

Ring Melt held at West Point for first time

Worn smooth, the crass mass of brass bears the scars of a long life. The crest that once adorned the side has long since disappeared as have the words etched around the stone.

Lying on a placard beside the name of its owner and his cadet photo, the class ring is a testament to the life its wearer lived. Now, it is time for the ring to begin a new journey, its worn edges melted away and the gold used to craft rings that will carry the Class of 2020 through their lives.

The West Point Association of Graduates hosted its annual Ring Melt Ceremony Jan. 25 where class rings from old grads living and deceased were donated and melted down into a gold brick that is used as part of the gold to craft the next classes rings.

Fifty-five rings were donated this year and the gold will be used to craft the rings for the Class of 2020, which they will receive Ring Weekend in August.

"This ceremony was surreal," Class of 2020 Cadet Emma Powless said. "I really wish the whole Class of 2020 could have seen what went into it and how it was executed. I think it is important to know what goes into our rings and how much it means to people to have their rings go into our classes'. I think, for the most part, people understand the meaning of a class ring, but I think today ties it all together and you get to see the physical representation of what is going into them."

The ring melt has occurred every year since 2001, but this year marked the first time it has been held at the U.S. Military Academy. The ceremony started at Eisenhower Hall where either a representative from the family donating the ring or someone on the family's behalf placed the ring into a crucible. A few ounces of legacy gold, which was extracted from last year's melt, was also included which ties together each of the 18 melts that have occurred. The rings were then taken to be melted.[READ MORE...](#)