


Newsletter

TUSCOLA COUNTY DECEASED VETERANS MEMORIAL-PROJECT



5140 English Rd., Clifford, MI 48727

www.tuscolaveterans.org

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Dear Friends,

It is amazing and almost unbelievable the project is 10 years old this year. What began as 80 records on four sheets of paper, in 2001, has now expanded to 7300 records on nearly 350 pages. And what's more, all members on the committee are still well and continue to contribute. Our Lord must know what we do is worth while, and our work will inform future generations for years to come.

In 2001 Ed Jagosz and a few American Legion members gathered at the Caro Area District for an informal posting of those four sheets of paper at the entrance of the Library, in their display case. We didn't have a ceremony or any other deliberate notice of the occasion, just a notion that veterans from the community should be mentioned in a public place during the month of May. Perhaps some of us had a premonition that the memories of deceased veterans should be preserved in some way, but certainly we didn't know how to do it. The following year Ed again mentioned that the list should be expanded to include more than the Caro area, and also a committee should be formed to assist in the collection of records. I agreed with him and submitted the names of veterans from the Kingston area. The display was held at the Community Bank in 2002.

In 2003 the project included the records from the Wiltse Civil War list of 1966. In addition, I visited a regular meeting of American Legion Post No. 181 and requested their help in expanding the list; and they did, putting the number of records to over 1000. The display in 2003 was held in the lobby of the Mayville State Bank. After that interest in the project began to take on momentum with Arlie Robinson, John Engles, and Rita Easlick joining to form the project committee.

With more than 1700 records collected displaying the information became a problem. So I developed a database and designed the format and criteria, which has served us well to this point. The 2004 display was held in Cass City at the Rawson Memorial Library. From then on Millington, Vassar, Reese, Fairgrove, and Unionville graciously supported our effort. The Tuscola Advertiser published stories about the Project which help give us more exposure. Gail Lesoski joined the project and helped immensely with canvassing cemeteries. John Engles supplied many veteran records from the Vassar area, and Arlene Robinson continued to work the Mayville cemeteries. A web presence was created in November of 2005 further exposing our work. The website has had over 11,000 visitors and continues to be our day-to-day resource for people interested in adding information and submitting corrections. Trudy Hall has been a particular source of information in this respect. And most recently Norm Wiltse has supplied detailed information on Civil War soldiers.

The problem we face now is the financing going forward. We have received \$640 in donations, and the donations have never been used because technology costs far exceed that amount. Therefore, I will ask American Legion Post No. 7 to embrace this project because the project meets one important aspect of a 501c(19) organization, e.g. to perpetuate the memories of deceased veterans. That organization has the resources to keep the project on-going. American Legion Post No. 7 is 91 years old this year and they have the technology to maintain the project.

The 2010 Ceremony will be held at the Caro Area District Library on May 3, 2010 at 11:00 AM. The public is invited to the Ceremony. And the display will be there throughout the month of May.

Your truly, Don Lotter