

Way We Were

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Glenwood remains unforgettable

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In 1996 the Glenwood Cemetery was placed on the National Register of Historic Places. As unique as Glenwood is, it was bound for historic prominence.

Established in 1885, Glenwood was born out of need, and it was the miners that purchased and developed their own cemetery for themselves and their family members at an affordable cost.

Fraternal organizations flourished in mining communities throughout the West, and Park City was no exception. These organizations filled a much-needed social void and, importantly, provided assistance (financial and social) to miners and their families in case of injury or death. The Knights of Pythias, the Independent Order of Odd Fellows, the Masons – to name just a few – were a miner's source of solace, support and friendship.

When a cemetery was needed, these organizations pooled their money to purchase three acres of land near town for \$100. Two more acres were donated, totaling five acres, which was set up in 4 quadrants, dividing down to an 8 foot by 13 foot eternal patch of earth.

Mining was extremely dangerous work punctuated with accidents, cave ins, explosions and illness. Life could be snuffed out with the buck of a horse, slip of a gear, or an unintended spark, giving Glenwood all the business it could handle from 1885 into the 1930s. In 1902 alone, thirty-four men lost their lives in the Daly West mine disaster. Some are buried in the Glenwood.

When one first visits Glenwood, the thought of an Alfred Hitchcock movie may come to mind. It is not a sterile cemetery with artificial flowers, sculptured hedges or the sounds of busy lawn mowers buzzing about like hungry bees. Glenwood is raw. The scarred aspens are many, surrounding the weathered graves and filling up the sky. The wildflowers spread a blanket of brilliant colors one might find in a painting by Monet. The headstones tell the story of men and women forging a life of labor and sacrifice: a stone log, a granite book, a discarded robe, tools, globes, crosses; anything that tells a story can be found here.

Glenwood is unique in that not anyone can be buried there, even today, unless you are a descendent of an original plot owner. A stroll through this very private historic cemetery gives one the opportunity of introspection and serenity that is rarely felt in our busy lives these days. It is written in the visitor log: "900 Souls Guard These Grounds, Please be Respectful."

If you choose to visit Glenwood, give yourself time to take it all in. You won't be disappointed and it truly is impossible to forget what you find here.

Interested in learning about the lives and deaths of some of the people buried at Glenwood Cemetery? Join the Park City Museum for tours on September 22 from 10:45am-12pm or 12:45pm-2pm. History will come alive through re-enactors in costume. Space is limited and reservations are required. Tickets are \$15 per person, with all proceeds benefitting the historic cemetery. For more information, visit our website at parkcityhistory.org.



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Credit: Park City Historical Society and Museum, Myles Rademan Collection

Caption: The ornate cast iron gate pictured was installed in 1982.