



# Patriot Points

*A Look at America's Most Renowned Places*



# **test book**

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# Statue of Liberty

The **Statue of Liberty** (*Liberty Enlightening the World*; French: *La Liberté éclairant le monde*) is a colossal neoclassical sculpture on Liberty Island in New York Harbor within New York City, in the United States. The copper statue, a gift from the people of France to the people of the United States, was designed by French sculptor Frédéric Auguste Bartholdi and its metal framework was built by Gustave Eiffel. The statue was dedicated on October 28, 1886.

The statue is a figure of Libertas, a robed Roman liberty goddess. She holds a torch above her head with her right hand, and in her left hand carries a tabula ansata inscribed JULY IV MDCCLXXVI (July 4, 1776 in Roman numerals), the date of the U.S. Declaration of Independence. A broken shackle and chain lie at her feet as she walks forward, commemorating the recent national abolition of slavery.<sup>[8]</sup> After its dedication, the statue became an icon of freedom and of the United States, seen as a symbol of welcome to immigrants arriving by sea.

Bartholdi was inspired by a French law professor and politician, Édouard René de Laboulaye, who is said to have commented in 1865 that any monument raised to U.S. independence would properly be a joint project of the French and U.S. peoples. The Franco-Prussian War delayed progress until 1875, when Laboulaye proposed that the French finance the statue and the U.S. provide the site and build the pedestal. Bartholdi completed the head and the torch-bearing arm before the statue was fully designed, and these pieces were exhibited for publicity at international expositions.

The torch-bearing arm was displayed at the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia in 1876, and in Madison Square Park in Manhattan from 1876 to 1882. Fundraising proved difficult, especially for the Americans, and by 1885 work on the pedestal was threatened by lack of funds. Publisher Joseph Pulitzer, of the New York World, started a drive for donations to finish the project and attracted more than 120,000 contributors, most of whom gave less than a dollar. The statue was built in France, shipped overseas in crates, and assembled on the completed pedestal on what was then called Bedloe's Island. The statue's completion was marked by New York's first ticker-tape parade and a dedication ceremony presided over by President Grover Cleveland.

The statue was administered by the United States Lighthouse Board until 1901 and then by the Department of War; since 1933 it has been maintained by the National Park Service as part of the Statue of Liberty National Monument, and is a major tourist attraction. Public access to the balcony around the torch has been barred since 1916.

## Statue of Liberty *Liberty Enlightening the World*



<b>Location</b>	Liberty Island Manhattan, New York City, New York, <sup>[1]</sup> U.S.
<b>Coordinates</b>	40°41'21"N 74°2'40"W
<b>Height</b>	Height of copper statue (to torch): 151 feet 1 inch (46 meters) From ground level to torch: 305 feet 1 inch (93 meters)

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## Design and construction process

### Origin

According to the [National Park Service](#), the idea of a monument presented by the French people to the United States was first proposed by [Édouard René de Laboulaye](#), president of the French Anti-Slavery Society and a prominent and important political thinker of his time. The project is traced to a mid-1865 conversation between Laboulaye, a staunch abolitionist, and [Frédéric Bartholdi](#), a sculptor. In after-dinner conversation at his home near [Versailles](#), Laboulaye, an ardent supporter of the [Union](#) in the [American Civil War](#), is supposed to have said: "If a monument should rise in the United States, as a memorial to their independence, I should think it only natural if it were built by united effort—a common work of both our nations."<sup>[9]</sup> The National Park Service, in a 2000 report, however, deemed this a legend traced to an 1885 fundraising pamphlet, and

Dedicated	October 28, 1886
Restored	1938, 1984–1986, 2011–2012
Sculptor	Frédéric Auguste Bartholdi
Visitors	3.2 million (in 2009) <sup>[2]</sup>
Governing body	U.S. <a href="#">National Park Service</a>
Website	<a href="#">Statue of Liberty National Monument</a> ( <a href="https://www.nps.gov/stli">https://www.nps.gov/stli</a> )

### UNESCO World Heritage Site

Type	Cultural
Criteria	i, vi
Designated	1984 (8th session)
Reference no.	307 ( <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/307">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/307</a> )
State Party	United States
Region	Europe and North America

### U.S. National Monument

Designated	October 15, 1924
Designated	President <a href="#">Calvin Coolidge</a> <sup>[3]</sup>

### U.S. National Register of Historic Places

Official name	The Statue of Liberty Enlightening the World <sup>[4][5]</sup>
Designated	September 14, 2017
Reference no.	100000829

### New Jersey Register of Historic Places

Official name	Statue of Liberty National Monument, Ellis Island and Liberty Island
Designated	May 27, 1971

that the statue was most likely conceived in 1870.<sup>[10]</sup> In another essay on their website, the Park Service suggested that Laboulaye was minded to honor the Union victory and its consequences, "With the abolition of slavery and the Union's victory in the Civil War in 1865, Laboulaye's wishes of freedom and democracy were turning into a reality in the United States. In order to honor these achievements, Laboulaye proposed that a gift be built for the United States on behalf of France. Laboulaye hoped that by calling attention to the recent achievements of the United States, the French people would be inspired to call for their own democracy in the face of a repressive monarchy."<sup>[11]</sup>

According to sculptor Frédéric Auguste Bartholdi, who later recounted the story, Laboulaye's alleged comment was not intended as a proposal, but it inspired Bartholdi.<sup>[9]</sup> Given the repressive nature of the regime of Napoleon III, Bartholdi took no immediate action on the idea except to discuss it with Laboulaye. Bartholdi was in any event busy with other possible projects; in the late 1860s, he approached Isma'il Pasha, Khedive of Egypt, with a plan to build *Progress or Egypt Carrying the Light to Asia*,<sup>[12]</sup> a huge lighthouse in the form of an ancient Egyptian female *fellow* or peasant, robed and holding a torch aloft, at the northern entrance to the Suez Canal in Port Said. Sketches and models were made of the proposed work, though it was never erected. There was a classical precedent for the Suez proposal, the Colossus of Rhodes: an ancient bronze statue of the Greek god of the sun, Helios. This statue is believed to have been over 100 feet (30 m) high, and it similarly stood at a harbor entrance and carried a light to guide ships.<sup>[13]</sup> Both the khedive and Lesseps declined the proposed statue from Bartholdi, citing the expensive cost.<sup>[14]</sup> The Port Said Lighthouse was built instead, by François Coignet in 1869.

Any large project was further delayed by the Franco-Prussian War, in which Bartholdi served as a major of militia. In the war, Napoleon III was captured and deposed. Bartholdi's home province of Alsace was lost to the Prussians, and a more liberal republic was installed in France.<sup>[9]</sup> As Bartholdi had been planning a trip to the United States, he and Laboulaye decided the time was right to discuss the idea with influential Americans.<sup>[15]</sup> In June 1871, Bartholdi crossed the Atlantic, with letters of introduction signed by Laboulaye.<sup>[16]</sup>

Arriving at New York Harbor, Bartholdi focused on Bedloe's Island (now named Liberty Island) as a site for the statue, struck by the fact that vessels arriving in New York had to sail past it. He was delighted to learn that the island was owned by the United States government—it had been ceded by the New York State Legislature in 1800 for harbor defense. It was thus, as he put it in a letter to Laboulaye: "land common to all the states."<sup>[17]</sup> As well as meeting many influential New Yorkers, Bartholdi visited President Ulysses S. Grant, who assured him that it would not be difficult to obtain the site for the statue.<sup>[18]</sup> Bartholdi crossed the United States twice by rail, and met many Americans who he thought would be sympathetic to the project.<sup>[16]</sup> But he remained concerned that

Reference no. 1535<sup>[6]</sup>

**New York City Landmark**

Type Individual

Designated September 14, 1976<sup>[7]</sup>

Reference no. 0931



Location within New York City



Location within New York (state)



The Roman goddess Libertas and Sol Invictus ("The Unconquered Sun") (shown here) both influenced the Statue of Liberty.

<sup>[16]</sup> But he remained concerned that

popular opinion on both sides of the Atlantic was insufficiently supportive of the proposal, and he and Laboulaye decided to wait before mounting a public campaign.<sup>[19]</sup>

Bartholdi had made a first model of his concept in 1870.<sup>[20]</sup> The son of a friend of Bartholdi's, U.S. artist John LaFarge, later maintained that Bartholdi made the first sketches for the statue during his U.S. visit at La Farge's Rhode Island studio. Bartholdi continued to develop the concept following his return to France.<sup>[20]</sup> He also worked on a number of sculptures designed to bolster French patriotism after the defeat by the Prussians. One of these was the *Lion of Belfort*, a monumental sculpture carved in sandstone below the fortress of Belfort, which during the war had resisted a Prussian siege for over three months. The defiant lion, 73 feet (22 m) long and half that in height, displays an emotional quality characteristic of Romanticism, which Bartholdi would later bring to the Statue of Liberty.<sup>[21]</sup>



Bartholdi's 1880 sculpture, *Lion of Belfort*

## Design, style, and symbolism

Bartholdi and Laboulaye considered how best to express the idea of American liberty.<sup>[22]</sup> In early American history, two female figures were frequently used as cultural symbols of the nation.<sup>[23]</sup> One of these symbols, the personified *Columbia*, was seen as an embodiment of the United States in the manner that *Britannia* was identified with the United Kingdom, and *Marianne* came to represent France. *Columbia* had supplanted the traditional European personification of the Americas as an "Indian princess", which had come to be regarded as uncivilized and derogatory toward Americans.<sup>[23]</sup> The other significant female icon in American culture was a representation of *Liberty*, derived from *Libertas*, the goddess of freedom widely worshipped in ancient Rome, especially among emancipated slaves. A *Liberty* figure adorned most American coins of the time,<sup>[22]</sup> and representations of *Liberty* appeared in popular and civic art, including Thomas Crawford's *Statue of Freedom* (1863) atop the dome of the United States Capitol Building.<sup>[22]</sup>



Detail from a 1855–56 fresco by Constantino Brumidi in the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C., showing two early symbols of America: *Columbia* (left) and the Indian princess

The statue's design evokes iconography evident in ancient history including the Egyptian goddess *Isis*, the ancient Greek deity of the same name, the Roman *Columbia* and the Christian iconography of the *Virgin Mary*.<sup>[24][25]</sup>

Artists of the 18th and 19th centuries striving to evoke republican ideals commonly used representations of *Libertas* as an allegorical symbol.<sup>[22]</sup> A figure of *Liberty* was also depicted on the Great Seal of France.<sup>[22]</sup> However, Bartholdi and Laboulaye avoided an image of revolutionary liberty such as that depicted in Eugène Delacroix's famed *Liberty Leading the People* (1830). In this painting, which commemorates France's July Revolution, a half-clothed *Liberty* leads an armed mob over the bodies of the fallen.<sup>[23]</sup> Laboulaye had no sympathy for revolution, and so Bartholdi's figure would be fully dressed in flowing robes.<sup>[23]</sup> Instead of the impression of violence in the Delacroix work, Bartholdi wished to give the statue a peaceful appearance and chose a torch, representing progress, for the figure to hold.<sup>[26]</sup>



Thomas Crawford's Statue of Freedom (1854–1857) tops the dome of the U.S. Capitol building in Washington, D.C.

Crawford's statue was designed in the early 1850s. It was originally to be crowned with a *pileus*, the cap given to emancipated slaves in ancient Rome. Secretary of War Jefferson Davis, a Southerner who would later serve as President of the Confederate States of America, was concerned that the *pileus* would be taken as an abolitionist symbol. He ordered that it be changed to a helmet.<sup>[27]</sup> Delacroix's figure wears a *pileus*,<sup>[23]</sup> and Bartholdi at first considered placing one on his figure as well. Instead, he used a diadem, or crown, to top its head.<sup>[28]</sup> In so doing, he avoided a reference to Marianne, who invariably wears a *pileus*.<sup>[29]</sup> The seven rays form a halo or aureole.<sup>[30]</sup> They evoke the sun, the seven seas, and the seven continents,<sup>[31]</sup> and represent another means, besides the torch, whereby Liberty enlightens the world.<sup>[26]</sup>

Bartholdi's early models were all similar in concept: a female figure in neoclassical style representing liberty, wearing a *stola* and *pella* (gown and cloak, common in depictions of Roman goddesses) and holding a torch aloft. According to popular accounts, the face was modeled after that of Charlotte Beysser Bartholdi, the sculptor's mother,<sup>[32]</sup> but Regis Huber, the curator of the Bartholdi Museum is on record as saying that this, as well as other similar speculations, have no basis in fact.<sup>[33]</sup> He designed the figure with a strong, uncomplicated silhouette, which would be set off well by its dramatic harbor placement and allow passengers on vessels entering New York Bay to experience a changing perspective on the statue as they proceeded toward Manhattan. He gave it bold classical contours and applied simplified modeling, reflecting the huge scale of the project and its solemn purpose.<sup>[26]</sup>

Bartholdi wrote of his technique:

The surfaces should be broad and simple, defined by a bold and clear design, accentuated in the important places. The enlargement of the details or their multiplicity is to be feared. By exaggerating the forms, in order to render them more clearly visible, or by enriching them with details, we would destroy the proportion of the work. Finally, the model, like the design, should have a summarized character, such as one would give to a rapid sketch. Only it is necessary that this character should be the product of volition and study, and that the artist, concentrating his knowledge, should find the form and the line in its greatest simplicity.<sup>[34]</sup>

Bartholdi made alterations in the design as the project evolved. Bartholdi considered having Liberty hold a broken chain, but decided this would be too divisive in the days after the Civil War. The erected statue does stride over a broken chain, half-hidden by her robes and difficult to see from the ground.<sup>[28]</sup> Bartholdi was initially uncertain of what to place in Liberty's left hand; he settled on a *tabula ansata*,<sup>[35]</sup> used to evoke the concept of law.<sup>[36]</sup> Though Bartholdi greatly admired the United States Constitution, he chose to inscribe JULY IV MDCCLXXVI on the tablet, thus associating the date of the country's Declaration of Independence with the concept of liberty.<sup>[35]</sup>

Bartholdi interested his friend and mentor, architect Eugène Viollet-le-Duc, in the project.<sup>[33]</sup> As chief engineer,<sup>[33]</sup> Viollet-le-Duc designed a brick pier within the statue, to which the skin would be anchored.<sup>[37]</sup> After consultations with the metalwork foundry Gaget,



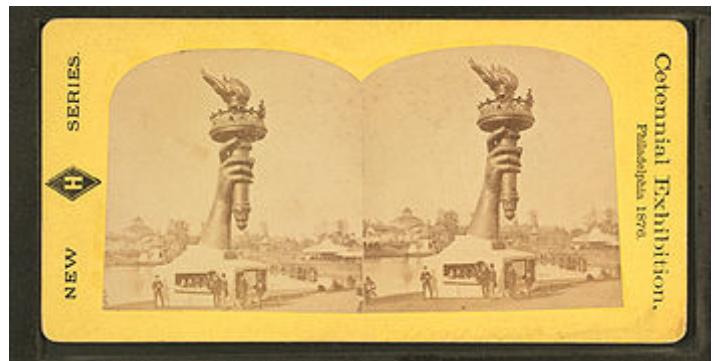
Liberty is depicted with a raised right foot, showing that she is walking forward amidst a broken shackle and chain.

Gauthier & Co., Viollet-le-Duc chose the metal which would be used for the skin, copper sheets, and the method used to shape it, *repoussé*, in which the sheets were heated and then struck with wooden hammers.<sup>[33][38]</sup> An advantage of this choice was that the entire statue would be light for its volume, as the copper need be only 0.094 inches (2.4 mm) thick. Bartholdi had decided on a height of just over 151 feet (46 m) for the statue, double that of Italy's *Sancarlone* and the German statue of *Arminius*, both made with the same method.<sup>[39]</sup>

## Announcement and early work

By 1875, France was enjoying improved political stability and a recovering postwar economy. Growing interest in the upcoming *Centennial Exposition* in Philadelphia led Laboulaye to decide it was time to seek public support.<sup>[40]</sup> In September 1875, he announced the project and the formation of the Franco-American Union as its fundraising arm. With the announcement, the statue was given a name, *Liberty Enlightening the World*.<sup>[41]</sup> The French would finance the statue; Americans would be expected to pay for the pedestal.<sup>[42]</sup> The announcement provoked a generally favorable reaction in France, though many Frenchmen resented the United States for not coming to their aid during *the war with Prussia*.<sup>[41]</sup> French monarchists opposed the statue, if for no other reason than it was proposed by the liberal Laboulaye, who had recently been elected a senator for life.<sup>[42]</sup> Laboulaye arranged events designed to appeal to the rich and powerful, including a special performance at the *Paris Opera* on April 25, 1876, that featured a new *cantata* by composer *Charles Gounod*. The piece was titled *La Liberté éclairant le monde*, the French version of the statue's announced name.<sup>[41]</sup>

Initially focused on the elites, the Union was successful in raising funds from across French society. Schoolchildren and ordinary citizens gave, as did 181 French municipalities. Laboulaye's political allies supported the call, as did descendants of the *French contingent* in the *American Revolutionary War*. Less idealistically, contributions came from those who hoped for American support in the French attempt to build the *Panama Canal*. The copper may have come from multiple sources and some of it is said to have come from a mine in *Visnes*, Norway,<sup>[43]</sup> though this has not been conclusively determined after testing samples.<sup>[44]</sup> According to Cara Sutherland in her book on the statue for the *Museum of the City of New York*, 200,000 pounds (91,000 kg) was needed to build the statue, and the French copper industrialist *Eugène Secrétan* donated 128,000 pounds (58,000 kg) of copper.<sup>[45]</sup>



Stereoscopic image of right arm and torch of the Statue of Liberty, 1876 Centennial Exposition

Although plans for the statue had not been finalized, Bartholdi moved forward with fabrication of the right arm, bearing the torch, and the head. Work began at the Gaget, Gauthier & Co. workshop.<sup>[46]</sup> In May 1876, Bartholdi traveled to the United States as a member of a French delegation to the Centennial Exhibition,<sup>[47]</sup> and arranged for a huge painting of the statue to be shown in New York as part of the Centennial festivities.<sup>[48]</sup> The arm did not arrive in Philadelphia until August; because of its late arrival, it was not listed in the exhibition catalogue, and while some reports correctly identified the work, others called it the "Colossal Arm" or "Bartholdi Electric Light". The exhibition grounds contained a number of monumental artworks to compete for fairgoers' interest, including an *outsized fountain* designed by Bartholdi.<sup>[49]</sup> Nevertheless, the arm proved popular in the exhibition's waning days, and visitors would climb up to the balcony of the torch to view the fairgrounds.<sup>[50]</sup> After the exhibition closed, the arm was transported to New York, where it remained on display in *Madison Square Park* for several years before it was returned to France to join the rest of the statue.<sup>[50]</sup>

During his second trip to the United States, Bartholdi addressed a number of groups about the project, and urged the formation of American committees of the Franco-American Union.<sup>[51]</sup> Committees to raise money to pay for the foundation and pedestal were formed in New York, Boston, and Philadelphia.<sup>[52]</sup> The New York group eventually took on most of the responsibility for American fundraising and is often referred to as the "American Committee".<sup>[53]</sup> One of its members was 19-year-old Theodore Roosevelt, the future governor of New York and president of the United States.<sup>[51]</sup> On March 3, 1877, on his final full day in office, President Grant signed a joint resolution that authorized the President to accept the statue when it was presented by France and to select a site for it. President Rutherford B. Hayes, who took office the following day, selected the Bedloe's Island site that Bartholdi had proposed.<sup>[54]</sup>

## Construction in France

On his return to Paris in 1877, Bartholdi concentrated on completing the head, which was exhibited at the 1878 Paris World's Fair. Fundraising continued, with models of the statue put on sale. Tickets to view the construction activity at the Gaget, Gauthier & Co. workshop were also offered.<sup>[55]</sup> The French government authorized a lottery; among the prizes were valuable silver plate and a terracotta model of the statue. By the end of 1879, about 250,000 francs had been raised.<sup>[56]</sup>

The head and arm had been built with assistance from Viollet-le-Duc, who fell ill in 1879. He soon died, leaving no indication of how he intended to transition from the copper skin to his proposed masonry pier.<sup>[57]</sup> The following year, Bartholdi was able to obtain the services of the innovative designer and builder Gustave Eiffel.<sup>[55]</sup> Eiffel and his structural engineer, Maurice Koechlin, decided to abandon the pier and instead build an iron truss tower. Eiffel opted not to use a completely rigid structure, which would force stresses to accumulate in the skin and lead eventually to cracking. A secondary skeleton was attached to the center pylon, then, to enable the statue to move slightly in the winds of New York Harbor and as the metal expanded on hot summer days, he loosely connected the support structure to the skin using flat iron bars<sup>[33]</sup> which culminated in a mesh of metal straps, known as "saddles", that were riveted to the skin, providing firm support. In a labor-intensive process, each saddle had to be crafted individually.<sup>[58][59]</sup> To prevent galvanic corrosion between the copper skin and the iron support structure, Eiffel insulated the skin with asbestos impregnated with shellac.<sup>[60]</sup>

Eiffel's design made the statue one of the earliest examples of curtain wall construction, in which the exterior of the structure is not load bearing, but is instead supported by an interior framework. He included two interior spiral staircases, to make it easier for visitors to reach the observation point in the crown.<sup>[61]</sup> Access to an observation platform surrounding the torch was also provided, but the narrowness of the arm allowed for only a single ladder, 40 feet (12 m) long.<sup>[62]</sup> As the pylon tower arose, Eiffel and Bartholdi coordinated their work carefully so that completed segments of skin would fit exactly on the support structure.<sup>[63]</sup> The components of the pylon tower were built in the Eiffel factory in the nearby Parisian suburb of Levallois-Perret.<sup>[64]</sup>

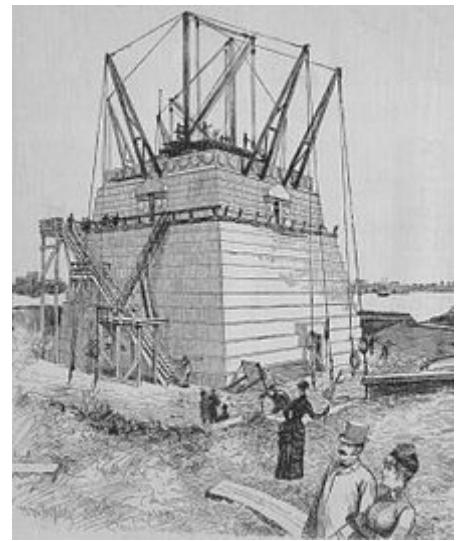
The change in structural material from masonry to iron allowed Bartholdi to change his plans for the statue's assembly. He had originally expected to assemble the skin on-site as the masonry pier was built; instead, he decided to build the statue in France and have it disassembled and transported to the United States for reassembly in place on Bedloe's Island.<sup>[65]</sup>



The statue's head on exhibit at the Paris World's Fair, 1878

In a symbolic act, the first rivet placed into the skin, fixing a copper plate onto the statue's big toe, was driven by United States Ambassador to France Levi P. Morton.<sup>[66]</sup> The skin was not, however, crafted in exact sequence from low to high; work proceeded on a number of segments simultaneously in a manner often confusing to visitors.<sup>[67]</sup> Some work was performed by contractors—one of the fingers was made to Bartholdi's exacting specifications by a coppersmith in the southern French town of Montauban.<sup>[68]</sup> By 1882, the statue was complete up to the waist, an event Bartholdi celebrated by inviting reporters to lunch on a platform built within the statue.<sup>[69]</sup> Laboulaye died in 1883. He was succeeded as chairman of the French committee by Ferdinand de Lesseps, builder of the Suez Canal. The completed statue was formally presented to Ambassador Morton at a ceremony in Paris on July 4, 1884, and de Lesseps announced that the French government had agreed to pay for its transport to New York.<sup>[70]</sup> The statue remained intact in Paris pending sufficient progress on the pedestal; by January 1885, this had occurred and the statue was disassembled and crated for its ocean voyage.<sup>[71]</sup>

The committees in the United States faced great difficulties in obtaining funds for the construction of the pedestal. The Panic of 1873 had led to an economic depression that persisted through much of the decade. The Liberty statue project was not the only such undertaking that had difficulty raising money: construction of the obelisk later known as the Washington Monument sometimes stalled for years; it would ultimately take over three-and-a-half decades to complete.<sup>[72]</sup> There was criticism both of Bartholdi's statue and of the fact that the gift required Americans to foot the bill for the pedestal. In the years following the Civil War, most Americans preferred realistic artworks depicting heroes and events from the nation's history, rather than allegorical works like the Liberty statue.<sup>[72]</sup> There was also a feeling that Americans should design American public works—the selection of Italian-born Constantino Brumidi to decorate the Capitol had provoked intense criticism, even though he was a naturalized U.S. citizen.<sup>[73]</sup> Harper's Weekly declared its wish that "M. Bartholdi and our French cousins had 'gone the whole figure' while they were about it, and given us statue and pedestal at once."<sup>[74]</sup> The New York Times stated that "no true patriot can countenance any such expenditures for bronze females in the present state of our finances."<sup>[75]</sup> Faced with these criticisms, the American committees took little action for several years.<sup>[75]</sup>



Richard Morris Hunt's pedestal under construction in June 1885

## Design

The foundation of Bartholdi's statue was to be laid inside Fort Wood, a disused army base on Bedloe's Island constructed between 1807 and 1811. Since 1823, it had rarely been used, though during the Civil War, it had served as a recruiting station.<sup>[76]</sup> The fortifications of the structure were in the shape of an eleven-point star. The statue's foundation and pedestal were aligned so that it would face southeast, greeting ships entering the harbor from the Atlantic Ocean.<sup>[77]</sup> In 1881, the New York committee commissioned Richard Morris Hunt to design the pedestal. Within months, Hunt submitted a detailed plan, indicating that he expected construction to take about nine months.<sup>[78]</sup> He proposed a pedestal 114 feet (35 m) in height; faced with money problems, the committee reduced that to 89 feet (27 m).<sup>[79]</sup>

Hunt's pedestal design contains elements of classical architecture, including Doric portals, as well as some elements influenced by Aztec architecture.<sup>[33]</sup> The large mass is fragmented with architectural detail, in order to focus attention on the statue.<sup>[79]</sup> In form, it is a truncated pyramid, 62 feet (19 m) square at the base and 39.4 feet (12.0 m) at the top. The four sides are identical in appearance. Above the door on each side, there are ten disks upon which Bartholdi proposed to place the coats of arms of the states (between 1876 and 1889,

there were 38 U.S. states), although this was not done. Above that, a balcony was placed on each side, framed by pillars. Bartholdi placed an observation platform near the top of the pedestal, above which the statue itself rises.<sup>[80]</sup> According to author Louis Auchincloss, the pedestal "craggily evokes the power of an ancient Europe over which rises the dominating figure of the Statue of Liberty".<sup>[79]</sup> The committee hired former army General Charles Pomeroy Stone to oversee the construction work.<sup>[81]</sup> Construction on the 15-foot-deep (4.6 m) foundation began in 1883, and the pedestal's cornerstone was laid in 1884.<sup>[78]</sup> In Hunt's original conception, the pedestal was to have been made of solid granite. Financial concerns again forced him to revise his plans; the final design called for poured concrete walls, up to 20 feet (6.1 m) thick, faced with granite blocks.<sup>[82][83]</sup> This Stony Creek granite came from the Beattie Quarry in Branford, Connecticut.<sup>[84]</sup> The concrete mass was the largest poured to that time.<sup>[83]</sup>

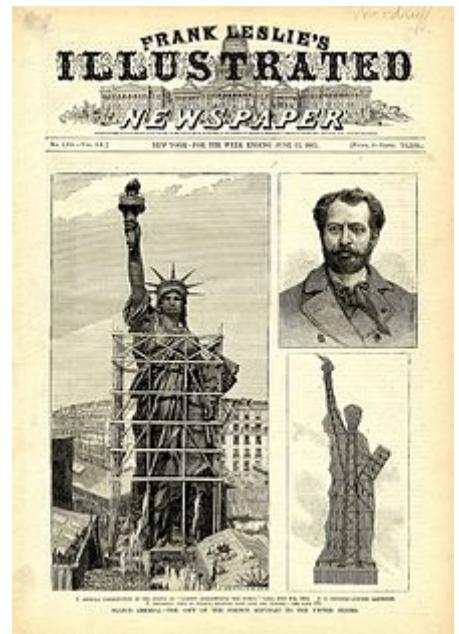
Norwegian immigrant civil engineer Joachim Gæver designed the structural framework for the Statue of Liberty. His work involved design computations, detailed fabrication and construction drawings, and oversight of construction. In completing his engineering for the statue's frame, Gæver worked from drawings and sketches produced by Gustave Eiffel.<sup>[85]</sup>

## Fundraising

Fundraising in the US for the pedestal had begun in 1882. The committee organized a large number of money-raising events.<sup>[86]</sup> As part of one such effort, an auction of art and manuscripts, poet Emma Lazarus was asked to donate an original work. She initially declined, stating she could not write a poem about a statue. At the time, she was also involved in aiding refugees to New York who had fled Anti-Semitic pogroms in eastern Europe. These refugees were forced to live in conditions that the wealthy Lazarus had never experienced. She saw a way to express her empathy for these refugees in terms of the statue.<sup>[87]</sup> The resulting sonnet, "The New Colossus", including the lines: "Give me your tired, your poor/Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free", is uniquely identified with the Statue of Liberty in American culture and is inscribed on a plaque in its museum.<sup>[88]</sup>

Even with these efforts, fundraising lagged. Grover Cleveland, the governor of New York, vetoed a bill to provide \$50,000 for the statue project in 1884. An attempt the next year to have Congress provide \$100,000, sufficient to complete the project, also failed. The New York committee, with only \$3,000 in the bank, suspended work on the pedestal. With the project in jeopardy, groups from other American cities, including Boston and Philadelphia, offered to pay the full cost of erecting the statue in return for relocating it.<sup>[89]</sup>

Joseph Pulitzer, publisher of the New York World, a New York newspaper, announced a drive to raise \$100,000—the equivalent of \$2.3 million today.<sup>[90]</sup> Pulitzer pledged to print the name of every contributor, no matter how small the amount given.<sup>[91]</sup> The drive captured the imagination of New Yorkers, especially when Pulitzer began publishing the notes he received from contributors. "A young girl alone in the world" donated "60 cents, the result of self denial."<sup>[92]</sup> One donor gave "five cents as a poor office boy's mite toward the Pedestal Fund." A group of children sent a dollar as "the money we saved to go to the circus with."<sup>[93]</sup> Another dollar was given by a "lonely and very aged woman."<sup>[92]</sup> Residents of a home for alcoholics in New



Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper, June 1885, showing (clockwise from left) woodcuts of the completed statue in Paris, Bartholdi, and the statue's interior structure

York's rival city of Brooklyn—the cities would not merge until 1898—donated \$15; other drinkers helped out through donation boxes in bars and saloons.<sup>[94]</sup> A kindergarten class in Davenport, Iowa, mailed the *World* a gift of \$1.35.<sup>[92]</sup> As the donations flooded in, the committee resumed work on the pedestal.<sup>[95]</sup>

## Construction

On June 17, 1885, the French steamer *Isère* arrived in New York with the crates holding the disassembled statue on board. New Yorkers displayed their new-found enthusiasm for the statue. Two hundred thousand people lined the docks and hundreds of boats put to sea to welcome the ship.<sup>[96][97]</sup> After five months of daily calls to donate to the statue fund, on August 11, 1885, the *World* announced that \$102,000 had been raised from 120,000 donors, and that 80 percent of the total had been received in sums of less than one dollar.<sup>[98]</sup>

Even with the success of the fund drive, the pedestal was not completed until April 1886. Immediately thereafter, reassembly of the statue began. Eiffel's iron framework was anchored to steel I-beams within the concrete pedestal and assembled.<sup>[99]</sup> Once this was done, the sections of skin were carefully attached.<sup>[100]</sup> Due to the width of the pedestal, it was not possible to erect scaffolding, and workers dangled from ropes while installing the skin sections.<sup>[101]</sup> Bartholdi had planned to put floodlights on the torch's balcony to illuminate it; a week before the dedication, the Army Corps of Engineers vetoed the proposal, fearing that ships' pilots passing the statue would be blinded. Instead, Bartholdi cut portholes in the torch—which was covered with gold leaf—and placed the lights inside them.<sup>[102]</sup> A power plant was installed on the island to light the torch and for other electrical needs.<sup>[103]</sup> After the skin was completed, landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted, co-designer of Manhattan's Central Park and Brooklyn's Prospect Park, supervised a cleanup of Bedloe's Island in anticipation of the dedication.<sup>[104]</sup> General Charles Stone claimed on the day of dedication that no man had died during the construction of the statue. This was not true, however, as Francis Longo, a thirty-nine year old Italian laborer, had been killed when an old wall fell on him.<sup>[105]</sup>

## Dedication

A ceremony of dedication was held on the afternoon of October 28, 1886. President Grover Cleveland, the former New York governor, presided over the event.<sup>[106]</sup> On the morning of the dedication, a parade was held in New York City; estimates of the number of people who watched it ranged from several hundred thousand to a million. President Cleveland headed the procession, then stood in the reviewing stand to see bands and marchers from across America. General Stone was the grand marshal of the parade. The route began at Madison Square, once the venue for the arm, and proceeded to the Battery at the southern tip of Manhattan by way of Fifth Avenue and Broadway, with a slight detour so the parade could pass in front of the *World* building on Park Row. As the parade passed the New York Stock Exchange, traders threw ticker tape from the windows, beginning the New York tradition of the ticker-tape parade.<sup>[107]</sup>

A nautical parade began at 12:45 p.m., and President Cleveland embarked on a yacht that took him across the harbor to Bedloe's Island for the dedication.<sup>[108]</sup> De Lesseps made the first speech, on behalf of the French committee, followed by the chairman of the New York committee, Senator William M. Evarts. A French flag draped across the statue's face was to be lowered to unveil the statue at the close of Evarts's speech, but Bartholdi mistook a pause as the conclusion and let the flag fall prematurely. The ensuing cheers put an end to Evarts's address.<sup>[107]</sup> President Cleveland spoke next, stating that the statue's



*Unveiling of the Statue of Liberty  
Enlightening the World* (1886) by  
Edward Moran. Oil on canvas. The J.  
Clarence Davies Collection, Museum  
of the City of New York.

"stream of light shall pierce the darkness of ignorance and man's oppression until Liberty enlightens the world".<sup>[109]</sup> Bartholdi, observed near the dais, was called upon to speak, but he declined. Orator Chauncey M. Depew concluded the speechmaking with a lengthy address.<sup>[110]</sup>

No members of the general public were permitted on the island during the ceremonies, which were reserved entirely for dignitaries. The only females granted access were Bartholdi's wife and de Lesseps's granddaughter; officials stated that they feared women might be injured in the crush of people. The restriction offended area suffragists, who chartered a boat and got as close as they could to the island. The group's leaders made speeches applauding the embodiment of Liberty as a woman and advocating women's right to vote.<sup>[109]</sup> A scheduled fireworks display was postponed until November 1 because of poor weather.<sup>[111]</sup>

Shortly after the dedication, *The Cleveland Gazette*, an African American newspaper, suggested that the statue's torch not be lit until the United States became a free nation "in reality":

"Liberty enlightening the world," indeed! The expression makes us sick. This government is a howling farce. It can not or rather *does not* protect its citizens within its own borders. Shove the Bartholdi statue, torch and all, into the ocean until the "liberty" of this country is such as to make it possible for an inoffensive and industrious colored man to earn a respectable living for himself and family, without being ku-kluxed, perhaps murdered, his daughter and wife outraged, and his property destroyed. The idea of the "liberty" of this country "enlightening the world," or even Patagonia, is ridiculous in the extreme.<sup>[112]</sup>

## After dedication

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### Lighthouse Board and War Department (1886–1933)

When the torch was illuminated on the evening of the statue's dedication, it produced only a faint gleam, barely visible from Manhattan. The *World* characterized it as "more like a glowworm than a beacon."<sup>[103]</sup> Bartholdi suggested gilding the statue to increase its ability to reflect light, but this proved too expensive. The United States Lighthouse Board took over the Statue of Liberty in 1887 and pledged to install equipment to enhance the torch's effect; in spite of its efforts, the statue remained virtually invisible at night. When Bartholdi returned to the United States in 1893, he made additional suggestions, all of which proved ineffective. He did successfully lobby for improved lighting within the statue, allowing visitors to better appreciate Eiffel's design.<sup>[103]</sup> In 1901, President Theodore Roosevelt, once a member of the New York committee, ordered the statue's transfer to the War Department, as it had proved useless as a lighthouse.<sup>[113]</sup> A unit of the Army Signal Corps was stationed on Bedloe's Island until 1923, after which military police remained there while the island was under military jurisdiction.<sup>[114]</sup>

Wars and other upheavals in Europe prompted large-scale emigration to the United States in the late 19th and early 20th century; many entered through New York and saw the statue not as a symbol of enlightenment, as Bartholdi had intended, but as a sign of welcome to their new home. The association with immigration only became stronger when an immigrant processing station



Government poster using the Statue of Liberty to promote the sale of Liberty Bonds

was opened on nearby Ellis Island. This view was consistent with Lazarus's vision in her sonnet—she described the statue as "Mother of Exiles"—but her work had become obscure. In 1903, the sonnet was engraved on a plaque that was affixed to the base of the statue.<sup>[115]</sup>

Oral histories of immigrants record their feelings of exhilaration on first viewing the Statue of Liberty. One immigrant who arrived from Greece recalled:

I saw the Statue of Liberty. And I said to myself, "Lady, you're such a beautiful! [sic] You opened your arms and you get all the foreigners here. Give me a chance to prove that I am worth it, to do something, to be someone in America." And always that statue was on my mind.<sup>[116]</sup>

The statue rapidly became a landmark.<sup>[116]</sup> Originally, it was a dull copper color, but shortly after 1900 a green patina, also called verdigris, caused by the oxidation of the copper skin, began to spread. As early as 1902 it was mentioned in the press; by 1906 it had entirely covered the statue.<sup>[117]</sup> Believing that the patina was evidence of corrosion, Congress authorized US\$62,800 (equivalent to \$1,809,000 in 2020) for various repairs, and to paint the statue both inside and out.<sup>[118]</sup> There was considerable public protest against the proposed exterior painting.<sup>[119]</sup> The Army Corps of Engineers studied the patina for any ill effects to the statue and concluded that it protected the skin, "softened the outlines of the Statue and made it beautiful."<sup>[120]</sup> The statue was painted only on the inside. The Corps of Engineers also installed an elevator to take visitors from the base to the top of the pedestal.<sup>[120]</sup>



Bedloe's Island in 1927, showing the statue and army buildings. The eleven-pointed walls of Fort Wood, which still form the statue's base, are visible.

On July 30, 1916, during World War I, German saboteurs set off a disastrous explosion on the Black Tom peninsula in Jersey City, New Jersey, in what is now part of Liberty State Park, close to Bedloe's Island. Carloads of dynamite and other explosives that were being sent to Britain and France for their war efforts were detonated. The statue sustained minor damage, mostly to the torch-bearing right arm, and was closed for ten days. The cost to repair the statue and buildings on the island was about \$100,000 (equivalent to about \$2,380,000 in 2020). The narrow ascent to the torch was closed for public-safety reasons, and it has remained closed ever since.<sup>[110]</sup>

That same year, Ralph Pulitzer, who had succeeded his father Joseph as publisher of the World, began a drive to raise \$30,000 (equivalent to \$713,000 in 2020) for an exterior lighting system to illuminate the statue at night. He claimed over 80,000 contributors, but failed to reach the goal. The difference was quietly made up by a gift from a wealthy donor—a fact that was not revealed until 1936. An

underwater power cable brought electricity from the mainland and floodlights were placed along the walls of Fort Wood. Gutzon Borglum, who later sculpted Mount Rushmore, redesigned the torch, replacing much of the original copper with stained glass. On December 2, 1916, President Woodrow Wilson pressed the telegraph key that turned on the lights, successfully illuminating the statue.<sup>[121]</sup>

After the United States entered World War I in 1917, images of the statue were heavily used in both recruitment posters and the Liberty bond drives that urged American citizens to support the war financially. This impressed upon the public the war's stated purpose—to secure liberty—and served as a reminder that embattled France had given the United States the statue.<sup>[122]</sup>

In 1924, President Calvin Coolidge used his authority under the Antiquities Act to declare the statue a national monument.<sup>[113]</sup> A suicide occurred five years later when a man climbed out of one of the windows in the crown and jumped to his death.<sup>[123]</sup>

## Early National Park Service years (1933–1982)

In 1933, President Franklin Roosevelt ordered the statue to be transferred to the National Park Service (NPS). In 1937, the NPS gained jurisdiction over the rest of Bedloe's Island.<sup>[113]</sup> With the Army's departure, the NPS began to transform the island into a park.<sup>[124]</sup> The Works Progress Administration (WPA) demolished most of the old buildings, regraded and reseeded the eastern end of the island, and built granite steps for a new public entrance to the statue from its rear. The WPA also carried out restoration work within the statue, temporarily removing the rays from the statue's halo so their rusted supports could be replaced. Rusted cast-iron steps in the pedestal were replaced with new ones made of reinforced concrete;<sup>[125]</sup> the upper parts of the stairways within the statue were replaced, as well. Copper sheathing was installed to prevent further damage from rainwater that had been seeping into the pedestal.<sup>[126]</sup> The statue was closed to the public from May until December 1938.<sup>[125]</sup>

During World War II, the statue remained open to visitors, although it was not illuminated at night due to wartime blackouts. It was lit briefly on December 31, 1943, and on D-Day, June 6, 1944, when its lights flashed "dot-dot-dot-dash", the Morse code for V, for victory. New, powerful lighting was installed in 1944–1945, and beginning on V-E Day, the statue was once again illuminated after sunset. The lighting was for only a few hours each evening, and it was not until 1957 that the statue was illuminated every night, all night.<sup>[127]</sup> In 1946, the interior of the statue within reach of visitors was coated with a special plastic so that graffiti could be washed away.<sup>[126]</sup>

In 1956, an Act of Congress officially renamed Bedloe's Island as Liberty Island, a change advocated by Bartholdi generations earlier. The act also mentioned the efforts to found an American Museum of Immigration on the island, which backers took as federal approval of the project, though the government was slow to grant funds for it.<sup>[128]</sup> Nearby Ellis Island was made part of the Statue of Liberty National Monument by proclamation of President Lyndon Johnson in 1965.<sup>[113]</sup> In 1972, the immigration museum, in the statue's base, was finally opened in a ceremony led by President Richard Nixon. The museum's backers never provided it with an endowment to secure its future and it closed in 1991 after the opening of an immigration museum on Ellis Island.<sup>[99]</sup>

In 1970, Ivy Bottini led a demonstration at the statue where she and others from the National Organization for Women's New York chapter draped an enormous banner over a railing which read "WOMEN OF THE WORLD UNITE!"<sup>[129][130]</sup>

Beginning December 26, 1971, 15 anti-Vietnam War veterans occupied the statue, flying a US flag upside down from her crown. They left December 28 following a federal court order.<sup>[131]</sup> The statue was also several times taken over briefly by demonstrators publicizing causes such as Puerto Rican independence, opposition to abortion, and opposition to US intervention in Grenada. Demonstrations with the permission of the Park Service included a Gay Pride Parade rally and the annual Captive Baltic Nations rally.<sup>[132]</sup>

A powerful new lighting system was installed in advance of the American Bicentennial in 1976. The statue was the focal point for Operation Sail, a regatta of tall ships from all over the world that entered New York Harbor on July 4, 1976, and sailed around Liberty Island.<sup>[133]</sup> The day concluded with a spectacular display of fireworks near the statue.<sup>[134]</sup>

## Renovation and rededication (1982–2000)

The statue was examined in great detail by French and American engineers as part of the planning for its centennial in 1986.<sup>[135]</sup> In 1982, it was announced that the statue was in need of considerable restoration. Careful study had revealed that the right arm had been improperly attached to the main structure. It was swaying more and more when strong winds blew and there was a significant risk of structural failure. In



July 4, 1986: First Lady Nancy Reagan (in red) reopens the statue to the public.

addition, the head had been installed 2 feet (0.61 m) off center, and one of the rays was wearing a hole in the right arm when the statue moved in the wind. The armature structure was badly corroded, and about two percent of the exterior plates needed to be replaced.<sup>[136]</sup> Although problems with the armature had been recognized as early as 1936, when cast iron replacements for some of the bars had been installed, much of the corrosion had been hidden by layers of paint applied over the years.<sup>[137]</sup>

In May 1982, President Ronald Reagan announced the formation of the Statue of Liberty–Ellis Island Centennial Commission, led by Chrysler Corporation chair Lee Iacocca, to raise the funds needed to complete the work.<sup>[138][139][140]</sup> Through its fundraising arm, the Statue of Liberty–Ellis Island Foundation, Inc., the group raised more than \$350 million in donations for the renovations of both the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island.<sup>[141]</sup> The Statue of Liberty was one of the earliest beneficiaries of a cause marketing campaign. A 1983 promotion advertised that for each purchase made with an American Express card, the company would contribute one cent to the renovation of the statue. The campaign generated contributions of \$1.7 million to the restoration project.<sup>[142]</sup>

In 1984, the statue was closed to the public for the duration of the renovation. Workers erected the world's largest free-standing scaffold,<sup>[33]</sup> which obscured the statue from view. Liquid nitrogen was used to remove layers of paint that had been applied to the interior of the copper skin over decades, leaving two layers of coal tar, originally applied to plug leaks and prevent corrosion. Blasting with baking soda powder removed the tar without further damaging the copper.<sup>[143]</sup> The restorers' work was hampered by the asbestos-based substance that Bartholdi had used—ineffectively, as inspections showed—to prevent galvanic corrosion. Workers within the statue had to wear protective gear, dubbed "Moon suits", with self-contained breathing circuits.<sup>[144]</sup> Larger holes in the copper skin were repaired, and new copper was added where necessary.<sup>[145]</sup> The replacement skin was taken from a copper rooftop at Bell Labs, which had a patina that closely resembled the statue's; in exchange, the laboratory was provided some of the old copper skin for testing.<sup>[146]</sup> The torch, found to have been leaking water since the 1916 alterations, was replaced with an exact replica of Bartholdi's unaltered torch.<sup>[147]</sup> Consideration was given to replacing the arm and shoulder; the National Park Service insisted that they be repaired instead.<sup>[148]</sup> The original torch was removed and replaced in 1986 with the current one, whose flame is covered in 24-karat gold.<sup>[36]</sup> The torch reflects the Sun's rays in daytime and is lighted by floodlights at night.<sup>[36]</sup>

The entire puddled iron armature designed by Gustave Eiffel was replaced. Low-carbon corrosion-resistant stainless steel bars that now hold the staples next to the skin are made of Ferralium, an alloy that bends slightly and returns to its original shape as the statue moves.<sup>[149]</sup> To prevent the ray and arm making contact, the ray was realigned by several degrees.<sup>[150]</sup> The lighting was again replaced—night-time illumination subsequently came from metal-halide lamps that send beams of light to particular parts of the pedestal or statue, showing off various details.<sup>[151]</sup> Access to the pedestal, which had been through a nondescript entrance built in the 1960s, was renovated to create a wide opening framed by a set of monumental bronze doors with designs symbolic of the renovation.<sup>[152]</sup> A modern elevator was installed, allowing handicapped access to the observation area of the pedestal.<sup>[153]</sup> An emergency elevator was installed within the statue, reaching up to the level of the shoulder.<sup>[154]</sup>

July 3–6, 1986, was designated "Liberty Weekend", marking the centennial of the statue and its reopening. President Reagan presided over the rededication, with French President François Mitterrand in attendance. July 4 saw a reprise of Operation Sail,<sup>[155]</sup> and the statue was reopened to the public on July 5.<sup>[156]</sup> In Reagan's dedication speech, he stated, "We are the keepers of the flame of liberty; we hold it high for the world to see."<sup>[155]</sup>

## Closures and reopenings (2001–present)



The Statue of Liberty on September 11, 2001 as the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center burn in the background



The new staircase to the crown

Immediately following the September 11 attacks, the statue and Liberty Island were closed to the public. The island reopened at the end of 2001, while the pedestal and statue remained off-limits. The pedestal reopened in August 2004,<sup>[156]</sup> but the National Park Service announced that visitors could not safely be given access to the statue due to the difficulty of evacuation in an emergency. The Park Service adhered to that position through the remainder of the Bush administration.<sup>[157]</sup> New York Congressman Anthony Weiner made the statue's reopening a personal crusade.<sup>[158]</sup> On May 17, 2009, President Barack Obama's Secretary of the Interior, Ken Salazar, announced that as a "special gift" to America, the statue would be reopened to the public as of July 4, but that only a limited number of people would be permitted to ascend to the crown each day.<sup>[157]</sup>

The statue, including the pedestal and base, closed on October 29, 2011, for installation of new elevators and staircases and to bring other facilities, such as restrooms, up to code. The statue was reopened on October 28, 2012,<sup>[1][159][160]</sup> but then closed again a day later in advance of Hurricane Sandy.<sup>[161]</sup> Although the storm did not harm the statue, it destroyed some of the infrastructure on both Liberty and Ellis Islands, including the dock used by the ferries that ran to Liberty and Ellis Islands. On November 8, 2012, a Park Service spokesperson announced that both islands would remain closed for an indefinite period for repairs to be done.<sup>[162]</sup>

Since Liberty Island had no electricity, a generator was installed to power temporary floodlights to illuminate the statue at night. The superintendent of Statue of Liberty National Monument, David Luchsinger—whose home on the island was severely damaged—stated that it would be "optimistically ... months" before the island was reopened to the public.<sup>[163]</sup> The statue and Liberty Island reopened to the public on July 4, 2013.<sup>[164]</sup> Ellis Island remained closed for repairs for several more months but reopened in late October 2013.<sup>[165]</sup>

The Statue of Liberty has also been closed due to government shutdowns and protests, as well as for disease pandemics. During the October 2013 United States federal government shutdown, Liberty Island and other federally funded sites were closed.<sup>[166]</sup> In addition, Liberty Island was briefly closed on July 4, 2018, after a woman protesting against American immigration policy climbed onto the statue.<sup>[167]</sup> However, the island remained open during the 2018–19 United States federal government shutdown because the Statue of Liberty–Ellis Island Foundation had donated funds.<sup>[168]</sup> It closed beginning on March 16, 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>[169]</sup> On July 20, 2020, the Statue of Liberty reopened partially under New York City's Phase IV guidelines, with Ellis Island remaining closed.<sup>[170][171]</sup>

On October 7, 2016, construction started on the new Statue of Liberty Museum on Liberty Island.<sup>[172]</sup> The new \$70 million, 26,000-square-foot ( $2,400 \text{ m}^2$ ) museum may be visited by all who come to the island,<sup>[173]</sup> as opposed to the museum in the pedestal, which only 20% of the island's visitors had access to.<sup>[172]</sup> The new museum, designed by FXFOWLE



The Statue of Liberty's original torch displayed in the Statue of Liberty Museum

Architects, is integrated with the surrounding parkland.<sup>[174]</sup><sup>[175]</sup> Diane von Fürstenberg headed the fundraising for the museum, and the project received over \$40 million in fundraising by groundbreaking.<sup>[174]</sup> The museum opened on May 16, 2019.<sup>[176]</sup><sup>[177]</sup>

## Access and attributes

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### Location and access



Tourists aboard a Circle Line ferry arriving at Liberty Island, June 1973

The statue is situated in Upper New York Bay on Liberty Island south of Ellis Island, which together comprise the Statue of Liberty National Monument. Both islands were ceded by New York to the federal government in 1800.<sup>[178]</sup> As agreed in an 1834 compact between New York and New Jersey that set the state border at the bay's midpoint, the original islands remain New York territory though located on the New Jersey side of the state line. Liberty Island is one of the islands that are part of the borough of Manhattan in New York. Land created by reclamation added to the 2.3-acre (0.93 ha) original island at Ellis Island is New Jersey territory.<sup>[179]</sup>

No charge is made for entrance to the national monument, but there is a cost for the ferry service that all visitors must use,<sup>[180]</sup> as private boats may not dock at the island. A concession was granted in 2007 to Statue Cruises to operate the transportation and ticketing facilities, replacing Circle Line, which had operated the service since 1953.<sup>[181]</sup> The ferries, which depart from Liberty State Park in Jersey City and the Battery in Lower Manhattan, also stop at Ellis Island when it is open to the public, making a combined trip possible.<sup>[182]</sup> All ferry riders are subject to security screening, similar to airport procedures, prior to boarding.<sup>[183]</sup>

Visitors intending to enter the statue's base and pedestal must obtain a complimentary museum/pedestal ticket along with their ferry ticket.<sup>[180]</sup><sup>[184]</sup> Those wishing to climb the staircase within the statue to the crown purchase a special ticket, which may be reserved up to a year in advance. A total of 240 people per day are permitted to ascend: ten per group, three groups per hour. Climbers may bring only medication and cameras—lockers are provided for other items—and must undergo a second security screening.<sup>[185]</sup>

### Inscriptions, plaques, and dedications

There are several plaques and dedicatory tablets on or near the Statue of Liberty.

