



# *Memorial Day*

*Addison Independent*

*May 23, 2024*



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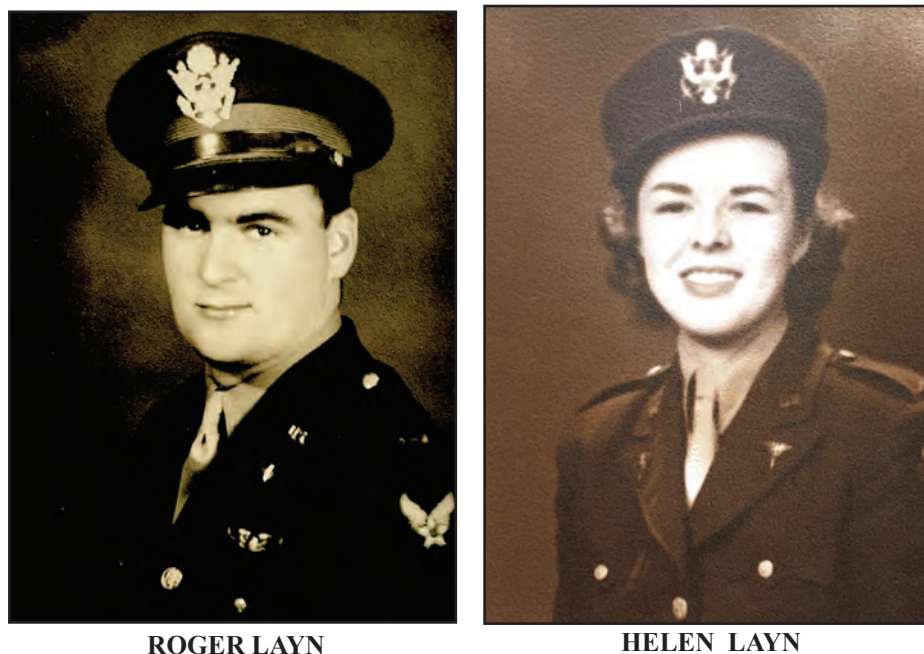
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ROGER LAYN

HELEN LAYN

## Monkton couple served in World War II

By MARIN HOWELL

MONKTON — Helen and Roger Layn were well-known and well-loved members of the Monkton community.

Married in 1947, the pair settled in the Addison County town and ran the family dairy farm Roger grew up on. Throughout their lives, they remained plugged into the community in many ways — helping out neighbors, volunteering around town and taking part in the antique equipment

exhibits at the Addison County Fair & Field Days.

In addition to their local contributions, Roger and Helen were among the Addison County residents who served their country during World War II; Roger as a B-17 pilot, and Helen as a nurse in the Army Nurse Corps.

Monkton resident Candace Polzella, one of the couple's three children, shared

*(See The Layns, Page 3C)*

Remembering those who courageously gave their lives in order for our nation to stand proud.



Honor our heroes.



# The Layns

*(Continued from Page 2)*

with the *Independent* some of the details of her parents' service.

The pair both grew up in the Addison County area and attended Bristol High School.

After graduating high school in 1940, Helen, then Helen Burritt, went on to complete her nurse's training at the former Mary Fletcher Hospital in Burlington. She graduated in 1943 and enlisted in the Army Nurse Corps the following year.

Helen was sent to France, where she served with the 5th Field Hospital as part of the 7th Army. During the war, field hospitals would closely follow combat troops and set up in tents near the front to treat wounded patients.

According to the U.S. Army Center of Military History, these hospitals were typically assigned 18 nurses and could handle 75-150 patients. Doctors and nurses would perform triage and immediate care on patients at the field hospital and could conduct around 80 operations each day.

