



Sculptor/Artist: Willie Logan (1940-2010)

Tree Type/Origin: Cypress/ Sypsy Swamp

Tree Donors: Roger and Gary Phillips

Year Erected: 1999

Statue Location: Samantha, AL (2 miles north of Northside High School, between mile markers 216 and 217)

After the death of his mother, Pearlie Mae Williamson, Johnny Williamson was inspired to create a *representation* of the 23rd Psalm. It was her favorite scripture.

A cypress log was chosen for *The Good Shepherd Statue* because of the longstanding belief that the Cypress is the “gopher wood” (or kopher which is the Hebrew word for waterproof) that Noah used to build the ark. He worked alongside longtime friend and local artist/sculptor, Willie Logan (1940-2010), to carve the 6-1/2 foot statue of *The Good Shepherd*. Logan’s other works include a life-size sculpture of Chief Tuskalusa on display in the Tuscaloosa Public Library, and the 50’ x 47’ mural at Woods and Water off Skyland Boulevard in Tuscaloosa. Logan also created numerous paintings and murals for baptisteries across the South and is well-known for his wildlife paintings and his wood sculptures.

Biblical Shepherds: The Bible references shepherd more than 200 times. One of the most important occupations recorded in the scriptures is that of shepherd. Although the literal keeping of sheep was not particularly important in itself, attributes of this occupation lend it to be an important symbol. The best recognized example of a symbolic shepherd is in the Son of God, Jesus. In John 10:11, Jesus spoke of himself, *I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep*. Abel was the very first shepherd; Abraham, Jacob (Israel) and Moses were shepherds. Shepherds were the first people to see the newborn Jesus Christ and King David, a man after God’s own heart, wrote the beloved Psalm 23:

The Lord is my shepherd. I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside quiet waters. He restores my soul; He guides me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil, for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You have anointed my head with oil; My cup overflows. Surely goodness and loving-kindness will follow me all the days of my life, And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

Joshua 4 teaches us to set up memorials as reminders of what God has lead us through and to give us opportunity to teach our children about our spiritual heritage. ***The Good Shepherd Statue is intended to be such a memorial.***

Johnny explained, “The Statue is a testimony of my faith. It isn’t meant to be an idol. You don’t worship it, but it gets people to think and do good deeds”. At the time of his death (June 30, 2013), Johnny, had five children, 13 grandchildren and 17 great-grandchildren.

We respectfully request that the statue be referred to as The Good Shepherd and not Jesus in a box!!

Photos are welcomed. Please post them on our Facebook Page. We enjoy knowing where all the visitors are from.

Like us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/TheGoodShepherdStatueatPawpawJohns. Send comments to info@goodshepherdfound.org; contact by phone at (205) 233-3794 or for more information about Johnny Williamson Good Shepherd Foundation go to the website: www.goodshepherdfound.org. **A Legacy of Love in Action.**