World War II Memorial Fact Sheet

During World War II, the spirit of America, in home front factories and on distant battlefields, saved the world. It is a spirit our soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines carried to victory, and sometimes carried to eternity. We owe them a debt. We repay it with a pledge: to preserve their memory against the tide of time".

Senator Bob Dole

- President Clinton signed Public Law 103-32 on May 25, 1993, authorizing the American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC) to establish a World War II Memorial in Washington, D.C.
- The memorial site on the National Mall was dedicated during a formal ceremony on Veterans Day 1995. The National Park Service, the Commission of Fine Arts, and the National Capital Planning Commission approved selection of the Rainbow Pool site at the east end of the Reflecting Pool between the Lincoln Memorial and the Washington Monument.
- The memorial will honor the 16 million people who served in the armed forces of the U.S. during WWII, the more than 400,000 who died, and the millions who supported the war effort on the home front.
- As of June 2003, the ABMC received \$192 million in donations and pledges for construction of the memorial, exceeding the estimated price tag of \$171 million. Remaining funds will be deposited into the WWII Memorial Trust Fund.
- The NFDA's Celebration of Freedom Campaign, launched in 2000, helped to raise nearly \$3 million for the project. Funeral homes nationwide solicited contributions in support of the memorial. These generous donations ranked NFDA as the second-highest non-corporate donor, behind only the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and fifth among the top 10 contributors to the *entire* campaign.
- The WWII Memorial Registry of Remembrances presently contains about 1.3 million names. ABMC hopes to gather the name of every U.S. citizen who served as a member of the Armed Forces or on the home front.
- Visitors to the Memorial will see two 43-foot arches, flanking the sides of the oval memorial plaza. The arches house laurel wreaths, commemorating the victory of the WWII generation. Fifty-six granite pillars celebrate the unity of the nation during WWII.
- Waterfalls that appear to flow from the reflecting pool flank a central ceremonial area. Inscriptions within this area will honor those who gave their lives.