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ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY



HISTORY EDUCATION SERIES

Hiroshima Peace Memorial (Genbaku Dome)

Hiroshima, Japan



Genbaku Dome in Hiroshima, Japan. The building was 525 feet away from the center of the blast. (Vladimir Mokry)



Cenotaph Arch for the atomic bomb Victims in Peace Memorial Park. The stone box under the arch contains the names of those who died in the bombing. (Vladimir Mokry)

On August 6, 1945, the United States dropped an atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Japan. This was the first time an atomic bomb had ever been deployed in war and the devastation it caused was unprecedented. The city of Hiroshima estimated that 237,000 people were killed directly or indirectly.

In the aftermath of the bomb, the Hiroshima Peace Memorial, or Genbaku Dome, was the only structure to remain standing. Through preservation, the building still looks exactly as it did after the bombing.

The memorial symbolizes the destructive power of nuclear weapons, but also hope for world peace. The Memorial Peace Park surrounds the building and forms part of the memorial. The park features a cenotaph to commemorate the atomic bomb victims. A cenotaph is a monument or empty tomb that honors a person or group buried elsewhere. Cenotaphs are found throughout history from all over the world and do not have a set design.

Symbolic Elements:

- The Genbaku Dome remains symbolize hope and resilience following extreme violence.
- The cenotaph arch is inspired by *haniwa* pottery, traditional Japanese clay sculptures used for rituals and buried with the dead during the 3rd to 6th centuries AD.

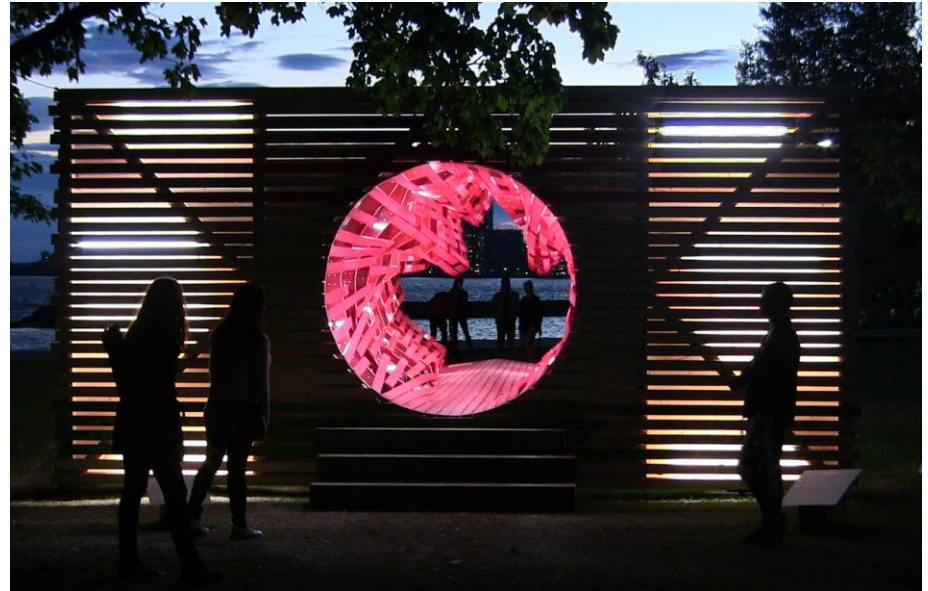
Tunnel Through Time

Niagara Falls, Canada

Tunnel Through Time commemorates the 37,565 Hungarians who fled to Canada after the 1956 Hungarian Revolution — a popular uprising against Hungary's authoritarian rule, which was crushed by a Soviet invasion in November 1956. The Consulate General of Hungary in Toronto commissioned the installation for the 60th anniversary of the revolution and subsequent Hungarian emigration to Canada.

