



The Wall song is a tribute born out of the kindred creative spirits of poet **Judy Gorman King** and songwriters **Mitch Townley and Brad Dunse**. Mitch heard Judy present her poem, *The Spirit Of The Wall*, at a Nashville benefit for homeless veterans in March, 2008. She gave him permission to use the poem as the inspirational foundation for the song. Mitch invited his good friend, singer/songwriter Brad Dunse to collaborate with him and the project was underway. The Wall Song was recorded in Nashville in July, 2008 by artist J.P. Williams and produced by Chip Martin. We pray that The Wall Song will honor our surviving and fallen heroes of the Vietnam War as well as any who have served in the Armed Forces.





The Wall – poem: *Judy Gorman King* / music by: *Mitch Townley and Brad Dunse*

*When you were searching for my name today
I saw you standing there
Man you look different with that silver in your hair
Me I haven't aged a bit—still all of 21
That's the thing about us spirits we're forever young
At the wall
Here at the wall*

*We were proud to serve our country when called by Uncle Sam
Then more than a little anxious when they shipped us off to Nam
Remember all the heat and bugs- days marchin' the mud
Constant gunfire, smell of death, sight of all that blood
Some gave all
The names carved in this wall*

*But it's a wall of love
A wall that heals
A wall that touches
And helps you feel
The faces of more than 50,000 names
Feel the wall, be forever changed*

*When we finally got the orders sayin' we could go back home
They were lookin' for my body so you made the trip alone*

*You came back to a country that couldn't comprehend
How so many boys that left returned as messed up men
Who served with all
The names here on the wall*

*But it's a wall of love
A wall that heals
A wall that touches
And helps you feel
The faces of more than 50,000 names
Feel the wall, be forever changed*

*So as you stand there weepin' with your fingers on my name
Share with those cute grandkids the reason for this place
To restore some stolen gratitude and dignity
This granite wall of honor that holds my memory*

*It's a wall of love
A wall that heals
A wall that touches
And helps you feel
The faces of more than 50,000 names
Feel the wall, be forever changed
Feel the wall, be forever changed*



The Story behind the song “The Wall” – by Brad Dunse



In honor of Veteran’s Day coming up on November 11, particularly those who served in the Vietnam War, this month’s SBTS is a song I had the honor of co-writing entitled The Wall. No, sorry it’s not the Pink Floyd tune of the same name... which I think is pretty awesome in its own right. However, this is quite a different song for which I feel very honored to have been a part of its writing, and continual affect on those who have served or those who have lost loved ones. I still get emails in my in-box from vets expressing their appreciation despite the song having been around for a while. That to me is the most rewarding thing in songwriting. Though it was written with the Vietvets in mind, it definitely holds honor to all our vets. Next month I’ll finish out the year with another military minded song of general lyrical nature... unless of course I happen to be struck by the Christmas song bug

between now and then.

This is one of only two songs which I was involved in a three-way co-write. A fellow songwriter, a Nashville poetess and myself all contributed in various ways to The Wall. At the time of this writing I had never met either of my co-writers. I’ve since met Knoxville songwriter Mitch Townley and we’ve written several songs together to date both before and after we’d met in person or written this particular song. I still need to personally meet Judy Gorman King, without her poem entitled “The Spirit Of The Wall” this particular song would not have been written.

My buddy Mitch happened to be in Nashville attending a Vietnam Veteran event when he heard Judy reciting her poem. He then asked her about possibly putting it to song form. She said that would be great and to go for it. Mitch pared down the poem into song form and then contacted me to see if I wanted in on coming up with the music and melody arrangement.

At the time of this project coming my way, I had wanted to; almost burdened to, write a song about the Traveling Wall, a portable version of the larger monument. I spent a good bit of time researching the real wall on-line. I remember one particular night I had logged on to a memorial web site that contained a database of fallen soldiers. There it told a bit about them and also had an area where family, friends and fellow soldiers could post thoughts, dedications and notes to the fallen soldier as a memoriam. I found myself searching for last names of folks where I grew up, and the areas where I’ve lived. I became nearly addicted to the heart-felt stories and dedications people had written there. I almost felt like I was ease dropping on conversations, and yet there was an honorable sense of contributing to the recognition of the worth of the people I’d been reading about... contributing to the fact they are not forgotten. I wondered how they’d be today had they returned home to family. Some would be farmers, some lawyers, some mailmen, construction workers, teachers,, songwriters even ... dads, moms, husbands, and wives.

It was nearly first light when I finally stopped reading, having been up all night envisioning and imagining the way of life of these folks pre-war. Within a couple weeks from that all nighter, Mitch contacted me about working on the song, the timing was perfect.

I looked at the lyrics Mitch emailed and felt an incredible burden of responsibility to come up with something that worked. I sat down with the guitar and a couple hours time, a few lyrical tweaks later to fit to the music, and occasional tear from choking up as I put myself in the place of both soldiers, The Wall was coming to be. A few additional collaboration tweaks with Mitch, an OK or two from Judy, and before we knew it, it was ready for recording.

As you will hear it is written from the perspective of a fallen soldier watching his buddy visiting the fallen soldier's name engraved in the Vietnam Memorial Wall in DC. I had the fortune to have visited the wall long before I ever got into songwriting and it is indeed both awesome and sobering at the same time.

A couple facts about The Wall:

- The poem *Spirit Of The Wall* is a poem that served as foundation for the song. The poem has been recited all over the country and is embroidered on a quilt that is displayed in the Smithsonian Institute as well listed with other literary works at: <http://www.thewall-usa.com/literary/SpiritofTheWall.htm>
- It will receive major station air play this Thursday/Friday in Knoxville, TN at: <http://q93country.com/>
- The Wall is the featured track on a compilation CD entitled *Songs of Healing and Remembrance for Vietnam Veterans*. I do have some limited copies of that CD if you are interested in ordering one, just email me.
- There is a MySpace web site dedicated to the song with a video of still picks put together by Mitch accompanying the song. That version was sung by fellow songwriter JP Williams. You can see it at <http://www.myspace.com/wallsong>
- The Wall is linked to several Vietnam Memorial web sites as well air play on military and civilian web stations.
- I had the honor of playing it for a group of vets at a Vietnam Veteran event newly dubbed by the governor of Minnesota as Vietnam Veteran's Day, held on the capitol ground in St. Paul which was very humbling.
- The Wall has been part of a high school event in honor of Vietnam Vets