- A plaque on the copper just under the figure in front declares that it is a colossal statue representing Liberty, designed by Bartholdi and built by the Paris firm of Gaget, Gauthier et Cie (Cie is the French abbreviation analogous to Co.).<sup>[186]</sup>
- A presentation tablet, also bearing Bartholdi's name, declares the statue is a gift from the people of the Republic of France that honors "the Alliance of the two Nations in achieving the Independence of the United States of America and attests their abiding friendship."<sup>[186]</sup>



The Statue of Liberty stands on Liberty Island

- A tablet placed by the American Committee commemorates the fundraising done to build the pedestal.<sup>[186]</sup>
- The cornerstone bears a plaque placed by the Freemasons.<sup>[186]</sup>
- In 1903, a bronze tablet that bears the text of Emma Lazarus's sonnet, "The New Colossus" (1883), was presented by friends of the poet. Until the 1986 renovation, it was mounted inside the pedestal; later, it resided in the Statue of Liberty Museum, in the base.<sup>[186]</sup>
- "The New Colossus" tablet is accompanied by a tablet given by the Emma Lazarus Commemorative Committee in 1977, celebrating the poet's life.<sup>[186]</sup>

A group of statues stands at the western end of the island, honoring those closely associated with the Statue of Liberty. Two Americans—Pulitzer and Lazarus—and three Frenchmen—Bartholdi, Eiffel, and Laboulaye—are depicted. They are the work of Maryland sculptor Phillip Ratner.<sup>[187]</sup>

## **Historical designations**

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President Calvin Coolidge officially designated the Statue of Liberty as part of the Statue of Liberty National Monument in 1924.<sup>[3][188]</sup> The monument was expanded to also include Ellis Island in 1965.<sup>[189][190]</sup> The following year, the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island were jointly added to the National Register of Historic Places,<sup>[191]</sup> and the statue individually in 2017.<sup>[5]</sup> On the sub-national level, the Statue of Liberty National Monument was added to the New Jersey Register of Historic Places in 1971,<sup>[6]</sup> and was made a New York City designated landmark in 1976.<sup>[7]</sup>

In 1984, the Statue of Liberty was designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The UNESCO "Statement of Significance" describes the statue as a "masterpiece of the human spirit" that "endures as a highly potent symbol—inspiring contemplation, debate and protest—of ideals such as liberty, peace, human rights, abolition of slavery, democracy and opportunity."<sup>[192]</sup>

## **Measurements**

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Feature <sup>[77]</sup>	Imperial	Metric
Height of copper statue	151 ft 1 in	46 m
Foundation of pedestal (ground level) to tip of torch	305 ft 1 in	93 m
Heel to top of head	111 ft 1 in	34 m
Height of hand	16 ft 5 in	5 m
Index finger	8 ft 1 in	2.44 m
Circumference at second joint	3 ft 6 in	1.07 m
Head from chin to cranium	17 ft 3 in	5.26 m
Head thickness from ear to ear	10 ft 0 in	3.05 m
Distance across the eye	2 ft 6 in	0.76 m
Length of nose	4 ft 6 in	1.48 m
Right arm length	42 ft 0 in	12.8 m
Right arm greatest thickness	12 ft 0 in	3.66 m
Thickness of waist	35 ft 0 in	10.67 m
Width of mouth	3 ft 0 in	0.91 m
Tablet, length	23 ft 7 in	7.19 m
Tablet, width	13 ft 7 in	4.14 m
Tablet, thickness	2 ft 0 in	0.61 m
Height of pedestal	89 ft 0 in	27.13 m
Height of foundation	65 ft 0 in	19.81 m
Weight of copper used in statue	60,000 pounds	27.22 tonnes
Weight of steel used in statue	250,000 pounds	113.4 tonnes
Total weight of statue	450,000 pounds	204.1 tonnes
Thickness of copper sheeting	3/32 of an inch	2.4 mm



As viewed from the ground on Liberty Island

## Depictions

Hundreds of replicas of the Statue of Liberty are displayed worldwide.<sup>[193]</sup> A smaller version of the statue, one-fourth the height of the original, was given by the American community in Paris to that city. It now stands on the Île aux Cygnes, facing west toward her larger sister.<sup>[193]</sup> A replica 30 feet (9.1 m) tall stood atop the Liberty Warehouse on West 64th Street in Manhattan for many years;<sup>[193]</sup> it now resides at the Brooklyn Museum.<sup>[194]</sup> In a patriotic tribute, the Boy Scouts of America, as part of their Strengthen the Arm of Liberty campaign in 1949–1952, donated about two hundred replicas of the statue, made of stamped copper and 100 inches (2.5 m) in height, to states and municipalities across the United States.<sup>[195]</sup> Though not a true replica, the statue known as the Goddess of Democracy temporarily erected during the Tiananmen Square protests of 1989 was similarly inspired by French democratic traditions—the sculptors took care to avoid a direct imitation of the Statue of Liberty.<sup>[196]</sup> Among other recreations of New York City structures, a replica of the statue is part of the exterior of the New York-New York Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas.<sup>[197]</sup>

As an American icon, the Statue of Liberty has been depicted on the country's coinage and stamps. It appeared on commemorative coins issued to mark its 1986 centennial, and on New York's 2001 entry in the state quarters series.<sup>[198]</sup> An image of the statue was chosen for the American Eagle platinum bullion coins in 1997, and it was placed on the reverse, or tails, side of the Presidential Dollar series of circulating coins.<sup>[31]</sup> Two images of the statue's torch appear on the current ten-dollar bill.<sup>[199]</sup> The statue's intended photographic depiction on a 2010 forever stamp proved instead to be of the replica at the Las Vegas casino.<sup>[200]</sup>

Depictions of the statue have been used by many regional institutions. Between 1986<sup>[201]</sup> and 2000,<sup>[202]</sup> New York State issued license plates with an outline of the statue.<sup>[201][202]</sup> The Women's National Basketball Association's New York Liberty use both the statue's name and its image in their logo, in which the torch's flame doubles as a basketball.<sup>[203]</sup> The New York Rangers of the National Hockey League depicted the statue's head on their third jersey, beginning in 1997.<sup>[204]</sup> The National Collegiate Athletic Association's 1996 Men's Basketball Final Four, played at New Jersey's Meadowlands Sports Complex, featured the statue in its logo.<sup>[205]</sup> The Libertarian Party of the United States uses the statue in its emblem.<sup>[206]</sup>

The statue is a frequent subject in popular culture. In music, it has been evoked to indicate support for American policies, as in Toby Keith's song "Courtesy of the Red, White and Blue (The Angry American)", and in opposition, appearing on the cover of the Dead Kennedys' album *Bedtime for Democracy*, which protested the Reagan administration.<sup>[207]</sup> In film, the torch is the setting for the climax of director Alfred Hitchcock's 1942 movie *Saboteur*.<sup>[208]</sup> The statue makes one of its most famous cinematic appearances in the 1968 picture *Planet of the Apes*, in which it is seen half-buried in sand.<sup>[207][209]</sup> It is knocked over in the science-fiction film *Independence Day* <sup>[210]</sup> and in *Cloverfield* the head is ripped off.<sup>[211]</sup> In Jack Finney's time-travel novel *Time and Again*, the right arm of the statue, on display in the early 1880s in Madison Square Park, plays a crucial role.<sup>[212]</sup> Robert Holdstock, consulting editor of *The Encyclopedia of Science Fiction*, wondered in 1979:

Where would science fiction be without the Statue of Liberty? For decades it has towered or crumbled above the wastelands of deserted Earth—giants have uprooted it, aliens have found it curious ... the symbol of Liberty, of optimism, has become a symbol of science fiction's pessimistic view of the future.<sup>[213]</sup>



A replica of the Statue of Liberty forms part of the exterior decor at the New York-New York Hotel and Casino on the Las Vegas Strip

Head of Liberty, U.S. airmail stamp, 1971 issue



Reverse side of a Presidential Dollar coin

## See also

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- [List of statues by height](#)
- [List of the tallest statues in the United States](#)
- [Place des États-Unis, in Paris, France](#)
- [The Statue of Liberty \(film\)](#), a 1985 [Ken Burns](#) documentary film
- [Statues and sculptures in New York City](#)



Approximate heights of various notable statues:

1. [Statue of Unity](#) 240 m (790 ft) (incl. 58 m (190 ft) base)
2. [Spring Temple Buddha](#) 153 m (502 ft) (incl. 25 m (82 ft) pedestal and 20 m (66 ft) throne)
3. [Statue of Liberty](#) 93 m (305 ft) (incl. 47 m (154 ft) pedestal)
4. [The Motherland Calls](#) 87 m (285 ft) (incl. 2 m (6 ft 7 in) pedestal)
5. [Christ the Redeemer](#) 38 m (125 ft) (incl. 8 m (26 ft) pedestal)
6. [Michelangelo's David](#) 5.17 m (17.0 ft) (excl. 2.5 m (8 ft 2 in) plinth)

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## External links

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- [Statue of Liberty National Monument](http://www.nps.gov/stli/index.htm) (<http://www.nps.gov/stli/index.htm>)
  - [Statue of Liberty–Ellis Island Foundation](http://statueofliberty.org/) (<http://statueofliberty.org/>)
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  - Views from the webcams affixed to the Statue of Liberty ([http://www.earthcam.com/usa/newyork/statueofliberty/?cam=liberty\\_hd](http://www.earthcam.com/usa/newyork/statueofliberty/?cam=liberty_hd))
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  - [Statue of Liberty](https://structurae.net/structures/data/index.cfm?ID=20000068) (<https://structurae.net/structures/data/index.cfm?ID=20000068>) at *Structurae*
  - Historic American Engineering Record (HAER) No. NY-138, "Statue of Liberty, Liberty Island, Manhattan, New York, New York County, NY" (<https://loc.gov/pictures/item/ny1251/>), 404 photos, 59 color transparencies, 41 measured drawings, 10 data pages, 33 photo caption pages
  - HAER No. NY-138-A, "Statue of Liberty, Administration Building" (<https://loc.gov/pictures/item/ny2026/>), 6 photos, 6 measured drawings, 1 photo caption page
  - HAER No. NY-138-B, "Statue of Liberty, Concessions Building" (<https://loc.gov/pictures/item/ny2027/>), 12 photos, 6 measured drawings, 1 photo caption page
  - [The Statue of Liberty](https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b008xh3x) (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b008xh3x>), BBC Radio 4 discussion with Robert Gildea, Kathleen Burk & John Keane (*In Our Time*, February 14, 2008)
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# Liberty Bell

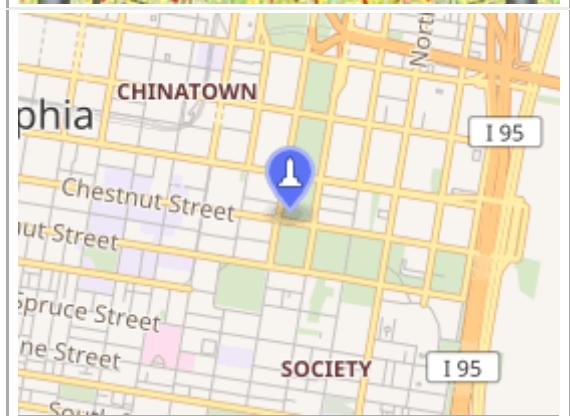
The **Liberty Bell**, previously called the **State House Bell** or **Old State House Bell**, is an iconic symbol of American independence, located in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Once placed in the steeple of the Pennsylvania State House (now renamed Independence Hall), the bell today is located across the street in the Liberty Bell Center in Independence National Historical Park. The bell was commissioned in 1752 by the Pennsylvania Provincial Assembly from the London firm of Lester and Pack (known subsequently as the Whitechapel Bell Foundry), and was cast with the lettering "Proclaim LIBERTY Throughout all the Land unto all the Inhabitants Thereof", a Biblical reference from the Book of Leviticus (25:10). The bell first cracked when rung after its arrival in Philadelphia, and was twice recast by local workmen John Pass and John Stow, whose last names appear on the bell. In its early years, the bell was used to summon lawmakers to legislative sessions and to alert citizens about public meetings and proclamations.

Although no immediate announcement was made of the Second Continental Congress's vote for independence—and so the bell could not have rung on July 4, 1776, related to that vote—bells were rung on July 8 to mark the reading of the United States Declaration of Independence. While there is no contemporary account of the Liberty Bell ringing, most historians believe it was one of the bells rung. After American independence was secured, the bell fell into relative obscurity until, in the 1830s, the bell was adopted as a symbol by abolitionist societies, who dubbed it the "Liberty Bell".

The bell acquired its distinctive large crack some time in the early 19th century—a widespread story claims it cracked while ringing after the death of Chief Justice John Marshall in 1835. The bell became famous after an 1847 short story claimed that an aged bellringer rang it on July 4, 1776, upon hearing of the Second Continental Congress' vote for independence. Although the bell did not ring for independence on that July 4, the tale was widely accepted as fact, even by some historians. Beginning in 1885, the city of Philadelphia—which owns the bell—allowed it to go to various expositions and patriotic gatherings. The bell attracted huge crowds wherever it went, additional cracking occurred, and pieces were chipped away by souvenir hunters. The last such journey occurred in 1915, after which the city refused further requests.

After World War II, Philadelphia allowed the National Park Service to take custody of the bell, while retaining ownership. The bell was used as a symbol of freedom during the Cold War.

**Liberty Bell**



Interactive map pinpointing the bell's location

<b>Coordinates</b>	39°56'58"N 75°9'1"W
<b>Location</b>	Liberty Bell Center Philadelphia, <u>Pennsylvania, United States</u>
<b>Designer</b>	<u>Whitechapel Bell Foundry</u>
<b>Type</b>	<u>Tower bell</u>
<b>Material</b>	70% <u>Copper</u> , 20% <u>Tin</u> , 10% other metals
<b>Width</b>	3.82 ft (1.16 m) (circumference is 12 ft (3.7 m) around the lip,

and was a popular site for protests in the 1960s. It was moved from its longtime home in Independence Hall to a nearby glass pavilion on Independence Mall in 1976, and then to the larger Liberty Bell Center adjacent to the pavilion in 2003. The bell has been featured on coins and stamps, and its name and image have been widely used by corporations.

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	7.5 ft (2.3 m) around the crown)
<b>Height</b>	About 4 ft (1.2 m)
<b>Completion date</b>	1752 (Recast 1753 by Pass and Stow)
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.nps.gov/inde/liberty-bell-center.htm">Liberty Bell Center (http://www.nps.gov/inde/liberty-bell-center.htm)</a>

**Weight** 2,080 pounds (940 kg)

## **Founding (1751–1753)**

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Philadelphia's city bell had been used to alert the public to proclamations or civic danger since the city's 1682 founding. The original bell hung from a tree behind the Pennsylvania State House (now known as Independence Hall) and was said to have been brought to the city by its founder, William Penn. In 1751, with a bell tower being built in the Pennsylvania State House, civic authorities sought a bell of better quality that could be heard at a greater distance in the rapidly expanding city.<sup>[1]</sup> Isaac Norris, speaker of the Pennsylvania Provincial Assembly, gave orders to the colony's London agent, Robert Charles, to obtain a "good Bell of about two thousands pound weight".<sup>[2]</sup>

We hope and rely on thy care and assistance in this affair and that thou wilt procure and forward it by the first good opp<sup>o</sup> as our workmen inform us it will be much less trouble to hang the Bell before their Scaffolds are struck from the Building where we intend to place it which will not be done 'till the end of next Summer or beginning of the Fall. Let the bell be cast by the best workmen & examined carefully before it is Shipped with the following words well shaped around it.

By Order of the Assembly of the Povince [sic] of Pennsylvania [sic] for the State house in the City of Philada 1752

and Underneath

Proclaim Liberty thro' all the Land to all the Inhabitants thereof.-Levit. XXV. 10.<sup>[2]</sup>

## Inscription

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The inscription on the bell reads:

PROCLAIM LIBERTY THROUGHOUT ALL THE LAND UNTO  
ALL THE INHABITANTS THEREOF LEV. XXV. v X.  
BY ORDER OF THE ASSEMBLY OF THE PROVINCE OF  
PENNSYLVANIA FOR THE STATE HOUSE IN PHILAD<sup>A</sup>  
PASS AND STOW  
PHILAD<sup>A</sup>  
MDCCLIII



The path of the Liberty Bell's hairline crack

At the time, "Pennsylvania" was an accepted alternative spelling for "Pennsylvania." That spelling was used by Alexander Hamilton, a graduate of King's College (now Columbia University), in 1787 on the signature page of the Constitution of the United States.<sup>[3]</sup>

Robert Charles dutifully ordered the bell from Thomas Lester of the London bellfounding firm of Lester and Pack (known subsequently as the Whitechapel Bell Foundry)<sup>[4]</sup> for the sum of £150 13s 8d,<sup>[5]</sup> (equivalent to £23,850.62 today)<sup>[6]</sup> including freight to Philadelphia and insurance. It arrived in Philadelphia in August 1752. Norris wrote to Charles that the bell was in good order, but they had not yet sounded it, as they were building a clock for the State House's tower.<sup>[7]</sup> The bell was mounted on a stand to test the sound, and at the first strike of the clapper, the bell's rim cracked. The episode would be used to good account in later stories of the bell;<sup>[8]</sup> in 1893, former President Benjamin Harrison, speaking as the bell passed through Indianapolis, stated, "This old bell was made in England, but it had to be re-cast in America before it was attuned to proclaim the right of self-government and the equal rights of men."<sup>[9]</sup> Philadelphia authorities tried to return it by ship, but the master of the vessel that had brought it was unable to take it on board.<sup>[10]</sup>



The Bell's First Note by Jean Leon Gerome Ferris

Two local founders, John Pass and John Stow, offered to recast the bell. Though they were inexperienced in bell casting, Pass had headed the Mount Holly Iron Foundry in neighboring New Jersey and came from Malta that had a tradition of bell casting. Stow, on the other hand, was only four years out of his apprenticeship as a brass founder. At Stow's foundry on Second Street, the bell was broken into small pieces, melted down, and cast into a new bell. The two founders decided that the metal was too brittle, and augmented the bell metal by about ten percent, using copper. The bell was ready in March 1753, and Norris reported that the lettering (that included the founders' names and the year) was even clearer on the new bell than on the old.<sup>[11]</sup>

City officials scheduled a public celebration with free food and drink for the testing of the recast bell. When the bell was struck, it did not break, but the sound produced was described by one hearer as like two coal scuttles being banged together. Mocked by the crowd, Pass and Stow hastily took the bell away and again recast it. When the fruit of the two founders' renewed efforts was brought forth in June 1753, the sound was deemed satisfactory, though Norris indicated that he did not personally like it. The bell was hung in the steeple of the State House the same month.<sup>[12]</sup>

The reason for the difficulties with the bell is not certain. The Whitechapel Foundry took the position that the bell was either damaged in transit or was broken by an inexperienced bell ringer, who incautiously sent the clapper flying against the rim, rather than the body of the bell.<sup>[13]</sup> In 1975, the Winterthur Museum conducted an analysis of the metal in the bell, and concluded that "a series of errors made in the construction, reconstruction, and second reconstruction of the Bell resulted in a brittle bell that barely missed being broken up for scrap".<sup>[14]</sup> The Museum found a considerably higher level of tin in the Liberty Bell than in other Whitechapel bells of that era, and suggested that Whitechapel made an error in the alloy, perhaps by using scraps with a high level of tin to begin the melt instead of the usual pure copper.<sup>[15]</sup> The analysis found that, on the second recasting, instead of adding pure tin to the bell metal, Pass and Stow added cheap pewter with a high lead content, and incompletely mixed the new metal into the mold.<sup>[16]</sup> The result was "an extremely brittle alloy which not only caused the Bell to fail in service but made it easy for early souvenir collectors to knock off substantial trophies from the rim".<sup>[17]</sup>

## Early days (1754–1846)

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Pennsylvania State House as it appeared in the 1770s

Dissatisfied with the bell, Norris instructed Charles to order a second one, and see if Lester and Pack would take back the first bell and credit the value of the metal towards the bill. In 1754, the Assembly decided to keep both bells; the new one was attached to the tower clock<sup>[18]</sup> while the old bell was, by vote of the Assembly, devoted "to such Uses as this House may hereafter appoint."<sup>[18]</sup> The Pass and Stow bell was used to summon the Assembly.<sup>[19]</sup> One of the earliest documented mentions of the bell's use is in a letter from Benjamin Franklin to Catherine Ray dated October 16, 1755: "Adieu. The Bell rings, and I must go among the Grave ones, and talk Politiks. [sic]"<sup>[20]</sup> The bell was rung in 1760 to mark the accession of George III to the throne.<sup>[19]</sup> In the early 1760s, the Assembly allowed a local

church to use the State House for services and the bell to summon worshipers, while the church's building was being constructed.<sup>[20]</sup> The bell was also used to summon people to public meetings, and in 1772, a group of citizens complained to the Assembly that the bell was being rung too frequently.<sup>[19]</sup>

Despite the legends that have grown up about the Liberty Bell, it did not ring on July 4, 1776 (at least not for any reason connected with independence), as no public announcement was made of the Declaration of Independence. When the Declaration was publicly read on July 8, 1776, there was a ringing of bells, and while there is no contemporary account of this particular bell ringing, most authorities agree that the Liberty Bell was among the bells that rang.<sup>[21][22][23]</sup> However, there is some chance that the poor condition of the State House bell tower prevented the bell from ringing.<sup>[22]</sup> According to John C. Paige, who wrote a historical study of the bell for the National Park Service, "We do not know whether or not the steeple was still strong enough to permit the State House bell to ring on this day. If it could possibly be rung, we can assume it was. Whether or not it did, it has come to symbolize all of the bells throughout the United States which proclaimed Independence."<sup>[24]</sup>

If the bell was rung, it would have been most likely rung by Andrew McNair, who was the doorkeeper both of the Assembly and of the Congress, and was responsible for ringing the bell. As McNair was absent on two unspecified days between April and November, it might have been rung by William Hurry, who succeeded him as doorkeeper for Congress.<sup>[25]</sup> Bells were also rung to celebrate the first anniversary of Independence on July 4, 1777.<sup>[22]</sup>

After Washington's defeat at the Battle of Brandywine on September 11, 1777, the revolutionary capital of Philadelphia was defenseless, and the city prepared for what was seen as an inevitable British attack. Bells could easily be recast into munitions, and locals feared the Liberty Bell and other bells would meet this fate.

The bell was hastily taken down from the tower, and sent by heavily guarded wagon train to the town of Bethlehem. Local wagoneers transported the bell to the Zion German Reformed Church in Northampton Town, now Allentown, where it waited out the British occupation of Philadelphia under the church floor boards.<sup>[26]</sup> It was returned to Philadelphia in June 1778, after the British departure. With the steeple of the State House in poor condition (the steeple was subsequently torn down and later restored), the bell was placed in storage, and it was not until 1785 that it was again mounted for ringing.<sup>[27]</sup>

Placed on an upper floor of the State House, the bell was rung in the early years of independence on the Fourth of July and on Washington's Birthday, as well as on Election Day to remind voters to hand in their ballots. It also rang to call students at the University of Pennsylvania to their classes at nearby Philosophical Hall. Until 1799, when the state capital was moved to Lancaster, it again rang to summon legislators into session.<sup>[28]</sup> When Pennsylvania, having no further use for its State House, proposed to tear it down and sell the land for building lots, the City of Philadelphia purchased the land, together with the building, including the bell, for \$70,000, equal to \$1,067,431 today.<sup>[29]</sup> In 1828, the city sold the second Lester and Pack bell to St. Augustine's Roman Catholic Church that was burned down by an anti-Catholic mob in the Philadelphia Nativist Riots of 1844. The remains of the bell were recast; the new bell is now located at Villanova University.<sup>[30]</sup>

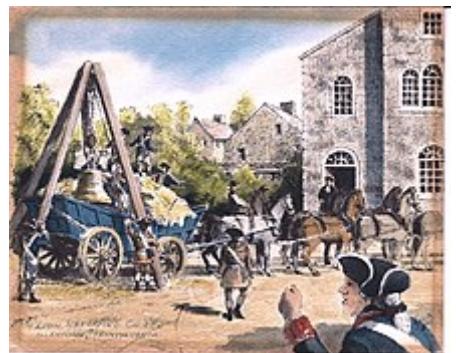
It is uncertain how the bell came to be cracked; the damage occurred sometime between 1817 and 1846. The bell is mentioned in a number of newspaper articles during that time; no mention of a crack can be found until 1846. In fact, in 1837, the bell was depicted in an anti-slavery publication—uncracked. In February 1846 Public Ledger reported that the bell had been rung on February 23, 1846, in celebration of Washington's Birthday (as February 22 fell on a Sunday, the celebration occurred the next day), and also reported that the bell had long been cracked, but had been "put in order" by having the sides of the crack filed. The paper reported that around noon, it was discovered that the ringing had caused the crack to be greatly extended, and that "the old Independence Bell ... now hangs in the great city steeple irreparably cracked and forever dumb".<sup>[31]</sup>

The most common story about the cracking of the bell is that it happened when the bell was rung upon the 1835 death of the Chief Justice of the United States, John Marshall. This story originated in 1876, when the volunteer curator of Independence Hall, Colonel Frank Etting, announced that he had ascertained the truth of the story. While there is little evidence to support this view, it has been widely accepted and taught. Other claims regarding the crack in the bell include stories that it was damaged while welcoming Lafayette on his return to the United States in 1824, that it cracked announcing the passing of the British Catholic Relief Act 1829, and that some boys had been invited to ring the bell, and inadvertently damaged it. David Kimball, in his book compiled for the National Park Service, suggests that it most likely cracked sometime between 1841 and 1845, either on the Fourth of July or on Washington's Birthday.<sup>[32]</sup>

The Pass and Stow bell was first termed "the Liberty Bell" in the New York Anti-Slavery Society's journal, Anti-Slavery Record. In an 1835 piece, "The Liberty Bell", Philadelphians were castigated for not doing more for the abolitionist cause. Two years later, in another work of that society, the journal Liberty featured an image



The Liberty Bell is paraded through the streets of Philadelphia in 1908, in a recreation of its 1777 journey to Allentown.



Reproduction of a watercolor by Davis Gray of the arrival of the Liberty Bell at Zions Church, in Northampton Towne, (later Allentown) Pennsylvania on 24 September 1777. (Holdings of the Lehigh County Historical Society)

of the bell as its frontispiece, with the words "Proclaim Liberty".<sup>[33]</sup> In 1839, Boston's Friends of Liberty, another abolitionist group, titled their journal *The Liberty Bell*. The same year, William Lloyd Garrison's anti-slavery publication *The Liberator* reprinted a Boston abolitionist pamphlet containing a poem entitled "The Liberty Bell" that noted that, at that time, despite its inscription, the bell did not proclaim liberty to *all* the inhabitants of the land.<sup>[34]</sup>

## Becoming a symbol (1847–1865)

A great part of the modern image of the bell as a relic of the proclamation of American independence was forged by writer George Lippard. On January 2, 1847, his story "Fourth of July, 1776" appeared in the Saturday Courier.<sup>[35]</sup> The short story depicted an aged bellman on July 4, 1776, sitting morosely by the bell, fearing that Congress would not have the courage to declare independence. At the most dramatic moment, a young boy appears with instructions for the old man: to ring the bell. It was subsequently published in Lippard's collected stories.<sup>[36]</sup> The story was widely reprinted and closely linked the Liberty Bell to the Declaration of Independence in the public mind.<sup>[37]</sup> The elements of the story were reprinted in early historian Benson J. Lossing's *The Pictorial Field Guide to the Revolution* (published in 1850) as historical fact,<sup>[38]</sup> and the tale was widely repeated for generations after in school primers.<sup>[39]</sup>

In 1848, with the rise of interest in the bell, the city decided to move it to the Assembly Room (also known as the Declaration Chamber) on the first floor, where the Declaration and United States Constitution had been debated and signed.<sup>[40]</sup> The city constructed an ornate pedestal for the bell. The Liberty Bell was displayed on that pedestal for the next quarter-century, surmounted by an eagle (originally sculpted, later stuffed).<sup>[41]</sup> In 1853, President Franklin Pierce visited Philadelphia and the bell, and spoke of the bell as symbolizing the American Revolution and American liberty.<sup>[42]</sup> At the time, Independence Hall was also used as a courthouse, and African-American newspapers pointed out the incongruity of housing a symbol of liberty in the same building in which federal judges were holding hearings under the Fugitive Slave Act.<sup>[43]</sup>

In February 1861, the President-elect, Abraham Lincoln, came to the Assembly Room and delivered an address en route to his inauguration in Washington DC.<sup>[44]</sup> In 1865, Lincoln's body was returned to the Assembly Room after his assassination for a public viewing of his body, en route to his burial in Springfield, Illinois. Due to time constraints, only a small fraction of those wishing to pass by the coffin were able to; the lines to see the coffin were never less than 3 miles (4.8 km) long.<sup>[45]</sup> Nevertheless, between 120,000 and 140,000 people were able to pass by the open casket and then the bell, carefully placed at Lincoln's head so mourners could read the inscription, "Proclaim Liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof."<sup>[44]</sup>



*The Bellman Informed of the Passage of the Declaration of Independence:* an 1854 depiction of the story of the Liberty Bell being rung on July 4, 1776

## Traveling icon of freedom (1866–1947)

In 1876, city officials discussed what role the bell should play in the nation's Centennial festivities. Some wanted to repair it so it could sound at the Centennial Exposition being held in Philadelphia, but the idea was not adopted; the bell's custodians concluded that it was unlikely that the metal could be made into a bell that would have a pleasant sound, and that the crack had become part of the bell's character. Instead, a replica weighing 13,000 pounds (5,900 kg) (1,000 pounds for each of the original states) was cast. The metal used for what was dubbed "the Centennial Bell" included four melted-down cannons: one used by each side in the



The Liberty Bell on its ornate stand,  
1872

American Revolutionary War, and one used by each side in the Civil War. That bell was sounded at the Exposition grounds on July 4, 1876, was later recast to improve the sound, and today is the bell attached to the clock in the steeple of Independence Hall.<sup>[46]</sup> While the Liberty Bell did not go to the Exposition, a great many Exposition visitors came to visit it, and its image was ubiquitous at the Exposition grounds—myriad souvenirs were sold bearing its image or shape, and state pavilions contained replicas of the bell made of substances ranging from stone to tobacco.<sup>[47]</sup> In 1877, the bell was hung from the ceiling of the Assembly Room by a chain with thirteen links.<sup>[48]</sup>

Between 1885 and 1915, the Liberty Bell made seven trips to various expositions and celebrations. Each time, the bell traveled by rail, making a large number of stops along the

way so that local people could view it.<sup>[49]</sup> By 1885, the Liberty Bell was widely recognized as a symbol of freedom, and as a treasured relic of Independence, and was growing still more famous as versions of Lippard's legend were reprinted in history and school books.<sup>[50]</sup> In early 1885, the city agreed to let it travel to New Orleans for the World Cotton Centennial exposition. Large crowds mobbed the bell at each stop. In Biloxi, Mississippi, the former President of the Confederate States of America, Jefferson Davis came to the bell. Davis delivered a speech paying homage to it, and urging national unity.<sup>[51]</sup> In 1893, it was sent to Chicago's World Columbian Exposition to be the centerpiece of the state's exhibit in the Pennsylvania Building.<sup>[52]</sup> On July 4, 1893, in Chicago, the bell was serenaded with the first performance of *The Liberty Bell March*, conducted by "America's Bandleader", John Philip Sousa.<sup>[53]</sup> Philadelphians began to cool to the idea of sending it to other cities when it returned from Chicago bearing a new crack, and each new proposed journey met with increasing opposition.<sup>[54]</sup> It was also found that the bell's private watchman had been cutting off small pieces for souvenirs. The city placed the bell in a glass-fronted oak case.<sup>[55]</sup> In 1898, it was taken out of the glass case and hung from its yoke again in the tower hall of Independence Hall, a room that would remain its home until the end of 1975. A guard was posted to discourage souvenir hunters who might otherwise chip at it.<sup>[56]</sup>

By 1909, the bell had made six trips, and not only had the cracking become worse, but souvenir hunters had deprived it of over one percent of its weight. (Its weight was reported as 2,080 lb (940 kg) in 1904.<sup>[57]</sup>) When, in 1912, the organizers of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition requested the bell for the 1915 fair in San Francisco, the city was reluctant to let it travel again. The city finally decided to let it go as the bell had never been west of St. Louis, and it was a chance to bring it to millions who might never see it otherwise.<sup>[58]</sup> However, in 1914, fearing that the cracks might lengthen during the long train ride, the city installed a metal support structure inside the bell, generally called the "spider."<sup>[59]</sup> In February 1915, the bell was tapped gently with wooden mallets to produce sounds that were transmitted to the fair as the signal to open it, a transmission that also inaugurated transcontinental telephone service.<sup>[60]</sup> Some five million Americans saw the bell on its train journey west.<sup>[61]</sup> It is estimated that nearly two million kissed it at the fair, with an uncounted number viewing it. The bell was taken on a different route on its way home; again, five million saw it on the return journey.<sup>[62]</sup> Since the bell returned to Philadelphia, it



The glass-encased Liberty Bell in the tower hall of Independence Hall



The Liberty Bell visits Bunker Hill (obelisk visible background left) in 1903.

has been moved out of doors only five times: three times for patriotic observances during and after World War I, and twice as the bell occupied new homes in 1976 and 2003.<sup>[54][63]</sup> Chicago and San Francisco had obtained its presence after presenting petitions signed by hundreds of thousands of children. Chicago tried again, with a petition signed by 3.4 million schoolchildren, for the 1933 Century of Progress Exhibition and New York presented a petition to secure a visit from the bell for the 1939 New York World's Fair. Both efforts failed.<sup>[64]</sup>

In 1924, one of Independence Hall's exterior doors was replaced by glass, allowing some view of the bell even when the building was closed.<sup>[65]</sup> When Congress enacted the nation's first peacetime draft in 1940, the first Philadelphians required to serve took their oaths of enlistment before the Liberty Bell. Once the war started, the bell was again a symbol, used to sell war bonds.<sup>[66]</sup> In the early days of World War II, it was feared that the bell might be in danger from saboteurs or enemy bombing, and city officials considered moving the bell to Fort Knox, to be stored with the nation's gold reserves. The idea provoked a storm of protest from around the nation, and was abandoned. Officials then considered building an underground steel vault above which it would be displayed, and into which it could be lowered if necessary. The project was dropped when studies found that the digging might undermine the foundations of Independence Hall.<sup>[67]</sup> On December 17, 1944, the Whitechapel Bell Foundry offered to recast the bell at no cost as a gesture of Anglo-American friendship.<sup>[68]</sup> The bell was again tapped on D-Day, as well as in victory on V-E Day and V-J Day.<sup>[69]</sup>

## Park Service administration (1948–present)

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After World War II, and following considerable controversy, the City of Philadelphia agreed that it would transfer custody of the bell and Independence Hall, while retaining ownership, to the federal government. The city would also transfer various colonial-era buildings it owned. Congress agreed to the transfer in 1948, and three years later Independence National Historical Park was founded, incorporating those properties and administered by the National Park Service (NPS or Park Service).<sup>[70]</sup> The Park Service would be responsible for maintaining and displaying the bell.<sup>[71]</sup> The NPS would also administer the three blocks just north of Independence Hall that had been condemned by the state, razed, and developed into a park, Independence Mall.<sup>[70]</sup>



A National Park Service ranger gives a talk about the Liberty Bell to tourists, Independence Hall, July 1951

In the postwar period, the bell became a symbol of freedom used in the Cold War. The bell was chosen for the symbol of a savings bond campaign in 1950. The purpose of this campaign, as Vice President Alben Barkley put it, was to make the country "so strong that no one can impose ruthless, godless ideologies on us".<sup>[71]</sup> In 1955, former residents of nations behind the Iron Curtain were allowed to tap the bell as a symbol of hope and encouragement to their compatriots.<sup>[72]</sup> Foreign dignitaries, such as Israeli Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion and West Berlin Mayor Ernst Reuter were brought to the bell, and they commented that the bell symbolized the link between the United States and their nations.<sup>[71]</sup> During the 1960s, the bell was the site of several protests, both for the civil rights movement, and by various protesters supporting or opposing the Vietnam War.<sup>[73]</sup>

Almost from the start of its stewardship, the Park Service sought to move the bell from Independence Hall to a structure where it would be easier to care for the bell and accommodate visitors. The first such proposal was withdrawn in 1958, after considerable public protest.<sup>[74]</sup> The Park Service tried again as part of the planning for the 1976 United States Bicentennial. The Independence National Historical Park Advisory Committee proposed in 1969 that the bell be moved out of Independence Hall, as the building could not accommodate the millions expected to visit Philadelphia for the Bicentennial.<sup>[75]</sup> In 1972, the Park Service announced plans to



A crowd of tourists gathers around the Liberty Bell, Independence Hall, July 1951

build a large glass tower for the bell at the new visitors center at South Third Street and Chestnut Street, two blocks east of Independence Hall, at a cost of \$5 million, but citizens again protested the move. Instead, in 1973, the Park Service proposed to build a smaller glass pavilion for the bell at the north end of Independence Mall, between Arch and Race Streets. Philadelphia Mayor Frank Rizzo agreed with the pavilion idea, but proposed that the pavilion be built across Chestnut Street from Independence Hall, which the state feared would destroy the view of the historic building from the mall area.<sup>[76]</sup> Rizzo's view prevailed, and the bell was moved to a glass-and-steel Liberty Bell Pavilion, about 200 yards (180 m) from its old home at Independence Hall, as the Bicentennial year began.<sup>[77]</sup>

During the Bicentennial, members of the Procrastinators' Club of America jokingly picketed the Whitechapel Bell Foundry with signs "We got a lemon" and "What about the warranty?" The foundry told the protesters that it would be glad to

replace the bell—so long as it was returned in the original packaging.<sup>[10]</sup> In 1958, the foundry (then trading under the name Mears and Stainbank Foundry) had offered to recast the bell, and was told by the Park Service that neither it nor the public wanted the crack removed.<sup>[74]</sup> The foundry was called upon, in 1976, to cast a full-size replica of the Liberty Bell (known as the Bicentennial Bell) that was presented to the United States by the British monarch, Queen Elizabeth II,<sup>[78]</sup> and was housed in the tower once intended for the Liberty Bell, at the former visitor center on South Third Street.<sup>[79]</sup>



The Liberty Bell Pavilion, the bell's home from 1976 to 2003

## Liberty Bell Center

In 1995, the Park Service began preliminary work on a redesign of Independence Mall. Architects Venturi, Scott Brown & Associates developed a master plan with two design alternatives. The first proposed a block-long visitors center on the south side of Market Street, that would also house the Liberty Bell. This would have interrupted the mall's three-block vista of Independence Hall, and made the bell visible only from the south, i.e. Chestnut Street. The second alternative placed a similar visitors center on the north side of Market Street, also interrupting the mall's vista, with the bell in a small pavilion on the south side.<sup>[80]</sup> City planner Edmund Bacon, who had overseen the mall's design in the 1950s, saw preservation of the vista of Independence Hall as essential. He created his own plan that included a domed bell pavilion built north of Market Street.<sup>[81]</sup> Public reaction to the possibility of moving the Liberty Bell so far from Independence Hall was strongly negative. NPS announced that the bell would remain on the block between Chestnut and Market Streets.<sup>[82]</sup> Other plans were proposed, each had strengths and weaknesses, but the goal of all was to encourage visitors to see more of the historical park than just the Liberty Bell.<sup>[83]</sup>

The Olin Partnership was hired to create a new master plan for Independence Mall; its team included architect Bernard Cywinski, who ultimately won a limited design competition to design what was called the Liberty Bell Center (LBC). Cywinski's design was



Bell Chamber interior, Liberty Bell Center. Independence Hall is in the background, with the Centennial Bell visible in its steeple.



