

# War Dogs Monument Dedication,

Riverside, CA,  
February 21, 2000  
March Field Museum



*VDHA, VFW, and VSPA celebration Banquet! February 21, 2000*



**INTRODUCTION** - The [Vietnam Security Police Association, Inc. \(USAF\)](#) (VSPA), [Vietnam Dog Handler Association](#), and Veterans of Foreign Wars, have joined together to post *photos and feelings* associated with the dedication of the War Dogs Monument in Riverside, California on President's Day, February 21, 2000. As a member of these three organizations, I was *drafted* to post whatever is sent in by you.

The [Vietnam Security Police Association, Inc. \(USAF\)](#) will host the War Dogs pages and photos. VSPA is an association of USAF Vietnam War Veterans who served in Vietnam or Thailand between July 1, 1958 and May 15, 1975, as Air / Security Police (*Permanent Change of Station, TDY, or as an augmentee*). Your War Dogs Monument dedication comments, feelings and thoughts (before, during, or after), or photographs taken at the dedication or banquet, will become a permanent part of the record of this historic event archived at March Field Museum.

The following guidelines will help you *help us* post your feedback and photos of the War Dogs Monument dedication, and banquet. Please comply with these important points. If you don't have a teenager handy to help with the computer stuff, then just do your best.

## HOW TO SUBMIT A COMMENT, STORY, OR PHOTOS

**THE FINE PRINT:** BY SUBMITTING A STORY, COMMENT, OR PHOTO(S), YOU UNDERSTAND AND AGREE THAT SUCH STORIES, COMMENTS, AND PHOTOGRAPHS SUBMITTED BECOME THE PROPERTY OF VSPA, VDHA, AND THE VDHA ORGANIZATIONS. PHOTOS ARE IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN AND PERMISSION IS GRANTED TO DOWNLOAD AND FREELY USE FOR NON COMMERCIAL PURPOSES.

**COMMENTS, STORY, FEELINGS AND THOUGHTS:** All "Feelings and Thoughts" submitted must be emailed to Don Poss. Please do not fax or snail-mail your story or photos, as I simply cannot take the time to retype or scan for you. By emailing comments, I can copy and drop it into my word processor for posting.Z

## Guidelines follow:

- Please write using UPPER *and* lower case letters, appropriately. Email submitted in all upper case letters cannot be retyped nor published.
- If you are a Veteran, always include your Name, Unit(s) and Base(s), and the year(s) in-country. If you served as a dog handler in the military, or police, state where and when, and your dog's name and number (if known).
- I shouldn't have to say this, but we are a family webpage: No profanity. No exceptions. No racial or derogatory remarks or comments. No exceptions.

## PHOTOS

- **Be selective! Chose your best photos.** We want to post them all, however, 500 photos of groups standing in front of the monument would grow tedious to view. But, if you can name your group in the caption, then we will post them.
- **Check out the photos as they are posted.** If you have a "different" or touching photo, send it in. If you have a better photo similar to one posted--send it in. If it is your favorite photo--send it in. Although not every photo can be posted, if there is enough interest we are thinking about posting every photo and story sent in on a CD for archiving at the March Field Museum. The CD may be available (too early to tell at this point) to the public, as a fund-raiser for the March Field Museum, War Dogs project, and/or other events by the VSPA, VDHA, and VFW. Attach any photos you want to an email (JPG format!). In your email, write a brief caption about each photo in the email, and link each caption to the name of the photo attached.
- **Before submitting the email, please use spell-check.**
- **Photos - Do Not:** Write on the front of the photo, Colorize, Crop, Resize, Optimize, fold, bend, staple, or give to your dog to play with!
- **If you do not have access to a scanner,** but want to post your photos, you may go to your local photo shop and have them copied to a CD. It doesn't cost much for a half-dozen or so photos. Email me for the snail-mail address of where to send them (if you want it returned, I will ask you include a SASE). Please be patient! We are all volunteers on this end.

# War Dogs Memorial Dedication

... and then it was time to unveil the War Dogs Monument.

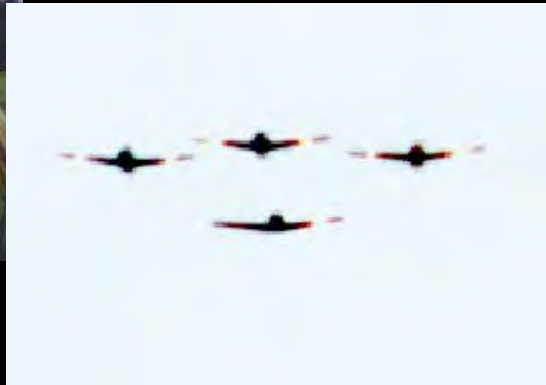


Thunder ... applause! and the roar of approaching aircraft!





