



THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA VIETNAM WAR 50th COMMEMORATION



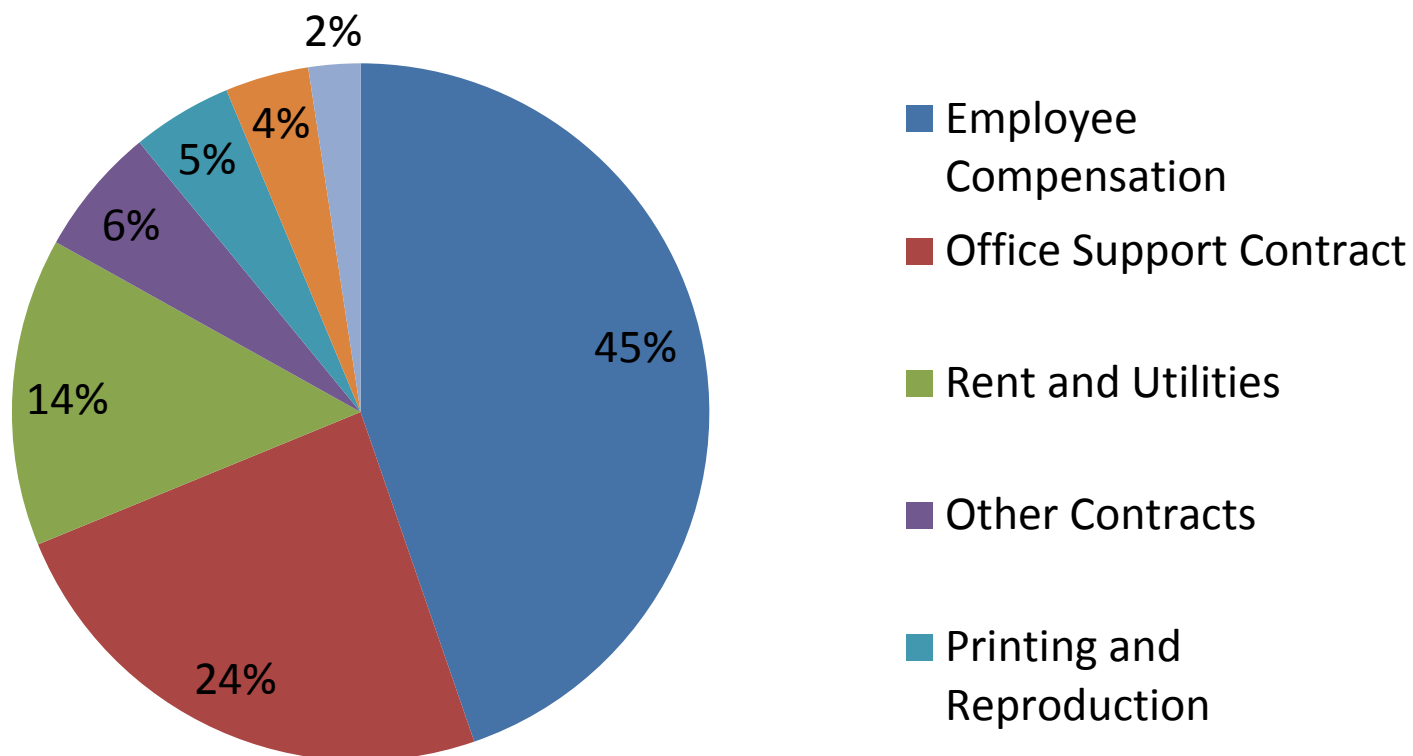
Federal Advisory Committee
September 19, 2016

Join the Nation, Get Involved and Become a Commemorative Partner!

www.VietnamWar50th.com



FY16 Budget Usage





THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA VIETNAM WAR COMMEMORATION



Commemorative Partner Program Federal Advisory Committee

September 19, 2016

*Office of Commemorations
Vietnam War 50th Anniversary*



Commemorative Partner Program



COMMEMORATIVE PARTNER (CP) UPDATE:

■ **Current Approved CPs: 10,253**

- ❑ **Civilian:** 9144
- ❑ **Military:** 1109

■ **Pending Applications: 45**

- ❑ **In-Process App:** 12
- ❑ **Incomplete App:** 16
- ❑ **Missing SOU:** 17

- ❑ County VA offices continue to sign up as partners as a direct result of state directors spreading the word about the Commemoration and the recent National Association of County Veterans Service Officers conference where the Director spoke to the attendees
- ❑ Reachback and Outreach efforts are generating results:
 - Emphasis on VSO Reachback has generated more applications from VSO chapters and Posts. Awareness of the Commemoration is significantly up at national conferences this summer. High percentage of attendees are aware of the Commemoration and had received a lapel pin prior to the conference. Emphasis on regional and state attendance will be more beneficial.
- ❑ Puerto Rico and American Samoa were not in attendance at the Fall National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs (NASDVA) conference. NASDVA leadership is assisting as well as state directors in Hawaii and Guam with remaining VA offices/governors.

Current State/Territory/Commonwealth

CP Status:

*54/56 States/Territories/Commonwealths

**54/56 State VA Offices

54/54 TAGS

*Missing American Samoa & Puerto Rico

**Missing American Samoa & Puerto Rico



THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA VIETNAM WAR COMMEMORATION



History & Legacy Federal Advisory Committee *September 19, 2016*

*Office of Commemorations
Vietnam War 50th Anniversary*



History and Legacy Mission Statement



Provide historically accurate materials and interactive experiences that thank, honor and tell the story about the Vietnam War veterans and their families to help Americans better understand and appreciate their service and sacrifice and ensure the legacy of their service and sacrifice endures for future generations.



