

Many attend the Memorial Day service

By Norma Martinez
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Commander, Charles Coleman conducted the American Legion Memorial Service titled, "Remembering Our Fallen at 10 a.m. on Monday at the Bird City Cemetery. Hulda Dorsch, the Auxiliary president, was unable to attend as she was out of town.

After Mr. Colman led everyone with the Pledge of Allegiance, and Beth and Rod Klepper's daughter-in-law, Terry Hawkins Klepper, led the singing of the "Star Spangled Banner," Pastor Tom Bailey opened in prayer, and introduced Hawkins and she led everyone in singing "America". Charles Coleman then introduced Pastor Tom Bailey as the speaker.

Wanda Dowdy, in giving the memorial roll call, said John DaPron, Melvin Mast and Richard Brubaker were the only ones who have died in the past year. Charles Coleman, as the commander, gave the Legion roll call, and extended a moment of silent prayer remembering the dead.

It was previously announced that Joy Anderegg was to place the memorial wreath on Everett Nelson's stone, but it was Wanda Dowdy and Val Coleman who had the honor. The group sang, "God Bless America." Pastor Bailey then gave the benediction and Walker Janicke played "Taps" on his trumpet after a gun salute to the deceased was given by Norman Dorsch, Charles Coleman, Bob Brubaker and Charles Damm.

Pastor Bailey gave the Memorial Day address, thanking everyone for being there. It is a distinct honor to be together on this special occasion, he said, honoring the commitments of all whom have served our nation with the ultimate sacrifice of their very lives - is a commitment from all of us that should go on every day of the year.

While Memorial Day services have been largely recognized and conducted principally by veteran's groups conducting services in many of our nation's cemeteries, yet there are many individuals and families as well as churches across our nation that have chosen, over the years, to ignore the sacred honor of Memorial Day. This day didn't used to be so ignored.

This Memorial Day service is more than a historic tradition. It is more than historically patriotic. It is also historically spiritual.

I have been in this cemetery so many times doing services and burials, 14 burials in my first year of ministry here, and each time I have stood on this hallowed ground, it has had a profound effect on me.

Years ago I discovered just following the Civil War, the day was observed by holding services in churches filled to



VETERANS PREPARE TO STAND AT ATTENTION for 'Taps.' Pictured, left to right, Charles Damm, Charles Coleman and Robert Brubaker. Not pictured, Norm Dorsch.



WALKER JANICKE played Taps at the conclusion of the Memorial Day Service, Remembering Our Fallen at the Bird City Cemetery. Times staff photos by Norma Martinez.

capacity. Stores were closed on Memorial Day. Now it has almost been reversed. In that reversal, the day's original and highest meaning has been lost.

It was on a Memorial Day long ago that a small congregation assembled after their church worship and entered the hallowed ground of the cemetery. There they held concluding prayers next to a war veteran's grave. I can only imagine that it was one of the most moving services of the year.

I attended a Memorial Day service and it is touching seeing the men and women in the uniforms, whether the uniform they wore in service to our nation, most can no longer get in them or their American Legion uniforms. But most touching of all was the time I watched a family go to

the grave of a veteran, long after the service had been concluded, and decorate it with a small U.S. Flag. They represent families and individuals who honor this day, a day set aside for more than picnicking, backyard barbecues, and shopping at Walmart.

So let us keep the occasion. Let us hallow the day and share the blessing! This day is holy; this holy occasion; this Memorial Day.

Thirty five attended the pot luck dinner at the Senior Center following the service. Out of town visitors were; Becky (Elliott) Babcock from Castle Pines, Colo. Bill and Judy Elliott from Amarillo, Texas., Dave and Connie (Rambat) Zertas from Hot Springs Village, Ark., and Gwen (Rambat) Boswell from Loveland, Colo.



LANDYN WILSON carried a flower to a grave at the Bird City Cemetery.



CINDY BURR watches her grandson, Carter Wilson, as he checks out the stones. She is carrying Landyn. Time staff photos by Tim Burr



ROD YOUNG, facing, talked to some of the visitors at the Bird City Cemetery on Sunday evening. Also pictured to the left is Ethan Young.