



News Release

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National WWI Museum and Memorial Announces Special Exhibition “The Vietnam War: 1945-1975” to Open in Conjunction with Veterans Day

Exhibition explores themes of patriotism, duty & Vietnam War connections to World War I

KANSAS CITY, MO. – More than 40 years after its conclusion, the Vietnam War remains one of the most controversial events of the 20th century. How did the conflict begin? Why did it begin? What are the connections between the war and its confounding cousin, World War I?

The National WWI Museum and Memorial will host the special exhibition [The Vietnam War: 1945-1975](#) beginning on Friday, Nov. 8, 2019 (Veterans Day Weekend) through Sunday, May 31, 2020. From perspectives covering both the home front and the war front, the exhibition explores themes of patriotism, duty and citizenship through a remarkable collection of objects, documents, photographs and more.

“We are honored to serve as the first host institution in the Midwest for this incredibly important and poignant exhibition,” said National WWI Museum and Memorial President and CEO Dr. Matthew Naylor. “Some might wonder why the National WWI Museum and Memorial would host an exhibition about the Vietnam War. As we seek to achieve our mission of informing the public about the Great War’s enduring impact, events that took place in Vietnam are quite connected to and were most certainly influenced by World War I.”

The exhibition takes visitors on a journey spanning the duration of U.S. involvement in Indochina, using compelling storytelling, powerful photography and artifacts that tell the deeply personal stories of the men and women who were affected by the war.

The Vietnam War: 1945-1975 explores themes through fascinating objects, including a troopship berthing unit, vibrant anti-war posters, artwork by Vietnam vets, a Viet Cong bicycle, the Pentagon Papers and historical film footage. More than 300 artifacts, photographs, artworks, documents, films, and interactive digital media help to convey the story.

An introductory gallery precedes the exhibition, which features documents and historical research from the collection of the Museum and Memorial, helping to illustrate connections between the Great War and the Vietnam War. At the Paris peace talks in 1919, a young man named Nguyễn Sinh Cung requested audiences with world leaders in an attempt to secure independence from France for what eventually became Vietnam. Denied these repeated attempts, he later forged alliances with Communist-leaning leaders and renamed himself Ho Chi Minh.

A bespectacled artillery captain from Missouri, Harry S. Truman said his later decisions were based on his World War I experiences, including providing economic and military aid to France in support of its efforts in Indochina. Brigadier General Douglas MacArthur, a young tank captain named Dwight Eisenhower, Assistant Secretary of the



Navy Franklin D. Roosevelt, Colonel George C. Marshall and many others deeply involved in World War I had connections to the war in Southeast Asia a few decades later.

“The intersections of World War I and the Vietnam War are numerous and extensive,” said National WWI Museum and Memorial Senior Curator Doran Cart. “World War I affected virtually every aspect of human life in some manner for the remainder of the 20th century and beyond. The circumstances surrounding the Vietnam War are certainly no different in that regard.”

In conjunction with the exhibition, the Museum and Memorial offers a variety of engaging programs that will be announced in the coming months. The exhibition website features a host of supplemental items, including interviews with veterans who served, incredible photographs of the conflict, oral histories from veterans, a family guide for children, curriculum guides for teachers and much more.

Additionally, the Museum and Memorial will host the AVTT Traveling Vietnam Wall, an 80 percent scale replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, on the Southeast Lawn of the complex from May 15-25, 2020. Visitation of the wall is open to the public.

This exhibition has been organized by the New-York Historical Society with special collaboration of the National WWI Museum and Memorial. This traveling exhibition was made possible with major support from Lockton Companies, the National Endowment for the Humanities: Exploring the human endeavor, Bernard L. Schwartz and the Achelis and Bodman Foundation.

About the National WWI Museum and Memorial

The National World WWI Museum and Memorial is America’s leading institution dedicated to remembering, interpreting and understanding the Great War and its enduring impact on the global community. The Museum and Memorial holds the most comprehensive collection of World War I objects and documents in the world and is the second-oldest public museum dedicated to preserving the objects, history and experiences of the war. The Museum and Memorial takes visitors of all ages on an epic journey through a transformative period and shares deeply personal stories of courage, honor, patriotism and sacrifice. Designated by Congress as America’s official World War I Museum and Memorial and located in downtown Kansas City, Mo., the National WWI Museum and Memorial inspires thought, dialogue and learning to make the experiences of the Great War era meaningful and relevant for present and future generations. To learn more, visit theworldwar.org.

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