Pentagon Corridor Exhibit



3rd Floor – A Ring – Between Corridors 2 & 3 Estimated Completion – November 2016

VIETNAM WAR EXHIBIT
Timeline Wall: Section One

December 2015





**January 15, 1965
WOMEN'S ARMY CORPS PERSONNEL
ARRIVE IN VIETNAM**

Major Kathleen L. Wilkes and Sergeant First Class Betty L. Adams of the U.S. Women's Army Corps (WAC) arrive in Saigon to train South Vietnamese Women's Armed Forces Corps. They are the first WAC representatives to serve in Vietnam since 1963. Many more WAC women later deploy to Vietnam. They serve in clerical, administrative, finance, intelligence, logistics, training, and legal and civil affairs assignments in various U.S. military headquarters.

WAC today includes Major Kathleen L. Wilkes and Sergeant First Class Betty L. Adams from training in the newly formed South Vietnamese Women's Army Corps. (National Archives)



**February 10-11, 1965
VIET CONG BOMBING AND OPERATION
FLAMING DART II**

Communist guerrillas bomb the Viet Quang Hotel in the coastal city of Qui Nhon. The U.S. Army had been using the hotel as a barracks facility. The blast kills twenty-three Americans and seven South Vietnamese. In response, President Johnson orders additional air strikes in North Vietnam on February 11, known as FLAMING DART II. U.S. Navy and Air Force and South Vietnamese aircraft hit barracks and other facilities at Qui Nhon and Ho Coang with rockets and bombs.

Major Kathleen L. Wilkes and Sergeant First Class Betty L. Adams from training in the newly formed South Vietnamese Women's Army Corps. (National Archives)

**February 25, 1965
SOUTH KOREA SENDS A NONCOMBAT
UNIT TO VIETNAM**

The Republic of Korea Military Assistance Group, Vietnam, also known as One Unit, begins to arrive in Vietnam. It is based in Bien Hoa Province. South Korea's One Unit includes a noncombat force of about 2,400 men comprising a construction support group, marine corps engineer company, army security company, and navy amphibious unit.

**February 7-8, 1965
VIET CONG ATTACKS NEAR PLEIKU
AND OPERATION FLAMING DART**

Viet Cong mortar crews attack U.S. facilities near Pleiku, killing eight Americans and wounding over 100 others. Three days later, allied personnel find that it was carrying about 100 tons of arms, ammunition, explosives, and other supplies intended for the Viet Cong.

The incident helps provide the justification for Operation MARKET TIME. This combined U.S. Navy-U.S. Coast Guard-South Vietnamese naval patrol operation is designed to stem the flow of supplies by sea from North to South Vietnam. During the next seven years, the patrol vessels and aircraft of MARKET TIME help thwart the great majority of infiltration by North Vietnamese coastal sea routes.

Operation Market Time was established and administered from the expanded U.S. Navy's 7th Fleet. (National Archives)



**February 16, 1965
THE VUNG RO BAY INCIDENT AND
OPERATION MARKET TIME**

A U.S. helicopter pilot spots a 130-foot North Vietnamese freighter unloading cargo on a beach in South Vietnam's Vung Ro Bay. Airlines capture the freighter. Three days later, allied personnel find that it was carrying about 100 tons of arms, ammunition, explosives, and other supplies intended for the Viet Cong.

The incident helps provide the justification for Operation MARKET TIME. This combined U.S. Navy-U.S. Coast Guard-South Vietnamese naval patrol operation is designed to stem the flow of supplies by sea from North to South Vietnam. During the next seven years, the patrol vessels and aircraft of MARKET TIME help thwart the great majority of infiltration by North Vietnamese coastal sea routes.

Operation Market Time was established and administered from the expanded U.S. Navy's 7th Fleet. (National Archives)



**March 2, 1965
OPERATION ROLLING THUNDER
BEGINS THE SUSTAINED BOMBING
OF NORTH VIETNAM**

Operation ROLLING THUNDER begins. In this almost four-year campaign, U.S. Air Force, Marine, and Navy aircraft bomb military, industrial, and infrastructure targets throughout North Vietnam. ROLLING THUNDER's original purpose is to end North Vietnam's support for the Communist insurgency in the South by ending its aerial logistical base. That effort eventually fails, and cutting the flow of food, fuel, ammunition, and troops from North to South Vietnam becomes the priority.

After March 1969, President Johnson restricts the bombing to an effort to encourage peace negotiations. Johnson ends the campaign altogether after October 31, 1969. The ROLLING THUNDER bombing destroys or damages many of North Vietnam's bridges and power generating plants and much of its infrastructure and petroleum storage capacity. Its material losses are counterbalanced by aid from China and the Soviet Union. The United States loses nearly 1,000 aircraft in the campaign. ROLLING THUNDER weakens and complicates North Vietnamese combat operations in South Vietnam, but the campaign is ultimately viewed as a failure.

A 100 Thunderbolt flies off on a mission to South Vietnam, 1965. (National Archives)

**U.S. Air Force
Vietnam Defensive
2 March 1965-30 January
1966**



**March 8, 1965
U.S. MARINES ARRIVE AT DA NANG,
SOUTH VIETNAM**

U.S. Marines of the 9th Marine Expeditionary Brigade (MEB) arrive at Da Nang, South Vietnam. The brigade consists of two Marine battalions. One makes an amphibious landing and the other arrives by air. The 9th MEB assumes command of the helicopters of MACV, which becomes Marine Aircraft Group 16.

