



WWII Vet Honored By Legion

BY SHAUNA MARLETTE
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Honoring America's veterans is what Memorial Day is about. Remembering the sacrifices, the battles that all who have served have given and endured to help make sure the liberties enjoyed were secured.

For World War II vet Howard Kussman, the 70 years since his war ended have passed quickly, yet his memories and his ties to the military have been the backbone of who he is.

One of seven children, five of them boys who all served in WWII, Kussman said his service was not one of battle but rather of doing a job.

Drafted on October 24, 1942 he came out December 24, 1945, a little over 38 months, during



HOWARD
KUSSMAN

Antonio, Texas. I was shipped from New Zealand to Sydney Australia, to a small island in Dutch New Guinea. I was in Japan and there I got my order to go home. They signed the declaration on the boat. I was in the islands near Clark Field."

While he said his service was like an ordinary job for him, he

which time he served in several different overseas locations from New Zealand to Japan.

"It was either join or be drafted, I was drafted into the army," Kussman said. "I did my training in San Antonio, Texas. I was shipped from New Zealand to Sydney Australia, to a small island in Dutch New Guinea. I was in Japan and there I got my order to go home. They signed the declaration on the boat. I was in the islands near Clark Field."

While he said his service was like an ordinary job for him, he

worked on keeping the trucks running.

"A high point was when Bob Hope was there with all of his girls," he said with a smile. "The low point was probably missing home."

Kussman noted that he was not married when he went overseas.

"I came home and was married to Marian after the service," he said. "She died of Leukemia when she was almost 60. I was 29 when we were married so we had thirty years together. After she died, I married her older sister DeAnn, she died five months ago."

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SALUTE TO HONOR THE DEAD
VFW Honor Guard

IN MEMORY OF THOSE WHO GAVE
EVERYTHING FOR OUR FREEDOM
VERMILLION VFW CLAY POST 3061

Memorial Day Events Planned

BY JAMES COOPER
For The Plain Talk

Memorial Day is a time to recognize those who gave their lives in service to the United States of America.

On the last Monday of May each year, the Vermillion community comes together to honor those people in a ceremony hosted by the Clay County Sheriff's office. While the venue may have changed, the spirit of remembrance has not.

At 10 o'clock on the morning of May 25, 2015, the Memorial Day observance will take place at the First Baptist Church at 101 E. Main St in downtown Vermillion. The church has generously offered to provide a space and refreshments.

During the ceremony, there will be an Honor Roll Call for all Clay County veterans who have died in action in all wars. A keynote speech will be given by Lee Felder, Vice President for Human Resources at The University of South Dakota and retired Air Force Major. There will be a traditional

reading of General Logan's Orders; a Civil War General who organized the original Memorial Day Services. Then the Honor Guard will conduct a rifle salute to honor our fallen heroes.

Prior to the Monday observance, there will be a ceremony in league with the American Legion to place between four and five hundred small gravesite flags on all of the veteran's graves at Bluff View Cemetery on Friday, May 22.

Following the individual veteran honors, a Saturday event will consist of an avenue of flags where passersby will see one hundred flags placed along the main road leading into the cemetery with an engraved sign with the names of veterans whose families have asked to have them memorialized.

When speaking with Sheriff Andy Howe, he commented on the changes that have occurred to the Memorial Day service over the years.

"We used to do it outside at the Veteran's Memorial at the courthouse and we always got lucky and had a

beautiful day, but we knew we were pushing our luck," he said.

An event that takes this much preparation and setup relies heavily on the support of volunteer veterans and their families. Unfortunately, active membership has declined because, "younger veterans just haven't joined at the level that the older veterans did. We're losing older veterans and not replacing them with new ones, so we have less people to do the work."

A move to the Vermillion Public Library helped abate this need for extra help, but with a generous offer to host the event by Pastor Sandy Aakre, it has moved once more to its current location.

Now that the Memorial Day ceremonies have found a stable venue, the Vermillion community should come out and support the remembrance of those veterans who have fallen in war.

Editors Note: Originally published about Memorial Day, 1918, in the Dakota Republican on June 5, 1918 when the country was in the middle of World War One, the following article, and the subsequent address, covered the entire front page and six full columns and stressed patriotism and the differences between government in the United States and Germany. The G.A.R. is short for the Grand Army of the Republic, Union veterans from the Civil War and credited with starting Memorial Day in Vermillion. The W.R.C. is the Womens' Relief Corps, the women's auxiliary to the G.A.R. The Air Line Bridge was the eastern most bridge south of Vermillion that crossed the Vermillion River and is along South Dakota St. The Norway Band was the band from Norway Township, just west of Vermillion.

