

## THE STORY OF THE VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL IN WASHINGTON D.C. AKA "THE WALL"

"THE OTHER WALL"

**249**

THIS ARTICLE IS IN THREE PARTS

PART ONE – STORY OF THE WALL

PART TWO – WHAT HAPPENS TO THE TRIBUTES THAT ARE LEFT AT THE WALL?

PART THREE – WHY WERE THE VIETNAM VETERANS TREATED SO BADLY WHEN THEY CAME HOME?



The Vietnam Veterans Memorial is a 2-acre (8,000 m<sup>2</sup>) national memorial in Washington, DC. It honors U.S. service members of the U.S. armed forces who fought in the Vietnam War, service members who died in service in Vietnam/South East Asia, and those service members who were unaccounted for (Missing In Action) during the War. There are no civilian names on the wall. *The Memorial is dedicated to the 2.7 million men and women in the U.S. military who served in the designated war zone.*

Its construction and related issues have been the source of controversies, some of which have resulted in additions to the memorial complex. The memorial currently consists of three separate parts: the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall, completed first and the best-known part of the memorial; the Three Servicemen Memorial, and the Vietnam Women's Memorial.

THIS IS NOT A "WAR MEMORIAL", BUT A MEMORIAL TO THOSE WHO SERVED IN THE WAR, BOTH LIVING AND DEAD



The Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, DC, USA, "The Wall" now has carved into it the names of the 58,300 American military personnel (eight were women) who were direct casualties of the war, including about 1300 who are still considered Missing In Action (MIA) but officially classified as "Died, body not recovered".

**The Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, DC is owned by the people of the USA and is maintained by the U.S. National Park Service.**

When The Wall was built, there were 57,159 names. A few names have been added each year: those where lost records of wartime death were found later and names of men who died after the war from physical injuries as a result of the war.

The US Department of Defense established the criteria of geographic boundaries and beginning and ending dates. Each of the branches of the Department of Defense made and continues to make the determinations of eligibility. We do not determine if a person's death qualifies to have his name on the Wall.

**The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund (VVMF) raised the money to build the memorial from donations from more than 275,000 private citizens and organizations.**

Jan Scruggs was president of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund (VVMF). Robert Doubek was the Executive Director of VVMF and the project director to build the Memorial. Doubek also spent hundreds of hours personally creating one list of names from many different sources from the Department of Defense.

There was a contest for the design of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. A jury of eight prominent artists and architects considered 1,421 design entries. The design submitted by Maya Ying Lin, a 21-year-old architecture student at Yale University won the design competition. Maya Lin was born in Ohio; her parents had fled the communist takeover of China in 1949. A formal groundbreaking ceremony for The Wall was held on March 26, 1982.

In November 1984 The Wall became the property of the people of the USA. Since that time, The Wall has been maintained by U.S. National Park Service employees and is staffed by National Park Service Park Rangers, National Park Service Park Security, and National Park Service "Yellow hat" volunteers. The National Park Service funds ceremonies at The Wall several times each year, in coordination with several different veteran organizations.

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial belongs to the people of the United States of America.

**The proper name of the memorial is "Vietnam Veterans Memorial." It is purposely NOT a war memorial.**

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall has frequently been described as **"the most visited memorial in the country."** Many report their first encounter with The Wall as an emotional experience. Various aspects of the design contribute to the emotion, whether visitors are consciously aware of the connection or not.



The Wall is both partly into the ground, signifying death and mourning, and above ground. The center of The Wall rises above the surrounding terrain as a symbol of life, hope, and resurrection. Although completely open on one side, visitors feel they are walking down, into The Wall.

The Wall was made from black granite from Bangalore, India. The granite is extremely hard and has a very fine grain, **so the names carved into The Wall should remain for hundreds of years.** The black surface gives a feeling of death and sadness but is polished to a high finish, so The Wall becomes a "living" memorial by reflecting the sky, the environment, and visitors. The Wall absorbs sunlight during the day and radiates that energy as heat during the evening and night.

Additional slabs of the same granite are in storage in the United States in case any of the panels of the Wall need to be replaced.

Like the war, itself, The Wall begins small, rises to a peak, and then tapers off small again.

The Wall consists of the East Wall and West Wall, two triangles each 246.75 feet long and 10.1 feet tall where they meet at the central apex. As seen from above, they meet at a 125-degree angle, with the West Wall pointing toward the Lincoln Memorial and the East Wall pointing to the Washington Monument. Each Wall consists of 72 panels: 70 with names and 2 very small, blank panels at each end.

