

*Brazoria County Old Timers Association*

**50<sup>th</sup>  
Anniversary  
1940-1990**

**A Brief History  
of  
Brazoria County  
Old Timers Association  
and  
Camp Mohawk  
Gulf Coast Union  
Camp Meeting Association**

**Compiled by  
J. W. Moore**

# **50<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting**

## **Brazoria County Old Timer's Association**

### **Camp Mohawk**

**October 21, 1990**

#### **Program:**

<b>11:00 AM - 1:00 PM</b>	<b>Registration and Visiting</b>
<b>1:00 PM - 2:30 PM</b>	<b>Dinner</b>
<b>2:30 PM - 4:30 PM</b>	<b>Business Meeting</b>
	<b>Recognitions</b>
	<b>Presentation of Awards</b>
	<b>Special Music and Singing</b>
	<b>more Visiting and Adjournment</b>

#### **List of Directors**

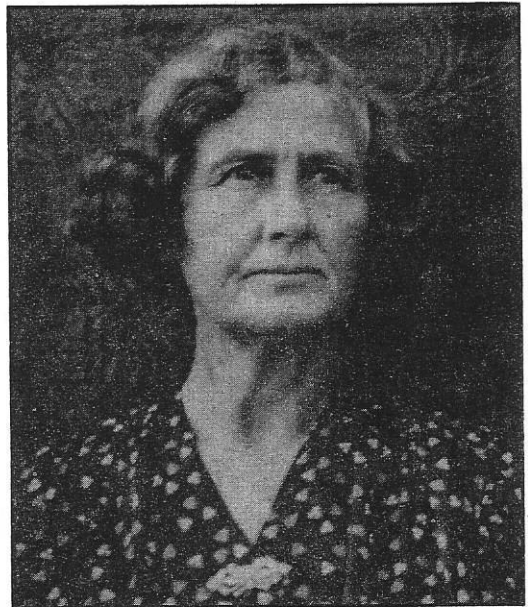
**Everett Crainer, President**  
**M.B. Ward, Vice President**  
**J.W. Moore, Secretary - Treasurer**  
**Allen Crainer**  
**Arthur Evans**

**Howard Glassford**  
**Olivia Hankamer**  
**Jerry Pryor**  
**Stanley Richardson**

## BRAZORIA COUNTY OLD TIMER'S ASSOCIATION

The Brazoria County Old Timer's Association was organized in 1940 for the purpose of having an annual reunion of all the Old Timers in the Brazoria County Community. There are no dues, membership fees, or charges for the dinner and everyone, regardless whether they are Old Timers and or new arrivals are welcome to attend.

The first meeting was a family reunion, held August 11, 1940, at the Gulf Coast Union Camp Ground, now called Camp Mohawk, by the Bud Callihan, Charlie Waltrip, and Josiah Parker families. Mrs. Bud Callihan, or "Virgie" as she was called, was the "organizer" that instigated and encouraged all of the kin folks and friends to come. There were around sixty-five to attend the gathering, and they all brought well-filled baskets of good foods and cold drinks for a full day of visiting, eating, singing, and playing games. The meeting was such a success that they decided to make it an annual affair. After much discussion, and a suggestion by Mr.



**MARTHA VIRGINA "VIRGIE" WALTRIP CALLIHAN**, born February 1, 1885, died March 7 1953, married A. "Bud" Callihan August 12, 1906, and they had the following children, Leone & Arsdell Callihan.

John Parker, they decided to invite all the friends and neighbors and make it a community meeting, rather than a family reunion. They also voted to call it the Brazoria County Old Timer's Association because so many of the members of the families of the Liverpool area were now living in other communities throughout Brazoria County.

Although the first meetings were held in August, they were later changed to September, and finally to October. Today the meetings are held on the third Sunday of October. The dinner, usually a barbecue, is served at 1:00 p.m. to allow the members to attend their regular church service before coming to the meeting. The Association furnishes the barbecue, bread, drinks, plates, and silverware, and the members are asked to bring a side dish of a vegetable, salad, or dessert. There is always a good selection and plenty to eat. No one ever goes away hungry.

The Association is governed by a board of directors elected by the members at the business session following the dinner at the annual meeting. The rules and by-laws of the Association are very "loosely" prescribed and there are no time limits on the terms of the directors. When they are elected to a position they usually hold it until they resign for their own personal reasons.

Mr. E. C. Kimmons was the first president of the board of directors, serving from 1941 to 1942. John Parker was the second president, serving from 1943 to 1947 and he was followed by Frank Booth who served from 1948 to 1959. Bob Lynch was then elected to serve from 1959 to 1970, when Nester Weiting took over the presidency and served from 1970 to 1974. Johnny Glassford was the next in line and he served as president from 1974 to 1977. Everett Crainer was elected president in 1977 and has served in that position to the present date, 1990.