Symbolism:

- The tunnel entrance is the Hungarian flag, with a hole in the center. During protests, those opposed to the authoritarian government would cut out the communist coat of arms from the center of the flag.
- The tunnel exit is a maple leaf, the national symbol of Canada, to represent the journey of Hungarian refugees to Canada.
- The tunnel consists of 37,565 wood pieces. Each piece represents a Hungarian refugee accepted into Canada in the aftermath of the revolution.



The tunnel in Budapest Park, Toronto in 2016. Notice the tunnel morphing from a circle to a maple leaf. (Sharon VanderKaay)



The tunnel exit during the day. Visitors may interact with the installation by walking through the tunnel. (Sharon VanderKaay)

Iran Rescue Mission Memorial

Arlington National Cemetery (Arlington, VA)



Iran Rescue Mission Memorial, 2019. (ANC/Elizabeth Fraser)

The Iran Rescue Mission Memorial commemorates the role of U.S. service members during the Iran Hostage Crisis in 1979. By the spring of 1980, diplomatic negotiations had reached a stalemate, and President Jimmy Carter authorized a secret military operation to begin on April 24 to rescue the remaining hostages. During mission preparations, however, a helicopter collided with a transport plane, killing eight American service personnel. The rescue mission was aborted. Iran did not release the hostages until January 20, 1981 – day 444 of their captivity and the day of President Ronald Reagan's inauguration.

Dedicated in 1983, the Iran Rescue Mission Memorial consists of a white marble column with a bronze plaque listing the names and ranks of those who lost their lives during the mission.

Symbolism:

- The laurel leaves bracketing the inscription are traditional Christian symbols of victory and death. They are a common motif in military memorials.

Steilneset Memorial

Vardø, Norway

Steilneset Memorial commemorates the 91 victims of the Finnmark witch trials in 17th-century Norway. The memorial consists of two structures designed separately by Swiss architect Peter Zumthor and French-American artist Louise Bourgeois. Zumthor's 400-foot-long structure is made from pine scaffolding that supports a silk "cocoon." Inside the cocoon is a hallway with 91 windows and plaques telling each victim's story. A lightbulb hangs in front of each window.

A much smaller glass structure houses Bourgeois' portion of the memorial. The installation features an eternal flame burning on a steel chair. The chair stands in a hollow concrete cone, surrounded by circular mirrors.

Symbolism:

- Each lightbulb represents a victim of the trials.
- The mirrors represent the harsh condemnation the victims faced from judges during the trial.
- The burning chair symbolizes the way most of the victims died: burning at the stake.



Eternal flame burning on the steel chair. Notice the circular mirrors above the flame and the "cocoon" behind it. (Bjarne Riesto)



Small windows along the cocoon. (Schnoogg)

Major General Philip Kearny Memorial Grave

Arlington National Cemetery (Arlington, VA)

The Kearny Memorial commemorates Major General Philip Kearny's lifelong association with cavalry troops. Philip Kearny Jr. studied cavalry tactics in France, fought with French forces during a colonial uprising in Algiers, and received the French Legion of Honor. When he returned to the United States, he prepared a cavalry manual for the U.S. Army and served in the Mexican-American War. When the Civil War broke out in 1861, Kearny returned to the Army, despite having lost his left arm during the Mexican-American War. Appointed as a brigadier general, he trained and commanded the First New Jersey Brigade. Kearny was killed in action on September 1, 1862, at the Second Battle of Bull Run.

Symbolism:

- Kearny's left sleeve is pinned to represent his injury during the Mexican-American War.
- The horse represents Kearny's career as a cavalryman, but also conveys military success and power.