The field hospital Helen served in was among those that supported troops during the Battle of the Bulge, also known as the Ardennes Offensive. The Battle of the Bulge was Germany's last major offensive on the Western Front during the war, a campaign that was ultimately unsuccessful for German forces, but was very costly in terms of lost lives. Lasting six weeks, the battle was the largest and  
*(See The battle, Page 4)*



LONGTIME MONKTON RESIDENT Roger Layn, second in from top left, served as a bomber pilot during World War II. He is pictured here with fellow crew members of the B-17 plane "My Prayer" in 1943. Helen Burritt, who later married Roger, also served in the war as a nurse in the Army Nurse Corps.

Photo courtesy of Candace Polzella

*We salute all military personnel  
for the sacrifices they have made for our freedom.*

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# The battle

*(Continued from Page 3)*

bloodiest for American forces on the Western Front during the war.

Helen was promoted to 1st lieutenant in August of 1945 and separated from the Army Nurse Corps a few months later. For her service, she was awarded the European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal with two Bronze service stars, the American Campaign Medal and the World War II Victory Medal.

Helen also received a citation from a brigadier-general for outstanding service beyond the call of duty.

Roger entered the service in 1941, first serving as a bomb service truck driver and automotive mechanic for the Aviation Ordnance Company in Manchester, N.H. He went on to complete elementary flying training in Decatur, Ala., in 1942, was promoted from 2nd lieutenant to 1st lieutenant and assigned to a heavy bomb crew as a co-pilot.

After graduating as a pilot from advanced flying school in Seymour, Ind., in 1943, Roger was stationed in Basingbourn, England. He served as a B-17 pilot in the 91st Bombardment Group of the 8th Army Air Force.

Among the missions Roger took part

in was the Schweinfurt-Regensburg Raid. The strategic bombing mission took place on Aug. 17, 1943, and targeted two sites deep in Germany: the Messerschmitt aircraft factory at Regensburg and ball bearing production plants at Schweinfurt.

The operation was intended to weaken the German aircraft industry and was a two-pronged strike in which two large forces attacked the separate targets.

**Roger Layne and Lt. James D. Judy stayed onboard with Sgt. Earl Cherry, and as the pilot flew, Roger and Cherry worked to put out flames and hold off German fighters.**

Though the raid was successful in hitting its targets, the mission only temporarily hindered the Germans and resulted in significant losses for American crews. According to the National Museum of the United States Air Force, 60 of the 376 bombers, or around one out of six of those dispatched, were shot down and more than 600 airmen were killed, missing

or captured.

Roger was a co-pilot on one of the B-17s sent to Schweinfurt. During the mission, his aircraft was attacked by German fighters near Frankfurt. The aircraft caught fire, went into a dive and fell several thousand feet before Roger and the pilot, Lt. James D. Judy, could level it out. Due to the damage, Judy ordered the crew to bale out, which most did. However, the crew's top-turret

gunner, Sgt. Earl Cherry could not jump out of the aircraft as he was wounded and his parachute was too burned to use.

Roger and Judy stayed onboard with Cherry, and as the pilot flew, Roger and Cherry worked to put out flames and hold off German fighters. While Judy tried to bring the aircraft home, Roger threw overboard remaining ammunition and other items to lighten the plane, tried to repair control cables to the rudder and attempted to close the jammed bomb bay doors.

The aircraft ultimately landed in Manston, England, and Roger was awarded a Silver Star Medal for his actions during the mission. The three crew members were all recommended for the Congressional Medal of Honor, though they were not awarded it.

Around six months later, Roger was serving as a gunner on a mission when the aircraft was shot down near Frankfurt. He and other crew members baled out, and Roger spent the next 15 months as a prisoner of war in Stalag Luft 1, a camp for captured airmen near Barth, Western Pomerania, Germany. Roger remained in the camp from Feb. 4, 1944, until it was liberated on May 1, 1945.

For his service, Roger received an Air Medal, a Prisoner of War Medal and a Vermont National Guard Commendation Medal.

In the years after returning to Addison County, Helen and Roger were married and started a family that remains deeply



**ROGER LAYN WAS awarded a Silver Star Medal for his actions in the Schweinfurt-Regensburg Raid during World War II. Layn was a B-17 co-pilot in the mission, during which the aircraft he was on was attacked by German fighters and caught fire.**

*Photo courtesy of Candace Polzella*

invested in the Monkton community.

