NPS Form 10-900
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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received JUN 15 1987
date entered JUL 16 1987

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Mountain View Cemetery

and or common Columbus Cemetery

2. Location

street & number ~~Highway~~ 10 and Rapelje Road N/A **not for publication**

city, town Columbus N/A **vicinity of**

state Montana **code** 030 **county** Stillwater **code** 095

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
___ district	X public	___ occupied	___ agriculture	___ museum
___ building(s)	___ private	X unoccupied	___ commercial	___ park
___ structure	___ both	___ work in progress	___ educational	___ private residence
X site	**Public Acquisition**	**Accessible**	___ entertainment	___ religious
___ object	___ in process	___ yes: restricted	___ government	___ scientific
	___ being considered	X yes: unrestricted	___ industrial	___ transportation
	n/a	___ no	___ military	X other: Cemetery

4. Owner of Property

name City of Columbus

street & number P.O. Box 575

city, town Columbus N/A **vicinity of** **state** Montana

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Stillwater County Courthouse

street & number Third Avenue

city, town Columbus **state** Montana

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title none **has this property been determined eligible?** ___ yes X no

date ___ federal ___ state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records

city, town **state**

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
_X_ excellent	___ deteriorated	_X_ unaltered	_X_ original site
___ good	___ ruins	___ altered	___ moved date N/A
___ fair	___ unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

To the casual observer at first glance, the Mountain View Cemetery, also known as the Columbus Cemetery, appears similar to any other late 19th or early 20th century burial place in rural Montana. A wire mesh fence outlines the property and several mature coniferous and deciduous trees shade portions of the well-groomed grass. Upon closer scrutiny and beyond the more contemporary and typical block and raised-top inscription monuments, however, the graveyard reveals a plethora of unusual, hand-carved funerary art uncommon to most cemeteries. Thirty-one markers, referred to as tree-stump or log tombstones, markedly contrast with the somber, unadorned granite memorials elsewhere in the cemetery. These edifices are carved from sandstone blocks taken from a nearby quarry, which also provided ample building stone for structures throughout Montana.

The Mountain View Cemetery is located approximately one-half mile west of Columbus, Montana at the intersection of State Highway 10 and Rapelje Road. The relatively small, ten-acre cemetery occupies a parcel of land rising above the roadbed overlooking the Yellowstone and Stillwater Rivers to the south. Flat in contour and roughly square in shape, the basic layout of the cemetery adheres to a compass-oriented grid. This grid pattern, a model for the ubiquitous town plan found throughout states in the Midwest and West, utilizes walkways and narrow driveways as "streets" with each "block" containing several grave plots. In the Mountain View Cemetery a north-south paved walkway bisects the grid and graves are oriented on an east-west axis. Headstone orientation to the direction of the sun is a common characteristic of cemeteries and, as noted by cultural geographer Terry Jordan, is firmly fixed in folk tradition in the southern United States and Britain.[1]

Two variations of the log tombstone design are commonly found in the Mountain View Cemetery: monuments carved in the shape of a stack of logs piled one atop the other, and two, three, or more logs placed together on end. In both of these cases, epitaphs are usually attached to one side of the logs in the form of a large, partially unrolled scroll. In all examples the log carvings rest on top of a simple square or rectangular carved stone base.

In addition to the 31 tree-stump or log tombstones in the Mountain View Cemetery, a variety of other somewhat simpler sandstone memorials can be found. Six massive obelisks also stand in the cemetery. A total of over 100 hand-carved sandstone tombstones are scattered around the Mountain View Cemetery, dating from 8 February 1900 to 17 July 1928. Taken together, they present striking evidence of how an individual's creations can significantly impact the visual appearance of a cultural landscape.

