

A Guide to the Records of the Virginia War Memorial Commission, 1953-1983

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History

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Descriptive Summary

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5.5 cu. ft. (14 boxes)

Repository

The Library of Virginia

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

Use Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

Acquisition Information

Transferred at an unknown date by the Dept. of Historic Resources, Richmond, Va.

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Biographical Information

Created by an Act of the General Assembly (Chapter 244) in 1950, the Virginia World War II Memorial Commission was authorized to erect a World War II Memorial building to honor those Virginians who had served in World War II. The Commission, composed of fourteen members (five from the House of Delegates appointed by the Speaker of the House, four Senators appointed by the President of the Senate; four citizens-at-large appointed by the Governor; and the Adjutant General of Virginia), acts as the official custodian of the Memorial.

In 1979, the original Act was amended (Chapter 300) to honor not only the servicemen of World War II but also those of all modern wars. The name of the Commission was changed to the Virginia War Memorial Commission and its membership increased to include five citizens-at-large.

In 1984, the Act was repealed (Chapter 750). The Commission was put under the auspices of the Department of Conservation and Historic Resources. The composition of the Commission remained the same and its function as the custodian of the Memorial remained the same. In addition, the Commission was to participate with the Department, the U.S. military, and recognized veterans organizations in the planning, development, and execution of appropriate events that furthered the purposes of Chapter 750.

In 1985, the Legislature changed the name of the Commission to the Virginia War Memorial Board (Chapter 448). Its composition and function remained the same. When the Department of Conservation and Historic Resources reorganized in 1989, the Board was placed under the Department of Historic Resources (formerly the Division of Historic Landmarks within the Department).

The Virginia War Memorial building, located in Richmond, is an open marble and glass structure with the names of the war dead from World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War etched into the walls. A marble statue sculpted by Leo Friedlander and entitled "Memory" stands at one end of the structure. At its base burns a "Torch of Liberty." Relics of various battle sites lie embedded in the floor of the Memorial. Designed by the architectural firm of T.J. Collins and Son of Staunton, Virginia, and built by the Thorington Construction Company, the Virginia War Memorial was dedicated on February 29, 1956. Subsequently, a Vietnam Wing, designed by the architectural firm of Ballou and Justice of Richmond, and constructed by Taylor and Parrish, Inc. of Richmond, was dedicated on November 20, 1981.

Civic, patriotic, and education groups may use the Memorial's small auditorium. Applications for use are reviewed by the Department of Historic Resources which then issues permits for use. The Capitol Police provide security for the Memorial and the Department of Buildings and Grounds provides grounds keeping and maintenance at the Memorial.

Scope and Content

Records, 1953-1983, of the Virginia War Memorial Commission are housed in fourteen boxes and arranged alphabetically by folder title, with restricted materials to the rear. Included are architectural drawings and blueprints, correspondence, permits and applications, photographs, meeting minutes, and various artifacts.

Includes correspondence, 1954-1983, detailing the construction and building of the Virginia World War II Memorial, as well as the addition of the Vietnam Wing of the building. Also included are permits and applications to use the building from various organizations; photographs of the Vietnam Wing Dedication; correspondence, lists, photographs, and programs of the Tribute to Vietnam Veterans Parade held in Washington, D.C. on 13 November 1982; and minutes of the War Memorial Commission, 1961-1981. Some Vietnam era artifacts are also included such as a flag, money, and spent shell casing.

The architectural drawings, construction records, and blueprints are restricted and placed at the end of the collection in their own box.

Arrangement

This collection is arranged alphabetically by folder title.

