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THE CEMETERY COUPLE OF SULPHUR SPRINGS

Tumbleweed Smith

Editors note: This article was written before James passed away, Dec. 8, 2024.

Annada Jones and her husband, James, are active citizens of Sulphur Springs. Annada has worked with the Civic Center and the Chamber of Commerce. James is involved with veterans' activities. Annada is a retired teacher. James worked for a company that makes valves for the oil patch.

"The Rockwell plant here supported me for 42 years," says James. I commented to him that after being there so long he could probably call his own shots. He replied with a gleam in his eyes, "No, but I knew where to hide."

Both Annada and James volunteer at the cemetery. Annada is on the cemetery board. James keeps up with cemetery data. A lot more than burials take place at the cemetery. "We like for people to come and enjoy the cemetery," says Annada. "It is really beautiful when the crepe myrtles are in bloom. They are everywhere. Everything is so nice and green. It's just a delightful place."

The ten-acre tract has more than 7,000 graves dating back to 1847. Annada says the first known burial was in 1830 but it's not marked. The cemetery has a beautiful chapel complete with air-conditioning, stained glass windows, a sound system and comfortable seating for at least a hundred. The building was temporarily used as a storage building for lawn mowers and other equipment until it was remodeled. It's a venue for weddings and other events. A re-enactment group tells about some of the prominent people buried there.

"They assume an identity and play the person who is buried there and talk about them," says Annada. "I read my kids at school a book one time that referred to the gravesites in Boston as the dead worthies of Boston. So I've always thought of this cemetery as the dead worthies of Sulphur Springs and Hopkins County." James was in the Army toward the end of the Vietnam war.

"I've been a lot better ex-soldier than I was a soldier," he says. "I was drafted and I was not happy and did just the minimum to get through without being court-martialed."

A few years after his discharge, James joined an American Legion Post and his patriotic fervor was revived. He helped put 800 flags on veterans' graves on Memorial day before that job was turned over to the Boy Scouts and the Marine League. He helps place wreaths on the graves of veterans around Christmas time. "We hope that a lot of people are touched by these things. It's a labor of love."

The Military Coalition is often called in to provide a military funeral to veterans.

"They do hundreds of ceremonial burials each year when they are invited. They have uniformed honor guards that are very practiced and they play taps."



Tumbleweed Smith



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Cindy Elder

Graveside service for Cindy Elder, age 82, of Longview, Texas will be held at 11 a.m. on Saturday, March 22, 2025 at Sulphur Springs City Cemetery with Rev. David Larkin officiating. Visitation will be held one hour prior from 10-11 a.m. at Myra Wilson Chapel. Ms. Elder passed away at Pine Tree Nursing Home in Longview, Texas on Tuesday, March 4, 2025.

Cynthia Brown Elder was born on June 18, 1942 in Lake Charles, Louisiana to Henry Nicholas Brown, III and Edna (Cole) Brown. She married James Everett Elder on December 31, 1961, and they were married 14 years. Friends remember enthusiastic conversations with Cindy, almost all of which included her boisterous laugh and big, warm smile. Cindy was very well-read and very knowledgeable. She probably read every book in the public library. She loved

EVERYONE but with that, had the slightest hint of "mischievousness" in her eyes and quite often too; that is what everyone loved about her. Cindy was involved in Y-Teens and a member of the Tau Delta Sigma Sorority in High School. She attended Lambuth College where she was a member of the Sigma Kappa Sorority. In her adult life, she volunteered at the Opportunity Center, First United Methodist Church, the Girls Scouts of America, and the Heritage Park & Museum all in Sulphur Springs. Cindy was a longtime member of the First United Methodist Church.

Cindy started every day off with a cup of coffee which she looked forward to every morning. Her favorite musical artists were John Prine, Meatloaf, Neil Diamond, and Kris Kristofferson. She enjoyed spending time with her grandsons and great-grandsons and trying new recipes. Cindy loved watching college basketball, especially during March Madness. She always cheered for the University of North Carolina as her father was an alumni and it was a family tradition.