**A dramatic flyover sweeps over the wings  
of another museum-veteran . . .  
a B-52 Bomber's tail *salutes*.**



**and closer they fly...**

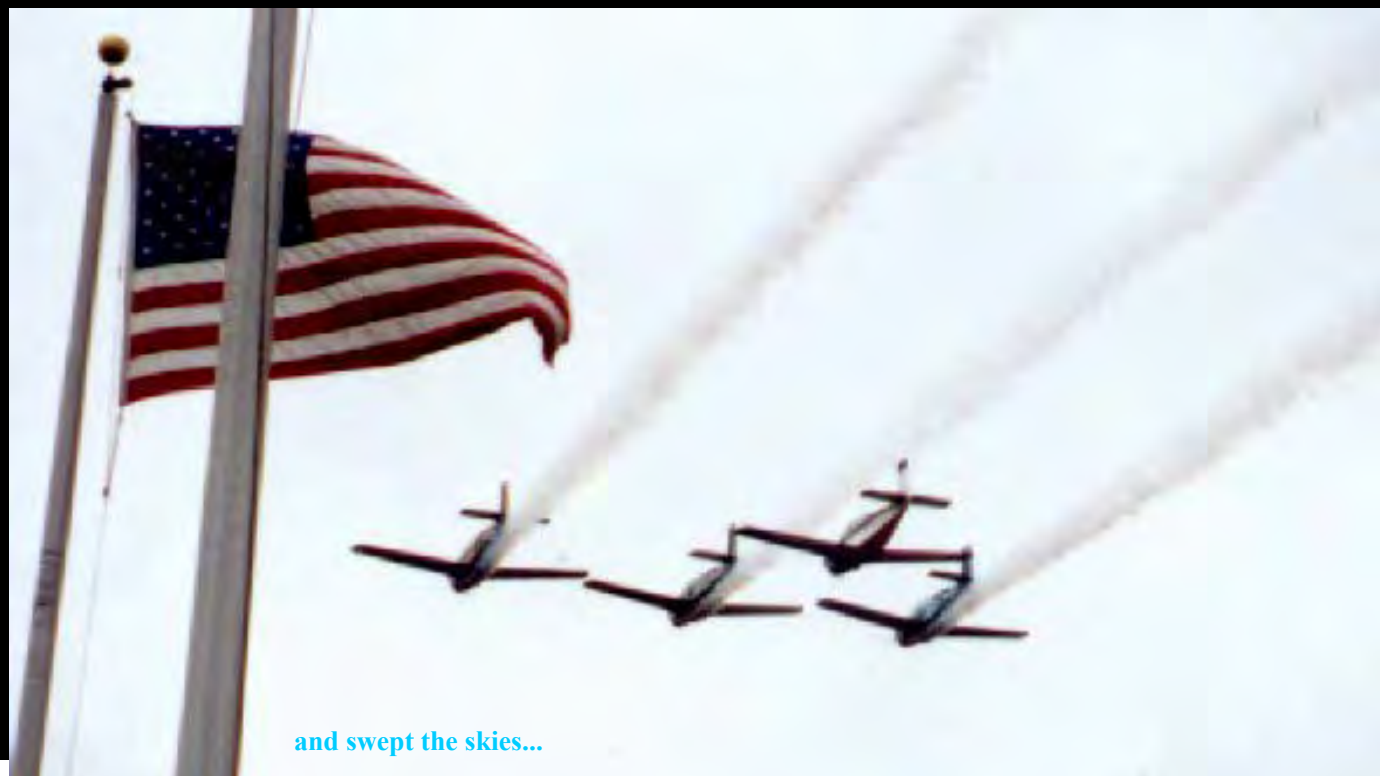


**Children point . . . people cover their ears . . .  
the crowd cheers in approval!**





As Old Glory snaps a Well Done!



and swept the skies...

# War Dogs Memorial Dedication



**The intent for having the Handler partially within a barrier, is the symbolism of leaving safety and entering harm's-way.**





Photo by Chris Raper, of Mr. and Mrs. Shomberg.

War Dogs display inside one of several aircraft hangers

Later, friends meet and visit the March Field Museum, making purchases of CD's, postcards, and jackets, and memorabilia. Plans are firmed up to meet at the VFW/VDHA/VSPA's celebration banquet that afternoon and evening.



