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ED LEE/Journal correspondent

Wives of veterans join hands and sing at the dedication of Winfield's new veterans memorial yesterday in Creekside Park. The memorial honors those who served in World War I, World War II, Korea and Vietnam.

Winfield dedicates veterans memorial

By Jennifer L. Berry
Journal correspondent

"We do not honor wars, but the Americans who died in them. We remember the missing and desire peace for those who returned."

In Winfield, those words are now engraved in stone.

The village officially dedicated its new veterans memorial yesterday at Creekside Park in an emotional and sometimes tearful observance that culminated its annual Good Old Days celebration. Two Vietnam veterans dedicated the 7-foot-high memorial to those who served in World War I, World War II, Korea and Vietnam.

The engraved inscription rests in the center of the memorial to emphasize the importance of the words.

Veterans Lou Miotto and Jim Stepanek tearfully praised the nearly 300 people who attended the ceremonies, including representatives from all four wars. They handed a yellow rose — a symbol of peace — to a 94-year-old World War I veteran.

"I would apologize that I cried, but I am not sorry," Stepanek said, receiving loud applause.

Also on hand were teen-agers



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Chuck Clendenin of the U.S. Air Force lays a wreath at Winfield's veterans memorial during dedication ceremonies yesterday at Creekside Park. Later, Air Force planes flew above the crowd in the missing-man formation.

dressed as World War I doughboys. Twenty military units marched in the Good Old Days parade and many of them participated in the dedication ceremony.

Miotto and Stepanek said the memorial was built from common red brick "to represent the common man. That is who we

for the memorial were introduced.

Miotto stated that "in between rain drops" it took 42 working days to create the 14-foot long memorial at the south end of the park.

He estimated that 95 percent of the work was donated by "astronomical volunteers" who included wives, the Winfield Park District, Girl Scouts, members of the Winfield Veterans Memorial Committee, Joe Jedlovec from the Winfield Township Highway Department, Winfield Fuel and Materials, Meyers Concrete, Lombard Ready Mix, Biedleman Monument, Winfield Middle School, and chiropractor Dr. Robert Krzyzewski, who "saved our backs."

Last Thursday, the final piece of sod was put in place and the lights went on, two days ahead of schedule.

"Everybody had something to do with it," Miotto said.

Also honored were families with members still deemed prisoners of war. Keynote speaker the Rev. John Steer and Stepanek referred to them instead as hostages who have been neglected by the U.S. government.

are."

The name of each war is engraved in gold on a black plaque.

In front of the "V" shaped memorial, a brick viewing area includes the American and Missing in Action flags.

The group also honored the people who donated labor and materials in the year since plans