

Written In Stone

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Arkadelphia Cemetery

When researching the history behind the cemetery, it's important to remember that a cemetery is a history of people. The cemetery serves as a perpetual record of yesterdays and a sanctuary of peace and quiet today. A cemetery exists because every life is worth loving and remembering always.

Studying the migratory patterns of many of the earliest settlers in AL and Conecuh County, we find that many of these families can also be found first in the Carolinas, VA and GA. In many instances, entire neighborhoods moved together to the new territory in the early 1800's, creating communities, and forming relationships that would last a lifetime and generations to come.

In a previous column, we explored the history of the Bedingfield/Martin/Riley Cemetery located on the Loree Road; with the various family connections being explained. We find marriages that inter-connect many of the same families that came originally from upper America, and before that, from across the great oceans to the New Land. Many of these same families can be found in the Arkadelphia Cemetery. That church was organized about 1845 and many of those who lived on this side of Belleville or Burnt Corn chose the Arkadelphia Community as their home, worshipping at the local Baptist Church, going to school in the Loree area schools, and finally being laid to rest in the church cemetery. At Arkadelphia, you will find a nice chain link fence surrounding this well-maintained cemetery, with neat rows of headstones and concrete slabs, flowers adorning the graves of loved ones and some angels standing guard over those who once walked among us.

I've been doing some additional research for the Bedingfield/Martin/Riley Cemetery, as we discovered more graves in the woods nearby and several of these same families once lived side by side, all enjoying the wonderful community of Arkadelphia, with later generations being buried in their cemetery. I'd like to ask you to contribute to the Cemetery History Files by sending us any information you may have on the families that are interred at either of these two cemeteries. If you know of a cemetery in Conecuh County that you'd like to see featured in this weekly column, I encourage you to contact me and let's see what we can find out together on it!