Virginia Medal of Honor Gallery
Beyond the Call of Duty

Learn the history of the brave Virginians who have been awarded the nation’s highest and most prestigious military honor for valor. Of the more than 25 million men and women who have served and sacrificed in our nation’s wars, fewer than 3,600 have received the Medal of Honor. Of those, 50 have been officially attributed to the Commonwealth of Virginia by the U.S. Department of Defense.

Virginia’s Annual Memorial Day Ceremony
Monday, May 29 — 11 am
E. Bruce Heilman Amphitheater

Hill of Heroes Day
Friday, June 23
Installation of 12,000 flags: 8 am
Family activities: 9 am – 2 pm

50 YEARS BEYOND
The Vietnam Veteran Experience

Over half a century has passed since the signing of the Paris Peace Accords in January 1973, marking the beginning of the end of the war in Vietnam. Virginia is home to nearly 200,000 veterans who served during the Vietnam era. For 50 years, these Virginians have lived with the war in the backgrounds of their lives. This exhibit offers a glimpse into 50 of those lives, acknowledging that the Vietnam experience remains understudied and misunderstood.

The exhibit consists of 50 panels, each profiling a Vietnam veteran.

The exhibition includes Vietnam veteran Charlie McConnell’s self-portrait, Me and My Old Guitar.

My Art Is My Portrait
A Vietnam veteran and native of Coeburn in Wise County, Virginia, Charlie McConnell grew up with a passion and talent for drawing and painting. A current exhibit at the Memorial features his work from his time in the service to the present. 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.

Veterans gathered with loved ones and friends for their private opening of the exhibit.

Virginia War Memorial Foundation

ALSO ON VIEW

50 YEARS BEYOND
The Vietnam Veteran Experience

This exhibit is made possible by the generous support of:

- Peachtree House Foundation
- E. B. Duff Charitable Lead Annuity Trust
- War Heroes Initiative Fund
- Charlottesville Area Community Foundation
- Virginia War Memorial Foundation
Movina Forward with Purpose

Thanks to your support, there’s a lot going on at the Memorial. Not all of it is included in the newsletters. The best way to be sure that you are getting the details of everything we do is to visit our website: VaWarMemorial.org.

When you do that, you can also register to receive our weekly e-blasts that give more details about each event. By the time you receive this newsletter, two significant March events will have occurred. Our inaugural WK Memorial Walk for 10 veterans sponsored by Woodfin, and “War in Pieces,” a festival of four one-act plays written by veterans. This year, for the first time, our VMI Alumni Hall of Honor is the venue for the one-act plays. Virginia Rep is our theater partner.

Rest assured that our activity is part of moving forward with purpose. In 2022, our board approved a long-range plan to ensure that we make the highest and best use of your contributions as we advance our mission. Every activity, every program, every expenditure is matched to our long-range plan and the five goals we have set for ourselves:

- Invest and align resources (staff resources, board resources, and financial resources) to achieve financial sustainability
- Invest in technology and marketing across all media platforms to increase awareness
- Pursue collaborations and partnerships
- Strengthen our public/private partnership with the state
- Create strong connections to veterans

When you visit our website, you can read the particulars of each goal and the action steps in place to achieve them. You can also read about our values and guiding principles:

- Historical accuracy
- Transparency
- Accessibility
- Diversity
- Patriotism

We do not take your support for granted. Rather, we realize that we must work hard to earn the trust and confidence you place in us. As we strive to meet the 2023 Memorial Day Giving Challenge issued by our board, please consider renewing your investment in the Virginia War Memorial Foundation. Your contributions are what make the best Memorial of its type in the country.

FROM THE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT

Meet Sylvia Marshall, Virginia War Memorial Archivist

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e are thrilled to have Sylvia Marshall join our ranks. Originally from Columbus, Georgia, Sylvia has a B.A. in history and anthropology from Agnes Scott College and an M.A. in history and public history concentration from the University of North Carolina (UNC) at Charlotte. She has extensive archival experience from such places as the Smithsonian National Museum of American History, the Special Collections and University Archives at UNC Charlotte, and the DeKalb History Center.

“The commitment to preserving and honoring the stories of veterans drew me to the Virginia War Memorial,” she says. “The archives and library at the Virginia War Memorial are a unique repository dedicated to preserving the voices of Virginians at war and Virginia’s involvement in war. The memoirs, scrapbooks, and other material in our archives give a glimpse into how veterans understood their roles as members of our armed forces and the events that happened around them. This material supports the Virginia War Memorial mission to honor veterans, preserve history, educate, and inspire patriotism. As the archivist, I am honored to be a part of this effort and excited to work with our veteran community.”

Although they just left the harbor at San Diego, the water was rough. The ship was rocking and rolling. I lay down and heaved up my toenails. But after I’d finally got over it. We got to France, I got a little bit more, a little more used to it. A guy said, “You guys freemem?” We said, “No, we’re seamen.”

I said, “Well, what do they do?” He said ... took me down through the engine room. He said, “You work down here.” He said, “If anybody asks you to do something topside, tell him to kiss your behind.” So, I said, “Yeah, I want to be a fireman.”