Contents List

Biennial report, 1960-1961

Box 1

Folder 1

Chairfund, 1962-1980

Box 1

Folder 2

Competition for memorial, 1951

Box 1

Folder 3

Correspondence, 1954

Box 1

Folder 4

Correspondence, 1955

Box 1

Folder 5

Correspondence, 1956-1957

Box 1

Folder 6

Correspondence, 1958

Box 1

Folder 7

Correspondence, 1961

Box 1

Folder 8

Correspondence, 1962

Box 1

Folder 9

Correspondence, 1963

Box 1

Folder 10

Correspondence, 1964

Box 1

Folder 11

Correspondence, 1965

Box 1

Folder 12

Correspondence, 1966

Box 2

Folder 1

Correspondence, 1967

Box 2

Folder 2

Correspondence, 1968

Box 2

Folder 3

Correspondence, 1969

Box 2

Folder 4

Correspondence, 1970

Box 2

Folder 5

Correspondence, 1971

Box 2

Folder 6

Correspondence, 1972

Box 2

Folder 7

Correspondence, 1973

Box 2

Folder 8

Correspondence, 1974

Box 2

Folder 9

Correspondence, 1975

Box 2

Folder 10

Correspondence, 1976

Box 2

Folder 11

Correspondence, 1977 January-June

Box 2

Folder 12

Correspondence, 1977 July-December

Box 2

Folder 13

Correspondence, 1978 January-June

Box 2

Folder 14

Correspondence, 1978 July-December

Box 2

Folder 15

Correspondence, 1979

Box 2

Folder 16

Correspondence, 1980

Box 2

Folder 17

Correspondence, 1981 January-June

Box 3

Folder 1

Correspondence, 1981 July-December

Box 3

Folder 2

Correspondence, Vietnam Wing Dedication, 1981

Box 3

Folder 3

Correspondence, 1982

Box 3

Folder 4

Correspondence, 1983

Box 3

Folder 5

Insurance records, 1956-1978

Box 3

Folder 6

Mailing list, ca. 1980

Box 3

Folder 7

Mechanical specifications, nd

Box 3

Folder 8

Pamphlets, postcards, etc., ca. 1950-1960

Box 3

Folder 9

Permits and applications, 1960

Box 3

Folder 10

Permits and applications, 1961-1962

Box 3

Folder 11

Permits and applications, 1963-1964

Box 3

Folder 12

Permits and applications, 1965

Box 4

Folder 1

Permits and applications, 1966

Box 4

Folder 2

Permits and applications, 1967

Box 4

Folder 3

Permits and applications, 1969

Box 4

Folder 4

Permits and applications, 1970 January-June

Box 4

Folder 5

Permits and applications, 1970 July-December

Box 4

Folder 6

Permits and applications, 1971 January-February

Box 4

Folder 7

Permits and applications, 1971 March-July

Box 4

Folder 8

Permits and applications, 1971 August-December

Box 4

Folder 9

Permits and applications, 1972 January-February

Box 4

Folder 10

Permits and applications, 1972 March-August

Box 4

Folder 11

Permits and applications, 1972 September-December

Box 4

Folder 12

Permits and applications, 1973

Box 4

Folder 13

Permits and applications, 1974

Box 5

Folder 1

Permits and applications, 1975

Box 5

Folder 2

Permits and applications, 1976

Box 5

Folder 3

Permits and applications, 1977 January-June

Box 5

Folder 4

Permits and applications, 1977 July-December

Box 5

Folder 5

Permits and applications, 1978

Box 5

Folder 6

Permits and applications, 1979

Box 5

Folder 7

Permits and applications, 1980

Box 5

Folder 8

Permits and applications, 1981

Box 5

Folder 9

Permits and applications, 1982

Box 5

Folder 10

Photographs, Misc., ca. 1960-1970

Box 5

Folder 11

Poem, nd

Box 5

Folder 12

Publicity, 1961-1978

Box 5

Folder 13

Requests for proposals, 1954

Box 5

Folder 14

Vietnam Veterans Parade, Certificate of recognition, 1982

Box 6

Folder 1

Vietnam Veterans Parade, Correspondence, 1982 June-September

Box 6

Folder 2

Vietnam Veterans Parade, Correspondence 1982 October

Box 6

Folder 3

Vietnam Veterans Parade, Correspondence 1982 November-December

