

# Written In Stone

*By Sherry Johnston*

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## **Midway Baptist Cemetery**

Representing Conecuh County, I recently attended two important cemetery preservation programs, one in Butler County and the other in Randolph County. As the new President of the Alabama Cemetery Preservation Alliance, working alongside the Alabama Historical Commission, we presented a program on the efforts underway by both organizations to promote better legislation for preservation of our cemeteries in Alabama. Our cemetery programs offer preservation help, information and education on how to properly clean and maintain a cemetery, get it registered on the AHC Historic Cemetery Register, and documenting tips. Even if only a few broken grave markers remain, every burial ground is a place to honor and respect, a site worthy of preservation and appreciation, a museum of history and culture of the families and communities in which we live.

Located in the northeast section of Conecuh County along the Monroe County line, the Midway Baptist Church has been an instrumental spiritual resource for the families living in the area since about 1890. According to archived information, the deed recorded in Monroe County shows the property was donated by Mr. and Mrs. Wright L. Mims. An earlier church might have occupied the property, however, the Midway Baptist is the earliest one documented. The oldest grave in the cemetery is supposed to be that of W.H. Griffin (1885), and names common to the cemetery and community include Andrews, Anthony, Brooks, Cole, Cobb, Martin, McPherson, Skinner, Snowden, Smith, Stacey, and Wallace. There are many others here, as well as home to three known Confederate veterans: J.C. Anthony (1829-1913), Samuel Brooks (1829-1895), and William Snowden (1836-1926). There are other veterans of later conflicts buried in this old cemetery. Within the boundaries of Midway Baptist Cemetery are old iron markers, brick, limestone, granite, and concrete based tombstones, many having been replaced over the years by descendants of those interred here. As one strolls through the cemetery, reading the names, a sense of history and calm permeates the air, along with the scent of the tall pines surrounding the church. For more information on this cemetery, visit the local library, or if you have information on those interred here since 1981, please contact me so that we can add those names to the historical archives.