Forest Cemetery Historical Walking Tour

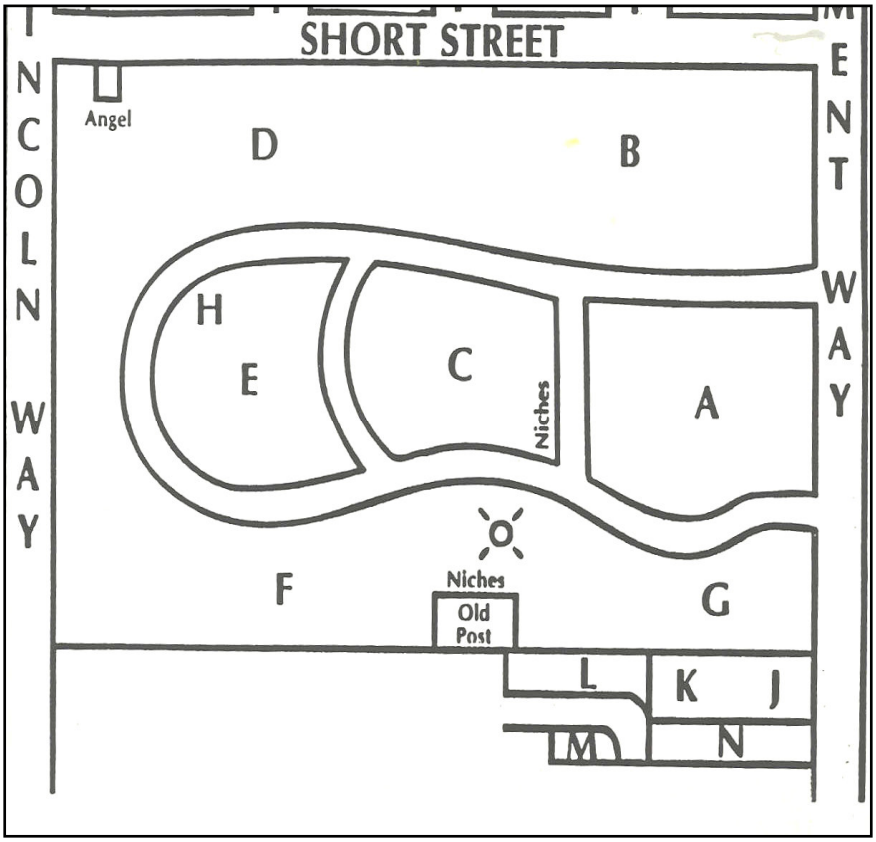
Cemetery Location:
1011 Government Way
Coeur d'Alene, Idaho

Coeur d'Alene Parks Department
710 E Mullan Avenue
Coeur d'Alene, Idaho 83814
Phone: (208) 769-2252

Map Key

Numbers denote tour stops within cemetery.
Letters denote sections of cemetery.

1	Captain Peter C. Sorensen	11	Infant Section
2	Frederick A. Blackwell	12	Angel Statue
3	Joseph C. White	13	Francis Bond
4	Betsey Ross Monument	14	Clayton Henley
5	Old Post	15	Veterans of Foreign Wars
6	GAR Statue	16	Class of 1945 Flagpole
7	Spanish American Veterans	17	American Legion Section
8	WWI Veterans	18	Burl C. and Beverly Hagadone
9	Edward C. Pulaski	19	William S. Hawkins
10	Old and Unique Section	20	Original Location of the Sexton's Office
		21	Avenue of Flags [Holiday Dependent]



Forest Cemetery is located at 1011 Government Way in the City of Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. The 20.7 acre cemetery was originally owned by the U.S. Army at Fort Sherman during its operation from 1878 to 1901. When Fort Sherman was abandoned in 1901, the remains of approximately one hundred soldiers and their families that were buried here were moved to Fort George Wright in Spokane, Washington.

A proclamation from Theodore Roosevelt in 1905 gave the City of Coeur d'Alene the original one acre of the "Old Post" cemetery and an additional 19.7 acres to form what is now Forest Cemetery. There was a brief period of time between the army's release of the grounds and when the city assumed ownership. Within that short interim, there were no burial records kept. Approximately thir graves have no burial records of any kind. Small brick markers containing the inscription "unknown" mark these graves. As of 2004, there are over 16,000 people buried in Forest Cemetery.