Bert Brewer — Petty Officer, 2nd Class, U.S. Navy, WWII–Pacific

Honors for LTG Joseph R. Inge, USA (Ret.), member of the Virginia War Memorial Foundation Board

During the recent session of the Virginia General Assembly, LTG Joe Inge was recognized with a commending resolution for his military career, spanning 38 years and including many high-level domestic and overseas postings. His service to his country continues as a private consultant to industry, government, and the military. He also serves on the boards of several foundations and nonprofit organizations, including the Virginia War Memorial Foundation board. He was a proud member of the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets and was commissioned a second lieutenant of armor when he graduated from Virginia Tech in 1969.

Recently, MG Randall D. Fullhart, USA (Ret.), Commandant of Cadets at Virginia Tech, presented the G Company Guidon to Inge. During the recent session of the Virginia General Assembly, LTG Joe Inge was recognized with a commending resolution for his military career, spanning 38 years and including many high-level domestic and overseas postings. His service to his country continues as a private consultant to industry, government, and the military. He also serves on the boards of several foundations and nonprofit organizations, including the Virginia War Memorial Foundation board. He was a proud member of the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets and was commissioned a second lieutenant of armor when he graduated from Virginia Tech in 1969. Honors for LTG Joseph R. Inge, USA (Ret.), member of the Virginia War Memorial Foundation Board

Recently, MG Randall D. Fullhart, USA (Ret.), Commandant of Cadets at Virginia Tech, presented the G Company Guidon to Inge (seated), standing, from left to right: CDR Nate Brown, USN (Ret.), Virginia Tech Alumni Director; Bob Archer, member of the Virginia War Memorial Foundation board. He was a proud member of the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets and was commissioned a second lieutenant of armor when he graduated from Virginia Tech in 1969.

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Creating a Public Green Space

We are recognized as the nation's leading state war memorial. We very much want to look the part. Our fallen veterans deserve no less.

The Virginia War Memorial is located on five rolling acres with a beautiful view of the James River and the skyline of downtown Richmond. The names of nearly 12,000 Virginia men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice during World War II and the wars in Korea, Vietnam, and the Persian Gulf are engraved on the Memorial's Shrine of Memory—20th Century. The Memorial's Shrine of Memory–Global War on Terrorism carries the names of Virginians killed in Iraq, Afghanistan, Lebanon, and other locations around the world.

The setting provides the perfect backdrop for paying tribute to the military veterans whose service is, and has always been, essential to our democracy. We know that scenic beauty, shade, and accessible green space are essential to the soul. Examples of quiet space architecture, such as the Memorial, can be powerful places of connection and contemplation. The creation of a public green space will provide a sense of arrival and better wayfinding.

The plan provides opportunities for special commemorative gardens. The use of native and favorite Virginia plants, shade trees, and pollinators will encourage longer, more comfortable visits. Visit our website and look for exciting details on our plans and learn how you can help us share the most beautiful view in Richmond.

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.

One Week, 13 Names, and 40 Years

In the fall of 1983, I was 11 years old and I had my first job, delivering the Stars and Stripes newspaper to our military housing area in Kittingen, Germany. I distinctly remember one very dark early morning, opening the metal box containing that day's edition and being struck by the photo on the front page. It showed a U.S. Marine, covered in dust, his clothes ripped from his body, being pulled from a pile of debris. The headline announced a bombing in some place I had never heard of: Beirut, Lebanon. More than 200 Marines had been killed, and more were expected to die. Even at that age, I understood that this terrible, tragic event was historic, something that would change things.

Eleven of the 241 Americans killed in the bombing of the Marine Corps Barracks in Beirut were from Virginia. Their names are on the Shrine of Memory at the Virginia War Memorial. They are joined by the names of two other Virginians killed in the same week in 1983 during Operation Urgent Fury, the U.S. invasion of Grenada. Thirteen names, all representing one terrible, but significant, week in American history.

This coming October will mark the 40th anniversary of that week, and in recognition of those events we are producing the next Virginians at War documentary, a new film titled One Week in October. We are teaming with PBS Blue Ridge to produce and distribute the film, and have lined up a wonderful list of interviewees from Virginia who participated in the campaigns in Beirut and Grenada, or lost a loved one in them. I am very excited to hear their stories and to see how they will translate into what will surely be an informative, moving, and inspiring film.

To mark the film's release in October, we will host a Leadership in America event featuring a panel of veterans involved in the making of the documentary.

It's hard to believe it has been nearly 40 years since those fateful events. It's perhaps even harder to accept that few, if any, young Americans know what happened in Beirut or Grenada. Let's do what we can to honor those 13 Virginians listed on the Shrine of Memory; let's pass on their stories.

The Virginia War Memorial is located on five rolling acres with a beautiful view of the most beautiful view in Richmond.
An understanding of local history is essential to developing pride of place. Whether immigrant, transplant, or native, understanding how your community affected, and was affected by, national events is the first step toward love of country.

One of the most important things the Virginia War Memorial does is to offer local history education in a current, specific, and accurate way that published textbooks can never attain.

The cities, towns, and counties represented here by a flame of patriotism are remembering their local history and the men and women to whom we owe so much.