The design motifs of the non-log Mountain View Cemetery carved sandstone headstones are simpler and more traditional than the more unique log carvings. Nevertheless, as an artifact, each marker exhibits an expressed aesthetic and design which provides information about the intentions of its producer. These less ornate gravestones can be grouped into three categories, two of which are characterized by vertically-oriented, smooth-surfaced stones approximately three feet in height. The first type of gravestones are upright slabs which have an elliptical top and chamfered corners. Frequently recessed in the center of the

ellipsis is a finely-detailed, semi-circular carving of a cluster of flowers, a fern leaf, ribbons with flowers, or similar allusion to some type of vegetation. Another category of gravestone resembles the shape of a bedboard, apparently making reference to eternal sleep. Eighteenth Century gravestone carvers in Plymouth County, Massachusetts regularly used this motif, perhaps transplanting the concept from England where it is thought to have originated.[2] Headboard designs in the Mountain View Cemetery do not replicate exactly Colonial tombstones, but they make clear reference to this early design. The final category of non-log tombstone is the obelisk form. The ancient obelisk, a symbol of eternity, achieved popularity in upper Midwestern and Northwestern cemeteries in the late 1800s.[3] In the Mountain View Cemetery six obelisk style gravestones - each with a smooth, polished finish - were carved during the first two decades of the 20th century, reflecting later settlement in this area of Montana. Several of the obelisks tower above the cemetery, reaching heights of thirty to forty feet.

Similar to the other carved sandstone markers, nearly all of the log and tree-stump gravestones stand on square or rectangular carved stone bases with the surname placed at the front of the base in raised block letters. Occasionally the family name is carved into the stone or does not appear at all. Typically the surface of the base on which the name is placed has a smooth finish, while the sides and back have a rough texture. The same technique of presenting the most attractive image to the viewer is commonly applied in building construction; masonry commercial and residential structures frequently exhibit a higher quality facade finish to project a more impressive appearance.

If the gravestone has logs standing on end or upright, these are typically placed directly on top of the base. In other cases, another smaller carved slab which is smaller in dimension serves as a sub-base between the logs and base. Logs stacked in succession (as many as seven on one gravestone but commonly four or five) atop the base are found regularly in the Mountain View Cemetery. In all examples the logs are carved in the round exhibiting broken branches, peeled bark and "checks" or cracks on each end. Numerous memorials have a series of logs stacked horizontally next to a single upright log. Another common design involves the use of a partially unrolled scroll carved to appear as though it is attached to the horizontal or vertical logs. Inscribed on the scroll is the epitaph, a brief secular phrase such as "Gone But Not Forgotten," or "We Shall Awake In His Likeness." No recorded gravestone epitaph provided biographical information other than the name and dates of birth and death.

Of all the carved gravestones in the Mountain View Cemetery, two of the three free-standing tree-stumps are the most elaborately designed. The earliest is the 1903 Wimsett tree-stump, a massive and ornate marker that was carved in Columbus and later exhibited at the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair. In describing

the monument, the local newspaper praised the nearby quarries and workers, calling the carving:

> "a tree, constructed of one large piece of stone, and bearing on its sides a number of beautiful and appropriate designs. The tree is an oak and its graceful leaves are but little less attractive than the delicate ferns that rise from its base. Its rugged trunk supports the clinging stems of a large ivy plant, whose leaves render the design still finer. Two doves and many other figures complete the carving."[4]

At about 12 feet in height with its impressive array of carvings, the Wimsett tree-stump appears overwhelming yet fragile within the cemetery. Its lower half has the stub of a broken branch around which is wrapped a rope that dangles toward the base with an anchor attached at the end. A smooth panel in the middle contains the epitaph "Gone But Not Forgotten" surrounded by intricate carvings of petaled flowers and a long ribbon. A smaller and less elaborately designed tree-stump tombstone carved in 1928 for Ben Stein bears a striking resemblance to the Wimsett stone with its use of an ivy plant, ferns, broken branches and a large panel for biographical information. The Stein tree-stump also has a pair of hands shaking directly below the name, a common motif among carvers but appearing only once in Columbus.

