



VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS

VFW Post 8870
and Auxiliary
Edmonds, WA
www.vfw8870.org
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Events on the Horizon:

Staff Meetings: 9:00 AM, First Tues., American Legion Hall, 117 6th Ave. S., Edmonds
Post Meetings: Second Tues., American Legion Hall; Dinner at 5:00 PM (\$5) Meeting at 6:00 PM
Veterans Plaza Gardern Installation; volunteers will be needed, date TBA

Poppy Distribution: May 26-28

Memorial Day Observances: May 29, including dedication of the Edmonds Veterans Plaza
Dept. of Washington Convention, June 22-24, at the Red Lion in Olympia

May Post meeting takes place on Tuesday, May 9

Memorial Day: Remember the Fallen

In Flanders Fields
John McCrae

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.



Buddy Poppy Distribution

Memorial Day poppy distribution will occur on Memorial Day weekend May 26-28 at Edmonds Way and Mukilteo QFC stores, Fred Meyer at 164th & Alderwood Mall Blvd. and at Central market in Mill Creek. Poppy coordinators Bob Crawford and Jim McCann will be taking sign ups for Friday and Saturday shifts, plus Sunday shifts at Central Market in Mill Creek only. Please participate. This is the major fund raiser which allows the post to support veterans and our community projects. The more people we have on hand, the more poppies we hand out and the more money we collect to benefit our Veterans. Besides, it's fun!

At left is John McCrae's poem "In Flanders Fields"; the source of the poppy as the object of remembrance for the fallen.



Memorial Day 2017

Annual Memorial Day Observance, Edmonds Cemetery.

Monday, May 29, 11:00 AM. Join our color guard and participate in the ceremonies to honor the fallen. We will form up near the east entrance at 10:45, then at 11:00 we will proceed to the Flag pole and hold colors

Edmonds Veterans Plaza Dedication

Monday, May 29, 2:00-3:00 PM at 5th Ave & Bell St in downtown Edmonds.

(Bell St. Will be closed to traffic, 5th Ave will be open for drop off and handicapped parking.)

Guest Speakers:

Edmonds Mayor Dave Earling
Lt. Gen Robert Otto, USAF Retired
State Representative Strom Peterson
Fallen Heroes Project Artist Michael G. Reagan

Following the dedication, we will host an informal reception at the American legion Hall with beverages, snacks & desserts. All are welcome.

All members of VFW Post 8870 are urged to attend. Please wear your cover.



New Member Steve Brown

Steve is shown being welcomed into the Post by Commander Terry Crabtree. A Vietnam veteran, Steve was a MAT team advisor embedded with the "ruff-puffs" in II Corp. 1970-1971.



Steve told us: " I was in the Army for five and a half years and made Captain when I left Viet Nam in April, 1971. Finished up in Baumholder, Germany after eighteen more months as Company commander with the 268 Armor BN. I've worked the aviation Industry for nearly forty years-Currently own my own machine shop and am still working-part time with my son. Been married for 44 years and have a son, daughter and teenage granddaughter. My wife was also in the military (1Lt) when we got married after I came home from Nam. We've lived peacefully in Mill Creek for the past 30 years. "

Edmonds Veterans Plaza

Project Completion is in Sight

The photos below were shot by Jim Traner on April 27, reflecting the status of construction with just one month remaining until dedication on Memorial Day.

The first photo shows the installation of granite paving blocks, purchased by friends and family to honor individual veterans, viewed looking north from the Bell Street side.

In the second picture, we see a view of the wall and seating area, all of which will be surrounded by garden. This view is from the Bell St. side, closer to 5th Ave.



The Chaplain's Corner

Coming Home From Vietnam, 47 Years Later

By Dan Doyle

Forty seven years ago I was serving as a Fleet Marine Corpsman with Bravo Co., 3rd Recon Bn., 3rd Marine Division. When my generation came home it was to a nation that was severely divided over the war and we often found ourselves rejected by former friends, belittled, even despised by many because of our service in Vietnam. Those who were vehemently against the war either could not, or would not, separate the warriors from the politics of the war.

We, of course, had our own issues, suffering, as so many of us were, from the various symptoms of what would later be recognized as PTSD. **Our families, too, struggled to understand our angers**, our silences, our restlessness. As a result, we learned to keep all of that “stuff” inside, shoving it into the background as best we could. In time, most of us just found ways to go on and to succeed in our lives.

As a result of that time in our country's history, we never felt the important psychological experience of being “welcomed home.” Vietnam veterans, on meeting each other for the first time, even these many years after the war, will often say “welcome home” to one another. It means that much. **It is that important.**

Our service, which was honorable and done with great courage and skill, was never recognized, or respected in the way it had been for veterans from other wars. Time, though, and the terrible events of September 11, 2001, brought about a change in the general attitude of society toward the men and women of the modern all-volunteer military. Now, even if people disagree with the wars, they have been able (for the most part) to separate the warriors from the war and to give them the honor and the respect they are due. We Vietnam veterans are profoundly happy to see these men and women who have served in Iraq and Afghanistan coming home to warm welcomes and getting positive coverage by the media. In a strange sort of way this new attitude toward the warriors coming home from Iraq and Afghanistan has come to encompass the warriors of my generation too.

