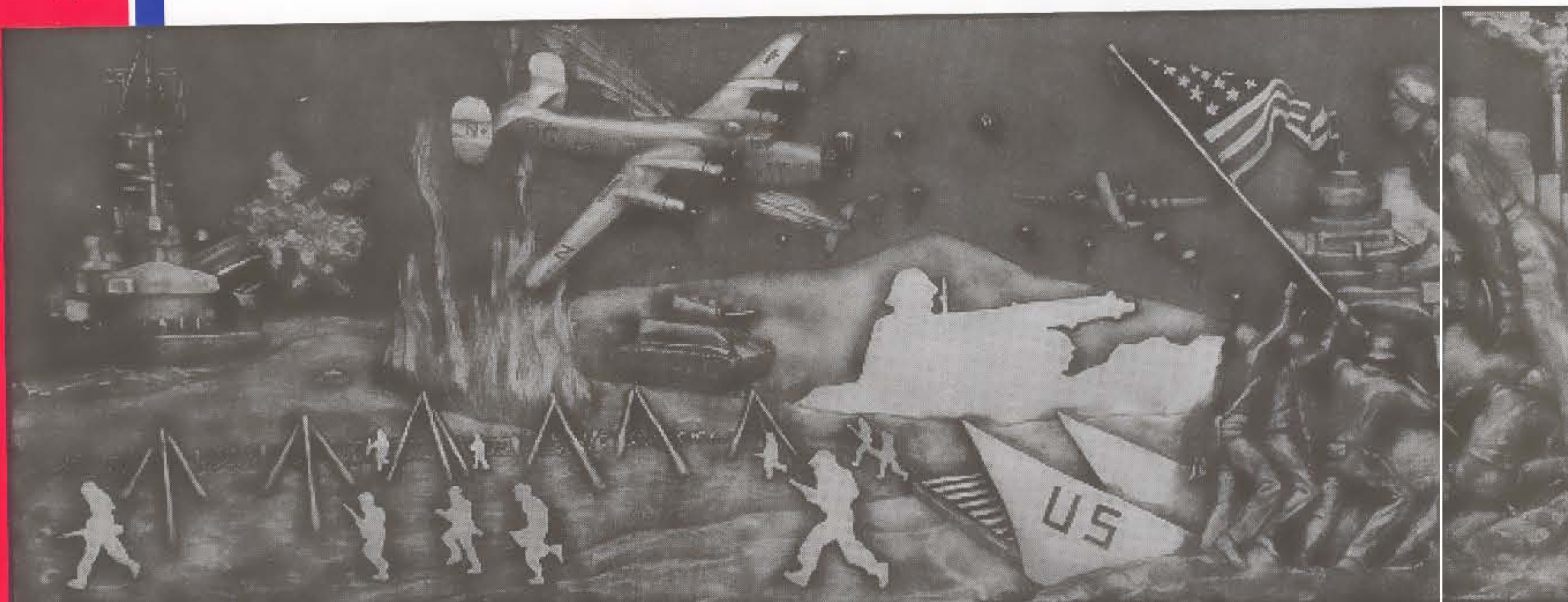


Interpretation of the World War II 50th Anniversary Memorial



The World War II 50th Anniversary Memorial portrays how World War II engulfed Europe, Asia, North Africa and the seas of both the Atlantic and Pacific, in the Allies' confrontation against Axis tyranny. The plaque was commissioned by Costas Rombocos, President of the Shrine of Remembrance. The renowned artist, John Hancovsky of Matthews International Corporation's Bronze Division, was the designer and sculptor.

The raised relief bronze plaque with gold, red, white and blue highlights depicts the poignant warfare and personal involvement that affected the 16 million Americans who put on the military uniform. It also portrays the millions on the home front who contributed to the war effort that consumed the entire nation, serving both at home and overseas.