Helen died at home in Monkton in 2011, at the age of 89. Roger also died at home in Monkton — this was in 2020, at the age of 100.

Prior to his death, Roger would at times share his experiences in the war with community members through interviews and presentations. He'd also attend the annual banquet for ex-POWs hosted by the Bristol American Legion Post 19, which members of the family still attend today.

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## Middlebury's Memorial Day Parade hits the road at 9 a.m.

MIDDLEBURY — The annual Memorial Day parade in Middlebury will, of course, be held this coming Monday, May 27.

Legion Post 27, the town of Middlebury and the large number of guests attending will honor the more than 1 million men and women who have lost their lives defending America since the Revolutionary War.

The parade, which will include its usual accompaniment of military color guard, fire trucks, bands, civic groups and cute kids, will assemble in the Middlebury Arts Center parking lots at 8:30 a.m. and commence at 9 a.m. Marchers will proceed from Porter Field Road off South Main Street, through the traffic circle, around the green and end at Court Square. There will be a ceremony following the parade at the Soldier's Monument in front



of the Town Hall Theater.

There is still time for those wanting to participate. Contact the Middlebury American Legion Post 27 at 802-388-9311 ext: "0" or at legionpost27@aol.com indicating the name of the group or organization, the number and nature of participation (walkers, vehicle, float, etc.), and a contact name and telephone number.

## Bristol to host Memorial Day ceremony

BRISTOL — Bristol's American Legion Post 19 will host the 2024 Memorial Day Ceremony on the Village Green at 1 p.m. this coming Monday, May 27.

Post Commander Ron LaRose will emcee a ceremony that will feature a guest speaker from the Vermont Army National Guard. Details on the name and more about the speaker are in Section A of this edition.

LaRose has led Post 19 for a number of years. He served in the U.S. Army and the Army National Guard for 39 years, retiring in 2005 at the rank of lieutenant colonel.

Monday's ceremony will include the laying of a wreath on the Veterans Memorial in the park.

All are welcome at Bristol's Memorial Day Ceremony.

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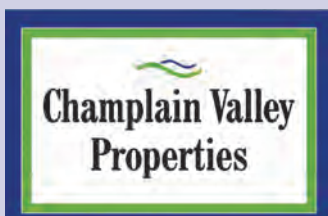
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ALMOST 80 U.S. servicemen were killed when this submarine, the USS Flier, was sunk on its way to engage a Japanese convoy in World War II. A memorial to the men stands at the Veterans Administration in White River Junction, Vt.

# Memorial dedicated to those lost on submarine

VERMONT — At the Veteran Administration in White River Junction there is a distinct memorial dedicated to the Submarine *USS Flier*, formally classified as SS 250. The ship was lost during World War II.