In 1968, the City of Coeur d'Alene acquired an additional eight acres of land directly northwest of Forest Cemetery for expansion purposes. This area is known as Riverview Cemetery.

The following is a narrative walking tour of some of the historical and unique features of Forest Cemetery. Some of these features of interest are described at the end of this tour brochure. On some of the sites there are markers provided to help you on the tour.

The Forest Cemetery historical tour begins in section G, which is on your left as you enter the south cemetery gate on Government Way. Walk west along the cemetery driveway until you reach the tour start marker. Head south about forty steps to Captain Sorenson's gravestone.

1 Captain Peter C. Sorensen

Peter C. Sorensen, the "father of Coeur d'Alene boating," was born in Kragero, Norway. Sorensen built boats in Michigan and Oregon before coming to Coeur d'Alene to build the lake's first steamboat, the Amelia Wheaton. The Amelia Wheaton was launched in late 1880, with Sorenson as the first captain. Captain Sorensen, exploring on the uncharted waters of Lake Coeur d'Alene, named most of the bays and points as they appear on maps today. Sorensen helped build many steamboats on the lake including the General Sherman, Volunteer, Scheley, and the Torpedo. Sorensen passed away on January 16, 1918, at the age of eighty-five.

Museum of North Idaho

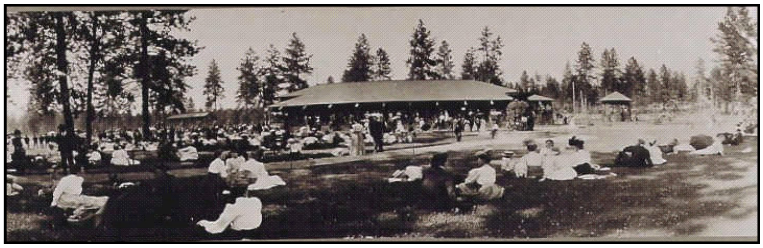
The tour continues about twenty-five steps southwest of the Sorenson gravestone. Pass four rows of headstones to reach the Blackwell stone. It is indicated by a tour marker.

2 Frederick A. Blackwell

In 1901, Frederick A. Blackwell moved to Coeur d'Alene from Williamsport, Pennsylvania. Blackwell undertook many enterprises throughout northern Idaho. In 1902 he bought twenty-six million feet of timber from the State of Idaho in the St. Maries River area. Blackwell organized the St. Joe Improvement Company to improve log transportation on the St. Joe and St. Maries Rivers. By 1905 he and his associates had built the Coeur d'Alene and Spokane Electric Line, an electric railroad. Blackwell also helped plan and develop numerous other lumber companies, as well as the Idaho and Washington Northern Railway. This railroad extended from Rathdrum to Spirit Lake, Blanchard, and on to Metaline Falls, Washington and served many operations along its line. Blackwell and his associates also helped build the town sites of Spirit Lake, Idaho and Ione, Washington.

Museum of North Idaho

He also helped develop a public park which extended over twenty landscaped acres along the waterfront of Lake Coeur d'Alene. "Blackwell Park" was known as one of the most attractive parks in the Inland Empire. The grounds were laid out with gravel walkways and landscaped with flowers, plants, water fountains, and more than 250 varieties of shade trees. Over time, Blackwell Park became known as Coeur d'Alene City Park, and was given to the City in 1904 by the BLM. Blackwell proved to be an ambitious developer in northern Idaho. He passed away on December 8, 1922, at the age of seventy.



Museum of North Idaho

Walk north towards the driveway about twenty steps, past the Harris obelisk, to the White gravestone.

3 "Commodore" Joseph Clarence White

Joseph C. White came to Coeur d' Alene in 1887. White was well known in northern Idaho as a builder of roads, railroads, and steamboats. He was a booster, an advertiser, and a risk taker. He helped place Coeur d' Alene and the lake on the map.

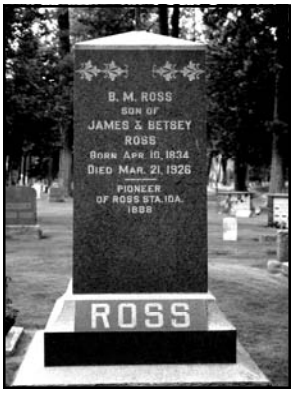
White was a civil engineer who helped construct D.C. Corbin's narrow gauge railroad from the Old Mission east into the Silver Valley. White bought a homestead on Emerald Creek in the St. Maries River Valley, and some of the very first logs driven down the St. Maries River were cut from timber on his homestead. In 1893 White was the engineer for the first road built up the St. Maries River valley. After 1900 he became the central figure around which lake boating revolved.