Cindy is survived by her daughters, Kathleen Elder of Dallas, Texas and Connie Johnson of Longview, Texas; daughter-in-law, Stacy Borchard of Greeley, Colorado; grandsons, Trevor Johnson of Sulphur Springs, Texas, Tucker Johnson of Longview, Texas, Everett Elder (Conner) of Johnstown, Colorado, Wilson Elder of Greeley, Colorado; great-grandchildren, Granger Johnson, Landon Johnson, and their mother, Ashlyn Davis; niece, Amanda Beard of Delray Beach, Florida; and nephew, Billy Beard of Griffin, Georgia.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Henry Nicholas Brown, III and Edna Brown; son, Dr. James Everett "Jimmy" Elder, Jr.; and sister, Mary Jo Beard.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that you consider a donation to the First United Methodist Church at 301 Church Street, Sulphur Springs, TX 75482 or the Friends of the Library at 611 N. Davis, Sulphur Springs, TX 75482.



George Wayne Hines

Funeral services for George Wayne Hines, age 85, of Sulphur Springs were conducted at 2:00 p.m., on Monday, March 10, 2025 at West Oaks Funeral Home with Bro. Al Davis and Bro. Kenneth Ballard officiating.

Visitation was at 1:00 p.m., one hour prior to the service. Interment followed at Nelta Cemetery with Richard Francis, Darrin Hicks, Tyler Francis, Tyler G. Davison, Timmy Henderson and Michael Watkins serving as pallbearers. Honorary pallbearers will be David Gilmore, Sam Tatum, Eddie Northcutt, Art Trepainer, Charles Murray, Bobby Edge, Chris Childers, Gary Thompson and Jeff Williams. George passed away on Friday, March 7, 2025 surrounded by his family. George was born on July, 27, 1939 in Independence, West Virginia, the son of George Washington Hines and Arbutis Adaline Stonebreaker Hines. He married Lou Ann Burkhart on October 29, 1988 in Farmersville, Texas.

George worked for 32 years in Greenville at E-Systems/Ratheon/L-3 as an aircraft mechanic with FAA license and SR quality Eng. In his early years he enlisted in the United States Airforce and for 8 years he worked on aircrafts. He worked 4 years at Dallas Aira motive overhauling engines and 5 years at LTV in Grand Prairie as an aircraft mechanic and supervisor. He spent 2 and half years at China Lake N.W.C. in California in a government research program for the Navy. George also graduated from the police academy and worked 23 years at the police department as a reserve and security officer in Farmersville, Texas. In his spare time George taught CPR and First Aid. George loved Jesus and sang songs at church and at home. We know his pain is gone now and he is resting with his Lord and Savior.

In addition to his wife he is survived by his step-daughters, Janeen Francis (Richard), Becky Hicks (Darrin) and Patricia Roff (Andy), sister, Bonnie Stehlik, grandchildren, Magan Henderson (Timmy), Tyler Francis (Brooke), McKenzie Davison (Tyler) and Michael Watkins, great-grandchildren, Easley Henderson, Finn Henderson, Lincoln Rose Henderson, Maddox Francis, Addilyn Francis, Jaxsyn Francis, Owen Davison, Michael Watkins, Jr., and Makaylah Watkins along with numerous nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents, infant brother, sisters, Gloria Fay Ward Crowder and Velma Lee Miller, grandsons, Nathan Spataro and Jerry Watkins.

Memorial may be made to the Faith Fellowship Ministries, 991 CR 2389, Pickton, Texas 75471.

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Tam Stoker

July 2, 1958 — March 8, 2025

Sulphur Springs

Memorial service will be held at a later date for Tam Stoker, age 66, of Sulphur Springs, Texas.

Mr. Stoker passed away at Rock Creek Nursing and Rehabilitation Center in Sulphur Springs, Texas on Saturday, March 8, 2025.



Capri Brooks

Capri Brooks, passed away on Saturday, March 8, 2025, (formerly of Mount Pleasant, Texas), at the age of 40.

Capri was born on September 30, 1984, to Jack and Mary, in Hopkins County, Texas. She is a graduate of Sulphur Bluff High School.

Survivors include her father, Jack and Glenda Brooks of Hagansport; mother, Mary and Doug Austin of Remus, Michigan; brother, Dakota Brooks of Victoria, Texas; a special aunt, Sherri Thompson of Sulphur Springs, Texas, and numerous cousins and extended family members.

