



Fall/Winter
2022

Blue Star Families Hero Tree

NOW ON VIEW

★

The Commonwealth's Pearl Harbor Day Ceremony

DECEMBER 7, 2022



Now Open in the Veterans' Art Gallery

My Art Is My Portrait

A native of Coeburn in Wise County, Charlie McConnell grew up with a passion and talent for drawing and painting. Encouraged by his aunt, who was also an artist, McConnell pursued the arts as a hobby, although he did not consider it as a possible career path.

McConnell was drafted immediately after graduation from East Tennessee State University. His superior officers, once they became aware of his degree and his talent, both in basic training and in officer candidate school, put him to work creating military paintings.

"I was told to paint a combat scene of Vietnam," notes McConnell. "This happened both during basic training and in Officers' Candidate School. Although, once in Vietnam there was obviously little time for art."

After his service ended, McConnell struggled to find his way. He initially tried to pursue a master's degree in fine arts, but that path became financially impractical.

McConnell eventually found his way to work for the Wise County Redevelopment and Housing Authority, where he was able to marry his artistic talents with support for the community in which he was raised. McConnell's art is not only his portrait, but also a portrait of *Virginia*, and a portrait of *moments in time preserved for Memorial visitors today*.



The exhibition of McConnell's art includes (clockwise) *Me and My Old Guitar*, *Cloud Over the Valley*, and *Low Coal*.

"You will see common themes in my work — my love of family and friends, my family's deep roots in the life, culture, and landscape of Southwest Virginia, and my work serving my fellow Virginians."

— Charlie McConnell



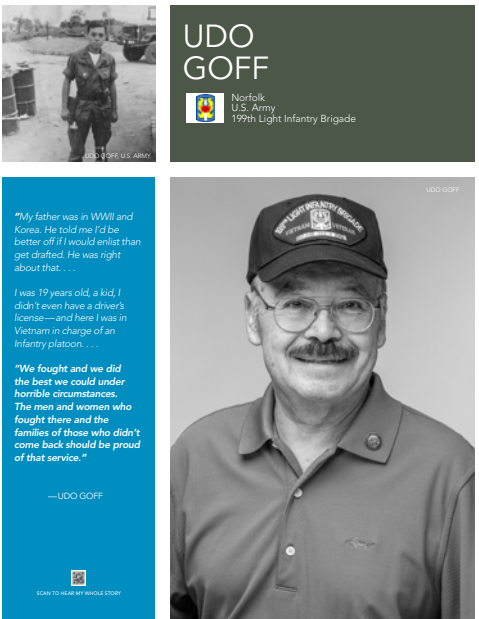
Fifty Vietnam War veterans from across the Commonwealth are highlighted in candid photographs, in contemporary video, and — most poignantly — in their own words.

50 Years Beyond THE VIETNAM VETERAN EXPERIENCE

Exhibition opening on January 27,
the 50th anniversary of
the signing of the Paris Peace Accords

SPONSORS

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War Heroes' Initiatives Scholarship Fund



The Legacy of Memory



Our vision is that a global audience will recognize the valor and sacrifice of Virginia military veterans in the pursuit of liberty, democracy, justice, and peace for all.

A simple marble plaque installed in the nave of a 12th-century stone Romanesque church in Ver-sur-Mer, France, is the perfect embodiment of that vision. In recognition and appreciation for the relief and restoration efforts provided by the Garden Club of Virginia to the Normandy village of Ver-sur-Mer, the sons and husbands of Garden Club of Virginia members are memorialized for their service during World War II.

Recently, Virginia War Memorial volunteer Bill Wheeler researched each of these 30 individuals — individuals wanting to live, but willing to die for the cause of liberty. Their stories, and photographs, when available, are now on our website and in a book recently published by the Virginia War Memorial Foundation.

There are nearly 12,000 other names etched on our Shrine of Memory — names of Virginia’s sons and daughters who died in combat in World War II, Korea, Vietnam, the Persian Gulf, and the Global War on Terrorism. And whether their remains rest in hometown cemeteries or overseas, it is here at the Virginia War Memorial that the stories behind their names are preserved.

