

# Korean War Veterans Memorial

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## History

The Korean War Veterans Memorial was confirmed by the U.S. Congress (Public Law 99-572) on October 28, 1986, with design and construction managed by the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board and the American Battle Monuments Commission.

The initial design competition was won in 1986 by a team of four architects from The Pennsylvania State University, but this team withdrew as it became clear that changes would be needed to satisfy the advisory board and reviewing agencies such as the Commission of Fine Arts. A federal court case was filed and lost over the design changes. The eventual design was by Cooper-Lecky Architects who oversaw collaboration between several designers.

President George H. W. Bush conducted the groundbreaking for the Memorial on June 14, 1992, Flag Day. The companies and organizations involved in the construction are listed on the memorial as: the Faith Construction Company, the Richard Sherman Company, the Cold Spring Granite Company, the Tallix Art Foundry and the Baltimore District of the US Army Corps of Engineers.... The memorial was dedicated on July 27, 1995, the 42nd anniversary of the armistice that ended the war, by President Bill Clinton and Kim, President of the Republic of Korea, to the men and women who served during the conflict. Management of the memorial was turned over to the National Park Service, under its National Mall and Memorial Parks group. As with all National Park Service historic areas, the memorial was administratively listed on the National Register of Historic Places on the day of its dedication.

## United Nations Wall

To the north of the statues and path is the United Nations Wall, a low wall listing the 22 members of the United Nations that contributed troops or medical support to the Korean War effort.

## Pool of Remembrance

The circle contains the Pool of Remembrance, a shallow pool 30 feet (9 m) in diameter lined with black granite and surrounded by a grove of linden trees with benches. The trees are shaped to create a barrel effect, which allows the sun to reflect on the pool. Inscriptions list the numbers killed, wounded, missing in action, and held as prisoners of war, and a nearby plaque is inscribed: "Our nation honors her sons and daughters who answered the call to defend a country they never knew and a people they never met." Additionally, right next to the number of American soldiers are those of the United Nations troops in the same categories. In the south side of the memorial, there are three bushes of the Rose of Sharon hibiscus plant, South Korea's national flower.

A further granite wall bears the simple message, inlaid in silver: "Freedom Is Not Free."

Visitation practice suggests that a large majority of viewers do not associate the relationship between the casualties and the Pool. Most visitors don't see the casualty figures as they are not prominent in view and it is difficult for visitors to relate the numbers to the Pool. Further, the pedestrian traffic in the alcove tends to discourage entering and most visitors bypass the alcove.

Accordingly, the subliminal message intended is too subtle and over 90% of visitors do not encircle the Pool. Thus, unless called to their attention, an almost impossible process, visitors depart the

Memorial awed by the artistic message but unaware of the symbolic message. For most it is a work of art—not an honoring of those who gave life and limb to justify a Memorial.

## Korean War Veterans Memorial Foundation's Maintenance Fund

On October 12, 2015, Samsung Electronics donated \$1 million to the Korean War Memorial Foundation. The memorial used the donation for maintenance. According to William Weber, the chairman of the memorial foundation, "Most of the grouting needs to be treated twice a year. And there isn't enough for all of that upkeep." In addition, on the October 16, Samsung help cleaned the memorial ground as part of the company's national day of service.

## 19 Stainless Steel Statues

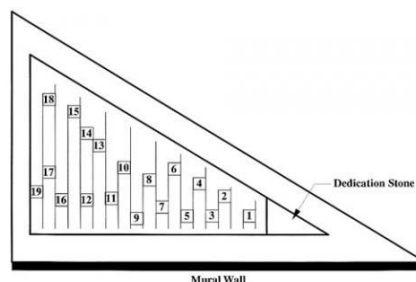
Within the walled triangle are 19 stainless steel statues designed by Frank Gaylord, each larger than life-size, between 7 feet 3 inches (2.21 m) and 7 feet 6 inches (2.29 m) tall; each weighs nearly 1,000 pounds (500 kg). The figures represent a squad on patrol, drawn from each branch of the armed forces; fourteen of the figures are from the U.S. Army, three are from the Marine Corps, one is a Navy Corpsman, and one is an Air Force Forward Air Observer. They are dressed in full combat gear, dispersed among strips of granite and juniper bushes which represent the rugged terrain of Korea.

## The Mural Wall

The Mural Wall was designed by Louis Nelson of New York, NY and fabricated by Cold Spring Granite Company, Cold Spring, MN. The muralist, sculptor and architect worked closely to create a two-dimensional work of art adjacent to the three-dimensional statues. The wall consists of 41 panels extending 164 feet. Over 2,400 photographs of the Korean War were obtained from the National Archives. They were enhanced by computer to give a uniform lighting effect and the desired size. The mural, representing those forces supporting the foot soldier, depicts Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force and Coast Guard personnel and their equipment. The etchings are arranged to give a wavy appearance in harmony with the layout of the statues. The reflective quality of the Academy Black Granite creates the image of a total of 38 statues, symbolic of the 38th Parallel and the 38 months of the war. When viewed from afar, it also creates the appearance of the mountain ranges of Korea.

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Pos.	Service	Duty	Race	Weapon
1.	Army	Lead Scout	Caucasian	M-1
2.	Army	Scout	Caucasian	M-1
3.	Army	Squad Leader	Caucasian	M-1
4.	Army	BAR Man	Afro-American	Browning Automatic Rifle (BAR)
5.	Army	BAR Assistant	Caucasian	Carbine
6.	Army	Rifleman	Afro-American	M-1
7.	Army	Group Leader	Caucasian	Carbine
8.	Army	Radio Operator	Caucasian	Carbine
9.	Army	Army Medic	Hispanic	None
10.	Army	Forward Observer	Caucasian	Carbine
11.	Air Force	Air-Ground Controller	Caucasian	Carbine
12.	Marine Corps	Assistant Gunner	Caucasian	Tripod
13.	Marine Corps	Gunner	Caucasian	Machine Gun
14.	Navy	Corpsman	Afro-American	None
15.	Marine Corps	Rifleman	Asian-American	M-1
16.	Army	Rifleman	Caucasian	M-1
17.	Army	Rifleman	Hispanic	M-1
18.	Army	Assistant Group Leader	Caucasian	M-1
19.	Army	Rifleman	Native American	M-1