It was impossible to get a complete list of all of the Vice Presidents that have served on the board because many of the early records were lost. We do have a fairly accurate record from 1955 to the present date. George Seibel was the vice president from 1955 to 1962, and Eddie Perrin filled that position from 1963 to 1966. Jerry Cooley was elected and served from 1966 to 1974. M.B. Ward was elected vice president in 1974 and has served in that office until the present date 1990.

Mrs. Virgie Callihan was the first secretary of the Association. She served from 1941 thru 1947, turning her records over to Mr. W.E. "Watt" Davis, the newly elected Secretary. Watt Davis served for several years before turning the records over to Mr. Jim Ward, who also served for several years, and unfortunately the records for those prior years were lost. In 1953 Mr. R.E. "Bob" Lynch was elected secretary and he served in that position until 1959 when Mr. S.S. "Shep" McKenzie was elected. Shep McKenzie served as secretary from 1959 to 1970, when he turned the records over to J.W. "Dub" Moore, who has served in that position to the present date, 1990.

At the seventh annual meeting which was held in 1947 it was decided that a barbecue would be served at the next meeting that was to be held in 1948. Mr. George Seibel volunteered to donate the beef and several of the other members said they would help with the barbecuing. This started a precedent that continued for several years. After it became impossible to find someone to donate the beef, the committee still did the barbecuing, but used a free will offering to purchase the beef. This procedure is still practiced today. Some of the men that have helped with the barbecuing were Dick Dawson, Johnny Glassford, Blackie Page, Bob Lynch, Dub Moore, Allen Crainer, Joe Harper Clement, Robert Sterken, Lonnie Thomas and many others too numerous to mention.

All of the annual meetings, except three, have been held at Camp Mohawk. One of the early meetings in the late 1940's was held in the grove of oak trees near the old dipping vat just west of Camp Mohawk because the camp was already booked for another group on that date. In 1958 it was held at the road side park on Highway 35 just across the road from Camp Mohawk, and in 1959 it was held at the American Legion Hall in Alvin.

Even though Virgie Callihan is not here with us today to help us celebrate the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Old Timer's Reunion, I am sure that she is with us in spirit and smiling with pleasure for the fifty years of successful activities of the Old Timer's meetings, and thankful that the descendents of the Old Timers are continuing to carry on the old traditions of family visitations and family love.



The 1990 Board of Directors of The Brazoria County Old Timers Association (L. to R.) Arthur Evans, Everett Cranier (President), Stanley Richardson, J. W. Moore (Secretary), Jerry Pryor, Olivia Hankamer, M.B. Ward (Vice President), Allen Crainer. (Not Pictured Howard Glassford)



## **CAMP MOHAWK**

### **GULF COAST UNION CAMP MEETING ASSOCIATION**

Camp Mohawk is a non-denominational church camp, originally called the Gulf Coast Union Camp Meeting Association, containing thirty-five beautifully wooded acres, a small horseshoe lake, a chapel, several dormitories, caretaker's house, swimming pool, kitchen, and numerous camping and picnic areas. It is located on the west side of Chocolate Bayou, and the north side of Highway #35, seven miles south of Alvin and three miles north of Liverpool.

The camp was first organized in 1929, and was the fulfillment of a dream of Mr. Andrew Moller. Andrew Moller was a native of the Liverpool area, having been born and raised on Austin Bayou, and was always active in the civic and religious activities of the community. It was his ambition to start a church camp meeting ground in this area similar to the Bloys Camp in Fort Davis which he and his family had attended numerous times, and he had been impressed so much during his visits there.

In the early part of 1929, Mr. Moller received a check for \$10,000.00 for an oil lease on some of his property near Austin Bayou, and he thought this was his big opportunity to use this money to purchase some land for a camp meeting ground. On December 21, 1929, he purchased the thirty-five acre tract from Mr. W.O. Stanley and immediately started improving it and getting it ready for use as a church camp.

The property was deeded to the trustees of the Gulf Coast Union Camp Meeting Association, with Judge A.R. Rucks of Angleton and Rev. N.R. Hawkins of Taylor, serving as temporary trustees until a meeting could be held and regular directors and trustees were elected.

Interest in the community was very high and friends and neighbors from far and wide came to help clean up and prepare the area for camp meetings. Dick Dawson, an Old Timer of this area, recalls helping dig the lake. He was working for Humble Oil Company at the time but was between jobs. He was contacted by George Seibel, who was at the time Brazoria County Road Commissioner, to help with the volunteer work. They were damming up a horseshoe lake and putting a levee around it, and since he had two teams of mules and did dirt work he volunteered. Some of the others that he remembered that also volunteered to help were Dan Roberson, Bernis Flora, Bully Callihan, Paul and John Ewing, George Seibel, John Crainer, Frank Booth, Alvin Jones, Ellis Callihan, Arsdell Callihan, Harold Johanson, Johnny Glassford, and many others too numerous to remember. They cleared the brush, built several bridges, and improved the road leading into the camp area. A dam was built across the heels of the horseshoe, forming a lake that was fed from several springs flowing into it. They eventually built a tabernacle, a kitchen, several cabins, a dormitory and a caretaker's house.

