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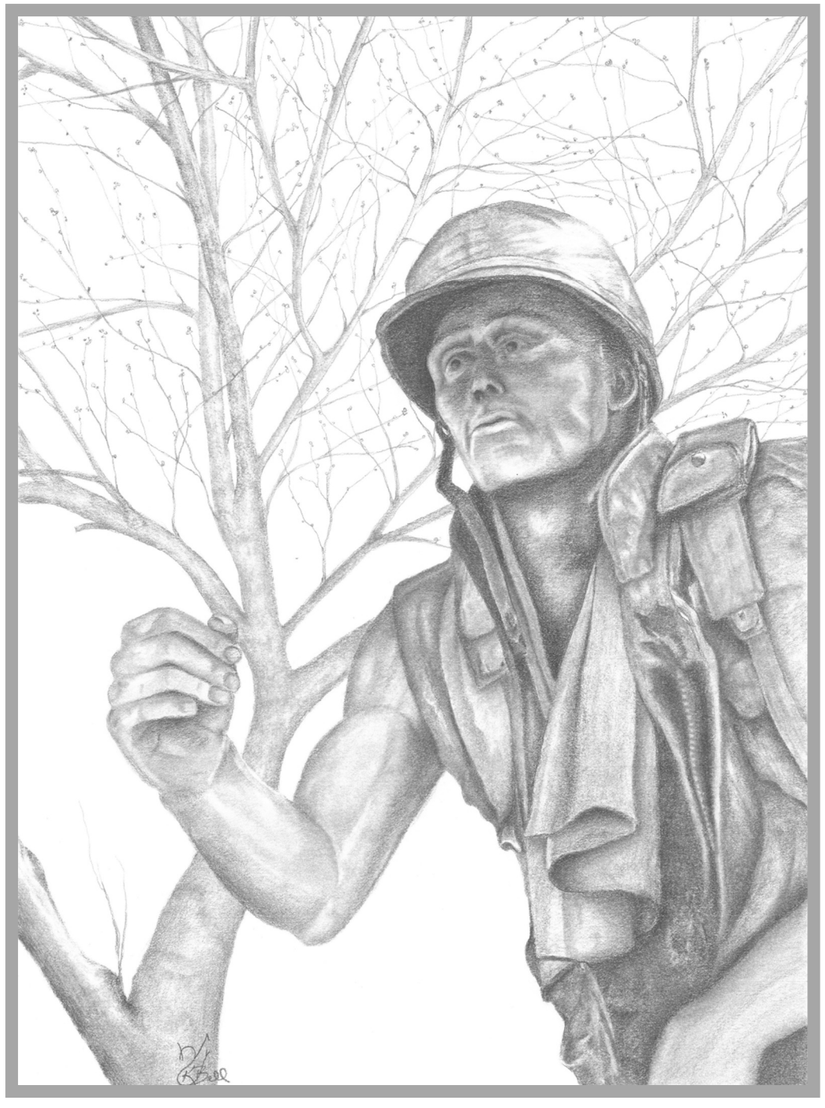
We would like the thank the following businesses and individuals for supporting the reception: VideoRay, Fitch Electronics, Frank A. Smith Beverages, Hamlin Hawgs Motorcycle Club, Hurter's Meats, North Coventry Police, Pottstown Police, Gear Jammers, Bause Catering, Santina's Kitchen, Riverside Beer Distributers, Milkman Lunch Company, Ice House, Grumpys, Penny Batista, Lindt Chocolates, Gourmet Cupcakes, Thriftway Markets, The Very Best, DVD Video Albums/Tom Carbo, AFJROTC, Margie Nace, Haven't You Heard, Gina Custer, Kathleen Borz, Sean Risko, Kathy Yeagle, Jason Coady Hill School Volunteer Coordinator, Pottstown Parks & Rec, Matt Eshelman, Chele Hartman, Ret. Navy Captain Robert W. Boyce, Father Terrence Highland, Mike Schultz bagpiper, and Rich MacNeill bagpiper.

