

STEVE CLARK

The years were kind to this old time box

Time is not always kind to the contents of a time box. Mary Studt knows all about that.

"I've seen these boxes opened before, and there's nothing in them but dust," she said.

Studt is a paper conservator at the Virginia Historical Society, so she has opened her fair share of old boxes containing mementos from bygone years.

The other day, she attended the opening of a time box that had been placed inside the base of a flagpole at John Marshall High School in 1950, when the school was in downtown Richmond.

That flagpole was one of two erected on the drill field behind the old school in the spring of 1950. They were memorial flagpoles, dedicated to the memory of former members of the school's Corps of Cadets who

had died in World Wars I and II.

To honor the war dead, eight bronze markers with their names had been produced and the markers were mounted on the bases of the two flagpoles.

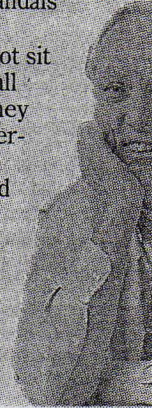
In 1960, when the "new" John Marshall opened, the twin flagpoles and the bronze markers were moved to the new campus on Old Brook Road.

In the ensuing years, the markers fell into disrepair. Several were desecrated by vandals who spray-painted obscenities on them.

This lack of respect for the dead did not sit well with grads of the "old" John Marshall who had been in the Corps of Cadets. They formed an organization that was given permission to remove the markers, have them cleaned and relocated in Hollywood Cemetery, where they will be kept in perpetual care.

When the markers were removed from the flagpoles at the new school last spring, a time box was found inside the base of one flagpole.

"We tried to find out what was in the



box, but nobody came forth to tell us," said Bill Cole, a 1946 graduate of John Marshall.

The old grads finally decided to open the time box, a tarnished copper box just about the right size to hold two six-packs of canned beer.

This past Saturday afternoon, about 50 former cadets from the "old" John Marshall gathered on the landing in front of the Virginia Historical Society on the Boulevard to watch the mysterious box be opened.

Bill Cole's younger brother, Bob Cole, Class of 1949, took charge of cracking open the box with a hammer and a chisel. As he began to hammer, somebody quipped, "Maybe we should call the bomb squad!"

"The bum squad is already here," responded Randy Cosby, Class of 1946.

It took Bob Cole several whacks to pop off the lid.

Mary Studt, who was invited to oversee the operation, looked inside the box. She saw no dust. It was full of mementos, most of them paper

items.

"I'm impressed," she said. "These things held up very well. Obviously the box was well sealed."

The biggest surprise was finding an envelope that had been added in 1960, when the time box was moved to the new campus. The envelope was stuffed with several items, including a shiny quarter minted in 1960.

The 1950 items included a pair of white dress gloves a cadet would have worn for a dress formation.

When Bob Cole pulled out a brass breast plate in need of polishing, he shouted, "Anybody bring a blitz cloth?"

"We all wore out many of those," said Buddy Garrett, Class of 1951.

A detailed list of the items in the box will be made. The items will be placed back into the box, which will be re-sealed and stashed near the memorial bronze markers in Hollywood Cemetery.

Years from now, it's safe to say, somebody will find the box and crack it open out of curiosity.

Seal it real tight, fellows.



JM former cadets are back in spotlight

Robert Johnson and Preston L. Parrish Jr. are raring to turn back the clock. Way back. All the way back to the spring of 1950, when they were seniors at John Marshall High School and the top-ranked cadet officers in the school's Corps of Cadets.

Bob Johnson was cadet first captain. Preston Parrish was cadet captain adjutant. Those leadership positions put them in the spotlight May 30, 1950, when twin flagpoles were dedicated during a Memorial Day ceremony on the parade ground

behind the school, then in downtown Richmond. Eight large, granite markers formed the bases of the two flagpoles. Etched on those markers were the names of former John Marshall cadets who had died in World Wars I and II.

Later this month, in Hollywood Cemetery, Johnson and Parrish will be back in the spotlight when they participate in re-enacting part of the ceremony that took place on the old John Marshall campus on Memorial Day, 1950.

But don't look for either man to show up in the cadet uniform he wore 49 years ago. "I've definitely outgrown the uniform," said Parrish, who still lives in Richmond. "We were a lot trimmer back then," said Johnson, who lives in Wilmington, N.C.

The Hollywood Cemetery ceremony is scheduled for Sunday, May 30 — 49 years to the day after the twin flagpoles and memorial markers were ded-



icated. The markers are being relocated to the cemetery, thanks to the efforts of an organization of former cadets who have gained possession of the markers.