Independence Hall, with Liberty Bell Center to the right

unveiled in early 1999. Significantly larger than the existing pavilion, allowing for exhibit space and an interpretive center,<sup>[84]</sup> the proposed LBC building also would cover about 15% of the footprint of the long-demolished President's House, the "White House" of George Washington and John Adams.<sup>[85]</sup> Archaeologists excavating the LBC's intended site uncovered remnants of the 1790–1800 executive mansion that were reburied.<sup>[86]</sup> The project became highly controversial when it was revealed that Washington's slaves had been housed only feet from the planned LBC's main entrance.<sup>[87]</sup> The Park Service refused to redesign the LBC building, or delay its construction.<sup>[88]</sup> Initially, NPS resisted interpreting the slaves and the slave quarters,<sup>[89]</sup> but after years of protest by Black activists, agreed.<sup>[90]</sup> The new facility that opened hours after the bell was

installed on October 9, 2003, is adjacent to an outline of Washington's slave quarters marked in the pavement, with interpretive panels explaining the significance of what was found.<sup>[91]</sup> The GPS address is 526 Market Street.<sup>[92]</sup>

Inside the LBC, visitors pass through a number of exhibits about the bell before reaching the Liberty Bell itself. Due to security concerns following an attack on the bell by a visitor with a hammer in 2001, the bell is hung out of easy reach of visitors, who are no longer allowed to touch it, and all visitors undergo a security screening.<sup>[91]</sup>

Today, the Liberty Bell weighs 2,080 pounds (940 kg). Its metal is 70% copper and 25% tin, with the remainder consisting of lead, zinc, arsenic, gold and silver. It hangs from what is believed to be its original yoke, made from American elm.<sup>[93]</sup> While the crack in the bell appears to end at the abbreviation "Philad<sup>a</sup>" in the last line of the inscription, that is merely the 19th century widened crack that was filed out in the hopes of allowing the bell to continue to ring; a hairline crack, extending through the bell to the inside continues generally right and gradually moving to the top of the bell, through the word "and" in "Pass and Stow," then through the word "the" before the word "Assembly" in the second line of text, and through the letters "rty" in the word "Liberty" in the first line. The crack ends near the attachment with the yoke.<sup>[94]</sup>



A view of the bell's mount

Professor Constance M. Greiff, in her book tracing the history of Independence National Historical Park, wrote of the Liberty Bell:

[T]he Liberty Bell is the most venerated object in the park, a national icon. It is not as beautiful as some other things that were in Independence Hall in those momentous days two hundred years ago, and it is irreparably damaged. Perhaps that is part of its almost mystical appeal. Like our democracy it is fragile and imperfect, but it has weathered threats, and it has endured.<sup>[95]</sup>

## Legacy and commemorations

In addition to the replicas that are seen at Independence National Historical Park, early replicas of the Liberty Bell include the so-called Justice Bell or Women's Liberty Bell, commissioned in 1915 by suffragists to advocate for women's suffrage. This bell had the same legend as the Liberty Bell, with two added words, "establish justice", words taken from the Preamble to the United States Constitution. It also had the clapper chained to the bell so it could not sound, symbolizing the inability of women, lacking the vote, to influence

political events. The Justice Bell toured extensively to publicize the cause. After the passage of the [Nineteenth Amendment](#) (granting women the vote), the Justice Bell was brought to the front of Independence Hall on August 26, 1920, to finally sound. It remained on a platform before Independence Hall for several months before city officials required that it be taken away, and today is at the [Washington Memorial Chapel at Valley Forge](#).<sup>[96]</sup>



Bicentennial dollar, 1976 issue



Liberty Bell stamp, issue of 1926

See other versions issued in [1960](#), [1961](#), [1975](#)

As part of the Liberty Bell Savings Bonds drive in 1950, 55 replicas of the Liberty Bell (one each for the 48 states, the District of Columbia, and the territories) were ordered by the [United States Department of the Treasury](#) and were cast in [France](#) by the [Fonderie Paccard](#). The bells were to be displayed and rung on patriotic occasions.<sup>[97]</sup> Many of the bells today are sited near state capitol buildings.<sup>[97]</sup> Although Wisconsin's bell is now at its state capitol, initially it was sited on the grounds of the state's Girls Detention Center. Texas' bell is located inside the [Academic Building](#) on the campus of [Texas A&M University](#) in [College Station](#).<sup>[97]</sup> The Texas bell was presented to the university in appreciation of the service of the school's graduates.<sup>[97][98]</sup>

In 1950, too, an enlarged and slightly modified replica of the Liberty Bell, baptized [Freedom Bell](#), was cast in England, brought to the United States, and toured the country as part of a "Crusade of Freedom". It was then shipped to Germany and installed in the tower of West Berlin's city hall. When [Robert F. Kennedy](#) visited the city in 1962, followed by his brother [John F. Kennedy](#) in June 1963, both drew a parallel between the Liberty Bell and the new Freedom Bell.<sup>[99]</sup>

The Liberty Bell appeared on a commemorative coin in 1926 to mark the sesquicentennial of American independence.<sup>[100]</sup> Its first use on a circulating coin was on the [reverse](#) side of the [Franklin half dollar](#), struck between 1948 and 1963.<sup>[101]</sup> It also appeared on the [Bicentennial design](#) of the [Eisenhower dollar](#), superimposed against the moon.<sup>[102]</sup>

On the 150th anniversary of the [Declaration of Independence](#) in 1926 the U.S. Post Office issued a [commemorative stamp](#) depicting the Liberty Bell for the [Sesquicentennial Exposition](#) in Philadelphia in 1926,<sup>[103]</sup> though this stamp actually depicts the replica bell erected at the entrance to the exposition grounds.<sup>[104]</sup> The Liberty Bell was chosen for the stamp design theme because the symbol was most representative of the nation's independence.<sup>[105]</sup> Since then the Liberty Bell has appeared on several other U.S. postage stamps,<sup>[106]</sup> including the first [forever stamp](#), issued since 2007.<sup>[107]</sup>

An image of the Liberty Bell appears on the current \$100 note. The image changes color, depending on the angle at which it is held.<sup>[108]</sup>

The name "Liberty Bell" or "Liberty Belle" is commonly used for commercial purposes, and has denoted brands and business names ranging from a life insurance company to a [Montana](#) escort service.<sup>[109]</sup> [Walt Disney World](#) has a replica of the Liberty Bell that is located in [Liberty Square](#) in the [Magic Kingdom](#). The



Walt Disney World's Liberty Bell replica

replica was cast from the mold of the actual Liberty Bell in 1989.<sup>[97][110][111]</sup> A large outline of the bell hangs over the right-field bleachers at Citizens Bank Park, home of the Philadelphia Phillies baseball team, and is illuminated, swings back and forth, and a bell sound is played whenever one of their players hits a home run or if the Phillies win that game.<sup>[112]</sup> This bell outline replaced one at the Phillies' former home, Veterans Stadium.<sup>[113]</sup> On April 1, 1996, Taco Bell announced via ads and press releases that it had purchased the Liberty Bell and changed its name to the Taco Liberty Bell. The bell, the ads related, would henceforth spend half the year at Taco Bell corporate headquarters in Irvine, California. Outraged calls

flooded Independence National Historical Park, and Park Service officials hastily called a press conference to deny that the bell had been sold. After several hours, Taco Bell admitted that it was an April Fools' Day joke. Despite the protests, company sales of tacos, enchiladas, and burritos rose by more than a half million dollars that week.<sup>[114]</sup>

## See also

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- Liberty Bell Memorial Museum, located in Melbourne, Florida
- Liberty Bell Museum, located in Allentown, Pennsylvania
- Liberty Bell Ruby, a massive ruby sculpted into the shape of the Liberty Bell
- The Mercury spacecraft that astronaut Gus Grissom flew on July 21, 1961, was dubbed Liberty Bell 7. Mercury capsules were somewhat bell-shaped, and this one received a painted crack to mimic the original bell. Liberty Bell 7 became the only Mercury capsule to suffer an integrity failure.
- Margaret Buechner composed a work for chorus and orchestra, Liberty Bell, that incorporates a 1959 recording of the actual bell made by Columbia Records.
- Freedom Bell in Berlin, Germany – given as a gift from Americans to the city of Berlin in 1950 as a symbol of the fight for freedom and against communism in Europe
- The superhero Liberty Belle whose powers are derived from the ringing of the bell.
- The Freedom Bell, American Legion twice-size replica that resides in front of Washington, D.C., Union Station toured the United States aboard the 1975–76 Bicentennial American Freedom Train.
- The Rhodesian Independence Bell, a replica of the Liberty Bell funded by American donors to commemorate Rhodesia's Unilateral Declaration of Independence
- The Tsar Bell, an early 18th-century Russian bell famous for its massive size and its damaged state

## References

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### Notes

1. Nash, pp. 1–2
2. Paige, pp. 2–3
3. Paige, p. 9
4. The Franklin Institute, p. 19
5. One hundred fifty pounds, thirteen shillings and eightpence.

6. *Purchasing power of British Pounds from 1264 to present* ([http://www.measuringworth.com/poweruk/result.php?use%5B%5D=CPI&use%5B%5D=NOMINALEARN&year\\_early=1752&pound71=150&shilling71=13&pence71=8&amount=150.6833333333334&year\\_source=1752&year\\_result=2008](http://www.measuringworth.com/poweruk/result.php?use%5B%5D=CPI&use%5B%5D=NOMINALEARN&year_early=1752&pound71=150&shilling71=13&pence71=8&amount=150.6833333333334&year_source=1752&year_result=2008)) on March 5, 2012. Retrieved August 26, 2010. The same site indicates that the pound sterling was worth \$1.85 in 2008.
7. Kimball, p. 20
8. Nash, p. 7
9. Pierce, James Wilson (1893). *Photographic History of the World's fair and Sketch of the City of Chicago* (<https://archive.org/details/photographichis00piergoog>). Baltimore: R. H. Woodward & Co. p. 491 (<https://archive.org/details/photographichis00piergoog/page/n16>). Retrieved August 17, 2010. "Liberty Bell."
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11. Nash, p. 7–10
12. Nash, pp. 10–11
13. Nash, p. 9
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# White House

The **White House** is the official residence and workplace of the president of the United States. It is located at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW in Washington, D.C., and has been the residence of every U.S. president since John Adams in 1800. The term "White House" is often used as a metonym for the president and their advisers.

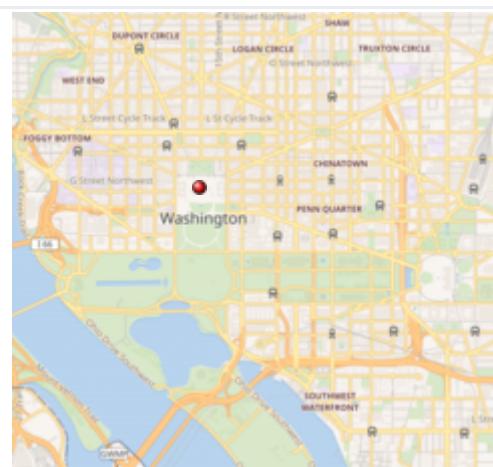
The residence was designed by Irish-born architect James Hoban<sup>[3]</sup> in the neoclassical style. Hoban modelled the building on Leinster House in Dublin, a building which today houses the Oireachtas, the Irish legislature. Construction took place between 1792 and 1800 using Aquia Creek sandstone painted white. When Thomas Jefferson moved into the house in 1801, he (with architect Benjamin Henry Latrobe) added low colonnades on each wing that concealed stables and storage.<sup>[4]</sup> In 1814, during the War of 1812, the mansion was set ablaze by the British Army in the Burning of Washington, destroying the interior and charring much of the exterior. Reconstruction began almost immediately, and President James Monroe moved into the partially reconstructed Executive Residence in October 1817. Exterior construction continued with the addition of the semi-circular South portico in 1824 and the North portico in 1829.

Because of crowding within the executive mansion itself, President Theodore Roosevelt had all work offices relocated to the newly constructed West Wing in 1901. Eight years later in 1909, President William Howard Taft expanded the West Wing and created the first Oval Office, which was eventually moved as the section was expanded. In the main mansion, the third-floor attic was converted to living quarters in 1927 by augmenting the existing hip roof with long shed dormers. A newly constructed East Wing was used as a reception area for social events; Jefferson's colonnades connected the new wings. East Wing alterations were completed in 1946, creating additional office space. By 1948, the residence's load-bearing exterior walls and internal wood beams were found to be close to failure. Under Harry S. Truman, the interior rooms were completely dismantled and a new internal load-bearing steel frame constructed inside the walls. On the exterior, the Truman Balcony was added. Once the structural work was completed, the interior rooms were rebuilt.

The modern-day White House complex includes the Executive Residence, West Wing, East Wing, the Eisenhower Executive Office Building (the former State Department, which now houses offices for the president's staff and the vice president) and Blair House, a guest residence. The Executive Residence is made up of



Top: the northern facade with a columned portico facing Lafayette Square  
Bottom: the southern facade with a semi-circular portico facing the South Lawn and The Ellipse



Location in Central Washington, D.C.

six stories: the Ground Floor, State Floor, Second Floor, and Third Floor, as well as a two-story basement. The property is a National Heritage Site owned by the National Park Service and is part of the President's Park. In 2007, it was ranked second<sup>[5]</sup> on the American Institute of Architects list of "America's Favorite Architecture".

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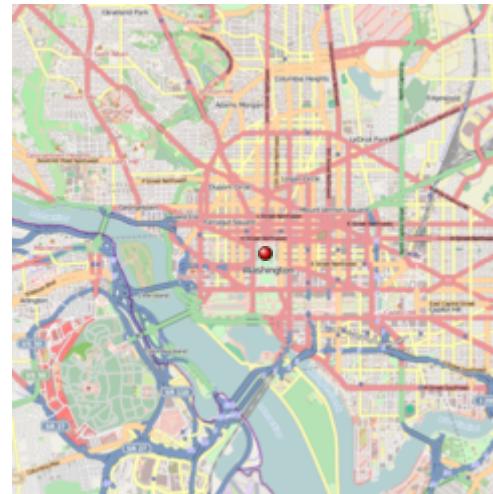
#### References

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## Early history

### 1789–1800



Location in Washington, D.C.



Location in United States

### General information

**Architectural style** Neoclassical, Palladian

**Address** 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington, D.C. 20500 U.S.

**Coordinates** 38°53'52"N  
77°02'11"W

**Current tenants** Joe Biden, President of the United States and the First Family

**Construction started** October 13, 1792

**Completed** November 1, 1800<sup>[1]</sup>

### Technical details

**Floor area** 55,000 sq ft  
(5,100 m<sup>2</sup>)

### Design and construction

Following his April 1789 inauguration, President George Washington occupied two private houses in New York City as the executive mansion. He lived at the first, known as the Franklin House and owned by Treasury Commissioner Samuel Osgood, at 3 Cherry Street through late February 1790.<sup>[6][7]</sup> The executive mansion moved to the larger quarters of the Alexander Macomb House at 39–41 Broadway<sup>[7]</sup> where he stayed, with his wife and a small staff until August 1790. In May 1790, New York began construction of a "proper" house for the presidential mansion, Government House.<sup>[8]</sup> Washington never used the mansion because it was not completed until after the national capital was moved to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in December 1790.<sup>[8]</sup>

The July 1790 Residence Act designated the capital be permanently located in the new Federal District, and temporarily in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, for ten years while the permanent capital was built.<sup>[9]</sup> Philadelphia rented the mansion of the wealthy merchant Robert Morris at 190 High Street (now 524–30 Market Street) as the President's House, which Washington occupied from November 1790 to March 1797.<sup>[10]</sup> Since the house was too small to accommodate the thirty people who made up the presidential family, staff, and servants, Washington had it enlarged.<sup>[10]</sup>

President John Adams also occupied the High Street mansion from March 1797 to May 1800. On Saturday, November 1, 1800, he became the first president to occupy the White House.<sup>[11]</sup>

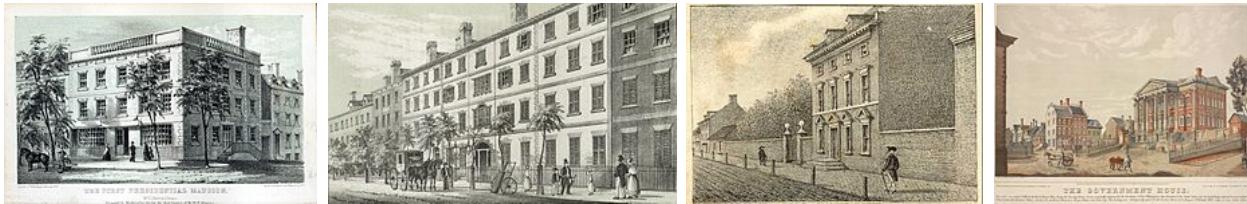
The President's House in Philadelphia was converted into the Union Hotel, and later used for stores, before being demolished in 1832.<sup>[10]</sup>

Philadelphia began construction of a much grander presidential mansion several blocks away in 1792. It was nearly completed by the time of Adam's 1797 inauguration. However, Adams declined to occupy it saying he did not have Congressional authorization to lease the building. It remained vacant until it was sold to the University of Pennsylvania in 1800.<sup>[12]</sup>

<b>Architect</b>	James Hoban
<b>Website</b>	whitehouse.gov ( <a href="https://whitehouse.gov">https://whitehouse.gov</a> )
<b>U.S. National Register of Historic Places</b>	
<b>U.S. National Historic Landmark</b>	
<b>NRHP reference No.</b>	19600001 ( <a href="http://npgallery.nps.gov/AssetDetail/NRIS/1960001">http://npgallery.nps.gov/AssetDetail/NRIS/1960001</a> ) <sup>[2]</sup>
<b>Designated NHL</b>	December 19, 1960



Aerial view of the White House complex, from north. In the foreground is Pennsylvania Avenue, closed to traffic. Center: Executive Residence (1792–1800) with North Portico (1829) facing; left: East Wing (1942); right: West Wing (1901), with the Oval Office (1934) at its southeast corner.



First Presidential Mansion: <u>Samuel Osgood House</u> , Manhattan, New York. Occupied by Washington: April 1789 – February 1790.	Second Presidential Mansion: <u>Alexander Macomb House</u> , Manhattan, New York. Occupied by Washington: February–August 1790.	Third Presidential Mansion: <u>President's House</u> , Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Occupied by Washington: November 1790 – March 1797. Occupied by Adams: March 1797 – May 1800.	<u>Government House</u> , Manhattan, New York (1790–1791). Built to be the permanent presidential mansion, Congress moved the national capital to Philadelphia before its completion.
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House intended for the President, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (1790s). Built to be the permanent presidential mansion, it was not used by any president.

## Architectural competition

The President's House was a major feature of Pierre (Peter) Charles L'Enfant's<sup>[a]</sup> 1791 plan for the newly established federal city, Washington, D.C.<sup>[13]</sup> Washington and his Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson, who both had personal interests in architecture, agreed that the design of the White House, and the Capital, would be chosen in a design competition.<sup>[14]</sup>

Although all proposals for the Capital were rejected, an acceptable drawing for the White House submitted by James Hoban was selected from several including one submitted anonymously by Jefferson himself.<sup>[15]</sup>

Hoban was born in Ireland and trained at the Dublin Society of Arts. He emigrated to the US after the revolution, first seeking work in Philadelphia and later finding success in South Carolina where he designed several buildings including the state capitol at Columbia. Hoban ultimately supervised the construction of both the US Capitol and the White House.<sup>[16]</sup>

President Washington visited Charleston, South Carolina, in May 1791 on his "Southern Tour", and saw the under-construction Charleston County Courthouse designed by Hoban. He is reputed to have met with Hoban then. The following year, he summoned the architect to Philadelphia and met with him in June 1792.<sup>[17]</sup>

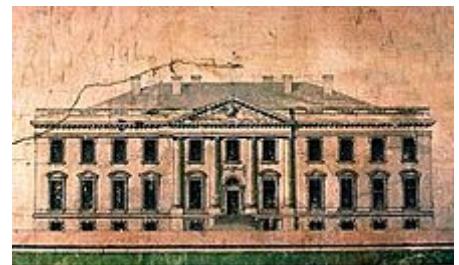
On July 16, 1792, the president met with the commissioners of the federal city to make his judgment in the architectural competition. His review is recorded as being brief, and he quickly selected Hoban's submission.<sup>[18]</sup>

## Design influences

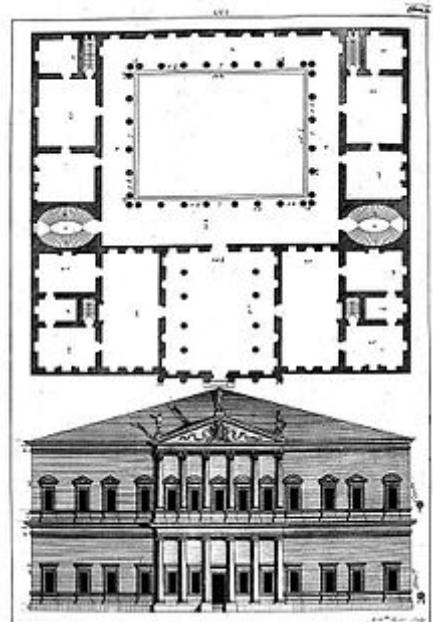
The building has classical inspiration sources, that can be found in the styles of the Roman architect Vitruvius and the Venetian architect Andrea Palladio; Palladio being an Italian architect of the Renaissance whose style evolved into Palladian architecture, which became popular in North America in the 18th century. Hoban's design is influenced by the upper floors of Leinster House, in Dublin, which later became the seat of the Oireachtas (the Irish parliament).<sup>[19]</sup> Several other Georgian-era Irish country houses have been suggested as sources of inspiration for the overall floor plan, details like the bow-fronted south front, and interior details like the former niches in the present Blue Room. These influences, though undocumented, are cited in the official White House guide, and in White House Historical Association publications. The first official White House guide, published in 1962, suggested a link between Hoban's design for the South Portico and Château de Rastignac, a neoclassical country house located in La Bachellerie in the Dordogne region of France and designed by Mathurin Salat. Construction on the French house was initially started before 1789, interrupted by the French Revolution for twenty years and then finally built 1812–1817 (based on Salat's pre-1789 design).<sup>[20]</sup> The theoretical link between the two houses has been criticized because Hoban did not visit France. Supporters of a connection posit that Thomas Jefferson, during his tour of Bordeaux in 1789, viewed Salat's architectural drawings (which were on-file at the college) at the École Spéciale d'Architecture (Bordeaux Architectural College).<sup>[21]</sup> On his return to the US he then shared the influence with Washington, Hoban, Monroe, and Benjamin Henry Latrobe.<sup>[20]</sup>



Hoban's Charleston County Courthouse, Charleston, South Carolina, 1790–92, was admired by Washington.



A 1793 elevation by James Hoban. His 3-story, 9-bay original submission was altered into this 2-story, 11-bay design.



Drawing of Andrea Palladio, Project for Francesco et Lodovico de Trissini, from the book I quattro libri dell'architettura, 1570

<sup>[20]</sup>

## Construction

Though there is no record of a formal ceremony,<sup>[b]</sup> construction of the White House began at noon on October 13, 1792, with the laying of the cornerstone.<sup>[23]</sup> The main residence, as well as foundations of the house, were built largely by enslaved and free African-American laborers, as well as employed Europeans.<sup>[24]</sup> Much of the other work on the house was performed by immigrants, many not yet with citizenship. The sandstone walls were erected by Scottish immigrants, employed by Hoban,<sup>[25]</sup> as were the high-relief rose and garland decorations above the north entrance and the "fish scale" pattern beneath the pediments of the window hoods. There are conflicting claims as to where the sandstone used in the construction of the White House originated. Some reports suggest sandstone from the Croatian island of Brač (specifically the Pučišća quarry whose stone was used to build the ancient Diocletian's Palace in Split) was used in the original construction of the building, contrarily researchers believe limestone from the island was used in the 1902 renovations and not the original construction. Others suggest the original sandstone simply came from Aquia Creek in Stafford County, Virginia, as importing the stone would be too costly.<sup>[26][27][28]</sup> The initial construction took place over a period of eight years, at a reported cost of \$232,371.83 (equivalent to \$3,543,000 in 2020). Although not yet completed, the White House was ready for occupancy circa November 1, 1800.<sup>[29]</sup>

Shortages of material and labor forced alterations to the earlier plan developed by French engineer Pierre Charles L'Enfant for a "palace" that was five times larger than the house that was eventually built.<sup>[25]</sup> The finished structure contained only two main floors instead of the planned three, and a less costly brick served as a lining for the stone façades. When construction was finished, the porous sandstone walls were whitewashed with a mixture of lime, rice glue, casein, and lead, giving the house its familiar color and name.<sup>[25]</sup>



The North Portico of the White House compared to [Leinster House](#)



The [Château de Rastignac](#) compared to the South Portico of the White House, c. 1846

## Architectural description

The north front is the principal façade of the White House and consists of three floors and eleven bays. The ground floor is hidden by a raised carriage ramp and parapet, thus the façade appears to be of two floors. The central three bays are behind a prostyle portico (this was a later addition to the house, built circa 1830) serving, thanks to the carriage ramp, as a porte cochere. The windows of the four bays flanking the portico, at first-floor level, have alternating pointed and segmented pediments, while at second-floor level the pediments are flat. The principal entrance at the center of the portico is surmounted by a lunette fanlight. Above the entrance is a sculpted floral festoon. The roofline is hidden by a balustraded parapet.

The mansion's southern façade is a combination of the Palladian and neoclassical styles of architecture. It is of three floors, all visible. The ground floor is rusticated in the Palladian fashion. At the center of the façade is a neoclassical projecting bow of three bays. The bow is flanked by five bays, the windows of which, as on the north façade, have alternating segmented and pointed pediments at first-floor level. The bow has a ground

floor double staircase leading to an Ionic colonnaded loggia (with the Truman Balcony at second-floor level), known as the south portico. The more modern third floor is hidden by a balustraded parapet and plays no part in the composition of the façade.

## Naming conventions

The building was originally variously referred to as the "President's Palace", "Presidential Mansion", or "President's House".<sup>[30]</sup> The earliest evidence of the public calling it the "White House" was recorded in 1811.<sup>[31]</sup> A myth emerged that during the rebuilding of the structure after the Burning of Washington, white paint was applied to mask the burn damage it had suffered,<sup>[32]</sup> giving the building its namesake hue.<sup>[33]</sup> The name "Executive Mansion" was used in official contexts until President Theodore Roosevelt established the formal name by having "White House–Washington" engraved on the stationery in 1901.<sup>[34][35]</sup> The current letterhead wording and arrangement "The White House" with the word "Washington" centered beneath goes back to the administration of Franklin D. Roosevelt.<sup>[35]</sup>

Although the structure was not completed until some years after the presidency of George Washington, there is speculation that the name of the traditional residence of the president of the United States may have derived from Martha Washington's home, White House Plantation in Virginia, where the nation's first president had courted the first lady in the mid-18th century.<sup>[36]</sup>

## Evolution of the White House

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### Early use, the 1814 fire, and rebuilding

On Saturday, November 1, 1800, John Adams became the first president to take residence in the building.<sup>[25]</sup> The next day he wrote his wife Abigail: "I pray Heaven to bestow the best of blessings on this House, and all that shall hereafter inhabit it. May none but honest and wise men ever rule under this roof."<sup>[37]</sup> President Franklin D. Roosevelt had Adams's blessing carved into the mantel in the State Dining Room.<sup>[37]</sup>

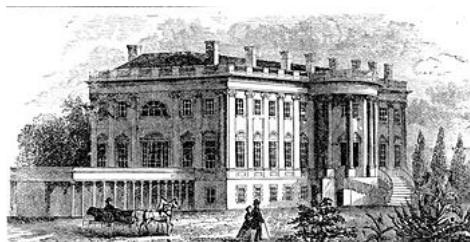
Adams lived in the house only briefly before Thomas Jefferson moved into the "pleasant country residence"<sup>[38]</sup> in 1801. Despite his complaints that the house was too big ("big enough for two emperors, one pope, and the grand lama in the bargain"),<sup>[39]</sup> Jefferson considered how the White House might be added to. With Benjamin Henry Latrobe, he helped lay out the design for the East and West Colonnades, small wings that help conceal the domestic operations of laundry, a stable and storage.<sup>[25]</sup> Today, Jefferson's colonnades link the residence with the East and West Wings.<sup>[25]</sup>

In 1814, during the War of 1812, the White House was set ablaze by British troops<sup>[40]</sup> during the Burning of Washington, in retaliation for attacking and burning Toronto (then called York),<sup>[41]</sup> Port Dover and other towns in Upper Canada; much of Washington was affected by these fires as well. Only the exterior walls remained, and they had to be torn down and mostly reconstructed because of weakening from the fire and subsequent exposure to the elements, except for portions of the south wall. Of the numerous objects taken from the White House when it was ransacked by British troops, only three have been recovered. Employees and slaves rescued a painting of George Washington,<sup>[40]</sup> in 1939, a Canadian man returned a jewelry box to President Franklin Roosevelt, claiming that his grandfather had taken it from Washington, and, also in 1939, a medicine chest that had belonged to President Madison was returned by the descendants of a British naval officer.<sup>[42][43]</sup> Some observers allege that most of these spoils were lost when a convoy of British ships led by HMS *Fantome* sank en route to Halifax off Prospect during a storm on the night of November 24, 1814,<sup>[44][45]</sup> even though *Fantome* had no involvement in that action.<sup>[46]</sup>

After the fire, President James Madison resided in the Octagon House from 1814 to 1815, and then the Seven Buildings from 1815 to the end of his term.<sup>[47]</sup> Meanwhile, both architect Benjamin Henry Latrobe and Hoban contributed to the design and oversight of the reconstruction, which lasted from 1815 until 1817. The south portico was constructed in 1824 during the James Monroe administration; the north portico was built six years later.<sup>[25]</sup> Though Latrobe proposed similar porticos before the fire in 1814, both porticos were built as designed by Hoban.<sup>[48]</sup> An elliptical portico at Château de Rastignac in La Bachellerie, France with nearly identical curved stairs is speculated as the source of inspiration due to its similarity with the South Portico,<sup>[49]</sup> although this matter is one of great debate.<sup>[50]</sup> Italian artisans, brought to Washington to help in constructing the U.S. Capitol, carved the decorative stonework on both porticos. Contrary to speculation, the North Portico was not modeled on a similar portico on another Dublin building, the Viceregal Lodge (now Áras an Uachtaráin, residence of the president of Ireland), for its portico postdates the White House porticos' design.<sup>[49]</sup> For the North Portico, a variation on the Ionic Order was devised incorporating a swag of roses between the volutes. This was done to link the new portico with the earlier carved roses above the entrance.



The White House as it looked following the fire of August 24, 1814



Jefferson and Latrobe's West Wing Colonnade, in this nineteenth-century engraved view, is now the James S. Brady Press Briefing Room.



Principal story plan for the White House by Benjamin Henry Latrobe, 1807



Earliest known photograph of the White House, taken c. 1846 by John Plumbe during the administration of James K. Polk

## Overcrowding and building the West Wing

By the time of the American Civil War, the White House had become overcrowded. The location of the White House was questioned, just north of a canal and swampy lands, which provided conditions ripe for malaria and other unhealthy conditions.<sup>[51]</sup> Brigadier General Nathaniel Michler was tasked to propose solutions to address these concerns. He proposed abandoning the use of the White House as a residence and designed a new estate for the first family at Meridian Hill in Washington, D.C., but Congress rejected the plan.<sup>[51]</sup> Another site under consideration was Metropolis View, today the campus of The Catholic University of America.<sup>[52]</sup>

When Chester A. Arthur took office in 1881, he ordered renovations to the White House to take place as soon as the recently widowed Lucretia Garfield moved out. Arthur inspected the work almost nightly and made several suggestions. Louis Comfort Tiffany was asked to send selected designers to assist. Over twenty wagonloads of furniture and household items were removed from the building and sold at a public auction.<sup>[53]</sup> All that was saved were bust portraits of John Adams and Martin Van Buren.<sup>[54]</sup> A proposal was made to build a new residence south of the White House, but it failed to gain support.

In the fall of 1882 work was done on the main corridor, including tinting the walls pale olive and adding squares of gold leaf, and decorating the ceiling in gold and silver, and colorful traceries woven to spell "USA". The Red Room was painted a dull Pomeranian red, and its ceiling was decorated with gold, silver, and copper stars and stripes of red, white, and blue. A fifty-foot jeweled Tiffany glass screen, supported by imitation marble columns, replaced the glass doors that separated the main corridor from the north vestibule.<sup>[55][56]</sup>

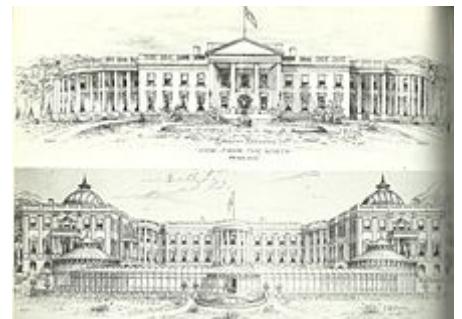
In 1891, First Lady Caroline Harrison proposed major extensions to the White House, including a National Wing on the east for a historical art gallery, and a wing on the west for official functions.<sup>[51]</sup> A plan was devised by Colonel Theodore A. Bingham, which reflected the Harrison proposal.<sup>[51]</sup> These plans were ultimately rejected.

However, in 1902 Theodore Roosevelt hired McKim, Mead & White to carry out expansions and renovations in a neoclassical style suited to the building's architecture, removing the Tiffany screen and all Victorian additions.<sup>[57][58]</sup> Charles McKim himself designed and managed the project, which gave more living space to the president's large family by removing a staircase in the West Hall and moving executive office staff from the second floor of the residence into the new West Wing.<sup>[25]</sup>

President William Howard Taft enlisted the help of architect Nathan C. Wyeth to add additional space to the West Wing, which included the addition of the Oval Office.<sup>[51]</sup> In 1925, Congress enacted legislation allowing the White House to accept gifts of furniture and art for the first time.<sup>[59]:17</sup> The West Wing was damaged by fire on Christmas Eve 1929; Herbert Hoover and his aides moved back into it on April 14, 1930.<sup>[60]</sup> In the 1930s, a second story was added, as well as a larger basement for White House staff, and President Franklin Roosevelt had the Oval Office moved to its present location: adjacent to the Rose Garden.<sup>[25]</sup>



Entrance Hall in 1882, showing the new Tiffany glass screen



Additions proposed by architect Frederick D. Owen (1901)



The North Lawn during the Lincoln administration

## Truman reconstruction



Truman reconstruction, 1949–1952.

A steel structure is built within the exterior shell.

Decades of poor maintenance, the construction of a fourth story attic during the Coolidge administration, and the addition of a second-floor balcony over the south portico for Harry S. Truman<sup>[61]</sup> took a great toll on the brick and sandstone structure built around a timber frame.<sup>[25]</sup> By 1948, the house was declared to be in imminent danger of collapse, forcing President Truman to commission a reconstruction and to live across the street at Blair House from 1949 to 1951.<sup>[62]</sup> The work, done by the firm of Philadelphia contractor John McShain, required the complete dismantling of the interior spaces, construction of a new load-bearing internal steel frame and the reconstruction of the original rooms within the new structure.<sup>[61]</sup> The total cost of the renovations was about \$5.7 million (\$57 million in 2020).<sup>[63]</sup> Some modifications to the floor plan were made, the largest being the repositioning of the grand staircase to open into the Entrance Hall, rather than the Cross Hall.<sup>[61]</sup> Central air conditioning was added, as well as two additional sub-basements providing space for workrooms, storage, and a bomb shelter.<sup>[25]</sup> The Trumans moved back into the White House on March 27, 1952.<sup>[25]</sup> While the house's structure was kept intact by the Truman reconstruction, much of the new interior finishes were generic, and of little historic value. Much of the original plasterwork, some dating back to the 1814–1816 rebuilding, was too

damaged to reinstall, as was the original robust Beaux Arts paneling in the East Room. President Truman had the original timber frame sawn into paneling; the walls of the Vermeil Room, Library, China Room, and Map Room on the ground floor of the main residence were paneled in wood from the timbers.<sup>[64]</sup>

## Jacqueline Kennedy restoration

Jacqueline Kennedy, wife of President John F. Kennedy (1961–63), directed a very extensive and historic redecoration of the house. She enlisted the help of Henry Francis du Pont of the Winterthur Museum to assist in collecting artifacts for the mansion, many of which had once been housed there.<sup>[65]</sup> Other antiques, fine paintings, and improvements of the Kennedy period were donated to the White House by wealthy philanthropists, including the Crowninshield family, Jane Engelhard, Jayne Wrightsman, and the Oppenheimer family.

Stéphane Boudin of the House of Jansen, a Paris interior-design firm that had been recognized worldwide, was employed by Jacqueline Kennedy to assist with the decoration.<sup>[65]</sup> Different periods of the early republic and world history were selected as a theme for each room: the Federal style for the Green Room, French Empire for the Blue Room, American Empire for the Red Room, Louis XVI for the Yellow Oval Room, and Victorian for the president's study, renamed the Treaty Room. Antique furniture was acquired, and decorative fabric and trim based on period documents was produced and installed. The Kennedy restoration resulted in a more authentic White House of grander stature, which recalled the French taste of Madison and Monroe.<sup>[65]</sup> In the Diplomatic Reception Room, Mrs. Kennedy installed an antique "Vue de l'Amérique Nord" wallpaper which Zuber & Cie had designed in 1834.



The Red Room as designed by Stéphane Boudin during the presidency of John F. Kennedy

The wallpaper had hung previously on the walls of another mansion until 1961 when that house was demolished for a grocery store. Just before the demolition, the wallpaper was salvaged and sold to the White House.

The first White House guidebook was produced under the direction of curator Lorraine Waxman Pearce with direct supervision from Mrs. Kennedy.<sup>[66]</sup> Sale of the guidebook helped finance the restoration.

Kennedy showed her restoration of the White House to the public in a televised tour of the house on Valentine's Day in 1962.<sup>[67]</sup>

## The White House since the Kennedy restoration

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The White House complex and vicinity, viewed from the north with the Potomac River, Jefferson Memorial and Washington Monument to the south

Congress enacted legislation in September 1961 declaring the White House a museum. Furniture, fixtures, and decorative arts could now be declared either historic or of artistic interest by the president. This prevented them from being sold (as many objects in the executive mansion had been in the past 150 years). When not in use or display at the White House, these items were to be turned over to the Smithsonian Institution for preservation, study, storage, or exhibition. The White House retains the right to have these items returned.<sup>[59]:29</sup>

Out of respect for the historic character of the White House, no substantive architectural changes have been made to the house since the Truman renovation.<sup>[68]</sup> Since the Kennedy restoration, every presidential family has made some changes to the

private quarters of the White House, but the Committee for the Preservation of the White House must approve any modifications to the State Rooms. Charged with maintaining the historical integrity of the White House, the congressionally-authorized committee works with each First Family – usually represented by the first lady, the White House curator, and the chief usher – to implement the family's proposals for altering the house.<sup>[69]</sup>

During the Nixon Administration (1969–1974), First Lady Pat Nixon refurbished the Green Room, Blue Room, and Red Room, working with Clement Conger, the curator appointed by President Richard Nixon.<sup>[70]</sup> Mrs. Nixon's efforts brought more than 600 artifacts to the house, the largest acquisition by any administration.<sup>[71]</sup> Her husband created the modern press briefing room over Franklin Roosevelt's old swimming pool.<sup>[72]</sup> Nixon also added a single-lane bowling alley to the White House basement.<sup>[73]</sup>

Computers and the first laser printer were added during the Carter administration, and the use of computer technology was expanded during the Reagan administration.<sup>[74]</sup> A Carter-era innovation, a set of solar water heating panels that were mounted on the roof of the White House, was removed during Reagan's presidency.<sup>[75][76]</sup> Redecorations were made to the private family quarters and maintenance was made to public areas during the Reagan years.<sup>[77]</sup> The house was accredited as a museum in 1988.<sup>[77]</sup>

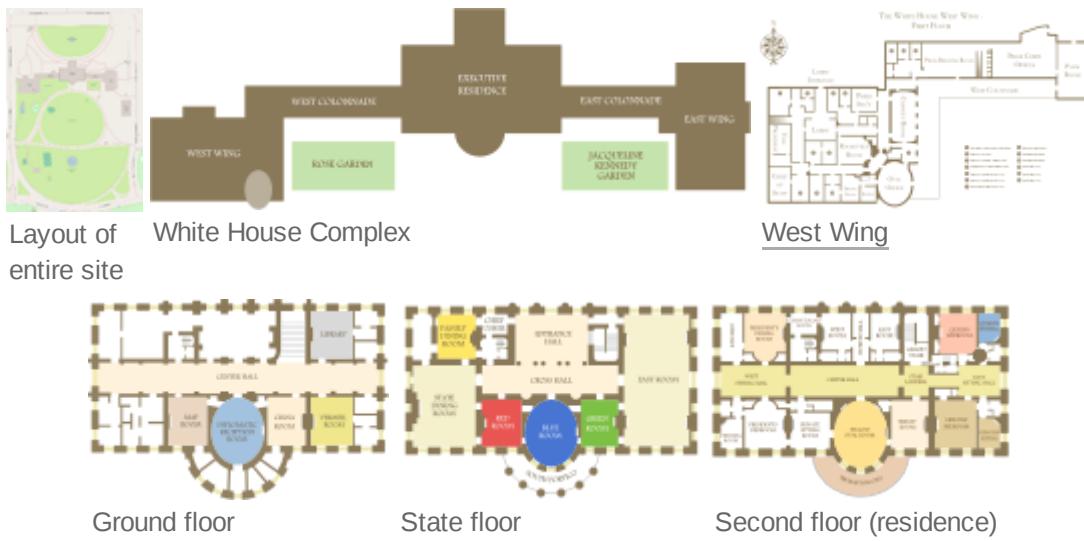
In the 1990s, Bill and Hillary Clinton refurbished some rooms with the assistance of Arkansas decorator Kaki Hockersmith, including the Oval Office, the East Room, Blue Room, State Dining Room, Lincoln Bedroom, and Lincoln Sitting Room.<sup>[78]</sup> During the administration of George W. Bush, First Lady Laura Bush refurbished the Lincoln Bedroom in a style contemporary with the Lincoln era; the Green Room, Cabinet Room, and theater were also refurbished.<sup>[78]</sup>

The White House became one of the first wheelchair-accessible government buildings in Washington when modifications were made during the presidency of Franklin D. Roosevelt, who used a wheelchair because of his paralytic illness. In the 1990s, Hillary Clinton, at the suggestion of Visitors Office Director Melinda N. Bates, approved the addition of a ramp in the East Wing corridor. It allowed easy wheelchair access for the public tours and special events that enter through the secure entrance building on the east side.

In 2003, the Bush administration reinstalled solar thermal heaters.<sup>[76]</sup> These units are used to heat water for landscape maintenance personnel and for the presidential pool and spa. One hundred sixty-seven solar photovoltaic grid-tied panels were installed at the same time on the roof of the maintenance facility. The changes were not publicized as a White House spokeswoman said the changes were an internal matter. The story was picked up by industry trade journals.<sup>[79]</sup> In 2013, President Barack Obama had a set of solar panels installed on the roof of the White House, making it the first time solar power would be used for the president's living quarters.<sup>[80][81]</sup>

## Layout and amenities

Today the group of buildings housing the presidency is known as the White House Complex. It includes the central Executive Residence flanked by the East Wing and West Wing. The Chief Usher coordinates day to day household operations. The White House includes six stories and 55,000 square feet (5,100 m<sup>2</sup>) of floor space, 132 rooms and 35 bathrooms, 412 doors, 147 windows, twenty-eight fireplaces, eight staircases, three elevators, five full-time chefs, a tennis court, a (single-lane) bowling alley, a movie theater (officially called the White House Family Theater<sup>[82]</sup>), a jogging track, a swimming pool, and a putting green.<sup>[35]</sup> It receives up to 30,000 visitors each week.<sup>[83]</sup>



## Executive Residence

The original residence is in the center. Two colonnades – one on the east and one on the west – designed by Jefferson, now serve to connect the East and West Wings added later. The Executive Residence houses the president's dwelling, as well as rooms for ceremonies and official entertaining. The State Floor of the residence building includes the East Room, Green Room, Blue Room, Red Room, State Dining Room, Family Dining Room, Cross Hall, Entrance Hall, and Grand Staircase.<sup>[84]</sup> The Ground Floor is made up of the Diplomatic Reception Room, Map Room, China Room, Vermeil Room, Library, the main kitchen, and other offices.<sup>[85]</sup> The second floor family residence includes the Yellow Oval Room, East and West Sitting Halls, the White House Master Bedroom, President's Dining Room, the Treaty Room, Lincoln Bedroom and Queens'

Bedroom, as well as two additional bedrooms, a smaller kitchen, and a private dressing room.<sup>[86]</sup> The third floor consists of the White House Solarium, Game Room, Linen Room, a Diet Kitchen, and another sitting room (previously used as President George W. Bush's workout room).<sup>[87]</sup>

## West Wing

The West Wing houses the president's office (the Oval Office) and offices of his senior staff, with room for about 50 employees. It also includes the Cabinet Room, where the president conducts business meetings and where the Cabinet meets,<sup>[88]</sup> as well as the White House Situation Room, James S. Brady Press Briefing Room, and Roosevelt Room.<sup>[89]</sup> In 2007, work was completed on renovations of the press briefing room, adding fiber optic cables and LCD screens for the display of charts and graphs.<sup>[90]</sup> The makeover took 11 months and cost of \$8 million, out of which news outlets paid \$2 million.<sup>[90]</sup> In September 2010, a two-year project began on the West Wing, creating a multistory underground structure.<sup>[91]</sup>

Some members of the president's staff are located in the adjacent Eisenhower Executive Office Building, until 1999 called the Old Executive Office Building, and historically the State War and Navy building.<sup>[90]</sup>

The Oval Office, Roosevelt Room, and other portions of the West Wing were partially replicated on a sound stage and used as the setting for *The West Wing* television show.<sup>[92]</sup>

## East Wing

The East Wing, which contains additional office space, was added to the White House in 1942. Among its uses, the East Wing has intermittently housed the offices and staff of the first lady, and the White House Social Office. Rosalynn Carter, in 1977, was the first to place her personal office in the East Wing and to formally call it the "Office of the First Lady". The East Wing was built during World War II in order to hide the construction of an underground bunker to be used in emergencies. The bunker has come to be known as the Presidential Emergency Operations Center.

## Grounds

The White House and grounds cover just over 18 acres (about 7.3 hectares). Before the construction of the North Portico, most public events were entered from the South Lawn, the grading and planting of which was ordered by Thomas Jefferson. Jefferson also drafted a planting plan for the North Lawn that included large trees that would have mostly obscured the house from Pennsylvania Avenue. During the mid-to-late 19th century a series of ever larger greenhouses were built on the west side of the house, where the current West Wing is located. During this period, the North Lawn was planted with ornate carpet-style flowerbeds. The general layout of the White House grounds today is based on the 1935 design by Frederick Law Olmsted Jr. of the Olmsted Brothers firm, commissioned by President Franklin D. Roosevelt. During the Kennedy administration, the White House Rose Garden was redesigned by Rachel Lambert Mellon. The Rose Garden borders the West Colonnade. Bordering the East Colonnade is the Jacqueline Kennedy Garden, which was begun by Jacqueline Kennedy but completed after her husband's assassination. On the weekend of June 23, 2006, a century-old American Elm (*Ulmus americana* L.) tree on the north side of the building came down during one of the many storms amid intense flooding. Among the oldest trees on the grounds are several magnolias (*Magnolia grandiflora*) planted by Andrew Jackson, including the Jackson Magnolia, reportedly grown from a sprout taken from the favorite tree of Jackson's recently deceased wife, the sprout planted after Jackson moved into the White House. The tree stood for over 200 years; but in 2017, having become too weak to stand on its own, it was decided it should be removed and replaced with one of its offspring.<sup>[93][94]</sup>

Michelle Obama planted the White House's first organic garden and installed beehives on the South Lawn of the White House, which will supply organic produce and honey to the First Family and for state dinners and other official gatherings.<sup>[95]</sup> In 2020, First Lady Melania Trump redesigned the Rose Garden.



The Cross Hall, connecting the State Dining Room and the East Room on the State Floor

Marine One prepares to land on the South Lawn, where State Arrival Ceremonies are held.

View from the south, with south fountain



View from the north, with north fountain



White House at night, view from the north

## Public access and security

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### Historical accessibility

Like the English and Irish country houses it was modeled on, the White House was, from the start, open to the public until the early part of the 20th century. President Thomas Jefferson held an open house for his second inaugural in 1805, and many of the people at his swearing-in ceremony at the Capitol followed him home, where he greeted them in the Blue Room. Those open houses sometimes became rowdy: in 1829, President Andrew Jackson had to leave for a hotel when roughly 20,000 citizens celebrated his inauguration inside the White House. His aides ultimately had to lure the mob outside with washtubs filled with a potent cocktail of orange juice and whiskey.<sup>[96]</sup> Even so, the practice continued until 1885, when newly elected Grover Cleveland arranged for a presidential review of the troops from a grandstand in front of the White House instead of the traditional open house. Inspired by Washington's open houses in New York and Philadelphia, John Adams began the tradition of the White House New Year's Reception.<sup>[97]</sup> Jefferson also permitted public tours of his house, which have continued ever since, except during wartime, and began the tradition of annual reception on the Fourth of July. Those receptions ended in the early 1930s, although President Bill Clinton briefly revived the New Year's Day open house in his first term.

### Aviation incidents

In February 1974, a stolen army helicopter landed without authorization on the White House's grounds.<sup>[98]</sup> Twenty years later, in 1994, a light plane flown by Frank Eugene Corder crashed on the White House grounds, and he died instantly.<sup>[99]</sup>

As a result of increased security regarding air traffic in the capital, the White House was evacuated in May 2005 before an unauthorized aircraft could approach the grounds.<sup>[100]</sup>

## Closure of Pennsylvania Avenue



A uniformed US Secret Service Agent on Pennsylvania Avenue

buildings are.<sup>[102]</sup>

On May 20, 1995, primarily as a response to the Oklahoma City bombing of April 19, 1995, the United States Secret Service closed off Pennsylvania Avenue to vehicular traffic in front of the White House from the eastern edge of Lafayette Park to 17th Street. Later, the closure was extended an additional block to the east to 15th Street, and East Executive Avenue, a small street between the White House and the Treasury Building.

After September 11, 2001, this change was made permanent in addition to closing E Street between the South Portico of the White House and the Ellipse.<sup>[101]</sup> In response to the Boston Marathon bombing, the road was closed to the public in its entirety for a period of two days.

The Pennsylvania Avenue closing has been opposed by organized civic groups in Washington, D.C. They argue that the closing impedes traffic flow unnecessarily and is inconsistent with the well-conceived historic plan for the city. As for security considerations, they note that the White House is set much farther back from the street than numerous other sensitive federal

Prior to its inclusion within the fenced compound that now includes the Old Executive Office Building to the west and the Treasury Building to the east, this sidewalk served as a queuing area for the daily public tours of the White House. These tours were suspended in the wake of the September 11 attacks. In September 2003, they resumed on a limited basis for groups making prior arrangements through their Congressional representatives or embassies in Washington for foreign nationals and submitting to background checks, but the White House remained closed to the public.<sup>[103]</sup> White House tours were suspended for most of 2013 due to budget constraints after sequestration.<sup>[104]</sup> The White House reopened to the public in November 2013.<sup>[105]</sup>

## Protection

The White House Complex is protected by the United States Secret Service and the United States Park Police.

NASAMS (Norwegian Advanced Surface to Air Missile System) were used to guard air space over Washington, D.C. during the 2005 presidential inauguration. The same NASAMS units have since been used to protect the president and all airspace around the White House, which is strictly prohibited to aircraft.<sup>[106][107]</sup>



For security reasons, the section of Pennsylvania Avenue on the north side of the White House is closed to all vehicular traffic, except government officials.

North front of the White House on the reverse (back) of the [U.S. \\$20 bill](#).

