

# BEALS HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Vol. XXII, No. 3 (Summer 2022)

## 2022 MEMORIAL DAY OBSERVANCE

In lieu of Covid, this year's Memorial Day Observance was once again filmed live on Beals Historical Societies Facebook wall. For those who do not have Facebook, the following is a brief summation of the program originally compiled and presented by Daniel Davis for the 2013 Memorial Day Observance.

The program began with an explanation of how Memorial Day was originally instituted as Decoration Day. A day set aside to pay tribute to those who served our nation in war and in the keeping of peace, and who now rest from their labors.

Following a prayer and the Flag Salute, Debbie Kelley honored us by singing a song made famous by singing star, Lee Greenwood, entitled, "God Bless the USA".

The following **Memorial Day Address** consists of a true **WWII story of the "Four Chaplains and the U.S.A.T. Dorchester"**.

It was the evening of February 2, 1943, and the U.S.A.T. Dorchester was crowded to capacity, carrying 902 service men, merchant seamen, and civilian workers.

Once a luxury coastal liner, the 5,649-ton vessel had been converted into an Army transport ship. The Dorchester, one of three ships in the SG-19 convoy,

was moving steadily across the icy waters from Newfoundland toward an American base in Greenland. SG-19 was escorted by Coast Guard Cutters Tampa, Escanaba and Comanche.

Hans J. Danielsen, the ship's captain, was concerned and cautious. Earlier the Tampa had detected a submarine with its sonar. Danielsen knew he was in dangerous waters even before he got the alarming information. German U-boats were constantly prowling these vital sea-lanes, and several ships had already been torpedoed and sunk.

The Dorchester was now only 150 miles from its destination, but the captain ordered the men to sleep in their clothing and keep life jackets on. Many soldiers sleeping deep in the ship's hold disregarded the order because of the engine's heat. Others ignored it because the life jackets were uncomfortable.

On February 3, at 12:55 a.m., a periscope broke the chilly Atlantic waters. Through the cross hairs, an officer aboard the German submarine U-223 spotted the Dorchester.

The U-223 approached the convoy on the surface, and after identifying and targeting the ship, he gave orders to fire the torpedoes and a fan of three were fired. The one that hit was decisive---



and deadly---striking the starboard side, amid ship, far below the water line.

Danielsen, alerted that the Dorchester was taking water rapidly and sinking, gave the order to abandon ship. In less than 20 minutes, the Dorchester would slip beneath the Atlantic's icy waters.

Tragically, the hit had knocked out power and radio contact with the three escort ships. The CGC Comanche, however, saw the flash of the explosion. It responded and then rescued 97 survivors. The CGC Escanaba circled the Dorchester, rescuing an additional 132 survivors. The third cutter, CGC Tampa, continued on, escorting the remaining two ships. .

Aboard the Dorchester, panic and chaos had set in. The blast had killed scores of men, and many more were seriously wounded. Others, stunned by the explosion were groping in the darkness. Those sleeping without clothing rushed topside where they were confronted first by a blast of icy Arctic air and then by

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## PRESENTATION OF 1890 WAX RECORDINGS

On Thursday, July 14th at 6PM, at the Jonesport Fire Station, Passamaquoddy historian and language translator Dwayne Tomah will be doing a presentation and audio demonstration of the wax cylinder recordings taken in 1890 of Indian stories and songs. **These recordings are the oldest field recordings of human voices in the world.** The public is welcome to attend this most interesting presentation hosted by Jonesport and Beals Historical Societies.

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the knowledge that death awaited.

Men jumped from the ship into lifeboats, over-crowding them to the point of capsizing, according to eyewitnesses. Other rafts, tossed into the Atlantic, drifted away before soldiers could get in them.

Through the pandemonium, according to those present, four Army chaplains brought hope in despair and light in darkness. Those chaplains were Lieutenant George L. Fox, Methodist; Lieutenant Alexander D. Goode, Jewish; Lieutenant John P. Washington, Roman Catholic; and Lieutenant Clark V. Poling, Dutch Reformed.

Quickly and quietly, the four chaplains spread out among the soldiers. There they tried to calm the frightened, tend the wounded and guide, the disoriented toward safety.

"Witnesses of that terrible night remember hearing the four men offer prayers for the dying and encouragement for those who would live," says Wyatt R. Fox, son of Reverend Fox.

One witness, Private William B. Bednar, found himself floating in oil-smeared water surrounded by dead bodies and debris. "I could hear men crying, pleading, praying," Bednar recalls. "I could also hear the chaplains preaching courage. Their voices were the only thing that kept me going."

Another sailor, Petty Officer John J. Mahoney, tried to re-enter his cabin but Rabbi Goode stopped him. Mahoney, concerned about the cold Arctic air, explained he had forgotten his gloves.

"Never mind," Goode responded. "I have two pairs." The rabbi then gave the petty officer his own gloves. In retrospect, Mahoney realized that Rabbi Goode was not conveniently carrying two pairs of gloves, and that the rabbi had decided not to leave the *Dorchester*.

By this time, most of the men were topside, and the chaplains opened a storage locker and began distributing



life jackets. It was then that Engineer Grady Clark witnessed an astonishing sight.