This is the first deployment of a major U.S. combat unit to Vietnam. Although the mission of the 9th MEB is limited to the defense of the air base at Da Nang, it signals the beginning of the United States' transition from an advisory role to direct participation in the war.

U.S. Marines land at Da Nang's beach, March 8, 1965. U.S. Marine Corps History Center



**March 30, 1965
VIET CONG BOMBING OF THE
U.S. EMBASSY IN SAIGON**

Viet Cong agents detonate a car bomb outside the U.S. Embassy in Saigon, killing CIA attaché Robert A. Robbins, Navy Storekeeper Second Class Marcello W. Cavillo, and as many as 19 others. Robbins becomes the first senior CIA officer to die in the line of duty. The bomb wounds over 200 other Americans and Vietnamese. These include CIA Saigon Station Chief Peter de Silva and Deputy U.S. Ambassador Unit Aileen Johnson.

Scene of the Viet Cong bombing of the U.S. Embassy in Saigon, 1965. (National Archives)

**U.S. Army, U.S. Navy
Vietnam Defense Campaign
8 March 1965-24 December 1965**



**April 3, 1965
ATTEMPTS TO DESTROY THE
THANH HOA BRIDGE**

As part of Operation ROLLING THUNDER, the U.S. Air Force launches a strike against the Thanh Hoa Bridge, which spans the Long Xa River in North Vietnam, approximately 70 miles south of Hanoi. The bridge is a choke point on a crucial North Vietnamese supply route. A total of 75 U.S. aircraft attack the bridge with a variety of munitions but fail to destroy it.

Before a bombing halt in 1966, the U.S. Air Force and Navy launch numerous strikes on the Thanh Hoa Bridge. None manage to take the bridge permanently out of service. Not until 1972, with the help of new precision electronic-guided and laser-guided bombs, does U.S. air power succeed in destroying it.

Map showing bombing route packages in North Vietnam with the Thanh Hoa Bridge at the center. (National Archives)

**April 7, 1965
U.S. AIR FORCE F-4 FIGHTER
SQUADRON DEPLOYS TO THAILAND**

The U.S. Air Force 49th Tactical Fighter Squadron (TF) deploys to Udon Royal Thai Air Force Base, Thailand. The squadron is equipped with the first Air Force F-4 Phantom II jets in Southeast Asia. On July 10 the 49th TF's rounds the Air Force's first aerial victory in Southeast Asia when two F-4s scores shoot down two North Vietnamese MiG-17 jet fighters.

U.S. TROOPS
IN VIETNAM
BY THE END OF
1968:
536,100*

U.S. Army
U.S. Navy
U.S. Air Force
TET 69/Counteroffensive
20 February 1969–8 June 1969



December 6, 1968
OPERATION GIANT SLINGSHOT BEGINS
Operation GIANT SLINGSHOT begins. It is an extension of SEALORDS better patrols that seek to eliminate enemy riverine infiltration from Cambodia. GIANT SLINGSHOT personnel focus efforts specifically along the Vam Co Dong and Vam Co Tay rivers in the "Punch Bowl" area of the South Vietnam-Cambodia border. The operation lasts until May 1969, when it is transferred to the South Vietnamese Navy.

The cover of U.S. Navy's first printed leaflet, counteroffensive during GIANT SLINGSHOT, February 1969. Photo: Henry and Heritage Collection.



January 14, 1969
FIRE ABOARD THE USS ENTERPRISE
While steaming off of Hawaii before deploying to Vietnam, the nuclear-powered carrier USS Enterprise suffers a costly fire when a rocket, thrown on the flight deck and ignited, explodes in nearby aloft. Though the flames are brought under control, 27 crewmen are killed, 344 are injured, and 15 aircraft are destroyed.

The USS Enterprise, January 14, 1969. Photo: Naval Station Hawaii.



January 22, 1969
OPERATION DEWEY CANYON BEGINS
From January 20 to March 16, the U.S. 9th Marine Regiment conducts Operation DEWEY CANYON. Its objective is to eliminate a North Vietnamese buildup in the Da Hong Village, an enemy supply route between the Lachien River and the A Sui Valley. Over the course of two months, Marine infantry units, transported and supported by helicopters, operate in the two valleys surrounding the base and clearing out North Vietnamese troops. The operation accounts for numerous enemy casualties and the capture or destruction of thousands of tons of enemy arms, ammunition, and supplies.

Captain Thomas F. White captured a North Vietnamese officer alive and Communist troops captured at the 9th Marine Regiment's command during Operation DEWEY Canyon. U.S. Marine Corps History Division.

February 23, 1969
MINI-TET 1969 BEGINS

The North Vietnamese and Viet Cong launch artillery attacks on over 100 populated centers and military targets across South Vietnam. The attacks represent a Communist attempt to mount another sustained offensive close to the Tet season, though this one is far weaker than Tet 1968. Communist forces target bridges and other cities and installations with mortar and rocket fire. MACV commander General Abrams quickly orders a four-day retaliatory bombardment of North Vietnam below the 19th parallel using both air strikes and naval artillery. In March, President Nixon orders further retaliatory air strikes known as Operation MIKE. The entire Communist offensive ends on June 1.



April 1969
NIXON'S VIETNAMEZATION PLAN

At the direction of President Nixon and with insights from Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird, who has recently returned from a visit to Vietnam, National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger issues a memo instructing the Department of Defense, the State Department, and the CIA to formulate "a specific timetable for Vietnamizing the war." The goal of Vietnamization is to gradually turn the conduct of the war over to the South Vietnamese and begin the incremental withdrawal of American troops.

