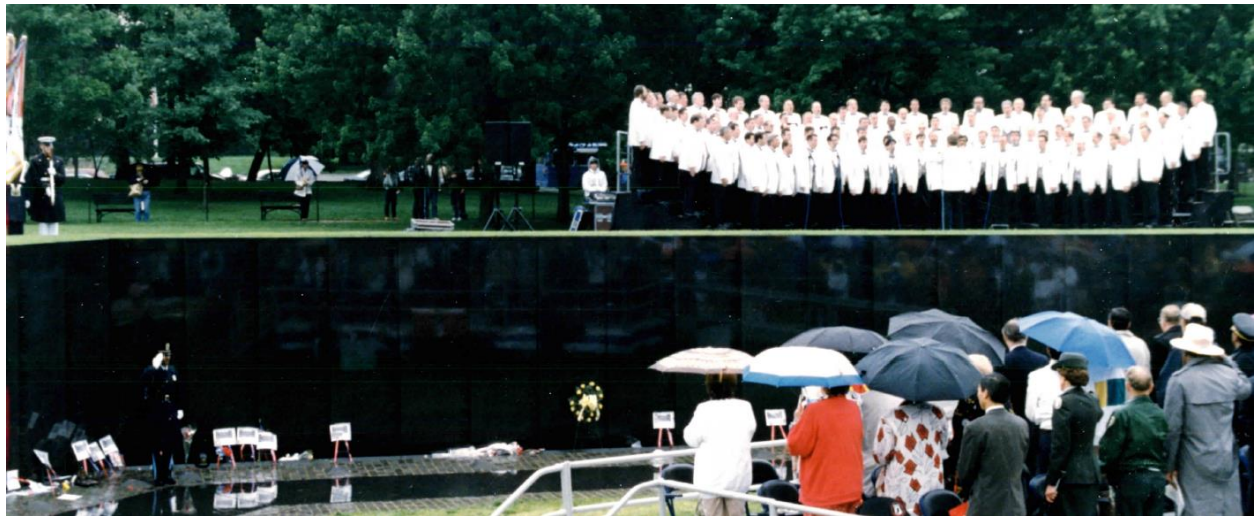


## We Were Soldiers Once - 1996

Honoring the men and women who served in the controversial Vietnam War, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial chronologically lists the names of 58,318 Americans who gave their lives in service to their country. The most emotionally meaningful Harmonizer show of 1996 occurred when we sang the Memorial Day concert at the Wall 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 chorus was positioned atop the Wall in their white tuxedo jackets and 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 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'."

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 to fund and build the Vietnam Veterans Memorial that was dedicated in 1982.

Historical Tagline #1. *Platoon* is a 1986 American war film written and directed by Oliver Stone, starring Tom Berenger, Willem Dafoe, and Charlie Sheen. The film, based on Stone's experience from the war, follows a U.S. Army volunteer serving in Vietnam

while his Platoon Sergeant and his Squad Leader argue over the morality in the platoon and of the war itself. Reviewers called “Adagio for Strings” by Samuel Barber a film score “full of pathos and calhartic passion” that “rarely leaves a dry eye.”

Historical Tagline #2. “We Were Soldiers Once...and Young” is a 1992 book that 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. The book was adapted into the 2002 film *We Were Soldiers*, starring Mel Gibson. and featuring the haunting song of remembrance “Mansions of the Lord”... *“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...”*