The commemorative memorial illustrates the June 6th, 1944 American forces crossing of the English Channel and landing on the beaches of Normandy which was the turning point of the war in Europe. The mighty USS Missouri battleship is firing its 16-inch guns in one of the many naval battles in the South Pacific. A B-24 "Liberator" Bomber, one of the thousands that bombed Axis enemy targets in Europe, is banking right over a target at Ploesti, Romania, while behind it a German ME-109 fighter plane is going down in flames. An M-4 Sherman tank is shown advancing across the deserts of North Africa, while the conflict in the Italian Alps is depicted by the mountains. A machine gun nest of American soldiers, on the Solomon Islands in the Pacific, and a C-47 flying the Burma Hump, in the Burma-China-Indian Theater with Americans parachuting into the interior of China is also shown.

The countless millions of American mothers, wives and sweethearts that went to work in war factories across the home front is portrayed by "Polly the Riveter".

The triumphant scene of U.S. Marines raising the American flag on the Iwojima hilltop graces the memorial plaque indicating that freedom had been restored by the heroism and toil of America's young sons and daughters.

The memorial quotes Lt. General Claude M. Kicklighter who retired from the U.S. Army in 1991 after serving as Commanding General of the U.S. Army Pacific. He is the chairman of the World War II Anniversary Committee on behalf of the Department of Defense. He personally gave his permission to Costas Rombocos and the Shrine of Remembrance Veterans Honor Court to cast the memorial in everlasting bronze to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of World War II.



IN HONOR OF
ALL WORLD WAR II VETERANS

"We honor and remember the brave young men and women who gave all of their tomorrows to purchase peace with freedom. To them we pledge 'never again' A grateful nation remembers that this strong and free America is the result of their courage and their sacrifice."

—Lt. Gen. Claude M. Kicklighter

WORLD WAR II MEMORIAL DEDICATED ON D-DAY ANNIVERSARY

The 50th anniversary of D-Day and of World War II was commemorated in a moving ceremony at the Veterans Honor Court of the Shrine of Remembrance in Colorado Springs. The original of a new World War II memorial plaque specially designed by Matthews International Corporation of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania was unveiled with military pageantry seldom seen outside of the nation's capital.

The Shrine of Remembrance and its Veterans Honor Court facility was designated as an official WWII Commemorative Community by Secretary of Defense William J. Perry. The facility has become widely recognized as a symbol of dignified remembrance of military personnel and veterans in Colorado.

At this D-Day commemoration, the U. S. Army from Fort Carson brought in 400 uniformed troops of their 4th Infantry Division. These soldiers represented the same Army division that landed on the beaches of Normandy 50 years ago. The present commanding general of that division, Major General Thomas A. Schwartz, unveiled the WWII memorial near the climactic conclusion of an hour long commemorative ceremony. Also unveiling the plaque was a WWII recipient of the Congressional Medal of Honor, retired Master Sergeant William Crawford of Palmer Lake, Colorado, who won the country's highest military decoration for combat gallantry in Italy. He then became a prisoner of war for the remainder of the conflict.

The climactic unveiling of the WWII commemorative bronze followed General Schwartz's speech titled "A Grateful Nation Remembers." The memorial was commissioned by Costas Rombocos, president and owner of the Shrine of Remembrance. Consulting on the design and historical significance of the plaque and the overall planning of the Memorial Day program was Colonel (Retired) James H. Rix who is Director of Military and Veterans Affairs at the Shrine of Remembrance.

The WWII bronze memorial plaque was designed to portray how that conflict engulfed Europe, Asia, North Africa, and the seas of both the Atlantic and Pacific in the Allies confrontation against Axis tyranny. The renowned bronze artist John Hancovsky of Matthews' Bronze Division was the designer and sculptor.

The bronze pictorial is presented with deep sculptured relief and patriotic color highlights. The memorial plaque quotes Lt. General Claude M. Kicklighter who is chairman of the WWII Anniversary Committee. He gave his permission to use his quote which reads:

"We honor and remember the brave men and women who so very young gave all their tomorrows to purchase peace with freedom. To them we pledge 'never again'. A grateful nation remembers that this strong and free America is the result of their courage and their sacrifice."