In 1961, when John Marshall's new school opened on Old Brook Road, the flagpoles and the markers were moved to the new campus. Over the years, the markers fell into disrepair. Some were defaced by vandals.

To save them, a group of Richmond-area men formed the John Marshall Corps of Cadets Foundation to raise the funds needed to clean the markers and to move them to a landscaped site in Hollywood.

Johnson, who grew up in South Richmond, and Parrish, who grew up in the East End, went to Hollywood one day this week to check out the site.

"The men who have pulled this

PLEASE SEE CADETS, PAGE B5 ▶



MARK GORMUS/TIMES-DISPATCH

CADETS. Preston L. Parrish Jr. (left) and Robert Johnson stand at the Hollywood Cemetery site where memorials to John Marshall High School cadets will be rededicated.

Ex-JM cadets will be back in spotlight at rededication

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thing together deserve all the credit in the world," said Johnson.

At the 1950 ceremony, Cadet First Capt. Bob Johnson called out by company the names of former cadets who died in World Wars I and II.

To which each cadet company's commander responded: "Died on the field of honor, sir."

At the rededication ceremony in Hollywood, Johnson again will call the roll of the war dead, and at least four of the same cadet company commanders from 1950 will be on hand to respond again.

Looking back on the 1950 ceremony, Johnson said:

"It was an awesome occasion. Classes were dismissed so the entire student body could attend. But those of us who were in the cadet

corps were too young to fully appreciate the significance of the ceremony at the time."

Johnson, who was a math professor at Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, N.C., for 12 years before becoming a financial planner, was involved in a number of other activities in high school.

"But being in the Corps of Cadets was the most significant experience I had in high school," he said. "It has had the most lasting impression on me."

That's why Johnson is coming home on Memorial Day weekend 49 years later to take part in a ceremony honoring former John Marshall cadets who died in war.

"It's a great honor to play a part," he said. "I wouldn't miss it for the world. I just can't believe 49 years could go by so fast."

War memorial markers to be rededicated

Ceremony at cemetery set today

The John Marshall Corps of Cadets Memorial Foundation will rededicate eight war memorial markers in a ceremony at 2 p.m. today in Hollywood Cemetery.

The granite markers originally were attached to the bases of two memorial flagpoles erected in 1950 on the parade ground at the old John Marshall High School in downtown Richmond.

Inscribed with the names of former members of the school's Corps of Cadets who had died in World Wars I and II, the markers were dedicated May 30, 1950. Several years later, the names of former cadets who died in the Korean War were added to the markers.

In 1960, the flagpoles and the markers were moved to the new John Marshall campus on Old Brook Road, where the markers eventually fell into disrepair.

Last spring, a group of former cadets got permission to take possession of the markers. They were removed from the flagpoles at the high school and thoroughly cleaned. And the name of a former cadet who died in Vietnam was added.

In recent weeks, the markers were placed at a site in Hollywood Cemetery, where they can be cared for in perpetuity.

Other Memorial Day observances in the Richmond area today and tomorrow included the following:

Today

■ Edward Bates, a Confederate soldier whose grave had no marker designating his military affiliation, will be honored in a ceremony at 9 a.m. at Oakwood Cemetery. The ceremony will include a uniformed honor guard, military gun salute, wreath-laying and unveiling of a new marker.

■ Three Confederate soldiers who died during the Civil War — R. Marion, D.J. Briggs and A.C. Legg — will be honored in a ceremony at 10:30 a.m. at Hollywood Cemetery. Grave markers for each man will be unveiled. The ceremony is sponsored by F Company, 21st Virginia Volunteer Infantry.

Tomorrow

■ A 21-gun salute and the playing of taps will mark Virginia American Legion's Richmond Area Memorial

Day Ceremony at 10 a.m. at the Virginia War Memorial, 621 S. Belvidere St. Roger L. Clevinger of Grundy, the state American Legion commander, will address the gathering, and veterans organizations will place wreaths at the statue of Memory.

■ Vietnam POW and retired naval officer Paul Galanti of Richmond will address the annual Memorial Day ceremony at the Virginia Veterans Cemetery in Amelia County at 10 a.m. Sponsored by the Veterans of Foreign Wars' Post 7819 in Crewe, the event will include the presentation of wreaths by veterans groups. Post 7819 members also will distribute small American flags.

■ American Legion Post 242 in Sandston will hold its Memorial Day ceremony at 10 a.m. at the Seven Pines National Cemetery. Henrico County Sheriff A.D. "Toby" Mathews will speak at the event, which will include a wreath-laying and the playing of taps by a Highland Springs High School student.