The names are arranged by date of casualty, as a continuous flow of names with no demarcation of dates. The earliest casualties are named just to the right of where the two Walls meet, under the large date 1959, on line 1 of panel 1E (east). The names continue to line 2 of panel 1E, down to the bottom of panel 1E, then to the top of panel 2E.

That pattern continues to the east end of the East Wall, where panel 70E has the names of 4 men who died on May 24, 1968, and 1 man who died on May 25, 1968. May 25 continues at the far end of the West Wall, at panel W70.

The names continue from there back to the center, where the last casualties are listed at the bottom of panel W1. The names of the last and first casualties are thereby near each other to form a closed circle, described as "a wound that is closed and healing." Within any given day, the names are arranged alphabetically.

The year "1975" is carved on the bottom of panel W1 because that was the year of the last American casualties, even though American involvement had ended in 1973. In compliance with the Paris Peace Accords, both US and North Vietnam military forces were supposed to withdraw from South Vietnam in March 1973. US military forces withdrew as promised. The US was no longer involved in the war, although a few US Marines were left to guard the US Embassy in Saigon. In April 1975, North Vietnam forces swept through the south. A US Navy ship involved with rescuing Vietnamese and American civilians came under heavy fire, killing and wounding several US Marines and sailors. Those killed are listed above the "1975."

When The Wall was built, it was thought the first American military casualties occurred in 1959. After The Wall was erected, two families brought forth proof that two American military advisors had been killed earlier, one in 1956 and one in 1957. Their names were added to panel 1E but it was decided to not correct the date carved on the top of panel 1E, which would deface The Wall.

A small symbol is carved next to each name. A diamond indicates "killed, body recovered". A small percentage of names have a plus sign, indicating "Missing in Action" which has been officially renamed "killed: body not recovered". The plus sign was chosen because it could be changed to a diamond if the person's remains were found, or a circle could be carved around it if that person returned alive. Since The Wall was built, several hundred remains of men have been found and identified, so the symbols next to their names were changed to diamonds. There have not yet been any symbols changed to circles. In most cases, the date the person became missing was used to place his name with those who died on that date. Detailed information about all the persons listed as POWs or MIAs from the Vietnam War can be found at [www.POWNetwork.org](http://www.POWNetwork.org).

The names of 14 men who came home alive are on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall. When the Wall was built, their military records were not clear whether they had died in the war or not. It was decided to add their names to err on the side of inclusion, rather than leaving their names off. Once it was confirmed they were alive, their names were removed from the directories and database used for looking up names. Their names were left on the Wall because any form of removing them would deface the Wall.

In 1984 a flagpole and a life-size sculpture named "The Three Fighting Men" by Frederick Hart were added near the west end of The Wall.

In 1993, the Vietnam Women's Memorial Project dedicated the Vietnam Women's Memorial, a sculpture by Glenna Goodacre. It honors the eight military and fifty-six civilian American women who died in the war and some ten thousand American women who served in the war.

In 1984, a transportable scale model of the Wall named The Moving Wall was first put on display. John Devitt was a helicopter door gunner in Vietnam. After he attended the 1982 dedication of the Wall in Washington, he vowed to make a smaller version of the Wall that could travel the country to take the Wall directly to the cities and towns of those named upon it. Friends and relatives of the fallen who could not make the trip to Washington could now experience the Wall. John and his friends built The Moving Wall. Since 1984, two *additional structures of The Moving Wall were added and have made more than 1000 visits all over the USA and Canada.*

Since the names on the Wall are listed in the order of death, first-time visitors to the Wall are frequently unable to find the name they came to see. Shortly after the Wall was built, some relatives and friends of the fallen decided to help visitors find names and began to spend their spare time at the Wall with their copies of the Directory of Names. They formed the organization Friends of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, "The Friends."

*The Three Soldiers statue sits a few feet from the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall.* This statue was added after the Wall opened to complement it and to offer an alternative memorial for critics who disliked the non-traditional design of the Wall. The sculpture's 3 soldiers represent the diversity of the US military by including a Caucasian, African American, and Latino American whose service branch is intentionally ambiguous. Together, they face the Wall of the Fallen.

The statue, unveiled on Veterans Day, 1984, was designed by Frederick Hart, who placed third in the original memorial design competition.