Through exhibitions, educational programs, lectures, and documentaries, we strive to preserve the stories of veterans who made the ultimate sacrifice, to honor all veterans and active-duty military, and to inspire love of country.

I invite you to join us in this mission. Visit the Memorial. Listen to our livestreams. Watch our documentaries. Make plans to place personal items here — photographs, letters, military-related documents, uniforms, and other objects.

And please, make a year-end gift to our operating fund. It is only with your continued support that we can continue this important work. On behalf of the 700,000 veterans who call Virginia home, we are grateful for your support.

Pam

Pamela R. Seay
PRESIDENT
VIRGINIA WAR MEMORIAL FOUNDATION



TOP: The plaque in the 12th-century Church of St. Martin in Ver-sur-Mer commemorating the gift from the Garden Club of Virginia for the restoration of the stained glass windows in the nave of the church following military action on D-Day.

INSET: *Memory* — Leo Friedlander’s monumental sculpture of a grieving woman keeping watch over the eternal flame of patriotism at the Virginia War Memorial.



Hill of Heroes flag display, held each June

January 27
New Exhibition Opening
“50 Years Beyond: The Vietnam Veteran Experience”

March 11
K-9 Veterans Day

March 14
Leadership in America Speaker Series
Jan Scruggs, Founder of the Vietnam Wall
Jan Scruggs was a wounded and decorated Vietnam War veteran, having served in the 199th Light Infantry Brigade of the U.S. Army. He conceived of the Vietnam Wall as a memorial for healing the national psyche after a long and controversial war. Scruggs will speak as part of our celebrated speaker series, Leadership in America. Light reception precedes event.

March 17
Opening Night — *War in Pieces*
Join us for opening night of four one-act plays written by military veterans. These playwrights created their work through our Mighty Pen Project writing class. Each play highlights a significant moment in the veteran experience. Produced in partnership with Virginia Repertory Theatre. Plays run daily March 17–19 and March 23–26.

May 3
Leadership in America Speaker Series
Alex Kershaw — *Against All Odds: A True Story of Courage and Survival in World War II*
Alex Kershaw is the widely acclaimed, prize-winning, *New York Times* best-selling author of 11 books, including *The Longest Winter* and *The Bedford Boys*. His latest book tells the story of four men — all from the same unit — awarded the Medal of Honor for their courage during World War II. Light reception and book signing follow the lecture.



The Memorial Is on the Move

Announcing insider trips to some of Virginia’s most remarkable destinations.
Visit VaWarMemorial.org/insidertrips for details.

- JUNE** — Fort Eustis
- AUGUST** — Hampton Roads (HR Naval Museum, MacArthur Memorial)
- OCTOBER** — Fort Monroe

May 29
Commonwealth of Virginia’s Memorial Day Ceremony

June 23
Hill of Heroes Day
Every June, 12,000 American flags are placed on the hillside of the Virginia War Memorial representing the nearly 12,000 names engraved on the Shrine of Memory. This coming June, after volunteers finish placing the flags in the ground, the Virginia War Memorial Foundation will host a fun and patriotic festival for children and families. The event will include live music, K-9 demonstrations, interactive exhibits, giveaways, tactile learning opportunities, military vehicles to explore, food trucks, crafts, scavenger hunts, and more.

September 11
Commonwealth’s 9/11 Patriot Day Ceremony

September 16
National POW/MIA Recognition Day

September 22
Sips on the Skyline
The Virginia War Memorial Foundation is proud to host the 5th Annual Sips on the Skyline, a salute to Virginia Spirits Month. This evening celebration features delicious food, great music, creative craft cocktails designed by Virginia’s best distilleries (many of them veteran-owned), and of course, the dramatic skyline views of downtown Richmond and the James River.

October 24
Leadership in America Speaker Series
One Week in October — Moderated panel
October 2023 will be the 40th anniversary of the Beirut bombing. In the barracks bombing, 241 U.S. Military personnel were killed, including 220 Marines. The incident was the deadliest single-day death toll for the United States Marine Corps since the Battle of Iwo Jima.

