

TAYLOR SQUARE'S FORGOTTEN STATUE

Investigating the Significance of the “War Soldiers Memorial”

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OVERVIEW OF MONUMENT & SYNOPSIS

The War Soldiers Memorial, located in Taylor Square at the intersection of 4th Street and Liberty Street, was erected on May 30, 1937. Its original purpose as a monument – then as now – was to commemorate the sacrifices of veterans of the United States’ most significant wars.

Each conflict, remembered with only its name and a symbol, contains a poetic verse that summarizes the commitment and honorable duties of United States veterans – those involved in waging war – to emphasize the importance of remembering those who gave their lives in each significant international conflict throughout American history. The monument is best known for its role in providing viewers with a reason to remember the past.

RESTORED MONUMENT, 2025



Figure 2: American Legion California Post No. 377, May 30, 1937, California, PA, Washington County; photo taken by Connor Berg, March 25, 2025.

DID YOU KNOW? TOP FIVE FUN FACTS

- (1) The War Soldiers Memorial is believed to be the oldest historical monument in town. Erected in 1937 by the former California chapter of The American Legion, it serves as a memorial to the sacrifice of every veteran who served in national U.S. wars or conflicts.
- (2) Upon its conception in 1937, the War Soldiers Memorial only had four wars etched into its surface: the Revolutionary War, Civil War, Spanish-American War, and World War I.
- (3) The War Soldiers Memorial was used by the students of the California Academy (today known as California University of Pennsylvania) as a site of parades held during the week of Memorial Day. Students would participate in the related festivities on the last day of school before summer break.
- (4) The War Soldiers Memorial was initially constructed to provide a site of remembrance for the soldiers that gave their lives in World War I; today, it now honors all veterans of national conflict.
- (5) As of March 2025, the War Soldiers Memorial has a total of seven major wars inscribed onto its four faces (in addition to the above): The Revolutionary War, Civil War, Spanish-American War, World War I, World War II, The Korean War, and The Vietnam War (as of 1975).

MONUMENT DEDICATION, 1937



Figure 1: War Soldiers Memorial, 1937, California, Pennsylvania, in *Images of America: California, Pennsylvania*, by Arcadia (Tempus Publishing, 2003), page 2.

REFERENCES FOR MY RESEARCH

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- “Soldiers Memorial Monument,” *HMBD.org – The Historical Marker Database*, July 16, 2022, <https://www.hmdb.org/m.asp?m=202334>.
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- Trout, Steven. *On the Battlefield of Memory: The First World War and American Remembrance, 1919-1941*. <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/clarion-ebooks/reader.action?docID=835645&ppg=1>

MONUMENT LOCATION (MAP)

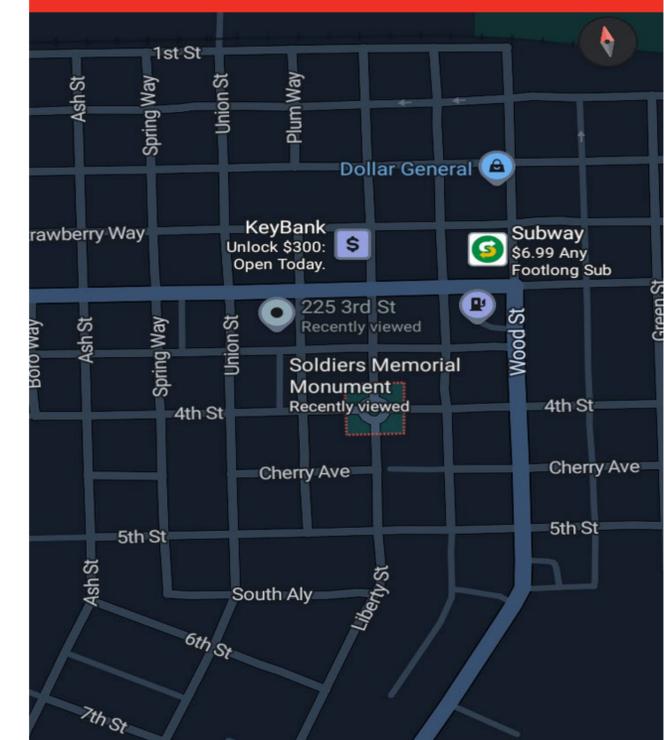


Figure 3: View of California, Pennsylvania, Google Maps, accessed March 22, 2025, https://www.google.com/maps/@40.0655068,-79.8915072,85m/data=!3m1!1e3?entry=tту&g_ep=EgoyMDI1MDxOS4yKXMDSoASAFQAw%3D%3D.