

A Very Special Exhibit to Honor Our War Dead

By

Richard Forliano

Eastchester Town Historian

As told by Mike Fix, President Emeritus of the Eastchester Historical Society

Memorial Day has always had a special significance for the town of Eastchester including the villages of Tuckahoe and Bronxville. Memorial Day began in 1868 after the Civil War when flowers were first placed on the graves of Union and Confederate soldiers at Arlington National Cemetery. While New York State was the first to recognize the holiday in 1873, it is now recognized in almost every state as the last Monday in May. Memorial Day parades in our town have taken place as long as anyone can remember.

This year because of the unceasing efforts of one Vietnam veteran the time span between Memorial Day through the Fourth of July will have added significance. This man has been working tirelessly day and night, week after week, and year after year to chronicle and present the stories of the soldiers from Eastchester including the villages of Tuckahoe and Bronxville who made the ultimate sacrifice in American wars of the 20th century. On May 27 at 7:00 PM Mike Fix, President Emeritus of the Eastchester Historical Society, will unveil his massive project at the O'Silas gallery on the second floor of the library at Concordia College.

The display centers around 70 panels of men who died in World War I, World War 2, Korea, and Vietnam. Each panel includes where the young man lived in town, his unit, and the battle action in which he died. In addition each panel describes where he is buried and/or how he is memorialized.

But that is not all that this exhibit depicts. There are letters from family members to soldiers and from soldiers back to their loved ones. There will be WW2 recruitment posters on loan from the Eastchester Historical Society and maps of the different campaigns during the war. The Danbury Connecticut Military Museum has agreed to send many of its WW2 artifacts. We already know that there will be on loan dioramas of different scenes from World War 2 and a model of the battle ship Iowa. [The Danbury Museum is also sending a landing ship tank that was used in World War II as an amphibious vehicle to take soldiers off ocean going vessels and then bring them ashore.](#)

There is still more. Sheila Marcotte, President of the Eastchester Historical Society, will show her vast collection of American flags. Models of the airplanes (B-17's and the Lockheed P 38 Lightning to name a few) will be part of the exhibit. Special sections will be set aside to present what a person must do to receive the Medal of Honor and what constitutes a MIA (Missing in Action) There is so much at this exhibit that you might need two trips to take it all in.

The exhibit opens on Thursday, May 27 at 7:00 PM with a special ceremony at the O'Silas gallery on the second floor of the Concordia library. Surviving members of the families who had relatives who died in the service of their country will participate. The color guard will consist of soldiers from Korea, Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan.

Mike Fix believes that the exhibit that he has tirelessly put together provides a once in a life time opportunity to connect three generations. Parents can bring their children to honor those men and

women of our town who paid the ultimate sacrifice in American wars of the twentieth century. It is up to us

Time Table of some of the events

Thursday, May 27 at 7:00 PM: Opening Ceremony at the O'Silas Gallery on the second floor of the Concordia library

Monday, May 31 at 8:30 AM: Ceremony before the Memorial Day parade at Monument Park at the intersection of California and White Plains Road. Eastchester's Memorial Day Parade will follow

Monday, May 31 at 9:00: Start of Bronxville's Memorial Day Parade: The parade starts at Leonard Morange Square (Across the street from Lawrence Hospital)

Monday, June 14 at 6 PM Flag Day, a formal flag retirement ceremony will take place at Eastchester and Tuckahoe High School sponsored by the American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars

Thursday, June 24: An evening concert at Concordia College by the West Point Band called the 'Jazz Kings'