

# Memorial to Vietnam Veterans is dedicated in impressive ceremonies

By DENISE ELLEN RIZZO  
News Staff

WINTHROP — The dedication ceremony of the new Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Winthrop High School was not an act of remembrance, but rather of love and friendship.

On a warmer-than-usual Sunday afternoon, Winthrop residents gathered to reflect and once again touch the eight Winthrop men who died while fighting in the Vietnam War. It was a ceremony to unveil a unique and beautiful plaque which houses the name rubbings of the eight local men from the Washington D.C. Vietnam Memorial.

The plaque was dedicated in the memory of: Robert Winslow Belcher, Paul Frank Brugman, John Alden Countaway, Jr., Joseph Patrick Logan, Jr., Edmund

Lambert MacNeill III, George W. McRae, Joseph Michael Pignato and John Cullen White. They were eight brave, young men who lost their lives fighting for their country.

"They made the supreme sacrifice and their lives were not in vain," said George Reed, who was the best friend and classmate of Robert Belcher. He spoke of a time when they were in school and in Vietnam together.

"His life touched and enriched the lives of lot of fine people," said Reed. "He was someone you could always count on."

Reed spoke of a discussion he had with a Vietnamese woman, whom he asked what her reaction was to the war and how the American involvement affected her life.

"She told me that while the Americans were there (in Viet-

nam), there was a type of freedom," he said. "While we were there we made a difference. Bobby Belcher's life was not in vain, because he went to war over a principle he believed in and made the supreme sacrifice."

The decision to have a memorial, first came from a suggestion by Ellen Pinzur from the Class of '64. The reunion committee was discussing plans to dedicate a memorial in the name of a classmate, Robert Belcher as a gift to the high school. Pinzur later met with School Committee member Donna Segreti Reilly who asked her to come and explain her idea to the School Committee. It was out of that meeting that the ideas were combined and the creation of a memorial for all of the Winthrop Vietnam soldiers who died came about.

(Continued on page 7)



**LOVED ONES** — friends and relatives attended last Sunday's Vietnam Veterans Memorial ceremony to honor the eight local boys who died from in war.

(Carl Blomendale photos)



# Winthrop remembers its Vietnam Vets

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"This memorial was not conducted by government agencies," said Reilly, "but born of those who were the youth of the '60s. The committee appointed to work on this memorial wanted to do something special and they accomplished it."

Winthrop Teachers Association President Donald Dayton said, "This memorial is dedicated to the young men of Winthrop who gave their last effort. It will stand as a reminder to all, of the significance of their endeavors."

Pinzur reminded those family

and friends who gathered how the Washington Memorial was started and what it means. "It is a memorial to the Vietnam Veterans, not the Vietnam War," she said. "With its shiny reflection, the dead and the living once again meet."

From the Class of '68, Huck Larsen of the WHS quoted Abraham Lincoln by saying, "we have a responsibility not to forget, but to remember. These eight men were called to duty, served and died for our country." He also commented that the students should be made aware of the sacrifice those men made to preserve freedom throughout the world.

Guest speaker, Vietnam Veteran Robert Giuliano of the WHS Class of '68 spoke of the difficult decision those young men had to make in choosing to serve their country. "It only matters that they served. To the sons and to all of our brothers, we are proud to commemorate their deaths with this memorial. We remain free because of the causes which they fought for in Vietnam. I vow to remember you."

Among those town officials who spoke at the dedication ceremony were state Rep. Alfred Saggese of the WHS Class of '64, state Sen. Michael J. LoPresti, representing Congressman Edward Markey's office was Peg Riley and Winthrop Selectmen Chairman John Lyons of the WHS Class of '74.

As a classmate of Robert Belcher, Saggese said, "I will always remember him and our memories together I will cherish. We need a memorial for the future generations who follow us, so they won't forget the evils of war."

Justice Joseph Ferrino said, "This will be a reminder. They were not just preserving their own freedoms. They went into the service to give their blood and their lives so others could maintain their freedom."

