



Daily Tribune staff photo by Dick Hunt

Ferndale resident Florence Warren's World War II Army uniform is one of the many artifacts on display in the Ferndale Historical Museum's In Memoriam Room. The museum will hold an open house on Memorial Day.

Memorial Day observed at Ferndale museum

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FERNDALE — Those who prefer to leave the balloons and politicians at home on Monday can join the celebration here.

Ferndale prefers to observe Memorial Day in the spirit in which it was intended, honoring those who fought to preserve our freedoms, said Ferndale Memorial Association's executive secretary, Barbara Earl.

"Our parade is a little more solemn for that reason. There'll be no balloons, no political campaigning or passing out of candy and flags," Earl said.

Instead, she and Ivy Schaeffer, also a director of the memorial association, will read the 89 names of Ferndale's current and former service persons who have died since last year, at the city's memorial service following Monday's parade.

Resident Milton Merry, a fighter pilot based in England during World War II, will be the main speaker at the 11:30 a.m. service on Memorial Mall, across from Fire Station No. 1.

Residents will have a chance to see and touch Ferndale's history, both military and civilian, when the Historical Museum holds an open house after the memorial service.

The museum has a special In Memoriam Room dedicated to war memorabilia from World War I, when the Ferndale Memorial Association was founded, to the present.

On hand are such items as German soldiers' helmets from World War I, hand-knitted helmet liners and vests worn by Ferndale soldiers during the same war, and several uniforms including one worn by Ferndale's

first Women's Army Corp member, teacher Florence Warren. Also on view is a photo of Warren in her World War II uniform.

There's also a very narrow wool, sailor's suit from the same era — with what appears to be an 18-inch waist — and a fur-collared, leather bomber jacket.

A photo on the wall behind Florence Warren's uniform shows a WWII, one-man Japanese suicide submarine captured during the war. It toured the country and made an appearance in Ferndale, said Kulick.

A display case also holds an empty Lucky Strike cigarettes package, with a special WWII design and the motto, "Lucky Strike goes to war."

In a book of newspaper articles is the full front page of the Honolulu Star-Bulletin from December 7, 1941.

The 5-inch headline screams "War! Oahu Bombed by Japanese Planes."

Not to forget the civilians back home in Ferndale, there's also a photo of then-mayor Carl Forsythe and two others holding a flag presented to the city for being the first in the country to buy a Series E bond, said Kulick.

A white, WWII vintage air raid warden's hat also hangs among the soldiers' helmets in the Memoriam Room. An old, metal-capped eyebrow pencil in one glass display case is a curious WWII artifact. But it's missing a companion piece, a bottle of leg makeup, said Kulick.

"When women couldn't get nylons, they would use leg makeup, and an eyebrow pencil to draw the (stockings') seams up the back of the leg," Kulick said with a laugh.

"Some of the leg makeup was made here in Ferndale," she added.