■ In Petersburg at 10 a.m., Lt. Col. Bert Strange, Fort Lee chaplain, will be the guest speaker at the Blandford Cemetery Memorial Day ceremony. American Legion Post 2 will be the host. Blandford Cemetery is on Crater Road in Petersburg.

■ Hollywood Cemetery in Richmond — the burial site of two U.S. presidents, 22 Confederate generals and many others — will commemorate its 150th anniversary, beginning at 11 a.m. Dr. Peter S. Charmichael, professor of history at Western Carolina University, will share some of the cemetery's highlights. Afterward, the Keystone Jazz Band will play.

■ A Memorial Day service will be held at the Confederate Memorial Chapel, 2900 Grove Ave., from 10 to 11 a.m., including re-enactors, music and speakers. The event is sponsored by Lee-Jackson Camp No. 1, Sons of Confederate Veterans.

■ At Fort Harrison National Cemetery, two miles south of Route 5 and eight miles south of Richmond, the Richmond National Battlefield Park is co-sponsoring a Memorial Day program to commemorate the services of America's soldiers. The event, which is co-sponsored by the Veterans Administration, will begin at noon. Mitch Bowman, director of Virginia's Civil War Trails system, will speak.

Memorial Day holiday schedule

Here are closings and schedule changes for tomorrow:

Federal government

Federal offices:

Post offices: Closed.

Virginia

State offices: Closed.

Richmond metropolitan area

Colleges: University of Richmond, Virginia Commonwealth University, Virginia Union University, J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College, John Tyler Community College and Randolph-Macon College closed. Virginia State University open for registration.

County and city offices: Closed.

County, city schools: Closed.

Courts: Closed.

DMV: Customer service centers closed.

Libraries: Richmond, Chesterfield, Hanover, Henrico, Powhatan, Goochland closed.

Traffic, parking: Meters will not be enforced.

Trash: Richmond and Henrico collections will be a day late.

Goochland and Powhatan transfer stations open. Hanover transfer stations and landfill open. Chesterfield transfer station closed. Central Virginia Waste Management Authority pickups will be a day late.

Transportation

GRIC: Buses will run on a Sunday/holiday schedule, except no bus service to Henrico County.

CARE: (Transportation of handicapped, disabled and the elderly) Closed.

Business, commerce

Stock market: Closed.

Banks: Closed.

ABC stores: Closed.

Major shopping malls: Open.

■ The J.E.B. Stuart Camp — Sons of Confederate Veterans will honor about 250 Confederate soldiers buried at Huguenot Springs Confederate Cemetery at 2 p.m. Along with period music, events will include a Confederate artillery battery, a color guard, a volley of musketry and a laying of wreaths at the monument in the cemetery.

"Died on the field of honor, sir!"

COMPANY COMMANDER
RESPONSE TO READING OF NAMES OF WAR DEAD



MARK GORMUS/TIMES-DISPATCH

REMEMBER. Eight granite markers, known collectively as the John Marshall Cadet War Memorial, were rededicated yesterday.

800 rededicate memorial

John Marshall markers go to Hollywood Cemetery

BY STEVE CLARK

TIMES-DISPATCH STAFF WRITER

Mission accomplished.

After spending hours and hours attending planning meetings where they spent a lot of time squabbling over details, a group of men who were in John Marshall High School's famed Corps of Cadets in the "old-school" days have completed the job they began more than a year ago.

They have successfully relocated memorial markers bearing the names of 76 John Marshall cadets who died in wars.

The eight granite markers, known collectively as the John Marshall Cadet War Memorial, were rededicated yesterday afternoon during a ceremony in Hollywood Cemetery. The ceremony was held 49 years to the day after the markers were dedicated on John Marshall's drill field when the school was in downtown Richmond.

Several John Marshall graduates, who, as stu-

dent cadets took part in the original dedication ceremony on May 30, 1950, participated in yesterday's rededication ceremony.

One was Robert Johnson Jr., of Wilmington, N.C.

A 1950 graduate of John Marshall, Bob Johnson was cadet first captain his senior year. During the 1950 dedication ceremony, he called the names of the war dead by company, and each company commander responded:

"Died on the field of honor, sir!"

Yesterday, they replayed that scene.

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800 rededicate John Marshall memorial

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Johnson again called the names of the war dead by company, and former cadets representing each company responded loud and clear:

"Died on the field of honor, sir!"