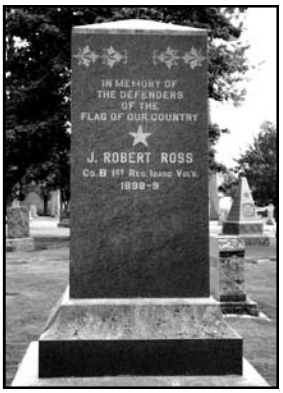
White was a major participant with the Red Collar Line which during its peak from 1908 to 1913, owned an estimated fleet of fifty boats on the lake. White was also a member of "Transportation Companies of the West", an organization composed of railroad and other officials. This group built the first paved road to Spokane. He was also instrumental in getting an improved road built around the lake and through the Fourth of July Canyon into the mining towns of the Silver Valley.

Museum of North Idaho

White lived in retirement in Coeur d'Alene until his death on April 5, 1953, at the age of eighty-eight. Both Joseph and his wife Harriet White are buried here.

Look northwest and you will see the Ross monument rising about eight feet from the ground. The four-sided obelisk is about twenty-five steps northwest of the White gravestone.





4 Betsey Ross

Betsy Ross is known as the maker of the first flag for our country in 1776. On June 14, 1777, the Continental Congress, seeking to promote national pride and unity, adopted the national flag. Betsy Ross died in Philadelphia on January 30, 1836 at the age of eighty-four. This monument is one of our unsolved mysteries in the cemetery.

First, the engraving on the monument spells Betsy differently than history books; there is an extra 'e' in her name. Secondly, the monument states that B.M. Ross, one of her descendents, erected the monument. On the other side of the monument B.M. Ross is listed as the son of James and Betsey Ross. Yet Betsy Ross had seven daughters, but did not have any sons. The date of birth and date of death for B.M. Ross raises additional questions (assuming that the descendent B.M. Ross and the son B.M. Ross is the same individual). If he was born to Betsy in 1834, she would have been eighty-two years old. We have not been able to find information on Ross Station to which B.M. Ross is referenced as the pioneer in 1888. If you can help us solve this mystery, please let us know!

Museum of North Idaho

From the Betsey Ross Monument, turn southwest and walk about thirty steps to the large Norway maple tree. The tree resides on the northwest corner of the Old Post Section.

5 Old Post

This area is the original Fort Sherman Cemetery. It was used exclusively by the military for burials of soldiers and their families. Fort Sherman was in service from 1878 until 1901 when it was officially abandoned by the military. By 1905, many of the graves and the remains of the soldiers were relocated to Fort George Wright in Spokane.

This original Fort Sherman Cemetery is also referred to as the "Old Post" section, and encompasses close to an acre of ground. Marion Glutches, the oldest burial (1881) in the Forest Cemetery, can also be found in this section.

Timothy Shea from Kerry County Ireland served in the U.S. Military Infantry and is buried here. Shea is the only soldier from the Fort Sherman era that was not relocated when the Post moved to Spokane in the 1890s. The Shea gravestone is located about fifty steps southwest of the maple tree.

The tour now turns north. From the Shea gravestone, walk about fifty-five steps to the statue of the Union Soldier.

6 Grand Army of the Republic (GAR)

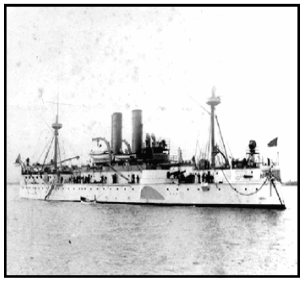
The Civil War began in 1861 and ended in 1865. The GAR was founded in 1866 and consisted of Union Civil War Veterans. It began to flourish around 1875, and consisted of over 490,000 members. During the active years of the GAR, the organization had great influence on politics, law, and social areas of the United States.

