17th Annual American Legion Veterans' Day Race

Thursday, 11 Nov 1954 at Legion Hall in Uptown Butte -- Armistice Day Renamed Veterans' Day.

Armistice Day is now Veterans' Day by recent Congressional mandate in order to explicitly honor men and women who served in all previous U.S. military conflicts. The term "Armistice" led some to the exclusionary view that the holiday honored only World War I vets. Butte's Rev. Frank L. Harrington also clarified for those attending memorial services that the Veterans' Day primarily honors living combat veterans, and that the Memorial Day holiday is when we pay tribute to those who gave their lives defending the United States.

Armistice Day was commonly observed in the USA, including Butte, starting on 11 November 1919, but it was not made a federal holiday until 1938, which was four years after Butte's American Legion sponsored its first annual race on that day.

Butte's observance of the newly named holiday remained the same, featuring the customary bomb salute, open houses, foot race, parade, memorial service, and dances in the Public Library, the VFW Building and nearby on a portion of Arizona St.

At 11 minutes to 11 a.m. Legionnaires began firing an 11 mortar round salute from the corner of Broadway and Main. The 3 elevens symbolized the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month when the WWI armistice was signed, ending what had been hoped to be "The war to end all wars." Unfortunately, US troops have since observed six Armistice Days while again engaged in war.

The race was started at 11 a.m., immediately following the final mortar blast. The first finisher was Butte High's Wendell Glenn who was timed in 16:05. Glenn had finish second in the race each of the previous two years, and according to the Montana Standard report "trained faithfully throughout the past year for the race and had his heart set on winning it." After finishing, Glenn collapsed from fatigue, but then quickly recovered.

Glenn's teammate, Stanley Lode, placed second and together the two gathered all the team points (11) that the Purples would need, or get, to retain temporary position of the Jack Pachico Trophy, which travels annually with the team that wins it, and which is also the object of an ongoing 11-year contest to decide final ownership. This was the second consecutive year that Butte Public enjoyed a 1-point (11 to 10) victory over Butte Private, and those points bumped the Bulldogs' 7-year point lead to 76-71. A minimum of 116 points are needed for one team to ultimately retire the trophy at the end of the eleventh year.

There were 30 listed finishers (21 from Central and 9 from Butte High).

Team Scores: Butte High, 11; Butte Central, 10.

HS Boy's 2.7 mile (pictured from left): Race Chairman C. Owen Smithers; 1, Wendell Glenn (with Pachico Cup), BH, 16:05; 2, Stanley Lode, BH; 3, Jim Stanaway, BC; 4, Tom Monaghan, BC; 5, Dennis Winters, BC; 6, Vincent Garvey, BC; Race Co-Chairman Martin Kearney.

Additional finishers:
BC: Joe D'Arcy, Bill Hanley, Bernie Harrington, Donald Austin, Dan Rogers, Roger Doherty, Jerry McGivern, Tony Craig, Jim Lynch, Tim Sheehan, Jim Fernlon, Ernie Busby, John O'Mara, Emmett Quinn, John Kingston, Bob Robinson, John Nuckols.

BH: Eugene Kalis, Dick Pohto, Bob Morgan, Doug Carriger, Ralph Bingaman, Wayne Marshall, Daniel Hawke.