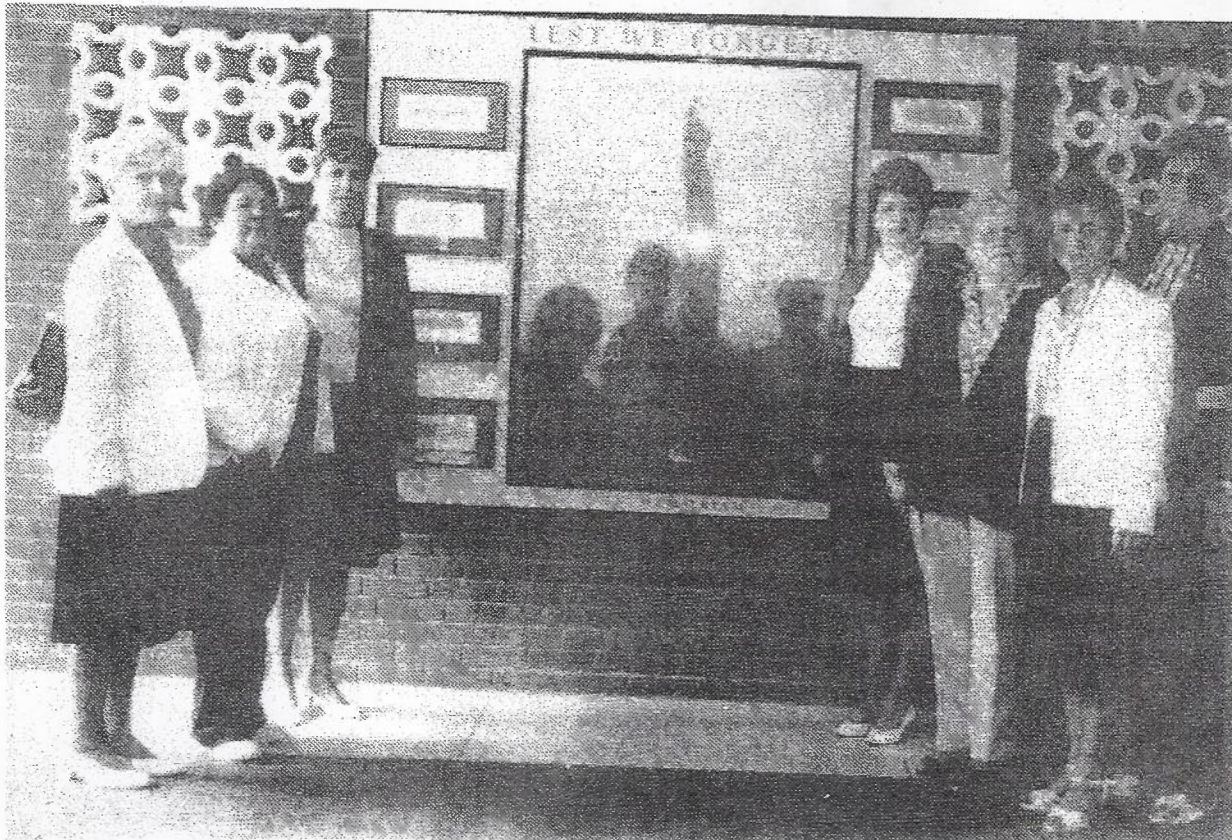
Lyons summed up the feelings of everyone in attendance by saying, "Forget Nam - never."



A memorial to honor the eight Winthrop Vietnam Veterans was unveiled at the High School over the weekend. Pictured (above) is guest speaker, Vietnam Vet. Robert Giuliano. Pictured below (left) is a classmate of Robert Belcher, George Reed; and (right) residents Richard Honan and Robert DeLeo who both donated time and money towards the memorial.