Memorial Day was officially proclaimed as a national holiday on May 5, 1869 by General John Logan, a national commander of the Grand Army of the Republic. Since its establishment there have been five Presidents that were GAR members. Most of the Governors in the New England states were members, and veteran pensions were given to the union veterans. In many cases it was impossible to be elected to public office if you were not a veteran of the Civil War. This life-sized statue of a union soldier in uniform was erected here in 1907 to honor the veterans of the Civil War. This statue is referred to as the G.A.R. Statue, and stands twelve feet tall, including the base. Headstones of many union veterans from many different companies and regiments across the United States surround the GAR statue. Each year, Memorial Day services are held at this location honoring the fallen veterans of all wars.

Walk west about twenty steps along the cemetery driveway and look for a tour marker on the north side. This is the Spanish American War Veterans section in section C.

7 Spanish American War Veterans Section

U.S. intervention in Cuba in 1898 was decided upon with the occurrence of two particular incidents. A letter intercepted from the Spanish Minister to the U.S., Senor Dupuy de Lôme, was published characterizing President McKinley as "a weakling…a bidder for the admiration of the crowd." The second incident was the sinking of the U.S.S. Maine that suffered an explosion and quickly sank, killing 266 men.



Museum of North Idaho

The Maine was in the Havana Harbor in Cuba on a "goodwill visit." Expert opinion is divided on why the ship exploded and sank. Most consider it an accidental explosion of an underwater mine. Others maintain that the U.S.S. Maine was the victim of sabotage, or was sacrificed to rally public opinion against Spain. Either way, this incident led to a declaration of war.

Coeur d'Alene's connection to the Spanish American War is Fort Sherman. In 1898, the Fort Sherman garrison was sent to Cuba, never to return to post. Fort Sherman was officially abandoned in 1901.

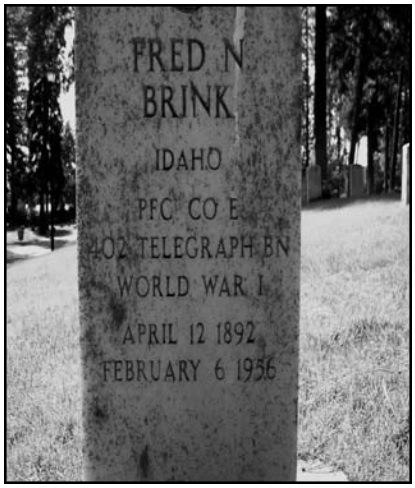
From this section, head west along the cemetery driveway about seventy steps, past the driveway cut-through, to the dove carving. An American flag just east of the dove resides in the middle of the white marble headstones, gravesites for many of Coeur d'Alene's World War I Veterans.

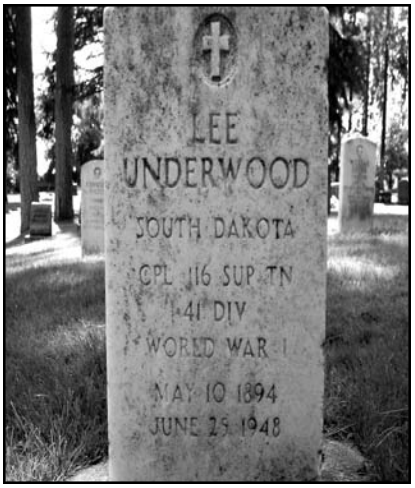
8 World War I Veterans

On June 28, 1914, the heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne, Archduke Franz Ferdinand, was assassinated in Sarajevo, setting off a sequence of diplomatic events leading to the outbreak of World War I in late July 1914. Ferdinand was shot by Serbian terrorist Gavrilo Princip immediately following a reception for the Archduke at Sarajevo's Town Hall.

The war lasted from 1914 to 1919. On April 2, 1917, President Woodrow Wilson concluded that America could not remain neutral in the war and asked Congress for a declaration of war on Germany. Fighting ceased in November 1918, and the Treaty of Versailles was signed in June of 1919.

This area is dedicated to those who served in World War I.





From the carved dove, look northwest. Walk approximately sixty steps past two Ponderosa Pine trees, following tour marker to Edward C. Pulaski's headstone.

9 Edward C. Pulaski

Famous for inventing the ingenious tool that combines an ax and hoe for fighting wildland fires, Edward Pulaski served in the U.S. Forest Service in Wallace, Idaho as Forest Ranger from 1908 until 1930. Well known in forest fire history, Pulaski helped save forty men during the Big Blowup in August 1910 when gale force winds swept through Idaho, Montana, and Washington consuming three million acres in two days. When fires trapped the crews, Pulaski led forty five men to an abandoned mineshaft and positioned himself at the entranceway fighting the encroaching flames with wetted blankets. He and forty men survived from his leadership efforts. In the aftermath, Congress decided to spend federal money on forest fires for the first time, and the Forest Service policy of fighting fires emerged.

