

2012

Korean War Veterans Digital Memorial Progress Report:

KWVA national convention in Boston (2011), interviews with KWVs in Hawaii, Tacoma, Washington, Long Island, Washington D.C. and plans for expansion including the launch of “Grandchildren Club of KWVs.”

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Creation of The Korean War Veterans Digital Memorial

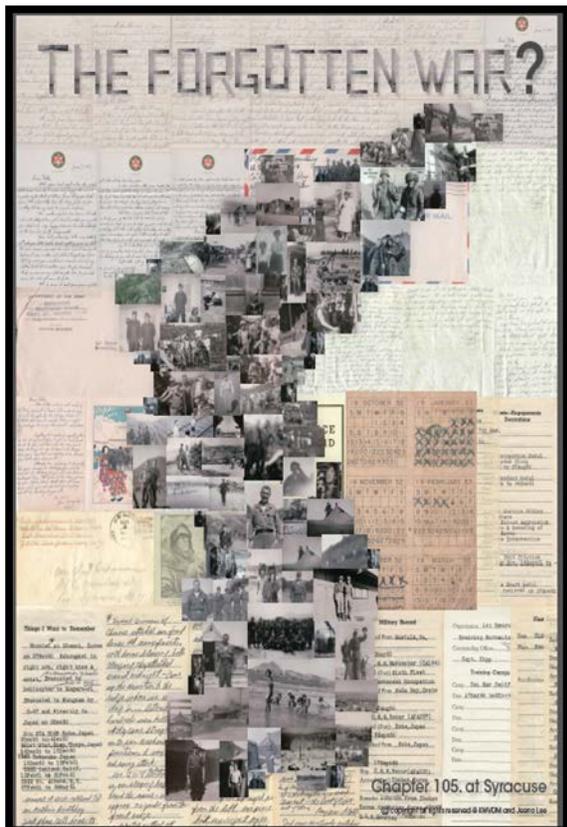
Never a "Forgotten War"

The creation of the the Korean War Veterans Digital Memorial (KWVDM) emerges as a first-of-its-kind project seeking to permanently preserve unedited the first-hand memories, experiences, and artifacts of our Korean War Veterans in an effort to pass them down to future generations. The KWVDM wants to emphasize that the Korean War will never be, what many call, a "Forgotten War." The Korean Peninsula is covered by the efforts and sacrifices of American men and women, and the success of South Korea today would have been impossible without their contributions.

The KWVDM is unique because of its in-depth and inexhaustible quality. The Internet itself is an endless storage area and unlike any museum the KWVDM can store unlimited number of interviews and artifacts without ever running out of space and be accessible from anywhere at any time. It transcends temporal and spatial limitation and attracts our young generations in their daily activities in the cyberspace. Moreover; every artifact and interview stored on the website is completely searchable by keywords or Metadata so visitors to the site can find the information they need in a quick and efficient way.

Gathering information for the website is not purely one-sided either. While Dr. Han and his team have made every effort to reach out to Korean War Veterans across the State through national and local chapter meetings as well as major events; such as the anniversary of the Korean War beginning on June 25 and the Korean War Armistice on July 27 each year to record interviews and collect artifacts.

The webiste makes it easy for veterans and their families to personally submit their artifacts and testimonies directly. Two KWVs, Donald Schneider (CA) and



Eugene Dixon (M) have recently added their own interviews to the KWV Digital Memorial (www.kwvdm.org), which demonstrates the unique strength of KWVDM collecting interviews and artifacts online.

The KWVDM was founded early in 2011 by Dr. Jongwoo Han of Syracuse University after becoming acquainted with Korean War Veteran Norman “Norm” Champaign and his chapter (Central New York Chapter #105, Inc.).

KWVA Convention in Boston and Plans for Expansion

Reaching out nationally

The KWVDM intends to become a national—and even international—project. In order to make that goal possible, Dr. Han and CNY Chapter member Norm Champagne presented the KWVDM project to the Korean War Veterans Association Convention in Boston on Saturday and Sunday mornings, October 29 and 30. The project was warmly received by the KWVA board and general attendees including DoD representatives, families of KWVs, and representatives from other Korean War related organizations. The KWVA unanimously passed a motion to host the KWVDM (www.kwvdm.org) in its own website, www.kwva.org and has

After nearly a year this digital memorial has doubled the numbers of interviews and has added thousands of more artifacts to the original database based on the Central New York Korean War Veterans Association # 105. These new interviews and artifacts are collected from KWVs from Tacoma, Washington, Long Island and Staten Island of New York, and from the areas of Maryland and Virginia.

published a series of articles on the activities of the KWVDM in its bi-monthly magazine, The Grey Beards. At the end of the convention, several veterans and some organizations offered to collaborate with Dr. Han on the KWVDM project.

