

# Notable Burials in Scottsboro's Cedar Hill Cemetery

The history of Scottsboro can be seen and felt by walking through the headstones of Cedar Hill Cemetery. The distinguished politicians, the doctors and lawyers, the editors, the educators, and the larger-than-life characters all rest here together. Charlotte Scott Skelton, daughter of Scottsboro founder Robert T. Scott, Sr., gave the land for Cedar Hill Cemetery about 1876, but as *The Scottsboro Citizen* noted on May 21, 1908, the city cemetery had not been named. Mrs. Evie Robinson suggested Cedar Hill, and *The Citizen* concurred, noting "The suggestion made by this excellent lady is a good one." There are three Cedar Hill cemeteries in Alabama.



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|-----------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Unknown White Male | 6. Bob Jones            | 11. Mary Hunter          |
| 2. James K. P. Martin | 7. Babs Deal            | 12. Nat Hamlin Snodgrass |
| 3. Lucille Benson     | 8. Milo Moody           | 13. James Armstrong      |
| 4. Matt Wann          | 9. Henry Clay Bradford  | 14. The Bynums           |
| 5. Jessie W. Floyd    | 10. Col. John Snodgrass | 15. Frazier Cemetery     |

**1. Unknown White Male:** In the late evening of October 18, 1981, an unidentified man was killed in a hit-and-run incident in Scottsboro. His burial was delayed for five weeks while his picture was circulated nationally and his body was viewed by numerous people searching for lost family members. Thirty-three years after he was buried in Cedar Hill, the FBI placed an alleged murderer, William Bradford Bishop, on its Ten Most Wanted list. After watching a "cold case" program on television, a Scottsboro Funeral Home employee informed the FBI that there was a strong resemblance between the FBI's wanted man and Scottsboro's unknown man. The FBI agreed the matter was worth pursuing, and in October, 2014, the unknown man was exhumed to recover



DNA for analysis. Subsequent DNA tests failed to establish the unknown man as the alleged killer (who is charged by the FBI with murdering his wife, mother, and three children in 1976). The unknown man was reinterred. The wanted man has never been apprehended.

**2. James K. P. Martin:** James Martin's gravestone was moved from nearby Bellefonte and was placed in the cemetery to honor a soldier who died and was buried elsewhere. His inscription reads: "Born Nov. 5, 1844, Died Jan. 4. 1863, in a negro cabin at Parker's Crossroads from a wound received in the Battle at that place Dec. 31, 1862. He was most brutally treated by the Yankees, and shamefully neglected by his own Southern doctors. A volunteer in the army of the South before he had reached his 18 years. He sealed with his blood his devotion to the 'Lost Cause.' Peace to his ashes. To the youthful brave soldier's name, a soldier's honored grave." James was the son of Daniel Martin, a prominent merchant and innkeeper in Bellefonte who had befriended General Sherman during Sherman's stay in Bellefonte in the 1840s. During the war, Sherman and Daniel Martin exchanged letters in which Sherman lamented the suffering of the Martin family brought about by the war.



**3. Lucille Benson:** Described online as "a Southern character actress with a down-home accent," Lucille Benson was the adopted daughter/niece of Elma Kirby Benson and John Bernard Benson. She was the orphaned daughter of Alberta Kirby Morris, who died at age 23 of tuberculosis and is buried in the Frazier Cemetery section of Cedar Hill. She was valedictorian and president of her Jackson County High School class in the 1930s, and attended Huntington College in Montgomery and later, Northwestern School of Drama in Evanston, Illinois. She had roles in a number of movies between 1960 and 1983, several under young director Steven Spielberg, including *Tom Sawyer*, *Slaughterhouse Five*, *The Fugitive Kind* (with Marlon Brando), *Silver Streak* (with Gene Wilder), *Big Fauss and Little Halsey* (with Robert Redford), and *Mame* (with Lucille Ball). She appears in many television series, including *Alice*, *Simon and Simon*, *The Ropers*, *Wonder Woman*, *Petrocelli*, *Eight is Enough*, *Little House on the Prairie*, *Mannix*, *Cannon*, *Love Boat*, *The Waltons*, and *Bonanza*. She was a cast member of the *Bosom Buddies* sitcom in 1980 with fledgling actor Tom Hanks. She died of liver cancer on February 17, 1984 in Scottsboro. She is pictured here with director Steven Spielberg.



