VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL FUND

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

For Immediate Release: Friday, May 21, 2010
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THREE SERVICEMEN STATUE TO UNDERGO SIX-WEEK RESTORATION

Washington, D.C. – The Three Servicemen statue, an integral part of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial site, will receive restoration treatment beginning May 25 in a project expected to last approximately six weeks, said Jan C. Scruggs, founder and president of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund (VVMF).

The restoration will remove damage and restore the original patina of the statue. VVMF and the National Park Service (NPS) are partners in the project.

The work will be performed by New Arts Foundry out of Baltimore, MD. The statue will remain in place while the work is done, but an enclosure will be built around it to provide a more controlled environment for the restoration process. The enclosure, which will be erected beginning May 25, will include windows so the visiting public may view the work as it progresses.

"For almost as long as "The Wall" has been in place, the Three Servicemen Statue has been an important component of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial site," said Scruggs. "The statue provides an artistic representation of those brave service members whose names are on "The Wall." It is imperative that we keep this important artwork in top condition."

"This project was identified as a need by both the park and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund in 2005," said National Mall and Memorial Parks Superintendent, John Piltzecker. "Both began developing funding requests to provide the necessary treatment. Funding provided by the NPS Challenge Cost Share program will allow the park and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund to finally realize our combined goal of resource preservation for the Three Servicemen Statue."

The Three Servicemen Statue was created by artist Frederick Hart in 1984 with a patina that includes combinations and gradations of many different colors. Elliot Gantz, the original patina artist, has recreated the colors and prepared color match samples on the same bronze material that was used for the statue. Eight different colors of chemically applied patina will be used in the restoration.

Currently, oxidation has caused parts of the statue—areas on the figures' faces, noses, arms, hands and weapons—to turn a greenish-blue color. New Arts Foundry will remove the worn finish, reduce the areas of damaged patina and reapply the patina to the artist's original intent.

James Cummings, architect of record for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, will oversee the restoration project. Valuable background information about the artist and the creation of the statue was provided by Jay Hall Carpenter, a sculptor himself who, in 1984, served as a sculptor's assistant to Frederick Hart; and Hart's widow, Lindy Lain Hart.

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Once the restoration is complete, the NPS and the VVMF will establish a program of regularly scheduled maintenance, including waxing, which will preserve the new patina and prevent future damage of this type.

VVMF began raising funds to restore the statue last fall. NPS contributed a grant of nearly $25,000 through its Challenge Cost Share Program. On May 15, Lindy Hart, held a fundraiser in her home to assist in the effort. VVMF gathered donations from around the country, including gifts from: Thomas N.P. Johnson III and the Roy R. Charles Charitable Trust; Robert Chase Sr.; Chesley LLC; Richard Lieb; VFW Post 5958 of Titusville, Pa.; Tom and Edwina Johnson; Bill Nelson; the Ladies' Auxiliary to the Veterans of Foreign Wars; American Legion Post 10 of Manassas, Va.; and Pentagon Federal Credit Union.

Work on the Three Servicemen Statue is part of a maintenance and restoration program begun last fall by the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund to assist the NPS in upkeep of the site. VVMF raised funds last year to refinish the flagpole and flagpole base, as well as five directory stands located throughout the site. It also paid to replace paper directories of the names on "The Wall" with laminated directories better able to withstand being out in the weather.

VVMF also raised funds to repair the sprinkler system at "The Wall" and care for the lawn at and around the Memorial site—13.5 acres in all, including the future home for the Education Center at "The Wall," across Henry Bacon Drive near the Lincoln Memorial.

On May 11, VVMF announced that the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM) had contributed $50,000 to pay for lawn maintenance at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial through the rest of the year.

Since September 2009, VVMF has raised $231,000 to pay for lawn maintenance and other restoration projects on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial site.

Established in 1979, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund is dedicated to preserving the legacy of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C., promoting healing and educating about the impact of the Vietnam War. Authorized by Congress, its most recent initiative is building The Education Center at The Wall, an underground facility near the Memorial that is designed to help visitors discover the stories of those named on The Wall and celebrate the values embodied by all service members who served in all of America's wars. Other Memorial Fund initiatives include educational programs for students and teachers, a traveling Wall replica that honors our nation's veterans and a humanitarian and mine-action program in Vietnam.

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