Among those offering to team up with Dr. Han were Sal Scarlato (President of the New York state chapter), Gene Ferris (1st VP of CNY Chapter #105), Larry Kinard (2nd VP of Texas Chapter #215, member of the Tell America initiative), the Coalition of Families of Korean and Cold War POWs/MIAs, and the Department of Defense. In 2012, President of the KWVDM Foundation and director of KWVDM has worked with President of the New York State KWVA Sal Scarlato collecting interviews from 12 members of his Long Island Chapter. President Scarlato also arranged a series of interviews from

Staten Island chapter and their interviews and artifacts will be updated in the KWVDM soon.

A crucial portion of the KWVDM is its outreach to the young generation. The Mutual Mentor Program is an internship that has been launched in the following two categories: Youth Program involving middle and high-school students and Internship for college students. The end goal of the program is to have students and veterans learn directly from each other. While students help veterans upload their information to the KWVDM, veterans pass down their experiences to the interns. The project hopes to have the Mutual Mentor Program find students and veterans interested in participating and match them up based on region. Connecting with veterans across the country can make the Mutual Mentor Program a successful initiative. Such a goal has recently been accomplished through KWVDM's Youth and Internship programs.

President Han of the KWVDM Foundation received a phone call from Daniel H. Kim who is a senior in the program of History & East Asian Studies, College of Arts & Science of New York University in early summer of 2012. Daniel Kim expressed his strong interest in learning more about the origins of the Korean War, the legacy of the Korean War Veterans, and helping the cause of the KWVDM Foundation. He was born

and raised in Seoul and has experienced quite an international life; he went to high school in Hong Kong and is currently a senior, majoring in history with a minor in East Asian Studies at New York University. Many Koreans say that the experience of living outside Korea for a number of years fosters patriotism. Daniel is no exception. Watching Korea not only develop rapidly but also solidify her position as a significant power in the international community in such a short period of time; Daniel naturally developed a sense of sheer respect for those who contributed to establishing and protecting the Republic of Korea in times of critical crises. He is extremely proud of what modern Korea has accomplished; simultaneous achievement of unprecedented economic development and substantive democracy during the period of 1960 to 1980s.

Daniel says "it is no surprise that as soon as he learned about the Korean War Veterans Digital Memorial, I immediately decided to apply for the internship position". "I was introduced to the KWVA in Staten Island and have worked with Korean War Veterans very closely collecting many valuable historical artifacts and their pictures, which demonstrates their sacrifice for Korea." He firmly believes that he, as well as every young Korean, to have a full and accurate understanding of the Korean War is obligated to express gratitude to the Korean War Veterans for

their sacrifices and devotion. Because, without their contributions it is impossible to claim the Republic of Korea could still exist today Daniel says. Assigned to the Korean War Veterans Association of Staten Island, New York, CPL. Allan F. Kivlehan Chapter, Daniel has been developing amicable relationships with a number of honorable veterans including, but not limited to, Mr. George Parsons, Mr. Steven Montalbano, Mr. Joseph Calabria and Mr. Bernard Hoganson. His main responsibilities have been collecting photographs taken during the Korean War from the veterans in person and creating the veterans' database.

Following Daniel's ground breaking efforts opening his heart to KWVs in Staten Island chapter, President Han made a visit to collect interviews and their documents to be updated in the KWVDM soon. It is a concrete outcome of KWVD's vision to connect our young generations with KWVs.

Let me introduce another success story of linking our young generations with KWVs. Hyemin Han joined KWVDM's Youth Program in December 2011 and has assisted in a significant number of interviews. Hyemin became acquainted with Korean War veterans after meeting the veterans of the Central New York Chapter #105 as a part of her activities in the Central New York Korean School;. The school has been the host of the "Korean Day" since 2009 and invited KWVs around the CNY region. Hyemin thinks, "It's important to know about the

past because the past tells us what went wrong and what we can do to avoid it in the future." She hopes to become a lawyer one day so she can "fight for something or someone who needs it." Her faithful and close working relationship with President Han has produced a total of 28 interviews and profiles of KWVs in the KWVDM.