Four companies were represented by the same men who had been their company commanders in 1950. They were Coleman H. Krane, Company A; Norman F. Pohlig, Company B; Richard A. Neely, Company C, and Addison E. Slayton Jr., Company E.

"None of us could have imagined in 1950 that 49 years later — to the day — the Lord would have blessed us to repeat the ceremony," Johnson said.

The crowd, estimated at some 800, sat in lawn chairs under the shade of trees on a rising slope overlooking the site where the granite markers have been embedded in a bank shored up by a new stone wall.

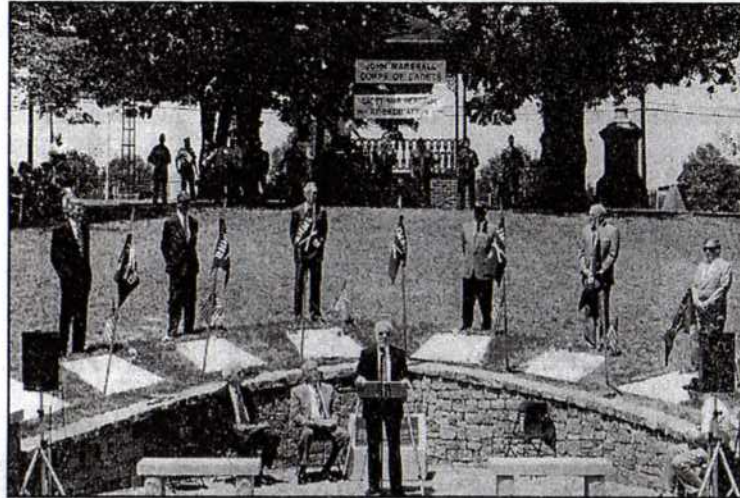
For the National Anthem, a tape-recording of the anthem as it was played by John Marshall's band in 1955 was played over the loudspeaker system. The recording was provided by former cadet Bobby Joyce, who was in the band in 1955.

"The recording was at our band's annual spring concert at the high school," Joyce said. "They made records of the concerts. I kept the records and later made tape recordings of them."

Joyce recalled that the Corps' band in those years had 50 members.

"A strong fifty," he said with a grin.

The keynote speech was given by the Rev. Robert Bluford Jr., pastor of Overbrook Presbyterian Church. Bluford is a 1936 John Marshall



MARK GORMUS/TIMES-DISPATCH

TRIBUTE. The Rev. Robert Bluford Jr., pastor of Overbrook Presbyterian Church and member of the Corps' band, gave the keynote speech.

graduate who was in the Corps' band, in which he "learned to blow a horn from scratch."

When Bluford was a child in Richmond, his parents always took the family to the city's Memorial Day parade, which was a major event. Bluford recalled that large numbers of people lined the sidewalks, and the biggest cheers were for the cadets from Virginia Military Institute and John Marshall High School.

"None of the other groups had straighter lines or marched with a better cadence than did the cadets from VMI and John Marshall," he said.

For several decades, the high school's Corps of Cadets marched in the Memorial Day parade, which always ended in Hollywood Cemetery.

"So a more appropriate place for this memorial could not have been found," he said. "Here, future

generations can ponder the meaning of sacrifice."

Bluford said the men whose names are on the markers "sacri-

ficed all they had to give." He noted that many former cadets who fought in combat often ask of the ones who did not come home: Why them, and not me?

"Only God knows the answer to that," Bluford said.

Before and after the ceremony, many people walked up to the markers to find the names of family members or close friends from high school days.

Woody Paris, Class of '35, found the names of the two Thrasher brothers with whom he had been good friends. Thomas Lee Thrasher Jr., Class of '37, is on Company D's marker. Jack White Thrasher, Class of '40, is on Company E's marker.

Both were killed in World War II.

"They were two fine boys," Paris said. "We grew up together in the same part of town in the North Side area."

Former cadet Andrew J. Winston, Class of '38, presided over the ceremony.

The markers originally were the bases of two flagpoles that were erected at the old school in 1950. At that time they were inscribed with the names of former cadets who died in World Wars I and II.

Later, names of those who died in Korea were added. And recently, the name of one who died in Vietnam was added.

The flagpoles and the markers were moved to the new John Marshall on Old Brook Road in 1960. Over the years, the markers fell into disrepair and were defaced by vandals.

Last spring, a group of former cadets gained possession of the markers and organized a committee to plan what to do with them.

"It's been a long, difficult project," said William E. "Bill" Cole, Class of '46, who served as the committee's treasurer.

"But it was worth every minute we spent on it."