## See also

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- [Camp David](#)
- [Pedro Casanave](#)
- [Germantown White House](#)
- [Graphics and Calligraphy Office](#)
- [List of largest houses in the United States](#)
- [List of National Historic Landmarks in Washington, D.C.](#)
- [List of residences of presidents of the United States](#)
- [Number One Observatory Circle, residence of the vice president](#)
- [Reported White House ghosts](#)
- [White House Acquisition Trust](#)
- [White House Chief Calligrapher](#)
- [White House Chief Floral Designer](#)
- [White House Christmas tree](#)
- [White House Communications Agency](#)
- [White House Endowment Trust](#)
- [White House Executive Chef](#)
- [White House Fellows](#)
- [White House History](#)
- [White House Social Secretary](#)
- [Category:Rooms in the White House](#)
- [White House COVID-19 outbreak](#)

## Notes

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- a. L'Enfant identified himself as "Peter Charles L'Enfant" during most of his life while residing in the United States. He wrote this name on his ["Plan of the city intended for the permanent seat of the government of t\(he\) United States ..."](http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g3850.ct000512) (<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g3850.ct000512>) (Washington, D.C.) and on other legal documents. However, during the early 1900s, a French ambassador to the US, [Jean Jules Jusserand](#), popularized the use of L'Enfant's birth name, "Pierre Charles L'Enfant". (Reference: Bowling, Kenneth R (2002). *Peter Charles L'Enfant: The Life and Work of the City Planner*. Princeton Architectural Press.

*vision, honor, and male friendship in the early American Republic.* George Washington University, Washington, D.C. ISBN 978-0-9727611-0-9). The United States Code states in 40 U.S.C. § 3309 (<https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/40/3309>): "(a) In General. – The purposes of this chapter shall be carried out in the District of Columbia as nearly as may be practicable in harmony with the plan of Peter Charles L'Enfant." The National Park Service identifies L'Enfant as "Major Peter Charles L'Enfant ([" and as "Major Pierre \(Peter\) Charles L'Enfant \(\[https://www.nps.gov/nr/travel/presidents/washington\\\_monument.html\]\(https://www.nps.gov/nr/travel/presidents/washington\_monument.html\)\)" on its website.](http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/travel/Wash/ext.htm#washington)

b. Sources disagree<sup>[22]</sup>

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## External links

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- Official website (<https://www.whitehouse.gov>) 
- The White House Historical Association (<http://www.whitehousehistory.org/>), with historical photos, online tours and exhibits, timelines, and facts
- President's Park (White House) (<http://www.nps.gov/whho/>) part of the [National Park Service](#)
- The White House Museum (<http://www.whitehousemuseum.org/>), a detailed online tour
  - Detailed 3D computer model (<http://www.whitehousemuseum.org/model/>) of White House and grounds
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# Washington Monument

The **Washington Monument** is an obelisk within the National Mall in Washington, D.C., built to commemorate George Washington, once commander-in-chief of the Continental Army (1775–1784) in the American Revolutionary War and the first President of the United States (1789–1797). Located almost due east of the Reflecting Pool and the Lincoln Memorial,<sup>[2]</sup> the monument, made of marble, granite, and bluestone gneiss,<sup>[3]</sup> is both the world's tallest predominantly stone structure and the world's tallest obelisk,<sup>[A]</sup> standing 554 feet  $7\frac{1}{32}$  inches (169.046 m) tall according to the U.S. National Geodetic Survey (measured 2013–14) or 555 feet  $5\frac{1}{8}$  inches (169.294 m) tall, according to the National Park Service (measured 1884).<sup>[B]</sup> It is the tallest monumental column in the world if all are measured above their pedestrian entrances.<sup>[A]</sup> Overtaking the Cologne Cathedral, it was the tallest structure in the world between 1884 and 1889, after which it was overtaken by the Eiffel Tower in Paris.

Construction of the presidential memorial began in 1848 and was halted for a period of 23 years, from 1854 to 1877 due to a lack of funds, a struggle for control over the Washington National Monument Society, and the American Civil War. Although the stone structure was completed in 1884, internal ironwork, the knoll, and installation of memorial stones were not completed until 1888. A difference in shading of the marble, visible approximately 150 feet (46 m) or 27% up, shows where construction was halted and later resumed with marble from a different source. The original design was by Robert Mills (1781–1855) of South Carolina, but he did not include his proposed colonnade due to a lack of funds, proceeding only with a bare obelisk. The cornerstone was laid on July 4, 1848; the first stone was laid atop the unfinished stump on August 7, 1880; the capstone was set on December 6, 1884; the completed monument was dedicated on February 21, 1885;<sup>[14]</sup> and officially opened October 9, 1888.

The Washington Monument is a hollow Egyptian style stone obelisk with a 500-foot (152.4 m) tall column surmounted by a 55-foot (16.8 m) tall pyramidion. Its walls are 15 feet (4.6 m) thick at its base and  $1\frac{1}{2}$  feet (0.46 m) thick at their top. The marble pyramidion has thin walls only 7 inches (18 cm) thick supported by six arches, two between opposite walls that cross at the center of the pyramidion and four smaller corner arches. The top of the pyramidion is a large marble capstone with a small aluminum pyramid at its apex with inscriptions on all four sides. The lowest 150 feet (45.7 m) of the walls, constructed during the first phase 1848–1854, are composed of a pile of bluestone gneiss rubble stones (not finished stones) held together by a large amount of mortar with a facade of semi-finished marble stones about  $1\frac{1}{4}$  feet (0.4 m) thick. The upper 350 feet (106.7 m) of the walls, constructed during the second phase 1880–1884, are composed of finished marble surface stones, half of which project into the walls, partially backed by finished granite stones.<sup>[15]</sup>

The interior is occupied by iron stairs that spiral up the walls, with an elevator in the center, each supported by four iron columns, which do not support the stone structure. The stairs contain fifty sections, most on the north and south walls, with many long landings stretching between them along the east and west walls. These landings allowed many inscribed memorial stones of various materials and sizes to be easily viewed while the stairs were accessible (until 1976), plus one memorial stone between stairs that is difficult to view. The pyramidion has eight observation windows, two per side, and eight red aircraft warning lights, two per side. Two aluminum lightning rods, connected via the elevator support columns to ground water, protect the monument. The monument's present foundation is 37 feet (11.3 m) thick, consisting of half of its original bluestone gneiss rubble encased in concrete. At the northeast corner of the foundation, 21 feet (6.4 m) below ground, is the marble cornerstone, including a zinc case filled with memorabilia.<sup>[15]</sup> Fifty American flags fly on a large circle of poles centered on the monument.<sup>[16]</sup> In 2001, a temporary screening facility was added to the entrance to prevent a terrorist attack.<sup>[17]</sup> An earthquake in 2011 slightly damaged the monument, and it was closed until 2014.<sup>[18]</sup> It was closed again for elevator system repairs, security upgrades, and mitigation of soil contamination from August 2016 to September 2019.

## Washington Monument



The Washington Monument, pictured in October 2020.

<b>Location</b>	National Mall, Washington D.C., United States
<b>Coordinates</b>	38°53'22"N 77°2'7"W <sup>[1]:6, 82, 86</sup>
<b>Area</b>	106.01 acres (42.90 ha)
<b>Height</b>	555 ft (169 m)
<b>Built</b>	1848–1854, 1879– 1884
<b>Visitors</b>	671,031 (in 2008)
<b>Governing body</b>	National Park Service
<b>Website</b>	Washington Monument ( <a href="https://www.nps.gov/wamo/">https://www.nps.gov/wamo/</a> )

## U.S. National Register of Historic Places

<b>Designated</b>	October 15, 1966
<b>Reference no.</b>	66000035

## U.S. National Memorial

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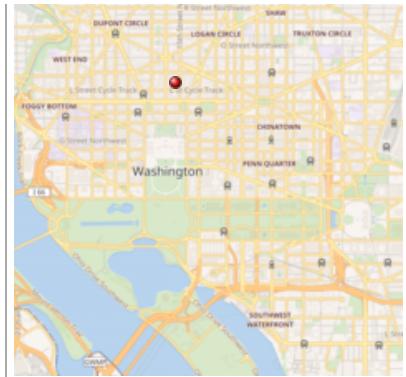
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Location of Washington Monument in Central Washington, D.C.



Washington Monument (the District of Columbia)



Washington Monument (the United States)

# History

## Rationale

George Washington (1732–1799), hailed as the father of his country, and as the leader who was "first in war, first in peace and first in the hearts of his countrymen" (in eulogy by Maj. Gen. 'Light-Horse Harry' Lee at Washington's funeral, December 26, 1799), was the dominant military and political leader of the new United States of America from 1775 to 1799. Even his former enemy King George III called him "the greatest character of the age".<sup>[19]</sup>

At his death in 1799, he left a critical legacy: Washington was the unchallenged public icon of American military and civic patriotism. He was also identified with the Federalist Party, which lost control of the national government in 1800 to the Jeffersonian Republicans, who were reluctant to celebrate the hero of the opposition party.<sup>[20]</sup>

## Proposals for a memorial

Starting with victory in the Revolution, there were many proposals to build a monument to Washington, beginning with an authorization in 1783 by the old Confederation Congress to erect an equestrian statue of the General in a future American national capital city. After his December 1799 death, the United States Congress authorized a suitable memorial in the planned national capital then under construction since 1791, but the decision was reversed when the Democratic-Republican Party (Jeffersonian Republicans)

took control of Congress in 1801 after the pivotal [1800 Election](#), with the first change of power between opposing political parties.<sup>[21]</sup> The Republicans were dismayed that Washington had become the symbol of the [Federalist Party](#); furthermore the values of Republicanism seemed hostile to the idea of building monuments to powerful men. They also blocked his image on coins or the celebration of his birthday. Further political squabbling, along with the North–South division on the Civil War, blocked the completion of the Washington Monument until the late 19th century. By that time, Washington had the image of a national hero who could be celebrated by both North and South, and memorials to him were no longer controversial.<sup>[22]</sup>

As early as 1783, the old [Confederation Congress](#) (successors after 1781 to the earlier [Second Continental Congress](#)) had resolved "That an equestrian statue of George Washington be erected at the place where the residence of Congress shall be established". The proposal called for engraving on the statue which explained it had been erected "in honor of George Washington, the illustrious Commander-in-Chief of the Armies of the United States of America during the war which vindicated and secured their liberty, sovereignty, and independence".<sup>[23]</sup> Currently, there are two equestrian statues of President Washington in the national capital city of Washington, D.C. One is located in [Washington Circle](#) at the intersection of the [Foggy Bottom](#) and [West End](#) neighborhoods at the north end of the [George Washington University](#) campus, and the other is in the gardens of the [National Cathedral](#) of the [Episcopal Church](#) on Mount St. Alban in northwest Washington.

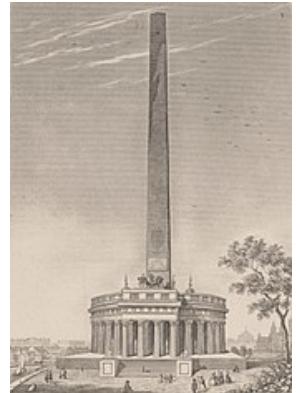
On December 24, 1799, 10 days after Washington's death, a U.S. Congressional committee recommended a different type of monument. [John Marshall](#) (1755–1835), a [Representative](#) from Virginia (who later became [Chief Justice of the United States](#), 1801–1835) proposed that a tomb be erected within the [Capitol](#) and it was designed later to place such a crypt sepulchre below the rotunda of the great dome. However, a lack of funds, disagreement over what type of memorial would best honor the country's first president, and the Washington family's reluctance to move his body from [Mount Vernon](#) prevented progress on any project.<sup>[24]</sup>

## Design

Progress toward a memorial finally began in 1833. That year a large group of citizens formed the Washington National Monument Society. Three years later, in 1836, after they had raised \$28,000 in donations (equivalent to \$1,000,000 in 2019), they announced a competition for the design of the memorial.<sup>[25]:chp 1</sup>

On September 23, 1835, the board of managers of the society described their expectations:<sup>[26]</sup>

It is proposed that the contemplated monument shall be like him in whose honor it is to be constructed, unparalleled in the world, and commensurate with the gratitude, liberality, and patriotism of the people by whom it is to be erected ... [It] should blend stupendousness with elegance, and be of such magnitude and beauty as to be an object of pride to the American people, and of admiration to all who see it. Its material is intended to be wholly American, and to be of marble and granite brought from each state, that each state may participate in the glory of contributing material as well as in funds to its construction.



Print of the proposed Washington Monument by architect Robert Mills (1781–1855), Proposed Plan circa 1845–1848

The society held a competition for designs in 1836. In 1845, the winner was announced to be architect [Robert Mills](#), supposedly the first native-born American to be professionally trained as an architect.<sup>[6]:2–2</sup> The citizens of [Baltimore](#) had chosen him in 1814 to build one of the [first monuments to George Washington](#) originally planned for the former courthouse square in their port city, and he had designed a tall elaborately decorated [Greek column](#) with balconies, surmounted by a statue of the President. Mills' Baltimore monument, with cornerstone laid and construction begun in 1815, was later simplified to a plain column shaft with a statue of a toga-clad Washington at the top when it was completed in 1829, but moved (because of its height) to the then [rural hills to the north](#), where the city's growth would later extend. Mills also knew the capital well, with its being only 40 miles (65 kilometers) southwest of Baltimore, and his having just been chosen Architect of Public Buildings for Washington. His design called for a circular colonnaded building 250 feet (76 m) in diameter and 100 feet (30 m) high from which sprang a four-sided obelisk 500 feet (150 m) high, for a total elevation of 600 feet (180 m). A massive cylindrical pillar 70 feet (21 m) in diameter supported the obelisk at the center of the building. The obelisk was to be 70 feet (21 m) square<sup>[C]</sup> at the base and 40 feet (12 m) square at the top with a slightly peaked roof. Both the obelisk and pillar were hollow within which a railway spiraled up. The obelisk had no doorway—instead its interior was entered from the interior of the pillar upon which it was mounted. The pillar had an "arched way" at its base. The top of the portico of the building would feature Washington standing in a chariot holding the reins of six horses. Inside the colonnade would be statues of 30 prominent [Revolutionary War](#) heroes as well as statues of the 56 signers of the [Declaration of Independence](#).<sup>[27]:6–8[15]:13[28]:26–28</sup>

Criticism of Mills's design and its estimated price tag of more than \$1 million (in 1848 money, equivalent to \$20,000,000 in 2019) caused the society to hesitate. On April 11, 1848, the society decided, due to a lack of funds, to build only a simple plain obelisk. Mills's 1848 obelisk was to be 500 feet tall, 55 feet (17 m) square at the base and 35 feet (11 m) square at the top. It had two massive doorways, each 15 feet (4.6 m) high and 6 feet (1.8 m) wide, on the east and west sides of its base.<sup>[15]:15, 21</sup> Surrounding each

doorway were raised jambs, a heavy pediment, and entablature within which was carved an Egyptian-style winged sun and asps.<sup>[29][15]:23[28]:353+</sup> Some of these details can be seen in the 1860 photograph below at Donations run out, after clicking on the image and viewing the original file at its highest magnification. This original design conformed to a massive temple which was to have surrounded the base of the obelisk, but because it was never built, the architect of the second phase of construction Thomas Lincoln Casey smoothed down the projecting jambs, pediment and entablature in 1885, walled up the west entrance with marble forming an alcove, and reduced the east entrance to 8 feet (2.4 m) high.<sup>[30][15]:90–91</sup> The western alcove has contained a bronze statue of Washington since 1992–93. Also during 1992–93 a limestone surround was installed at the east elevator entrance decorated with a winged sun and asps to mimic Mills's 1848 design.

## Construction

The Washington Monument was originally intended to be located at the point at which a line running directly south from the center of the White House crossed a line running directly west from the center of the U.S. Capitol on Capitol Hill. French born and military engineer Pierre (Peter) Charles L'Enfant's 1791 visionary "Plan of the city intended for the permanent seat of the government of the United States ..." designated this point as the location of the proposed central equestrian statue of George Washington that the old Confederation Congress had voted for in 1783, at the end of the American Revolutionary War (1775–1783) in a future American national capital city.<sup>[31][D]</sup> The ground at the intended location proved to be too unstable to support a structure as heavy as the planned obelisk, so the monument's location was moved 390 feet (118.9 m) east-southeast.<sup>[E]</sup> At that originally intended site there now stands a small monolith called the Jefferson Pier.<sup>[36][37]</sup> This offset caused the McMillan Plan to specify that the Lincoln Memorial should be "placed on the main axis of the Capitol and the Monument", about 1° south of due west of the Capitol or the monument, not due west of the Capitol or the monument.<sup>[38][F]</sup>



West side of Jefferson Pier with Washington Monument in background

## Excavation and initial construction

Construction of the monument finally began three years later in 1848 with the excavation of the site, the laying of the cornerstone on the prepared bed, and laying the original foundation around and on top of the cornerstone, before the construction of its massive walls began the next year. Regarding modern claims of slave labor being used in construction, Washington Monument Historian John Steele Gordon stated "I can't say for certain, but the stonemasonry was pretty highly skilled, so it's unlikely that slaves would've been doing it. The stones were cut by stonemasons, which is highly skilled work; and the stones were hoisted by means of steam engines, so you'd need a skilled engineer and foreman for stuff like that. Tending the steam engine, building the cast-iron staircase inside—that wasn't grunt work. ... The early quarries were in Maryland, so slave labor was undoubtedly used to quarry and haul the stone"<sup>[39]</sup> Abraham Riesman, who quoted Gordon, states "there were plenty of people who worked as skilled laborers while enslaved in antebellum America. Indeed, there were enslaved people who worked as stonemasons. So the possibility remains that there were slaves who performed some of the necessary skilled labor for the monument."<sup>[39]</sup> According to historian Jesse Holland, it is very likely that African-American slaves were among the construction workers, given that slavery prevailed in Washington and its surrounding states at that time, and slaves were commonly used in public and private construction.<sup>[40]</sup>

Gordon's arguments are valid for the second phase (1879–1888) after slavery was abolished, when every stone laid required dressing and polishing by a skilled stonemason. This includes the iron staircase which was constructed 1885–86. That the stonemasons in the quarry were slaves is confirmed because all quarry workers were slaves during the construction of the United States Capitol during the 1790s.<sup>[41]:5–6</sup> However, Holland's views are valid for the first phase because most of its construction only required unskilled manual labor. No information survives concerning the method used to lift stones that weighed several tons each during the first phase, whether by a manual winch or a steam engine.<sup>[15]:17–23</sup> The surviving information concerning slaves that built the core of the United States Capitol during the 1790s is not much help. At the time, the District of Columbia outside of Georgetown was sparsely populated so the federal government rented slaves from their owners who were paid a fee for their slaves' normal daily labor. Any overtime for Sundays, holidays, and nights was paid directly to the slaves which they could use for daily needs or to save to buy their freedom.<sup>[41]:9</sup> Conversely, the first phase of the monument was constructed by a private entity, the Washington National Monument Society, which may not have been as magnanimous as the federal government, but most information was lost during the 1850s while two Societies vied for control of the monument. Useful information concerning the use of slaves during the major expansion of the Capitol during the 1850s, nearly contemporaneous with the monument's first phase, does not exist.

Only a small number of stones used in the first phase required a skilled stonemason, the marble blocks on the outer surface of the monument (their inner surfaces were left very rough) and those gneiss stones that form the rough inner walls of the monument (all other surfaces of those inner stones within the walls were left jagged). The vast majority of all gneiss stones laid during the first phase, those between the outer and inner surfaces of the walls, from very large to very small jagged stones, form a pile of rubble held together by a large amount of mortar. The top surface of this rubble can be seen below at Walls in an 1880 drawing made just before the polished/rough marble and granite stones used in the second phase were laid atop it. The original foundation below the walls was made of layered gneiss rubble, but without the massive stones used within the walls. Most of the gneiss stones used during the first

phase were obtained from quarries in the upper Potomac River Valley. Almost all the marble stones of the first and second phases came from two Maryland quarries about 20 miles (30 km) north of downtown Baltimore in rural Baltimore County where stone for their first Washington Monument was obtained.

On Independence Day, July 4, 1848, the Freemasons, the same organization to which Washington belonged, laid the cornerstone (symbolically, not physically).<sup>[28]:45, 136–143</sup> According to Joseph R. Chandler:<sup>[28]:136, 140–141[42]</sup>

No more Washingtons shall come in our time ... But his virtues are stamped on the heart of mankind. He who is great in the battlefield looks upward to the generalship of Washington. He who grows wise in counsel feels that he is imitating Washington. He who can resign power against the wishes of a people, has in his eye the bright example of Washington.<sup>[42]</sup>

Two years later, on a torrid July 4, 1850, George Washington Parke Custis (1781–1857), the adopted son of George Washington and grandson of Martha Washington (1731–1802), dedicated a stone from the people of the District of Columbia to the Monument at a ceremony that 12th President Zachary Taylor (1784–1850, served 1849–1850) attended, just five days before he died from food poisoning.<sup>[43]</sup>

## Donations run out



The partially completed monument, photographed by Mathew Brady; circa 1860

Construction continued until 1854, when donations ran out and the monument had reached a height of 152 feet (46.3 m). At that time a memorial stone that was contributed by Pope Pius IX, called the Pope's Stone, was destroyed by members of the anti-Catholic, nativist American Party, better known as the "Know-Nothings", during the early morning hours of March 6, 1854 (a priest replaced it in 1982 using the Latin phrase "A Roma Americae" instead of the original stone's English phrase "Rome to America"). Economic and political conditions of the time caused public contributions to the Washington National Monument Society to cease, so they appealed to Congress for money.<sup>[15]:23, 25–26[44]:16, 215, 222–3</sup>

The request had just reached the floor of the House of Representatives when the Know-Nothing Party seized control of the Society on February 22, 1855, a year after construction funds ran out. Congress immediately tabled its expected contribution of \$200,000 to the Society, effectively halting the Federal appropriation. During its tenure, the Know-Nothing Society added only two courses of masonry, or four feet, to the monument using rejected masonry it found on site, increasing the height of the shaft to 156 feet. The original Society

refused to recognize the takeover, so the two rival Societies existed side by side until 1858. With the Know-Nothing Party disintegrating and unable to secure contributions for the monument, it surrendered its possession of the monument to the original Society three and a half years later on October 20, 1858. To prevent future takeovers, the U.S. Congress incorporated the Society on February 22, 1859 with a stated charter and set of rules and procedures.<sup>[25]:chp 3[28]:52–65</sup>

## Post-Civil War

The American Civil War (1861–1865), halted all work on the monument, but interest grew after the war's end. Engineers studied the foundation several times to determine if it was strong enough for continued construction after 20 years of effective inactivity. In 1876, the American Centennial of the Declaration of Independence, Congress agreed to appropriate another \$200,000 to resume construction.<sup>[45]</sup>

Before work could begin again, arguments about the most appropriate design resumed. Many people thought a simple obelisk, one without the colonnade, would be too bare. Architect Mills was reputed to have said omitting the colonnade would make the monument look like "a stalk of asparagus"; another critic said it offered "little ... to be proud of".<sup>[24]</sup>

This attitude led people to submit alternative designs. Both the Washington National Monument Society and Congress held discussions about how the monument should be finished. The Society considered five new designs, concluding that the one by William Wetmore Story (1819–1895), seemed "vastly superior in artistic taste and beauty". Congress deliberated over those five as well as Mills's original. While it was deciding, it ordered work on the obelisk to continue. Finally, the members of the society agreed to abandon the colonnade and alter the obelisk so it conformed to classical Egyptian proportions.<sup>[26]</sup>

## Resumption

Construction resumed in 1879 under the direction of Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Lincoln Casey of the United States Army Corps of Engineers. Casey redesigned the foundation, strengthening it so it could support a structure that ultimately weighed more than 40,000 tons. The first stone atop the unfinished stump was laid on August 7, 1880, in a small ceremony attended by President Rutherford B.

Hayes, Casey and a few others. The president placed a small coin on which he had scratched his initials and the date in the bed of wet cement at the 150-foot level before the first stone was laid on top of it.<sup>[15]:76</sup> Casey found 92 memorial stones ("presented stones") already inlaid into the interior walls of the first phase of construction. Before construction continued he temporarily removed eight stones at the 150-foot level so that the walls at that level could be sloped outward, producing thinner second-phase walls. He inserted those stones and most of the remaining memorial stones stored in the lapidarium into the interior walls during 1885–1889.<sup>[44]:11–17</sup> The bottom third of the monument is a slightly lighter shade than the rest of the construction because the marble was obtained from different quarries.<sup>[46]</sup>

The building of the monument proceeded quickly after Congress had provided sufficient funding. In four years, it was completed, with the 100-ounce (2.83 kg) aluminum apex/lightning-rod being put in place on December 6, 1884.<sup>[45]</sup> The apex was the largest single piece of aluminum cast at the time, when aluminum commanded a price comparable to silver.<sup>[10]</sup> Two years later, the Hall-Héroult process made aluminum easier to produce and the price of aluminum plummeted, though it should have provided a lustrous, non-rusting apex.<sup>[G]:[47]</sup> The monument opened to the public on October 9, 1888.<sup>[48]</sup>

## Dedication

The Monument was dedicated on February 21, 1885.<sup>[14]</sup> Over 800 people were present on the monument grounds to hear speeches during a frigid day by Ohio Senator John Sherman (1823–1900), the Rev. Henderson Suter, William Wilson Corcoran (of the Washington National Monument Society) read by Dr. James C. Welling because Corcoran was unable to attend, Freemason Myron M. Parker, Col. Thomas Lincoln Casey of the Army Corps of Engineers, and President Chester A. Arthur.<sup>[45][28]:104[49]</sup> President Arthur proclaimed:

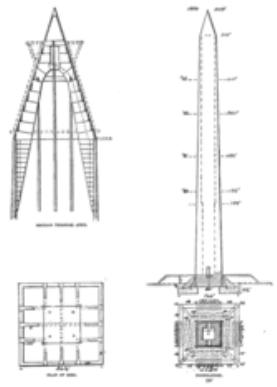
I do now .... in behalf of the people, receive this monument .... and declare it dedicated from this time forth to the immortal name and memory of George Washington.<sup>[49]</sup>

After the speeches Lieutenant-General Philip Sheridan (1831–1888), Civil War Cavalry veteran and then General-in-Chief of the United States Army led a procession, which included the dignitaries and the crowd, past the Executive Mansion, now the White House, then via Pennsylvania Avenue to the east main entrance of the Capitol, where 21st President Chester Arthur (1829–1886, served 1881–1885) received passing troops. Then, in the House of Representatives Chamber at the U.S. Capitol, the president, his Cabinet, diplomats and others listened to Representative John Davis Long (1838–1915), (former Lieutenant Governor and Governor of Massachusetts and future Secretary of the Navy) read a speech written a few months earlier by Robert C. Winthrop (1809–1894), formerly the Speaker of the House of Representatives when the cornerstone was laid 37 years earlier in 1848, but now too ill to personally deliver his speech.<sup>[28]:234–260</sup> A final speech was given by John W. Daniel (1842–1910), of Virginia, a well-regarded lawyer, author and Representative (congressman), and Senator. The festivities concluded that evening with fireworks, both aerial and ground displays.<sup>[28]:260–285[50][51]</sup>

## Later history

At completion, it was the tallest building in the world, until the Eiffel Tower was completed four years later in Paris in 1889. It is still the tallest building in Washington, D.C.<sup>[52][53]</sup> The Heights of Buildings Act of 1910 restricts new building heights to no more than 20 feet (6.1 m) greater than the width of the adjacent street.<sup>[54]</sup> This monument is taller than the obelisks around the capitals of Europe and in Egypt and Ethiopia, but ordinary antique obelisks were quarried as a monolithic block of stone, and were therefore seldom taller than approximately 100 feet (30 m).<sup>[55]</sup>

The Washington Monument attracted enormous crowds before it officially opened. For six months after its dedication, 10,041 people climbed the 900 steps and 47 large landings to the top. After the elevator that had been used to raise building materials was altered to carry passengers, the number of visitors grew rapidly, and an average of 55,000 people per month were going to the top by 1888, only three years after its completion and dedication.<sup>[56]</sup> The annual visitor count peaked at an average of 1.1 million people between 1979 and 1997. From 2005 to 2010, when restrictions were placed on the number of visitors allowed per day, the Washington Monument had an annual average of 631,000 visitors.<sup>[57]</sup> As with all historic areas administered by the National Park Service (an agency of the U.S. Department of the Interior), the national memorial was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on October 15, 1966.<sup>[58]</sup>



Monument plans and timeline of construction

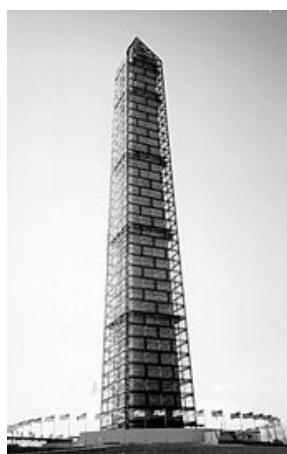


P. H. McLaughlin setting the aluminum apex with Thomas Lincoln Casey (hands up)



The Washington Monument almost complete around 1884

In the early 1900s, material started oozing out between the outer stones of the first construction period below the 150-foot mark, and was referred to by tourists as "geological tuberculosis". This was caused by the weathering of the cement and rubble filler between the outer and inner walls. As the lower section of the monument was exposed to cold and hot and damp and dry weather conditions, the material dissolved and worked its way through the cracks between the stones of the outer wall, solidifying as it dripped down their outer surface.<sup>[59]</sup>



The monument undergoing restoration in 1999

For ten hours in December 1982, the Washington Monument and eight tourists were held hostage by a nuclear arms protester, Norman Mayer, claiming to have explosives in a van he drove to the monument's base. United States Park Police shot and killed Mayer. The monument was undamaged in the incident, and it was discovered later that Mayer did not have explosives. After this incident, the surrounding grounds were modified in places to restrict the possible unauthorized approach of motor vehicles.<sup>[60]</sup>

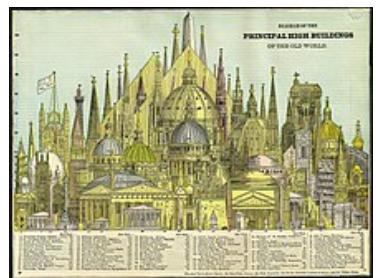


Diagram of the Principal High Buildings of the Old World, 1884. The Washington Monument is the tallest structure represented.

The monument underwent an extensive restoration project between the years of 1998 and 2001. During this time it was completely covered in scaffolding designed by the American architect Michael Graves (who was also responsible for the interior changes).<sup>[61]</sup> The project included cleaning, repairing and repointing the monument's exterior and interior stonework. The stone in publicly accessible interior spaces was encased in glass to prevent vandalism, while new windows with narrower frames were installed (to increase the viewing space). New exhibits celebrating the life of George Washington, and the monument's place in history, were also added.<sup>[62]</sup>

A temporary interactive visitor center, dubbed the "Discovery Channel Center" was also constructed during the project. The center provided a simulated ride to the top of the monument, and shared information with visitors during phases in which the monument was closed.<sup>[63]</sup> The majority of the project's phases were completed by summer 2000, allowing the monument to reopen July 31, 2000.<sup>[62]</sup> The monument temporarily closed again on December 4, 2000, to allow a new elevator cab to be installed, completing the final phase of the restoration project. The new cab included glass windows, allowing visitors to see some of the 194 memorial stones with their inscriptions embedded in the monument's walls. The installation of the cab took much longer than anticipated, and the monument did not reopen until February 22, 2002. The final cost of the restoration project was \$10.5 million.<sup>[64]</sup>

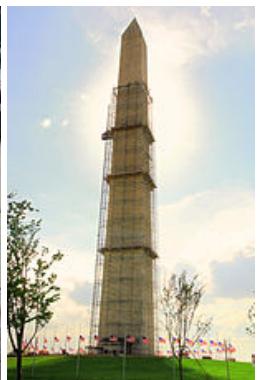
On September 7, 2004 the monument closed for a \$15 million renovation, which included numerous security upgrades and redesign of the monument grounds by landscape architect Laurie Olin (b. 1938). The renovations were due partly to security concerns following the September 11, 2001 attacks and the start of the War on Terror. The monument reopened April 1, 2005, while the surrounding grounds remained closed until the landscape was finished later that summer.<sup>[65][66]</sup>

## 2011 earthquake damage

On August 23, 2011, the Washington Monument sustained damage during the 5.8 magnitude 2011 Virginia earthquake:<sup>[67]</sup> over 150 cracks were found in the monument.<sup>[68]</sup> A National Park Service spokesperson reported that inspectors discovered a crack near the top of the structure, and announced that the monument would be closed indefinitely.<sup>[69][70]</sup> A block in the pyramidion also was partially dislodged, and pieces of stone, stone chips, mortar, and paint chips came free of the monument and "littered" the interior stairs and observation deck.<sup>[71]</sup> The Park Service said it was bringing in two structural engineering firms (Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates, Inc. and Tipping Mar Associates) with extensive experience in historic buildings and earthquake-damaged structures to assess the monument.<sup>[72]</sup>



Crack in a stone at the top of the monument after the 2011 Virginia earthquake



Repairs on the Washington Monument in 2013

Officials said an examination of the monument's exterior revealed a "debris field" of mortar and pieces of stone around the base of the monument, and several "substantial" pieces of stone had fallen inside the memorial.<sup>[70]</sup> A crack in the central stone of the west face of the pyramidion was 1 inch (2.5 cm) wide and 4 feet (1.2 m) long.<sup>[73][74]</sup> Park Service inspectors also discovered that the elevator system had been damaged, and was operating only to the 250-foot (76 m) level, but was soon repaired.<sup>[75]</sup>

On September 27, 2011, Denali National Park ranger Brandon Latham arrived to assist four climbers belonging to a "difficult access" team from Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates.<sup>[70][74]</sup> The reason for the inspection was the park agency's suspicion that there were more cracks on the monument's upper section not visible from the inside. The agency said it filled the cracks that occurred on August 23. After Hurricane Irene hit the area on August 27, water was discovered inside the memorial, leading the Park Service to suspect there was more undiscovered damage.<sup>[70]</sup> The rappellers used radios to report what they found to engineering experts on the ground.<sup>[76]</sup> Wiss, Janney, Elstner climber Dave Megerle took three hours to set up the rappelling equipment and set up a barrier around the monument's lightning rod system atop the pyramidion;<sup>[73]</sup> it was the first time the hatch in the pyramidion had been open since 2000.<sup>[73]</sup>

The external inspection of the monument was completed on October 5, 2011. In addition to the 4-foot (1.2 m) long west crack, the inspection found several corner cracks and surface spalls (pieces of stone broken loose) at or near the top of the monument, and more loss of joint mortar lower down the monument. The full report was issued in December 2011.<sup>[18]</sup> Bob Vogel, Superintendent of the National Mall and Memorial Parks, emphasized that the monument was not in danger of collapse. "It's structurally sound and not going anywhere", he told the national media at a press conference on September 26, 2011.<sup>[74]</sup>

More than \$200,000 was spent between August 24 and September 26 inspecting the structure.<sup>[70]</sup> The National Park Service said that it would soon begin sealing the exterior cracks on the monument to protect it from rain and snow.<sup>[76][77]</sup>

On July 9, 2012, the National Park Service announced that the monument would be closed for repairs until 2014.<sup>[78]</sup> The National Park Service hired construction management firm Hill International in conjunction with joint-venture partner Louis Berger Group to provide coordination between the designer, Wiss, Janney, and Elstner Associates, the general contractor Perini, and numerous stakeholders.<sup>[79]</sup> NPS said a portion of the plaza at the base of the monument would be removed and scaffolding constructed around the exterior. In July 2013, lighting was added to the scaffolding.<sup>[80]</sup> Some stone pieces saved during the 2011 inspection would be refastened to the monument, while "Dutchman patches"<sup>[H]</sup> would be used in other places. Several of the stone lips that help hold the pyramidion's 2,000-pound (910 kg) exterior slabs in place were also damaged, so engineers installed stainless steel brackets to more securely fasten them to the monument.<sup>[82]</sup>

The National Park Service reopened the Washington Monument to visitors on May 12, 2014, eight days ahead of schedule.<sup>[83][79]</sup> Repairs to the monument cost \$15 million,<sup>[68]</sup> with taxpayers funding \$7.5 million of the cost and David Rubenstein funding the other \$7.5 million.<sup>[84]</sup> At the reopening Interior Secretary Sally Jewell, Today show weatherman Al Roker, and American Idol Season 12 winner Candice Glover were present.<sup>[85]</sup>

## Subsequent problems and repairs

The monument continued to be plagued by problems after the earthquake, including in January 2017 when the lights illuminating it went out.<sup>[86]</sup> The monument was closed again in September 2016 due to reliability issues with the elevator system.<sup>[87]</sup> On December 2, 2016, the National Park Service announced that the monument would be closed until 2019 in order to modernize the elevator. The \$2–3 million project was to correct the elevator's ongoing mechanical, electrical and computer issues, which had shuttered the monument since August 17. The National Park Service requested funding in its FY 2017 President's Budget Request to construct a permanent screening facility for the Washington Monument.<sup>[88]</sup> The final months of closure were for mitigation of possibly contaminated underground soil thought to have been introduced in the 1880s.<sup>[89]</sup> The monument reopened September 19, 2019.<sup>[90]</sup>

## January 2021

On January 11, 2021, a few days after the storming of the United States Capitol, the National Park Service announced a two-week closure of the monument due to "credible threats to visitors and park resources".<sup>[91]</sup>

## Components

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### Cornerstone

The cornerstone was laid with great ceremony at the northeast corner of the lowest course or step of the old foundation on July 4, 1848. Robert Mills, the architect of the monument, stated in September 1848, "The foundations are now brought up nearly to the surface of the ground; the second step being nearly completed, which covers up the corner stone."<sup>[15]:20</sup> Therefore, the cornerstone was laid below the 1848 ground level. In 1880, the ground level was raised 17 feet (5.2 m) to the base of the shaft by the addition of a 30-foot (9.1 m) wide earthen embankment encircling the reinforced foundation, widened another 30 feet in 1881, and then the knoll was constructed in 1887–88.<sup>[6]:B-36-B-39[15]:70, 95–96</sup> If the cornerstone was not moved during the strengthening of the foundation in 1879–80, its upper surface would now be 21 feet (6.4 m) below the pavement just outside the northeast corner of the shaft. It would now be sandwiched between the concrete slab under the old foundation and the concrete buttress completely encircling what remains of the old foundation. During the strengthening process, about half by volume of the periphery of the lowest seven of

eight courses or steps of the old foundation (gneiss rubble) was removed to provide good footing for the buttress. Although a few diagrams, pictures and descriptions of this process exist, the fate of the cornerstone is not mentioned.<sup>[6]:2-7-2-8, 3-3-3-5, 4-3-4-4, B-11-B-18, figs 2.5-2.7, 3.2-3.6, 3.13, 4.8-4.11</sup><sup>[15]:67-73</sup>

The cornerstone was a 24,500-pound (11,100 kg) marble block 2.5 feet (0.76 m) high and 6.5 feet (2.0 m) square with a large hole for a zinc case filled with memorabilia. The hole was covered by a copper plate inscribed with the date of the Declaration of Independence (July 4, 1776), the date the cornerstone was laid (July 4, 1848), and the names of the managers of the Washington National Monument Society. The memorabilia in the zinc case included items associated with the monument, the city of Washington, the national government, state governments, benevolent societies, and George Washington, plus miscellaneous publications, both governmental and commercial, a coin set, and a Bible, totaling 73 items or collections of items, as well as 71 newspapers containing articles relating to George Washington or the monument.<sup>[25]:app C[28]:pp 43-46, 109-166</sup>

The ceremony began with a parade of dignitaries in carriages, marching troops, fire companies, and benevolent societies.<sup>[25]:chp 2[28]:44-48</sup><sup>[50]:16-17, 45-47</sup> A long oration was delivered by the Speaker of the House of Representatives Robert C. Winthrop.<sup>[28]:113-130</sup> Then, the cornerstone was pronounced sound after a Masonic ceremony using George Washington's Masonic gavel, apron and sash, as well as other Masonic symbols. In attendance were President James K. Polk and other federal, state and local government officials, Elizabeth Schuyler Hamilton, Mrs. Dolley Madison, Mrs. John Quincy Adams, and George Washington Parke Custis, among 15,000 to 20,000 others, including a bald eagle. The ceremony ended with fireworks that evening.

## Memorial stones



Memorial stone from Utah representing the former provisional State of Deseret

States, cities, foreign countries, benevolent societies, other organizations, and individuals have contributed 194 memorial stones, all inserted into the east and west interior walls above stair landings or levels for easy viewing, except one on the south interior wall between stairs that is difficult to view. The sources disagree on the number of stones for two reasons: whether one or both "height stones" are included, and stones not yet on display at the time of a source's publication cannot be included. The "height stones" refer to two stones that indicate height: during the first phase of construction a stone with an inscription that includes the phrase "from the foundation to this height 100 feet" was installed just below the 80-90-foot stairway and high above the 60-70-foot stairway,<sup>[7]:sheet 25[44]:52</sup> during the second phase of construction a stone with a horizontal line and the phrase "top of statue on Capitol" was installed on the 330-foot level.<sup>[7]:sheet 30[92]</sup>

The *Historic Structure Report* (HSR, 2004) named 194 "memorial stones" by level, including both height stones.<sup>[6]:4-17-4-20, 5-6, "194" on 4-17</sup> Jacob (2005) described in detail and pictured 193 "commemorative stones", including the 100-foot stone but not the Capitol stone.<sup>[44]:"193" on 1</sup> The *Historic American Buildings Survey* (HABS, 1994) showed the location of 193 "memorial stones", but did not describe or name any. HABS showed both height stones, but did not show one stone not yet installed in 1994.<sup>[7]:sheets 22-25, 28-30</sup> Olszewski (1971) named 190 "memorial stones" by level, including the Capitol stone but not the 100-foot stone. Olszewski did not include three stones not yet installed in 1971.<sup>[25]:chp 6, app D, "190" in chp 6</sup>

Of 194 stones, 94 are marble, 40 are granite, 29 are limestone, 8 are sandstone, with 23 miscellaneous types, including stones with two types of material and those whose materials are not identified.<sup>[1]</sup> Unusual materials include native copper (Michigan),<sup>[44]:147</sup> pipestone (Minnesota),<sup>[44]:153</sup> petrified wood (Arizona),<sup>[44]:213</sup> and jadeite (Alaska).<sup>[44]:220</sup> The stones vary in size from about 1.5 feet (0.46 m) square (Carthage)<sup>[1]</sup> to about 6 by 8 feet (1.8 m × 2.4 m) (Philadelphia and New York City).<sup>[44]:3, 90, 124, 218</sup>

Utah contributed one stone as a territory and another as a state, both with inscriptions that include its pre-territorial name, Deseret, both located on the 220-foot level.<sup>[44]:154-155</sup>

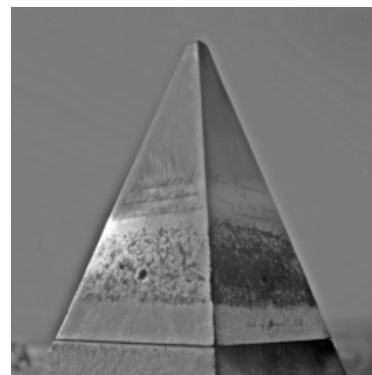
A stone at the 240-foot level of the monument is inscribed in Welsh: *Fy Iaith, Fy Ngwlad, Fy Nghenedl, Cymry am byth* (My Language, My Country, My Nation, Welsh forever). The stone, imported from Wales, was donated by Welsh citizens of New York.<sup>[44]:170[94]</sup> Two other stones were presented by the Sunday Schools of the Methodist Episcopal Church in New York and the Sabbath School children of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Philadelphia—the former quotes from the Bible verse Proverbs 10:7, "The memory of the just is blessed".<sup>[44]:190, 192</sup>

Ottoman Sultan Abdul Mejid I donated \$30,000 toward the construction of the Washington monument. The Sultans' donation was the largest single donation toward the building of the Washington Monument. The Sultan's intention was to bridge peace between the Ottomans and the Americans. The stone containing the Turkish inscriptions commemorating this event is on the 190-foot level. The translation of the inscriptions state, "To support the continuation of true friendship Abdul Mejid Khan's clear and pure name was written on the lofty stone in Washington."<sup>[44]:128</sup> It combines the works of two eminent calligraphers: an imperial *tughra* by Mustafa Rakim's student Haşim Efendi, and an inscription in *jalī ta'līq* script by Kazasker Mustafa İzzet Efendi, the calligrapher who wrote the giant medallions at Hagia Sophia in Istanbul.<sup>[95][96]</sup>

One stone was donated by the Ryukyu Kingdom and brought back by Commodore Matthew C. Perry,<sup>[97]</sup> but never arrived in Washington (it was replaced in 1989).<sup>[44]:210</sup> Many of the stones donated for the monument carried inscriptions that did not commemorate George Washington. For example, one from the Templars of Honor and Temperance stated "We will not make, buy, sell, or use as a beverage, any spirituous or malt liquors, Wine, Cider, or any other Alcoholic Liquor."<sup>[44]:140</sup> (George Washington himself had owned a whiskey distillery which operated at Mount Vernon after he left the presidency.<sup>[98]</sup>)

## Aluminum apex

The aluminum apex, composed of a metal that at the time was as rare and valuable as silver, was cast by William Frishmuth of Philadelphia.<sup>[10]</sup> At the time of casting, it was the largest piece of aluminum in the world. Before the installation, it was put on public display at Tiffany's in New York City and stepped over by visitors who could say they had "stepped over the top of the Washington Monument". It was 8.9 inches (23 cm) tall before  $\frac{3}{8}$  inch (1 cm) was vaporized from its tip by lightning strikes during 1885–1934, when it was protected from further damage by tall lightning rods surrounding it. Its base is 5.6 inches (14 cm) square. The angle between opposite sides at its tip is  $34^\circ 48'$ . It weighed 100 ounces (2.83 kg) before lightning strikes removed a small amount of aluminum from its tip and sides.<sup>[30]</sup> Spectral analysis in 1934 showed that it was composed of 97.87% aluminum with the rest impurities.<sup>[10]</sup> It has a shallow depression in its base to match a slightly raised area atop the small upper surface of the marble capstone, which aligns the sides of the apex with those of the capstone, and the downward protruding lip around that area prevents water from entering the joint.<sup>[15]:83–84</sup> It has a large hole in the center of its base to receive a threaded 1.5-inch (3.8 cm) diameter copper rod which attaches it to the monument and used to form part of the lightning protection system.<sup>[15]:91</sup> In 2015 the National Geodetic Survey reported the coordinates of the 1 mm dimple atop the aluminum apex as  $38^\circ 53' 22.08920''\text{N}$   $77^\circ 2' 6.92910''\text{W}$  (WGS 84).<sup>[1]:6, 82, 86</sup>



Aluminum apex showing inscriptions on its east (left) and north (right) faces. Lightning rods not shown.

The four faces of the external aluminum apex all bear inscriptions in cursive writing (Snell Round hand), which are incised into the aluminum.<sup>[10]</sup> The apex was inscribed on site after it was delivered. Most inscriptions are the original 1884 inscriptions, except for the top three lines on the east face which were added in 1934. From 1885 to 1934 a wide gold-plated copper band that held eight short lightning rods, two per side but not at its corners, covered most of the inscriptions, which were damaged and illegible as shown in the accompanying picture made in 1934. A new band including eight long lightning rods, one at each corner and one at the middle of each side, was added in 1934 and removed and discarded in 2013. The inscriptions that it covered were still damaged and illegible in 2013.<sup>[1]:90–95</sup> Only the top four and bottom two lines of the north face, the first and last lines of the west face, the top four lines of the south face, and the top three lines of the east face are still legible. Even though the inscriptions are no longer covered, no attempt was made to repair them when the apex was accessible in 2013. The following table shows legible inscriptions in blue and illegible inscriptions in red.<sup>[1]:93</sup> No colors appear on the actual apex. The inscriptions occupy the lower portions of triangles, thus the inscribed upper lines are necessarily shorter than some lower lines.