The notion of "de-Americanizing" the war seems back to President Kennedy, but the Nixon administration formalizes it as policy. In addition to significantly expanding and training the South Vietnamese military, the plan involves attempting to improve security for the rural population, disrupting Viet Cong activities in the countryside, and helping the South Vietnamese government institute needed reforms.

Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird and President Richard M. Nixon, June 26, 1969. Photo: Henry and Heritage Collection.

January 13, 1969
OPERATION BOLD MARINER BEGINS
In Operation BOLD MARINER, a U.S. Navy Seventh Fleet task force puts a brigade-size Marine force ashore on the Battangan Peninsula, Quang Ngai Province, in South Vietnam. The region has long been a Viet Cong stronghold. The operation's objective is to locate and clear out Viet Cong agents and secure the civilian population. The Marines, working in concert with U.S. Army and South Vietnamese troops, screen some 10,000 civilians and remove them from their villages for resettlement further south. They then identify and destroy heavily armed units of enemy guerrillas. The main portion of BOLD MARINER lasts until early February and is the largest amphibious operation of the war.

March 16, 1969
OPERATION MENU BEGINS

The United States conducts the first of a round of bombings against North Vietnamese and Viet Cong sanctuaries in Cambodia. These strikes evolve into the top secret bombing campaign known as Operation MENU, which lasts for 14 months. The Nixon administration hopes the bombings will demonstrate American resolve to defend itself and significantly reducing the flow of North Vietnamese troops and supplies into South Vietnam. The administration also believes that the campaign will increase pressure on the North to negotiate more seriously for peace.

Although the bombings are a tightly held secret within the U.S. government and military, the New York Times breaks the story of the bombings on May 6. The possible leak prompts the Nixon White House to order whitewash on the phrases of journalists and administration officials, including an official in DOD. The and similar actions by the White House eventually lead to the Watergate scandal in 1972.

Map showing typical communist base areas. MACV Command Map 201 (March 1969).

April 1969
PEAK U.S. TROOP LEVELS

U.S. troop levels in South Vietnam reach a peak at approximately 540,000 troops. In June, President Nixon begins ordering the first phased troop withdrawals.

TET 69/COUNTEROFFENSIVE



Pentagon Corridor Exhibit



Medal of Honor: video interactive

1. NEC 42" V423 LED Display: \$600.00
 2. NEC Touch Screen Overlay OL-V423: \$1149.00
 3. BrightSign HD 1020 Player: \$500
 3. Memory card, and cables: approx. \$150
- Total based on retail prices: \$2699.00

Video Wall: looping video and still images, non-interactive

1. 2X2 Tile Matrix Video Wall: 55" NEC X55UN LED Displays \$33,399.00
 2. BrightSign HD 1020 Players: 4 @ \$500 each= \$2000
 3. data switch, memory card, and cables: approx. \$200
- Total based on retail prices: \$35,599.00



Pentagon Corridor Exhibit



Taking the Offensive 1967



Taking the Offensive: 1967

In 1967, the United States expected offensive operations were further. Approximately 100,000 additional American troops arrived during the year, bringing the total number in Vietnam to almost half a million. MACV planned to win the war by directly attacking the enemy's main force units and the VC/Cong on the ground. In the air, and at sea, Allied operations grew larger, faster, lifting, and more efficient. U.S. troops inflicted heavy casualties on enemy forces.

The Army continued to pursue the enemy's main force units and guerrilla units, especially in the I Corps area, Saigon and in the Central Highlands. Air Force and Navy air operations expanded, and the bombing of North Vietnam continued unabated. Navy and Coast Guard crews continued off South Vietnam from enemy maritime infiltration, and a Joint Army-Navy river force went on the offensive in the Mekong Delta. The United States also honored the Office of Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS), which assumed central responsibility for

pacification for the first time. Outside of Vietnam, the CIA and other U.S. organizations created a covert war against Communist forces in Laos. The Marines, defending I Corps, battled Communist forces in larger, more frequent, and more intense engagements than in previous years. As North Vietnam began a large buildup in the area, the MACV reinforced southern I Corps with Army units. The Marines also began construction of a barrier system at the DMZ, hoping to check enemy infiltration across the border. American leaders expressed confidence that the United States was winning the war, but would just before Christmas military setbacks, despite mounting casualties, morale, and public opinion plummeted. Increased. By the end of the year, more than 20,000 Americans had died in Southeast Asia—the total of them in 1967 alone. As called forces pushed their offensive, there were definite signs that North Vietnam was preparing to launch a major offensive of its own.

I could quote you a number of meaningful statistics, such as roads that are being opened, the increasing number of enemy that are being killed, the number of defectors that are coming in from the Communist side... the number of weapons being captured, and other statistical information which suggest that we are making progress and we are winning.

— William C. Westmoreland
November 19, 1967



Operation Rolling Thunder
The Rolling Thunder campaign was a series of air strikes against North Vietnam, intended to weaken its war effort and bring about a negotiated settlement. The campaign began in March 1965 and continued through 1968. It was one of the most intense bombing campaigns in the history of the United States.

Engineers

Engineers played a crucial role in the Vietnam War, constructing roads, bridges, and other infrastructure to support military operations. They also worked to improve the living conditions of the American troops in the field.

