

Pioneer cemetery restored

*(Article that appeared in the Herald Citizen Newspaper,
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BUFFALO VALLEY -- Step-by-step, Captain William Jared's great-great-great-grandchildren and other descendants are fixing up the old soldier's final resting place.

For years the 80-foot by 120-foot plot of land, located off the beaten path about two and a half miles east of Buffalo Valley with no road access and no signs identifying it had become overgrown with bushes and trees.

Today the 20 or so surviving headstones are protected by a shiny new chain link fence and double gate and are resting in an area that has been mowed and weeded.

"About two years ago Audrey June Denny Lambert (who was born and raised in Putnam County) became genuinely concerned about the condition of the cemetery when she came for a visit from her present home in Sterling Heights, Mich.," said Carolyn Shanks Huddleston who lives near the old graveyard in Buffalo Valley.

"Audrey is the granddaughter of Virgil & Audrey Denny who owned the property after the Jared family and are also buried in this cemetery. And one of her Denny ancestors married a Jared," Huddleston said. *(Corrections: "Audrey is the granddaughter of Virgil Timothy Denny & Audra Camilla Anderson who owned the property after the Jared family. Audrey Lambert's great grandparents, Timothy Denny & Elizabeth "Hettie" Paul are buried in the Capt. William Jared Cemetery. Timothy & Hettie Denny were the parents of Virgil Timothy Denny. Virgil T. Denny and his wife Audra Camilla Anderson Denny are buried in the Cookeville City Cemetery, Cookeville, TN).*

Carolyn Shanks Huddleston is the great-great-great-granddaughter of Captain William Jared.

The two women got together and said told each other that "whatever had to be done, had to be done now."

They set up a cemetery fund at Regions Bank in Baxter, got some immediate help and support from area family members Jerry Jared and Robert Shanks, notified as many other family members as they could find and, with their help and the help of good natured spouses they began the work of cutting back all the debris.

"You'd be surprised how many relatives can be traced back to one man," Huddleston said.

"We received donations from out of state descendants who have been working on their own genealogy, and from the DAR, and others who just like cemeteries," Huddleston said.

The last time the cemetery had been cleared to such an extent was in 1936 when a family celebration of Captain Jared was held there.

For much of the time the cemetery has been known not as the Captain William Jared Cemetery, but as the Jared-Byrne Graveyard.

"The family is trying hard to put it all together," said Huddleston.

The cemetery which also contains the remains of individuals from the Denny and Byrne families is a reminder that the modern history of Putnam County was jump-started by the Revolutionary War.

According to the Patriot Index of the Daughters of the American Revolution, William Jared enlisted in the Continental Army when he was 17 years old. He served eight years rising to the rank of Captain and was with the patriots when the peace treaty was signed on September 3, 1783.

For his loyalty and service the fledging US government awarded the young captain 1,000 acres of rural farm land in what was soon to become the State of Tennessee. He traveled there from Virginia with his wife and their first two children. According to historic records he was an accomplished woodworker, as his father was before him.

Jared's family was one of the first Euro-American families to settle in Tennessee. The captain is listed in the book, *First Families of Tennessee*, published by the East Tennessee Historical Society.

William Jared was born in Pennsylvania in 1758 to John and Hannah (Whitacre) Jared. His mother's family was part of the Quaker community in Bucks County, and when the Revolution came, John and William had to decide whether to join the Continental Army, which would have been against the pacifist philosophy of the church, or to join in fighting for the establishment of a new country.

They decided to fight. Later, though, William became a Methodist minister.

With the graveyard protected from grazing animals and looking neat and tidy, what else does the family want for the little cemetery?

"We have a number of grave markers that need to be repaired," Huddleston said. "We're hoping we can begin to identify who the other people are who are buried there.

"We need to find a way to take care of the cemetery perpetually," she said.

To help with the weeding, next month Audrey June Denny Lambert will be coming back down from Michigan with her garden tools in hand.

"We've still got the trust fund and hopefully enough people will become involved in this project that we can continue to maintain the cemetery," Huddleston said.

"And, of course, we need a memorial marker installed with the name of the cemetery. And, who knows, someday we may even put in an access road."

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Fence surrounding the Capt. William Jared Cemetery - 2005



Ted Huddleston & Charles Hancock
Standing by the gate of the
Capt. William Jared Cemetery

<http://www.ajlambert.com>