ArtFusion 19464 would like to give a very special thank you to our Special Exhibits Director and Co-Founder Cathy Paretti for her tireless efforts to make this exhibit a reality.

254 E. High St. * Pottstown, PA 19464

610-326-2506 * www.artfusion19464.org

Gallery Hours: Tuesday-Friday 10am-5pm,
Saturday 10am-3pm. Closed Sunday and Monday



To Support and Defend by Kristy Bell

WHEN WE WERE SOLDIERS

September 20 through November 9, 2013

Your Non-Profit Community Art Center

“WE MUST NOW RECOGNIZE that ending the war is only the first step toward building the peace. All parties must now see to it that this is a peace that lasts, and also a peace that heals, and a peace that not only ends the war in Southeast Asia, but contributes to the prospects of peace in the whole world.”

—President Richard Nixon’s Broadcast Speech

The men whose stories are part of this exhibit did what millions of men (and women) have done throughout time: they went to war. Some enlisted, some were drafted, and some enlisted after they were drafted, usually with the hope that they could avoid what turned out to be inevitable—being sent to Vietnam. As you will read in their narratives and see in the exhibit, the impact of war is keenly felt more than 40 years later, whether through vivid and haunting memories or through the physical wounds and chronic conditions that they still contend with. All this reminds us that the scars of war are not always readily visible.

This past summer we interviewed the veterans individually over the course of a couple hours, asking questions and letting the conversation go where it wanted to go. In many instances, voices cracked, words remained unspoken, and tears were shed. Certain stories and observations about the war were talked about “off the record” and do not appear in the exhibit. As these men spoke, their words were being typed as accurately as possible. We avoided using audio or video recorders because we wanted to create a quiet, intimate setting without letting too much technology, additional people, or commotion into the rooms at ArtFusion. Then, over the course of a couple of months, we set about shaping the transcripts into the vignettes you see today, then sending them to the veterans for further input and approval. From the beginning, we assured them that they would have the power of final approval.

In the end, we wanted these oral histories to capture the voices of these courageous men, who put their lives on the line so long ago and came home to protests and discrimination, while struggling with their own wounds, both physical and psychological. They have once again shown an enormous amount of courage by sharing themselves as young men, really no more than boys, and who they are today. We are honored and extremely grateful that they allowed us a glimpse into their histories and their hearts.

—Sue Repko and Parker Blaney

DAILY LIFE

Vietnam in the northern regions have a humid subtropical climate, with humidity averaging 84% throughout the year. However, because of differences in latitude and the marked variety of topographical relief, the climate tends to vary considerably from place to place. During the winter or dry season, extending roughly from November to April, the monsoon winds usually blow from the northeast along the China coast and across the Gulf of Tonkin, picking up considerable moisture; consequently the winter season in most parts of the country is dry only by comparison with the rainy or summer season. During the southwesterly summer monsoon, occurring from May to October, the heated air of the Gobi Desert rises, far to the north, inducing moist air to flow inland from the sea and deposit heavy rainfall. The climate in the southern regions especially Ho Chi Minh City and surrounding Mekong Delta is predominantly Tropical savanna climate with high humidity and a distinct wet and dry season.

Photo courtesy of Ron Moyer

Annual rainfall is substantial in all regions and torrential in some, ranging from 1,200 to 3,000 millimeters (47.2 to 118.1 in). Nearly 90% of the precipitation occurs during the summer. The average annual temperature is generally higher in the plains than in the mountains and plateaus. Temperatures range from a low of 5 °C (41 ° F) in December and January, the coolest months, to more than 37 °C (98.6 °F) in April, the hottest month. Seasonal divisions are more clearly marked in the northern half than in the southern half of the country, where, except in some of the highlands, seasonal temperatures vary only a few degrees, usually in the 21–28 °C (69.8–82.4 °F) range.