Box 6

Folder 4

**Vietnam Veterans Parade, Correspondence, A-B, 1982
December**

Box 6

Folder 5

**Vietnam Veterans Parade, Correspondence, C-D, 1982
December**

Box 6

Folder 6

**Vietnam Veterans Parade, Correspondence, E-G, 1982
December**

Box 6

Folder 7

**Vietnam Veterans Parade, Correspondence, H-K, 1982
December**

Box 6

Folder 8

**Vietnam Veterans Parade, Correspondence, L-M, 1982
December**

Box 6

Folder 9

**Vietnam Veterans Parade, Correspondence, N-S, 1982
December**

Box 6

Folder 10

**Vietnam Veterans Parade, Correspondence, T-Z, 1982
December**

Box 6

Folder 11

Vietnam Veterans Parade, Correspondence, 1983

Box 7

Folder 1

Vietnam Veterans Parade, Financial records, 1982

Box 7

Folder 2

Vietnam Veterans Parade, Insignia, 1982

Box 7

Folder 3

Vietnam Veterans Parade, Lists of participants, 1982

Box 7

Folder 4-5

Vietnam Veterans Parade, Lists of organizations, 1982

Box 7

Folder 6

Vietnam Veterans Parade, List of Vietnam KIA from Virginia, nd

Box 7

Folder 7

Vietnam Veterans Parade, Photographs, Negatives, 1982

Box 7

Folder 8

Vietnam Veterans Parade, Photographs, Black and white, 1982

Box 7

Folder 9

Vietnam Veterans Parade, Photographs, Color, 1982

Box 7

Folder 10

Vietnam Veterans Parade, Programs, pamphlets, etc., ca. 1980

Box 7

Folder 11

Vietnam Veterans Parade, Publicity, 1982

Box 7

Folder 12

Vietnam Veterans Parade, Schedules, instructions, maps, ca. 1982

Box 7

Folder 13

Vietnam Veterans Parade, Task Force, Minutes, 1982

Box 7

Folder 14

Vietnam Wing Dedication, KIA lists, nd

Box 8

Folder 1

Vietnam Wing Dedication, Lists, Guests, 1981-1982

Box 8

Folder 2

Vietnam Wing Dedication, Misc. records, 1981-1982

Box 8

Folder 3

Vietnam Wing Dedication, Photographs, Black and white, 1981-1982

Box 8

Folder 4-5

Vietnam Wing Dedication, Photographs, Color, 1981-1982

Box 8

Folder 6

Vietnam Wing Dedication, Video, PSA: Gov. Charles Robb National Salute [unreformatted], 1981-1982

Box 8

Folder 7

Visitor statistics, 1955-1973

Box 9

Folder 1

War Memorial Commission, Meeting, 1961

Box 9

Folder 2

War Memorial Commission, Meeting, 1964

Box 9

Folder 3

War Memorial Commission, Meeting, 1965

Box 9

Folder 4

War Memorial Commission, Meeting, 1966

Box 9

Folder 5

War Memorial Commission, Meeting, 1968

Box 9

Folder 6

War Memorial Commission, Meeting, 1971

Box 9

Folder 7-8

War Memorial Commission, Meeting, 1972

Box 9

Folder 9

War Memorial Commission, Meeting, 1973

Box 9

Folder 10-11

War Memorial Commission, Meeting, 1974

Box 9

Folder 12

War Memorial Commission, Meeting, 1975

Box 9

Folder 13

War Memorial Commission, Meeting, 1977

Box 9

Folder 14

War Memorial Commission, Meeting, 1978

Box 9

Folder 15

War Memorial Commission, Meeting, 1979

Box 9

Folder 16

War Memorial Commission, Meeting, 1980

Box 9

Folder 17

War Memorial Commission, Meeting, 1981

Box 9

Folder 18

Weekly report of the Clerk of the Works, 1954 November-December

Box 9

Folder 19

Artifacts, Partial plank from the USS New Jersey

Box 10

Artifacts, Canvas pouch

Box 10

Artifacts, Strap

Box 10

Artifacts, Vietnamese money

Box 10

Artifacts, Cartoon

Box 10

Artifacts, Spent shell casing

Box 11

Artifacts, Lucite block with soil and gravel from Vierville-sur-Mer

Box 12

Artifacts, South Vietnamese flag

Box 13

Architectural drawings [restricted], 1978

Box 14

Folder 1

Blueprints [restricted], ca. 1955

Box 14

Folder 2-3

Construction records [restricted], 1953-1979

Box 14

Folder 4

Mechanical specifications [restricted], ca. 1955

Box 14

Folder 5