Because of the natural beauty of the spot, combined with the romance of its historic setting, it was a most fitting location for a church camp meeting site. The tall pine trees with their distinctive fragrance and cool shade on the bank of the bayou was very conducive to relaxation and religious meditation.



**WILLIAM ANDREW MOLLER**, born July 28, 1881, died February 21, 1975, married Mary Roseanna Hoskins January 30, 1901. They had the following two sons, Clarence Adrian Moller & Sydney Erle Moller

The Karankawa Indians were probably the first to use the site for their camp meetings. Evidence of their use of this area was shown by the finding of many arrow heads, pottery shards, and several large piles of buried oyster shells and animal bones, the remains of a feast or tribal ceremony. These finds were reported and verified by Arsdell Callihan, a native of this area who hunted and roamed along Chocolate Bayou as a boy exploring all of the creeks, frog ponds, swimming holes, and other points of interest to a young barefoot boy. Arsdell is the son of Bud Callihan, and the grandson of T.J. Callihan, a veteran of the Battle of San Jacinto, and one of the earliest settlers of Liverpool.

The first settlers of this area hewed clearings and built their homes along Chocolate Bayou and used the stream as a highway. A short distance further up stream from the camp site is a spot known since the early days as "Mill Crossing". A dam of logs was built across the bayou to form a mill pond and water spilled over to turn the great wheel that ran the saw mill. It was the only place the settlers could get lumber to build their homes other than having it shipped in from New Orleans, which was very expensive. At one time lumber was milled here and shipped to Mexico.

It is also rumored that in the early 1800's members of the pirates crew of Jean Lafitte came up Chocolate Bayou as far as Mill Crossing. Whether they came up land to search for fresh water and game supply, or they came to hide and bury their treasure, as some of the old timers firmly believe, we will probably never know. However it is factual that when the pirate Jean Lafitte, was banned by the U.S. Government and he had to leave Galveston Island and go to the Yucatan Peninsula, he left several of his members that eventually settled in the Liverpool area. Legend has it that old Captain Snyder who lived on Chocolate Bayou near the Amsterdam area was one of the pirates crew that was left behind. Some of the younger old timers, like Buck Callihan and Henry Clement, remembered and retold many of the old stories about the pirates and buried treasures on Chocolate Bayou.

In 1861, when Texas joined the Confederate States, the area was used for a Confederate Army Camp for training recruits from Brazoria County. Browns Company was stationed here for eighteen months and was later known as Bates Regiment, one of the most fearless and dashing regiments of the Confederate Army. The remnants of the old Army Post, especially the old barbecue pits and the old low-water bridge across the bayou were still visible in the late 1930's.

A camp site with that much history and that much natural beauty was bound to be a good site for a church camp, and Mr. Moller made it all possible.

On April 21, 1930, the first meeting was held with a big barbecue. Rev. Harry Knowles of the First Christian Church of Houston was the principal speaker. There were between 1200 and 1500 persons attending and at that time the directors and trustees were elected, and the organization was officially named the Gulf Coast Union Camp Meeting Association

Henry Clement, J.T. Loggins and W.A. Moller were elected trustees to replace Judge A.R. Rucks and Rev. N.R. Hawkins who were serving as temporary trustees. The Gulf Coast Union Camp Meeting Association was to be governed by a board of twenty-four directors, elected at the annual meeting, and to serve for a term of three years. It was purposely tried to have directors from each of the communities of the surrounding area. The directors normally met once a month, usually the first Monday night of each month, to handle the business and activities of the camp. Unfortunately we do not have record of all the names of those early directors who were elected.

The records of the Gulf Coast Union Camp Meeting Association were kept by the various secretaries, and unfortunately many of the early records were lost. We were able to find some information in the old Alvin Sun records regarding the names of the officers and directors, but it is not complete. With the help of some of the old timers still living today, we have come up with the following list:

**Trustees (three elected for term for life)**

Rev. N.R. Hawkins (temporary)	1929-1930
Judge A.R. Rucks (temporary)	1929-1930
Henry Clement	1930-1966
J.T. Loggins	1930-1942
W.A. Moller	1930-1966
E.C. Kimmons (replaced J.T. Loggins)	1942-1966

*In 1966 the Gulf Coast Union Camp Meeting Association was incorporated and trustees were no longer used.*

**Presidents of the Board of Directors****(List Incomplete)**

J.E. McCreight	1931-1932
R.F. Campbell	1933-
Earl McBride	1957-1958
W.A. Moller	1958-1959
E.C. Kimmons	1959-1963
J.W. Moore	1964-1966
Harold Hughes	1966-1971
Joe Peery	1972-1990

**Secretary and Treasurer****(List Incomplete)**

Henry Clement	1930-
Alton C. Arnold	1940-?
Adrian Moller, Jr.	1958-1959
Tom Blakeney, Jr.	1959-1990

