

## Pleasant Grove Cemetery, Arbor, Houston County, Texas

The original land for Pleasant Grove Cemetery was donated by David Blalock Webb and his wife, Frances Elizabeth Smith Stuckey Webb. They were cotton farmers having arrived from Mississippi in the early 1870's from their home near the Tombigbee River. Once they arrived in Texas, their cotton enterprise flourished and David accumulated a great deal of land extending from the current Hwy 7 toward Arbor about 2 miles. After their arrival in Texas, one of David's sons, James Allen Webb died in 1874 at 16 years of age and, as there was no cemetery in the area, the Webb family buried him at English Cemetery.

Within a few years, David and Frances realized the need for a cemetery in the immediate area and donated the original tract for Pleasant Grove. Additional land has been added over the years by generous donations from Dr. Monroe Arthur Thomas, son-in-law of David and Frances Webb, and the Malone Family.

Mary Frances Mims Arnold is the earliest recorded burial in Pleasant Grove in July, 1881 per her tombstone. She was the mother of James Madison Arnold, and mother-in-law of Ellen Cedella Stuckey (step-daughter of David Blalock Webb and daughter of Frances Elizabeth Webb). The second burial was the Arnold's own daughter, 4-year-old Winnie Belle in 1884.

From the early 1900's, Pleasant Grove was maintained by family members living in the area who mowed, removed downed trees, and fenced the cemetery. James P. "Dutch" Brewton, Millard Smith, Earle Easterly, J. D. Hallmark, Clifton Malone, George Tatom, Leonard Tatom, Thomas Tolar, and William Tolar were a few of the locals who continued the upkeep.

A group was formed in the 1970's to collect funds for future management and maintenance of the cemetery and gravesites, document the burials, and continue fundraising. Those original members of the Pleasant Grove Cemetery Association were Bonnie Smith, Millard Smith, Carlton Smith, Dutch Brewton, C. P. Conaway, Wayne Stockton, and Morris "Boog" Easterly.

As their generation passed and they all now occupy their rightful places in Pleasant Grove, another group has assumed their roles in responsibility for the cemetery. They are Jerry Easterly, Charles Conaway, Linda Easterly, Steve Conaway, Marlene Cogwin, Jamie Easterly, Stacy Conaway, and Lloyd Conaway. The cemetery is maintained by funds received from the families and friends of those interred within.

Pleasant Grove remains a small family-centered community cemetery with burials mainly from the Arnold, Cannon, Conaway, Easterly, Hallmark, Smith, Swearingen, Tatom, Tolar and Webb extended families, most of whom are cousins in some form. It is also open to burials for people of the immediate area.

For more information, contact Jerry Easterly 713-412-9100.