



Women in Union Cemetery: Christina Reeg Duffy Bayne

The women featured in this series of articles are part of the Women in Union Cemetery Tour conducted by Mike Roberts in 2024.

Christina Reeg Duffy Bayne 1871 – 1956

Buried in Placerville Union Cemetery, Section 21B Block 34 Plot C

Portrayed by Lori Phillips-Whittle, Save the Graves 2019 event

Christina became one of the first female business owners on Main Street. Twice widowed, she bought what is now the Placerville News Company. It remains in her family today.

She was born at Chili Bar, the spot where the road to Georgetown crosses the American River. Her father owned the toll road and bridge. She was a teacher until she met cattle and timberman George Duffy. They married in 1903 but their happiness was short lived. She was with child in 1912 when George suffered appendicitis. Doctors at the Placerville Sanatorium were unable to save him.

To make ends meet she took a job in downtown Placerville at Shelley Inch's Placerville News Company. Christina bought the building in 1923 and moved her family into the upstairs apartment. Over the years, Christina and her son George twice expanded the store, leaving the original wood floors with square nails intact.

She subsequently married John Bayne of Coloma, a future county supervisor for whom Bayne Road would one day be named. John died suddenly of a heart attack in 1934. Christina lived for another 20+ years.

Christina's son George carried on the business and became one of Placerville's most beloved merchants, welcoming visitors with a warm smile. George's daughter, Mary Meader, later took over the business and finally retired last year. Today the business is run by Christina's great grandson Jeff and his sister Chris, with help from her great-great granddaughter Liliana.

A little more history...

Fisher's Oasis Coffee House and Wadsworth's Chicago Dining Saloon occupied the Placerville News site from 1851 - 1855.

In 1853, F.A. Bee, who built the house across the street from Union Cemetery, founded the *Placerville Herald*, and printed his short-lived newspaper here.

He also put the last nail in the Pony Express' coffin by running a telegraph line to Salt Lake City. Bee was also famously supportive of the "Celestials" (Chinese).

Later co-occupants Jacob Perkins and Shelley Inch carried on the business of selling newspapers, books and stationary. Eventually Inch acquired both portions of the property. Around 1898 he added the building's second floor and the cast iron front to its facade. Inch then named the business *The Placerville News Company*.

Interpretation by Mike Roberts, 2024

[SaveTheGravesElDorado.org](https://www.savethegraveseldorado.org)

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