(Carl Blomendale photos)



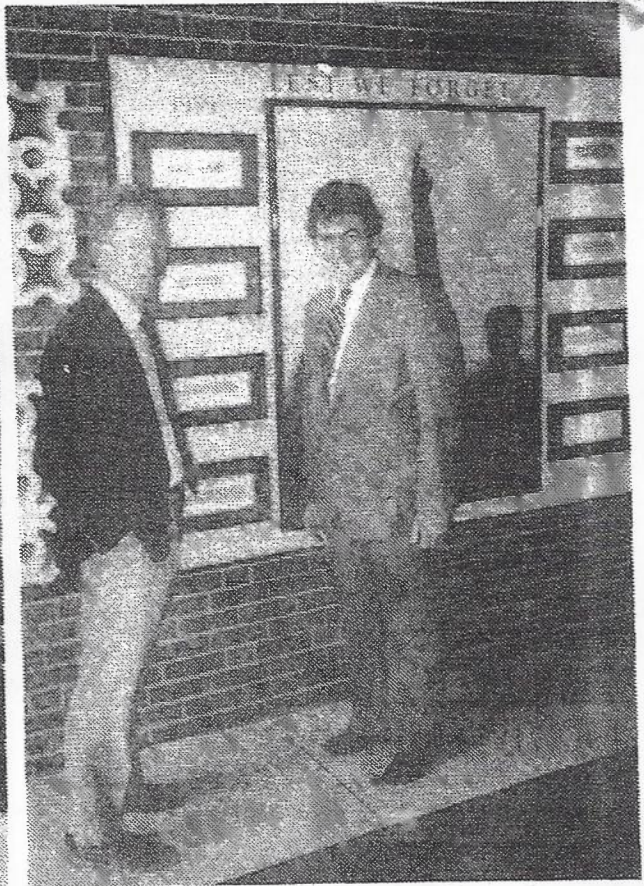
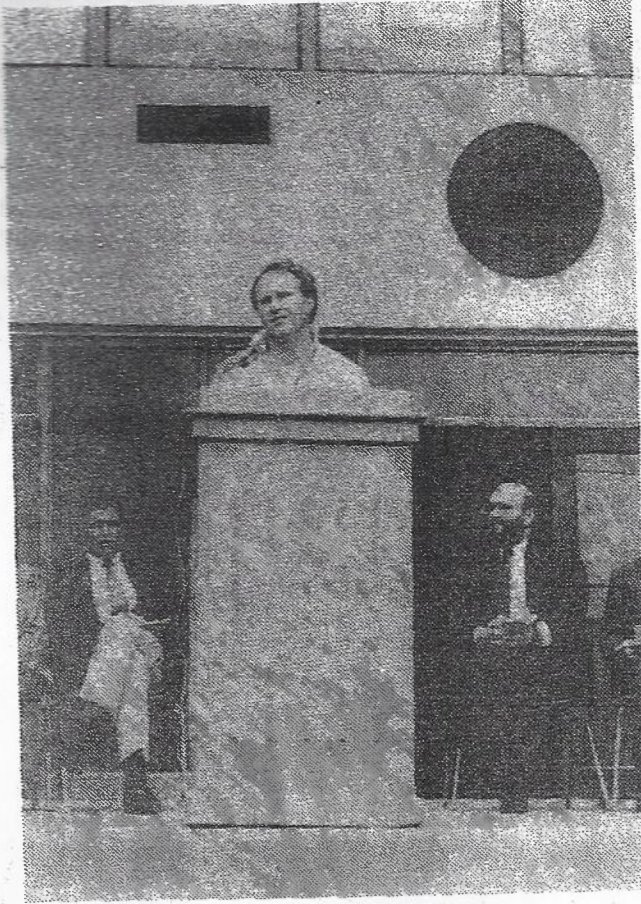


**WINTHROP VIETNAM MEMORIAL** — Members of the local Emblem Club are pictured next to the new memorial located in the high school.



time and money towards the memorial.

(Carl Blomendale photos)





## Thank you Mr. Boyle... *Transcript 6/1/88*

We would certainly feel remiss were we to let this opportunity pass without a special word of appreciation to Mr. Matthew Boyle, of Winthrop High School, for his efforts in recalling, and implementing a memorial for those students of Winthrop High School who were killed in Vietnam.

Through the efforts of Mr. Boyle, the names of those former Winthrop High School students, will be remembered for years and generations to come for the sacrifice they made for their country, when called upon to do so.

The time will come — as it surely must — when those most affected by the death of these young men, their mothers, fathers, brothers and sisters — will themselves find their own peace in death so that only a few people will recall the name of some remote village in Southeast Asia where some dear son, or brother or friend was killed.