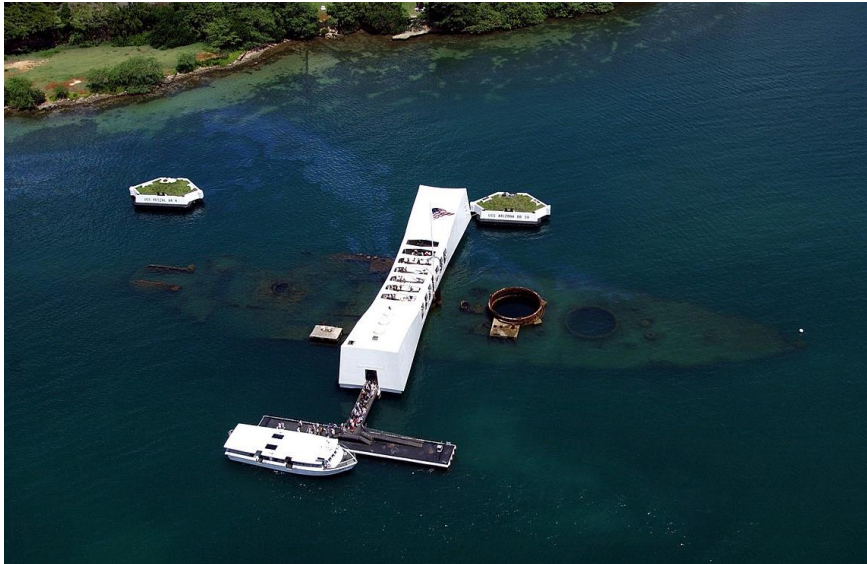
Kearny Memorial Grave. (ANC/Rachel Larue)

USS Arizona Memorial

Oahu, Hawaii



Assembly Hall on the USS Arizona Memorial. (USN/ Katarzyna Kobiljak)



Aerial view of a boat docking at the USS Arizona Memorial. (USN/Jayme Pastoric)

The USS Arizona Memorial commemorates the Arizona crewmen killed in Japan's attack on the Pearl Harbor naval base on December 7, 1941 — prompting U.S. entry into World War II. As part of the larger Pearl Harbor National Memorial, the USS Arizona Memorial has come to honor all military personnel killed at Pearl Harbor.

The structure spans the sunken ship and visitors can only visit the site by boat. Architect Alfred Preis designed the concrete and steel memorial to sag “in the center but [stand] strong and vigorous at the ends, express[ing] initial defeat and ultimate victory.” The memorial consists of three rooms: the Entry Room, the Assembly Hall, and the Shrine. In the Assembly Hall, visitors can view the shipwreck below through a hole cut into the middle of the floor.

Symbolism:

- The 21 windows symbolize a 21-gun salute: the highest honor rendered in military ceremonies.
- The American flag flies from a flagpole connected to the ship's mainmast, in tribute to the USS Arizona crew.
- The memorial is designed to sag in the middle to represent American morale before, after, and during the attack on Pearl Harbor. The attack was a low point in American history, but the United States ultimately triumphed.

Statue of Liberty

New York, New York

Dedicated on October 28, 1886, the Statue of Liberty was a gift from France to the United States. It commemorated the centennial of the Declaration of Independence and the longstanding alliance between the two countries.

The Statue of Liberty symbolizes liberty and freedom, but it holds special meanings in the historical context of immigration to the United States. During the late 19th and early 20th centuries — a peak period of immigration — many European immigrants arrived by ship. The massive statue, located at the entrance to New York Harbor, was many's first glimpse of the U.S. after their long journey across the Atlantic.

Symbolism:

- Liberty holds a tablet inscribed “July 4th, 1776” in Roman numerals, marking American independence.
- The spikes on her crown represent the sun's rays shining out to enlighten the world.
- The broken shackle and chains on her foot represent the abolition of slavery in 1865.
- Her torch symbolizes enlightenment, a philosophical movement that emphasizes reason and tolerance; the statue's official name is “The State of Liberty Enlightening the World.”



The Statue of Liberty is built on Liberty Island. (Warby)



Liberty's tablet. (Ron Cogswell)

Vietnam Veterans Memorial

Washington, DC



The Vietnam Veterans Memorial (VVM), dedicated in 1982, honors all who served in the Vietnam War. In 1979, a Vietnam veteran named Jan Scruggs began the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund (VVMF) to create a memorial to help veterans heal. After President Jimmy Carter signed legislation authorizing the memorial to be created on the mall, the VVMF held a national design competition.

