Collection Summary
Title: Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund Records
Span Dates: 1965-1994
Bulk Dates: (bulk 1978-1985)
ID No.: MSS61695
Creator: Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund
Extent: 43,700 items ; 125 containers plus 8 oversize ; 53 linear feet
Language: Collection material in English
Location: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
Summary: Organization founded for the purpose of erecting a national memorial honoring American veterans of the Vietnam conflict. Administrative files document the operations and technical resources required for the erection of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial as well as the surrounding political controversy.

Selected Search Terms
The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

People
Carhart, Tom.
Century, Larry.
Clinton, Bill, 1946-
Copulos, Milton R.
Doubek, Robert W.
Hart, Frederick, 1943-
Lin, Maya Ying.
Perot, H. Ross, 1930-
Scruggs, Jan C.
Sherwood, Carlton.
Webb, James H.

Organizations
Binswanger Glasscraft Products.
Cooper-Lecky Partnership.
Gilbane Building Company.
Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund.

Subjects
Memorial Day.
Vietnam Veterans Memorial (Washington, D.C.)
War memorials--Washington (D.C.)

Administrative Information
Provenance
The records of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund were donated to the Library of Congress in several installments, the first in 1984 upon completion of the memorial. Additional gifts followed, 1985-1999.
Transfers

Photographs, photographic slides, posters, blueprints, and drawings have been transferred to the Prints and Photographs Division; videotapes, audiotapes, and phonograph records have been transferred to the Motion Picture, Broadcasting, and Recorded Sound Division of the Library of Congress. These transfers are identified as part of the fund's records. A scale model of the memorial has been transferred to the National Park Service, the government agency responsible for the administration of the memorial, along with a large poster and banner associated with the National Salute to Vietnam Veterans.

Copyright Status

Copyright in the unpublished writings of members of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund in these papers and in other collections of papers in the custody of the Library of Congress has been dedicated to the public.

Access and Restrictions

The records of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund are open to research. Researchers are advised to contact the Manuscript Reading Room prior to visiting. Many collections are stored off-site and advance notice is needed to retrieve these items for research use.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container number, Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Scope and Content Note

The records of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund span the years 1965-1994, with the bulk of the material concentrated in the period between 1978 and 1985. The records document the administrative and operational history of the fund, a nonprofit, charitable organization founded for the purpose of erecting a national memorial honoring American veterans of the Vietnamese Conflict. The fund's files detail all phases of the activities associated with this undertaking, including the design, construction, financing, and promotion of the memorial. The main body of the fund's records is arranged in two series identified as Office Files and Project Director's Files, while documentation of the organization's fund-raising activities is grouped under a separate series. Material relating to the National Salute to Vietnam Veterans (10-14 November 1982), a five-day tribute to Vietnam veterans consisting of commemorative events and the dedication of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, is also organized within its own series. Although the original organization of the files maintained by the fund has largely been preserved, some rearrangement was undertaken to achieve consistency and clarity.

Incorporated on 27 April 1979, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund completed its mission in the fall of 1984 with the addition of Frederick Hart's life-size sculpture to the entry plaza of the memorial grounds. Although the vision and determination of a small group of individuals led by Jan C. Scruggs, president of the fund, culminated in a public memorial honoring Americans who served in Vietnam, construction of the memorial had proved divisive, mirroring the political passions and controversies concerning the war. Both the Office Files and Project Director's Files provide the researcher with documentation of the administrative operations and technical resources which affected the building of the memorial as well as of the political controversy which surrounded its construction.

The Office Files contain general administrative records of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund arranged under the following headings: administration, expenses and contracts, fiscal, general subject file, memorial design, project construction, and public relations. The files include architectural drawings, business and financial records, and construction reports. The fund solicited designs for the memorial in open competition and received 1,421 entries in reply. On 1 May 1981, an eight-member jury announced the selection of the design submitted by Maya Ying Lin. The memorial design files contain material relating to the design competition and to Lin's selection, as well as to hearings before the Commission of Fine Arts and the National Capital Planning Commission, agencies whose approval of the design was necessary before construction could begin. Records concerning Frederick Hart's sculpture are filed under the same heading.

The chevron-shaped, black granite memorial represented a negative symbol to many and was characterized by Tom Carhart, a prominent critic, as "a black gash of shame and sorrow." Material documenting Carhart's criticism and that of Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund Records
others concerned with the controversial design, including Milton R. Copulos, H. Ross Perot, Carlton Sherwood, and James H. Webb, is contained under the memorial design heading within the Office Files. Other records concerning Sherwood, an investigative reporter whose series, "Vietnam Memorial: A Broken Promise," was televised on the local news broadcasts of WDVM-TV, Washington, D.C., 7-10 November 1983, are in the public relations files.

