

Tuscumbia Free Will Baptist Church Cemetery

Inquire and please, ask permission to enter private property.

Quadrant Map:

Bunceton

General Location:

Northwest of Bunceton

Congressional Township:

Township 47-N; Range 18-W

Section:

Southeast quarter of the southwest quarter of section 14

Longitude & Latitude:

To be determined

Directions:

About one mile due west of Bell Air, Missouri

Atlas Survey:

1877 land atlas – no cemetery symbol on Mrs. Hanna Franklin land

1915 land atlas – no cemetery symbol on George Holliday land

1978 plat book – no cemetery symbol on W. R. Mitzel and Sons Farms, Inc.

1991 plat book – no cemetery symbol on W. R. Mitzel and Sons Farms, Inc.

History:

There was, at one time a school here, the Bell Air Negro School; for the colored children of the neighborhood; dating back many years.

In 1913, the congregation of the Free-Will Baptists purchased one acre of land adjoining the school grounds, from Mr. Dan Hawkins, and built a church and established a cemetery. Sometime about the middle of this century, the church was abandoned, as the people of the congregation had either passed away or moved away.

The cemetery remains, descendants of the first members have built a new fence around it and each Memorial day a few come to visit and decorate the graves.

The church building still stands; the school building was torn down long ago and that piece of land reverted back to the farm of Mr. Emmett Watkins, from whom it was purchased.

The little church, which stood here near the burial plot, was destroyed by a grass fire some time ago; probably in the 1980s. On a very windy day a fire blew in from the south side of the Ravenswood Farms. The church has stood vacant for some years, perhaps 20 or 30 years since there had been a congregation and service there. The land is now owned by W. R. Mitzel and Sons Farms, Inc.

In 1987, Roy and Helen Mitzel placed a nice granite marker bearing the names of all those persons known to have been buried here. There had never been any markers placed at these graves. This site is protected by a fence and is cared for from time to time.

This list was supplied by Mrs. Beatrice nee' Williams Lucas and Mr. George Buckner and his sister, Polly, in 1972.

Updated:

February 1, 2009 with 18 entries for this cemetery.

Bailey	Jessie; no marker; no dates
Baylor	Jess or Jessie; born Apr 1875 in Bunceton, Missouri; died 21 May 1932 in Boonville, Missouri; buried 23 May 1932; black; husband of Mary Baylor; informant Mary Baylor of Bunceton, Missouri

Emery	Louise; no marker; no dates
Fry	Arthur; no marker; no dates
Hawkins	Dan; no marker; no dates
Smith	Jennie Ann; no marker; no dates
Smith	Jennie; no marker; no dates
Walker	Vida; no marker; no dates
Watkins	Emmett; no marker; no dates; husband of Mary Watkins
Watkins	Lula; no marker; no dates; daughter of Mary and Emmett Watkins
Watkins	Mary, no marker; no dates; wife of Emmett Watkins
Watkins	Vida; no marker; no dates; daughter of Mary and Emmett Watkins
Williams	Fannie nee' Watkins; wife of Leslie Watkins; no marker; no dates; daughter of Emmett and Mary Watkins
Williams	Hernton Rayfield; no marker; no dates
Williams	Leslie; no marker; no dates; husband of Fannie nee' Watkins Williams
Williams	Theodore R.; no marker; no dates
Wilson	Emil; no marker; no dates
Wilson	Lula; no marker; no dates