North face	West face	South face	East face
<u>Joint Commission at Setting of Cap Stone.</u>  <u>Chester A. Arthur.</u> <u>W. W. Corcoran, Chairman.</u> <u>M. E. Bell.</u> <u>Edward Clark.</u> <u>John Newton.</u> <u>Act of August 2, 1876.</u>	<u>Corner Stone Laid on Bed of Foundation July 4, 1848.</u>  <u>First Stone at Height of 152 feet laid August 7, 1880.</u>  <u>Capstone set December 6, 1884.</u>	<u>Chief Engineer and Architect,</u> <u>Thos. Lincoln Casey,</u> <u>Colonel, Corps of Engineers.</u> <u>Assistants:</u> <u>George W. Davis, Captain, 14th Infantry.</u> <u>Bernard R. Green, Civil Engineer.</u> <u>Master Mechanic,</u> <u>P. H. McLaughlin.</u>	<u>Repaired 1934,</u> <u>National Park Service,</u> <u>Department of the Interior.</u>  <u>Laus Deo.</u>

Although most printed sources, Harvey (1903),<sup>[28]:295</sup> Olszewski (1971),<sup>[25]:app C</sup> Torres (1984),<sup>[15]:82, 84</sup> and the Historic Structure Report (2004),<sup>[6]:4-6-4-7</sup> refer to the original 1884 inscriptions, the National Geodetic Survey (2015)<sup>[1]:90–95</sup> refers to both the 1884 and 1934 inscriptions. All sources print them according to their own editorial rules, resulting in excessive capitalization (Harvey, Olszewski, and NGS) and inappropriate line breaks. No printed source uses cursive writing, although pictures of the apex clearly show that it was used for both the 1884 and 1934 inscriptions.<sup>[1]:92–95[99][100]</sup>

A replica displayed on the 490-foot level uses totally different line breaks than those on the external apex—it also omits the 1934 inscriptions. In October 2007, it was discovered that the display of this replica was positioned so that the Laus Deo (Latin for "praise be to God") inscription could not be seen and Laus Deo was omitted from the placard describing the apex. The National Park Service rectified the omission by creating a new display.<sup>[101]</sup>

## Lightning protection

The pyramidion, the pointed top 55 feet (17 m) of the monument, was originally designed with an 8.9-inch (23 cm) tall inscribed aluminum apex which served as a single lightning rod, installed December 6, 1884. Six months later on June 5, 1885 lightning damaged the marble blocks of the pyramidion,<sup>[102]</sup> so a net of gold-plated copper rods supporting 200 3-inch (7.6 cm) gold-plated, platinum-tipped copper points spaced every 5 feet (1.5 m) was installed over the entire pyramidion.<sup>[6]:3-10-3-11, 3-15, figs 3.17, 3.23[25]:chp 6[15]:91-92</sup> The original net included a gold-plated copper band attached to the aluminum apex by four large set screws which supported eight closely spaced vertical points that did not protrude above the apex. In 1934 these eight short points were lengthened to extend them above the apex by 6 inches (15 cm).<sup>[103]</sup> In 2013 this original system was removed and discarded. It was replaced by only two thick solid aluminum lightning rods protruding above the tip of the apex by about one foot (0.3 m) attached to the east and west sides of the marble capstone just below the apex.<sup>[1]:23, 26[11]</sup>

Until it was removed, the original lightning protection system was connected to the tops of the four iron columns supporting the elevator with large copper rods. Even though the aluminum apex is still connected to the columns with large copper rods, it is no longer part of the lightning protection system because it is now disconnected from the present lightning rods which shield it. The two lightning rods present since 2013 are connected to the iron columns with two large braided aluminum cables leading down the surface of the pyramidion near its southeast and northwest corners. They enter the pyramidion at its base, where they are tied together (electrically shorted) via large braided aluminum cables encircling the pyramidion two feet (0.6 m) above its base.<sup>[11]</sup> The bottom of the iron columns are connected to ground water below the monument via four large copper rods that pass through a 2-foot (0.6 m) square well half filled with sand in the center of the foundation. The effectiveness of the lightning protection system has not been affected by a significant draw down of the water table since 1884 because the soil's water content remains roughly 20% both above and below the height of the water table.<sup>[104]</sup>

## Walls

During the first phase of construction (1848–1854), the walls were built with bluestone gneiss rubble, ranging from very large irregular stones having a cross section of about 5 by 10 feet (1.5 m × 3.0 m) down to spalls (broken pieces of stone) all embedded in a large amount of mortar. The outer surface is marble stones 14 to 18 inches (36–46 cm) thick in 2-foot (61 cm) high courses or rows horizontally encircling the monument. Although each course contains both stretchers (stones parallel to the wall) and headers (stones projecting into the wall), about two to three times as many stretchers as headers were used. Their joints were so thin that some stones pressed on bare stone below them, breaking off many pieces since it was constructed. The batter or slope of the outer surface is 0.247 inches per foot (2.06 cm/m, 1°11'). The inner surface has disorderly rows of smaller roughly dressed bluestone gneiss.<sup>[6]:B-49[7]:sheets 7-30[15]:18-19, 23, 105-6</sup> The base of the first phase walls has an outer dimension of 55 feet 1½ inches (16.80 m) square and a thickness of 15 feet (4.6 m). The interior well is 25 feet 1 inch (7.65 m) square and has square corners.<sup>[9]</sup> The weight of the first phase walls up to 150 feet (45.7 m) is 22,373 long tons (25,058 short tons; 22,732 tonnes).<sup>[9]</sup>

During the second phase (1879–1884), the walls were constructed of smoothly dressed (ashlar) large marble and granite blocks (rectangular cuboids) laid down in an orderly manner (Flemish bond) with thick joints. Two-foot high marble surface stones, using an equal number of stretchers and headers, were backed by granite blocks from the 152-foot level (the first course above the rubble) to the 218-foot level, where marble headers become increasingly visible on the internal surface of the walls up to the 450-foot level, above which only marble stones are used.<sup>[K]</sup> Between the 150- and 160-foot levels the inner walls rapidly slope outward, increasing the shaft well from 25 feet 1 inch square to 31 feet 5½ inches (9.59 m) square with a corresponding decrease in the thickness of the walls and their weight.<sup>[7]:sheets 4-5[15]:23</sup> The second phase walls at the 160-foot level were 8 feet 7½ inches (2.63 m) thick, which, combined with the larger shaft well, yields an outer dimension of 48 feet 8½ inches (14.85 m) square at that level. The top of the second phase walls are 34 feet 5½ inches (10.50 m) square and 1 foot 6 inches (46 cm) thick.<sup>[6]:3-7[9]</sup> The second phase interior walls have rounded corners (2-foot (0.61 m) radii). The weight of the second phase walls (from 150 feet to 500 feet) are 21,260 long tons (23,810 short tons; 21,600 tonnes). The walls of the entire shaft (combined first and second phases) are 500 feet 5⅛ inches (152.530 m) high.<sup>[9]</sup>

The first phase of the walls was constructed under the direction of William Dougherty. Its white Cockeysville marble exterior came from the Texas quarry now adjacent to and east of north I-83 near the Warren Road exit in Cockeysville, Maryland. The quarry was named for the Texas Station (no longer extant) and 19th-century town on the Northern Central Railway. During the first phase it was operated by Thomas Symington, but is now operated by Martin Marietta Materials<sup>[106]</sup> and no longer produces building stone. The second phase of construction was under the direction of Lt Col/Col Thomas Lincoln Casey of the United States Army Corps of Engineers, who removed two defective courses added by the Know-Nothings and the last 152-foot course added by Dougherty before Casey began his construction. The next three courses of white marble (152–156 feet (46–48 m)) came from Sheffield, Massachusetts, while all courses above them came from the Beaver Dam quarry just west of the 19th-century town of Cockeysville.<sup>[15]:63[107][108]</sup>



Cross section of rubble in shaft at 150 feet and typical of rubble below 150 feet

The latter quarry is located on Beaver Dam Road near its intersection with McCormick Road. During the second phase the quarry was operated by Hugh Sisson, but is now flooded, is called Beaverdam Pond, and is the home of the Beaver Dam Swimming Club. Both 19th-century towns are now within the city limits of Cockeysville.

## Pyramidion

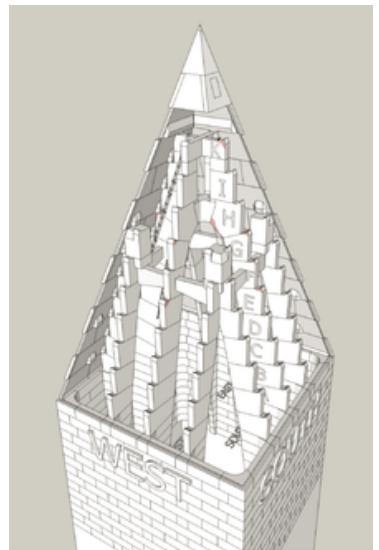
The marble capstone of the pyramidion is a truncated pyramid with a cubical keystone projecting from its base and a deep groove surrounding the keystone. The aluminum apex replaces its truncated top. The inside upper edges of the topmost slabs on the four faces of the pyramidion rest on the keystone and in the groove. It has a large vertical hole through which a 1.5-inch (3.8 cm) threaded copper rod passes and screws into the base of the apex, which used to form part of its lightning protection system. The keystone and groove occupy so much of its base that only a small horizontal area near its outer edge remains. The weight of the capstone is transferred to both the inner and outer portions of the shiplap upper edges of the slabs. It weighs 3,300 pounds (1,500 kg), is 5 feet 2 inches (1.57 m) high from its base to its top, and is 3 feet (91 cm) square at its base.<sup>[15]:85[105]:80</sup>

The marble pyramidion has an extremely complex construction to save weight yet remain strong. Its surface slabs or panels are usually only 7 inches (18 cm) thick (with small thick and thin portions) and generally do not support the weight of slabs above them, instead transferring their own weight via 1-foot (30 cm) wide internal marble ribs to the shaft's walls. The slabs are generally 7 feet (2 m) wide and 4 feet 4 inches (1 m) high with a 2-inch (5 cm) vertical overlap (shiplap) to prevent water from entering the horizontal joints. Twelve such courses, the internal ribs, the marble capstone, and the aluminum apex comprise the pyramidion. Its height is 55 feet 0 inches (16.76 m). Its weight is 300 long tons (336 short tons; 305 tonnes).<sup>[9]</sup> The slope of the walls of the pyramidion is 17°24' from the vertical.<sup>[30]</sup> There are twelve ribs, three per wall, which spring from the 470-foot (143.3 m) level, all being integrated into the walls up to the 500-foot (152.4 m) level. All are free standing above 500 feet, relying on mortise and tenon joints to attach neighboring stones. The eight corner ribs terminate six courses above the shaft, each corner rib resting on its neighboring corner rib via a miter joint, forming four corner arches. Each such arch supports a pair of square corner stones, one above the other totaling one course in height. Each corner rib is linked to the nearest center rib at the sixth course via a marble tie beam. The four center ribs terminate eight courses above the shaft at a marble cruciform (cross shaped) keystone, forming two main arches that cross each other. Two stones, each one course high, are mounted on each of the four ribs, supporting two additional courses above the cruciform keystone, leaving two courses to support the capstone's weight by themselves.<sup>[6]:3-8-3-11[18]:6-10[109]</sup>

The observation floor (nominally the 500-foot level) is 499 feet 4½ inches (152.21 m) above the entry lobby floor or lowest landing level. It is 1¼ inches (3.2 cm) above the marble base of the pyramidion and the top of the shaft walls.<sup>[1]:56, 58, 65[7]:sheet 7, 31-35[9]</sup>

Four pairs of 3-foot (91 cm) wide observation windows are provided, spaced 4 feet (122 cm) apart, inner stone edge to edge, all just above the lowest course of slabs (504-foot level). Six are 1 foot 6 inches (46 cm) high while two on the east face are 2 feet (61 cm) high for easier egress. All were originally provided with thin marble shutters in a bronze frame each of which could be opened inward, one left and the other right per wall.<sup>[6]:3-11</sup> After two people committed suicide by jumping through the open windows in the 1920s, hinged horizontal iron bars were added to them in 1929.<sup>[6]:3-14[15]:85, 102</sup> A ninth opening in a slab on the south face just below the capstone is provided for access to the outside of the pyramidion. It is covered by a stone slab which is internally removable. In 1931, four red aircraft warning lights were installed, one per face in one of its observation windows. Pilots complained that they could not be easily seen, so the monument was floodlit on all sides as well.<sup>[6]:2-14, B-39, B-41, B-52-B-53</sup> In 1958, eight 14-inch (36 cm) diameter holes for new red aircraft warning lights were bored, one above each window near the top edge of the fourth course of slabs (516-foot level) in the pyramidion.<sup>[6]:2-28, 3-15, B-55[7]:sheet 12</sup> In 1958 the observation windows were glazed with shatterproof glass. In 1974–1976, they were glazed with bulletproof glass and the shutters removed. New bulletproof glass was installed during 1997–2000.<sup>[6]:3-16, 3-18, B-49</sup>

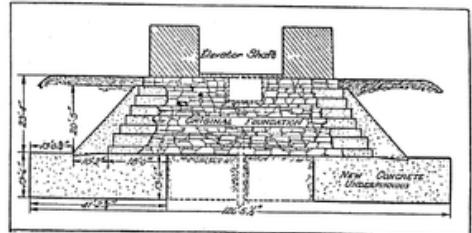
The pyramidion has two inscriptions, neither of which is regarded as a memorial stone. One is the year "1884" on the underside of the cruciform keystone; the other is at the same level as that keystone on the north face of the west center rib containing the names and titles of the four highest ranked builders. Its inscription ("Chief Engineer ...") is almost identical to the inscription on the south face of the aluminum apex except for "U.S.", which is part of the phrase "14th U.S. Infantry" in the inscription inside the pyramidion, but the apex has only "14th Infantry". Additionally, the internal inscription does not use cursive writing and all letters in all names are capitals.<sup>[7]:sheet 35[18]:8</sup>



Rib structure of pyramidion with letter designations for courses

## Foundation

The first phase began with the excavation of about 7 feet 8 inches (2.3 m) of topsoil down to a level of loam, consisting of equal parts of sand and clay, hard enough to require picks to break it up. On this "bed of the foundation" the cornerstone was laid at the northeast corner of the proposed foundation. The rest of the foundation was then constructed of bluestone gneiss rubble and spalls, with every crevice filled with lime mortar.<sup>[15]:23, 68</sup> The dimensions of this old foundation were 23 feet 4 inches (7.1 m) high, 80 feet (24.4 m) square at the base, and 58 feet 6 inches (17.8 m) square at the top, laid down in eight steps, similar to a truncated step pyramid.<sup>[15]:18–19, 23, 47</sup> At the center of the foundation a brick-lined 2-foot (60 cm) square well was dug to a depth of 20 feet (6 m) below the bed of the foundation to keep it dry and to supply water during construction.<sup>[15]:19</sup>



Cross section of foundation, both old and reinforced, showing dimensions

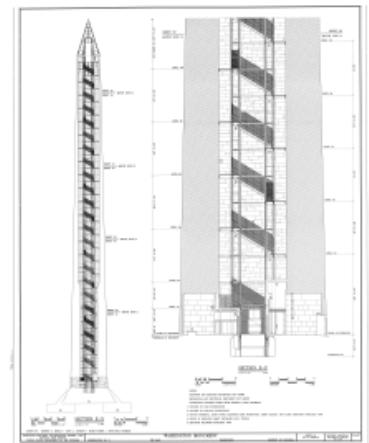
During the second phase, after determining that the proposed weight of the monument was too great for the old foundation to safely bear, the thickness of the walls atop the unfinished stump was reduced and the foundation was strengthened by adding a large unreinforced concrete slab below the perimeter of the old foundation to increase the monument's load bearing area two and one half times. The slab was 13 feet 6 inches (4.1 m) thick, with an outer perimeter 126 feet 5½ inches (38.54 m) square, an inner perimeter 44 feet (13.4 m) square, with undisturbed loam inside the inner perimeter except for the water well. The area at the base of the second phase foundation is 15,992 square feet (1,485.7 m<sup>2</sup>). The strengthened foundation (old foundation and concrete slab) has a total depth of 36 feet 10 inches (11.2 m) below the bottom of the lowest course of marble blocks (now below ground), and 38 feet (11.6 m) below the entry lobby floor. Casey reported that nowhere did the load exceed 9 long tons per square foot (140 psi; 970 kPa) and did not exceed 3 long tons per square foot (47 psi; 320 kPa) near the outer perimeter.<sup>[9]</sup> To properly distribute the load from the shaft to slab, about half by volume of the outer periphery of the old rubble foundation below its top step was removed. A continuous sloping unreinforced concrete buttress encircles what remains. The buttress is 100 feet 4 inches (30.6 m) square at its base, 64 feet 6 inches (19.7 m) square at its top, and 20 feet 5 inches (6.2 m) high. The perimeter of the original top step of the old rubble foundation rests on the larger top of the concrete buttress. Its slope (lower external angle from the vertical) is 49°. This buttress rests in a depression (triangular cross-section) on the top surface of the concrete slab. The slab was constructed by digging pairs of 4-foot (1.2 m) wide drifts on opposite sides of the monument's center line to keep the monument properly balanced. The drifts were filled with unreinforced concrete with depressions or dowel stones on their sides to interlock the sections.<sup>[6]:3-3-3-5, figs 3.1–3.6, 3.9, 3.13, 4.11[15]:39, 47–48, 67–73</sup> An earthen terrace 60 feet (18 m) wide with its top at the base of the walls and steep sides was constructed in 1880–81 over the reinforced foundation while the rest of the monument was being constructed. During 1887–88, a knoll was constructed around the terrace tapering out roughly 300 feet (90 m) onto the surrounding terrain. This earthen terrace and knoll serves as an additional buttress for the foundation. The weight of the foundation is 36,912 long tons (41,341 short tons; 37,504 tonnes),<sup>[9]</sup> including earth and gneiss rubble above the concrete foundation that is within its outer perimeter.

## Stairs and elevator

The monument is filled with ironwork, consisting of its stairs, elevator columns and associated tie beams, none of which supports the weight of the stonework. It was redesigned in 1958 to reduce congestion and improve the flow of visitors. Originally, visitors entered and exited the west side of the elevator on the observation floor, causing congestion. So the large landing at the 490-foot level was expanded to a full floor and the original spiral stair in the northeast corner between the 490- and 500-foot levels was replaced by two spiral stairs in the northeast and southeast corners. Now visitors exit the elevator on the observation floor, then walk down either spiral stair before reboarding the elevator for their trip back down.<sup>[6]:fig 3.31</sup>

The main stairs spiral up the interior walls from the entry lobby floor to the elevator reboarding floor at the 490-foot level. The elevator occupies the center of the shaft well from the entry lobby to the observation floor, with an elevator machine room (installed 1925–26) whose floor is 18 feet 10 inches (5.7 m) above the observation floor and an elevator pit (excavated 1879) whose floor is 9 feet (2.74 m) below the entry lobby floor.<sup>[7]:sheet 31-35[15]:61, 74</sup> The stairs and elevator are supported by four wrought iron columns each. The four supporting the stairs extend from the entry lobby floor to the observation floor and were set at the corners of a 15-foot-8-inch (4.78 m) square. The four supporting the elevator extend from the floor of the elevator pit to 14 feet (4.3 m) above the observation floor and were set at the corners of a 9-foot-9½-inch (2.98 m) square.<sup>[6]:3-6</sup> The weight of the ironwork is 275 long tons (308 short tons; 279 tonnes).<sup>[9]</sup> Cast iron, wrought iron, and steel were all used. The two small spiral stairs installed in 1958 are aluminum.

Most landings occupy the entire east and west interior walls every 10 feet from and including the east landing at the 30-foot level up to the west landing at the 480-foot level, east then west alternately. Three stairs with small landings rise from the entry lobby floor to the 30-foot level successively along the north, west and south interior walls. Landings from the 30-foot level up to the 150-foot level are



North interior wall with its stairs and their wire screening.

3 feet  $2\frac{1}{4}$  inches (0.97 m) by 25 feet 1 inch (7.65 m), while landings from the 160-foot level to the 480-foot level are 7 feet  $10\frac{3}{4}$  inches (2.41 m) by 31 feet  $5\frac{1}{2}$  inches (9.59 m). All stairs are on the north and south walls except for the aforementioned west stair between the 10- and 20-foot levels, and the two spiral stairs.

About one fourth of visitors chose to ascend the monument using the stairs when they were available. They were closed to up traffic in 1971, and then closed to all traffic except by special arrangement in 1976.<sup>[6]:3-18[15]:101</sup> The stairs had 898 steps until 1958, consisting of 18 risers in each of the 49 main stairs plus 16 risers in the spiral stair.<sup>[25]:chp 7[110]:18</sup> Since 1958 the stairs have had 897 risers if only one spiral stair is counted because both spiral stairs now have 15 risers each.<sup>[7]:sheets 6, 31-35[15]:72</sup> These figures do not include two additional steps in the entry passage that were covered up in 1975 by a ramp and its inward horizontal extension to meet the higher (since 1886) entry lobby floor. One step was 3.2 feet (1 m) away from the outer walls and the other was at the end of the passage, 15 feet (4.6 m) away from the outer walls.<sup>[6]:3-17-3-18, figs 3.11, 3.32-3.33, 3.39</sup>

As initially constructed, the interior was relatively open with two-rail handrails, but a couple of suicides and an accidental fall prompted the addition of tall wire screening (7 feet (2.1 m) high with a large diamond mesh) on the inside edge of the stairs and landings in 1929. The original steam powered elevator, which took 10 to 12 minutes to ascend to the observation floor, was replaced by an electric elevator powered by an on-site dynamo in 1901 which took five minutes to ascend. The monument was connected to the electrical grid in 1923, allowing the installation of a modern electric elevator in 1925–26 which took 70 seconds. The latter was replaced in 1958 and again in 1998 by 70-second elevators.<sup>[6]:2-13, 2-15, 3-20-3-21, B-44, B-47, B-48[28]:102, 107-8</sup> During 1997–2000, the wire screening at three platforms was replaced by large glass panels to allow visitors on the elevator to view three clusters of memorial stones that were synchronously lit as the elevator automatically slowed as it passed them during its descent.<sup>[6]:3-21, 4-16</sup>

## Flags

Fifty American flags (not state flags), one for each state, are now flown 24 hours a day around a large circle centered on the monument. Forty eight American flags (one for each state then in existence) were flown on wooden flag poles on Washington's birthday since 1920 and later on Independence Day, Memorial Day, and other special occasions until early 1958. Both the flags and flag poles were removed and stored between these days. In 1958 fifty 25-foot (7.6 m) tall aluminum flag poles (anticipating Alaska and Hawaii) were installed, evenly spaced around a 260-foot (79 m) diameter circle. During 2004–05, the diameter of the circle was reduced to 240 feet (73 m). Since Washington's birthday 1958, 48 American flags were flown on a daily basis, increasing to 49 flags on July 4, 1959, and then to 50 flags since July 4, 1960. When 48 and 49 flags were flown, only 48 and 49 flag poles of the available 50 were placed into base receptacles. All flags were removed and stored overnight. Since July 4, 1971, 50 American flags have flown 24 hours a day.<sup>[6]:2-14-2-15, 4-1-4-2, B-35-B-36[7]:sheet 3[16]</sup>



Fifty American flags around the monument

## Vesica piscis

In the 2004 grounds renovation, two large circles were added to the landscaping with the obelisk in the intersection or vesica piscis. The monument's vesica piscis is not ideal because neither circle passes through the center of its neighbor. Furthermore, both "circles" are slightly elliptical.

## Miscellaneous details

The total cost of the monument from 1848 to 1888 was \$1,409,500<sup>[110]</sup> (equivalent to \$30,000,000 in 2019).<sup>[111]</sup> The weight of the above ground portion of the monument is 44,208 long tons (49,513 short tons; 44,917 tonnes), whereas its total weight, including the foundation below ground and any earth above it that is within its outer perimeter is 81,120 long tons (90,854 short tons; 82,422 tonnes). The total number of blocks in the monument, including all marble, granite and gneiss blocks, whether externally or internally visible or hidden from view within the walls or old foundation is over 36,000.<sup>[8]</sup> The number of marble blocks externally visible is about 10,000.

The monument stands 554 feet  $7\frac{11}{32}$  inches (169.046 m) tall according to the National Geodetic Survey (measured 2013–14) or 555 feet  $5\frac{1}{8}$  inches (169.294 m) tall according to the National Park Service (measured 1884).<sup>[B]</sup> In 1975, a ramp covered two steps at the entrance to the monument, so the ground next to the ramp was raised to match its height, reducing the remaining height to the monument's apex. It is both the world's tallest predominantly stone structure and the world's tallest obelisk. It is the tallest monumental column in the world if all are measured above their pedestrian entrances, but two are taller when measured above ground, though they are neither all stone nor true obelisks.<sup>[A]</sup> The tallest masonry structure in the world is the brick Anaconda Smelter Stack in Montana at 585 feet  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches (178.35 m) tall. But this includes a 30-foot (9.1 m) non-masonry concrete foundation, leaving the stack's brick chimney at 555 feet  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches (169.20 m) tall, only about 6 inches (15 cm) taller than the monument's 2015 height. If the monument's aluminum apex is also discounted, then the stack's masonry portion is 15 inches (38 cm) taller than the monument's masonry portion.<sup>[12][B][L]</sup>

## Security

In 2001, a temporary visitor security screening center was added to the east entrance of the Washington Monument in the wake of the September 11 attacks. The one-story facility was designed to reduce the ability of a terrorist attack on the interior of the monument, or an attempt to seize and hold it. Visitors obtained their timed-entry tickets from the Monument Lodge east of the memorial, and passed through metal detectors and bomb-sniffing sensors prior to entering the monument. After exiting the monument, they passed through a turnstile to prevent them from re-entering. This facility, a one-story cube of wood around a metal frame, was intended to be temporary until a new screening facility could be designed.<sup>[17]</sup>



A low-profile ha-ha wall surrounds the monument.

On March 6, 2014, the National Capital Planning Commission approved a new visitor screening facility to replace the temporary one. The 785-square-foot ( $72.9 \text{ m}^2$ ) facility will be two stories high and contain space for screening 20 to 25 visitors at a time. The exterior walls (which will be slightly frosted to prevent viewing of the security screening process) will consist of an outer sheet of bulletproof glass or polycarbonate, a metal mesh insert, and another sheet of bulletproof glass. The inner sheet will consist of two sheets (slightly separated) of laminated glass. A 0.5-inch (1.3 cm) airspace will exist between the inner and outer glass walls to help insulate the facility. Two (possibly three) geothermal heat pumps will be built on the north side of the monument to provide heating and cooling of the facility. The new facility will also provide an office for National Park Service and United States Park Police staff. The structure is designed so that it may be removed without damaging the monument.<sup>[112]</sup> The United States Commission of Fine Arts approved the aesthetic design of the screening facility in June 2013.<sup>[113]</sup>

A recessed trench wall known as a ha-ha has been built to minimize the visual impact of a security barrier surrounding the monument. After the September 11 attacks and another unrelated terror threat at the monument, authorities had put up a circle of temporary Jersey barriers to prevent large motor vehicles from approaching. The unsightly barrier was replaced by a less-obtrusive low 30-inch (76 cm) granite stone wall that doubles as a seating bench and also incorporates lighting. The installation received the 2005 Park/Landscape Award of Merit from the American Society of Landscape Architects.<sup>[114][115][116]</sup>

## Transit

The Washington Monument is served by the Smithsonian metro station.<sup>[117]</sup>

## See also

- Bunker Hill Monument
- List of public art in Washington, D.C., Ward 2
- List of tallest freestanding structures in the world
- List of tallest towers in the world
- Tuckahoe marble
- Yule Marble

## Notes

A. Two other monumental columns (honoring a person or thing) have heights comparable to that of the Washington Monument, the San Jacinto Monument in Texas and the Juche Tower in North Korea. Which of the three is taller depends on how its height is measured.<sup>[12]</sup> A traditional method is above a part of the monument comparable to ground level. A more recent method is that used by the Council on Tall Buildings and Urban Habitat (CTBUH), the arbiter of the height of tall buildings since 1969. The CTBUH states the height of a building must be measured above the "level of the lowest, significant, open-air, pedestrian entrance".<sup>[4]</sup> The three CTBUH (above pedestrian entrance) heights from tallest to shortest are the Washington Monument, the San Jacinto Monument (~2.6 feet (~0.79 m)), and the Juche Tower (~20 feet (~6 m)). The above ground heights of the three monumental columns from tallest to shortest are the San Jacinto Monument (+12.70 feet (3.871 m)), the Juche Tower (3.3 feet (+1 m)), and the Washington Monument. Height differences are relative to the height of the Washington Monument.

- The Washington Monument's CTBUH (above pedestrian entrance) height, 554 feet  $7\frac{1}{32}$  inches (169.046 m), is the same as its above ground height.
- The San Jacinto Monument has a surveyed height of 567.31 feet (172.916 m) from its footing to the top of its beacon. However, the architect of the monument, Albert C. Finn, stated, "San Jacinto ... is actually 552 feet [168.2 m] from the first floor to the top of the beacon" ... in the "customary way" of measuring such things.<sup>[13]</sup> The "first floor" is the CTBUH criterion. A stepped terrace elevates this pedestrian entrance above ground, thus reducing the monument's remaining height by its thickness, about 15.5 feet (4.7 m), to the monument's CTBUH height. The monument is made of reinforced concrete, not stone, although it has a facade of limestone.

- The Juche Tower has a specified height of 558 feet (170 m) above a very large concrete bus parking lot just east of the tower. A stepped terrace elevates its pedestrian entrance, also on its east side, above this ground level. Its thickness, 23 feet (7 m), reduces the remaining height of the tower to 535 feet (163 m), its CTBUH height. The tower is made of reinforced concrete, not stone, although it has a facade of granite. A metal cage holding many panels of red glass in the shape of a flame, internally illuminated, surmounting a gold-colored "fuel chamber", occupies its top 66 feet (20 m).
- B. Several heights have been specified, all of which exclude the foundation whose top is 15 feet 8 inches (4.78 m) above the pre-construction ground level. The foundation is surrounded by a grassy knoll which effectively places the foundation below ground level. This knoll serves as a buttress for the foundation.
- 554 feet  $7\frac{11}{32}$  inches (169.046 m) according to the National Geodetic Survey (NGS)<sup>[1]:5</sup> using the criteria of the Council on Tall Buildings and Urban Habitat (CTBUH), that is, from the "level of the lowest, significant, open-air, pedestrian entrance" to the highest point of the building.<sup>[4]</sup> From among four candidate points suggested by the NGS, the CTBUH chose a point on the entry ramp installed in 1975 where it crosses the outer face of the marble facade of the monument.<sup>[3]:7[5][6]:2-15, 3-18, 4-13, B-49, figs 3.32, 3.33, 3.39, 3.42[7]:sheet 31</sup> Measured 2013–14 and reported February 16, 2015. This is also its new above ground height because the ground at the shaft was raised in 1975 to match the ramp. The ground surrounding the shaft was replaced by granite pavers during 2004–05 to match the raised ground level and the ramp. This height is 22.0 centimeters ( $8\frac{5}{8}$  in) above four "CASEY marks",  $2\frac{1}{2}$ -inch-diameter (6.4 cm) brass bolt heads whose shafts are inserted vertically into the topmost level of the foundation just outside the four corners of the monument. These CASEY marks were set flush with the lower surface of the marble blocks. The NGS thinks they were likely used by Col. Thomas Lincoln Casey, the engineer in charge of construction, to determine the traditional height in 1884. The floor at the elevator is now 13.9 centimeters ( $5\frac{1}{2}$  in) above this pedestrian entrance, and 35.9 centimeters ( $14\frac{1}{8}$  in) above the CASEY marks.<sup>[1]:13, 56, 65, 82–84</sup> The highest point of the monument is a one millimeter diameter dimple atop the aluminum apex.
  - 555 feet  $5\frac{1}{8}$  inches (169.294 m) according to the National Park Service.<sup>[8]</sup> Measured and reported in 1884 by Col. Thomas Lincoln Casey, the engineer in charge of construction.<sup>[9]</sup> It was measured from the top of the foundation (the lowest marble joint or the door-sills of the two empty doorways), which was in place in 1884. This is the traditional height of the monument that became moot when the pavement or ground next to the monument was raised in 1975.
  - 554 feet  $11\frac{1}{2}$  inches (169.151 m) according to architectural drawings in the *Historic American Buildings Survey* (1994), pavement at shaft to tip.<sup>[7]:sheets 7, 31</sup> This height is comparable to the NGS height because it was also determined after the ramp was installed in 1975.
- None of these heights include a set of lightning rods surrounding the monument's aluminum apex. An old set was installed in 1934, which protruded above its tip by 6 inches (15 cm).<sup>[10]</sup> In 2013 a new set of lightning rods was installed which protrude above the apex by about one foot (0.3 m).<sup>[1]:23, 26[11]</sup>
- C. The base of the obelisk atop the circular pillar was to have been "70 feet square" according to the House report of 1872<sup>[27]:8</sup> and Torres (1984),<sup>[15]:13</sup> but only "50 feet square" according to Harvey (1903).<sup>[28]:27</sup> The corners of a 70-foot square base (99-foot diagonal) would dangerously overhang a 70-foot diameter pillar, whereas a 50-foot square base (71-foot diagonal) would not.
- D. L'Enfant identified himself as "Peter Charles L'Enfant" during most of his life, while residing in the United States. He wrote this name on his "Plan of the city intended for the permanent seat of the government of t(he) United States ..." and on other legal documents.<sup>[31]</sup> However, during the early 1900s, the then French ambassador to the U.S., Jean Jules Jusserand, popularized the use of L'Enfant's birth name, "Pierre Charles L'Enfant".<sup>[32]</sup> The National Park Service identifies L'Enfant as "Major Peter Charles L'Enfant" and as "Major Pierre (Peter) Charles L'Enfant" on pages of its website that describe the Washington Monument.<sup>[33][34]</sup> The United States Code states in **40 U.S.C. § 3309** (<https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/40/3309>): "(a) In General.—The purposes of this chapter shall be carried out in the District of Columbia as nearly as may be practicable in harmony with the plan of Peter Charles L'Enfant."
- E. The monument is located 370 feet (112.78 m) east of the north–south White House axis, 123 feet (37.49 m) south of the east–west Capitol axis, and 7,387.4 feet (2,251.68 m) west of the north–south Capitol axis.<sup>[15]:16[35]</sup>
- F. The park portion of the Mall, including Madison Drive, Jefferson Drive, and four wide gravel boulevards between them east of the monument, and the Reflecting Pool and sidewalks west of the monument, are parallel to the offset Capitol-Monument-Lincoln axis. But the major highways immediately north and south of the Mall, Constitution Avenue and Independence Avenue, are oriented east–west. This misalignment can be seen on a map of the area.
- G. The large gold-plated copper band added to the aluminum apex in 1885 discolored or damaged the surface of the aluminum so much that most of its inscriptions are no longer legible – see Aluminum apex.
- H. A "Dutchman Repair" "is a type of partial replacement or 'piecing-in'" that "involves replacing a small area of damaged stone" with a small piece of natural or imitation stone, "wedged in place or secured with an adhesive", with the joint being "as narrow as possible to maintain the appearance of a continuous surface".<sup>[81]</sup>

- I. Material of the memorial stones is that named as "original material" by Judith Jacob, regardless of the material given in her "documentation" for the same stone. Some stones have small amounts of black paint, gold or silver within their letters. Six memorial stones are composed of significant amounts of two types of material each, the first stone and the second stone, lead or bronze. The material of seven memorial stones is not identified, including that of the Capitol stone.<sup>[44]</sup>
- J. The Carthage stone was the last memorial stone installed in the monument, in 2000.<sup>[93]</sup>
- K. Three types of levels exist, one for marble courses in the walls, one for marble courses in the pyramidion, and one for stair landings. The level of a marble course in the walls is named by the height of its upper surface or joint, in multiples of 2 feet (61 cm), above the lower surface (zero feet) of the lowest marble course in the walls (now below ground), which rests on the old foundation and is at the same height as four Casey marks (the tops of four brass bolts inserted vertically into the top of the old foundation). The level of a marble course in the pyramidion is similar to those in the walls except that they are in multiples of 4 feet (122 cm). The level of a stair landing is named by its height, in multiples of 10 feet (3.0 m), above the lowest landing, which coincides with the entry lobby floor. The zero-foot height or reference for marble courses in the first phase walls (which do not extend through the rubble walls) is 14 $\frac{1}{8}$  inches (36 cm) below that for stair landings,<sup>[1]:56, 58, 65</sup> but marble levels in the second phase walls (except for the 500-foot level) are only 11 inches (28 cm) below their corresponding stair levels.<sup>[7]:sheets 32–35[105]:22</sup>
- L. Masonry, by definition, includes manufactured brick, natural stone units, and concrete masonry units. Taller stacks or chimneys are made of reinforced concrete. See the list of tallest towers (designed for regular public access), and the list of tallest chimneys (not designed for regular public access).

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## External links

- Official NPS website: [Washington Monument](http://www.nps.gov/wamo) (<http://www.nps.gov/wamo>)

- "Trust for the National Mall: Washington Monument" (<https://web.archive.org/web/20110611031625/http://www.nationalmall.org/sites-subpage-washington.php>). Trust for the National Mall. Archived from the original (<http://www.nationalmall.org/sites-subpage-washington.php>) on June 11, 2011.
  - *Harper's Weekly* cartoon, February 21, 1885, the day of formal dedication (<https://www.nytimes.com/learning/general/onthisday/harp/0221.html>)
  - Today in History—December 6 (<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/today/dec06.html>)
  - Washington National Monument (<https://structurae.net/structures/data/index.cfm?ID=20000087>) at *Structurae*
  - Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) No. DC-428, "Washington Monument (<https://loc.gov/pictures/item/dc0261/>)"
  - Historic American Engineering Record (HAER) No. DC-5, "Washington Monument (<https://loc.gov/pictures/item/dc0968/>)"
  - Prehistory on the Mall at the Washington Monument ([http://anthropology.si.edu/cm/krakker\\_wash\\_monument.htm](http://anthropology.si.edu/cm/krakker_wash_monument.htm))
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# United States Capitol

The **United States Capitol**, often called **The Capitol** or the **Capitol Building**, is the meeting place of the **United States Congress** and the **seat of the legislative branch** of the **U.S. federal government**. It is located on **Capitol Hill** at the eastern end of the **National Mall** in **Washington, D.C.** Though no longer at the geographic center of the **federal district**, the Capitol forms the origin point for the district's street-numbering system and the district's four quadrants.

The original building was completed in 1800. It was partly destroyed in the 1814 **burning of Washington**, then was fully restored within five years. The building was later enlarged, with the addition of a massive **dome**, and extended wings with expanded chambers for the **bicameral legislature**, the **House of Representatives** in the south wing and the **Senate** in the north wing. Like the principal buildings of the **executive** and **judicial** branches, the Capitol is built in the **neoclassic style** and has a white exterior. Both its east and west elevations are formally referred to as *fronts*, though only the east front was intended for the reception of visitors and dignitaries.

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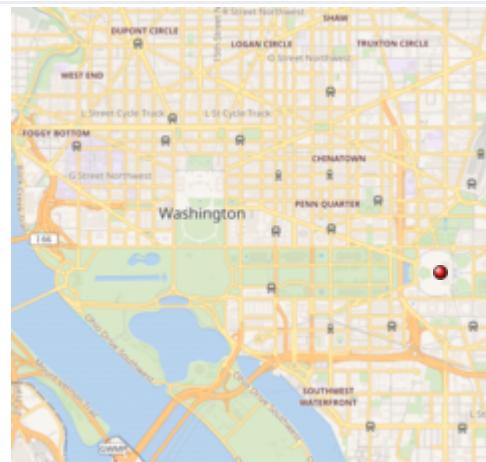
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### United States Capitol



West front



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General information	
Architectural style	American neoclassic
Town or city	Capitol Hill, Washington, D.C.
Country	United States
Coordinates	38°53'23"N 77°00'32"W
Construction started	September 18, 1793
Completed	1800 (first occupation) 1962 (last extension)
Client	Washington administration
Technical details	
Floor count	5
Floor area	16.5 acres (67,000 m <sup>2</sup> ) <sup>[1]</sup>
Design and construction	
Architect	William Thornton, designer (see <a href="#">Architect of the Capitol</a> )
Website	
<a href="http://www.capitol.gov">www.capitol.gov</a> ( <a href="https://www.capitol.gov/">https://www.capitol.gov/</a> )	
<a href="http://www.aoc.gov/us-capitol-building">www.aoc.gov/us-capitol-building</a> ( <a href="http://www.aoc.gov/us-capitol-building">http://www.aoc.gov/us-capitol-building</a> )	

## History

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### Background

Prior to establishing the nation's capital in Washington, D.C., the [United States Congress](#) and its predecessors had met in [Philadelphia](#) ([Independence Hall](#) and [Congress Hall](#)), New York City ([Federal Hall](#)), and a number of other locations ([York, Pennsylvania](#); [Lancaster, Pennsylvania](#); the [Maryland State House](#) in [Annapolis, Maryland](#); and [Nassau Hall](#) in [Princeton, New Jersey](#)).<sup>[2]</sup> In September 1774, the [First Continental Congress](#) brought together delegates from the [colonies](#) in Philadelphia, followed by the [Second Continental Congress](#), which met from May 1775 to March 1781.

After adopting the [Articles of Confederation](#) in [York, Pennsylvania](#), the [Congress of the Confederation](#) was formed and convened in Philadelphia from March 1781 until June 1783, when a mob of angry soldiers converged upon [Independence Hall](#), demanding payment for their service during the [American Revolutionary War](#). Congress requested that [John Dickinson](#), the [Governor of Pennsylvania](#), call up the [militia](#) to defend Congress from attacks by the protesters. In what became known as the [Pennsylvania Mutiny of 1783](#), Dickinson sympathized with the protesters and refused to remove them from Philadelphia. As a result, Congress was forced to flee to [Princeton, New Jersey](#), on June 21, 1783,<sup>[3]</sup> and met in [Annapolis, Maryland](#), and [Trenton, New Jersey](#), before ending up in New York City.



The east front of the United States Capitol (2013 view)

The United States Congress was established upon ratification of the United States Constitution and formally began on March 4, 1789. New York City remained home to Congress until July 1790,<sup>[4]</sup> when the Residence Act was passed to pave the way for a permanent capital. The decision of where to locate the capital was contentious, but Alexander Hamilton helped broker a compromise in which the federal government would take on war debt incurred during the American Revolutionary War, in exchange for support from northern states for locating the capital along the Potomac River. As part of the legislation, Philadelphia was chosen as a temporary capital for ten years (until December 1800), until the nation's capital in Washington, D.C., would be ready.<sup>[5]</sup>



The east front at night (2013 view)

Pierre (Peter) Charles L'Enfant was given the task of creating the city plan for the new capital city.<sup>[6]</sup> L'Enfant chose Jenkin's Hill as the site for the "Congress House", with a "grand avenue" (now Pennsylvania Avenue, NW) connecting it with the President's House, and a public space containing a broader "grand avenue" (now the National Mall) stretching westward to the Potomac River (see: L'Enfant Plan).<sup>[7][8]</sup>

## Name

In reviewing L'Enfant's plan, Thomas Jefferson insisted the legislative building be called the "Capitol" rather than "Congress House".<sup>[7]</sup> The word "Capitol" comes from Latin and is associated with the Temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus on Capitoline Hill, one of the seven hills of Rome.<sup>[9][10]</sup> The connection between the two is not clear.<sup>[11]</sup> In addition to coming up with a city plan, L'Enfant had been tasked with designing the Capitol and President's House; however, he was dismissed in February 1792 over disagreements with President George Washington and the commissioners, and there were no plans at that point for the Capitol.<sup>[12]</sup>

The word "capitol" has since been adopted, following the example of the United States Capitol, in many jurisdictions also for other government buildings, for instance the "capitols" in the individual capitals of the states of the United States. This, in turn, has led to frequent misspellings of "capitol" and "capital". The former refers to a building which houses government institutions; the latter refers to the entire city.<sup>[13]</sup>

## Design competition



Design for the U.S. Capitol, "An Elevation for a Capitol", by James Diamond was one of many submitted in the 1792 contest, but not selected.

too costly.<sup>[16]</sup>

In spring 1792, United States Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson proposed a design competition to solicit designs for the Capitol and the "President's House", and set a four-month deadline. The prize for the competition was \$500 and a lot in the Federal City. At least ten individuals submitted designs for the Capitol; however the drawings were regarded as crude and amateurish, reflecting the level of architectural skill present in the United States at the time.<sup>[14]</sup> The most promising of the submissions was by Stephen Hallet, a trained French architect.<sup>[15]</sup> However, Hallet's designs were overly fancy, with too much French influence, and were deemed



The west front in the afternoon (2021)

A late entry by amateur architect William Thornton was submitted on January 31, 1793, to much praise for its "Grandeur, Simplicity, and Beauty" by Washington, along with praise from Thomas Jefferson. Thornton was inspired by the east front of the Louvre, as well as the Paris Pantheon for the center portion of the design.<sup>[17]</sup><sup>[18]</sup> Thornton's design was officially approved in a letter dated April 5, 1793, from Washington, and Thornton served as the first Architect of the Capitol (and later first Superintendent of the United States Patent and Trademark Office).<sup>[19]</sup> In an effort to console Hallet, the commissioners appointed him to review Thornton's plans, develop cost estimates, and serve as superintendent of construction. Hallet proceeded to pick apart and make drastic changes to Thornton's design, which he saw as costly to build and problematic.<sup>[20]</sup> In July 1793, Jefferson convened a five-member commission, bringing Hallet and Thornton together, along with James Hoban (winning architect of the "President's Palace") to address problems with and revise Thornton's plan. Hallet suggested changes to the floor plan, which could be fitted within the exterior design by Thornton.<sup>[21]</sup><sup>[22]</sup> The revised plan was accepted, except that Secretary Jefferson and President Washington insisted on an open recess in the center of the East front, which was part of Thornton's original plan.<sup>[23]</sup>



The winning design for the U.S. Capitol, submitted by William Thornton

The original design by Thornton was later modified by the British-American architects Benjamin Henry Latrobe Sr., and then Charles Bulfinch.<sup>[24]</sup> The current cast-iron dome and the House's new southern extension and Senate new northern wing were designed by Thomas Ustick Walter and August Schoenborn, a German immigrant, in the 1850s,<sup>[25]</sup> and were completed under the supervision of Edward Clark.<sup>[26]</sup>

## Construction



The Capitol when first occupied by Congress (painting circa 1800 by William Russell Birch)

L'Enfant secured the lease of quarries at Wigginton Island and along Aquia Creek in Virginia for use in the foundations and outer walls of the Capitol in November 1791.<sup>[27]</sup> Surveying was under way soon after the Jefferson conference plan for the Capitol was accepted.<sup>[21]</sup> On September 18, 1793, President George Washington, along with eight other Freemasons dressed in masonic regalia, laid the cornerstone, which was made by silversmith Caleb Bentley.<sup>[28]</sup><sup>[29]</sup>

Construction proceeded with Hallet working under supervision of James Hoban, who was also busy working on construction of the "President's House" (also later known as the "Executive Mansion"). Despite the wishes of Jefferson and the President, Hallet went ahead anyway and modified Thornton's design for the East Front and created a square central court that projected from the center, with flanking wings which would house the legislative bodies. Hallet was dismissed by Secretary Jefferson on November 15, 1794.<sup>[30]</sup> George Hadfield was hired on October 15, 1795, as Superintendent of Construction, but resigned three years later in May 1798, because of his dissatisfaction with Thornton's plan and quality of work done thus far.<sup>[31]</sup>

The Senate (north) wing was completed in 1800. The Senate and House shared quarters in the north wing until a temporary wooden pavilion was erected on the future site of the House wing which served for a few years for the Representatives to meet in, until the House of Representatives (south) wing was finally completed in 1811, with a covered wooden temporary walkway connecting the two wings with the Congressional chambers where the future center section with rotunda and dome would eventually be. However, the House of Representatives moved early into their House wing in 1807. Though the Senate wing building was

incomplete, the Capitol held its first session of the United States Congress with both chambers in session on November 17, 1800. The National Legislature was moved to Washington prematurely, at the urging of President John Adams, in hopes of securing enough Southern votes in the Electoral College to be re-elected for a second term as president.<sup>[32]</sup>

## Early religious use

For several decades, beginning when the federal government moved to Washington in the fall of 1800, the Capitol building was used for Sunday religious services as well as for governmental functions. The first services were conducted in the "hall" of the House in the north wing of the building. In 1801 the House moved to temporary quarters in the south wing, called the "Oven", which it vacated in 1804, returning to the north wing for three years. Then, from 1807 to 1857, they were held in the then-House Chamber (now called Statuary Hall). When held in the House chamber, the Speaker's podium was used as the preacher's pulpit. According to the U.S. Library of Congress exhibit *Religion and the Founding of the American Republic*:

It is no exaggeration to say that on Sundays in Washington during the administrations of Thomas Jefferson (1801–1809) and of James Madison (1809–1817) the state became the church. Within a year of his inauguration, Jefferson began attending church services in the chamber of the House of Representatives. Madison followed Jefferson's example, although unlike Jefferson, who rode on horseback to church in the Capitol, Madison came in a coach and four. Worship services in the House – a practice that continued until after the Civil War – were acceptable to Jefferson because they were nondiscriminatory and voluntary. Preachers of every Protestant denomination appeared. (Catholic priests began officiating in 1826.) As early as January 1806 a female evangelist, Dorothy Ripley, delivered a camp meeting-style exhortation in the House to Jefferson, Vice President Aaron Burr, and a "crowded audience".<sup>[33]</sup>



The Capitol from Pennsylvania Avenue as it stood before 1814 (drawn from memory by an unknown artist after the burning)

## War of 1812

Not long after the completion of both wings, the Capitol was partially burned by the British on August 24, 1814, during the War of 1812.