When there were no more lifejackets in the storage room, the chaplains removed theirs and gave them to four frightened young men.

"It was the finest thing I have seen or hope to see this side of heaven," said John Ladd, another survivor who saw the chaplains' selfless act. Ladd's response is understandable. The altruistic action of the four chaplains constitutes one of the purest spiritual and ethical acts a person can make, an act that is spoken of in Scripture when Jesus said, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." When giving their life jackets, Rabbi Goode did not call out that the receiver of his sacrificial gift of life be a Jew; Father Washington did not call out for a Catholic; nor did the Reverends Fox and Poling call out for a Protestant. They simply gave their life jackets to the next man in line.

As the ship went down, survivors in nearby rafts could see the four chaplains--arms linked and braced against the slanting deck. Their voices could also be heard offering prayers.

Of the 902 men aboard the *U.S.A.T. Dorchester*, 672 died, leaving 230 survivors. When the news reached

American shores, the nation was stunned by the magnitude of the tragedy and heroic conduct of the four chaplains.

That night Reverend Fox, Rabbi Goode, Reverend Poling and Father Washington passed life's ultimate test. In doing so, they became an enduring example of extraordinary faith, courage, and selflessness.

The Distinguished Service Cross and Purple Heart were awarded posthumously December 19, 1944, to the next of kin by Lieutenant General Brehon B. Somervell, Commanding General of the Army Service Forces, in a ceremony at the post chapel at Fort Myer, Virginia.

A one-time only posthumous Special Medal for Heroism was authorized by Congress and awarded by the President Eisenhower on January 18, 1961. Congress attempted to confer the Medal of Honor but was blocked by the stringent requirements that required heroism performed under fire. The special medal was intended to have the same weight and importance as the Medal of Honor.

In Arlington National Cemetery, among countless other burial grounds across the country, we find hundreds of thousands of tombstones and monuments to veterans of all American

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wars and from all branches of military service that have erected in honor of those who valiantly served their country, both in times of war and in the keeping of the peace. On this solemn day thousands of families, soldiers, and sailors, airmen, and marines will visit the resting places of the fallen, placing flags and flowers in humble tribute to those who gave of

themselves for the cause of freedom at home and abroad. But let us not forget that for every marker and every grave on America's soil and elsewhere, there are countless other unmarked graves of those of those buried at sea who also made the ultimate sacrifice, as we have seen in the above story. To them we owe a debt of gratitude that we can never

repay.

These brave men and women gave their last full measure of devotion in support of freedom. It is their valor, heroism, unwavering commitment, and patriotism that calls us to an attitude of commemoration and appreciation for the price they paid on our behalf.

## VETERANS' GRAVES, TOWN OF BEALS

*Hopefully the following list of deceased Veteran's graves will help those who are looking for their family members in the cemeteries on Beals Island. Updated by Daniel F. Davis:*

*May 2018*

### **(18) BEALS VILLAGE CEMETERY**

*(Across from Leon's)*

Alley, Closson Jr. (Center Right)  
Alley, Elmer (Front Right)  
Beal, Barney (Center Left)  
Beal, Edward and son Edward, Jr.  
(Civil War) (Back Left) (2)  
Beal, Harry (down back near Malcolm  
Lowell) (Back Right)  
Beal, Manwarren, Jr. (Center, Left)  
Dawes, Almon (near Harold Gower)  
(Back Right)  
Dobbin, William (also same name in  
Sewall Field) (Center Left)  
Gower, Harold (Back Right)  
Lenfestey, Chester (Center Right)  
Lowell, John  
McGahagin, Roy  
Norton, Harley  
Urquhart, Wendell  
(middle front, near fence)  
Whalen, Charles &  
Lawrence Baker (2)  
Lowell, Malcolm

### **(2) C. H. BEAL PRIVATE CEMETERY**

*(Next to Beals Village Cemetery)*

Elmer C. Beal  
Esten L. Beal, Jr.  
(not buried there, but has stone)

### **(52) SEWALL FIELD CEMETERY**

*(Near Flying Place)*

Alley, Alamander  
Alley, Alonzo

Alley, Anson  
Alley, Archie Sr.  
Alley, Charlie  
Alley, Fletcher  
Alley, Hiram  
Alley, James Noyes  
Alley, John D.  
Alley, Joseph  
Alley, Leeman  
Alley, Lester W.  
(Husband of Ruth Alley)  
Alley, Millard Lester  
(Front, near main gate)  
Alley, Millard L. (Husband of Orletta  
Alley, at right of cemetery)  
Alley, Richard  
(near front, to right of center)  
Alley, Wendell  
(No stone; Alley lot, near George  
Woodward lot)  
Alley, William  
Backman, Gordon  
Backman, Herman Jr.  
Beal, Alvin Leon  
Beal, Clarence E.  
Beal, Edward B.  
(Husband of Jeanette)  
Beal, Elihu  
Beal, Freeman  
Beal, Halburton  
(Down back to right of center)  
Beal, Calvin B.  
Beal, Osmond  
Beal, Thurman  
Beal, Vinton Jr.  
Beal, Vinton Sr.  
Burke, Frank  
Burke, Nathan  
Dobbin, William S.  
Drisko, Esten "Tecky"  
(down back, to right of center)  
Faulkingham, Leslie