Source: Wikipedia http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Climate_of_Vietnam#Climate

“AS IF THE almost-constant mortar attacks weren't bad enough, simple "living conditions" in the rain forests of Vietnam were almost unbearable. The high humidity, temperatures in excess of 100 degrees, insects of all shapes and sizes, not to mention the blood-sucking leeches that attached themselves to your body at the most sensitive places, and with "growths" of various shapes, size, and color sprouting up and over your entire body - all of this made just surviving a full-time assignment."

—Howard Kalis

SUGGESTED READING AND WATCHING

Adult

The Things They Carried by Tim O’Brien
Fallen Angels by Walter Dean Myers
Cracker! The Best Dog in Vietnam by Cynthia Kadohata
When Heaven and Earth Changed Places by Le Ly Hayslip

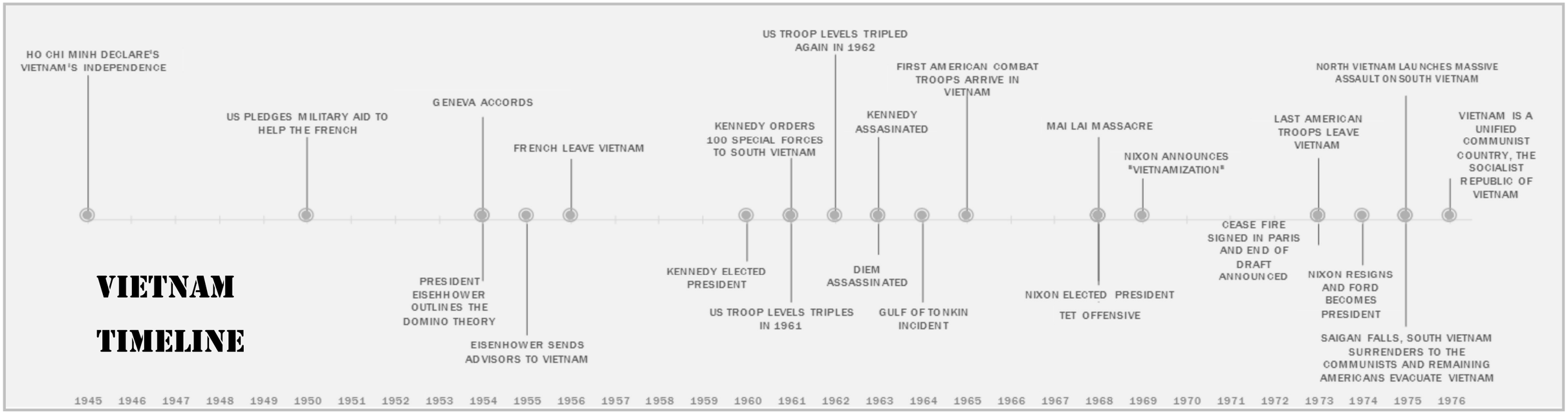
Juvenile

Where Have All The Flowers Gone by Ellen Emerson White
The Vietnam War: A Primary Source History by Andrew Mason
Weapons, Gear, and Uniforms of the Vietnam War by Shelley Tougas
Shooting the Moon by Frances O’Roark
Escape from Saigon: How a Vietnam War Orphan Became an American Boy by Andrea Warren

Photo courtesy of Larry Harp

Movies

Vietnam in HD
Full Metal Jacket
Apocalypse Now
Born on the Fourth of July
Coming Home
The Deer Hunter
Good Morning Vietnam
The Green Beret
The Hanoi Hilton
The Killing Fields
Who’ll Stop the Rain



E-tool entrenching tool. Folding shovel carried by infantrymen.

