

# World War II Memorial

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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 honors the 16 million who served in the armed forces of the U.S. during World War II, the more than 400,000 who died, and the millions who supported the war effort from home.

The first step in establishing the memorial was the selection of an appropriate site. Congress provided legislative authority for siting the memorial in the prime area of the national capital, known as Area I, which includes the National Mall. 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. President Clinton dedicated the memorial site during a formal ceremony on Veterans Day 1995.

The Memorial design by Friedrich St. Florian, Providence, R.I., was selected as one of six semi-finalists in an open, national competition. St. Florian's memorial design concept was approved by the Commission of Fine Arts and the National Capital Planning Commission in the summer of 1998. The

commissions approved the preliminary design in 1999, the final architectural design and several ancillary elements in 2000, granite selections in 2001, and sculpture and inscriptions in 2002 and 2003. The memorial is funded primarily by private contributions. The memorial received more than \$195 million in cash and pledges. This total includes \$16 million provided by the federal government. Construction began in September 2001. The memorial opened to the public on April 29, 2004. The memorial will be dedicated on Saturday, May 29, 2004 - Memorial Day Weekend.

*Editor's Note To many Chinese Americans, the World War II Memorial brings back the history of Japanese Invasion of China dated at least from 18 September 1931. Between that date and 7 December 1941 when Japan attacked Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, USA, Chinese people were fighting alone against a ruthless Japanese army, Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor made it abundantly clear that Japan's aim was to dominate the world After December 1941, China and U.S. fought side by side, and Chinese people and American soldiers died for the cause of freeing people from Imperialism for four more years. Japan surrendered unconditionally to the Allied Forces including China and the U.S. on 15 August 1945. During the long struggle against the Japanese Imperialism (1931-1945), more than 30 million Chinese gave their lives. That too was a part and an extension of overall legacy of the World War II.*