# War Dogs Memorial Dedication



**A steady rain begins to fall...**

**Fifty California law enforcement agencies were represented.**





**Air Force canine handlers waited their moment to honor those who came before them.**

**The War Dogs' Monument, embraced with flowers . . . and a rain soaked canine seeking approval from its handler. Air Force female canine handler keeps a short-leash.**



## War Dogs Memorial Dedication



**A call for War Dog Handlers to be the first amongst thousands to come forward to see the memorial... and place a Rose Remembrance for the K-9.**

**Hands: It was impossible not to pet him. Graying Soldiers, Airmen, Sailors, and Marines, touching and remembering . . . each placing a Rose in tribute . . . and for a private moment, each veteran is alone with his dog's memory.**







Many, without words, choked with emotion, simply touched the canine or handler . . . others lips moved with names of dogs whispered in reverent recognition ... and when the warriors have passed by the memorial is covered with a blanket of red and pink Roses. The scent of flowers and rain freshened skies is pleasant.

**"The War Dog Memorial  
They Protected Us on the Field of Battle  
They Watch Over Our Eternal Rest  
We are Grateful  
Dedicated February 21, 2000"**







**Vietnam dog handler veterans streamed forward to place a token rose in memory of their canine friends. It is only rain... but the first drop--*the very first*--landed as a tear in the canine's eye... and that is somehow fitting.**



William Wilson Lewis III / The Press-Enterprise

Veterans, police department canine teams and other visitors brave the rain to attend a ceremony at the War Dog Memorial at March Field Air Museum.



**Dozens of Roses... wreaths... tribute... photos... adorn the War Dog and Handler.  
A lone Rose at its base--not fallen--but placed in awe and humility by Don Poss.**

*We Take Care of Our Own*



The rains return . . . the crowd parts . . .  
bouquets, wreaths, photos, and flowers abound.

*(The Flowers would remain fresh and in  
place for the next few days.)*

*We Take Care of Our Own*



## War Dogs Memorial Dedication



*Above. The celebration banquet, at the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Post 9223, Riverside, California. first class prime-rib dinner was served in one of the halls! (No rubber chicken for these handlers!)*



*Left. L/R: David and Don Poss. I was very proud that my son David was present at the dediction and memorial.*

*... and yes, our canine buddies bellied up to the table too! Chris Raper commented, "Now this puppy was a class act. His manners were better than most children. He even cleaned up around his plate." Canine's handler is Robert and Robert's wife (seated at the far left).*





**Đà Nẵng Gang! I was especially pleased to meet Byron Martin (center) again after so many years. We served together in 1965-1966 with the USAF 366th K-9 Security Police Squadron, Đà Nẵng, SVN.**



*We Take Care of Our Own*



# War Dogs Memorial March Field Museum

Press-Enterprise photos and story reprinted at VSPA by permission.  
*Thanks Press-Enterprise and Reporter Marlowe Churchill!*



The Press-Enterprise's Reporter, Marlowe Churchill, pens eloquently of the dedication.

## Rainy tribute to war dogs

► An estimated 2,000 people from across the nation gather for the dedication at March Field Air Museum.

By Marlowe Churchill  
The Press-Enterprise



MARCH AIR RESERVE BASE Tom Mitchell hugs the newly dedicated German shepherd statue.

*A touching moment for us all . . .*



**Tom Mitchell hugs the newly dedicated German shepherd statue.**



**MARCH AIR RESERVE BASE**

They were Bingo, Rex, Ken, Max, Duke and a thousand other names — best buddies of soldiers who read them letters and shared cookies and cakes from home while serving on the front lines in South Vietnam.

Those memories of specially trained war dogs evoked tearful responses Monday from more than 100 Vietnam War combat veterans who lined up and lovingly patted the bronze replica of a German shepherd depicted in the War Dog Memorial at March Field Air Museum.

Some in the crowd, estimated at 2,000 people, traveled from all over the country and stood in the rain Monday morning to attend the dedication ceremony for the 18-foot tall bronze statue. The statue depicts a German shepherd sitting on alert, held on leash by a soldier who appears to be moving through a wall — symbolizing moving from a safe zone into harm's way.

"Everybody has a reason for being here," Air Force veteran Tom Mitchell of San Diego told the crowd. "These dogs were everything to us."

Mitchell is one of the founders of the Vietnam Dog Handlers Association that held a reunion over the weekend in Riverside.

When the dog handlers returned home to

resume civilian lives, the 4,000 mostly German shepherds used in South Vietnam were euthanized because the Pentagon feared they could harm people if adopted into the handlers' families.

Mitchell said 279 dogs were killed in combat during the Vietnam War while helping to protect U.S. troops from ambushes, hidden mines and trip-wires. The dogs could sniff scents of the enemy and explosives. Dogs could hear the near inaudible sound of a thin wire vibrating in the wind that was connected to hidden explosives.

The dogs would freeze to alert their handlers by pointing to hidden dangers. The association estimates 10,000 soldiers' lives were saved by the dogs' acute senses.

Mitchell said Monday's rain reminded him of the times in Vietnam when his dog joined him under his rain poncho. He laughed at the memory of the "nice dog smell" of the soggy canine cuddled next to him.

