

MORRIS or (CANEY)



Morris is a crossroads located about 10 miles southwest of Bluff City at the intersection of Hwys. 299 and 200. It is an old community dating back to Civil War days. It is shown on the 1865 Ouachita County map as Caney. The local people usually refer to it as Caney because it is located near Caney Creek. This community is not to be confused with another old community called Caney about eight miles to the southeast.

The oldest Morris grave at Caney Cemetery is that of W. Ephram Morris (1846-1916), a Civil War veteran. It is assumed that Morris is named after him.

John and Margaret Hicks deeded five acres in 1883 to the Caney Methodist church. Later church services were on alternate Sundays with the Baptists. When the Methodist congregation dwindled, the Methodists deeded it to the Baptists and it became the Morris Missionary Baptist Church. Vester Tucker and his son, Loyce Tucker also deeded land for the expansion of the Caney Cemetery in later years.

I can remember two churches—a Baptist church and a Nazarene church across the highway. The old vacant Nazarene church building was used in one scene of the movie “Boxcar Bertha” which was filmed in the area in the 1970s. Today, only the Morris Baptist church remains located adjacent to the Caney Cemetery. A school was located here in the early 1900s. The area around Morris is still pretty well populated.

The town of Cale is located about four miles south of Morris. About two miles west is Serepta Spring, one of the best known landmarks in this area. This was the site for many Confederate soldier reunions in the years following the Civil War. An open-air camp shed was constructed there in 1902 which still stands and is used for revivals once or twice each year. The spring provides plenty of cool, clear water and was the water source for early settlers and travelers.

Written by Jerry McKelvy



Camp Shed at Serepta Spring