

IMAGES

...THEN AND NOW

From the Indian Hill Historical Society



**Buckingham Lodge
1861**

The Story of Indian Hill's Veterans Memorial



In 2009 Lincoln Pavey, a World War II veteran, approached Indian Hill Village Council with a proposal. He suggested a local veterans' memorial, as so many neighboring communities had one. Council agreed to study this possibility, referring it to the Grounds Committee, followed by the creation of the Veterans Memorial Study Committee, which investigated what type of memorial, where to locate it, and its cost.

That group began meeting in 2010. Members were Lincoln Pavey, two other "Greatest Generation" veterans Art Leonard and Charles Stix, Council members Susan Holzapfel and Lindsay McLean (daughters of veterans), veterans Jim Gibbs and James Allen, John Bentley, David O'Maley, veterans City Manager Mike Burns and Ranger Chief Chuck Schlie, and also Beth Wood. The location of a memorial was discussed, and a central location with ample parking was preferable. Committee members visited Stephan Field, Drake Road Park, and the Bird Sanctuary as potential sites, and decided the parcel of land at the northeast corner of Drake and Shawnee Run Roads near the Bird Sanctuary was the most appropriate place.

Next the design of the memorial had to be established. Resident John Bentley, renowned landscape architect and longtime consultant on Village projects created a plan for an artistic work featuring the various branches of service. There were modifications to his model before final approval was given. The curved monument consisted of three polished granite stones about 8 feet high facing west. A laser-etched eagle was atop the stones and six 18- inch bronze medallions recognized the six branches of service: Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard, and Merchant Marines. Inscribed at the base was "Dedicated to all the Veterans who served in the United States Armed Forces with Honor, Loyalty and Devotion." A semicircular terrace made of stone pavers provided an apron beside the structure and a larger grass terrace surrounded the perimeter. Pavers could be inscribed in honor of individuals. A walkway of pavers from the road was also added. Many pavers were eventually ordered. The Memorial was handicap accessible, could accommodate guests at ceremonies, and yet could be a place for quiet reflection. An illuminated American flag was also at the site.

By late 2020 and early 2011, the focus turned to marketing and fundraising. Resident David O'Maley, founder of the Tri-State Warbird Museum, consulted with the group and advised a quiet private effort prior to a public solicitation of donors. His insight was most valuable. The committee believed that enlisting a well-known honorary chairman was appropriate. Mr. Robert McDonald, Chairman of the Board and CEO of Proctor and Gamble, a West Point graduate, and former Ranger in the 82nd Airborne Division agreed to accept this role. A timetable for construction and an attractive brochure for marketing/ fundraising were developed.

The fundraising phase of the project began with the goal of opening the memorial on July 4, 2011. The monetary target was \$120, 000. Mr. O'Maley was the first generous private contributor. By January 2011, over \$64,000 had been raised. In February, the total was \$90,000 and by April, \$130,00 had been collected. Individual pavers were purchased for \$500 by people to honor veterans. These fundraising efforts were successful.

After bids were considered and contracts signed, a groundbreaking ceremony was held in May 2011. The construction project was completed in June while preparations were underway for the Dedication Ceremony on July 4, 2011, at 12 noon. It was a glorious summer day, and the 30-minute program was memorable. A Marine Honor Guard presented the flag, parachuters jumped, and the National Anthem was played. A spectacular flyover by planes from the Tri-State Warbird Museum preceded the invocation and remarks by Bob McDonald. Then there was a 21-gun salute, followed by Taps, and music honoring 4 branches of military service. After the benediction, guests mingled or joined the 4th of July festivities at Stephan Field.

Since that dedication, there has been a Veterans Day Commemoration every year. It is an opportunity to pay tribute to those who served. Landscaping has been added to the site, and in 2015, three granite benches were installed honoring Art Leonard, Lincoln Pavey and Charles Stix – a fitting gesture for their hard work on the memorial. This year on November 11th, the twelfth observance will occur. Join your neighbors to honor American veterans.