Many dog breeders, along with about 50 canine teams from police departments from throughout the state, brought dogs to Monday's event. The museum's parking lot and a side street were filled with cars.

Please see **DOGS**, B-5

**Inspirational... and from the heart.**

**Justice Chin  
--Vietnam Veteran remembers.**



William Wilson Lewis III / The Press-Enterprise

State Supreme Court Associate Justice Ming Chin, who served in Vietnam as an Army officer, recognizes the service provided by war dogs and their handlers.

# DOGS

Continued from B-1

The statue brought tears to the eyes of many veterans who paused for a moment, touched the statue and then placed small bouquets at the dog's paws. Air Force veteran Steve Glab of Chicago, dressed in military fatigues, also placed a small pocket of ashes at the base of the memorial. He said they were from three dogs he previously owned.

Jack Moore of Alexandria, Va., spotted the War Dog Memorial on the Internet and just had to come cross-country to see the statue and dedication.

The 80-year-old Marine Corp veteran said his dog, Rex, helped him ferret out traps and enemy soldiers in the jungles of Guam during World War II. Rex served him loyally for a year in combat, keeping him safe from enemy fire, he said.

"I brought old Rex home with me and had him until 1955 when I had to put him down," Moore said.

Sculptor Tom Schomberg of Denver, commissioned to create the blackened bronze memorial, was moved by the out-pouring of emotion when his work was unveiled.

He posed for pictures with combat veterans in front of the statue at the end of the ceremony that included a fly-over of vintage warbirds by the March Aero Club and music about the dogs composed and performed by David Glen Elsley and his band.

State Supreme Court Associate Justice Ming W. Chin told the crowd he remembered his combat tour in

South Vietnam as an Army officer.

"There was never any question whether a soldier could count on his war dog," he said. "Let us never make a mistake and leave behind our canine friends again."

Some believe the practice of killing the dogs after the war was **WRONG**.

Steve Janke, an Air Force veteran, said he is trying to ensure that doesn't happen by educating today's young people about war dogs. He has used his Vietnam War experiences as a dog handler in history courses he teaches at a private Christian school in Carlstead, N.J.

"Most people never knew we used dogs in Vietnam," said Janke, a member of the dog handlers **GROUP**.

When he went to Vietnam in 1970 as a 20-year-old, Janke learned that he could only trust his dog Kobuc. Kobuc's instincts were keen, leashing in Janke's youthful bravado at crucial times.

"He was my friend, a friend that lived on the end of a leash," Janke said. He said he is often overcome by emotion in telling his students about Kobuc, whom he described as a "gift from God."

"This," he said of the memorial, "is very special. This is a place for healing."

The memorial was part of a \$1 million fund-raising campaign by Corona Mayor Jeffrey Bennett, president and founder of Nature's Recipe Pet Foods.

Marlowe Churchill can be reached by e-mail at [mchurchill@pe.com](mailto:mchurchill@pe.com) or by phone at (909) 856-3339.

# War Dogs Memorial

War Dogs Memorial,  
March Field Air Museum  
Riverside, California

War Dogs...

A Day To Remember:

The Veterans...

... the rain

the press... CNN... ABC

... the fly-over

the Music... the tears ... the joy

... Old Glory in review

... and nearby

hundreds of thousands honored, rest in  
eternal peace... but most of all...  
the War Dogs,

and our day to remember them...  
together.

Gone But Not Forgotten







**February 21, 2000  
Remembering...**

## Rememberin'

Old heart, hearing me callin, through the years, long ago  
 Let a smilin face of an old friend come to let me know  
 That all is not forgotten, all we gave and all we let go  
 Will live forever beyond heaven  
 It's the only world we've know n

Oh rememberin all we had done  
 Oh rememberin all we've been through  
 Oh rememberin the last fading son  
 Who looked up to you

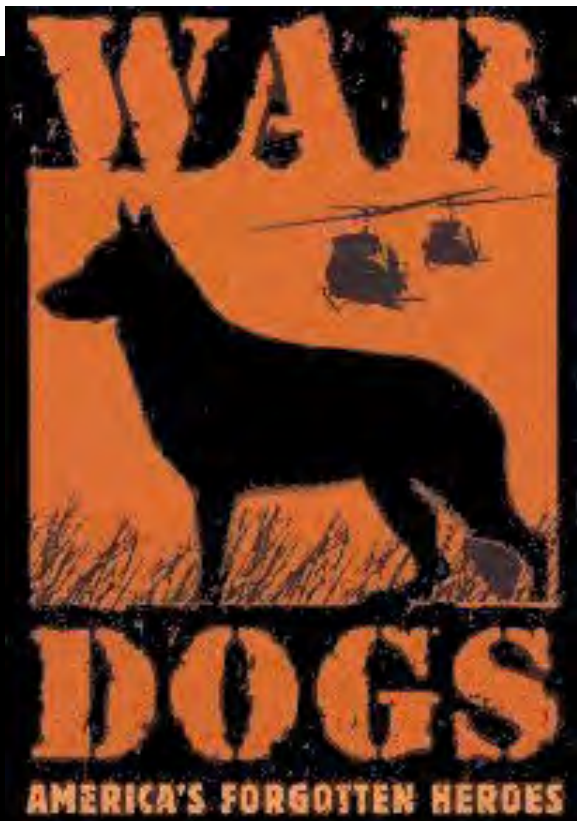
Old friends we are united through God's good fortune  
 It's shone in our eyes  
 True blood brothers sharing a memory  
 Of the ones we left behind

