

A Historic Event is Upon Us this Memorial Day

In just a few short days, we will be gathering for one of the more historical events for our town in recent history. The Clarence Veterans Memorial will be dedicated, following the Memorial Day parade and ceremony from American Legion Post 838.

The Clarence Rotary Foundation has been working tirelessly on this project since 2017, and it seems to have been well worth the wait.

Over 450 Veterans are placed on Honor Walls that surround our Memorial Fountain. The variety and history of these Veterans on the Honor Wall are incredible. Many of which will be present at dedication ceremony. The Memorial Fountain has those that made the ultimate sacrifice for our Country who were from Clarence when they were Killed in Action. Listed are the first lost in the War of 1812 to the Afghanistan War against the Taliban.

It was recently announced that the United States Air Force Band – West will be joining us for our special celebration. They will be providing music throughout the ceremony, and afterwards as well. This was the same military band that performed at the funeral of President George Bush Senior. We will also have the incredible honor of having Dr. Rose Valby, a Clarence native and high school graduate, perform for the first time in her hometown while in uniform.

We are asking Veterans to RSVP for the event, so we can give you a commemorative poppy and proper acknowledgement for your service.

This is an outdoor event, rain or shine. We are expecting a significantly sized crowd, but please know we have plenty of space to socially distance. Since this is an outdoor event, we will not be enforcing any masks, and simply ask the attendees to use your own discretion and precautions.

Memorial Day is to honor our fallen. This project will permanently honor our fallen, while also paying respect to all that have served. As I've previously said, with each passing day we lose another Veteran that may miss the opportunity to see this tribute. Eventually the memorial is all we may have to remember their service to our Country.

Just last week we lost another great resident who was a WWII Veteran. Mr. John Mosher. He was an astonishing member of our community, a great husband and father and a WWII Veteran who was an active member of the American Legion Post 838. I will miss our conversations we use have about life while he was riding with me during our Town's Memorial and Labor Day parades.

Within the past month, I am aware of at least three other Veterans that are on our Honor Walls that have passed away.

At the same time, it has already been such a pleasure meeting Veterans and residents that have stopped by to see the progress of the memorial. Their reaction, their tears, their thanks, their stories, that have been shared has made it all worth the effort to Honor our Veterans. One said the Memorial had the ambiance of being in Washington DC at a Veterans monument. You have to see it to believe it.

I would again like to thank and acknowledge the Clarence Rotary Club, an organization that I have proudly been a member of for 35 years. I would like to also thank for their incredible help bring this memorial to completion Tim Lavocat, our Town Engineer and our Parks Department. I look forward to seeing many of you on Memorial Day! More information can be found at ClarenceVeteransMemorial.org