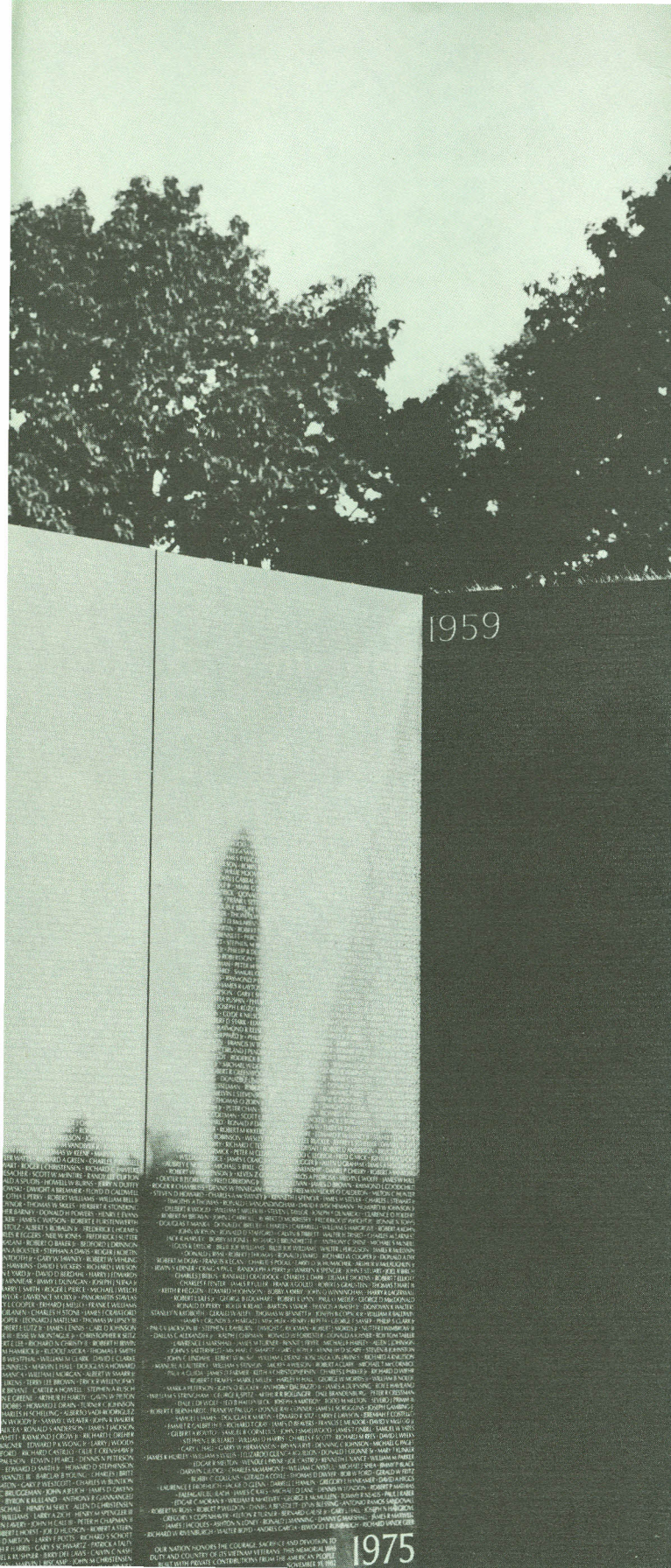


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**Vietnam
Veterans
Memorial**

Washington DC



The Vietnam Veterans Memorial is a symbol of the Nation's honor and recognition of the men and women of its armed forces who served in the Vietnam war. While, as a special tribute, the memorial is inscribed with the names of the more than 58,000 who gave their lives or remain missing, it is dedicated to honor the "courage, sacrifice, and devotion to duty and country" of all who answered their country's call.

The War

The Vietnam war was the longest in our Nation's history. Two American advisers were killed on July 8, 1959, and the last casualties in connection with the war occurred on May 15, 1975, during the *Mayaguez* incident. Approximately 2.7 million Americans served in the war zone; 300,000 were wounded and approximately 75,000 permanently disabled. Of the casualties, about 1,300 remain missing and unaccounted for.

The American advisory role began in the mid-1950s, and by 1964 U.S. personnel numbered approximately 20,000. With the "Gulf of Tonkin" Resolution, on August 7, 1964, the U.S. Congress authorized the President "to take all necessary measures to repel any armed attack against the forces of the United States and to prevent further aggression." The first American combat troops were landed in March 1965; by mid-1969, at the height of U.S. involvement, American military personnel in Vietnam numbered 550,000. Under a treaty signed by North Vietnam, South Vietnam, the Viet Cong, and the United States, a cease-fire went into effect on January 28, 1973. On April 30, 1975, the government of the Republic of Vietnam surrendered to the advancing North Vietnamese forces and all remaining U.S. civilian and military personnel were evacuated.

During the war, American soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines fought with heroism and determination under some of the most difficult circumstances ever encountered by American military personnel. Tragically, upon their return home they received virtually no recognition for their service and sacrifice because of the raging domestic controversy over U.S. policy in conducting the war.