**Caretakers**

J.D. Fagan	1936
George Seibel	1937-1956
W.C. "Blackie" Page	1957-1966
Ernest Allen	1969-1970
Nancy Langford	1970-1971
E.C. Gill	1971-1972
Gerald Haschke	1973-1990

**Present Directors**

Joe Peery	(President)
Stanley Richardson	(Vice President)
Tom Blakeney, Jr.	(Secretary Treasurer)

George Arth  
Kenneth Bayam  
Everett Crainer  
Arthur Evans  
J.R. Grupe  
Lee Hearne  
J.C. Hering, Jr.  
Lowell Herndon  
Laddie Korenek

Virgil McDonold  
Edward McKellop  
Coy Mitchell  
Gary Morris  
C.P. Munz  
George Nichols  
Terry Nolen  
James H. Stanley

### Some of the Past Directors

G.W. "Billy" Abbott	Sam Lee	J.A. Sherrick
Judge Alton C. Arnold	J.T. Loggins	Walter Snider
Tom Blakeney, Jr.	R.E. "Bob" Lynch	Clifford Stephens
Herman Booth	W.H. Martin	Lonnie C. Thomas
Stacy Botter	Earl McBride	J.R. Watts
R.F. Campbell	J.E. McCreigh	Max Wollam
Ben D. Cannan	Virgil McDonold	Ora Wollam
Henry Clement	S.S. "Shep" McKenzie	Clyde Wooster
Leslie Clement	August H. Miller	
Elzie Copeland	Herbert R. Miller	
Clyde Crow	C.A. "Andrew" Moller	
Monroe Davis	W.A. "Adrian" Moller	
Kenneth Doty	W.A. "Adrian" Moller, Jr.	
Otto Eberspacher	Homer Jean Moore	
B.D. Flora, Sr.	J.W. Moore	
Marvin Ford	Oscar Morris	
Johnny Glassford	Guy Myrick	
Judge L.R. Goff	M.A. Oliver	
Judge Thurman Gupton	Bob S. Owen	
Ed Hillyer, Sr.	W.C. "Blackie" Page	
C.B. Holdorff	Al Pruett	
Harold H. Hughes	Clark Roberts	
Ted Hermann	O.V. Robinson	
Lowell Herndon	Judge A.R. Rucks	
H.J. "Pat" Hudson	Lloyd Seabolt	
John Jennings	George Seibel	
Donald King	Harry Shriver	
E.C. Kimmons	A.L. Sharkey	

During the 1930's and early 1940's the camp was very active and usually had a well attended meeting on Christmas, Easter and Thanksgiving, as well as the annual summer meeting. As time went by, the interest seemed to decline, and the activities at the camp were fewer and less attended. Perhaps it was due to the economy or the war scare in Europe, but never the less, the attendance and activities of the camp steadily declined.

In 1944 the Gulf Coast Union Camp Meeting Association entered into a twenty year lease agreement with the Bay Area Boy Scout Council for the camp to be jointly used by the Boy Scouts for training and camping programs. The camp was in pretty bad shape at that time, and the scouts did a lot of volunteer work in cleaning up the brush and weeds and making more camping sites. The Scouts also built a large swimming pool that was quite an attraction for the camp. During the 1940's and 1950's Camp Mohawk was so active and such a popular camp for the Boy Scouts that most people began to think of it as a Boy Scout Camp instead of a church camp. When the lease expired in 1964 the Scouts did not renew it, and since that time have used it very little.

In 1965 a new chapel was built to replace the old tabernacle, and on July 25th the Andrew Moller Chapel was dedicated with a memorial service held in honor of Andrew Moller and in memory of Henry Clement and E.C. Kimmons, two faithful workers of the Camp who had passed away since the last annual meeting.

In 1957 Mr. Andrew Moller returned to this area after being away for about fifteen years in West Texas, Oklahoma and Arkansas. He immediately became active again in the functions and management of the camp for the next ten or twelve years. Rose Hoskins Moller, his wife, died June 8, 1964, and Andrew died February 21, 1975, and they are both buried in the Danbury Cemetery.





## **Camp Meeting Ground On Chocolate Bayou Is Center Of Historic Area**

**Confederate Soldiers Trained - And Half Starved There;  
Legend Has It Pirates Anchored Ships At Site**

*Article from Sunday, July 26, 1936 issue of the Houston Post; by Flora Humphires*

The annual Gulf Coast Union Camp Meeting carries on at a beautiful spot in the deep woods, where tall pines are mirrored full length across a horseshoe lake and clutching grapevines sweep from tree to tree above the dark current of Chocolate Bayou.

In the shadow of a log an alligator lifts his ugly snout but submerges it hastily when the clang of an iron bell echoes through the trees. A flivver, loaded with late arrivals, chugs along a shell road and halts at the door of the tabernacle. A piano sounds. Fervent voices ring out across the wilderness, singing the same words which comforted the pioneers one hundred years ago, "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound, That saved a wretch like me."

