

FINAL REPORT
to the
MCDC (McKinney Community Development Corporation)
from the
COLLIN COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM
for the
VIETNAM SYNDROME EXHIBIT

2015

ORGANIZATION: Collin County Historical Society (& Museum)

FUNDING AMOUNT: \$4,500

PROJECT/PROMOTION/COMMUNITY EVENT: The Vietnam Syndrome Exhibit

START DATE: March 13, 2015

COMPLETION DATE: November 14, 2015,
but extended through December 31, 2015

LOCATION OF PROJECT/PROMOTION/COMMUNITY EVENT:

Collin County Historical Society & Museum
300 E. Virginia Street
McKinney, TX 75069

NARRATIVE REPORT

The Vietnam Syndrome exhibit was an educational project/exhibit that ran from March 13, 2015 through November 14, 2015, then reopened November 27, 2015 until December 31, 2015, because of overwhelming popularity. The phrase "The Vietnam Syndrome" was coined by then candidate Ronald Regan during a speech to the annual VFW convention in Chicago in 1980, but defining it prompted a curiosity of its deeper meaning. This is where CCHS journeyed and offered a unique educational experience.

In 1955, U.S. policymakers viewed the conflict in Vietnam as a broader struggle with the Soviet Union. It was widely believed from the outset that Ho Chi Minh and the Vietminh were instruments of the Soviet drive for world domination. If it fell, all of Southeast Asia might be lost. America's involvement in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia began January 11, 1955 and officially continued through the fall of Saigon on April 30, 1975.

America's involvement in the Vietnam War remains a controversial topic. Many people today do not have a clear idea of why our country was engaged in this conflict. Furthermore, there is even larger concern that our youth... the future leaders and citizens of our nation, have no experience of the war and possess little or

no understanding of it. Our schools, entrusted with passing on our common heritage, have glazed over the Vietnam topic.

To address these concerns, the Collin County Historical Society & Museum mounted an educational project/exhibit in which wives, children and local veterans themselves tell of their experiences of before, during and after the fighting in Southeast Asia. We will explore who were the typical American soldiers, how they dealt with transitioning to peacetime existence in the face of absent federal programs to help veterans cope with postwar life at home.

Furthermore, The Vietnam Syndrome explored our Veteran's experiences as they returned home to an angry and hostile American public. We will explore the cultural impact of the era such as the anti-war movement, music, fashion, increased drug use and more.

GOALS/OBJECTIVES ACHIEVED

As of December 31, 2015, CCHS & Museum succeeded in reaching an attendance total of over 2,400 people. This included primary and secondary school youth, the local Dallas (North Central Texas) community at-large as well as out-of-state and foreign visitors. Attendees benefited by having the opportunity to hear and read personal stories from those that lived through the war rather than from a textbook. CCHS & Museum succeeded in presenting a venue which allowed for an understanding of the trails and ramifications endured during the Vietnam War and how it provides a link to the conflicts our nation engages in today.

The Museum was adorned, on two (2) levels with Vietnam era memorabilia and artifacts which enhanced the public's Vietnam literacy by using physical props, photographs taken by local veterans, and music of the era. For example: 1) There was Vietnam era, life-size bunker built, 2) displays of military uniforms and camouflage worn at the time with required survival gear, 3) a POW Tiger Cage, and (4) a life-size replica of the "Hanoi Hilton."

To further enhance the public's understanding of the Vietnam War and promote the exhibit, CCHS Museum produced a DVD called "Perspectives of Vietnam." This documentary included interviews from N. Texas Vietnam Veterans, wives and Vietnamese themselves. Perspectives of Vietnam premiered at MPAC (Downtown McKinney) on April 30, 2015 to a large, public audience. The documentary was well-received and copies of the DVD documentary were available for sale before, during and after the premier. The DVD documentary was also available for sale at the Museum and through the CCHS website. Additionally, Vietnam Syndrome T-Shirts were produced and worn by CCHS Board members during the premier and were for sale at the premier as a tool for promotion for the Vietnam Syndrome exhibit. These T-Shirts were also worn by Museum Board members at the Museum were for sale at the Museum and on the CCHS Museum website.

PERFORMANCE AGAINST METRICS OUTLINED IN APPLICATION

In the original application to the MCDC for the Vietnam Syndrome, a detailed description of the Vietnam Syndrome was discussed, but the finished product/exhibit far exceeded even the Museum's expectations.

SCREEN SHOTS OF ONLINE PROMOTIONS / PRINTED MARKETING

Note: All of the following screen shots were or still are located on the Collin County Historical Society & Museum website: <http://www.collincountyhistoricalsociety.org> Click on the appropriate Vietnam Syndrome link(s) and see additional photos, slides and video's that were produced for promoting the exhibit.



The poster features a green background with a black banner at the top. In the top left corner is the Collin County Historical Society logo. The main title is on a black banner with white text. Below the title, it says 'BROUGHT TO YOU BY CRAIG INTERNATIONAL'. A yellow box contains a short description of the exhibit. The opening date is prominently displayed in large black letters. Below that, a white box lists the hours and admission prices. A black banner at the bottom of the main section contains a call to action. The bottom of the poster is green and contains logos for Craig International, McKinney, and Tomes Auto Group, along with contact information.

 THE COLLIN COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM PRESENTS:

**-THE-
VIETNAM SYNDROME**

BROUGHT TO YOU BY
CRAIG INTERNATIONAL

THIS EXHIBIT WILL TAKE VISITORS BACK TO A TURBULENT ERA IN AMERICAN HISTORY. WE WILL TELL THE STORIES FOR OUR NORTH TEXAS VIETNAM VETERANS. "THE VIETNAM SYNDROME" WILL CREATE A SAFE PLACE TO LEARN ABOUT THE WAR AND THE CULTURAL SHIFT BEGINNING IN THE 1960'S.

OPENING DAY MARCH 13, 2015

Open Thursdays – Saturdays
11AM – 4PM

General Admission \$7.50
Seniors and Veterans \$5.00
Children \$3.00
Vietnam Veterans free of charge

DON'T MISS THIS OPPORTUNITY TO HONOR THOSE WHO WERE ALMOST FORGOTTEN!

 **CRAIG**
INTERNATIONAL

 **McKINNEY**
M C D C
Unique by nature.™

 **TOMES**
AUTO GROUP
Ford CERTIFIED PRE-OWNED SUBARU
TomesAutoGroup.com

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Vietnam Syndrome poster



SPONSORED BY
THE COLLIN COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
& MUSEUM

DVD's AVAILABLE

PUBLIC PREMIER

PERSPECTIVES from Viet Nam

Stories
from
North
Texas
Vietnam
Veterans

Thursday APRIL 30th, at 6:00 P.M.

A Colin Kimball Documentary

**\$6.00
Tickets Sold Through
MPAC**

McKINNEY PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

AT THE HISTORICAL COLLIN COUNTY COURTHOUSE

BEER & WINE CASH BAR

Premier of Perspectives of Vietnam at MPAC

PERSPPECTIVES ON VIETNAM




FROM THOSE WHO SERVED WITH HONOR

A DOCUMENTARY BY
COLIN E KIMBALL

DVD Documentary



T-Shirt for Sale (also came in Sand color)



THE COLLIN COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM PRESENTS:

-THE- VIETNAM SYNDROME

See the Making of the Vietnam Syndrome Exhibit ([Click Here](#))

LISTEN TO MEDIA PARTNER...

LEGENDS770KAAM
Music you "love," Pros you trust

...FOR UP-TO-DATE VIETNAM
SYNDROME SPECIAL EVENTS

This was part of the CCHS & Museum marketing outreach.