

THE STORY OF THE "BUDDY" POPPY

"IN FLANDERS FIELDS THE POPPIES BLOW…"

These are the opening words of Colonel John McCrea's Immortal poem dedicated to the memory of the men and women who served, fought and died in France during World War 1. 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 around the world. It is distributed by veteran's organizations in Europe, North 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 surviving family members of deceased veterans.

POPPIES EVERYWHERE

Today, buddy poppies are distributed by posts and auxiliary of the VFW in every state of the union and in dozens of other countries. Some 14 million are distributed annually; most of them during the period preceding Memorial Day and Veterans Day, but many of them at other times of the year.

More than 11 million dollars is raised each year through the distribution of the 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 the national, state, and local charitable purposes.

When you make a donation ...

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 services in Washington, DC... to the VFW rehabilitation service in your own State... and to direct assistance programs for needy and disabled veterans and active service members and their families in your own community.

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

How can so little do so much?

The person from whom you received your poppy is a volunteer. Their 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 veterans who assembled the poppy from the original parts receives a nominal sum for their work. The amount is small, but it does help them buy the little luxuries which make hospital life tolerable and it does permit them to purchase a gift now and then for their 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 veteran’s hospitals, visiting the sick and helping them with their problems, give them a word of greeting.

You are Partners in a great work.



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.

John McCrae (1872-1918)

“BUDDY” IS A TRADEMARK WHICH CAN ONLY BE USED ON THE POPPIES ASSEMBLED AND DISTRIBUTED BY THE VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE UNITED STATES.