Yet even if they are no longer here to remember that sacrifice, it will still be a part of the red thread which runs continuously through our country's history.

And it was that sacrifice of former Winthrop High School students, which Mr. Boyle and others joining with him, recalled with sorrow and observed with dignity by the recent dedication of the memorial plaque at Winthrop High School.

*6/1/88 Transcript*

### Clarification

CLARIFICATION — The master of ceremonies at the unveiling of the Winthrop Vietnam Veterans Memorial at the High School, was Acting WHS Principal Matthew Boyle, whose name was inadvertently omitted from the story in last week's Transcript.



**MOMENTARY PAUSE** — Acting High School Principal Matthew Boyle pauses during address to student body Sunday afternoon.



Reporter 5/19/00

# Vietnam Vets memorial dedication this Sunday

On Sunday, May 22, at 2 p.m., the Winthrop School Committee and its Vietnam Memorial Committee will formally dedicate a special Vietnam Memorial on the front steps of Winthrop High School, Main Street, Winthrop. In case of rain, the dedication will move to Fortunato Hall. So reports School Committee member Donna Segreti Reilly, one of the coordinators of the dedication.

The public is invited to the Memorial dedication. A short program is planned with a collation to follow in the high school cafeteria.

The Memorial is a collection of eight framed rubbings of the names of Winthrop's eight servicemen who died during the Vietnam War. "The rubbings came directly from the Vietnam Memorial (The Wall) in Washington, D.C." Mrs. Reilly said. The rubbings were the idea of Ellen Pinzur, Winthrop High School Class of '64, who is writing her Masters Thesis on memorabilia left at the Vietnam Memorial. Along with Donna Reilly and Ellen Pinzur, School Superintendent Joseph Laino, Winthrop High School Principal, Matthew Boyle, school teachers Larry

Larsen (WHS Class of '68) and Mary Ann Ulrich serve on the School Committee's Vietnam Memorial Sub-Committee.

Superintendent Laino is looking forward to a sizable turnout of family and friends of the eight Winthrop men who gave their lives during the Vietnam War. The eight men are: Robert W. Belcher, Paul F. Brugman, John A. Countaway, Jr., Joseph P. Logan, Jr., Edmund L. MacNeil, III, George W. McRae, Joseph M. Pignato and John C. White.

Principal Matthew Boyle also anticipates a good showing from Winthrop's student population. Mr. Boyle is working with high school teachers Larry Larsen and Mary Ann Ulrich. Larry Larsen and a group of Winthrop High School teachers originally came up with the idea of a Vietnam Memorial at the High School. "It's also a way to make history come alive for the young people in our high school" Larsen said. High School librarian, Mary Ann Ulrich, agreed that the memorial will cause our young people to learn about the Vietnam War and war in general.

Seventeen Winthrop/Revere organizations and individuals contributed funds for the framing of the rubbings and for a donation to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund in Washington, D.C. These same organizations will be sending representatives to the May 22nd dedication to participate in the ceremonies. The organizations who helped sponsor the Memorial are: The Bicentennial Committee of Winthrop; The Winthrop Emblem Club; Winthrop Lodge of Elks; Winthrop Veterans Services; Jewish War Veterans; Winthrop Chamber of Commerce; Winthrop Rotary; Winthrop American Legion Post 146; Winthrop Amvets Post 48; Winthrop High School Class of '88; Winthrop School Administrators Association; Winthrop Teachers' Association; VFW Post 6712, Revere; Attorney Robert A. DeLor; Richard Honan, Honan Signs; Representative Alfred E. Saggese Jr.; Bob Wheaton, Woodside Hardware; Ron Camacho, Sound System.

The Winthrop School Committee and its Vietnam Memorial Committee look forward to full community participation in the May 22nd dedication.

