



Miramar National Cemetery Support Foundation

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Hold for release on: November 11, 2016

Veterans Tribute Tower & Carillon Dedicated Veterans Day, November 11, at Miramar National Cemetery

A Veterans Tribute Tower & Carillon was dedicated during a 9 a.m. ceremony, Nov. 11, Veterans Day, at Miramar National Cemetery. The 30-foot tall structure stands on a knoll on the north side of the cemetery where it is visible from most points of the grounds, and from nearby streets. The Tower is unlike any other at a VA-operated cemetery.

The Tower is specially dedicated to soldiers of the U.S. 3rd Infantry Division who fought in the June, 1953, Battle of Outpost Harry during the Korean War, and honors veterans of all U.S. military services. The Miramar National Cemetery Support Foundation, which coordinated funding and construction of the Tower, sponsored the dedication.

Col. William G. Gang, USAR (Ret.), a civilian aide to Army Secretary Eric Fanning, was the featured speaker at the event. The guest speaker was Bob Baker, 84, who as a 20-year-old corporal fought in the Battle of Outpost Harry. Now a prominent local automobile dealer, Baker donated the majority of funding for the \$400,000 Tower project.

In addition to the \$250,000 contributed by the Bob Baker Family Foundation, Inc., the San Diego County Board of Supervisors donated an additional \$78,000 through Supervisor Bill Horn's neighborhood discretionary funds. Members of the public also contributed funding to the project.

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“Our Foundation is very appreciative of the support we have had from our major donors – Bob Baker and Supervisor Horn – and from all those who contributed to the project over many months,” said Dennis A. Schoville, Foundation President and CEO. “We worked closely with the VA and National Cemetery Administration to develop what we believe will be a lasting memorial to our Korean War veterans, and to all those veterans who have sacrificed so much for our country.”

“We expect the Veterans Tribute Tower & Carillon to be a focal point of Miramar National Cemetery, and to be an inspiration to all who visit the cemetery to pay their respects to those who are buried here,” Schoville added.

The Veterans Tribute Tower & Carillon is the single largest project the Support Foundation has undertaken on behalf of the cemetery. In January 2012, the Foundation dedicated the \$110,000 Avenue of Flags project, a display of 50 American flags unique among national cemeteries.

The Tower stands on a landscaped plaza where visitors may gather to read the inscriptions on commemorative plaques mounted on memorial stones, or set into the base of the tower.

A 250-pound, 24-inch diameter, custom-cast bronze bell, that can be rung electronically, hangs from the center of the tower. It also includes a Sonata electronic chamber carillon that plays “Taps” and other musical selections appropriate for veterans’ cemeteries.

The Support Foundation contracted with The Verdin Company of Cincinnati, Ohio, to construct the Tower.

A family-owned, six-generation firm, Verdin has manufactured clocks, carillons, and bells since 1842 and now has more than 50,000 installations worldwide. Assembled at the Verdin plant, the Tower was trucked to the cemetery site where it was erected by local crews.

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Patrick W. Caughey, President of Wimmer Yamada and Caughey Landscape Architects of San Diego, worked with the Foundation to provide landscape planning and plaza design services. The firm's many landscaping projects include the Unconditional Surrender Statue at Tuna Harbor Park, the Embarcadero Marine Park, Plaza La Jolla Village, and military projects at Camp Pendleton, Naval Station Pearl Harbor, and Travis Air Force Base.

Caughey's landscape design for the Veterans Tribute Tower & Carillon takes advantage of the cemetery's natural topography and plant life. Native coastal plants will surround the landscaped terrace below the Tower.

"The Veterans Tribute Tower & Carillon will stand as a tribute to honor America's veterans of the past, as a well-earned recognition of our present veterans, and as a salute to the active duty and reserve personnel who are our future veterans," said Foundation President & CEO Schoville.

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