Visitation will be on Friday, March 14, 2025, at Sam B. Harvey Funeral Home, from 6-8:00 p.m. The Celebration of Life

Service will be on Saturday, March 15, 2025, at the Sulphur River Cowboy Church at 11:00 a.m. with Terry Bolton and

Henry Blackmon officiating.

In lieu of flowers, the family ask that donations be made to the Sulphur Bluff Scholarships — P.O. Box 2 — Sulphur Bluff, Texas 75481.

Services entrusted to Sam B. Harvey Funeral Home.



Judy Kay Sinclair Wetzel

June 16, 1950 — March 9, 2025

Sulphur Springs

Funeral service for Judy Kay Sinclair Wetzel, age 74, of Como, Texas will be held at 1:00 p.m. on Thursday, March 13, 2025 at First Baptist Church in Como, Texas. Interment will follow at Monticello Woodmen Cemetery (aka Woodmen of the World Cemetery) in Titus County. Visitation will be held from 6:00-8:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 12, 2025 at Murray-Orwosky Funeral Home in Sulphur Springs, Texas.

Mrs. Wetzel passed away at Christus Mother Frances Hospital in Sulphur Springs, Texas on Sunday, March 9, 2025.

Clifford Hill

August 17, 1951 — March 25, 2025

Sulphur Springs

Funeral service for Clifford Hill, age 73, of Sulphur Springs, Texas will be held at 2:00 p.m. on Thursday, March 13, 2025 at Murray-Orwosky Funeral Home in Sulphur Springs, Texas. Interment will follow at Mt. Sterling Cemetery. Visitation will be held one hour prior from 1:00-2:00 p.m. at Murray-Orwosky Funeral Home.

Mr. Hill passed away at Christus Mother Frances Hospital in Tyler.

Jane Newkirk February 3, 1941 - March 6, 2025 - Sulphur Springs

Jane Newkirk, age 84 of Sulphur Springs, Texas passed away at Sunny Springs Nursing and Rehabilitation in Sulphur Springs, Texas on Thursday, March 6, 2025.

Jane Faerol Newkirk was born on February 3, 1941 in Sulphur Springs, Texas to Truman and Vivian (Scott) Gullledge. She married James Newkirk in Sulphur Springs, Texas on May 31, 1960. Jane enjoyed sewing, and music, and could play many instruments. She loved raising chickens and had a smile that could light up a room. Jane played the piano and organ at many local churches as well as Forest Academy and in doing so met and became friends with people in the community. Jane enjoyed the "homemaker life" tremendously which included gardening, canning her vegetables, and caring for her many animals. She will be missed dearly by all who knew her.

Jane Newkirk is survived by her daughter, Erica Vaughn of Waianae, Hawaii; son, Walter Newkirk of Sulphur Springs, Texas; 8 grandchildren, and numerous great-grandchildren, nieces, and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Truman and Vivian Gullledge; husband, James Newkirk; daughters, Juanza George, Cheryl Morris, and Stacey Howk; grandson, John Allen Morris; and brother Thomas Gullledge.

The History Of St. Patrick's Day

Saint Patrick's Day, although a legal holiday only in Savannah, Georgia, and Suffolk County, Massachusetts, is nonetheless widely recognized and celebrated throughout the United States. It is primarily celebrated as a recognition of Irish and Irish American culture; celebrations include prominent displays of the color green, eating and drinking, religious observances, and numerous parades. The holiday has been celebrated in what is now the U.S. since 1601.

According to the National Retail Federation, consumers in the United States spent \$4.4 billion on St. Patrick's Day in 2016. This amount is down from the \$4.8 billion spent in 2014.

EARLY CELEBRATIONS

The first recorded St. Patrick's Day celebration in America was in St. Augustine, Spanish Florida, in the year 1600 according to Michael Francis's 2017 research. Francis discovered the first St. Patrick Day Parade was also in St. Augustine in 1601. Both were organized by the Spanish Colony's Catholic Irish vicar Ricardo Artur (Richard Arthur).

