

# Dawn Cemetery

Searcy, Arkansas



Photo by Leroy Blair

**This Cemetery is also known as: Mossey Point Cemetery.**

**Legal description: : SE, NE, NE, Sect. 23, T7N, R8W**

**GPS Location: 607228 - 3898174**

**Arkansas Archeological Survey site #: 3WH0650**

**Number of Marked Graves: About 5**

**Number of Unmarked Graves: Unknown**

**The last complete survey of this cemetery was: November 1, 2000 By Leroy Blair.**

**Current status of cemetery: Active.**

**Point of contact for cemetery. No known contact person.**

**This cemetery is located in the area known as Mossy Point, and may have been called Mossy Point Cemetery at one time. When modern-day owners discovered it on their land, they named it Dawn Cemetery, in memory of a granddaughter who died in 1977.**

**The area where this cemetery is located was once known as Mossy Point. An article in the Searcy Daily Citizen on November 23, 1986, stated that Mossy Point was "so named because a long moss used to grow there before a fire in the 1950s. Annie Killough of Park Avenue in Searcy, a longtime teacher in White County, tells of 50 to 60 years ago this was a place that people from Searcy rode in buggies for an all-day picnic and a time to enjoy a lovely view from the top of Mossy Point. A note of tragedy there was 40 or 50 years ago, when a woman threw her baby in the Des Arc Bayou because a man wouldn't marry her since she had a baby. Indians also enjoyed the beauty of this place as numerous arrowheads and chips are found in the area, so they must have camped here."**

**Zella Holden of Searcy, noticing that the White County Historical Society in 1999 was placing cemetery records on the Internet, contacted Society president Eddie Best with the first report of a "Dawn Cemetery." She stated that she and her husband bought a 130-acre farm from the Tom Killough family in the 1960s and discovered there was an old cemetery on the land. Mrs. Holden said she had never heard of any name for the cemetery, so her family began calling it Dawn Cemetery in memory of her granddaughter, Dawn Bales, who died of cancer at age 2. A monument in her name was placed in this old cemetery. Shelly Dawn Bales was born May 27, 1975, the daughter of Rebecca and Mark Bales. Despite surgery and treatment she lived only four months after her cancer was diagnosed; she died April 5, 1977.**

**It was learned that the cemetery is the final resting place of descendents of John W. Ross, who came to Arkansas before the Civil War. John W. may also be buried here. Mrs. Holden said she was told that a man named Lee Ross, his wife and some of their children were buried in the cemetery and that descendents placed a stone at the site many years after Lee Ross died in 1923. The Ross information was confirmed in 1999 by Joyce King Gay of the White County Historical Society, who stated that Lee Ross was the great grandfather of her husband James Austin Gay. In March 2002, the Society received additional information on the Ross family from Linda McCall Rodgers of Romance. Her research showed that Lee Ross and his first wife Rebecca Holland Ross were parents of 18 children, including three sets of twins. She also reported that four years after Rebecca in 1909, Lee married Mrs. Eva Arnold. [See Linda McCall Rodgers' writeup, "History of the Ross Family of Mossy Point."]**

**Dawn Cemetery is located on Holden Drive, which is off to the east at the end of West Country Club where it goes south. Mrs. Holden said of the cemetery, "We do not know all the people in it as many graves are just marked with rocks."**

**The cemetery was visited November 1, 2000, by Leroy Blair of the White County Historical Society. He provided the following list. He reported finding six other graves that were marked with rocks but no identification and five depressions that he thought were probably graves. He noted that the cemetery is very clean and has a gazebo. Following are his directions: "To get to this cemetery, take Highway 36 west to Honey Hill Road. Turn left on Honey Hill Road and continue to Country Club, then turn right. Go about 2 1/8 miles to Holden Drive, a small dirt road on the left. The cemetery is at the end of Holden on the left."**

**If you have corrections or additions to this list or other information on this Cemetery, Contact the White County Historical Society, P.O. Box 537, Searcy, AR 72145. Or phone 501- 278- 5010**

**Following is a list of known burials in this cemetery.**

**Bales, Shelly Dawn – May 27, 1975 – April 5, 1977 - Dawn Cemetery**

**Holden, Charles Earl – November 16, 1957 – February 6, 2010 - Dawn Cemetery**

**Pruitt, Polly Ann (Bond) – No dates listed – Wife of Jeremiah Pruitt – (Unmarked grave) - Rodgers - Dawn Cemetery**

**Reed, Charles Spurgeon – September 14, 1906 – April 23, 1982 - Dawn Cemetery**

**Ross, Frances R. “Fannie” (Pruitt) – 1859 – 1897 – First wife of John Henry Ross – (Unmarked grave) - Dawn Cemetery**

**Ross, Hannah Caroline (Lane) – May 2, 1825 – May 4, 1897 – Wife of John W. Ross – (Unmarked grave) - - Dawn Cemetery**

**Ross, John W. – 1824 – January 2, 1911 – Civil War Veteran, Ark. Cav. – Husband of Hannah Caroline Ross – (Unmarked) - Dawn Cemetery**

**Ross, Leander Fountain “Lee” – January 11, 1845 – April 28, 1923 – 8<sup>th</sup> Ark. Cav. Regt. C.S.A. – DS with wife Rebecca Ross - Dawn Cemetery**

**Ross, Littie – December 24, 1889 – Only date listed - Infant – Twin of Lillie Ross – Daughter of Lee & Rebecca Ross – (Unmarked grave) -**

**Ross, Rebecca P. “Becky” (Holland) – February 10, 1848 – 1909 – DS with Lee Ross – Dawn Cemetery**

**Ross, Unnamed – No dates listed – Children of Lee & Rebecca Ross – (Several unmarked graves) - Dawn Cemetery**

**Smith, Ronald Gean – May 31, 1935 – June 8, 1985 - Dawn Cemetery**

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**Legend: Copyright-Aug.23, 2016-Paul V. Isbell-Webmaster:**

**Most of the cemetery information listed was collected by Leroy “Lee” Blair Former member of the White County Historical Society Board of Directors. Now working at the White County Historical Society office**

**If you have any additions or corrections to the burial listing please contact the Historical Society. Phone 501-278-5010 or Email me at [lblblair74@gmail.com](mailto:lblblair74@gmail.com) or [wchs1962@gmail.com](mailto:wchs1962@gmail.com)**

**I will be posting more burials later. The Searcy Daily Citizen donated all their Micro Film and Ledgers dating back to 1953. After reviewing them, if I find a death of a person that we do not have I will to add to the cemetery listings.**

**There are some graves listed as unmarked that may have had a tombstone set since the listing was made.**

**I may have missed some graves when I prepared the listing. Some cemeteries are very hard to get an accurate listing due to how some graves are scattered**

**The following Abbreviations are used in the listings.**

**FM-Funeral home marker DS-Double tombstone TS-Triple tombstone**

**(Obit)-means that the Historical Society has, or has access to the Obituary for this person.**