

New Castle's Historic Preservation Commission requests approval of Historic Designation for the Highland Cemetery located at 1009 Clubhouse Drive (where Cemetery Road connects to Clubhouse Drive). It has been identified as a historic site in New Castle and qualifies for a Historic Designation possessing the following qualities or characteristics listed below.



**Setting:**

New Castles original and only Cemetery, Highland Cemetery, sits at the end of Clubhouse Drive overlooking the Town with one of the best views of the Grand Hogback and area around. It is 10.51 acres and sits on the hogback high above Main Street approximately 1 mile north. Bordered by Lakota Golf Course, Club House Drive and undeveloped Lakota Golf Properties. The town of New Castle began burying townspeople in what is now known as the Highland Cemetery in 1888, the same year the town was incorporated.

The cemetery was on private property in 1896, it was owned by Mrs. Teresa Schuessler. She wanted to make it right to legally bury people there. Either she would run the cemetery and be compensated by the town, or New Castle could buy the 10 acres where the cemetery was for \$1000. Heated negotiations went on all year including attorneys on both sides. The end result was that the town purchased the cemetery June 13, 1897 for \$200. Interestingly, Mrs. Teresa Schuessler was the mother-in-law of infamous New Castle mine owner, PC Coryell.



**General Description and Characteristics representing an established and familiar visual feature within the Town:**

The earliest burial in the cemetery is from 1889. Among the earliest burials in the cemetery were Civil War Veterans who settled in New Castle after the Civil War. It's location along the hogback ridge is laid out in formal blocks with 10 north-south roads and 4 east-west roads. It has a Solders Circle with a red concrete point star with the in insignias of the 5 branches of the military and a US Flag. There is also some non-military buried in the Old Solders Circle.



Grave enclosures and monuments are in a variety of styles, depending on what the families chose at time. The grave markers are a variety of granite, marble, wood, welded steel, concrete and many other variations. There are no mausoleums or tombs. Many sites are large family sites that include husbands, wives, children, brothers and sisters.





### Shed and Original Sign:

There is a caretakers shed and the original Cemetery sign stands at what once was the original entrance to the Cemetery just North of the Shed. The original sign was built by Barney Fuienwider, who used to have a steel shop in the original Black Smiths shop, in the early 1960's. A new sign (shown in the first picture) was placed at the current entrance when the Lakota development was built in that area. The caretaker maintains the cleanliness and integrity of the cemetery. Also, there are volunteer cleanups throughout the year. The current Caretaker Mike Miller) is the only care taker the Cemetery has had. Prior to him, a Council member was responsible for the upkeep of the Cemetery site. The landscape is maintained twice a year.



### Historic Significance:

It has existed for over 50 years.

The Highland Cemetery was designated in 1888, the same year that New Castle was incorporated. The earliest recorded burials are from 1889. The cemetery is an operational cemetery and still accepts burials in a non-historic (for now) portion of the Cemetery.





The First person interred in the Highland Cemetery was John Battista Garbolino. An Italian Immigrant who worked in the coal mines near New Castle. According to Cemetery records, there are 12-15 infant graves of Garbolino babies.



The growth of the Cemetery in terms of people being buried there, would obviously vary over the years. From the first burial in 1889 to 1922, several hundred were buried in the Cemetery. From 1923 to 1934 the average was around 10 burials. In 1931 there was a spike of 23 burials with another noticeable spike in 1932. Following that it was a normal average of Internments.

**Is associated with events that have made significant contribution to the Town's history:**

Among those interred are early settlers of New Castle and the surrounding area, Town politicians and business owners and leaders, at least 177 miners from the five operational mines in the late 1800's, the Coryell, Vulcan, Keystone, B&M and Consolidated Mines.

Many of the early miners, their families and victims of the mine explosions and their family members that stayed calling New Castle their home are buried in the cemetery. They represent an important part of the early development and growth of New Castle.



**Is associated with the lives of persons significant to the Town's past and yields information important to the history of the Town:**

1883 Jasper Ward, who had been operating a freight business with his brothers in Leadville, brought his wife Annie and daughter Netti to Carbonate, the original Garfield County seat on the Flat Tops. Carbonate was abandoned when the Flat Tops winters became unendurable, and the Wards made their way to the Colorado River Valley. Ward claimed a homestead site at the confluence of Elk Creek and the Colorado River, becoming the first white settler to build a home in New Castle in 1883.



Ellen Ganley 1865-1968 was the first bride married in New Castle. She was also a midwife in the town.

Merrit Vandeventer 1864-1919 was the first Mayor and Postmaster of New Castle.





**1910** Billy Griffith was a former Town Marshall, a popular baseball player and a saloon owner. On November 9, 1910 he was convicted in court of assault, unfairly he believed. The next day, November 10, he accosted Frank Sample, one of the people who had testified against him, on Main Street. Town Marshall John Rennix came to the rescue, and Sample was able to escape. Griffith had two pistols out, and he shot Rennix in the stomach. Rennix was able to get off a couple shots before collapsing, and he managed to wound Griffith. All this happened in front of the Trimble building, and Griffith ran inside and up to the second floor. Meanwhile William Davis and Town Councilor Hugh Miller had rushed to Marshall Rennix to try to help. Griffith started firing from a second-floor window, and hit Davis in the head, killing him. A posse of nearly 40 men arrived from Glenwood Springs and fired into the building. No one, however, dared to enter the building until Griffith's girlfriend, Lelia McMichael, volunteered. Inside she discovered that Griffith had turned his gun on himself and shot himself in the head. Rennix died the next day at the sanitarium in Glenwood Springs. Griffith, Rennix and Davis are all buried in Highland Cemetery. John's wife, Lieuvernia May lies next to him, having pasted 9 years before John's death.



Kathryn Senor 1914-1993 was a beloved teacher at New Castle School, as well as Rifle High School and Riverside school. Kathryn Senor Elementary School is named after her.





Joshepine Rolletto 1870-1956 was an Italian can-can dancer that grew flowers on New Castle's main Street. Next to her lies her sons Leo and Joseph.



James Nesbit Adams 1834-1904-Served in the Civil War and his name appears as J.N. Adams on the Pennsylvania state monument in Gettysburg. James moved to New Castle later in life for health reasons but only lived here for 4 years before his death. He is buried in the Old Soldiers Circle along with his daughter Hattie.



There are several "Woodsman" plots in the Highland Cemetery. The "Woodsman of the World" was a fraternal, "not for profit" society founded in 1890 established by Joseph Cullen Root. Its history includes community outreach and philanthropic efforts to communities that in turn provided its members with financial security. The burial sites are distinctive with a cut-off stump stone headstones or monolith headstones that each member received as a member of the society.



The New Castle Museum is a great place to learn about the History of New Castle. Associated with this write up they have a Cemetery Plot Map, Cemetery Records A-Z and the Mortician's burial records from 1910 to 1939. As a side note, the only Mortician in New Castle was during that time frame

