

**Minutes of February 10, 2015
Monuments and Ceremonies Commission**

Commissioners present: Phil Kraft, Terry Gaffney, Charles Scribner, Ian Konecke, Dave Polett, Dawn Crouch, Ken Reiss, Roland Holub, George Walsh, Sueann Schorr, Karen Polett, and Marian Castell.

Meeting was called to order by Chairman, Phil Kraft at 3:30 PM. Minutes of the January 13, 2015 were accepted as read on a motion by Dave, second Rollie. Karen thanked Dawn for taking the January minutes.

Discussion followed about Wreaths Across America 2015 and a committee composed of Terry, Phil, Dave, Rollie, Becky, Chick and Karen will work together on this. Terry would like to begin collections and publicity earlier this year. It was suggested that a presentation about the wreaths be given to the Selectmen and to the RTM so they are aware of what we do. It was noted that the Veterans' Cemetery belongs to the State of CT, and that when WAA fundraising goes through a non-profit like the VFW, we can get the WAA option of 3 for 2 wreaths. WAA Committee can determine direction for wreath ceremony scheduled for December 12, 2015.

A Committee composed of Ian, Marian, Ken, Phil, and Sue will meet and discuss the next step to be taken in preserving the Darien Town Hall murals. Our Commission feels that these WPA murals are of historical significance and should have the same status as town monuments. Photos and a descriptive inventory including signatures on the murals would be the first step. Murals at Holmes School and the Police Station should also be included. Once all murals are inventoried, identified and photographed, grants and sources of funding to preserve and conserve them can be explored. This catalogue of the murals can be added to the existing monument inventory. Small local cemeteries were also mentioned, but are not under the auspices of our Commission. Several cemeteries are on private property and have existing Cemetery Associations in place to care for them. Some cemeteries are derelict.

Marian and Phil updated the Commission on the status of the VFW building, the former chapel of the Fitch Home for Soldiers. Once the building is declared as a Historic Place in CT, Marian said that matching funds from the CT Trust can be applied for. This would require a condition assessment by an architect.

Former Memorial Day Parades were suggested as the Darien Town Hall display case exhibit for May. George will check and collect photos he took of past Parades. Veterans' Day could be the display for November, and WAA would be appropriate for December. Terry, Ian and Ken volunteered to work on this.

Discussion followed about a Speaker for Memorial Day, May 25, 2015. Names of possible speakers should be given to Phil by February 24th so that an informed decision can be made at the March M&C meeting. Suggestions included Chris Pintauro; Brian O'Malley; Tony Pavia and Ian Burjoyne. Gene Coyle will serve as the Grand Marshall this year and his selection is under the control of the Memorial Day Committee. The Memorial Day speaker is the responsibility of the M&C Commission. Terry reported that the Memorial Day Essays by the middle school and high school students are planned again for this year.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:45 PM on a motion by Terry, second George. The next M&C Commission meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 10, 2015 at 3:30 PM in Room 206.

Submitted by,
Karen Kreitzberger Polett, Secretary