



★
Best Wishes for
Peace on Earth and
Goodwill to All
★

CURRENTLY ON VIEW

Virginia's MIA: The Search Continues

•
Virginia Medal of Honor Gallery

•
Ode to the Warrior Class:
The Artwork of Michael Solovey

•
Mighty Pen Project

•
Arms for the Nation

•
Blue Star Families Hero Tree

•
Undercroft Exhibit Hall

New Exhibit Honors Virginia's Missing In Action

Virginia's MIA: *The Search Continues* highlights the ongoing efforts to locate and identify the more than 1,300 Virginians still listed as missing in action (MIA). Through powerful stories, personal artifacts, and interviews with friends and family, this exhibit reminds us that the search for answers, and for closure, continues. A section of panels shares biographies of Virginians still unaccounted for, honoring their service and keeping their memories alive.

The sacrifices of these Virginians would be forgotten without the efforts of organizations like the Virginia War Memorial and the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA). The exhibit explores the dedicated scientific process used to search for and recover the remains of those individuals.



During the opening of *Virginia's MIA*, members of the VMI Class of 1969 gather to hear Don Mercer (VMI '69) remember Brother Rat Capt. John W. Kennedy, USAF.



DPAA Director Kelly K. McKeague (foreground) delivered the *Leadership in America* lecture to open the MIA exhibition. Afterwards, he visited the gallery to answer additional questions.

THIS EXHIBITION IS
MADE POSSIBLE BY



The Alfred I. duPont
Foundation

Altria

The Windsor Foundation

The Anne Carter Robins
and Walter R. Robins Jr.
Foundation

Members of the VMI Class
of 1969 in memory of their
Brother Rat, Capt. John W.
Kennedy, USAF

TowneBank

Virginia Heritage
Veterans Club

Mr. William Duncan

NOW OPEN IN THE VETERANS' ART GALLERY

Ode to the Warrior Class: The Artwork of Michael Solovey

Michael Solovey went to high school in Williamsburg, Virginia, where he was selected to attend the Virginia Governor's School for the Visual and Performing Arts at the University of Richmond. He was one of only 16 students from Virginia to attend this very selective program. During his senior year, Solovey also earned a provisional scholarship to the Savannah School of Art and Design. He graduated prolific in three media — pen and ink, watercolor, and pencil drawing — in 1992.

Seeking a different kind of challenge, Solovey decided to attend the Virginia Military Institute (VMI), where he majored in modern languages (French, German, and Spanish) while pursuing all available art courses to earn a minor in fine arts. During his junior



Colonel Solovey's promotion ceremony at Norfolk Naval Base at Allied Command Transformation NATO Headquarters in 2020.

year at VMI, he was nominated to represent the Institute in France, where he attended the Leo Marchutz School of Art in Aix-en-Provence. During his study abroad, he learned and became skilled in both pastels and oil painting while receiving all instruction in French. He returned to VMI and received a regular commission to the U.S. Army in 1996. During his 29-year career, he developed his artistic career over the course of 10 deployments to Bosnia, Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, and Kuwait, as well as numerous assignments in Germany and Italy. His military awards are numerous.

In 1998, Solovey produced his first military lithograph for the 1st Armored Division during his first deployment in Bosnia. He is now working on his 185th set of limited-edition lithographs.



Brotherhood (2007), watercolor on canvas

This especially compelling image was inspired by an event in Afghanistan. The soldier in the middle of the painting had been shot in the thigh, and his two battle buddies were helping him to a Black Hawk helicopter, which would evacuate him to the Bagram military hospital for treatment.

Thank You



We cannot say it enough. Your support makes it possible for us to meet our mission to preserve the stories of veterans who have made the ultimate sacrifice, to honor all veterans and active-duty military, and to inspire love of country through education. We are the only organization with this mission statement. We are considered the best state memorial of its type in the country.

We do not take your support for granted. Rather, we know we must earn your trust and show an educational return on your investment. Those returns include award-winning programs, professional development opportunities for educators, creative outlets for our veterans, classroom resources, and memorable field trips led by veterans.

As we focus on ending 2025 on a high note, we have ambitious plans for the year ahead. We are compelled to devote much of the year to marking the 25th anniversary of 9/11.

It's hard to imagine that young adults of voting age have no firsthand experience of the deadly events of that day. It is up to institutions like the Virginia War Memorial to preserve the stories of that attack and our country's subsequent response.