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**4. Matt Wann:** During a lonely overnight vigil the evening of March 25, 1931, Jackson County Sheriff Matt Wann faced down a lynch mob in front of the county jail in order to protect the Scottsboro boys. He had arrested the nine youths earlier in the day. His actions that night are commonly believed to have inspired the scene where Atticus Finch makes a similar stand in "To Kill A



Mockingbird.” Many also speculate that Matt Wann’s jailhouse defense cost him his life. He was murdered one year later under extremely unusual circumstances. Current speculation is that his murder resulted from a conspiracy between his law enforcement colleagues and the KKK in retaliation for his single-minded determination to see justice served for his prisoners. The Scottsboro Boys thrust Wann, a former farmer and merchant, into a nightmarish situation. He pulled the nine young men from a train just yards from the edge of his jurisdiction. “A little further and they’d have been known as ‘The Huntsville Boys’,” Wann is credited with saying.

**5. Jessie W. “Hoo Daddy” Floyd:** Hoo Daddy and his brother, Cecil, distinguished themselves in WWII, Cecil as a pilot and Hoo Daddy as a paratrooper. However, it was on his return to Scottsboro that Hoo Daddy became legendary. Once, during a town celebration in which Hoo Daddy was to parachute into the celebration below, he threw a mannequin from the plane and it hit the ground to the horror of the waiting crowd, which included his mother. A self-taught pilot, Hoo Daddy is best known for barrel-rolling his plane beneath BB Comer bridge on several occasions. He also “buzzed” the courthouse cupola, resulting in a warning from county officials. “You tell ‘em to open the doors, and I’ll fly the damn thing *through* the courthouse,” was Hoo Daddy’s reported reply.



**6. Bob Jones:** Robert Emmett (Bob) Jones Jr. was a Congressman, serving 14 terms in the US House of Representatives from 1947 until 1977. He was a graduate of Jackson County High



School and the University of Alabama Law School. Before his election to The House, Jones served as a Jackson County judge and then as a gunnery lieutenant in the North Atlantic and the Philippines. A “New Deal” democrat, Jones drove legislation that benefitted the farmers and working people of Jackson County and the nation. He was instrumental in passing laws that offered federally subsidized mortgages to farm families, founded the Appalachian Regional Commission, was instrumental in bringing NASA to Huntsville, worked to assure the TVA’s independence from the federal government in an effort to assure continued low energy prices, and was chair of the committee that prepared the Water Quality Act of 1972. Locals will best remember Bob Jones for his accessibility and his continued participation in the civic affairs of the town and county. When not in Washington, he frequented local restaurants, businesses, and

social events.

**7. Babs Deal:** Novelist Babs Hodges Deal was born and raised in Scottsboro, Jackson County, Alabama, the daughter of Evelyn Coffey Hodges. She worked as a substitute teacher and later joined the US Army and worked as a clerk-typist in Washington, D.C. After her discharge from the army, she attended the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa and received her BA in 1952. While at Alabama, she met and married writer



Borden Deal. The Deals moved to Scottsboro in 1954 but returned to Tuscaloosa in the late 1950s. Babs Deal published her first novel, *Acre of Afternoon*, in 1959. In 1961, her short story "Make My Death Bed" was televised as part of the Alfred Hitchcock Presents series. In 1964, the Deals moved to Sarasota, FL and became involved with the writing community there. Babs Deal published twelve novels between 1959 and 1979. Her short stories were published in national magazines such as *McCall's* and *Redbook*. In 1979, *Friendships, Secrets, and Lies*, a movie version of her novel *The Walls Came Tumbling Down*, was broadcast on NBC-TV. The Deals divorced in 1975, and Babs spent her later years living in Gulf Shores, Ala. After becoming seriously ill in the winter of 2004, she was hospitalized in Montgomery, where she died.

