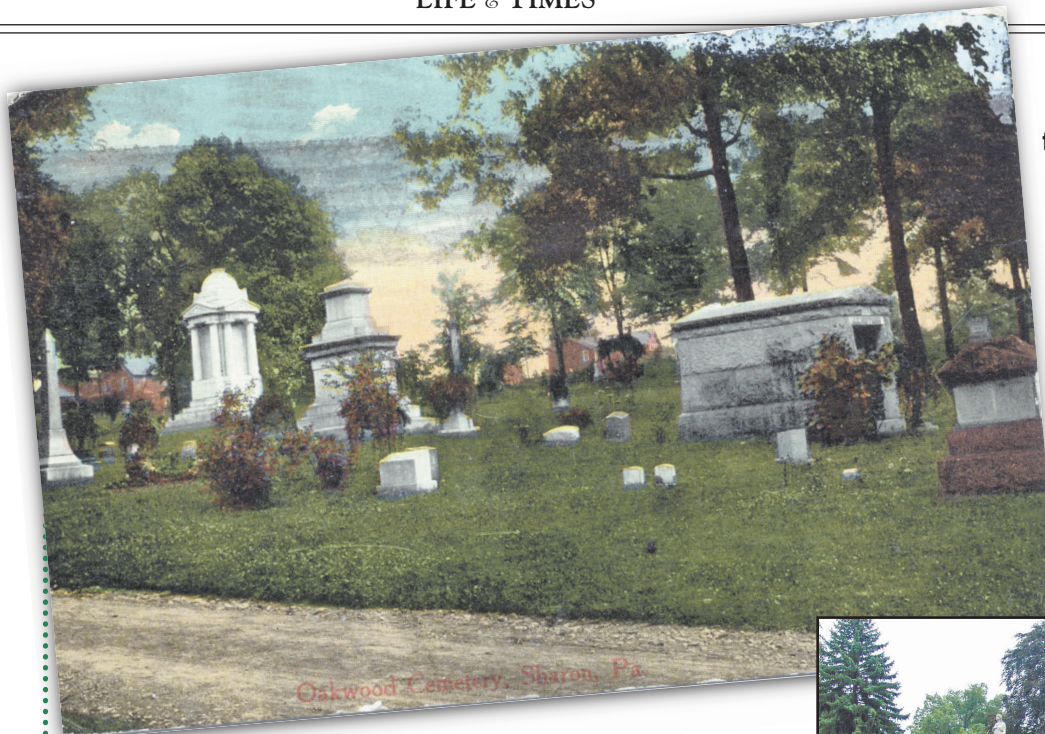




**NOW
AND THEN**



John Zavinski of Hermitage is a deltiologist – a collector of postcards – and illustrates historic local images here with modern views of the same scene. He is director of graphics and technology for *The Herald* newspaper and design director for *Life & Times* magazine. Contact him at jzavinski@sharonherald.com or 724-981-6100 ext. 235.



A stroll through the graveyard, whistling optional

By John Zavinski

MEMORIAL DAY brings a reason to visit the Shenango Valley's prettiest cemetery, Oakwood.

Like many valley graveyards, it's in Hermitage, just outside the city limits of Sharon, where burials were prohibited in the mid-19th century, presumably for health and sanitation reasons.

In fact, after Oakwood was established in 1866, some early burials were re-burials from a graveyard on Sharon's West Hill, just west of Irvine Avenue and Church of the Sacred Heart.

I find myself spending many summer hours in cemeteries, helping tend no less than five plots belonging to family and friends.

Even when traveling, I'll often stop and wander through an interesting-looking

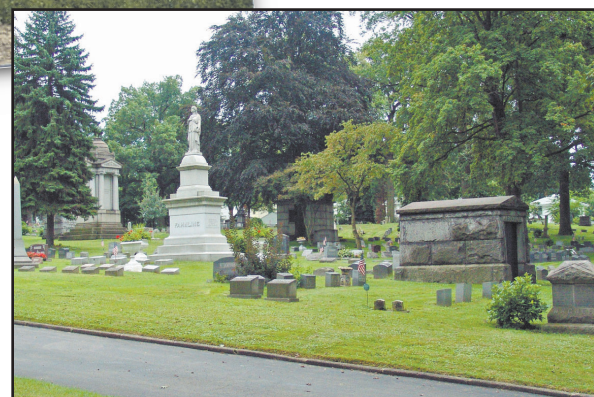
cemetery. Besides the serenity and park-like beauty, older cemeteries combine architecture and history – beautiful monuments and tombs and the stories of the people in or beneath them. You know you've found a town's main cemetery when the stones bear the names of local streets. Oakwood boasts the likes of Forker, Budd, Stambaugh, Prindle, Ormond and Irvine.

One of the more curious plots in Oakwood is a massive granite monument for Peter Lanterman Kimberly, a partner of industrialist Frank H. Buhl in local ventures as well as western irrigation and mining projects. In 1905 he left his millions to, among others, the nursing school at what is now Sharon Regional Health System.

The monument bears just his name

Finding the matching scene for this view from circa 1907-10 was complicated by the later addition of a statue atop the Fahline monument in the left center.

Behind and to the left of it is the Peter Kimberly monument, which is much larger than it looks here. The century-old monument to the industrialist is curious both for the large open space surrounding it and because Kimberly is actually buried elsewhere in the cemetery.



John Zavinski/Life & Times

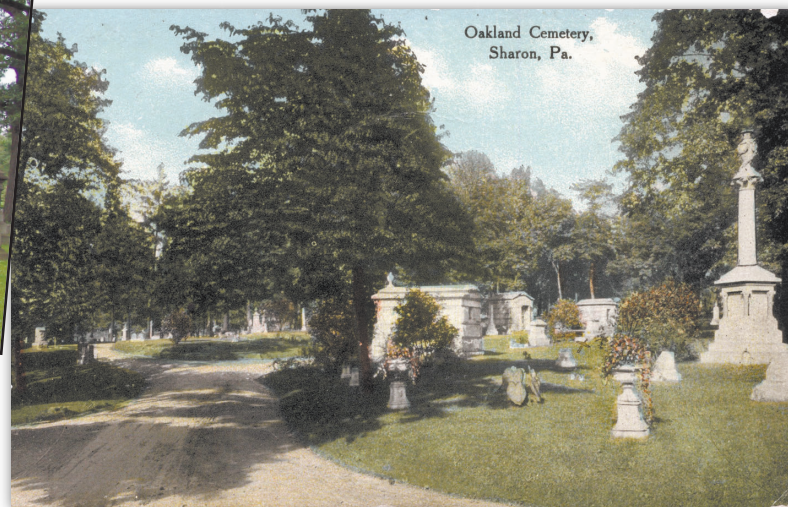
and birth and death dates and is surrounded by a 75-by-75-foot grassy area – grave space that would cost six figures today and is enough room for a modest house. Oddly, he is actually buried several hundred feet away near the chapel in a simple grave beside his parents (of Youngstown fame).

A stroll through a cemetery offers countless fascinating stories of common or prominent people – like Kimberley's, which I'm still researching – that unfold on the Internet or with a visit to the public library.

If nothing else, it's just a peaceful place to get a little exercise, which helps put off the day when you'll come to stay. ♦



John Zavinski/Life & Times



Two foreground rows of matching little family stones have filled in with additional generations during the century since this view was photographed in Oakwood Cemetery, behind the chapel.

A note on the back of the unmailed, unaddressed card reads, "My Dear Cousin, This is the cemetery where my poor dear boy was buried. I made a cross where he is buried." The tiny ink mark is right of center, but in the cemetery no stone there clearly seems to be her boy's.