

Memorials Honor Nation's Fallen

Upgrades to the Korean War Veterans Memorial and the addition of a new veterans memorial on the National Mall highlight recent developments

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The VFW has long been privileged to help preserve the memory of America's war dead. Here is an update on memorials in our nation's capital as well as a new addition to a memorial at Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

KOREAN WAR VETERANS MEMORIAL WALL TO OPEN THIS SUMMER

In October 2016, the Korean War Veterans Memorial Wall of Remembrance Act (P.L. 114-230) was signed. Last year, the improvements and additions to the memorial began.

The Wall of Remembrance is set to be completed later this summer. A permanent addition to the memorial, the wall will include the names of 36,574 American servicemen and more than 7,200 members of the Korean Augmentation to the U.S. Army who died defending the people of South Korea.

The sloped, granite Wall of Remembrance will encircle the existing Pool of Remembrance.

Updates to the memorial, which was dedicated in 1995 and supported by a \$200,000 VFW donation (\$600,000 was donated separately by VFW members), include:

- Pavement repair
- Replacement of engraved names of participating countries and casualty figures with stainless steel letters
- Replacement of linden trees around the Pool of Remembrance and juniper trees in the Field of Service
- Updates to existing lighting with high-efficiency LED lamps

The estimated \$22 million budget for this project was entirely provided by donations from citizens of the U.S. and the Republic of Korea.

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For more information on the progress and design, visit www.koreanwarvetsmemorial.org.

GWOT MEMORIAL TO BE LOCATED ON NATIONAL MALL

When the FY 2022 National Defense Authorization Act (P.L. 117-81) was passed on Dec. 15, 2021, it included a provision for the location of the planned Global War on Terrorism Memorial.

This legislation allows for the memorial to be built in the Reserve portion of the National Mall in Washington, D.C. The Reserve was set aside by Congress in 2003 as a space on the National Mall where no new memorials would be built.

Spearheaded by the Global War on Terrorism Memorial Foundation under the leadership of president and CEO Michael Rodriguez, the memorial will honor the sacrifices of those 4,431 U.S. troops who died in Iraq and the 2,352 U.S. troops who died in Afghanistan.

Army Staff Sgt. Bryan A. Burgess of the 101st Airborne Division will be honored. He was KIA on March 29, 2011, at Bagram Airfield in Afghanistan.

“Our hearts are truly warmed knowing that Bryan’s sacrifice for family, country and freedom will be memorialized in this tribute at our nation’s capital,” Gold Star parents Terry and Beth Burgess, and Bryan’s widow, Tiffany Burgess, said in a statement. “We’re sure that every Gold Star family from the Global War on Terrorism would agree that this memorial is going to be a treasured place to gather in the spirit of turning grief into honor.”

According to the foundation’s website, the memorial aims to:

- **Honor:** Salute all who served in this conflict, including service members, civilians and their families.
- **Heal:** Provide a focal point for healing and reflection on a complex, multigenerational conflict.
- **Empower:** Engage and educate civilian and military communities to build mutual understanding.
- **Unite:** Foster and sustain the sense of patriotism that brought all Americans together in the wake of 9/11 and catalyze support for those continuing to serve.

In January, Student Veterans of America awarded the Foundation its inaugural Senator Bob Dole Continued Service Award for its work in advocating for the memorial location on the National Mall.

“Senator Bob Dole was a great veterans and their families,” Rodriguez said. “Our Foundation is proud to pursue our mission of building a memorial to honor our veterans in close partnership with SVA and many other veteran service organizations.”

For more information on the memorial, visit www.gwotmemorialfoundation.org.

MILITARY WOMEN’S MEMORIAL REGISTRY WANTS YOUR STORY

Located at the gateway to Arlington National Cemetery stands the Military Women’s Memorial. Opened to the public in 1997, the memorial honors the more than 3 million women who have served the nation since the Revolutionary War.

The Military Women’s Memorial Registry provides a place for servicewomen and women veterans to register their military service for posterity.

For more than 30 years, the memorial has been permanently documenting military women’s experiences and their impact on women’s history.

Visitors are invited to look up servicewomen in the register and learn about these military women and veterans.

If you know a servicewoman or woman veteran, take advantage of the free registration to ensure her story joins hundreds of thousands of individual stories that make up the registry. As the Military Women’s Memorial website states: “History is not complete until every military woman’s story is told.”

Visit www.womensmilitarymemorial.org for more information or to register in this national registry.

FORT BRAGG MEMORIAL WALLS ADD NAMES

Last November, the names of eight paratroopers killed in combat or in training accidents were added to the American whose spirit of public service lives on within SVA and all of America’s memorial walls at Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

Sgt. Bryan Mount was added to the Global War on Terrorism monument. Mount died July 21, 2020, in a rollover accident in eastern Syria. Mount’s name joined more than 230 names already listed on the monument.

The names of Spc. Abigail Jenks and Pfc. Jean Cruz De Leon were added to the memorial wall. Jenks died during a jump accident on April 19, 2021, at Fort Bragg. De Leon died after his parachute malfunctioned on Sept. 10, 2020, at Fort Stewart, Georgia.

The names of Sgt. 1st Class Harold Jeffries, Cpl. Essex Graham, Cpl. Calvin Jackson, Cpl. Joe Mills and Pvt. Clarence Johnson also were added to the memorial. They died following a B-29 accident in 1948. The men were part of the 555th Parachute Infantry Battalion.

These monuments are located at the 82nd Airborne Division Museum. Each monument honors paratroopers who have died in every war since World War I.

This article is featured in the 2022 May issue of [VFW magazine](#), and was written by [Janie Dyhouse](#), senior editor for VFW magazine.