

THE STORY OF

THE VFW

“BUDDY”

POPPY



“IN FLANDERS FIELDS

THE POPPIES BLOW...”

These opening words of Col. John McCrae's immortal poem are known to every child in the United States. Dedicated to the memory of the men who fought and died in France during World War I, the poppies of which he wrote have become the true symbol of all those who have given their lives in our nation's wars.

The Poppy has become recognized as the memorial flower in countries throughout the world. It is distributed by veterans organizations in Europe, in America, and in most of the countries of the British Commonwealth.

Since 1922, the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States has conducted an annual distribution of “Buddy” Poppies to raise funds for its charitable programs on behalf of the needy and disabled veterans, and the widow and orphans of deceased veterans.

In Flanders Fields the poppies blow

Between the crosses row on row

That mark our place; and in the sky

The larks, still bravely singing, fly

Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the dead, short days ago

We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,

Loved and were loved and now we lie

In Flanders Fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe

To you, from failing hands, we throw

The torch, be yours to hold it high.

If ye break faith with us, who die

We shall not sleep, though poppies grow

In Flanders Fields.

Col. John McCrae

“BUDDY” is a trademark which can only be used on the poppy assembled and distributed by the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States.

POPPIES EVERYWHERE

Today, Buddy Poppies are distributed by Posts and Auxiliaries of the VFW in every state of the union and in dozens of other countries. Some 16 million are distributed annually; most of them during the period preceding Memorial Day, but many of them at other times of the year.

More than a million and a half dollars is raised each year through the distribution of Buddy Poppies -- all of it strictly accounted for and dedicated entirely to veterans welfare.

Under the unique VFW distribution system, the proceeds of the distribution are divided between national, state, and local charitable purposes.

WHEN YOU DROP A DONATION IN A POPPY CANISTER ...

you have contributed to the Veterans of Foreign Wars National Home for children of deceased or disabled veterans at Eaton Rapids, Michigan... to the National VFW Rehabilitation Service in Washington, D.C. ... to the VFW Rehabilitation Service in your own state ... and to direct assistance programs for needy and disabled veterans in your own community.

The services made possible through your donation are available to ALL needy veterans -- not just those who are members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. Hundreds of thousands of non-members are assisted with disability claims and served in hospitals each year by the Veterans of Foreign Wars, its Posts and its Auxiliaries.

HOW CAN SO LITTLE DO SO MUCH?

The person from whom you purchased your Poppy is a volunteer. His supervisor is a volunteer and the people who helped organize the distribution are volunteers. Their only pay is the satisfaction which comes from devoting time and effort to a worthy cause.

However, there is someone who DOES get paid. The disabled veteran who assembled the Poppy from the original parts receives a nominal sum for his work. The amount is small, but it does help him to buy the little luxuries which make hospital life tolerable and it does permit him to purchase a gift now and then for his loved ones at home.

When you are handed a "Buddy Poppy", give generously.

And when you wear your Poppy, do it proudly.

And when you see VFW and Auxiliary volunteers working in veterans hospitals, visiting the sick and helping with their problems, give them a word of greeting.

You are partners in a great work.