Launching "Grandchildren Club of KWV" in the Upcoming KWVA Annual Convention in St. Louis , MO, October 10-14, 2012

President Han has discussed how the KWVDM Foundation and the KWVA can maximize the potential for the sustainable legacy of the Korean War and the sacrifice of KWVs. We are brought together through KWVA's "Tell America Program" and the KWV Digital Memorial. The President James Ferris and the Tell America Program Chair Larry Kinard (the First Vice President of KWVA) agreed to President Han's vision of launching "Grandchildren Club of KWA Project" on the basis that the legacy of KWVs will only be carried out by our own descendents. Invited by President Ferris (KWVA), President Han of KWVDM Foundation will present this idea to KWVA Board and other participants at the upcoming St. Louis

convention from October 10-14, 2012. After two days of interviews with Long Island chapter members, President Han working with KWVDM's Youth Program participant, Hyemin Han sent out the letters asking those interviewees to work with their own grandchildren on their own interviews and artifacts. As a final project to create the Grandchildren Club, President Han suggested they make an online presentation of all their short video clips into one for the upcoming St. Louis convention. Here is the excerpt of that letter:

Dear Korean War Veterans,

However, while talking to chairman and directors of the "Tell America" program, I realized that there is another step that has to be taken. This step is to connect your memories with our younger generations. This is because although your memories might be documented, those interviews and scanned materials will be of no use unless they use them. Ultimately, I realized that your grandchildren, and possibly great grandchildren are the ones we need to work with for the next step. By working with them, I want to spread the word of your sacrifice and legacy to future generations to come. I know that most of them have a Twitter or Facebook account, and I think that these social networks will be the most effective bridge that connects

the KWVDM with the rest of the world. Not only can we spread it to the younger generation, but also people in other countries and those who know nothing of it. With these powerful online social media, we will be able to make the "Tell American Program" and the KWVDM more popular to people all over the world.

This is my objective in writing to all of you today; not only to thank you for your sacrifice and willingness to have an interview with us, but to also ask for your help once again. Please talk to your grandchildren about this and send me their contact information so that I can explain to them what I just explained to you and ask them for their help. In this way, we can make sure that your sacrifice was not only not in vain, but also an example for the future generations to come.

Unfortunately, we don't have much time. My goal is to be able to talk to your grandchildren and come up with a video or slideshow about their view of your interviews or their experience on Korea to present in the Annual Convention at St. Louis this October. By presenting the willingness and interest the younger generation has on the Korean War and the KWVDM we can launch and begin our venture to create a "grandchildren's movement" of some sort to preserve and honor your sacrifices.

A Proposal for the “Grandchildren Club of KWV”

Welcome! We are glad to have all of you with us while we share the importance of our duties and joy of passing on our KWV grandfathers’ legacies.

Our goal is to create a “critical mass” that is genuinely interested in knowing more about what our grandfathers did during the Korean War, and why those things are still important to our friends and us.

1. A **short term** goal
 - 1) Short term goal: launching the club by participating in the KWV Association’s Annual Convention in St. Louis, Missouri, from October 10 to 14, 2012, by creating your own 3-5 minute video clip.
 - 2) How: by looking into the KWV Digital Memorial (KWVDM, www.kwvdm.org). There are two big categories of historical materials, interviews and artifacts related to the Korean War, the KWVs’ memories, and the sacrifices they made, as well as facts about Korea during the 1950’s.
 - a. Please work on your own grandfathers’ interviews and artifacts if it is on the website.
 - b. If not, please navigate to the KWVDM and find anything that interests you.

3) Then, make a 3-5 minute video clip about:

- **what** you found.
- if you like what you found & **why you like it** or **if you don’t like** what you found & **why you don’t like it**.
- **why** it is important to you.
- **what can we do about** this in terms of passing it to other kids

4) Our final step will be to put all those short video clips you make into one big presentation clip for the KWV Association (KWVA) Annual Convention at St. Louis, MO from October 10 to 14, 2012.

Note: Let’s try to get this done by September 20, 2012.

2. A **long term** goal: expanding the club
 - 1) Think about strategies on how we can make this club popular to others.
 - 2) What are the important facts about the Korean War?
 - 3) What will make kids get interested in the Korean War?

Our relationship with the KWVA and the KWVDM Foundation

- 1) You can come to the KWVA convention if you are able to, and talk about:
 - a. how you feel about what your grandfather did during the Korean War.
 - b. how you can spread the word to others.

c. how you think we can expand this club.

2) If this “Grandchildren’s club” becomes successful, starting in 2013, the KWVDM Foundation may be able to fund your travel to the KWVA annual convention, or, we can organize our own meeting (funded by the KWVDMF).

3) Also, you can apply for an *internship* provided by the KWVDMF. Please check the KWVDMF website on Internship and other participation programs.

Please **contact** President Jongwoo Han of the KWVDMF (jonghan@syr.edu, 315-480-9427) if you have any further questions on this project.

Special Recognitions

The expansion of the prototype of the KWV Digital Memorial has been achieved through generous supports from the Ministry of Patriots and Veterans Affairs of the Republic of Korea (<http://www.mpva.go.kr/>) and CEO Park Byeong Yeop of Pantech Co., Ltd (<http://www.pantech.com/>) headquartered in Seoul, ROK.

