

Donations to Guiceland

Donations may be made to Guiceland Cemetery Association, P. O. Box 571, Grapeland, TX 75844.

If you are interested in participating in the permanent fund, please contact Jimmy at 361-215-7048. Donations are tax deductible.

Recent burials at Guiceland

	DOB	DOD	Section	Row	Plot
Mary Morehead Rutledge	8/8/40	5/1/19	North	12	10
Billie Ann Mosley Coleman	9/7/34	6/12/19	Old	1	15
Anita Schultz	11/15/56	9-13-19	West	1	5
Bobby J. Callaway	11/6/36	9/13/19	Old	8	5
Kenneth Edward Prater	12/19/51	9/22/19	North	9	9
Annis H. Salmon	12/11/51	10/31/19	North	25	9
Davis Alsobrook	10/18/34	12/31/19	Old	4	58
Betty Oliver	12/3/32	3/9/19	North	1	3