THE THREE SOLDIERS' STATUS

*The Vietnam Women's Memorial is a memorial dedicated to the women of the United States who served in the Vietnam War, most of whom were nurses.* It serves as a reminder of the importance of women in the conflict. It depicts three uniformed women with a wounded soldier. It is part of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and is located on the National Mall in Washington D.C., a short distance south of The Wall, north of the Reflecting Pool.

It was designed by Glenna Goodacre and was dedicated on November 11, 1993.



THE WOMEN'S MEMORIAL





The figures are called "The Three Servicemen". This is not a war Memorial but a Memorial to those who served in the war, both living and dead.

**Remember them.....**

*If you are able, save for them a place inside of you and save one backward glance when you are leaving for the places they can no longer go. Be not ashamed to say you loved them, though you may or may not have always. Take what they have taught you with their dying and keep it with your own. And in that time when men decide and feel safe to call the war insane, take one moment to embrace those gentle heroes you left behind.*

**Major Michael Davis O'Donnell**  
**KIA 1 January 1970**  
**Dak To, Vietnam**



PANORAMA OF THE VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL AND THE THREE SOLDIERS STATUE

#### OTHER INFORMATION ABOUT "THE WALL"

**A.** The wall originally listed 57,939 names when it was dedicated in 1982, however, other names have since been added and as of May 2018, there were 58,320 names, including eight women. The number of names on the wall is different than the official number of U.S. Vietnam War deaths, which is 58,220 as of May 2018. The names inscribed are not a complete list of those who are eligible for inclusion as some names were omitted at the request of families

**B.** The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, Inc. (VVMF) raised nearly \$9,000,000 entirely through private contributions from corporations, foundations, unions, veterans and civic organizations, and more than 275,000 individual Americans. No Federal funds were needed.

**C.** The names were NOT carved by hand, but by a computerized typesetting process (by Datalantic, Incorporated, Atlanta, Georgia) called photo stencil grit blasting, developed by Larry Century, specifically for the Memorial, in Memphis, Tennessee.

**D.** The Moving Wall is a half-size replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. It was devised by John Devitt after he attended the 1982 annual commemoration ceremonies celebrated in Washington for Vietnam veterans. He felt that he needed to share his experience with those who did not have the opportunity to go to Washington. Devitt, Norris Shears, Gerry Haver, and other Vietnam veterans volunteered to build the Wall. It went on display for the first time in Tyler, Texas, in October 1984.

Two structures of The Moving Wall now travel the United States from April through November, spending 5 or 6 days at each site. Veterans' organizations contact his company, Vietnam Combat Veterans, Ltd., to arrange local visits. By 2006, the structure has made more than 1000 visits. On its visits, the Moving Wall is often escorted by state troopers or volunteer organizations such as the Patriot Guard Riders, who accompany the memorial on motorcycles.

The first Moving Wall structure to retire has been on permanent display at the Veterans Memorial Amphitheater in Pittsburg, Kansas since 2004. The Memorial is open to the public with no admission fee, 24 hours a day, year-round.

**E.** When a visitor looks upon the wall, his or her reflection can be seen simultaneously with the engraved names, which is meant to symbolically bring the past and present together.

**F.** Visitors to The Wall will take a piece of paper and place it over a name on The Wall and rub a wax crayon or graphite pencil over it as a memento of their loved ones.

Visitors to the memorial began leaving sentimental items at the memorial at its opening. One story claims this practice began during construction when a Vietnam veteran threw the Purple Heart his brother received posthumously into the concrete of the memorial's foundation. Several thousand items are left at the memorial each. (See the article concerning these left-behind items at the end of this article.)

**G.** On April 27, 1979, four years after the Fall of Saigon, The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, Inc. (VVMF), was incorporated as a non-profit organization to establish a memorial to veterans of the Vietnam War. Much of the impetus behind the formation of the fund came from a wounded Vietnam veteran, Jan Scruggs, who was inspired by the film *The Deer Hunter*, with support from fellow Vietnam veterans such as retired Navy chaplain Arnold Resnicoff. Eventually, \$8.4 million was raised by private donations.

A year later, a site near the Lincoln Memorial was chosen and authorized by Congress on the site of the demolished World War I Munitions Building. Congress announced that the winner of a design competition would design the park. By the end of the year, 2,573 registered for the design competition with a prize of \$20,000. On March 30, 1981, 1,421 designs were submitted.