George Bomford and Joseph Gardner Swift, both military engineers, were called upon to help rebuild the Capitol. Reconstruction began in 1815 and included redesigned chambers for both Senate and House wings (now sides), which were completed by 1819. During the reconstruction, Congress met in the Old Brick Capitol, a temporary structure financed by local investors. Construction continued through to 1826, with the addition of the center section with front steps and columned portico and an interior Rotunda rising above the first low dome of the Capitol. Latrobe is principally connected with the original construction and many innovative interior features; his successor Bulfinch also played a major role, such as design of the first low dome covered in copper.



The Capitol after the August 1814 burning of Washington, D.C., by the British, during the War of 1812 (painting 1814 by George Munger)



Daguerreotype of east side of the Capitol in 1846, by John Plumbe, showing Bulfinch's dome

of the construction labor was carried out by slaves "who cut the logs, laid the stones and baked the bricks".<sup>[35]</sup> The original plan was to use workers brought in from Europe; however, there was a poor response to recruitment efforts, and African Americans, some free and some enslaved, composed the majority of the work force.<sup>[36]</sup>

## Capitol dome



Inauguration of Abraham Lincoln in 1861, before the partially complete Capitol dome

is seen "*The Apotheosis of Washington*" painted on a shell suspended from the supporting ribs, which also support the visible exterior structure and the tholos that supports The "Statue of Freedom", a colossal statue that was raised to the top of the dome in 1863. The weight of the cast iron for the dome has been published as 8,909,200 pounds (4,041,100 kg).<sup>[37]</sup>

## Later expansion

When the Capitol's new dome was finally completed, its massive visual weight, in turn, overpowered the proportions of the columns of the East Portico, built in 1828. The East Front of the Capitol building was rebuilt in 1904, following a design of the architects Carrère and Hastings, who also designed the Russell Senate and Cannon House office buildings.

The next major expansion to the Capitol started in 1958, with a 33.5-foot (10.2 m) extension of the East Portico. During this project, in 1960 the dome underwent a restoration.<sup>[38]</sup> A marble duplicate of the sandstone East Front was built 33.5 feet (10.2 m) from the old Front. (In 1962, a connecting extension incorporated what had been an outside wall as an inside wall.) In the process, the original sandstone Corinthian columns were removed and replaced with marble. It was not until 1984 that landscape designer Russell Page created a suitable setting for them in a large meadow at the U.S. National Arboretum in northeast Washington as the

## The House and Senate Wings

By 1850, it became clear that the Capitol could not accommodate the growing number of legislators arriving from newly admitted states. A new design competition was held, and President Millard Fillmore appointed Philadelphia architect Thomas U. Walter to carry out the expansion. Two new wings were added: a new chamber for the House of Representatives on the south side, and a new chamber for the Senate on the north.<sup>[34]</sup>

When the Capitol was expanded in the 1850s, some



The earliest known interior photograph of the Capitol, taken in 1860 and showing the new House of Representatives chamber

The 1850 expansion more than doubled the length of the Capitol, and dwarfed the original, timber-framed, copper-sheeted, low dome of 1818, designed by Charles Bulfinch which was no longer in proportion with the increased size of the building. In 1855, the decision was made to tear it down and replace it with the "wedding-cake style" cast-iron dome that stands today. Also designed by Thomas U. Walter, the new dome would stand three times the height of the original dome and 100 feet (30 m) in diameter, yet had to be supported on the existing masonry piers. Like Mansart's dome at "Les Invalides" (which he had visited in 1838), Walter's dome is double, with a large oculus in the inner dome, through which

National Capitol Columns, where they are combined with a reflecting pool in an ensemble that reminds some visitors of the ruins of Persepolis, in Persia. Besides the columns, hundreds of blocks of the original stone were removed and are stored behind a National Park Service maintenance yard in Rock Creek Park.<sup>[39][40]</sup>

On December 19, 1960, the Capitol was declared a National Historic Landmark by the National Park Service.<sup>[41]</sup> The building was ranked #6 in a 2007 survey conducted for the American Institute of Architects' "America's Favorite Architecture" list.<sup>[42]</sup> The Capitol draws heavily from other notable buildings, especially churches and landmarks in Europe, including the dome of St. Peter's Basilica in the Vatican and St. Paul's Cathedral in London.<sup>[43]</sup> On the roofs of the Senate and House Chambers are flagpoles that fly the U.S. flag when either is in session. On September 18, 1993, to commemorate the Capitol's bicentennial, the Masonic ritual cornerstone laying with George Washington was reenacted. U.S. Senator Strom Thurmond was one of the Freemason politicians who took part in the ceremony.

On June 20, 2000, ground was broken for the Capitol Visitor Center, which opened on December 2, 2008.<sup>[44]</sup> From 2001 through 2008, the East Front of the Capitol (site of most presidential inaugurations until Ronald Reagan began a new tradition in 1981) was the site of construction for this massive underground complex, designed to facilitate a more orderly entrance for visitors to the Capitol. Prior to the center being built, visitors to the Capitol had to line up in the basement of the Cannon House Office Building or the Russell Senate Office Building. The new underground facility provides a grand entrance hall, a visitors theater, room for exhibits, and dining and restroom facilities, in addition to space for building necessities such as a service tunnel.

A large-scale Capitol dome restoration project, the first extensive such work since 1959–1960, began in 2014, with completion scheduled before the 2017 presidential inauguration.<sup>[45]</sup> As of 2012, \$20 million in work around the skirt of the dome had been completed, but other deterioration, including at least 1,300 cracks in the brittle iron that have led to rusting and seepage inside, needed to be addressed. Before the August 2012 recess, the Senate Appropriations Committee voted to spend \$61 million to repair the exterior of the dome. The House wanted to spend less on government operations,<sup>[38]</sup> but in late 2013, it was announced that renovations would take place over two years, starting in spring 2014.<sup>[46]</sup> Extensive scaffolding was erected in 2014, enclosing and obscuring the dome.<sup>[45]</sup> All exterior scaffolding was removed by mid-September 2016.<sup>[47]</sup>

With the increased use of technologies such as the internet, a bid tendering process was approved in 2001/2002 for a contract to install the multidirectional radio communication network for Wi-Fi and mobile-phone within the Capitol Building and annexes, followed by the new Capitol Visitor Center. The winning bidder was an Israeli company called Foxcom which has since changed its name and been acquired by Corning Incorporated.<sup>[48][49]</sup>



The Washington Depot with the U.S. Capitol in the distance (1872 view)



National Capitol Columns at the National Arboretum (2008 view)



The United States Capitol, with scaffolding erected to facilitate restoration work on the dome (November 2014 view)

## Interior



Capitol Rotunda (2013 view)

The Capitol building is marked by its central dome above a rotunda in the central section of the structure (which also includes the older original smaller center flanked by the two original (designed 1793, occupied 1800) smaller two wings (inner north and inner south) containing the two original smaller meeting chambers for the Senate and the House of Representatives (between 1800 and late 1850s) and then flanked by two further extended (newer) wings, one also for each chamber of the larger, more populous Congress: the new north wing is the Senate chamber and the new south wing is the House of Representatives chamber. Above these newer chambers are galleries where visitors can watch the Senate and House of Representatives. It is an example of neoclassical architecture.

Tunnels and internal subways connect the Capitol building with the Congressional office buildings in the Capitol Complex. All rooms in the Capitol are designated as either S (for Senate) or H (for House), depending on whether they are in the Senate or House wing of the Capitol.

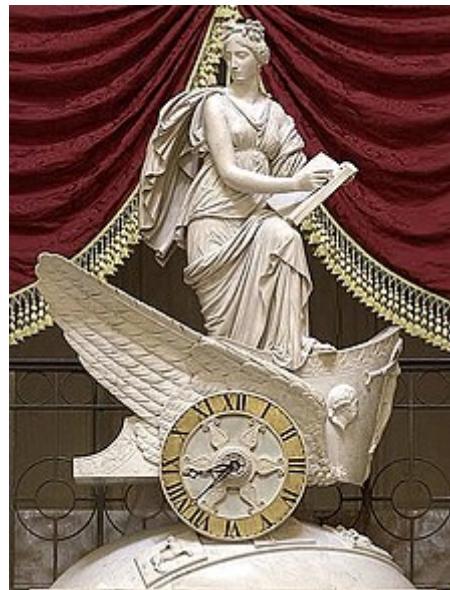
## Art



*The Apotheosis of Washington*, the 1865 fresco painted by Constantino Brumidi on the interior of the Capitol's dome (2005 view)

The Capitol has a long history in art of the United States, beginning in 1856 with Italian/Greek American artist Constantino Brumidi and his murals in the hallways of the first floor of the Senate side of the Capitol. The murals, known as the Brumidi Corridors,<sup>[50]</sup> reflect great moments and people in United States history. Among the original works are those depicting Benjamin Franklin,

John Fitch, Robert Fulton, and events such as the Cession of Louisiana. Also decorating the walls are animals, insects and natural flora indigenous to the United States. Brumidi's design left many spaces open so future events in United States history could be added. Among those added are the Spirit of St. Louis, the Moon landing, and the Space Shuttle Challenger crew.



Carlo Franzoni's 1819 sculptural chariot clock, the *Car of History*, depicting Clio, the Greek muse of history. National Statuary Hall (2006 view).

Brumidi also worked within the Rotunda. He is responsible for the painting of *The Apotheosis of Washington* beneath the top of the dome, and also the *Frieze of American History*.<sup>[51]</sup> *The Apotheosis of Washington* was completed in 11 months and painted by Brumidi while suspended nearly 180 feet (55 m) in the air. It is said to be the first attempt by the United States to deify a founding father. Washington is depicted surrounded by 13 maidens in an inner ring with many Greek and Roman gods and goddesses below him in a second ring. The frieze is located around the inside of the base of the dome and is a chronological, pictorial history of the United States from the landing of Christopher Columbus to the Wright Brothers's flight in Kitty Hawk, North Carolina. The frieze was started in 1878 and was not completed until 1953. The frieze was therefore painted by four different artists: Brumidi, Filippo Costaggini, Charles Ayer Whipple, and Allyn Cox. The final scenes depicted in the fresco had not yet occurred when Brumidi began his *Frieze of the United States History*.



Capitol Rotunda (2005 view)

Within the Rotunda there are eight large paintings about the development of the United States as a nation. On the east side are four paintings depicting major events in the discovery of America. On the west are four paintings depicting the founding of the United States. The east side paintings include *The Baptism of Pocahontas* by John Gadsby Chapman, *The Embarkation of the Pilgrims* by Robert Walter Weir, *The Discovery of the Mississippi* by William Henry Powell, and *The Landing of Columbus* by John Vanderlyn. The paintings on the west side are by John Trumbull: *Declaration of Independence*, *Surrender of General Burgoyne*, *Surrender of Lord Cornwallis*, and *General George Washington Resigning His Commission*. Trumbull was a contemporary of the United States' founding fathers and a participant in the American Revolutionary War; he painted a self-portrait into *Surrender of Lord Cornwallis*.



*Declaration of Independence* (1819),  
by John Trumbull

*First Reading of the Emancipation Proclamation of President Lincoln*, an 1864 painting by Francis Bicknell Carpenter, hangs over the west staircase in the Senate wing.<sup>[52]</sup>

The Capitol also houses the National Statuary Hall Collection, comprising two statues donated by each of the fifty states to honor persons notable in their histories. One of the most notable statues in the



National Statuary Hall Collection  
viewed from the south

National Statuary Hall is a bronze statue of King Kamehameha donated by the state of Hawaii upon its accession to the union in 1959. The statue's extraordinary weight of 15,000 pounds (6,800 kg) raised concerns that it might come crashing through the floor, so it was moved to Emancipation Hall of the new Capitol Visitor Center. The 100th, and last statue for the collection, that of Po'pay from the state of New Mexico, was added on September 22, 2005. It was the first statue moved into the Emancipation Hall.

## Crypt



Capitol Crypt

On the ground floor is an area known as the Crypt. It was intended to be the burial place of George Washington, with a ringed balustrade at the center of the Rotunda above looking down to his tomb. However, under the stipulations of his last will, Washington was buried at Mount Vernon. The Crypt houses exhibits on the history of the Capitol. A compass star inlaid in the floor marks the point at which Washington, D.C. is divided into its four quadrants and is the basis for how addresses in Washington, D.C., are designated (NE, NW, SE, or SW).

Within the Crypt is Gutzon Borglum's massive *Abraham Lincoln Bust*. The sculptor had a fascination with large-scale art and themes of heroic nationalism, and carved the piece from a six-ton block of marble. Borglum carved the bust in 1908, and it was donated to the Congress by Eugene Meyer Jr., and accepted by the Joint Committee on the Library, in the same year. The pedestal was specially designed by the sculptor and installed in 1911. The bust and pedestal were on display in the Rotunda

for many years until 1979 when, after a rearrangement of all sculpture in the Rotunda, they were placed in the Crypt.<sup>[53]</sup> Borglum was a patriot; believing the "monuments we have built are not our own", he looked to create art that was "American, drawn from American sources, memorializing American achievement", according to a 1908 interview article. Borglum's depiction of Lincoln was so accurate, that Robert Todd Lincoln, the president's son, praised the bust as "the most extraordinarily good portrait of my father I have ever seen".<sup>[53]</sup> Supposedly, according to legend, the marble head remains unfinished (missing the left ear) to symbolize Lincoln's unfinished life.

## Features

At one end of the room near the Old Supreme Court Chamber is a statue of John C. Calhoun. On the right leg of the statue, a mark from a bullet fired during the 1998 shooting incident is clearly visible. The bullet also left a mark on the cape, located on the back right side of the statue.

Twelve presidents have lain in state in the Rotunda for public viewing, most recently George H. W. Bush. The tomb meant for Washington stored the catafalque which is used to support coffins lying in state or honor in the Capitol. The catafalque now on display in the Exhibition Hall of the Capitol Visitor Center was used for President Lincoln.

The Hall of Columns is located on the House side of the Capitol, home to twenty-eight fluted columns and statues from the National Statuary Hall Collection. In the basement of the Capitol building in a utility room are two marble bathtubs, which are all that remain of the once elaborate Senate baths. These baths were a spa-like facility designed for members of Congress and their guests before many buildings in the city had modern plumbing. The facilities included several bathtubs, a barbershop, and a massage parlor.

A steep, metal staircase, totaling 365 steps, leads from the basement to an outdoor walkway on top of the Capitol's dome.<sup>[54]</sup> The number of steps represents each day of the year.<sup>[55]</sup> Also in the basement, the weekly Jummah prayer is held on Fridays by Muslim staffers.<sup>[56]</sup>

## Height

Contrary to a popular myth, D.C. building height laws have never referred to the height of the Capitol building, which rises to 289 feet (88 m).<sup>[57]</sup> Indeed, the Capitol is only the fourth-tallest structure in Washington.

## House Chamber

The House of Representatives Chamber has 448 permanent seats. Unlike senators, representatives do not have assigned seats.<sup>[58]</sup> The chamber is large enough to accommodate members of all three branches of the federal government and invited guests for joint sessions of Congress such as the State of the Union speech and other events.

The Chamber is adorned with relief portraits of famous lawmakers and lawgivers throughout history. The United States national motto "In God We Trust" is written over the tribune below the clock and above the United States flag. Of the twenty-three relief portraits only Moses is sculpted from a full front view and is located across from the dais where the Speaker of the House ceremonially sits.



President George W. Bush delivering the annual State of the Union address in the House chamber

In order clockwise around the chamber:



Old Supreme Court Chamber (2007 view)



US Senate chamber (circa 1873 view)

No.	Individual	Years	Country	Legal work
1	George Mason	1725–1792	United States	Virginia Declaration of Rights
2	Robert Joseph Pothier	1699–1772	France	<i>Pandectae Justinianae in novum ordinem digestae</i>
3	Jean-Baptiste Colbert	1619–1683	France	
4	Edward I	1239–1307	England	Statute of Westminster 1275 and Statute of Westminster 1285
5	Alfonso X	1221–1284	Castile	<i>Fuero Real</i> and <i>Siete Partidas</i>
6	Pope Gregory IX	c. 1145–1241	Papacy	<i>Decretales</i>
7	Louis IX	1214–1270	France	
8	Justinian I	c. 482–565	Byzantine Empire	<i>Corpus Juris Civilis</i>
9	Tribonian	c. 485–542	Byzantine Empire	<i>Codex Justinianus</i>
10	Lycurgus	fl. c. 820 BC	Sparta	
11	Hammurabi	c. 1810 – 1750 BC	Babylonian Empire	<i>Code of Hammurabi</i>
12	Moses	c. 1570 – 1450 BC	Tribes of Israel	<i>Law of Moses</i>
13	Solon	c. 638 – c. 558 BC	Athens	<i>Solonian Constitution</i>
14	Papinian	142–212	Rome	
15	Gaius	fl. 130–180	Rome	<i>Institutes</i>
16	Maimonides	1135/38–1204	Almoravid Empire	<i>Mishneh Torah</i>
17	Suleiman the Magnificent	1494–1566	Ottoman Empire	<i>Kanune Raya</i>
18	Pope Innocent III	1160/61–1216	Papacy	
19	Simon de Montfort	c. 1208–1265	England	<i>Simon de Montfort's Parliament</i>
20	Hugo Grotius	1583–1645	Dutch Republic	<i>Mare Liberum</i> , <i>De jure belli ac pacis</i> and others
21	William Blackstone	1723–1780	Great Britain	<i>Commentaries on the Laws of England</i>
22	Napoleon	1769–1821	France	<i>Napoleonic Code</i>
23	Thomas Jefferson	1743–1826	United States	United States Declaration of Independence and <i>Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom</i>

There is also a quote etched in the marble of the chamber, as stated by venerable statesman Daniel Webster: "Let us develop the resources of our land, call forth its powers, build up its institutions, promote all its great interests, and see whether we also, in our day and generation, may not perform something worthy to be remembered."<sup>[59]</sup>

## **Senate Chamber**

The current Senate Chamber opened in 1859<sup>[60]</sup> and is adorned with white marble busts of the former Presidents of the Senate (Vice Presidents).<sup>[61]</sup>

## **Old Chambers**

### **Statuary Hall (Old Hall of the House)**

The National Statuary Hall is a chamber in the United States Capitol devoted to sculptures of prominent Americans. The hall, also known as the Old Hall of the House, is a large, two-story, semicircular room with a second story gallery along the curved perimeter. It is located immediately south of the Rotunda. It was the meeting place of the U.S. House of Representatives for nearly 50 years (1807–1857). After a few years of disuse, in 1864, it was repurposed as a statuary hall.

### **Old Senate Chamber**

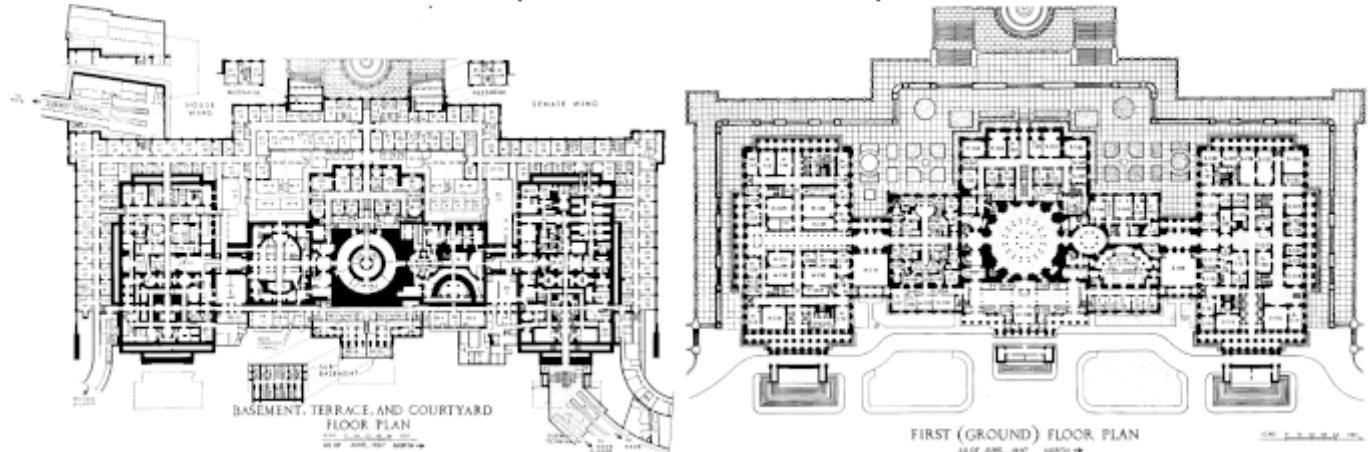
The Old Senate Chamber is a room in the United States Capitol that was the legislative chamber of the United States Senate from 1810 to 1859, and served as the Supreme Court chamber from 1860 until 1935.

### **Old Supreme Court Chamber**

This room was originally the lower half of the Old Senate Chamber from 1800 to 1806. After division of the chamber in two levels, this room was used from 1806 until 1860 as the Supreme Court Chamber. In 1860, the Supreme Court began using the newly vacated Old Senate Chamber. In 1935, the Supreme Court vacated the Capitol Building and began meeting in the newly constructed United States Supreme Court Building across the street.

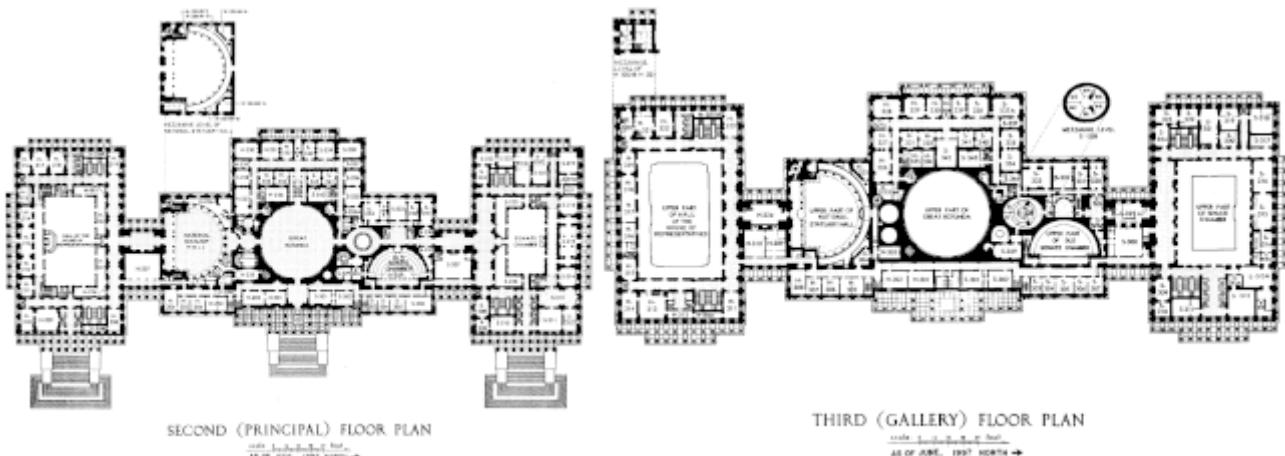
## **Floor plans**

## Floor plans of the United States Capitol



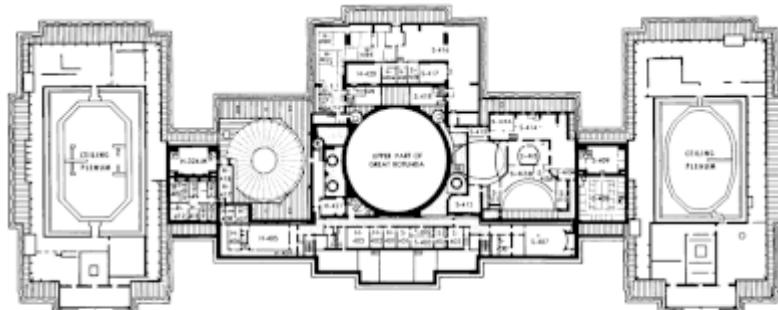
Basement, Terrace, and Courtyard Floor

First (Ground) Floor



Second (Primary) Floor

Third (Gallery) Floor



Fourth (Attic) Floor

Layout and room numbers as of 1997

## Exterior

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### Grounds

The Capitol Grounds cover approximately 274 acres (1.11 km<sup>2</sup>), with the grounds proper consisting mostly of lawns, walkways, streets, drives, and planting areas. Several monumental sculptures used to be located on the east facade and lawn of the Capitol including The Rescue and George Washington. The current grounds were

designed by noted American landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted, who planned the expansion and landscaping performed from 1874 to 1892. In 1875, as one of his first recommendations, Olmsted proposed the construction of the marble terraces on the north, west, and south sides of the building that exist today.

Olmsted also designed the Summerhouse, the open-air brick building that sits just north of the Capitol. Three arches open into the hexagonal structure, which encloses a fountain and twenty-two brick chairs. A fourth wall holds a small window which looks onto an artificial grotto. Built between 1879 and 1881, the Summerhouse was intended to answer complaints that visitors to the Capitol had no place to sit and no place to obtain water for their horses and themselves. Modern drinking fountains have since replaced Olmsted's fountain for the latter purpose. Olmsted intended to build a second, matching Summerhouse on the southern side of the Capitol, but congressional objections led to the project's cancellation.<sup>[62]</sup>



A 2007 aerial view of the Capitol Grounds from the west



Magnolias bloom on the Capitol Grounds in March 2020

## Flags

Up to four U.S. flags can be seen flying over the Capitol. Two flagpoles are located at the base of the dome on the East and West sides. These flagpoles have flown the flag day and night since World War I. The other two flagpoles are above the North (Senate) and South (House of Representatives) wings of the building, and fly only when the chamber below is in session. The flag above the House of Representatives is raised and lowered by House pages. The flag above the United States Senate is raised and lowered by Senate Doorkeepers. To raise the flag, Doorkeepers access the roof of the Capitol from the Senate Sergeant at Arms's office. Several auxiliary flagpoles, to the west of the dome and not visible from the ground, are used to meet congressional requests for flags flown over the Capitol. Constituents pay for U.S. flags flown over the Capitol to commemorate a variety of events such as the death of a veteran family member.

## Major events

The Capitol, as well as the grounds of Capitol Hill, have played host to major events, including presidential inaugurations held every four years. During an inauguration, the front of the Capitol is outfitted with a platform and a grand staircase. Annual events at the Capitol include Independence Day celebrations, and the National Memorial Day Concert.

The general public has paid respect to a number of individuals lying in state at the Capitol, including numerous former presidents, senators, and other officials. Other Americans lying in honor include Officers Jacob Chestnut and John Gibson, the two officers killed in the 1998 shooting incident. Chestnut was the first African American ever to lie in honor in the Capitol. The public also paid respect to Rosa Parks, an icon of the civil rights movement, at the Capitol in 2005. She was the first woman and second African American to lie in honor in the Capitol. In February 2018, the evangelical Rev. Billy Graham became the fourth private citizen to lie in honor in the Rotunda.<sup>[63]</sup>



The body of former President Ronald Reagan lying in state in June 2004

On September 24, 2015, Pope Francis gave a joint address to Congress, the first Pope to do so.<sup>[64]</sup>

## Security

The Capitol is believed to have been the intended target of the hijacked United Airlines Flight 93 on September 11, 2001, before it crashed near Shanksville in Somerset County, Pennsylvania, after passengers tried to take over control of the plane from hijackers.<sup>[65][66]</sup>



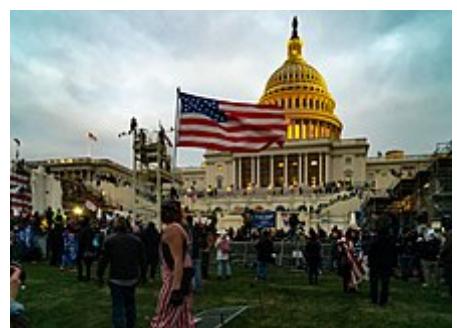
Exterior of the Capitol prior to the 2015 visit by Pope Francis

Since the September 11 attacks, the roads and grounds around the Capitol have undergone dramatic changes. The United States Capitol Police have also installed checkpoints to inspect vehicles at specific locations around Capitol Hill,<sup>[67][68]</sup> and have closed a section of one street indefinitely.<sup>[68]</sup> The level of screening employed varies. On the main east-west thoroughfares of Constitution and Independence Avenues, barricades are implanted in the roads that can be raised in the event of an emergency. Trucks larger than pickups are interdicted by the Capitol Police and are instructed to use other routes. On the checkpoints at the shorter cross streets, the barriers are typically kept in a permanent "emergency" position, and only vehicles with special permits are allowed to pass. All Capitol visitors are screened by a magnetometer, and all items that visitors may bring inside the building are screened by an x-ray device. In both chambers, gas masks are located underneath the chairs in each chamber for members to use in case of emergency. Structures ranging from scores of Jersey barriers to hundreds of ornamental bollards have been erected to obstruct the path of any vehicles that might stray from the designated roadways.<sup>[69]</sup>

After the 2021 storming of the US Capitol, security increased again. Additional security fences were installed around the perimeter, and US National Guard troops were deployed to bolster security.

### List of security incidents

- On January 30, 1835, what is believed to be the first attempt to kill a sitting President of the United States occurred just outside the United States Capitol. As President Andrew Jackson was leaving the Capitol out of the East Portico after the funeral of South Carolina Representative Warren R. Davis, Richard Lawrence, an unemployed and deranged housepainter from England, either burst from a crowd or stepped out from hiding behind a column and aimed a pistol at Jackson which misfired. Lawrence then pulled out a second pistol which also misfired. It has since been postulated that the moisture from the humid weather of the day contributed to the double misfiring.<sup>[70]</sup> Lawrence was then restrained, with legend saying that Jackson attacked Lawrence with his cane, prompting his aides to restrain him. Others present, including Davy Crockett, restrained and disarmed Lawrence.
- On April 23, 1844, then House-Speaker John White was involved in a physical confrontation on the House floor with Democratic Congressman George O. Rathbun of New York. White was delivering a speech in defense of Senator Henry Clay, the Whig nominee for President in that year's presidential election, and objected to a ruling from the Speaker denying him time to conclude his remarks. When Rathbun told White to be quiet, White confronted him and their disagreement lead to a fistfight between the two with dozens of their colleagues rushing to break up the fight. During the disturbance, an unknown visitor fired a pistol into the crowd,



2021 storming of the United States Capitol

wounding a police officer. Both White and Rathbun subsequently apologized for their actions.  
[71]

- On July 2, 1915, prior to the United States' entry into World War I, Eric Muenter (aka Frank Holt), a German professor who wanted to stop American support of the Allies of World War I, exploded a bomb in the reception room of the U.S. Senate. The next morning he tried to assassinate J. P. Morgan Jr., son of the financier, at his home on Long Island, New York. J.P. Morgan's company served as Great Britain's principal U.S. purchasing agent for munitions and other war supplies. In a letter to the Washington Evening Star published after the explosion, Muenter, writing under an assumed name, said he hoped that the detonation would "make enough noise to be heard above the voices that clamor for war."
- In the 1954 United States Capitol shooting, Puerto Rican nationalists opened fire on members of Congress from the visitors' gallery, injuring five representatives.
- On March 1, 1971, a bomb exploded on the ground floor of the Capitol, placed by the radical left domestic terrorist group the Weather Underground. They placed the bomb as a demonstration against U.S. involvement in Laos.
- In the 1983 United States Senate bombing, a group called the Armed Resistance Unit claimed responsibility for a bomb that detonated in the lobby outside the office of Senate Minority Leader Robert Byrd.<sup>[72]</sup> Six people associated with the John Brown Anti-Klan Committee were later found in contempt of court for refusing to testify about the bombing.<sup>[73]</sup>
- In 1990, three members of the Armed Resistance Unit were convicted of the bombing, which they claimed was in response to the invasion of Grenada.<sup>[74]</sup>
- In the 1998 United States Capitol shooting, Russell Eugene Weston Jr. burst into the Capitol and opened fire, killing two Capitol Police officers, Officer Jacob Chestnut and Det. John Gibson.
- In 2004, the Capitol was briefly evacuated after a plane carrying the then-governor of Kentucky strayed into restricted airspace above the district.
- In 2013, Miriam Carey, 34, a dental hygienist from Stamford, Connecticut, attempted to drive through a White House security checkpoint in her black Infiniti G37 coupe, struck a U.S. Secret Service officer, and was chased by the Secret Service to the United States Capitol where she was fatally shot by law enforcement officers.
- A shooting incident occurred in March 2016. One female bystander was wounded by police but not seriously injured; a man pointing a gun was shot and arrested, in critical but stable condition.<sup>[75]</sup> The city police of Washington D.C. described the shooting incident as "isolated".<sup>[76]</sup>
- In the 2021 storming of the United States Capitol, during the counting of electoral college votes for the 2020 United States presidential election, a pro-Trump rally resulted in a mob that violently stormed the Capitol.<sup>[77]</sup> The rioters unlawfully entered the Capitol during the joint session of Congress certifying the election of President-elect Joe Biden and Vice President-elect Kamala Harris, temporarily disrupting the proceedings. This triggered a lockdown in the building.<sup>[78]</sup> Vice President Mike Pence, Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi, and other staff members were evacuated, while others were instructed to barricade themselves inside offices and closets.<sup>[79]</sup> The rioters breached the Senate Chamber and multiple staff offices, including the office of House Speaker Nancy Pelosi.<sup>[80][81]</sup> One person was shot by law enforcement, and later succumbed to the injury.<sup>[82]</sup> President-elect Joe Biden criticized the violence as "insurrection" and said democracy was "under unprecedented assault" as a result of the storming.<sup>[83]</sup> The attack resulted in the death of four rioters, including a woman who was shot as she attempted to breach the Capitol.<sup>[84]</sup> The events ultimately led to the second impeachment of Donald Trump.<sup>[85]</sup> It was the first time the Capitol had been violently seized since 1814, when it was taken by the British in the War of 1812.<sup>[86]</sup>
- In the April 2021 United States Capitol car attack, an attacker rammed a car into barriers outside the Capitol, hitting several Capitol Police Officers before exiting his vehicle and

attempting to attack others with a knife. An officer hit by the attacker's car died shortly thereafter. The attacker was shot by Capitol Police and later died of his injuries.<sup>[87]</sup>

## Capitol Visitor Center

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The United States Capitol Visitor Center (CVC), located below the East Front of the Capitol and its plaza, between the Capitol building and 1st Street East, opened on December 2, 2008. The CVC provides a single security checkpoint for all visitors, including those with disabilities, and an expansion space for the US Congress.<sup>[88][89]</sup> The complex contains 580,000 square feet (54,000 m<sup>2</sup>) of space below ground on three floors,<sup>[90]</sup> and offers visitors a food court, restrooms, and educational exhibits, including an 11-foot scale model of the Capitol dome.<sup>[91]</sup> It also features skylights affording views of the actual dome. Long in the planning stages, construction began in the fall of 2001, following the killing of two Capitol police officers in 1998. The estimated final cost of constructing the CVC was \$621 million.<sup>[92]</sup>

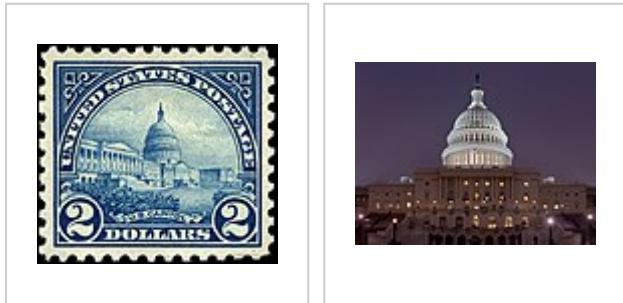


The opening ceremony of the Capitol Visitor Center in December 2008.

The plaster cast model of the Statue of Freedom is in the foreground.

## Gallery

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In 1922, the US Post Office featured the US Capitol on a US Postage stamp. The Capitol at night (2006 view)

## See also

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- Apotheosis of Democracy by Paul Wayland Bartlett, a pediment on the east front of the House of Representatives Portico
- Congressional Prayer Room
- Hideaways, secret offices used by members of the Senate
- History of modern period domes
- President's Room, an ornate office sometimes used by the President
- United States fifty-dollar bill, which pictures the Capitol on the back
- Vice President's Room
- Washington's Tomb

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## External links

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-  Geographic data related to [United States Capitol](https://www.openstreetmap.org/browse/wa/y/66418809) (<https://www.openstreetmap.org/browse/wa/y/66418809>) at [OpenStreetMap](#)
- [Official website](https://www.capitol.gov/) (<https://www.capitol.gov/>) 
- [Capitol Visitors Center](http://www.visitthecapitol.gov/) (<http://www.visitthecapitol.gov/>)
- [United States Capitol Historical Society](http://www.uschs.org/) (<http://www.uschs.org/>)
- [Architect of the Capitol](http://www.aoc.gov/) (<http://www.aoc.gov/>)
- [Capitol History Project](http://www.c-span.org/capitol/history) (<http://www.c-span.org/capitol/history>)
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# Lincoln Memorial

The **Lincoln Memorial** is a US national memorial built to honor the 16th president of the United States, Abraham Lincoln. It is on the western end of the National Mall in Washington, D.C., across from the Washington Monument, and is in the form of a neoclassical temple. The memorial's architect was Henry Bacon. The designer of the memorial interior's large central statue, Abraham Lincoln (1920), was Daniel Chester French; the Lincoln statue was carved by the Piccirilli Brothers.<sup>[3]</sup> The painter of the interior murals was Jules Guerin, and the epithet above the statue was written by Royal Cortissoz. Dedicated in May 1922, it is one of several memorials built to honor an American president. It has always been a major tourist attraction and since the 1930s has sometimes been a symbolic center focused on race relations.

The building is in the form of a Greek Doric temple and contains a large seated sculpture of Abraham Lincoln and inscriptions of two well-known speeches by Lincoln, The Gettysburg Address and his second inaugural address. The memorial has been the site of many famous speeches, including Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech, delivered on August 28, 1963, during the rally at the end of the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom.

Like other monuments on the National Mall – including the nearby Vietnam Veterans Memorial, Korean War Veterans Memorial, and World War II Memorial – the national memorial is administered by the National Park Service under its National Mall and Memorial Parks group. It has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places since October 15, 1966, and was ranked seventh on the American Institute of Architects' 2007 list of America's Favorite Architecture. The memorial is open to the public 24 hours a day, and more than seven million people visit it annually.<sup>[4]</sup>

## Contents

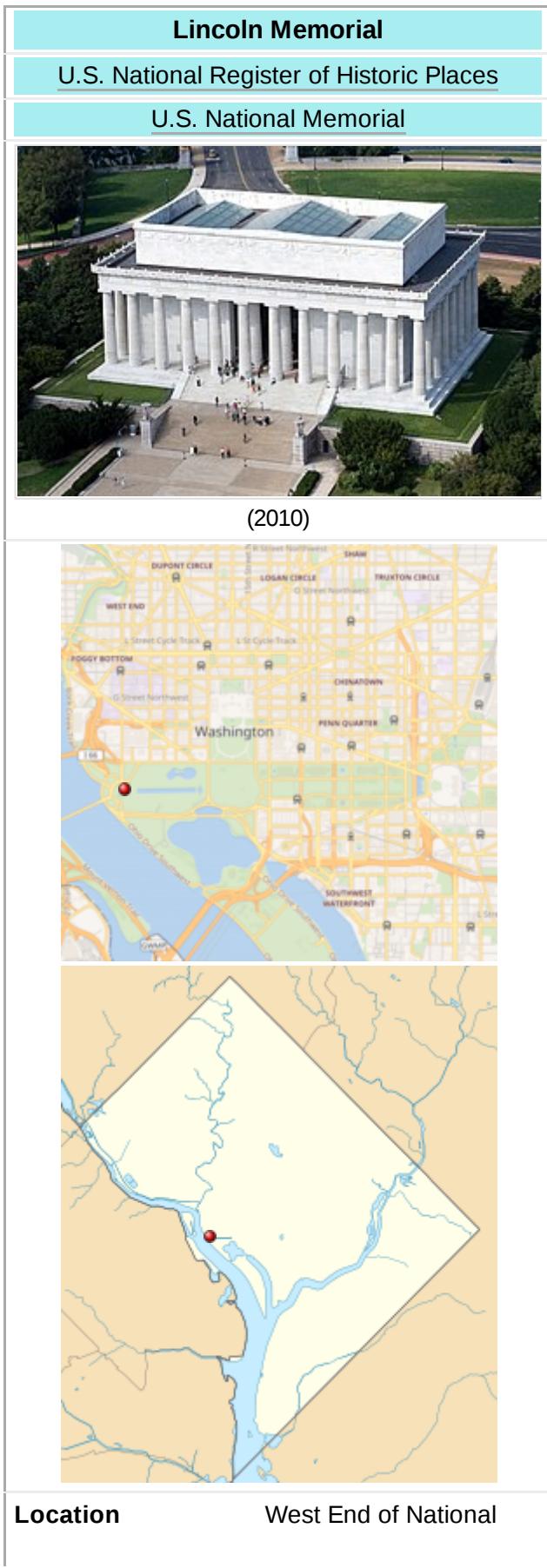
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Exterior

Interior

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Statue



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## History

The first public memorial to [United States President Abraham Lincoln](#) in [Washington, D.C.](#), was a statue by [Lot Flannery](#) erected in front of the [District of Columbia City Hall](#) in 1868, three years after [Lincoln's assassination](#).<sup>[5][6]</sup>

Demands for a fitting national memorial had been voiced since the time of Lincoln's death. In 1867, [Congress](#) passed the first of many bills incorporating a commission to erect a monument for the sixteenth president. An American sculptor, [Clark Mills](#), was chosen to design the monument. His plans reflected the nationalistic spirit of the time, and called for a 70-foot (21 m) structure adorned with six equestrian and 31 pedestrian statues of colossal proportions, crowned by a 12-foot (3.7 m) statue of Abraham Lincoln. Subscriptions for the project were insufficient.<sup>[7]</sup>

The matter lay dormant until the start of the 20th century, when, under the leadership of [Senator Shelby M. Cullom of Illinois](#), six separate bills were introduced in Congress for the incorporation of a new memorial commission. The first five bills, proposed in the years 1901, 1902, and 1908, met with defeat because of opposition from Speaker [Joe Cannon](#). The sixth bill (Senate Bill 9449), introduced on December 13, 1910, passed. The Lincoln Memorial Commission had its first meeting the following year and [United States President William H. Taft](#) was chosen as the commission's president. Progress continued at a steady pace and by 1913 Congress had approved of the commission's choice of design and location.<sup>[7]</sup>

There were questions regarding the commission's plan. Many thought that architect Henry Bacon's Greek temple design was far too ostentatious for a man of Lincoln's humble character. Instead, they proposed a simple log cabin shrine. The site too did not go unopposed. The recently reclaimed land in [West Potomac Park](#) was seen by many to be either too swampy or too inaccessible. Other sites, such as [Union Station](#), were put forth. The Commission stood firm in its recommendation, feeling that the Potomac Park location, situated on the [Washington Monument–Capitol axis](#), overlooking the [Potomac River](#) and surrounded by open land, was

<b>Coordinates</b>	Mall, <a href="#">Washington, D.C.</a> 38°53'21.4"N 77°3'0.5"W
<b>Area</b>	27,336 square feet (2,539.6 m <sup>2</sup> )
<b>Built</b>	1914–1922
<b>Architect</b>	<a href="#">Henry Bacon</a> (architect) <a href="#">Daniel Chester French</a> (sculptor)
<b>Architectural style</b>	<a href="#">Greek Revival</a> <sup>[1]</sup>
<b>Visitation</b>	7,808,182 (2019) <sup>[2]</sup>
<b>Website</b>	<a href="#">Lincoln Memorial</a> ( <a href="http://www.nps.gov/linc/index.htm">http://www.nps.gov/linc/index.htm</a> )
<b>NRHP reference No.</b>	<a href="#">66000030</a> ( <a href="https://npgallery.nps.gov/AssetDetail/NRIS/66000030">https://npgallery.nps.gov/AssetDetail/NRIS/66000030</a> ) <sup>[1]</sup>
<b>Added to NRHP</b>	October 15, 1966



Future site of the Memorial, c. 1912



President [Warren G. Harding](#) speaking at the dedication, 1922

ideal. Furthermore, the Potomac Park site had already been designated in the [McMillan Plan](#) of 1901 to be the location of a future monument comparable to that of the Washington Monument.<sup>[7][8]</sup>

With Congressional approval and a \$300,000 allocation, the project got underway. On February 12, 1914, a dedication ceremony was conducted and the following month the actual construction began. Work progressed steadily according to schedule. Some changes were made to the plan. The statue of Lincoln, originally designed to be 10 feet (3.0 m) tall, was enlarged to 19 feet (5.8 m) to prevent it from being overwhelmed by the huge chamber. As late as 1920, the decision was made to substitute an open portal for the bronze and glass grille which was to have guarded the entrance. Despite these changes, the Memorial was finished on schedule.

