

Memorial Day celebration

The last few days I've been sitting here thinking about Memorial Day coming up and it brings back memories of my younger years at Knox Memorial Central School. The last day of school before Memorial Day the school always had a big celebration. Sometimes the VFW from Canton would lead the parade if they were available the school band would March from the school parking lot Out to the street and up the street to the cemetery that was located next to the school behind the band The Boy Scouts and the Girl Scouts dressed in their uniforms would March behind them and all the classes from kindergarten through 12th grade would march out to the cemetery. the principal MR William Wiese would give a welcome address followed by one of the ministers in town that would give a prayer. After the prayer the principal would motion to the kindergarten teachers the teachers would take their students who are all carrying Flags up into the cemetery and replace all the old flags on the veterans Graves with brand new ones. While the kindergarten students were in the cemetery some of the older students in the upper grades That had won an essay contest that was put on by the old Arsenal Association would read the essays that they had Wrote about the history of the United States. After they were finished one of the older students, usually a senior, would step up to the microphone and he would read The Gettysburg Address .

the Gettysburg Address given by Abraham Lincoln November 19th 1863 went something like this.

Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

now we are engaged in a great civil war testing whether that Nation or any Nation so conceived and so dedicated can long endure. we are met on a great battlefield of that war we have come to dedicate a portion of that field as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that that Nation might live. it is altogether fitting and proper that we shall do this.

But, in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate_ we cannot consecrate we cannot hallow _this ground. The brave men, living and dead ,who struggled here ,have consecrated it ,far above our poor power to add or detract. the world will little note, nor long remember what we say here ,but it can never forget what they did here. it is for the living ,rather to be dedicated here to the Unfinished work which they who here fought here have thus far so nobly advanced .It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us_ that from these honored dead we take increased Devotion to the cause for which they gave their last full measure of devotion_ and that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain_ that this nation under God ,shall have a new birth of freedom_ and that the government of the People, by the people, for the people ,shall not perish from the Earth .

After he was finished a bugler from the band would play Taps when he was through playing taps. Deep from the backside of the cemetery you would hear the echo of the taps being played honoring the dead. when the Memorial Day ceremony was over .The minister would give a final prayer then the band would lead everybody back to the school where they would board their buses and go home for the memorial weekend.

Lot of you might not remember or maybe even do not know that the large monument in front of the cemetery was dedicated in honor of all the men that the town of Russell loss during the Civil War.

During the Civil War the town of Russell had 423 military personnel in the Civil War of that amount 31 of the soldiers were commissioned officers. We had one Colonel, one Lieutenant Colonel, one major, 8 Captain's , 8 first lieutenant, and 12 second lieutenants.

The unfortunate part of this war was that the town of Russell had seventy one of our citizens Paid the Ultimate price and gave their lives and are sleeping in soldiers Grave.

If you go to the town of Russell's website look under Memorial Hall Museumyou can read the full story under the Rebellion Record of the town of Russell.

You can go down that list to soldiers lost in all wars to find out the price of freedom has cost the Town of Russell.

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