Museum of North Idaho

The Pulaski Project, named for the revered forest ranger, intends to build a national wildfire education center and museum in Wallace to honor past and present firefighters. The center would bring the Forest Service, timber companies, and environmental representatives together to develop an improved fire policy.

From the Pulaski gravestone, turn south to the driveway and continue west along the cemetery driveway. At the section F marker, walk about thirty-five steps down the driveway to the bend at the Ashley and Whitknect headstones. They are on the west side of the driveway.

10 Old & Unique Section

This section of the cemetery is an interesting area to view old headstones. Many of the headstones have interesting symbols with 100-200-year-old dates. Some of these symbols can be found on the following page.

You may have noticed that the graves thus far on the tour and within this section are not uniformly arranged. Within Forest Cemetery, there are two distinct plat designs. In this area, headstones run in all directions, whereas another area has headstones set in a linear arrangement. If you look east across the cemetery driveway, you will notice that the headstones are arranged in a linear style.

The previous plat design was common practice when family burial plats were popular in older cemeteries. A family burial plat could hold ten, fifteen, or more burials, and it was determined by the family where a member would be placed within the plat. The old style plat design had many circular easement designs running between and around family burial plots. These paths were designed to allow access by the early horse drawn hearses to the gravesite. The hearse would then proceed down the path and exit back on the main road without the need to back up.

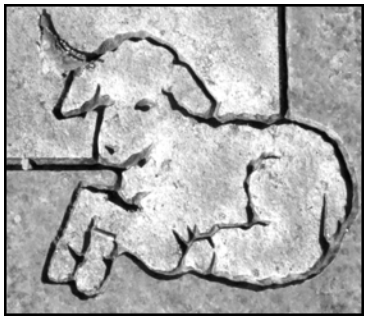
Today's more conventional straight row platting designs were created to optimize burial lots in a given area. This new style platting was first utilized around the 1920s and was quickly adapted by many cemeteries.

Walk north about sixty steps to the middle of the Infant section.

11 Infant Section

In this section of Forest Cemetery, over two-thirds of the infants buried here between 1912 and 1944 died due to being either stillborn, premature, or from pneumonia. Causes of death can provide insight into the history of generations past as well as the challenges that have led to modern medicine. Throughout the cemetery, you may come across numerous symbols engraved on the headstones.

The following are some of the symbols that you may find:



Anchor: hope, mariner, at rest
Book: faith everlasting
Cherub: a small angel portrayed as a child, derived from cherubim, a winged celestial being, the second of the nine orders of angels in medieval angelology, often used for young people, symbolize the gift of knowledge
Crown: glory of life after death
Dove: innocence, peace
Gates: afterlife
Ivy: fidelity, attachment, eternal life
Lamb: purity, innocence, gentleness, sacrifice, usually mark the graves of children
Laurel: victory, peace
Lily: innocence, purity
Morning glory: beginning of life
Oak leaves: strength of faith, virtue, endurance
Poppies: eternal sleep
Roses: victory, pride, triumphant love,
Star: divine guidance
Tree: life

The tour continues in the northwest corner of the cemetery. Walk north towards the fence that borders Forest Cemetery and Short Street.

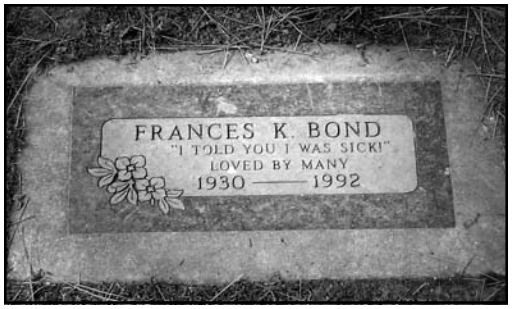
12 Angel Statue

This marble statue was donated on September 6, 1931 by Coeur d'Alene Homes Assisted Living. This area around the five-foot tall statue is owned by Coeur d' Alene Homes. They have provided not-for-profit assisted living since 1921 and are owned and operated by twenty-five local churches.