Next year also marks the 35th anniversary of Operation Desert Storm — another critical turning point in our country's history, and two generations removed from the collective memory. Elsewhere in this newsletter, you can read more about our plans for that commemoration, including an original documentary produced with Blue Ridge PBS that will be available to air on all PBS affiliates in the country.

We extend our very best wishes to you for a healthy and happy holiday season.

Pam

Pamela R. Seay
PRESIDENT
VIRGINIA WAR MEMORIAL FOUNDATION

Former Directors of the Virginia War Memorial Foundation

The success of the Virginia War Memorial Foundation has been built on the work of these living former directors, and those who have passed before them. We thank them for their dedication to our mission over the years.

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- Ms. Barbara N. Howard
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- Mr. R. Wayne Mullican
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- Mr. Millard "Pete" Stith Jr.
- Mr. Jamal Thomas

Please help us keep accurate records. If you see an omission or any change that should be made to this list, please let us know.



Welcome to the Foundation Board

Hunter A. Applewhite is president of the Dominion Energy Charitable Foundation, the philanthropic arm of Dominion Energy, a Fortune 500 company headquartered in Richmond. In addition to corporate philanthropy, he oversees the company's advertising, brand management, and market research functions. Prior to joining Dominion Energy, he served as associate director of The Community Foundation of Richmond from 1989 to 1996. He currently serves on governing boards for the Ann K. Kirby Foundation, a grant-making foundation in Richmond; the George C. Marshall Foundation at Virginia Military Institute in Lexington; and ChamberRVA Foundation. He is a past board member of the Richmond Ballet, the Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation, and Hope Church. He graduated *magna cum laude* from Washington and Lee University with a bachelor's degree in European history.



HERE TO SERVE

The Foundation Welcomes Allison "Allie" Rose as the Engagement & Outreach Manager



With over four years of experience in the special events industry, Allie is passionate about crafting meaningful experiences that bring people together and strengthen community connections. She holds a BFA in communication arts from Virginia Commonwealth University, where she developed a strong foundation in storytelling, design, and visual communication. Allie is ready to bring her creativity and enthusiasm to the Virginia War Memorial Foundation's programs and events that honor Virginia's veterans. Her experience will be invaluable in supporting our mission of preserving veterans' stories for future generations. Originally from Manassas, Virginia, she is excited to serve an organization that connects community, history, and purpose.



Guests gathered recently for a *Leadership in America* lecture on the liberation of the Philippines and the battle of the Gulf of Leyte presented by Col. Michael Bell, Director of the Institute for the Study of War and Democracy at the National World War II Museum in New Orleans. We are honored to be a place where all are welcome to celebrate the American spirit that binds us together.



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The More We Listen,
the More We Learn



The Virginia War Memorial has the mission to preserve veterans' history, and the best way to do that is through gathering firsthand stories. While books and manuscripts can paint a detailed, illuminating picture of

history, nothing quite meets the moment of conveying feeling, emotion, and thoughts than gathering veteran experiences through oral histories.

Our archivist, Sylvia Marshall, has done remarkable work over the past three years in growing our digital archive of veteran stories, and in the past year, we have learned the tremendous value that these interviews provide with our education mission. We have been able to delve into our oral histories to make short



films for our exhibits, to identify speakers for our education programs both in person and online, and to plumb themes and concepts for future displays and programs. Our oral history project, and the hundreds of veterans who have helped us grow it over the past few years, have greatly enhanced our ability to meet our mission to honor veterans, preserve their history, educate, and inspire patriotism.


We are now seeing researchers, authors, and producers interested in using our oral history archive. This has always been our goal: to share our preserved history with others so that they can help distribute these tremendous stories of service, to better amplify and spread their impact.

And even while we've seen great success thus far with our oral history project, we still need veterans (or their family members) to step forward and be heard. We understand that sharing stories of service is not always easy and often requires revisiting tough, unwelcome memories, and that's why we treat our interviews and veteran interviewees with the grateful respect they deserve. We could not achieve our preservation mission without them, and we are honored to sit with them, each and every one.

If you have not yet preserved your story of service with the Virginia War Memorial, please consider doing so. Our archivist, Sylvia Marshall, would love to hear from you and can be reached at sylvia.marshall@dvs.virginia.gov or 804-786-1468.



Dr. Clay Mountcastle
DIRECTOR
VIRGINIA WAR MEMORIAL





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.



