

# Veteran's Day rites span ages



Architect William Ahern, with the drawing he designed for a monument commemorating the last shot of World War II.

By Leslie Anderson  
GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

His physical remains have long since disappeared. After 225 years, even his name is unknown.

Yet a British soldier who died in Concord on April 19, 1775, will be honored by 100 British and Colonial reenactors next Sunday, thanks to the efforts of a Vietnam veteran who in his spare time plays the role of an 18th-century American patriot.

"Here you have a soldier who was killed in the town and buried in the town and yet was never re-

## ► VETERAN'S DAY Continued from Page 1

membered in the town," said D. Michael Ryan, who pored through historic documents to determine the approximate location of the soldier's grave.

"We have worked hard to account for our soldiers killed or missing in Vietnam. Should we do less for this British soldier?"

Sometimes it takes decades to fully appreciate the sacrifices soldiers make. Sometimes it takes centuries. As Veterans Day approaches, preparations are underway in Medford and Concord to honor men from two very different wars.

On Nov. 11, the city of Medford will award high school diplomas to men who cut their education short nearly half a century ago to serve in the military during the Korean War.

"These guys left high school prematurely to serve their country," said Edward Nolan, commander of the Veterans of Foreign

Wars, Post 1012, where the diploma presentation will take place at 11 a.m. "We're just paying tribute to the tremendous sacrifice they made as kids to serve in the military."

The following day, representatives from the British Consulate will join town leaders and reenactors in dedicating a granite marker on Monument Street honoring one of three British soldiers who died during the Concord fight. He is believed to have been buried along Monument Street just outside Monument Square. The other two soldiers were interred next to the North Bridge.

The parade of reenactors begins at the North Bridge at 1 p.m. The dedication ceremony will take place at the marker at 1:30 p.m.

Meanwhile, a Belmont man recently returned from Ft. Benning, Ga., where he attended the dedication of a memorial that he designed commemorating the last shot fired in the European theater of World War II.

William Ahern, an architect and engineer, was part of an infantry company in Czechoslovakia that was credited with firing the last official shot before the Nazis surrendered on May 7, 1945. The black granite slab features a replica of an M-1 rifle carved from stone and lying on its side.

"I thought it would be nice to symbolize the laying down of arms," Ahern said. "The important thing to me was not that it was the last shot of the war, but the beginning of peace."

Bob  
This article appeared in the Boston Globe on Sunday November 5th, an interesting article.

Since the picture is very light, I had to go over the 97th emblem in pencil. This man lives in the town of Belmont, which is next to Arlington. In a series of phone calls, I was able to contact him. He was with the 302nd Infantry regiment.

He was not the soldier who fired the "so-called last shot" however he did design the memorial. He commented that <sup>the</sup> memorial dedication was a very impressive ceremony. That's all for now.

10/11/00

Bob DONESKI