Operation Rolling Thunder

Operation Rolling Thunder was a series of air strikes against North Vietnam, intended to weaken its war effort and bring about a negotiated settlement. The campaign began in March 1965 and continued through 1968.

Operation Rolling Thunder

Operation Rolling Thunder was a series of air strikes against North Vietnam, intended to weaken its war effort and bring about a negotiated settlement. The campaign began in March 1965 and continued through 1968.

Operation Rolling Thunder

Operation Rolling Thunder was a series of air strikes against North Vietnam, intended to weaken its war effort and bring about a negotiated settlement. The campaign began in March 1965 and continued through 1968.

Operation Rolling Thunder

Operation Rolling Thunder was a series of air strikes against North Vietnam, intended to weaken its war effort and bring about a negotiated settlement. The campaign began in March 1965 and continued through 1968.

Operation Rolling Thunder

Operation Rolling Thunder was a series of air strikes against North Vietnam, intended to weaken its war effort and bring about a negotiated settlement. The campaign began in March 1965 and continued through 1968.

Operation Rolling Thunder

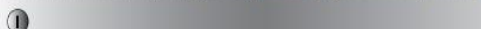
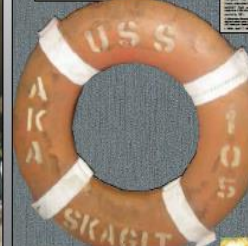
Operation Rolling Thunder was a series of air strikes against North Vietnam, intended to weaken its war effort and bring about a negotiated settlement. The campaign began in March 1965 and continued through 1968.

Operation Rolling Thunder

Operation Rolling Thunder was a series of air strikes against North Vietnam, intended to weaken its war effort and bring about a negotiated settlement. The campaign began in March 1965 and continued through 1968.



Maritime Operations





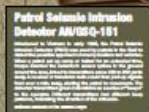
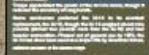
Pentagon Corridor Exhibit



TV '68







Remembrances Left at the Wall: Vietnam Veterans Memorial Collection

Since the Vietnam Veterans Memorial was dedicated in 1982, the walls have been left many thousands of items at the Wall. Twice a day, National Park Service rangers collect these items—everything from letters, photographs, flags, and mementos to tools, cigarettes, jewelry, and combat boots—and send them to the National Park Service Museum Research Center in Landon, Maryland. These donations preserve and label each item before adding it to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Collection.

Most of the artifacts in the collection were left at the Wall without descriptions or explanations. Together they comprise a unique, poignant archive of the Vietnam War and its enduring personal costs and consequences.

A psychologist came up with four reasons why people leave things at the memorial: to apologize, to commemorate, to apologize and to communicate. But remember, when you look at the collection, you are only looking at the tangible left behind. Many don't leave anything tangible. . . . We are all trying to deal with the Vietnam experience.

—Dusty Falton,
Vietnam Veterans Memorial Collection Curator



Medals

Medals and ribbons are a tangible way for veterans to express their pride and sacrifice. Many of the items in the collection were left at the Wall without descriptions or explanations. Together they comprise a unique, poignant archive of the Vietnam War and its enduring personal costs and consequences.



Ribbon Sets

Ribbon sets are a tangible way for veterans to express their pride and sacrifice. Many of the items in the collection were left at the Wall without descriptions or explanations. Together they comprise a unique, poignant archive of the Vietnam War and its enduring personal costs and consequences.



POW/MIA Bangles

Bangles are a tangible way for veterans to express their pride and sacrifice. Many of the items in the collection were left at the Wall without descriptions or explanations. Together they comprise a unique, poignant archive of the Vietnam War and its enduring personal costs and consequences.



Bulldog Statue with POW Bangle

Bulldog statues are a tangible way for veterans to express their pride and sacrifice. Many of the items in the collection were left at the Wall without descriptions or explanations. Together they comprise a unique, poignant archive of the Vietnam War and its enduring personal costs and consequences.



Lighters

Lighters are a tangible way for veterans to express their pride and sacrifice. Many of the items in the collection were left at the Wall without descriptions or explanations. Together they comprise a unique, poignant archive of the Vietnam War and its enduring personal costs and consequences.



Basket of Eggs

Baskets of eggs are a tangible way for veterans to express their pride and sacrifice. Many of the items in the collection were left at the Wall without descriptions or explanations. Together they comprise a unique, poignant archive of the Vietnam War and its enduring personal costs and consequences.



Photo Albums

Photo albums are a tangible way for veterans to express their pride and sacrifice. Many of the items in the collection were left at the Wall without descriptions or explanations. Together they comprise a unique, poignant archive of the Vietnam War and its enduring personal costs and consequences.



Worn Jungle Boots

Worn jungle boots are a tangible way for veterans to express their pride and sacrifice. Many of the items in the collection were left at the Wall without descriptions or explanations. Together they comprise a unique, poignant archive of the Vietnam War and its enduring personal costs and consequences.

Walking Stick

Walking sticks are a tangible way for veterans to express their pride and sacrifice. Many of the items in the collection were left at the Wall without descriptions or explanations. Together they comprise a unique, poignant archive of the Vietnam War and its enduring personal costs and consequences.



Khmer Rouge Seize the SS Mayaguez

The SS Mayaguez was a merchant ship that was seized by the Khmer Rouge in May 1975. The ship was taken to the island of Koh Tang, where it was held for several weeks. The ship was then released and returned to the United States.



Mayaguez Rescue Fiasco

The Mayaguez rescue fiasco was a military operation in May 1975 to rescue the crew of the SS Mayaguez, which had been seized by the Khmer Rouge. The operation was a failure, and the ship was eventually released.