That same week, citing danger to the U.S. citizens in Grenada, President Ronald Reagan ordered nearly 2,000 U.S. troops onto the island, where they soon found themselves facing opposition from Grenadan armed forces and groups of Cuban military engineers who were in Grenada to repair and expand the island’s airport.

November 11
The Commonwealth of Virginia’s Veterans Day Ceremony

December 7
Commonwealth of Virginia’s Pearl Harbor Day Ceremony



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Vietnam Veterans in Virginia



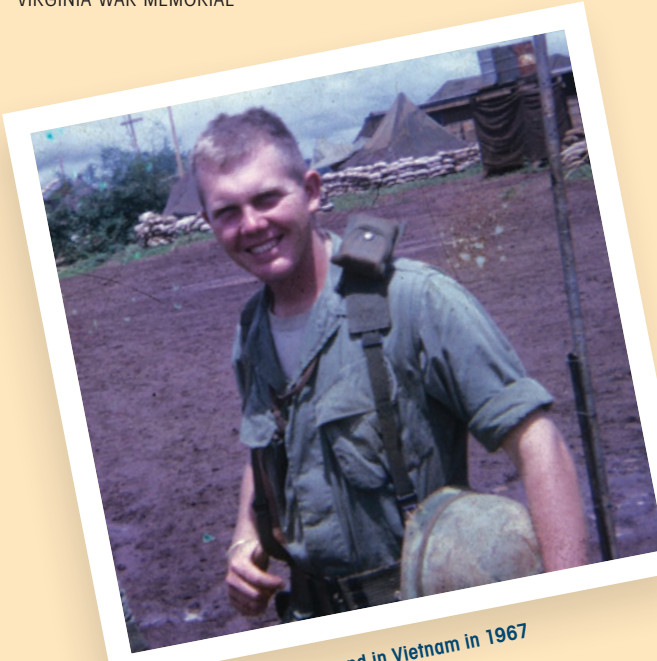
This summer and fall, the Virginia War Memorial staff has been on a journey to photograph and interview Vietnam veterans from around the state in preparation for our upcoming exhibit: *50 Years Beyond: The Vietnam Veteran*

Experience. We have teamed up with veteran photographer Laura Hatcher, USN (Ret.), and videographer Pamela Vines, USA (Ret.), who have captured some terrific images and interviews. Our sessions have taken us from here in Richmond at the Memorial to Hampton Roads and then to Alexandria in Northern Virginia. We have one more remaining session in Roanoke at the end of November. Then, we will prepare to unveil this wonderful new exhibit on January 27, 2023, marking the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Paris Peace Accords.

This project has been extremely rewarding thus far and is quite possibly one of the most rewarding endeavors I've ever personally been a part of. As the son of a Vietnam Veteran, I know the importance of preserving the history of those who served during the Vietnam War. I did not expect, however, to be so moved by the stories I have heard and the memories shared. I have laughed, shed tears, and everything in between. This is exactly the type of work we need to be doing here at the Virginia War Memorial and exactly the time to do it.

I am very grateful for the support of the Virginia War Memorial Foundation for making this project possible, and I'm certain that the veterans, their families, and the general public will be thrilled with the exhibit when it opens at the beginning of next year.

Dr. Clay Mountcastle
DIRECTOR
VIRGINIA WAR MEMORIAL



Jack Mountcastle of Richmond in Vietnam in 1967



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[VaWarMemorial.org/get-involved/
sign-up-for-newsletter](https://VaWarMemorial.org/get-involved/sign-up-for-newsletter)



Our Newest Board Member: Lacyn Barton

Lacyn Barton has been president of the Woody and Nelsen firms since 2019, and is Woody Funeral Home's first female president since the firm was established in 1905. She has worked in the funeral profession for 18 years, serving as a director in communities in seven different states. A job opportunity with Nelsen Funeral Home brought her to Richmond from Pittsburgh in 2015.

