

The Forgotten War

Not even five years after the United States had dropped the Atomic Bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki to end WWII, were American Troops once again called upon to stop aggression on foreign soil without starting WWIII.

This meant limiting the geographic scope and the objectives of the conflict. This was the 1st war fought under the auspices of the United Nations; successfully operating a UN command with contributions from 19 countries was a significant achievement.

On a peninsula extending south from main land China, is Korea. On June 25th, 1950, North Korea invaded South Korea with 135,000 men, thus initiating The Korean War. In the three years that the conflict lasted, The Chinese and North Korean troops fought bitter battles against the South Koreans And U.N. Forces over what was some of the worst terrain and under even worse weather conditions ever encountered.

There was a strip of land that was just two and a half miles wide. This strip of land was known as the 38 parallel, which separated North and South Korea. It was also referred to as the DMZ (Demilitarized Zone) or No Man's Land. On July 27th, 1953 The U.S., North Korea and China sign an Armistice which ends the war, but fails to bring permanent peace.

Casualties were extremely high for such a short campaign. Over two million Chinese and North Korean troops were killed. American losses were also great.

37,000 lost their lives, in which 886 of them were from Kentucky and 24 of those were from our own Kenton County. 100,000 were wounded. 7,000 became prisoners of war. And as of today more than 8,100 remain missing in action and unaccounted for.

Thus brings us to present day Latonia. With the combined efforts of V.F.W. Post 6095, American Legion Post 203 and The Ritte's East Neighborhood Group, the dream of a Memorial honoring the men and women who served our country during the Korean War, is now becoming a reality. The groundbreaking ceremony took place on Friday August 24th, 2001. Four Veterans from our area who fought in the war were the first ones to shovel the dirt.

Bob Hughes, QA Tech. From Decoursey Rail and Track, Created the Logo for the memorial. Jeff Meyers, Bob's brother-in-law, did the computer generated finished logo that will be cast in bronze and placed on the wall at the memorial where the names of the 24 local veterans who lost there lives during the war will be placed. Bob's father, Robert f. Hughes was a Korean War veteran who passed away in 1995. He received a military burial. The memorial committee has given Bob the honor of having his father's flag being the 1st one flown at the Memorial. It will fly for the first thirty days, then be returned to Bob.

With this Memorial, we want to honor all of the veterans who fought for our country in this " The Forgotten War."