flack jacket heavy fiberglass-filled vest worn for protection from shrapnel
Freedom Bird the plane that took soldiers from Vietnam back to the World
free strike zone area where everyone was deemed hostile and a legitimate target by U.S. forces

gook derogatory term for an Asian; derived from Korean slang for "person" and passed down by Korean war veterans
grunt infantryman. Originally slang for a Marine fighting in Vietnam but later applied to any solder fighting there; a boonierat.

heat tabs flammable tablet used to heat C-rations. Always in short supply.
hooch a hut or simple dwelling, either military or civilian. Also spelled hootch.
hoochgirl Vietnamese woman employed by American military as maid or laundress

immersion foot condition resulting from feet being submerged in water for a prolonged period of time, causing cracking and bleeding.
in-country Vietnam

KBA killed by artillery
KIA killed in action
killing zone the area within an ambush where everyone is either killed or wounded

litters stretchers to carry dead and wounded
lit-up fired upon; shot and killed or wounded
mama san *pidgin used by American servicemen for any older Vietnamese woman*
MASH mobile Army surgical unit
MIA missing in action
MP military police

papa san *pidgin used by U.S. servicemen for any older Vietnamese man*
PFC private first class
platoon a subdivision of a company-sized military unit, normally consisting of two or more squads or sections
poncho liner nylon insert to the military rain poncho, used as a blanket
post-traumatic stress disorder development of characteristic symptoms after the experiencing of a psychologically traumatic event or events outside the range of human experience usually considered to be normal.
POW prisoner of war

R&R rest and recreation. A three to seven-day vacation from the war for a soldier.
Rangers elite commandos and infantry specially trained for reconnaissance and combat missions
recon reconnaissance. Going out into the jungle to observe for the purpose of identifying enemy activity.
red alert the most urgent form of warning. Signals an imminent enemy attack.
rice paddy racers rubber shower shoes used by GIs
RTO radio telephone operator.

sampan *a Vietnamese peasant's boat*
shrapnel pieces of metal sent flying by an explosion
squad a small military unit consisting of less than ten men
Tail-end Charlie last unit in a long column on the move
TC tactical commander
tee-tee *pidgin for very small*
trach a tracheotomy. Making an opening into the windpipe to facilitate breathing.
triage the procedure for deciding the order in which to treat casualties

VC Viet Cong, the National Liberation Front
ville Vietnamese hamlet or village
VNAF South Vietnamese Air Force
WIA wounded in action

xin loi *a Vietnamese idiom meaning "sorry about that"*
zulu a casualty report

Source:
http://www2.iath.virginia.edu/sixties/HTML_docs/Resources/Glossary/Sixties_Term_Gloss_U_Z.html#Letter%20%27U%27

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“WE’D CLIMB OVER the side (of a boat) wearing our heavy pack, flak jacket, and our M-14 rifles, and some of the guys who weren’t in good shape struggled. Eventually, however, we all made it on to the boat.”

—Dick Hurter

WHAT SOLDIERS HAD TO CARRY

Average weight carried by infantrymen in Vietnam

2 frag grenades: 2 pounds
2 smoke grenades: 3 pounds
1 claymore mine: 3.5 pounds
Helmet: 5 pounds
Boots: 2 pounds
Poncho and liner: 3 pounds
Entrenching tool: 5 pounds.
M-16 ammo: 14 pounds
200 hundred M60 ammo in can: 13 pounds
Rifle: 7.5 pounds
Machete: 3 pounds
Sandbags (empty): 4 pounds
3-4 days C-rations: 6 pounds
1-1/2 gal. Water: 12 pounds
Total = approximately 83 pounds.

Photo courtesy of David Koch

“I WOULD NOT DARE to attempt to put into words the way each man dealt with his thoughts as we walked through this oven-like jungle. The moisture was so thick in the air, every breath for me felt as if it could be my last. All of us looked as if we had just walked out of a steam bath fully dressed in our combat gear and carrying all of our individual weapons."

