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Frank Buckles, the last American who served in World War I, died Feb. 27 at the age of 110. He was born in Missouri, grew up in Oklahoma, and enlisted in World War I at the age of 16, after lying about his age.

It is stories like Buckles' that the City is trying to memorialize through the Operation Remember and Bricks for Veterans projects. That recognition may be the veteran's name, branch of service, engraved seal, and the name of the conflict, all engraved on a brick at Veterans Memorial Park via the City's Bricks for Veterans, or it could be an interview conducted by volunteers through the City's Operation Remember. As of today, 1,235 veteran bricks have been sold and 66 veteran interviews are archived.

With the expertise of community volunteers Dale Dexheimer, Milton Gibson and Gary Burton, the City has been compiling video interviews with military veterans since the spring of 2010. Twenty-four of those 66 interviews were with Army veterans, 21 from Air Force veterans, and 15 from the Navy. Seven were from the Marine Corps and one was from the United States Coast Guard. Fourteen of the 66 were awarded the Purple Heart. Of the 66 interviewees, 63 were men and three were women. Twenty-seven served in Vietnam, 23 in World War II, 10 in Korea, and six in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Interviews for Operation Remember follow closely with the guidelines of the Library of Congress Veterans History Project (go to <http://www.loc.gov/vets/questions.html> for suggested interview questions). The veteran is interviewed, then he/she submits pictures (one from their time in service and a current picture) to the City.

Thanks to the Operation Remember informational kiosk that was unveiled in November 2010 during the fourth annual Military Veteran Tribute, visitors to Burleson Veterans Memorial Park can type in the name of a veteran on the kiosk keyboard. In return they receive the location of that veteran's brick as well as the veteran's name, branch of service, conflict (World War I, World War II, Korea, Vietnam, Gulf War, Iraq, Afghanistan, Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation Enduring Freedom, and more), years of service and birthplace. If an interview has been submitted to the City, a brief clip of the interview plays on the kiosk. The interviews are available on the City website, www.burlesontx.com and are also available through the Burleson Public Library's public Internet computers.

Go to the City website and click on “Operation Remember/Veterans” in the center column and click on the “Veteran Search” link.

The local Veterans History Project was started in 2003 by members of the Burleson Heritage Foundation. J.W. Arnold and up to half a dozen members of the foundation interviewed local veterans.

More recognition came in November 2007 when community volunteer Betty Shelton and business partners Rocky Bransom and Jim Garrett worked together on the Burleson Bricks for Veterans project at Renfro Square. Bransom and Garrett, of B&G Development (Renfro Square), agreed to replace the walkway around the fountain with bricks engraved with the names of military veterans. The trio expected to place 400 veteran bricks. That number soon burgeoned into the 1,235 veteran bricks sold as of March 2, 2011. There are approximately 115 slots remaining for more bricks.

In November 2007, the City helped host the first Military Veteran Tribute at Renfro Square. Shortly after the 2007 tribute, the staff at the Burleson Public Library took over the Bricks for Veterans project, and still have that responsibility today. The City adopted Veterans Memorial Park in 2009.

Bricks for Veterans can be purchased through Amanda Goshey at the Burleson Public Library for \$45. Go to the City website, www.burlesontx.com, Departments, Library, and Bricks for Veterans. Instructions on how to order a brick, as well as an online order form, are available on the City website.

The memories of military veterans are preserved thanks to the Bricks for Veterans Project, volunteers who are willing to conduct the interviews, the City’s Operation Remember program, and the Library of Congress Veteran History Project. Men and women from all branches - the United States Navy, Coast Guard, Army, Air Force and Marine Corps are included. The interviews are submitted to Operation Remember as well as to the Library of Congress website (<http://www.loc.gov/vets/>).

The Library of Congress’ Veterans History Project was created in 2000 to record the memories of veterans of World War I, World War II, the Korean War, Vietnam War, Persian Gulf War, and the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan.

To purchase a brick for Veterans Memorial Park, call Amanda Goshey at 817-426-9206. To tell a veteran’s story, call the city secretary’s office, 817-426-9661, and request an interview.