

## Vietnam Veterans Living Memorial <sup>[1]</sup>

### Rating:



Average: 3.5 (2 votes)



Vietnam Veterans Living Memorial, photo by Donald Burgess Tilley Jr.

<sup>[2]</sup>

Vietnam Veterans Living Memorial  
Durham

View complete article and references at Commemorative Landscapes of North Carolina at:

<https://docsouth.unc.edu/commland/monument/195> <sup>[3]</sup>

Description: This book-shaped granite war memorial honors both the soldiers who died in the Vietnam War and those veterans who are still living. The creators of the monument wanted to establish an area of tranquility. The memorial consists of five granite benches, each representing a branch of the armed forces. The benches rested on a brick base, with the names of donors etched into the bricks. The monument faces east, representing the direction the individuals who served in Vietnam were sent.

Images: [Front View](#) <sup>[4]</sup> | [Left View](#) <sup>[5]</sup> | [Right View](#) <sup>[6]</sup> | [Names](#) <sup>[7]</sup> | ["Welcome Home"](#) <sup>[8]</sup> | [Bench 1](#) <sup>[9]</sup> | [Bench 2](#) <sup>[10]</sup> | [Bench 3](#) <sup>[11]</sup> | [Bench 4](#) <sup>[12]</sup> | [Bench 5](#) <sup>[13]</sup> | [Blue Rose](#) <sup>[14]</sup> | [Memorial Dove](#) <sup>[15]</sup> | [Flags](#) <sup>[16]</sup>

### Inscription:

Front of the Open Book: [Image](#) <sup>[17]</sup>

Left side:

\* 1959 VIETNAM 1975 \*

...AMERICA'S LONGEST WAR..AVERAGE SOLDIER'S AGE..NINETEEN...AS BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF THE SAME CLOTH...LET US NOT FORGET THAT OVER 2,700,000 SERVED...OVER 300,000 WERE WOUNDED...OVER 75,000 DISABLED...OVER 58,000 DIED...AND MORE THAN 2,000 REMAIN UNACCOUNTED FOR...THEY ARE NOT FORGOTTEN...

\* A TRIBUTE \*

...TO ALL THOSE BRAVE...NOBLE...HONORABLE...MEN AND WOMEN...WHO MOST GLORIOUSLY FOR THIS NATION...SERVED WITH DIGNITY AND FOUGHT FOR FREEDOM OF SOUTHEAST ASIA...DURING A TIME OF CONTROVERSY AND UNCERTAINTY...TO THOSE WHO GAVE THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICE...TO THOSE POW'S AND MIA'S WHO REMAIN UNACCOUNTED FOR...AND TO THOSE WHO SO NOBLY RETURNED...TO A NATION IN TURMOIL...

\* AMERICA \*

WE KNOW THE PAIN...THE HORROR...THE LONELINESS...THE WASTE...AND THE SADNESS OF WAR...LET US REMEMBER AND NEVER AGAIN ABANDON OUR POW'S AND MIA'S...THOSE BRAVE WARRIORS SHOULD NEVER BE FORGOTTEN...LET US AS A NATION WELCOME OUR BRAVE MEN AND WOMEN WHEN THEY COME HOME...FROM WAR...LET US AS A NATION REMEMBER...WE PAID SUCH A GREAT PRICE FOR WAR...BY SENDING THIS NATION'S MOST PRECIOUS AND PRICELESS GIFT...OUR YOUTH...INTO BATTLE...GOD BLESS THIS GREAT NATION.

Right side:

WE...THE VIETNAM VETERANS...HONOR AND RESPECT ALL THE FAMILIES AND LOVED ONES OF THOSE WHO SERVED AND FOUGHT FOR FREEDOM IN SOUTHEAST ASIA...

WE..THE VIETNAM VETERANS...SALUTE ALL VETERANS WHO STAND BEFORE THIS LIVING MEMORIAL...

