

View from Post 119



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The Story of the Four Immortal Chaplains

A convoy of three ships and three escorting Coast Guard cutters passed through "torpedo alley" some 100 miles off the coast of Greenland at about 1 AM on February 3, 1943. The submarine U-223 fired three torpedoes, one of which hit the midsection of the *Dorchester*, a U.S. Army troopship with more than 900 men on board. Ammonia and oil were everywhere in the fast-sinking vessel and upon the freezing sea.

The four Chaplains on board, two Protestant pastors, a Catholic priest and a Jewish rabbi, were among the first on deck, calming the men and handing out life jackets. When they ran out, they took off their own and placed them on waiting soldiers without regard to faith or race.

Approximately 18 minutes from the explosion, the ship went down. They were the last to be seen by witnesses; they were standing arm-in-arm on the hull of the ship, each praying in his own way for the care of the men.

Almost 700 died, making it the third largest loss at sea of its kind for the United States during World War II. The *Coast Guard Cutter Tampa* was able to escort the other freighters to Greenland. Meanwhile the cutters *Comanche* and *Escanaba*, disobeying orders to continue the search for the German U-Boat, stopped to rescue 230 men from the frigid waters that night.

The four Chaplains were **Father John Washington** (Catholic), **Reverend Clark Poling** (Dutch Reformed), **Rabbi Alexander Goode** (Jewish) and **Rev. George Fox** (Methodist). These four Chaplains were later honored by the Congress and Presidents. They were recognized for their selfless acts of courage, compassion and faith. According to the First Sergeant on the ship, "They were always together, they carried their faith together." They demonstrated throughout the voyage and in their last moments, interfaith compassion in their relationship with the men and with each other. In 1960 Congress created a special Congressional Medal of Valor, never to be repeated again, and gave it to the next of kin of the "Immortal Chaplains."

The State of Our Building

By Jacquie Halburnt, Post Commander

Our fabulous building is in rough shape. It's a tough spot to be in as a civic-minded community-based organization with little funds. Believe it or not, our building was repainted less than five years ago. Its current appearance makes it glaringly obvious that the problem extends beyond a couple coats of paint. The Legion recently applied for a Colorado State Historical

Society building assessment grant. If we receive the grant, it will allow us to hire professionals to perform a thorough assessment of what our building needs and distinguish between crucial and lesser important needs. If successful, the next step would be to apply for a building restoration grant, also through the State Historical Society. Our building is an important piece of Estes Park's history and a community asset. We are a community-based organization and many local organizations benefit from the use of our building. As a Legion, we are focused on helping our veterans, their families and supporting the community. We hope to receive grants to stop the progressive decline of our beautiful building.

The story of our building is a fascinating one that began when it was built in 1939 as the Colorado Big Thompson Water Project administration offices. Today, it remains one of the state's best surviving examples of Depression era, Bureau of Reclamation Colonial Revival designs. We purchased the building from the Bureau of Reclamation, and the formal dedication was held on November 11, 1954. Our building was constructed on the point of a triangle plan lot that included a village of housing and office units fanning out behind. Many of the buildings associated with the project are now gone or have been altered, our American Legion Post 119 building still retains much of its original appearance and historic integrity.

The building is a T-shaped plan formed by the original building and a later addition. The one-story, wood frame structure of white painted horizontal siding has an intersecting side gable roof that holds several dormers and a center cupola. The former main façade holds a portico that runs nearly the full length and shelters 6 original windows and door assembly. A rear addition was constructed in 1955, is sympathetic to the original design and now serves as the primary entrance location. In the 1960's several modifications were made to the building including infill of windows and the addition of a vestibule. Other elements such as cupola details are missing.

The building was placed on the Colorado state historic register in 1998, which enables us to apply for grants to improve it. Our post has been around a long time. The first recorded minutes of Post 119 are dated May 10, 1920, with 16 veterans attending the meeting. The Post received its charter on August 1, 1920 and the Auxiliary was formed in 1921. By 1940 the membership grew to 48 members. Our home may need some fixing, but we stand strong as an organization and we will move forward together to tackle our building issues.

