

Stepping back in history

Teen descendent of Philip Shaver will conduct program

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The Back Mountain was much different in the early 1800s than it is today. The terrain was heavily wooded and only a few people lived in the area.

Philip Shaver of Forty Fort decided to move to the Back Mountain to farm and start a lumbering business after he heard a legend of the many large trees in the area. In 1813, he purchased 1000 acres of land from William Trucks, the founder of Trucksville, to ensure a future for his family.

And so, "Shavertown" was born.

Rosemary Shaver, a descendent of Philip Shaver and a senior at Dallas High School, will present "Here lies my weary feet," a program on Philip Shaver's journey to the Back Mountain and the history of the Shaver family.

The program will be held at 2, 3 and 4 p.m. on Sunday, Sept. 16, at the George M. Dallas Lodge on Main Street in Dallas.

Philip Shaver lived eight generations before Rosemary Shaver, who is in the line of descendants from Asa Shaver, one of Philip Shaver's sons. The 17-year-old Shavertown resident is very interested in history and has won the history award at Dallas High School given annually to one student in each ninth, 10th and 11th grades.

Rosemary Shaver's presentations are part of the Dallas Harvest Festival and are open to the public.

In 1769, Philip Shaver came to northern New Jersey from Austria with his parents at the age of seven. During the onset of the Revolutionary War, he became a fifer in the military and later served as a private.

He moved from New Jersey to Northampton Township, then to Forty Fort and finally to the Back Mountain.

Philip Shaver and his wife, Mary Ann, had two daughters, but there are discrepancies as to whether they had five or six sons. Eight names found for the children through family research were: Elizabeth, Katherine, John, Peter, William, James, George and Asa.

The first school in the Back Mountain was a one-room log cabin built on land donated in 1816 by Philip Shaver, who also helped construct the school. Shaver supported the school so the children of area farmers could learn to read and write.

And, although he is known for having donated land for the first public cemetery in the Back



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Rosemary Shaver, a descendant of Philip Shaver who purchased Shavertown from William Trucks, will give presentations on Sunday, September 16 on the beginnings of Shavertown as part of the Dallas Harvest Festival. From left, are History Committee member Owen Faut, Rosemary Shaver, History Committee Chair Carol Wall and History Committee member Liz Martin.

"Here lies my weary feet."

Words on Philip Shaver's tombstone

Mountain, no one today is sure which cemetery that is.

Years after Philip Shaver bought his land, he sold a portion of it which is now known as Dallas.

While making cider on his farm in 1824, Philip Shaver got his arm stuck in an apple presser and instructed his sons to bring him a saw so he could amputate his arm.

He died from blood poisoning several days later.

"Here lies my weary feet" is titled after the

inscription on Philip Shaver's footstone in Shaver Cemetery, a private family cemetery located near the site where Philip Shaver lived at the intersection of Pioneer Avenue and Overbrook Road in Shavertown. He wanted the saying on his grave because he was "a progressive man" who traveled and moved often.

Though some Shavers relocated to Missouri over the years, most remained in the Back Mountain.

Many Shavers from the area fought in America's wars and several owned businesses on Main Street in Dallas.

One of the Shaver-owned businesses in the Back Mountain which still remains open is Paul B. Shaver Electric in Shavertown. Paul Shaver was one of the founders of the Dallas American Legion.