



KOREAN WAR MEMORIAL FOUNDATION

1806 Belles Street, #6-B
The Presidio
San Francisco, CA 94129



Newsletter

November–December 2015



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Another Major Milestone — Construction Begins!



Photo by Michael Lamb, Historic Landscape Architect, the Presidio Trust

Good news: we've reached another major milestone! On December 1, under a brilliant blue sky, construction on the Korean War Memorial site in the Presidio of San Francisco finally began. The Korean War veterans community, the Korean-American community, and all of our gen-

erous donors and supporters couldn't ask for a better way to look ahead to the New Year.

Glen Angell, the Presidio Trust's Parks Projects Construction Manager, was on-site bright and early to oversee the activity. Glen explained

that this first stage in the construction process requires the trucking in, placement, and compacting of approximately 1,100 cubic yards of soil fill to create the raised base upon which the curving black granite wall, the centerpiece of the Memorial, will stand.

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Presidio Trust's Parks Projects Construction Manager Glen Angell on the right, with McGuire & Hester Site Foreman Nick Krell, Jr.

This work is being done now, before the heavy winter rains arrive, so that the site will be ready for the installation of the Memorial wall panels and other features in the spring.



Artist's rendering of the future Memorial by Art Zendarski

KWMF Secretary John R. Stevens, Lieutenant Colonel, USMC (Ret.), came by to observe the commencement of the construction activity. He had to see this landmark event in person. It has been a long, arduous journey for John, a 94-year-old veteran of World War II as well as the Korean War, and the dedicated driving force behind this Memorial project nearly every day since 2009.

John was clearly pleased to see this emphatic sign of progress. "It has taken a lot of dedication, hard work, and generosity from a lot of people to

bring us to this point," he remarked. "Now let's move forward and finish this long-overdue Memorial to a war that will no longer be forgotten."

While the site preparations are underway here in San Francisco, another key element in the process will be taking place back in Minnesota at Coldspring, the natural stone fabricating firm that worked on the Korean War Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. The granite wall panels will be cut and shaped, and then laser-engraved with the words and images that will capture the essence of that long ago, faraway war. After that, the panels will be shipped overland to the Presidio for installation. Concurrently, the other Memorial features – the entrance walls, Memorial tiles and plaques, interpretive/informational panels, and landscaping – will be put in place.

The Presidio Trust anticipates that work on the Memorial will be completed some time in the spring of 2016. KWMF is tentatively planning to hold a gala Opening Ceremony in June. The exact date and full details will be announced in the new year.



KWMF Secretary John Stevens observes the start of construction, with Alcatraz Island visible in the background.

Paying for That Construction

On November 10, in anticipation of the December 1 commencement of work on the Memorial site, KWMF paid the Presidio Trust the remaining balance due for construction costs: \$1,602,660. In a brief ceremony at the Presidio Trust headquarters, KWMF President and Chairman Judge Quentin L. Kopp (Ret.) presented Presidio Trust Acting Executive Director Michael Boland with the check. KWMF Secretary John R. Stevens and Treasurer Donald F. Reid also participated in the ceremony.

Judge Kopp stated, "I am confident that the application of this contribution will be scrupulously executed by the Presidio Trust, in which we repose our full faith." Michael Boland said, "We are thrilled and honored to be partnering with the Korean War Memorial Foundation to build the Memorial in the Presidio. I can think of no better place than this

stunning national park site to recognize the sacrifice of those who fought and died in the Korean War."

KWMF will also be paying the Presidio Trust over \$400,000 this coming spring for long-term maintenance

of the Memorial site. The Presidio Trust for its part is contributing over \$700,000 in staff time and other items, and has of course also provided the stunning site upon which the Memorial will stand – a site that is arguably priceless.



From L to R: John Stevens, Michael Boland, Judge Quentin Kopp, and Donald Reid
Photo by Dominic Maggio, Presidio Trust

Fallen Korean War Soldier Finally Comes Home

Robert V. Witt, Corporal, U.S. Army, has finally come home after nearly 65 years. On October 15, the Department of Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency announced that his remains had been identified after having been received from North Korean officials, and were being returned to his family in Southern California. On October 30, in Whittier, California, his family finally found closure and buried him with full military honors.