Back of the Open Book: [Image](#) <sup>[18]</sup>

Right Side:

VIETNAM VETERANS LIVING MEMORIAL "SYMBOLISM OF BOOK"

"RED BOOK MARKER" SYMBOL OF FIRE, AND THE COMMON BLOOD OF HUMANITY, SIGNIFIES CHARITY...  
"LETTERS CARVED INTO BLACK BOOK" SYMBOL OF LIGHT, SIGNIFIES PURITY, LOVE, AND GLORY...  
"BLUE ROSE" SYMBOL OF HEAVEN AND THE SEA, SIGNIFIES, FAITH TRUTH, TRUST AND HONESTY...  
"GREEN STEM AND LEAVES" THE LEAVES SIGNIFIES THE SHEETS OF PAPER BOUND IN A VOLUME...EACH SIDE OF WHICH CONSTITUTES A PAGE...THE STEM, SIGNIFIES THE MAIN LINE OF DESCENT OF A FAMILY AS DISTINGUISHED FROM A BRANCH AND WHICH REPRESENTS ALL ORGANIZATIONS OF THE U.S. MILITARY FORCES, AND WE THE PEOPLE OF THIS NATION.  
"BLACK BOOK" SYMBOL OF A MIRROR, POLISHED TO REFLECT ALL THOSE WHO STAND BEFORE IT. SIGNIFIES THE UNACCOUNTED FOR POW'S AND MIA'S FROM ALL WARS, AND THE DEATH OF ALL THOSE NOBLE MEN AND WOMEN WHO GAVE THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICE FOR FREEDOM...  
THIS OPEN BOOK FACES THE "EAST" THE DIRECTION OF ASIA AND ITS NEIGHBORING ISLANDS, "THE ORIENT", THE EARTH'S AXIAL ROTATION AND THE RISING OF THE SUN. IT WILL FOCUS ON THE SUN-RISE EVENT OR TIME OF THE DAILY FIRST APPEARANCE OF THE SUN ABOVE THE EASTERN HORIZON TO SHOW THE OUTSET OF CIVILIZATION...  
FOUGHT FOR ALL...LOVED BY FEW...FORGOTTEN BY MANY...

Left side:

WE FOUGHT IN THE NORTH...WE FOUGHT IN THE SOUTH...VIETNAM...CAMBODIA AND LAOS...  
DEDICATED AUGUST 8, 1992 / VANDALIZED JANUARY 30, 2001 / ...RESTORED... / REDEDICATED IN THE MILLENNIUM YEAR OF OUR LORD...SUNDAY...VETERANS' DAY... NOVEMBER 11, 2001  
A TRIBUTE IN MEMORY OF SEPTEMBER 11, 2001 LET US AS A PEOPLE NEVER FORGET...IT IS ALL ABOUT TIME...THE PAST...THE PRESENT...THE FUTURE

Inscription on the bottom: [Image](#) <sup>[19]</sup>

...YOU NEVER LIVED...UNTIL... YOU ALMOST DIED... / "FOR THOSE WHO FOUGHT FOR IT, FREEDOM HAS A FLAVOR THE PROTECTED WILL NEVER KNOW..."

Dedication date: 8/8/1992

Creator: Jerond Belton, Designer Frank Bratsch, Designer

Materials & Techniques: Granite and brick

Sponsor: The VVA of Durham, Chapter 530 raised funds to have the monument built. Brenda Watson used her home as collateral to get a bank note to pay for the memorial.

Cost: \$40,000

Post dedication use: One of the observers of the monument noted that the treatment of the monument by those who visited it was very similar the way people treated The Wall in Washington, as they would leave flowers and mementos at the memorial.

The restored and rebuilt monument was re-dedicated in November 2001 with additional inscriptions added to commemorate re-dedication and the attacks of September 11th, 2001.

Subject notes: On the night of January 29, 2001, someone stole a bulldozer from a local construction site and smashed through the memorial in an act of vandalism. The only salvageable piece that remained was part of the granite base. Days after the incident an individual stole the American flag from the site. No arrests were made in either act of vandalism. The monument was later restored and rebuilt.

Location: The monument faces east (towards Vietnam).

Landscape: The monument is in the Edison Johnson Recreation Center in a wooded area, next to walking trails.

City: Durham

County: Durham

Subjects: Tragedy

**Latitude:** 36.02952

**Longitude:** -78.90033

**Subjects:**

[Monuments](#) <sup>[20]</sup>

[Places](#) <sup>[21]</sup>

**Authors:**

[Commemorative Landscapes of North Carolina](#) <sup>[22]</sup>

**Origin - location:**

Durham County [23]

Durham [24]

**From:**

Commemorative Landscapes of NC, University of North Carolina Chapel Hill. [25]

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**Source URL:**<https://ncpedia.org/monument/vietnam-veterans-living>

**Links**

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