Mayaguez Rescue Fiasco

The Mayaguez rescue fiasco was a military operation in May 1975 to rescue the crew of the SS Mayaguez, which had been seized by the Khmer Rouge. The operation was a failure, and the ship was eventually released.



Binnacle from the SS Mayaguez

The binnacle from the SS Mayaguez was a navigational instrument that was used by the ship's crew. It was a large, ornate brass instrument that was used to measure the ship's position and direction.

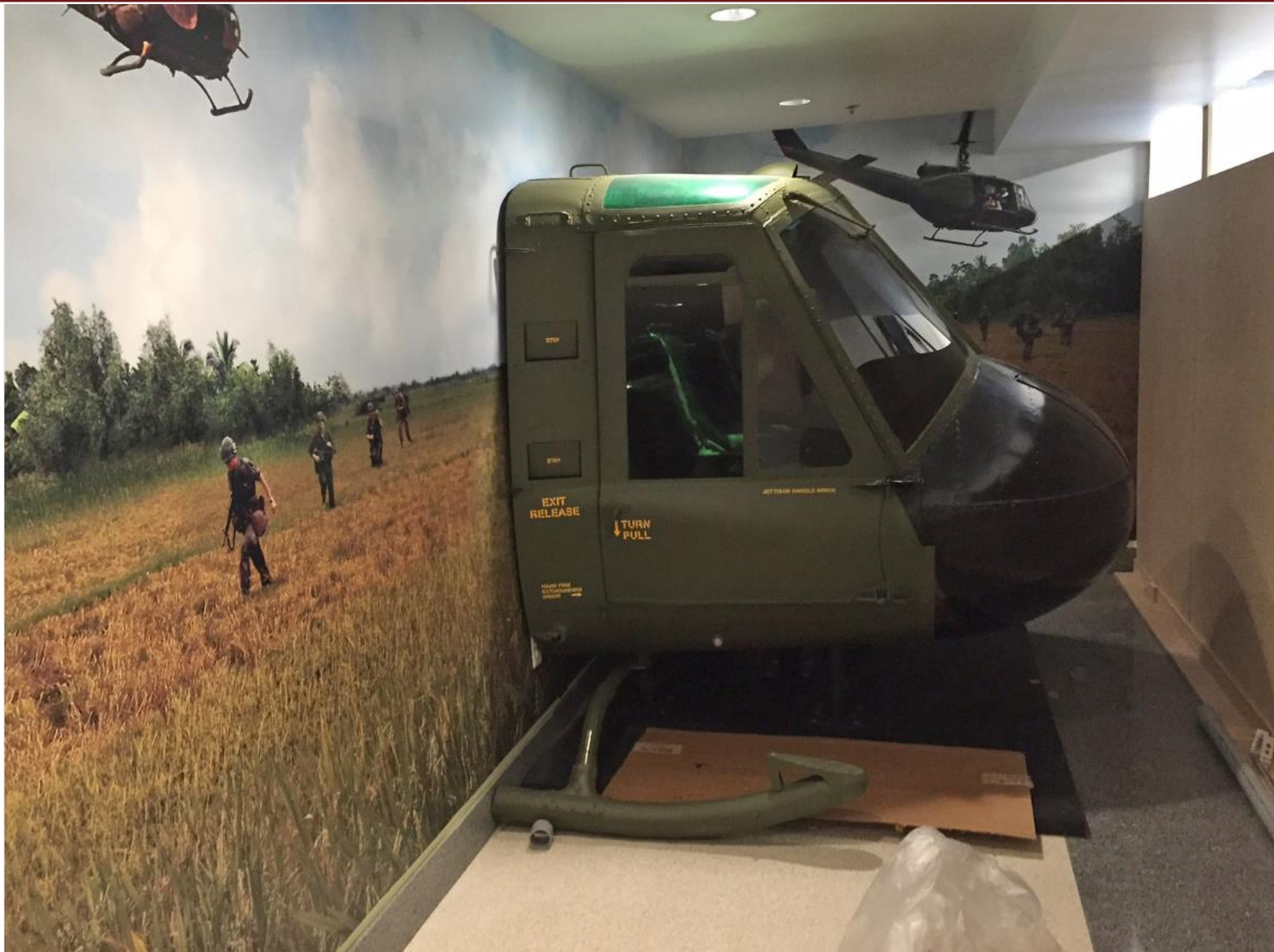


Huey Helicopters Alcove





Huey Helicopters Alcove





Huey Helicopters Alcove





Current Timeline



MARCH 2, 1968

Nicholas J. Cutinha, Medal of Honor



MARCH 5, 1968

Ralph H. Johnson, Medal of Honor



MARCH 9, 1968

Jack H. Jacobs, Medal of Honor



MARCH 11, 1968

Lima Site 85 Attacked



MARCH 11, 1968

Richard L. Etchberger, Medal of Honor



MARCH 16, 1968

Americal Division Kills Hundreds of Vietnamese Civilians at My Lai



MARCH 16, 1968

Paul William Bucha, Medal of Honor



MARCH 17, 1968

Edward A. DeVore, Jr. Medal of Honor



MARCH 19, 1968

Thomas J. McMahon, Medal of Honor



MARCH 23, 1968

General Westmoreland became U.S. Army Chief of Staff



MARCH 31, 1968

Johnson Suspends Bombing of North Vietnam, Announces He Won't Run Again



APRIL 8, 1968

Marines Help Break Siege with Operation PEGASUS



1945

1968

1975





Current Timeline



MARCH 11, 1968

LIMA SITE 85 ATTACKED

CLOSE (x)



People's Army of Vietnam sappers and ground forces attack Lima Site 85, a clandestine U.S. base in Laos. CMSGT Richard Etchberger, who was killed on the extraction, was awarded the Air Force Cross. Another 11 U.S. Air Force personnel were missing, and two Central Intelligence Agency officers wounded. This was the single largest ground loss for the Air Force during the war.