**8. Milo Moody:** Milo Moody had a long history of service to Jackson County before, as a man of 70, he was asked to defend the Scottsboro Boys. In 1896-97, Moody served as constable in 1896-97, in 1897 as tax commissioner, and in 1898 as the Jackson County delegate to the Alabama Legislature, the same year he was admitted to the bar in Scottsboro. In 1901, he was elected to the constitutional convention. While in the legislature, he and Calvin Marcellus Rousseau introduced what is believed to be the first act to use bonds for the building of roads in the state, in fact, in any



state. But he is best remembered as the elderly attorney assigned to defend the Scottsboro Boys in the first trial, held in Scottsboro. Seven members of the Scottsboro bar had been assigned to represent the Scottsboro boys, but one by one they found excuses to withdraw. Dan Carter in his book *Scottsboro* noted that "He [Moody] did have something of a reputation as a man who would defend unpopular ideas." People interested in locating others associated with the Scottsboro Boys will find that young Dr. Marvin Lynch—who testified in the first trial that plaintiffs (Bates and Price) showed no evidence of rape and in the Decatur trial convinced Judge Horton that no rape had occurred—is also

buried in Cedar Hill. John W. Sanford, the "fifty-year-old Negro plasterer" (Carter) cross-examined by Samuel Leibowitz in Decatur about requirements for black jurors, is also in this cemetery.

**9. Henry Clay Bradford.** Henry Clay Bradford was a distinguished lawyer and military officer from Bellefonte. He was born July 27, 1829 in Huntsville, the son of Daniel Morgan and Mary Booker (Lamkin) Bradford. At age 18, he enlisted for service in the Mexican-American War and fought in a number of famous battles, rising to the rank of lieutenant in spite of his age. After the war, he attended law school at Lebanon, TN and practiced law in Huntsville. He was elected to the state legislature before moving to Bellefonte. In 1854, he married Annie Watkins of Huntsville and they had three children. During the Civil War, he raised Company H, part of the 55th Alabama Regiment, and was their Captain, rising to the rank of Colonel and serving with distinction for the duration of the war. *The Dictionary of Alabama Biography* (Owen and Owen, 1921) notes that "he was a Democrat and was known as 'the silver-tongued orator of North Alabama'." He died April 3, 1879 just before his 50th birthday and is buried with his Coffey cousins in Cedar Hill. His descendants still live in the Chattanooga area.



**10. Col. John Snodgrass:** One of Jackson County's first to enlist as a Confederate, John Snodgrass was commissioned with the rank of captain and placed in command of the company he raised, known as the Jackson Hornets. Prior to the war, he was a merchant in Bellefonte and served as Jackson County Sheriff from 1849-1852. After the war, he opened a general mercantile store at the corner of Houston Street and Mary Hunter Avenue in 1866 and served as the Memphis and Charleston Railroad depot agent during the late 1860s. Col. John was instrumental in founding the Scottsboro Male and Female Institute in 1870 and served as a school trustee. He also helped organize St. Luke's Episcopal Church. He was one of the first in Scottsboro to install a home telephone, and the event was considered newsworthy, as the editor of *The Alabama Herald* reported that Col. John "can now talk between his store and his home".