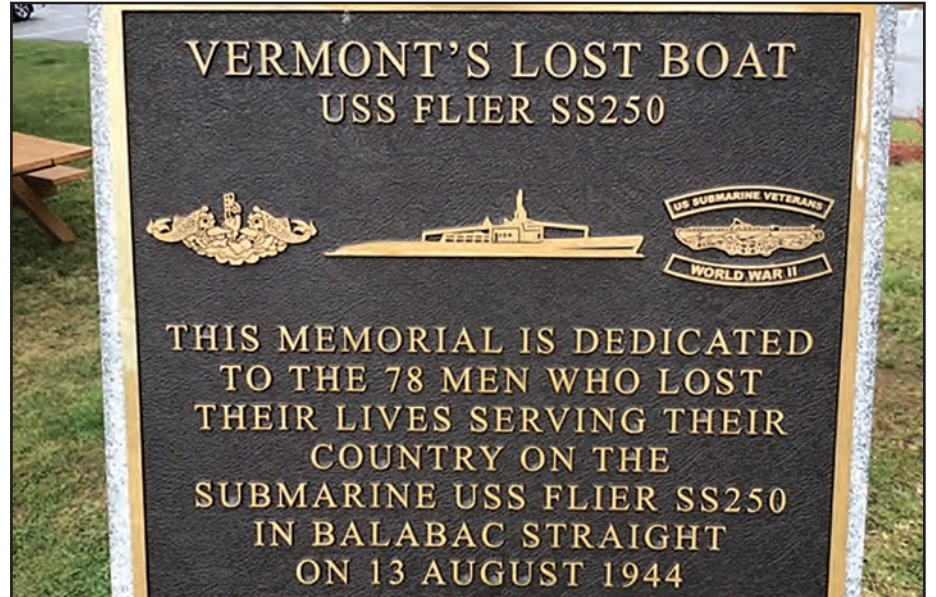
The United States Submarine Veterans Inc., or USSVI, is ever mindful of lost shipmates, friends and family that have served in the submarine service of our country. It assigned each state one of the 52 lost submarines from World War II, with California and New York receiving 2 each of the lost submarines. Vermont was assigned the *USS Flier* (SS 250). The Green Mountain Base Chapter of USSVI cares for the memorial and sees the significance of fellow submariners

that were lost.

*Flier's* keel was laid down on Oct. 30, 1942, in Groton, Conn. She launched on July 11, 1943. During combat in the South China Sea, her crew sank 10,380 gross tons of Japanese shipping. *Flier* stuck a naval mine on Aug. 13, 1944, near the Balabac Strait in the Philippines, and sunk. Seventy-eight sailors and officers were killed.

Read more about the *Flier* online at [tinyurl.com/FlierSub](http://tinyurl.com/FlierSub).

If you are ever at Vermont's VA hospital and outpost, the memorial is in the park where the U.S. flag is flown along with several other significant memorials at the park dedicated to our veterans. The submariners in Vermont remember the



*USS Flier* and the men lost and on Eternal Mountain Base Submariners and the USSVI, contact Bill Mattoon at email: [cmattoon@vermontel.net](mailto:cmattoon@vermontel.net).

For more information about the Green

Mountain Base Submariners and the USSVI, contact Bill Mattoon at email: [cmattoon@vermontel.net](mailto:cmattoon@vermontel.net).

# MEMORIAL DAY 2024



LEGION.ORG



The American Legion - Middlebury Post 27

**REMEMBER THAT FREEDOM IS NOT FREE.**

# Jackman

(Continued from Page 5)

service, and the United States military. A member of American Legion Post No. 14 for more than half a century, he served his nation in the Vermont Army National Guard from 1968-1991, retiring as a first sergeant.

Daniels has been a member of the Vergennes Fire Department since 1968, serving as captain and deputy chief. His municipal services included over five years on the Vergennes City Council and as Vergennes mayor for seven years in two different terms. In addition, he serves as the superintendent of the Prospect Cemetery.

For Daniels, Memorial Day is a time of remembrance for all who have served, both those who are walking the earth today and those who paid the ultimate sacrifice.

For Parade Marshal Jackman, Memorial Day is also important as a veteran.

“It’s a very special day to me and means a lot for the community to thank us for what we’ve done,” he said. “In these times with everything so topsy turvy, we need to come together and if Memorial Day can do that, that’s great.”

Jackman was born and raised in the

Little City and has been a member of the American Legion for more than 50 years, including the past 42 at Post No. 14 in Vergennes. He served in the roles of historian, chaplain, service officer and second vice commander at Post No. 14. Before moving back to Vergennes, he

was a member of American Legion posts in North Carolina and in Middlebury.

He is also a life member of Middlebury VFW Post No. 7823, where Jackman served as adjutant.

Jackman has been active in service with Meals on Wheels and many projects over the years with the Legion and VFW.

Jackman feels that Memorial Day is more than just remembrance. It is realizing what all the men and women who serve have done and the time they are away from friends and family. It is understanding the sacrifice of those who gave their lives.