Maya Lin, then an undergraduate student at Yale University, won the competition. She envisioned a memorial that would be “apolitical and contemplative... personal, human.” Her design featured granite walls cut into the earth, inscribed with the names of more than 58,000 service members who died or were listed as missing in action. The VVM is the most-visited memorial on the National Mall.

Symbolism:

- One section of the wall points to the Lincoln Memorial and the other to the Washington Monument to symbolize the Vietnam War's place in American history.
- The black granite panels reflect the faces of those who visit, encouraging contemplation.
- The names of the first and last Americans who died in the war meet in the middle of the wall to represent the war's end.



Top: The Vietnam Veterans Memorial. Notice how the wall is built into the grassy hill. (VA/Eugene Russell)

Bottom: Names inscribed on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. A diamond indicates servicemembers who died in battle and a plus sign indicates those listed as MIA. (Angela N.)

Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe

Berlin, Germany

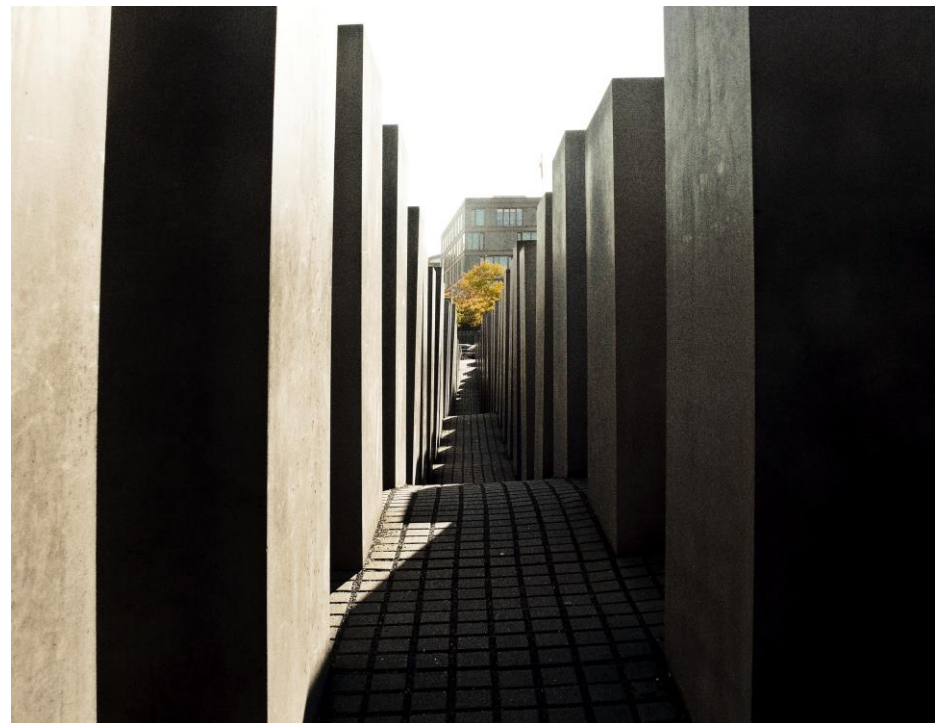
The Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe commemorates the over six million Jewish people slaughtered in the Holocaust. The memorial comprises 2,711 concrete blocks, called stelaes, arranged in a grid, with narrow, undulating alleys in between the blocks. Many visitors describe walking through the memorial as disorienting due to the changes in elevation and maze-like paths through the blocks. Eisenman did not use the number or arrangement of the blocks as a symbolic element. Instead, he designed the site for visitors to experience in its entirety. A museum, directly underneath the memorial, educates visitors on the events of the Holocaust.

