

What is Armistice Day?

Prior to its designation by Congress in 1954 as Veterans Day, November 11 was known as Armistice Day. World War I – known at the time as “The Great War” – officially ended when the Treaty of Versailles was signed on June 28, 1919. However, fighting ceased seven months earlier when an armistice or temporary cessation of hostilities, between the Allied nations and Germany went into effect on the eleventh day of the eleventh month. For that reason, November 11, 1918, is generally regarded as the end of “the war to end all wars.” In recognition of the significance of that date, in 1926 Congress resolved that “this date should be commemorated with thanksgiving and prayer and exercises to perpetuate peace through good will and mutual understanding between nations.”



Statement of Purpose

We, having dutifully served our nation, do hereby affirm our greater responsibility to serve the cause of world peace. To this end we will work, with others

- To increase public awareness of the costs of war;
- To restrain our government from intervening, overtly and covertly, in the internal affairs of other nations;
- To end the arms race and to reduce and eventually eliminate nuclear weapons;
- To seek justice for veterans and victims of war;
- To abolish war as an instrument of national policy.

To achieve these goals, members of Veterans For Peace pledge to use non-violent means and to maintain an organization that is both democratic and open with the understanding that all members are trusted to act in the best interests of the group for the larger purpose of world peace.

Smedley D. Butler Brigade (Ch. 9)

P.O. Box 320683

Boston, MA 02132

www.smedleyvfp.org

vfpsmedley@gmail.com

www.facebook.com/smedleyvfp/

Armistice (Veterans) Day For Peace

November 11, 2017

2:30 PM – 3:30 PM

Samual Adams Park

Boston Massachusetts



“War is a racket.
A few profit. The Many pay.”

Maj. Gen. Smedley D. Butler, USMC

In Flanders Fields

John McCrae

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.

It is believed that the death of his friend and former student, Lieutenant Alexis Helmer, was the inspiration for the poem written by Major John McCrae, a surgeon attached to 1st Brigade, Canadian Field Artillery. Helmer was a popular young officer in the 1st Brigade who, on the morning of Sunday, May 2, 1915, left his dugout and was killed instantly by a direct hit from an 8 inch German shell in the second week of fighting during the Second Battle of Ypres. Lieutenant Helmer was buried later that day. In the absence of a chaplain, Major McCrae conducted a simple service at the graveside, reciting from memory some passages from the Church of England's 'Order of Burial of the Dead.'

The next day, sitting on the back of an ambulance parked near the dressing station just a few hundred yards north of Ypres, McCrae vented his anguish by composing a poem. In the nearby cemetery, McCrae could see the wild poppies that sprang up in the ditches in that part of Europe, and he spent twenty minutes of precious time scribbling fifteen lines of verse in a notebook – what would become one of the most memorable war poems ever written.



Major John McCrae

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PROGRAM

<i>Leftist Marching Band/Voice Opposition</i>	<i>Bring Us Together Music</i>
<i>Dan Luker, Smedley Butler, VFP Coordinator</i>	<i>Welcome</i>
<i>Doug Stuart, Smedley Butler, VFP</i>	<i>Opening Words-What Is Armistice Day?</i>
<i>Pat Scanlon, Smedley Butler, VFP</i>	<i>David Spinney, Presente</i> <i>This program is dedicated to his memory</i>
<i>Paul Atwood – VFP, Marine Corps, peace activist, professor U/Mass-Boston</i>	<i>U.S. Foreign Policy</i> <i>“The Crisis On The Korean Peninsula”</i>
<i>Leftist Marching Band/Voice Opposition</i>	<i>Musical Interlude</i>
<i>Ray Ajemian, Smedley Butler, VFP</i>	<i>100th Anniversary Of World War I-Lessons</i>
<i>Bob Masters–Smedley Butler, VFP, Vietnam Veteran, Doctor-101st Airborne</i>	<i>Vietnam Experiences</i>
<i>David Rothhauser, Smedley Butler VFP</i>	<i>Jihadi Girl - poem read by Al Johnson</i>
<i>Webb Nichols, Smedley Butler, VFP, U.S. Army, Vietnam veteran</i>	<i>poetry selections</i>
<i>Juston Eivers, Smedley Butler, VFP Secretary</i>	<i>Closing Words</i>
<i>Leftist Marching Band/Voice Opposition</i>	<i>Musical Wrap-up</i>

Many thanks to the City of Boston for use of Sam Adams Park