The designs were displayed at an airport hangar at Andrews Air Force Base for the selection committee, in rows covering more than 35,000 square feet (3,300 m<sup>2</sup>) of floor space. Each entry was identified by number only, to preserve the anonymity of their authors. All entries were examined by each juror; the entries were narrowed down to 232, then 39. Finally, the jury selected entry number 1026, designed by Maya Lin.

**H.** The selected design was very controversial, in particular its unconventional design, its black color, and its lack of ornamentation. Some public officials voiced their displeasure, calling the wall "a black gash of shame." Two prominent early supporters of the project, H. Ross Perot and James Webb, withdrew their support once they saw the design. Said Webb, "I never in my wildest dreams imagined such a nihilistic slab of stone." James Watt, Secretary of the Interior under President Ronald Reagan, initially refused to issue a building permit for the memorial due to the public outcry about the design. Since its early years, criticism of the Memorial's design faded. In the words of Scruggs, "It has become something of a shrine".

Negative reactions to Maya Lin's design created a controversy; a compromise was reached by commissioning Frederick Hart (who had placed third in the original design competition) to produce a bronze figurative sculpture in the heroic tradition. Opponents of Lin's design had hoped to place this sculpture of three soldiers at the apex of the wall's two sides. Lin objected strenuously to this, arguing that this would make the soldiers the focal point of the memorial, and her wall a mere backdrop. A compromise was reached, and the sculpture was placed off to one side to minimize the impact of the addition on Lin's design.

On March 11, 1982, the revised design was formally approved, and on March 26, 1982, the ground was formally broken. The memorial was dedicated on November 13, 1982, after a march to its site by thousands of Vietnam War veterans. About two years later the Three Soldiers statue was dedicated

**I. The Women's Memorial** was designed by Glenna Goodacre for the women of the United States who served in the Vietnam War. Before Goodacre's design was selected, two design entries had been awarded as co-finalists - one a statue and the other a setting - however, the two designs were unable to be reconciled. Glenna Goodacre's entry received an honorable mention in the contest and she was asked to submit a modified maquette (design model). Goodacre's original design for the Women's Memorial statue included a standing figure of a nurse holding a Vietnamese baby, which although not intended as such, was deemed a political statement, and it was asked that this be removed. She replaced them with a figure of a kneeling woman holding an empty helmet. As stated before... On November 11, 1993, the Vietnam Women's Memorial was dedicated...

**J. There have been hundreds of incidents of vandalism at the memorial wall**. Some of the most notable cases are:

In April 1988, when a swastika and various scratches were found etched in two of the panels

In 1993, someone burned one of the directory stands at the entrance to the memorial.

On September 7, 2007, an oily substance was found by park rangers on the memorial's wall panels and paving stones. It was spread over an area of 50-60 feet (15-18 m). Memorial Fund founder Jan Scruggs deplored the scene, calling it an "act of vandalism on one of America's sacred places". The removal process took a few weeks to complete.

#### WHAT THE NAMES ON THE WALL REPRESENT

There are three sets of fathers and sons on the Wall.

39,996 on the Wall were just 22 or younger.

8,283 were just 19 years old.

The largest age group, 33,103 were 18 years old.

12 soldiers on the Wall were 17 years old.

5 soldiers on the Wall were 16 years old.

One soldier, PFC Dan Bullock, was 15 years old.

997 soldiers were killed on their first day in Vietnam.

1,448 soldiers were killed on their last day in Vietnam.

31 sets of brothers are on the Wall.

31 sets of parents lost two of their sons.

54 soldiers attended Thomas Edison High School in Philadelphia.

8 Women are on the Wall. Killed while Nursing the wounded.

244 soldiers were awarded the Medal of Honor during the Vietnam War; 153 of them were on the Wall.

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## **PART 2**

### **HOW THE TRIBUTES LEFT AT THE VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL IN WASHINGTON D.C ARE KEPT AND RECORDED BY THE STAFF**



A location where American prisoners and missing are remembered is at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, where, *since the memorial was consecrated in 1982*, visitors have left many different items in memory of the imprisoned, the dead, and those still missing.

But what happens to those tributes after visitors depart?

The wall is under the purview of the National Park Service, and NPS staff that have kept and stored many of the items left at the Memorial. Although there are other memorials on the National Mall, the NPS only collects material deposited at the Vietnam Memorial.