Symbolism:

- The museum has a coffered ceiling, indentations in the ceiling framed by beams, to represent the pillars above and prompt reflection. The indentations are spaced from each other at the same widths as the pillars above.
- The memorial's design avoids traditional memorial symbols to convey that the Holocaust cannot be adequately remembered through traditional architecture.



Stelaes from above. The blocks have a protective coating to prevent graffiti. (Rob Faulkner)



Alleyways between blocks. The alleys in the memorial are only wide enough for one person at a time. (Chrissie Sternschnuppe)

Lincoln Memorial

Washington, DC

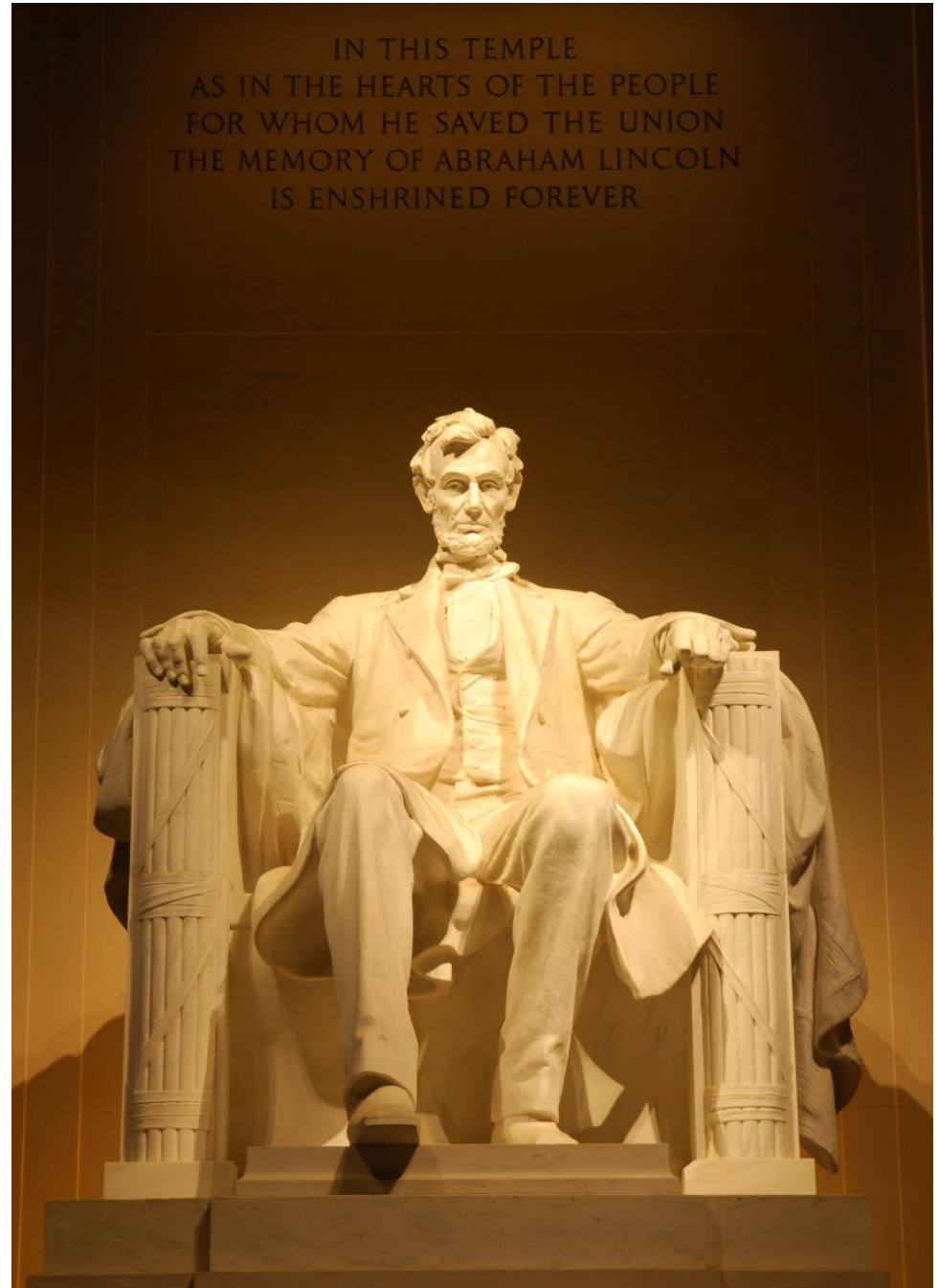
The Lincoln Memorial, dedicated in 1922, honors President Abraham Lincoln, who held office between 1861 and 1865. Lincoln led the United States throughout the Civil War and issued the 1863 Emancipation Proclamation, which ended slavery within the rebelling Confederate states.