**11. Mary Hunter:** If you have ever driven down Mary Hunter Avenue in Scottsboro, you have seen an acknowledgement of Scottsboro's debt to African American educator Mary Emily Donegan Weatherly Hunter. Hunter was the daughter of Reverend Elias Donegan and Maria Donegan. She was born near Greenbrier in Madison County, Alabama on June 21, 1897. She married first Thomas Weatherly, a farmer who died of appendicitis. She then married Lawrence Hunter and was a teacher in Scottsboro and later principal of the Rosenwald Elementary School in Hollywood, Alabama. She was also the church secretary in her father's A.M.E. church. She is the grandmother of poet and educator Thomas Weatherly, known for "Mau Mau American Cantos" and "The History of the Saxophone." Thomas said of his grandmother, "She encouraged my poem writing, taught me piano and composition. She rewarded me for memorizing her favorite poems. Great lady." Hunter died in 1959 and is buried in Cedar Hill Cemetery in Scottsboro. The street where she lived and the public housing complex are both named in her honor.



**12. Nat Hamlin Snodgrass:** Little Nat Hamlin Snodgrass lived only 9 days, but his gravestone, known as "the baby in the shell," has become a poignant landmark in Cedar Hill. He was the infant son of Nathaniel Andrew Snodgrass (1862-1910) and his wife Eliza Alice Thomason (1868-1941). The couple married late, and Little Nat, their only child, died four years before his father's untimely death at age 48. His headstone is memorable because of the impression it made on young author Babs Hodges Deal. In her book *It's Always Three O'Clock*, written in 1961, she wrote:



*Far back behind the fence the iron baby lay asleep in the iron shell, curled warmly against the cold. She had seen him first when she was ten years old, when they came to bury Uncle Dan. She said, "Why is a baby here?" and her father said, "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away. Blessed be the name of the Lord." It was the baby sleeping in its shell that first brought her here.*

**13. James Armstrong:** As his headstone states, James Armstrong was for 20 years the owner and editor of *The Scottsboro Citizen*. *The Citizen* was not the first paper in the county. There is evidence that as early as 1839, Bellefonte had a local newspaper where public notices were posted. At least three papers were published in Bellefonte between 1839 and 1862 when Union General O.M. Mitchel destroyed the paper. *The Jackson County Herald* started publication in 1868, and survived under different names until 1887. James Armstrong established *The Scottsboro Citizen* in 1877 and was its editor and proprietor. According to Kenamer's *History of Scottsboro*, "The paper prospered and was widely read until his [Armstrong's] health failed. The paper was consolidated with *The Progressive Age* in May 1911." In addition to editing *The Citizen*, James was Jackson County's representative to the state legislature between 1907 and 1911. Kenamer notes that he "held offices in the Alabama Legislature and was door-keeper in Congress during one of the Cleveland administrations." James died in 1911 at age 56, four years after his wife Mallie. His gravestone poignantly states, "He loved his mother."



**14. The Bynums** (Hugh Otis, Jr., Lucy Scott, and Jessie Sue): The Bynum siblings, the great grandchildren of the Scottsboro founder Robert Scott, each made significant contributions to the legacy and lore of Scottsboro. Lucy and Jessie Sue (who is pictured here) were generous philanthropists whose largess continues today through the Bynum Foundation, administered by their heirs, the Skeltons and Tallys, whose ancestors are buried nearby. Both sisters received advanced degrees, taught at prestigious universities, frequented Broadway plays, and spent long stints in Europe. Their worldliness was at odds with their modesty and their near-hermit-like lifestyle while at home here in Scottsboro. Their brother, Hugh Otis, Jr., was the defendant in several assault cases, the most publicized of which still stirs controversy today: he was convicted in a 1972 car bombing that badly maimed a local attorney. The case is the subject of the book *Lay Down with Dogs* by Byron Woodfin.



**14. The Frazier Cemetery:** In 1967, The Tennessee Valley Authority sold Goose Pond Island to Revere Copper and Brass for the construction of two enormous aluminum smelting and finishing mills. Although Frazier Cemetery was not within the proposed construction site, the company believed that visitors to the site could present a security problem, and the cemetery was transferred here. The graves in the Frazier Cemetery belonged to families from submerged towns like Kirbytown and Larkin's Landing who had already been displaced when the TVA impounded Guntersville Lake in 1939.

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