The Charitable Irish Society of Boston organized the first observance of Saint Patrick's Day in the Thirteen Colonies in 1737. Surprisingly, the celebration was not Catholic in nature, Irish immigration to the colonies having been dominated by Protestants. The society's purpose in gathering was simply to honor its homeland, and although they continued to meet annually to coordinate charitable works for the Irish community in Boston, they did not meet on 16 March again until 1794. During the observance of the day, individuals attended a service of worship and a special dinner.

New York's first Saint Patrick's Day observance was similar to that of Boston. It was held on 16 March 1762 in the home of John Marshall, an Irish Protestant, and over the next few years informal gatherings by Irish immigrants were the norm. The first recorded parade in New York was by Irish soldiers in the British Army in 1766. The first documented St. Patrick's Day Celebration in Philadelphia was held in 1771. Philadelphia's Friendly Sons of St. Patrick was found to honor St. Patrick and to provide relief to Irish immigrants in the city. Irish Americans have celebrated St. Patrick's Day in Philadelphia since their arrival in America. General George Washington, a member of Philadelphia's Friendly Sons of St. Patrick, actively encouraged Irish American patriots to join the Continental Army. In 1780, while camped in Morristown, NJ, General Washington allowed his troops a holiday on 17 March "as an act of solidarity with the Irish in their fight for independence." This event became known as The Saint Patrick's Day Encampment of 1780.

Irish patriotism in New York City continued to soar, and the parade in New York City continued to grow. Irish aid societies like Friendly Sons of Saint Patrick and the Hibernian Society were created and marched in the parades. Finally when many of these aid societies joined forces in 1848, the parade became not only the largest parade in the United States but one of the largest in the world.

The City of Savannah, Georgia, has hosted Saint Patrick's Day celebrations since 1824. It boasts a celebration rivaling that of New York City in size and fervor. Unlike any other cities, Savannah's historic parade is always held on March 17, not on the neighboring weekend. Festivities begin more than a week in advance with communal rituals and commemorative ceremonies, such as the St. Patrick's Parade. Such events were, in fact, the main factors in shaping Irish-American identity as recognized today.

MODERN CUSTOMS

The White River in Indianapolis is dyed green in celebration of St. Patrick's Day, 2015.

In every year since 1991, March has been proclaimed Irish-American Heritage Month by the US Congress or President due to the date of Saint Patrick's Day. Christian denominations in the United States observing this feast day include the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Episcopal Church (United States), and the Roman Catholic Church. Today, Saint Patrick's Day is widely celebrated in America by Irish and non-Irish alike. For most Irish-Americans, this holiday is both religious and festive. It is one of the leading days for consumption of alcohol in the United States, as individuals are allowed to break their Lenten sacrifices for the day in order to celebrate Saint Patrick's Day. Alcohol consumption levels vary by state. The consumption of artificially colored green beer is a common celebration. Green Beer Day, for instance, is a tradition among students at Miami University in Ohio dating to 1952; the day has been held on the Thursday before spring break due to the fact that Saint Patrick's Day often occurs during the spring recess. The holiday has been criticized for promoting over-indulgence in alcohol, resulting in drunk driving, property damage, absenteeism, public urination and vomiting, and other ill effects. A notable difference between traditions widely observed in the United States versus those of Ireland is the consumption of corned beef, which is not a traditional Irish dish, but rather one that was adopted by the new immigrants upon their arrival in the 19th century.

Many people choose to wear green colored clothing and items. Traditionally, those who are caught not wearing green are pinched "affectionately".

Seattle and other cities paint the traffic stripe of their parade routes green. Chicago dyes its river green and has done so since 1962 when sewer workers used green dye to check for sewer discharges and had the idea to turn the river green for Saint Patrick's Day. Originally 100 pounds of vegetable dye was used to turn the river green for a whole week but now only forty pounds of dye is used and the color only lasts for several hours. Indianapolis also dyes its main canal green. Savannah dyes its downtown city fountains green. Missouri University of Science and Technology - St Pat's Board Alumni paint 12 city blocks kelly green with mops before the annual parade. In Jamestown, New York, the Chadakoin River is dyed green each year.



The north White House fountain has been dyed green for Saint Patrick's Day every year since 2009.

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