



BROCKTON WAR MEMORIAL

WAR MEMORIAL RESTORATION PROJECT

Honoring the Past – Planning for the Future

Ceremonial Groundbreaking War Memorial Building October 11, 2007

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Mayor James Harrington, Colonel Robert Tripp and Dr. Robert Haglund welcomed a host of dignitaries and well-wishers to the recent Ceremonial Groundbreaking at the Brockton War Memorial Building, marking Phase 1 of the War Memorial Restoration Project.

The ceremony combined solemnity with celebration. The Brockton High School Junior ROTC Color Guard led the opening procession. When the colors were posted, Mayor Harrington led the Pledge of Allegiance. Anthony O'Brien led the singing of the National Anthem. Shannon Oriola sang God Bless America, which began as a beautifully rendered solo. As the assembled crowd joined in, the acoustically perfect auditorium reverberated with pride and patriotism.

Mayor Harrington gave a brief welcome. Colonel Tripp described his and the ROTC cadets' pleasure in honoring our country's flag, and asked for a moment of silence to pay respect to all of our fallen heroes, and to recognize the five local servicemen who recently lost their lives: Army Capt. Anthony Palermo, Jr. (Brockton), Marine Sgt. William J. Callahan (Easton), Marine Lance Corporal Walter O'Haire (Rockland), Army PFC Matthew Bean (Pembroke) and Army Corporal Donald Fisher (Brockton).

The moment of silence was followed by Taps, played by Sgt. Skip Spoerke, whose duty included playing that mournful tune for over 250 fallen comrades in Bosnia and Iraq. Applause was spontaneous when Colonel Tripp detailed Sgt. Spoerke's work to send supplies to servicemen still overseas, and his support of the effort to restore the War Memorial Building.

Dr. Haglund outlined plans for "This remarkable building, unique Memorial and architectural treasure," and the efforts of the Steering Committee to raise funds to accomplish them. He did not solicit donations, but offered information about donor opportunities including a "Dedication Walkway" and a "Stepping-Stone Initiative."

After the formal program refreshments were served to the music of Billy Coutu, as Steering Committee members gave tours of the building and Brockton Community Access Television taped interviews with many of the notable guests and participants.

Information about the Project can be found online at www.brocktonwarmemorial.com.

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Reported by
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