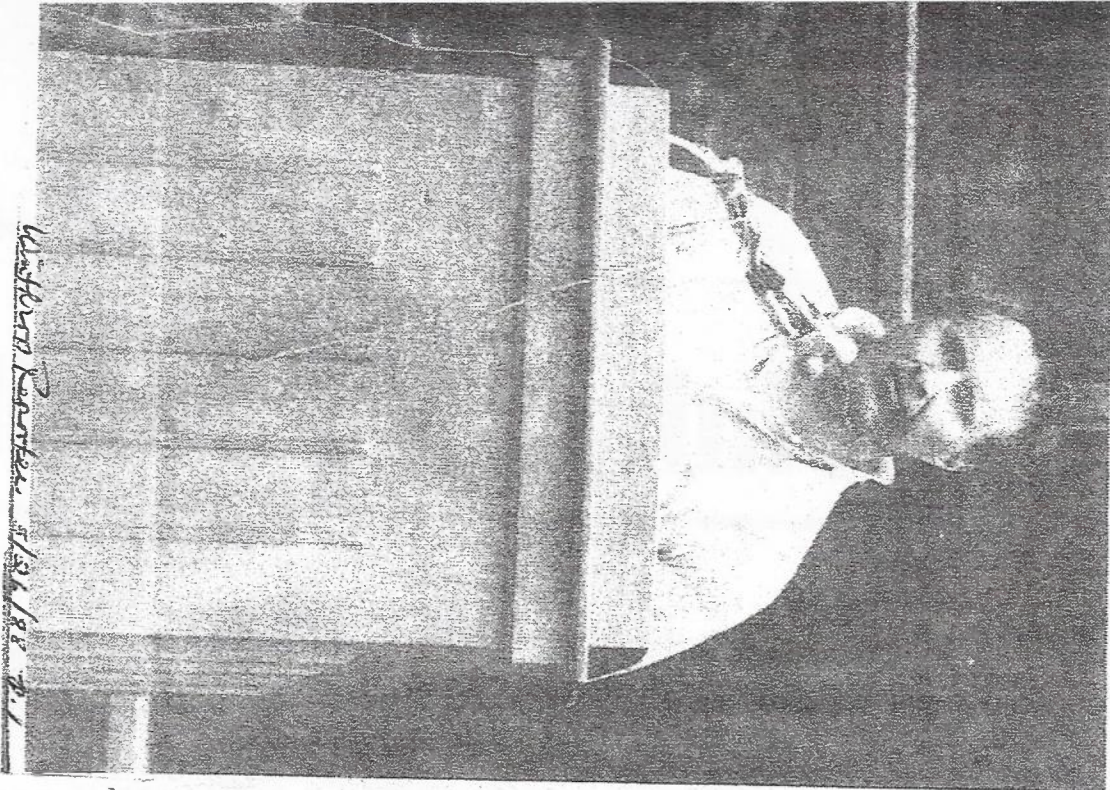




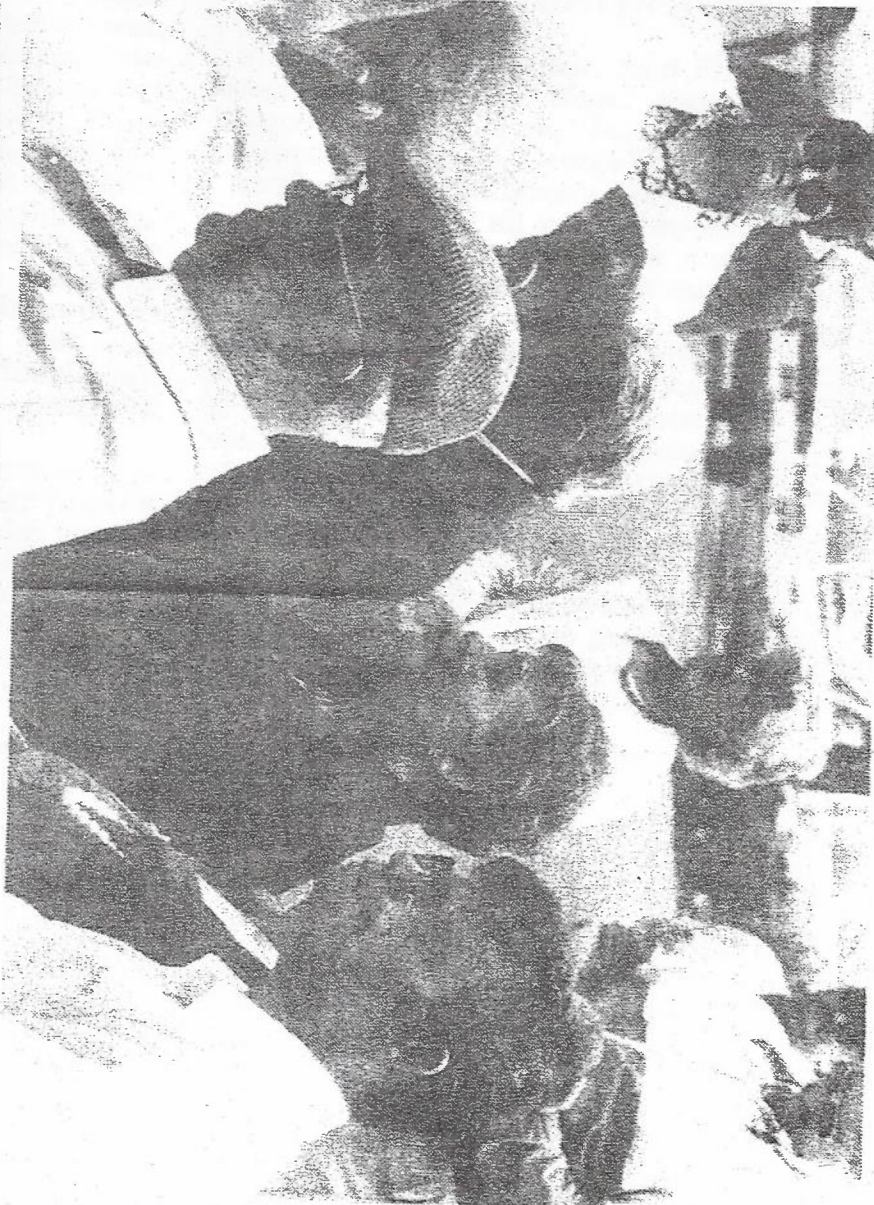
**REMEMBERING VIETNAM VETS — Superintendent of Schools Joseph Laino addresses crowd at the dedication of the Vietnam Veteran Memorial at Winthrop High School Sunday afternoon.**

*Reporter 5/26/88*





*Winthrop Reporter 5/31/88 p.1*



**REMEMBERING LOST HEROES —** George Reed (left), Vietnam veteran and friend of Robert Belcher, who lost his life in Vietnam, addresses those gathered at Sunday's Vietnam Veterans Memorial Dedication at Winthrop High School. Above, family members of the eight Winthrop residents who died in Vietnam listen intently.

*Reporter 05/26/88*



# Editorial / Opinion

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## Honoring all our Vets

This coming Monday is Memorial Day. In keeping with this solemn event, the town dedicated the Vietnam Veterans Memorial at the High School last Sunday. It was a day to remember those who gave up their lives during that troubling conflict halfway around the world.

This Memorial Day, the Vietnam War and those who fought in it should share in the importance of this country's beloved history. Although many will criticize this country's role in that war, those who fought there know that, like all other U.S. wars, they were fighting for freedom.

George Reed, a Vietnam veteran himself, who spoke so eloquently at Sunday's dedication ceremonies, reminded us that South Vietnam quickly fell to the communists as soon as the American presence disappeared. And, while this effort failed, the same U.S. forces were able to maintain some form of democracy in

South Korea, just a few short years before Vietnam.

Robert Winslow Belcher, Paul Frank Brugman, John Alden Countaway, Jr., Joseph Patrick Logan, Jr., Edmund Lambert MacNeil III, George W. McRae, Joseph Michael Pignato and John Cullen White were all part of an effort which promoted freedom to a nation which now knows little of what we here in America enjoy.

We must never forget all those who laid down their lives for our country. Included in that list are all the young men who ventured to Vietnam. For them, the return home was not as glorious as it was for veterans of other wars. Still, they must now know that their service was both honorable and respectable.

This Memorial Day we salute all who fought in foreign lands to preserve our way of life. We also honor those who never returned.