In late November, 1950, Corporal Witt was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 32nd Infantry Regiment, 31st



Corporal Robert V. Witt, U.S. Army

Regimental Combat Team of the 7th Infantry Division, historically known as Task Force Faith. He was reported missing in action during heavy fighting east of the Chosin Reservoir on December 2, 1950. Then in 1953, during the prisoner of war exchanges, repatriated U.S. soldiers told debriefers that Witt had been captured during the 1950 battle and had subsequently died of malnutrition on January 31, 1951. May you now rest in peace, Corporal Witt.

Father Daniel Joseph Rooney: Profile of a Korean War Chaplain

It's not often that you hear of a chaplain who was the recipient of not one but two Silver Stars for valor as well as a Purple Heart. Father Daniel Joseph Rooney was such a chaplain. He was born in the Bronx on August 14, 1914. When he was five years old, his mother died in childbirth, and he was sent to Ireland to be raised by family members. He began to study for the priesthood at St. Michael's College in County Louth, Ireland, and then went on to Rome to continue his studies there. He was just about to be ordained when World War II broke out and the Italian Fascist Government declared him an alien and deported him. He ended up in Galesburg, Illinois, where he was finally ordained.



The young Father Rooney

When the Korean War broke out, Father Rooney volunteered for the U.S. Army Chaplains Corps. He was inducted into the Army on December 9, 1951 and sent to Korea to serve with the 17th Infantry Regiment.

Although he was assigned to Regimental Headquarters Company, more often than not he was with the

rifle companies on the front lines -- or on outposts *in front of* the front lines. He received a Purple Heart and his first Silver Star for an action on Outpost Charlie on October 8, 1952. He was saying Mass, using the tailgate of a truck for an altar, when the unit came under small arms and artillery fire. He coolly continued to pass out communion until the truck was destroyed by incoming rounds and he was wounded. He then went from foxhole to foxhole, distributing ammunition and absolution to the men.



Father Rooney receiving his first Silver Star

He received his second Silver Star on April 18, 1953. When an outpost near Sok-Kog-Ae came under intense mortar and artillery fire, Father Rooney immediately moved forward to administer medical and spiritual aid to the wounded and assist in their evacuation. He made numerous trips between the beleaguered outpost and the aid station under enemy fire, encouraging the men and consoling the wounded.

All who served with him had the highest regard for his courage

and selfless devotion to duty. "He was always up there where he was not supposed to be, doing more than his job," commented 1st Lt. Thomas Fernandez de la Reguera, a platoon leader who served with him. Col. DeLyle G. Redmond, U.S. Army (Ret.), a platoon leader at the time, described how he and Father Rooney first met: "We were under heavy enemy shelling. I was in a shallow hole trying not to get hit. He came up to me, tapped me on the shoulder, and asked, 'Say, can you tell me where the front lines are?' My response is unprintable. But that's the type of man he was. He was fearless."

Father Rooney was honorably discharged from the Army on July 31, 1956. He died on September 27, 1990, and is buried in St. Mary's Cemetery in Kingston, New York. He is survived by, among others, Ann McParland Of County Armagh, Ireland, who brought this story to our attention. Ann has never been to the United States, but she is now planning to come to Kingston, New York in February, 2016, to visit Father Rooney's grave.



Father Rooney (R) with 1st Lt Dick Whitson, Easy Company, 17th Infantry Regiment, Korea, 1952

KWMF Benefits from Korean-American Social Event

On Saturday evening, October 17, KWMF was given the opportunity to be part of the 2015 Bay Area Korean Americans (BAKAs) Wine Tasting Mixer. The event, held in the San Francisco County Fair Building in Golden Gate Park, was hosted by the Korean American Professional Society (KAPS) and the Korean American Chamber of Commerce of San Francisco (KACC-SF).



Sipping, socializing, and raising awareness
Photos by Ian Lee

Representatives of local non-profit and service organizations were able to meet and interact with an audience of over 150 Korean American professionals. This relaxed, social setting was an ideal milieu in which to help raise awareness of these organizations, and increase community involvement in their good works. The sponsors included the Korean American Community Foundation and the Korean Bar Association of Northern California (both major sponsors of the event) and a number of other prominent Bay Area organi-



Cheerful staffers at the KAPS table

zations, as well as leading wineries and wine suppliers that generously donated a great selection of wines for the guests.

