Memorial Day 2014

This year’s Memorial Day program theme will be Honoring and remembering the 70th Anniversary of the Invasion of Europe, known to us as D-Day, June 6th, 1944.

I had the great pleasure of visiting Paris and Normandy last year and had the very emotional opportunity to stand on Omaha Beach in Normandy and visit the cemetery. Standing there on that beach listening to the waves, I tried to imagine those young men, carrying all that equipment, knowing the dangers ahead of them. There was also a very intense feeling of loss as I walked through the cemetery.

The reason for this notice is, as many of you know, 2014 will be the 70th anniversary of the D-Day invasion. I want to make this Memorial Day special, and would very much like everyone to join us on Memorial Day, Monday, May 26, 2014.

We have invited the present Consul General Fabien Fiecshi, to join us. In November 2008 we had the great honor of having Deputy Consul General of France Henry Bertrand-Pradviel attend our Veterans Day Ceremony as we celebrated the 90th Anniversary of the signing of the Armistice, ending the hostilities in World War – 1. At that time an invitation to the Consul General was transcribed into the beautiful French language by the Burlington High School French class.

We have also invited an author (Walter Ford Carter) who has written a book about the loss of his father 11 days after his landing on the beaches of Normandy. Many years later, he found his father’s unit, the 29th Infantry Division, and joined them on a journey to France for a reunion, and stood on the very spot where a burst of gunfire rang out and killed Dr. Norval Carter of Huntington, West Virginia, Captain in the United States Army. He died right there at the edge of an orchard at 5:00am on June 17, 1944 while trying to save the life of another wounded soldier.

We have other things planned for Memorial Day and will add them to the program as each is confirmed.

Bob Hogan, Director
Burlington Veterans Services