In 1981, the fund engaged the Cooper-Lecky Partnership, an architectural firm, to assist Maya Ying Lin in developing her design and Gilbane Building Company to manage its construction. Files located under expenses and contracts relate to these and other companies employed by the fund to build the memorial.

Verifying and inscribing the names of the war dead on the memorial's panels posed major administrative and technical problems. Binswanger Glasscraft Products was awarded the contract for inscribing the names and, with the aid of a new stenciling technique designed by independent inventor Larry Century, completed the inscriptions in three months. The Office Files series contains material relating to names and inscriptions in the project construction files, which also include a complete set of blueprints for the memorial and its surrounding area.

As project director, Robert W. Doubek, a cofounder of the fund, was also directly responsible for the design and construction of the memorial. As a result, while the Office Files are more comprehensive in scope, the records in the Files of the Project Director series more fully reflect the administrative and technical aspects of Doubek's dual responsibilities. Since the Office Files and Project Director's Files contain similar types of records, both series should be consulted to insure complete coverage of a particular topic.

The Addition series contains material arranged subsequent to the initial organization of the Fund's records. Items in the series document activities surrounding the tenth anniversary celebration of the memorial in 1992 and Memorial Day ceremonies held at the memorial in 1993. The series also contains printouts and registration labels of entrants in the memorial design competition, as well as working copies of printouts listing the veterans whose names were inscribed on the memorial.

In order to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the construction of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, the fund sponsored a year-long program of special events culminating on Veterans Day, 11 November 1992. As part of this program, the fund presented a series of educational seminars on various topics analyzing the effects of the Vietnam War on America. The Addition contains transcripts from most of these seminars as well as from the Veterans Day commemoration ceremony held at the memorial wall. The Addition also includes informational pamphlets and printed items promoting the anniversary events. Correspondence and miscellaneous items relating to the participation of President Bill Clinton in the Memorial Day ceremony of 1993 consists chiefly of letters from veterans reacting to the president's presence at the event.

**Organization of the Papers**

The collection is arranged in eight series:

- **Office Files, 1979-1985**
- **Files of the Project Director, 1965-1984**
- **National Salute to Vietnam Veterans, 1979-1983**
- **Fund-raising, 1979-1984**
- **Miscellany, 1966-1985**
- **Card Files, circa 1980-circa 1984**
- **Addition, 1980-1994**
- **Oversize, 1980-1982**
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Film, TV, and radio projects

Housing
Metro
Miscellany
Operations plan
(2 folders)
Press kits

Public relations guide
Publicity
Registrants
Tyl Associates
Volunteer coordination
White House
Proclamations, 1981-1982
Program souvenir, 1982-1983, undated

Advertisers

Donor mailings, Sept. 1982 and Jan. 1983
(2 folders)
Free distribution to veterans organizations
Marketing and phase III
Photographic sheets
Planning and components
Requests for information
Report, 1982
(2 folders)
Small claims court law suit, 1982, undated

Fund-raising, 1979-1984
Correspondence, memoranda, financial records, minutes of meetings, reports, card files, and form letters relating to fund-raising activities.
Arranged alphabetically by subject and chronologically thereunder.

Campaign plan, 1981, undated
Case statement, 1981
Consultant proposals, 1979-1980
Contributions
Account books, 1979-1984
(2 folders)
Donor card files
Corporations See Container 125, same heading
"In Memoria" contributions See Container 126, same heading
Unions See Container 127, same heading
Veterans organizations See Containers 128-129, same heading
VIP gifts See Container 130, same heading

Microfiche donor lists
Located in microfiche cabinet
Public letters, 1981-1982 See also Container 122, same heading
Thank-you letters
  (2 folders)

BOX 102
  Apr. 1983-July 1984
  (3 folders)

BOX 103
  Correspondence, 1981-1982
  Correspondent lists, 1981, undated
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  Corporations
  Dedication ceremony
  Favorite correspondents
  Foundations
  Friends and fund-raisers
  Individual gifts ($100 and up)
  Miscellany
  Names and inscriptions
  National fund-raisers
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  Volunteers

Direct mail
  Creative Mailing Consultants of America
    Correspondence, 1980-1982

