

Address delivered by Alison Adler
daughter of Alexander Adler
at the rededication of the American Jewish Veterans Memorial
on November 13, 2016

Exactly eight years ago on this Veterans Day weekend, my sister, Linda, and I stood here with our father, Alexander Adler, as the American Jewish Veterans Memorial was dedicated.

That day marked the culmination of a long dream which finally turned into reality.

My father and his fellow Jewish War Veteran Post 58 colleagues had dreamed for many, many years of this tribute to all Jewish men and women who served in our Nation's military. They talked about it incessantly. Over the years several attempts at funding fell through and eventually the concept just faded away.

But not in Alex Adler's mind. The thought never left him.

He died in June, 2010 at the age of 90. But I will use his own words from an interview he gave to the Gazette newspaper back at the time of the dedication to tell his story.

"I read that up to 1,000 veterans of my World War II generation are dying every day. I realized that if this sculpture was going to go from concept to reality, I would have to step in now. I'll be 89 years old in December."

And so, step in he did knowing that the sand was rapidly going out of his own hourglass. He underwrote, in its entirety, the creation of this sculpture which we rededicate today. And he was involved in its production every step of the way.

And so, to go on with his own words:

"I do think that most people, both Jewish and non-Jewish, are not aware that Jewish participation in the military campaigns of this country stretch back to the Revolutionary War and Colonial times. I am hoping that this sculpture will spark an awareness and a desire to learn more about the subject among those who view the sculpture – particularly among children."

He then went on to say that he also wanted the memorial to serve as an expression of gratitude.

"From the bottle of my heart, I wanted this sculpture to be a vehicle to express our gratitude and appreciation to past and present generations of American Jewish men and women who have contributed to the freedom and liberty we enjoy today."

I know my father is here with us today in spirit and is thrilled at this new, more visible and enhanced location for this memorial. And he, his two daughters and son-in-law are full of gratitude to JWV Post 692, the Bender Jewish Community Center, his own Post 58 and the many individuals who came together to make this possible.

Daddy, today belongs to you.