Architect Henry Bacon designed the memorial to resemble a Greek temple to honor Lincoln's commitment to democracy. Columns separate the interior of the marble memorial into three chambers. A towering statue of Lincoln stands inside the central chamber.

The side chambers feature inscribed quotes from two of Lincoln's most famous speeches: the Gettysburg Address (delivered on the battlefield near Gettysburg, Pennsylvania on November 19, 1863 — and considered one of the most important presidential speeches in U.S. History) and his Second Inaugural Address (March 4, 1865 — just 41 days before his assassination).

Above the speeches, murals depict values Lincoln held central to his life, such as freedom, justice, faith, and truth.

*Sculpture of Abraham Lincoln, made of Georgia white marble.
Note the fasces at the ends of his armrests and his one unclenched hand and one clenched hand. (NPS/Terry Adams)*



Lincoln Memorial

Washington, DC



Aerial view of the Lincoln Memorial. Notice the Doric columns along the perimeter. (NPS)

Symbolism:

- 36 Doric columns represent the 36 states in the United States at the time of Lincoln's assassination.
- The many fasces (an ancient Roman symbol of strength, with a bundle of rods and an ax) symbolize a strong union. During the 1930s, fascist regimes in Italy and Germany became associated with the fasces symbol, but that is not what it represents in this context.
- The sculptor of Lincoln's statue, Daniel Chester French, designed Lincoln's hands to depict his character: the clenched hand may represent his determination to reunite the nation, while the other, more open hand, may represent his compassion.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial

