



Veterans Memorial Committee 2017

About the Veterans Memorial Committee

The Veterans Memorial Committee was formed in 1969 to create a fitting Memorial to the Cohasset men that were being killed in Vietnam; five of them in 1969 at six week intervals.

It was determined that the land known as Veterans Park could be developed beyond the small plaque that had been placed there remembering Cohasset Veterans.

Our group presented a plan to the 1969 Annual Town Meeting with a request for \$6,600 to build the center wall and terrace which would have four bronze plaques with the names of the Cohasset men that had sacrificed their lives in WWI, WWII, Korean and Vietnam Wars. It was funded, built, and dedicated on Memorial Day 1970, as the Vietnam War raged on.

Over the next few years, it was decided that since the WWII memorial had fallen down in the Village it should be replaced with a stone monument at the Park. Along with a group of WWII Veterans, we worked to raise the money needed and the expansion was under way. Austin Ahern, a WWII Veteran and retired jeweler, did the stone work with the help of other WWII Vets. No town funds were used for this project.

As a follow on in the late 1980's our Committee expanded the memorial to include the Civil War, Mexican Expedition, and WWI, which was constructed through private donations and the support of the Selectmen's office.

In the early 1990's our Committee looked at spaces around town that could be dedicated as memorials for the heroes of the Korean and Vietnam conflicts, just as the WWI and WWII fallen soldiers had to remember them, (voted at Town meetings after WWI and II). The Town Meeting in 1995 voted to name and dedicate nine locations in memory to these heroes. The committee set about to raise funding and place memorial signs at the locations, and on Veterans Day 1996 we conducted a rolling parade and series of dedications. As the years have passed, the Veterans Memorial Committee has spent money, as we have been able to raise it, to upgrade these memorials. Today, Reardon Square is the next up for major upgrade, followed by Peter Albiani Square, (which is on private property, licensed to the Town for the Memorial), and David Strout Square, to be improved.

We are vigilant about the upkeep the Memorials for all 22 men that gave their lives during the 20th century. We do not allow commercial signs or storage of materials on the memorials and we pay for the maintenance of irrigation systems on Todd and Cogill Square. A few years ago, the memorial for Craig Simeone was damaged, and we were told Lantern Lane was a Private Way and no public money could be spent to fix the memorial, **therefore**, our committee paid for the repair. Over the years we have replaced broken signs and with the generous donations of Cohasset Collision we refurbish the signs as needed. Veterans Park is meticulously maintained by Kelly Landscape, through the generosity of the Roy Family, no taxpayer funds are spent on the park maintenance.

During the expansion of the Woodside Cemetery in 2001, we worked with the Cemetery Committee to design and build the Gold Star Mothers Memorial. This memorial was dedicated on Veterans Day 2001 and pays tribute to the 22 Cohasset mothers that truly know the high price of freedom. Flags fly over the Memorial on the anniversary of the loss of each of our serviceman.

By far our biggest and most dramatic project was the redesign of Veterans Park and the construction of the memorial to the Veterans of the Korean War, Vietnam War, Gulf War and War on Terror. The \$250,000 project, built with donated funds and the help of the Community Preservation Committee (\$125,000), was

dedicated on Veterans Day 2006. Every year since, the Committee has added the names of the new Cohasset servicemen and women, who have volunteered to serve our country.

As the country began to realize many veterans were passing away as a direct result of their service related injuries or exposure to hazardous chemicals, we again moved to remember the Cohasset servicemen and women. During the 2012 Memorial Day ceremony, we dedicated a bronze plaque on the memorial wall, remembering them and their service. As is our practice, the needed money was donated and no town funds were used.

Over the entire 48 year history of our committee, we have always had a member who is from a Gold Star family, and we keep in touch with all the Gold Star families. In fact, recently we received photographs from the Strout family (a Korean War casualty) of David during his years in military school.

The committee is in the planning stages for a fitting memorial at Veterans Park that pays tribute to a Cohasset soldier of the Civil War, Levi Gaylord, who was the recipient of the Medal of Honor for his actions. Currently, his grave stone at Central Cemetery is the only indication of his award.

On Veteran's Day 2017 the Committee unveiled a mural to all Cohasset Servicemen who have died since the Revolution, thirty-eight in all. The mural is at the Senior Center near the Veterans Service office and a POW/MIA Chair.

We are proposing a memorial for the names of the nearly 225 Cohasset men that served in the Revolutionary War, and the 125 that served during the War of 1812. Which we seek your approval for at this time.

Our passion and dedication to the Cohasset Veterans drives us to carry on our important work. We invite you to visit our web site, www.Cohassetveteransmemorial.com to learn more about the memorials and our Cohasset veterans.

Thank you for your support of our work.