Oh rememberin all we had done  
 Oh rememberin all we've been through  
 Oh rememberin the last fading son  
 Who looked up to you

And if tomorrow father times takes me please remember how I feel  
 For all my pride was standing by your side  
 And with this I'll say farewell

We will remember all you have done  
 We will remember all you've been through  
 We will remember your forgotten sons  
 Who looked up to you

Always rememberin  
 Always rememberin  
 Always rememberin



Memorial Unveiling 2/21/00  
 March Field Air Museum

**FORGOTTEN,  
 NO MORE!**

## War Dogs Memorial

... and David Glen Eisley's music...

not a dry eye... nor a harden heart... could withstand David Gen Eisley's compelling, and soul-releasing music. Stirring... lifting... enabling... giving a hand to step over the hardship of lingering memories. Remember the music at the dedication? The bagpipes? You've heard them before, in the movies "Brave Heart", and "Titanic!" I have no connections with Ol'Boothill Records... I'm just telling you like it was-- this is one CD you must order!

*David Glen Eisley's War Dogs CD... I bought it... you should too.*

**DAVID GLEN EISLEY**

**WAR DOGS**

Ol'Boothill Records  
 P.O. Box 6052 Bgua Dulce  
 California 91350-6052  
 email:boothill24@earthlink.net

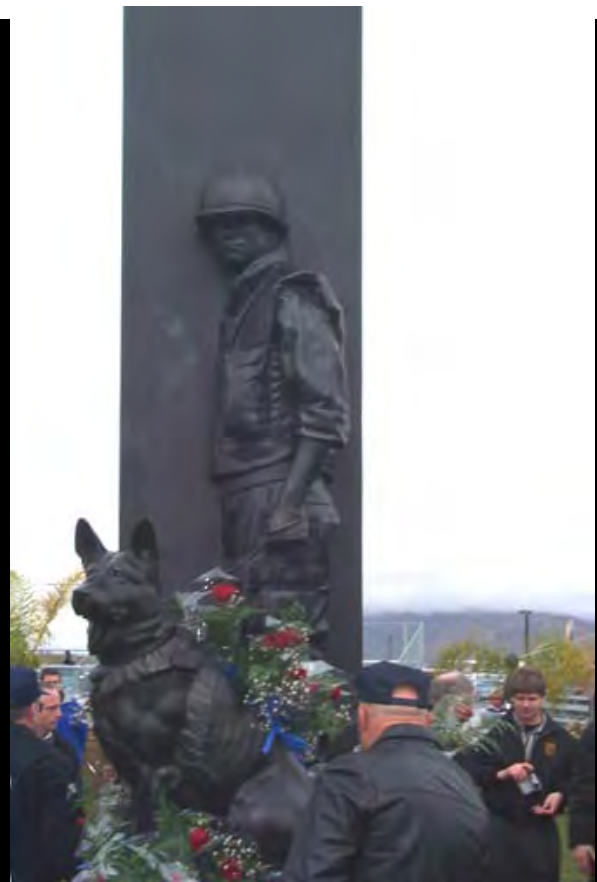


## **War Dogs Memorial** March Field Museum

**Celebration mini-reunion at the  
VFW in Riverside California.**

*And yes...  
dogs ate at the table with  
the rest of us!*

Chris' close-up of a Vietvet  
placing a Rose in Memory.



*We Take Care of Our Own*





War Dogs Memorial is sculpted, by world-renown sculptor, A. Thomas Schomberg. The bronze and granite War Dogs Memorial will stand 16 feet and 10 feet at its base.