New Timeline





THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Vietnam War
COMMEMORATION

Enter Search Term

Search

Home

Partners

About

Media

History & Legacy

Advisory Committee

History & Legacy
Introduction

Timeline

Educator Resources

Oral Histories:
Veterans & Families

This Week in
History

Posters

Medal of Honor
Recipients


Primary Resources
& References

Timeline:
[Month Day, Year]

Prev


Next

Select another Date




[Month Day, Year]
Title of Event Here]

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Aenean ex efficitur sem. Ut quis dui fringilla, efficitur enim eu, molestie sapien. Ut ligula ipsum, elementum in odio a, ultricies feugiat nunc. Quisque ac felis lacinia, accumsan mauris vitae, tristique nisl. Aliquam id velit a augue facilisis dapibus. Vivamus pharetra vestibulum lobortis. Nam sit nunc vestibulum, consectetur massa eu, tempus est, Phasellus fringilla mi aliquam rhoncus maximus. Proin hendrerit nec odio et aliquet. Donec nunc venenatis laoreet id malesuada. Phasellus eu purus et eros porttitor sodales.



Donec risus sem, placerat varius nunc in, pulvinar tristique risus. Sed vel mauris quis ligula tempor vehicula. Etiam non eros eget dolor gravida blandit. Viverra non suscipit eros. Suspendisse potenti. Aliquam nunc tempus dolor ac imperdiet. Donec trincidunt lectus vel turpis efficitur consequat.

Donec vitae cursus odio, sed tempor diam. Donec semper urna ex, non porta augue euismod quis. Suspendisse sit amet felis est. Aliquam laoreet, aisi nos scelerisque vulputate, lectus nisl fribus metus, eget eleifend libero sem sit amet metus. Mauris leo ipsum, consectetur at enim non, euismod eleifend elit. Maecenas pulvinar, enim sed cursus aliquam, ex nisl molestie nibh, ut vestibulum sapien ipsum eget justo. Fusce feugiat diam non ornare sollicitudin. Sed condimentum ex nec interdum tempor. Fusce molestie lorem vel lorem auctor aliquet. Ut nec justo sed magna cursus sollicitudin at quis eros. Nunc quis lectus lorem. Curabitur pharetra consequat ipsum id hendrerit. Proin congue lobortis pulvinar.



Back to Timeline

Title (Merriweather Reg 20pt)

Body Copy (Source Sans Pro Regular 17pt) Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit.

Learn More

Title (Merriweather Reg 20pt)

Body Copy (Source Sans Pro Regular 17pt) Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit.




Learn More

Medals of Honor

Army

Navy

Air Force



Body Copy (Source Sans Pro Regular 17pt) Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Quisque .

Learn More

Home

Contact Us

Site Map

Accessibility/Section 508

Privacy/Security Policy

DoD FOIA

DoD Inspector General



Link Disclaimer

Recovery Act

Defense.gov

USA.gov

Follow us:



21



New Timeline



Operation ROLLING THUNDER

[1. Entry Overview]

March 2, 1965: Operation ROLLING THUNDER Begins the Sustained Bombing of North Vietnam

Operation ROLLING THUNDER begins. In this almost four-year campaign, U.S. Air Force, Marine, and Navy aircraft bomb military, industrial, and infrastructure targets throughout North Vietnam. ROLLING THUNDER's original purpose is to end North Vietnam's support for the Communist insurgency in the South by striking its small industrial base. As the campaign progresses, cutting off the flow of food, fuel, ammunition, and troops from North to South Vietnam also becomes a major operational objective.

By most American metrics, ROLLING THUNDER should severely damage North Vietnam's continued ability to fight, as it destroys a great majority of the Communist nation's small industrial base. However, nearly all observers agree with the conclusion of a 1967 CIA report that, "these losses... have not meaningfully degraded North Vietnam's material ability to continue the war in South Vietnam."



Agreement: The first F-4 Phantom II mission was flown on March 2, 1965, against the Vinh area. The first F-4 Phantom II mission was flown on March 2, 1965, against the Vinh area. The first F-4 Phantom II mission was flown on March 2, 1965, against the Vinh area.



Operation ROLLING THUNDER

[1. Entry Overview (continued)]

Why doesn't ROLLING THUNDER have the intended effect?

The North Vietnamese are resourceful in their responses to ROLLING THUNDER:

1. They disperse their military assets throughout the country, denying U.S. bombers significant targets.
2. They direct increasing amounts of traffic and supplies through neighboring Laos and Cambodia via the Ho Chi Minh Trail, which the United States cannot openly bomb.
3. They begin importing the vast majority of their supplies and arms from China and the Soviet Union, rapidly making up for any losses due to U.S. bombs.



Rolling Thunder: The first F-4 Phantom II mission was flown on March 2, 1965, against the Vinh area. The first F-4 Phantom II mission was flown on March 2, 1965, against the Vinh area. The first F-4 Phantom II mission was flown on March 2, 1965, against the Vinh area.