—Howard Kalis

ArtFusion 19464 would like thank all the Vietnam veterans who participated in this show:
Barry Amole, Harrison “Buck” Appel, Charlie Becker , Rich Brucker, Dale Colledge, Terry Foulke, Larry Harp, Clyde Hoch, Dick Hurter, Howard Kalis, David Koch, D. Glen Miller, Ron Moyer, Ken Schweitzer, Frank Strunk, and Billy Worrell.

In memory of Mary Lou Raplee Amole and Kathleen “Kathy” Shields.

MILITARY TIME

12:00 AM -- 0000 hrs.
1:00 AM -- 0100 hrs.
2:00 AM -- 0200 hrs.
3:00 AM -- 0300 hrs.
4:00 AM -- 0400 hrs.
5:00 AM -- 0500 hrs.
6:00 AM -- 0600 hrs.
7:00 AM -- 0700 hrs.
8:00 AM -- 0800 hrs.
9:00 AM -- 0900 hrs.
10:00 AM -- 1000 hrs.
11:00 AM -- 1100 hrs.

12:00 PM -- 1200 hrs.
1:00 PM -- 1300 hrs.
2:00 PM -- 1400 hrs.
3:00 PM -- 1500 hrs.
4:00 PM -- 1600 hrs.
5:00 PM -- 1700 hrs.
6:00 PM -- 1800 hrs.
7:00 PM -- 1900 hrs.
8:00 PM -- 2000 hrs.
9:00 PM -- 2100 hrs.
10:00 PM -- 2200 hrs.
11:00 PM -- 2300 hrs.

For most daily things, military personnel use local time as a reference. In order words, "report to duty at 0700," would mean you have to be at work at 7:00 AM, local time. "The Commander wants to see you at 1500 hrs," means you need to be in the Commander's office at 3:00 PM, local time.

Source: Military Time
by Rod Powers at Ask.com

VIET NAM

“The Vietnamese language is basically monosyllabic. Sometimes, particularly with words of Chinese origin, two words are joined to create a third. Thus, *Viet Nam* combine *Viet*, the name of the largest of the country’s some fifty ethnic groups, and *Nam*, meaning “the South.” “South” was used in this context to distinguish Viet Nam from China, which in the ancient times of Chinese domination was called “the North.”

—*After Sorrow* by Lady Borton

VOCABULARY

ammo dump location where live or expended ammunition is stored
APC armored personnel carrier. A track vehicle used to transport Army troops or supplies, usually armed with a .50-caliber machine gun.
AR Army regulation
arc light code name for B-52 bombers strikes along the Cambodian-Vietnamese border. These operations shook earth for ten miles away from the target area.
AWOL absent without leave; leaving a post or position without official permission

bac-si *Vietnamese for doctor; also used to refer to medic in the U.S. Army*
base camp a resupply base for field units and a location for headquarters of brigade or division size units, artillery batteries and air fields. Also known as the rear area.
battalion a military unit composed of a headquarters and two or more companies, batteries, or similar units
BK amputee below-the-knee amputation of the leg
body count the number of enemy killed, wounded, or captured during an operation. The term was used by Washington and Saigon as a means of measuring the progress of the war.
boot a soldier just out of boot camp; inexperienced, untested
bush infantry term for the field

cache hidden supplies
Charlie Viet Cong; the enemy
CO commanding officer
Code of Conduct military rules for U.S. soldiers taken prisoner by the enemy
company a military unit usually consisting of a headquarters and two or more platoons
compound a fortified military installation
concertina wire coiled barbed wire used as an obstacle
counterinsurgency antiguerrilla warfare
CP command post
C-rations combat rations. Canned meals for use in the field. Each usually consisted of a can of some basic course, a can of fruit, a packet of some type of dessert, a packet of powdered cocoa, a small pack of cigarettes, and two pieces of chewing gum.

didi mau *slang Vietnamese for "go quickly"*
DMZ demilitarized zone.
doc medic or corpsman
DTs defensive targets
dung lai! *stop*!