The property of the Camp Meeting Association includes 30 acres of woodland with the horseshoe lake; a large, well equipped, all-weather tabernacle, screened and electrically lighted; a mess hall and kitchen; shell roads; cabins for campers, and boats on the lake. Nearly all of this has been made possible by the efforts and generosity of the Mollers, a family prominent in South Texas ranching annals since an early day.

### **Austin Rested Here**

It is fitting that this particular spot be selected for a yearly pilgrimage to mingle creeds and return to the faith of our fathers, for along this section of Chocolate Bayou were played many significant episodes of Texas' past century.

While Stephen F. Austin charted the coast country for his first colonists, snorting mustangs, with manes atoss, galloped over the prairies. Great naked Carancahuas waded Chocolate Bayou and left piles of oyster shells where they had gorged prodigiously.

On a hot summer day the colonizer urged his weary pony through a forest of pines along Chocolate Bayou, skirting an ancient horseshoe bend of the stream which had been cut off from the main course by a long-forgotten flood. Austin doffed his hat, shifted his powder horn and threw himself down to rest on the sweet scented carpet of pine needles.

Aisles of pines stood as straight and tall as the nave of a great cathedral. Gulf breezes sighed through their boughs like the opening breath of an organ. While the Father of Texas relaxed aching muscles, another dream took shape. "What a wonderful site for a camp meeting ground," he thought.

### **Mill Was Built There**

Many of the first settlers of the coast country hewed clearings and built their log cabins along Chocolate Bayou, using the stream as a highway.

<sup>1</sup> A score of bends above the camp meeting ground is a spot known since the earliest days as Mill Crossing. A dam of logs was built across the bayou and water spilled over to turn a great wheel which creaked and creaked while it ground corn for the settlers.

Below the dam was a crossing with wheel marks deep in the bank, where a dim trail passed across the prairies from the Brazos Bottom toward Galveston. Down the ruts of this old road stumbled terrified women and

children, clutching a few cherished possessions, while they fled from Santa Anna's army before the Battle of San Jacinto.

### **Confederate Camp**

"Uncle Dan" Moller tells fascinating tales of when the present camp meeting ground was used as a training camp for Confederate soldiers. One of their barbecue pits can still be seen near the bank of the bayou. Two great pines have grown up from its bottom, where weary men in gray once raked live oak coals and watched hungrily while simmering quarters of beef turned brown.

A few yards from the old barbecue pit the bayou bank is worn far down, showing that at that spot there was once a crossing. At that point the Confederates built a crude, short bridge which barely cleared the water. Logs of the old bridge are buried in the mud. Sometimes when the current is low, their ends can be seen, still pointing as bravely across the stream as they did when Lee surrendered.

"Uncle Jess" Brunner of Alvin says that the Confederates camped on Chocolate Bayou were known as the "Buttermilk Cavalry." He remembers that when he was a boy he saw high log pens which they had left in the woods.

### **Spent Time Foraging**

There was no fighting to be done and rations were low, so the soldiers spent their time in foraging. Possums and rabbits were trapped and roasted. Persimmon thickets were shaken for fruit. Belts were tightened. The hungry men built log pens into which they chased wild cows and tied them down so they could be milked. The long-horned, wild-eyed creatures bawled and fought as long as they could stand. Settlers complained bitterly that they had to get up long before day to prevent the soldiers from milking their best cows. "Don't leave anything loose," they would say, "or the Buttermilk Cavalry will carry it off."

The soldiers made love to all the pretty girls along Chocolate Bayou but the bulk of flattery went to the best cooks. Dreams of savory dishes were as effective as the Blarney stone. Many pies and cakes were slipped through back doors to hungry but silver-tongued swains.

### **Played While Asleep**

Between Mill Crossing and the camp ground is the old <sup>2</sup>Callihan place, settled a hundred years ago, now ghostly and deserted. From there the famous Will Callihan set out with his fiddle under his arm to play at many dances. According to Uncle Jess Brunner, he was the best fiddler in all the coast country. "He could go to sleep and keep right on playin' and patten' his foot. Lots of times we had to wake him up to get him to change his tune."

Downstream from the camp ground is old Liverpool, one of Texas' earliest ports. To its wharf clipper ships and steamboats made regular trips to be loaded with cotton and sugar from slave-time plantations.

One day a schooner nosed up to the noisy landing and waited while freight was transferred. A man lay on deck groaning and burning with a strange fever. With animal instinct for relief the sufferer crawled into the shallow water and covered himself with cool mud.

### **Brought Yellow Fever**

In a short time he was dead. Liverpool citizens buried him in a shallow grave near the bayou, but he was long remembered, for he had brought yellow fever to Chocolate Bayou.

