

Memorial Day Service remembers fallen heroes

Written by Holyoke Enterprise



Members of the firing squad perform the 21-gun salute during Monday’s Memorial Day Service at Holyoke Cemetery. Other performers included Ella Stewart and the group Equally Delinquent. □ □

—Enterprise photo

Those lost at war, those who have served in a war and those currently serving in war were remembered and thought of during a Memorial Day Service Monday, May 31 at Holyoke Cemetery.

“Always remember, all gave some, but some gave all,” guest speaker Sarah Tobin said Monday.

Why are we here?

After flying into Holyoke on her own plane, Major Tobin of the United States Air Force addressed the audience and spoke of the true meaning of Memorial Day and “why are we

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here.” Tobin is stationed at Peterson Field in Colorado Springs.

She explained Memorial Day was originally known as Decoration Day. May 30, 1865 marked the first Decoration Day when flowers were placed at graves of Union and Confederate Soldiers.

After World War I, Decoration Day was expanded and in 1954, became known as Memorial Day.

Tobin also briefly spoke of the red poppy and the history behind it.

“Today in sacred remembrance, we mourn the loss of almost two million Americans,” Tobin said. “It’s a big number.”

Tobin reminded the audience the U.S. is still engaged in a multi-war on terrorism and to be thinking about those currently serving the country.

Terry Barth and Shirley Kadlec opened the program with welcoming comments, and a Memorial Day prayer was given by Gene Daise. The group Equally Delinquent comprised of Dan Kafka, Maury Kramer, Chris Garcia and Steve Schwartzkopf sang The Star Spangled Banner. The group sang America the Beautiful Overlay later in the program and invited the audience to participate. Ella Stewart also showcased her talent with Amazing Grace.

Betty Austin and Everette Harmon placed memorial wreaths in front of the gazebo and the Memorial Honor Roll was read by Elton Oltjenbruns and Shirley Kadlec. The list included those from Holyoke who lost their lives in combat followed by a list of veterans who have died in the last seven years.

A salute from the Honor Guard and a 21-gun salute followed.

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Taps was played by Jack Wieland and Hannah Newman before Daise closed Monday's program with a prayer.