After a near fatal horse-riding accident, Barton, a world champion mounted shooter, was inspired to pursue a career in funeral service to help people who found themselves in that same dire situation. She earned a degree in mortuary science from Arapahoe Community College, a bachelor's degree in agricultural business administration from Fort Lewis College and an MBA in healthcare management from Regis University, all in Colorado.

A citizen of the Chickasaw Nation, Barton received tremendous support from her Native American nation to complete her education, and she has been grateful to provide funeral services for many different Native American groups across the country.

Barton is also an accomplished artist whose memorial portraits are displayed across the United States, most notably at the distinguished Joseph Gawler's Sons Funeral Home in Washington, D.C., which has participated in state funerals for decades.

Joseph A. Weinberg Memorial Store

Gift giving can be a challenge.

We are making our shopping experience easier than ever with online purchasing. Whether you're a first-time visitor or a longtime supporter, the Joseph A. Weinberg Memorial Store has mementos for everyone. Seasonal items have hit the shelves: view our selection of ornaments, children's gifts, and cold weather gear. For the veterans in your life, challenge coins and service hats make the perfect gift. From books and home goods to art from our Veterans Art Gallery, there's something special for every member of the family. All proceeds from purchases made through the Joseph A. Weinberg Memorial Store fund the continuing educational mission of the Virginia War Memorial Foundation.

Shop our entire inventory online at VaWarMemorial.org.
Shipping and local pickup options are available.



The Virginia War Memorial Foundation Challenge Coin is one of our most popular items. Order yours today.

Shown at actual size: 1.75"



The Walkway of Honor

There are heroes among us worthy of recognition. There are people we have lost who should be remembered. There are dates that should be commemorated. You can purchase a brick to be placed on our Walkway of Honor for any of these (or other) reasons. Your brick purchase directly benefits our core mission programs.

To order a memorial brick, contact Annie Warman at awarman@vawarmemorial.org or (804) 786-2176.



OUR MISSION

To preserve the stories of veterans who made the ultimate sacrifice, to honor all veterans and active-duty military, and to inspire love of country through education.

OUR VISION

A global audience will recognize the valor and sacrifice of Virginia's military veterans in the pursuit of liberty, democracy, justice, and peace for all.



The Mighty Pen Project

CONGRATULATIONS to Robert Waldruff, Charles Williamson, David Aldridge, David Robbins (instructor), and Rachel Landsee (pictured above) for being nominated for BEST ORIGINAL WORK for the 2022 Artsie Award. The nomination was for their one-act plays, comprising *War In Pieces*. The Artsie Awards are given by the Richmond Theatre Critics Circle (RTCC) to recognize excellence in theatrical work produced in Richmond. This year's *War in Pieces* festival will be produced by VirginiaRep and will be presented on our stage at the Virginia War Memorial.

The Virginia War Memorial Foundation is proud to offer tuition-free creative writing instruction to veterans. Visit our website to register for a 2023 class.

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OPEN: Monday – Saturday: 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. Sunday: noon – 4 p.m. Shrine of Memory: 5 a.m. to midnight daily	CLOSED: New Year’s Day, Easter, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day VaWarMemorial.org	PHOTOGRAPHY: John Crank Virginia War Memorial Virginia War Memorial Foundation	COPY EDITING: Jenny M. Abel Editorial Services NEWSLETTER DESIGN: Communication Design Inc.
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Who They Were: Lives Worth Knowing

Nearly 12,000 names, engraved in stone and walls of glass, represent men and women from a grateful Commonwealth. The cities, towns, and counties represented here by a flame of patriotism are remembering those to whom we owe so much.

CITIES Bristol	COUNTIES Amelia Augusta Bland Botetourt Caroline Chesterfield Fauquier Floyd	Goochland Halifax Hanover Henrico Louisa Lunenburg Madison Mecklenburg Nelson	Nottoway Pittsylvania Rappahannock Scott Southampton Stafford
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FALL 2022

If your city or county would like to support our efforts, please contact us at mmwachur@vawarmemorial.org or (301) 580-1488. Or visit VaWarMemorial.org/support/whotheywere.