Head east to the cemetery driveway past sections H and E (on the south side of the driveway). Continue past the next driveway cut-through on the right to the first lamp post, and look for a marker before the second lamp post.

13 Francis Bond

This headstone is unusual due to the engraving. Francis Bond must have had a sense of humor engraving "I told you I was sick!" on her headstone.



Walk east along the cemetery driveway until you reach the section A marker. Continue east twenty steps past the first black lamp post to the Henley gravestone.

14 Clayton Henley

This monument honors Clayton Henley. He was one of the founders of the former Henley Aerodrome near Athol, Idaho, which is now the site of Silverwood Theme Park. The eighty-acre aerodrome was dedicated on July 9, 1973 and was a base for vintage airplanes and numerous air shows including planes, gliders and hot air balloons. His remains are located at this aerodrome.

From the Henley monument, continue east along the cemetery driveway. The area on the northeast corner of the cemetery is the VFW section.

15 Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Section

In 1899, veterans of the Spanish-American War of 1898 and the Philippine Insurrection (1899-1902) secured rights and benefits for their service through the creation of local organizations. These organizations would later be referred to as the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States. The VFW created the Veterans Administration, led national cemetery system development, protected the VA budget, and with its Ladies Auxiliary now contributes more than thirteen million hours of volunteerism in communities. The VFW, with its auxiliaries, includes 2.6 million members in approximately 9,000 posts worldwide.

Look north towards the Government Way fence and you will see the Class of 1945 flagpole.

16 Coeur d'Alene High School Class of 1945 Flagpole

The Coeur d'Alene High School Class of 1945, which graduated as World War II ended, donated this beautiful flagpole to the cemetery in 2001. Their donation serves to honor and remember the veterans of World War II, as well as veterans of all other conflicts.

To continue the tour, walk south to the cemetery driveway and approximately seventy steps southwest to the American Legion Flagpole.

17 American Legion Section

The American Legion is the largest veterans organization in the world. It was chartered by Congress in 1919 and now has over three million members. This patriotic, mutual-help, community service organization has nearly 15,000 American Legion Posts worldwide. These Posts are organized into fifty-five departments, one each for the fifty states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, France, Mexico, and the Philippines. The Kootenai Post #14 established in 1947 dedicated this flagpole.

Walk approximately twenty steps northwest from the American Legion Flagpole past three rows to the Hagadone gravestones. They are flanked by two small trees, and a tour marker.

Museum of North Idaho

18 Burl C. & Beverly Hagadone

Lifelong residents of Coeur d'Alene, Burl and Beverly Hagadone were instrumental in the development of Coeur d'Alene. Burl Hagadone accomplished a multitude of tasks within a short life of forty-nine years, including: newspaper publisher, radio station founder, fundraiser, realtor, and investor. Both Burl and Beverly Hagadone served on various community and civic organizations devoting much to the attention and advancement of the City of Coeur d'Alene.

The next gravestone is west about ten steps.

19 Largest Monument in the Cemetery

William Stark Hawkins' monument is the largest monument in Forest Cemetery. It is five-feet tall and thirteen-feet long. William S. Hawkins was a Grand Exalted Ruler of the Elks and made many contributions toward community functions. The Elks, formed in 1866, are patriotic public servants with over 1.5 million members.

Walk southwest to the first driveway cut-through. On the corner of section C, a few feet from the corner lamp post, you will find the site of the old Sexton Office, marked by two stone urns.

20 Old Sexton's Office

This area is the location of the original Sexton's Office that was erected in 1908. A sexton is the caretaker responsible for the cemetery. The only remnants of this office are two stone planting urns. Each year the urns are planted with annual flowers. The cemetery records are now kept in the Coeur d'Alene Parks Department office at City Hall on 710 E. Mullan Avenue.

Museum of North Idaho

21 Avenue of Flags

If you happen to be in the cemetery on Memorial Day, Flag Day, Fourth of July, or Veteran's Day, you will see the Avenue of Flags. This is a series of over seventy American Flags placed around the cemetery driveways in Forest Cemetery and Riverview Cemetery.

We hope that you have enjoyed the tour. Please contact us with any information that might update our information, or be of interest to others.

Other points of interest along the Forest Cemetery Tour:

Pyramids:
Often represent eternity. It is supposed that a pyramid-shaped tombstone prevents the devil from reclining on a grave. The pyramid is a symbol for the Egyptian god "Ra," the giver of all life.