An Invitation from Bob Flowers to the
Veterans of Desert Shield and Desert Storm



I look forward to seeing all veterans of Operation Desert Shield and Operation Desert Storm at the Virginia War Memorial on March 21, 2026, for a day of honor, remembrance, and reconnection. The inaugural *Salute to Service Reunion Celebration* recognizes your service and the bonds all of us forged more than three decades ago.

Throughout the day, veterans and their families will come together for a meaningful program of reflection and celebration, featuring inspiring speakers, moderated discussions, musical performances, and the premiere of the next *Virginians at War* documentary, *Decisive Victory: Operation Desert Storm*. Together, we'll explore the experiences of Virginia's Desert Storm veterans and the stories of the people with whom they served.

A wreath-laying ceremony and time for personal reflection on the grounds of the Virginia War Memorial will offer moments to remember and pay tribute to those who did not return, one of whom, Terry Plunk, served under my command.

We'll also honor the shared history of veterans through oral histories, photographs, and artifacts — preserving the legacy of Desert Storm veterans for future generations and deepening our understanding of service and sacrifice.

Requests for invitations are now open and formal invitations will be sent in January. To be added to the invitation list, please visit vawarmemorial.org or email salutetoservice@vawarmemorial.org.



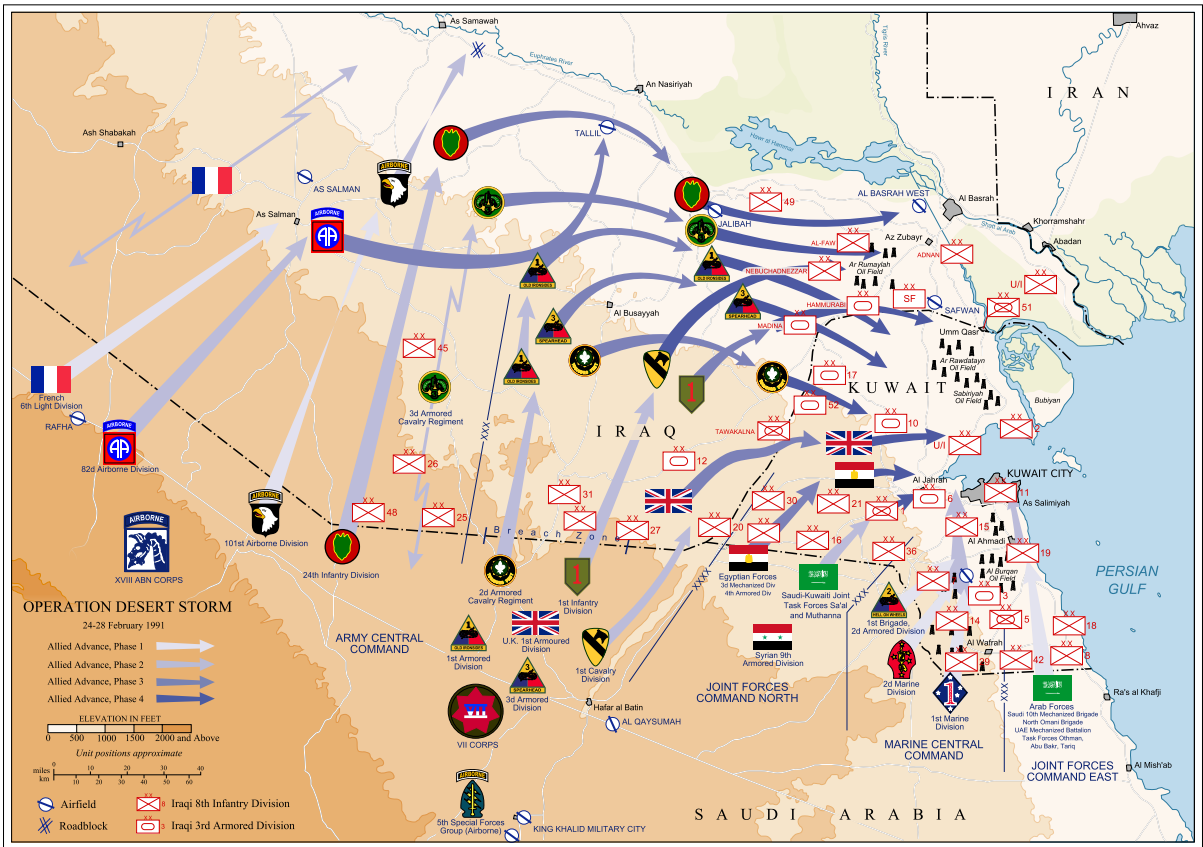
LTG Robert B. Flowers, USA (Ret.)
VIRGINIA WAR MEMORIAL FOUNDATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

P.S. Certain revisions of General Order No. 1
(30 August 1990) will be rescinded during Happy Hour.

