

Museum News

February, 2009



Official Groundbreaking for the Vietnam Memorial Wall

The museum Board of Directors met with the major donors responsible for providing the funds to build a replica of the Vietnam Memorial Wall on January 17, 2009. At 11:00 am the gold shovels were placed into the dirt signifying the beginning of construction for the wall. The Brazos Foundation Officers were on hand to present the museum with a check for \$30,000.

The replica will be built on a steel frame and the 58,260 names will be engraved onto black aluminum sheets by a computer controlled router. Each aluminum panel contains the names found on two panels of the Vietnam Memorial Wall in Washington D.C.

The dimensions of the replica are approximately three fourths of the dimensions of the actual wall. The names are arranged in the same order, with symbols identifying the MIA versus the KIA. The same angle found on the National Memorial has been built into the wall at the museum.

There are no other permanent walls that replicate the National Memorial. The museum plans

to update the wall just as it is updated in Washington on Memorial Day. None of the portable walls have been updated since they were built so there are no other walls that contain the same names found on the National Memorial.

The Museum sponsored The Moving Wall™ in Mineral Wells, TX in July 1998 and have now brought a permanent wall to the area approximately 11 years later. The wall will be unveiled on May 30, 2009 and open to the public 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

If you are unable to travel to Washington to see the National Memorial, perhaps you will be within reach of our wall. Please visit us at any opportunity.

There is still time to become a sponsor of the Memorial Wall and Garden. Donor levels are available as follows: Sponsors of the Wall (\$10,000), names will be engraved on a wall panel; Bridge donor (\$10,000), name will be on a plaque by the entrance bridge; Garden Donor (\$5,000), names will be on a plaque in the garden; Tree Donors (\$1,000), names will be on a plaque in the forest; Flag donors (\$500), names will be on a plaque by the flags. Send donations to P.O. Box 146 Mineral Wells, TX 76068.



Pictured are (l to r): The Brazos Foundation Officers; Bill Kane, Museum Board past president as proxy for Baum-Carlock-Bumgardner Funeral Home; Kirk Horton; Rowena Ash, as proxy for Betty Boyd Dettre; Jim Messinger, President of the Friends of the Museum; Gerald Brazell, Museum Board President; and Edd Luttenberger, Vice president

(Photo courtesy of Iola Messinger)

More volunteers

2008 marked the first complete year of operation of the gardens at The National Vietnam War Museum. In 2007, we had substantial help from CCA in Mineral Wells, but they were short supervisors in 2008 and were unable to help. So the call went out to anyone who could push a lawnmower or swing a weedeater. We have 12 acres to maintain and found a local friend who cut and baled most of the property but two or three acres remained to be managed by hand.

Since the museum operates on a small budget, volunteers have saved the day. There's a picture below of most of last years crew.

Jim Messinger, U.S. Army retired; Melvin Davis, Navy Veteran, retired from his business Melvin's Auto Repair; Ralph Lister, retired Army National Guard; Wayne Parham, Army veteran, retired from Mitchell Energy; Boyd Buchholz, retired Air Force; Gary Salisbury, retired Army, and retired from Mitchell Energy; Missing from the ranks in the picture is Bob Hughes, Navy veteran.

You can readily see that we don't discriminate with regard to branch of service. We would like to have a Marine and a Coast Guardsman on the crew. We also don't discriminate with regard to age. These men range in age from 57– 69. One 67 year old ran a weedeater for several hours each week to keep the gardens trimmed back. Missing from the ranks is Bob Hughes, Navy veteran.

If you want fresh air and exercise, come on out on Mondays. We usually work from 9-12.

Another Idea

The museum board would like to add a 105mm Howitzer to our artifacts. We have found a man who builds replicas of cannons and he will build a full scale replica 105mm Howitzer for us (that shoots) for about \$6500.

We need a project manager for this project to raise funds and coordinate the construction and movement of the gun to the museum site. We already own the deuce and a half that will pull it.

How about some artillery men volunteers???

Contact Jim Messinger 940-664-3918 or messinger@wc.edu to volunteer.



The guys who mowed the lawn: From left to right Jim Messinger, Melvin Davis, Ralph Lister, Wayne Parham, Boyd Buchholz, Gary Salisbury. (photo courtesy of Iola Messinger)

Contemplation Garden Completed

See the color picture on the back cover of the completed garden, wall, huey on a stick, and the rotor blades. The garden will begin to look good this spring. One of our friends is acquiring the windsock that flew at Fort Wolters main heliport and that will be added to the garden as time permits.

Thanks to the generosity of our donors, we have also added bulletin boards to our gardens. Detailed information is posted on the all weather bulletin board for you educational interests.

Coming Events

March 28 - Spring Fundraiser—Holiday Hills Country Club in Mineral Wells. Begins at 6 pm. If you have not received your invitation and want to join us, send checks or money orders to Friends of the Museum, P. O. Box 146, Mineral Wells, TX, 76068. Tickets are \$40 each in advance, \$50 at the door if there are seats remaining.

Donor levels are:

Buffalo Nickel (includes 2 tickets) \$ 125
Liberty Dime (includes 4 tickets) \$ 250
Silver Dollar (includes 6 tickets) \$ 500
Gold Double Eagle (includes 8 tickets, a table, National Vietnam War Museum Bottle of wine) \$ 1000

All sponsors receive preferred seating (reserved), recognition at the event and post-event publicity.

May 30 - Unveiling Ceremony for the replica of the Vietnam Memorial Wall.

June 1 - 30 - The Empty Chair Exhibit at the Fort Worth Community Arts Center

July 1 - 6 - The VHPA reunion Philadelphia PA. The friends of the museum will travel to this event with our mobil gift shop.

Friends of the Museum

The Friends of the Museum is a 501(c)(3) Texas Corporation whose mission is to raise funds and public awareness for The National Vietnam War Museum. The Friends publish a quarterly newsletter that is available for annual dues of \$10.

Founders Association

Founders Association continues to grow. Four new members are:

James & Terri Collins
Lt. Col. & Mrs Gerald Ourada
Bill & Janie Jones
Jerry Carr

The Founders Association consists of groups or individuals who contribute \$1,000 or more before the groundbreaking for the main museum building. These people share our vision for building the National Vietnam War Museum.

Space is still available in the Meditation Garden for bricks, plaques or tablets to memorialize family members, friends or organizations that served in the Vietnam-War.

A special stone honoring our veterans can be placed in the Mediation Garden for a donation of \$250. The first line on the stone is engraved: In Honor of Those Who Served.

You may add a second line with your name or an organizations name.



The mission of the museum is:

To promote an understanding of the Vietnam era while honoring those who served.

www.NationalVNWarMuseum.org



P.O. Box 146, Mineral Wells, TX 76068-0146

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The Contemplation Garden at Sunset

(photo courtesy of Iola Messinger)

