War Memorials in Massachusetts

AMERICAN REVOLUTION • CIVIL WAR • WWI and WWII
VIETNAM WAR • KOREAN WAR • AND MORE

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AMERICAN REVOLUTION

Live American history with a trip to some of the most influential sites of the early days of the American Revolution! These sites honor the revolutionaries who fought for freedom in the 17th century and commemorate the battles for liberty that founded the United States. Many of these destinations are along the Freedom Trail, an iconic, red brick path that winds through the heart of Boston.

Begin at the starting line of the Revolutionary War, with a trip to Old North Church in Boston’s North End. In this renowned church hung the lanterns which indicated the means – one if by land, and two if by sea - by which the British would travel to Lexington.

Journey through the North End past Paul Revere’s home on North Square to Copps Hill Burial Ground, where the British were positioned for the battle of Bunker Hill. Many beloved soldiers, and key figures in the American Revolution are laid to rest here.

Head over the bridge to Charlestown and up Bunker Hill to see recognizable obelisk monument that honors the Battle of Bunker Hill in 1775. This battle was hard-fought by the American Patriots and served as a testament to the ferocity with which soldiers would stand for their independence.

Stroll through historic Beacon Hill and trek up to the Beacon Hill Eagle Monument, perched behind the State House. This monument, created by sculptor Charles Bullfinch, was dedicated in 1790 before being moved in 1811 and recreated in 1990, honors those who fell in the American Revolution. It is the first national monument to salute soldiers of the American Revolution.

Be sure to visit Lexington Green, the site of the first shots of the American Revolution.

March along Concord and Lexington’s Battlefield Road and visit the “Midnight Riders” plaque placed at the spot where Paul Revere was captured. Continue on to Old North Bridge, where the Revolutionaries fought the Red Coats.

No American Revolution tour would be complete without stops at memorials for key figures honored for their service in the American Revolution:

- Thaddeus Kosciuszko, a critical member of the Sons of Liberty was recruited by Benjamin Franklin and tasked with fortifying Philadelphia. Find his statue in Boston Public Garden.
- The bravery of Colonel William Prescott during the Battle for Bunker Hill earned him a memorial beside the Bunker Hill Monument in Charlestown.
The Bay State played a critical role in the abolitionist movement and the events leading up to the Civil War. Salute our sailors and soldiers by exploring the memorial grounds in Boston and on the Massachusetts islands, with sites honoring the courage of those who took up arms to fight for the emancipation of slaves in the United States.

Boston Common is home to two of the most high profile Civil War tributes in the state— the **Robert Gould Shaw and the 54th Regiment Memorial** and the **Soldiers and Sailors Monument**.

- The **Robert Gould Shaw and Massachusetts 54th Regiment Memorial** honors the first African Americans who fought in the Civil War at the attack on Fort Wagner, South Carolina on July 18, 1863. Only 598 of the original 1,007 men were present for the final memorial ceremonies on the Boston Common in 1884.

- The **Soldiers and Sailors Monument** is another 19th century dedication to those who passed during service of the Civil War. This monument is the tallest of the Boston Common memorials standing at 126 feet. The memorial has four pedestals representing, "The Departure for the War", the Sanitary Commission, "The Return from the War", and departure of the sailors from home.

The **Soldiers’ Memorial Fountain** at Ocean Park in Oak Bluffs has interesting origins. It was erected in 1891, by a former Confederate soldier who also served as publisher of the Martha’s Vineyard Herald. The memorial is dedicated to Union Civil War veterans and signifies unity and healing.

Salute the sailors and soldiers of Nantucket who fought in the Civil War by spending a few moments walking along **Monument Square**. This area pays tribute to those who fought by land and sea— some of whom grew up on this picturesque island. Be sure to view the Town & Country Building on Federal Street as well, to recognize those who served in World War I, World War II, Korea, and Vietnam.
Experience the magnitude of the World Wars with Massachusetts memorials and museums! From Battleship Cove in Fall River to Natick’s extensive wartime exhibits— you’ll feel like you’re a part of history.

Take a step back to the World War II era with a trip to Natick’s Museum of WWII. This local treasure is one of the country’s finest wartime museums and the most comprehensive WWII collection in the world. With over 7,000 artifacts that tie together the human, political, and military stories of the 1940s, you’ll want to dedicate plenty of time to absorb the collection.

Test your sea legs at Battleship Cove America’s Fleet Museum. This Fall River favorite features both a Maritime Museum which houses over 150 model ships, as well as real life battleships like the U.S.S. Massachusetts, and several war boats that you can board and tour.