Obelisks:
An upright four-sided pillar, gradually tapering as it rises and cut off at the top in the form of a pyramid. Usually made of granite, sandstone, or marble. In Egypt, obelisks were erected in pairs in front of temple entrances.

Ledger Stones:
These are stones that may simply be a cap over the gravesite, or it may be the lid into a vault.

Benches & Birdbaths: Look for these throughout the cemeteries.

Additional Symbols Also Found Within the Cemetery:

Benevolent Protective Order of Elks: [An elk head within a clock] A social organization created in 1866 as an offshoot of a drinking club, the Jolly Corks, to avoid a New York law which prohibited the sale of spirits on Sundays. They are a patriotic group devoted to public service.
Daughters of Rebekah: [A half moon, a dove, and the intertwined letters DR] This is an auxiliary of the Odd Fellows established in 1851.
Eastern Star: [A five pointed star with the tip pointing down] Each symbol within the star represents fidelity, constancy, loyalty, faith, and love. It is the female counterpart to Freemasonry founded in 1876.
Fraternal Order of Eagles: [The engraving F.O.E.] The F.O.E was established in Seattle, Washington, in 1898 by a group of theater owners. They sponsor a number of health related charities and promote improved workman's compensation.
Freemasons: [A square and compass with the letter "G"] The square and compass represent the interaction between mind and matter and the development from the material to the intellectual to the spiritual. The largest fraternal organization in the world began as self employed stonemasons who built the great cathedrals in Europe.
Independent Order of Odd Fellows: [Three links of a chain with the letters FLT] The links represent Friendship, Love and Truth. The I.O.O.F. is an Odd Fellows offshoot created in the 1700s in England as a working class and benevolent association.
Knights of Pythias: [Shield with the letters FCB] The letters stand for Friendship, Charity, and Benevolence. It began in 1864 as a secret society for government clerks. It was named after Phinias, a Pythagorean philosopher.
Masonic Keystone: [The letters H.T.W.S.S.T.K.S. arranged in a circle] This symbol is the Masonic Mark of an Ancient Grand Master. The letters stand for "Hiram the Widow's Son Sent to King Solomon"
Shriners: [A scimitar and a hanging crescent with the head of a sphinx and a five-pointed star inside.] Founded 1872, they contribute to hospitals and various other causes.
Woodmen of the World: [A dove, olive branch, tree stump, ax, and the words "Dum Tacet Clamet". The latin phrase means "Though silent, he speaks". Now known as Woodmen of the World Life Insurance Society/Omaha Woodmen Life Insurance Society.

References:

- The American Legion. October 2004. http://www.legion.org
- The Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks of the USA. October 2004. http://www.elks.org
- Brief History of the Grand Army of the Republic. October 2004. http://suvcw.org/gov.htm
- Coeur d' Alene Parks Department. Forest Cemetery Records. 2004.
- Defort, Edward J. American Cemetery. Lakewood, NJ: Kates-Boylston Publications. December 2003.
- Devlin, Sherry. "Mountains of Fire." The Missoulian. October 2004.
- El Hult, Rubl. Steamboats in the Timber. Oregon: Binford & Mort, 1968
- Hagengruber, James. "A Fire's Line of Legacies." Spokesman Review. 20 June 2004
- Idaho State Historical Society. Reference Series. Fort Sherman. Number 355. September 2004. http://www.idahohistory.net
- Museum of North Idaho. Historical Photograph Archives. 2004
- Museum of North Idaho. Photo FS-8-28. September 1910
- The Pulaski Project. October 2004. http://imbris.net/~roisen2
- Strong, Clarence C., and Webb, Clyde S. White Pine: King of Many Waters. Missoula: Mountain Press, 1970
- Tombstone Art and Symbols. September 2004. www.tales.ndirect.co.uk
- Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States. October 2004. www.vrw.org
- Wellman, Kay. Communication. September 2004.

[Advertisements]

[Advertisements]

TREE CITY USA

COEUR D'ALENE 1887 CITY BY THE LAKE

All-America City 1990

Coeur d'Alene Parks Department

710 E. Mullan Avenue
Coeur d'Alene, Idaho 83814
Phone: (208) 769-2252
Fax: (208) 769-2383
Email: parks@cdaid.org