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Pioneer cemetery restored

A good shepherd finds Little Flock Cemetery

By [RANDY WEST](#)
Editor

Descendants of people buried in once-abandoned Little Flock Baptist Cemetery south of Elizabeth will gather there Saturday to rededicate the ground where early pioneers as well as Civil War and Revolutionary War soldiers are buried.

Crawford County native C.A. (Art) Dillman, 60, a retired engineer from Spencer, Ind., has spearheaded the restoration of the humble and well-hidden historic site in Taylor Township the past two years. He sent out 150 invitations; visitors are coming from as far away as the West Coast and even Norway, although he has no idea how many people will be here.

The program begins at 2 p.m. A Sons of the American Revolution Color Guard from Brownstown will add color and drama to the occasion. Dillman has invited Katherine Veitch Grimes, the national president of the Veach Historical Society in Louisville, to address the group. The Rev. Bruce Hawkins, pastor of the Marengo Christian Church, will speak and offer the invocation and benediction.

Flags and signs will give directions, and Bill Miller of Elizabeth will provide a parking lot and tractor-and-wagon transportation to the clearing where the little cemetery is located. Miller owns the property.

Dillman and one of the co-organizers of the event, Terry Straub, of Soldier, Kan., an Internet-savvy genealogist, will be there from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

"We will be answering questions, sharing Harrison County genealogies and celebrating our ancestors," they said on their Little Flock Baptist Cemetery Rededication Ceremony web site.

Dillman said Little Flock is one of nearly 300 abandoned pioneer cemeteries in Harrison County.

Dillman is a member of the Indiana Pioneer Cemeteries Restoration Project, started in 1997, and Preservation committees.

He first suspected the original cemetery contained 15 to 20 graves, but so far he and his colleagues have documented 170.

His interest in the cemetery goes back to his great-great-great-grandfather, Nathan Veatch, who came here in 1811 and is buried at Little Flock. His son, Elijah, founded the town of Elizabeth and named it after his mother, Elizabeth Craig Veatch.

Dillman said he uncovered this information while reading a genealogy in the Harrison County Public Library. The book was titled, "We Veitches, Veatches, Veaches, Veeches, a Historical Treasury of the Descendants of

James Veitch, the Sheriffe, Volume 1."

Dillman said Veitch is a Scottish name, from the Lowlands in Scotland.

Dillman was a traveling salesman throughout Indiana for 30 years. A student of history and genealogy, Dillman said he got interested in restoring the pioneer cemetery because he "grew up a poor boy" in these parts and "This country's been good to me, and I don't have a lot of ways to give back. I'm foolish about old cemeteries."

Two years ago, Dillman came to Elizabeth to find the cemetery and was surprised when he couldn't find anyone who knew where it was located. He sought help from his niece, Sandra Beauchemin, and her husband, Bernard, who live south of Corydon. Bernard did some research in the Corydon library and Harrison County Court House to determine Little Flock's location. One hot summer morning, they started their search, tramping along a logging "road" on a secluded ridge of land owned by Miller, southwest of Glenwood Presbyterian Church. They found it -- first, a gravestone setting next to the logging path and then a wooden sign which declared it to be the right place. They tried to determine the dimensions of the graveyard but the thick underbrush, mosquitoes and intense summer heat forced them to continue their work that fall.

During their second weekend of clearing, Dillman's wife, Rene, found Nathan Veatch's tombstone and a bronze plaque in front of it that read, "Revolutionary Soldier, Lt. Nathan Veatch 1775 1783, Placed by the Hoosier Elm Chapter, DAR."

The Little Flower Baptist Church was organized in 1825 when John Saffer deeded land to the congregation. The first trustee was George Boone, who was related to Daniel and Squire Boone.

The church was dissolved in 1852, but burials continued until 1893.

Nathan Veatch's family produced a number of soldiers. Seven fought against the British in the Revolutionary War in Maryland, Virginia and both Carolinas in the late 1780s, three fought the Indians in Tennessee after the British had surrendered, and three fought in the War of 1812.

Maj. Gen. James Clifford Veach, a grandson of Nathan Veach, commanded the forces from Indiana who fought at Shiloh during the Civil War. He later became the first post-Civil War adjutant general for Indiana and directed the Internal Revenue collections for Southern Indiana. The grandson is buried in Rockport!

Another son of Nathan Veach married the daughter of the founder of Evansville.

Some of the family names that can be found at Little Flock are: Veatch, Funk, Meek, Thompson, Brown, Moreland, Wallace, Kingery, Justice, Snodgrass and Shields.