I experienced a personal example of this change in attitude this past April 28th, in Spokane, Washington, forty seven years after I came home from Vietnam. I was a veteran chosen to be honored at Washington Secondary School Athletic Administrators Association (WASSAAA) annual conference in Spokane in 2015. The conference also invited my siblings to be in attendance and to participate in this event. For the past five years, the WASSAAA conference has included the honoring of a military veteran in their program. It has become an



Dan, with his brothers and sister

important part of their annual conference. The people involved with WASSAAA are hard working and dedicated to the daily struggle of molding young student athletes in middle schools and secondary schools all across the state of Washington. Having met them, I can tell you that they do it with love, joy, and good humor as well.

The welcome and the respect that these folks have for our military veterans is both genuine and warm. When I was introduced at the conference dinner event, a nine minute film interview done with me last year by U.S.A. Military Medals (**USAMM**) was shown, after which I was overwhelmed by the standing ovation I was given. It moved me very deeply. In fact I can say that now I know what it feels like to be “welcomed home.”

From the Bookshelf

The Fleet at Flood Tide

America at Total War in the Pacific, 1944-1945

By James D. Hornfischer

There was no explaining away what thousands of Marines had observed with their own disbelieving eyes in the Marianas. The ritual suicides of the Japanese garrisons, their predatory brainwashing and murder of the innocent unarmed, have been insufficiently considered as a turning point that shaped the war's final year. ... The first direct U.S. experience of total war occurred in the Marianas, and it renewed the will to win and to win totally, using all means available, without restraint. Unconditional surrender became the byword of this new resolve.

Viewed through the haze of 7-plus decades it is hard to imagine the scope, the dedication and the unimaginable horrors of total all-out world war that was WWII. But James Hornfischer describes it well in his latest book, *The Fleet at Flood Tide*.

As the brief excerpt above suggests, this splendid volume is a detailed narrative of the U.S. offensive into the Mariana Islands of the Central Pacific and the final year of the war.

If one can quibble with anything about the book, to me it would be the title, specifically “The Fleet.” It is far from being just a chronicle of naval warfare. Rather it spells out in close detail the overwhelming air, land and sea operations that seized the strategically vital islands of Saipan, Tinian and Guam.

It is the story of the strategies and planning at the highest levels, but also it is the story of the individual men—mostly very young men—that made victory happen. It details what one reviewer called the true nature of their foe—not only the Imperial Japanese military—but its suicide-ready civilians as well.

He said that after the bloody capture of Saipan, two clear truths emerged: “A great victory was in hand... and far worse lay ahead.”

If you have ever questioned the decisions that brought about the end of the war, Hornfischer may make you reorder your thinking. The book makes clear the unimaginable depth of the Japanese will to resist. The reader is left with the obvious conclusion that an invasion of Japan proper would have been bloody beyond measure, for us as well as for the Japanese populace.

Today we all know how the saga ends, but this highly recommended book details how in the final months of the war we got there. It covers the penultimate B-29 incendiary raids on Japan and the painfully considered use of atomic bombs. But most significantly, it tells the story of the actions of soldiers, sailors, and airmen that combined to achieve victory.

—Reviewed by Past Commander Jim Blossey

Your 2017-18 Post Officers

Commander	David M. (Mike) Denton
Senior Vice Commander	Carl F. Kurfess
Junior Vice Commander	Rose Gililand
Quartermaster	Dennis L. Peterson
Chaplain	Daniel J. Doyle
Judge Advocate	Aaron M. Terwedo
Surgeon	Al S. Boyett
1 Year Trustee	Daniel A. White
2 Year Trustee	James R. Mc Cann
3 year Trustee	James M. Traner
Adjutant	Richard F. Simmons
Service Officer	Don D. Whedon

New officers will be installed at the Post meeting, on June 13, 2017

Dispatch from Rome by Pete Farmer



I am living in Rome, Italy for a year. It is a great experience and I thought I would share some that would be of interest to Post 8870 members.

April 25th is ANZAC Day in Australia and New Zealand. It commemorates the landing of the Australia and New Zealand Army Corps at Gallipoli, Turkey on that date 1915. As part of British and Commonwealth ground and Naval forces, the aim was to knock the Ottoman Empire (Turkey), a German ally, out of WWI and provide relief to Russia. The campaign failed and ground forces withdrew after 8 months and with heavy losses on both sides.

Why celebrate a failure? Both Australia and New Zealand were newly independent, but there was no question that they would fight for the mother country on the international stage. Their involvement was a sign of nationalism and ANZAC spirit that had not fully existed earlier. Australians and New Zealanders annually participate in a lottery to attend ceremonies at Gallipoli. I was able to visit the battlefield as part of a tour of Turkey two years ago. It was a moving experience.

Rome is one of several other sites in the world to have their own ceremonies. The Australian and New Zealand embassies sponsor the event at the Rome War Cemetery. This is a plot of land donated by Italy and contains the graves of 426 Commonwealth veterans of the liberation of Italy in WWII. The ceremony remembers all their veterans. Wreaths are placed by representatives of the Commonwealth and Allied nations and by Turkey.

