

Written In Stone

By Sherry Johnston

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Introduction

Historic cemeteries are found in every community across Alabama, whether rural or urban areas. They are in thickets so dense you can't see them; copses of trees in an open field; in the churchyard or old family home place; or right in the middle of the town.

Cemeteries provide an excellent opportunity to tell the life story of a community, providing insights into our past and windows to our future.

Many cemeteries are well maintained; taken care of by family, churches, historical societies or a town.

Benjamin Franklin said that you can tell the nature of man by how they take care of their cemeteries. We show our pride in community, respect of our elders, and care of the legacy of our community by how we treat the final burial places of our dead. There are just as many, if not more, cemeteries that are endangered by vandalism, neglect, encroachment or destruction by larger companies.

Several organizations are actively working to protect and preserve the historic cemeteries of Alabama. The Alabama Historic Commission; the Alabama Cemetery Preservation Alliance; and the Canebrake Historical Society are just three that are working locally to bring respect and recognition to our cemeteries.

More help is needed if we are going to preserve for future generations the Heritage of our community. It's going to take sincere dedication, some muscle, money and a willingness to look beyond who might be buried in these places; and respect for all of the people in all of the county.

As the Conecuh representative of the ACPA, I have the honor and privilege of identifying, researching, locating and helping to protect and preserve our cemeteries. I need the help of every citizen: taxpayer, governing leader, congregation, property owner- all of you. You may reach me at (251) 578-2670 or email me at canebrakesociety@yahoo.com if you have information about a cemetery in Conecuh.

Conecuh presently has six cemeteries named to the AHC's Historic Cemetery Register: Ward-Witherington & Witherington Family Cemeteries (Nov 2005); and most recently, Antioch-Rabb; Calloway Hodge Stallworth; Evergreen (aka Greasy Bottom); and the Old Historical Evergreen Cemeteries.