BOX 104
  Invoices and fund-raising costs, 1980-1982
  Liberal appeal, 1980, undated
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  Proposals, 1980, undated
  Stewart, Jimmy, 1981, undated

BOX 105
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    Final report, 1982
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    Samples, 1981-1982, undated
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    Contractor selection, 1980, undated
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BOX 106
  Direct mail summaries, 1983
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      "A Memorial Day Message from Bob Hope," 1980
    Fall package, 1980
    Logo, undated
  Minutes of meetings and memoranda, 1979-1980
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    Continued services, 1980
    Contracts, 1979-1980
    Rejected proposals, 1980
    Statistical analysis, 1980-1981
Recommendations on fund-raising agencies, 1981

BOX 107
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    (3 folders)
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    Correspondence lists
    Form letters, 1981-1982, undated
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        No. 3 (Veterans)
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    No. 5 ("In memory of...")
    Nos. 6-9
        (4 folders)
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Fund-raising campaign books, 1980, undated
    Vol. 1
        (2 folders)
BOX 109
    Vol. 2
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Late pledges, 1982-1983
Lost checks, 1981-1982, undated
Miscellany, 1980, undated
Program souvenir, 1982-1983, undated
BOX 110
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Recognition program, 1980-1981, undated
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    Progress reports, 1981-1982
    Report to Congress, Sept. 1983
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<td>Schools and colleges, 1981-1982</td>
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<td>Corporate Advisory Board, 1981, undated</td>
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<td>&quot;Heart of Illinois&quot; campaign</td>
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<td>Massachuetts fund raisers</td>
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<td>&quot;Pass the Helmet&quot;</td>
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Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund Records
**Fund-raising, 1979-1984**

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### Fund-raising, 1979-1984

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#### BOX 121-123  
**Miscellany, 1966-1985**  
Correspondence, telephone message books, address book, notes and posters, poems and songs, memorabilia, printed matter, and plaques.  
Arranged alphabetically by type of material and chronologically thereunder.

| BOX 121 | Address book, undated  
Memorabilia, undated  
Notes, posters, and other items, 1981-1982, undated  
Plaques, undated  
(1 folder) |
Public letters, 1981-1985  
See also Container 101, same heading  
(2 folders) |
| BOX 123 | Sayers, James E., correspondence, 1980-1982  
Telephone message books, 1983-1984 |

#### BOX OV 124-OV 130  
**Card Files, circa 1980-circa 1984**  
Invitations to the National Salute to Vietnam Veterans and donor card files.  
The latter are arranged alphabetically by donor group.

| BOX OV 124 | National Salute to Vietnam Veterans, ceremony invitations |
| BOX OV 125 | Fund-raising, donor card files  
Corporations |
| BOX OV 126 | "In Memoria" contributions |
| BOX OV 127 | Unions |
| BOX OV 128-OV 129 | Veterans organizations |
| BOX OV 130 | VIP gifts |

#### BOX 131-132  
**Addition, 1980-1994**  
Correspondence, transcripts, promotional material, printouts, registration labels, printed matter, and miscellaneous items concerning ceremonial tributes and various aspects of the memorial’s design.  
Arranged alphabetically by type of material and chronologically thereunder.

| BOX 131 | Ceremonies  
1992, tenth anniversary commemoration  
Miscellany  
Seminars, 1992  
3 May, "The War at Home, Two Perspectives"  
19 May, "The Media and the Vietnam War"  
12 June, "The Color of the Vietnam War" |
23 June, "Women and the Vietnam War"
10 July, "The Vietnam War and Military Decision Making"
6 Nov., "A Decade at the Wall"
9 Nov., "A Day at the Archives"
Veterans Day ceremony transcript
1993, Memorial Day
Correspondence
Miscellany
Public opinion of Bill Clinton's address
  Favorable
  Mixed responses (mostly unfavorable), 1993-1994
  (3 folders)
  (4 folders)
Unfavorable
Memorial design
  Cooper-Lecky Partnership, 1982
Design competition
  Entrants
    Midwest list, 1981 See Oversize
    Registration labels, 1980
      (2 folders)
State totals, undated
Miscellany, 1980-1981
Names listed on memorial, printouts, 1980-1982 See Oversize

BOX OV 1

Oversize, 1980-1982
Oversize material consisting of printouts.
Organized and described according to the series, boxes, and folders from which the items were removed.

BOX OV 1

Addition
Memorial design
  Design competition
  Entrants
    Midwest list, 1981 (Container 132)
Names listed on memorial, printouts, 1980-1982 (Container 132)