Between the chaotic reconstruction period following the war between the states the Brazoria County Prairie Rangers policed against marauding ex-slaves. Dark figures slunk through the deep woods. By leaping firelights grim vigilantes dealt swift justice under the pines.



Long after reconstruction had passed and the war had become a dim memory, camp-fires again flared in bivouac on Chocolate, for the John A. Wharton Camp of United Confederate Veterans journeyed to the camp ground for annual reunions. Tottery old gentlemen with long gray beards shook canes under one another's noses and argued long and loud about how much blood they had spilled at Appomattox.

### **Lafitte's Pirates**

Annals of Chocolate Bayou are not complete without the mention of pirates. Back in 1818, while Lafitte and his bloody buccaneers pillaged the coast, they often entered Chocolate Bayou to rest, to wait for victims and, according to many legends, to bury their loot.

A few aged residents of the lower prairies tell of old Captain Snyder, a member of Lafitte's crew who was left behind when the pirate chief sailed to Yucatan. The old man had a mysterious source of income and it was believed that he had access to buried treasure. He told stories of hand-to-hand battles with dripping cutlasses, when blood ran off the decks like water and enemies' bodies were booted into the sea. He told that pirate vessels often slipped into the quiet reaches of Chocolate Bayou to wait for their prey.

### **Hard Work for Two Coins**

Uncle Jess Brunner tells of a week, long ago, when he was a member of a treasure hunting party who had a "sure tip" on the location of Captain Snyder's gold. Studying an old ragged chart, they measured and dug and measured again. When two old Spanish coins came to light they were jubilant and worked with feverish haste. They dug over a wide territory but no more money was found and they finally abandoned the search with two rusted coins, ruined clothes and several dozen blisters.

For more than a century hopeful souls have dug along Chocolate Bayou in search of Lafitte's gold. But the pirates and their bloody cutlasses have vanished across the bar and now Methodists, Baptists, and Presbyterians are tenting the old camp ground. Instead of "Yo ho and a bottle of rum," "Onward Christian Soldiers," echoes through the pines.

The right Rev. Clinton S. Quin, Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Texas, discards clerical attire and tries to start a game of pitching horseshoes in the shade of a spreading oak. Perhaps in the sand below his feet there lies a chest of doubloons and pieces of eight, rusted black from pirates' blood.

### **References:**

- |           |          |  |
|-----------|----------|--|
| (Page 12) | <b>1</b> | The mill was first built and used as a saw mill in the 1830's by the Warren D.C. Hall family to produce lumber from the large stand of pine trees on Chocolate Bayou which were the only pine trees in the Austin Colony. The lumber was not only used locally for the building of homes, but it was also shipped and sold in Mexico. Texas was a part of Mexico at that time. It is possible and very likely that after the timber played out the mill was converted to a grist mill and used for grinding grain. |
| (Page 13) | <b>2</b> | The Olds Callihan place is located between the Camp Ground and Liverpool (which is South of the Camp Ground) and not between the Camp Ground and Mill Crossing (which is North of the Camp Ground).  |



## **Brazoria County Camp, Now Popular Retreat, Is On Site Of Civil War Training Center**

*Article Clipping from sometime around 1940 by Edith L. Shanklin*

About 35 miles from Houston, where the training camp of Brazoria County was stationed during the war between the states, another camp is growing into existence. The same giant live oak stands in regal dignity on the outskirts of the new one.

Henry Austin Perry of Angleton, great nephew of Stephen F. Austin and lifelong resident of Brazoria County remembers the former camp. Filling his pipe as he sat in an old hickory rocker on his wide shady veranda, he recalled how his county reacted to the news of the ratifications of the ordinance favoring secession in February 1861.

"To a man," he stated proudly, "the youths of Brazoria answered their state's call. Almost over night a camp sprang up on the grounds about four miles from Liverpool. Here Brown's company was stationed over a period of 18 months. Raw recruits, boys scarcely out of their teens, were trained and drilled. They became known as Bate's Regiment, one of the most fearless and dashing regiments of the South."

### **Is Presented Slave.**

Mr. Perry paused in retrospection. "My father served as colonel out there until he was transferred to Bragg's regulars in Louisiana. Just before leaving he made me a present of Joe Lee, a slave boy about my age. "Don't forget, Henry is you master," my father told him, "and watch over him until I get back." Joe obeyed. He still is alive, and I believe," he confided proudly, "that we are the only living master and slave."

Because of the natural beauty of this spot, combined with the romance of its historic setting, W. Andrew Moller, a prominent ranchman of Danbury, selected it as a most fitting location for a camp meeting site and purchased it with a large adjoining tract in 1929.

Several years before, Mr. Moller had become interested in the Aloysius Camp at Fort Davis, and since then had cherished a dream that some day there would be a similar camp built for the Gulf Coast country. Judge A.R. Rucks of Angleton and Rev. N.R. Hawkins of Taylor served as temporary trustees until the land could be purchased, a meeting held, and permanent officers elected.

A dam was built across the two heels of the horseshoe, and here, feeding from live springs emptying into it, a lake was formed.

