

Written In Stone

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Hampden Ridge / Sandbar Cemeteries

Heading south on US 31 from Evergreen towards Castleberry, past the Fairview community, you can turn right on CR 17 where a sign points you to a small African American church called Hampden Ridge Baptist. The church is located directly across from one of the oldest known cemeteries in Conecuh: Ashley-Suddith-Thomas Cem., and sits on the corner of an un-paved road known locally as the George Pate road. Turning right on the dirt road, around the corner, on the right side of the road, is the church cemetery, where old oak trees surround this cemetery, with fresh bouquets, and artificial flowers to mark the graves of loved ones interred here. When the cemetery was transcribed, the earliest known grave was that of Lewis Crosby who died in 1920. Other names common to this cemetery are Millender, Sheppard, Stallworth, Thompson & Wilson. In the *'Historical Atlas of Alabama, Vol. 2, Cemetery Locations by County'* the cemetery is listed as # 51 SW in T5N, R10, and S27.

Leaving this cemetery, just ahead on your left, before you cross the interstate, another little known and previously un-plotted cemetery is located. A church once stood nearby, and today, only one marked grave remains in the grassy, briar patch of land where Sandbar Church once was located. The Sandbar Cemetery holds the only marked grave of a young girl, Eula Shel Rose (1916-1929). Two other slabs are present beside the young girl; however, these are unmarked, and perhaps more graves were once here, but were destroyed when the interstate highway was built. It's unfortunate that no records appear to exist to help us document this young lady's life; as well, as the life of Sandbar Church and cemetery.