

JOHN WARNER
VIRGINIA

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United States Senate

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August 2, 1993

Ms. Ruth C. Fitzgerald
Fredericksburg, Virginia 22401

Dear Ms. Fitzgerald:

The Regional Director of the National Park Service has sent me the attached response, in reply to my recent inquiry on your behalf. I hope that the information provided will be helpful and responsive to your specific concerns.

With kind regards,

Sincerely,



John Warner

JW/php
Enclosure



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION
1100 OHIO DRIVE, S. W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20242



D66 (NCR-NACC)

28 JUL 1993

Honorable John Warner
United States Senator

Richmond, Virginia 23219

Dear Senator Warner:

We have been asked to respond to the request for information to answer the questions of your constituent, Ruth Coder Fitzgerald, about the possibility of adding names of those who died from the effects of Agent Orange to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, because the memorial is under our jurisdiction. To provide you the information you need, we are including the following history.

Public Law 96-297, was signed July 1, 1980. It authorized the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund to set up at no cost to the Government, a Memorial "in honor and recognition of the men and women of the Armed Services of the United States who served in the Vietnam War." In testimony before Congress, the Fund stated that as a special tribute, they would permanently inscribe on the memorial the names of those who had died or remained missing in the war. The only available official source of these names was the roll compiled by the Department of Defense. The Fund's Board of Directors determined that this listing would serve as the source of the names they would inscribe on the memorial panels.

On March 11, 1982, the Federal Government gave final approval to the overall design and plans for the memorial. On November 11, 1984, the National Park Service accepted the completed memorial to maintain, preserve and administer. Later, the Fund set up a procedure by which they could inscribe any names omitted and correct mistakes. Before any names are inscribed or corrections made, the information must be verified by the Department of Defense. This is necessary, as neither the Fund nor the National Park Service has access to official records. The Department of Defense is the only authority that could make sure that a death was the result of a service-related condition.

We have received no information of a special project to include the names of those who have died from the effects of Agent Orange to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. Ms. Fitzgerald should contact the casualty office of the Air Force to determine if her brother's name meets the qualifications for inclusion on the memorial. She needs to provide all available pertinent data, such as full name, birth date, service number, and any other information she may have. This should be sent to:

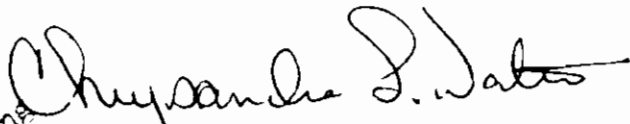
Air Force Military Personnel Center
AFMPC/DPMC
Randolph Air Force Base, Texas 78150-6001

If the Air Force Casualty Office determines that the name of Ms. Fitzgerald's brother should be added to the wall, the Department of Defense will let the National Park Service know of the correction required. The National Park Service will in turn, give any names to be inscribed on the memorial to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund. The Fund, which conceived and erected the memorial, has by agreement, retained the responsibility for adding names and correcting errors. They will subsequently let a contract for the actual inscribing of the name on the memorial. At the same time, the National Park Service will have the Memorial Directory updated, effective as of the next printing.

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial honors without exception, all those who served in the Vietnam War. The fact that a serviceman's death may not have occurred under the circumstances that permit the inclusion of his name on the memorial in no way diminishes the value or honor of his service to his country.

We hope that this information will help you to answer the concerns of your constituent. Thank you for your interest in the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

Sincerely,



Regional Director, National Capital Region

Copy to your Washington, D.C., office

Enclosures:
Constituent's letter