### **First Meeting**

On April 21, 1930, a one-day meeting with a big barbecue was held. Rev. Harry Knowles of the First Christian Church, Houston, was the principal speaker. There were between 1220 and 1500 persons present and at that time the name "Gulf Coast Camp Meeting Association" was chosen and officers were elected.

On a low hillside jutting into the lake a tabernacle was built. Dr. T.W. Currie, president of the Theological Seminary at Austin, preached the dedicatory sermon. Two large dormitories and several smaller cabins were built, a well drilled and a kitchen and dining hall added.

The kitchen is fitted up with an old-fashioned wood range and two deep pits. The annual camp meeting usually closes with a basket picnic and barbecue.

Just beyond the pits are heavy timbers, worm eaten and rotten, remains of a bridge over which troops and artillery were moved.

### **Interest Growing**

Interest in the camp meeting has been spreading throughout the state. Bishop Clinton S. Quin of the Episcopal diocese of Texas, Dr. E.M. Munroe of the Second Presbyterian Church, Houston; Rev. Franklin Henderson, Central Park Presbyterian; Dr. M.M. Wolf of South Main Baptist, Houston, as well as many other prominent ministers of Texas have actively assisted in meetings held there.

In addition to the annual camp meeting, the Brazoria County Austin Endeavor Union holds its regular meetings there. The intermediate camp of Brazos Presbytery had been held there for three years. At these meetings it is commonly spoken of as "Camp Mohawk."

Preparations for early summer meetings already have begun. A deep washout has been filled, holly trees transplanted in a "holly row."

Rev. Monroe Vivion of Central Methodist, Houston, feels confident the Gulf Coast Camp has a great future. "It can render a real service," he said, "and increasingly we shall go aside to such places of peace and quiet, dedicated to God's service for the enrichment of our lives."

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## **"EARLY MEMORIES OF THE CAMP MEETING GROUNDS"**

*By A. A. Callihan*

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In his "Memories of an Old Cow Hand," an autobiography by William Andrew Moller, he notes briefly on page 74 his sponsorship and development of the camp ground now known as Camp Mohawk on Chocolate Bayou north of Liverpool. He merely states that in 1929 he was paid \$ 10,000.00 for a mineral lease on 40 acres he owned in the Towsey Survey (near Austin Bayou and Danbury), and that he decided to devote it to a camp ground for Christian service. He names its general location with bare mention of its development and operation.

What a pity he didn't go into greater detail! The project came at the time the economy was going into a nose dive following the 1929 stock market crash. Equipment and employees were recruited mainly from the Liverpool area, with Alvin, Angleton and Danbury being represented to some extent in the work force. It was a welcome source of some hard-to-come-by dollars.

Some background on the site of the endeavor fits into the overall history of Liverpool. The property was adjacent to Chocolate Bayou at a location strictly "in the raw" and unfamiliar to anyone, other than cowboys, coon hunters, bullfroggers, and wood haulers. It contained what those who were "woods-wise" know as "Horseshoe Lake" - a good place to harvest frog legs. There people thought of it as being somewhat south of "Mill Crossing," a former fording point of the bayou. It was also north of the "mouth of Kornegay Gully," which runs near the present J.W. Moore home, and used to be a good perch fishing stream. (The stream was named for a family who lived nearby whose homesite is probably still marked by crepe myrtle shrubs over a hundred years old. In fact, Mr. Kornegay is buried not far from Mr. Moore's back door).

One other land mark south of "Horseshoe Lake" and "Kornegay Gully", is "Tar Kiln Gully" which crosses road 192 and runs near the former T.B. Williams homesite. This stream took its name from a pine pitch processing operation near its mouth at least 100 years ago. For many years brick fragments could be seen at the site,

In 1929 the present highway had not been started. Horseshoe Lake was accessible only by winding wagon trail cleared and maintained open by wood haulers. Wood hauling was mainly by local, scattered residents for their own use in cookstoves and heaters. Much of the timberland was fenced at this time. Any fencing was usually by local owners or lessors who didn't deny their neighbors access for wood hauling, wild plum gathering, or hunting.

When work began on the camp meeting site it was possible to get teams of work animals in along with plows, slips, and fresnos for earth loosening and moving - horsepower and manpower. (No boys need apply - except for clearing out roots). There may have been an old Fordson tractor on the job. Much thinning out trees and underbrush was necessary to make room for buildings and camping area. A roadway had to be cleared through the timber and continued westward across the prairie to what is now County Road 193. That old camp ground road is now County Road 192. There were no chain saws at that time leaving all clearing work to be done by hand. Stumps in the roadway were blown out with dynamite. Harold Johansen and Johnnie Glasford worked that project.