*“It’s a very special day to me and means a lot for the community to thank us for what we’ve done. In these times with everything so topsy turvy, we need to come together and if Memorial Day can do that, that’s great.”*

— Michael Jackman

During his years in the Coast Guard, Jackman was a commissary supply officer. He took care of payroll and worked closely with cooks in ordering of food and managing menus. He was stationed out of Boston on a 327-foot weather cutter.

He also served as “recreation officer,” which involved things like picking up and screening films on the ship while it was away from port. During an extended stop in Japan, when the ship was in drydock, Jackman planned a ski trip for fellow guardsmen that took them to the interior mountains of the island nation.

During the year in Vietnam, Jackman was directly involved in the war. His role was as a hotshelmer on a 38-inch gun mounted on the bow of the ship. He was stationed in the Tonkin Gulf in 1968.

“We were lobbing shells a mile or two inland to support our troops there,” he said.

Back in Vermont, Jackman worked at Miller’s Chevrolet in Vergennes for 40 years. Then he worked at Dennecker Chevrolet, and now sells cars for Wimett Trading Company in Leicester.

He also looked to serve the community. Coincidentally, a lot of what he did involved food, just like his job on the Coast Guard ship. He worked at Legion dinners. “I’ve worked on getting meals to shut-ins for as long as I can remember,” he said. “I enjoy that immensely.”

Jackman, 77, has also volunteered at the Legion’s Memorial Day parade for at least four decades. He was moved to be selected as parade marshal, in part recognizing his own years of volunteering, but also in solemn recognition of the service of men and women who sacrificed for their nation.



MICHAEL JACKMAN

“I was very honored to be asked,” he said. “It’s a very special day to me and means a lot for the community to thank us for what we’ve done.”

Anyone with questions about the Vergennes parade should feel free to email the American Legion Post No. 14 Parade Committee at marsulli75@gmail.com.

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# Fort Ticonderoga to pay tribute to those who fought

TICONDEROGA, N.Y. — Fort Ticonderoga across Lake Champlain from Shoreham this weekend will pay tribute to the men and women who lost their lives during the American Revolution. Discover the story of the American Army in 1777 and how it defended liberty at Ticonderoga. Special living history programs and demonstrations will be presented throughout Memorial

*Join a hive of activity as citizens-turned-soldiers reinforced extensive lines of defenses across the Ticonderoga peninsula and beyond to prepare for a renewed British invasion.*

Day weekend, Saturday and Sunday, May 25-26.

Join a hive of activity as citizens-turned-soldiers reinforced extensive lines of defenses across the Ticonderoga peninsula and beyond to prepare for a renewed British invasion. Throughout the weekend, visitors will witness the labor of liberty

as Fort Ticonderoga staff portraying Continental Army soldiers bring to life this defining story through military drill, weapon demonstrations, historic trades, hauling timber with oxen and raising  
*(See Fort Ti, Page 10)*



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in uniform, past,  
present and future**

**THANK YOU**

**for Your Service!**

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# Fort Ti

*(Continued from Page 9)*

huts for shelter,” said Stuart Lillie, Fort Ticonderoga Vice President of Public History.

Members of the public are invited to come enjoy narrated boat tours aboard the Carillon, a small pleasure boat, and cruise along the same shores of Lake Champlain that American soldiers and sailors sailed in 1777.

A full lineup of activities and programs offered throughout the weekend include daily tours within the fort, King’s Garden, and museum exhibition spaces; historic trades programs; ongoing living history programs; thrilling

weapons demonstrations; fife & drum performances; the Mount Defiance experience; and the Carillon Battlefield hiking trail. A full schedule can be found at [fortticonderoga.org](http://fortticonderoga.org).

Sunday, May 26, will feature two special services:

- 11 a.m. Memorial Service at Fort Ticonderoga

Join the procession of a Continental Army Soldier’s funeral and see him laid to his final resting place. Pay respect to the numerous soldiers who did not receive a proper burial at Ticonderoga in 1777 and reflect on the ultimate sacrifice they made to secure our liberty today.

