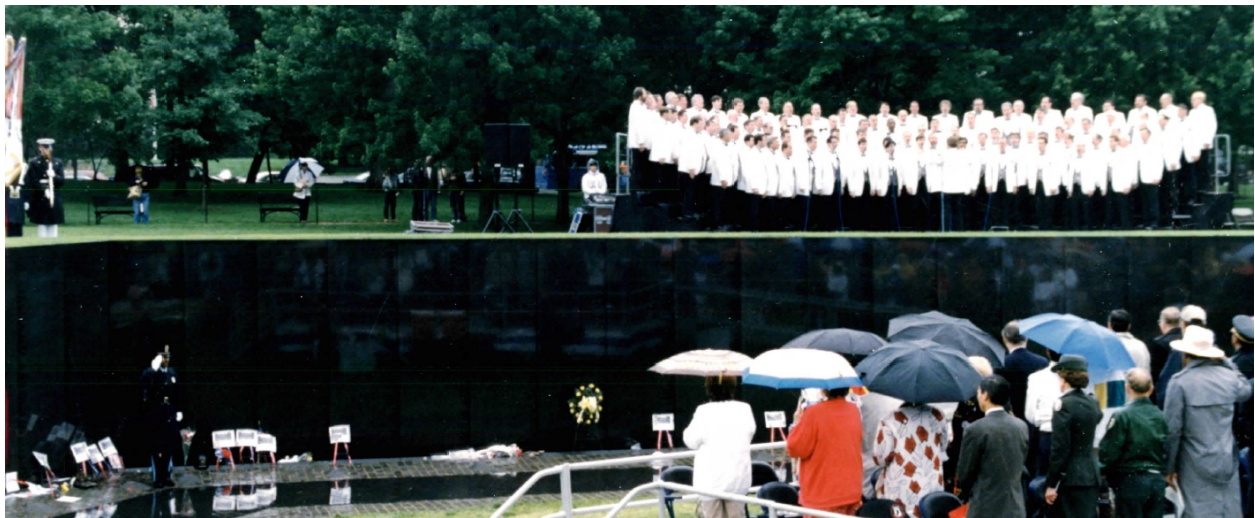


Alexandria Harmonizers 70th Anniversary Throwback Thursdays

No. 28 - 1996 We Were Soldiers Once

Memorial Day 1996 at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial

The most emotionally meaningful Harmonizer show of 1996 occurred when we sang the Memorial Day concert at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial on May 27th. Of the 100 men who sang that day, 60 percent had military service and 30 percent had Vietnam service. Words simply fail to suggest the intense, private feelings that these men experienced on this occasion.



The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, together with the National Park Service, present the annual Memorial Day and Veterans Day observances on the Memorial Wall. The chorus was positioned atop the Wall in their white tuxedo jackets, silver vests, ties, and stuffers, black tuxedo pants, and Gold Medals (1995). Many Harmonizer family members were seated in the audience.

The Harmonizers were complimented several times by the Memorial Day organizers who wrote about the day's activities: "Although the sun never came out and it drizzled the entire afternoon, the Memorial Day observances went off without a hitch. We began with some beautiful songs by the award winning barbershop chorus, the **Alexandria Harmonizers**. They sang songs of remembrance like 'Danny Boy' as well as patriotic songs ('Grand Old Flag,' 'God Bless the USA') and the 'National Anthem.' The sound of over 100 a cappella voices truly resonated on the Wall."

Following the formal ceremonies and several speakers, the Harmonizers “sang a heart wrenching rendition of ‘I’ll Be Seeing You’.” War journalist **Peter Arnett** gave a keynote speech on remembrance and thanks to the many who gave their lives on behalf of our country. The observance ended with the Wreath Laying Ceremony, a solemn procession of veterans and patriotic groups laying wreaths in memory of brothers and sisters lost in the Vietnam War, indeed in all wars.

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, headed by **Jan C. Scruggs**, is the nonprofit organization authorized by Congress in 1980 to fund and build the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. Dedicated in 1982, the Vietnam Memorial Wall, together with the Three Servicemen Memorial and the Vietnam Women’s Memorial, attract more than 5.6 million visitors each year. As of May 2017, inscribed on the black granite Wall are 58,318 names of men and women who gave their lives or remain missing in the Vietnam War.

Historical Tagline:

“We Were Soldiers Once...and Young” is a 1992 book by **Lt Gen Harold G. Moore (Ret)** and war journalist **Joseph L. Galloway** about the Vietnam War. It focuses on the role of the First and Second Battalions of the 7th Cavalry Regiment in the Battle of the Ia Drang Valley, the United States’ first large-unit battle of the Vietnam War. It was adapted into the 2002 film, *We Were Soldiers*, starring **Mel Gibson**. The featured melody in the movie is a haunting song of remembrance-- *To fallen soldiers let us sing, Where no rockets fly nor bullets wing, Our broken brothers let us bring to the Mansions of the Lord.*