Frost, Merrill  
Greenlaw, Arthur  
Hatt, Eric  
(Front to right of center)  
Huntley, James  
Kent, Berwin  
Look, Enos  
Merchant, Ellery  
Merchant, Quentin  
Faulkingham, Herbert R.  
Crowley, Harvey  
(Down back, left of center)  
Norton, Lawrence  
Peabody, Elmer  
Peabody, Earle  
Peabody, Ro  
Peabody, Thomas  
Seavey, Charlie  
Wallace, Frank  
Crowley, Harry

### **(5) CARVER PRIVATE CEMETERY**

*(Down the Island)*

Alley, Harold  
Carver, Guy Sr.  
Carver, Oscar  
Kent, Melrose

Worcester, Carroll

### **(11) GREAT WASS CEMETERY**

*(Down the Island)*

Alley, Dick  
Alley, Hartley (Clifton)  
Baillargeon, Lawrence  
Bean, Benjamin  
Frazier, Gladwyn Earl  
Garnett, Donald Sr.  
Kelley, Avery  
Merchant, Reginald  
Merchant, Sidney  
Sparks, Clayton  
Tapia, Carlos

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**(4) ALLEY'S BAY CEMETERY**

(Next to Willard Kelley's house)

Alley, John

(First settler of Alley's Bay)

Faulkingham, Leo

Also, 2 unmarked

(Left front corner near the road)

**(7) JOHN A. BEAL PRIVATE CEMETERY**

(Alley's Bay by Eugene Smith's)

Beal, Floyd

Beal, Virgil

Fagonde, Charles Alexis

Fagonde, Pierre

Kelley, Willard M.

Moore, Clarence "Bud"

Seavey, Willard

**ACADIA VETERANS CEMETERY**

(JONESBORO)

Kenton Feeney

Leeman Faulkingham, Jr

**GREENWOOD CEMETERY**

Ralph Alley

Ralph Davis

*Additional information as to where Beals Island veterans are buried would be much appreciated. If anyone has this information, please contact Carol Davis at cfdavis44@yahoo.com or call and leave a message at 207-497-2675.*

*Thank you!*

**BEALS HERITAGE CENTER FUNDRAISING DRIVE  
BUY A PERSONALIZED BRICK PROGRAM**

The Beals Historical Society offers the chance to be creative in personalizing a brick for your favorite person, pet, place, event, occasion, or simply something that is near and dear to your heart. Purchasing a personalized brick will enable the continuation of the brick patio, and/or adding your favorite Veteran to the Veterans Monument Park Area. The Veteran's 4 x 8 brick consists of the Veteran's rank, name, branch of service, war served in and years served. Your purchase of a personalized 4x8 cinnamon colored brick with black filled lettering for \$85 is a tax-deductible donation or you may wish to purchase an 8x8 brick for \$125. Purchasing the 8 x 8 brick gives you an additional line or instead of the line you may purchase a logo for an additional \$10. Price includes shipping.

**YES! WE'D LIKE TO RESERVE A PERSONALIZED PERMANENT BRICK.**

*Please check one of the following:*

☐ Patio

☐ Veterans Monument

☐ Check here for 4x8 brick for \$85.00 (standard block lettering included).

☐ Check here for 8x8 brick for \$125.00 (add an additional \$10 for a logo)

Please engrave your brick as follows: For a 4 x 8 brick use three lines with 21 letters including spaces and for an 8 x 8 brick add use four lines.


**PLEASE MAKE YOUR CHECK OR MONEY ORDER PAYABLE TO:  
BEALS HISTORICAL SOCIETY, ATTN: Treasurer, PO Box 280, Beals, ME 04611**

*Thank you for your contribution!*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount Paid: \_\_\_\_\_

*For further information or suggestions with a design for your personalized brick, please contact Carol Davis at (207) 497-2675 or email cfdavis44@yahoo.com.*

# ***Beals Heritage Center***



## **Beals Historical Society Membership Application**

Please check one: ☐ Renewal ☐ New

Name(s) as you wish it to appear on membership card and member roll on website:

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(Please type or print clearly)

Your mailing address: Street or Post Office Box: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of membership (Please review all types and check the one that applies)

- |  |                        |
|--|------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual Annual       | \$10 annually          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual/Life         | \$200 one-time payment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Couple Annual           | \$15 annually          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Couple/Life             | \$300 one-time payment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Senior/65 Annual        | \$5 annually           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Senior couple/65 Annual | \$7.50 annually        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student                 | \$5 annually           |

Over and above dues, I wish to donate \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_operating expenses, \_\_building fund, or \_\_ endowment fund. Receipt and membership card will be sent to you.

**Instructions:** Please print, complete and mail this application, together with tax-deductible check or money order payable to Beals Historical Society to:  
Membership Chairperson, Beals Historical Society, P.O. Box 280, Beals, ME 04611

*Annual memberships are for the calendar year and expire Dec. 31.*