

# Written In Stone

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## Old New Hope Baptist Church Cemetery

Mixing the words 'old' and 'new' in the same sentence is confusing; however, in describing a church or cemetery in this way, it gives us a brief history of how it might have evolved. Case in point, the Old New Hope Baptist Church obviously was located near the old Jay Villa Plantation, with the 'new' New Hope Baptist Church located nearer the old Warren Cemetery, both of them near Sparta, AL.

According to our historical information provided in our Conecuh Headstones, Volume 3, the Old New Hope Baptist Church Cemetery was located about 1.6 miles past the plantation house, on an unpaved road circa 1986, with most of the roads in this area still unpaved. The site of the cemetery was beside the road, though there are no visible signs of a cemetery being located here today. The information provided suggested there have been no burials since about 1943. There are supposedly 17 burials here, known by family researchers, involving the families of Boswell, Bradley, Gray, Gross, Hall, Harris, Harrison, Jackson, Johnson, Lee, and Longmire.

In researching the names provided by local historians and researchers, I found more information on Amanda Shaw and her husband, Matt Gross. I found a death record for a Matt Gross in April 1941 and a death record for a Mandy (Amanda) Gross for 28 July 1957 at Sparta, Alabama. In the <http://pilot.familysearch.org> site, I found that her maiden name was Shaw, her parents given as Handy and Mary Shaw, with Handy/Andy Shaw born in VA. The listings for the cemetery include a Mack and Mandy Gross. I found the families of Shaw and Gross in the 1870, 1880, 1900, 1910, and 1920 censuses of Conecuh County, as well as neighboring families with the above last names known to be buried at Old New Hope Baptist Church Cemetery.