ROLLING THUNDER BY THE NUMBERS, 1965-1967

North Vietnam

- Petroleum storage capacity.....85% destroyed
- Power generators.....70% destroyed
- Ammunition resources.....70% destroyed
- Soldier barracks facilities.....25% destroyed

United States

- Approximate aircraft losses.....>1,000

Content

Content/Statistics

Operation ROLLING THUNDER

ROLLING THUNDER's Conclusion:

The Air Force, Navy, and Marine Corps lose about 1,000 aircraft, and nearly 800 crew members are killed, missing, or captured during Operation ROLLING THUNDER. Although the number is debated, many tens of thousands of Vietnamese are killed during the operation, most of whom are civilians.

In the United States and elsewhere in the world, the bombing campaign prompts increased opposition to the war, which intensifies over the following years.

After March 1965, President Johnson greatly restricts the bombing of North Vietnam in an effort to encourage peace negotiations, and he ends the campaign altogether after October 31, 1968.

[2. Introduction to Historical Debate]

Historians Debate:

Historians often disagree over why ROLLING THUNDER failed to achieve its primary objectives, despite the overwhelming superiority of American firepower. Some argue that restrictions that political leaders in Washington, D.C. placed on the bombing hampered its effectiveness over the long term. Others are restricted or prohibited from attacking targets in the vicinity of Hanoi and Haiphong as well as any targets near the Chinese border, for fear of provoking China and the Soviet Union to enter the war. Some also point to the decision to make the campaign a gradual escalation, which eventually allowed Hanoi the time to devise solutions and construct an advanced air defense system.



Rolling Thunder: The first F-4 Phantom II mission was flown on March 2, 1965, against the Vinh area. The first F-4 Phantom II mission was flown on March 2, 1965, against the Vinh area. The first F-4 Phantom II mission was flown on March 2, 1965, against the Vinh area.

Others instead argue that the bombing of North Vietnam is ineffective because of its inability to halt or even slow the flow of war material into the country from China and the USSR. These historians point out that historical precedent demonstrates that a large-scale bombing campaign's capacity to destroy the war-making ability of a nation is limited. This is especially true in North Vietnam during the 1960s and 1970s because of its agriculture-based economy. Moreover, the American reliance on firepower and other conventional warfare approaches is ill-suited to a rural, semi-literate, and resource-rich nation with a limited industrial base.

Historical Debates

Operation ROLLING THUNDER

For more on the historical conversation about ROLLING THUNDER:

- [2. Supplement: Reading List: Books]
 - Mark Clodfelter, *The Limits of Air Power: The American Bombing of North Vietnam* (1989)
 - Dennis M. Owen, *Rolling Thunder: 1968: Anatomy of a Failure* (1988)
 - Ronald B. Franks, Jr., *Like Rolling Thunder: The Air War in Vietnam, 1964-1972* (2008)
 - Richard H. Kohn and Joseph P. Mahoney, eds., *Strategic Air Warfare* (1988)
 - U. S. Grant Sharp, *Strategy for Defeat: Vietnam in Retrospect* (1978)
 - James Clay Thompson, *Rolling Thunder: Understanding Policy and Program Failure* (1980)
 - Wayne Thompson, *To Hanoi and Back: The United States Air Force and North Vietnam 1964-1972* (2000)
 - Brian Vandemark, *Into the Quagmire: Lyndon Johnson and the Escalation of the Vietnam War* (1991)
 - Jacob Van Swanen, *Gradual Failure: The Air War Over North Vietnam, 1964-1968* (2003)
- Essays and Articles:
 - Robert E. Brigham, "An Unavoidable War," in McMahon, ed., *Major Problems in the History of the Vietnam War* (2003)
 - Robert Buzzanco, "The Politics of Escalation in Vietnam During the Johnson Years," in Young and Ransome, *A Companion to the Vietnam War* (2003)
 - John A. Nagl, "The Failure of Counterinsurgency Warfare," in McMahon, ed., *Major Problems in the History of the Vietnam War* (2003)
- [4. Primary Resource Section] Primary Sources in Reference to ROLLING THUNDER:
 - [TSD: Document descriptions with linked PDF documents or web URLs would go here]
- [8. Oral History Section] Oral Histories of ROLLING THUNDER:
 - [TSD: Short clips of interviews where a veteran may talk about participating in something related to a particular timeline entry]



Rolling Thunder: The first F-4 Phantom II mission was flown on March 2, 1965, against the Vinh area. The first F-4 Phantom II mission was flown on March 2, 1965, against the Vinh area. The first F-4 Phantom II mission was flown on March 2, 1965, against the Vinh area.

Resources

Operation ROLLING THUNDER

Veterans of ROLLING THUNDER



Brigadier General J. Timothy Rodde, a major in Vietnam, saw more than 200 missions in Vietnam during Operation ROLLING THUNDER in the F-4 Phantom, 1966-1967.

Oral Histories



Certificates of Honor and Lapel Pins



*A Grateful Nation Thanks and Honors
Our Vietnam War Families for Their
Service & Sacrifice*

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE VIETNAM WAR COMMEMORATION



Certificate of Honor
to

RECIPIENT'S NAME

On behalf of a grateful Nation and the Department of Defense, we honor you for the significant sacrifice you and your family continue to make in the name of freedom and democracy over these many years. Thank you for your courage and for being an inspiration to the people of the United States of America. We renew our commitment to the fullest possible accounting for our patriots who have not returned. Our Nation is forever indebted to you and extends its deepest respect and admiration. Done this 27 day of JANUARY 2016.

SIGNATURE

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

SIGNATURE

CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF



Certificates of Honor Recipients

