



**News Release**

## **Museum to Celebrate Book Release with Reunion and Special Events**

**WHEATON, IL, April 17, 2012** — On May 3-6, the First Division Museum at Cantigny Park will welcome 50 Vietnam veterans of Charlie Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 18<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division, as they gather for their annual reunion and celebrate the release of *Dogface Charlie*, a book about their experiences as soldiers.

*Dogface Charlie* began as an idea of Tom Mercer, a Charlie Company veteran and fire-team leader in 1967-68, after he and his wife visited the Moving Wall, a replica of the Vietnam Memorial which travels the country. After seeing many familiar names on the memorial, Mercer decided to hold an initial reunion in 2009, where he recruited other Charlie Company veterans to contribute to the book.

For the official release of *Dogface Charlie* on May 4, the First Division Museum has coordinated with the members of Charlie Company to make this reunion special, featuring private events for the veterans and their families, as well as special guest speakers and other events that will be open to the public.

On Friday, May 4, at 1 pm, the public is invited to a discussion panel at the First Division Museum featuring members of Charlie Company and museum staff who will speak on how the book began and the important themes it represents. After the panel, the book will officially go on sale and be available to purchase in the museum lobby.

The following day, on Saturday, May 5, at 10 am, members of Charlie Company will hold a memorial service in the museum's courtyard in honor of their fellow soldiers who made the ultimate sacrifice. After the service, the public is also invited to attend the museum's panel of distinguished authors who will speak on their experiences during the Vietnam War. Participating in the author's panel will be noted war journalist and author, Joe Galloway; Brigadier General (Retired) James Shelton, operations officer of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 28<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment during the 1967 battle of Ong Thanh; and Joan Kotcher, a former Red Cross "Donut Dolly" with the 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division in Vietnam. Following the panel, books written by Galloway, Shelton and Kotcher will be available for purchase at the museum for a book signing in the lobby.

Publishing books like *Dogface Charlie*, and bringing together veterans like Charlie Company, are among the ways in which the museum ensures these stories will be available to future generations.

"Our mission is to preserve the history of the Army's 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division, and one of the ways we do that is to engage veterans like these, but it is also a great honor," said Paul Herbert, First Division Museum executive director.

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### **About the First Division Museum**

The First Division Museum at Cantigny Park, part of the Robert R. McCormick Foundations, promotes public learning about America's military heritage and affairs

through the history of the Big Red One—the famed 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division of the U.S. Army. It stands in tribute to all who have served our country in the armed forces. The museum’s main exhibit hall transports visitors to the trenches of World War I, the beaches of World War II and the jungles of Vietnam. Outside, tanks are displayed from every era, along with personnel carriers and artillery. The Robert R. McCormick Research Center, open to the public, houses the museum’s library, archival and photo collections. Visit the First Division Museum at Cantigny Park online at [FirstDivisionMuseum.org](http://FirstDivisionMuseum.org).

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