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Touring Texas: Carmen Nelson Bostick Cemetery

A peaceful place older than Tomball

By Deborah Dousay

Also – by permission – the site of Tomball Centennial, Once-in-a-Lifetime, Geocache # 10!

Touring Texas takes us once again up close and personal, right in our own backyard. Someone once told me that one lifetime is not enough to see Texas, alone, if you chose to go nowhere else. I can see why that is an accurate statement every single day.

I had the privilege to meet and visit with Mrs. Princess (Pat) Bridwell, owner, proprietor, dreamer, and do-er extraordinaire, commonly known in Texas as a "Go-Getter."

This beautiful, exciting, and sometimes impish lady owns, maintains and in general pampers the love of her life, affectionately known as The Carmen Nelson Bostick Cemetery.

There aren't many days you can stop by 12317 Holderreith Road and not see her there clipping, mowing, weed-eating, or in general slaving over the grounds that became her passion when she learned, soon after her Mother's passing, that it belonged to her. She assertively tells me she is the only female cemetery owner in the State of Texas.

This acreage is, by nature, pure and unspoiled beauty! Graves and markers date back into the 1800s, before Tomball was Tomball. Trevia Woosier Beverly's records from the Harris County Historical Commission tells us that the "earliest known settler of Willow Creek was a Frenchman by the name of Claude Nicholas Pilot. He was the son of Charles Eugene and Marianne (Dory) Pilot, born in Gevigney Mercy, Haute Saone, France."



Claude had been a teacher in France until 1832, when his family emigrated to New York. He started in the timber business there, working for 5 years, then moved his family to Texas. It was hard to resist the lush, wooded lands along Willow Creek, and at a time when The Republic of Texas was offering first, second, third, and fourth class "head right" certificates to attract new settlers. Mr. Pilot accepted a second class grant of 1280 acres on Willow Creek in the short-lived Spring Creek County. (Established in January, 1841, it was quickly abolished by the Texas Supreme Court as being unconstitutional.) The Pillots Built a farm near the point where FM-2920 crosses the creek, barely one mile southeast of the Tomball city limits.

There is no water or electricity at the cemetery, and from the road you may just drive by without taking notice, but it is still kept authentically correct, and groomed by one who I refer to as a Real Princess!

She has reinstated life back into the death of one of my favorite sites, and is absolutely the most intriguing piece of a history puzzle I have visited in my 4 year tenure with this publication.

I believe as long as Mrs. Bridwell and her family are around to watch it grow, perseverance will overcome any obstacles that prevent her from sustaining this living monument to history. Open daylight till dark every day, for a lifetime! For more information, or questions, call 281-256-3635.

Be sure and don't miss this historical site from my personal "Touring Texas Top Ten List." It will be a sure thing you will have a That! Texas kind of sight, sound, and feel!

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