The hand-carved sandstone memorials are in very good condition and show little sign of wear other than slight corrosion from water on those which exhibit the finest degree of carving.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
___ prehistoric	___ archeology-prehistoric	___ community planning	___ landscape architecture	___ religion
___ 1400–1499	___ archeology-historic	___ conservation	___ law	___ science
___ 1500–1599	___ agriculture	___ economics	___ literature	___ sculpture
___ 1600–1699	___ architecture	___ education	___ military	___ social/ humanitarian
___ 1700–1799	X art	___ engineering	___ music	
X 1800–1899	___ commerce	___ exploration/settlement	___ philosophy	___ theater
___ 1900–	___ communications	___ industry	___ politics/government	___ transportation
		___ invention		___ other (specify)

Specific dates 1900-1928 **Builder/Architect** Michael Jacobs and Pasqual Petosa, stone carvers

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Mountain View Cemetery is significant under the category of folk/funerary art for its large collection of unusual and distinctive hand-carved sandstone gravestones. While other examples of log and tree-stump tombstones exist in other parts of the United States, no known concentration of these memorials is greater anywhere in Montana than in the Mountain View Cemetery. These headstones represent the traditional repertoire of at least two highly-skilled carvers and, perhaps more importantly, the significance of their ability to create striking and poignant tombstones that carry a rich variety of ornamentation, symbolism and meaning for members of the community.

A prominent visual element of the Mountain View Cemetery is the tree-stump and log tombstone; together, 31 examples are located on the grounds. Despite its use in Columbus and cemeteries in Indiana, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Michigan, Kentucky, New York and probably dozens of other states, interpretation of the significance of the tree-stump and log forms vary. As the folklorist Simon Bronner has pointed out, explanations as to the design of these stones range from an association with Woodmen of the World and Woodmen of America (the log motif allows the carver to include the tools of the deceased's trade) to a reference of the log stump's image of a cut-off life. "Intertwined logs have also been conspicuously used to represent the love of husband and wife, often with smaller stumps of other family members around the large, vertical tree stumps."[5] Other motifs such as a broken limb on the tree trunk usually indicates that a family member's life has ended; rings carved on the ends of the log may represent the age of the deceased; and cracks intersecting the rings refer to the number of children born to the marriage. Traditional symbols each carry their own meaning: the dove symbolizes peace, the morning glory refers to resurrection and bonds of love, the fern indicates an unfinished goal in life, and ivy symbolizes fidelity and immortality.

Stone carving has been described as "probably the first truly American form of folk sculpture."[6] In Columbus, gravestone carving as a profession was practiced by at least two Italian stone masons, Michael Jacobs and Pasqual (Pete) Petosa. Jacobs arrived in Columbus in ca.1900 to manage the Montana Sandstone Company quarry located immediately north of town. His skills as a stone carver are evidenced in the detailing of his former residence, an ornate masonry Renaissance Revival building he designed and erected in ca.1900 (Listed in the National Register on January 28, 1987). The house is appropriately located at the corner of Quarry St. and First Ave. on the west side of Columbus within close proximity to the former quarry. In 1907, Jacobs advertised with the Sandstone Company as a Cut Stone Contractor, with "all work executed according to Plans and Details and Delivered to destination Crated and Numbered ready to go in the wall." By 1914, after demand for building stone decreased, Jacobs had expanded his interests to become owner and manager of the Stillwater Monumental Works Co., carrying "an artistic line of monuments manufactured exclusively of Columbus Sand Stone." An

9. Major Bibliographical References

see continuation sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 4.6 acres

Quadrangle name Columbus, West, Montana **Quadrangle scale** 1:24000

UTM References

	Zone	Easting	Northing
A	12	634600	5050500
B			
C			
D			
E			
F			
G			
H			

Verbal boundary description and justification Beginning at the northeast corner of the intersection of State Highway 10 and Rapelje Road proceed north 500 feet paralleling Rapelje Road; turn east and proceed 400 feet; turn south and proceed 500 feet; and turn west proceeding 400 feet to the point of origin. T2S;R20E: SW ¼ Section 21 (see continuation sheet)

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A	**code**	**county**	**code**
state	**code**	**county**	**code**

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Mike Koop

organization **date** April, 1987

street & number 615 Jackson St. NE **telephone** 612-623-8365

city or town Minneapolis **state** Minnesota

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

___ national ___X___ state ___ local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Marcella Sherfy

title SHPO **date** 6-9-87

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

William B. Bushong **date** 7/16/87

for **Keeper of the National Register**

Attest: **date**

Chief of Registration

advertisement in the Columbus News from December 1916 which showed a photograph of Jacobs standing proudly beside one of his gravestones described the business: "We carry the most artistic line of monuments in the state at prices as to not fear competition. Seventy different designs to choose from. Lot and grave curbing, flower urns and all other ornaments."

