

Saying Welcome Back:

Over fifty years ago thousands of men and women returned home from a tremendously controversial and lengthy conflict. The Vietnam War ended but many of those returning were not given the respect or ticker tape parades they deserved. Thanks to the Department of Defense, groups such as ours were afforded the opportunity to become Commemorative Partners of the United States of America Vietnam War Commemoration Program. Under the leadership of Miriam Lillback, Mariemont Chapter applied for and became authorized to provide certificates and lapel pins as a token of appreciation by a grateful nation for the faithful service of veterans during the Vietnam War Era. This year is the second year in the three year program and on November 19 we were again afforded an opportunity to say “thank you” to 18 veterans and their spouses.

The entire program was directed toward honoring those who served. Greeters Jeanne Devine and Rachel Fischer helped guide our guests to check in and to refreshments provided by Judy Sheakley, Liz Niehaus, Miriam Lillback, Linda Homer, Shelley Jensen and Jan Mauch before the meeting. This was a great opportunity for guests to meet each other over hot coffee on this our first really cold day of the fall.

The Nolan Carson Memorial Color Guard under Michael B. Gunn, PhD, Color Guard Commander and President of the Cincinnati Chapter SAR presented the colors. Miriam presented facts from the Commemoration Fact Sheet, a video entitled “A Tribute to Vietnam Veterans” was viewed and then each individual veteran was called forward to receive a certificate and pin from your Regent. Veterans were guided to their place in line by Judy Sheakley. Shelley Jensen read the fact sheet about the Vietnam Veteran Lapel Pin and she also read the statement honoring the wives of each veteran. The wives were called forward to receive a long stemmed red rose as they stood by their spouses.



Saying Welcome Back, continued

A wonderful connection was made between the video, the veterans and our extremely interesting program provided by David Savage on the History of the Vietnam Memorial in Washington DC. Many of these veterans had not seen the wall and all of the attendees found his presentation very informative. Debbie Patek served as our official photographer throughout the day and a group picture was taken following the ceremony and program. Maxine Mace graciously took the donations brought to the meeting for the VA and will see that they are delivered.

The following veterans representing the US Navy, US Air Force and US Army were honored: Richard L. Bowman, Jack Buchholz, Jay DeWitt, Kelly Farrish, Michael M. Fischer, Jim Garner, Thomas Geygan, Neal Hamlin, Samuel K. Hines, Phillip L. Hughes, Thomas R. Jones, James E. Kuertz, Michael L. Loudenslager, Ronald L. O’Banion, Terry L. Shetler, Lou Terhar, Kenneth Whitmire and William G. (Bill) Williamson.

(more on next page)

A personal thought from your Regent:

Your Regent is always so impressed with the humility of the veterans and the pride exhibited by the spouses. This committee is doing very special work and I hate to think that after another year it will end. I also have to admit that a part of me is a little sad that this was my last opportunity to have the immensely humbling experience of shaking each veteran's hand and offering our appreciation as we give them their much deserved certificates. The look in their eyes says it all. It makes me realize how much DAR can do that matters, even in little ways like saying thank you. We are looking forward to our next opportunity to honor more veterans.

Many members worked diligently to make this event a success. I hope I did not leave out anyone who took part in the organization and conduct of the meeting. Thank you to everyone who contributed names of veterans to be included in the day. Thank you to the many members who just jumped in to help set up, tear down and put away in addition to those involved in the program.

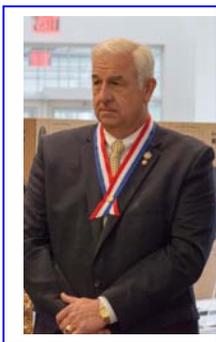
We were very happy to have HODARs Larry Lillback (manning the check in table for veterans) and Jon Mauch (operating all of the technological needs).



You never know when you will learn something important!

Meet Mr. Jim Garner. He is the gentleman who works for Armstrong Chapel and maintains all of this wonderful facility. He is the responsible person for the Armstrong Room in which we usually hold our meetings. But, as we were setting up for the program on Friday, Mr. Garner who had already set up all of the chairs, came in to see what else we needed. Miriam and Jan observed a military tattoo on his arm and learned that he was also a Vietnam Era Veteran.

We were so happy to meet him and to be able to invite him to join us on Saturday. Mr. Garner is a United States Air Force Veteran and, like so many other veterans, had to be persuaded that he deserved to be honored. He felt he had done nothing special and was concerned about those who did not come home. We have heard that many times as we work with this commemorative program. Again, it shows how we need to continue to thank those in uniform and those who are no longer in uniform. They DID do something special and they are our heroes.



Jim Garner