KWMF Executive Director Gerard Parker and Office Manager Eleanor Zapanta were there to spread the word about the Korean War Memorial Foundation to the young and socially conscious Korean American professionals in attendance.



Gerard Parker and Eleanor Zapanta staffing the KWMF table

Memorial, for which we are grateful.

This memorable evening marked the return of the annual BAKAs event after a two-year hiatus. People interested in next year's event, and/or in KAPS, may contact:

Fred Choi
Treasurer, Korean American Professional Society (KAPS)
408 806 5351
fred@kaps.org
www.kaps.org



The irreplaceable Christine Ko

Christine Ko of KAPS cheerfully volunteered to move around the room and sell raffle tickets for premium wines to benefit KWMF. Her exuberant, high-energy efforts succeeded in raising over \$400 for the



The BAKAs Mixer - an event that brings social conscience into social life

Congratulations to the Lucky Winners of the KWMF Lottery

On November 11, Veterans Day, at the Golden Gate Grill Restaurant in San Francisco, KWMF held the drawing for the lottery we have been running for the past few months. There were four First Prize winners, each receiving one pair of round-trip tickets to any Virgin America domestic destination. We at KWMF wish to express our gratitude to Virgin America for generously providing us with these flight vouchers to support our Foundation.

There was one Second Prize winner, receiving a two nights' stay at the famed Marines' Memorial Club and Hotel in San Francisco, plus a voucher for dinner for two at the hotel's Leatherneck Steakhouse. We at KWMF wish to express our gratitude to the Marines' Memorial Club and Hotel for its generosity and support.



Marines' Memorial Club and Hotel, The Leatherneck Steakhouse
San Francisco

Congratulations to our four First Place prize winners:



Paul Comeau, Hollywood, FL



Bernard Froio, Korean War Veteran, Palm Desert, CA



Joe Martin (with Keiko-san), Orinda, CA



Fred Rutledge, Orinda, CA

Congratulations to our Second Place prize winner:



Wallace Stewart, Korean War Veteran, Sebastopol, CA

A Third Prize was added on-site during the drawing. KWMF Vice President Man J. Kim provided a voucher for a meal for two at his Sears Fine Food Restaurant, a San Francisco landmark since 1938. We at KWMF are grateful to Man J. for his generosity.



Sears Fine Food Restaurant, San Francisco

Congratulations to our Third Prize winner, whose photo, unfortunately, was not available at press time: John Sexton, Korean War Veteran, Winters, CA.

Once again, thanks to our generous sponsors, and to all of you who supported the lottery. And congratulations to our winners!



KOREAN WAR MEMORIAL FOUNDATION

An Important Request from Judge Quentin L. Kopp (Ret.) President and Chairman, Korean War Memorial Foundation

Dear Friend,

As 2015 draws to a close, I write to ask you to consider making an additional donation. Your donation, of course, will be tax-deductible.

As you can see on the cover of this newsletter, construction of the Memorial has begun at last, thanks to donors like you. The Memorial will be open to the public by late spring, 2016. Our duty, however, will not end at that time. We have made a commitment to an ongoing educational program to ensure that future generations are aware of the true cost of war and the true price of freedom, and that the sacrifices made in that so-called “Forgotten War” are never forgotten. We also have a continuing need to fund long-term maintenance of the Memorial site, to ensure that its beauty and impact remain timeless.

In this Season of Giving, please help us support the continuing legacy of the Korean War Memorial Foundation by sending either a one-time gift or a recurring monthly gift. You may donate online at www.kwmf.org/donate/, by phone at 415 921 1933, or by mail to the address below.



Thank you for your kind consideration and past generosity. We look forward to your joining us in June, 2016 at the Opening Ceremony of the Korean War Memorial.

Yours truly,

Judge Quentin L. Kopp (Ret.)
President and Chairman of the Board
Korean War Memorial Foundation
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San Francisco, CA 94129

Thank you, Lighthouse Worldwide Solutions

KWMF wishes to thank Dr. Kim Tae Yun and her staff at Lighthouse Worldwide Solutions in Fremont, CA — www.golighthouse.com — for their generosity in underwriting the costs of printing and mailing this newsletter.



KOREAN WAR MEMORIAL FOUNDATION

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