Spotlight on A Post 119 Member

By Diane Rayburn, Editor

This month we proudly shine a spotlight on our own Chaplain – Frank Faiella, who was born and raised in Nutley, New Jersey. He joined the U.S. Navy in 1951 and served until 1955, as a Machinist Mate 2nd class. In 1957, he joined the U. S. Air Force, where he served until 1965, as an instructor in ICBMs.

Frank got his Master's Degree in Industrial Technology from the University of Northern Colorado in Greeley, CO. He taught at Estes Park High School for 20 years where he headed up the Industrial Technology Department.

Frank has been a very loyal member of Post 119 for over 20 years, serving on the House Committee for 1 year, Chaplain for the past two, and as a volunteer for 19 years for the Veteran's Day breakfast. That in itself is no mean feat!

Frank and Mary Lou were married at Our Lady of the Mountains Catholic Church here in Estes, on December 21, 1963. They have two daughters, Sherry Green and Linda Brown, who just received her doctoral degree.

We salute Frank Faiella for his service to our country, in the military, as a teacher, and for his loyal and dedicated volunteer service at our Post! And we thank MaryLou for her support of Frank and our Post for the past 21 years as well.

Thank You Both! Your service is appreciated. And Happy Belated 47th Wedding Anniversary!

GLORY OF SECTION ONE

Somewhere in the Caribbean Sea 1942-43

Why won't the Nazis ever attack?

When Two and Three are in their sack?

They turn and always run

Cause on deck is — Section One.

Lookouts keep a trained eye.

No sub will pass them by.

Who is fastest on the Gun?

Darn right — Section One.

We're rough and ready - set to go.

Where is that oft hunted foe?

Eight hours a day you're in danger Hun.

Be on the watch for — Section One.

Catch 'em ever asleep? Say,

These boys really earn their pay.

And on the beach, who has all the fun?

Sure, you know — Section One.

Once in awhile they may slip up

And leave an old dirty cup.

But if there's a battle to be won,

You can depend on — Section One.

The men are both young and old.

'Round women they oft are bold.

But if there is any work to be done,

Please, don't call — Section One.

Contributed by Bill Dye

Need to Renew?

By Jeff Van Bogaert, Adjutant

Legionnaires: Look at the mailing label on this newsletter and if there isn't a '10 after your name, you are not a current member of the Legion or the Post. If it's an '09 or even '08, you need to send in \$40 per year to keep your membership current. If you need to make other arrangements, contact the Adjutant. We will not be sending future issues of "The View From the Post" to anyone but current members. Dues can be dropped off at the Legion or mailed to the Post.

Our Post is active in several Veteran and Community activities, such as care packages for the troops, high school scholarships, the Fourth of July fireworks, an honor guard for parades and funerals, etc. At the national level, the American Legion is the 800 pound gorilla in the Veteran Advocacy arena. Your dues support this advocacy, as well as special needs and emergency services for veterans. We're sure you want to continue to support these worthwhile activities.

If your dues are not current, we look forward to your re-upping with the Legion. We know you'll be glad you did.

We Love Our Vets Program

The **Rams Horn Resort** at 1565 Colorado Hwy. 66, Estes Park, has developed a benefit for all honorably discharged veterans. The management at Rams Horn wanted to do something for veterans and the their **We Love Our Vets** program was developed:

\$79 per night (Sunday through Thursday);

\$99 per night (Friday and Saturday);

Complimentary Wine/Cheese party Saturday evenings; \$3.00; Waffle breakfast Sunday mornings.

When making reservations, please refer to the "We Love Our Vets" program. Veterans using this program must email or fax proof of Veteran status, either a DD 214 or a membership card in a Veteran Service Organization.

For more information see the flyer at: <http://estespost119.org/RamsHornWeLoveOurVetsProgram.pdf>.

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