Commission president William H. Taft – who was then Chief Justice of the United States – dedicated the Memorial on May 30, 1922, and presented it to [United States President Warren G. Harding](#), who accepted it on behalf of the American people. Lincoln's only surviving son, 78-year-old [Robert Todd Lincoln](#), was in attendance.<sup>[9]</sup> Prominent African Americans were invited to the event and discovered upon arrival they were assigned a segregated section guarded by [U.S. Marines](#).<sup>[10]</sup>

The Memorial was listed on the [National Register of Historic Places](#) on October 15, 1966.<sup>[11]</sup>

## Exterior

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The exterior of the Memorial echoes a classic [Greek temple](#) and features [Yule marble](#) quarried from [Colorado](#). The structure measures 189.7 by 118.5 feet (57.8 by 36.1 m) and is 99 feet (30 m) tall. It is surrounded by a [peristyle](#) of 36 [fluted Doric columns](#), one for each of the 36 states in the Union at the time of Lincoln's death, and two columns [in-antis](#) at the entrance behind the [colonnade](#). The columns stand 44 feet (13 m) tall with a base diameter of 7.5 feet (2.3 m). Each column is built from 12 drums including the [capital](#). The columns, like the exterior walls and facades, are inclined slightly toward the building's interior. This is to compensate for perspective distortions which would otherwise make the memorial appear to bulge out at the top when compared with the bottom, a common feature of [Ancient Greek architecture](#).<sup>[12]</sup>



Detail of the Memorial's [friezes](#)

Above the colonnade, inscribed on the [frieze](#), are the names of the 36 states in the Union at the time of Lincoln's death and the dates in which they entered the Union.<sup>[Note 1]</sup> Their names are separated by double wreath medallions in [bas-relief](#). The [cornice](#) is composed of a carved scroll regularly interspersed with projecting lions' heads and ornamented with palmetto cresting along the upper edge. Above this on the attic frieze are inscribed the names of the 48 states present at the time of the Memorial's dedication. A bit higher is a [garland](#) joined by ribbons and palm leaves, supported by the wings of eagles. All ornamentation on the friezes and cornices was done by [Ernest C. Bairstow](#).<sup>[12]</sup>

The Memorial is anchored in a concrete foundation, 44 to 66 feet (13 to 20 m) in depth, constructed by M. F. Comer and Company and the National Foundation and Engineering Company, and is encompassed by a 187-by-257-foot (57 by 78 m) rectangular granite [retaining wall](#) measuring 14 feet (4.3 m) in height.<sup>[12]</sup>



Chief Justice [Taft](#), President [Harding](#) and [Robert Todd Lincoln](#) at the dedication of the Lincoln Memorial in 1922

Leading up to the shrine on the east side are the main steps. Beginning at the edge of the Reflecting Pool, the steps rise to the **Lincoln Memorial Circle** roadway surrounding the edifice, then to the main portal, intermittently spaced with a series of platforms. Flanking the steps as they approach the entrance are two buttresses each crowned with an 11-foot (3.4 m) tall tripod carved from pink Tennessee marble<sup>[12]</sup> by the Piccirilli Brothers.<sup>[13]</sup>

## Interior

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The Memorial's interior is divided into three chambers by two rows of four Ionic columns, each 50 feet (15 m) tall and 5.5 feet (1.7 m) across at their base. The central chamber, housing the statue of Lincoln, is 60 feet wide, 74 feet deep, and 60 feet high.<sup>[14]</sup> The north and south chambers display carved inscriptions of Lincoln's second inaugural address and his Gettysburg Address.<sup>[Note 2]</sup> Bordering these inscriptions are pilasters ornamented with fascles, eagles, and wreaths. The inscriptions and adjoining ornamentation are by Evelyn Beatrice Longman.<sup>[12]</sup>

The Memorial is replete with symbolic elements. The 36 columns represent the states of the Union at the time of Lincoln's death; the 48 stone festoons above the columns represent the 48 states in 1922. Inside, each inscription is surmounted by a 60-by-12-foot (18.3 by 3.7 m) mural by Jules Guerin portraying principles seen as evident in Lincoln's life: Freedom, Liberty, Morality, Justice, and the Law on the south wall; Unity, Fraternity, and Charity on the north. Cypress trees, representing Eternity, are in the murals' backgrounds. The murals' paint incorporated kerosene and wax to protect the exposed artwork from fluctuations in temperature and moisture.<sup>[15]</sup>

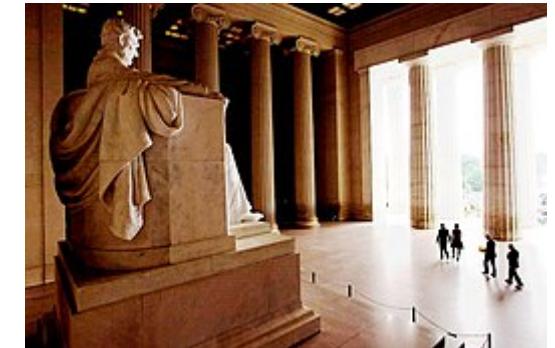
The ceiling consists of bronze girders ornamented with laurel and oak leaves. Between these are panels of Alabama marble, saturated with paraffin to increase translucency. But feeling that the statue required even more light, Bacon and French designed metal slats for the ceiling to conceal floodlights, which could be modulated to supplement the natural light; this modification was installed in 1929. The one major alteration since was the addition of an elevator for the disabled in the 1970s.<sup>[15]</sup>

## Undercroft

Below the memorial is an undercroft. Due to water seeping through the calcium carbonate within the marble, over time stalactites and stalagmites have formed within it.<sup>[16]</sup> During construction, graffiti was scrawled on it by workers,<sup>[17][18]</sup> and is considered historical graffiti by the National Park Service.<sup>[17]</sup> During the 1970s and 1980s, there were regular tours of the undercroft.<sup>[19]</sup> The tours stopped abruptly in 1989 after a visitor noticed asbestos and notified the Service.<sup>[20]</sup> For the memorial's centennial in 2022, the undercroft is planned to be open to visitors following a rehabilitation project funded by David Rubenstein.<sup>[21][22]</sup>

## Statue

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President Barack Obama, First Lady Michelle Obama, and former Presidents Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton walk past the statue of President Abraham Lincoln to participate in the ceremony on the 50th anniversary of the historic March on Washington and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech

Lying between the north and south chambers of the open-air Memorial is the central hall, which contains the large solitary figure of Abraham

**IN THIS TEMPLE  
AS IN THE HEARTS OF THE PEOPLE  
FOR WHOM HE SAVED THE UNION  
THE MEMORY OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN  
IS ENSHRINED FOREVER**

—*Epitaph by Royal Cortissoz*

Lincoln sitting in contemplation. Its sculptor, Daniel Chester French, supervised the Piccirilli Brothers in its construction, and it took four years to complete.

The 175-short-ton (159 t) statue, carved from Georgia white marble, was shipped in 28 pieces.<sup>[15]</sup> Originally intended to be only 10 feet (3.0 m) tall, the sculpture was enlarged to 19 feet (5.8 m) from head to foot considering it would look small within the extensive interior space.<sup>[23]</sup> If Lincoln were depicted standing, he would be 28 feet (8.5 m) tall.

The widest span of the statue corresponds to its height, and it rests upon an oblong pedestal of Tennessee marble 10 feet (3.0 m) high, 16 feet (4.9 m) wide, and 17 feet (5.2 m) deep. Directly beneath this lies a platform of Tennessee marble about 34.5 feet (10.5 m) long, 28 feet (8.5 m) wide, and 6.5 inches (0.17 m) high. Lincoln's arms rest on representations of Roman fasces, a subtle touch that associates the statue with the Augustan (and imperial) theme (obelisk and funerary monuments) of the Washington Mall.<sup>[24]</sup> The statue is discretely bordered by two pilasters, one on each side. Between these pilasters, and above Lincoln's head, is engraved an epitaph of Lincoln<sup>[15]</sup> by Royal Cortissoz.<sup>[25]</sup>

## Sculptural features

An urban legend holds that the face of General Robert E. Lee is carved onto the back of Lincoln's head,<sup>[26]</sup> and looks back across the Potomac toward his former home, Arlington House (now within the bounds of Arlington National Cemetery). Another popular legend is that Lincoln's hands are shown using sign language to represent his initials, his left hand signing an *A* and his right signing an *L*. The National Park Service denies both legends.<sup>[26]</sup>

However, historian Gerald Prokopowicz writes that, while it is not clear that sculptor Daniel Chester French intended Lincoln's hands to be formed into sign language versions of his initials, it is possible that French did intend it, because he was familiar with American Sign Language, and he would have had a reason to do so, that is, to pay tribute to Lincoln for having signed the federal legislation giving Gallaudet University, a university for the deaf, the authority to grant college degrees.<sup>[27]</sup> The National Geographic Society's publication "Pinpointing the Past in Washington, D.C." states that Daniel Chester French had a son who was deaf and that the sculptor was familiar with sign language.<sup>[28][29]</sup> Historian James A. Percoco has observed that, although there are no extant documents showing that French had Lincoln's hands carved to represent the letters "A" and "L" in American Sign Language, "I think you can conclude that it's reasonable to have that kind of summation about the hands."<sup>[30]</sup>



Abraham Lincoln, by Daniel Chester French

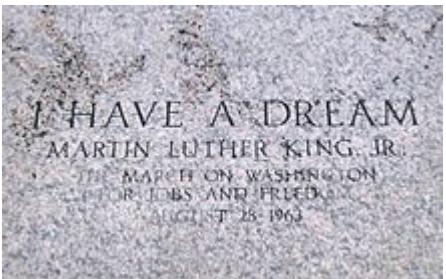


The sculptor's possible use of sign language is speculated, as the statue's left hand forms an "A" while the right hand portrays an "L"

## Sacred space



The March on Washington in 1963 brought 250,000 people to the National Mall and is famous for Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech.



The location on the steps where King delivered the speech is commemorated with this inscription.

believed the location would be less threatening to Congress and that the occasion would be especially appropriate underneath the gaze of Abraham Lincoln's statue.<sup>[34]</sup> The D.C. police also appreciated the location because it was surrounded on three sides by water, so that any incident could be easily contained.<sup>[35]</sup>

Twenty years later, on August 28, 1983, crowds gathered again to mark the 20th Anniversary Mobilization for Jobs, Peace and Freedom, to reflect on progress in gaining civil rights for African Americans and to commit to correcting continuing injustices. King's speech is such a part of the Lincoln Memorial story, that the spot on which King stood, on the landing eighteen steps below Lincoln's statue, was engraved in 2003 in recognition of the 40th anniversary of the event.<sup>[36]</sup>

At the memorial on May 9, 1970, President Richard Nixon had a middle-of-the-night impromptu, brief meeting with protesters who, just days after the Kent State shootings, were preparing to march against the Vietnam War.<sup>[37]</sup>

## Vandalism

In September 1962, amid the civil rights movement, vandals painted the words "nigger lover" in foot-high pink letters on the rear wall.<sup>[38]</sup>

On July 26, 2013, the statue's base and legs were splashed with green paint.<sup>[39]</sup> A 58-year-old Chinese national was arrested and admitted to a psychiatric facility; she was later found to be incompetent to stand trial.<sup>[40]</sup>

The Memorial has become a symbolically sacred venue, especially for the Civil Rights Movement. In 1939, the Daughters of the American Revolution refused to allow the African-American contralto Marian Anderson to perform before an integrated audience at the organization's Constitution Hall. At the suggestion of Eleanor Roosevelt, the wife of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, Harold L. Ickes, the Secretary of the Interior, arranged for a performance on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial on Easter Sunday of that year, to a live audience of 75,000 and a nationwide radio audience.<sup>[31]</sup> On June 29, 1947, Harry Truman became the first president to address the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). The speech took place at the Lincoln Memorial during the NAACP convention and was carried nationally on radio. In that speech, Truman laid out the need to end discrimination, which would be advanced by the first comprehensive, presidentially proposed civil rights legislation.<sup>[32]</sup>

On August 28, 1963, the memorial grounds were the site of the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, which proved to be a high point of the American Civil Rights Movement. It is estimated that approximately 250,000 people came to the event, where they heard Martin Luther King Jr., deliver his historic "I Have a Dream" speech before the memorial honoring the president who had issued the Emancipation Proclamation 100 years earlier. King's speech, with its language of patriotism and its evocation of Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, was meant to match the symbolism of the Lincoln Memorial as a monument to national unity.<sup>[33]</sup> Labor leader Walter Reuther, an organizer of the march, persuaded the other organizers to move the march to the Lincoln Memorial from the Capitol Building. Reuther believed the location would be less threatening to Congress and that the occasion would be especially appropriate underneath the gaze of Abraham Lincoln's statue.<sup>[34]</sup> The D.C. police also appreciated the location because it was surrounded on three sides by water, so that any incident could be easily contained.<sup>[35]</sup>

On February 27, 2017, graffiti written in permanent marker was found at the memorial, the Washington Monument, the District of Columbia War Memorial, and the National World War II Memorial, saying "Jackie shot JFK", "blood test is a lie", as well as other claims. Street signs and utility boxes were also defaced. Authorities believed that a single person was responsible for all the vandalism.<sup>[41]</sup>

On August 15, 2017, Reuters reported that "Fuck law" was spray painted in red on one of the columns. The initials "M+E" were etched on the same pillar. A "mild, gel-type architectural paint stripper" was used to remove the paint without damaging the memorial. However, the etching was deemed "permanent damage." A Smithsonian Institution directional sign several blocks away was also defaced.<sup>[42][43]</sup>

On September 18, 2017, Nurtilek Bakirov from Kyrgyzstan was arrested when a police officer saw him vandalizing the Memorial at around 1:00 PM EDT. Bakirov used a penny to carve the letters "HYPT MAEK" in what appeared to be Cyrillic letters into the fifth pillar on the north side. As of September 20, 2017, police do not know what the words mean, although there is a possibility that they contain a reference to the vandal's name. Court documents indicate that the letters cannot be completely removed, but could be polished at the cost of approximately \$2,000. A conservator for the National Park Service said that the stone would weather over time, helping to obscure the letters, although she characterized it as "permanent damage".<sup>[44]</sup>

On May 30, 2020, during protests in the wake of George Floyd's death, vandals spray-painted "Yall not tired yet?" beside the steps leading to the memorial. The National World War II Memorial was also vandalized that night.<sup>[45][46]</sup>

## In popular culture

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With Reflecting Pool

At sunrise

Daytime

At dusk

As one of the most prominent American monuments, the Lincoln Memorial is often featured in books, films, and television shows that take place in Washington; by 2003 it had appeared in over 60 films,<sup>[47]</sup> and in 2009, Mark S. Reinhart compiled some short sketches of dozens of uses of the Memorial in film and television.<sup>[48]</sup>

Some examples of films include Frank Capra's 1939 film Mr. Smith Goes to Washington, where in a key scene the statue and the Memorial's inscription provide inspiration to freshman Senator Jefferson Smith, played by James Stewart.<sup>[49]</sup> The Park Service did not want Capra to film at the Memorial, so he sent a large crew elsewhere as a distraction while a smaller crew filmed Stewart and Jean Arthur inside the Memorial.<sup>[50]</sup>

Other films featuring the Memorial include the 2001 version of Planet of the Apes; the 2003 film Legally Blonde 2: Red, White & Blonde; X-Men: First Class; the 2011 film Transformers: Dark of the Moon;<sup>[51]</sup> and the 2016 horror movie The Purge: Election Year, in which the Lincoln Memorial is shown with defaced columns.<sup>[52]</sup>

Additional films and television programs which use the Memorial include In the Line of Fire (1993); National Treasure (2004); the 2009 comedy Night at the Museum: Battle of the Smithsonian; the 1991 "Mr. Lisa Goes to Washington" episode of The Simpsons;<sup>[53]</sup> a scene from Forrest Gump (1994); the 2013 finale of The Amazing Race 22;<sup>[54]</sup> and the 2013 film White House Down.<sup>[49]</sup>

Many of the appearances of the Lincoln Memorial are actually digital visual effects, due to restrictive filming rules.<sup>[53]</sup> As of 2017, according to the National Park Service, "Filming/photography is prohibited above the white marble steps and the interior chamber of the Lincoln Memorial."<sup>[55]</sup>

Mitchell Newton-Matza said in 2016 that "Reflecting its cherished place in the hearts of Americans, the Lincoln Memorial has often been featured prominently in popular culture, especially motion pictures."<sup>[56]</sup> According to Tracey Gold Bennett, "The majesty of the Lincoln Memorial is a big draw for film location scouts, producers, and directors because this landmark has appeared in a considerable number of films."<sup>[57]</sup>

Jay Sacher writes:

From high to low, the memorial is cultural shorthand for both American ideals and 1960s radicalism. From Forrest Gump's Zelig-like insertion into anti-war rallies on the steps of the memorial, to the villainous Decepticon robots discarding the Lincoln statue and claiming it as a throne. ... The memorial's place in the culture is assured even as it is parodied.<sup>[53]</sup>

## Depictions on U.S. currency

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From 1959 (the 150th anniversary of Lincoln's birth) to 2008, the memorial, with statue visible through the columns, was depicted on the reverse of the United States one-cent coin, which since 1909 has depicted a bust of Lincoln on its front.<sup>[58]</sup>



Reverse of a 2003 United States five-dollar bill and 2006 Lincoln cent

The memorial has appeared on the back of the U.S. five-dollar bill since 1929.<sup>[59]</sup> The front of the bill bears Lincoln's portrait.

## See also

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-  [United States portal](#)
-  [National Register of Historic Places portal](#)
- [List of areas in the United States National Park System](#)
- [National Register of Historic Places listings in the District of Columbia](#)

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### Informational notes

1. The date for Ohio was incorrectly entered as 1802, as opposed to the correct year, 1803.
2. In the line from the second inaugural, "With high hope for the future," the *F* in *FUTURE* was carved as an *E*. To obscure this error the spurious bottom line of the *E* is not painted in with black paint.

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## External links

- Lincoln Memorial homepage (NPS) (<http://www.nps.gov/lin/index.htm>)
- Lincoln Memorial Panoramic Tour (<http://www.terrain360.com/trails/lincoln-memorial>)
- "Trust for the National Mall: Lincoln Memorial" (<https://web.archive.org/web/20110612034249/http://www.nationalmall.org/sites-subpage-lincoln.php>). Trust for the National Mall. Archived from the original (<http://www.nationalmall.org/sites-subpage-lincoln.php>) on 2011-06-12.

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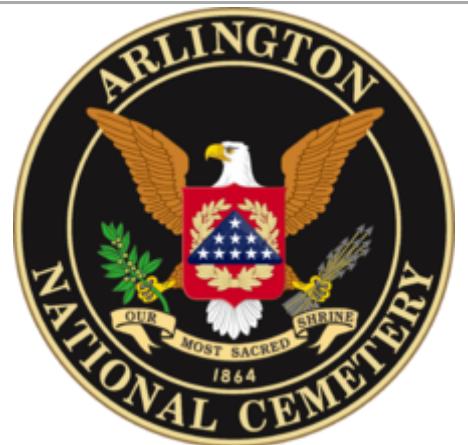
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# Arlington National Cemetery

**Arlington National Cemetery** is a United States military cemetery in Arlington County, Virginia, across the Potomac River from Washington, D.C., in whose 639 acres (259 ha) the dead of the nation's conflicts have been buried, beginning with the Civil War, as well as reinterred dead from earlier wars.<sup>[1]</sup> The United States Department of the Army, a component of the United States Department of Defense (DoD), controls the cemetery.

The national cemetery was established during the Civil War on the grounds of Arlington House, previously the estate of Mary Anna Custis Lee, a great-granddaughter of Martha Washington and wife of Robert E. Lee. The Cemetery, along with Arlington House, Memorial Drive, the Hemicycle, and Arlington Memorial Bridge form the **Arlington National Cemetery Historic District**, listed on the National Register of Historic Places in April 2014.<sup>[2][3]</sup>

## Arlington National Cemetery



Arlington National Cemetery Seal

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Details	
<b>Established</b>	May 13, 1864
<b>Location</b>	<u>Arlington County, Virginia</u>
<b>Country</b>	United States
<b>Coordinates</b>	38°52'45"N 77°04'20"W
<b>Type</b>	<u>National</u>
<b>Owned by</b>	<u>U.S. Department of the Army</u>
<b>Size</b>	639 acres (259 ha)
<b>No. of graves</b>	~400,000 <sup>[1]</sup>
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.arlingtoncemetery.mil">www.arlingtoncemetery.mil</a> ( <a href="https://www.arlingtoncemetery.mil">https://www.arlingtoncemetery.mil</a> )
<b>Find a Grave</b>	<a href="https://www.findagrave.com/center/49269">Arlington National Cemetery</a> ( <a href="https://www.findagrave.com/center/49269">https://www.findagrave.com/center/49269</a> )

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# History

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George Washington Parke Custis, grandson of Martha Washington and adopted son of George Washington, acquired the land that now is Arlington National Cemetery in 1802, and began construction of Arlington House, which was ultimately named after the village of Arlington, Gloucestershire, England, where his family was originally from. The estate passed to Custis's daughter, Mary Anna, who had married United States Army officer Robert E. Lee. Custis's will gave a "life inheritance" to Mary Lee, allowing her to live at and run Arlington Estate for the rest of her life but not enabling her to sell any portion of it.<sup>[5]</sup> Upon her death, the Arlington estate passed to her eldest son, George Washington Custis Lee.<sup>[5]</sup> The building had previously been known as the Custis-Lee Mansion.<sup>[4]</sup>

When Virginia seceded from the Union after the start of the American Civil War at Fort Sumter, Robert E. Lee resigned his commission on April 20, 1861, and took command of the armed forces of the Commonwealth of Virginia, later becoming commander of the Army of Northern Virginia.<sup>[6]</sup> On May 7, troops of the Virginia militia occupied Arlington and Arlington House.<sup>[7]</sup> With Confederate forces occupying Arlington's high ground, the capital of the Union was left in an untenable military position.<sup>[8]</sup> On May 3, General Winfield Scott ordered Brigadier General Irvin McDowell to clear Arlington and the city of Alexandria, Virginia, of all troops not loyal to the United States.<sup>[9]</sup> Despite not wanting to leave Arlington House, Mary Lee believed her estate would soon be recaptured by federal soldiers. On May 14, she buried many of her family treasures on the grounds and left for her sister's estate at Ravensworth in Fairfax County, Virginia.<sup>[10][11]</sup> McDowell occupied Arlington without opposition on May 24.<sup>[12]</sup>

At the outbreak of the Civil War, most military personnel who died in battle near Washington, D.C., were buried at the United States Soldiers' Cemetery in Washington, D.C., or Alexandria Cemetery in Alexandria, Virginia, but by late 1863 both were nearly full.<sup>[13]</sup> On July 16, 1862, Congress passed legislation authorizing the U.S. federal government to purchase land for national cemeteries for military dead, and put the U.S. Army Quartermaster General in charge of this program.<sup>[13]</sup> In May 1864, Union forces suffered large numbers of dead in the Battle of the Wilderness. Quartermaster General Montgomery C. Meigs ordered that an examination of eligible sites be made for the establishment for a large new national military cemetery. Within weeks, his staff reported that Arlington Estate was the most suitable property in the area.<sup>[13]</sup> The property was high and free from floods (which might unearth graves), it had a view of the District of Columbia, and it was aesthetically pleasing. It was also the home of the leader of the armed forces of the Confederate States of



Officers of the 8th New York State Militia at Arlington House, June 1861



The Arlington Mansion, when it was known as Custis-Lee Mansion,<sup>[4]</sup> seen with Union soldiers on its lawn on June 28, 1864

America, and denying Robert E. Lee use of his home after the war was a valuable political consideration.<sup>[14]</sup> The first military burial at Arlington, for William Henry Christman, was made on May 13, 1864,<sup>[15]</sup> close to what is now the northeast gate in Section 27.<sup>[16]</sup> However, Meigs did not formally authorize establishment of burials until June 15, 1864.<sup>[17]</sup> Arlington did not desegregate its burial practices until President Harry S. Truman issued Executive Order 9981 on July 26, 1948.<sup>[18]</sup>

The government acquired Arlington at a tax sale in 1864 for \$26,800, equal to \$443,454 today.<sup>[19]</sup> Mrs. Lee had not appeared in person but rather had sent an agent, attempting to pay the \$92.07 in property taxes (equal to \$1,523 today) assessed on the estate in a timely manner.<sup>[20]</sup> The government turned away her agent, refusing to accept the tendered payment. In 1874, Custis Lee, heir under his grandfather's will passing the estate in trust to his mother, sued the United States, claiming ownership of Arlington. On December 9, 1882, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled 5–4 in Lee's favor in United States v. Lee, deciding that Arlington had been confiscated without due process.<sup>[20][21]</sup> After that decision, Congress returned the estate to him, and on March 3, 1883, Custis Lee sold it back to the government for \$150,000 (equal to \$3,535,000 in 2021) at a signing ceremony with Secretary of War Robert Todd Lincoln.<sup>[19][22]</sup> The land then became a military reservation.<sup>[23]</sup>

President Herbert Hoover conducted the first national Memorial Day ceremony in Arlington National Cemetery, on May 30, 1929.<sup>[24]</sup>

## Freedman's Village

Beginning in 1863, the federal government used the southern portion of the land now occupied by the cemetery as a settlement for freed slaves, giving the name of "Freedman's Village" to the land. The government constructed rental houses that 1,100 to 3,000 freed slaves eventually occupied while farming 1,100 acres (450 ha) of the estate and receiving schooling and occupational training during the Civil War and after War ended.<sup>[25]</sup> However, after the land became part of a military reservation, the government asked the Villagers to leave. When some remained, John A. Commerford, the Superintendent of Arlington National Cemetery, asked the Army's Quartermaster General in 1887 to close the Village on the grounds that people living in the Village had been taking trees at night from the cemetery for use as firewood.<sup>[23][26]</sup> The Quartermaster General and the Secretary of War then approved Commerford's request.<sup>[23]</sup> The last of the Village's residents departed after the 56th United States Congress appropriated \$75,000 in 1900 (equal to \$2,333,100 today) to settle the government's debts to them.<sup>[23]</sup>



Arlington House



Arlington National Cemetery and the Netherlands Carillon in December 2012



The Old Guard transports the flag-draped casket of the second Sergeant Major of the Army, George W. Dunaway, who was buried with full military honors at Arlington National Cemetery

## Expansion

With limited space but large numbers of World War II, Korean War, Vietnam War, and other veterans dying and wanting to be buried at Arlington, the need for additional burial space at the cemetery became a pressing issue. In 1991, Cemetery superintendent John C. Metzler, Jr., implemented a \$1.4 million plan to clear a former

13-acre (5.3 ha) parking lot to create space for about 9,000 new grave sites.<sup>[27]</sup>

The Cemetery received the authority to transfer 12 acres (4.9 ha) of woodland from the NPS-controlled Arlington House in 1996<sup>[28][29]</sup> and 2001,<sup>[30][31]</sup> 37 acres (15 ha) of land in 1999 from the DoD that was the site of the Navy Annex building,<sup>[32][33]</sup> 8 acres (3.2 ha) of land in 1999 from the Department of the Army that was part of Fort Myer,<sup>[32][34]</sup> 4 acres (1.6 ha) of land from Arlington County's Southgate Road right-of-way in 2004,<sup>[35]</sup> and just under 10 acres (4.0 ha) of land from Fort Myer in 2005.<sup>[30][36][37]</sup>

In 2007, Metzler implemented the Millennium Project, a \$35 million expansion plan to begin utilizing the Arlington woodland, Fort Myer, and Navy Annex land. The project also included converting 40 acres (16 ha) of unused space and 4 acres (16,000 m<sup>2</sup>) of maintenance property on the cemetery grounds into burial space in 2006 and 2007 to allow an additional 26,000 graves and 5,000 inurnments. The Millennium Project expanded the cemetery's physical boundaries for the first time since the 1960s, and was the largest expansion of burial space at the site since the American Civil War.<sup>[36]</sup> Several environmental and historical preservation groups criticized Metzler's plans, as did the NPS and the manager of Arlington House.<sup>[36][37][38]</sup>

On March 26, 2013, the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2013 (Public Law 113–6) appropriated to the DoD \$84 million to plan, design and construct the Millennium Project.<sup>[39]</sup> The legislation additionally appropriated to the DoD \$19 million to study, plan and design a future expansion of the cemetery's burial space.<sup>[39]</sup>



Gravestones at the cemetery are marked by U.S. flags each Memorial Day

## Navy Annex property expansion controversy

In 1998, a Congressional proposal to expand the cemetery onto land that the Navy Annex and Fort Myer then occupied led to concerns that Arlington County officials had not been properly consulted, leading to the withdrawal of the proposal.<sup>[40]</sup> However, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000 (Public Law 106–65), which was enacted into law during October 1999, subsequently required the Secretary of Defense to transfer administrative jurisdiction of the 36 acres (15 ha) Navy Annex property to the Secretary of the Army. The Act required the Secretary of Defense to demolish the Annex's buildings and prepare the property for use as part of the cemetery, while requiring the Secretary of the Army to incorporate the Annex property into the cemetery.<sup>[33]</sup>

In January 2013, the County Manager of Arlington County, Virginia, and the Executive Director of the Army National Military Cemeteries (consisting of Arlington National Cemetery and the United States Soldiers' and Airmen's Home National Cemetery)<sup>[41]</sup> signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the Arlington County Board and the Department of the Army to expand the cemetery even further. Under the tentative plan, Arlington County would give up the easement for Southgate Road (which lies between the Navy Annex property and the cemetery's 2012 boundary), and obtain a narrow easement along the southwest border of the Navy Annex site for a new Southgate Road. In exchange, the Department of Defense would give the Navy Annex parking lot to the county.

The Army would also transfer land west of South Joyce Street to Columbia Pike to Arlington County. Additionally, the Commonwealth of Virginia would convey to the cemetery roughly the northern half of the Virginia Department of Transportation land bounded by South Joyce Street, Columbia Pike, and South Washington Boulevard. The cloverleaf interchange between Columbia Pike and S. Washington Blvd. would be eliminated, and the hairpin turn in Columbia Pike straightened, to provide a safer, more natural exit from S.

Washington Blvd. onto Columbia Pike. Although exact acreages were not specified and the plan depended upon the Commonwealth of Virginia's cooperation, the MOU if implemented would have created a more contiguous plot of land for the cemetery.<sup>[42]</sup>

However, in December 2016, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 (Public Law 114–328) authorized the Secretary of the Army to expand the cemetery by acquiring from Arlington County and the Commonwealth of Virginia by condemnation and other means properties near the cemetery that contain the Southgate Road, South Joyce Street and Washington Boulevard right-of-ways, including the Washington Boulevard-Columbia Pike interchange.<sup>[43]</sup> The Army then informed the Arlington County government in June 2017 that the Army would no longer pursue a land exchange with the county. The Army told the County that the Army would use the entire Navy Annex site to expand the cemetery and would acquire for the cemetery about 5 acres (2.0 ha) of public land that Arlington County then owned. The Army would also acquire for the cemetery expansion about 7 acres (2.8 ha) of land located between Columbia Pike and Interstate 395 that the Commonwealth of Virginia then owned.<sup>[44]</sup>

In 2018, the US Army Corps of Engineers announced the expansion would allow for 40,000 to 60,000 additional burials and will incorporate the existing United States Air Force Memorial. Construction of roadways is planned for 2021–2023 and of the actual cemetery 2023–2025. Total cost of the project is \$274 million.<sup>[45]</sup> The project covers 70 acres (28 ha) and by closing and relocating local roadways, allows the cemetery to utilize the former Navy annex property and remain contiguous. The Columbia Pike and interchange will be realigned to maximize burial space. The existing Operations Complex will also be relocated south of the Columbia Pike and its current location will become burial space. The expansion is projected to keep the cemetery open into the middle of the century.<sup>[46]</sup>

## Arlington Woods expansion controversy

On February 22, 1995, officials of the United States Department of the Interior and the United States Department of the Army signed an agreement to transfer from Arlington House, The Robert E. Lee Memorial, to the Army a part of Arlington Woods, which was located in Section 29 of the NPS at Arlington National Cemetery between Arlington House and Fort Myer.<sup>[47]</sup> The property transfer, which involved 12 acres (4.9 ha) of NPS land, was intended to permit Metzler to start expanding the cemetery beyond its existing boundaries.<sup>[29][48]</sup>



A portion of Arlington Woods on Humphreys Drive (2013)

Environmentalists expressed concerns that the agreement would result in the partial destruction of the 24-acre (9.7 ha) remnant of a historically important stand of native trees.<sup>[38][49]</sup> A historical marker near the woodland notes that, while visiting Arlington House in 1825, Gilbert du Motier, Marquis de Lafayette had warned Mary Lee Fitzhugh Custis, the wife of George Washington Parke Custis: "Cherish these forest trees around your mansion. Recollect how much easier it is to cut a tree than to make one grow." The marker further notes that the Virginia Native Plant Society had recognized the woodland as being one of the best examples of old growth terraced gravel forest remaining in Virginia.<sup>[50]</sup>

On September 23, 1996, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1997 (Public Law 104–201) authorized the Secretary of the Interior to transfer to the Secretary of the Army all of the land in Section 29 that was within an "Arlington National Cemetery Interment Zone" and some of the land in the Section that was within a "Robert E. Lee Memorial Preservation Zone".<sup>[28][29]</sup>

On March 5, 1998, the NPS, which is a component of the Department of the Interior, informed the National Capital Planning Commission that it wanted to transfer only 4 acres (1.6 ha) to the cemetery, rather than the 12 acres (4.9 ha) that the 1995 agreement had described. In response, Metzler stated: "I was surprised. But we will continue to work with the Department of Interior and see what happens."<sup>[29]</sup>

On July 12, 1999, the NPS issued a Federal Register notice that announced the availability of an environmental assessment (EA) for the transfer.<sup>[48][51]</sup> The EA stated that the Interment Zone contained the oldest and largest tract of climax eastern hardwood forest in Arlington County. This forest was the same type that once covered the Arlington estate, and had regenerated from trees that were present historically. A forestry study determined that a representative tree was 258 years old. The Interment Zone was also determined to contain significant archeological and cultural landscape resources, in addition to those in the Preservation Zone.<sup>[51]</sup> The EA described four alternative courses of action.<sup>[51]</sup>

In contrast to the NPS's March 1998 statement to the National Capital Planning Commission, the 1999 EA stated that the preferred alternative (Alternative 1) would transfer to the cemetery approximately 9.6 acres (3.9 ha), comprising most of the Interment Zone and the northern tip of the Preservation Zone.<sup>[51]</sup> Another alternative (Alternative 3) would transfer to the cemetery the 12 acres (4.9 ha) Interment Zone, while keeping the 12.5 acres (5.1 ha) Preservation Zone under NPS jurisdiction.<sup>[51]</sup> The EA concluded: "Public Law 104-201 directed the Secretary of the Interior to transfer to the Secretary of the Army jurisdiction over the Interment Zone, which is the plan in Alternative 3. Adoption of any of the other alternatives would require legislative action to amend the existing law."<sup>[51]</sup>



Map showing the Millennium Project's expansion of Arlington National Cemetery into Arlington Woods and Fort Myer

On December 28, 2001, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2002 (Public Law 107-107) repealed the "obsolete" part of Public Law 104-201 that had authorized the transfer of portions of Section 29 to the Secretary of the Army.<sup>[31]</sup> The new legislation required the Secretary of the Interior to transfer to the Secretary of the Army within 30 days the approximately 12 acres (4.9 ha) Interment Zone.<sup>[31]</sup> The transfer therefore involved the entire 12 acres (4.9 ha) of NPS land that the 1995 agreement and Alternative 3 in the 1999 EA had described.

The 2001 legislation required the Secretary of the Army to use the Interment Zone for in-ground

burial sites and columbarium.<sup>[31]</sup> In addition, the legislation required the Secretary of the Interior to manage the remainder of Section 29 "in perpetuity to provide a natural setting and visual buffer for Arlington House, the Robert E. Lee Memorial."<sup>[31]</sup>

On December 12, 2012, the United States Army Corps of Engineers asked for comments on a draft EA that described a further expansion of Arlington National Cemetery as part of the Millennium Project.<sup>[52][53][54]</sup> The 2012 draft EA was intended to implement conversion into burial space of the 17 acres (6.9 ha) of Ft. Myer grounds as well as 10 acres (4.0 ha) of Section 29 woodland. The draft EA described seven alternatives. The preferred alternative (Alternative E) called for the removal of about one-half of the 1,700 trees with a diameter of 6 inches (15 cm) or greater on the site. About 640 of the trees were within a 135-year-old portion of Arlington Woods.<sup>[55]</sup> The draft EA concluded: "Based on the evaluation of environmental impacts....., no significant impacts would be expected from the Proposed Action; therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement will not be prepared and a Finding of No Significant Impact will be prepared and signed."<sup>[55]</sup>

On March 12, 2013, the Corps of Engineers released a revised EA for the Millennium Project.<sup>[56][57]</sup> The revised EA contained copies of a number of public comments on the draft EA that had criticized the project and parts of the EA while proposing alternative locations for new military burials near the cemetery and elsewhere.<sup>[58]</sup> However, the Department of Forestry of the Commonwealth of Virginia found that, based on information in the draft EA, the project would not have a significant adverse impact on the Commonwealth's forest resources.<sup>[59]</sup> The revised EA did not change the preferred alternative (Alternative E) or the Army's plans to prepare and sign the Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) that the draft EA had described.<sup>[60]</sup>

On June 5, 2013, after reviewing 100 public comments that it had received on the revised EA, the Corps of Engineers released a final EA and a signed FONSI for the Millennium Project.<sup>[61][62]</sup> The Final EA and the FONSI retained Alternative E as the preferred alternative.<sup>[61]</sup> The final EA stated that, of the 905 trees to be removed, 771 trees were healthy native trees that had diameters between 6 and 41 inches.<sup>[63][64]</sup> The project would remove approximately 211 trees from a less than 2.63 acres (1.06 ha) area containing a portion of a 145-year-old forest that stood within the property boundaries of a historic district that a National Register of Historic Places nomination form for Arlington House had described in 1966.<sup>[63][65]</sup> About 491 trees would be removed from an area of trees that was approximately 105 years old.<sup>[63]</sup> Approximately 203 trees with ages of 50 to 145 years would be removed from a former picnic area.<sup>[63]</sup> At a public hearing on July 11, 2013, the National Capital Planning Commission approved the site and building plans for the Millennium Project.<sup>[66]</sup>

## 2010 mismanagement controversy

On June 9, 2010, United States Secretary of the Army John M. McHugh reprimanded the cemetery's superintendent, John C. Metzler, Jr., and his deputy, Thurman Higgenbotham, after a DOD inspector general's report revealed that cemetery officials had placed the wrong headstones on tombs, buried coffins in shallow graves, and buried bodies on top of one another. Metzler, who had already announced his intention to retire on July 2, 2010, admitted some mistakes had been made but denied allegations of widespread or serious mismanagement.<sup>[67]</sup> The investigation also found that cemetery employees were burdened in their day-to-day work by "dysfunctional management, lack of established policy and procedures, and an overall unhealthy organizational climate."<sup>[68][69]</sup> Both Metzler and Higgenbotham retired soon after the investigation commenced.<sup>[70]</sup>

In March 2011, as a result of the problems discovered, Kathryn Condon, the recently appointed Executive Director of the Army National Military Cemeteries, announced that the cemetery's staff had been increased from 102 to 159. She added that the cemetery was also acquiring additional equipment because, "They didn't have the proper equipment to do the job really to the standard they needed to do."<sup>[71]</sup>

The mismanagement controversy included a limitation on mass media access to funerals, which also proved controversial. Until 2005, the cemetery's administration gave free access, with the family's permission, to the press to cover funerals at the cemetery. According to The Washington Post in 2008, the cemetery gradually imposed increasing restrictions on media coverage of funerals beginning about 2005.<sup>[72]</sup>

## Management turnover

After the cemetery's management controversy began to end, the Army appointed Patrick K. Hallinan the acting superintendent of the cemetery in June 2010. He was promoted permanently to the position in October 2010. Hallinan had previously worked for the Office of Field Programs in the National Cemetery Administration, an agency of the United States Department of Veterans' Affairs. In that capacity, Hallinan had oversight of 131 national cemeteries, national cemetery policy, procedures, and operations.<sup>[73]</sup> Hallinan was promoted to Executive Director of the Army National Military Cemeteries upon the retirement of Kathryn Condon in spring 2014.<sup>[74]</sup>

In May 2014, Hallinan stepped down and was replaced by Jack E. Lechner, Jr. as superintendent of the cemetery. Lechner had been a funeral director for 10 years in the private sector before joining the U.S. Army. He rose to the rank of colonel (retiring in November 2011), having spent 2008 to 2010 as chief of the Supply Division of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, overseeing the equipping of Iraqi and Afghanistan national security forces. Since June 2010, he had served as executive officer and deputy superintendent of the cemetery under Hallinan.<sup>[74]</sup>

The Army removed Lechner as superintendent of the cemetery in early August 2015 after a performance review "called into question his ability to serve successfully as a senior leader". The Army declined to elaborate further and appointed Hallinan to be the temporary Cemetery superintendent until the Army could find a successor.<sup>[75]</sup>

Katharine Kelley, a former Army officer and senior executive service civilian employee for the Department of the Army, was appointed Superintendent on March 2, 2017.<sup>[76]</sup> She moved to another Army position in March 2019.

Charles R. "Ray" Alexander, a former Army colonel and senior executive service civilian employee for the Department of the Army, was appointed Superintendent on February 18, 2020.<sup>[77]</sup>

## Wreaths Across America

In 1992, the Morrill Worcester wreath company in Harrington, Maine, had a surplus at the end of the holiday season. Recalling a boyhood trip to the cemetery, Worcester donated to the cemetery 5,000 wreaths to honor the cemetery's dead, with the help of volunteers and a local trucking company. After thirteen years of similar donations, in 2005 a photo of snowy gravestones covered with wreaths at the cemetery received widespread circulation on the internet. Thousands of people called Worcester, wanting to replicate the wreath-laying service at their own veteran cemeteries.<sup>[78]</sup>



Wreaths supplied by Wreaths Across America in 2013

At the end of 2006, Worcester's company supplied wreaths to over 230 state and national cemeteries and veterans monuments across the country.<sup>[79]</sup> Over 150 different locations simultaneously held ceremonies with Arlington's. Additionally, the project had its first "Veterans Honor Parade" with "Patriot Guard Riders" who escorted the wreaths from Maine to the cemetery. The parade, which is held each year, now visits schools, monuments, veterans' homes and communities along its route.<sup>[78]</sup>

Assisted by veterans and truckers, Worcester established in 2007 a nonprofit organization named "Wreaths Across America".<sup>[78]</sup> In December 2008, the United States Senate agreed to a resolution that designated December 13, 2008, as "Wreaths Across America Day".<sup>[80]</sup>

In 2014, volunteers placed over 700,000 memorial wreaths at 1,000 locations in the United States and overseas, including the USS Arizona Memorial at Pearl Harbor, Bunker Hill, Valley Forge, and the National September 11 Memorial at the World Trade Center site in New York City. During that year, volunteers were able to place wreaths in all sections of the cemetery for the first time.<sup>[78]</sup> In 2016, this number increased to 1.2 million wreaths being placed at more than 1,230 cemeteries across the nation.<sup>[81]</sup>

Conflict of interest charges have been made against Wreaths Across America because this charity has an exclusive for-profit supplier, Worcester Wreath Company, also run by the Morrill family in the same town. The charity's purchases of wreaths from this company account for most of the company's revenue and profits. In late 2015, The Wall Street Journal reported serious conflicts of interest with potential malfeasance in

governance and contracting.<sup>[82]</sup> In 2015 alone, the *Journal* reported profits of over \$1 million on sales of over 850,000 wreaths to the charity raising concerns about competitive bidding, reporting that several competitors had asked to bid significantly below the price offered by Worcester Wreath Company but were denied access.<sup>[82]</sup>

## 150th anniversary

During May and June 2014, the cemetery celebrated the 150th anniversary of its founding with a month-long series of events, tours, and lectures.<sup>[83]</sup> During these celebrations, cemetery officials formally re-designated the Old Amphitheater as the James Tanner Amphitheater. James R. Tanner was a Union Army officer who lost both legs during the war. He later became a War Department stenographer, and recorded much of the early evidence in the investigation into the assassination of Abraham Lincoln. He later was active in the Grand Army of the Republic, a Union Army veterans group. Tanner is buried a few yards from the amphitheater.<sup>[84]</sup>

## Sections

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The Cemetery is divided into 70 sections, with some sections in the southeast and western part of the cemetery reserved for future expansion.<sup>[85]</sup> Section 60, in the southeast part of the cemetery, is the burial ground for military personnel killed in the "war on terror" since 2001.<sup>[86]</sup> Section 21, also known as the Nurses Section, is the burial site for many nurses, and the location of the Spanish–American War Nurses Memorial and the Nurses Memorial.<sup>[87]</sup> Another section – Chaplains Hill – includes monuments to Jewish, Protestant, and Roman Catholic military chaplains.

In 1901, Confederate soldiers buried at the Soldiers' Home and various locations within Arlington were reinterred in a Confederate section that was authorized by Congress in 1900. On June 4, 1914, the United Daughters of the Confederacy dedicated the Confederate Memorial designed by Moses Ezekiel. Upon his death in 1917, Ezekiel was buried at the base of the monument as he was a veteran of the Confederate army.<sup>[88]</sup> All Confederate headstones in this section are peaked rather than rounded.<sup>[89]</sup>

More than 3,800 formerly enslaved people, called "Contrabands" during the Civil War, are buried in Section 27. Their headstones are designated with the word "Civilian" or "Citizen".<sup>[90]</sup>



Graves of former slaves, marked "Citizen", in Section 27

## Grave markers, niches, and headstones

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The United States Department of Veterans Affairs oversees the National Cemetery Administration's orders<sup>[91]</sup> for placement of inscriptions and faith emblems at no charge to the estate of the deceased, submitted with information provided by the next of kin<sup>[92]</sup> that is placed on upright marble headstones or columbarium niche covers. The Department of Veterans Affairs currently offers 63 authorized faith emblems for placement on markers to represent the deceased's faith.<sup>[93]</sup> Over time this number grew as the result of legal challenges to policy.<sup>[94]</sup>

Prior to 2007, the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) did not allow the use of the pentacle as an "emblem of belief" on tombstones in military cemeteries. This policy was changed following an out-of-court settlement on April 23 following a series of lawsuits by the family of Patrick Stewart against the

VA.<sup>[95][96][97]</sup>

Between 1947 and 2001, privately purchased markers were permitted in the cemetery. The sections in which the cemetery permitted such markers are nearly filled and the cemetery generally does not allow new burials in these sections.<sup>[98]</sup> Nevertheless, the older sections of the cemetery have a wide variety of private markers placed prior to 2001, including an artillery piece.<sup>[99]</sup>

There are 32 British Commonwealth war dead burials, 11 from World War I and 19 from World War II<sup>[100]</sup> and some headstones are Commonwealth War Graves Commission style.

## Arlington Memorial Amphitheater

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The interior of Memorial Amphitheater

The Tomb of the Unknowns is part of the Arlington Memorial Amphitheater. The Memorial Amphitheater has hosted state funerals and Memorial Day and Veterans Day ceremonies. Ceremonies are also held for Easter. About 5,000 people attend these holiday ceremonies each year. The structure is mostly built of Imperial Danby marble from Vermont. The Memorial Display room, between the amphitheater and the Tomb of the Unknowns, uses Botticino stone, imported from Italy. The amphitheater was the result of a campaign by Ivory Kimball to construct a place to honor America's servicemen/women. Congress authorized the structure on March 4, 1913. Woodrow Wilson laid the cornerstone for the building on October 15, 1915. The cornerstone contained 15 items including a Bible and a copy of the Constitution.<sup>[101]</sup>

Before the Arlington Memorial Amphitheater was completed in 1921, important ceremonies were held at what is now known as the "Old Amphitheater." This structure sits where Robert E. Lee once had his gardens. The amphitheater was built in 1868 under the direction of Civil War General John A. Logan. Gen. James A. Garfield was the featured speaker at the Decoration Day dedication ceremony, May 30, 1868, later being elected as President of the United States in 1881. The amphitheater has an encircling colonnade with a latticed roof that once supported a web of vines. The amphitheater has a marble dais, known as "the rostrum", which is inscribed with the U.S. national motto found on the Great Seal of the United States, *E pluribus unum* ("Out of many, one"). The rostrum was designed by General Montgomery C. Meigs, then Quartermaster General of the U.S. Army.<sup>[102]</sup> The amphitheater seats 1,500 people and has hosted speakers such as William Jennings Bryan.<sup>[103]</sup>

## Memorials

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### Tomb of the Unknown Soldier

The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier stands on top of a hill overlooking Washington, D.C. One of the more well-attended sites at the cemetery, the tomb is made from Yule marble quarried in Colorado. It consists of seven pieces, with a total weight of 79 short tons (72 metric tons). The tomb was completed and opened to the public April 9, 1932, at a cost of \$48,000.

Other unknown servicemen were later placed in crypts there, and it also became known as the Tomb of the Unknowns, though it has never been officially named. The soldiers entombed there are:

- Unknown Soldier of World War I, entombed November 11, 1921; President Warren G. Harding presided

- Unknown Soldier of World War II, interred May 30, 1958; President Dwight D. Eisenhower presided
- Unknown Soldier of the Korean War, also interred May 30, 1958; President Dwight Eisenhower presided again, Vice President Richard Nixon acted as next of kin
- Unknown Soldier of the Vietnam War, interred May 28, 1984; President Ronald Reagan presided. The remains of the Vietnam Unknown were disinterred, under the authority of President Bill Clinton, on May 14, 1998, and were identified as those of Air Force 1st Lt. Michael J. Blassie, whose family had them reinterred near their home in St. Louis, Missouri. It has been determined that the crypt at the Tomb of the Unknowns that contained the remains of the Vietnam Unknown will remain empty.

The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier has been perpetually guarded since July 2, 1937, by the U.S. Army. The 3rd U.S. Infantry Regiment ("The Old Guard") began guarding the Tomb on April 6, 1948. There is a meticulous routine that the guard follows when watching over the graves.<sup>[104]</sup> The Tomb Guard:

1. Marches 21 steps southward down the black mat behind the Tomb
2. Turns left, facing east for 21 seconds
3. Turns left, facing north for 21 seconds
4. Takes 21 steps down the mat
5. Repeats the routine until the soldier is relieved of duty at the changing of the guard

After each turn, the Guard executes a sharp "shoulder-arms" movement to place the weapon on the shoulder closest to the visitors to signify that the Guard stands between the Tomb and any possible threat.

Twenty-one was chosen because it symbolizes the highest military honor that can be bestowed – the 21-gun salute.

Each turn the guard makes precise movements and followed by a loud click of the heels as the soldier snaps them together. The guard is changed every half-hour during daylight in the summer, and every hour during daylight in the winter and every two hours at night (when the cemetery is closed to the public), regardless of weather conditions.

A commemorative stamp was issued on November 11, 1922, the first anniversary of the first entombment picturing the Amphitheater. It encompasses the original Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. The remains of an unidentified WW I American soldier was entombed on Armistice Day, November 11, 1921, later covered in 1931 by a more elaborate marble sarcophagus.<sup>[105]</sup>



Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in 1922



Installation of the marble sarcophagus on top of the unknown WWI veteran tomb (1931)



Honor guards (2005)

## Other memorials

There are several memorials on the grounds of the cemetery. However, due to the lack of space for burials and the large amount of space that memorials take up, the U.S. Army now requires a joint or concurrent resolution from Congress before it will place new memorials at Arlington.

