



Virginia 4-H MAKING the Future

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The History of Monuments

The History Behind it . . .

What is a monument?

A **monument** is a physical object, such as a building, pillar, or statue that is built to keep the memory alive of a person(s), persons, or event. A **memorial** is something (not always a physical object) such as a monument or holiday that is intended to remind people of an aspect of history.

Monuments have been constructed for thousands of years. Some early monuments include the pyramids of Egypt, the Roman colosseum, and the Great Wall of China. American monuments tell the story of our nation, how and why we say thanks to honor Americans across many generations. One of the most famous American monuments is the Statue of Liberty, dedicated in 1886, as a symbol of freedom and democracy.

World War I

Many monuments and memorials were constructed in communities across the US at the end of World War I. They were as simple as a small bronze statue or as large as an entire granite building. It is estimated that up to 10,000 monuments and memorials may have been constructed.

The American Battle Monuments Commission operates and maintains 14 WWI monuments and memorials overseas and 8 permanent overseas cemeteries which have a total of 30,922 war dead.

Did you know?

- The only world war that does not have a national monument in Washington D.C. is World War I. The US World War One Centennial Commission is working to build a monument for the 100-year anniversary. For more information: www.ww1cc.org
- The WWI Memorial Inventory project is working to identify all of the WWI memorials across the country. Everyone can participate in documenting their local monuments and memorials by uploading information to the website: <http://wwi-inventory.org/>
- A unique WWI memorial is a log cabin that was built by the men of the 314th Infantry while training at Camp Meade, after returning from France they reconstructed the cabin as a memorial to their fallen comrades.

Sources

- ⇒ 314th Infantry AEF Log Cabin Memorial: www.314th.org
- ⇒ American Battle Monuments Commission: www.abmc.gov/about-us
- ⇒ American Markings: *Registry of American Monuments and Memorials - Civic Remembrances, Public Appreciation*: www.monumentsandmemorials.com/manuscript.pdf
- ⇒ The History Channel: www.history.com/news/the-hunt-for-forgotten-world-war-i-monuments
- ⇒ The National Park Service: www.nps.gov/deto/learn/historyculture/index.htm
- ⇒ The National Building Museum - *Washington: Symbol and City*: www.nationalbuildingmuseum.net/pdf/WSCERP2012.pdf
- ⇒ World War I Memorial Inventory Project: <http://wwi-inventory.org/>

www.ext.vt.edu/topics/4h-youth/makers