*(Double-Click image left)*

**War Dogs! Memorial:**

**March Field Museum--*the perfect location!***

**Need a ride, directions, VDHA connections & Discounts to attend the dedication? Read on!**

**I was at the War Dogs Memorial today: [Read what it's like now!](#)**

**How [Get Air Travel help](#)**

**to: [Transportation from Airport; to the Hotel; to the events](#)**

**[Hotel Recommendation](#)**

**[Reservations for the Memorial Dedication, and VFW/VDHA prime-rib dinner](#) [Directions to War Dogs Dedication Memorial](#) [VDHA Members - Who's Signed Up?](#)**

**[LATEST NEWS & UPDATES!](#) (Can I leave a tribute?)**

*The simple fact is: American War Dogs were left behind in Vietnam -- abandoned -- intentionally.*

**About the War Dogs Memorial location** - The first of two War Dogs Memorials will be unveiled on Presidents Day, 2000, at March Air Field (Air Reserve Base; adjoining the former AFB).

As a former USAF K-9 Sentry Dog handler (Đà Nẵng, Blackie 129X, 1965-1966), I believe March Field Museum is the perfect location for the towering War Dog and Handler monument. A prime location, both poetic and highly appropriate for honoring War Dogs and their partners. At sunset, the monument will silhouette against amber skies while quietly overlooking the green manicured lawns of our nation's largest veterans cemetery where over 114,000 are at final rest. The War Dog and Handler will symbolically watch over the park-like cemetery... while performing a *last patrol* on the outer perimeter around the giant Air Base, formerly known as March Air Force Base.



*Photo: Blackie 129X, was put down after six years of faithful heroic service from Đà Nẵng AB early 1965 to Tan Son Nhut AB, late 1970).*

## War Dogs! Memorial March Field Museum



As you can see by viewing the map (courtesy of Thomas Guide), March Field Museum is located exactly halfway between the Air Base's flight line and Riverside National Cemetery, which is only a stones throw from the museum grounds (for scale, the runway is 3 miles long!), and parallels the heavily traveled 215 Freeway. You can also check out [March Field Museum's WebPage](#) for an aerial view of part of the grounds, and read about placing a tiled tribute on the grounds. I recommend the museum, have been there, and drive by it daily.

*Don Poss*

**VDHA:** Because of American War Dogs, there are thousands fewer names etched in stone on The Wall.



The Wall of the National Vietnam Veterans Memorial, at Constitutional Park, Washington, D.C.. Ironically, at the end of the Vietnam War, military officials *abandoned* almost all the war dogs. **VDHA** writes, "*Of the 10,000 men who served with K-9 units during the Vietnam War more than 265 were Killed in Action. Of the 4,000 Dogs that served, 281 were "Officially" listed as "Killed in Action", but only 190 were returned home at the end of the war. Over 500 dogs died on the battlefields of Vietnam.*" Nevertheless, there has been no tribute to these dogs until the *Discovery Channel* program, sponsored by *Nature's Recipe*, as envisioned and promoted by the [Vietnam Dog Handler Association](#) to raise the memorial's \$1,500,000!

*The second War Dogs Memorial is at Ft. Benning's Infantry Museum on the east coast. Proceeds from WAR DOGS project has helped fund the \$1,500,000 memorials to honor those heroic dogs and handlers who served in Vietnam.*

### *What's happening... and where?*

Need a ride, directions, VDHA connections, where to stay, and discounts to attend the dedication? Read on-- we're going to help!

Tom Mitchell  
VDHA Chairman

**AIR TRAVEL:** If you are flying in, please contact **Joan Elder**, at 1-800-878-6991, so we can be sure it is taken care of properly and that we have the information for the shuttles we will be providing. Be sure you fly into **Ontario, CA International Airport!** If you fly to LAX (Los Angeles) or John Wayne (Orange County) then you have a two hours drive, minimum, and you will be on-your-own!

**TRANSPORTATION:** A great group of guys in Riverside have volunteered to shuttle us around -- plus there will be a number of guys from SoCal who will have cars to help with transportation.

**HOTEL RECOMMENDED:** We have chosen the Best Western Hotel on Magnolia Street in Riverside as the VDHA hotel. We will not have any events there though. It is about three miles from the VFW post and is in a good clean part of town.

**VDHA Hotel Group Rate:** \$55 per night.  
Bringing a dog? you'll need to pay a \$100 deposit.  
**Hotel Reservations**, please call **Joan Elder** at 1-800-878-6991.

The Memorial...

### **War Dog Memorial Dedication - Directions:**

11:00 a.m., Monday, February 21, 2000,  
March Field Air Museum,  
Center Courtyard,  
22550 Van Buren Blvd., Riverside, CA

Take the I-215 Freeway / Van Buren Boulevard exit (south of I-60 Freeway)

*To clarify, the War Dog Memorial is really not located on March ARB property (adjoining properties), so don't follow the signs to March ARB. It is just outside the west end of the base.*

Tom Mitchell

### **... and Celebration Banquet**

will be a very special event! Local dog handlers are gearing up with VDHA and VFW to make this happen--including *rides from Ontario Airport*, discounts, car rentals, and a celebration banquet!