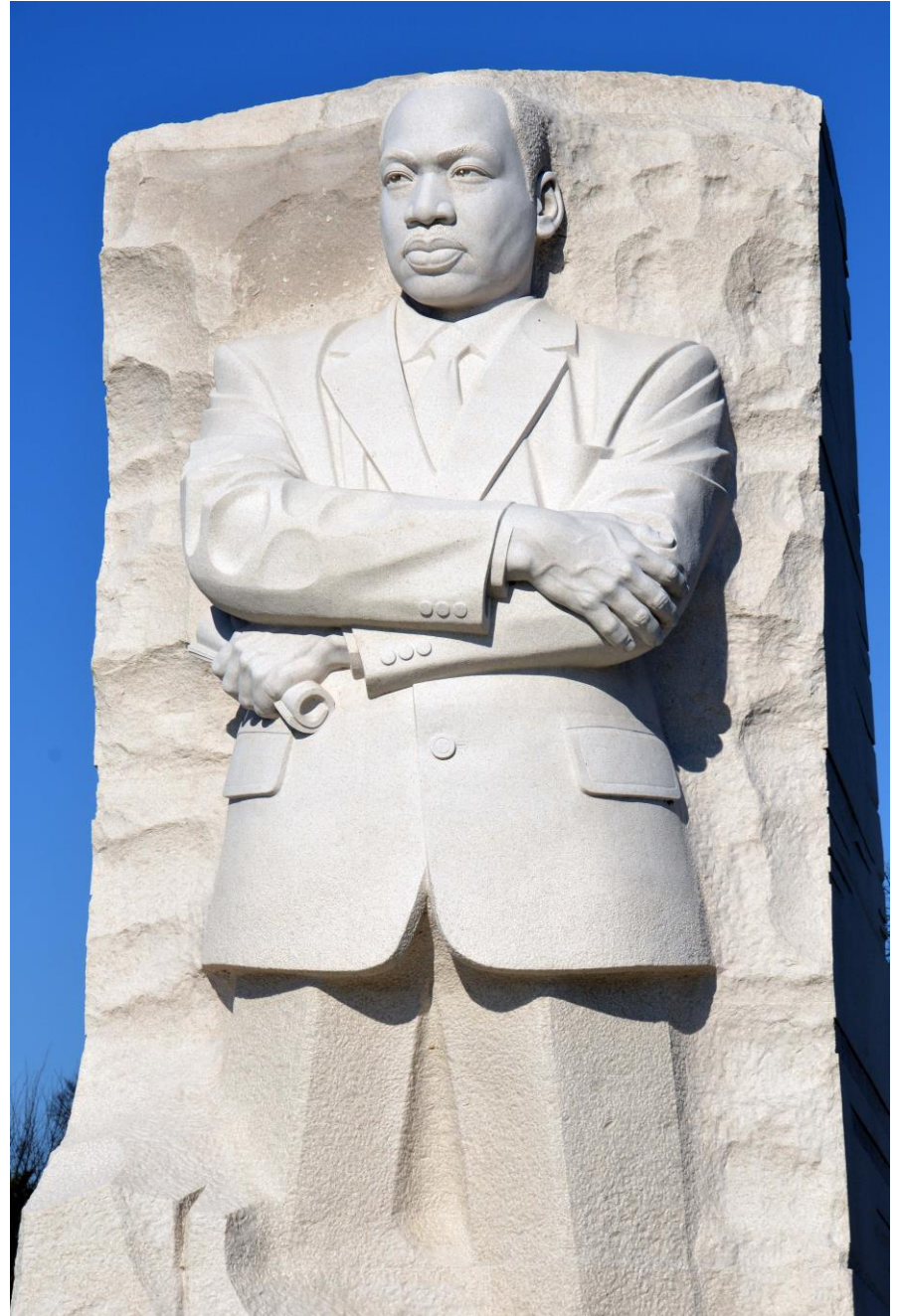
Washington, DC

The Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial honors Dr. Martin Luther King, Junior, a Baptist minister, and famed civil rights activist. King fought for African American civil rights through nonviolence and civil disobedience. He was assassinated in 1968.

The memorial is the first on the National Mall to honor a Black individual. In 1996, Congress granted King's fraternity Alpha Phi Alpha permission to build a memorial for King in Washington, DC. The memorial was dedicated in 2011.

King's 1963 "I Have a Dream" speech inspired the memorial's design. In his speech, King said, "With this faith, we will be able to hew out of the mountain of despair a stone of hope." The memorial features a granite "mountain of despair," with the center "stone of hope" carved out and pushed forward. Carved out of the front of the "stone of hope," stands a 30-foot sculpture of King. On either side of mountain stand sloping walls with quotes from King's speeches and writings.

Sculpture of Dr. King carved from granite. King's expression is meant to look determined and resolute. (NPS/Bill Shugarts)



Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Washington, DC



The Stone of Hope and Mountain of Despair. The stone is designed to look as if cut from the middle of the mountain. (NPS/Bill Shugarts)

Symbolism:

- The Memorial is located between the Lincoln and Jefferson Memorials, connecting the three men who at three different moments in history fought for American civil rights — Jefferson for (white men's) life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness, Lincoln to end slavery, and King to end legal segregation.
- A reference to King's "I Have a Dream Speech," the mountain represents the "mountain of despair" while the slice of granite from the middle represents the "stone of hope." The pieces are separate to show that the victories of the civil rights movement were a product of great pain and suffering.