Near the Tomb of the Unknowns stands the USS Maine Mast Memorial, which commemorates the 266 men who lost their lives aboard the USS Maine. The memorial is built around a mast salvaged from the ship's wreckage. The memorial served as the temporary resting place for two foreign heads of state or government who died in exile in the United States during World War II, Manuel L. Quezon of the Philippines and Ignacy Jan Paderewski of Poland.

The Space Shuttle Challenger Memorial was dedicated on May 20, 1986, in memory of the crew of flight STS-51-L, who died during launch on January 28, 1986. Transcribed on the back of the stone is the text of the John Gillespie Magee, Jr. poem *High Flight*, which was quoted by then President Ronald Reagan when he addressed the disaster. Although many remains were identified and returned to the families for private burial, some were not, and were laid to rest under the marker. Two crew members, Dick Scobee and Michael Smith, are buried in Arlington. On February 1, 2004, NASA Administrator Sean O'Keefe dedicated a similar memorial to those who died when the Shuttle Columbia broke apart during reentry on February 1, 2003.<sup>[106]</sup> Astronauts Laurel Clark, David Brown, and Michael Anderson, who were killed in the *Columbia* disaster, are also buried in Arlington.

The Lockerbie Cairn is a memorial to the 270 killed in the bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland. The memorial is constructed of 270 stones, one for each person killed in the disaster. In section 64, a memorial to the 184 victims of the September 11 attacks on the Pentagon was dedicated September 11, 2002. The memorial takes the shape of a pentagon, and lists the names of all the victims that were killed. Unidentified remains from the victims are buried beneath it.<sup>[107]</sup>

On June 25, 1925, President Calvin Coolidge approved a request to erect a Commonwealth Cross of Sacrifice with the names of all the citizens of the United States who lost their lives fighting in the Canadian forces during World War I. The monument was dedicated November 11, 1927, and after the Korean War and World War II the names of US citizens who died in those conflicts were added.

The Laos Memorial, or Lao Veterans of America memorial, dedicated to Lao and Hmong veterans who served with US Special Forces and CIA advisors during the Vietnam War, to defend the Royal Kingdom of Laos from the North Vietnamese invasion of Laos by selling opium to the CIA in exchange for weapons and promises for their own country, is located on Grant Avenue near the eternal flame memorial to U.S. President John F. Kennedy.<sup>[108]</sup>

In 2012, legislation began moving through Congress to approve a "Place of Remembrance" at the cemetery. The memorial will be an ossuary designed to contain fragments of remains which are unidentifiable through DNA analysis. The remains will be cremated before placement in the memorial.<sup>[109]</sup>



Arlington Amphitheater 1922 issue



The USS Maine Mast Memorial

## Burial procedures

The flags in the cemetery are flown at half-staff from a half-hour before the first funeral until a half hour after the last funeral each day. Funerals are normally conducted five days a week, excluding weekends.<sup>[110][111]</sup>

Funerals, including interments and inurnments, average between 27 and 30 per day. The cemetery conducts approximately 6,900 burials each year.<sup>[90]</sup>

With more than 400,000 interments,<sup>[1]</sup> the cemetery has the second-largest number of burials of any national cemetery in the United States. The largest of the 130 national cemeteries is the Calverton National Cemetery, on Long Island, near Riverhead, New York, which conducts more than 7,000 burials each year.

In addition to in-ground burial, the cemetery also has one of the larger columbaria for cremated remains in the country. Four courts are currently in use, each with 5,000 niches. When construction is complete, there will be nine courts with a total of 50,000 niches; capacity for 100,000 remains. Any honorably discharged veteran is eligible for inurnment in the columbarium, if they served on active duty at some point in their career (other than for training).<sup>[112]</sup>

## Burial criteria

Part 553 (Army National Military Cemeteries) of Title 32 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) establishes regulations for the cemetery, including eligibility for interment (ground burial) and inurnment.<sup>[113]</sup> Due to limited space, the criteria for ground burial eligibility are more restrictive than at other national cemeteries, as well as more restrictive than for inurnment in the columbarium.

The persons specified below are eligible for ground burial in the cemetery, unless otherwise prohibited.<sup>[114]</sup> The last period of active duty of former members of the armed forces must have ended honorably. Interment may be of casketed or cremated remains.

- Any active-duty member of the armed forces (except those members serving on active duty for training only)
- Any veteran who is retired and eligible for retirement pay from service in the armed forces, including service members retired from a reserve component who served a period of active duty (other than for training)
- Any former member of the armed forces separated honorably prior to October 1, 1949, for medical reasons and who was rated at 30% or greater disabled effective on the day of discharge
- Any former member of the armed forces who has been awarded one of the following decorations:
  - Medal of Honor
  - Distinguished Service Cross, Navy Cross, or Air Force Cross
  - Silver Star
  - Purple Heart
- Any former member of the armed forces who served on active duty (other than for training) and who held any of the following positions:
  - An elective office of the U.S. Government (such as a term in Congress)



The flag at Arlington House is lowered to half-staff during interments.



Military funeral procession in Arlington National Cemetery, July 1967

- Office of the Chief Justice of the United States or of an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States
- An office listed, at the time the person held the position, in 5 USC 5312 or 5313 (Levels I and II of the Executive Schedule)
- The chief of a mission who was at any time during his/her tenure classified in Class I under the provisions of Section 411, Act of August 13, 1946, 60 Stat. 1002, as amended (22 USC 866) or as listed in State Department memorandum dated March 21, 1988
- Any former prisoner of war who, while a prisoner of war, served honorably in the active military, naval, or air service, whose last period of military, naval or air service terminated honorably and who died on or after November 30, 1993
- The spouse, widow or widower, minor child, or permanently dependent child, and certain unmarried adult children of any of the above eligible veterans
- The widow or widower of:
  - a member of the armed forces who was lost or buried at sea or fell out of a plane or officially determined to be permanently absent with a status of either missing or missing in action
  - a member of the armed forces who is interred in a US military cemetery overseas that is maintained by the American Battle Monuments Commission
- The spouse, minor child, or permanently dependent child of any person already buried in Arlington National Cemetery
- The parents of a minor child, or permanently dependent child whose remains, based on the eligibility of a parent, are already buried at Arlington. A spouse divorced from the primary eligible, or widowed and remarried, is not eligible for interment
- Provided certain conditions are met, a former member of the armed forces may be buried in the same grave with a close relative who is already buried and is the primary eligible



Respectful silence is requested at the Arlington National Cemetery.

## Inurnment criteria for columbarium

Due at least partly to the lack of space at the cemetery for ground burial, standards for inurnment (burial of cremated remains) in the columbarium are currently much less restrictive than for ground burial at the cemetery. In general, any former member of the armed forces who served on active duty (other than for training) and whose last service terminated honorably is eligible for inurnment. Eligibility for inurnment is described fully in 32 C.F.R. § 553.15a (<https://web.archive.org/web/20110612211846/http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov/cgi/t/text{text-idx?c=ecfr;sid=ebe6204b5183f9156bf1036a1135dc30;rgn=div5;view=text;node=32:3.1.1.4.18;idno=32;cc=ecfr#32:3.1.1.4.18.0.11.16}>).

## Prohibitions against interment or memorialization

Congress has from time to time created prohibited categories of persons that, even if otherwise eligible for burial, lose that eligibility. One such prohibition is against certain persons who are convicted of committing certain state or federal capital crimes, as defined in 38 U.S. Code § 2411 (<https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/38/2411->). Capital crime is a specifically defined term in the statute, and for state offenses can include offenses that are eligible for a life sentence (with or without parole). The reasoning for this provision originally was to prevent Timothy McVeigh from being eligible at Arlington National Cemetery, but it has since been amended to prevent others.<sup>[115]</sup>

Also prohibited under the same statute are those determined, with clear and convincing evidence, to have avoided such conviction by death or flight.

## Notable burials

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The first soldier to be buried in Arlington was Private William Henry Christman of Pennsylvania on May 13, 1864.<sup>[116]</sup> There are 396 Medal of Honor recipients buried in Arlington National Cemetery.<sup>[117]</sup>

Five state funerals have been held at Arlington: those of Presidents William Howard Taft and John F. Kennedy, his two brothers, Senator Robert F. Kennedy and Senator Edward "Ted" Kennedy, as well as General of the Armies John J. Pershing. Whether or not they were wartime service members, U.S. presidents are eligible to be buried at Arlington, since they oversaw the armed forces as commanders-in-chief.<sup>[118]</sup>



The grave marker of former U.S. President John F. Kennedy

Among the most frequently visited sites in the cemetery is the grave of President John F. Kennedy and Jacqueline Kennedy, who is buried nearby along with their son Patrick and their stillborn daughter Arabella. Kennedy's remains were interred there on March 14, 1967, a reinterment from his original Arlington burial site, some 20 feet (6.1 m) away, where he was buried in November 1963. The grave is marked with an "eternal flame". The remains of his brothers, Senator Robert F. Kennedy and Senator Edward M. "Ted" Kennedy, are buried nearby. The latter two graves are marked with simple crosses and footstones. On December 1, 1971, Robert Kennedy's body was re-interred 100 feet (30 m) from its original June 1968 burial site.

Two of the astronauts who were killed on January 27, 1967, by a flash fire inside the Apollo 1 Command Module, Gus Grissom and Roger Chaffee, are buried at the cemetery. John Glenn, the first American to orbit Earth and a longtime U.S. Senator from Ohio, was buried at the cemetery in April 2017.<sup>[119]</sup>

British diplomat and Field Marshal Sir John Dill was buried at the cemetery when he died in Washington D.C. during World War II.<sup>[120]</sup> The equestrian statue on Dill's grave is one of only two such statues at the cemetery; the other is Major General Philip Kearny's.<sup>[121]</sup>

Lauri Tönni, known for having served in the Finnish army during the Winter War, the German army during World War II, and the US army during the Vietnam War is buried at Arlington. He is the only former member of the Waffen-SS to be interred here.<sup>[122]</sup>

## Visitor requirements

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In 2016 the cemetery announced policies and procedures that limit visitor access to the cemetery's grounds, some of which were thought could create delays for visitors.

### Bicycle use

Pursuant to the Department of the Army final rule established in 2016,<sup>[123]</sup> the cemetery's bicycle policy states bicycling presents a potential safety hazard, and is only allowed on its grounds with a family pass.<sup>[124]</sup>

## Security procedures

In September 2016, acting superintendent of the cemetery Hallinan announced that the cemetery was increasing security measures for its visitors. In addition to random identification checks and other security measures already in place, the cemetery would require pedestrians to enter at set access points: the main entrance on Memorial Avenue, the Ord and Weitzel gate, and the Old Post Chapel gate at Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall. Before entering the cemetery through its main entrance, all pedestrians are now screened through the cemetery's Welcome Center. All vehicle access requires presenting valid, government-issued photo identification, such as a driver's license or passport, when entering the cemetery. Vehicles are also subject to random inspections. Hallinan stated that these processes could result in delays when entering the cemetery.<sup>[125]</sup>

## See also

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- [List of national cemeteries](#)
- [McKee Grave](#)
- [Theodore Wint Grave](#)
- [United States Department of Veterans Affairs emblems for headstones and markers](#)

## Notes

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(a) Land Transfer Required. The Secretary of Defense shall provide for the transfer to the Secretary of the Army of administrative jurisdiction over three parcels of real property consisting of approximately 36 acres and known as the Navy Annex (in this section referred to as the "Navy Annex property").  
(b) Use of Land. Subject to paragraph (2), the Secretary of the Army shall incorporate the Navy Annex property transferred under subsection (a) into Arlington National Cemetery.  
(2) ... (c) Remediation of Land for Cemetery Use. Immediately after the transfer of administrative jurisdiction over the Navy Annex property, the Secretary of Defense shall provide for the removal of any improvements on that property and shall prepare the property for use as part of Arlington National Cemetery. ..."
34. "Division B: Military Construction Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000: Title XVIII – General Provisions: Subtitle F – Expansion of Arlington National Cemetery: Section 2882. Transfer from Fort Myer, Arlington, Virginia (113 Stat. 880)" (<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PLAW-106publ65/pdf/PLAW-106publ65.pdf>) (PDF). *Public Law 106-65: National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000*. United States Government Printing Office. October 5, 1999. Archived (<https://web.archive.org/web/20130102175433/http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PLAW-106publ65/pdf/PLAW-106publ65.pdf>) (PDF) from the original on January 2, 2013. Retrieved March 20, 2013. "SEC. 2882. Transfer from Fort Myer, Arlington, Virginia. (a) Land Transfer Required. The Secretary of the Army shall modify the boundaries of Arlington National Cemetery and of Fort Myer to include in Arlington National Cemetery the following parcels of real property situated in Fort Myer, Arlington, Virginia: (1) A parcel comprising approximately five acres bounded by the Fort Myer Post Traditional Chapel to the southwest, McNair Road to the northwest, the Vehicle Maintenance Complex to the northeast, and the masonry wall of Arlington National Cemetery to the southeast. (2) A parcel comprising approximately three acres bounded by the Vehicle Maintenance Complex to the southwest, Jackson Avenue to the northwest, the water pumping station to the northeast, and the masonry wall of Arlington National Cemetery to the southeast."

35. "Division B: Military Construction Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2005: Title XXVIII – General Provisions: Subtitle D – Land Conveyances: Part IV – Other Conveyances: Section 2881. Land Exchange, Arlington County, Virginia (118 Stat. 2153–2154)" (<http://www.dod.gov/dodgc/olc/docs/PL108-375.pdf>) (PDF). *Public Law 108-375: Ronald W. Reagan National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2005*. United States Government Printing Office. October 28, 2004. Archived (<https://web.archive.org/web/20130214223619/http://www.dod.gov/dodgc/olc/docs/PL108-375.pdf>) (PDF) from the original on February 14, 2013. Retrieved March 20, 2013.  
"Sec. 2881. Land Exchange, Arlington County, Virginia. (a) Exchange Authorized.--The Secretary of Defense may convey to Arlington County, Virginia (in this section referred to as the "County"), all right, title, and interest of the United States in and to a parcel of real property, together with any improvements thereon, that consists of not more than 4.5 acres and is located north of Columbia Pike on the Navy Annex property in Arlington County, Virginia, for the purpose of the construction of a freedmen heritage museum and an Arlington history museum. (b) Consideration. As consideration for the conveyance of the real property under subsection (a), the County shall convey to the United States all right, title, and interest of the County in and to a parcel of real property, together with any improvements thereon, that is of a size equivalent to the total acreage of the real property conveyed by the Secretary under subsection (a) and is located in the area known as the Southgate Road right-of-way between Arlington National Cemetery, Virginia, and the Navy Annex property..... (g) Inclusion of Southgate Road Right-of-Way Property in Transfer of Navy Annex Property for Arlington National Cemetery. Subsection (a) of section 2881 of the Military Construction Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000 (division B of Public Law 106-65; 113 Stat. 879) is amended by striking "three parcels of real property consisting of approximately 36 acres" and inserting "four parcels of real property consisting of approximately 40 acres."
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(2) Nakashima, Ellen (July 6, 1995). "Environmentalists Fear Effects of Expanded Arlington Cemetery" (<https://pqasb.pqarchiver.com/washingtonpost/access/6855447.html?FMT=ABS&FMTS=ABS&date=Jul+6%2C+1995&author=Nakashima%2C+Ellen&pub=The+Washington+Post&edition=&startpage=B3&desc=Environmentalists+fear+effects+of+expanded+Arlington+cemetery>). Metro. *The Washington Post*. p. B3. Archived (<https://web.archive.org/web/20130318045239/http://pqasb.pqarchiver.com/washingtonpost/access/6855447.html?FMT=ABS&FMTS=ABS&date=Jul+6%2C+1995&author=Nakashima%2C+Ellen&pub=The+Washington+Post&edition=&startpage=B3&desc=Environmentalists+fear+effects+of+expanded+Arlington+cemetery>) from the original on March 18, 2013. Retrieved December 29, 2012).
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(A) from Arlington County (in this section referred to as the "County"), one or more parcels of real property in the area known as the Southgate Road right-of-way, Columbia Pike right-of-way, and South Joyce Street right-of-way located in Arlington County, Virginia; and  
(B) from the Commonwealth of Virginia (in this section referred to as the "Commonwealth"), one or more parcels of property in the area known as the Columbia Pike right-of-way, including the Washington Boulevard-Columbia Pike interchange, but excluding the Virginia Department of Transportation Maintenance and Operations Facility. ...."
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## External links

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- Official website (<http://www.arlingtoncemetery.mil/>)
- History of Arlington Cemetery and Arlington House (<https://www.nps.gov/arho/learn/historyculture/cemetery.htm>) by National Park Service
- Arlington Cemetery: Hallowed Ground (<http://www.life.com/image/first/in-gallery/26692/arlington-cemetery-hallowed-ground>), a March 11, 2010 *Life* magazine article (archived copy (<https://web.archive.org/web/20100414004840/http://www.life.com/image/first/in-gallery/26692/arlington-cemetery-hallowed-ground>))
- Arlington National Cemetery (<https://www.pbs.org/video/weta-documentaries-arlington-national-cemetery/>), a 2014 WETA-TV video
- CWGC: Arlington National Cemetery (<http://www.cwgc.org/find-a-cemetery/cemetery/2073193/ARLINGTON%20NATIONAL%20CEMETERY>) at the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) website
- ArlingtonCemetery.net (<http://www.arlingtoncemetery.net>) (an unofficial website listing internments)
- ArlingtonCemetery.org (<https://arlingtoncemetery.org>) (an unofficial website concerning addiction issues with veterans)
- U.S. Geological Survey Geographic Names Information System: Arlington National Cemetery ([https://geonames.usgs.gov/apex/f?p=gnispq:3::NO::P3\\_FID:1462551](https://geonames.usgs.gov/apex/f?p=gnispq:3::NO::P3_FID:1462551))
- Arlington National Cemetery (<https://www.findagrave.com/cemetery/49269>) at Find a Grave
- Wreaths Across America official site (<https://www.wreathsacrossamerica.org/>)

## Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) links

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- Old Potting House, Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, Arlington County, VA (<https://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/hh/item/va1752/>) at HABS
- Arlington National Cemetery, Old Amphitheater, Arlington, Arlington County, VA (<https://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/hh/item/va1792/>) at HABS
- Arlington National Cemetery, Ord-Weitzel Gate, Arlington, Arlington County, VA (<https://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/hh/item/va1846/>) at HABS
- Arlington National Cemetery, USS Maine Memorial, Arlington, Arlington County, VA (<https://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/hh/item/va1847/>) at HABS
- Arlington National Cemetery, Columns and Gates, Arlington, Arlington County, VA (<https://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/hh/item/va2061/>) at HABS

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# Tomb of the Unknown Soldier (Arlington)

The **Tomb of the Unknown Soldier** is a monument dedicated to deceased U.S. service members whose remains have not been identified. It is located in [Arlington National Cemetery](#) in [Virginia](#), United States. The World War I "Unknown" is a recipient of the [Medal of Honor](#), the [Victoria Cross](#), and several other foreign nations' highest service awards. The U.S. Unknowns who were interred are also recipients of the Medal of Honor, presented by [U.S. presidents](#) who presided over their funerals.<sup>[1][2]</sup> The monument has no officially designated name.



Tomb Guard on post, 2018

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## Tomb of 1921

On March 4, 1921, the [United States Congress](#) approved the burial of an unidentified American serviceman from World War I in the plaza of the new [Memorial Amphitheater](#). On November 11, 1921, the unknown soldier brought back from France was [interred](#) below a three-level marble tomb. The bottom two levels are six granite sections each and the top at least nine blocks with a rectangular opening in the center of each level through which the unknown remains were placed through the tomb and into the ground below. A stone slab, rather than marble, covers the rectangular opening.<sup>[3][4][5]</sup>

# Tomb of 1931

Since 1921 the intent was to place a superstructure on top of the Tomb, but it was not until July 3, 1926, that Congress authorized the completion of the Tomb and the expenditure of \$50,000 (with a completed cost of \$48,000). A design competition was held and won by architect Lorimer Rich<sup>[nb 1]</sup> and sculptor Thomas Hudson Jones. An appropriation from Congress for the work was secured and on December 21, 1929, a contract for completion of the Tomb itself was entered into. The Tomb would consist of seven pieces of marble in four levels (cap, die, base and sub-base) of which the die is the largest block with the sculpting on all four sides.<sup>[3][6]</sup>

Quarrying the Yule marble (3.9 miles south of Marble, Colorado by the Vermont Marble Company) was a one-year process beginning in 1930. The cap was quarried on the first attempt but the base required three tries. The large middle block also required three tries. In late January 1931, the 56 ton middle block was lifted out of the quarry. The quarrying involved 75 men. When the block was separated from the mountain inside the quarry it weighed 124 tons. A wire saw was then brought into the quarry to cut the block down to 56 tons.

On February 3, the block reached the marble mill site (in the town of Marble) after a four-day trip from the quarry. Here it was crated, then shipped to Vermont on February 8. The block was sawn to final size in West Rutland, Vermont, and fabricated by craftsmen in Proctor, Vermont, before it was shipped by train to Arlington National Cemetery, Virginia.<sup>[7]</sup> By September, all 7 blocks were on the grounds of the Tomb site, at Arlington.

Assembly began in September 1931. An imperfection was found in the base, requiring three more quarryings. By the end of December 1931, the assembly was completed. Finishing work followed with the carvings on the die block by the Piccirilli Brothers under the direction of the sculptor Thomas Jones.<sup>[3][8]</sup> (The brothers also carved the Lincoln statue for the Lincoln Memorial, among others). The Tomb was completed without formal ceremony on April 9, 1932.<sup>[9]</sup>

The Tomb<sup>[nb 2]</sup> was placed at the head of the grave of the World War I Unknown. West of this grave are the crypts of Unknowns from World War II (south) and Korea (north). Between the two lies a crypt that once contained an Unknown from Vietnam (middle). His remains were positively identified in 1998 through DNA testing as First Lieutenant Michael Blassie, United States Air Force and were removed. Those three graves are marked with white marble slabs flush with the plaza.

The Tomb has a flat-faced form and is relieved at the corners and along the sides by neo-classical pilasters set into the surface with objects and inscription carved into the sides. The 1931 symbolism<sup>[8]</sup> of the objects on the north, south and east sides changed over time.<sup>[3][6]</sup>



Tomb as of November 11, 1922. The Tomb of 1931 would occupy this same location.



Part of the delegation at the Tomb in 1921, alongside Crow Nation chief Alaxchíá Ahú ("Plenty Coups")



Secretary of War Dwight F. Davis (left) and Major General B. F. Cheatham, Quartermaster General of the U.S. Army, inspect the accepted model and design for the completion of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier (1928). The design by sculptor Thomas Hudson Jones and architect Lorimer Rich was selected after a competition in which 73 designs were submitted.

**North and South panel** with 3 wreaths on each side represent (in 1931) "a world of memories" but later the six major battles engaged in by American forces in France: Ardennes, Belleau Wood, Château-Thierry, Meusse-Argonne, Oisiu-Eiseu, and Somme. Each wreath has 38 leaves and 12 berries.

**East panel** that faces Washington, DC, are three Greek figures representing Peace, Victory, and "American Manhood" – but later "Valor" instead of "American Manhood"

**West panel** is inscribed with (centered on the panel):

HERE RESTS IN  
HONORED GLORY  
AN AMERICAN  
SOLDIER  
KNOWN BUT TO GOD

**Tomb Dimensions**<sup>[nb 3]</sup> as of 2004<sup>[10]</sup> (xxx)\* 1931 die block dimension coming out of the quarry.<sup>[7]</sup>

Level	Length	Width	Height	Cubic Feet	Tons
Cap	12'-5.4"	6'-6.7"	1'-3.3"	100.69	8.56
Die	12'-3.0" (14'-0")*	6'-6.4" (7'-4.8")*	5'-2.1" (6"-0")*	385.43 (621.6)*	32.76 (52.84)*
Base	13'-10.0"	7'-11.9"	1'-11.1"	198.64	16.88
Sub-Base	14'-10.4"	9'-0.2"	1'-10.9"	255.81	21.74



Placing the marble sarcophagus on top of the Tomb (1931)

## The Unknown of World War I

On Memorial Day, 1921, four unknown servicemen were exhumed from four World War I American cemeteries in France, Aisne-Maine, Meuse-Argonne, Somme, and St. Mihiel. U.S. Army Sgt. Edward F. Younger, who was wounded in combat, highly decorated for valor and received the Distinguished Service Cross selected the Unknown of World War I from four identical caskets at the city hall in Châlons-en-Champagne, France, on October 24, 1921.<sup>[5]</sup> Younger selected the World War I Unknown by placing a spray of white roses on one of the caskets. He chose the third casket from the left. The chosen Unknown was transported to the United States aboard USS Olympia. Those remaining were interred in the Meuse Argonne Cemetery, France.<sup>[5]</sup>



The World War I Unknown arriving at the Washington Navy Yard, 1921 (colorized)

The World War I Unknown lay in state in the Capitol Rotunda<sup>[11]</sup> from his arrival in the United States until Armistice Day, 1921. On November 11, 1921, President Warren G. Harding officiated at the interment ceremonies at the Memorial Amphitheater at Arlington National Cemetery. During the ceremony, the World War I Unknown was awarded the Victoria Cross by Admiral of the Fleet Lord Beatty, on behalf of King George V of the United Kingdom.<sup>[12]</sup> The United Kingdom Victoria Cross was placed with the soldier.

Earlier, on March 4, 1921, the British Unknown Warrior was conferred the U.S. Medal of Honor by General of the Armies John Pershing. In 1928, the Unknown Soldier was presented the Silver Buffalo Award for distinguished service to America's youth by the Boy Scouts of America.<sup>[13]</sup>

## The Unknowns of World War II and Korea

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On August 3, 1956, President Dwight D. Eisenhower (a general during WWII) signed a bill to select and pay tribute to the Unknowns of World War II and the Korean War.<sup>[14]</sup> The selection ceremonies and the interment of these Unknowns took place in 1958. The World War II Unknown was selected from remains exhumed from cemeteries in Europe, Africa, Hawaii, and the Philippines.<sup>[15]</sup>

Two Unknowns from World War II, one from the European Theater and one from the Pacific Theater, were placed in identical caskets and taken aboard USS Canberra, a guided-missile cruiser resting off the Virginia Capes, and placed on either side of the Korean unknown. Navy Hospital Corpsman 1st Class William R. Charette, then the U.S. Navy's only active-duty Medal of Honor recipient who was an enlisted man, selected the right-hand casket as the World War II Unknown. The casket of the remaining WWII unknown received a solemn burial at sea.<sup>[15]</sup>

The Korean unknown had been selected from four unknown Americans who died in the Korean War that were disinterred from the National Cemetery of the Pacific in Hawaii. Army Master Sergeant Ned Lyle made the final selection.<sup>[15]</sup> The unselected unknowns were re-interred there.

The caskets of the WWII & Korean unknowns arrived in Washington on May 28, 1958, where they lay in the Capitol Rotunda<sup>[11]</sup> until the morning of May 30, when they were carried on caissons to Arlington National Cemetery. President Eisenhower awarded each the Medal of Honor, and the Unknowns of World War II and the Korean War were interred in the plaza beside their World War I comrade.<sup>[15]</sup>

## The Unknown of Vietnam

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The Vietnam Unknown service member was originally designated by Medal of Honor recipient U.S. Marine Corps Sgt. Maj. Allan Jay Kellogg, Jr., during a ceremony at Pearl Harbor.

Each branch of the Armed Services took part in the transportation to honor the unknown. The Marines from Marine Barracks Hawaii consisted of an Honor Guard of 9 enlisted men and Lt. Denis Muller. The designated Vietnam Unknown was transported aboard USS Brewton, where the Marines stood guard over the casket during the voyage to Naval Air Station Alameda, California. At Travis, the debarkation ceremony turned the remains over to the USAF on May 24. The next day, the remains of the Unknown were flown from Travis Air Force Base, California, arriving at Andrews Air Force Base, Maryland. Once there the remains were turned over to the US Army, where the remains were taken to Fort McNair for placement upon the horse-drawn wagon which later carried the



Charette selects a coffin for burial in the World War II Tomb of the Unknown from the two coffins representing World War II (Pacific and European theaters) resting on each side of the Korean unknown [center] during ceremonies on board the USS Canberra, May 26, 1958



Last rites for the Unknowns of World War II and the Korean War at Arlington National Cemetery (May 30, 1958)

Unknown to the Capital Rotunda for display before interment.<sup>[11]</sup> While on display for public viewing, all branches of the U.S. Armed Forces stood in honor, guarding the casket of the Unknown for two weeks.

Many Vietnam veterans and President Ronald Reagan and Nancy Reagan visited the Vietnam Unknown in the U.S. Capitol. An Army caisson carried the Vietnam Unknown from the Capitol to the Memorial Amphitheater at Arlington National Cemetery on Memorial Day, May 28, 1984.

President Reagan presided over the funeral, and presented the Medal of Honor to the Vietnam Unknown, and also acted as next of kin by accepting the interment flag at the end of the ceremony. The interment flags of all Unknowns at the Tomb of the Unknowns are on view in the Memorial Display Room.



The Tomb guards stood at death watch for the entire day as thousands of people braved the dreary weather to pay their respects to the Vietnam Unknown in May 1984.

## Identification of the Unknown

In 1994, Ted Sampley, a POW/MIA activist, determined that the remains of the Vietnam Unknown were likely those of Air Force 1st Lt. Michael Joseph Blassie, who was shot down near An Lộc, Vietnam, in 1972. Sampley published an article in his newsletter and contacted Blassie's family, who attempted to pursue the case with the Air Force's casualty office without result. In January 1998, CBS News broadcast a report based on Sampley's investigation which brought political pressure to support the identification of the remains.<sup>[16]</sup> The body was exhumed on May 14, 1998. Based on mitochondrial DNA testing, Department of Defense scientists confirmed the remains were those of Blassie. The identification was announced on June 30, 1998, and on July 10, Blassie's remains arrived home to his family in St. Louis, Missouri; he was reinterred at Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery on July 11.<sup>[17][nb 4]</sup>



The presidential wreath was brought forward toward President Reagan during the interment ceremony for the Unknown Serviceman of the Vietnam Era at the Tomb of the Unknowns on May 28, 1984.

## Redesignation of the crypt

The slab over the crypt that once held the remains of the Vietnam Unknown has since been replaced. The original inscription of "Vietnam" has been changed to "Honoring and Keeping Faith with America's Missing Servicemen" as a reminder of the commitment of the Armed Forces to the fullest possible accounting of missing service members. It was decided that the crypt would remain vacant.

## Tomb Guards

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The tomb guards are soldiers of the United States Army. The first military guards were troopers from the 3rd Cavalry, "Brave Rifles", who were posted nearby on Fort Myer. Since April 6, 1948, (known then as "Army Day"), when the regiment was reactivated, it has been guarded by soldiers from 3rd Infantry Regiment, "The Old Guard". The Old Guard is also posted to Fort Myer, Virginia, adjacent to Arlington National Cemetery. It is considered one of the highest honors to serve as a Sentinel at the Tomb of the Unknowns. Fewer than 20 percent of all volunteers are accepted for training and of those only a fraction pass training to become full-fledged Tomb Guards. The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier Guard Identification Badge is the third least-awarded qualification badge of the United States Army; as of July 4, 2020, they number 683, including 23



Tomb of the Unknown Soldier  
Guard Identification Badge

which have been revoked and 7 "administrative errors". It is preceded by the 15 Military Horseman Identification Badges and the 17 Astronaut Badges.<sup>[18][19]</sup>

The soldier "walking the mat" does not wear rank insignia, so as not to outrank the Unknowns, whatever their ranks may have been. Non-commissioned officers (usually the Relief Commander and Assistant Relief Commanders), do wear

insignia of their rank when changing the guard only. They have a separate uniform (without rank) that is worn when they actually guard the Unknowns or are "posted."

The sentinels will confront people who cross the barriers at the tomb or whom they perceive to be disrespectful or excessively loud.

## Weapons

There have been several different types of weapons used by the tomb guards. The changes in weapons reflect the changes in the Army, including the M1903 Springfield rifle, M1 Garand and M14 rifles, and the M1911, M9 and M17 pistols. Tomb guards currently carry M14 rifles, which are affixed to ceremonial rifle stocks.<sup>[20]</sup>

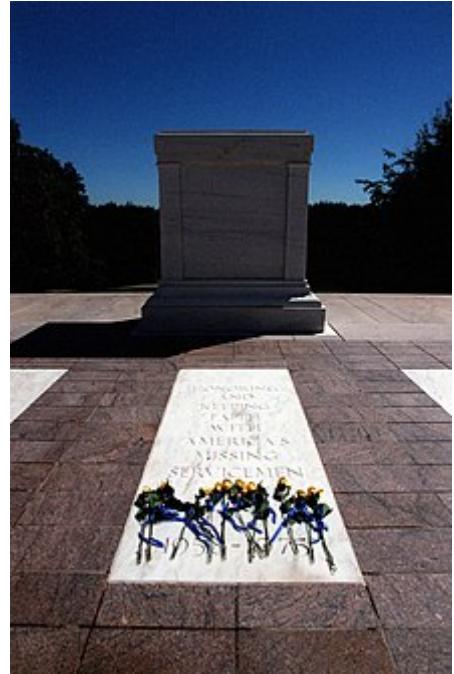
## Walking the mat

There is a meticulous routine that the guard follows when watching over the graves.<sup>[21]</sup> The tomb guard:

1. Marches 21 steps south down the 63-foot-long (19 m) black mat laid across the Tomb.
2. Turns and faces east, toward the Tomb, for 21 seconds.
3. Turns and faces north, changes weapon to outside shoulder, and waits 21 seconds.
4. Marches 21 steps down the mat.
5. Turns and faces east for 21 seconds.
6. Turns and faces south, changes weapon to outside shoulder, and waits 21 seconds.
7. Repeats the routine until the soldier is relieved of duty at the Changing of the Guard.

After each turn, the guard executes a sharp "shoulder-arms" movement to place the weapon on the shoulder closest to the visitors to signify that the guard stands between the Tomb and any possible threat.

Out of respect for the interred, the sentinels command silence at the tombs. If the guard walking the mat must vocally confront a disturbance from spectators, or a threat, the routine is interrupted, and remains so until the disturbance is under control. The sentinel will exit the mat, place the weapon in port arms position, and confront the disturbance. Once under control, the sentinel then walks on the pavement to the other side of the mat, turns to shoulder arms, and resumes the routine from the point of interruption.



Dedicated during the 1999 National POW/MIA Recognition Day, the inscription on the empty crypt of the Vietnam Unknown now reads "Honoring and Keeping Faith with America's Missing Servicemen 1958–1975".

Twenty-one was chosen because it symbolizes the highest military honor that can be bestowed—the 21-gun salute.

The mat is usually replaced twice per year: before Memorial Day and before Veterans Day. This is required because of the wear on the rubber mat by the special shoes worn by tomb guards. The sentinels have metal plates built into the soles and inner parts of their shoes to allow for a more rugged sole and to give the signature click of the heel during maneuvers. The sentinels wear sunglasses because of the bright reflection from the marble surrounding the Tomb and the Memorial Amphitheater.

## Changing of the Guard

While Arlington National Cemetery is open, during the day in summer months from April 1 to September 30, the guard is changed every half hour. During the winter months, from October 1 to March 31, the guard is changed every hour. After the cemetery closes to the public (7 p.m. to 8 a.m. April through September, and 5 p.m. to 8 a.m. October through March), the guard is changed every 2 hours. The ceremony can be witnessed by the public whenever Arlington National Cemetery is open.<sup>[22]</sup>



Changing of the Guard, 2005.

The guard change is very symbolic, but also conducted in accordance with Army regulations. The relief commander or assistant relief commander, along with the oncoming guard, are both required for a guard change to take place. The relief commander orders the guard being relieved to "pass on your orders" to the oncoming guard. The guard being relieved will say to the oncoming guard, "Post and orders remain as directed." The oncoming guard's response is always "Orders acknowledged." During changes when the public is witnessing the ceremony, the commander will inform the public that the ceremony is about to take place and that those in attendance should remain "silent and standing" throughout the entire event. In some occurrences, the public is also asked to refrain from taking flash pictures (mostly during inclement weather).

## Dedication

A civilian guard was first posted at the Tomb on November 17, 1925, to prevent, among other things, families from picnicking on the flat marble slab with views of the city. A military guard was first posted on March 25, 1926. The first 24-hour guard was posted on midnight, July 2, 1937. The Tomb of the Unknowns has been guarded continuously, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, since that time.<sup>[23]</sup> Inclement weather,<sup>[24][25]</sup> terrorist attacks,<sup>[26]</sup> et cetera, do not cause the watch to cease.<sup>[27]</sup>



A soldier guards the tomb in snowy weather in 2021

Since 1948, the tomb guards, a special platoon within the 3rd U.S. Infantry Regiment (The Old Guard) work on a team rotation of 24 hours on, 24 hours off, for five days, taking the following four days off. A guard takes an average of six hours to prepare his uniform—heavy wool, regardless of the time of year—for the next day's work. In addition to preparing the uniform, guards also conduct physical training, tomb guard training, participate in field exercises, cut their hair before the next work day, and at times are involved in regimental functions as well. Tomb guards are required to memorize 35 pages of information about Arlington National Cemetery and the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, including the locations of nearly 300 graves and who is buried in each one.<sup>[22]</sup>

A special Army decoration, the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier Guard Identification Badge, is authorized for wear after passing a detailed test of 100 questions (from a pool of more than 300), a uniform test with two gigs (errors) or fewer (measured to the 1/64"), and a test on the guard-changing sequence. After serving honorably for a period of nine months, and having passed the sequence of tests, a tomb guard is permanently awarded the Badge. Since the first award on February 7, 1958, fewer than 650 soldiers have completed training and been awarded this badge, including four women. A small number of tomb guard Identification Badges have also been retroactively awarded to soldiers who served as Guards before 1959. The Tomb Guard Identification Badge is the only badge awarded by the United States Army that can be revoked after a soldier has left the military. The Regimental Commander of the 3rd U.S. Infantry Regiment has the authority to revoke a badge from any Guard (past or present) for any act that would bring discredit upon the Tomb of the Unknowns.<sup>[28]</sup>

The badge was designed in 1956 and first issued to members of the Honor Guard at the Tomb of the Unknowns on February 7, 1958. The badge was first issued only as a temporary wear item, meaning the soldiers could only wear the badge during their tenure as members of the honor guard. Upon leaving the duty, the badge was returned and reissued to incoming soldiers. In 1963, a regulation was enacted that allowed the badge to be worn as a permanent part of the military uniform, even after the soldier's completion of duty at the Tomb of the Unknowns.

In keeping with the dedication, Tomb Guards have made, this year (2021) serves as a centennial commemoration for The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. "For nearly 100 years, the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier (TUS) has served as the heart of Arlington National Cemetery. It is a people's memorial that inspires reflection on service, valor, sacrifice and mourning. As a sacred memorial site and the grave of three unknown American service members, the Tomb connects visitors with the legacy of the U.S. armed forces throughout the nation's history.

"As the stewards of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, it's our honor to lead the centennial commemoration of this site," said Karen Durham-Aguilera, Executive Director, Army National Military Cemeteries and Arlington National Cemetery. "In collaboration with other governmental and non-governmental organizations, ANC is using this centennial commemoration to explore and share with the public the history, meaning and evolution of the Tomb."

Throughout this year, the cemetery will hold events leading up to the centennial ceremony on November 11, 2021. The public will be able to experience and participate in the commemorative events in many ways, both at the cemetery and virtually."<sup>[29]</sup>

## **Damage and repair to the Tomb Monument**

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Cracking and weathering are causing concerns for the long-term preservation of the Tomb Monument. A November 1963 report first recorded horizontal cracking of the monument's marble die block. Though this was the first time that the damage was documented, the report made it clear that the cracks had become visible some time before that date.<sup>[30]</sup>

In 1963–1964, there were two cracks—referred to as "primary" and "secondary"—extending approximately 34 feet (10 m) around the die block. By 1974, they had extended to 40 feet (12 m). They grew another 4.6 feet (1.4 m) over the next 15 years. Inspection has determined that the cracks have increased horizontally since 1990. Analysis also indicates that the cracks are not surficial but extend partially through the block and will eventually extend all the way through.<sup>[30]</sup>



The crack can be seen underneath the words "An American" and above the word "Soldier."

The 1990 report documented deterioration of the marble's surface. As much as 2.85 millimetres (0.112 in) of the marble surface has been lost through weathering. The study projected that before 2010, the Tomb Monument will have been weathered enough to have a negative effect on the experience of the visitors and concludes the only solutions are to enclose or replace the monument.<sup>[30]</sup>

Several options have been considered to deal with the damage. Officials at Arlington National Cemetery determined that proper repair can return the Tomb Monument to an acceptable appearance. However, because the cracks will continue to lengthen and widen, continuous grouting, regROUTING, touch-up, monitoring, and maintenance would be required. Therefore, a report commissioned by Arlington National Cemetery and published in June 2006 confirmed the Cemetery's conclusion that "replacement of the three pieces of the Tomb Monument is the preferred alternative". A final decision was scheduled to be made on September 30, 2007.<sup>[30]</sup>

The National Trust for Historic Preservation objects to the plan to replace the authentic Tomb Monument. The Trust expressed concern that Arlington National Cemetery seeks to replace the existing monument with marble from the original quarry, which experts agree is likely to eventually crack.<sup>[31]</sup>

The Trust has observed that the Cemetery's own 1990 report recommended that the monument be repaired and that the Cemetery, in fact, commissioned Oehrlein Architects to repair the stone. In 2007, Mary Oehrlein informed Congressional staff members that: "The existing monument can easily be repaired, as was done 17 years ago, using conventional conservation methods to re-grout the cracks. Once repaired, the fault lines would be virtually invisible from the public viewing areas."<sup>[32][33]</sup>

On September 26, 2007, U.S. Senator Daniel Akaka announced that an amendment crafted together with Senator Jim Webb will be added to the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008 (H.R. 1585) that would require a report on the plans of the Secretary of the Army and the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to replace the monument at the Tomb of the Unknowns. The secretaries would be required to advise Congress on the current efforts to maintain and preserve the monument. Additionally, they would have to provide an assessment on the feasibility and advisability of repairing rather than replacing the Tomb Monument. Finally, if the secretaries choose replacement, they would have to report those plans and detail how they intend to dispose of the current monument. Once the report is provided, the secretaries are prevented from taking action to replace the monument for at least 180 days. The Akaka-Webb amendment was included in the bill by unanimous consent of the Senate.<sup>[34]</sup> An amendment to the Fiscal Year 2008 Defense Authorization Bill authorized a review of the monument's condition. The bill also authorized repair, but not replacement, of the monument.<sup>[35]</sup> Final passage of the National Defense Authorization Act for 2008 (H.R. 4986) was signed by President Bush on January 28, 2008.

In 2003 John Haines, a retired car dealer, offered to donate a large slab of marble to the Arlington National Cemetery to replace the existing marble. Haines paid \$31,000 for the marble slab.<sup>[36]</sup> The marble was not removed from the quarry, however, because imperfections were found and the block was rejected.

In June 2009 Arlington National Cemetery and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers announced that the monument was to be repaired, not replaced.<sup>[37]</sup> In 2010, the cracks were filled but the repairs lasted only a few months.<sup>[38]</sup> As of June 2011, the cemetery was struggling to repair the cracks in the monument, one of which measured 28.4 feet (8.7 m) long, with another at 16.2 feet (4.9 m).<sup>[39]</sup> In September 2011, the cracks were filled again<sup>[38]</sup> and on October 21, 2011, inspection by the Corps of Engineers and other experts pronounced the repairs a success.<sup>[40]</sup>



October 21, 2011: Completed repair of the cracks in the Tomb.

## See also

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- [Civil War Unknowns Monument](#)
- [Tomb of the Unknown Confederate Soldier](#)
- [Tomb of the Unknown Soldier](#) – for a list of similar memorials in other countries
- [Tomb of the Unknown Revolutionary War Soldier](#)
- [World War I memorials](#)
- [Canadian Tomb of the Unknown Soldier](#)
- [The Unknown Warrior](#) – London, UK
- [The Unknown Soldier](#) – Paris, France
- [Military rites](#)

## Notes

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1. Syracuse University Archives has an extensive collection of Lorimer Rich (1914 Syracuse graduate) papers pertaining to his architect design work of the Tomb, including 44 numbered drawings of the Tomb. [http://archives.syr.edu/collections/alumni/rich\\_box.html](http://archives.syr.edu/collections/alumni/rich_box.html) Archived ([https://web.archive.org/web/20120218084751/http://archives.syr.edu/collections/alumni/rich\\_box.html](https://web.archive.org/web/20120218084751/http://archives.syr.edu/collections/alumni/rich_box.html)) February 18, 2012, at the [Wayback Machine](#)
2. Many sources reference the 1931 Tomb as a sarcophagus, but it is not: in a [sarcophagus](#), the remains are placed in a hollowed-out portion of the stone; the marble in the Tomb was not hollowed out and the remains are underneath the Tomb.
3. 1931 body block tonnage calculated in 2004 is different (by 5.9%) from the other source amount of 56 tons and can not be explained with certainty. Sub-base cubic footage and tons was calculated from the source dimensions because cubic feet and tons were not included in the source data table. Per cubic foot, the marble weighs 170 pounds.
4. The identification took place after Blassie's family lobbied the Pentagon to perform the DNA testing. His remains (6 partial bones) had originally been recovered several months after his aircraft had been shot down and were not sufficient to allow for positive [identification](#) at the time. CNN.com "Home at last for a fallen hero". June 11, 1998 (<https://web.archive.org/web/20110815114853/http://edition.cnn.es/US/9807/11/unknown.soldier.02/index.html>). Also see: U.S. National Library of Medicine – Visible Proofs, "Michael Blassie unknown no more", May 23, 2006 (<https://www.nlm.nih.gov/visibleproofs//galleries/cases/blassie.html>)

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## External links

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- Official U.S. Army Tomb Guard and Tomb of the Unknowns website (<https://web.archive.org/web/20110731151403/http://www.army.mil/info/organization/unitsandcommands/commandstructure/theoldguard>)
- Arlington Cemetery official site (<http://www.arlingtoncemetery.mil/>) Archived (<https://web.archive.org/web/20110722175730/http://www.arlingtoncemetery.mil/>) 2011-07-22 at the Wayback Machine
- Arlington Historical Society (<http://www.arlingtonhistoricalsociety.org/>)
- Arlington Convention and Visitors Service official website (<https://web.archive.org/web/20051105022742/http://www.stayarlinton.com/index.cfm/8105/>)
- Snopes's article on the Tomb of the Unknowns (<http://www.snopes.com/military/unknown.asp>)
- Society of the Honor Guard – Tomb of the Unknown Soldier (<http://www.tombguard.org/>)
- Video of the Changing of the Guard at the Tomb of the Unknowns, by Dover Lodge #489 (<http://www.dover489.org/?p=797>)
- Video of a changing of the guard (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZYZgbgJdvc0&hd=1>)
- Video of the Changing of the Guard (Silent Mode) (<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=UP3wKmtmYy4>)
- Tomb guards keep a watch at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National...HD Stock Footage (<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=0yRVbeLx788>)
- The short film *Interment Ceremony Of The Vietnam Unknown (1985)* (<https://archive.org/details/gov.dod.dimoc.604778>) is available for free download at the Internet Archive
- Historic film footage of November 11, 1921 interment ceremony for the World War I Unknown Soldier at the tomb of 1921 ([http://www.criticalpast.com/video/65675021991\\_American-Unknown-Soldier\\_carrying-a-casket\\_placing-on-Sarcophagus\\_Plenty-Coos](http://www.criticalpast.com/video/65675021991_American-Unknown-Soldier_carrying-a-casket_placing-on-Sarcophagus_Plenty-Coos))
- *The Unknowns* – 2016 Documentary film (<http://www.theunknownsmovie.com>)
- World War I Unknown Soldier (<http://www.arlingtoncemetery.net/wwi-unk.htm>) Archived (<https://web.archive.org/web/20210204113537/http://www.arlingtoncemetery.net/wwi-unk.htm>) 2021-02-04 at the Wayback Machine, ArlingtonCemetery.net – an unofficial website
- U.S. Geological Survey Geographic Names Information System: Tomb of the Unknown Soldier ([https://geonames.usgs.gov/apex/f?p=gnispq:3::NO::P3\\_FID:1493855](https://geonames.usgs.gov/apex/f?p=gnispq:3::NO::P3_FID:1493855))
- Tomb of the Unknown Soldier (<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/1051>) at Find a Grave 

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