And don't forget Disneyland is nearby! If at all possible, join us at the War Dogs Memorial dedication--It will be something you will be proud of, and never forget!

**Banquet Reservations, as of today**, Friday, January 21: **108** from VDHA are coming -- including 44 members. 86 will be at the dinner and 16 of us will be at the Best Western. These numbers will soar quickly, as the majority of the members know nothing of these events as they are not online. *Your letter from Jeff Bennett should arrive very soon.*

**Please let me know if you are coming to the Reception after the Dedication**, at the Riverside VFW Post 9223 (corner of Tyler and Arlington) for cocktails at 5: 00 p.m., and a fantastic prime rib dinner at 6: 00 p.m. I am keeping track of how many will attend both Memorial & Dinner, for our VFW cook and the Museum Director at March Field Air Museum. All members are invited!

- Reservations are just \$15.00 per person.
- **Make your check payable to VFW Post 9223** (In Remarks: War Dogs Dinner), and mail it to:  
VFW Post 9223  
(War Dogs Dinner)  
10303 Arlington Avenue,  
Riverside, CA 92506

### **VDHA Members - Who's Signed up so far?**

**FYI Here is a list of 94 VDHA members who we have as attending the War Dog Memorial on Feb. 21. This list is as of Friday, Feb 11, 2000. Also included is their Vietnam unit and e-mail address, if they have one. Sometime tomorrow I will be sending more details on the dedication.**

Tom Mitchell [vdha@home.com](mailto:vdha@home.com)

- Ron Aiello Marine Scout [raiello@icdc.com](mailto:raiello@icdc.com)  
Rusty Allen, Jr. 47th/59th Scout [ipsd@gte.net](mailto:ipsd@gte.net)  
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David Baker, 632nd APS (RIP Feb 2, 2014)  
Billy Barnes, 50th Scout [m100fink@aol.com](mailto:m100fink@aol.com)  
Richard Baumer, 62nd CTT [baumerR@aol.com](mailto:baumerR@aol.com)  
Rita Bernier Supporter



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 Bruce Carroll 47th Scout  
 George Cartter 31st SPS  
 Larry Chilcoat 12th SPS [lar-dj@tisd.net](mailto:lar-dj@tisd.net)  
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 Steve Janke 483rd SPS [jank953208@aol.com](mailto:jank953208@aol.com)  
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 Byron Martin 366th SPS [bymart@sdcoc.k12.ca.us](mailto:bymart@sdcoc.k12.ca.us)  
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 Bob Mc Cuen 14th SPS  
 Mike Mc Kelroy Marine Sentry [Topusmc1@aol.com](mailto:Topusmc1@aol.com)  
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 Mac McDonough 377th/366th SPS  
 Robert Mendoza 65th/557th CTT [rjm47@gateway.net](mailto:rjm47@gateway.net)  
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#### **LATEST NEWS, UPDATES, & SUMMARY !**

**FYI - I just got word from the "Riverside Team" that the War Dog Memorial has been installed at the March Air Museum and it looks fantastic! Bob Rodocker said the statue, which stands about 18-feet, really stands out and that you can plainly see it from the I-215 freeway. As he said, "It is the best location for the Memorial, by far." Thousands of motorists will see it everyday! The Memorial will be draped for the dedication and be unveiled as part of the ceremony on Feb. 21.**

**Here is all the info I think you will need. If I have not addressed something, please let me know.**

Please check out these two websites:

- **VDHA Command Center**
- **[Vietnam Security Police Association, Inc. \(USAF\) War Dogs Memorial \(You're Here Now!\)](#)**

Both will keep you updated on the dedication info.

VFW Post 9223 will be the Command Post for the dedication. If you are flying in and need a ride, please call the VFW at 909-688-7170 for the shuttle to the hotel. The VFW is at the corner of Tyler and Arlington. We have eight VDHA members who live in the area, in addition, a number of VDHA members from Southern Cal will also have cars. Getting a ride will not be a problem.

**The hotel is the Best Western, 10518 Magnolia St., Riverside, 909-359-0770. The hotel is about two miles from the VFW**

miles from March Air Field Museum. Tyler street is just one block from the hotel, so it is a straight shot up Tyler to the VFW.

**At the moment we know of 45 members who will be staying at the hotel.** There will be a short meeting at 6: 00 p.m., at the VFW Post on Sunday evening. This will give us a chance to meet, if we have already done so, and to talk about your participation in the next day's dedication.

**VDHA members will get dashboard cards for Priority parking at the dedication,** so we'll need to hand those out too. If you are driving to Riverside on Monday morning we need to get you a Priority parking slip. We'll have a plan of attack on that in the next couple of days. I'll let you know.

