

Local Family Cataloging Burial Site

BY MAUREEN MANZANO
THE SUNDAY TIMES

DALTON — Resting on a hill about a mile outside of the town, the Dalton Shoemaker Cemetery holds a place in the history of local families who settled in the area, and American history.

Marylee Schrig, president of the Dalton Shoemaker Cemetery Association, said she wanted to make the cemetery an important part of history and has been in the process of having it included in the National Register of Historic Places.

"We've put a lot into it," she said. "It's our family. We want people to see and appreciate our history."

Mrs. Schrig is continuing a personal project of charting every grave in the old section of the cemetery. Many of the names were lost and so she spends her afternoons visiting the cemetery and reading each headstone carefully.

The cemetery basically remained untouched since the 1930s, she said, so a lot of work lay ahead for her.

What makes the cemetery unique is that it includes the remains of many of the founding families of Dalton.

In 1831, the two pieces of land were donated by Nathan and Elias Lillibridge.

Dalton, founded as Bailey's Landing, came into being when John and Nancy Bailey's parents, George Bailey and Elizabeth Barnard, came to the area from Rhode Island in 1801.

Other historic names found in the cemetery include the Jeraulds, the Baileys, the Colvins, and the Colvins.

"These are just a handful of the names that came from Rhode Island and settled here," Mrs. Schrig said.

The cemetery is the final resting place of Johnathan Dean, a Revolutionary War veteran, and George Gardner, a veteran of the Civil War of 1812.

"There are a lot of old graves here," Mrs. Schrig said. "There are around 80 veterans here. There are numerous Civil



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Frank Illuzzi, Marylee Schrig and Nancy Bailey Bushko, above, stand near a new monument dedicated to Michael D. Illuzzi, a World War II veteran, at the Dalton Shoemaker Cemetery. The cemetery, right, is the final resting place for many veterans dating back to the Revolutionary War.



In Dalton Cemetery

Local Family Cataloging Burial Sites

BY MAUREEN MANZANO
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DALTON — Resting on a hill about a mile outside of the center of town, the Dalton Shoemaker Cemetery holds a place not only in the history of local families who settled in the area, but in American history.

Marylee Schirg, president of the Dalton Shoemaker Cemetery Association, said she would like to make the cemetery an official part of history and has begun the process of having it included in the National Register of Historic Places.

"We've put a lot into it," she said. "It's our family. We want people to see and appreciate this history."

Mrs. Schirg is continuing her personal project of charting every grave in the old section of the cemetery. Many of the records were lost and so she spends afternoons visiting the cemetery and reading each headstone carefully.

The cemetery basically has remained untouched since the 1930s, she said, so a lot of work lay ahead for her.

What makes the cemetery unique is that it includes the remains of many of the founding families of Dalton.

In 1831, the two pieces of land were donated by Nathan Bailey and Elias Lillibridge.

Dalton, founded as Bailey Hollow, came into being when Nathan Bailey's parents, George A. Bailey and Elizabeth Barnes Bailey came to the area from Rhode Island in 1801.

Other historic names to be found in the cemetery include the Jeraulds, the Baileys, Northups, Colvins.

"These are just a handful that came from Rhode Island and settled here," Mrs. Schirg said.

The cemetery is the burial place of Johnathan Dean, a Revolutionary War veteran, and George Gardner, a veteran of the War of 1812.

"There are a lot of old-timers here," Mrs. Schirg said. "We have around 80 veterans here."

There are numerous Civil War



RICH BANICK / THE SUNDAY TIMES

Nancy Bailey Bushko looks at the grave of her great-great-great-uncle George A. Bailey, who was the first to settle in Dalton.

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'There's a lot of people who helped out and it's something Dalton should be proud of.'

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MARYLEE SCHIRG
President, Dalton Shoemaker Cemetery Association

veterans buried there, as well as veterans from the Spanish American War, World War I and World War II.

The flagpole, which can be seen from Routes 6 and 11 at night, was donated in memory of World War II veteran Michael D. Illuzzi. His brother, Frank, said the flagpole, lights and monument were a gift from the entire Illuzzi family.

Every year, the cemetery association hosts a Memorial Day service in honor of the veterans buried there. Lackawanna Trail English students are invited to participate in an essay contest sponsored by the association.

Mrs. Schirg, who became association president four years ago, said the cemetery which almost faded into oblivion has come a long way.

"It was bad," she said. "It was

really bad."

Mrs. Schirg, whose family is buried in the cemetery, had purchased lots in October 1994. When she went to check on the site, she discovered an overgrown cemetery with some headstones knocked down.

Nancy Bailey Bushko, a Bailey descendant, recalls how unrecognizable the cemetery was.

"This was so overgrown, you couldn't read the headstones," she said.

With the help of many volunteers, the grass and brush were trimmed back, the shed was repainted and some stones were put upright.

"There's a lot of people who helped out and it's something Dalton should be proud of," she said. "We want the public to know we're up and running. Financially, we're not in the best of shape, but we're making it."

The lower section in the front of the cemetery which is available for use was donated by Samuel J. Bailey in 1948.

The association's latest project is to rebuild the historic stone wall which once bordered the cemetery. A portion of it has been completed. It will continue as money is made available.

"I donated the stones off my farm for it," she said. "Hopefully, we can continue this all the way down."