It is not surprising that Jacobs applied his skill as a stone carver in the cemetery after providing sandstone for no less that twelve structures in Columbus and numerous public and private buildings throughout Montana, including the State Capitol building in Helena. When the quarry business declined, Jacobs undoubtedly felt the need to supplement his income, and it was natural for him to open a monument business where he could put to use his knowledge of carving. Maintaining a dual occupation in many trades was not unusual. For example, early 19th century cabinet makers in Davidson County, North Carolina applied their skills by creating pierced carved gravestones which incorporated many design elements found in locally produced furniture.[7]

The second known carver in Columbus was Pete Petosa, another Italian immigrant who also came to the community in ca.1900. Petosa reportedly worked at the Montana Sandstone Company after he came to Montana, but he is reported to have opened the Petosa Monument Company at a later unknown date, operating the business with a son using sandstone blocks they had stockpiled from the Columbus quarry.

Since none of the Mountain View Cemetery carved gravestones carry a signature or known identifying marks, it is not possible to determine exactly who was responsible for the design of each memorial. However, interviews with local residents and the literature strongly suggest that both Jacobs and Petosa designed and carved most, if not all of the sandstone markers. Determining a source for the gravestone designs in Mountain View Cemetery is difficult, although Jacobs' newspaper advertisement suggests that he could provide a potential customer with one of dozens of the most popular motifs. It is likely that Jacobs was cognizant of professional journals and freely borrowed ideas for his own business. One monthly trade journal established in 1889 and published in Chicago (where Jacobs had previously lived and worked) called The Monumental News was "Devoted to the Advancement of Monumental Art and The Interests of Workers in Marble, Granite, Stone and Bronze." The journal carried a list of advertisers and books available for the trade, features on the care and use of pneumatic tools, contemporary cemetery designs, and offered "suggestive ornament for monumental work." If Jacobs did not subscribe to this particular journal, he may have integrated concepts from it or other magazines for his own designs.

In Indiana, some traditional limestone carvers used their own ideas and suggested these to customers, while many patrons specifically requested a tombstone resembling one on an existing grave.[8] John Rowe was a Bedford, Indiana carver who regularly advertised in The Monumental News using as his trademark a

tree-stump design with the carved seal of the Woodmen of America. It is probable that dispersion of the tree-stump motif throughout the U.S. resulted in part from advertising by Rowe and fellow Bedford carvers who shipped their monuments on order, and because fraternal organizations such as Woodmen of the World provided ready-made markers for their members.[9] Gravestones similar to those in the Mountain View Cemetery are reported to have been carved in Columbus by Jacobs or Petosa and shipped elsewhere in Montana, but a systematic search has not been undertaken to determine if any exist.

Regardless of the provenance of the log and tree-stump tombstone, in Columbus it remains as an indication of the popularity of a particular folk design. Jacobs and Petosa likely followed the practice of reinterpreting a familiar motif, and because no two carved gravestones are exactly alike, it is clear that the selection of the form, design and epitaph was left to the discretion of the carver. In describing the design process utilized by a North Carolina folk builder which applies as well to the folk craftsman, Catherine Bishir paraphrased an important essay by folklorist Henry Glassie. Bishir writes:

> "Folklorist Henry Glassie points out that the folk artisan, consciously or unconsciously, extracts from his tradition a few basic forms that are old at the time of his use and different from those promoted by popular culture. Working in his tradition he defines for himself a minimal concept of the essentials of the object and arrives at a `small set of rules that define the limits within which he can modify the concept according to his taste and talent and the taste and pocketbook of his clientele.' Within the concept thus defined the artisan can work freely, varying nonessential details as he chooses."[10]

On the many Columbus sandstone gravestones - both the vertical and horizontal log, tree-stump, obelisk, as well as the less-ornately designed carvings - the work of Jacobs and Petosa fits well into this definition of the folk craftsman. Here it is possible to see the older albeit more unusual designs in a more contemporary setting.