Establishment of the Memorial

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, Inc. (VVMF), a nonprofit, charitable organization formed to establish the memorial, was incorporated on April 27, 1979, by a group of Vietnam veterans in Washington, D.C. The founders of VVMF wanted Vietnam veterans to have a tangible symbol of recognition by American society. By separating the issue of those who served in Vietnam from that of U.S. policy in the war, VVMF hoped to begin a process of national reconciliation.

On July 1, 1980, Congress authorized a site in Constitution Gardens near the Lincoln Memorial as the future location of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. That October, VVMF announced that the

1959

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1975

THE NAMES OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE WHO SERVED IN THE VIETNAM WAR ARE LISTED ON THE WALL OF THE MEMORIAL. THE WALL IS A SYMBOL OF THE NATION'S HONOR AND RECOGNITION OF THE MEN AND WOMEN OF ITS ARMED FORCES WHO SERVED IN THE VIETNAM WAR. WHILE, AS A SPECIAL TRIBUTE, THE MEMORIAL IS INSCRIBED WITH THE NAMES OF THE MORE THAN 58,000 WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES OR REMAIN MISSING, IT IS DEDICATED TO HONOR THE "COURAGE, SACRIFICE, AND DEVOTION TO DUTY AND COUNTRY" OF ALL WHO ANSWERED THEIR COUNTRY'S CALL.

memorial's design would be selected through a national design competition open to any U.S. citizen 18 years of age or older. With 2,573 registrants, the competition became the largest of its kind ever held in the United States. The 1,421 design entries finally submitted were judged anonymously by a jury of eight internationally recognized artists and designers selected by VVMF. On May 1, 1981, the jury presented its unanimous selection for first prize, which was accepted and adopted enthusiastically by VVMF.

The winning design was the work of Maya Ying Lin of Athens, Ohio, who at the time was a 21-year-old student attending Yale University. In August 1981 VVMF selected a building company and a professional architecture firm to develop the plans and build Ms. Lin's design.

The following January it was determined that a figurative sculpture and a flagstaff would be added to the memorial site to provide a realistic depiction of fighting men in Vietnam and a symbol of their devotion to country. On March 11, 1982, the design and plans received final approval, and ground was formally broken on March 26.

Washington sculptor Frederick Hart was selected to design the sculpture of the servicemen to be placed at the site. Construction of the walls was completed in late October 1982, and the memorial was dedicated on November 13, 1982. The life-size sculpture, to be cast in bronze, is expected to be completed and installed at the site by the end of the summer of 1984.

Memorial Design

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund desired, above all, that the memorial have a prominent site in a large, parklike area. Subsequently, VVMF set four major criteria for the design: (1) that it be reflective and contemplative in character, (2) that it harmonize with its surroundings, especially the neighboring national memorials, (3) that it contain the names of all who died or remain missing, and (4) that it make no political statement about the war.

Lin conceived her design as creating a park within a park—a quiet protected place unto itself, yet harmonious with the overall plan of Constitution Gardens. To achieve this effect she chose polished black granite for the walls. Its mirror-like surface reflects the images of the surrounding trees, lawns, and monuments. The memorial's walls point to the Washington Monument and Lincoln Memorial, thus bringing the memorial into the historical context of our country. The names are inscribed in chronological order of the date of death, showing the war as a series of individual human sacrifices and giving each name a special place in history.

The list of names begins at the vertex of the walls below the date of the first casualty, and continues to the end of the east wall. It resumes at the tip of the west wall, ending at the vertex, above the date of the last death. With the meeting of the beginning and ending, a major epoch in American history is signified.

Hart's goal was to create a sculpture which was a moving evocation of the experience and service of the Vietnam veteran. He has described it as follows:

"The portrayal of the figures is consistent with history. They wear the uniform and carry the equipment of war; they are young. The contrast between the innocence of their youth and the weapons of war underscores the poignancy of their sacrifice. There is about them the physical contact and sense of unity that bespeaks the bonds of love and sacrifice that is the nature of men at war. And yet they are each alone. Their strength and their vulnerability are both evident. Their true heroism lies in these bonds of loyalty in the face of their aloneness and their vulnerability."

The flag flies from an 18-meter (60-foot) staff. Its base contains the emblems of the five services. The sculpture and flag form an entryway plaza.

Memorial Statistics

Each of the walls is 75.2 meters (246.75 feet) long. They meet at an angle of 125°12', pointing exactly to the northeast corners of the Washington Monument and Lincoln Memorial. The walls are supported along their entire length by 140 concrete pilings driven approximately 11 meters (35 feet) to bedrock. At their vertex the walls are 3.4 meters (10.1 feet) high. The stone for the walls, safety curbs and walkways is black granite quarried near Bangalore, India. All cutting and fabrication was done in Barre, Vermont. The variations in color and texture are a result of different finishing techniques, such as polishing, honing, and flame treating.

The names and inscriptions were gritblasted in Memphis, Tennessee, using stencils produced through a photographic process. The names were arranged chronologically and typeset in Atlanta, Georgia, from a computer tape of the official Vietnam casualty list. The letters are 1.3 centimeters (0.53 inch) high, and approximately 0.038 centimeter (0.015 inch) deep. A total of 58,007 names are inscribed on the walls.