Honor Memory Of Veterans

Decoration Day Was Duly Observed In Vermillion Last Thursday With Fitting Ceremonies

DAKOTA REPUBLICAN - JUNE 5, 1918

After a week of almost continuous rains, the weather man let up on his deluge stunt last Thursday to allow some fair skies and bright sunshine for the proper observance of Decoration Day. It was an ideal day overhead, and while the roads were pretty bad yet a large crowd assembled in the city to attend the annual exercises. Those in charge had made splendid preparation for the proper observance of the day, and the program was carried out without a hitch.

At 9 o'clock a.m. there was a service at the Air Line Bridge, and flowers were scattered on the water in honor of the sailors who fought in the Civil War.

At 10 o'clock the G. A. R. and the W. R. C. and a number of the school children proceeded to the cemetery where the graves

of the comrades who had gone to the last long sleep were reverently decorated with flowers and flags. An extra wreath was hung on the monument for the soldiers and sailors who had sacrificed their lives in the present war.

Returning to the city the veterans were entertained at a dinner served by the ladies of the W. R. C. in the dining room of the Methodist Church.

At 1:30 in the afternoon the parade was formed in front of the court house. The Stars and Stripes headed the procession, and was followed by the Norway Band, the veterans of the G. A. R., members of the W. R. C., the Meckling Company of the Home Guards, and the Vermillion Boy Scouts. Major Martin L. Thompson of the second regiment of Home Guards was marshal of the day. The procession moved east on

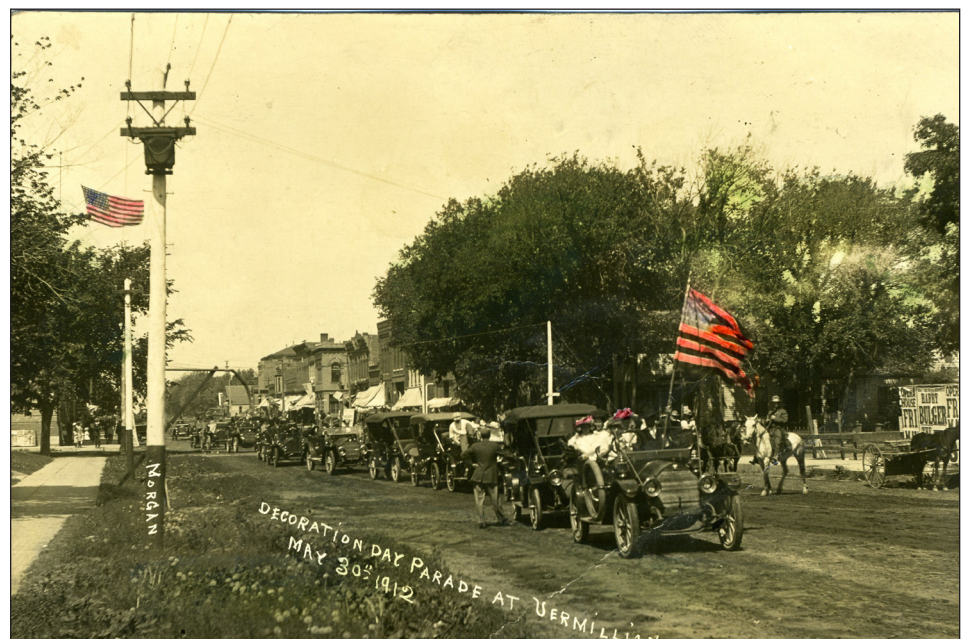


PHOTO COURTESY OF THE CLAY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

This postcard is from Decoration Day, May 30, 1912. The picture was taken on E. Main St. just in front of the Baptist Church.

Main street to Dakota street, and counter-marched to the city theatre, where the exercises of the afternoon were held.

The exercises at the theatre were carried out according to program. Comrade Jones acted as chairman of the occasion. Rev. J.H. Gagnier offered the invocation, and there was music by the Norway Band, a selection by a quartette composed of Messrs. Vanneman, Cleland, Albertson, and Collins, a song sung by a number of school children,

a recitation by John Garvis, and the reading of Lincoln's Gettysburg Address by Helen Ortmyer.

The address of the afternoon was delivered by Prof. T.E. McKinney, and it was one of the best that has been heard at a Decoration Day service in Vermillion for a long time. It made a profound impression on the audience, and for the benefit of those who could not be present we take the pleasure of printing the address in full herewith.

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