Since the "Lake" was merely an old horseshoe loop bend of the bayou which had been cut off by nature's straightening process, it was shallow and sometimes went dry. The plan was to make it a lake of standing, deeper water mostly surrounding an oval peninsula of natural growth on which a "tabernacle" was to be built. This meant that extensive earth fills would have to be made on the two out-flows of the lake. First timber clearings began on the areas where soil was available for these fills. Men, animals, and equipment combined for days to accomplish this task. Elbridge (Bully) Callihan guided this operation. Completion of the dams and lakeshore clearing provided right-of-way for a driveway around the lake, with an entrance way between the dams to the tabernacle area.

By this time things were ready for Henry Clement to bring in material and his crew to begin work on the tabernacle and other needed structures. Throughout all of this activity Mr. Andrew Moller was staying in close touch, often accompanied by his father "Uncle Dan". N.R. Hawkins, then minister to the Angleton Presbyterian Church, stayed closely in contact with the project. Another minister by the name of Streeter frequented the site.

It was Mr. Moller's wish that the facility be constituted for non- or inter-denominational worship services. Consequently it was named "Gulf Coast Union Camp Meeting Association". The tabernacle dedicatory banner bore a portion of the King James version of John 10:16; - "And there shall be one fold and one shepherd."

There were scheduled services and the tabernacle rafters and the surrounding woodland rang with good sermons and good singing. Some families arranged to build camp cabins for convenience during camp meetings. This practice was abandoned as it was feared that too many such building would detract from the intended atmosphere of the site.,

Early enthusiasm for the project did not endure and after the first few years scheduled services became sporadic and not well attended. There was at least one Chocolate Bayou overflow due to heavy rains that flooded the area and buidings, causing considerable damage.

Later, while retaining the right to use the facility for its original purpose, the directors granted the Boy Scouts access for use as their Camp Mohawk.

It needs to be noted here that the name "Camp Mohawk" was not originally applied to the Gulf Coast Union Camp Meeting Associations' grounds. The Boy Scouts used that name in accordance with their tradition of often adopting Indian tribe names for their activity sites, Camp Karankawa, for instance. The cute little story that "Mohawk" was arrived at by combining parts of the names of Moller and Hawkins, is just that - a story. Anyone who knew those men would know that they would have been embarrassed and aghast at the idea of having their identities incorporated in the name of the selfless endeavor they were promoting!

The name has stuck and a voting precinct number is now listed under that name, for the attractive subdivision which has sprung up in the beautiful timbered area adjacent to "The Camp Meeting Grounds". This development and easier access to the Camp Meeting Grounds was made possible by the near access to the rerouted Highway 35 between Alvin and Angleton.

At the time work was begun on "The Camp Meeting Grounds." there were close ties by blood and marriage - and friendship - among many of the families living in Alvin, Manvel, Liverpool, Danbury, Angleton, and the rural areas of northern Brazoria County. Through such relationships Mr. Moller was widely known in that area. It was not surprising, then, that the project he was sponsoring attracted wide attention among those people.

Early - on, interested kinsmen and friends visited the site to observe and help. This led to "dinners - on - the - grounds, with family mini-reunions and renewal of friendships. This kind of use of the grounds was, from the beginning, welcomed and carried over into the time following the completion of the project, There were gatherings for a meal and a day-on-the-grounds at times when there were no other activities scheduled.

Those earlier gatherings were small, simply word-of-mouth get - togethers without any kind of organization or schedule. They were, however, the nuclei which gave growth to the point where an enterprising group made up of representatives from Alvin, Manvel, Liverpool and the old Parker neighborhood, at one of the meetings, held an organizational session which resulted in a slate of officers and the simple name, "Old Timer's Reunion." with planned annual meetings,

Publicity and scheduling resulted in increased attendance. Beeves were donated and barbecuing was done on the ground. Ellis Callihan headed up the early cooking crews which would spend the night before meetings over an open earthen pit glowing with oaken embers. Those attending brought all the trimmings for the meeting day "feed".

All of this goes back more than fifty years. In the meantime, descendants of those original "Old Timers" have scattered to all parts of Brazoria County, and beyond—and they keep coming back in increasing numbers to the annual meetings. It became necessary to go to catered barbecuing with membership donations to cover the cost. A bountiful supply of supplemental goodies is still the pride of the attending ladies. The name of the organization has had to be extended to "Brazoria County Old Timer's Reunion".

In the years since the Boy Scout relinquished their Camp Mohawk, the annual meeting of the Old Timer's has been the main use of the facility.

The highway sign at the entrance to these old grounds says "Camp Mohawk", but to die-hard old timers it is still "The Camp Meeting Grounds".

Now a personal note: - I grew up within teenagers walking distance of "Horseshoe Lake", I have set foot, many times, on most of the timbered area I have mentioned in this article. I helped with the site work while Gulf Coast Union Camp Meeting Association grounds were being developed. I knew Mr. Moller from my childhood and was well acquainted with N.R. Hawkins., I was a charter member of The Gulf Coast Union Camp Meeting Association. I attended services there. I have attended most of the Old Timer's Meetings since the one when they organized.