They were unsure how to treat the items initially. Some maintenance people felt very guilty about throwing away the things that they found there, and so they began holding onto the items, as NPS Museum Technician Janet Donlin told CNN. In 1984, their regional curator found out about this, and she determined to make an official collection of the items.

After collection at the wall by NPS employees, the items are deposited at the Museum Resource Center in Maryland State. The Center is the storage building for NPS collections in the National Capital Region and has over 40 museum collections. So far, more than 1,400 boxes are earmarked for items collected from the Memorial, CNN Politics reported.

Donlin is responsible for preserving and cataloging the collection. She estimates that, for over 30 years, the number of items is in the hundreds of thousands. The only items not collected by the NPS are things like wreaths left by numerous school groups – they are too plentiful.

The largest category of things that are left at the wall is what they call ‘documentary artifacts’ - documents such as poems, pictures, notes, and collages, Donlin said.

The collection also includes distinctive items such as mannequins, a race car hood, a motorcycle, and a helicopter blade.

Following instructions from Wisconsin veterans who built and donated the motorcycle, it is to sit idle until all of the state’s missing soldiers have returned home. More than 1,600 Americans are listed as missing from the war.

The President traditionally signs a proclamation on the third Friday in September as POW/MIA Recognition Day.

In this short video, American History TV speaks to one of the curators of the collection and views some of the items.

To view the video copy and paste the below link into your browser.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=1&v=HNNaTasQ\\_CY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1&v=HNNaTasQ_CY)

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### **PART 3**

#### **WHY WERE VIETNAM WAR VETS TREATED POORLY WHEN THEY RETURNED?**

**(ARTICLE DTD 8 NOV, 2018)**

Americans' attitudes toward veterans of the Vietnam War have been characterized by tension between a sense of virtue and a sense of shame.



*This article from The History Channel Website provides some insight into a question that has been asked for many years concerning the Vietnam War, **but are they answers or excuses?***



American soldiers returning home from Vietnam often faced scorn as the war they had fought in became increasingly unpopular.

Twenty-one-year-old Steven A. Wowwk arrived as an infantryman in the Army's First Cavalry Division in Cam Ranh Bay, Vietnam in early January 1969 to fight in an escalating and increasingly unwinnable war. By June, Wowwk had been wounded twice—the second time seriously—and was sent back to the United States for treatment at Boston's Chelsea Naval Hospital.

It was after returning to the U.S. and while en route to the hospital that Wowwk first encountered hostility as a veteran.

Strapped to a gurney in a retrofitted bus, Wowwk and other wounded servicemen felt excitement at being back on American soil. But looking out the window and seeing civilians stop to watch the small convoy of hospital-bound vehicles, his excitement turned to confusion. "I remember feeling like, what could I do to acknowledge them, **and I just gave the peace signal," Wowwk says. "And instead of getting return peace fingers, I got the middle finger."**



*A group of amputee Vietnam veterans talk together at a hospital in San Francisco, California, in 1967.*

*The Vietnam War claimed the lives of more than 58,000 American service members and wounded more than 150,000 more. And for the men who served in Vietnam and survived unspeakable horrors, coming home offered its kind of trauma. Some, like Wowwk, say they had invectives hurled their way; others, like naval officer Ford Cole, remember being spit on. As a cohort,*

*Vietnam veterans were met with none of the fanfare and received none of the benefits bestowed upon World War II's "greatest generation."*

#### NO WELCOME HOME PARADES FOR VIETNAM VETS

**This was partly due to the logistics of the never-ending conflict.** The Vietnam War lasted from 1964 to 1973—the longest war in American history until it was overtaken by the one in Afghanistan—and servicemen typically did one-year tours of duty.

Unlike conflicts with massive demobilizations, men came back from Vietnam by themselves rather than with their units or companies. For a decade, as one person was shipped off to fight, another was returning.

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"The collective emotion of the country was divided," says Jerry Lembke, a Vietnam veteran, sociologist, and author of *The Spitting Image: Myth, Memory, and the Legacy of Vietnam*. "For the family whose son is just coming back, you aren't going to have a public welcoming home ceremony when someone's son just down the road was just sent off to Vietnam."