**SALUTE TO
SERVICE**

**35 Years Beyond
Operation Desert Storm**

Celebrating The Veterans Who Served Together



LTG Flowers commanded an expanded brigade of 10 battalions (7,700 soldiers) during Operation Desert Shield and Operation Desert Storm.

Honoring the Actions Behind the Words

Fourteen veterans who have participated in the Memorial's writing program, the Mighty Pen Project, have donated artifacts from their service careers to be on long-term display. Medals, personal articles, even a twisted bit of steel from a truck destroyed by an IED in Baghdad, bring home some of the stories written for the Mighty Pen. The exhibit includes a captured North Vietnamese battle flag, a religious stole worn by one of the first female Marine chaplains to cross enemy lines to chase down Saddam Hussein, two Silver Stars, and the Purple Heart awarded to the son of one Mighty Pen writer for giving his life in Iraq. The display is a powerful reminder of the service and sacrifices the people of our American military make around the world.



Visit the [Mighty Pen Project](http://MightyPenProject.org) website to learn more about these stories.
VaWarMemorial.org/MightyPenProjectExhibit



AVAILABLE NOW FOR HOLIDAY GIFT GIVING

The First Definitive History of the Virginia War Memorial

The Virginia War Memorial is one of Virginia's most important and cherished landmarks — a place for pilgrimage, remembering, and learning. It began with a vision and desire to honor Virginians who had nobly left family, friends, jobs, and school to fight fascism and tyranny during World War II. Over the past seven and a half decades, the Memorial has evolved and expanded. This book documents the creation and evolution of the Memorial against the backdrop of post-World War II America. It highlights the ongoing struggle between historic preservation and development; relevance and public art; political partisanship and public opinion.

Construction of the original Shrine of Memory at the Memorial — one of scores of historical images included in the book, along with striking new images of the Memorial today.



A History of the First 75 Years:
1950–2025

Two-book volume, large format
(16" x 10"), 200 pages,
150 archival and contemporary
photographs

Written by Philip Bigler,
a former Arlington National
Cemetery historian and the author
of *Tomb of the
Unknown Soldier: A Century of
Honor, 1921–2021* as well as
12 other books

Principal photography by John
Henley, U.S. Army veteran
and well-known Virginia artist

Design by Tim Priddy, a former
principal and co-owner of
Communication Design

Limited first edition
**Copies are now available for
on-site pickup and delivery.**

Order online at
**VaWarMemorial.org/
historybook**

Or visit the Memorial
Store and find other great
gift ideas.



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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, Christmas Day

VaWarMemorial.org

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Who They Were: Lives Worth Knowing

The Importance of Local History

An understanding of local history is essential to developing pride of place. Whether you are an 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 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.

CITIES

Bristol
Colonial Heights
Martinsville

TOWNS

Chase City
Halifax
South Boston
South Hill

COUNTIES

Amelia
Augusta
Bland
Botetourt
Caroline
Chesterfield
Fauquier
Floyd
Goochland

Halifax

Hanover
Henrico
Louisa
Lunenburg
Madison
Mecklenburg
Nelson
Nottoway
Pittsylvania

Rappahannock

Scott
Southampton
Stafford

WINTER 2025

If your city or county would like to support our efforts, please contact us at awarman@vawarmemorial.org or 540-808-6410. Or visit VaWarMemorial.org/support/whotheywere.

2026 Events Calendar

Mark your 2026 calendar for these upcoming events and visit our website to register for e-news alerts for details on these events and others at VaWarMemorial.org/events.

February 8–14
National Salute to Veteran Patients

March 14
K9 Veterans Day Memorial Walk

March 20
Leadership In America:
LTC Joseph C. Barto III, USA (Ret.),
“Desert Storm: Memories and
Perspective 35 Years Later”

March 21
Salute to Service Reunion
Celebration: Operations Desert
Shield and Desert Storm

March 21
*Decisive Victory: Operation Desert
Storm* airs on local PBS stations

May 25
The Commonwealth's Memorial
Day Commemoration