Arrangement of Names

Each of the walls is composed of 70 separate inscribed granite panels. The largest panels have 137 lines of names; the shortest have one line. There are five names on each line. On each wall the panels are numbered from 1 to 70, with panel 1 at the vertex and panel 70 at the far end. The numbers are inscribed at the base of each panel. On every second panel, every tenth line is denoted by a marker in the margin to facilitate counting the lines.

The names of the first casualties (July 1959) appear on the first line of panel 1 on the east wall below the date 1959. The chronological listing of the names proceeds line by line down each panel and then to the top line of the panel to the right, as though the panels were pages in a book. The sequence of names proceeds from panel 70 on the east wall to panel 70 on the west wall. The listing continues on each panel to the right, until the names of the last casualties (May 1975) form the last lines of panel 1 on the west wall, above the date 1975.

Locating a Name

All the names, with panel and line location, are listed in an alphabetical directory at the memorial. Also, if the date of death is known, the guide below shows how to find any particular time so the name can be searched out.

DATE	PANEL	LINE	DATE	PANEL	LINE
JUL 59	1E	1	JAN 69	35W	14
JAN 62	1E	4	FEB 69	33W	30
JAN 63	1E	15	MAR 69	31W	98
JAN 64	1E	39	APR 69	28W	101
JAN 65	1E	81	MAY 69	26W	89
APR 65	1E	99	JUN 69	23W	34
JUL 65	2E	26	JUL 69	21W	41
OCT 65	2E	100	AUG 69	20W	82
NOV 65	3E	10	SEP 69	18W	18
DEC 65	3E	119	OCT 69	17W	21
JAN 66	4E	47	NOV 69	16W	11
FEB 66	4E	127	DEC 69	15W	12
MAR 66	5E	92	JAN 70	15W	113
APR 66	6E	70	FEB 70	14W	88
MAY 66	7E	15	MAR 70	13W	70
JUN 66	7E	130	APR 70	12W	64
JUL 66	8E	114	MAY 70	11W	78
AUG 66	9E	92	JUN 70	10W	129
SEP 66	10E	59	JUL 70	9W	108
OCT 66	11E	32	AUG 70	8W	73
NOV 66	12E	2	SEP 70	7W	29
DEC 66	12E	131	OCT 70	7W	102
JAN 67	13E	106	NOV 70	6W	33
FEB 67	14E	102	DEC 70	6W	100
MAR 67	15E	124	JAN 71	5W	19
APR 67	17E	83	FEB 71	5W	71
MAY 67	19E	2	MAR 71	4W	13
JUN 67	21E	25	APR 71	4W	98
JUL 67	22E	90	MAY 71	3W	21
AUG 67	24E	58	JUN 71	3W	60
SEP 67	25E	76	JUL 71	3W	96
OCT 67	27E	35	AUG 71	3W	120
NOV 67	28E	107	SEP 71	2W	7
DEC 67	31E	20	OCT 71	2W	32
JAN 68	33E	11	NOV 71	2W	58
FEB 68	36E	45	DEC 71	2W	82
MAR 68	42E	12	JAN 72	2W	94
APR 68	47E	29	FEB 72	2W	103
MAY 68	53E	27	MAR 72	2W	112
JUN 68	62W	19	APR 72	2W	126
JUL 68	54W	25	MAY 72	1W	10
AUG 68	50W	40	JUN 72	1W	34
SEP 68	45W	18	JUL 72	1W	51
OCT 68	42W	52	OCT 72	1W	76
NOV 68	40W	70	JAN 73	1W	108
DEC 68	37W	15	JAN 75	1W	121

The Missing

Each name is preceded (on the west wall) or followed (on the east wall) by one of two symbols: a diamond or a cross. The diamond symbol denotes that the serviceman's or servicewoman's death was confirmed. The approximately 1,300 men whose names are designated by the cross symbol were either missing or prisoners at the end of the war and remain missing and unaccounted for.

In the event a serviceman's remains are returned or he is otherwise accounted for, the diamond symbol will be superimposed over the cross. If a man returns alive, a circle, as a symbol of life, will be inscribed around the cross.

IN HONOR OF THE MEN AND WOMEN OF
THE ARMED FORCES OF THE UNITED
STATES WHO SERVED IN THE VIETNAM
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OUR NATION HONORS THE COURAGE,
SACRIFICE AND DEVOTION TO DUTY AND
COUNTRY OF ITS VIETNAM VETERANS.
THIS MEMORIAL WAS BUILT WITH
PRIVATE CONTRIBUTIONS FROM
THE AMERICAN PEOPLE.
NOVEMBER 11, 1982



Administration

The \$7,000,000 cost of establishing the memorial was raised entirely through private contributions from the American people. Corporations, foundations, unions, veterans and civic organizations, and more than 275,000 individual Americans provided the money to build it. No Federal funds were appropriated.

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial is administered by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. Address inquiries to the superintendent, National Capital Parks—Central, 900 Ohio Drive SW, Washington, DC 20242

**national park service
u.s. department of the interior**