

The Korean War Memorial

Since my column on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial was well received, I decided to research other memorials in Washington, D.C. Located on the other side of the reflecting pond from the Vietnam Memorial and near the Lincoln Memorial is the Korean Memorial. I've visited it several times while in D.C. and found it to be very moving but in a different way from the Vietnam Memorial. The Korean Memorial was dedicated on 27 July 1995 to the 5.8 million Americans who served in the US military during the three year Korean Conflict. At the Memorial are 19 stainless steel statues sculpted by Frank Gaylord of Vermont. They are about 7 feet tall and represent an ethnic cross section of the US. There are 12 Caucasian, 3 Afro-American, 2 Hispanic 1 Asian-American and 1 Native American. Of the statues, 14 represent the Army, 3 Marine Corps, 1 Navy and 1 Air Force. They appear to be walking through the rice paddies of Korea. One year when I went to the Memorials, there was snow on the ground and the fields looked very realistic.

Next to the field of statues is an awesome mural wall, designed by Louis Nelson of New York. The wall is 164 feet long with 41 panels with 2,400 photographs of the Korean War. The reflective quality of the black granite creates the image of 38 statues, symbolic of the 38 parallel and the 38 months of the war. The reflections of the statues in the rice paddy combined with the photographs and etchings make it an eerie sight.

Also located at the sign is a Pool of Remembrance of 128 feet in diameter. On a wall that extends into the pool are written in 10 inch letters the reminder 'Freedom is not free'. As with the Vietnam Wall, there is a kiosk with the Honor Roll of all military personnel who lost their lives during the Korean War.

As a fitting tribute, the Honor Flight this summer will have a large number of Korean War Veterans along with a few WWII Veterans and some Veterans diagnosed as terminally ill. Fund raisers for the Honor Flights continue at various locations and contributions are gratefully accepted.

Sweetie, Bev and I attended the American Legion membership dinner on Sunday. The Legion is 98 years old and will soon celebrate its 100th birthday. Events are being planned in Moorhead to help with that celebration.