**There are no formal get-togethers of VDHA members, except for Monday night's dinner.** The rest of the time you are on your own, but the VFW is the CP and a great place to "hang out." It is a very welcoming place and I know I'll be spending a lot of my time there.

**The is NO DRESS CODE.** I plan to wear a pair of slacks, nice shoes, and my VDHA T-shirt or Sweat shirt. John Langley is sending some merchandise to the VFW, so we will be able to buy some stuff there. For your guests, I'd suggest "business attire," something you would wear to a nice restaurant. Nothing really fancy, high-heels are not necessary. Pant-suits... that kind of thing.

**Sunday, Feb. 20, 6: 00 pm, Dedication Briefing at VFW Post 9223.**

**Monday, Feb. 21 11:00 a.m. Dedication at March Air Field Museum**

**5: 00 p.m. Cocktails at VFW \* 6: 00 p.m. Prime rib dinner at VFW**

**Can I leave something at the War Dogs' Memorial, like at The Wall in D.C.?**

**YES!** The March Air Museum is making a large space available for a temporary War Dog display during the Feb. 21 - March 3 time period. After that they will build, with the assistance of the VDHA, a permanent War Dog display. If you have photos or other dog team related memorabilia you can donate to the War Dog Exhibit please let us know. Time is getting pretty late for the temporary display, but if you have scanned photos you can e-mail to me, I'll try to get them printed up in time for the dedication next week.

**Again, if I didn't answer one of your questions, please let me know.**

Tom Mitchell [vdha@home.com](mailto:vdha@home.com)

[Click Here to a large War Dogs Memorial image](#)

**First Notice, on 01-17-00, 9: 40 p.m.**

I am sending this to all VDHA members online. I know most of you cannot make it to the War Dog Memorial Dedication, but just in case your plans change, I wanted to make sure you got this information. I hate long e-mails, but I have no choice on this one. Sorry

In the future I will only send Memorial information back to those who say they coming. That way I don't jam your computer with a bunch of unnecessary e-mails. If you still want the info even if you aren't coming, please let me know.

I was in Riverside most of today and there is only one word to describe what will take place there on February 21. FANTASTIC!

When I arrived at the museum I was surprised and happy to see that the museum has its own sign on the freeway, the very busy I-215. I turned off and also saw the sign for the National Cemetery, so I drove there first to check out the new Medal of Honor Memorial.

When I drove in to the cemetery I expected to see a sign, even a small one, directing me to the Memorial - Nothing. Nada. If I didn't know it was there... well, now I feel we are very lucky to have it at March. At least people will know it is there. Nothing against the cemetery, because they have been behind us all the way, but the Museum is a much better location. During the two-hours I was at the Museum I'd bet 50-100 people toured the area.

I meet with Laura Benge of the War Dog Memorial Fund; Steve Clark, the General Manager of the March Field Museum; and world-renown sculptor, A. Thomas Schomberg, who did the memorial. We spent quite a bit of time trying to figure out the best spot for the memorial. We found a location that is in the front courtyard. A place where everyone who comes to the museum will see and go to it. It will be a very high profile place. Heck, you'll be able to see it from the freeway!



The memorial is made of bronze and will stand 18-feet tall. The handler stands 8-feet tall! One big memorial. It will face south so the sunshine will really make it sparkle. A great site for a great memorial. Oh, I have not seen the memorial yet. It is due for installation on Feb. 15.

After that meeting, I met with VDHA member Mike Mc Elroy, who is also the VFW 9223 Commander . I checked out their facility and it will be a great place to hang out if you come to town prior to the dedication, as well as a great place for our dinner Monday night.

We have a dedicated team of VDHA members in the area who are helping out. Mike Mc Elroy, Don Poss, Scott Faust, Jim Camp, Dennis Jefcoat, Gerry Heitsman and Albert Cianci. Dennis has arranged for a nine-passenger van for the three day weekend. He is also working with Budget Rental to get a group deal on car rentals. I am very excited about this, especially sense it is all coming together so well. I hope you can make it.

We found some hotels today, but we have not set up a group rate with any of them yet. Please do not make reservations at a hotel until we can get the best rate. I will let you know in the next couple of days.

Everywhere I went today they wanted to know how many members were coming. The Museum wants to know, as does the VFW and the hotels.

**So here is what I need:**

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1. Are you coming to the Dedication, if so how many are in your party?
2. Do you need a hotel? Arriving when and departing when?
3. Do you plan to fly?
4. Do you want a rental car?
5. Do you plan to have dinner at the VFW Monday night, and how many?

If you have already e-mailed me with information please do it again and include the above answers. I sure hope this e-mail makes sense. I am way too excited!

**Thank you very much.**

**Tom Mitchell,  
VDHA Chairman**

*We Take Care of Our Own*