- Noon. Flag Raising Ceremony beginning atop Mount Defiance at 72 Defiance St.

Join the Ticonderoga American Legion as they renew the American flag atop Mount Defiance, as a salute to all those who have fallen in the service of this nation. From this breathtaking vista, remember their sacrifice with a 21-gun salute.

A 10% general admissions discount will be given to military members with proof of service for this special weekend-long event.

Welcoming visitors since 1909, Fort Ticonderoga is museum, historic site, major cultural destination, and center for learning, on-site and across the globe through Fort Ticonderoga’s Center for Digital History.



In honor of those who have served and who continue to serve.

*Thank You.*

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# Remembering those who served.

ADDISON COUNTY  
**INDEPENDENT**



THE NEXT GENERATION of Vermonters are instilled with respect for the sacrifices of the women and men in our U.S. armed forces. Here, during a previous Memorial Day observance, young Scouts gather around a memorial monument on the Orwell town green.

## Orwell village gears up for Memorial Day Parade

ORWELL — If you want to see a Memorial Day parade, you can get start early and head out to Orwell for the community's annual Sunday before Memorial Day festivities. As usual, the annual parade in Orwell starts lining up on

North Orwell Road at noon and steps off at 1:30 p.m. this Sunday, May 26.

Many floats will be designed to reflect some of the many traditional Vermont activities and industries, and there will be plenty of just-fun floats and attractions.

American Legion Post 49 from Fair Haven will lead the parade and will honor our veterans with a 21-gun salute.


Organizers have lined up a great selection of marchers, players, riders and floaters. They will include the Catamount

Pipe Band, the Fair Haven Union High School marching band and various local youth.

And, of course, there will be plenty of vintage cars, trucks and tractors at (See Orwell, Page 12C)

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and those who continue to serve.**

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to All Those  
Who Served*



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THE CAIRO SHRINER Northeast Clowns will return to Orwell's fabulous Memorial Day parade this year.

## Orwell

*(Continued from Page 11)*

the 49th Annual Orwell Memorial Day Parade. Join in for this free event and parade through the village of Orwell to show the freedoms we enjoy and honor the veterans who fought for them.

Kate Hunter will be the 2024 Grand Marshal of the Orwell parade. In addition to being the librarian at the Orwell Free Library, Hunter is active in community events. Thanks go to Randy Kavet from Orwell, who will be giving Marshal Hunter a parade ride in his 2007 Corvette convertible.

Always a favorite, the Cairo Shriner Northeast Clowns are returning for 2024.

Keep an eye out for all those sluggers on the Orwell Little League teams on the May 26th Memorial Day Parade. Dancing in the Street will return this year with Rutland's Cast Off 8's Square Dance Club. Spectators will welcome two Orwell Devil's Bowl drivers will be in the parade: Jakabee and Ron Alger.

A returning crowd favorite will be Dan Brett of Whiting and the Hearthunder Art Collective. This group uses art and creativity to show support for environmental and social justice causes in an effort to inspire positive change.

Let's not forget those awesome tractors that come out every year.

In the spirit of fun for the entire family, 802 Ghostbusters are expected to return to the parade this year. Also returning is the 1st Vermont Calvary on horses!



**ORWELL PARADE MARSHAL  
KATE HUNTER**

To register for a spot in the parade, head online to [www.facebook.com/orwellmemorialday](http://www.facebook.com/orwellmemorialday) to get the latest contact information.

The parade will take the same route as in years past: beginning on North Orwell Road and running east to Main Street, before heading onto Church Street, circling Roberts Avenue, and then bending back to march west on Main Street. The parade will conclude on the town green, where many of the bands will perform for the crowd.

Lineup begins at 12 noon on North Orwell Road just north of the village green. All vehicles must obey posted traffic rules, no burnouts are allowed.

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# What families can do to honor fallen service members

The freedoms people living in the United States are afforded would not have been possible to provide if not for the brave efforts and undying commitment of the many individuals who have served in the nation's armed forces. American military personnel have played vital roles in securing freedoms for their fellow citizens as well as individuals overseas.

