

## CEMETERY

America's best kept lawns are in Cemeteries.

*03-3-2014 By Harry Zirkelbach*

A child is born. Celebrates first day of eternity.

Regretfully Americans have ceased to gather family, pack an exquisite lunch, soft drink and bottle of wine, fine tablecloth and settings, join in a picnic, one more meal of shared stories with loved ones at a grave of a deceased favorite.

As a youngster and Boy Scout, Our Troop marched summer parades, with Memorial and Independence Day gatherings ending at the Soldier and Sailors Home, downtown near the shore of Lake Erie. Graves of these decorated deceased, bordered the road leading to the large common Veterans Home for Retirees. Headstones were even more simple than today. Names were readable, individuals unknown to us.

Most of who marched were met by family, friends, so their reunion was of friendship and joyful noise.

In addition, at least annually, our family would visit Calvary Cemetery on the far side of town, for here relatives and friends had found final rest. Our parents spoke at length of their affection for their peers, passed that sensitivity to my sister and me. Stories representing each life, related by Mom and Dad, decorated these bonds.

WW II changed all. Suddenly, dead became contemporaries, friends.

Later the East U.S. receding in memory, roots now in Colorado, further change.

Barbara, her family, shunned visiting any cemetery. We attend funerals, seldom accompany a family to the cemetery.

My familiar cemetery is Ft Logan, visited with military buddies, celebrate a friend being laid to rest, or already there.

Fort Logan military Cemetery occupies 214 acres that of the once the frontier Fort Logan. It is named after General John Logan, Civil War commander of volunteer forces, later head of Veterans Grand Army of the Republic. There he had established May 30 as Decoration Day, made a national holiday;

later renamed Memorial Day,

The military base of Fort Logan was closed in 1946. In 1960 much of the land was deeded to Colorado for a State Hospital. Before then in 1950, that part of the Fort used as a military cemetery was expanded, set aside as a Fort Logan National Cemetery. Today there are about 100,000 interned here, veteran, wife, some children. All honorably retired veterans are eligible for burial. Given proof of service, morticians make arrangements.

These acres, southeast, on Hampden and Sheridan Streets, main entrance, on Logan Boulevard, are on gentle rolling hills. There are no vistas not peaceful.

Five other named streets are inside Fort Logan National Cemetery, honor, Denver and Omaha, Kansas Wyoming and Nebraska. There are two Lakes an three columbarium, the latter reflect the increasing internment by cremation.

Fort Logan has been chosen for Barbara and Harry's resting place.  
Picnic anyone?



Cemeteries need not be perfectly groomed to be memorable.  
We always smile, remember, when we visit our daughter's mountain home,  
drive past their cemetery on arrival and departure.