During the commemoration ceremony, active duty military and veterans of all branches of the armed services were represented in the program. Retired Rear Admiral Clinton Taylor was the Master of Ceremonies. He is currently the president of the largest chapter of The Retired Officers Association, which is in Colorado.

Admiral Taylor's introductory speech remembered D-Day as a historic and heroic overview of WWII. He concluded by naming ten individuals in the audience and telling of their specific involvement in the war in Europe, Africa, the Pacific, and the China-India theaters.

Posting of the flags of the U. S. Armed Forces was by members of The Retired Enlisted Association. At the same time the U. S. Army Band played the anthem of each military service. A large 50' x 30' American flag was raised on the 125' "Old Glory" flag pole that is the focal point of the Veterans Honor Court. Twenty members of District Five of the Veterans of Foreign Wars raised this breathtaking flag.

Another poignant part of the commemoration was when Brigadier General David Winn and two other WWII prisoners of war laid a special wreath remembering those who had been held captive. Winn is Chairman of the Board of Regents of the University of Colorado.

Over 1,200 people attended the ceremony on a cloudless Memorial Day in Colorado Springs. The media provided extensive coverage. The local Gazette Telegraph featured the ceremony with a front-page feature story and color photos.

The statewide significance of the commemoration at the Veterans Honor Court is indicated by the joint resolutions passed by the Colorado Legislature and County Commissioners. During the ceremony, a resolution was read by State Senator MaryAnne Tebedo. An excerpt from the Senate Resolution reads:

WHEREAS, This memorial will both honor the veterans of World War II and remind the citizens of Colorado of the heroism and dedication of thousands of Coloradans who put on the military uniform and endured the torment and danger of wars on foreign shores, in lands far from the fruited plains and the purple mountain majesties of Colorado, in order to preserve freedom.

Yet another poignant part of the ceremony was the dedication of a plaque titled "Never Saw Another Butterfly" in remembrance of Holocaust victims. Mrs. Sarah Hauptman, together with Costas Rombocos, unveiled the new memorial. Mrs. Hauptman and her late husband were held captive in Auschwitz and Dachau. She is one of the few Holocaust survivors in Colorado.

Most people who lived through WWII remember the romantic song, "The White Cliffs of Dover," which was sung by Michael Sorg accompanied by the Army band. Military honors were rendered by the U. S. Air Force Honor Guard. Then, Army 75mm cannons echoed across the community in a 21-gun salute. Two teams of buglers played Taps in echo.

On the hillside behind the Veterans Honor Court, a formation of Army troops carried flags that had flown over the nation since 1776. Nearby on display was an Apache attack helicopter, a huge M109 Howitzer artillery cannon that was used in Operation Desert Storm, a vintage WWII jeep, and an old Army staff car.

Remembrance gifts were given to all WWII veterans. This included a new "Ruptured Duck" lapel pin similar to the pin these veterans were given at their discharge following the war. Another memento was a color reproduction of the poster commissioned by Peter Coors of Coors Brewery. These limited edition posters were also being presented to President Clinton, Queen Elizabeth, and other heads of state at the ceremonies on Normandy Beach being held the same week.

The colorful ceremony on Memorial Day was concluded with a fly over of four vintage WWII fighter aircraft. The appearance of the old aircraft was an unannounced surprise ending the celebration.

The evening TV newscasts stated that the commemoration at the Shrine of Remembrance Veterans Honor Court was the most significant in the western U. S. to honor the veterans of WWII and to remind all citizens of the high cost of preserving freedom.

From Washington, Lt. General Kicklighter recently informed Costas Rombocos that the WWII bronze memorial plaque unveiled at the Veterans Honor Court in Colorado Springs will also be mounted at either Arlington National Cemetery or displayed by the American Battlefields Commission in Europe. The Washington WWII committee is looking for the most appropriate site to install this important monument.

Contact: Colonel (Ret) James H. Rix or Costas Rombocos Office: (719) 634-1598
Shrine of Remembrance, 1730 E. Fountain Blvd.
Colorado Springs, CO 80910