The only two gravestones which do not face due east or west are those for Jacobs and Petosa, which are oriented to the south. In addition, Jacobs' marker, a tall obelisk surrounded by small family memorials, guards the cemetery entrance; its prominent location serves as a reminder of his importance to the community. Also noteworthy is the fact that following Petosa's death, no carved sandstone markers appear in the Mountain View Cemetery. His own gravestone is a an austere piece of granite standing only a few inches above the ground. Clearly, when these two Italian stone masons died they carried with them an artistic folk craft that could not be repeated.

Endnotes

1. Jordan, Terry G., "The Roses So Red and the Lilies So Fair: Southern Folk Cemeteries in Texas," Southwestern Historical Quarterly 83, January 1980, p. 254.

2. Benes, Peter, The Masks of Orthodoxy, Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1977.

3. Francaviglia, Richard V., "The Cemetery As An Evolving Cultural Landscape," Annals of the Association of American Geographers, 61/3, September 1971, pp. 501-509.

4. Columbus Tri-County News, 31 December 1903.

5. Bronner, Simon J., "The Durlauf Family: Three Generations of Stonecarvers in Southern Indiana," Pioneer America 13, no. 1, 1981, p. 20.

6. Kermes, Constantine, "Folk Images of Rural Pennsylvania," Pennsylvania Folklife 24, 1975, p. 6.

7. Rauschenberg, Bradford L., "A Study of Baroque and Gothic Style Gravestones in Davidson County, North Carolina," Journal of Early Southern Decorative Arts, 3, 1977, pp. 24-50.

8. Weldy, Mary Helen and Taylor, David L., "Gone But Not Forgotten: The Life and Work of a Traditional Tombstone Carver," Keystone Folklore 21:2, 1976-77, pp. 14-33.

9. Roberts, Warren, Folklore Institute, Indiana University, 17 February 1987, "Tools on Tombstones: Some Indiana Examples," Pioneer America 10, 1978, pp. 106-11.

10. Bishir, Catherine, "Jacob Holt: An American Builder," Winterthur Portfolio, 16:1, Spring, 1981, p. 12.

Benes, Peter, The Masks of Orthodoxy, Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1977.

Bishir, Catherine, "Jacob Holt: An American Builder," Winterthur Portfolio, 16:1, Spring, 1981.

Bronner, Simon J., "The Durlauf Family: Three Generations of Stonecarvers in Southern Indiana," Pioneer America 13, no. 1, 1981.

Columbus Tri-County News, 31 December 1903.

Francaviglia, Richard V., "The Cemetery As An Evolving Cultural Landscape," Annals of the Association of American Geographers, 61/3, September 1971.

Jordan, Terry G., "The Roses So Red and the Lilies So Fair: Southern Folk Cemeteries in Texas," Southwestern Historical Quarterly 83, January 1980.

Kermes, Constantine, "Folk Images of Rural Pennsylvania," Pennsylvania Folklife 24, 1975.

Rauschenberg, Bradford L., "A Study of Baroque and Gothic Style Gravestones in Davidson County, North Carolina," Journal of Early Southern Decorative Arts, 3, 1977.

Roberts, Warren, "Tools on Tombstones: Some Indiana Examples," Pioneer America 10, 1978.

Weldy, Mary Helen and Taylor, David L., "Gone But Not Forgotten: The Life and Work of a Traditional Tombstone Carver," Keystone Folklore 21:2 (1976-77).

Since carved gravestones are found scattered throughout the property rather than in a highly concentrated area, the boundary is drawn to encompass the entire cemetery. This small, ca. 5 acre cemetery remains in active use. Gravestones date from the late 19th Century through to the present. Although the carved gravestones represent only a small percentage of the total number of gravestones found in the Mountain View Cemetery, the simple, uncarved obelisks and markers do not detract from the artistic and historical significance of the stones carved by Petosa and Jacobs. In fact, the very unadorned appearance of the majority of the gravestones in the cemetery tends to highlight the unusual artistic value of the carved gravestones.