Stop by the World War II Memorial in Boston which commemorates the service of over 3,000 men and women who lost their lives in the war. With WWII memorial’s beacon of light shining atop the bronze-winged female figure representing Victory, the site feels like sacred ground. This memorial standing in the Back Bay Fens, has grown to be surrounded by tributes to Bostonians who lost their lives in the later Korean and Vietnam Wars.

Servicemen take center stage in Worcester. In 1935, Worcester War Memorial Auditorium was built in the form of a multi-purpose hall that pays tribute to the fallen soldiers and battles of World War I. This building which sits in the center of Lincoln square, has gone on to host events for generations: from Bob Dylan concerts to sporting events.
The Vietnam War changed a generation. Here in Massachusetts, we honor those who served with memorials that range from stunning statues to entire parks. Be sure to visit these hallowed grounds as a part of your next Massachusetts history experience.

Worcester has the most spectacular Vietnam Veterans Memorial in New England. The sprawling four-acre estate along Skyline Drive in Green Hill Park serves as one of the most dedicated locations for reflection and remembrance. The property is divided among the place of flags, the place of words, and the place of names.

Both South Boston and Dorchester boast beautiful memorials for fallen soldiers during the Vietnam War.

- The M Street Beach location of the South Boston Vietnam War Memorial is often considered the first memorial in the world honoring locals who died in the war, represented by a black headstone and framed by two flower-wielding firearms.

- The neighboring Dorchester memorial depicts a broken arch, which signifies the loss and mourning associated with the war while also remembering those who have died in service to freedom.

The Back Bay Fens War Memorial creates a place for respect and reverence. The Vietnam Memorial in Boston, is joined by memorials from other wars to pay tribute to all fallen soldiers. Its location closest to the rose garden makes it even more special, and depicts Vietnam on the stone floor between the two benches sitting at opposite ends of the three columns, listing the names of the Massachusetts men who gave their lives to service from 1962-1975.
Commemorate veterans of the Korean War by visiting these sights honoring those who served their country during what many Americans consider the “Forgotten War.” Massachusetts will never forget their service to the United States and honor their sacrifice with these special tributes.

The Massachusetts Korean War Memorial in Boston Navy Yard, salutes the men of Massachusetts who died in service of United States during the Korean War. This memorial depicts a statue of a soldier standing on a rock brought over from South Korea, signifying the friendship between both countries. Additionally, the memorial lists the names of fallen servicemen.

The Haverhill Korean War Memorial in G.A.R. Park is famous in the northern part of Massachusetts for its strong community of veterans, which is why their Korean War memorial is a must see. Its three beautiful benches are stunning when illuminated at night.

Hyannis houses one of the Commonwealth’s finest tributes to the Korean War. At Veterans Memorial Park, the names of those who gave their lives in service are alongside a depiction of a soldier at war. Also nearby at this family-friendly space is a memorial to President JFK.
MORE MUST-SEE MEMORIALS

Calling all history buffs! On your next visit to the Bay State be sure to check out these incredible memorials commemorating the servicemen and women who have given their lives for their country. Massachusetts honors our veterans with bridges, statues, and parks dedicated to our fallen and welcome you to visit these sacred sites of battles and hometown heroes.

The Massachusetts State House is home to the first national monument dedicated to the women of the north during the Civil War, Nurses Hall. This hall salutes the service of Civil War heroes along with murals dedicated to the memory of American Revolutionaries.

One of newest and most relevant Massachusetts memorials can be found on South Boston’s Northern Avenue. The Massachusetts Fallen Heroes Memorial, dedicated in 2014, is a five-sided diaphanous column, representing multiple branches of the Service. It reflects the harbor lights during the day, and is illuminated from within at night— serving as a beacon of light for many downtown and on the waterfront.

Take a drive or walk along Memorial Bridge in Springfield. This bridge, running across the Connecticut River, was dedicated to those who have given their lives to service in the American Revolution, Civil Wars, and all foreign wars—with its four columns symbolizing the wars that have upheld American independence and freedom.

The oldest university in the country honors students and faculty who have fallen during service. At Harvard University’s Memorial Church, names of departed soldiers are etched in the stone walls of this non-denominational place of worship which honors those who have passed during each November’s “War Dead” service.

Atop Massachusetts tallest peak sits War Memorial Tower. The Mt. Greylock War Memorial was built by the Commonwealth in 1932 and salutes the “Sons and Daughters of Massachusetts” for their sacrifices in United States wartimes. The light from the tower can be seen for many Berkshire mountainside miles.

Step aboard the U.S.S. Constitution docked in Charlestown Navy Yard. This Boston treasure has circumnavigated the world and served as a warship in the War of 1812. Visitors are welcomed to explore the ship and visit the U.S.S. Constitution Museum.