Each year on the final Monday in May, the United States commemorates military personnel who lost their lives while serving in the armed forces. Those individuals made the ultimate sacrifice, and Memorial Day is a way to honor them and thank their families for their selfless acts. This Memorial Day, families can embrace various measures to honor fallen veterans.

- Visit a local veterans cemetery. The United Service Organization (USO) notes that most states have national veterans cemeteries. Though some veterans cemeteries are open only to family members of service personnel, others are open to the general public. Visiting a veterans cemetery is a great way to honor fallen military members and ensure the memory of their service and sacrifice is not forgotten on Memorial Day.

- Celebrate veterans over Memorial Day weekend. Memorial Day weekend is now synonymous with getaways and backyard barbecues. By taking time out during the weekend to honor fallen veterans, families can ensure the meaning behind the holiday is not lost in the midst of celebrations with family and friends. Take time out during



a family barbecue to discuss a family member who served or, if traveling, make an effort to visit a veterans memorial along your travel route.

- Help raise funds for veterans organizations. Fun runs or community Memorial Day walks may benefit local veterans organizations that help service members in need. Many service members

may need help dealing with the deaths of friends or family members who died while serving in the armed forces, and veterans organizations may provide such help or direct funds to groups that do. That makes participation in events that benefit veterans organizations a great way to honor current military personnel and those who have served in the past, including those who

died in service of their country.

- Teach youngsters about the role of the armed forces. There's a lot competing for the attention of today's young people, and that can make it easy to overlook the very freedoms that make the United States such a unique country throughout world history. Parents and guardians can emphasize the

(See *Veterans*, Page 15)

**Join us this Memorial Day as we remember and honor our heroes.**

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## Interesting facts

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American Civil War.

• Among the more notable postwar commemorations was one organized by former slaves in Charleston, S.C. That commemoration occurred less than a month after the Confederate forces surrendered in 1865. Despite that, History.com notes that in 1966 the federal government declared Waterloo, N.Y., the birthplace of Memorial Day.

• Postwar commemorations also were organized by northern veterans of the Civil War. General John A. Logan, who led an organization of Union veterans, called for a nationwide day of remembrance in May 1868. General Logan referred to the holiday as Declaration Day and chose May 30 because it was not the anniversary of any specific battle and therefore unlikely to be viewed by some as controversial.

• Early commemorations of Decoration Day, which gradually came to be known as Memorial Day, initially honored only those soldiers who died during

the American Civil War. However, that changed over time as American servicemen fought in various wars, including both World Wars, the Vietnam War, the Korean War, and other conflicts.

• The red poppy has become a symbol of Memorial Day. That red poppy can be traced to a poem by Canadian John McCrae, who served as a lieutenant colonel in World War I. "In Flanders Field" notes the red poppies that grew in fields where countless soldiers had been buried in modern-day Belgium. The poem was published in 1915, three years before the war ended. Sadly, McCrae himself was a casualty of the war, succumbing to pneumonia in France in 1918 while still in the service.

Memorial Day honors service personnel who lost their lives while serving in the U.S. military. The holiday's inspiration and lengthy history merits consideration as the nation prepares to commemorate countless soldiers' sacrifices once more.

— Metro Creative

## Veterans

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role the armed forces play in procuring and protecting freedoms in the United States and emphasize the significance of the sacrifices of those who gave their lives to ensure a higher quality of life for all U.S. residents.

Memorial Day commemorates military personnel who died while serving in the armed forces. There is much families can do to ensure those sacrifices are never forgotten or taken for granted.

— Metro Creative



### Summer kickoff

LINCOLN SIBLINGS GORDON Eastwood Smith, 6, and Fern Matthew Smith, 8, wave flags and cheer the 2023 Memorial Day parade on the porch of a Main Street business in Vergennes. Hopefully they get as good a vantage point at this year's parade.

Independent photo/Steve James



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