As the war ground on and became increasingly hopeless, the military personnel put through this kind of revolving door of service came to represent something many Americans would rather not accept: defeat. "Vietnam was a lost war, and it was the first major lost war abroad in American history," Lembke says. **"You don't have parades for soldiers coming home from a war they lost."**



*Vietnam veterans held a silent march down Pennsylvania Avenue past the White House here on April 22, 1971.*

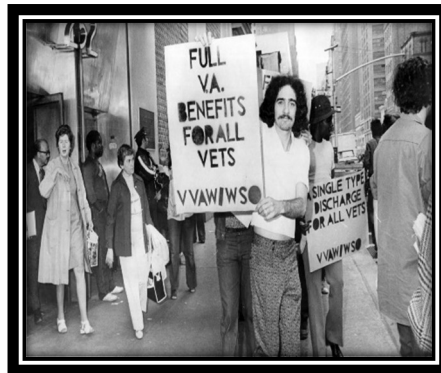
#### GI BENEFITS WERE LACKING

Celebrations aside, the government also failed to make good on its promises to those who served. Veterans returning from Vietnam were met with an institutional response marked by indifference. Peter Langenus, today the Commander of VFW Post 653 in New Canaan, Connecticut, commanded Delta Company, 3rd Battalion/7th Infantry, 199th Light Infantry Brigade from 1969-70. He led his men on operations that lasted 30 days or more in some of Vietnam's most inhospitable conditions, "without shaving, bathing or changing clothing. None of that," he says, "prepared me for the reception at home upon our return."

Back in the States, Langenus quickly discovered the GI benefits available for Vietnam veterans "were almost nonexistent." While living in New York, he developed symptoms of malaria—a tropical disease fairly uncommon in the concrete jungle—yet he was denied VA health care because he didn't display those symptoms in Vietnam. He graduated from Notre Dame before being commissioned, and after his service returned to law school to cash in his educational benefits. "At a time when I was paying \$300 a credit, my entire educational benefit was \$126." When it came to

finding a job, he was met with thinly veiled disgust and discrimination from law firms upon learning he was a Vietnam infantry veteran.

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*Protestors demonstrated for full benefits for all US veterans, including Vietnam War veterans in July 1974.*

“The society was ill-prepared to give these guys what they deserved,” says Christian Appy, Professor of History at the University of Massachusetts Amherst and author of three books on Vietnam. “They were not necessarily looking for a parade, but they were certainly looking for basic human support and help in readjusting to civilian life after this really brutal war.

Part of the reason was economic. While the economy after World War II was one of the most robust in American history, during and after Vietnam the nation was in a death spiral of stagflation and economic malaise. As more and more wartime atrocities came to light, there was a national implication of guilt and shame placed on Vietnam veterans as participants in and avatars of a brutal, unsuccessful war. In popular culture, the stereotype of the broken, homeless Vietnam vet began to take hold thanks to films like *The Deer Hunter* (1978), *Coming Home* (1978), and *First Blood* (1982).



*In 1982 Vietnam veterans marched down Constitution Avenue toward the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, which would be dedicated later that day.*

#### THE GULF WAR SAW A SHIFT OF ATTITUDES

It would take nearly 20 years after the end of the war for America to get right with its Vietnam veterans. The dedication of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in 1982 began the process, but many identify the Gulf War of 1990-91—with its national flag-waving, yellow-ribbon cultural mobilization, and the grand celebrations of a successful campaign—as ending Vietnam Syndrome. “The Vietnam veterans, we couldn’t believe it. We could not understand getting letters from school kids,” says Langenus, also a veteran of Desert Storm. “You couldn’t believe that people were cheering you.”

Since 9/11, patriotic gestures, like wearing flag pins and saying, “Thank you for your service,” have become common, as more troops are sent to Iraq and Afghanistan. But the specter of Vietnam still lingers, and some of that war’s veterans view such acts with a wary glance.

“Deeds need to be done in addition to words,” says Wowwk, who is 100 percent disabled from his Vietnam wounds. “I appreciate the respect of ‘thank you’ because that was something I never

received when I came home. It's better than nothing. It's better than them walking away and not even recognizing you. But what are you doing in addition to saying 'thank you'?"

## **DISCLAIMER**

PLEASE UNDERSTAND THAT EVEN THOUGH THIS INFORMATION HAS BEEN TAKEN  
FROM WEBSITES & OTHER SOURCES THAT APPEAR TO BE AUTHENTIC, I CAN NOT ENSURE THAT ALL THE  
DATA IN THIS ARTICLE IS ACCURATE AND CORRECT.